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**CITY OF TEMPE**  
**DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMISSION**

**Meeting Date: 02/14/2023**  
**Agenda Item: 3**

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**ACTION:** Request for a recommendation of the renaming of existing streets from West Laird Street to Romo-Jones Street; East Laird Street to Ragsdale Street; and from Hudson Lane to Thomas Lane. The applicant is the City of Tempe.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** Costs associated with updating physical signs and coordination with emergency response and the US Postmaster for updates.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** The street renaming request is associated with the City Council Work Study Item, "Streets and Parks Renaming Committee Update" which will be presented to the City Council on February 9, 2023, for any further direction or guidance. For the purpose of this request, the City Park renaming portion has been excluded from the action being requested by the Development Review Commission but is included as a part of the comprehensive materials provided by the Committee. Staff will be available for a presentation or to answer any questions.

Pursuant to Tempe City Code, Sec. 25-45. - Changing, renaming or naming existing streets.

*The Mayor and Council by resolution may change, rename or name an existing or newly established street within the limits of the City at any time upon recommendation of the Development Review Commission and after consultation with the County Court or County Planning Commission, if any, and any other governmental agency directly affected thereby.*

**ATTACHMENTS:** Work Study Session Memo for February 9, 2023  
Work Study Session PowerPoint Presentation  
Next Steps memo

**STAFF CONTACT(S):** Madalaine McConville, Temp City Manager's Office

# MEMORANDUM

## ITEMS FOR UPDATE

**TO:** Mayor and Council  
**FROM:** City Manager Andrew Ching and Madalaine McConville  
**DATE:** February 9, 2023  
**SUBJECT:** Street and Park Renaming Committee Update



### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:**

At the October 21, 2021 Work Study Session, Tempe City Council directed the renaming of several city parks and streets named for individuals who, historical records show, were members of a local Ku Klux Klan chapter in the 1920s.

Hudson Lane, Laird Streets, and Hudson, Harelson and Redden parks bear the names of now-deceased community leaders who the city discovered to have been dues-paying members of the KKK's Butte Klan No. 3 in the Tempe area. Tempe's research was conducted by Tempe History Museum staff using records from the Arizona Historical Society and Phoenix Public Library.

Initially, Hudson Drive was also designated for renaming but further research conducted by the Tempe History Museum staff after the Oct. 21, 2021 Work Study Session found that Hudson Drive was not named for an individual affiliated with the KKK, so it was removed from the list.

Additionally, last June, the Tempe Elementary School District renamed three schools bearing some of the associated names. Gililand Middle School will be named Geneva Epps Mosely Middle School, Hudson Elementary will be named Joseph P. Spracale Elementary School, and Laird School will be named Cecil Shamley School. All were previously employed at Tempe Elementary in different capacities, but all had a great impact on the school and education in Tempe.

### **RECOMMENDATION OR DIRECTION REQUESTED:**

The Street and Park Ad Hoc Renaming Committee voted to forward the following recommendations for Council action: Romo-Jones Street (for Adolfo Romo and Joaquina Jones), to replace West Laird Street; Michelle Brooks-Totress Park, to replace Redden Park; Parque de Sotelo-Soza, to replace Hudson Park; Mary & Moses Green Park, to replace Harelson Park; Thomas Lane (for Maggie and Theodore Thomas), to replace Hudson Lane; and Ragsdale Street (for Lincoln Ragsdale), to replace East Laird Street.

Subsequent to the closure of the committee, we received an alternative suggestion by a direct descendent of the Sotelo and Soza families. Instead of combining the family's names for Parque de Sotelo-Soza to replace Hudson Park. The alternative is to instead have Parque de Soza replace Hudson Park, and identify the original 160-acre Sotelo Ranch as Rancho de Sotelo a Special Recognition Area to honor both families appropriately.

### **FISCAL IMPACT or IMPACT TO CURRENT RESOURCES:**

Fiscal impact will include costs to change the streets and parks names and reimbursing impacted residents for costs relating to their street's names changing. Staff is working on a reimbursement process for impacted residents and finalizing the budgetary impacts for changing the streets and parks names. Additionally, there are no impacted businesses on the three streets. Please see the "Next Steps" attachment for additional information.

