

CITY OF SEATTLE

ORDINANCE _____

COUNCIL BILL _____

..title

AN ORDINANCE relating to public outreach and engagement; creating a Community Involvement Commission to advise and make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council; amending Sections 3.35.010, 3.35.030, and 3.35.050 of the Seattle Municipal Code; and adding a new Chapter 3.62, consisting of Sections 3.62.010, 3.62.020, 3.62.030, 3.62.040, 3.62.050, and 3.62.060, to the Seattle Municipal Code.

..body

WHEREAS, the mission of the Department of Neighborhoods is to support and build inclusive partnerships across the City in order to provide Seattle communities with equitable access to government resources; and

WHEREAS, a focus on equity is essential to any community involvement process in order to build relationships and improve outcomes, especially for under-represented and under-served communities, including, but not limited to, renters, immigrants and refugees, communities of color, people experiencing homelessness, LGBTQ persons, low-income households, youth, and seniors; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 27709, adopted in 1987, Resolution 28115, adopted in 1989, and Resolution 28948, adopted in 1994, established a process for dividing Seattle into 13 neighborhood District Council districts, each with a District Council comprised of local residents, business owners and other community members that provide representatives to the citywide City Neighborhood Council; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution 27709, Resolution 28115, and Resolution 28948, District Councils and the City Neighborhood Council receive dedicated staff support from the Department of Neighborhoods, review and provide input on City budget issues, and are

1 tasked with rating and ranking eligible applications for Neighborhood Matching Fund
2 allocations; and

3 WHEREAS, as the composition of Seattle’s population continues to change, the City needs to
4 continually revisit, revise, and expand its public engagement efforts in order to ensure
5 representatives from growing demographic groups have opportunities to participate in
6 City decision-making processes that respond to their unique preferences and needs, and
7 that barriers that discourage people from participating are eliminated; and

8 WHEREAS, the public involvement programs and practices advanced by City departments
9 should reflect Seattle’s commitment to the Race and Social Justice Initiative, which
10 focuses on ending structural racism and race-based inequities both within City
11 government and across the community; and

12 WHEREAS, as part of the City’s 2016 Adopted Budget, the City Council requested that the
13 Department of Neighborhoods develop a plan to provide more equitable community
14 engagement, with a particular focus on Department of Neighborhoods staff resources
15 assigned to support the District Council system; and

16 WHEREAS, on July 13, 2016, Mayor Murray issued Executive Order 2016-06 directing the
17 Department of Neighborhoods to prepare an ordinance that (1) creates a Seattle
18 Community Involvement Commission, and (2) supports the implementation of more
19 equitable public involvement techniques by amending Chapter 3.35 of the Seattle
20 Municipal Code to end the practice of providing District Councils and the City
21 Neighborhood Council with unique and prioritized access to City resources, thereby
22 affording Department of Neighborhoods staff the capacity to assist and engage a broader
23 range of community voices; NOW, THEREFORE,

1 **BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:**

2 Section 1. Section 3.35.010 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance
3 124650, is amended as follows:

4 **3.35.010 Department established—purpose**

5 There is established a Department of Neighborhoods to provide ~~((citizens and neighborhoods))~~
6 community members and groups with ~~((consolidated))~~ coordinated, accessible, and effective
7 tools and resources to:

8 A. ~~((To identify))~~ Identify and address their diverse character and needs;

9 B. ~~((To assist their participation in the processes of))~~ Participate in City
10 government processes;

11 C. ~~((To improve))~~ Improve two-way communications with ~~((between them and))~~
12 City departments;

13 D. ~~((To give them the capacity to build))~~ Build capacity and strengthen their
14 communities;

15 E. ~~((To encourage their participation in finding solutions to their problems))~~
16 Resolve and respond to issues and challenges facing their communities;

17 F. ~~((To encourage their communication and collaboration with other~~
18 ~~neighborhoods, business))~~ Communicate and collaborate with other local organizations and
19 community groups; and

20 G. ~~((To implement the Neighborhood Planning and Assistance Program adopted~~
21 ~~by Resolution 27709; and~~

22 H. ~~— To foster))~~ Foster coordination and unity of purpose among ~~((neighborhoods))~~
23 local communities and City government.

