



**Agenda Item Title:** Street Naming – PH-10 Extension

**Meeting Date:** April 13, 2026

**From:** Jeff Wilcox, Senior Planner

**Action:**  Motion,  Ordinance,  Resolution,  Information only,  Other

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**File:** AR26-02

**Location:** N/A

**Land Use District:** N/A

**Date Notice of Application Published:** April 1, 2025

**Date of Hearing:** April 28, 2025

## I. OWNER INFORMATION

N/A

## II. APPLICANT

City of Phoenix  
Zac Moody, Community Development Director  
PO Box 330  
Phoenix, OR 97535

## III. SUMMARY

Street naming and renaming within the City of Phoenix is governed by Phoenix Municipal Code (PMC) Chapter 12.06 (Street Naming), which establishes the exclusive authority and procedures for assigning names to public streets and for changing existing street names. Under Chapter 12.06, all proposals to name or rename a street must be processed through the City, using the adopted Street Naming or Renaming application, and must comply with standards intended to promote public safety, efficient emergency response, clear addressing, and avoidance of duplicate or confusingly similar names.

PMC 12.06 assigns responsibility to the City to review proposed street names for consistency with the City's addressing system and other applicable policies, and to coordinate review with affected agencies such as emergency service providers and postal authorities before a name is approved. The chapter also requires that abutting and affected property owners receive mailed notice of proposed street naming or renaming actions and have an opportunity to comment, with the final decision made by the appropriate City decision-making body as provided in Chapter 12.06.

In the case of this application, the City is proposing 10 street names as part of the required submittal. These proposed names have been evaluated under the criteria and procedures of PMC 12.06, including review for duplication or similarity to existing street names, clarity of spelling and pronunciation, and consistency with the City's overall street naming and addressing system. Once a name is approved pursuant to Chapter 12.06, it is applied to the recorded plat or other official instrument and incorporated into the City's addressing, mapping, and emergency response systems.

The Planning Commission is being asked to consider historically appropriate name options and to make a recommendation consistent with the requirements and intent of PMC 12.06. The Commission's recommendation will guide the City's final street naming action and ensure that the selected name complies with Chapter 12.06 while also reflecting the community's history and identity. Below are the proposed list of street names and in the case where the name has historical relevance, the relevance is discussed in greater detail.

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### **Option 1: Stockade Ridge Road**

Historical Relevance:

Around 1854–1855, Emerson Elijah Gore built a fortified residence known as the "Gore stockade" on his Donation Land Claim approximately two miles north of Phoenix on Bear Creek [4][6]. The stockade served as a protective refuge for neighboring settlers during periods of conflict in the Rogue River Indian Wars, and it became one of several fortified homes that defined the settlement pattern of Jackson County during this era [6][7]. Contemporary accounts note that families including the Van Dykes maintained cabins within reach of the Gore stockade, forming a cluster of early farms along the ridges and benches above Bear Creek [4][6].

The name "Stockade Ridge Road" honors the Gore family's role in providing security and community cohesion during a vulnerable period of settlement, while also reflecting the ridge topography characteristic of the area where the new street is located. This name conveys both the pioneering spirit of mutual protection and the physical landscape that shaped early land use in the North Phoenix corridor [6][7].

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### **Option 2: Mill Creek Way**

Historical Relevance:

Emerson and Emery Gore established a sawmill on Bear Creek at Emerson's farm around 1854, which operated until a major flood destroyed it in 1862[4]. The Gore sawmill supplied lumber to neighboring settlers building their homes, including Sam Van Dyke, who used Gore lumber to construct a frame house on his adjoining Donation Land Claim [4]. The mill represented critical infrastructure for the developing farm community, transforming raw timber from the surrounding hills into building materials that allowed pioneers to replace log cabins with more permanent structures [4].

"Mill Creek Way" acknowledges the Gore family's sawmill enterprise and its essential role in the physical development of the Fern Valley and North Phoenix area. The name ties directly to Bear Creek (historically the water source for the mill) and evokes the early industrial activity that supported homestead construction and agricultural expansion in the region [4][8].

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### **Option 3: Pioneer Timber Lane**

Historical Relevance:

Early settlement in the Bear Creek valley required clearing timber from bench lands and creek corridors to create farmable acreage and pasture [9]. The Gore brothers' sawmill not only processed logs for construction lumber but also represented the broader pioneer effort to transform forested land into productive farms and orchards [4]. By the early 1900s, the timber that had once covered the valley floor and benches had been largely converted into agricultural land, with the first commercial orchards planted around 1910 using cleared and irrigated ground [10].

