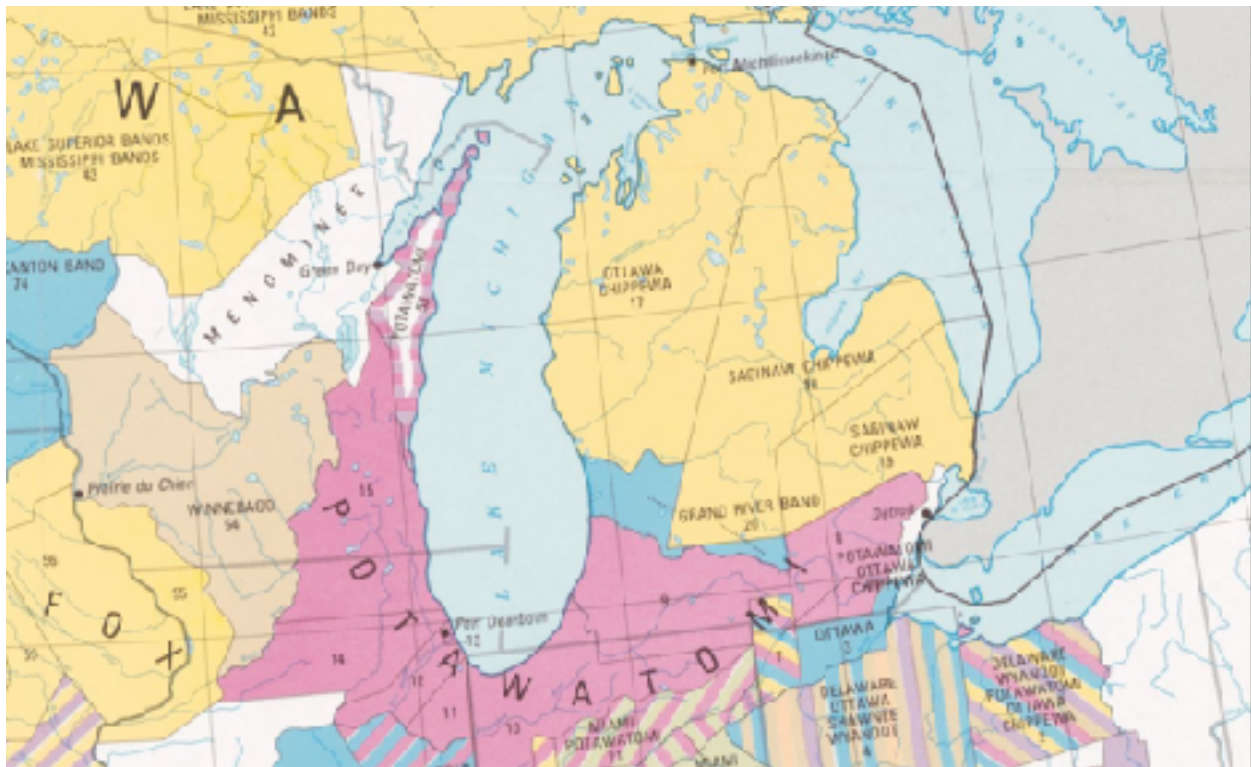


## Chicago is on the lands of the Potawatomi - why land acknowledgments for Chicago should acknowledge this historical fact:

Land Acknowledgments have become very popular in the most recent past. But in the Chicago area - there is substantial confusion as to whose lands were northeast Illinois and northwest Indiana. What I provide below is the evidence that I believe supports the belief that most accurately, Chicago and surrounding areas were the lands of the Potawatomi.

The maps:



<https://www.loc.gov/item/80695449/>

[Indian land areas  
judicially established |  
Library of Congress](https://www.loc.gov/item/80695449/)

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The Wisconsin Department of Instruction has also created a map of the locations of tribal nations in Wisconsin, northern Illinois, northern Indiana, and Michigan. The green areas clearly show that Potawatomi territory included what is now Chicago. Nowhere is there a reference to Chicago also being the lands of the Ojibwe and/or Odawa. <https://theways.org/map>



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Similarly, see the above map courtesy of Michigan State University - <https://project.geo.msu.edu/geogmich/potawatomi.html>



