

Resolution no. _____

Acceptance of the rededication of Calhoun Avenue, Stevens Street, and Frost Street

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria is committed to addressing the inequalities and historic legacies that impact residents, businesses, workers, and visitors across the community; and

WHEREAS, on January 10, 2023, Mayor Justin Wilson introduced a proposal to rename city streets currently named for confederate officers; and

WHEREAS, many such streets were named in 1953 through ordinance no. 769, which directed that “streets running in a generally north-south direction shall, insofar as possible, bear the names of confederate military leaders.” This ordinance was adopted one year after the annexation of Alexandria’s west end, where many streets had not yet been developed or named, and in anticipation of the landmark U.S. supreme court decision in *Brown v. Board of education*, a defining moment in the civil rights movement that, as stated by the Southern Poverty Law Center, resulted in a widespread backlash among segregationists, including the naming of streets and public facilities for confederates; and

WHEREAS, the City seeks to remove honors previously granted to confederate military leaders, most of which were bestowed during the civil rights era, to correct historical injustices and better reflect Alexandria’s present-day values; and

WHEREAS, the city council naming committee recommended that, where feasible, streets named for confederate military leaders be rededicated to individuals of the same surname who made significant, positive contributions to Alexandria, thereby providing a new civic narrative while minimizing logistical challenges associated with full street renaming; and

WHEREAS, rededicated streets will receive markers providing historical context and highlighting the contributions of the individuals for whom they are newly dedicated; and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria has identified three streets appropriate for rededication, including:

- Calhoun Avenue
- Stevens Street
- Frost Street; and

WHEREAS, ROBERT “BOB” CALHOUN was a yale-educated attorney, respected republican member of the Alexandria City Council (1976–1982), and former vice mayor, known for his intelligence, civility, and leadership on transportation policy, including his role in establishing the dash bus system and advancing child-custody law reform; and

WHEREAS, MOSES STEVENS was a pioneering black businessman who, in post-civil war Alexandria, operated a successful livery business, founded mt. Jezreel Baptist church, and served

as an early adopter of telephone and automotive infrastructure in the city, making enduring civic and economic contributions; and

WHEREAS, JOHN FROST was a union soldier from Alexandria, buried in Alexandria national cemetery, representing the nearly 4,000 men of the Union Army of the Potomac interred there whose service helped preserve the United States;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Alexandria hereby supports the rededication of Calhoun Avenue, Stevens Street, and Frost Street in honor of Robert Calhoun, Moses Stevens, and John Frost, respectively; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that city staff shall continue to research and recommend rededications or renamings for remaining city streets named for confederate military leaders; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the City Manager is authorized to install signage honoring Robert Calhoun, Moses Stevens, and John Frost, without requiring modifications to the City's geographic information systems.