

1 Introduced by Council Members Salem, Pittman, Newby and Gaffney &  
2 Co-Sponsored by Council Members Becton, Bowman, Hazouri, Morgan,  
3 Freeman, Carrico, Ferraro, Diamond, White & Cumber:  
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6 **ORDINANCE 2021-64-E**

7 AN ORDINANCE NAMING FIELD AT J. P. SMALL  
8 MEMORIAL PARK STADIUM LOCATED AT 1701 MYRTLE  
9 AVENUE, JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209, IN DISTRICT 8,  
10 FOR HENRY L. AARON, TO BE KNOWN AS THE "HENRY  
11 L. AARON FIELD AT J. P. SMALL MEMORIAL PARK  
12 STADIUM"; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.  
13

14 **WHEREAS**, J. P. Small Memorial Stadium in the Durkeeville  
15 community of northwest Jacksonville was the first municipal  
16 recreation field in the city of Jacksonville; and

17 **WHEREAS**, J. P. Small Memorial Stadium was first created as a  
18 recreational field used by local teams, including the Jacksonville  
19 Tars and the African-American ball team, the Jacksonville  
20 Athletics, a team on which James Weldon Johnson played; and

21 **WHEREAS**, Major League Baseball teams, including the New York  
22 Giants and the Brooklyn Dodgers played at the field in the early  
23 decades of the twentieth century and Jacksonville's only Negro  
24 League team, the Jacksonville Red Caps, made up of employees of the  
25 East Coast Railroad, played against Negro League greats, including  
26 Satchel Paige; and

27 **WHEREAS**, in 1953 the field became part of history when it  
28 became the location of the first games played by the newly  
29 integrated Jacksonville Braves (a home team of the Milwaukee  
30 Braves), which included three Black players, one of which was Henry  
31 L. "Hank" Aaron; and

1           **WHEREAS**, on January 22, 2021, the nation was saddened when  
2 Hank Aaron passed away at the age of 86; and

3           **WHEREAS**, a native of Alabama, Henry Louis Aaron, is regarded  
4 as one of the greatest baseball players of all time, having a  
5 storied career in professional baseball for more than 30 years and  
6 after retiring as a player held front office positions within the  
7 Atlanta Braves, becoming one of the first minorities in Major  
8 League Baseball upper-level management; and

9           **WHEREAS**, Aaron began his Major League Baseball career when he  
10 was signed by the Boston Braves in 1952, and in 1953, the Braves  
11 (which had then relocated to Milwaukee) promoted him from the Eau  
12 Claire Bears (the Braves' Northern League Class-C farm team) to the  
13 Jacksonville Braves, their Class-A affiliate in the South Atlantic  
14 League; and

15           **WHEREAS**, the Jacksonville Braves won the league championship  
16 that same year and Aaron led the league in runs (115), hits (208),  
17 doubles (36), RBIs (125), total bases (338) and batting average  
18 (.362), and won the league's Most Valuable Player Award; and

19           **WHEREAS**, by 1954, Aaron was moving up within the ranks of the  
20 Milwaukee Braves and on April 13, he made his major league debut,  
21 and was swiftly nicknamed "Hammerin' Hank" by his teammates; and

22           **WHEREAS**, Aaron went on to play 23 seasons in Major League  
23 Baseball, from 1954 through 1976; he spent 21 seasons with the  
24 Braves in the National League and two season with the Milwaukee  
25 Brewers in the American League; and

26           **WHEREAS**, Aaron had 755 career home runs, breaking the record  
27 set by Babe Ruth; Aaron's record stood for 33 years until Barry  
28 Bonds broke it in 2006; he still holds many other Major League  
29 Baseball batting records to this day and was inducted into the  
30 National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1982, his first year of  
31 eligibility; and

1           **WHEREAS**, the provisions of Section 122.105, *Ordinance Code*,  
2 for renaming as to the renaming of the ball field have been met;  
3 the public hearings have been held and the Planning and Development  
4 Department has submitted its report to the Council; and

5           **WHEREAS**, in recognition of the contributions of Henry L.  
6 Aaron to the game of baseball and to Jacksonville's unique history,  
7 it is fitting that the field located at J. P. Small Memorial Park  
8 Stadium, where Aaron played as a member of the Jacksonville Braves,  
9 be named in honor of Henry L. Aaron; now, therefore

10           **BE IT ORDAINED** by the Council of the City of Jacksonville:

11           **Section 1.**           The field at J. P. Small Memorial Park  
12 Stadium, located at 1701 Myrtle Avenue, Jacksonville, Florida 32209  
13 in District 8, is hereby named the "Henry L. Aaron Field at J. P.  
14 Small Memorial Park Stadium" in recognition of Hank Aaron's  
15 enduring imprint made on the game of baseball and the history of  
16 Jacksonville.

17           **Section 2.           Effective Date.**           This ordinance shall  
18 become effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming  
19 effective without the Mayor's signature.

20  
21 Form Approved

22  
23           /s/ Paige H. Johnston          

24 Office of General Counsel

25 Legislation prepared by: Paige H. Johnston

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