

Park Naming Committee Report to City Council



Purpose of this Presentation

- 1) Provide Background on the Park History and Renaming
- 1) Process of the Community-Led Park Renaming Committee
- 1) Information on the Proposed name, Chochenyo Park



Who We Are: The Park Naming Committee

Community Members Serving on the Committee:

- Amelia “Mia” Eichel
- AJ Bustos
- Jessica Santone (presenter)
- Jim Manning
- Katherine Castro
- Philly Jones
- Rachel Brockl (presenter)
- Raquel Williams (presenter)
- Rasheed Shabazz

Representatives from ARPD on the Committee:

- Amy Woolridge, Recreation and Parks Director
- Adrienne Alexander, Recreation and Parks Commission Chair
- Eric Robbins, Recreation and Parks Commission Vice Chair

Complete biographies on Committee members and additional information on the Committee’s process including meeting minutes, survey data, outreach, and more are available at <https://www.alamedaca.gov/Shortcut-Content/Events-Activities/Rename-Jackson-Park>

Background: Park History



1041 — 841 A quiet spot in the park, Alameda, California.

“The desire of the Playground Commission in bestowing the names of presidents on the parks is to inspire the school children with the achievements and deeds of these illustrious men.”

F.N. Delanoy, president of the Parks and Playground Commission to the City Council, Oakland Tribune, 1909

Colonization of the unceded territory of the Ohlone people began in the late 1700s; Spain ‘gifted’ a vast track of the coastal East Bay to Luis Peralta, whose family ownership continued under Mexican rule. Part of his son’s land, Encinal de San Antonio, was purchased in 1851 and **named Alameda in 1853.**

Colonization continued with the purchase of a land tract by Alfred A. Cohen, an English immigrant and financier, who developed this land into Alameda Park Hotel and later the Alameda Park housing subdivision. This included a u-shaped garden created in 1867, which was co-owned by the Alameda Park residents whose property adjoined it. Demand for maintenance of the garden led to transfer of the land to the city in the 1890s and **establishment of the city’s first public park,** known popularly as Alameda Park (no documentation confirms the name was officially adopted). The park was landscaped in line with the City Beautiful movement, which used European design as moralism.

President Andrew Jackson was the 7th president (1829-1837); he was an advocate for slavery and enslaved about 300 people himself. He was a proponent for slavery’s expansion into Western states which included banning the sharing of anti-slavery rhetoric. He also **signed into law and helped implement the 1830 Indian Removal Act,** which aimed to expand land available to enslavers, and resulted in the forced relocation and genocide of people from the Indigenous tribes and nations, commonly known as the **“Trail of Tears”.**

Source: <https://renamejacksonpark.wordpress.com>

Learn more about the park’s history from the presentation by Rasheed Shabazz during the Nov. 14, 2020 Creating Our Future Opening Reception: <https://youtu.be/hWvpVR0qTSE?t=132>.

Background: De - Naming Jackson Park

In 1909, the park was officially named Jackson Park, in honor of Andrew Jackson. The name stood for 111 years, through periods when surrounding blocks were subject to redlining that excluded people of color from property ownership, and periods of public debate on park traffic, structures, and policing that were exclusionary and shaped who could enjoy the park and how.

In 2018, efforts to de-name the park began with public comment by Rasheed Shabazz to the Recreation and Parks Commission. A community group formed, the Committee to Rename Jackson Park, and brought forward a petition to rename the park, signed by over 1,000 Alameda residents. This group led public education about the park history and Andrew Jackson's discriminatory legacy.

In 2020, the police murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and others sparked renewed national attention to still-standing monuments of America's racist past and prompted new calls for the removal of them. In July 2020 the Recreation and Parks Commission and City Council each voted to dename Jackson Park and directed staff to establish a diverse committee that represented all Alameda perspectives, including from the park neighborhood and youth to recommend a new name. **The sign was removed and the committee selection began.**

