



**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Council Member Keith Blocker and Council Assistant for Policy Development Claire Goodwin  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Ordinance – Codifying Equity in City Manager’s Duties – December 13, 2022  
**DATE:** December 2, 2022

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**SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:**

An ordinance codifying the City’s Office of Equity and Human Rights as part of the departments and offices that represent the City’s codified administrative services and adding to the official duties of the City Manager as follows:

- The City Manager shall develop policies, practices and strategic investments to reverse racial disparity trends in the community and eliminate institutional racism at the City of Tacoma to ensure that outcomes and opportunities for all people are no longer predicable by race.
- The City Manager shall ensure all departments and offices incorporate racial equity principles in all aspects of strategic planning and budgetary planning.
- The City Manager shall provide to City Council, on at least an annual basis, a formal report on the progress in advancing equity, including progress on City racial equity action planning and specific departmental progress towards contracting and workforce diversity goals, and any other goals as determined by the City Council that impact the racial equity framework.

**COUNCIL SPONSORS:**

Mayor Victoria Woodards, Deputy Mayor Catherine Ushka, and Council Member Keith Blocker

**BACKGROUND:**

On June 30, 2020, the Tacoma City Council adopted Resolution No. 40622 affirming the City Council’s dedication and commitment to comprehensive and sustained transformation of all of the institutions, systems, policies, practices, and contracts impacted by systemic racism.<sup>1</sup> Resolution No. 40622 directed the City Manager to:

1. Keep anti-racism as a top priority in the process of budget development and prioritize anti-racism in the planning of an economic recovery strategy following COVID-19;
2. Prioritize anti-racism in the evaluation of new policies and programs, as well as the sustained and comprehensive transformation of existing services, with initial priority being given to policing;
3. Assess the current state of systems in place at the Tacoma Police Department in consultation with police reform experts, and give specific attention to how current policies and existing studies, agency composition, hiring, promotions, staffing levels, training, and accountability systems align to create just outcomes and use this assessment as a foundation for the work of comprehensive transformation;
4. Actively seek and implement interim administrative changes and process improvements that can legally be taken immediately to improve transparency and accountability in policing; and
5. Work with the Mayor and City Council to build a legislative platform at the local, state, and federal levels that works to transform institutions impacted by systemic racism for the greater equity and wellbeing of all residents of Tacoma, Washington State, and the United States.

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution 40622: <https://cityoftacoma.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4579947&GUID=A7AD32E5-A284-457C-96E5-B5D7A68B4B27&Options=&Search=>



The City of Tacoma acknowledges that the challenges of dismantling of more than 400 years of systemic racism to ensure measurable improvements in the equitable health and wellbeing of all members of the community is an adaptive leadership challenge that will require a radical reimagining of institutions and an innovative and collaborative response. It is the City Council’s intent that the transformation efforts being made by the City last beyond the current City administration and be added to the responsibilities of the City Manager. The City Council recognizes the City Manager’s internal Office of Equity and Human Rights has been a leader in the City’s transformation efforts and the City Council believes this office needs to be officially recognized in the Municipal Code to ensure the City’s transformation efforts continue. The City Council requests that the Public Utility Board impose similar duties on the Director of Utilities related to anti-racist transformation efforts.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:**

The City Council is committed to advancing racial equity. This proposal will provide direction to future City administrations to continue the work to address racial disparity trends in the community and eliminate institutional racism at the City of Tacoma to ensure that outcomes and opportunities for all people are no longer predicable by race.

**2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

**Equity and Accessibility: (Mandatory)**

This legislation will reduce racial inequities by codifying the Office of Equity and Human Rights in the departments and offices that represent the administrative services of the City, which formally makes advancing equity a standard role of the duties of the City of Tacoma. This legislation also codifies the duties of the City Manager to address racial disparity trends in the community and eliminate institutional racism in the organization.

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

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**

Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

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

This legislation will increase the percentage of residents who express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma by codifying the Office of Equity and Human Rights and the duties of the City Manager to advance equity which is intended to dismantle barriers to achieving equitable outcomes for Tacoma’s communities of color, and, internally, for City staff.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

| Alternative(s) | Positive Impact(s)   | Negative Impact(s)  |
|----------------|--|---|
| 1. No action   | Additional resources and time dedicated to other priorities. | Office of Equity and Human Rights not codified. Future City Managers may not realize the crucial role equity plays in the organization. |



**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:**

As part of the added duties of the City Manager in advancing racial equity, the City Manager shall provide to City Council, on at least an annual basis, a formal report on the progress in advancing equity, including progress on City racial equity action planning and specific departmental progress towards contracting and workforce diversity goals, and any other goals as determined by the City Council that impact the racial equity framework

**STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Sponsors recommend adopting this ordinance that codifies the City's Office of Equity and Human Rights as part of the departments and offices that represent the City's codified administrative services and adding to the official duties of the City Manager as follows:

- The City Manager shall develop policies, practices and strategic investments to reverse racial disparity trends in the community and eliminate institutional racism at the City of Tacoma to ensure that outcomes and opportunities for all people are no longer predicable by race.
- The City Manager shall ensure all departments and offices incorporate racial equity principles in all aspects of strategic planning and budgetary planning.
- The City Manager shall provide to City Council, on at least an annual basis, a formal report on the progress in advancing equity, including progress on City racial equity action planning and specific departmental progress towards contracting and workforce diversity goals, and any other goals as determined by the City Council that impact the racial equity framework.



**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The fiscal impacts of this legislation are negligible and include updating the leadership title on physical items to reflect the change from “Chief Equity Officer” to “Director.” The City Manager is already engaged in the work described in the proposal, so there are no fiscal impacts to codifying the duties as described in the legislation.

| Fund Number & Name | COST OBJECT<br>(CC/WBS/ORDER) | Cost Element | Total Amount |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. NA              |                               |              |              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>       |                               |              | NA           |

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

NA

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

**NO, PLEASE EXPLAIN BELOW**

Fiscal impacts are negligible.

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

YES

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

No

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

No

This legislation codifies current practices and codifies the Office of Equity and Human Rights.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Ordinance