

Racial Equity Pocket Questions

Title and Purpose of this Initiative: Street Naming/Renaming is the agenda item title. The purpose is to provide the Council with information about street naming and renaming following recent requests for streets to be renamed in recognition of Braxton Foushee.

Department: Planning

What are the racial impacts?

Names of streets are important. They identify the location of our homes and businesses and become a part of our identities on our drivers' licenses, college applications, and bank accounts, to name just a few. The naming of streets for individuals or events often reflects a recognition of contributions that have been celebrated or appreciated at a point in time. Some names are known to be associated with events or individuals who acted demonstrably in ways that segregated or negatively impacted people based on their race, gender, gender identity, ability, or ethnicity. With greater awareness of and interest in understanding how structures of racism are detrimental to society, delving into history sometimes reveals others, not as well known, who acted similarly. Individuals, families, communities, institutions, and nations explore when and whether to change the names of streets to cease to recognize and or celebrate those individuals and events.

Who is or will experience burden?

The burden of renaming falls primarily on those who must change their addresses and all associated identifying information. There are costs associated with these changes, both actual fees, as well as time to communicate about, make appointments about and travel to make changes. There can be significant challenges to updating drivers' licenses - appointments to get in the DMV (for those not using technology to update their address, those who need assistance to attend appointments or have difficulty adjusting their work schedules to take care of personal business during DMV working hours) can take months and to be seen often takes hours. Businesses or home-based businesses may have additional financial burdens for costs to reprint marketing materials, letterhead, invoices, et cetera. Another burden will occur during the period of transition when address changes cascade through address databases and require adjustments in the practice of those who deliver goods and services directly to homes and businesses, slowing or preventing deliveries, making it difficult for properties to be located. Family members of the individuals named or associated with events may be burdened by the focus on these aspects of history. Where there are inconsistencies or problems associated with existing names, maintaining an existing street name/numbering system can present a burden to emergency service providers and all those who access properties directly to make deliveries or provide services – due to delays. To date, changes have been made when 75 to 100 percent of the property owners have agreed to changes.

Who is or will experience benefit?

Those who are or have been harmed by the perception of or direct actions of those named individuals or events. The community when given the opportunity to learn about the historical and societal impacts of name choices as well as the expansion of community members or events of historical significance. Family and community members of the newly named/recognized individuals who appreciate the greater awareness and recognition of those contributions. New addresses may result in a greater sense of uniqueness or autonomy.

What are the root causes of inequity?

Structural racism in the United States has affected recognition for contributions of individuals and groups to important historical events, discoveries, and acts of bravery among others, has affected access to leadership roles in government, to and funding/financing for property ownership, educational and health care access, infrastructure, public services, and wealth generation for BIPOC families.

What might be the unintended consequences of this action or strategy?

The noted burdens may be larger than anticipated. Research into new names may not reveal conditions which are later found to convey negative connotations and may be found harmful.

How is your department planning to mitigate any burdens, inequities, and unintended consequences?

The department plans to evaluate renaming processes before, during and after they are implemented. The department will continue to use the REAL and pocket questions in relation to consideration and implementation of policies in the town's comprehensive plan, *Carrboro Connects*. Should the Town proceed with directing street renaming, a subsidy for low- and moderate-income residents could be considered to offset those monetary and time cost burdens that accrue when making address changes.