

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA TOPIC

Name recommendation for the park at Main Street and 112th Avenue SE

Meredith Petit, Director

Camron Parker, Assistant Director

Betsy Anderson, Senior Planner

Susan Ulep, Parks Capital Project Coordinator

Parks & Community Services Department

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**DIRECTION**

Staff seeks Council's preferred name for the park at Main Street and 112th Avenue SE and direction to return with a resolution adopting that name.

RECOMMENDATION

Consider directing staff to prepare a resolution to formally adopt the name Isan Park for the park site located at Main Street and 112th Avenue SE, as recommended by the Parks & Community Services Board.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

The park site located at the southwest corner of Main Street and 112th Ave SE (Attachment A) was initially acquired by Sound Transit to support light rail staging and construction of the south tunnel portal. As part of Sound Transit's park impact mitigation requirements, the city and Sound Transit collaborated on the design of a public park space to be developed above the tunnel portal infrastructure. In September 2024, the park property was transferred to the city, and Parks & Community Services assumed full maintenance and operations responsibility.

Naming Process

Bellevue City Council Resolution No. 10151 establishes the policy for naming public parks and park and recreation facilities in Bellevue (Attachment B). The resolution directs that City Council designates the names of parks and park or recreation facilities, and that Council may seek a recommendation from the Parks & Community Services Board that is informed by public input. Resolution No. 10151 specifies that proposed names should be based on the following criteria:

- 1) Neighborhood or geographical identification;
- 2) A natural or geographical feature;
- 3) An historical figure or name of historical or cultural significance;
- 4) A corporation, non-profit organization, or an individual (living or deceased) who has made a significant land, monetary, or other contribution to the park system and who has a compelling connection to Bellevue and/or the park system; and

- 5) In naming parks and park and recreational facilities for individuals or historic figures, the City should consider how such name meets other City priorities, including diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Following the City's naming policy, Council directed staff at a March 4, 2025, study session to seek a name recommendation from the Parks & Community Services Board that is based on community suggestions. Public engagement for the park name began in spring 2025 and was conducted using an online survey. Information about the survey was shared on the project webpage; in a *Neighborhood News* article; and via social media posts. In addition, a postcard about the survey was mailed to neighborhood residents and available at all Bellevue community centers, the downtown library, and H-Mart; and signs were posted in and near the park.

The survey was translated into the six most spoken languages within a 1/3-mile vicinity of the park and resulted in 258 unique name suggestions, proposed by 157 respondents. Of these suggested names, approximately 30 met the criteria in the City Council naming policy. Staff researched the 30 names that were compliant with policy and narrowed the list of possible park names to nine options, which were presented to the Parks & Community Services Board for consideration in spring 2026.

Staff undertook a thorough review of the proposed names to ensure the quality of name options presented for Board consideration. This included analysis of the park's current amenities and potential future uses, including a partnership agreement to develop a proposed commemorative installation in the park to honor Bellevue's Japanese American community. While it developed independently of the park naming process, the commemoration project provided important context to inform the naming process.

Japanese American Legacy Project

A local community-based organization named Isan Bellevue operates with a mission to commemorate Japanese American heritage in Bellevue. They have worked with staff to identify sites for a Legacy Project that honors the contributions of Japanese Americans in the development and growth of the city and builds understanding of the impact of World War II incarceration on the Bellevue Japanese American community.

A Council study session presentation on May 19 provided background information about the collaboration and process to identify potential sites for the commemoration project. In 2023, the City Council allocated \$250,000 (CIP Project No. P-AD-115) to support planning and conceptual design for the project. In 2024, the first stage of planning and conceptual design confirmed the park at Main Street and 112th Avenue SE as a suitable location. In December 2025, a final concept design was developed for the Japanese American Legacy Project.

The commemoration project is intended as an addition to the park's current amenities, designed to inspire education and reflection while preserving the pathways, open space, and gathering areas that currently exist. Isan Bellevue has committed to raising all funding for design and construction of the project. The project timeline depends largely on the success of the fundraising campaign, which may take up to five years.

Parks & Community Services Board Recommendation

After careful deliberation of the nine name options presented, the Board unanimously recommends the name Isan Park to City Council for consideration.

Isan means “legacy” or “heritage” in Japanese. Variations of this name in English, as well as the Japanese word, were suggested by community members who completed the naming survey. The Board noted their appreciation for the community’s name suggestions and expressed an interest in a unique name for the park that would support the Japanese American Legacy Project. While some of the proposed names reflect the park’s location on Main Street and its view of Mount Rainier, the Board observed that many of the other candidate names are common in the region or throughout the country. The Board identified Isan Park as the preferred name because of its distinctive character and connection to Bellevue’s heritage.

The recommended name of Isan Park meets criterion 3 in the city’s park naming policy as a name of “historical or cultural significance.” The recommended name honors the Japanese American community’s contributions to Bellevue, both historically and today.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

Resolution No. 10151 sets forth the policy and procedure for naming public parks and recreation facilities. The City Council designates the names of public parks and park or recreation facilities and may seek a recommendation from the Parks & Community Services Board, which is based on public input from individuals and organizations.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with selecting a preferred name for the park at Main Street and 112th Avenue SE.

OPTIONS

1. Consider directing staff to prepare a resolution to formalize the name Isan Park for the park site located at Main Street and 112th Avenue SE, as recommended by the Parks & Community Services Board.
2. Do not identify a preferred name and provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Resolution No. 10151: Park Naming Policy

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

N/A