



April 24, 2017

**TO:** Park Board Chair and Commissioners  
**FROM:** General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation  
**SUBJECT:** Park Naming Recommendations - Report Back

---

## RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve the name “Empire Fields” for the playing fields located at the southeast corner of Hastings Park;
- B. THAT the Park Board approve the name “Slidey Slides” for the play space located adjacent to both Playland and the sports fields on the south side of Hastings Park (commonly known as Plateau Park);
- C. THAT the Park Board approve the name “Lilian To Park” for the park at Yukon Street and 17th Avenue;
- D. THAT the Park Board approve the name “Sun Hop Park” for the park at Main Street and 18th Avenue;
- E. THAT any further naming processes be suspended to allow Park Board staff, working with Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh staff, to update the Park Naming Process to incorporate Indigenous place names in Vancouver Parks; and
- F. THAT Park Board staff report back on recommendation for amendments to the Park Naming Process to incorporate Indigenous place names and steps to resume the naming process.

## POLICY

The Park Board has jurisdiction over Vancouver Parks, including the naming of parks as guided by the [Park Naming Process](#), adopted in 2007.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to consider names put forward by the Park Naming Committee. As follows:

- sports fields commonly known as Empire Fields,
- play space located adjacent to both Playland and the sports fields on the south side of Hastings Park (commonly known as Plateau Park)
- recently opened park at Yukon Street and 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and
- park opened in 2013 at Main Street and 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

## BACKGROUND

At their regular meeting on September 14, 2015, the Park Board directed staff to convene a Neighbourhood Park Naming Committee as per Vancouver Park Board policy to name the park

spaces at Empire Fields and Plateau Sports Park and bring recommendations from the committee to the Park Board for their consideration and approval.

On July 25, 2016, the Vancouver Park Board also initiated the naming process for the park located at Main Street and 18th Avenue and the park located at Yukon Street and 17th Avenue.

On July 11 and September 19, 2016, the Vancouver Park Board appointed the Park Naming Committee standing members and ad hoc members for the naming of Empire Fields and Plateau Park, Main Street and 18th Avenue, and Yukon Street and 17th Avenue as per the [Park Naming Committee Terms of Reference](#).

The Park Naming Process adopted in 2007 does not describe the role of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations in naming parks. Park Board staff invited the three local First Nations to review the location and context and decide whether they would like to be involved in the Park Naming Process. Staff sent an information package to each Nation, and Tsleil-Waututh staff responded with interest in participating in the naming process.

Tsleil-Waututh staff initially expressed interest in participating in the naming process for the site currently known as Empire Fields. However timing became an impediment, and it was agreed that in this case the Park Naming Process, already underway, should move forward to conclusion. Tsleil-Waututh staff also indicated a desire to work with the Park Board to incorporate an Indigenous place name at the adjacent, New Brighton Park where they, along with Musqueam and Squamish staff are actively involved in the shoreline habitat restoration project.

Following discussions with Tsleil-Waututh staff, and upon further internal review, the Park Naming Committee moved forward to provide recommendations the four park sites listed above. The process for a fifth site (currently known as Trillium Park, between Malkin and National Avenues at Thornton Street) is on hold. This is to allow time for the Board to consider updates to the Park Naming Process that identify a role for the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. In January 2016, The Vancouver Park Board endorsed 11 strategies to advance the historic work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The strategies address critical themes identified by the Commission, including Language and Culture and Commemoration. Park naming provides the Park Board an opportunity to restore the Nations' visibility on the land through naming, honour their language sovereignty, and help implement the strategies endorsed last year.

## PROCESS

The [Park Naming Process](#) outlines the steps involved in naming Vancouver parks; the details are posted on the Park Board's website. In summary, the Board initiates a naming process with a motion to staff. With this direction, staff engages the Park Naming Committee and requests the Board appoint two additional members of the Committee with local experience and knowledge in the area of the park(s) being considered. The Park Naming Committee works with staff to develop a public engagement process that solicits community feedback for possible park names. The Committee then reviews names collected from the community engagement process; develops a shortlist of preferred names, and finally, recommends names to the Park Board for their consideration and approval.

