

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council**March 3, 2026**

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**SUBJECT: CHOCTAW CODE TALKERS HISTORICAL MARKER AT
VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK**

This report provides information regarding the Texas Historical Commission's Choctaw Code Talker Historic Marker to be installed at the City's Veterans Memorial Park.

Background

Since October 1950, Veterans Memorial Park has served as a solemn tribute to those who served in America's wars, especially the men and women from Fort Worth. The park features several significant memorials, including those dedicated to the Texas 36th Infantry Division, one for World War I (installed in 1950) and another for World War II (1987).

Visitors will also find a statue honoring Flanders Field (WWI), four monuments recognizing Medal of Honor recipients with Fort Worth connections, two naval projectiles from WWII, and a Navy anchor on loan from the U.S. Navy commemorating the commissioning of the USS *Fort Worth*.

In partnership with the Choctaw Nation, the Texas Historical Commission has proposed adding a historical marker recognizing the Choctaw Code Talkers who were members of the 36th Infantry Division during World War I. These Native American soldiers played a critical role in Allied communications during campaigns in northern France. By transmitting messages in the Choctaw language, a code the Germans could not decipher within 24 hours, they became instrumental to U.S. operations. The Choctaw Code Talkers are widely considered to be the first Native American Code Talkers to serve in the U.S. military.

This new marker would expand the park's mission to honor not only military service, but also the unique cultural contributions that have shaped U.S. history. Staff has involved the City's Historic Preservation Officer throughout the process and briefed the Park & Recreation Advisory Board at the February 25, 2026, meeting.

Unveiling Event

The Park & Recreation Department is working with Texas Historical Commission, Choctaw Nation, and others to plan an unveiling event for the Choctaw Code Talker Historical Marker. The event is scheduled for April 1, 2026.

For any questions, please contact Joel McKnight, Park & Recreation Department Assistant Director, at Joel.McKnight@fortworthtexas.gov.

**Jesus "Jay" Chapa
City Manager**