



Legislation Text

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CITY OF SEATTLE
RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION endorsing community principles for green jobs, requesting that the Interdepartmental Team on Workforce Entry and Employment Pathways incorporate strategies to advance green careers for people of color and other marginalized or under-represented groups, supporting sustainable entrepreneurship and economic cooperative models.

WHEREAS, the Environmental Justice, Jobs, and Education: Seattle's Young Adults Speak Out report published by Got Green finds that young people, particularly low-income young people of color, hold deep environmental values; and

WHEREAS, in Seattle youth unemployment still tops 13 percent, disproportionately impacting young people of color and those from low-income communities; and

WHEREAS, in July 2016, the City of Seattle developed a Workforce Equity Action Plan based on the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan to guide and prioritize steps to creating a more equitable workforce; and

WHEREAS, the Action Plan identifies a specific workforce equity platform and workforce investment strategies that are focused on increasing equity and, among other goals, streamlining access and coordinated recruitment for entry-level employment and promotional pathways within the City of Seattle workforce; and

WHEREAS, a critical strategy in this Workforce Equity Action Plan is to improve recruitment, support and advancement of entry-level workers through the City's workforce investments including a specific focus on the City of Seattle's Youth Employment Program, internships, apprenticeships and investments in job training programs; and

WHEREAS, the University of Michigan’s Green 2.0 report identifies a “Green Ceiling,” in the environmental field where, nationally, people of color hold no more than 16% of positions in the studied environmental organizations, agencies, and foundations, additionally stating: “Once hired in environmental organizations, ethnic minorities are concentrated in the lower ranks, with less than 12% of the leadership positions,” and “Environmental Organizations do not use the internship pipeline effectively to find ethnic minority workers;” and

WHEREAS, a 2006 workforce preparedness study from the Partnership for 21st Century Learning found that nationally “nearly 70% of employers report [high school] graduates are deficient in critical thinking and problem solving skills essential to successful job performance,” and where “it is clear that there is a need for enhanced educational opportunities to prepare area youth for careers with local employers;” and

WHEREAS, the City’s commitment to Green Jobs can be traced to April 22, 2015, when Mayor Ed Murray launched Seattle's Equity & Environment Initiative (EEI), as “a partnership of the City, the community, and private foundations to deepen Seattle's commitment to race and social justice in environmental work” which focuses on “those most affected - communities of color, immigrants, refugees, people with low incomes, youth and limited English proficiency individuals” to lead on solutions; and

WHEREAS, information from the US Census Bureau and Puget Sound Clean Air Agency shows 13 out of 14 of the heaviest industrial polluters in Seattle are located within half a mile of the places where communities of color, immigrants, refugees and low income residents live; and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Census Bureau and Environmental Protection Agency, 58% of the population that lives within one mile of the Lower Duwamish Waterway’s Superfund site boundary are people of color and, in the Duwamish Valley Cumulative Health Impacts Analysis finds life expectancy in the zip code including Georgetown and South Park is eight years shorter than the Seattle average, and a full 13 years shorter than the wealthier neighborhood of Laurelhurst; and

WHEREAS, Got Green’s 2016 “Our People, Our Power, Our Planet” report finds people of color are disproportionately impacted by environmental harm yet underrepresented in careers in the environmental sector; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the City of Seattle Department of Human Resources data showed that jobs, including internships, held by youth 24 years or younger in city government were predominantly held by young white people-42%, with a wage rate of at least \$15 per hour, 55% being male and according to demographic data, youth who identified as Not Specified held 1%, Seattle, Asian/Pacific Islanders held 35%, African Americans 6%, Latinos 5%, Native American/Alaskan held 1% of those jobs and those who identified with Two or More Races were 10%; and

WHEREAS, in 2016 the Seattle Department of Human Resources data showed that Seattle Youth Employment Program opportunities that pay the City’s \$15 minimum wage were 55% African American, 16% Asian/Pacific Islander, 19% unknown, 7% Multi-Racial, 3% White/Caucasian, <1% American Indian/Alaska Native, <1% Hispanic/Latino; and

