

**Resolution # 26-06**  
**Naming Phalen “Picnic” Island to Tou Ger Xiong Island**

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

Naming Phalen “Picnic” Island to Tou Ger Xiong Island

**STAFF COMMENTS:**

The City of Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation has secured funding for the Tou Ger Xiong memorial at Tou Ger Xiong Island in Phalen Regional Park (1610 Phalen Dr). The scope of the project will include a sculpture, mural and site furnishings. The budget for this project is \$300,000 from a MN Historical Society Grant and Parks Capital Improvement Funds. In addition, the Saint Paul Parks Conservancy received a \$15,000 grant from Year-Round Star Funding to install permanent naming markers. Design development and engagement with the family will begin and occur through spring of 2026. Construction and installation of the artwork is anticipated during summer/fall of 2027.

The mural and statue will be installed on the island in Phalen Regional Park unofficially known as Picnic Island, that is primarily used for community gathering, picnicking and fishing. The project is centered on the construction of a mural and statue. The design phase of this project will determine the specific site improvements, mural incorporation, interpretation and signage, and Hmong artistic styles that will be employed.

The creation of public art and a designated memorial space to honor Tou Ger Xiong alongside Lake Phalen will support the goals of honoring Tou Ger Xiong's legacy as a pillar of the community and continuing his work celebrating Hmong heritage, inspiring future community leaders, and bringing people together. The City of Saint Paul has and will continue to work in close collaboration with several partners on this project, including the Xiong family, Senator Fong Hawj, Ward 6 City Council Office, community representatives, and City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation. The decision to install the mural and statue at Phalen Regional Park is due to the location holding personal significance to Tou Ger Xiong and his family, as it was a space he frequently visited and drew inspiration from - a place that mirrored his deep connection to community, nature, and reflection. The mural and statue will be aptly installed on Tou Ger Xiong Island within Phalen Regional Park.

The Parks & Recreation Commission Policy #7, Naming Parks and Recreation Sites, 2012 Update, provides criteria for naming of parks, and this request follows the purpose of the “Memorial Names” criteria. The policy states that Memorial names shall be based on names of an individual who made significant contributions to the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation system and who has been deceased for at least three years. While Tou Ger Xiong has not been deceased for three years, the Parks and Recreation Department is asking for approval to identify and celebrate Tou Ger’s life. In addition, the policy states, “Parks which have had another name for at least 50 years shall also be submitted by the Parks and Recreation Commission to the St. Paul Historic Preservation Commission, for its review and comment before renaming.” The island does not have an official name, and review by the St. Paul Historic Preservation Commission is not required.

**REQUEST OF THE COMMISSION:**

Naming Phalen Picnic Island to Tou Ger Xiong Island and that the naming go to the Saint Paul City Council for recommendation for approval.

**COMMUNITY CONCERNS:**

None



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