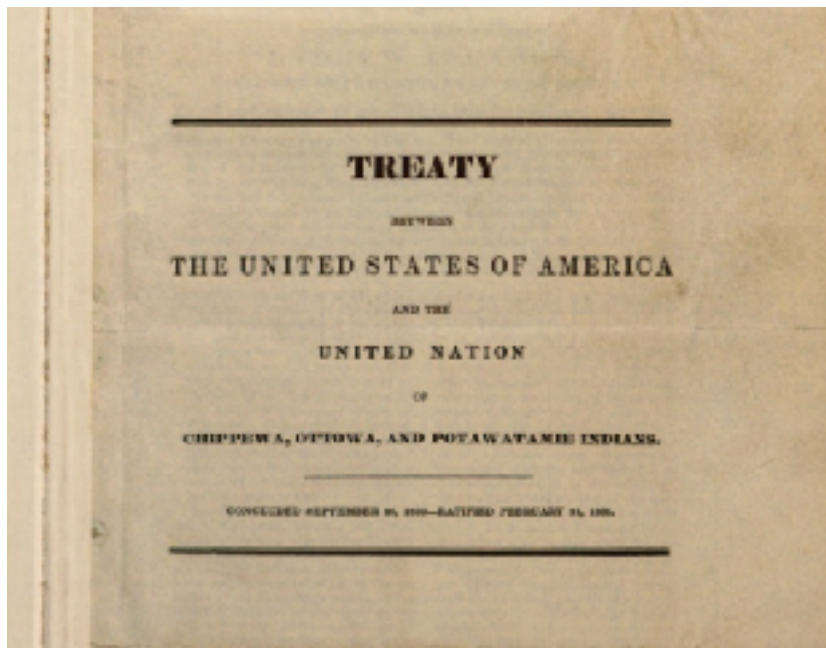
Potawatomi village sites along Lake Michigan. Courtesy of Kyle Malott - Pokagon Potawatomi Language Director.



Potawatomi village sites in and around Chicago. Courtesy of Kyle Malott - Pokagon Potawatomi Language Director.

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It's often said that we have to be labeled "the United Nation of the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi Indians" because that is what the 1833 Treaty of Chicago says:



<http://projects.leadr.msu.edu/firststoryna/exhibits/show/potawahf/item/20>

But we were never a "United Nation". We were and are individual and distinct tribal nations and this is only the Federal government title for the Indians of Chicago because they couldn't tell who we were. We were Potawatomi in Chicago. And we have no history among the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi of living in mixed villages. If an Ojibwe person moved to Chicago and married into a Potawatomi family, she/he became Potawatomi.

Furthermore, all of the signors of the 1833 Treaty were Potawatomi! And while we were a *Council of Three Fires*, each was a distinct sovereign nation. <https://www.fcpotawatomi.com/culture-and-history/treaties/september-26-1833-treaty-of-chicago/>

To-pen-e-bee, his x mark,  
Ob-wa-qua-unk, his x mark,  
N-saw-way-quet, his x mark,  
Puk-quech-a-min-ee, his x mark,  
Nah-che-wine, his x mark,  
Ke-wase, his x mark,  
Wah-bou-seh, his x mark,  
Mang-e-sett, his x mark,  
Caw-we-saut, his x mark,  
Ah-be-te-ke-zhic, his x mark,  
Pat-e-go-shuc, his x mark,

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E-to-wow-cote, his x mark,  
Shim-e-nah, his x mark,  
O-chee-pwaise, his x mark,  
Ce-nah-ge-win, his x mark,  
Shaw-waw-nas-see, his x mark,  
Shab-eh-nay, his x mark,  
Mac-a-ta-o-shic, his x mark,  
Squah-ke-zic, his x mark,  
Mah-che-o-tah-way, his x mark,  
Cha-ke-te-ah, his x mark,  
Me-am-ese, his x mark,  
Shay-tee, his x mark,  
Kee-new, his x mark,  
Ne-bay-noc-scum, his x mark,  
Naw-bay-caw, his x mark,  
O'Kee-mase, his x mark,  
Saw-o-tup, his x mark,  
Me-tai-way, his x mark,  
Na-ma-ta-way-shuc, his x mark,  
Shaw-waw-nuk-wuk, his x mark,  
Nah-che-wah, his x mark,  
Sho-bon-nier, his x mark,  
Me-nuk-quet, his x mark,  
Chis-in-ke-bah, his x mark,  
Mix-e-maung, his x mark,  
Nah-bwait, his x mark,  
Sau-ko-noek,  
Che-che-bin-quay, his x mark,  
Joseph, his x mark,  
Wah-mix-i-co, his x mark,  
Sen-e-bau-um, his x mark,  
Puk-won, his x mark,  
Wa-be-no-say, his x mark,  
Mon-tou-ish, his x mark,  
No-nee, his x mark,  
Mas-quat, his x mark,  
Sho-min, his x mark,  
Sho-min, (2d) his x mark,  
She-mah-gah, his x mark,  
O'ke-mah-wah-ba-see, his x mark,  
Na-mash, his x mark,  
Shab-y-a-tuk, his x mark,  
Ah-cah-o-mah, his x mark,  
Quah-quah, tah, his x mark,  
Ah-sag-a-mish-cum, his x mark,  
Pa-mob-a-mee, his x mark,  
Nay-o-say, his x mark,  
Ce-tah-quah, his x mark,  
Ce-ku-tay, his x mark,  
Sauk-ee, his x mark,

