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14 August 2020

Dear Commissioner Chris Goode,

It has been good to engage in genuine conversations with you and other commissioners around naming a major thoroughfare in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in Kansas City, MO. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Greater Kansas City is in full support of renaming to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Blvd., the major compilation of thoroughfares now known as Blue Parkway, Swope Parkway, and Volker Blvd. Our support for this location is grounded in the principles we have espoused since we inaugurated this effort at the community's request several years ago.

Firstly, this compilation of thoroughfares represents a major quantity of miles spanning the City limits which has always been an important factor. Dr. King is a major global figure whose contributions to our citizenry merit major honor.

Secondly, this artery assures direct exposure of the iconic Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd to Black Lives, more particularly Black children, who suffer the most in our City from a lack of African American cultural and historical landmarks and education that bolster their sense of value, esteem, and worth.

Thirdly, this choice is within the "ONE CITY" Central City Economic Development Sales Tax boundary which we assisted the Urban Summit of Kansas City in successfully passing into law. As you know this initiative provides more opportunity for leveraging investment and strengthening Black owned businesses which inherently foster job creation, economic uplift, and sustainability for us here on the East side. This is especially important given that we have historically suffered from uneven investment and social flight.

Finally, this thoroughfare's compilation contains boulevards which lend to the sustainability of infrastructure, beautification, and upkeep assuring the beauty and aesthetics of such a historically significant major artery of our City.

Your work on this effort has been valiant and integral and is appreciated. I look forward to our collaboration in the days, weeks, months, and years ahead to ensure that SCLC-GKC and our stakeholders and constituents who birthed this vision and dream also prominently share in the shape and decisions made in its unfolding.

Sincerely,

Dr. Vernon Percy Howard, Jr.

Rev. Dr. Vernon Percy Howard, Jr.

President

Southern Christian Leadership Conference
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