



Legislation Text

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CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION affirming The City of Seattle’s commitment to racial equity and social justice and recognizing the Seattle Department of Transportation’s Transportation Equity Program, created to provide safe, environmentally sustainable, accessible, and affordable transportation options that support communities of color, low-income communities, immigrant and refugee communities, people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, LGTBQ people, women and girls, youth, and seniors to thrive in place in vibrant and healthy communities, and eliminate or mitigate racial disparities and the effects of displacement.

WHEREAS, in Seattle transportation is the second highest household cost for all households after housing, disproportionately affecting low-income households, and safe, environmentally sustainable, accessible, and affordable transportation is a key contributor to households accessing and retaining housing and employment; and

WHEREAS, in Seattle and across the United States, communities of color, low-income communities, immigrant and refugee communities, people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity tend to live, work, play, and learn in concentrated areas, including often formerly redlined neighborhoods, or have been displaced to areas where barriers to safe, environmentally sustainable, accessible, and affordable transportation and housing among other race-based socio-economic disparities persist; and

WHEREAS, according to “The Impacts of Neighborhoods on Intergenerational Mobility: Childhood Exposure Effects and County-Level Estimates,” a national study on upward mobility published in 2015 by Harvard researchers, Raj Chetty and Nathaniel Hendren, commute time emerged as the single strongest indicator of the odds of escaping poverty, underscoring that the further low-income families must travel to access socio-economic opportunities or are displaced to outlying areas, the less likely their chances

are of moving up the economic ladder; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Equity Caucus, a national coalition comprised of policy experts led by PolicyLink and The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, defines transportation equity as “the fair and just treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of transportation regulations, policies, planning and investments”, and has identified the creation of affordable transportation options among its top goals; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle launched the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) in 2004 to eliminate race-based bias and disparities within city government, and in 2014 the Mayor's RSJI Executive Order 2014-02 declared the City would incorporate a racial equity lens in citywide initiatives to achieve coordinated planning and equitable growth; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, voters approved Proposition 1 to expand King County Metro bus transit service in Seattle, investing approximately \$45 million annually in increased service, helping to make bus transit a more reliable and affordable transportation option, and allowing The City of Seattle to set aside up to \$2 million annually to support access to transit service for low-income transit riders; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, King County implemented a low-income fare for metro transit service, increasing access to transit for low-income riders; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, Rainer Beach High School students organized a march and a town hall to raise awareness about the 2-mile walk zone threshold for school district-issued ORCA transit passes and, in 2016, City Council directed the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) through the budgeting process to set aside \$1 million annually for five years from the \$2 million annual Seattle Transportation Benefit District funds for low-income access to transit to purchase Youth ORCA transit passes from King County Metro and distribute the passes to free and reduced lunch eligible students living under the 2-mile walk zone threshold; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the Mayor unveiled Move Seattle, a 10-year vision for transportation in Seattle, which included among its goals, giving all people living, working, learning, and playing in the city high quality and low-cost transportation options, reducing transportation costs and freeing up individual resources for other quality of life needs and matters; and

WHEREAS, SDOT's multi-modal transportation investments and encouragement of emergent transportation providers and mobility solutions are intended to reduce household transportation costs and enable more people to live car-free or car-lite lifestyles; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the Mayor and City Council confirmed via Resolution 31577 the city's core values of race and social equity as one of the foundations on which The City of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan was built and, in 2016, led to the establishment of the Equitable Development Initiative and Implementation Plan with the intent of advancing racial equity and social justice through strong and accessible communities where communities could thrive in place; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the Mayor launched the Equity and Environment Initiative (EEI) to deepen Seattle's commitment to race and social justice in the environment and advance three primary goals: All people and communities benefit from Seattle's environmental progress; communities most affected by environmental injustice are engaged in setting environmental priorities, designing strategies, and tracking progress; and, people of color, immigrants, refugees, people with low incomes, and individuals with limited-English proficiency have opportunities to be part of and be leaders in the environmental movement; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, City Council adopted and the Mayor signed Resolution 31681 to establish shared city and community goals and strategies within the Equity and Environment Agenda as City policy and a critical aspect and foundation for all environment and sustainability work in Seattle, including the transportation-related strategies embedded within the EEI Agenda; and

WHEREAS, Seattle-based human services providers, youth advocates, transportation advocates, neighborhood

organizers, and social justice organizers from local advocacy groups, including Capitol Hill Housing, Puget Sound Sage, Transportation Choices Coalition, Transit Riders Union, the YWCA, Seattle Education Access, Seattle and King County Coalition on Homelessness, One America, and Rainier Beach Action Coalition, have long advocated for the advancement of transportation equity principles; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. Communities of color, low-income communities, immigrant and refugee communities, people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, LGBTQ people, women and girls, youth, and seniors should benefit equitably from the city's transportation investments, mobility innovation and progress to create safe, environmentally sustainable, accessible, and affordable transportation options.

