

# *PROPOSED DRAFT RESOLUTION*

## In Consideration to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples' Day

*WHEREAS*, in 1492, Christopher Columbus was given authority by the King and Queen of Spain, to sail to the Indies to investigate what Columbus described as the "proper method of converting Indians" to Christianity, and Columbus was granted "sufficient armament" to certain regions of the Indies for such forced conversion; and,

*WHEREAS*, Columbus left Spain on May 12, 1492. He never arrived in the Indies, but came upon an island in the Caribbean, later called Hispaniola, on October 12, 1492, and met the Taino people; and,

*WHEREAS*, Columbus remarked in *Columbus' Journal of his First Voyage* that he could "conquer the whole of the Taino people with fifty men, and govern them as he pleased". Columbus' own journal demonstrates that his objective was to find gold and precious stones; and,

*WHEREAS*, under color of authority of the Spanish crown, and using tactics garnered from his years of involvement in the West Indies slave trade, Columbus engaged in inhumane acts of slavery, sexual exploitation, murder and torture, which resulted in the near annihilation of the Taino people; and,

*WHEREAS*, Columbus attacked the towns and spared neither the children nor the aged nor pregnant women nor women in childbed, not only stabbing them and dismembering them but cutting them to pieces as if dealing with sheep in a slaughter house. They laid bets as to who, "with one stroke of the sword, could split a man in two or could cut off his head and spill out his entrails with a single stroke of the pike"; and,

*WHEREAS*, Columbus' cruelty was investigated and he was sent back to Spain in chains, but because of the enormous wealth realized through his exploits, the Spanish Crown freed Columbus, stripped of all his titles, and allowed him to return to the Caribbean; and,

*WHEREAS*, the brutal exploitation of the Indigenous Peoples' of the Americas that was ushered in by the Spanish conquest was soon followed by other European nation, and the Columbus voyage triggered one of history's greatest slave trades, the pillaging of Earth's natural resources, and a level of inhumanity towards indigenous peoples that still exists; and,

*WHEREAS*, the land where Oberlin now stands was once home to the Erielhona or Erie Tribe, referred to as the Cat Nation, fur traders and farmers but later absorbed by the Iroquois Nation. They used this land as hunting grounds for raccoon and beaver. When John Shipherd and Philo Stewart claimed the land for the Oberlin Colony in 1833, it was technically a part of the Iroquois Nation.

*WHEREAS*, the City recognizes and values the many contributions made to our community through labor, technology, science, philosophy, arts and the deep cultural contribution that has substantially shaped the character of Oberlin, Ohio; and,

*WHEREAS*, 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 Oberlin has a responsibility to oppose the systematic racism towards Indigenous people in the United States, which perpetuates high rates of poverty and income inequality, exacerbating disproportionate health, education and social crises; and,

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED* by the Council of the City of Oberlin, that in recognizing the atrocities perpetuated against indigenous peoples by Christopher Columbus and others, it is appropriate to repeal Columbus Day as a State holiday; and

*SECTION 1.* The City of Oberlin hereby abolishes the celebration known as Columbus Day and strongly supports the proposition that Indigenous Peoples' Day shall be an opportunity to celebrate the thriving cultures and values of the Indigenous Peoples' of our region.

*SECTION 2.* The City of Oberlin strongly encourage community members, schools, businesses, public and private organizations, and other community partners to join communities across America in recognizing and promoting the well being and understanding of the contributions of our Indigenous communities.

*SECTION 3.* Now, therefore, be it Resolved that the Council of the City of Oberlin hereby recognizes the second Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples' Day in the City of Oberlin.

Adopted by the City Council the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of Council