Park Renaming Committee Goals

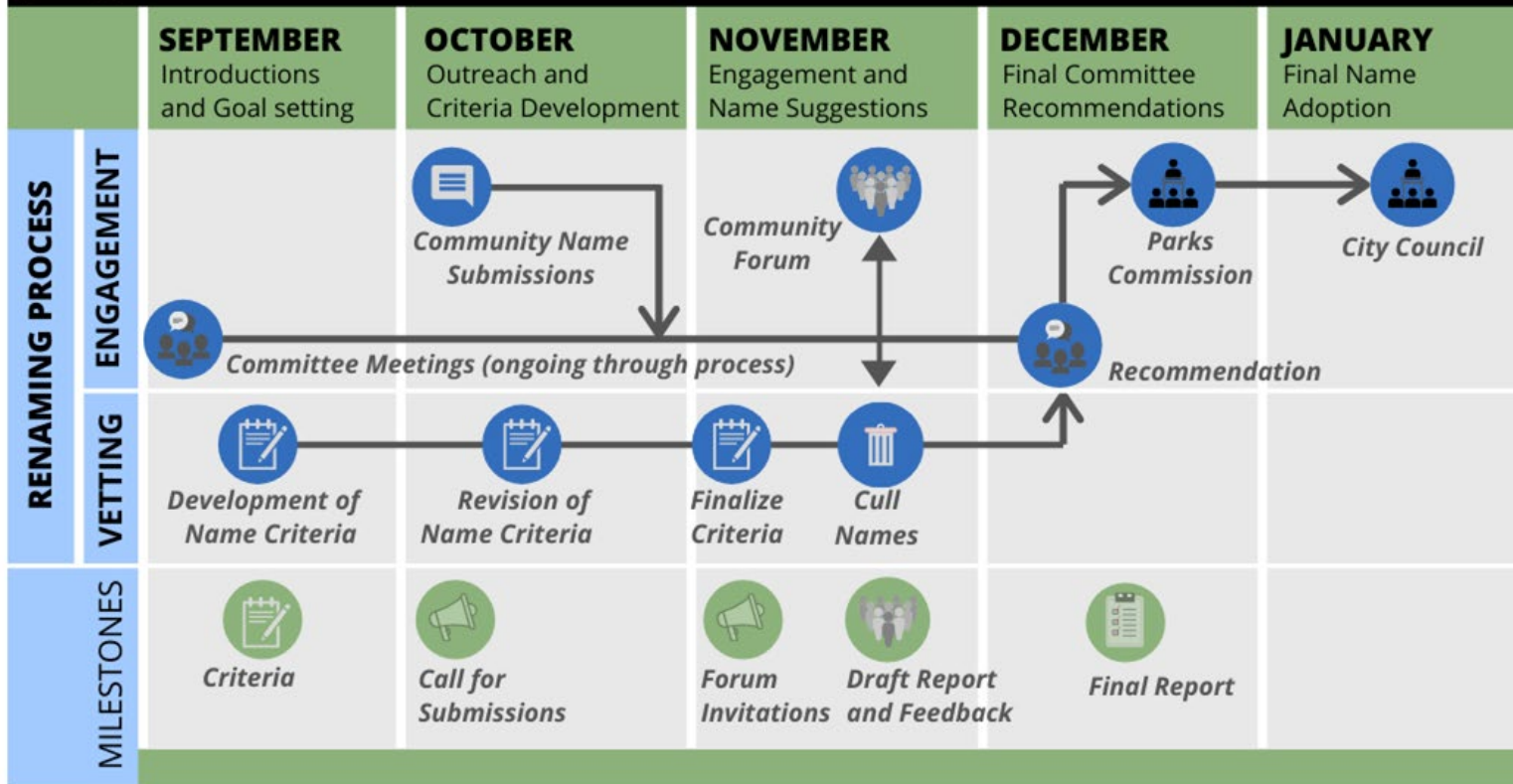
- 1) Recommend names for the park formerly known as Jackson Park to the Commission.
- 2) Recommend ideas to revise the existing Naming Policy and ways we can make the naming process more inclusive.
- 3) To educate the community on why we are renaming the park





PARK RENAMING COMMITTEE PROCESS

The Park formerly known as Jackson Park, Alameda, CA



Planning chart designed by Rasheed Shabazz

Additional documents related to the committee process can be found here:

<https://www.alamedaca.gov/Shortcut-Content/Events-Activities/Rename-Jackson-Park>

Naming Process: Goal Setting & Initial Outreach

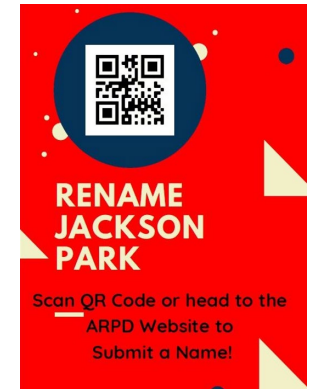
- **The Park Naming Committee**, made up of a carefully selected group of Alameda residents met weekly from September to December 2020.
- Defined goals, including equity, inclusion, and transparency throughout the process.
- Established criteria for the new name:

We are seeking a park name that reflects inclusion, diversity, and equity of the entire community of Alameda, and which represents social justice, human rights, and/or anti-racism. If a person's name is submitted, they must be deceased. Submitted park names should be related to Alameda and/or the greater SF Bay

- **Outreach Subcommittee** conducted focused outreach to over 100 community groups, cultural groups, and local programs, with aim to reach across the entire city, particularly folks historically marginalized or excluded from civic processes.
- Created the *Give us a Sign* project and flyer; posted flyers in parks, business districts and high traffic areas.
- Gave educational presentations about the park name, including at Alameda & Encinal High Schools.
- Gathered over 150 name suggestions from the community.



