



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

January 2, 2004

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM TO: Board Members
Division Engineers

FROM: Sandy Nance *Sandy Nance*

SUBJECT: Road Naming Procedures

As you know, the Board of Transportation's Road and Bridge Naming Procedures do not allow more than one honorary naming of a road or bridge for an individual or group. One of the most frequent duplicate requests we receive is for a roadway honoring Dr. Martin Luther King. With the Martin Luther King holiday this month, we typically receive several inquiries regarding our road naming procedures and requests for dedications for Dr. King. The following information may be helpful if you should receive any inquiries from your area.

In July 1994, the Board of Transportation dedicated the section of NC 401 through Scotland County from the South Carolina State Line to the Hoke County line in honor of Dr. King. When we receive another request for Dr. King, we advise the municipality or citizen of this dedication and that the Board does not approve more than one facility for any individual or group.

What we advise a municipality they can do is name a municipally owned bridge or roadway in honor Dr. King. Since the roadway is not state owned or maintained, this does not require any approval or action by the Board. Many cities have taken this action and have facilities honoring Dr. King.

Another action a municipality can take to honor Dr. King is actually name or rename a street within their city limits. In lieu of an honorary naming with signs at either end of the designated segment, this would actually be the street name and the mailing address for anyone living on the street. The signing would be the typical small green street signs. If the street is municipally owned, no action or approval is needed by the department. If the street is within the city limits but part of the state highway system, then forms are submitted through the division office and the renaming of the street would appear on the Board's regular agenda for approval. This is not considered an honorary naming by the Board. Some cities have chosen this option if the citizens along the roadway do not object to their mailing addresses being changed.

Finally, if a state owned roadway meets certain criteria, the city can request the Board's Road and Bridge Naming Committee to defer to the city the authority to dedicate the roadway for Dr. King. The roadway must be completely within the city limits, be primarily local traffic, and not a controlled access facility. The city submits a written request through their board member for review by the Road and Bridge Naming Committee. If the request is approved, the city will be advised they can proceed. This is not a board approved dedication and is action taken by the municipality only. Many cities have used this option to honor Dr. King within their city limits.

With all the above actions, all costs associated with the dedication and signing are the responsibility of the municipality and requires no action by the department except the division staff must approve the sign design and locations.

Dr. King was the example used above but the same procedures and processes apply for any duplication requests received by the department. If you have questions on this information or any aspect of the road naming process, please feel free to contact this office at 733-7384.

cc: Secretary Tippett, Co-Chairman, Road and Bridge Naming Committee
Doug Galyon, Co-Chairman, Road and Bridge Naming Committee