



Legislation Text

File #: Res 31609, Version: 1

CITY OF SEATTLE
RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION declaring the City Council's intent to consider strategies to increase the availability of affordable housing in The City of Seattle; and requesting the State Legislature to adopt new policies or modify existing policies in order to provide additional opportunities for cities and counties to increase the availability of affordable housing.

WHEREAS, from 2011 to 2015 rental rates for existing units open more than a year in Seattle increased by 25 percent according to Dupree + Scott Apartment Advisors Annual Apartment Reports; and

WHEREAS, in Seattle, 27,750 households at 0-50 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) and an additional 1,750 households at 50-80 percent of AMI spend more than half their income on housing, according to the *2006-2010 Five Year American Community Survey Data*; and high rental housing costs make it more difficult for lower-income households to remain in the city; and

WHEREAS, there is an estimated need for an additional 70,000 housing units over the next 20 years, with approximately 18,000 of those units needed for households at 0-50 percent of AMI and 9,500 units needed for households at 50-80 percent of AMI according to *Seattle 2035: Updating Seattle's Comprehensive Plan Background Report, February 2014*; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the growing housing affordability challenge in the city, the Council has taken numerous actions over the last several years to develop strategies for addressing this problem; and

WHEREAS, in May 2013, the Council adopted Resolution 31444, calling for a thorough review and update of Seattle's incentive zoning and affordable housing programs and policies focused on creating affordable workforce housing; and

WHEREAS, in response to the completed review and update of the incentive zoning program, the Council

adopted Resolution 31551 in October 2014 stating the City's intent to implement an affordable housing linkage fee program, establishing policy parameters for such a program, and directing the Department of Planning and Development and the Office of Housing to develop regulations implementing an affordable housing linkage fee program; and

WHEREAS, in response to the recommendations included in the report on affordable housing programs <http://clerk.seattle.gov/~public/meetingrecords/2014/plus20140625_1a.pdf> and policies operating nationwide, the Council adopted Resolution 31547 in September 2014 stating its intent to authorize \$1 million in funding for the Central Puget Sound Regional Equitable Development Initiative Fund (REDI) to finance the acquisition of land for the development of affordable housing along transit lines and requesting the Department of Planning and Development to explore the expansion of the development of accessory dwelling units and detached accessory dwelling units; and

WHEREAS, the Council authorized \$1 million in funding for the REDI Fund as part of the City's 2015 Adopted Budget; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the legal complexity of policies and practices designed to create more affordable housing, including state and federal constitutional questions, the Council urged the City Attorney in December 2014 to create a senior legal team composed of Assistant City Attorneys and outside legal experts to review potential policies and practices and advise city government; and

WHEREAS, in recognition that further strategies were needed to address the affordable housing challenge, in September 2014, the Council adopted Resolution 31546, establishing the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) Advisory Committee to evaluate potential strategies to support the development and preservation of a diversity of housing types and rents/prices for the residents of the City over the next ten years; and

WHEREAS, the HALA Advisory Committee examined an array of potential strategies the City can implement on its own, and some that will require state action in order to implement, and has issued a report with recommendations to the Council and Mayor; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor has submitted a set of recommendations based on the HALA's report that attempts to meet the goal of building or preserving 20,000 rent- and income-restricted units affordable to households from 0 - 80 percent of AMI and 30,000 units of market rate housing affordable to

households above 80 percent of AMI over the next 10 years; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. The City Council is ready to expeditiously consider strategies recommended by the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) Advisory Committee and the Mayor that will accomplish the following objectives:

- A. Increase the number of rent and income restricted units for households at or below 60 percent of AMI and explore changes to development regulations to increase the supply and variety of housing types.
- B. Implement programs and policies to preserve existing affordable housing, particularly in neighborhoods where low-income families are at risk of displacement.
- C. Adopt programs or policies that reduce barriers for tenants seeking housing who have insufficient incomes, involvement with the criminal justice system, or unconventional sources of income.
- D. Explore programs to assist existing homeowners to remain in their homes or to provide homebuyer programs to meet the need of those unable to access conventional mortgage programs.
- E. Streamline existing project review programs and permitting activities.

Attached as Attachment A to this resolution is the Council Work Plan for HALA Recommendations, which includes the specific strategies the Council intends to pursue and includes the draft work plan, deliverables, and estimated timeline for action on each of these strategies.

Section 2. The City implores the Washington State Legislature to adopt new policies or modify existing programs that could assist the City to significantly increase the availability of rental housing, particularly rent- and income-restricted units for those earning 60 percent of median income or below, including the following: authorize a 0.25 percent increase in the Real Estate Excise Tax to fund affordable housing; authorize an increase in the Housing Trust Fund; and authorize a new housing preservation tax exemption to create rent- and income-restricted affordable homes in existing buildings. The City Council requests the Mayor and the

Office of Intergovernmental Relations to coordinate discussions and planning to advance the measures in this resolution during the next session of the Washington State Legislature and to incorporate these in the City's 2016 State Legislative Agenda.

Section 3. The City Council concurs in the goal of producing 20,000 net new rent- and income-restricted housing units and 30,000 net new market rate housing units by December 2025, and requests that in implementing specific strategies the City aim to ensure at least 75 percent of rent- and income-restricted units are affordable to households earning 0-60 percent of median income. The City Council requests that the Mayor establish a method for annually tracking and reporting on progress towards producing rent- and income-restricted and market rate units.

Adopted by the City Council the ____ day of _____, 2015, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2015.

President _____ of the City Council

The Mayor concurred the ____ day of _____, 2015.

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Filed by me this ____ day of _____, 2015.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)

Attachment A: Council Work Plan for HALA Recommendations