



Onigamiinsing
“at the little portage”



Duluth Indigenous
Commission

Gichi-ode’ Akiing
(pronounced "gi-chee-oh-day-
ah-king") translates to "a grand
heart place"

In 2015 the Indigenous
Commission requested to
change the name of what was
then known as Lake Place Park.
The Ojibwe name, Gichi-ode’
Akiing, was officially adopted
by Duluth City Council in 2018.
We will not forget the past, but
this park offers our city an
opportunity to create
reconciliation through
reclaiming the Indigenous part
of our history and to move
forward with a grand heart.

CHIEF BUFFALO MURALS

The murals were designed and
painted collaboratively by a team of
artists led by Moira Villiard (Fond du
Lac Band of Ojibwe direct
descendent), including Michelle
Defoe (Red Cliff Band of Ojibwe),
Awanigiizhik Bruce (Turtle Mountain
Band of Ojibwe), and Sylvia Houle
(Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe),
with assistance from Mana Bolton
and Conor Fairbanks, as well as over
500 community volunteers. The walls
feature both historical and
contemporary depictions of
Indigenous people connected to our
region, maps of both treaty territories
and Chief Buffalo’s famous journey,
Ojibwe stories and folklore, and
traditional florals. This project was
honored in a ceremony in 2019 and
continues to serve as a space for
reflection and gathering for both
Indigenous and non Indigenous
community members.



Scan to learn
more about Chief
Buffalo and the
murals

OJIBWE WORDS

OJIBWE	ENGLISH
Miigwech	Thank you
Chi-miigwech	Thank you very much
Boozhoo	Greeting/Hello/ Welcome
Aaniin	Greetings etc.
Biindigen!	Come in, or come inside
Giga-waabamin miinawaa	I'll see you again (Goodbye)
Mino-giizhigad	(be a or have a) Nice Day



Scan for
pronunciation
guide



Photo by Moira Villiard



1854 Treaty

As part of the 1854 Treaty between the United States and the Chippewa of Lake Superior, Chief Buffalo selected a square mile of land in the large territory that the Chippewa ceded. The area Chief Buffalo chose would later become the city of Duluth. At the time, the land had not yet been platted, so Chief Buffalo used a large rock as a landmark to establish the location of his square mile of land. The Chief Buffalo rock was located at what is now the south-west corner of First Avenue West and Michigan Street.

Gichi-ode' Akiing “a grand heart place”

Trail System

Lake Avenue, which extends from the ship canal through Downtown, and up the hill to Duluth Heights, was originally an Indigenous trail. This trail system extended to Pike Lake and Grand Lake, an area used by Indigenous people as wintering grounds.

Summer Camps

Minnesota Point is the world's longest natural fresh water sand bar. Native Americans have lived along the seven-mile long peninsula for an untold number of centuries. An 1865 map of Duluth shows wigwam camp sites at the foot of 5th Avenue West and near the portage.

Minnesota Point Portage

The Ojibwe name for the Duluth area is Onigamiinsing or “little portage,” which refers to the short crossing over Minnesota Point from Lake Superior to the Bay of Superior. It is presumed that the site of the portage was destroyed when the artificial ship canal was constructed across the narrow neck of the point.