



Honorary Street Name Program Description & Application

POLICY:

The City of Joliet has established a policy with a review process and set of criteria for the designation of honorary street names in the City. Listed below are the purpose of the program; review criteria; detailed provisions of the program and the application form. The program is managed by the Department of Community Development. All supporting documentation is required at time of application submittal. The application will be reviewed by the Joliet Land Use & Legislative Committee who will make a recommendation to Joliet City Council for final review.

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM:

The City of Joliet honorary street name program is a means for honoring Joliet residents who have become well known for their civic, charitable, educational, or business contributions to the Joliet community. The honorary street name identifies a certain portion of a Joliet street with an individual name in honor of that person. The honorary street name supplements the permanent street name and does not change the permanent street name designation, nor does it require residents and businesses fronting on the street to change their address. There are also provisions in the program for honoring important local sites and events.

LIST OF CRITERIA:

The following list of criteria is used in determining eligibility for an honorary street name designation:

1. A site, event, or individual of known historic or cultural importance to the City;
2. Responsible for an accomplishment of local, regional, national or international significance;
3. Worked tirelessly for the benefit of the less fortunate of the community;
4. Exceptional involvement in church, school, service club or other organization which made Joliet a better place;
5. An individual with a distinguished career brought to the City or notable humanitarian achievement made while a resident of the City;
6. A site of national, regional, or local geographical interest.
7. A clear geographical relationship of the street to the area of interest of the nominee;
8. A clearly defined record of local community or public service made by the nominee.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS:

The following list describes the application process for an honorary street name designation:

1. The applicant must file a petition signed by 50% of property owners abutting the frontage to be dedicated as an honorary street;
2. The applicant shall pay a filing fee of \$120.00 to cover administration costs and the cost of the sign production;
3. The application will be reviewed and recommended by the Joliet Land Use & Legislative Committee with final approval by the Joliet City Council;
4. The Joliet City Council may authorize a waiver of the “50%” rule noted above on a case-by-case basis;
5. Nominations solely based on commercial or corporate-related identification shall not qualify for the program;
6. There shall be only one honorary street designation per street.
7. The honorary street designation shall not conflict with any other official street name.
8. Once the City Council approves the street name application, the Traffic Engineer/Engineering will produce a sign(s) for the street and place it where necessary on the roadway. An additional sign will be made and given to the applicant.

PLEASE FILL OUT THE ATTACHED APPLICATION

PETITION FOR HONORARY STREET NAME APPLICATION - JOLIET

Name of Honoree: Michael Austin Clark
(As it would appear on the street sign)

Proper Street Name: Glenwood Ave

Intersecting streets at each end of the street segment to be designated:

Start at Larkin Ave through Hammes Ave

Please check all that apply and give a brief explanation of the applicable criteria. A street can be named for an individual, place or event.

☒ **Individual**

Michael Austin Clark was a devoted servant leader who served his community with diligence, integrity, and heart. He was deeply committed to uplifting and advocating for underrepresented communities, always working to create opportunities where they were most needed. Guided by a strong belief in equity, he championed fair and inclusive practices that left a lasting impact on those he served. Michael served in Joliet in many capacities. He was the president of the NAACP as well as ABBA.

☒ **Place**

Michael Austin Clark was a proud Joliet West Alumni. In his adult years he spent much of his time working with district 204 co facilitating city townhall meetings, serving on the strategic planning committee, strategic sub planning committees, mentoring athletes, regularly attending numerous events such State of the District, Booster meetings, mentoring athletics etc.

While in school Michael was a captin on the football team, played first base on the baseball team, in the symphonic band. Michael was a member of the National Honors society.

☐ **Event**

☒ **Cultural Impact to the City:**

Michael Austin Clark had a profound and lasting impact on the Joliet community through his servant leadership, advocacy, and unwavering commitment to equity.

As a respected community leader, he used his voice to uplift underrepresented communities, champion educational equity, support youth mentorship, and promote economic empowerment.

His leadership strengthened relationships across schools, organizations, and neighborhoods, leaving a legacy of compassion, justice, and positive change that continues to inspire Joliet today.

X Historical impact to the City:

Michael Austin Clark had a historic and lasting impact on the Joliet community through his leadership, advocacy, and dedication to civic engagement. As President of the Joliet NAACP, he championed civil rights and equity for underrepresented communities.

