

City of East Lansing, Michigan

**RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY IN EAST LANSING**

October 4, 2022

WHEREAS, the City of East Lansing acknowledges the occupation of the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary lands of the Three Fires Confederacy of Odawa, Ojibwe and Potawatomi Indigenous Nations; and,

WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples have lived upon this land since time immemorial and thrived as sovereign nations before the Italian explorer Christopher Columbus' voyage to the place now known as the Americas; and,

WHEREAS, resisting the occupation of sacred lands, indigenous people were enslaved, murdered, and forcibly removed from ancestral lands; and,

WHEREAS, their populations were decimated through genocide and other unspeakable crimes to support European colonization of the Americas; and,

WHEREAS, the City of East Lansing acknowledges the harms and irreplaceable loss to our collective humanity for the acts committed against our indigenous family; and,

WHEREAS, the City of East Lansing understands that government and other public institutions must include and reflect the experiences of Native Peoples and uplift our country's indigenous roots, history, and contributions; and,

WHEREAS, the idea of Indigenous Peoples Day was first proposed in 1977 by a delegation of Native Nations to the United Nations; and,

WHEREAS, 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 indigenous cultures that have survived violent colonization processes, enslavement, genocide, and continue to exist and thrive in present day America; and,

WHEREAS, the United Nations Rights of Indigenous Peoples Declaration adopted in 2006 confirms the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination, recognizes subsistence rights and rights to lands, territories and resources; recognizes that indigenous peoples deprived of their means of subsistence and development are entitled to just and fair redress; outlaws discrimination against indigenous peoples; and promotes their full and effective participation in all matters that concern them, as well as their right to remain distinct and to pursue their own visions of economic and social development; and,

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians has passed a resolution: (1) officially recognizing Indigenous People's Day on the second Monday in October; (2) stating that Indigenous People's Day shall be used to reflect upon the ongoing struggles of indigenous peoples on this land; and (3) to celebrate the thriving cultures and value that the Odawa, Ojibwe, Potawatomi and other indigenous peoples contribute to society; and,

WHEREAS, on September 27, 2016, the City of East Lansing formally recognized the second Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples Day; and,

WHEREAS, the City of East Lansing officially acknowledges and affirms the sovereignty of these nations and the Seven Grandfather Teachings: Truth, Humility, Respect, Love, Honesty, Courage, and Wisdom; and,

WHEREAS, in honor of these seven teachings as being dependent upon and inseparable from the health and survival of trees, water, soil, plants, insects, and animals, the City of East Lansing will commit to sustaining the current natural woodlands, meadows, wetlands, and greenspaces in our parks and trails; and,

WHEREAS, in 2020, the East Lansing City Council declared the following land acknowledgment in written or spoken form will occur at the convening of all its public meetings, and a written acknowledgment is placed on all City council agendas:

*“The City of East Lansing occupies the ancestral, traditional and contemporary lands of the Anishinaabeg – Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi peoples land ceded in the 1819 Treaty of Saginaw;” and,*

WHEREAS, on Tuesday, September 6, 2022, Mayor Ron Bacon of the City of East Lansing appointed a committee to rename the 130 acre park at 2801 Abbot Road; and,

WHEREAS, the Anishinaabe, Indigenous, Black, and multi-racial women appointed to the Committee for the Renaming of Abbot Road Park came together in a good way, with traditional medicines and humble appeals for guidance from the place they looked to help name; and,

WHEREAS, the chosen spirit name is Azaadiikaa. The word Azaadi refers to the cottonwood tree as a living being whose essential nature is observable by the physical manifestation of movements in the world; and,

WHEREAS, on September 20, 2022, the East Lansing City Council by unanimous vote renamed Abbot Road Park to Azaadiikaa Park, translated in English as the Many Cottonwoods; and,

WHEREAS, in honor of Indigenous Peoples Day, the East Lansing City Council invites the community to join us on Monday, October 10 for a renaming ceremony at Azaadiikaa Park.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Indigenous Peoples Day shall be used to reflect upon the ongoing struggles of indigenous peoples on this land and to celebrate and learn from the thriving cultures and values that the Odawa, Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and other indigenous peoples contribute to communities throughout Michigan, the United States of America, and the world.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of East Lansing encourages other businesses, organizations, and public entities to recognize Indigenous Peoples Day on Monday, October 10, 2022.

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Ron Bacon, Mayor

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Jennifer Shuster, Clerk