



City of Grand Rapids, Michigan

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

ROSALYNN C. BLISS
MAYOR

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, The City of Grand Rapids has a long history of recognizing, celebrating, and honoring the vibrant diversity that is our community; and

WHEREAS, The City of Grand Rapids recognizes and solemnizes Indigenous Peoples, whose Indigenous Anishinaabek Peoples nourished, preserved, and protected Bawating (The Rapids) as their ancestral territory, and to acknowledge their continued presence in and care-taking of Bawating; and

WHEREAS, The City of Grand Rapids recognizes the annexation of Anishinaabek Peoples' homelands in order to build what is now Grand Rapids, and knows this Indigenous civilization existed within, and depended on, this area since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, The City of Grand Rapids specifically acknowledges Bawating was inhabited by the Anishinaabek People of the Three Fires: Chippewa (Ojibwe), Ottawa (Odawa) and Potawatomi (Bodéwadmi); and

WHEREAS, The City of Grand Rapids values that our society benefited from the technology, thought, and culture of these Indigenous Peoples, and the benefits from these contributions endure as they continue to share their home, and way of life with us; and

WHEREAS, The City of Grand Rapids desires to further efforts to support Indigenous inclusion into our present day understanding of our collective history, which can only be accomplished if government entities, organizations, and other public institutions change policies and practices to more accurately represent the Indigenous experience, in order to promote the celebration of this country's first people; and

WHEREAS, The City of Grand Rapids recognizes the idea of Indigenous Peoples' Day was first proposed in 1977 by a delegation of Native nations to the United Nations-sponsored International Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas; and

WHEREAS, The City of Grand Rapids recognizes that in 1990, representatives from 120 Indigenous Nations at the First Continental Conference on 500 Years of Indian Resistance unanimously passed a resolution to transform Columbus Day into an opportunity to educate the rest of the country about pre-existing resilient Indian cultures that survived an adverse and often violent colonization process and continue to exist and thrive in present day America; and

WHEREAS, The City of Grand Rapids understands the growing movement among Indigenous People and allies to (1) recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day on the second Monday in October, (2) to use Indigenous Peoples' Day to reflect upon the ongoing struggles of Indigenous Peoples on this land, and (3) to celebrate the thriving culture and value that Indigenous Peoples add to communities throughout and beyond the Grand Rapids region; and

WHEREAS, The City of Grand Rapids celebrates and honors its strong history of Indigenous activism; and

WHEREAS, The United States Federal Government recognizes Columbus Day on the second Monday of October, in accordance with the Federal holiday established in 1937; the City of Grand Rapids does not recognize nor celebrate this federal holiday, and now therefore,

PROCLAIMS, That the City of Grand Rapids hereby and henceforth recognizes Indigenous Peoples' Day on the second Monday of October; and further,

PROCLAIMS, The City of Grand Rapids shall continue in its efforts to promote the well-being and growth of the Grand Rapids Indigenous Peoples;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Rosalynn Bliss Mayor of the City of Grand Rapids, Michigan do hereby and henceforth proclaim and recognize the second Monday of October as

Indigenous Peoples Day

in Grand Rapids and urge all residents to use this day to reflect upon the ongoing struggles of Indigenous People on this land, and to celebrate the thriving culture and value that Indigenous Peoples add to communities throughout and beyond the Grand Rapids region; and encourages other businesses, organizations and public entities to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day.




Rosalynn Bliss