

DATE: January 12, 2026
TO: Land Use and Economic Development Committee of the City Council
FROM: Helen Miller, Planner
CC: Jayne Bernhard, Planning Director
SUBJECT: Honorary Street Name Designation: Wallace Street, between Joliet Street and Ottawa Street, as Reverend Larry Ellis Way

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Trista Brown, has submitted an application for an honorary street name designation for Reverend Larry Ellis due to his dedication to and involvement with the local community, specifically the South End community. According to the application and letters of support, Reverend Ellis was a community leader and activist who worked consistently to improve the community, promote social justice, and provide support to local initiatives and organizations. He was a longtime member and ordained minister of St. Mark C.M.E. Church, located on South Joliet Street. He served on various boards and committees, including the non-profit organization SpeakUp, which awarded him their Margaret Graves Humanitarian Award in 2021. Reverend Ellis endeavored to promote community connections and empower individuals by helping establish programs that promoted advocacy, mentorship, and youth engagement, among other topics.

Reverend Ellis was a lifelong resident of the Joliet South End community. The honorary street name designation is for the section of Wallace Street between Joliet Street and Ottawa Street. This location is near St. Mark C.M.E. Church. The petitioner requests that the requirement for signatures of 50 percent of the adjacent property owners be waived. The section of Wallace Street is short and has only five properties with frontage along the section. The petitioner has obtained at least one signature for this street section and several other signatures from residents of the area.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on the information provided, staff recommends that the Land Use and Economic Development Committee recommends approval of the honorary designation of Wallace Street between Joliet Street and Ottawa Street as "Reverend Larry Ellis Way."

Wallace Street between Joliet Street and Ottawa Street

