Note: Items with a red question mark require additional feedback from Commissioners.

Background

Pocahontas Park, located on 2540 Pascal, has been in the Roseville Parks and Recreation system since the 1960s. Its original naming did utilize a community process.

Recently, some community members have expressed some concern that the name may cause harm to Native Populations. Community members noted the following concerns:

- Pocahontas, the person, has no direct ties to Minnesota, Minnesota’s current Native populations or the indigenous populations who originally inhabited Minnesota.

- The popular, commonly told, narrative of Pocahontas’ life focuses primarily on her assimilation to European culture such as her conversion to Christianity and taking a European name. The version of events told by her tribe (The Powhatan) says that Pocahontas was exploited and victimized by the European settlers.

Although there have been some preliminary general comments from the community, the topic has not been widely discussed in a formal way. In accordance with the Government Alliance on Racial Equity (GARE) Toolkit, and City standards for engagement, it has been suggested by the Parks and Recreation Commission that a comprehensive engagement process be undertaken to ensure that the:

- Issue is thoroughly understood.
- Impacted populations are aware of the conversation and have the opportunity to participate.
- Recommendations are thoroughly vetted and that feedback of all Roseville residents is considered.
- Other ???

I. Objective

To engage the impacted communities to assess the impact of the name on their feeling of being “welcomed, included and respected” in Roseville, including the:

- Native American people who live in Roseville
- Indigenous populations of Minnesota
- Neighbors of Pocahontas Park
- Entire Roseville community
- Other??
II. Data

**History of Pocahontas as a Person:** A history of Pocahontas as a person was shared at the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting on September 1. View the meeting minutes of that discussion.


**Native American Population in MN:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Proportion of Total Minnesota Population</th>
<th>Percent Growth of Population</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In 1990</td>
<td>In 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American*</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>94.4%</td>
<td>89.4%</td>
</tr>
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**Pocahontas Park Neighborhood:**

An estimate found that nearly 700 Roseville addresses would likely consider Pocahontas Park to be their neighborhood park. This analysis of “neighborhood park” was comprised of walkability (distance and absence of significant barriers) and residents for whom Pocahontas Park is their nearest park.
Total Population of Roseville: 33,660

III. Engagement

Based on the information provided above, the following groups and strategies have been identified for engagement. Next to each strategy, a proposed responsible person is listed in parentheses. For further commentary/methodology, see Section V. Implementation.

Native Americans who live in Roseville

- Engagement Strategies:
  - Public notice that the Parks and Recreation Commission is seeking comment on the issue (Staff)
  - Project webpage (Staff)
  - Public meeting (likely virtual due to COVID 19) (Staff/Commission)
  - Connecting through personal resources
    - Wild Rice Festival Participants (Staff)
  - City newsletter (Staff)
  - Other??
  - Target: minimum 10 people.

Native Americans who live outside of Roseville but have expertise on impacts of names on a population

- Engagement strategies
  - Specific invitations:
    - Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (Commissioner: ???)
• School District (Commissioner: ????)
• U of M American Indian Studies leaders/faculty (Commissioner: ????)
• Other?
• Target: 2 or 3 experts

Neighbors of Pocahontas Park

○ Engagement method
  ▪ Direct mailing (Staff)
  ▪ Electronic notice (Staff)
  ▪ Public meeting (Staff)
  ▪ City newsletter (Staff)
  ▪ Survey (developed by Commissioners, administered by staff)
  ▪ Direct Engagement (Commissioners)
  ▪ Other??
  ▪ Target: 25 people.

Roseville residents beyond the park neighborhood

□ Electronic notice (Staff)
□ Public meeting (Staff)
□ City newsletter (Staff)
□ Web page (Staff)
□ HRIEC (Commissioners attend meeting/joint meeting)
□ Commission members outreach (Commission members)
□ Other??
□ Target: 50 people

Engagement should aim to clarify several questions:

• Do you feel that the name Pocahontas Park has a positive, negative or neutral impact on Roseville?
• Does the name Pocahontas Park have an impact on your “feeling welcome” in Roseville?
• If the name Pocahontas Park were to be changed, what kind of name would you recommend?
  ○ A traditional park name that does not reference a name, or specific group?
  ○ A name that pays tribute to Roseville’s Native American Community?
• Other questions ideas?

Sufficient Engagement Will Have Been Accomplished When:
A significant number of each of the stakeholder groups above have provided input (see “targets” above).

- Impacted groups such as neighbors, Roseville’s native community and the greater Roseville community is aware of the issue and conversation.
- Other????????
- Other??????

