

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Teri Castillo, District 5 Councilmember

COPIES TO: Erik Walsh, City Manager; Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk; Andy Segovia, City Attorney; John Peterek, Assistant to the City Manager; Emily McGinn Assistant to City Council

SUBJECT: Designation of a Memorial Way for Jovita Idar

DATE: 02/16/2024

Issue Proposed for Consideration

We ask for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the City Council:

Designation of a Memorial Way on Robert B. Green Wy from La Trinidad St to N Frio St – with no change to the official street name or mailing address – for Jovita Idar

Brief Background

Background provided by the Mexican American Civil Rights Institute:

The early twentieth century saw the rise of anti-Mexican sentiment in the United States. Ethnic Mexicans were segregated and discriminated against in social and educational spaces, and they were lynched and faced with other forms of racial violence primarily perpetrated by the Texas Rangers.

Jovita Idar (Laredo, 1885 - San Antonio, 1946) dedicated her life to denouncing and actively

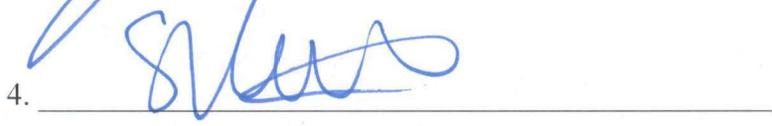
fighting against anti-Mexican violence and injustice. Idar began her career teaching at under-resourced ethnic Mexican schools in Texas. Later Idar became a journalist, and wrote for her family's Spanish language activist newspaper, *La Cronica*. She wrote in favor of women's suffrage and education, and denounced anti-Mexican discrimination, educational segregation, and racial violence. She continued writing throughout her life for *La Cronica* and other publications including *El Progreso*, *La Prensa*, *El Heraldo Cristiano*, and her own newspaper, *La Evolucion*.

Idar also took direct action in helping alleviate the issues she wrote about. In 1911, after the lynching of 14 year old Antonio Gomez, the Idar family organized *El Primer Congreso Mexicanista* to discuss issues facing the community. There, Idar founded the *Liga Femenil Mexicanista* which started free bilingual schools and fundraisers for children. During the Mexican Revolution, Idar joined the revolutionary army as a nurse for the Cruz Blanca.

After the war, Idar moved to San Antonio's Westside where she spent the rest of her life. She continued her activist journalism, helped undocumented workers obtain naturalization, tutored ethnic Mexican children, and educated women on hygiene and childcare. A teacher, journalist, nurse, health educator, and political activist in the ethnic Mexican community, Jovita Idar expanded the conversation around equity and organized political groups to directly meet the needs of ethnic Mexican women and children. She is an important figure remembered for her work towards better conditions, opportunities, and rights for Mexican Americans in South Texas and beyond.

Permanently commemorating **Jovita Idar** – Mexican American journalist, suffragist, educator, and civil rights hero – is the first step of many in ensuring San Antonio's Mexican American heritage and legacies are appropriately celebrated and honored throughout our city.

Submitted for Council consideration by: Teri Castillo
Councilwoman Teri Castillo, District 5

Supporting Councilmembers' Signatures (4 only)	District
1. 	4
2. 	6
3. 	2
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