



**CITY OF TACOMA, WASHINGTON  
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST (CCR)**

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Council member Marty Campbell and Council Assistant Lynda Foster

**COPIES TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager; Tadd Wille, Assistant City Manager; Bill Fosbre, City Attorney; Executive Leadership Team; File

**SUBJECT:** Sponsorship of Tacoma Refugee Choir's 2018 season

**DATE:** December 7, 2017

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**ITEM/ISSUE PROPOSED FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION:**

**I ask for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda at the earliest available meeting of the Study Session:**

I respectfully request City Council concurrence to direct the City Manager to allocate \$20,000 from the City Council Contingency Fund to support the 2018 season of the Tacoma Refugee Choir.

**BRIEF BACKGROUND:**

The Tacoma Refugee Choir (formally known as the Refugee Choir Project, a Washington non-profit corporation) builds community through music with a special emphasis on welcoming refugees. With the rapid rise in xenophobia and anti-refugee sentiment, there is an urgent need to combat hatred with positive and meaningful interactions amongst community members. The Tacoma Refugee Choir seeks to use music as a tool to support our most vulnerable residents, and educate and encourage actions of compassion and kindness between people of diverse backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, and languages as part of creating a more welcoming Tacoma community.

In their first season, the Tacoma Refugee Choir welcomed to their weekly practice sessions more than 150 participants from 24 countries, including Iraq, Ukraine, Vietnam, and DR Congo. They established non-profit status and engaged the support of a diverse all-star cast of Tacoma-area recording artists to deliver their message broadly through their first recorded song. They performed twelve public events, including WE Day for Tacoma School District 7<sup>th</sup> graders, a full-length Community Sing-along featuring Grammy winner Wanz and *The Voice*'s Stephanie Anne Johnson, and a performance and talk at [TEDxSeattle](#) (2:40-18:50) on November 18. Audience members described their Community Sing-along as "music, community building, social activism, and entertainment all in one," and one choir rehearsal attendee said, "I've been in the U.S. for four months and never felt welcomed until today."

Their second season seeks to build on the success of their inaugural season to uplift, inspire and unite through the transformative power of music. Their plans include three fully-produced events:

Tacoma Sings at Urban Grace Church (March 10, 2018)

This high-energy community sing-along event first held in November 2017 and features live band, professional lighting and sound, local recording artists, and the Tacoma Refugee Choir. Highly interactive and engaging, attendees will unite in song and celebrate the contributions of all members of our community. Sponsorships will allow free general admission for 750 people at this event.

**Refugees: Their Story is Our Story (May 12, 2018)**

This fully produced event will focus on refugee stories through video, song and art. Featuring performances by the Tacoma Refugee Choir and refugee recording artists, attendees will gain perspective on the refugee experience both locally and internationally and be encouraged to do their part to make Tacoma a more welcoming place.

**Your Voice Matters (November 2018 TBD)**

This high-energy production emphasizes the value of all voices in our community and the importance of using our voice for good. Food and activities will add to the festival format of this concert/sing-along. Featuring prominent guest artists and the Tacoma Refugee Choir. The Tacoma Refugee Choir has invited incoming Mayor Woodards to be a featured song-leader at this event.

The Tacoma Refugee choir's emphasis is on building partnerships and working with refugee and immigrant groups and other under-served communities aims to offer support and engage. Collaborative partners include Tacoma Community House, Korean Women's Association, Asia Pacific Cultural Center, Slavic Christian Center, Lutheran Refugee Services, Tacoma Community College, and more.

The requested \$20,000 sponsorship level will assist the Tacoma Refugee choir provide free admission to events for residents of the City who may be disabled or financially unable to attend. The sponsorship would include other benefits to the city including: eight VIP tickets to all there stage events, invitations to free community outreach events, recognition from the stage at all three events, logo on posters, logo on printed programs, feature on Tacoma Refugee Choir website, and recognition in the annual report.

This program is aligned with the Tacoma 2025 goal areas of Education and Learning, Arts and Cultural Vitality, and Civic Engagement.

**FUNDING REQUESTED:**

\$20,000 to be set aside for sponsorship of the 2018 season of the Tacoma Refugee Choir.

**In you have a question related to the Council Consideration Request, please contact Lynda Foster at (253) 591.5166 or [Lynda.Foster@CityofTacoma.com](mailto:Lynda.Foster@CityofTacoma.com).**

**SUBMITTED FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION BY:**   
Council Member

**SUPPORTING COUNCILMEMBERS SIGNATURES (2 SIGNATURES ONLY)**

*(Signatures demonstrate support to initiate discussion and consideration of the subject matter by City Council for potential policy development and staff guidance/direction.)*

1.  POS # Mayor

2.  POS# 8