As President of the African American Business Association of Will County, he promoted economic empowerment and opportunity for minority-owned businesses. Additionally, his service on strategic planning committees for Joliet Township High School helped shape educational policies and initiatives that ensured equitable opportunities for students. Through these roles, Michael Austin Clark's vision, leadership, and commitment to justice left an enduring legacy on Joliet's social, educational, and economic landscape.

X Humanitarian efforts:

Michael Austin Clark's humanitarian efforts were defined by his unwavering commitment to uplifting others and improving the lives of those in his community. He dedicated his time, energy, and leadership to addressing social, educational, and economic inequities in Joliet and Will County. Through his work with youth mentorship programs, advocacy for educational equity and support of minority-owned businesses, he provided opportunities and resources for individuals and families who were often underserved. Michael's leadership in organizations such as the NAACP and the African American Business Association further amplified his humanitarian impact, as he fought for justice, fairness, and empowerment. His life was a testament to selfless service, compassion, and the belief that one person can make a lasting difference in the lives of many.

X Close association with Joliet:

Michael Austin Clark was born and raised in Joliet IL. Throughout his life, Michael dedicated himself to improving the city through leadership roles, mentorship, advocacy, and civic engagement, demonstrating a profound love for the community that shaped him. His enduring presence and contributions made him a cornerstone of Joliet's social, educational, and economic life.

X Geographical relationship of the street to the area of interest of the nominee:

Michael Austin Clark was a proud Joliet West Alumni. In his adult years he spent much of his time working with district 204 co facilitating city townhall meetings, serving on the strategic planning committee, strategic sub planning committees, mentoring athletes, regularly attending numerous events such State of the District, Booster meetings, mentoring athletics etc. Michael Austin Clark partnered with Joliet Township High School to help bridge gaps between the school district and the surrounding community. Through collaboration, trust, and open communication, he strengthened relationships and created meaningful connections that supported students and families.

___ Responsible for an accomplishment of local, regional, national of international significance:

Name of Honoree: Michael Austin Clark

Proper Street Name: Glenwood Avenue

Intersecting streets: Hammes Avenue and Larkin Avenue

Individual

Michael Austin Clark was a devoted servant leader who served his community with diligence, integrity, and heart. He was deeply committed to uplifting and advocating for underrepresented communities, always working to create opportunities where they were most needed. Guided by a strong belief in equity, he championed fair and inclusive practices that left a lasting impact on those he served. Michael served in Joliet in many capacities. He was the president of the NAACP as well as ABBA.

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Cultural Impact to the City

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As an adjoining property owner to the proposed honorary street name known as _____, I hereby approve of the honorary street name being proposed:

DATE

[illegible]

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I, Shelley Clark, depose and say that the above statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I agree to be present in person or by representation when this petition is heard before the Joliet Land Use & Legislative Committee.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Date: 1/29/26



Subscribed and sworn to before me this
29th day of January, 2026

Applicant's Address: _____ Phone No.: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Submit completed form to:

City of Joliet
Attn: James N. Torri, Director
Planning Division
Community Development
150 W. Jefferson Street
Joliet, IL 60432
Phone: (815)724-4050
Email: zoning@joliet.gov

City of Joliet Web Site: Joliet.gov

PRINT



Joliet Township High School - District 204

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300 Caterpillar Drive
Joliet, IL 60436
www.jths.org

January 21, 2026

Dear City of Joliet Officials,

On behalf of Joliet Township High School District 204, I am writing to formally acknowledge the request to designate **Glenwood Avenue between Larkin Avenue and Hammes Street** as **Michael Austin Clark Way**.

The Joliet Township High School District 204 Board of Education has reviewed this request and has **voted in full agreement and support of this honor**. We believe this designation is both appropriate and meaningful in recognition of the significant impact Michael Austin Clark had on Joliet Township High School and the greater Joliet community.

Michael Austin Clark demonstrated unwavering commitment to service, leadership, and advocacy. His work and dedication to Joliet Township High School left a lasting legacy that continues to positively influence students, families, and staff. Honoring him in this way reflects the deep appreciation and respect our district holds for his contributions.

Please let us know if any additional information or documentation is needed as this process moves forward. We look forward to joining the City of Joliet in celebrating this well-deserved honor in the future.

Thank you for your consideration and continued partnership.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Dr. Karla Guseman.

Dr. Karla Guseman, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Joliet Township High School District 204

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

