

December 1, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Public Assets and Native Communities Committee
From: Lish Whitson, Analyst
Subject: Council Bill 120188: Indigenous Advisory Council

On December 7, 2021, the Public Assets and Native Communities Committee (Committee) will discuss and may vote on [Council Bill \(CB\) 120188](#), which would form a new Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) to increase communication between tribes and urban Indian populations and the City. The bill was drafted in consultation with urban Indian organizations, such as the Seattle Indian Health Board. The 2021 Adopted Budget added funding and staff in the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) to support the IAC; that position was hired in October 2021 and funding for that position is continued in the 2022 Adopted Budget. This bill would formally create the IAC, identify its purposes, and designate how members would be appointed. This memo briefly describes the proposed IAC.

CB 120188 creates a new Chapter 3.75 in the Seattle Municipal Code. The chapter would include six sections: (1) establishing the IAC, (2) describing its membership, (3) outlining the terms of service for IAC members, (4) indicating that some members may be compensated for their time, (5) outlining the duties of the IAC, and (6) recognizing native communities' rights to their cultural property.

Purpose and Duties

The IAC would be established to advise the Mayor, City Council, and City departments on policies of importance to tribes, urban Indians, and Indigenous populations, including American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian people. The IAC would collaborate with and advise the City, educate the City regarding Native cultures and lifeways, and develop best practices for working with Indigenous people in the area.

Duties of the IAC would include:

- Counseling on improvements to City services and resources for Indigenous communities;
- Supporting the creation and implementation of a tribal consultation policy for the City;
- Advising on a Citywide policy on consultation with urban Indian organizations;
- Developing programming to increase understanding of Indigenous communities; and
- Developing and reporting on an annual work program.

The bill recognizes the rights of Indigenous peoples to their cultural property. It would acknowledge the IAC's right to adopt rules that identify how it and its members would hold control over Indigenous cultural property.

Membership

The IAC would have nine members. All members would need to demonstrate a "commitment to advancing Indigenous knowledge, values and priorities" with a goal of improving the services the City provides to Indigenous people. Seven of the members would be nominated to serve by native organizations: three nominated by Tribes and four nominated by urban Indian organizations.¹ The remaining two positions would be reserved for youth and elders. The Mayor would appoint four positions and the City Council would appoint five positions. All positions would be confirmed by the City Council.

IAC members would typically serve for two years and for up to four consecutive terms. Four of the initial terms would be for one year, in order to allow for staggered terms. Members would be eligible for compensation for their expertise and participation, and to reimburse for travel and meeting expenses. The DON Director is directed to consider "the need to reduce barriers for participation for communities impacted by historic and on-going systemic oppression" and the value provided by culturally specific and community-oriented expertise.

Next Steps

If the Committee votes to recommend adoption of the bill at its December 7 meeting, it could be considered by the City Council as early as December 13.

cc: Esther Handy, Director
Aly Pennucci, Policy and Budget Manager

¹ "Urban Indian organization" is defined under [25 USC § 1603 \(29\)](#) as a "nonprofit corporate body situated in an urban center, governed by an urban Indian controlled board of directors, and providing for the maximum participation of all interested Indian groups and individuals, which body is capable of legally cooperating with other public and private entities for the purpose of performing the activities described in" [25 USC § 1653 \(a\)](#).