Section 2. The City Council and the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) recognize the need to lead by example and for government, community, businesses and employers, and philanthropy to work together to prioritize access to affordable transportation options and establish a process to define and advance equitable transportation through the SDOT Transportation Equity Program. SDOT commits to the following Transportation Equity Program-related preliminary actions using a racial equity and social justice lens.

A. SDOT intends to build community trust through engagement and accountability and commits to:

1. Establish a Transportation Equity Program that is informed by the narratives and expertise of those most affected by barriers to safe, environmentally sustainable, accessible, and affordable transportation options; and
2. Explore opportunities to support the creation of a group or committee comprised of those most affected by barriers to safe, environmentally sustainable, accessible, and affordable transportation options to provide guidance on the program's development and strategies; and
3. Address urgent transportation affordability needs through the Transportation Equity Program;

and

4. Coordinate with equity leads within SDOT and across city agency departments, including but not limited to the Office of Sustainability and Environment and the Office of Planning and Community Development, to advance transportation affordability; and

5. Build capacity of institutional and community leaders by expanding knowledge about the intersection of race and social justice as it pertains to transportation as well as safe, environmentally sustainable, accessible, and affordable transportation options in Seattle, respectively.

B. SDOT intends to provide affordable transportation options and commits to:

1. Inventory, collect and analyze new and existing qualitative and quantitative data to inform affordable transportation options; and

2. Assess existing affordable transportation options and expand successful projects into citywide programs, extending access to more affordable transportation options; and

3. Create new affordable transportation mobility programs through strategic community and stakeholder partnerships as well as in partnership with public and private mobility service providers; and

4. Shape innovation and harness technology to advance affordable transportation options; and

5. Work with the Department of Neighborhoods and collaborate with King County Metro and King County Public Health to ensure culturally relevant and language accessible affordable transportation information and programming is available and reaches communities of color, low-income communities, immigrant and refugee communities, people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, LGTBQ people, women and girls, youth, and seniors.

C. SDOT intends to create opportunities for communities to thrive in place through affordable transportation and commits to work with community-based organizations, service providers, affordable housing providers, and employers among other partners to identify and develop affordable transportation programs that connect people to opportunities for upward mobility, better quality-of-life, and greater well-being within their

communities.

Section 3. The City Council and SDOT recognize the need for a community-centered approach to the development of the Transportation Equity Program and intends to prioritize affordability and co-create additional transportation equity goals, strategies, indicators, and measures in partnership with leaders from community-based organizations, disproportionately affected community members and stakeholders, as well as the Mayor, City Council, and City of Seattle departmental agency and equity program leads. SDOT intends to work with the Department of Neighborhoods to develop and execute the Transportation Equity Program's community engagement and public outreach strategy.

Section 4. SDOT intends to align and leverage transportation equity interests related to affordability expressed within existing and on-going citywide planning efforts, including Equity and Environment Agenda, the Equitable Development Implementation Plan, as well as regional planning efforts and intends to collaborate with appropriate city departments, offices, and partner agencies. The City of Seattle and SDOT are committed to eliminating racial disparities and displacement by developing safe, environmentally sustainable, accessible and affordable transportation options with existing and emergent mobility solutions that connect communities of color, low-income communities, immigrant and refugee communities, people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, LGTBQ people, women and girls, youth, and seniors to nearby affordable housing, living wage jobs, schools, places of worship, cultural community assets, and green and open spaces consistent with the City's Equitable Development Implementation Plan, Equity and Environment Agenda, Comprehensive Plan, and multi-modal mobility plans, including the pedestrian, bicycle, transit and freight master plans.

Section 5. SDOT intends to phase, track and report progress towards the Transportation Equity Program's goals. The Transportation Equity Program Manager intends to create a phased approach to developing the program, which includes but is not limited to:

A. Convening community stakeholders;

- B. Co-defining transportation equity goals;
- C. Aligning existing and identifying new transportation equity-related strategies and metrics;
- D. Creating an implementation plan; and
- E. Developing a benchmarking report.

The Transportation Equity Program Manager shall work to report via presentation annually to the Mayor and City Council on the program’s progress towards advancing affordable transportation within communities of color, low-income communities, immigrant and refugee communities, the disability community, among people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, LGBTQ people, women and girls, youth, and seniors throughout the city. The first report via presentation shall be presented to the Sustainability and Transportation Committee no later than September 30, 2018.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2018, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2018.

President _____ of the City Council

The Mayor concurred the _____ day of _____, 2018.

Jenny A. Durkan, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2018.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)