

Communication from Public

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Council File No: 22-0050

Comments for Public Posting: To whom it may concern: I write this letter as a concerned Angeleno and a member of the LGBT community. On January 12, 2022, Councilmember Kevin de Leon made a motion to rename the portion of Bailey Street between 1st Street and Pennsylvania Ave in Boyle Heights "Vicente Fernandez Street," in honor of the late Mexican singer. This proposed renaming strikes me as problematic in light of the following: 1. In 2012, doctors found a cancerous lump on Vicente Fernandez's liver. "They wanted to put another bastard's liver in me and I told them 'I'm not going to sleep with my wife with another man's liver,' and I don't know if he was homosexual or a drug addict," said the Jalisco-born singer. He then proceeded to walk out of the hospital. This quote is from a Spanish-language media interview; the link to the video footage is included below. It can also be found in many reputable international media outlets. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gh4h0ghD2yU> 2. There are published incidents of Mr. Fernandez inappropriately touching women. As recently as December 2021, the year and month of his death, it was reported that he had inappropriately touched a young woman during a 2017 meet-and-greet. The incident was even caught on camera. A month later the news broke that Fernandez had been accused of sexual assault by a singer named Lupita Castro. The alleged assault took place nearly forty years prior, when she was still a minor. That case ultimately went away as Castro refused to take Fernandez to court. I believe it would be a serious error to name a street after Vicente Fernandez. We are living in an era when we are reconsidering many heroes from bygone times in light of the message their unquestioned veneration sends to marginalized communities -- a long-overdue reckoning. Renaming a street in honor of someone with a track record of homophobia and misogyny would be a real step backwards. I urge you to reconsider this decision. Thank you for your attention. Sincerely, Emma Rault