

DATE: February 4, 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: Glenwood Avenue, between Hammes Avenue and Larkin Avenue, as Michael Austin Clark Way

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Shelley Clark, has submitted an honorary street name designation for Michael Austin Clark due to his extensive service and leadership within the Joliet community. Mr. Clark was a community advocate and leader who dedicated his time and energy to addressing social, educational, and economic inequities in Joliet and Will County. Mr. Clark served in many significant local roles, including as chairman of the African American Business Association of Will County and as president of the NAACP Joliet Branch. He was also substantially involved in the local school system, serving on the strategic planning committee for District 204, co-facilitating townhall meetings for District 204, and mentoring athletes, among other contributions.

Michael Austin Clark was committed to building and enhancing community relationships and to creating equitable opportunities within the school system, business community, and larger community. His humanitarian efforts toward economic empowerment, educational equity, and social justice have had a lasting positive impact on the community. In 2023, he posthumously received the J.D. Ross Extraordinary Service Award for Distinguished Public Service from Joliet Junior College, which is a high honor for individuals who have demonstrated outstanding service within the JJC district.

The honorary street name designation is for the section of Glenwood Avenue in front of Joliet West High School, between Larkin Avenue and Hammes Avenue. Mr. Clark was involved in District 204 in numerous ways and was an alumnus of Joliet West High School. The applicant is requesting that the requirement for signatures of 50 percent of the adjacent property owners be waived. The proposed section of Glenwood Avenue contains residential properties on its north side, and two additional commercial properties on the south side in addition to the high school. District 204 has submitted a letter of support for the honorary street name designation at this location.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on the information provided, staff recommends that the Land Use and Economic Development Committee recommends approval of the honorary designation of Glenwood Avenue between Hammes Avenue and Larkin Avenue as "Michael Austin Clark Way."

Glenwood Avenue between Hammes Avenue and Larkin Avenue

