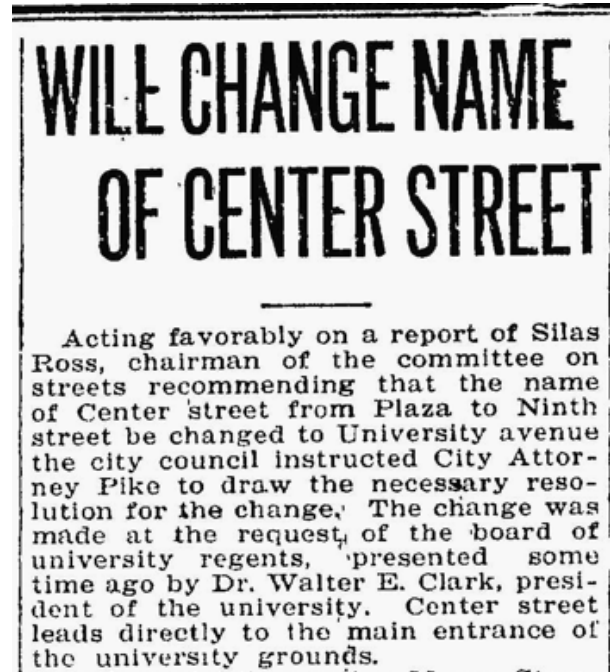


## The History of "University Avenue"

Center Street from the railroad to the UNR campus was named University Avenue from 1921 to 1957. There were efforts to reinstate the University Avenue name after that, none successful.



*Reno Evening Gazette, December 28, 1920*



*Reno Evening Gazette, January 11, 1921*

The City briefly considered changing the name of the entire street to University Avenue in 1957 (along with a bunch of other street name changes), but then decided instead to eliminate the name University Avenue entirely, for the sake of consistency (and because it would be unseemly to have casinos and bars on a street named University Avenue).

# Name Changes Proposed for Reno Streets

Name changes for Chestnut, Center and Sinclair streets were recommended by the street naming committee of the Regional Planning Commission at the regular commission meeting Tuesday night.

The Reno changes, plus one in Sparks, are recommended for consideration by the respective city councils.

In Reno, Chestnut street would become Arlington avenue, Center street would be renamed University avenue and Sinclair street would become Lake street.

*Reno Evening Gazette, March 27, 1957*

## Victims of Progress

MORE OF the old Reno landmarks are disappearing. No longer will there be a Center Street, it assumes the more elegant name of University Avenue its entire length, and with the passing of Center street goes Chestnut, another name that has been on the city maps since earliest days. Sinclair Street likewise loses its identity, to be merged with Lake Street.

And then comes the word that the building now known as the recreation center will be torn down. It was built on South Center Street (pardon, University Avenue) almost a half century ago, and has been successively a fire station, a school house, a federal office building in the boondoggle era, and lastly a youth recreation center.

Well, the old has to give way to the new, but such changes do bring a twinge of nostalgia to some of the sentimental oldsters.

# Name University Avenue Wiped From Map of City As Council Votes Change

Without a single protest, Reno councilmen wiped University avenue from the city map Monday night. Chestnut street disappeared just as definitely, but at least a single word of sorrow was expressed at its passing.

North Center street now continues to the University of Nevada gates.

For University avenue, oblivion followed a flash of glory. For Center street it was a return to better days. In the 1920's, Center street went to the university gates, with a short interruption at the Southern Pacific right of way, where a freight shed blocked traffic.

Then the portion from the tracks to the university was re-named University avenue, as fitted the tree-shaded residential blocks.

A month ago the city council dropped Center street and extended University avenue all the way to Virginia street, making it one of the city's longer thoroughfares.

Councilman Ben Maffi, who was absent from the council session that stretched University avenue, led the movement for its elimination.

"As a boy, I lived at Center and Plaza streets," he said, and told of Center street's once going all the way to the university.

Several Center street residents said they objected to having Center street re-named, and the council then voted to have the entire thoroughfare become Center street.

Only Councilman William L. Foster objected, and even he made it clear that he did so only to be consistent with his vote a month ago, making Center street University avenue.

## Pleads Guilty To Burglary

Accuser of Reno police captain, Reno Ferretto, Don McPherson pleaded guilty to burglary in Inyo county, Calif. superior court Monday.

