

COUNCIL POLICY BRIEF

Proposed Recognition of Indigenous Peoples' Day

Prepared by the Office of Councilman Alfred Dixon
For Mayor & Council | September 8, 2026

1. Georgia & Metro Atlanta Precedent

City of Atlanta

In 2021, the Atlanta City Council approved legislation declaring the second Monday in October to be Indigenous Peoples' Day. Atlanta described the observance as an opportunity to celebrate Indigenous cultures and values and encouraged public schools to include lessons on Indigenous peoples' contributions to American history. Legislative Reference: 21-O-0865.

City of South Fulton

On July 24, 2018, the City of South Fulton Mayor and Council passed a resolution celebrating Indigenous Peoples' Day as an alternative to Columbus Day on the second Monday in October.

What this means for Jonesboro: The proposal has regional precedent. Municipal governments within Metro Atlanta have already used their local authority to recognize the day differently from the State's designation.

2. Georgia's Current Practice

Georgia's official 2026 state holiday schedule lists **Columbus Day - Monday, October 12, 2026**. A Jonesboro action would concern the City's own recognition and would not change the State of Georgia or federal holiday designation.

3. Why Consider the Recognition?

Historical inclusion. Indigenous peoples and cultures existed on this land long before the creation of Jonesboro, Clayton County, Georgia, or the United States. Recognition provides an opportunity to include that earlier history in the City's civic story.

Education. The observance can serve as an annual opportunity for residents and young people to learn about Indigenous histories, cultures, contributions, and continued presence.

Consistency with preservation. As Jonesboro expands its focus on local history and historic preservation, the City's historical narrative can acknowledge periods that predate incorporation and statehood.

Regional precedent. Atlanta and South Fulton demonstrate that local governments in Metro Atlanta have already considered and adopted Indigenous Peoples' Day recognition.

4. Proposed Policy for Council

Recognize the second Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples' Day rather than Columbus Day on the City of Jonesboro's local calendar, while maintaining existing City closure, payroll, and operational practices.

5. Potential Benefits

Broader historical recognition. Acknowledges Indigenous history as part of the broader history of the land and region.

Educational value. Creates an opportunity for civic and historical education for residents and young people.

Alignment with local-history and preservation efforts. Complements Jonesboro's focus on understanding and preserving its history.

Regional precedent. Places Jonesboro alongside other Metro Atlanta municipalities that have already recognized Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Minimal operational disruption. Under the proposed approach, the City's existing closure, payroll, and operational practices would remain unchanged.

6. Source Notes

City of Atlanta: Atlanta City Council, Legislative Reference No. 21-O-0865.

City of South Fulton: City news release dated July 31, 2018 reporting the July 24, 2018 resolution.

State of Georgia: Official 2026 State Holidays schedule.