From:	Jeannie Williams
To:	KCC - Committee Assistants (Email Group)
Subject:	Establish a KC EDI - Support for Proposed Motion 2021-046, Rejection of Proposed Amendments
Date:	Tuesday, February 1, 2022 1:25:44 PM

My name is Jeannie WIliams and I live in/work in District #2 and am writing on behalf of the West Hill Community Association, which serves the Skyway-West Hill community.

I strongly support Proposed Motion 2021-046, to establish King County EDI and prepare an implementation plan.

The City of Seattle has a history of providing funding and opportunities for BIPOC communities to lead their own development projects through the Seattle Equitable Development Initiative. I believe this can serve as a model for creating a new community-driven EDI that serves the whole county.

With the increasing price of land and the additional stress on our communities from Covid, the time is now for all of us across King County to work together to put land and opportunities in the hands of BIPOC communitie so we can keep our communities rooted in place. In order to prevent further destabilization and displacement, our communities must have a significant level of ownership or stewardship of land in their neighborhoods. EDI would invest much needed funds in community-led land stewardship projects at all stages of the development process, including affordable housing, space for small businesses, and cultural facilities. This is important for my community because Skyway-West Hill has been consistently underinvested in and has limited funding opportunities and no local government like a Mayor or City Council to advocate for us. We believe our communities most impacted by displacement can help solve this problem if we have the resources we need to create our own solutions. We need a King County EDI NOW so that we don't lose affordable communities to gentrification forever

In addition, I also wanted to address the Amendments being presented by Council Member Upthgrove

After review of the four proposed amendments by Councilmember Upthegrove, I am deeply concerned that they undermine the core values and intent of this proposal. I feel we have to reject any proposals that take away from the vision, and all of the amendments proposed by CM Upthegrove undermine our values and intentions to achieve the following vision:

"Planning and creation of initiative should be completed in partnership with a planning workgroup comprising community membership emphasizing Black, indigenous and people of color leadership and geographic representation including unincorporated King County."

1. **<u>Striker Amendment S1:</u>**

1.

The striker amendment replaces convening a community-led planning workgroup with a "feasibility study," led by County staff. In the motion, the planning workgroup would complete Phase 1 of planning by mid-year, but the study in the proposed striker would not be finished until the end of the year without a clear indication as to how the planning workgroup would meaningfully take part in such. This is not acceptable – **all preliminary work in designing the EDI, and any analysis done by the County, should be led by the community-led planning workgroup, and be completed as soon as possible**.

2. The striker amendment establishes an advisory committee *after* the report is submitted by the Executive, "comprised of three representatives chosen by the executive and one representative from each council district." This typical, political approach to committee creation will not be able to recruit adequate diversity from communities threatened by displacement and instead encourages political appointees. **The Executive can ensure geographic representation for the planning workgroup while also ensuring representation of displaced communities: low-income, Black, Indigenous, immigrant & refugee, disabled, LGBTQ2s+, trans and gender diverse leadership.**

3. The striker also replaces the motion's permanent advisory council - which guides program implementation - with a "review panel" consisting of County staff and representatives from Councilmember offices. It is critical that community continue to shape and change the program to meet emerging displacement threats and community solutions, not just review projects. Seattle's permanent EDI board – comprising entirely of community representatives - has been very successful in reviewing and recommending EDI grant applications, and **we think is critical to ensure marginalized community leadership continues to guide the program.**

4. The striker removes any deadline for completion of community-led planning (called an "advisory committee" in the striker and a "planning workgroup" in the motion) and submittal of legislation by the Executive to establish an EDI. Our motion requires this by Summer of 2023. **Between this provision and the study, discussed in #1 above, the striker will result in a delayed starting date for a King County EDI.**

5. The striker also results in legislation to create only a "capital grants fund." The motion calls for creation of an overall initiative to provide capacity building grants for anti-displacement projects, along with capital funding. **This narrowing of the EDI focus undermines our vision for building community organizations as the problem solvers, development experts, and visionaries.**

6. The striker eliminates prioritization of unincorporated areas. While we agree that the replacement language emphasizing, "communities that are at highest risk of displacement based on established displacement risk indicator," we also believe that creating a King County EDI must add to recent policy and programs that ensure BIPOC-majority unincorporated areas receive long-overdue attention. Furthermore, the language in our motion, "should prioritize unincorporated area communities, particularly historically marginalized unincorporated area communities" does not exclude other areas – **it directs the planning workgroup and the Executive to figure out what that means in the context of County-wide equity.**

7. The striker also strips Phase 2 which is intended to be an implementation period after the program is created. **It is only seeking to focus on the creation of a "fund" which arguably already exists and is not focused on long-term equitable development investment in communities impacted the worst and the longest by disinvestment and displacement.**

Other Amendments:

1. **<u>Amendment 1:</u>**

This amendment should be rejected.

Amendment 1 replaces "The initiative shall be countywide in scope, but should prioritize unincorporated area communities, particularly historically marginalized unincorporated area communities"

The motion's language intentionally lifts up the importance of anti-displacement work in unincorporated areas, which rely entirely on the County for local government. The unincorporated areas do not have a Mayor or City Council to advocate for them and have historically been grossly underinvested in. It recognizes that we don't want to redirect recent emphasis by the County on anti-displacement in South King County's unincorporated areas. Furthermore, the vision is for a County-wide program that does not exclude any community, including Seattle which already has an EDI program. As we find with point #6 for the striker bill, we believe **how EDI funds are programmed should be worked out by a representative community workgroup.** Additionally, Amendment 1 leaves out mention of cultural displacement (that was included in the original motion) and instead focuses only on commercial and residential displacement.

The county does not currently have usable displacement risk data. In the current motion, the interim advisory board will incorporate available data on current and predicted future displacement risk and related metrics to determine programs and policies (See lines 88-89 of motion). This is one way that the interim advisory board will already use data to determine what prioritization means and how decisions will be made.

2. **<u>Amendment 2:</u>**

This amendment should be rejected.

Amendment 2 replaces "a planning workgroup comprised of community membership emphasizing Black, indigenous and people of color leadership and geographic representation including unincorporated King County, and who are compensated for their participation." **It will not create the diversity of impacted communities that will be needed to lead design of the program. This effort should be lead by community who is closest to the issue.**

3. **<u>Amendment 3:</u>**

This amendment should be rejected and is also a non-starter.

> It reduces the role of the planning workgroup from "determining" policy and funding decisions regarding equitable development to "making recommendations." The current language is consistent with the County's "community directs action" level of engagement while not taking away the Council's legislative power.

Thank You!

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