



# Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** BL2020-541, **Version:** 1

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An ordinance providing the honorary street name designation of “Mary Watson Way” for a portion of 12th Ave. N.

WHEREAS, Mary Louise Watson was born on August 8, 1919 in Maury County, Tennessee. From an early age, she was an active member of her church; and

WHEREAS, she received a limited education in the Nashville Public School System, but later became a faithful advocate of education and fought to desegregate Nashville Public Schools beginning in 1957; and

WHEREAS, her family was one of the 11 of 126 eligible families who would integrate Nashville’s schools. Her family received numerous threats, but Mrs. Watson was determined to provide her children with the best education possible; and

WHEREAS, in 1957, Mrs. Watson and her husband were honored as Nashville Pioneers Citizens, a certificate of appreciation awarded by the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. Mrs. Watson’s contributions to Nashville’s Civil Rights Movement have been chronicled in news articles and films. She was honored with the Freedom Sister Award by the Ford Motor Company in 2010; and

WHEREAS, before her death on December 10, 2018, Mrs. Watson was also active in the community as a volunteer with the Red Cross, Mother’s March of Dimes, her neighborhood watch program, and also voter registration drives; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of Mrs. Watson’s many contributions to Nashville, it is fitting and proper that the Metropolitan Council provide an honorary street name designation of “Mary Watson Way” for a portion of 12th Ave N; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 13.08 of the Metropolitan Code provides for the designation of honorary street names and signs without amending the Official Street and Alley Acceptance and Maintenance Map for The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, and without requiring residents and businesses to change their address.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That 12th Ave N between Clay Street and Cecilia Street is hereby designated with the honorary street name of “Mary Watson Way”.

Section 2. This honorary street designation shall not require residents located on 12th Ave N to change their

street address.

Section 3: The Department of Public Works is hereby authorized and directed, upon the enactment and approval of this Ordinance, to install the appropriate signage designating this section of roadway as “Mary Watson Way” in accordance with § 13.08.025 of the Metropolitan Code.

Section 4: This Ordinance shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.

### Analysis

This ordinance adds the honorary designation of “Mary Watson Way” for a portion of 12th Ave N between Clay Street and Cecilia Street. Mrs. Watson, who passed away on December 10, 2018, was a leader in the Nashville Civil Rights movement. She fought to desegregate Nashville Public Schools beginning in 1957, and received many honors and awards for her Civil Rights efforts.

Section 13.08.025 of the Metro Code provides a procedure for the designation of honorary street signs whereby the Council, by ordinance, can authorize and direct the Department of Public Works to install two honorary street signs per street - at each end of a street - beneath the official street name sign for any street identified on the official Street and Alley Centerline Layer map. No honorary street sign can be installed honoring a living person; and each member of council can sponsor only one such ordinance each calendar year. This ordinance does not officially re-name the designated street. Therefore, there would be no change of official address for properties along this portion of 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave S.