IV. Analysis

Parks and Recreation Commission Members shall review and analyze the data collected and make a recommendation to the City Council to either keep the name the same, change the name or engage in further conversation on the issue. If the commission recommends a name change, the City Council may ask the Parks and Recreation Commission to continue this process to recommend a new name to the city council.

It is important to note that the City’s Racial Equity Narrative will be utilized in the analysis of the data and the provision of a recommendation. This process is not intended to be a simple “straw poll” on the issue.

V. Implementation

The proposed process consists of:

- **PLAN DEVELOPMENT**
  - **November 5, 2020** – Discussion with City Council and finalize plan.
  - **January/February 2020** – Joint meeting with City Council to update on feedback received and seek feedback.

- **INFORMATION GATHERING**
  - Invite Native American expert to Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting December or January
  - **Community Feedback Meeting (February/March)**
    - Share feedback that has been received
    - Invite neighbors to participate
      - Direct mailing to neighborhood
      - Targeted mailing to Native American community (if possible)
      - Social Media/Nextdoor
    - Invite Native American residents to participate
    - Utilize existing contacts at school district(s)
- Other?????
- Other??????

- **WEBSITE (January – March)**
  - Overview of the discussion of the issue and updated
  - Offer opportunity for residents to submit their feedback (both open ended and a survey)

- **WRITTEN FEEDBACK (February/March)**
  - Mail a survey to target populations
    - Park neighborhood (as defined above)
    - Indigenous Roseville residents
  - Allow experts to submit written feedback
  - Other?????

- **IN PERSON ENGAGEMENT**
  - The COVID 19 pandemic causes challenges to other vehicles for engagement that may be used. Examples could include in-person community meetings and engagement at community events. Staff and the commission will continue to analyze the viability of safely using these methods.

- **DELIBERATION AND RECOMMENDATION**
  - Once sufficient engagement with all target populations has been reached, the Parks and Recreation Commission will analyze the data received and develop a recommendation for City Council. Their recommendation shall ensure that impacted communities’ input and racial equity considerations are included in their recommendation.

**VI. Accountability**

The above process will strive to meet the following tangible benchmarks to ensure that it meets the objective listed in section I.

- Notify all neighbors within the defined “neighborhood” of the conversation and provide them an opportunity to participate in the conversation.
- Receive feedback from:
  - 10 Roseville residents who are Native American.
  - 2 Native American experts.
  - 20 Neighbors of the park.
  - Provided the opportunity for all Roseville residents to participate in the process.
- Provided the opportunity for feedback on the final proposal before it is implemented.
- Other ?????????
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<th><strong>Contact Parks and Recreation Commission</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please complete this online form and submit.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Subject:</strong> Pocahontas Park</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Contact Information</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> Kathy Ramundt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Address:</strong> [redacted]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>City:</strong> Roseville</td>
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<td><strong>State:</strong> MN</td>
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<td><strong>Zip:</strong> 55113</td>
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<td><strong>How would you prefer to be contacted?</strong> Email</td>
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<td><strong>Email Address:</strong> [redacted]</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Please Share Your Comment, Question or Concern</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thank you so much for discussing Pocahontas Park at tonight's meeting. I have heard from multiple people, including some indigenous friends, that that name is very offensive. Given the fact that it has no connection to Minnesota, I sincerely hope that you will move to have the name changed. I imagine it would be a healing move to include indigenous people in choosing a name that reflects their presence in our community.</td>
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Contact Parks and Recreation Commission

Please complete this online form and submit.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Subject:</th>
<th>Pocahantas Park - rename it!</th>
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**Contact Information**

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<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Jennifer Wedel</th>
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<tr>
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<td>[Redacted]</td>
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<tr>
<td>City:</td>
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**Please Share Your Comment, Question or Concern**

Hello Commission,

I can't attend the meeting this evening. Here is my public comment. Please rename Pocahantas Park. Pocahantas never even traveled to Minnesota, as far as history knows. I recommend/request that the commission research and discover what indigenous nation originally settled or used that land and rename the park accordingly. Also, add a plaque or some other acknowledgement about the original settlement/use of the area by indigenous people. The folks at Mdewakanton would be happy to help, I imagine.

Thanks!
Jennifer
Caution: This email originated outside our organization; please use caution.

The following form was submitted via your website: Pocahontas Park Comments

My thoughts and comments on Pocahontas Park:: Where did the name of this park come from? Most of the other parks are named for there location, plot/area location name or our two parks dedicated to our two lost police officers.

I would like to suggest it is time to change the name of this park. Even if there is a same street name around the park, the park itself could be renamed.