### **STAKEHOLDER/PUBLIC OUTREACH:**

A public forum was opened from September 22, 2022 to November 30, 2022. Postcards were also sent to impacted residents to facilitate their feedback and notify them of the open public forum. There were also opportunities for citizens to provide public comment during committee meetings. Public input was also provided via email and council communicators. Staff members also attended various stakeholder meetings throughout the process to get additional feedback.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1 –Street & Park Renaming Committee Update Presentation

Attachment 2 – Next Steps

# Street & Park Renaming Committee Update

February 9, 2023



# Overview



- October 21, 2021, Work Study Session, City Council direction to rename the following streets and parks names:
  - Hudson Lane
  - West and East Laird Streets
  - Hudson Park
  - Harelson Park
  - Redden Park
- Tempe Elementary School District renamed three schools bearing some of the same associated names



# Advisory Committee Members

- Andrew Ching – Chair
- Hannah Moulton Belec – Neighborhood Advisory Commission
- JoAn Cooks – African American Advisory Committee
- Kim Dartez – African American Advisory Committee
- Neil Giuliano – At-Large
- Julie Kent – At-Large
- Mel Kessler – At-Large
- Phil Kraft – Veterans Commission
- Lauren Kuby – At-Large
- Shereen Lerner – Parks, Recreation, Golf, and Double Butte Cemetery Advisory Board
- Teri Metros – Library Advisory Board
- Jerry McPherson – At-Large
- Will Ortega – Human Relations Commission
- JC Porter – Transportation Commission
- Al Quihuis – Tempe Tardeada advisory group
- Isabel Ruiz – Los Vecinos
- Justin Stewart – Arts and Culture Commission
- Monica Trejo – Tempe Elementary School Board
- Sjaahn Washington – Youth Advisory Commission
- Reylynn Williams – Four Southern Tribes Cultural Resource Working Group



# Process

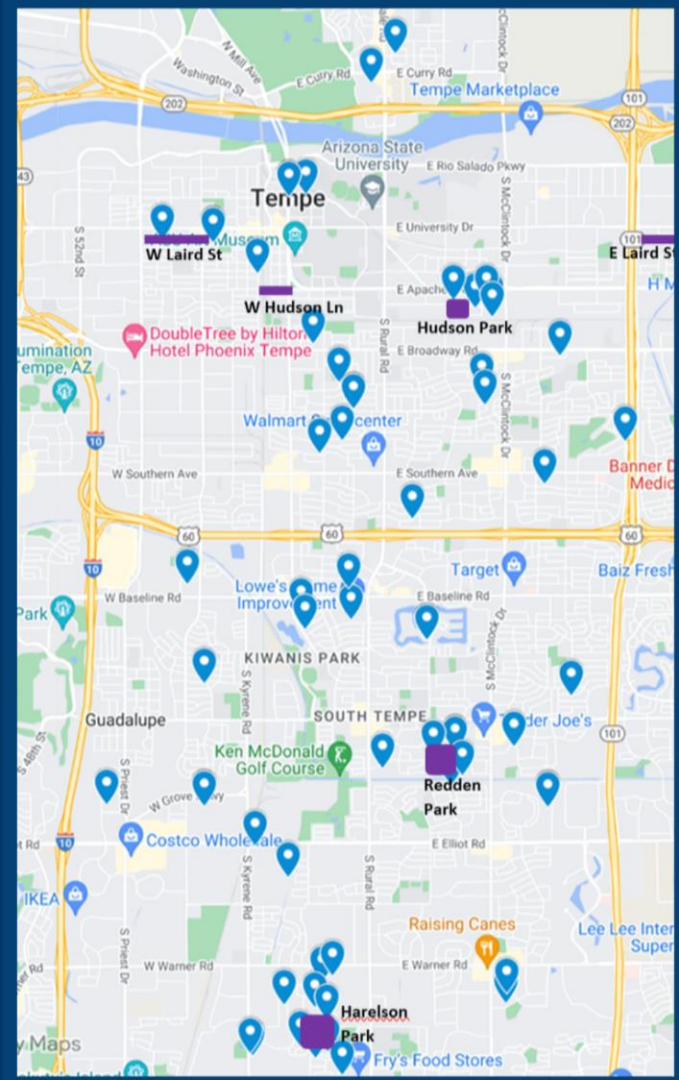
- Committee members appointments - August 2022
- Four Committee meetings
  - September 30, 2022
  - October 18, 2022
  - December 7, 2022
  - December 14, 2022
- Public Forum – Open September 22 through November 30, 2022
- Postcard sent to impacted residents (3,115) – Early November
- Additional Public Outreach – (Four Southern Tribes, Committee members outreach to community)





# Public Input

- Public Forum- 203 Responses (93 registered)
  - 66 Inside Tempe
  - 27 Outside Tempe
- Public Comment at Meetings
- Council Communicators/Direct Emails
- Stakeholder Meetings

