



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT JOINS ALDERMEN AND ADVOCATES FOR UNVEILING OF
NEW SIGNS FOR JEAN-BAPTISTE POINTE DUSABLE LAKE SHORE DRIVE**

*Chicago's Iconic Lakefront Roadway is Renamed in Honor of First Nonindigenous
Permanent Settler, An Immigrant and Trader from Haiti*

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today joined Aldermen Sophia King (4th), Alderman David Moore (17th), and other advocates for the ceremonial unveiling of new signs for the re-naming of Chicago's 18-mile lakefront roadway as Jean-Baptiste Pointe DuSable Lake Shore Drive at Buckingham Fountain. The name change was championed by Aldermen King and Moore, who co-sponsored the ordinance that was approved by the City Council in June.

"In celebration of Jean-Baptiste Pointe DuSable's indelible mark on our history, we are proud to rename this iconic roadway after him," said Mayor Lightfoot.

"Importantly, this renaming also recognizes and honors the contributions of our Black residents—especially those who are Haitian. By telling the story of our founder on this highway, we are further unifying our city and residents in a moment of racial and historical reckoning."

"I couldn't be more excited about this historic moment - changing the iconic Lake Shore Drive to DuSable Drive after our founder," said 4th Ward Alderman Sophia King. "We should look at this in context. Other founders of cities are celebrated with this type of reverence: Pittsburgh was named after its founder; Cleveland after its founder; and Cadillac founded Detroit. I am thrilled that we have chosen to elevate our founder, Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable to this status"

"As the singer Billie Holiday would say, 'The difficult, I'll do right now. The impossible will take a little while.' When we first started the quest to rename Lake Shore Drive after the city's founder, Jean-Baptiste Pointe DuSable, no one believed it would happen," said 17th Ward Alderman David Moore. "After decades of starts and stops, one of Chicago's most iconic roadways is named after the Black man whose vision as an entrepreneur to see Chicago as a commercial center, is finally a reality. For everything there is a season and the City Council's vote for Lakeshore DuSable Drive was the right thing at the right time."



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DuSable was a trader of African descent who was born in what is now Haiti. Along with his wife, a native American woman named Kitihawa of the Potawatomi tribe, DuSable established a trading post and farm in the 1770s at the mouth of the Chicago River on its north bank where Michigan Avenue now crosses the river. The Michigan Avenue Bridge was renamed the DuSable Bridge in 2010. A bust of DuSable was installed near the northeast bridgehouse, near where his cabin was believed to have been.

"We thank the Black Heroes Matter Coalition, the ordinance sponsors and all involved who helped to make Jean-Baptiste Pointe DuSable Lake Shore Drive a reality," said Ephraim M. Martin, President of the Black Heroes Matter Coalition. "This historic step tells the world that Chicago is not just ready for change, but it is setting the country on the path to end systemic racism, to the point where other major cities are now following our lead and honoring our Founder, Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable, and other great Black heroes."

The origins of Lake Shore Drive date back to 1869 with the legislation passed by the Illinois General Assembly that established the Lincoln Park District from Michigan Avenue to North Avenue. The roadway was extended north and south in the 1880s as was the name Lake Shore Drive.

The Chicago Department of Transportation has started installing the new signs along the roadway from Hayes Drive to Hollywood Avenue, including twelve large highway signs and more than 80 smaller street signs.

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