



HONORARY STREET NAME SIGN APPLICATION

City Hall, Room 205
200 East Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

PLEASE NOTE: A \$100 PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY THIS FORM
(Checks should be made payable to "City Treasurer")

1. Applicant information:

Applicant's Name Sheila Adams Gardner
Organization or Company _____
Street Address 1588 Wood Duck Ct City/State Woodbridge, VA Zip 22191
Telephone 571-214-4431 Fax _____ Email shellagardner4@icloud.com

2. Honorary Street Name Request

Street name requested Juanita Adams
Location of proposed designation: (for example, West Main Street from North 12th Street to North 15th Street)
West Highland Avenue between 17th & 18th Streets

3. Required Submittals:

- Refer to Chapter 113-3, Milwaukee Code of Ordinances (attached)
- A typed statement containing no fewer than **500 words** describing the significance of the person, place, or event being honored. The statement should indicate why a particular section of street has been requested for the honorary designation.

4. SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:

My application consists of the following items necessary to complete the application. Please check:

- \$100 fee (check made payable to "City Treasurer").
- Completed Application Form.
- Autobiography or statement regarding the person, place, or event being honored.

Signature Sheila A. Gardner Date 8/12/2022
Printed Name Sheila Adams Gardner

113-3. Naming of Public Buildings, Facilities and Streets. 1. POLICY. To preserve the city's heritage and protect the public safety and convenience, existing names of public buildings, facilities and streets may be changed only in exceptional cases and only when compelling reasons for change are evident. In the naming of new public buildings and facilities, in the assignment of honorary street names and in the exceptional cases of renamings of public buildings, facilities and streets, priority shall be given to names reflecting the city's cultural diversity and the contributions of groups underrepresented in the existing nomenclature.

2. EXEMPTION. The procedures and guidelines contained in this section shall not apply to the naming of new or replacement buildings or facilities when the names used are simply administrative identifiers or reflect the functions of the structures. In addition, these procedures and guidelines shall not apply to the naming of new streets.

3. CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE. There is created a citizen advisory committee on the naming of public buildings, facilities and streets which shall make recommendations to the common council regarding proposals to name or rename public buildings, facilities and streets or to assign honorary street names. The committee shall consist of 7 members who are residents of the city of Milwaukee and who hold no other public office or public employment. Committee members shall be appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the common council to serve staggered 3-year terms. The mayor shall designate the chair. Members of the committee shall include at least one recognized local historian, one representative of a local business association or chamber of commerce and one employe of a local nonprofit community organization. Four members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.

4. PROCEDURE. Proposals to name new public buildings and facilities, to rename existing public buildings, facilities and streets, or to assign honorary street names shall be processed in the following manner:

a. A proposal to name or rename a public building, facility or street, or to assign an honorary street name, shall be submitted in writing to the city clerk, who shall refer the proposal to the citizen advisory committee, the appropriate standing committee of the common council and the relevant city department or agency. Each proposal shall include:

a-1. The specific building, facility or street being proposed for naming or renaming, or the specific street or street segment being proposed for honorary street naming, including a sketch showing its location.

a-2. The full form of the name being proposed, as well as the form suggested for use in the naming, renaming or honorary street naming.

a-3. The origin or meaning of the proposed name.

a-4. If the proposed name refers to an individual, a brief biography of that individual. a-5. The rationale for naming or renaming the building, facility or street with the proposed name or for assigning the honorary street name, including, if applicable, an explanation of how the name or individual is or has been associated with the building, facility or street or the area in which the building, facility or street is located.

a-6. Any letters from appropriate organizations and individuals which provide evidence of substantial local support for the proposal.

b. Following submission of a naming, renaming or honorary street naming proposal, and, in the case of an official street renaming, the application fee required by ch. 81, the relevant city department or agency shall evaluate the proposed name in terms of the criteria contained in this section. In the case of an official street renaming, the department or agency shall also conduct a postcard survey of residents, businesses and owners of property along the street, with all postage costs relating to the survey to be borne by the applicant. An official street renaming proposal shall not be given further consideration by the city unless the results of the postcard survey indicate that at least 50 percent of all property owners, residents and businesses along the street support the proposal. One postcard shall be sent to each owner of property along the street and to each address along the street, including each individual apartment, unit, room or suite number. No postcard survey shall be required if the renaming is initiated by the city and the renaming is necessary to eliminate a threat to public safety, such as but not limited to a situation where 2 streets have the same name and identical addresses exist or could be created.

c. If the proposal was submitted in accordance with the requirements of par. a, the relevant city department or agency shall forward the findings of its review of the proposed naming, renaming or

Proposed Honorary Street Name Sign for Juanita Adams

Juanita Adams was a dedicated foot soldier in Milwaukee's civil rights movement. As a founding member of the Milwaukee chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and compatriot to Lloyd Barbee, Father Groppi, and other civil rights leaders, Juanita worked to end segregation through the power of peaceful protest. Having grown up in a segregated world in Memphis, Tennessee, Juanita committed her life to making Milwaukee a better place for all people. Juanita persisted in spite of violent anti-protesters, risking her life and even the life of her unborn child. The racial harmony Juanita experienced while representing Milwaukee at the March on Washington in Washington, DC in 1963 fueled her resolve. With lifelong friends, both Black and White, Juanita's activism helped lead to fair housing and education policies that changed Milwaukee and influenced the entire country.