The Park Naming Committee met four times between August 2016 and March 2017. Project staff worked with the Park Naming Committee to solicit feedback from the public, and the Park Board received 573 name ideas for the four unnamed parks.

Park Site	Name Submissions
Sports fields commonly known as Empire Fields	111 (online)
Park between the sports fields and Playland, commonly known as Plateau Park	69 (online)
Park at Main Street and 18th Avenue	81 (online)
Park at Yukon Street and 17th Avenue	282 (online) and 30 in person

The Park Naming Committee evaluated the proposed park names considering historical, cultural and geographic elements, using the following park naming guidelines laid out in the current [Park Naming Process](#):

**Geographic:**

- The park, trail or road or other feature being named generally should relate to a constant feature either nearby or within that park. This could relate to a bordering street name or a natural or man-made feature. This does not preclude the consideration of a name already in common use for the park. Such geographic criteria give ease of identification with relation to the park.

**Commemorative:**

- When no such constant feature is present or it is desired to commemorate an historical event or person important to the Park Board, City of Vancouver, or a person having made a substantial contribution to the Park Board, a park may be named for that person. Generally, names of individuals should only be used posthumously, except in the case of a living person who has a lifetime achievement consistent with the Park Board’s mandate.

**DISCUSSION**

The Park Naming Committee recommendations are described below.

**Empire Fields**

Preferred Name Recommendation: Empire Fields

Secondary Name Recommendation: Empire Fields Park

In 1954 Empire Stadium was built, in then-named, Exhibition Park in preparation for the British Empire Games. The stadium is most well-known for the race between Roger Bannister and John Landy, the “Miracle Mile” which was the first sports event broadcast live across North America. The stadium also hosted Elvis Presley in 1957 and the Beatles in 1965, and was the home of the BC Lions of the CFL from 1954 to 1982. Empire Stadium also hosted soccer, with the Vancouver Royals from 1967 to 1968 and the Vancouver Whitecaps from 1974 to 1982, before being torn down in 1993.

The site also housed the BC Lions' temporary stadium in 2010-2011 before being transformed into a community sports field. Empire Fields now has two full sized synthetic turf fields, a warm up area, limited spectator seating, and a 560m recreational running track.

The Park Naming Committee recommendation recognizes the many important events that took place on this site, the strength of the name 'Empire Fields' that is already in use, and the strong public support for maintaining the name 'Empire Fields' at this site.

### **Plateau Park**

Preferred Name Recommendation: Slidey Slides

Secondary Name Recommendation: Puzzle Park

'Plateau Sports Park' is an active park space located between Playland and the sports fields commonly known as Empire Fields. The park provides a diverse range of recreational opportunities for all ages. Facilities include beach volleyball courts, a flexible court space for multiple sports (street hockey and soccer, circus arts, yoga, boot camp, crossfit, tai chi, and dance), Canada's first public outdoor Parkour park, a bike park, outdoor ping pong tables, fitness equipment and children's playground including two big and slippery slides.

The public input received regarding names for Plateau Park include submissions from children at Hastings Park Childcare who frequent the site. Daycare staff submitted both 'Slidey Slides' and 'Puzzle Park' on behalf of the three to five-year-old children in their care.

The Park Naming Committee appreciates the originality and playfulness of the name 'Slidey Slides', the connection to local children, and pairing an unconventional name, 'Slidey Slides' with an unconventional space. As this site is a fun park-within-a-park and is next door to Playland, the Park Naming Committee felt a less formal name was appropriate. Parks in other parts of the world have also adopted more playful names to reflect dominant park elements. These include the Garden of Cosmic Speculation in Scotland, and Sea Monster Playground in Singapore. This name selection follows the Park Naming Process naming guidance by highlighting the dominant human-made structure—the slides.

