



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Peter Ortiz
Councilmember Dev Davis
Councilmember David Cohen
Councilmember Domingo
Candelas
Councilmember Bien Doan

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE:

Approved:

SUBJECT: STUDY SESSION:INDIGENOUS HERITAGE IN SAN JOSÉ

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Direct the City Clerk to set a City Council Study Session entitled **Indigenous Heritage in San José** in Fall 2023.
2. Direct the City Manager to develop an agenda and facilitate the Study Session with the objectives and goals mentioned below.

BACKGROUND

Since 2020, the City of San José has made significant progress in addressing systemic and systematic inequities, including the creation of the Office of Racial Equity and significant work across departments to make equity considerations a standard component of operations.

A consistent challenge, however, has been in improving how the City relates to indigenous communities, including the people on whose ancestral land the City of San José has been built. As demonstrated in the halted process to develop an official land acknowledgment for the City, confusion on the history of local indigenous people's relationships with local, state, and federal governments, of current governing structures, and of Ohlone culture and heritage has caused racial equity work as it relates to indigenous people to stagnate.

In order for staff and City Council to move forward confidently in addressing and affirming the rights of indigenous people in San José going forward, we believe it is necessary to conduct a study session where experts on the local history can present on, and answer any questions from councilmembers about, the following:

- The history of the indigenous peoples of Santa Clara Valley and their relationship with governments during the Spanish, Mexican, and American eras of colonialism.
- The historic relationship of the City of San José with local indigenous peoples.
- The unique history of federal treaties, federal recognition and lack thereof in the State of California.
- The relationship current tribal nations have with previous recognized nations, and with various indigenous groups described in history.

By establishing a thoughtful foundation, crafted from local area experts and stakeholders, it is our hope that Council would use this knowledge to expand in our racial equity work and begin the work of repairing the relationship between people with ancestral claims to this land and the City of San José.