



April 9, 2021

**Staff Report:  
Resolution # XX  
Establishment of the Park Names for Highland Bridge**

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

To name four new city park spaces currently identified as Park A, Park B, Park C and Park D within Highland Bridge.

**STAFF COMMENTS:**

The public request for name suggestions for city parks at Highland Bridge generated 302 submittals from 93 individuals and groups. The suggestions fell into four main themes: meaningful connections to Indigenous Land, the Ford Motor Plant, Geography, and Prominent People of Color. Forty-six submittals were names of individuals, 53 submittals referenced Ford Motor Plant and the people who had worked there, and 74 references to indigenous culture and presence. In addition, local wildlife and the idea of unity were frequently referenced.

It was a stated priority of the City to include feedback and input from indigenous communities during planning aspects of the Highland Bridge development, including the creation and naming of parks. We therefore formed an ad hoc group of Dakota individuals and community leaders who volunteered to review the list of generated names. The role of the reviewers was to provide feedback including appropriateness of names, identify ideas from the community that they felt should be elevated, and fill in the blanks on what may have been missed. See Attachment D.

Parks and Recreation actively engages the Saint Paul Youth Commission on policy matters and issues of equity. The Youth Commission is staffed by Parks and Recreation youth workers who curated and managed the discussion. The Youth Commissioners reviewed the entire list of names and provided a list of suggestions that most resonated with them. See Attachment C.

The names that have elevated from the public outreach list are below:

Park A: Geographic

The prominent location of this park lends itself to a name that reflects the importance of this entry point to the city and to the development. A geographic name for this park is appropriate.



---

**Gateway Park** (both geographic and in time – past to future)

Park B: Historic / Industry

Ford Assembly Plant stood where this park is now platted. Recognizing the site's industrial history and those who worked at Ford Motor Company, and specifically the importance of the workforce within the union labor movement and as contributing members of the surrounding communities at this location is appropriate.

**Assembly Union Park in recognition of Auto Industry Union Workers** (potentially shortened version Assembly Park)

Park C: Indigenous Recognition and Value

Park C connects people to more natural areas with access to Hidden Falls Regional Park and links the stormwater system from the neighborhood into the daylighted Hidden Falls Creek to the falls. Connection to nature for this park resonated with the Dakota group who reviewed the park names.

**Uŋči Makħa Park** ("Mother Earth" in Dakota)  
Pronounced oon-CHEE Ma-KAH

Park D: Indigenous Recognition and Local Wildlife

The smallest of the parks will remain largely undeveloped due to steep slopes and wetlands. There is a history of coyote families at the Highland Bridge site. The community has followed the sightings of the animals which have become an unofficial mascot for the neighborhood. They frequently access the Highland Bridge development from the CP Rail site through what is Park D.

**Míča Park** (abbreviation for "coyote" in Dakota)  
Pronounced MEE-cha

**REQUEST OF THE COUNCIL:**

Approval of proposed names for future parks at Highland Bridge.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONCERNS:**

The naming process was led by the community via an online portal. After the open call closed, names were reviewed by Indigenous Representatives and Youth Commission.

Below is a summary of community engagement related to park naming.:

- March 12: Open call stated that the project would review names based on City Policy and;
- Creativity
  - Uniqueness
  - Appropriateness



- How it relates to the place, history, and hope for the future of the spaces
- March 15: List provided to Ad Hoc group for Indigenous review and ideas and Youth Commission for review.
- March 15-March 25: Staff review of submitted names based on City Policy.
- March 25: Youth Commission and Ad Hoc Native American group provide input.
- March 28-29: Parks and Recreation staff vet names of people via online research.
- April 8: Parks and Recreation Commission recommends the names for approval by the City Council.

While the naming process resulted in a variety of names and interest, Parks and Rec does not anticipate community concern related to the four name recommendations.

**Attachments:**

- Attachment A: Highland Bridge Park Locations and Descriptions
- Attachment B: Name Suggestions Submitted
- Attachment C: Communication from Youth Commission
- Attachment D: Communication from Dakota Representatives