



# Office of the City Clerk

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## Legislation Text

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### ORDINANCE

Whereas, Chicago's annual celebrations of Poland's Constitution of May 3, 1791 were initiated by the Polish National Alliance to commemorate the centennial of the enactment of this important document. On May 2, 1891, that first Polish Constitution Day "parade" in Chicago had a different flavor than it does today. Historical accounts describe hundreds of carriages brightly decorated with Polish and American flags, marching military re-enactment units, equestrian units, groups of children and youth in traditional Polish costumes, and Polish American clubs and societies flooding the streets on their way to a gathering place on Haymarket Square. The program included patriotic speeches condemning the three partitions of Poland by Russia, Prussia, and Austria, as well as performances by musical groups and soloists.

WHEREAS, Among the guest speakers was financier and alderman John F. Smulski, who later served as Illinois state treasurer, and Chicago judge Murray F. Tuley.

Since then, the Polish American community in Chicago has come together on the first Saturday of May to celebrate patriotism, culture, history, and heritage, as a reminder that Poland enacted a democratic constitution that was second only to the Constitution of the United States and first of its kind in Europe.

WHEREAS, Over the years, parade organizers have hosted special guests including federal, state and local government officials, as well as special invitees from Poland. Parade themes have reflected important issues of the day, from anniversaries of military victories to celebrations of famous Poles and Polish Americans, including Nicolaus Copernicus, Maria Skłodowska Curie, Thaddeus Kosciuszko, and St. John Paul II. The parade marshal is always a person of stature in the Polish American community, someone who has made a significant contribution to further the good name of Polonia. With a special focus on youth, the parades have become particularly colorful and joyous with the participation of more than 50 Polish language schools and youth groups sponsored by local Polish American fraternal, cultural, and educational organizations and businesses, as well as some from our neighboring states of Wisconsin, Indiana, and Michigan. Parade routes have included Augusta Boulevard (Humboldt Park), and State Street, Dearborn Street, and Columbus Drive in downtown Chicago, with countless groups of marchers and thousands of spectators. Local media outlets broadcast the festivities and social media technology allows them to be transmitted worldwide.

WHEREAS, Events accompanying the parade celebrations include the parade queen pageant, a Polish flag raising at Richard J. Daley Plaza, wreath-laying at the Kosciuszko Monument on Solidarity Drive, Chopin concerts at the proposed Chopin Garden in Grant Park, a Polish Constitution Day banquet, and the traditional mass at Holy Trinity Church.

WHEREAS, In 1992, that role of the organizer of the May 3rd Constitution Parade was taken over by a civic committee composed of representatives of Polish American organizations in the Chicagoland area, under the auspices of the Alliance of Polish Clubs in the USA. For 30 years now, the parade has become the largest, most significant event in the Polish American community in the USA.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO

Section 1. Pursuant to Section 2-8-040 of the Municipal Code of Chicago, which allows Erection of

honorary street name designations, the Commissioner of Transportation shall take the necessary action for standardization of 5800 West Diversey Avenue, from North Monitor Avenue to North Schubert Avenue, as "May 3rd Polish Constitution Way."

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and publication.

Ajfi E. Reboyas Alderman, 30th Ward