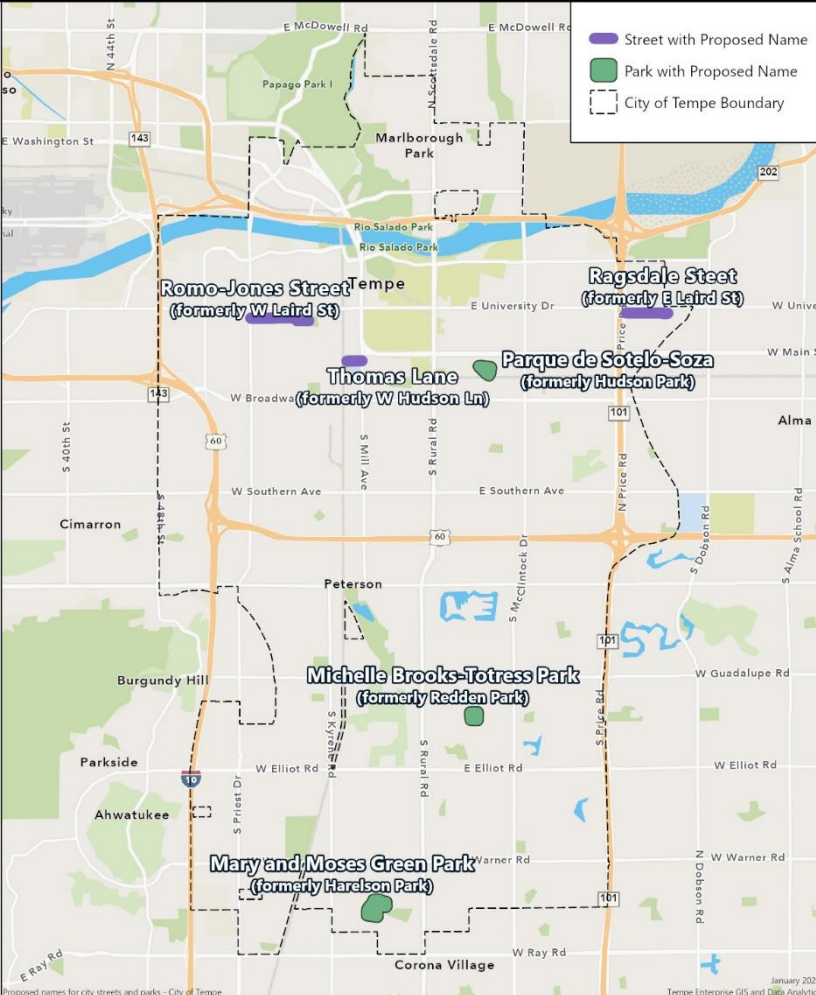






# Committee Sorting Process

- 200+ Different Names Received
  - Names include; plants, Tempe pioneers, political figures, civil rights activists, different family members of current parks and streets names, etc.
- Narrowing down the names
  - 2 Criteria- People who have died and took a restorative approach
  - Committee members forwarded top 10 names and discussed their top options at the December 7<sup>th</sup> meeting
  - Decided on 6 names, and 4 alternates for future consideration



# Proposed Renamings

- Romo-Jones Street (Adolfo Romo and Joaquina Jones), to replace West Laird Street
- Michelle Brooks-Totress Park, to replace Redden Park
- Parque de Sotelo-Soza, to replace Hudson Park
- Mary & Moses Green Park, to replace Harelson Park
- Thomas Lane (Maggie and Theodore Thomas), to replace Hudson Lane
- Ragsdale Street (Lincoln Ragsdale), to replace East Laird Street



# Michelle Brooks-Totress Park

- Community activist, philanthropist, and long-time Tempe resident
- Instrumental in bringing Juneteenth Celebration and the Crown Act to Tempe
- Membership on African American Advisory Committee for 14 years, also served as the Chair
  - Worked to provide scholarships for Tempe High School Students
- Collaboration on the *African American Experience in Tempe*
- Served as a Tempe Troop Leader for both Boys and Girls Scouts of America
- Provided education to the community as a member of the Metro Sun Chapter of the National Council of Negro Women



Michelle Brooks-Totress in 2021

# Romo-Jones Street (for Adolfo Romo and Joaquina Jones)



- Latino pioneer family
- Married (Joaquina kept her maiden name)
- Education segregation lawsuit plaintiffs in the 1925 Romo v Laird lawsuit against the Tempe Elementary School District
  - A judge rules the school must admit Hispanic Children
  - The case set precedent that would ultimately benefit children of all races