Park Naming Committee meeting on Zoom



Naming Process: Vetting Names & Community Forum

- **Vetting Subcommittee** sorted collected names into categories:
 - People & Cultural Groups
 - Places/Historical Names
 - Principles
- Used established criteria to to score and evaluate names by:
 - Contributions to Alameda / Bay Area
 - Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
 - Social Justice, Human Rights, & Anti-Racism
- Researched and scrutinized each name against these criteria and compiled team members' scores.
- Presented the highest scoring names in each category to the full committee for final selection of top 10 names.
- Full committee researched the top 10 names and prepared a presentation on the park history and our naming process for the November 23rd virtual Community Forum.
- Reached out to the Confederated Villages of Lisjan and the Sogorea Te Land Trust to seek permission and solicit feedback on the names Ohlone and Chochenyo and to invite their participation in the Forum.
- Conducted public polling during the Forum on Zoom and in a brief Survey Monkey poll advertised on ARPD social media, email list and website during the last week of November.

Places/Historical

Alameda

Principles

Justice

Peace

People & Cultural Groups

Chochenyo

Fred Korematsu

Mabel Tatum

Mary Rudge

Nielsen Tam

Ohlone

Yoshiko Uchida

Naming Process: Evaluation & Final Recommendation

- Scrutinized community feedback alongside our research findings.
- Evaluated diversity, equity, and inclusion in the process, including lack of equitable representation during the Forum and in the public survey in November.
- Weighed the impact of each potential name on our community as a whole.

	Community Forum 11.23.20		SurveyMonkey 11.24-29.20
	Which name stood out to you? (n=27)	What name represents the kind of place you want Alameda to be? (n=25)	Please choose your top 5 choices of park names (n=625)
Ohlone	15	11	295
Alameda	11	10	384
Chochenyo	11	9	115
Mabel Tatum	6	2	71
Peace	2	3	157
Justice	2	5	130
Nielsen Tam	2	1	75
Fred Korematsu	0	4	98
Yoshiko Uchida	0	2	91
Mary Rudge	0	1	69

- Selected final name recommendation through a consensus decision making process based on:
 - best fit with all of our criteria,
 - specific park location,
 - critical analysis of all community feedback, and
 - best opportunity for education to the community.
- Continued consultation with the Language Carrier for the Confederated Villages of Lisjan.

Final Names proposed to Recreation and Parks

Commission

Ohlone*
Chochenyo
Mabel Tatum
Justice

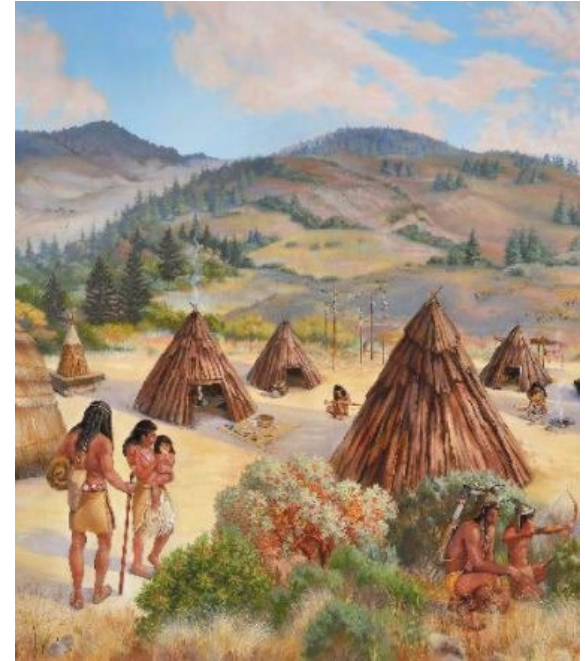
** Chochenyo is the name preferred by representatives of the Confederated Villages of Lisjan*

Background: History of the Land and the Ohlone People

The Ohlone people are a group of approximately 50 villages and family groups who lived on the land that is now known as the San Francisco Bay Area before the Spanish invasion. The unceded territory of the Lisjan Ohlone people includes the City of Alameda. The name Ohlone became popular in the 1960s and 1970s when people organized for Indigenous rights, inspired by the Black Power and American Indian Movements.

