



## Loudoun County, Virginia

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## NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release  
February 9, 2023

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### **Name of Historic 1895 Loudoun Courthouse to Honor Charles Hamilton Houston**

During its February 7, 2023, meeting, the Board of Supervisors formalized the name of Loudoun County's courthouse complex in downtown Leesburg. Additionally, the Board approved the placement of a special moniker on the historic 1895 courthouse on the corner of King and Market streets to honor civil rights attorney Charles Hamilton Houston. The move comes as the Loudoun County Courthouse Expansion project heads toward completion later this year.

The Board voted to name the multiple buildings that comprise the Loudoun courts and related offices the Loudoun County Courthouse Complex, while the historic courthouse will bear Houston's name. In 2020, the Board directed staff to pursue National Historic Landmark designation for the historic courthouse, which is expected to happen this year.

"This naming process has been ongoing since 2019; the county worked to include members of the public and the Heritage Commission," said Board of Supervisors Chair Phyllis J. Randall. "Having the very courthouse where Charles Hamilton Houston fully displayed the ability of Black lawyers—against all odds—to prevail against de-jure segregation through the courts is something that every Loudoun resident can be proud of."

The name selection is based on a recommendation from the Board-appointed Heritage Commission, which highlighted Houston's work on the nationally significant 1933 trial of George Crawford. In *Commonwealth of Virginia v. Crawford*, Charles Hamilton Houston, who was the dean of Howard University's Law School and legal counsel to the NAACP, led an all-Black legal team assembled by the NAACP to defend Crawford, who was accused of murdering two white women in Middleburg. The case brought national attention to the issue of all-white juries, facilitated widespread recognition of the abilities of Black lawyers and laid important groundwork in the NAACP's emerging campaign to use federal constitutional law to dismantle racial segregation.

The case is considered seminal to the emergence of the civil rights movement and civil rights jurisprudence and is of such national importance that Loudoun County is seeking National Historic Landmark status for the courthouse based on the event. The county anticipates a favorable vote by the National Park Service's Landmarks Committee later this year.

Meanwhile, work continues on the courthouse expansion. Construction crews have completed interior framing and the utility rough-in. The installation of drywall, door frames and window glazing are nearing completion. Permanent power for the new building has been established, and crews have installed the elevators and began painting interior walls. The Loudoun County Courthouse Expansion project is expected to be complete and open to the public in the fall of 2023.

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Loudoun County will host a virtual construction update on March 29, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. Details for joining the meeting are posted at [loudoun.gov/calendar](https://loudoun.gov/calendar). Additional information about the courthouse construction project is available at [loudoun.gov/courts-expansion](https://loudoun.gov/courts-expansion).

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