## STAFF REPORT

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| **Agenda Item:** | 8 | **Name:** | Jenny Ngo |
| **Proposed No**.: | 2021-0467 | **Date:** | February 16, 2022 |

**SUBJECT**

A motion requesting the Executive to establish an equitable development initiative (EDI) and prepare an implementation plan.

**SUMMARY**

Proposed Motion 2021-0467 would request the Executive to establish a countywide equitable development initiative (EDI) with a priority on unincorporated area communities. The motion also requests that the Executive prepare an implementation plan in two phases that is developed in conjunction with a planning workgroup.

The first phase of the implementation plan would establish an equitable development framework, information on procurement related to Best Starts Capital Grants Program, and recommendations for next steps to implement an EDI program. The second phase should include objectives and strategies to address disparities and displacement, incorporate displacement data to inform programs and policies, include metrics for evaluation, describe potential partnerships with community-based organizations, identify funding sources, propose strategies for agency coordination, use the "community directs action" level of engagement, propose next steps for implementation, and include recommendations for a permanent advisory board. The motion requests the Executive transmit Phase 1 of the plan by June 30, 2022, and Phase 2 by June 30, 2023.

**BACKGROUND**

*Equity and Social Justice at King County*

King County launched the Equity and Social Justice Initiative in 2008 to address long-standing and persistent inequities in King County. As part of this initiative, the King County Equity Impact Review Tool was developed as both a process and a tool to identify, evaluate, and communicate the potential impact, both positive and negative, of a policy or program on people with a particular focus on communities of color, low-income communities, and limited English proficient (LEP) communities.

Ordinance 16948, also referred to as the "Equity and Social Justice Ordinance," was enacted in 2010. This ordinance applies the countywide strategic plan's principle of "fair and just" in all county work in order to achieve equitable opportunities for all people and communities. The ordinance defines “fair and just" to mean that the county serves all residents by promoting fairness and opportunity and eliminating inequities through actions to which equity and social justice foundational practices are applied. The ordinance identified fourteen determinants of equity as the conditions that lead to the creation of a fair and just society in King County.

In 2014, the council provided funding for the Office of Equity and Social Justice through the 2015-2016 biennium budget. The office was established to support and work with King County leadership, employees, and local and national partners to advance practices, strategies, and policies that promote fairness, justice, and opportunity for all as directed by the ordinance. In March 2016, the Office of Equity and Social Justice revised the county’s Equity Impact Review Tool. The framework combined empirical data (quantitative analysis) and community engagement findings (qualitative analysis) to inform planning, decision-making and implementation of actions which affect equity in King County.

In 2021, as part of the second 2021 omnibus[[1]](#footnote-1), Council restricted $50,000 to support development of an Equitable Development Initiative, including workgroup facilitation costs and compensation for workgroup participants.

*Seattle's Equitable Development Initiative*

The City of Seattle adopted Resolution 31577[[2]](#footnote-2) in 2015 and Ordinance 124173[[3]](#footnote-3) in 2016, which made race and social equity one of the four core values in the Comprehensive Plan and incorporated race and social equity throughout the plan. The legislations led additional work that provides ongoing measures and analysis of equity citywide,[[4]](#footnote-4) which was used as part to the City's overall analysis of the Comprehensive Plan. Through the race and social equity framework established in the Comprehensive Plan, the City of Seattle prioritizes planning, policymaking, funding and programming to address inequities and disparities.

Seattle's EDI was established in 2016 and is considered by the City as a key component of implementing Ordinance 124173. The EDI was established though the Equitable Development Implementation Plan[[5]](#footnote-5) and the Equitable Development Financial Investment Strategy. The initiative was created in a partnership between South Communities Organization for Racial-Regional Equity (SouthCORE), Race and Social Equity Taskforce (RSET), the Center for Social Inclusion, and the City of Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development and Office of Civil Rights.

The City of Seattle defines equitable development as "public and private investments, programs, and policies in neighborhoods to meet the needs of marginalized people and reduce disparities, taking into account past history and current conditions, so that quality of life outcomes such as access to quality education, living wage employment, healthy environment, affordable housing and transportation, are equitably distributed for the people currently living and working there, as well as for new people moving in."[[6]](#footnote-6)

As part of the implementation plan, the City of Seattle developed an EDI framework, which is intended to support decision making and guide implementation "to reduce disparities and achieve equitable outcomes for marginalized populations."[[7]](#footnote-7) There are six equity drivers within the equitable development framework:

* Advance economic opportunity
* Prevent residential, commercial, and community displacement
* Build on local cultural assets
* Promote transportation mobility and connectivity
* Develop healthy and safe neighborhoods
* Equitable access to all neighborhoods

Seattle's implementation of the EDI has resulted in several notable actions. The EDI fund has distributed $49 million since 2017, which has been used fund projects, site acquisition and capacity building in support high displacement communities. $5.8 million and $9.8 million were awarded in 2020 and 2021 respectively.[[8]](#footnote-8) The EDI uses place-based strategies that prioritize communities that experience high levels of displacement, historical racially-driven disinvestment, significant populations of marginalized communities, inclusive community engagement, and major transit investment.