### **Yukon & 17th**

Preferred Name Recommendation: Lilian To Park

Secondary Name Recommendation: Yukon Park

Lilian To, was the Chief Executive Officer of S.U.C.C.E.S.S., an organization initially founded to help new Canadians from China overcome language and cultural barriers. It is now a multicultural, multi-service agency assisting people at all stages of their Canadian experience. Lilian To's name became synonymous with inclusivity. Her legacy and achievements include work to make Vancouver a more inclusive city, free of racism, and with a respect for all residents. She tirelessly dedicated herself to her work of serving S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and improving the quality of life for immigrants, including supporting their integration into society.

Lilian To became S.U.C.C.E.S.S.'s CEO in 1987 and unexpectedly passed away in July 2005. As noted by S.U.C.C.E.S.S. *"...she gave her best to lead the organization, and under her leadership, the spirit of S.U.C.C.E.S.S. flourished. Her sincerity and humility moved all who worked with her. She is well known and respected in both Chinese and mainstream*

*communities across the country. She generously gave her time, effort and devotion. Her dedication continues to be an inspiration to all.”*

She received several awards for her professional and community services, including a Vancouver Multicultural Society’s Distinguished Service Award in 1991, a YWCA Women of Distinction Award in 1999, and a federal Citation for Citizenship in 2001. The site of the park at Yukon Street and 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue is where her home stood until 2013.

The Park Naming Committee recommends naming the site ‘Lilian To Park.’ Lilian To’s former home is now a beautiful and active park; a great place to celebrate her important legacy.

### **Main & 18<sup>th</sup>**

Preferred Name Recommendation: Sun Hop Park

Secondary Name Recommendation: Hing Mai Park

Sun Hop Park celebrates the Chinese history of the mid-Main area. There were 52 green grocers owned by Chinese immigrants in Vancouver in 1923. By 1935 almost 80% of the 158 green grocers in the city were Chinese owned, and the number of Chinese fruit and vegetable wholesalers had grown to 21, largely within the Mount Pleasant and Riley Park Neighbourhoods. Many of the companies currently operating on Produce Row at Malkin Avenue have their origins with these early firms. The Sun Hop Company operated on Main Street at 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue in 1923, and the Hing Mai Company opened on 19th Avenue in 1926.

The Park Naming Committee recommends the name ‘Sun Hop Park.’ The name is playful, and it suits the unique and inviting park while connecting current residents with a piece of the site’s history.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Upon approval, events to celebrate the newly named park sites will be held over the summer of 2017.

This recent process to name some of Vancouver Park Board’s unnamed parks has engaged hundreds of Vancouver residents, highlighted important people and activities in Vancouver’s history, but also exposed a gap in the Park Naming Process established in 2007. Updates are needed to the Park Naming Process to address the need for local First Nations’ visibility on the land. Park Board staff will work together with Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh staff to build in the proper steps into an improved Park Naming Process for the Park Board’s consideration in 2018.

### **SUMMARY**

This report advances naming of the existing 23 unnamed parks in Vancouver and responds to the park naming processes initiated by the Board between March 23, 2015 and July 25th, 2016. The Park Naming Committee recommends that the Park Board consider the following names for the four unnamed parks as guided by the 2007 Park Naming Process.

- ‘Empire Fields’ to remain, Empire Fields
- ‘Plateau Park’ to become, Slidey Slides
- Yukon Street and 17th Avenue park to become Lilian To Park
- Main Street and 18th Avenue park to become Sun Hop Park

Further, the Park Naming Committee supports suspending any further naming processes to allow Park Board staff, working with Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh staff to develop updates to the Park Naming Process to help address the need for local First Nations' visibility on the land. Staff will bring forward suggested revisions to the Park Board for consideration following a collaborative process with Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh staff.

General Manager's Office  
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation  
Vancouver, BC

Prepared by:  
Erin Embley, Planner II, Vancouver Park Board

ee/jk