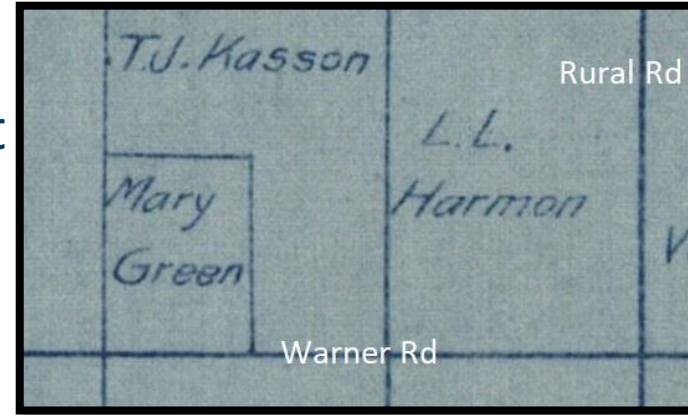


Adolfo Romo as a young man

# Mary and Moses Green Park



- African American pioneer family
- First African American landowners in what is now Tempe
- Mary Green homesteaded 160 acres near northwest corner of modern Rural and Warner Roads in 1888
- Three of Mary's children (and their families) lived in Tempe – Moses, Ada and Fred
- Moses and Fred were farmers/ranchers in Tempe and Chandler districts

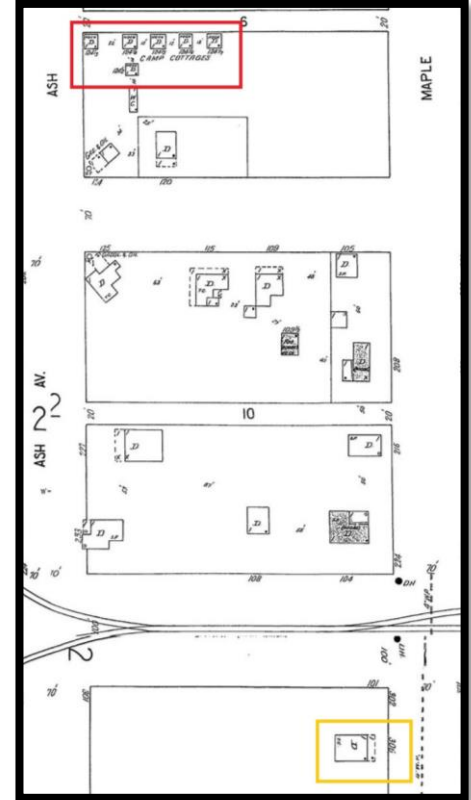


Mary Green's homestead in 1911, now approximately 20 acres (west of modern intersection of Warner and Rural Road). The original claim encompassed 160 acres, or the entire southeast quarter of Section 15, Township 1 South, Range 4 East.

# Thomas Lane (for Maggie & Theodore Thomas)



- African American pioneer family (Phoenix in the 1890s, and then moved to Tempe in 1906)
- Theodore was a local business owner (purchased the barbershop at 312 S. Mill Ave in 1906) and possibly a veteran Buffalo Soldier
- Was a pitcher for a baseball team of “colored” barbers
- The family rented housing to African American ASU students due to the campus housing discrimination
- Promoted early Juneteenth Celebrations near Tucson (in 1908, and likely other years as well)
- Involved in church groups and many other community activities



Thomas Family properties  
on Maple & Ash

# Ragsdale Street (Lincoln Ragsdale)



- Arizona African American businessman
- Tuskegee Airman Veteran (a corps of black military pilots on World War 2)
- Civil rights activist who was a force behind education and housing desegregation in the Phoenix Area
- Was elected to the Greater Phoenix Council for Civil Unity Board of directors
- ASU Alumnus and instrumental in bringing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to campus in 1964
- *“You can accept, rebel, or excel.”*



Civil rights activist and ASU alumnus Lincoln Ragsdale hands University President John Schwada a check for over \$125,000 for the 1971 Annual Alumni Fund.