As part of the implementation, the City launched an Equitable Development Monitoring Program (EDMP), wherein the City developed equitable development indicators that are monitored and analyzed to evaluate displacement within the city. Two reports, the Community Indicators Report[[9]](#footnote-9) and the Heightened Displacement Risk Indicators,[[10]](#footnote-10) provide information on affordability, livability, education and economic opportunity, and heightened displacement risk.

The EDI framework has also been incorporated into departmental work, through the use of an equity analysis and the equitable development framework to prioritize capital project planning, incorporating race and social equity policies throughout the comprehensive plan, and evaluating equity criteria in work that may result in displacement.

**ANALYSIS**

If implemented, Proposed Motion 2021-0467 would request the Executive to establish a King County EDI. The Executive is further requested to prepare an implementation plan in two phases, with the first phase due June 30, 2022 and the second phase due June 30, 2023.

The motion identifies that the EDI should be countywide and scope, but prioritize urban area communities, particularly historically marginalized communities. Further, the motion identifies a set of principles that would guide development of an EDI framework, including advancing economic mobility and opportunity for residents; preventing residential, commercial and cultural displacement; building upon and protects local cultural assets that anchor communities; supporting organizational capacity building; promoting transportation mobility and connectivity; and enabling equitable access for all communities.

Phase 1 of the equitable development initiative implementation plan is identified in the motion as an initial phase to creating an EDI program. The motion identifies that Phase 1 should include a completed EDI framework, consistent with the principles identified above; information on how the initiative would guide the Best Starts Capital Grant Program; recommendations for County and community structure, capacity, and resources to implement the program. This first phase would be due June 30, 2022.

Phase 2 of the equitable development initiative implementation plan would build on work done under Phase 1. Phase 2 would include objectives and strategies to reduce disparities; utilize data of displacement risk and other metrics to determine programs and policies; include metrics for monitoring and evaluating outcomes; describe partnerships with outside agencies such as community-based organizations or regional partners; identify funding sources that could be leveraged; propose strategies to coordinate across county agencies and programs; identify a community outreach and collaboration process; utilize the "community directs action" level of engagement; propose next steps and a timeline; and recommendations for a permanent advisory board. This second phase would be due June 30, 2023.

The motion requests that all work done under these two phases be completed in partnership with a planning workgroup, emphasizing Black, indigenous, and people of color leadership, and geographic representation that includes unincorporated King County.

**AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to Proposed Motion 2021-0467 will be available in the additional materials packet distributed on February 16, 2022.

**INVITED**

* Karan Gill, Deputy Chief of Staff, Executive Office
* Kelly Rider, Government Relations Officer, DCHS

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Proposed Motion 2021-0467
1. Ordinance 19364 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://clerk.seattle.gov/search/resolutions/31577> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://clerk.seattle.gov/search/ordinances/125173> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The equity analysis includes potential future displacement impacts of the city's growth strategy on marginalized populations and access to opportunity [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. City of Seattle, Equitable Development Implementation Plan, [https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/ OPCD/OngoingInitiatives/EquitableDevelopmentInitiative /EDIImpPlan042916final.pdf](https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/%20OPCD/OngoingInitiatives/EquitableDevelopmentInitiative%20/EDIImpPlan042916final.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. City of Seattle, Equitable Development Implementation Plan,page 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. City of Seattle, Equitable Development Implementation Plan, page 29 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. EDI funded projects can be found at: <https://www.seattle.gov/opcd/ongoing-initiatives/equitable-development-initiative#projects> and [https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OPCD/OngoingInitiatives/Equitable DevelopmentInitiative/EDIFundProjects\_2020\_location.pdf](https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OPCD/OngoingInitiatives/Equitable%20DevelopmentInitiative/EDIFundProjects_2020_location.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. <https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OPCD/Demographics/CommunityIndicatorsReport2020.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. <https://population-and-demographics-seattlecitygis.hub.arcgis.com/pages/displacement-risk> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)