

2021 Seattle City Council Statement of Legislative Intent

Council Budget Action: Agenda

Tab	Action	Option	Version
OCR	002	A	003

Budget Action Title: Request that the Executive participate in a work group regarding implementation of the 2019 Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) report

Ongoing: No Has Attachment: No

Primary Sponsor: Tammy Morales

Council Members: Lisa Herbold, Kshama Sawant, Lorena González

Staff Analyst: Asha Venkataraman

Date		Total	LH	TM	KS	AP	DJ	DS	AL	BC	LG
	Yes	0									
	No	0									
	Abstain	0									
	Absent	0									

Statement of Legislative Intent:

This Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI) requests that representatives from the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), the Mayor's Office, and members of the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) network participate in a work group that the Council will convene to review and determine how to implement remaining report recommendations from the Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) conducted on the structure and functions of OCR. Council Central Staff and staff from the Council committee that has jurisdiction over OCR will lead and staff the work group.

In the fall of 2017, the Council passed Ordinance 125470, creating additional protections for the OCR director, including requiring just cause for removal and consultation with commissions and staff before appointments. The ordinance also asked OCR to conduct and complete an RET on OCR's permanent structure; leadership appointment or designation; and duties and responsibilities. It asked that OCR include OCR staff, City departments, community members, anti-racist community-based agencies, and partner agencies. The Council asked for the RET after discussion of concerns from City employees and the community at large regarding the design and structure of the OCR, including whether community and City employee concerns about OCR could be addressed through some degrees of separation or OCR's independence from the Executive branch. The RET team issued a report (the "RET report") with recommendations in August 2019.

Since the preliminary discussion about OCR's structure began in 2017, both the Executive and Council have added staff and resources to OCR's budget to address concerns regarding understaffing, need for outreach staff, and the need for additional RSJI staff. The remaining items in the RET report address the underlying structure of the office and ability to advocate for equity and anti-racism. Recommendation 3 from the RET report was to establish an independent community oversight board. Recommendation 5 from the RET report was to ordain and invest in strengthening RSJI. The Council intends that the work group that this SLI would form will build on the work already completed by the RET team in the RET report regarding how to increase independence from the Executive, including answering questions and investigating topics that the RET team was not able to complete given its time limitations.

This SLI requests that the Council-convened work group assess the status of the RET report

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recommendations (particularly 3 and 5), consider which parts of the recommendations are ripe for implementation, and outline the steps needed to move forward with implementing those recommendations. The SLI requests that the work group provide the following deliverables to the Chair of the Council committee with jurisdiction over OCR:

By March 31, 2021: Detail which parts of recommendations 3 and 5 are ready to move forward, and what is needed (i.e., legislation, funding, etc.) to implement the recommendations.

By June 30, 2021: Draft ordinances and/or cost estimates as may be needed to implement the changes.

Responsible Council Committee(s):

Community Economic Development

Date Due to Council:

March 31, 2021