1 Section 2. Section 3.35.030 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance
2 124650, is amended as follows:

3 **3.35.030 Director—functions**

4 The Director of the Department of Neighborhoods shall manage the department and shall:

5 A. Serve as liaison with ~~((citizens, neighborhoods))~~ residents, neighborhood
6 groups, and other community organizations;

7 B. ~~((Manage the City's system of neighborhood service centers; provide))~~
8 Provide staff for the Community Involvement Commission; ~~((City Neighborhood Council~~
9 ~~and district councils and administer))~~

10 C. Administer the Neighborhood Matching Fund Program and the Neighborhood
11 Matching Fund;

12 ~~((C))~~ D. Conduct outreach programs to elicit ~~((citizen))~~ public participation;
13 present ~~((neighborhood))~~ community concerns to City departments ~~((and strengthen~~
14 ~~departmental responses to neighborhood problems))~~ ; and strengthen and support the
15 provision of ~~((assure))~~ coordinated departmental responses to ~~((neighborhood))~~ community
16 concerns, including the delivery of high-quality customer service; ~~((and mediate disputes~~
17 ~~between City departments and affected communities;))~~

18 ~~((D))~~ E. Assist communities in understanding and responding to proposed
19 projects and activities ~~((affecting local land uses and the quality of the neighborhood~~
20 ~~environment;))~~ and ~~((facilitate community))~~ convene public meetings on City issues and
21 actions having an impact on ~~((neighborhoods))~~ communities;

22 ~~((E))~~ F. Assist communities in identifying ~~((problems))~~ local challenges and
23 needs and help them ~~((develop, coordinate and))~~ implement neighborhood and community

1 plans and other actions to address such issues; ~~((and report annually to the City Council~~
2 ~~regarding the status of neighborhood plans;))~~

3 ~~((F))~~ G. Support neighborhood-based community building through technical
4 assistance, translation services, capacity building, and other resources, as appropriate.
5 Promote intergenerational and multilingual neighborhood-based organizing, emphasizing
6 engagement of racially and economically diverse communities.

7 H. Provide technical assistance, training, and access to digital engagement tools
8 to ~~((neighborhoods))~~ communities undertaking general organizing efforts; and

9 ~~((G.—Oversee and direct the Neighborhood Action Team Seattle to foster a multi-~~
10 ~~department and community engagement approach to solving complex public safety~~
11 ~~problems;))~~

12 ~~I.H.~~ Perform such other duties as assigned by the City in its annual budgets or by
13 ordinance from time to time.

14 Section 3. Section 3.35.050 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance
15 117977, is amended as follows:

16 **3.35.050 Neighborhood Matching Subfund ((-))**

17 A. There is hereby established in the City Treasury, as a subfund of the General
18 Fund, a Neighborhood Matching Subfund to be administered by the Director of the Department
19 of Neighborhoods and into which shall be deposited whatever sums the City may receive or
20 allocate from time to time or during the annual budget process ~~((for neighborhood planning and~~
21 ~~assistance purposes))~~ .

22 B. Disbursements from the Neighborhood Matching Subfund shall comply with
23 all applicable provisions of the State Constitution, State law, City Charter, and ordinances of

1 the City, and shall be made from appropriations authorized by the City Council by
2 ordinance.

3 C. Funds appropriated from the Neighborhood Matching Subfund shall not lapse
4 and shall be carried over each year until fully expended, reallocated by administrative
5 action, or abandoned or reappropriated to other authorized activities.

6 D. There is hereby established in the Neighborhood Matching Subfund a new
7 account called the Neighborhood Participation Account into which shall be deposited any
8 cash proceeds provided as matching participation in furtherance of projects authorized by
9 the City Council as part of the Neighborhood Matching Subfund program.

10 E. Funds received and deposited in accordance with the provisions of subsection
11 3.35.050.D (~~of this section~~) are available for appropriation for uses contemplated by the
12 Neighborhood Matching Subfund Program.