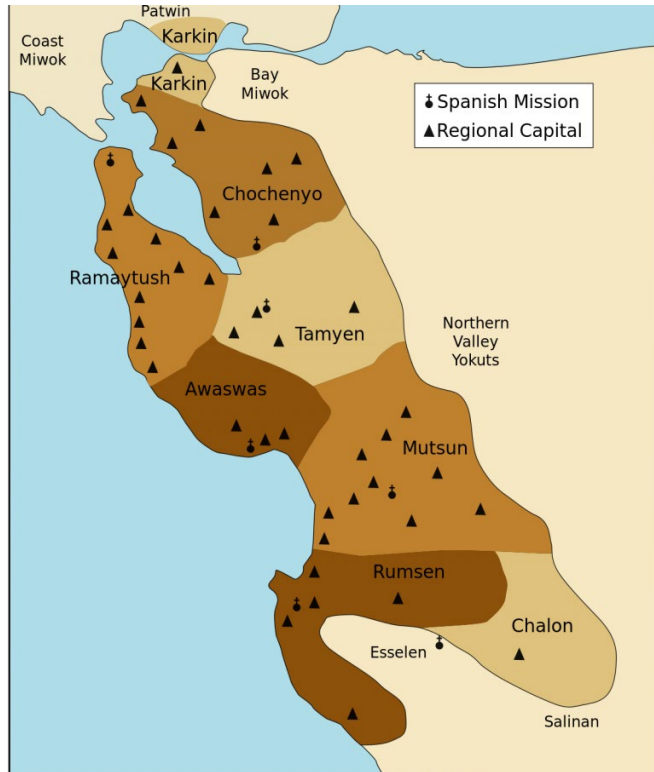
Prior to Spanish invasion in the late 1700s, the Ohlone people thrived in this area by hunting, fishing, gathering, and farming. Spanish soldiers and missionaries brought disease, drastic change in diet, food shortages, harsh lifestyle changes, unsanitary living conditions, forced assimilation, and death to Native communities. In the 1800s, Lisjan Ohlone survivors faced extermination policies of the United States that aimed to eliminate California Natives entirely; most Lisjan families survived by isolating themselves and concealing their identities. Cultural and spiritual traditions were forced into dormancy or secrecy, and much knowledge perished with the passing of generations. (<https://sogoreate-landtrust.org/lisjan-history-and-territory>)

Today, there are small segments of the Ohlone people that still live in the Bay Area and continue to fight to keep their culture alive. Most of the tribes continue to preserve and revitalize their cultural history through education, restoration of their native languages, and the practice of cultural storytelling. (theculturetrip.com)



Source: Image from the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History; www.santacruzmuseum.org/first-peoples-of-california-virtual-exhibit/

About the Proposed Name: Chochenyo Park



Chochenyo refers to one of the eight Ohlone languages spoken by the people who were the original inhabitants and caretakers of the unceded territory that includes the place presently named Alameda. While there are no living first-language Chochenyo speakers, the language has been revived and is still spoken by the local Ohlone tribes, including the Confederated Villages of Lisjan, a group not formally recognized by the federal government.

The Chochenyo language database contains 1,000 - 2,000 basic words. In the 20th century, this language has been taught in language lessons, tribal language workshops, California tribe conferences, and at educational institutions. ([06.04.2004 - Conferences focus on saving native languages \(berkeley.edu\)](https://native-land.ca/maps/territories/chochenyo/))

The Committee process arrived at two Indigenous names, Ohlone and Chochenyo, but **Chochenyo is preferred by members of the Confederated Villages of Lisjan as it is more specific to the people who lived in this place.** Naming the park this way honors them, respects their interests, and recognizes their continued impact in the East Bay.

Support for the Proposed Name Chochenyo Park

- **A tribally supported decision:**

- The Confederated Villages of Lisjan generously granted the City of Alameda permission to use this name.
- The Committee hopes that this name will begin a process of developing a relationship with the Ohlone Tribe, bringing a land acknowledgment to City Council for approval and including them in community decisions.



- **A community supported decision:**

- Ohlone received the most support during the Community Forum polling, when respondents had historical context about the park and name choices.
- The two names (Ohlone and Chochenyo) together received 410 votes in our online survey, which asked for top five name choices (625 respondents; 1485 total votes).
- The Recreation and Parks Commission unanimously voted to recommend the name.
- Reflects the diversity, equity, and inclusion as outlined in the park naming criteria determined by the Committee.

- **An ethical decision:**

- Chochenyo Park presents an opportunity for education about an inclusive history of the original peoples of this place.
- A repudiation of Andrew Jackson, his enslavement of African-Americans, and his involvement in the genocide of Indigenous peoples and theft of their land. This name is a gesture towards redressing the harm of the former name.