



[home](#) > [city hall](#) > [press releases](#)

## Perris Renames Columbus Day to Honor Indigenous People

The City of Perris will no longer celebrate Columbus Day on the second Monday in October.

Instead, the City Council unanimously voted to change the name of the holiday to Indigenous Peoples' Day "as a way to celebrate the history, culture and governments of Indigenous Peoples." Perris becomes the first City in Inland Southern California to make the change.

Perris City Councilman David Starr Rabb initially proposed the change earlier in October when, speaking from the dais, he outlined several misconceptions about Columbus and why many indigenous people do not consider him a hero or a history-making explorer.

Rabb noted that Columbus arrived in the Americas almost 500 years after Scandinavian explorers like Leif Eriksson.

Columbus never actually set foot on the North American continent and most likely landed originally in the Bahamas while also exploring Cuba and Hispaniola, which encompasses the present-day countries of Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Columbus was no savior.

He came to plunder gold and enslave the indigenous peoples of the lands he visited. Within 25 years of his initial voyage, slavery and disease practically wiped out nearly all of the 8 million natives on the islands he explored, Rabb said.

Rabb said other cities across the United States—including Berkeley, San Francisco and Portland, Ore., already have renamed Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples' Day.

"It's not a politically correct idea," Rabb said. "It's a morally right idea."

Other City Council members voiced similar sentiments.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch said the City, in changing the name of the municipal holiday, corrected a historical misperception.

"It's the proper thing to do," Busch said. "Columbus was not the hero everyone used to think he was. He got credit for landing in America-- something he never did. Our unanimous decision was the proper thing to do."

Mayor Pro Tem Rita Rogers mentioned that she is part American Indian (from the Cherokee tribe) and has discovered that "a lot of history and teaching is incorrect" about Columbus and his journeys to the New World. Changing the holiday in Perris is the moral thing to do, Rogers said.

"I am so glad Perris took the lead on this matter," Rogers said. "It's always rewarding to correct mistakes in history and to educate the public at the same time."

City Councilwoman Tonya Burke said that changing the holiday name to Indigenous Peoples' Day shows how unique we are as a City and that we are truly a multicultural City that respects all cultures." Burke said changing the name "rights a wrong."

"That's what we're supposed to do as leaders," she said.

City Councilman Mark Yarbrough said he spoke to several representatives of indigenous peoples to gauge their input on changing the name of the holiday. It was the right thing to do, he said. His wife is a member of the Ojibwa Indian tribe so respecting the heritage and cultures of Indigenous Peoples matters to him and his family.

"This is a sentiment I certainly support," Yarbrough said of the approved change.

### Media Contact

Joe Vargo  
Public Information Officer  
951-943-6100  
[jvargo@cityofperris.org](mailto:jvargo@cityofperris.org)



**Perris City Hall**  
101 N. D Street  
Perris, CA 92570

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8 am - 6pm

Phone: (951) 943-6100  
[Map to City Hall](#) • [Contact us](#)

Get our mobile apps:  
[Apple](#) • [Android](#)

### Contact Perris

Call: (951) 943-6100 (available 24 hours/day)

Report a Problem/Ask a Question:

[Contact Form](#)

Follow us: [f](#) [t](#) [v](#) [m](#) [i](#)

### In this website

▶ [City Hall](#)

▶ [Government](#)

▶ [Residents](#)

▶ [Business](#)

▶ [Visitors](#)

Translate this site:

[Select Language](#) | ▼