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TO: The Honorable Detroit City Council

FROM: David Whitaker, Director 
Legislative Policy Division Staff

DATE: June 20, 2023

RE: **QUESTIONS ABOUT CITY HOLIDAYS AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY**

Council Member Gabriela Santiago-Romero requested that the Legislative Policy Division (LPD) draft the following report to answer various questions regarding City holidays and on potentially adding Indigenous Peoples Day as an excused holiday.

1. When was Columbus Day removed from the list of excused city holidays?

According to HR Director Denise Starr, Columbus Day was removed from the list of excused city holidays sometime in or around 1986. Around that time, many of the unions representing City employees collectively bargained to make the day after Thanksgiving and excused holiday in exchange for working on Columbus Day, which was previously an excused holiday. The City then followed suit by amending its excused holidays ordinance to remove Columbus Day and to add the day after Thanksgiving as an excused holiday for non-union employees and appointees.

2. When was the day after Thanksgiving added to the list of city holidays?

As stated above, the day after Thanksgiving was added to the list of excused city holidays sometime around 1986 at the same time that Columbus Day was removed.

3. What are the ordinances that relate to Columbus Day and the Day After Thanksgiving, and are they still in effect?

The current ordinances do not make reference to Columbus Day. The day after Thanksgiving is still included in Sec. 35-2-35 of the City Code as an excused holiday.

4. If Indigenous Peoples Day is added to the list of excused city holidays, how does this effect collective bargaining agreements with the City?

The current version of the proposed ordinance to make Indigenous Peoples Day an excused holiday only directly affects non-union employees and appointees. The proposed ordinance, if passed, would not override any current collective bargaining agreements. However, unions representing City employees will almost certainly bargain over the new holiday when they renegotiate their contracts.

5. When did the city begin recognizing Indigenous Peoples Day as a holiday, and what is the ordinance?

City Council unanimously adopted a resolution in October of 2017 recognizing Indigenous Peoples Day in place of Columbus Day.

6. Will the observance of Indigenous Peoples Day have the same fiscal impact as the observance of Juneteenth? What is the fiscal impact?

According to Steven Watson, Deputy CFO/Budget Director for the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), the fiscal impact for recognizing Indigenous Peoples Day is essentially the same as the impact for recognizing Juneteenth because they both add a new excused holiday for city employees and appointees.

The Fiscal Impact Reports from the OCFO state that the estimated fiscal impact of an excused holiday in FY24 is identical for both Juneteenth and Indigenous Peoples Day at \$643,000 for each. This cost is largely attributed to incremental overtime and holiday pay for Police, Fire, and DDOT employees. HR Director Starr has estimated that the fiscal impact for each holiday will exceed \$1,000,000 when factoring in the potential effect of the new holiday on negotiations with labor unions.

7. Would adding Indigenous Peoples Day have an effect in recognizing the day after Thanksgiving as a Holiday?

Under the current draft of the ordinance, the amendment would add Indigenous Peoples Day as an excused holiday without making any change with regard to the day after Thanksgiving.