I would like Parks and Recreation staff to contact me.: Yes

First Name: Sharon
Last Name: Gerber
Address: [Redacted]
City: Roseville
State: MN
Zip Code: 55113
Email address: [Redacted]

Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 9/23/2020 11:20:49 AM
Submitted from IP Address: 174.20.3.238
From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 2, 2020 10:41 AM
To: *RVParksCommission <*RVParksCommission@metro-inet.us>*
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Contact Parks and Recreation Commission

**Caution:** This email originated outside our organization; please use caution.

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**Contact Parks and Recreation Commission**

Please complete this online form and submit.

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<th>Subject:</th>
<th>Pocahontus Park</th>
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**Contact Information**

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<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Kathy Ramundt</th>
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<td>Address:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>City:</td>
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Please Share Your Comment, Question or Concern

Thank you so much for your discussion on Pocahontus Park last night. I really appreciated the fact that Matt Johnson actually read the Powhatan history to inform your discussion. The only thing that was missing was hearing from Indigenous voices that actually live in Roseville, but I was very happy to
hear Darrell Baggenstoss emphasize the importance of hearing from the non-dominant culture before deciding on a new name. I also want to thank others who made similar comments.

I understand that you could choose to recommend changing the name to something more generic or a name based on current or more recent history. I’d like to suggest that this presents a unique opportunity to recognize and honor the Indigenous people who lived here before the white settlers came and literally stole their land. Looking around Roseville I have not seen anything, anywhere, which recognizes that the Dakota and Ojibwe people. Not as street name, a building, a Heritage Trail maker, nothing. Like other white people, I had never given it a moment’s thought until recently, and I was very sad when I visited the Roseville Historical Society last Winter and was told the history begins with Isaac Rose in 1843. I do appreciate that Parks and Recreation hosts Wild Rice Festival and that this year the Music at the Rog included an Indigenous band, and there are probably other things I am missing. What I’d like to see is something permanent that can be used as a catalyst for discussions of the full history of our City.

I’m going to push a little and say I would like to see two parks re-named. One in honor of the Dakota, and one in honor of the Ojibwe. The fact that we have a park named for a woman who was part of a Indigenous nation from the East Coast highlights the fact that many of us have not understood or appreciated that there were more than 500 Indigenous Nations in the US, and many different nations/communities/tribes in Minnesota. If they are discussed at all, they are usually lumped together as Indigenous. How powerful would it be to change that right here, right now, by taking this opportunity to separately honor both the Dakota and Ojibwe. It matters. I know that Don Eubanks who is from Mille Lacs and Dannah Thompson who is White Earth are always very careful to say that they cannot speak for the Dakota.

It could be so beautiful!!! Like the Arts Roseville Mosaic Project at the library, I imagine a project to honor separately honor the Dakota and Ojibwe. If that was at two separate and distinct parks it would be so powerful! It could always be a source of discussion. If it is impossible to imagine two separate parks, I hope in your discussions you will be attune to the fact that it is important to understand who you are hearing from.

Ultimately I could be completely wrong. Maybe it’s not as simple as making the two distinctions or maybe that’s not the
most important thing. This is another great example of a white person thinking I know what is needed! Please take this as a suggestion to encourage you to think big at this time and to suggest some questions to ask before making your recommendations.

One other thing I would like to point out is that usually in October the City of Roseville has a proclamation for Indigenous People’s Day. They are usually very generic. I have been pushing the Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission and the City Council to make all of the Proclamations more meaningful by actually referencing how the proclamations are connected to residents in Roseville, and I have asked them to do programming related to the proclamations too.

I know it’s virtually impossible to think you will have a new name by October, but I think it would be great if along with this year’s Proclamation, the Mayor could announce the work being done to change the name of Pocahontus Park. I imagine in the future every Indigenous proclamation could include references to the park or parks that honor the Indigenous People and why it is important to have them. The question that we like to ask when we are looking at what the City is doing is “Is whatever this action is meaningful, or is it just ‘checking a box’ to say we have done something’. You have a perfect opportunity to make the Indigenous People’s Day proclamation this year be more than checking a box. I know there’s not much time but you could also show that it is possible to move fast when the situation warrants it.

Thank you again for your thoughtful consideration of this park name. The fact that none of you questioned the need to change the name gave me great hope that more and more people in our community, and especially those representing our City, are ready to accept responsibility and do the work to really live up to the Inclusion and Respect Statement.

Thank you.

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Email not displaying correctly? View it in your browser.
Contact Parks and Recreation Commission

Please complete this online form and submit.

Subject: Pocahontas Park

Contact Information

Name: Shannon Geshick
Address: [Redacted]
City: Roseville
State: MN
Zip: 55113

How would you prefer to be contacted? Remember to fill in the corresponding contact information in the fields below.

