

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

..title

A RESOLUTION relating to the Chinatown/International District; identifying actions of the City and its partners that hold promise to enhance cultural identity, recognize history, and promote equitable development.

..body

WHEREAS, the area known as Chinatown/International District (C/ID) includes the

neighborhoods of Chinatown, Japantown, historic Manilatown, and Little Saigon; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance 102455, passed by the City Council (“Council”) on August 13, 1973,

established the International Special Review District in the C/ID to preserve the District’s

unique Asian-American character and to encourage rehabilitation of areas for housing

and pedestrian-oriented businesses; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle Chinatown National Register Historic District, established in 1986, is

located within the International Special Review District; and

WHEREAS, the City established the current boundaries of the C/ID in 1998 by Ordinance

119297, resulting from the collaboration by the people of the three distinct

neighborhoods on the Chinatown/International District Strategic Plan submitted to the

Council in December 1998; and

WHEREAS, the City has long benefited from the unique and significant contributions of the

people, organizations, and businesses of the C/ID to our shared economic vitality and

civic life; and

WHEREAS, the C/ID community has persevered despite the effects of racist and inequitable

national and local laws and unfair housing practices since the early days of the City; and

1 WHEREAS, several major public projects have significantly impacted the physical development
2 of the C/ID, including the construction of Interstate 5 through the C/ID, the construction
3 and demolition of the Kingdome, and the construction of two new stadia; and

4 WHEREAS, the City and the community began the planning effort known as Livable South
5 Downtown in 2003, leading to recommendations in 2009 for changes to zoning in South
6 Downtown neighborhoods, including in the C/ID; and

7 WHEREAS, in 2011, consistent with the recommendations, the City changed the Land Use Code
8 to increase development capacity in the South Downtown neighborhoods, and provided
9 for historic preservation, creation of open space, better building and street design, and
10 support for small businesses via Ordinance 123589; and

11 WHEREAS, in November 2015 the Council passed Ordinance 124895, which created Seattle
12 Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 23.58B and established the framework for the
13 commercial component of mandatory housing affordability (MHA); the Council updated
14 this chapter in December 2016 with Ordinance 125233; and

15 WHEREAS, in August 2016 the Council passed Ordinance 125108, which created SMC Chapter
16 23.58C and established the framework for the residential component of MHA; and

17 WHEREAS, concurrently with this resolution, the City is considering legislation for additional
18 development capacity in the C/ID, excluding the Seattle Chinatown National Register
19 Historic District, as well as implementation of MHA requirements; and

20 WHEREAS, the potential implementation of MHA requirements and additional development
21 capacity in the C/ID are changes to land use regulations that are intended to promote the
22 development of more affordable housing as well as encouraging growth in the Downtown
23 Urban Center; and

1 WHEREAS, the overarching goals of Seattle’s Comprehensive Plan (Seattle 2035) for the C/ID
2 are: thriving businesses, organizations, and cultural institutions; diverse and affordable
3 housing; safe and dynamic public spaces; and an accessible neighborhood for all
4 transportation modes; and

5 WHEREAS, the goal of Seattle 2035 for the commercial core of the C/ID is maintaining the
6 commercial core as a major employment center, tourist and convention attraction,
7 shopping magnet, residential neighborhood, and regional hub of cultural and
8 entertainment activities, while promoting a unique neighborhood identity for the
9 commercial core; and

10 WHEREAS, the City conducted the 2016 Growth and Equity Analysis in conjunction with the
11 update to Seattle’s Comprehensive Plan, finding in part that both the risk of displacement
12 and access to opportunity are high in the C/ID; and

13 WHEREAS, in response to the 2016 Growth and Equity Analysis, the City created the Equitable
14 Development Initiative, a collection of strategies aimed at advancing economic mobility
15 and opportunity, preventing displacement, building local cultural assets, promoting
16 transportation mobility and connectivity, and developing healthy and safe neighborhoods;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, in September 2016, InterIm Community Development Association, Swedish, Public
19 Health – Seattle and King County, and community-based organizations released the 2020
20 Healthy Community Action Plan, which defines the complex health and social issues,
21 resulting from years of historic disinvestment and institutional racism, the C/ID faces and
22 strategies to address those issues; and

