

DURHAM BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Proclamation

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH | 2024

WHEREAS, Native American Heritage Month honors and celebrates the important history and heritage of tribal communities across the state who have lived in the geographic area of North Carolina for more than 12,000 years; and

WHEREAS, today, there are more than 130,000 North Carolinians who identify as Native American in North Carolina, according to the 2020 U.S. Census; and

WHEREAS, Durham County, North Carolina acknowledges its presence on the ancestral lands of the Eno, Tuscarora, Lumbee, Occaneechi, Cheraw, Shakori, Saponi, and Catawba tribes, whose rich history and continued contributions have greatly shaped the cultural, historical, and environmental landscape of our community; and

WHEREAS, the Native American people of the Eno, Tuscarora, Lumbee, Occaneechi, Cheraw, Shakori, Saponi, and Catawba tribes have inhabited this region for time immemorial, maintaining a profound connection with the land, waterways, life force, and environment that sustain our community; and

WHEREAS, prior to colonization, Native Americans lived and flourished in what is known as the Americas for time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, the European colonization of North America led to the suppression, forced assimilation, and genocide of Indigenous Peoples and their cultures; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans of this region have experienced historical and present-day injustices and dispossession of their ancestral lands, leading to adverse social, cultural, economic, and health impacts on their communities; and

WHEREAS, Durham County recognizes the vital role the Eno, Tuscarora, Lumbee, Occaneechi, Cheraw, Shakori, Saponi, and Catawba tribes play in promoting understanding, respect, and preservation of Indigenous heritage, language, traditions, and customs, which continue to enrich our community's diverse cultural fabric; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, the North Carolina American Indian Heritage Commission, the North Carolina Museum of History, and North Carolina's Native American Tribes and Urban Indian Organizations collaborate to develop Native American Heritage Month celebrations each year, increasing awareness of Native American history and current issues; and

WHEREAS, the Durham County Board of County Commissioners is committed to fostering inclusive and equitable policies and practices that respect and celebrate the heritage, culture, and contributions of Native Americans; and

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina and the Durham County Board of County Commissioners encourages all residents to learn more about the rich history of Native Americans in our state and commit to preserving Native American heritage and traditions for generations to come.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Nida Allam, Chair and on behalf of the Durham Board of County Commissioners, do hereby proclaim the month of November 2024 as

“NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH”

in Durham County and call upon all citizens to observe, remember, honor, and respect the histories, experiences, and achievements of Native Americans.

This the 12th day of November 2024.

Nida Allam, Chair
Durham Board of County Commissioners