13 Section 4. A new Chapter 3.62 is added to the Seattle Municipal Code as follows:

14 **CHAPTER 3.62 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMISSION**

15 **3.62.010 Establishment**

16 There is established a Community Involvement Commission to advise and make
17 recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on the development of plans, policies,
18 regulations, strategies, and community grant funding processes that advance equitable public
19 engagement and civic participation in ~~(the)~~ The City of Seattle. The Commission shall act in an
20 advisory capacity only.

21 **3.62.020 Membership**

22 A. The Commission is comprised of 16 members. Appointments shall be made to
23 ensure that varied community perspectives are represented. At least one position shall be held by

1 a representative from each of the seven City Council districts. If a member cannot be found from
2 a particular district, that seat will remain empty. Appointments shall be made, to the extent
3 possible, so that the Commission membership reflects the current demographics of the City,
4 including consideration of historically underrepresented communities.

5 B. Members serve without compensation.

6 **3.62.030 Appointment and term**

7 A. All positions are numbered one through 16. Individuals shall be appointed into
8 those numbered positions. Members in positions one through seven shall be appointed by a
9 majority vote of the Council, with each member representing the City Council district that
10 corresponds to their position number. Individuals in positions eight through 14 shall be appointed
11 by the Mayor, subject to confirmation by a majority vote of the Council. Position 14 shall be
12 filled by a young adult pursuant to the Get Engaged Program in Chapter 3.51. Members in
13 positions 15 and 16 shall be selected by the Commission subject to approval by the Mayor and
14 confirmation by a majority vote of the Council. All positions shall be filled as soon as practicable
15 after the Council and Mayor have authorized the creation of the Commission. Staff from the
16 Department of Neighborhoods may provide appointment recommendations to both the Mayor
17 and City Council.

18 B. For the initial round of appointments, odd numbered positions will serve one-year
19 terms and even numbered positions will serve two-year terms. After the conclusion of the initial
20 terms, all subsequent terms of each position shall be for two years, with the exception of the
21 young adult position appointed pursuant to Chapter 3.51 who shall serve a one-year term. No
22 members shall serve more than two full consecutive terms. Any vacancy in an unexpired term
23 shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. A member whose term is ending

1 shall continue on an interim basis as a member with voting rights until such time as a successor
2 for that position has been appointed and confirmed by the City Council.

3 **3.62.040 Duties and functions**

4 A. The duties of the Commission include, but are not limited to, the following:

5 1. Provide advice on priorities, policies, and strategies related to equitable
6 civic engagement and public participation in City decision-making processes. This includes
7 review of proposals brought forward by the City, as well as ones identified by the Commission.

8 2. Advise the Department of Neighborhoods on the review of community
9 grant processes.

10 3. Meet at least four times per year.

11 **3.62.050 Ancillary powers**

12 A. The Commission shall have the power to:

13 1. By a majority vote of the Commission, elect one or more Commission
14 members to serve as Chairperson for a one-year term, and elect one or more members to serve as
15 Vice Chairperson for a one-year term, who shall serve as Chair in the absence of the
16 Chairperson.

17 2. Organize itself, establish committees or subcommittees, and delegate
18 duties for the performance of its work; and

19 3. Adopt rules of procedure to accomplish its functions.

20 B. The Department of Neighborhoods shall provide staff support and meeting
21 facilities for the Commission and maintain its records. The Commission may also receive staff
22 assistance from other City departments.

1 C. Meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public and the Commission shall
2 operate subject to the Washington Open Public Meetings Act (chapter 42.30 RCW). Meeting
3 notifications, agendas, minutes of proceedings, findings and recommendations, annual reports,
4 and other related material shall be available to the public and posted on the Department of
5 Neighborhoods' website.

6 **3.62.060 Unexcused absences and removal**

7 Any member may request an excused absence. For City Council appointed positions, the Council
8 may remove any member who is absent from three or more consecutive meetings without cause,
9 or otherwise for cause. For mayoral and Commission appointed positions, the Mayor may
10 remove any member who is absent from three or more consecutive meetings without cause, or
11 otherwise for cause. The Commission may recommend, by a majority vote, that the Mayor or
12 Council remove any member who is absent without excuse from three consecutive Commission
13 meetings.

