

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROCLAIMING
NOVEMBER 2020 AS NATIVE AMERICAN
HERITAGE MONTH IN THE GREATER
PORTLAND AREA

RESOLUTION NO. 20-5135

Introduced by Chief Operating Officer
Marissa Madrigal in concurrence with
Council President Lynn Peterson

WHEREAS, Metro recognizes the greater Portland area is built upon the ancestral homelands, villages and traditional use areas of the tribes, bands and Indigenous people of this region who have stewarded these lands we cherish since time immemorial;

WHEREAS, we owe a special acknowledgement to the many tribes and bands and their descendants who ceded these lands in treaties with the United States; and

WHEREAS, Metro recognizes tribes as political institutions possessing inherent rights and sovereignty to provide for the social, cultural, religious and economic welfare of their citizens; and

WHEREAS, Metro is committed to promoting trustworthy and meaningful relationships with tribal nations, their citizens and the greater Portland Native American community under a banner of truth, goodwill and hope; and

WHEREAS, tribes and Native people carry cultural wisdom, traditional knowledge, and professional expertise into every part of our communities, distinguishing themselves as artists, scientists, history makers, storytellers, entrepreneurs and leaders; and

WHEREAS, one percent of Metro's workforce are employees who identify as American Indian or Alaska Native; and

WHEREAS, Metro recognizes the development of the greater Portland area in the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers has ongoing, far-reaching impacts on many tribes and Native communities who have been displaced and disconnected from their homelands and resources; and

WHEREAS, Native American Heritage Month provides an opportunity to recognize the achievements and contributions of tribes and Native people in our region and society, while not forgetting Oregon's and the United States' past transgressions, injustices, acts of violence, thefts of lands and genocidal policies which we vow to never repeat; and

WHEREAS, Metro has a responsibility to implement our goals, projects and initiatives in a manner which interrupts the systemic erasure of Native people, upholds tribal sovereignty and treaties, instills cultural values and reflects the contemporary presence and interests of these nations and peoples; and

BE IT RESOLVED, Metro shall recognize every November as National Native American Heritage Month to honor the legacy and ongoing contributions of tribes and Native people throughout our vibrant community and region, and Metro encourages other businesses, organizations, public institutions, and community members to recognize National Native American Heritage Month and celebrate the tribal nations and people who deeply enrich the quality and character of our community making Portland and Oregon a better place to live and work; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Metro shall continue its efforts to promote the sovereignty, prosperity and well-being of tribes and the greater Portland Native American community through implementing our programs and activities within the context of honoring and respecting tribal treaty rights, tribal trust responsibilities, cultural heritage and the pursuit of traditional life-ways for present and future generations.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this twenty-ninth day of October, 2020.



Lynn Peterson, Council President

Approved as to Form:



Carrie MacLaren, Metro Attorney

STAFF REPORT

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 20-5135, FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROCLAIMING NOVEMBER AS NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH IN THE GREATER PORTLAND AREA

Date: October 26, 2020
Department: Council Office
Meeting Date: October 29, 2020

Prepared by: Andy Shaw
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ISSUE STATEMENT

The Metro Council has an opportunity to honor and celebrate the rich and diverse tribal cultures, traditions and histories as well as acknowledge the important contributions of tribes and native people in this region and beyond by adopting Resolution No. 20-5135 recognizing November as Native American Heritage Month in the greater Portland area.

ACTION REQUESTED

Consideration and vote on Resolution No. 20-5135.

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

Advancing the Metro Council's proclamation to observe Native American Heritage Month annually each November in the greater Portland area to honor and celebrate the many significant contributions and histories of tribes and native people throughout our vibrant community. We encourage all to recognize Native American Heritage Month and take time to deepen their understanding of the history and cultural significance of the tribes and native people of this land.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the Metro Council adopt Resolution No. 20-5135.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

- Council adoption of this resolution will further Metro's efforts to build relationships, promote effective communication and coordination, seek opportunities for partnership with sovereign tribal partners, and implement its programs and

activities within the context of honoring and respecting tribal rights, cultural heritage and traditional life-ways

- Council adoption of this resolution will further Metro’s commitment to the goals stated in the Strategic Plan to advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, in particular:
 - Metro meaningfully engages communities of color
 - Metro hires, trains and promotes a racially diverse workforce
 - Metro creates safe and welcoming services, programs and destinations

- Known Opposition/Support/Community Feedback
None

- Legal Antecedents
Metro Council Resolution No. 15-4663; Metro Council Resolution No. 16-4748; Metro Council Resolution No. 17-4851; Metro Resolution No. 18-4936; Metro Resolution 19-4992; Resolution No. 19-5036.

- Anticipated Effects
Metro shall recognize every November as Native American Heritage Month in the greater Portland area.

- Financial Implications
None

BACKGROUND

Metro recognizes the greater Portland area is built upon the ancestral homelands, villages and traditional use areas of the tribes, bands and Indigenous People of this region who have been caretakers of these lands we cherish since time immemorial.

Native American Heritage Month is a time to celebrate the rich and diverse tribal cultures, traditions, and histories as well as to acknowledge the important contributions of tribes and Native people. It is an opportune time to educate the general public about tribes, to raise a general awareness about the unique challenges Native people have faced both historically and in the present, and the ways in which they have worked to conquer these challenges.

It is important for us to never forget Oregon’s and the United States’ history of violence, forced migration, thefts of lands and resources, broken treaties, termination, relocation and other assimilative policies. Through these harmful government policies and practices, many tribes and Native people were forcibly removed from their homelands in our region, across Oregon and the country. Today, as a result, Portland has one of the country’s largest urban Native populations.

Native American Heritage Month originated from an effort in the 1900s to gain a day of recognition for the significant contributions tribes and native communities made to not only establish but grow the United States. Such efforts were made by courageous Indigenous People, including, but not limited to, Dr. Arthur C. Parker, Sherman Coolidge, and Red Fox James. In 1990 President George H.W. Bush approved a joint resolution designating November 1990 as “National Native American Heritage Month.” Since 1995, Presidents have issued annual proclamations which designate November as National Native American Heritage Month.

For many years, Metro, the City of Portland, other cities, jurisdictions and the State of Oregon have recognized and observed National Native American Heritage Month.

In May 2017, the Metro Council adopted an updated Diversity Action Plan, following Council’s 2016 adoption of the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Together, these policies seek to address systemic inequities and create a more equitable region for all by focusing on racial equity, diversity and inclusion of historically marginalized communities in every aspect of Metro’s work. Metro is guided by the values adopted in the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and is committed to helping remove the systemic and racist barriers that impact the greater Portland Native American community.

In recent years Metro has strategically created staff positions such as the Parks and Nature Indigenous Community Liaison and Tribal Policy Advisor to work collaboratively to develop and implement policies and practices that create trust, partnership and enhance access and opportunity with sovereign tribal governments and Indigenous community members. These efforts reflect and affirm Metro’s commitment to building a community that fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation for the diversity of culture and history of the tribes in our region and our commitment to work with tribal nations to protect their rights, interests and resources in the greater Portland metropolitan area.

Declaring November as Native American Heritage Month in the greater Portland area will honor and acknowledge the histories, cultures and resiliency of tribes and Native people in this region and beyond. Metro shall continue its efforts to partner with tribal nations and the greater Portland Native American Community to promote prosperity and well-being through implementing our programs and activities within the context of honoring and respecting tribal rights, cultural heritage and the pursuit of traditional life-ways for present and future generations.

ATTACHMENTS

None