

## IMPACT STATEMENT

**Legislation title:** Adopt actions identified through the Regional Collaborative Land Acknowledgement Project that promote consistent awareness and inclusion of Native people in all City business and more equitable outcomes for Native people (Resolution)

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### **Purpose of proposed legislation and background information:**

Non-tribal community organizations and government agencies in many parts of the world are adopting land acknowledgements, formal statements that recognize the unique relationship that exists between Indigenous people and their traditional territories, and the unique political status that Indigenous people and tribal governments hold.

For the past two years, Commissioner Fritz has championed the development of land acknowledgements that the City of Portland, if adopted, would be stated before City-sponsored events and meetings and presented in other forms such as digitally and on physical spaces. This initiative is co-led by Office of Government Relations Tribal Relations Director Laura John and Commissioner Fritz's Senior Policy Advisor Cynthia Castro. They are supported by a team of employees from different City bureaus and all Council Offices. The team is also joined in this endeavor by several regional partners representing the government, arts, culture, professional sports, utility, and philanthropy sectors.

The team is taking great care to ensure that the land acknowledgements are developed in a thoughtful and respectful manner and with the understanding that land acknowledgements are a first step in honoring Indigenous people and not the end. Although the land acknowledgements will not be completed until sometime in 2021, the team identified actions through the land acknowledgement development process that are being brought forward through this Resolution for Council consideration.

The actions Council are asked to approve through this Resolution are intended to 1) deepen the City's established commitment to working with Tribal governments and the urban Native community, 2) to help counter the erasure of Native people, 3) to improve recruitment and retention of Native employees in the City of Portland, and 4) provide all City of Portland employees with a baseline understanding of Tribal Nations and Native people and to help ensure respectful and meaningful engagement with Native people.

### **Financial and budgetary impacts:**

None

### **Community impacts and community involvement:**

Native people have been displaced from abundant lands several times throughout history, with the most recent being in the 1950's when Native people were forced from reservations and into poor urban areas. This recent history is a key factor in Portland emerging as being in the top 25 cities with the largest American Indian/Alaska Native populations. The Native community in Portland and in the surrounding areas exists as a testament to resilience and resistance.

Portland is home to 28 Native organizations run by and staffed with Native people, whose combined resources represent millions of dollars in revenue that go to local taxes, businesses and services. However, Native people face deeper economic challenges in Portland when compared with national averages for the Native community.

In the City of Portland, only 96 out of nearly 7,500 employees self-identify as Native American according to the Office of Equity and Human Rights employee demographics dashboard. This Resolution will help the City improve recruitment and retention of American Indian and Alaska Native people in our workforce and connect them to more living wage jobs and benefits.

During the 2020-21 Fall Budget Monitoring Process, City Council approved funding for the Office of Equity and Human Rights to develop curriculum for a new recurring Tribal Nations and Native people training for all City employees. The curriculum will be informed in part by Senate Bill 13 which created K-12 Native American Curriculum in statewide public schools and provided professional development to educators. To help ensure consistent understanding across the City of Tribal governments and Native people, this Resolution proposes the new recurring training be mandatory for all City employees.

Since 2015, the City of Portland has celebrated Indigenous Peoples' Day on the second Monday of October as a day to reaffirm the City's commitment to promote the prosperity and well-being of Portland's American Indian, Alaska Native and Indigenous community. Through this Resolution, Indigenous Peoples' Day would become a paid holiday for City employees with the intention for City employees to spend time self-educating about Native people and supporting Native-owned businesses and community organizations.

This Resolution would also lead to bureau-specific actions and citywide actions that contribute to greater inclusion of Native people in all aspects of City business, services, and programs, and more equitable outcomes for the Native community. Lastly, this Resolution directs City bureaus and offices, in a consistent manner, to support the Tribal Relations Program annual reporting. Annual reporting is necessary to hold the institution accountable to commitments being made in the area of Tribal Relations, to celebrate achievements, for future planning, and to inform resource allocations.

### **Community Involvement**

The City has convened an annual Summit of Tribal and City Elected Leaders and a day-long training for City employees since 2018. During the 2019 Tribal Summit, the co-leads of this policy initiative vetted actions found in this Resolution with Tribal leaders. More recently, the co-leads elicited the feedback on the actions from Native community leaders.

