

DENVER CITY COUNCIL



Proclamation No. 24-1428 In Observance of the Ninth Annual Indigenous Peoples' Day in the City and County of Denver

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

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

WHEREAS, this proclamation is being received by an Indian Boarding School Survivor, representing the strength and resilience of all those who survived these institutions, and we applaud their courage in reclaiming lost culture, knowledge, and heritage for future generations; and

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

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE DENVER CITY COUNCIL:

Section 1. That the Denver City Council recognizes the resilience of Indian Boarding School survivors, and the Indigenous peoples affected by the illegal occupation of their lands and commits to working alongside Indigenous communities to ensure their heritage, culture, and histories are honored, and preserved for future generations.

Section 2. The City and County of Denver, Colorado, does hereby observe Monday, Oct 14th, 2024, as "Indigenous Peoples' Day."

Section 3. That the Clerk and Recorder of the City and County of Denver shall affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and that a copy be presented to Elder and Residential school survivor Ruby Sanchez on behalf of the Denver American Indian Commission.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL October 14, 2024

PRESIDENT