1 WHEREAS, in December 2015, the Mayor convened the Chinatown/International District Public
2 Safety Task Force (“Task Force”) to address public safety and livability in the C/ID
3 neighborhood, and in 2016 the Council passed Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI)
4 80-1-A-4 requesting a report from the Task Force on public safety recommendations; and

5 WHEREAS, in June 2016, the Task Force delivered many recommendations under three main
6 categories: 1) improve communication and coordination between the C/ID and the City;
7 2) target criminal activities and related environmental factors; and 3) foster public safety
8 through a vibrant and healthy neighborhood; and

9 WHEREAS, the Mayor presented the Public Safety Action Plan for the C/ID in response to the
10 Task Force’s recommendations to the Council; NOW, THEREFORE,

11 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE**
12 **MAYOR CONCURRING, THAT:**

13 Section 1. The City recognizes the significance of land use regulation that implements
14 mandatory housing affordability (MHA) to the production of new affordable housing, as well as
15 more housing overall, while acknowledging that land use regulation alone is not sufficient to
16 achieve the articulated goals of the Chinatown/International District (C/ID).

17 Section 2. The City commits to considering the contributions of all stakeholders in the
18 C/ID during the pending revision of use and development rules and guidelines of the
19 International Special Review District and the design review program, to better serve the C/ID.

20 Section 3. The City will act in a timely manner to partner with local businesses,
21 community organizations, and customers to promote economic development and commercial
22 stability for culturally relevant commerce in the C/ID as guided by the recommendations of the
23 Commercial Affordability Advisory Committee.

1 Section 4. The City recognizes the critical contribution of the Chinatown/International
2 District Public Safety Task Force and is dedicated to maintaining improvements made based on
3 the recommendations of the Task Force, while acknowledging the significant work yet to be
4 completed. The Council requests that the Mayor and City departments maintain the momentum
5 of early 2017 in the effort to improve public safety in the C/ID and earnestly pursue the
6 completion of the unaccomplished goals of the Public Safety Action Plan for the C/ID.

7 Section 5. The Council requests a report from the Mayor on the timing and sequence of
8 the completion of City-supported projects to enhance parks and public spaces, including
9 improvements such as green streets, mid-block crossings, and pocket parks. Furthermore, the
10 Council intends to ensure ongoing support for the operation and maintenance of public spaces in
11 the C/ID, as well as throughout Seattle.

12 Section 6. The Council requests a report from the Mayor on the timing and sequence of
13 transportation investments and improvements in the C/ID to access and mobility via all modes,
14 including but not limited to better street design plans to guide private development,
15 improvements to crosswalks, protected bike lanes, a neighborhood greenway, and the Center
16 City Connector streetcar project.

17 Section 7. Consistent with Seattle’s designation as an Age-Friendly City, the City
18 recognizes the need for multicultural and multilingual services and businesses for long-term
19 residents who wish to live in the C/ID as they age. The Council requests that City departments
20 coordinate thoughtfully to amplify the City’s efforts in making the C/ID convenient to seniors.

21 Section 8. The City celebrates the strong cultural organizations, religious institutions, and
22 community-based organizations that the people of the C/ID have built over time. The City
23 recognizes with gratitude the partnerships with these institutions and organizations. The City will

1 emphasize the ongoing, reciprocal commitment with these organizations and institutions in
2 prioritizing the shared goals of the City and these partners for the near future and over the long
3 term.

4 Section 9. The Council requests that the Mayor direct the City’s departments to
5 coordinate efforts among themselves and with local organizations to enhance the C/ID, in a
6 manner exemplary of the City’s approach to maintaining and improving the quality of life
7 throughout Seattle.

8 Section 10. The City recognizes the potential for displacement as property in the C/ID
9 undergoes public and private development, and is committed to informing City decisions
10 regarding investments, including support under the Equitable Development Initiative, by careful
11 consideration of racial and social justice impacts.

1 Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2017,
2 and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of
3 _____, 2017.

4 _____
5 President _____ of the City Council

6 The Mayor concurred the _____ day of _____, 2017.
7 _____
8 Edward B. Murray, Mayor

9 Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2017.
10 _____
11 Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

12 (Seal)