



West 7th / Fort Road Federation

395 Superior Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102
651.298.5599
www.FortRoadFederation.org

August 14, 2026

Andy Rodriguez, Director
Department of Parks and Recreation
400 City Hall Annex
25 West 4th Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Director Rodriguez,

In 2017, the West 7th/Fort Road Federation began the process to rename Victoria Park. Throughout 2017 and 2018, the Federation worked to propose a name. At the conclusion of the process, commissioners raised questions about whether the process had engaged a sufficiently broad range of community members. That experience remained an important consideration as the community revisited the possibility of renaming the park.

Over the years, community interest persisted to find a fitting name for the parkland more deeply tied to community history and identity. In December 2024, the Federation opened an application for the Park Naming Committee, with an intentional focus on expanding community engagement throughout the process. This notice was published on the Federation website, social media, via flyers, and in our local newspapers including *The Community Reporter* and *MyVillager*. Applications closed January 31, 2025. Seven applications were received, and all seven applicants were appointed to the committee.

The committee met three times throughout 2025. The committee developed guiding principles, carried forward relevant work of the previous committee, learned about the history of the land, discussed and examined current uses of the space, and decided how best to engage the community in this renaming process.

Community engagement included word of mouth, social media, Federation newsletters, flyers, local media coverage, and yard signs with QR codes posted within the park to invite feedback. The committee issued an open call for community members to suggest names. After receiving suggestions, the committee reviewed and narrowed the list to ensure that proposed names met the City's park naming policy criteria before advancing them for broader consideration. Throughout the process, the Executive Director met with Alice Messer on multiple occasions to discuss the park naming policy and best practices and to ensure alignment with City requirements.

The Fort Road Federation coordinates participation in advocacy and planning and builds community connections for the residents, businesses, and nonprofit organizations of the West 7th neighborhood so that it is a place where people want to live, work, and play.

In April, 2025, the feedback form opened with five semi-finalist names that met the park naming policy criteria. Following the community feedback process, Brewer's Bluff Park emerged as the preferred name.

The name Brewer's Bluff Park provides an opportunity to honor the history and identity of Saint Paul's West 7th neighborhood. Beginning in the mid 1800s, the area became home to many immigrants who were drawn to Saint Paul by opportunities for work and affordable land.

Many German immigrants, bringing generations of brewing knowledge and cultural traditions, settled along West 7th Street because of its proximity to the Mississippi River and the ancient sandstone aquifers beneath the surrounding bluffs. These geologic formations provided abundant spring water, while the naturally cool sandstone caves offered the consistent temperatures needed to store and lager beer before refrigeration. Together, these unique natural resources made our neighborhood an ideal location for brewing.

German immigrants began opening breweries, establishing the neighborhood as the center of Minnesota's brewing industry. The breweries became gathering places for the community and foundations of the neighborhood's economy. Breweries grew into some of Minnesota's most recognizable businesses, employing thousands of workers, notably the Czech (Bohemian) and Slovak immigrants who were a driving work force in Saint Paul in the 19th century.

The name Brewer's Bluff Park reflects both the cultural legacies and the neighborhood's unique geography. The bluff overlooking the Mississippi River is more than just a scenic landmark; it is an essential part of why breweries have flourished here. The proposed name ties together the natural landscape with the people whose vision, hard work, and traditions helped build West 7th into one of Saint Paul's most distinctive neighborhoods.

The opportunity to rename this park aligns with ongoing efforts to preserve and celebrate West 7th's historic identity. As the neighborhood continues to grow and change, it is important to retain connections to the stories that made it what it is today. The park's location adjacent to Summit Brewing Company provides a particularly meaningful connection between West 7th's brewing history and its present-day vitality. Today, visitors to the park may experience the sights and smells of an active brewery nearby. We feel this is a fitting reminder of the industry that helped define this part of Saint Paul.

The name Brewer's Bluff Park is grounded in local history, helps current residents feel connected to their community, and perhaps gives visitors a greater appreciation for the people and industries that shaped Saint Paul.

We thank you for the opportunity to submit this proposal and respectfully request the consideration of Brewer's Bluff Park as the new name for the park.

Sincerely,

Julia McColley
Executive Director