Juanita's commitment to Milwaukee did not end with the civil rights movement. Juanita dedicated her life to serving others for the greater good. She volunteered countless hours in formal and informal ways to those in need. Supporting women was a special interest of hers. Along with the various volunteer leadership positions she held in churches, community organizations and schools, in the 1980's she volunteered at The Sojourner Truth House, taking overnight shifts once a week for several years to help women affected by domestic violence. All while working a full-time job and raising her own teenaged girls. She spent the last 12 years of her life as a weekly staff volunteer as an ART facilitator and Spiritual Guidance Instructor for The Convergence Resource Center, an organization that supports women who were incarcerated and female survivors of human trafficking. At New Testament Church of Milwaukee, she participated in many ministries including founding the Parents Without Partners ministry and facilitating the weight loss support ministry P.O.W.E.R. She was also passionate about the group S.P.I.R.I.T. where she faithfully visited the sick and shut-in seniors. When asked about her commitment to volunteerism she said, "My goal in life is to give back to the community because God has richly blessed me." She blessed so many people in informal ways including feeding them physically and spiritually, taking them to doctor's appointments and chemotherapy treatments, helping them find jobs, giving parenting advice and encouragement, and being a prayer warrior with a long list of people she prayed for daily.

Juanita retired from Blue Cross Blue Shield United Wisconsin in 2003, as a senior claims analyst. She was a stellar employee for over 25 years. She was married to past honoree, Cleotha Adams for 15 years. She is the mother of four daughters from that union, Patricia Adams Cifax, Ph.D., Regina Adams Allen (deceased), Jacinta Adams Tatum, M.Ed., and Sheila Adams Gardner, Esquire.

Juanita died after a short battle with cancer, September 24, 2016. Her activism has been commemorated in an interview and cover photo for the book, *"More Than One Struggle, The Evolution of Black School Reform in Milwaukee"* by Jack Dougherty; The Wisconsin Historical Society's curriculum, *"Juanita Adams: The Heart of an Activist, Milwaukee's Desegregation and Fair Housing Movement."*; and the children's book, *"My Granny Fought for Freedom"* by Sheila Adams Gardner.

The proposed location of the honorary street sign, (W. Highland Avenue between 17th and 18th streets), was chosen to commemorate the place where Juanita offered her body and that of her unborn child to disrupt the city's attempt to build a segregated school in December 1965. (See article below). That school would later become MacDowell Elementary. Currently, Highland Community School serves all kinds of children at that location. It is also where Juanita's great-granddaughter is enrolled.



PREGNANT PICKET — Mrs. Juanita Adams, 25, who said she expects a child in the spring, and Marc Lewis, 20, upper right, back to camera, attempt to block construction workers from a new school site on Milwaukee's inner core Wednesday. Both were arrested for disorderly conduct. They are among civil rights groups protesting that the new school will be attended largely by Negro students. The groups seek racial balance in all schools. (AP Wirephoto)

U
T
F
I
I
Fo
De
in
sen
the
sh
sk
es,
fa
ca
the
(
su
mi
tio
col
ing
wil
in
s
or
ha
cet
F
sol

 **Date:** 9 Dec 1965

 **Place:** Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Source: The Daily Telegram, Thursday, December 9, 1965 (Newspapers.com)

[**Note to reader:** Juanita Adams wrote the autobiography below in 2014 for the Wisconsin Black Historical Society. She passed away in 2016.]

Autobiography of Juanita Adams

I was born on June 27, 1940 in Memphis, Tennessee. I am the third of 12 children born to John and Betty Guy. At that time, "Jim Crow" laws demanded racial segregation in all public facilities. Blacks and Whites went to separate schools, used separate bathrooms, and drank from separate water fountains. Our movie theater and auditorium had separate entries for Blacks. On the city transit service, Black people had to sit behind Whites regardless of how many seats were empty in front of them. Jim Crow laws affected my life daily.