McPherson contends that all of the money taken from him following his arrest here in April did not make its way through official channels during the booking, that Ferretto had taken part of it.

The 40-year-old Carson logger made the claim against Ferretto when he was returned to Independence, Calif. to face charges of the burglary of a Death Valley dude ranch safe of about \$6000. Arrested here after he attempted to change silver for currency, he claimed he found the money in a canvas bag along a California roadside.

A week following McPherson's arrest Ferretto turned in to Police Chief T. R. Berrum \$1065 in cash, his service revolver and his badge. He was arraigned in justice court April 26 on charge of embezzlement and grand larceny and was released after posting \$500 bail.

## Center or University?

JUST ABOUT the time it appeared that the names of Reno streets had been straightened out, the University of Nevada regents propose that the name of Center Street be changed to University Avenue. Since this is the street that leads to the university gates, it is only fitting and descriptive that it be so called, the regents believe.

It was Center to begin with. Then, back in the early 1920s, the portion north of the Southern Pacific tracks was renamed University Avenue. That didn't cause any confusion, for the street didn't cross the tracks in those days. There were ambitious ideas, too, for this University Avenue. An unpaved strip was left in the center, and this was to be planted to lawn, shrubbery and trees—only this greenery never materialized. There was the little matter of who should pay for this scenery—the city or the fronting property owners. Neither wanted to assume the cost, and the center strip was used for parking until the city filled in the gap with paving.

After the Southern Pacific freight sheds were moved and the railroad crossing opened, some 30 years ago, University Avenue and Center Street were one thoroughfare with two different names. Three years ago the city officials decided to end this confusion, and apply the same name for the entire stretch from the university gates to the street's junction with Virginia Street at Mary Street.

What to call it? University, said those on the north reaches. Then came objections that this would give a most inappropriate address for the downtown gambling houses and saloons on the street. And it was on this more-or-less moral basis that Center was selected. But there was a more forceful reason. Business houses didn't want to have their street names changed. They had spent a lot of money advertising their Center Street locations. Besides, it would cost a lot of money to change letter heads, business cards, advertising notices, for example. And that complaint will come up again with this new suggestion for a return to University Avenue.

But Center or University, the street should have the name its entire length. The city finally made Arlington Avenue-Belmont Road-Chesnut Street into Arlington all the way, and did the same with Wells Avenue-Alameda Avenue, now Wells.

And this process has been going on for years. Who remembers, for instance, what ever became of Scott Street? Well, it's East Second Street now. Or Front Street? Or Walnut? To save some head scratching, Front is now First. And Walnut is Sixth street in its offset between Sierra and Ralston Streets.

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*Reno Evening Gazette*, August 18, 1959

After their failure to have the name of the street changed back to University Avenue in 1959, the Board of Regents repeated the request in 1962, and City Council initially agreed to do that, but later reversed its decision.

In other action yesterday the council:

- Decided to delay further the introduction of a sewer use and tap fee ordinance.

- Approved an ordinance setting up requirements for basement kitchens.

- Referred to the street naming commission a request from the University of Nevada Board of Regents that Center Street be renamed University Avenue, the name once posted on the portion between Fourth Street and the main entrance to the university. Mayor Bud Baker said he favored the idea; Councilman Dick Diamond warned it would be costly for Center Street businesses.

*Reno Evening Gazette, January 9, 1962*

## Center or University?

FROM THE Board of Regents of the University of Nevada comes the request that Center Street be renamed University Avenue, since it leads to the main campus entrance. The last time such a suggestion was made it didn't come from the University—in fact, the people “up on the hill” looked with disfavor on such an idea.

Center Street it was at the beginning of Reno, although it had a few breaks in it. It didn't manage to get across the Truckee River and the Southern Pacific tracks until the 1920s, and it was even later that its southern end was swung over to meet South Virginia Street.

More than 40 years ago, the city council changed the name of North Center Street from its dead end at Plaza up to the university gates to University Avenue. There were ambitious plans for a beautiful approach to the campus. The center section was left unpaved, and it was to be planted to lawn and shrubs. The only drawback to this desirable landscaping was that no one wanted to put up the money to accomplish it, or to take on the job of maintenance of this mid-street park. As a result, the center section was given over to rocks, mud and weeds, and was used as parking space. Finally, it was filled in with asphalt.