WHEREAS, the City invests heavily in workforce and talent development within the City and in the community to support the retention and advancement of City employees, and to ensure Seattle residents, especially low and moderate income residents, have access to good paying jobs in City government and to align employment paths with other City priorities, such as environmental justice and green jobs; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 31681 formally adopted the goals of the Equity and Environment Agenda, which highlights that jobs, local economies and youth pathways are “a critical aspect and foundation for all environmental and sustainability work in Seattle;” and

WHEREAS, in order to break through the green ceiling it is critical to understand the barriers women, people with low incomes, limited-English proficiency, youth, and immigrants face entering career pathways; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor has authorized the Workforce Entry and Employment Pathways Interdepartmental

Team to identify ways for the City to ease access to employment opportunities in City government and with local employers and build employment pathways in City government that lead to career mobility and success; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. The City of Seattle endorses the following community principle for green jobs: A green job is one that preserves or enhances environmental health as well as the economic and social well-being of people and communities, centers on communities most negatively impacted by climate change, and pays a living wage while providing career pathways. The City Council requests that the Interdepartmental Team (IDT) on Workforce Entry and Employment Pathways develop a definition for green jobs that aligns with this community principle. Examples of green career fields may include: urban farming, waste reduction, alternative transportation, green energy and clean technology, policy or program positions within nonprofits and government, and other fields that could incorporate environmentally sustainable practices.

Section 2. The City Council requests that the Interdepartmental Team on Workforce Entry and Employment Pathways incorporate strategies to overcome the Green Ceiling into the work of the IDT. The City Council requests the following actions, while working in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including those with interests in environmental justice, with a report back to Council included in the Workforce Equity Accountability Report:

A. Develop an inventory of internships, apprenticeships, and positions requiring 1 year or less of relevant work experience across the City of Seattle workforce, identifying the positions that fit the definition of green jobs developed by the IDT with a report back to Council by June 2017;

B. Document examples of how City environmental investments can integrate green jobs and local hire opportunities with workforce goals and existing program work;

C. Create an outreach and engagement strategy based on the findings of the inventory to identify

barriers to success for people of color and other marginalized or under-represented groups in entry to green career fields and outline a strategy to support communities in overcoming those barriers;

D. Create a plan to monitor and evaluate progress of the City’s actions towards the goal of advancing entry into green careers for people of color and other marginalized or under-represented groups.

Section 3. The City Council requests that the Workforce Entry and Employment Pathways IDT identify ways to encourage employers to advance in-demand careers, including green careers, as defined by the IDT, for people of color and other marginalized or under-represented groups in Seattle. Such strategies could include, but are not limited to, the creation of a “Green Pathways” label to identify and support organizations and businesses that advance the goals of this Resolution. The Council requests a report back on these potential opportunities in conjunction with the Workforce Equity Action Plan Accountability Report.

Section 4. The City Council supports sustainable entrepreneurship and encourages economic cooperative models that enable people of color and those from low-income communities to own the means of production and create sustainable and culturally appropriate business practices for their communities. Towards this end, the City Council recognizes the development of community developed and owned businesses such as the Rainier Beach Food Innovation District and urban farms focused on growing and distributing local food while creating local jobs.

Section 5. In order to achieve the outcomes referenced in Sections 2 and 3 of this resolution, the City Council intends to allocate City resources to achieve the successful development of these strategies. The purpose of additional resources is to provide staffing for the strategy development and implementation, fund consulting contracts to enable equitable community partnerships, create an inventory of internships offered by The City of Seattle that fulfill the definition of green careers; evaluate progress towards the goals of this Resolution, and support other activities to advance a Green Pathways strategy in the Workforce Equity Action Plan.

Adopted by the City Council the ____ day of _____, 2016, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2016.

President _____ of the City Council

The Mayor concurred the ____ day of _____, 2016.

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Filed by me this ____ day of _____, 2016.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)