Phone Number: Field not completed.
Email Address: [Redacted]

Please Share Your Comment, Question or Concern
As Executive Director of the MN Indian Affairs Council, I suggest that the Dakota tribal nations/ community have an opportunity for input as Roseville is their ancestral lands. As an Ojibwe woman, it makes sense to maybe not rename but rather revert back to the original name.

Unless restricted by law, all correspondence to and from Roseville City
From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 3, 2020 8:15 PM
To: *RVParksCommission <*RVParksCommission@metro-inet.us>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Contact Parks and Recreation Commission

**Caution:** This email originated outside our organization; please use caution.

Contact Parks and Recreation Commission

Please complete this online form and submit.

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<tr>
<th>Subject:</th>
<th>Discussion of Pocahontas Park</th>
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**Contact Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Dannah Thompson</th>
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<th>Address:</th>
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<tr>
<th>City:</th>
<th>Roseville</th>
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**Please Share Your Comment, Question or Concern**

I want to thank the Commission for their discussion and informed comments on Pocahontas Park. As a descendant of the White Earth Tribe of Ojibwe, I am very thankful you all identified this as an issue and are pursuing this discussion further, into concrete action. I hope you will work with the HREIC and the Indigenous community to deliver on this significant opportunity.

As was discussed on Tuesday the name Pocahontas Park can
be very triggering for our Indigenous relatives and we want Roseville to be inclusive and welcoming.

As I mentioned in my public comment, the name is harmful in four specific ways. 
1.) It contributes to Pan-Indianism which further strips our unique identities and cultural beliefs. Furthermore, it lacks accountability in acknowledging the awful history between America and Turtle Island and it forces the Indigenous community to relive the worst parts of it.

2.) Pocahontas was not her name and does not honor her as much as it does someone else. If we were to continue wanting to honor her, we should use her real Indigenous name, Matoaka.

3.) Pocahontas was not from modern day Minnesota, but from the East Coast. This erases the history of whose land we are on, the Lakota/Dakota, Ojibwe, and Ho Chunk. It’d be a better to honor those Tribes and leaders who truly sacrificed for this land.

4.) Matoaka was the first sister stolen from these lands which sparked centuries of genocide and the modern day Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's epidemic. We are still losing our relatives to colonization and human trafficking more than any other demographic.

While I write as a resident of Roseville, I believe this issue is important to the entire Indigenous community. We often say, "We are still here". It's because people associate us with ancient history and know only of Pocahontas. This can be very harmful when discussing politics - and social functions of government - if Natives are not included in the discussion. This is one way to have a thoughtful land acknowledge with action, and begin to eliminate the effects of centuries of erasure.

With this in mind, I encourage the Parks and Recreation Commission to advance this discussion to the City Council and consider new names for the park. I personally support sticking to the theme and honoring the Lakota ancestors who sacrificed everything for this land, Roseville.

Chi-Miigwech (Thank you),
Dannah Thompson
Contact Parks and Recreation Commission

Please complete this online form and submit.

Subject: Pocahontas park name change

Contact Information

Name: Pocahontas park name change
Address: Ted Tessier
City: Roseville
State: MN
Zip: 55113

How would you prefer to be contacted? Remember to fill in the corresponding contact information in the fields below.

Phone Number: Field not completed.
Email Address: [redacted]

Please Share Your Comment, Question or Concern

As an indigenous man and a Roseville resident I would really appreciate changing the name of this park. There are plenty of find names that could be selected from the Dakota language that would be more appropriate for this land. I myself am Ojibwe But I honor the fact that I live on Dakota land. Please consider showing respect by changing this name.

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Contact Parks and Recreation Commission

Please complete this online form and submit.

Subject: Park Building Names

Contact Information

Name: Kathy Ramundt
Address: [Redacted]
City: Roseville
State: MN
Zip: 55113

How would you prefer to be contacted? Remember to fill in the corresponding contact information in the fields below.

Phone Number: [Redacted]
Email Address: [Redacted]

Please Share Your Comment, Question or Concern

As you consider to discuss re-naming Pocahontas Park, and because we live in Ramsey County, I thought it might encourage you to seriously consider finding ways to honor the Dakota (Sioux)and Ojibwe people, if you see this quote attributed to Alexander Ramsey from the MN Historical Society page for the Alexander Ramsey House: “the Sioux Indians of Minnesota must be exterminated or driven forever beyond the borders of the state.”

There is much to atone for in our State. I hope we can take this
opportunity to do honor them in our community.

https://www.mnhs.org/ramseyhouse/learn/alexander-ramsey

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