



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Mayor Victoria Woodards and Council Members Robert Thoms and Catherine Ushka
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: **Resolution - Denouncing Anti-Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPI) Sentiment Due to Fears of the COVID-19 Pandemic and Affirming the City of Tacoma’s Commitment to the Well-Being and Safety of Asian American Communities – March 23, 2021**
DATE: 3/18/2021

SUMMARY & PURPOSE:

A resolution denouncing anti-Asian American and Pacific Islanders sentiment due to fears of the COVID-19 pandemic affirming the City of Tacoma’s Commitment to the Well-Being and Safety of Asian American Communities.

[Mayor Victoria Woodards and Council Members Robert Thoms and Catherine Ushka]

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

Mayor Victoria Woodards and Council Members Robert Thoms and Catherine Ushka

BACKGROUND:

This Council Member’s Recommendation is Based On:

Hate crimes, discrimination, and aggression against Asian American and Pacific Islanders are on the rise throughout the country as Asian American and Pacific Islanders are being blamed for the COVID-19 outbreak. Nearly 3,800 incidents of anti-Asian discrimination, harassment, assaults, and civil rights violations were reported to the Stop AAPI Hate center between March 2020 and February 2021. On March 17, 2021, eight individuals, including six women of Asian descent, were murdered at their workplaces in Atlanta, Georgia. The City of Tacoma, Washington stands in sympathy and solidarity with the AAPI community, as well as the greater Atlanta area, in condemning these vicious acts of hate and violence. Tacoma maintains that respect for individuals of all races, ethnicities and national origins is an integral part of our cultural fabric as a city and as a community.

Despite these increasing acts of intolerance, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have made our Nation more secure during the COVID-19 pandemic and throughout our history. Scientists have confirmed that COVID-19 does not respect borders and is not caused by ethnicity, and we caution against using geographic descriptors because they can fuel ethnic discrimination.

The City of Tacoma actively seeks to educate staff and our community on the poisonous effects of expressions of hatred or contempt based on race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, marital status, sex, age, sexual orientation or gender identity and to promote equality and mutual respect and understanding among all groups and individuals. The City Council adopted an Equity and Empowerment Framework in 2014 and is committed to equity in our service delivery, decision making and community engagement, including our COVID-19 response. The statement on Anti-Discrimination and COVID-19 approved by the City Council on April 3rd condemned discrimination of any kind against members of our community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:



The Korean Women’s Association and Asia Pacific Cultural Center have requested the Tacoma City Council adamantly condemn anti-Asian American and Pacific Island sentiment and violence.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility:

The Asian American and Pacific Islander population is more heterogeneous than any other racial group in the U.S., with more than 48 ethnicities, over 300 spoken languages, various socioeconomic statuses, immigration histories, cultures, and religions. Hate crimes, discrimination, and aggression against Asian American and Pacific Islanders are on the rise throughout the country as Asian American and Pacific Islanders are being blamed for the COVID-19 outbreak. COVID-19 is a public health issue, not a racial one, and the characterization by some national leaders of COVID-19 as a “Chinese virus” only encourages hate crimes and incidents against Asian American and Pacific Islanders at a time when communities should be working to get through this crisis.

Livability: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity

Improve health outcomes and reduce disparities, in alignment with the community health needs assessment and CHIP, for all Tacoma residents
Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

The City Council wishes to affirm its commitment to the well-being and safety of Asian American and Pacific Islander community members and ensure they know they are not alone and that their representatives will speak out to help stop the spread of bigotry.

ALTERNATIVES:

Presumably your recommendation is not the only potential course of action; please discuss other alternatives actions for council or staff to take. Please use table below.

Alternative	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
1. Take no action.	N/A.	The City of Tacoma’s AAPI community would not be supported while facing increased discrimination.

EVALUATIONS AND FOLLOW UP:

The City of Tacoma should use media channels to Denouncing Anti-AAPI Sentiment.

COUNCIL MEMBER RECOMMENDATION:

The recommendation is to make a strong statement on this topic and to use the influence and resources of the City to create a safe and welcoming environment for every community in Tacoma.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact.