



Legislation Text

File #: Res 31739, Version: 3

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION expressing The City of Seattle's commitment to being a more age-friendly city under the criteria established by the World Health Organization and the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

WHEREAS, according to the *An Aging World: 2015* report from the U.S. Census Bureau, the percentage of the global population aged 60 years or over increased from 8.5 percent in 1980 to 12.3 percent in 2015, and is projected to rise further to 21.5 percent in 2050; and

WHEREAS, according to the Pew Research Center, one in five U.S. residents is expected to be aged 65 years or over by mid-century; and

WHEREAS, King County reports that its population increased 36 percent from 1990 to 2015 while the number of residents living in unincorporated King County decreased by 50 percent, suggesting that a segment of the population is increasingly residing in cities; and

WHEREAS, although many cities and communities are increasingly engaging in age-friendly policies and programs, the older population continues to face problems of ageism that impact their quality of life; and

WHEREAS, on July 27, 2016, in recognition of The City of Seattle's (City) commitment to becoming more age-friendly, the World Health Organization and AARP designated the City a member of the Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, which includes 380 members representing 37 countries; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide identifies core characteristics of an age-friendly city in Eight Domains of Livability: outdoor spaces and buildings; transportation;

housing; social participation; respect and social inclusion; civic participation and employment; communication and information; and community support and health services; and

WHEREAS, older adults, whether domestic or foreign-born, in the U.S. face unique challenges impacting their health and wellbeing that need to be addressed by policymakers; and

WHEREAS it is estimated that at least one in eight U.S. adults aged 65 and older are foreign-born, a share that is expected to continue to grow; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) indicates that disparities in income level, poverty, access to medical care and other factors impacting quality of life persist among many older adults, increasingly adults of color; and

WHEREAS, according to HHS, the U.S. older population is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse as the overall minority population grows and experiences greater longevity; and

WHEREAS, although the study *Aging with Pride* provides important new information about the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) population over age 50, little is known about older LGBT people because very few studies on older adults and aging focus on sexual orientation or gender identity; and

WHEREAS, the National Resource Center on LGBT Aging reports that the number of self-identified LGBT older adults is expected to more than double by 2030; and

WHEREAS, *Aging with Pride* concludes that communities should identify successful programs and policies addressing the aging and health needs of LGBT older adults and create models that can be implemented in urban, suburban, and rural communities, especially where LGBT organizations are not present; and

WHEREAS, according to a report funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, the number of individuals in the labor force who are 65 years or older is expected to grow by 75 percent while those who are 25 to 54 is expected to grow by only two percent, which will result in 19 percent of the workforce being comprised of 19.6 million American workers 65 years or older by 2050; and

WHEREAS, according to AARP, many older unemployed workers lack the occupational training necessary to compete in the current job market, and that many older job seekers need accessible information about the skills they will need to obtain a job; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle has a longstanding and deep commitment to race and social justice and to equity, and has demonstrated its commitment to work in partnership with other cities and communities across the country to address some of the city's most challenging issues, including homelessness, affordable housing, transportation, education, environmental sustainability, and race and social justice; and

WHEREAS, *Age-Friendly Seattle* provides a community environment that optimizes opportunities for health, participation, and security to ensure quality of life and dignity for people of all ages and abilities. *Age-Friendly Seattle* accomplishes this by recognizing the wide range of older people's capacities and resources; anticipating and responding to aging-related needs and preferences; respecting older people's decisions and lifestyle choices, protecting those who are most vulnerable; and promoting older people's inclusion in, and contribution to, all areas of community life; and

WHEREAS, Seattle is a welcoming city that provides its residents, regardless of immigration status, access to all of its programs and services, reaffirmed by the Mayor on November 23, 2016, through Executive Order 2016-08; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. The City of Seattle (City) will engage in a continuous improvement process to become a more age-friendly city. This ongoing cycle of assessment, planning, implementing, and evaluating will:

A. Generate Seattle's age-friendly goals, success measures, and innovative solutions that reflect our diverse and vibrant community for each City department;

B. Create long-term goals and identify indicators of success to measure progress in the second quarter

of 2017;

C. Ask City departments to develop recommendations consistent with the World Health Organization's Eight Domains of Livability;

D. Integrate an age-friendly lens into the City's equity and inclusion initiatives;

E. Raise awareness of the positive contributions, strengths, and potential of older adults;

F. Increase collaboration among City departments and other governments, elders, families, caregivers, and service providers and provide regional leadership in supporting the positive contributions of older adults and enabling people of all ages and abilities to achieve their potential; and

G. Implement an early action launch plan in the second quarter of 2017 to build on best practices from other cities and create early successes in 2017 and early 2018 for seniors and families in Seattle. The early action launch plan includes the departmental actions described in Sections 2 through 5 of this resolution.

Section 2. The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) will take the following actions to improve the pedestrian environment:

A. Assess sidewalk conditions to improve mobility, transit connections, and safe travel for seniors and other pedestrians;

B. Develop a methodology and process for the sidewalk assessment that involves seniors in both design and validation;

C. Implement walkability audits for seniors to examine intersections, sidewalks, driver behavior, public safety, and more to help SDOT identify opportunities to improve the pedestrian experience in the city;

D. Explore other jurisdictions' funding programs for sidewalk improvements with the goal to incorporate new and various sidewalk funding options into the 2017-2018 City budget; and

E. Incorporate age-friendly considerations into the forthcoming Pedestrian Master Plan Implementation Plan.

Section 3. The Human Services Department (HSD) and SDOT will take the following actions to reduce transportation costs for seniors:

- A. Work with King County Metro to increase access to and use of the Regional Reduced Fare Permit;
- B. Leverage the “no wrong door” program structure to improve mobility and transportation access for seniors who enter the realm of aging services; and
- C. Partner with organizations to promote transportation options for all older adults.

Section 4. In promotion of recreation and wellness for seniors:

- A. The Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), HSD, and Department of Neighborhoods (DON) will ensure participation by seniors as part of the regular development and engagement process for new capital investments;
- B. DPR will ensure that intergenerational approaches to design are considered in capital investments; and
- C. HSD and DPR will increase participation in DPR senior-focused recreation and healthy food programs and collaborate with the Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE) to increase use of the City-sponsored Fresh Bucks program.

Section 5. To prevent resident displacement of seniors:

- A. HSD and the Office of Housing (OH) will advance a regional effort to create a housing action plan to assess senior housing needs, and advance affordable housing strategies for older residents;
- B. HSD, in cooperation with the King County Assessor, will identify low-income seniors to increase the number of households enrolled in either the senior property tax exemption or deferral program or in the Utility Discount Program;
- C. OH will create a cross-referral relationship with the tax exemption/deferral and utility discount programs to expedite seniors’ and other low-income homeowners access to these programs;
- D. OH will assist low-income homeowners in addressing critical home repair needs through home

repair programs and increasing access to weatherization services, and one-time loans to prevent foreclosure; and

E. HSD's *Age-Friendly Seattle* project team will evaluate the feasibility of senior home-sharing options, including: partnerships to increase the capacity and opportunity for short-term rentals; intergenerational home-sharing programs; and communal housing for self-sufficient seniors.

Section 6. City Council requests the Office of Economic Development (OED) to collaborate with the Mayor's Office of Senior Citizens to identify opportunities to improve access to employment and training for Seniors, as expressed in Economic Development Policy 4.7 of the City's 2035 Comprehensive Plan, which states that the City shall "[s]upport efforts to provide training and job placement for older workers and others who may have unique challenges finding employment."

Section 7. In June 2017, the Mayor will convene community equity forums to explore the unique vulnerabilities of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender elders, and those unique to older women, similar to forums that have explored aging issues among people of color and within immigrant and refugee communities.

Section 8. HSD's *Age-Friendly Seattle* project team will explore further system improvements to provide older adults with better access to human services and other City resources, which may include: redesign of the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens based on best practices and innovative solutions from other cities; enhanced uses and deployment of technology; and other recommendations for departments.

Section 9. HSD will design and administer a Human Services Innovation Fund, with the first year focused on the *Age-Friendly Seattle* initiative, modeled after successful small-grant programs at the Department of Neighborhoods and the Seattle Information Technology Department, to identify unique and creative projects that meet community needs.

Section 10. The City will consider suggestions for *Age-Friendly Seattle* investments in the 2018 budget.

Section 11. HSD will develop the *Age-Friendly Seattle* 2018-2021 Work Plan, which will continue implementation of 2017 *Age-Friendly Seattle* early actions and establish regular assessments of *Age-Friendly*

Seattle early launch actions.

Section 12. The Mayor or the Mayor’s designee will report on the progress of the *Age-Friendly Seattle* 2018-2021 Work Plan to the Human Services and Public Health Committee, or other appropriate City Council committee, throughout the period of performance as requested by City Council, along with a final report in 2021.

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

President _____ of the City Council

The Mayor concurred the _____ day of _____, 2017.

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2017.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)