

**RESOLUTION NO. 1199**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF GIG HARBOR, WASHINGTON,  
RENAMING AUSTIN ESTUARY PARK AND DESIGNATING THE  
tx<sup>w</sup>aalqəł ESTUARY AREA IN HONOR OF THE s<sup>x</sup>wəbabš BAND OF  
THE PUYALLUP TRIBE.**

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**WHEREAS**, the City recognizes and honors the fact that Gig Harbor is built upon the homelands and villages of Indigenous Peoples of this region better known as a band of the Puyallup Tribe called s<sup>x</sup>wəbabš (translated: “swift water people”); and

**WHEREAS**, the land surrounding the estuary of North Creek was the location of a long house of the s<sup>x</sup>wəbabš band and the area was of vital importance to the s<sup>x</sup>wəbabš band for salmon fishing, clam and oyster cultivation, and canoe carving; and

**WHEREAS**, the City and Puyallup Tribe are committed to work in cooperation to build the relationship between the two governments; and

**WHEREAS**, these actions are a demonstration of the City’s ongoing commitment to strengthening the relationship between the Puyallup Tribe and the City; and

**WHEREAS**, the City wishes to continue to honor the contributions of the Austin family to the development of Gig Harbor; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor formed an ad hoc committee of councilmembers, tribal representatives, and others from the community to explore options for renaming a City park to honor the s<sup>x</sup>wəbabš band; and

**WHEREAS**, after a series of meetings, the ad hoc committee forwarded its recommendations to the Gig Harbor Parks Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 3, 2021, the Parks Commission held a public hearing on renaming the park based on the recommendations of the ad hoc committee and subsequently recommended to the City Council that the name of “Austin Estuary Park” be changed to “Austin Park”; and

**WHEREAS**, the Parks Commission further recommended, based on the recommendation of the ad hoc committee, that the area surrounding the North Creek (aka Donkey Creek) estuary be referred to as the “tx<sup>w</sup>aalqəł Estuary.” In the Lushootseed language of the Puyallup Tribe, tx<sup>w</sup>aalqəł means “place where game exists;” and

**WHEREAS**, the Gig Harbor Peninsula Historical Society (aka Harbor History Museum) expressed support for the name change to “Austin Park”; and

**WHEREAS**, the protocol included in Resolution 717 has been adhered to by staff and the Parks Commission;

**NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GIG HARBOR, WASHINGTON, HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:**


Section 1. The existing City park named "Austin Estuary Park" shall now be named "Austin Park."

Section 2. The 7+ acre area surrounding the estuary of North Creek which includes the Harbor History Museum site, other lands in and around Donkey Creek Park and Austin Park, and is located within the North Creek watershed (as shown on Exhibit A) is designated as the "txʷaalqəł Estuary." The Mayor is authorized, in consultation with the Puyallup Tribe and other entities that support the tribe, to develop and install interpretive signage on City-owned property within the txʷaalqəł Estuary area and to provide educational information on the City's website and other avenues.


Section 3. Recognition of Ancestral Homelands of s̓x̓wəbabš Peoples. The Mayor is directed to add to future staff work plans the establishment of an honorary historic area along the Gig Harbor waterfront to recognize the ancestral homelands of the s̓x̓wəbabš band for educational and awareness purposes. Establishment of the historic area should be done in consultation with the Puyallup Tribe, the Design Review Board Historic Preservation designees, and other entities that support the tribe, as appropriate. City staff will work with the Puyallup Tribe to establish the area to be called the "Ancestral Homelands of the s̓x̓wəbabš." This would be an honorary designation for educational and awareness purposes only and would carry with it no regulatory impact.

**APPROVED** by the City Council this 22nd day of February, 2021.

APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Kuhn

ATTEST/AUTHENTICATED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

FILED WITH THE CITY CLERK: 2/9/2021  
PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL: 2/22/21  
RESOLUTION NO: 1199

**EXHIBIT A**

**Map of tx<sup>w</sup>aalqəł Estuary**