# Parque de Sotelo-Soza

## Soza

- Multi-generational Latino pioneer family – original family members were Juan Soza and Jesus Maria Sotelo Soza, homestead was near modern day Hudson Park
- Instrumental in agriculture and canal construction of the Roosevelt Dam
- Juan was an influential leader in the Hispanic community
- Juan served as a Deputy Sheriff to Sheriff Carl Hayden



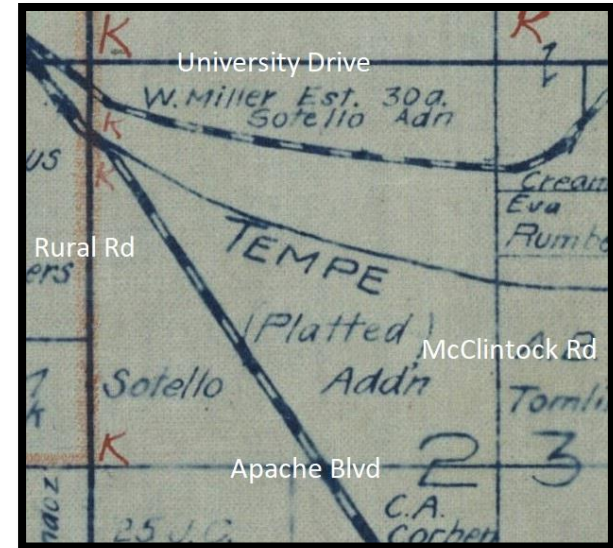
Juan Soza (on the right) and Juan Sotelo Soza (on the left). Juan Soza is Juan Sotelo Soza's father.

# Parque de Sotelo-Soza



## ● Sotelo

- Latina pioneer Manuela Sotelo, known as the “Mexican Mother of Tempe”
- Manuela Sotelo moved to Tempe with nine children after deaths of her pioneer husband and two sons in 1871
- Owned 160 ranch, near the Tempe Creamery on 8<sup>th</sup> St.
- Land originally purchased by husband Tiburcio Sotelo in 1871
- Manuela Sotelo was a tough frontierswoman, well-respected in Tempe

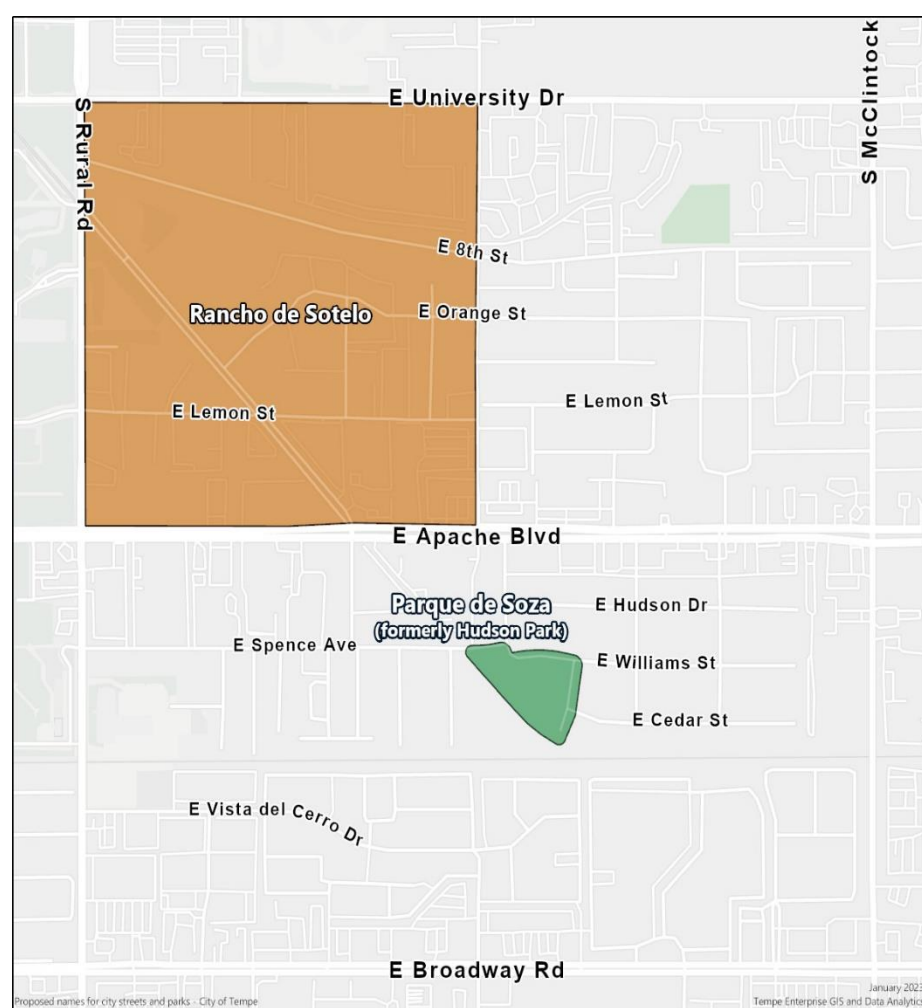


Manuela Sotelo's 160 ranch in 1911 (southeast corner of modern intersection of University Dr. and Rural Rd.).

