

# Mankato will celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day

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Mankato will celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day while continuing to recognize Columbus Day.

By a 6-1 vote at its meeting last week, the City Council adopted a resolution designating the second Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples Day and encouraged “other businesses, organizations and public entities” to recognize it annually.

The lone vote against the resolution came from Mayor Eric Anderson, who said he didn’t object to it on its merits, but thought a different day should be chosen. Both events will be marked on city calendars, but city offices will be open as usual.

Mankato was the site of the largest public execution in U.S. history, when 38 Dakota men were hanged on Dec. 26, 1862, after a six-week war that summer that left about 600 white settlers and 100 Dakota warriors dead. The city has been engaged in an ongoing reconciliation process for decades.

“I don’t think there’s another community in the country where this is as significant,” said Mankato resident Jack Considine. Added local resident Dave Braveheart: “It’s important for the next seven generations.”

## Indigenous Peoples Day in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Grand Rapids

**MINNEAPOLIS (KMSP)** - Minneapolis, St. Paul and [Grand](#) Rapids, Minnesota are a few of the U.S. cities that celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day on Oct. 9 instead of Columbus Day.

Leaders in those cities changed the [holiday](#) a few years ago. Residents asked for the name change because they felt it was not accurate to honor a man for “discovering” a place where people were already living. A number of other large cities, including Los Angeles, Seattle and Denver, are also moving to rename the holiday.

In 2014, the Minneapolis City Council unanimously approved a resolution to recognize the second Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples Day. The Minneapolis resolution states, “The City of Minneapolis recognizes the annexation of Dakota homelands for the building of our city, and knows Indigenous nations have lived upon this land since time immemorial and values the progress our society has accomplished through American Indian [technology](#), thought, and culture.”

It continues to resolve that, “The City of Minneapolis shall continue its efforts to promote the well-being and growth of the Minneapolis American Indian and Indigenous community. ... Indigenous Peoples Day shall be used to reflect upon the ongoing struggles of Indigenous people on this land, and to celebrate the thriving culture and value that Dakota, Ojibwe, and other Indigenous nations add to our city.”

Grand Rapids also passed an Indigenous Peoples Day resolution in 2014. Past celebrations have focused on dance, music and language, but this year’s celebration will focus on largely unexamined local history.

The city of St. Paul unanimously passed its resolution in 2015. The resolution affirms “the city’s commitment to promote the well-being and growth of St. Paul’s American Indian and Indigenous community.”

The concept of Indigenous Peoples Day was first proposed in 1977 by a delegation of Native nations at a United Nations-sponsored conference.

# Cities That Celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day Instead of Columbus Day

By **JENNIFER CALFAS** Updated: October 9, 2017 3:05 PM ET | Originally published: October 8, 2017

Each year, more cities, states and universities opt to celebrate an alternative to Columbus Day: Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Instead of honoring Christopher Columbus, the Indigenous Peoples' Day recognizes Native Americans, who were the first inhabitants of the land that later became the United States of America. Advocates for the switch to Indigenous Peoples Day argue that Columbus did not "discover" America in 1492 but instead began the colonization of it. For decades, Native American activists have advocated abolishing Columbus Day, which became a federal holiday in 1937.

This year, both Indigenous Peoples' Day and Columbus Day are on Monday, Oct. 9.

While the United Nations declared August 9 as International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples in late 1994, Berkeley, Calif., had already become the first city in the U.S. to replace Columbus Day itself. The city's decision was influenced by the First Continental Conference on 500 Years of Indian Resistance in Quito, Ecuador, in 1990, which spurred another Northern California conference that discussed similar issues and brought them to the Berkeley City Council.

With the exception of Santa Cruz, Calif., and the state of South Dakota, which adopted the similar Native American Day in place of Columbus Day in 1990, the cities, states and universities that have chosen to celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day instead have done so only recently, with cities like Minneapolis and Seattle voting to celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day instead in 2014.

Which cities and states celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day?

