

MOTION

Paul Revere Williams was born in Downtown Los Angeles in 1894, and was orphaned at the age of 4, becoming a foster child prior to his adoption. Despite his early childhood, he rose to prominence as one of the most influential and prolific architects Los Angeles has ever claimed as its own, designing over 2,500 buildings between 1920 and 1980.


Even more remarkably, Mr Williams achieved his successes while blazing a path forward in the field of civil rights, as the first certified African-American architect west of the Mississippi, the first African-American member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1923, and in 1957, the first Black member to be inducted into the AIA's College of Fellows. In order to achieve his success, Mr Williams taught himself to draft upside down to ensure that his wealthy white clients would not have to sit next to him, walked with his hands behind his back on his site tours to avoid creating discomfort for people who might not shake his hand, and was deeply aware that most homes he designed were on parcels of land where the discriminatory laws in place barred him and many other minority groups from purchasing a house.

Aside from his remarkable resilience and adaptability in his life and business in order to triumph despite the adversity he faced, Mr. Williams was an exemplary architect, who was known for adaptation, elegance and personalization. His designs withstand the test of time. In his own words, "Without having the wish to 'show them,' I developed a fierce desire to 'show myself.' I wanted to vindicate every ability I had. I wanted to acquire new abilities. I wanted to prove that I, as an individual, deserved a place in the world." He succeeded on every count.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the intersection of De Longpre Ave and N. Saint Andrew Place to be designated "Paul Revere Williams Square" to honor Paul Revere Williams and his contributions to the architecture of Los Angeles.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of Transportation be directed to erect a permanent ceremonial sign to this effect at this location.

PRESENTED BY:


HUGO SOTO-MARTÍNEZ
Councilmember, 13th District

SECONDED BY:



ORIGINAL

PK

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