When the old depot and freight sheds were torn down, and Center Street-University Avenue made one thoroughfare, the dispute started over what should be the name of the now one street.

University Avenue, said those on the north end. Center Street, replied the downtowners, who pointed out with some justice that a change of name would cause them no end of confusion and expense in changing their long-established and widely-advertised addresses. Then came another criticism. Center Street downtown had long been Reno's gambling and saloon center, and it would hardly do to give these seamy enterprises a University Avenue address, nor would it be good advertising for city or school to list assorted gambling houses and saloons on the main approach to a university. So, Center Street it became its entire length, from the Y with South Virginia up to the stone pillars that mark the entrance to the University of Nevada campus.

Now the University has a change of attitude, but no one is so rash as to predict that Center Street will take on a tonier title.

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## Center Street Once Again Changes Name

Center Street, at least that portion of the street north of the Southern Pacific tracks, will be known as University Avenue after March 15.

The city council yesterday, by a 5-1 vote, approved the name change. Councilman Dick Dimond voted against the move, which re-establishes the name by which the north end of the street was known from the early 1920's until a few years ago.

Dimond warned the name change, which was opposed by a bare majority of the Regional Planning Commission and the street-naming committee of police and fire representatives, would create problems.

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## EDITORIALS

### **Council Makes Three Hits— But Also Strikes Out Once**

The Reno City Council made three hits and struck out once during a semi-monthly "inning" at City Hall Monday.

The council scored a hit when it introduced, by title, the sewer use fee ordinance and thus started down the road toward solving one of the most important problems facing the city today.

It scored again with another try at getting an air pollution control ordinance.

The third hit was made when the councilmen warned that city powers will be used to see to it that suppliers of local saloons get their money when a bar "folds"—by the simple process of refusing to let it reopen until the old bills are paid.

The strike-out came on a comparatively minor matter—but demonstrates how city administrations can reverse an established trend without so much as a second thought.

The council voted, 5-1 with Councilman Dimond opposing, to change the name of Center Street, from the railroad tracks north, to University Avenue. So that part of Center Street, from its southern intersection with Virginia Street to the tracks, will retain that name and, without so much as a jog, will become University Avenue from the Railroad to the university gates at Ninth Street.

The change is scheduled to become effective March 15.

Once upon a time when Reno was "a pup" the entire length of this street was called Center Street—as it is at present. It dead-ended on the south as well as the north in those old days. And it also "stopped" twice in between. There was no bridge across the river, and a big freight shed cut the street at the tracks. First the freight shed was removed and later the Center Street bridge was built. The south end was opened into Virginia.

If the change in name from the tracks north goes into effect as scheduled, it will be the second time that portion has been known as University Avenue. For, in the early 1920s it was so designated. A grandiose scheme for beautifying the middle of the street between Fourth and Ninth was conceived. Grass was to be planted and the asphalt was actually torn up for the project. But that's as far as it ever got, and finally the "park" areas were repaved.

Three or four years ago the previous administration instituted a policy of combining Reno street names in instances where the thoroughfares were continuous. For example, what was then Arlington Avenue, Belmont Road and Chestnut Street all became Arlington; Wells and Alameda avenues, divided by Fourth Street, became Wells Avenue. And Center Street and University Avenue became Center Street.

The council at first was inclined to favor University Avenue as the designation but ran into opposition both downtown and from university officials. Center Street operators protested they'd have to make many changes in business stationery, and so forth, and it was also pointed out it would put gambling halls and bars on University Avenue—not a particularly good situation from an “image” standpoint.

Now campus officials, holding no college town is complete without a University Avenue, will get its wish for one.

But in granting that wish the council has reversed a policy recommended a few years ago by the traffic engineer, approved by a previous council and sustained by the planning committee and street naming committee, both of which opposed the council's Monday action.

# Reno Council Delays Action On Center Street Name Change

Final Reno city council action on the changing of the name of North Center Street to University Avenue was detoured Monday

At a previous meeting, the coun-

cil had voted in favor of the name switch but Monday the council voted 32 to retain the name of North Center Street

## City Council Backs Fallout

A letter from the city fire chief requesting the matter be reviewed before final action was taken prompted the council to stick with the Center Street name. In part, the fire chief's letter said that the names University Avenue and University Terrace could be confusing in the event of an emergency.

*Reno Evening Gazette, February 13, 1962*