



TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Council Member Beale
COPY: City Manager and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Resolution calling for the establishment of racial and socioeconomic justice as a foundational element of housing policy.
DATE: May 9, 2019

SUMMARY:

A Resolution calling for the establishment of racial and socioeconomic justice as a foundational element of housing policy to address disparate impacts from historic housing and land use practices, and reduction of displacement risk and gentrification by expanding housing choice and affordability throughout the community.

STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:

The establishment of racial and socioeconomic justice as a foundational element of housing policy supports the following priorities:

- Strengthen and support a safe city with healthy residents.
- Ensure all Tacoma residents are valued and have access to resources to meet their needs.

BACKGROUND:

There is a history of housing and land use practices that have facilitated socioeconomic division and the exclusion of people of color. The Housing Element of Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan sets a strong policy direction for inclusive and affordable housing, but does not currently emphasize the legacy of racial and economic exclusion in past housing policies, processes, and systems. Today's City government has a moral obligation to take a strong stance to redress that history, and allowing for a variety of housing types creates opportunities for all of our neighbors to be housed, and combats the legacy of past exclusionary practices.

The City is actively developing an Affordable Housing Action Strategy (AHAS), a comprehensive, market-based work program to address affordable housing needs. The AHAS recognizes that land use policy and zoning regulations are an important tool in providing additional opportunities for affordable housing, specifically includes Action 1.2 (Inclusionary Housing) and Action 1.8 (Encourage more diverse types of housing). The Tacoma Planning Commission is currently considering Housing Element updates to reflect and integrate the AHAS, and will be holding its public hearing on May 15, 2019.

ISSUE:

It is in the interests of the City to establish racial and socioeconomic justice as a foundational element of housing policy to address disparate impacts from historic housing and land use practices, and reduction of displacement risk and gentrification by expanding housing choice and affordability throughout the community.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council could choose not to establish racial and socioeconomic justice as a foundational element of housing policy to address disparate impacts from historic housing and land use practices, and reduction of displacement risk and gentrification by expanding housing choice and affordability throughout the community, not direct the Planning Commission to include considerations of racial justice and reduction of displacement risk and gentrification in its review of affordable housing policy within the Housing



Element of the Tacoma Comprehensive Plan, and to not request the Human Rights Commission to study displacement risk, and disparate racial impacts of displacement and gentrification in Tacoma, and develop policy recommendations to the City Council to reduce the risks of displacement and gentrification and associated disparate racial impacts.

RECOMMENDATION:

The City Council is recommended to adopt a resolution to establish racial and socioeconomic justice as a foundational element of housing policy to address disparate impacts from historic housing and land use practices, and reduction of displacement risk and gentrification by expanding housing choice and affordability throughout the community, direct the Planning Commission to include considerations of racial justice and reduction of displacement risk and gentrification in its review of affordable housing policy within the Housing Element of the Tacoma Comprehensive Plan, and request the Human Rights Commission to study displacement risk, and disparate racial impacts of displacement and gentrification in Tacoma, and develop policy recommendations to the City Council to reduce the risks of displacement and gentrification and associated disparate racial impacts.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The proposed Resolution may require additional funding for consultant and other support to the Human Rights Commission in an amount to be determined. Other potential future funding and policy options on the subject will have a fiscal impact yet to be determined.