



# METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

Metropolitan Historical Commission  
Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission  
Sunnyside in Sevier Park  
3000 Granny White Pike  
Nashville, Tennessee 37204  
Telephone: (615) 862-7970

To: Metropolitan Council  
From: Metropolitan Historical Commission, Staff  
Date: June 12, 2024  
Re: BL2024-349

An ordinance to amend the Geographic Information Systems Street and Alley Centerline Layer for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, by renaming four disconnected segments of Old Harding Pike. (Proposal Number 2023M-003SR-001).

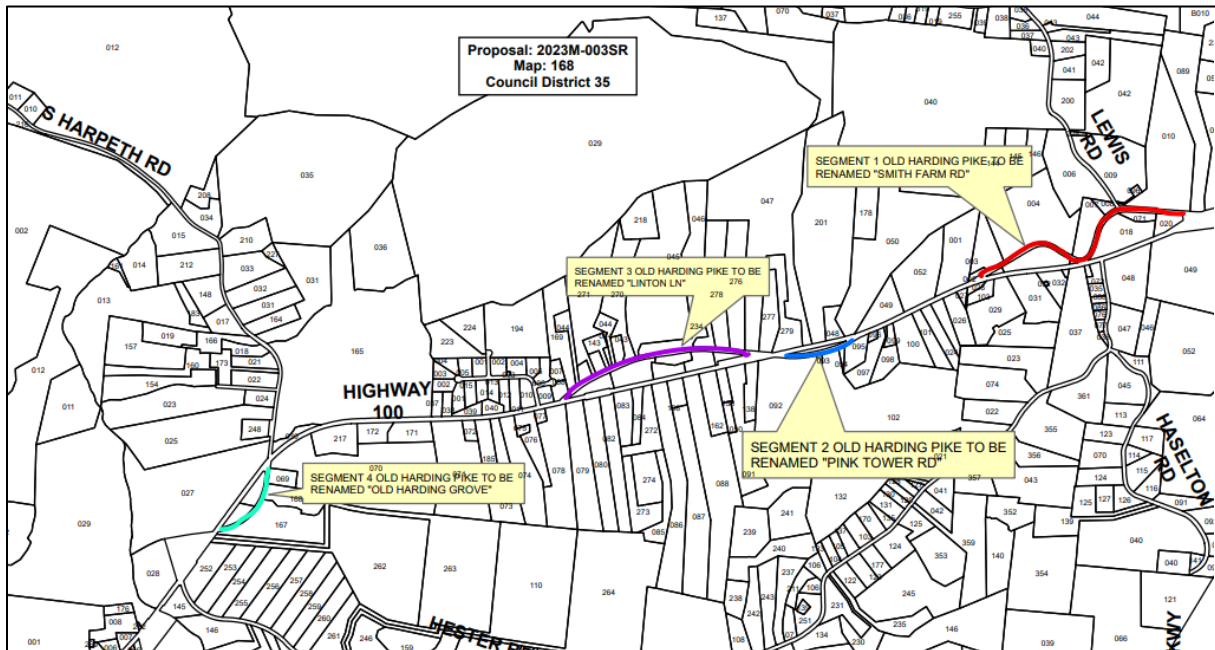


Figure 1: Parcel map showing location of Old Harding Pike segments to be renamed. Exhibit for 2023M-003SR-001.  
Source: Metropolitan Planning Department.

The Davidson County portion of State Route Highway 100 was constructed in the late 1920s, and generally follows the historic route of Harding Pike through southwestern Davidson

County.<sup>1</sup> By 1931, the roadway measured 12.1 miles from its intersection with the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway (State Route 1) to the Williamson County Line.<sup>2</sup> After entering Williamson County, Highway 100 continues in a southwesterly direction to its western terminus in Hardeman County. While the plan for Highway 100 overlapped some portions of the historic Harding Pike route, incorporating them into the new highway path, it also left several disconnected segments, particularly in the stretch between Bellevue and Williamson County (Figures 1 & 2).<sup>3</sup> These disconnected segments were renamed Old Harding Pike and are remnants of the original Harding Pike route prior to highway construction.<sup>4</sup>



Figure 2: General Road Map of Davidson County, 1940s (cropped). Image shows Harding Pike and Tenn. Route No. 100.  
Source: Tennessee State Library and Archives.