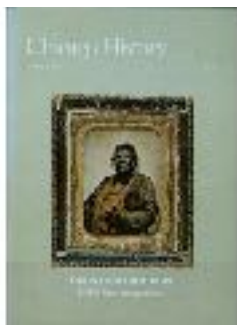
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Ah-quee-wee, his x mark,  
Ta-cau-ko, his x mark,  
Me-shim-e-nah, his x mark,  
Wah-sus-kuk, his x mark,  
Pe-nay-o-cat, his x mark,  
Pay-maw-suc, his x mark,  
Pe-she-ka, his x mark,  
Shaw-we-mon-e-tay, his x mark,  
Ah-be-nab, his x mark,  
Sau-sau-quas-see, his x mark.

There are no signatories to the 1833 Treaty of Chicago that are Ojibwe or Odawa and the vast majority to the 1823 treaty were also Potawatomi. One can tell by the names - these are Potawatomi names. That is because we lived here and this was our home.

An article by ethno-historian James Clifton confirms there were only Potawatomi at the Treaty negotiations in Chicago in 1833. He read through the treaty journals retained in the National Archives to confirm this fact.

<https://issuu.com/chicagohistorymuseum/docs/redacted-1980sum-chm-chicagohistory>



### [Summer 1980 by Chicago History Museum - Issuu](https://issuu.com/chicagohistorymuseum/docs/redacted-1980sum-chm-chicagohistory)

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[issuu.com](https://issuu.com)

We have the village map showing the Potawatomi villages - are there any maps of Ojibwe villages in and around Chicago - no. The "United Nation of Ojibwe, Ottawa and Pottawatomie" is what the Federal Government treaty negotiators called us because they could not tell the difference between us. But that is a settler colonial imposition and label. The Potawatomi were the people of Chicago.

Despite the attack on sovereignty, some are making by claiming Chicago is their lands - only a tribal government has the sovereign right and responsibility to make land claims. Not individuals. Any individual doing this is attacking and undermining tribal sovereignty. The Pokagon Potawatomi government has claimed Chicago since 1833 - no other tribal nation claims Chicago - only a few individuals assert it...

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It was the Potawatomi who burned down Fort Dearborn - no one else was here...

Simon Pokagon wrote in 1893 about Chicago as *home*...at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

And it was the Potawatomi from Indiana and Illinois who were walked out west on a *Trail of Death* - no one else has stories of removal from Chicago...

Almost all the notable chiefs of the era were Potawatomi...

And the very important Potawatomi women of Chicago - Kitihawa, Watseka, and Archange Ouilmette - how many newcomers married into Ojibwe and Odawa families when they came to Chicago? None! Ouilmette married a Potawatomi woman, Robinson married a Potawatomi woman, Billy Caldwell married a Potawatomi woman, Hubbard married a Potawatomi woman, etc. No one married an Ojibwe woman to settle in Chicago. No one married an Ojibwe or Odawa woman to settle in Chicago...Because there were only Potawatomi families to marry into and be adopted into.

It was the Pokagon Potawatomi who took their claim to the Chicago lakefront all the way to the United States Supreme Court. *Williams v. City of Chicago* (1917).

Truth and Reconciliation requires that accurate information be understood and available. Land Acknowledgements must be accurate in who they "Acknowledge".

**We need to educate ourselves so that we understand who we are acknowledging.**

Some people misguidedly refer to the map at this site as proof that Chicago was not Potawatomi land. <https://native-land.ca/> But this is not a battle of websites but a search for truth. And the above website includes an important disclaimer.

**“Native Land Disclaimer**

**This map does not represent or intend to represent official or legal boundaries of any Indigenous nations. To learn about definitive boundaries, contact the nations in question.”**

**Therefor what??? Ask the Natives!!! Are you listening???**

A proposed Land Acknowledgment for those in the greater Chicago area might read something like this:

The greater Chicago area is situated on the lands of the Potawatomi people. They were the stewards of this land and lived, loved, and cared for it until forced out by non-Native settlers. Tribes who have historical relationships with the lands in greater Chicago and Northern Illinois through trade, travel, and habitation also include the Odawa, Ojibwe, Peoria, Kaskaskia, Miami, Ho-Chunk, and Menominee, as well as mound builders and other tribes whose names have been lost as a result of genocide and ethnocide of European colonialism and United States expansion. This land continues to be home to Indigenous people, and Chicago is home to one of the largest urban Indigenous populations in the United States.

John N. Low, Ph.D.

Therefore.....(articulate the ways your institution or organization is going to connect, collaborate, ally, support etc. Native peoples).

**Questions? Reach out to me. I would love to talk about all this further with you!**

John N. Low, JD, Ph.D.

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