

## PROPOSAL FOR BILINGUAL COMMEMORATIVE NAME

### Submitted by the Grange Community Association and Campbell House Museum

The Grange Community Association and Campbell House Museum propose the name of **Asini-Aadisookaan-aki / Stone Spirit Park** for the new park that will be constructed in 2025 on St Patrick Street, south of Dundas Street. The new park will connect to Simcoe Street through a Privately-Owned Publicly Accessible Space (POPS) associated with Lanterra Development's condo development at 234 Simcoe Street.

The new park is a major component within the Relic Linear Park System, a community-led vision that features architectural relic stones and Indigenous artwork within the Grange Park neighbourhood, along with native trees and plantings (<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/construction-new-facilities/new-parks-facilities/relic-linear-park-system/>). The linear park will run from the Southern Gateway Boulevard at Queen and Simcoe streets (completed in 2023, beside Campbell House Museum) to the northern gateway at Dundas Street West and McCaul Street (kitty corner from the Art Gallery of Ontario, construction in 2025).

We urge the City of Toronto to assign the proposed bilingual commemorative name of **Asini-Aadisookaan-aki / Stone Spirit Park** to the new park because it is inspired by Anishnaabe artist Michael Belmore's stone sculpture, commissioned by the City of Toronto and called *Mishibizhiig: The Underwater Panther*. This massive carved granite block is a focal point because of its massive size, its location within the landscape design, and its different stone type – mostly black granite versus the limestone and sandstone of the park's other stone carvings.

The proposed name is significant to Indigenous Peoples, specifically the Anishnaabe People.

The proposed name honours and respects Indigenous ways of knowing because it springs from Michael Belmore's artist's statement about the sculpture. In his statement, the Anishnaabe artist refers to liminal sites that are spiritually active places, and he describes the Anishnaabe world view of a tiered cosmos animated by the ongoing and reciprocal interaction of beings and persons both natural and spiritual.

Importantly, before sharing the proposed name with the wider community, we reached out to Michael Belmore to discuss the proposed name and to ensure that the name respected his work. In his letter of support for the proposed name, he states, "The name Asini-Aadisookaan-aki / Stone Spirit Park expresses the intent of my work in stone. The name also acknowledges the spirit residing in the park's other carved stones, produced by anonymous artists for the city's buildings many years ago." In this way, the proposed name also connects with the City of Toronto's past architectural history that is embodied in the carved stone fragments that are integrated into the park's design. These stone fragments were salvaged from demolished Toronto heritage buildings by Rosa and Spencer Clark, then stored at what is now called Guild

Park and Gardens, a Toronto public park:

<https://www.toronto.ca/data/parks/prd/facilities/complex/406/index.html>)

At Michael Belmore's request, we also ensured the correct Anishnaabemowin expression of Stone Spirit Park, by consulting with acclaimed visual artist Robert Houle and his family, all speakers, and with Chief Sault of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and her Council, who confirmed the name in Anishnaabemowin.

In addition, we reached out to Chief Sault, who consulted with her Council and provided a letter of support.

We elicited public feedback about the proposed name in various ways. First, we sent a detailed Information Package about naming the new park to institutions, organizations, and individuals, requesting their letters of support. We are especially pleased that Stephan Jost, the CEO of the Art Gallery of Ontario, has offered a letter of support. The AGO's support is also meaningful because the northern gateway of the Relic Linear Park System will be constructed on the northeast corner of Dundas Street West and McCaul Street, across the intersection from the AGO, and this park will also feature an artwork by an Indigenous artist (Jay Havens). Additional letters of support have come from: residents of the Grangetown condominium, on St Patrick Street, directly across from the new park; 12 Degrees Condominium; Federation of South Toronto Residents' Association (FoSTRA); Miriam Kramer, Executive Director, Government & Community Relations and Public Policy, OCAD University; and Richard Longley, former President of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario.

To gauge public opinion, we created a petition and informational poster. Over a few days in July, we gathered signatures and addresses, standing at Queen and Simcoe, beside Relic Linear Park's Southern Gateway so that people would understand the new park's sculptural and green aspect. We also shared the petition with visitors to Campbell House Museum in the period July 20—August 8 and during the museum's outdoor Craft Mini-Market on Saturday, July 20. We indicated to visitors and passersby that they could also express a lack of support; however, invariably, people liked the name. We have not received any opposition to the proposed name.

We also posted the Information Package on the Campbell House Museum website.

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**The Grange Community Association** is a volunteer organization of residents, committed to strengthening and preserving the quality of life, the natural environment, and the distinctive character of Toronto's Grange neighbourhood (bounded by University and Spadina, east to west, and College and Queen, north to south). Our motto is "Better Buildings, Better Spaces, Better City."

<https://www.grangecommunity.ca/en/home/>

**Campbell House Museum** is a community museum, as defined by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. The museum opened in 1974 at the intersection of Queen and University, at the southeast corner of the Grange Neighbourhood.

<https://www.campbellhousemuseum.ca/>

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#### ATTACHMENTS

1. Letter from artist Michael Belmore, June 12, 2024
2. Letter from Chief Claire Sault, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
3. Letters of support for park name from:
  - a. Francesca Elliott, Director/Curator, Campbell House Museum
  - b. Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, President, Grange Community Association
  - c. Max Allen, President, Grangetown Condominium Corp., 78 St Patrick Street
  - d. Sal Rabanni, President, 12 Degrees Condominium, 15 Beverley Street
  - e. Rick Green, Chair, Federation of South Toronto Residents' Association (FoSTRA)
  - f. Stephen Jost, Michael and Sonja Koerner Director, and CEO, Art Gallery of Ontario
  - g. Miriam Kramer, Executive Director, Government & Community Relations and Public Policy, OCAD University
  - h. Richard Longley, former President, Architectural Conservancy of Ontario; co-founder Harbord Village Heritage Conservation District, Phase 1; leader, campaign to design and build The Doctors' Parkette (Brunswick at College)
4. Information Package: Naming the new park on St Patrick Street
5. Petition in support of the bilingual commemorative name **Asini-Aadisookaan-aki / Stone Spirit Park**
  - a. Petition template
  - b. Signatures, July 17-19, 2024
  - c. Signatures, July 20, 2024
  - d. Signatures, July 20-Aug 8, 2024
  - e. Photograph, gathering public input at Craft Mini-Market, July 20, 2024
  - f. Photograph, visitor reading poster at Craft Mini-Market, July 20, 2024
  - g. Poster content for gathering signatures: Help Us Name a New Park!