

# Red Robe Park



**Location:** 8<sup>th</sup> Street/Reserve Avenue

**Size:** 3.31 Acres

**Classification:** Mini/Neighborhood Park

**Usage:** Picnicking, Fishing, Walking on the Riverwalk

- Park where the history of our fine city begins.
- Formerly known as Indian Village Park.
- Until 1904, it was the site of an Ojibwe Village of 40 families, with dancing grounds and trails.
- 1976 – Statue of Chief Mon-Si-Moh dedicated in time for our nation’s Bicentennial.
- 1986 – Jaycees donated funds and labor to construct a 23’x30’ shelter.
- 1986 – DNR donated a fishing pier.
- 1988 – Playground equipment donated in memory of Charlie Emanuel.
- Park used in August for our annual Minn Aqua Fishing Clinic.

After the death of Chief Meskokonaye, Meskokonaye Jr. became Chief and assumed control of the land retained by his father. Chief Meskokonaye Jr. was coerced into leasing a portion of their land to the Crookston Lumber Co. as a landing but unbeknownst to Chief Meskokonaye Jr. the Department of War later known as the Bureau of Indian Affairs assumed control of all Indian land held in Trust and they had written a lease for this same land for the same time period to another white businessman. These two white men both asserted their rights under lease agreements and challenged each other in court. This case eventually made its way to the Supreme Court where it was ruled that Chief Meskokonaye Jr. was indeed the heir to this land and this land was intended to be an allotment rather than a reservation. With this land being declared an allotment, Chief Meskokonaye was declared competent and a fee patent was issued for this land so the Chief could lease, sell or do whatever he pleased with his own land. The Chief was not familiar with the ways of the white world and did not realize that with a fee patent came annual land taxes. He leased the land to the Crookston Lumber Company his original lessor and collected the rent for a number of years. In the meantime, Chief Meskokonaye and his band moved to Red Lake. He continued to collect the rent but his land continued to accumulate taxes against it, finally it was declared tax delinquent and tax forfeiture proceedings were initiated. The Crookston Lumber Company paid the delinquent taxes and took ownership of the land thus the reservation was lost.