

BY AUTHORITY

ORDINANCE NO. _____
SERIES OF 2025

COUNCIL BILL NO. 25-0261
COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE:
Finance and Governance

A BILL

For an ordinance amending Article V, Chapter 18 and Article I, Chapter 2 of the Revised Municipal Code to replace the commemorative holiday of Indigenous Peoples' Day with a designated city holiday beginning in the year 2025.

WHEREAS, the State of Colorado defines "indigenous" as "having descended from people who were living in North America prior to the time people from Europe began settling in North America, being an enrolled member of a federally recognized Indian tribe, or being a lineal descendant of a tribally enrolled parent or guardian;

WHEREAS, the Denver City Council recognizes that the Indigenous Peoples have lived and flourished on the lands known as the Americas since time immemorial, and that Denver and the surrounding communities are built upon the ancestral homelands of numerous Indigenous people, to include two land-based sovereign nations, 49 additional Tribes with legal and historic standing, and is home to the descendants of approximately 150 Tribal Nations; and

WHEREAS, the homelands and communities of the Arapaho and Cheyenne peoples along the banks of the Cherry Creek and South Platte River confluence gave bearing to future encampments of newcomers that would become the birthplace of the Mile High City; and

WHEREAS, the Denver City Council acknowledges that the land upon which the city stands was not legally transferred under the 1861 Fort Wise Treaty due to the lack of proper signatures as required by U.S. law, resulting in the illegal transfer of lands; and

WHEREAS, the Northern Cheyenne and Northern Arapaho peoples were forcibly removed from their homelands to make way for this illegal occupation, a legacy of displacement and injustice that remains uncorrected; and

WHEREAS, on October 3, 2016, the Denver City Council unanimously passed CB16-801, officially designating the second Monday of October of each year as Indigenous Peoples' Day in Denver, Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the Denver City Council honors the resilience and survivance of Indigenous people despite historical and contemporary barriers that seek to extract, displace, and destroy, and recognizes that it is because of their tenacity and stewardship of knowledge, land, science, philosophy, arts, and culture that the City of Denver has developed and thrived; and

1
2 **WHEREAS**, the Denver City Council acknowledges the ongoing harm caused by the illegal
3 transfers of land under the 1861 Fort Wise Treaty and the forced removal of Indigenous peoples,
4 and that to promote the health, wellness, and safety of current and future generations of the
5 Indigenous community, it is of paramount importance to repair both historical and ongoing harm;
6 and

7 **WHEREAS**, the Denver American Indian Commission is advocating for a paid city holiday for
8 Indigenous Peoples' Day to honor the cultural and foundational stewardship of Indigenous People
9 to our past, present, and future; and to promote education to the Denver community about the
10 historical and contemporary legacy of Indigenous People;

11 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF**
12 **DENVER:**

13
14 **Section 1.** That article 1, chapter 2, is hereby amended by deleting the language
15 stricken and adding the underlined language to read as follows:

16 **~~Sec. 2-5. -- Indigenous Peoples' Day.~~**

17 ~~On the second Monday of October in each year, hereafter to be known as "Indigenous~~
18 ~~Peoples' Day," appropriate observance may be held by the public in commemoration and in honor~~
19 ~~of Denver's indigenous and original history.~~

20 **~~Sec. 2-6. -- Reserved.~~**

21 **~~Secs. 2-75—2-15. - Reserved.~~**

22
23 **Section 2.** That article V, chapter 18, is hereby amended by deleting the language stricken
24 and adding the underlined language to read as follows:

25 **Sec. 18-142. - Designation of holidays.**

26 "Holidays" for the purposes of this article shall mean eight (8) hours in the following days:

- 27 (1) New Year's Day (January 1);
28 (2) Martin Luther King Day (third Monday in January);
29 (3) Washington's Birthday (to be observed on the third Monday in February);
30 (4) Cesar Chavez Day (last Monday in March);
31 (5) Memorial Day (last Monday in May);

- (6) Juneteenth (June 19)
- (7) Independence Day (July 4);
- (8) Labor Day (first Monday in September);
- (9) Indigenous Peoples' Day (second Monday in October)
- (~~9~~10) Veterans' Day (November 11);
- (~~10~~11) Thanksgiving Day (fourth Thursday in November);
- (~~11~~12) Christmas Day (December 25);
- (~~12~~13) Personal holiday (one (1) personal holiday on date agreed upon by employee and the city to be used within the calendar year).

COMMITTEE APPROVAL DATE: March 4, 2025

MAYOR-COUNCIL DATE: March 11, 2025

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL 03/24/2025

Amursh P. Sandoval - PRESIDENT

APPROVED: _____ - MAYOR _____

ATTEST: _____ - CLERK AND RECORDER,
EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE
CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER

NOTICE PUBLISHED IN THE DAILY JOURNAL _____ ; _____

PREPARED BY: Jonathan Griffin, Assistant City Attorney DATE: March 13, 2025

Pursuant to section 13-9, D.R.M.C., this proposed ordinance has been reviewed by the office of the City Attorney. We find no irregularity as to form and have no legal objection to the proposed ordinance. The proposed ordinance is not submitted to the City Council for approval pursuant to § 3.2.6 of the Charter.

Katie J. McLoughlin, Interim City Attorney

BY: *Anshul Bagga*, Assistant City Attorney DATE: Mar 13, 2025