



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 27, 2021

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO HONOR JEAN BAPTISTE POINT DUSABLE

CHICAGO - Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced the City's comprehensive plan to honor Jean Baptiste Point DuSable—the first permanent non-indigenous settler of Chicago— and his wife Kitihawa's legacy to the founding of Chicago. Through this plan, a private developer will invest \$10 million, and the City will invest \$30 million for the full development of DuSable Park, commissioning of new public art projects, and programming to create the DuSable Riverwalk, as well as the establishment of the annual "DuSable Festival."

"For far too long, the contributions of Black people both here in Chicago and across the country have gone overlooked and underappreciated—making it all the more important that we fully honor Jean Baptiste Point DuSable, the Black immigrant from Haiti who founded the settlement that would later become our city," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Had DuSable not chosen to seek his fortune at the nexus of Lake Michigan and the Chicago River, the great city we know and love simply wouldn't exist today. That's why it's only right that we invest in efforts to properly celebrate and uplift his incredible legacy."

The City's comprehensive plan designates three sites that have been identified for development for their prominence and proximity to the site of the DuSable homestead—the first of which being DuSable Park.

Established in the mid-1980s, DuSable Park is currently an undeveloped 3.44-acre peninsula of reclaimed land located along the Lake Michigan shoreline directly east of North Lake Shore Drive and north of the Chicago River. Through the City's targeted investment, the Chicago Park District looks forward to the design process, which includes establishing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify a park designer. This RFP process is set to begin later this year.

Additionally, the City identified DuSable Point on the Riverwalk, where a monumental, representative sculpture and tribute to DuSable and Kitihawa will be



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developed where the main branch of the Chicago River meets the south and north branches. This artwork will be visible to commuters on the El train, visitors of the Riverwalk, and the many thousands of people that participate in architectural boat tours each year. Part of this development will also include educational programming for tour guides and school groups.

The City will also install a monument to honor DuSable downtown near DuSable Bridge. This artwork will be highly visible from Michigan Avenue to residents and visitors. In addition, the City will upgrade existing tributes and signage near the bridge, which identifies the location of the DuSable homestead.

The last component of the City's comprehensive plan includes establishing an annual "DuSable Festival" to celebrate the legacy of DuSable and his wife Kitihawa. The festival will allow the City to expand and support existing community-based events that take place every August on the anniversary of his death and highlight the importance of DuSable and the Potawatomi nation, who are native to this region.

The City will identify artist/ artist team consultants to develop the public art master plan for DuSable to galvanize community groups and stakeholders around this effort. The information in this plan will inform the development of a Request for Proposals that will identify artists through an open, competitive process to develop the new public artworks. Artist recruitment will focus on engaging artists of color whose work is underrepresented in the City's public art collection. Multiple sites can approach the subject matter from different artistic styles and viewpoints include representational sculpture, contemporary styles, and integrated landscaping.

This comprehensive plan asserts the Mayor's belief that Jean Baptiste Point DuSable has played a critical role in Chicago's history and has not received the proper appreciation he deserves. As the first permanent non-indigenous settler of our city, we must take these measures and others to properly honor his legacy and contributions to the city of Chicago.

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