The first time I remember being angry about the unfair laws was when I became a freshman in high school and had to ride city busses. Often, we were forced to stand for the long ride to school because a White person would sit in the middle of the bus, purposefully limiting the number of seats where Blacks could legally sit. Fed up with this treatment, one day the boys threw spitballs at the White people and told them to move up to the front of the bus. The bus driver called the police who took our bus passes. Our principal did not reprimand us. Instead, without saying a word, he simply gave us new bus passes and the boys continued their behavior on the bus. After a couple weeks, city officials decided to send a chartered bus to our neighborhood in South Memphis to pick us up. This was my first protest experience. It lit a flame within me to stand for justice.

In 1959, my husband and I moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Like many Blacks in the 1940's and 1950's we moved north believing it would be better economically and socially, as there were no Jim Crow laws in the northern states. My husband quickly got a job at American Motors, and we started our family in this place we believed was free of the injustices of segregation we had known our entire lives. Several years passed before we began to notice the segregation that no one talked about. Subtle, quiet injustices were happening all around us. There seemed to be an invisible "Whites only" sign in certain areas of employment. The department stores did not have any Black salespeople; there were only a couple Black doctors, police officers and public service workers. I felt inspired to do something.

In 1962, I joined St Boniface Catholic Church where I became a member of its Christian Family Movement (CFM) organization. CFM called its membership to live out Christian principals by working to address the needs of the community. Led by Father James Groppi, a White priest, we became active in the cause of civil rights for Blacks in Milwaukee. Within that group, were several Black members who wanted a deeper connection with the organized civil rights movement occurring across the country and learned about the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). A group of us got together to establish a CORE chapter in Milwaukee. We elected John Givens as our first chairman, and we received our charter in 1963.

In July of 1963, CORE organized a peaceful sit-in to call for the removal of Fred Lins from the Milwaukee Community Social Development Commission. Fred Lins made many prejudicial statements against Blacks including "...an awful mess of them have an I.Q. of nothing." Several protesters were arrested for 'disorderly conduct'.

In August of 1963, representing CORE, I rode the bus to Washington, DC for the March on Washington. This was a life changing experience for me, a 23-year-old mother of two. The most exciting thing for me was my job as chaperone for Mrs. Edna Thompson, an 80-year-old woman who wanted to see changes toward racial equality while she was living. When we returned from Washington, CORE members were energized and ready to hit the streets full force. John Givens set up meeting with heads of department stores to get them to hire Blacks. I participated in some of those meetings.

In 1964 and 1966, I worked with the Milwaukee United School Integration Committee (MUSIC) led by Lloyd Barbee. We held a demonstration at Seifert Elementary School which had intact bussing do to overcrowding. Black students were bussed to all White schools to address the overcrowding but were forced to remain separate from the White students. They were given separate teachers and classrooms and were bussed back to Seifert for lunch to avoid racial mixing in the White school. As a mother, this injustice felt particularly painful to me. The Seifert school demonstration was the first time I was arrested for peacefully protesting for the integration of Milwaukee Public Schools. On May 17, 1964, the tenth anniversary of the Supreme Court's ruling in Brown vs. the Board of Education, MUSIC organized a one day public school boycott to protest school segregation. On that day, more than 11,000 boycotting students were offered 'Freedom

Schools'. I worked with hundreds of volunteers to provide students with a curriculum rich in African American and civil rights history, lunch and a party.

I was arrested a second time on December 11, 1965, at MacDowell construction site when I was six months pregnant with my third child. The site was to be a school for Black children. We protested the building of the school as it was intended to maintain racial segregation. I ran onto the site and pushed my body against the pouring spout of the cement mixer, to halt the transfer of cement to an elevator. This took the police by surprise. The police would routinely follow us to see what we were doing and to stop any action we might take. They did not expect a pregnant woman to do such a thing. A White nun, Marilyn Morheuser was also arrested that day and sentenced to 30 days in jail. Father Groppi was ordered by his superiors not to become involved in our demonstration. However, I recall him telling me that he would not stand silent while his people, St. Boniface members, were going to jail. (At this time several of us belonged to St Boniface where he was one of our priests.)

In the 1960's Blacks were often discriminated against by realtors and landlords in Milwaukee. I participated in many demonstrations to end that injustice. One night in 1967, I marched for open housing practices on Milwaukee's south side with Father Groppi. We marched across the 16 Street Viaducts, a bridge between the north and south sides. That was the scariest night of my life. Never had I experienced bystanders so filled with hate and anger. I thought I might die that night. Later, to honor Father Groppi's efforts, the bridge was named the James E. Groppi Unity Bridge.

After the riot on July 30, 1967, I began to see the movement move away from the non-violent principals I had been taught. The changing movement and the amount of time it took from my family motivated me to decrease my level of involvement. Two of my three children were in elementary school and needed my undivided attention. I decided it was time for me to consider the wellbeing of my own children, so I became full-time, stay at home mother.

Receipt of Street Naming Fee

Date:	9/6/22
Received Of:	Sheila Adams Gardner
Received By:	LME
Check # (If Applicable):	2572
Amount Received	\$100.00