"Pioneer Timber Lane" honors the labor and enterprise of the Donation Land Claim-era settlers who cleared land, built mills, and created the timber-frame homes and barns that defined the agricultural landscape. This name reflects both the physical work of early homesteaders and the natural resource—timber—that supported the region's transition from wilderness to farmland [4][9][10].

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### **Option 4: Bear Creek Stockade Road**

Historical Relevance:

The Gore stockade stood near Bear Creek on Emerson Gore's Donation Land Claim and served as a defensive refuge and community gathering point during the Rogue River conflicts of the 1850s[6][7]. Bear Creek itself was the lifeblood of the valley, providing irrigation water for farms and orchards and powering the Gore sawmill [2][4]. The creek corridor defined property boundaries, shaped transportation routes, and anchored the settlement pattern from Bear Creek to the Fern Valley Road area [2][10].

"Bear Creek Stockade Road" directly ties the new street to both the natural feature (Bear Creek) that made agriculture possible and the human response (the Gore stockade) to the challenges of frontier settlement. This name captures the intersection of geography and pioneer history in a single, place-specific reference that is unique to the North Phoenix and Fern Valley area [6][7].

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### **Option 5: Donation Claim Way**

Historical Relevance:

The entire N. Phoenix and Fern Valley area was originally divided into large Donation Land Claims under the 1850 federal Donation Land Act, which granted 320 acres to single settlers and 640 acres to married couples who improved the land [11]. The claims of Emerson Gore, John F. Gray (DLC #84), and S. D. Van Dyke formed the core of the settlement north of Phoenix along what is now North Phoenix Road [4][5]. These donation land claims were the legal and geographic foundation upon which all later subdivision, road construction, and town development were built [11].

"Donation Claim Way" acknowledges the federal land policy that brought pioneers to Oregon and shaped the property boundaries and agricultural landscape of the region. The name is historically accurate, educationally meaningful, and broadly representative of the era and process that created Phoenix and its surrounding farm community [4][5][11].

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### **Option 6: Homestead Ridge Road**

Historical Relevance:

The bench lands and low ridges above Bear Creek were attractive homestead sites for early settlers, offering well-drained ground, proximity to water, and defensible positions during periods of conflict [9]. Families including the Gores, Van Dykes, and others established homesteads on these ridges, cleared land for pasture and crops, and built the cabins and later frame houses that anchored the agricultural community [4][6]. The term "homesteaders" reflects the self-sufficient, family-based farming model that characterized the Fern Valley area from the 1850s through the early 1900s [9][10].

"Homestead Ridge Road" honors the pioneer families who claimed, improved, and farmed the ridge and bench lands in this area, while also referencing the topography that shaped settlement patterns. The name conveys both the human effort of homesteading and the physical landscape of ridges and benches that remain characteristic of the North Phoenix and Fern Valley corridors today [4][9].

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### **Option 7: Wagon Mill Road**

Historical Relevance:

The Gore sawmill produced lumber that was hauled by wagon to neighboring homesteads and to the emerging town of Phoenix, making wagon roads and trails essential to the mill's operation and the broader farm economy [4][12]. Early road improvements in the Fern Valley area, including a 1910 grading project that eliminated the need to open about twenty pasture gates between farms, transformed rough wagon tracks into passable roads that supported rural mail delivery, telephone lines, and the transport of farm goods and timber [10].

"Wagon Mill Road" ties together two key elements of pioneer infrastructure: the wagon transport system that connected isolated homesteads and the Gore sawmill that supplied construction materials for the growing community. This name reflects the practical logistics of early settlement and the roads that made commerce and communication possible in the Bear Creek valley [4][10][12].

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### **Option 8: Claim Way**

Historical Relevance:

Samuel Colver took up a 640-acre Donation Land Claim on the site where Phoenix now stands, laid out the townsite in 1854, and donated land for the community, becoming the town's founding figure [13]. The land immediately north of Colver's claim—including the Gore, Gray, and Van Dyke donation land claims—formed the agricultural hinterland that supported Phoenix as it grew from a crossroads into a town [4][5][13]. The term "Claim" references both the town's origin on Colver's donation claim and the broader network of claims that surrounded and sustained it.

"Claim Way" connects the new street to the city's founding story and the Donation Land Claim system that organized the landscape. The name is locally specific, historically accurate, and reinforces the identity of Phoenix as a community rooted in 1850s settlement and land policy [5][13].

