



**Action on Council Request
(Council Policy 030) for a
Resolution in Support of
Muwekma Ohlone Tribe being
Recognized**

June 9, 2026, Item #11 RTC 26-533
Paulina Morales, Assistant City Manager

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Council Request 030

- At the March 24, 2026, the City Council meeting, direction was provided to agendize a resolution in support of federal recognition of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe

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POST MEETING MATERIAL



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Muwekma Ohlone Tribe

- The Muwekma Ohlone Tribe is composed of descendants of the Ohlone (also known as Costanoan) people, who historically inhabited areas across present-day San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa, and portions of Napa, Santa Cruz, Solano, and San Joaquin counties. The Tribe traces its documented ancestry primarily to the historic Verona Band of Alameda County.

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Muwekma Ohlone Tribe...

- The Verona Band of Alameda County, now associated with the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, was previously recognized by the federal government. Federal records indicate that the group's federal acknowledgment status changed in the early 20th century through administrative actions by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), including actions taken by the Sacramento Indian Agency.

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Muwekma Ohlone Tribe...

- In 1989, the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe submitted a petition for federal acknowledgment under the BIA's Federal Acknowledgment Process (25 CFR Part 83). The federal acknowledgment process provides an administrative pathway for tribes to seek recognition and requires petitioners to demonstrate satisfaction of specific regulatory criteria related to historical continuity, community, and political authority.

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Actions taken by other Jurisdictions



August 4, 2025

Secretary Doug Burgum
Department of the Interior
e/for Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Subject: Letter of Support – Muwekma Ohlone Tribe's Application for Federal Recognition

Dear Secretary Burgum,

On behalf of the City of Livermore, I am writing to express our strong support of a federal recognition application from the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area.

We recognize the deep historical and cultural significance of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe in our region. The tribe's members have honorably served in the United States Armed Forces and have continually demonstrated their commitment to the community.

We urge the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs to thoroughly review an application for federal recognition from the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

John Marchand
Mayor, City of Livermore

cc: Evan Branning, Vice Mayor, City of Livermore
Mariana Burch, City Manager, City of Livermore
Charlene Nijmeh, Chairwoman of Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay

City Hall 1952 South Livermore Ave., Livermore, CA 94550
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To: The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Bryan Mercer
Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW, MS-4660 MB
Washington, DC 20240

From: Thai Nam Pham, City Clerk

Date: Tuesday, August 5, 2025

RE: Resolution No. 2025-107 - Supporting Federal Recognition of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe

Dear Secretary Burgum and Director Mercer,

As the City Clerk for the City of Union City, I am transmitting this letter pursuant to the direction of the City Council of Union City, which adopted Resolution No. 2025-107 at its regular meeting on July 22, 2025. The resolution urges the United States Congress, the Department of the Interior, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs to formally recognize the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area as a federally recognized tribe.

The resolution expresses the City Council's support for reaffirming the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe's status as a sovereign Native Nation. It highlights the Tribe's historical and cultural significance, including its long-standing presence in the Bay Area and documented historical relationship with the federal government as the Verona Band. Please find the adopted resolution attached. Should your offices require additional information or documentation, I am happy to provide it upon request.

Sincerely,

Thai Nam Pham, MMC, CPAC
City Clerk
City of Union City

CITY OF UNION CITY
1000 Lakeside Avenue, Suite 100, Union City, CA 94587
(415) 762-1000

city manager's office

Resolution No. 2025-107

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF UNION CITY URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, THE WHITE HOUSE, THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, AND THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE MUWEKMA OHLONE TRIBE OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA'S FEDERAL RECOGNITION

WHEREAS, the Muwekma Ohlone people are the only Bureau of Indian Affairs-recognized and historic Ohlone Tribe from the San Francisco Bay Area who have maintained a distinct culture, social, and political identity for over 230 years despite genocide and political erasure; and

WHEREAS, the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe has had an ancestral presence in the San Francisco Bay Area since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, the direct ancestors of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe were missionized into the three Bay Area Missions—Santa Clara, San Jose, and San Francisco—during the expansion of the Spanish Empire into Alta California from 1769 until secularization in 1820; and

WHEREAS, the United States Government maintained a "trust" relationship with the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, historically identified as the Verona Band, from 1906 to 1927, as recognized by Bureau of Indian Affairs agents and superintendents; and

WHEREAS, the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe has never been terminated by an act of Congress but was bureaucratically and politically removed from the list of landless tribes eligible for land or homestead purchases under the Congressional Appropriation Acts of 1906, 1908, and subsequent years, without due process, despite its trust relationship and prior federal recognition; and

WHEREAS, members of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe have been enrolled under the 1928 California Jurisdictional Act and subsequent acts, as approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Secretary of the Interior, and federal courts, and have consistently organized under the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act and attended Indian Boarding Schools in the 1930s and 1940s; and

WHEREAS, there are over 614 BIA-recognized enrolled members of the Verona Band/Muwekma Ohlone Tribe currently residing in the San Francisco Bay Area; and

WHEREAS, Muwekma Ohlone men and women have honorably served in all branches of the United States Armed Forces in every major military conflict since World War I and continue to serve today; and

WHEREAS, justice and equal treatment under the law demand that the Department of the Interior and the federal government officially recognize the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe's historical, social, military, and political contributions through reaffirmation of its federal status.

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Recommendation

- Receive the report and provide input or further direction to staff on the adoption of a Resolution supporting Federal Recognition of the Muwekma Ohlone.

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