States:

|           |         |        |               |
|-----------|---------|--------|---------------|
| Minnesota | Vermont | Alaska | South Dakota* |
|-----------|---------|--------|---------------|

Cities:

|                         |                      |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Los Angeles             | Phoenix              | Belfast, Maine       |
| Los Angeles County      | Ann Arbor, Mich.     | Bangor, Maine        |
| Berkeley, Calif.        | Traverse City, Mich. | Orono, Maine         |
| Santa Cruz, Calif.      | Alpena, Mich.        | Brunswick, Maine**   |
| San Fernando, Calif.    | East Lansing, Mich.  | Portland, Maine      |
| Burbank, Calif.         | Ypsilanti, Mich.     | Bexar County, Texas  |
| Long Beach, Calif.      | Albuquerque, N.M.    | Cambridge, Mass.     |
| San Luis Obispo, Calif. | Santa Fe             | Amherst, Mass.       |
| Watsonville, Calif.     | Portland             | Northampton, Mass.   |
| Seattle                 | Eugene, Ore.         | Harpers Ferry, W.Va. |
| Olympia, Wash.          | Newstead, New York   | Lawrence, Kansas     |
| Spokane, Wash.          | Village of Lewiston, | Davenport, Iowa      |
| Bainbridge Island,      | New York**           | Durham, N.H.         |
| Wash.                   | Ithaca, New York     | Moscow, Idaho        |
| Minneapolis             | Anadarko, Okla.      | Oberlin, Ohio        |
| Grand Rapids, Minn.     | Norman, Okla.        | Salt Lake City       |
| St. Paul, Minn.         | Tulsa, Okla.         | Austin, Texas        |
| Denver                  | Tahlequah, Okla.     | Nashville            |
| Durango, Colo.          | Carrboro, N.C.       | Madison, Wis.        |
| Boulder, Colo.          | Asheville, N.C.      |                      |

**Columbus Day? In More Than 50 Cities, It's Indigenous Peoples Day.**

A signing ceremony for a resolution designating the second Monday in October as Indigenous People's Day in Seattle. (AP/Elaine Thompson)

Columbus Day is being recognized today across the United States. But in more than 50 U.S. cities, along with a few universities, counties and states, it's not. Instead, those places are celebrating Indigenous Peoples Day.

Rather than commemorating the explorer Christopher Columbus, who has come to be seen as a controversial figure in recent years, the new holiday focuses on the lives of the people he and other European explorers encountered in the New World.

"Indigenous Peoples Day represents a shift in consciousness," says Dr. Leo Killsback, a citizen of the Northern Cheyenne Nation and assistant professor of American Indian Studies at Arizona State University. "It acknowledges that indigenous peoples and their voices are important in today's conversations."



### **Columbus Day Replaced by Indigenous People's Day in San Francisco Alaska and Tribes Sign Historic Agreement on Child Welfare**

Columbus Day marks the landing of the Italian-born explorer Christopher Columbus in the Caribbean in 1492. President Franklin Roosevelt created the first federal observance of Columbus Day in 1937. President Richard Nixon established it as a federal holiday in 1972, and today it's celebrated every year on the second Monday of October.

Historians in recent years have reassessed Columbus and the general depiction of him as a heroic figure. Proponents of Indigenous Peoples Day say Columbus and his crew were responsible for rapes, murders and the plunder of the Caribbean islands where they landed. They also say Columbus didn't "discover" the New World because there were already people living on the islands where he landed.

"Our city owes our very founding to the indigenous peoples in Denver," Denver City Councilman Paul Lopez told the *Denver Post*, shortly after the city adopted the new holiday in 2016. "We do this because our history books erase such history. You honor it by making it no longer invisible."

Berkeley, Calif., was the first in the nation to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day in 1992, and Santa Cruz, Calif., followed shortly after. No other cities followed suit for a couple decades. But that has changed in the past two or three years.

A few dozen cities -- from Bangor, Maine, to Spokane, Wash. -- have now made the switch, along with schools such as Syracuse University and the University of Utah. Three states -- Alaska, Minnesota and Vermont -- have changed the holiday. This year alone, some 20 cities voted to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day. One of them was Los Angeles.

"This gesture of replacing Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day is a very small step in apologizing and in making amends," L.A. City Councilman Mike Bonin, told the *Los Angeles Times*.

Still, jurisdictions that want to change the holiday can face opposition. The parades and festivities that take place on Columbus Day are often a broader recognition of Italian-American culture. Some in the Italian-American community have pushed back against the idea of dropping Columbus Day, seeing it as an erasure of the man and what his achievements mean to some Italian-Americans.

"On behalf of the Italian community, we want to celebrate with you. We just don't want it to be at the expense of Columbus Day," Ann Potenza, president of Federated Italo-Americans of Southern California, told the L.A. City Council, according to the *Los Angeles Times*.