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### **Option 9: Homestead Lane**

#### Historical Relevance:

Bear Creek was the central geographic feature of the Phoenix and Fern Valley area, providing water for irrigation, power for mills, and a transportation corridor that shaped early road networks and property boundaries [2][4]. Homesteads clustered along Bear Creek and the adjacent benches, taking advantage of the creek's water for domestic use, livestock, and early irrigation experiments [4][10]. By the 1910s, the completion of the Talent Irrigation District canal system formalized and expanded access to Bear Creek water, transforming homesteads into productive orchard and farm operations [2][3].

"Homestead Creek Lane" acknowledges the relationship between the creek and the family homesteads that depended on it, tying together the natural feature and the human settlement pattern in a historically accurate way. The name is evocative of the pioneer era while remaining relevant to the agricultural character that continues to define the area [2][4][10].

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### **Option 10: Settlers Way**

#### Historical Relevance:

The Rogue Valley, and specifically the Fern Valley sub-district, was settled by wagon train pioneers beginning in the early 1850s, with families arriving from the Midwest and East Coast to claim donation lands and establish farms [9][14]. The term "settlers" captures the broad pioneer migration that brought the Gore, Gray, Van Dyke, and other families to this region, transforming it from Native land into an agricultural valley [9][14]. These settlers faced challenges including land clearing, road building, conflict, and the establishment of irrigation systems, ultimately creating the farm landscape that persists today [2][9][10].

"Settlers Way" is an inclusive name that honors all the pioneer families who contributed to the settlement and development of the Fern Valley and Phoenix area, without singling out a specific individual. The name conveys the collective effort of early homesteaders and their lasting impact on the region's identity and economy [9][10][14].

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### **Option 11: Payne Cliffs Road**

#### Historical Relevance:

The Payne family name became attached to the prominent cliffs east of Phoenix after C. T. (Champ) Payne settled at their base in the 1860s, purchasing part of the former Miner Donation Land Claim in Fern Valley [15][16][17]. Early accounts describe the Payne home "beneath the rugged cliffs," with the family clearing land for fields and pasture along the benches below the rock face while using the cliffs as a visible landmark and natural windbreak [15][16]. Over time, maps and local histories recorded the feature as "Payne Cliffs" or "Payne's Cliff," cementing the association between the family and the dramatic escarpment that still defines the eastern edge of the valley [16][18][19].

"Payne Cliffs Road" directly references the high sandstone rim east of Fern Valley historically known as Payne Cliffs, named after C. T. Payne who located his home beneath them in the 1860s. The name emphasizes the prominent geologic feature that visually defines the area and is already recognized in regional history and mapping [16][18][19].

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### **Option 12: Payne Creek Way**

#### Historical Relevance:

Payne Creek, which flows from the foothills toward the Bear Creek valley, runs through or near lands historically farmed and improved by the Payne family [16][20][21]. The Paynes relied on nearby springs and creek flows for household water, garden irrigation, and livestock, and later agricultural development in the drainage tied the Payne name to the creek corridor [15][16]. Modern mapping and natural-resource documents continue to recognize "Payne Creek" as a named tributary, reflecting both the family's historic tenure in the area and the ongoing importance of this small watercourse to local agriculture and habitat [20][21][22].

"Payne Creek Way" uses the existing hydrologic feature name "Payne Creek," a named tributary in the Phoenix/Fern Valley area whose watershed includes lands historically associated with the Payne family. The name connects the new street to the local creek restoration and wetland history along Payne Creek, including recent efforts to rehabilitate riparian habitat [20][21][22].

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### **Option 13: Payne Dairy Way**

Historical Relevance:

Local historical sources identify the Payne place as one of the first dairies in the Rogue Valley, where the family kept a herd of milk cows and produced butter and other dairy products for sale [15][16]. Operating in an era when most farms were subsistence-based, the Paynes' dairy business stood out as an early example of specialized agriculture, supported by irrigated pasture and hay fields on the fertile benches below the cliffs [15][17]. Their products reportedly supplied nearby communities, helping link the Fern Valley farm to emerging markets in Phoenix and Medford and contributing to the region's transition from isolated homesteads to an interconnected agricultural economy [15][16].

"Payne Dairy Way" commemorates the Payne family's early dairy operation in Fern Valley, recognized as one of the first dairies in the valley and among the earliest in Jackson County, supplying butter and milk to local stores. The name highlights the agricultural and economic contribution of the Payne family, tying the street name to historic working landscapes between the cliffs and Bear Creek [15][16].

### **IV. APPLICABLE CRITERIA**

None

### **V. AGENCY COMMENTS**

To be added

### **VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

To be added

### **VII. RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends naming the road segment with a name appropriate for the area.

### **VIII. PROPOSED MOTION**

"I move to name the road segment identified in this staff report \_\_\_\_\_"

### **IX. EXHIBITS**

Exhibit A - References