



Office of the Mayor

CONSENT CALENDAR  
March 9, 2021

To: Honorable Members of the City Council

From: Mayor Jesse Arreguín, Councilmember Rigel Robinson,  
Councilmember Sophie Hahn

Subject: Declaring the 2021 Cesar Chavez-Dolores Huerta Commemorative Period

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution declaring the period of March 21, 2021 to April 10, 2021 as the Cesar Chavez/Dolores Huerta Commemorative Period in the City of Berkeley.

BACKGROUND

Cesar E. Chavez is one of the most influential civil rights and labor leaders in American history, who was an advocate for farm workers rights and social justice for all. As the co-founder of the United Farm Workers union with Dolores Huerta, the two formed an amazing organizing team that successfully organized a union for farm workers and won collective bargaining agreements providing increased wages, benefits and improved working conditions for some of the most oppressed workers in our society. They also became leaders and role models for Latinos throughout the United States. Chavez sadly passed away on April 23, 1993.

In honor of Chavez, in 1996 the park that was previously known as North Waterfront Park was renamed after César E. Chávez.

In 1999, the Berkeley City Council adopted a resolution supporting the designation of March 31 as a state and federal holiday in honor of Cesar Chavez.

In 2000, the State of California made César Chávez' birthday, March 31, a legal holiday for state workers and university students. He is the only labor leader and only Latino to have a state holiday. In 2003, the City of Berkeley created a commemorative period to honor César Chávez (March 20th to April 23).

Since 2003, the Cesar Chavez Commemorative Planning Committee, a group made up of community leaders and groups – including the Berkeley Unified School District, the Ecology Center, and the University of California– have organized events and community service opportunities in the Berkeley community in honor of César Chávez's legacy.

In 2004, the Berkeley City Council unanimously approved the Phase I Design for the Chávez Memorial proposed for César Chávez Park. It is in the form of an ancient solar

calendar and honor four virtues of Chávez: Hope, determination, Courage and tolerance/non-violence.

In 2014, the Chavez Commemoration Committee voted to also honor Dolores Huerta in recognition of her vital partnership with Cesar Chavez, her dedicated commitment to farm workers and in the formation of the UFW, and her current work with the Dolores Huerta Foundation and in political activism and organizing on a variety of social causes. The Committee voted to rename the group the “Chavez/Huerta Commemoration Committee”.

This this year, the Chavez/Huerta Commemorative Committee plans on shortening the commemorative period, beginning on the Spring Equinox on March 21, and ending on April 10, to mark Huerta’s birthday – which the State of California officially made April 10 Dolores Huerta Day in 2018.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial impact

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with adopting this recommendation.

CONTACT PERSON

Mayor Jesse Arreguín      510-981-7100

Attachments:

1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

DECLARING THE PERIOD OF MARCH 21, 2021 TO APRIL 10, 2021 AS THE CESAR CHAVEZ & DOLORES HUERTA COMMEMORATIVE PERIOD IN THE CITY OF BERKELEY

WHEREAS, César Chávez is one of the most influential civil rights and labor leaders in American history, and was an advocate for farm workers rights and social justice for all; and

WHEREAS, as the co-founder of the United Farm Workers union with Dolores Huerta, the two formed an amazing organizing team that successfully created a union for farm workers and won collective bargaining agreements providing increased wages, benefits and improved working conditions for some of the most oppressed workers in our society. They also became leaders and role models for Latinos throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez and Dolores Huerta formed an amazing organizing team who believed that service to others was a calling, a mission and a way of life, not merely an occupation or an occasional act of charity. They both believed that people have an obligation to contribute to their communities and to help those in need. Both were and are committed to the idea that service not only strengthened a community, but that service benefited those individuals who joined together to improve a community; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez sadly passed away on April 23, 1993; and

WHEREAS, in 1996 the City of Berkeley changed the name of Waterfront Park to César Chávez Park; and

WHEREAS, in 1999 the Berkeley City Council passed a resolution supporting State Senator Richard Polanco's efforts to establish a César Chávez state holiday, and also support for a federal César Chávez holiday; and

WHEREAS, in 2000 the State of California declared César Chávez's birthday an official state holiday for state workers (March 31); and

WHEREAS, in 2000 the Berkeley City Council voted on a resolution to support the development of the Chávez Memorial Solar Calendar at César Chávez Park; and

WHEREAS, in 2002 the Berkeley School Board adopted a resolution declaring that César Chávez Day is not currently a BUSD or COB holiday in Berkeley; rather it is an experimental service learning alternative to a school and city holiday; and

WHEREAS, the 2002 Berkeley School Board resolution included the intended commitment to follow an approved implementation plan that strongly priorities the following:

- Distribute information on curricula and resources developed by the State for teachers,
- Encourage teachers, through announcements and publications, to incorporate curricula and resources into their lesson plans,
- Encourage each school to have school-wide activities on or around March 31 to honor the legacy of César Chávez; and

WHEREAS, in 2003 the City of Berkeley along with the César Chávez Commemorative Planning Committee began to celebrate a citywide commemorative period – beginning on the Spring Equinox to mark the beginning of the planting season in agriculture, continuing through April 23<sup>rd</sup> to mark the anniversary of Chávez’s death; and

WHEREAS, in 2004 the Berkeley City Council unanimously approved the Phase I Design for the Chávez Memorial proposed for César Chávez Park. It is in the form of an ancient solar calendar and honor four virtues of Chávez: Hope, determination, Courage and tolerance/non-violence; and

WHEREAS, in 2014 the Chavez Commemorative Planning Committee voted to also honor Dolores Huerta in recognition of her vital partnership with César Chávez, her dedicated commitment to farm workers, an her activism and organizing on a variety of social causes. The Committee voted to rename the group the Chávez/Huerta Commemorative Committee.

WHEREAS, this year, the Chávez Huerta Commemorative Committee plans on shortening the commemorative period, beginning on the Spring Equinox on March 21, and ending on April 10, to mark Huerta’s birthday – which the State of California officially made April 10 Dolores Huerta Day in 2018.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that it hereby declares the period of March 21, 2021 to April 10, 2021 as the “César Chávez & Dolores Huerta Commemorative Period” in the City of Berkeley.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that together the School Board of Directors and City Council members are encouraged to participate in the Chávez/Huerta Commemorative events in the Berkeley community.