



RESOLUTION NO. 41197

1 BY REQUEST OF MAYOR WOODARDS, DEPUTY MAYOR WALKER, AND
2 COUNCIL MEMBERS DANIELS AND USHKA

3 A RESOLUTION relating to gun violence; acknowledging the devastating impact of
4 gun violence in our country and in Tacoma; naming the disparity of those
5 impacts on Black youths, boys, and children; affirming the City of Tacoma's
6 ongoing commitment to decreasing violence in our community; and directing
7 the City Manager to implement a range of immediate actions related to
8 bolstering community safety and the wellbeing of Tacoma's youth.

9 WHEREAS the youth in our country are experiencing surging levels of gun
10 violence, creating a dire crisis that has no quick fix and reached alarming new
11 heights in 2020, when gun violence became the leading cause of death for
12 Americans under the age of eighteen, and

13 WHEREAS nationally, gun violence has shown no signs of being a
14 temporary phenomenon among youths in America and has risen steadily and
15 sharply throughout the past decade, and

16 WHEREAS gun violence is affecting American youths in disparate ways – as
17 of 2021, Black children were about five times more likely to die from gunfire than
18 their White counterparts, and in addition, boys, and those ages 12-17 account for
19 most gun-related deaths, and

20 WHEREAS, the City's youth are not immune to gun violence, and we have
21 already lost beloved children, many of whom are youths of color, cherished by their
22 families and friends, with full lives ahead of them, and

23 WHEREAS, in the City, as across our country, youths are not only victims of
24 gun violence but are also finding ways to access firearms, with 10 percent of
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1 children in Tacoma Public Schools participating in the Healthy Youth Survey in
2021 claiming it would be easy to get access to a gun, and

2 WHEREAS, while we recognize and do not seek to infringe on law-abiding
3 Americans' Second Amendment rights to keep and bear arms, legally purchased
4 guns are being stolen in record numbers, from 2017 to 2021 more than one million
5 firearms were stolen from private citizens across the United States, a number that is
6 likely vastly underrepresented because it includes only thefts reported to
7 authorities, and

8 WHEREAS, in the City, a gun is stolen from a vehicle in Tacoma every 57
9 hours and failures to safely store legally purchased firearms are resulting in
10 firearms ending up in the hands of youths and an unknown number of guns illegally
11 circulating in our community, and

12 WHEREAS the tragic loss of life from gun violence has far-reaching
13 consequences in our City because gun violence does not only irrevocably change
14 or cut lives short, but it also traumatizes perpetrators, witnesses, and families, while
15 stoking stress, fear, and anxiety in our schools and neighborhoods, and

16 WHEREAS, we recognize and applaud the efforts undertaken thus far in the
17 City, State, and Nation to address gun violence and safe storage, we commend the
18 steady and committed work of our community partners who are working closely with
19 at-risk youth and helping to educate us all, and we see great value in the City,
20 State, and Nation's efforts to fund violence prevention programs, and

21 WHEREAS we seek to maintain the City's commitment to investing in
22 services that increase safety and supports systems, while decreasing violence in
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our community, such as our past work on the 2022 Youth and Young Adult Violence
1 Assessment and our 2019 Tacoma Gang Assessment, and

2 WHEREAS the City contracts with 11 agencies representing 19 programs,
3 including 12 new programs, and the City has increased the youth violence reduction
4 budget by \$870,086 in 2023-2024, including a \$400,000 grant received from the
5 Department of Commerce, Office of Firearm Safety and Violence Prevention, to
6 reach a total of \$2,044,852, and

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8 WHEREAS, in response to the alarming year-over-year increase in youth
9 deaths due to gun violence, Mayor Woodards convened representatives from
10 concerned government agencies, including Tacoma, Pierce County and its Juvenile
11 Court, Metro Parks Tacoma, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Tacoma
12 Public Schools, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, and Pierce Transit, beginning in
13 January 2023 to discuss shared concerns and a collaborative approach to this
14 important issue, and this resolution seeks to capture the outcomes of those
15 conversations to date, and

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18 WHEREAS it takes all of us, working as a village, to ensure every student is
19 safe, healthy, engaged, and supported, and we have an opportunity to act
20 alongside our community partners, cooperatively aligning existing resources to
21 address youth violence to expand summer programming in the spirit of the Whole
22 Child initiative, and

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24 WHEREAS, because violence often presents itself within a complex set of
25 issues which can be societal, systemic, cyclical, or intergenerational in nature, we
26 must work in concert to address community safety and youth violence in a



1 sustained manner, and the City is developing a Community Safety Plan using a
2 public health lens, defined and driven by community voices, and

3 WHEREAS, the unacceptable number of our youth affected by gun violence,
4 the human anguish spurred by the death and maiming of our children, and the
5 increasing availability of illegally obtained firearms in our community, demands
6 urgent and immediate action aimed at enhancing violence prevention efforts,
7 especially to protect our Black male children; Now, Therefore,

8 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

9 Section 1. The City Manager is hereby directed to provide \$200,000 in
10 funding for safe space for youth and \$100,000 in funding for youth programming for
11 the summer of 2023.
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13 Section 2. That the City Manager is hereby directed to ensure that the
14 ongoing work to create a Community Safety Plan includes an effort to: (1) identify a
15 set of data-driven goals for reducing gun violence in Tacoma and disrupting the
16 cycle of violence affecting young people, (2) identify pathways beyond policing to
17 help achieve strategic outcomes and violence prevention, and (3) place a priority
18 focus on youths of color, boys, and those ages 12-18.
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20 Section 3. That the City Manager is hereby directed to research the
21 feasibility of enhancing efforts to prevent legally purchased firearms from being
22 used illegally by or against youths, such as increasing the accessibility of gun safes
23 and trigger locks, and to evaluate whether there are unrealized or underutilized
24 opportunities in the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, signed into law in June
25 2022, that could help curb the spread of unlawfully obtained firearms in the City.
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Section 4. The City Manager is hereby directed to undertake efforts to work with public policy research organizations on youth asset mapping and work towards expanding community partnerships and programming specific to violence prevention among male youths of color who are ages 12-18.

Adopted _____

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

Approved as to form:

City Attorney