According to historian Ridley Wills II, Harding Pike was first called Richland Pike, so named for its proximity to Richland Creek. The general route was established by 1809 and was known as the “Richland Creek and Wharton Road.” In 1844, the Richland Turnpike Company was incorporated to help fund the building of a road to the Harpeth River, including a bridge to the Harpeth’s west bank. The turnpike was finished by 1849. It began at Boyd Avenue (Twentieth Avenue South), which was the corporation line at the time, and followed present day West End

<sup>1</sup> “Highway Program Shown in Report,” *Nashville Banner*, 28 June 1926. According to the Davidson County Highway Commission’s quarterly report, as referenced in the article, survey and plans for a four-mile stretch of Highway 100, from Backbone Ridge to the South Harpeth Bluff, were complete.

<sup>2</sup> Davidson County Highway Commission, *1931 Code*, 35.

<sup>3</sup> *General Road Map of Davidson County*. 1940s. Map.

<https://teva.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15138coll23/id/9700/rec/7> Accessed 11 June 2024.

<sup>4</sup> The renaming, if official, likely occurred between 1943 and 1950. The Davidson County Highway Commission Code Book from 1943 includes sections of “Harding Pike” among the List of Pikes Comprising General Road System of Davidson County. These same sections of road are called “Old Harding Pike” in the 1950 Code Book. Davidson County Highway Commission, *1943 Code*, 8; Davidson County Highway Commission, *1950 Code*, 11.

Avenue and Harding Road through Bellevue.<sup>5</sup> Wilbur Foster's 1871 map of Davidson County identifies the road as the Richland and Harding Turnpike.<sup>6</sup> The turnpike ends between the Pleasant Grove and Providence churches and continues as a dirt road into Williamson County. Eventually, the road was known simply as Harding Pike, named for the Harding family who held extensive acreage along the thoroughfare, particularly along its passage through Belle Meade. In 1919, Davidson County officially mapped and accepted Harding Pike, including it among the list of pikes comprising the county's general road system.<sup>7</sup>

In January and February 1997, Metropolitan Council Member Vic Lineweaver sponsored legislation to rename five short, disconnected segments of Old Harding Pike due to concerns that the numerous sections caused confusion for emergency responders.<sup>8</sup> The multiple pieces of legislation, each pertaining to a different segment of the road, all passed first reading when introduced. According to newspaper accounts, Council Member Lineweaver proposed the changes at the request of Metro Public Works and Metro's public safety agencies (police, fire, ambulance crews), yet some residents along the disconnected segments "vehemently opposed" the renaming of their roads due to the "inconvenience of changing their addresses."<sup>9</sup> Ultimately, all of the bills were withdrawn on August 17, 1999.

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<sup>5</sup> Ridley Wills II, *Nashville Streets and Their Stories* (Franklin, TN: Plumblin Media, LLC, 2012), 126.

<sup>6</sup> Wilbur F. Foster and G.W. & C.B. Colton & Co. *Map of Davidson County Tennessee, from actual surveys made by order of the county court of Davidson County*. New York: G.W. & C.B. Colton & Col, 1871. Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2006626025/>. Accessed 11 June 2024.

<sup>7</sup> County Committee (Finley M. Dorris, Samuel G. Douglas, James R. Allen, and John Langham) and Engineers (Freeland, Roberts & Co.), *General Road Map, Davidson County, Tenn.* 1919. Metropolitan Government Archives. Tennessee, *Senate Bill No. 484, Private Acts (1917)*, 441: 1375-1390.

<sup>8</sup> Three of the five bills filed by Council Member Lineweaver proposed renaming the same segments of road currently under consideration for renaming: O97-640, O97-642, and O97-643. Council Member Lineweaver introduced these three bills at first reading on February 4, 1997. The bills were deferred indefinitely by Metro Council on March 18, 1997, and withdrawn in August 1999.

<sup>9</sup> Mark Ippolito, "Too Many Old Harding Pikes?," *Tennessean*, 26 February 1997. Corwin A. Thomas, "Residents Roar at Road Renaming," *Tennessean*, 7 March 1997.