# Possible Alternative for Parque de Sotelo-Soza



- Proposed Option
- Discussions with Ty Lee, descendent of Sotelo's and Soza's
- Instead of Parque de Sotelo-Soza → Parque de Soza, and
- Rancho de Sotelo – Special Recognition Area
  - Original 160-acre Sotelo Ranch
  - Recognize with signage



# Four Additional Names for Future Consideration



## ● Hohokemel

- O’Odham word for “butterfly”

## ● San Pablo

- Latino community established during pioneer days of Tempe. After ASU used eminent domain-style property takeover in the late 1950s, many San Pablo residents relocated to Victory Acres and nearby Tempe neighborhoods.

## ● Okemah

- Neighboring Black farmworker community established in the 1920s (associated with the Bartlet-Heard Ranch). As longstanding exclusionary policies and practices in Tempe began to crumble between the 1950s and 1970s, many African American families from Okemah pushed to buy homes in Tempe.

## ● Obregon (for Pedro “Pete” Obregon)

- Latino Tempe Pioneer and farmer who worked at Hayden Flour Mill. He was also a Civil Rights advocate and was known as a humanitarian by the community.

# Next Steps



- Present to Development Review Commission
- Bring Resolution to City Council and Set “Effective Date”
- Reimbursement Process and Budget
- Communications to Residents (website and letters)
- Coordination with City Departments (Municipal Utilities, Public Safety, Engineering & Transportation, and Community Services)
- Coordination with External Groups (Post Office, Google, etc.)
- Park and Street Re-opening events
- For more information [www.tempe.gov/renaming](http://www.tempe.gov/renaming)

**Questions?**

## Next Steps

Per Tempe City Code **Sec. 25-45. - Changing, renaming or naming existing streets (Code 1967, § 8-8.8; Ord. No. 2006.01, 1-5-06)** staff will present at the February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Development Review Commission to receive their recommendation. After, a resolution will be brought to a Regular City Council Meeting, most likely the March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023 meeting. The resolution will then also set an “Effective Date” for when the Streets and Parks will officially be renamed. As of right now, a realistic date would be July or August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

The reimbursement process for impacted residents is still being formalized. There are 173 impacted residents who live on the three streets to be renamed (we have rounded up to 175 for our calculations), and no impacted businesses. Residents will have a \$100 cap for expenses they can claim a reimbursement for, and of course there will be exceptions for unforeseen circumstances. The main costs we foresee people requesting reimbursement for would be a new Drivers License, which costs \$12. Other costs may include, checks, business cards, etc. Residents will be able to print and send in a mail-in form or fill in a form on the website. The website will also indicate information on what the city will handle on our end, (i.e. changing their addresses for utility bills), what residents will have to take care of, and items they may need to request reimbursement for. Since 175 residents are impacted by these street name changes, the estimated max budgetary impact would be \$17,500, even though we do not foresee that being the actual expense for the City. For example, the City of Phoenix had 150 property owners affected during their renaming process, but only 10% of impacted residents submitted a request for reimbursement, totaling roughly \$2,000. Residents will have one year from the set effective date to submit reimbursement costs to the City.

Communications will be sent to the impacted residents surrounding the parks and the streets regarding the name changes. Additionally, a certified letter will be sent to the 175 impacted residents due to the street changes that outline the reimbursement process and the Tempe 311 number to call in case they have questions or want to be talked through the process. The staff liaison’s contact information, Madalaine McConville, will also be included on the letter for additional questions.

Coordination with city departments has already started. Staff liaison Madalaine McConville has been working with Stephanie Dietrich who is helping with the data related issues, such as municipal utilities, public safety, etc. She has also helped with coordination with external groups such as the Post Office and data sources like Google. There have been meetings with Engineering and Transportation, Community Services, Community Development departments to keep them updated and gain clarity on the timelines and budgetary impacts. The budgetary impacts to the city include; new street and park signs, honorary plaques to showcase the new names and information on the people, and reimbursement costs for residents.

Once the new signs are placed, there are plans to have re-opening events honoring the new street and parks names. Updates will be placed on the webpage: [www.tempe.gov/renaming](http://www.tempe.gov/renaming)