



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Melanie Harding, Chief Policy Analyst to the Mayor, City Manager's Office  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Council Contingency Fund Request to support a Community-led, Multi-sector Systems Transformation  
**DATE:** October 1, 2020

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**SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:**

A resolution allocating a Council Contingency Fund request of \$75,000, aligned with Mayor and Council directives in Resolution No. 40622, to stand-up a community-led, multi-sector systems transformation effort to address all institutions, systems, policies, practices, and contracts impacted by systemic racism, with initial priority being given to policing in the City of Tacoma.

**COUNCIL SPONSORS:**

Mayor Victoria Woodards  
Deputy Mayor Keith Blocker  
Councilmember Robert Thoms  
Councilmember John Hines

**BACKGROUND:**

This recommendation supports the direction outlined by the Mayor and Council in Resolution 40622, affirming the City of Tacoma's commitment to anti-racist systems transformation across the city.

Disparities by race continue to be seen across the nation and in Tacoma in almost every measure of human health and wellbeing, including perceptions of safety, incarceration and arrest rates, risk of death from homicide, annual income, net worth, access to education, and key indicators of public health, such as maternal and infant mortality, heart disease, and diabetes. These disparities remain despite the numerous national and local efforts that have been directed toward reforms and the restoration of civil rights, social justice, and equity.

In Resolution 40622, the Mayor and City Council committed to addressing these disparities through comprehensive and sustained transformation of all of the institutions, systems, policies, practices, and contracts impacted by systemic racism, with initial priority being given to policing in the City of Tacoma. They further declared that this work would engage organizations across all sectors, be community-led, and center the voices of those most impacted by systemic racism.

Transformation in this context is intended to mean comprehensive change that fundamentally enhances and radically re-imagines the way we operate as a city and a community. The goal of these transformational efforts would be to ensure that the services and opportunities provided by the City of Tacoma and throughout the city equitably serve every member of our community, including Black community members and other community members of color.



More traditional equity initiatives have resulted in important incremental changes and reforms in recent decades. To further pursue changes that are transformational in nature, Resolution No. 40622 outlines a new, community-led approach that allows every organization in Tacoma to come together and take actions that forward the shared, multi-sector goal of making Tacoma an Anti-Racist city.

It is envisioned that reconciliation work, such as the model that has been defined and refined by the National Network for Safe Communities, will be used to authentically acknowledge the past and present harms of systemic racism and bring the kind of true change that allows communities to be strengthened, served with greater equity, and ultimately experience healing. To allow broad participation and create multi-sector change, we will invite multi-sector leaders with a shared vision for an anti-racist Tacoma to bring their unique resources, provide subject matter expertise, and create additional community connections to support and empower this effort. While the work will be community led, the initial vision is to collectively work in alignment to:

- Acknowledge the past and present harms perpetuated by racism in their sector and their organization
- Center the voices of people most-impacted by systemic racism and allow the community to lead where we focus our efforts for systemic change
- Commit to making substantive changes – enacting true transformation that addresses the continuing harms of systemic racism – to collectively create an Anti-Racist Tacoma

To keep this broad coalition of organizations and community groups organized, a Core Coordinating Team (supported by a neutral facilitators to allow independence and encourage a shared sense of community ownership) will be nominated by the Community Vitality and Safety Committee and confirmed by the Council to guide this community-led effort. Among the Core Coordinating Team's responsibilities would be to "network weave" and ensure that contributions from throughout the community are strategically aligned, relationships are built, and resources are coordinated for maximum impact. The Core Coordinating Team will also select members for Transformation Teams who can lead out on systems change efforts specifically in priority areas defined by community members of color.

The Core Coordinating Team and each Transformation Team will have one City of Tacoma elected official and an alternate assigned as a policy liaison to listen and learn from meeting discussion and community engagement efforts, report back to Council, and (at the request of the Core Coordinating or Transformation Teams) serve as a link to resources and information from the City of Tacoma.

From demonstrations, communications, and council testimony, the community has indicated that policing must be a priority in this work. Accordingly, the City of Tacoma is engaged in initial current state assessment, the implementation of body worn cameras, the hiring of a new police chief, review of use of force policies, engaging in community dialogue to define safety, and other work that will be foundational to this effort.

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:**

Nationally, this is a historic moment of reckoning on issues related to race. Locally, Tacoma's elected leaders have received thousands of emails and countless telephone calls, and the City has seen widespread demonstrations (with sometimes more than 10,000 participants estimated) calling on the community to address the impacts of systemic racism, with a priority being placed on policing in the City of Tacoma. Resolution No. 40622 called for this systems transformation effort to be community led and to engage the public, centering the voices of those most impacted by systemic racism.



**2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

**Equity and Accessibility: (Mandatory)**

This funding will stand-up a process that seeks to reduce racial and other inequities, disparities, or discrimination to under-represented communities through community-led, multi-sector systems transformation.

**Economy/Workforce: Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity**

Increase the number of Tacoma households that have livable wage jobs within proximity to the city.

**Education: Equity Index Score: High Opportunity**

Increase the number of quality out of school time learning opportunities distributed equitably across the city.  
Increase digital access and equity across the city.

**Civic Engagement: Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity**

Representation at public meetings will reflect the diversity of the Tacoma community  
Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

**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.

**Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).**

These dollars would serve as start-up funding for a community-led process that seeks to reduce racial and other inequities, disparities, or discrimination to under-represented communities through systems transformation. While the work will begin with policing, it is envisioned to be comprehensive and sustained across all systems/sectors and may have measurable outcomes on any/all Tacoma 2025 indicators.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Presumably, your recommendation is not the only potential course of action; please discuss other alternatives or actions that City Council or staff could take. Please use table below.

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Take no action	City resources could be allocated to other areas of service delivery	Significantly limited ability to carry out the directives of Resolution No. 40622, with no budgeted dollars to stand up a community led effort.
2. Begin with community fundraising campaign	City resources could be allocated to other areas of service delivery	Significant investment of Mayor & City Council time and potentially unfunded staff time; slowed response to standing up an effort which meets the directives of Resolution No. 40622



**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:**

This process is likely to include evaluating existing performance measures and/or benchmarks and potentially establishing new measures to accurately reflect meaningful progress.

**STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:**

The sponsor recommends approval.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The initial allocation of \$75,000 will go to initial start-up funding with additional resources to be sought from other community partner organizations and entities.

Overall future impacts are to be determined. Because systems transformation is an adaptive challenge, defining the problem and determining solutions will be a collaborative learning process that Council has directed should be community led. It is acknowledged that COVID-19 and its impacts to revenues will be a consideration for the funding of all City services and operations.

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
1. Council Contingency Fund 1030	660000	5310100	\$75,000
2.			
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$75,000</b>

**What Funding is being used to support the expense?**

Council Contingency Funding

**Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?**

**NO, PLEASE EXPLAIN BELOW**

These dollars are drawn from Council Contingency Fund, which provides for the funding of initiatives that are not called out in the biennial budget.

In addition to these dollars, a contract for an initial scope of work has been put in place for consultation with police reform experts during the current state assessment of the Tacoma Police Department. Work beyond consultation, including assessment of the department, would need to be identified.

The City currently allocates funding for equity and outreach work, budget development, government relations, continuous improvement, development of legislative agendas, police administration, etc.

**Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?**

**YES**

Without intervention, there will be reoccurring costs to public health and wellbeing that will continue to fall inequitably on residents/businesses who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

**Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?**



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Choose an item.

This legislation is for one-time funding. It is anticipated that additional funding will be sought from community partners.

**Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?**

**No**

No changes to FTEs.