

(Meeting date)

RESOLUTION NO. M-_____

A RESOLUTION of the City Council of the City of Vancouver adopting an Equity and Inclusion Vision Statement and acknowledging its responsibilities to address existing inequities in City policies, programs, services, funding, and services for the benefit of all members of the public.

WHEREAS, the history of Vancouver is comprised of the stories of people across the millennia who have contributed to the land and today's unique and vibrant culture. These stories include patterns of inequality and unequal distribution of resources, power, and economic opportunities seen throughout the United States. Its vulnerable populations continue to face unrectified historical injustices; and

WHEREAS, Washington State has sought to address racial and sex-based discrimination through the Washington Law Against Discrimination, initially passed in 1949 and updated over the years; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, the voters of Vancouver inserted prohibitions on discrimination into the City Charter, which were further expanded in 2015; and

WHEREAS, the City of Vancouver has prioritized the advancement of equity through numerous proactive initiatives, including:

1. In 2020, the City Council adopted equity as a core value;
2. The 2021-23 budget authorized the creation of an Office of Equity and Inclusion with a full-time dedicated staff;
3. In 2019, Reside Vancouver, an anti-displacement strategy, was developed.
4. In 2023, the Council reiterated its commitment by adopting equity as a core value of the 2023-2029 Strategic Plan, embedded equity as a foundation of the updated transportation System Plan and Climate Action Framework, adopted the Fourth Plain for All investment plan, and endorsed an equity framework for the development of the 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan;
5. The city developed a social vulnerability index to identify disparities in housing, health, education, criminal justice, environment, and employment often correlated with race and vulnerable population status. Identified disparities are addressed through methodologies and strategies, such as equitable programming in city services and long-range planning, resident engagement toolkits, and professional development;
6. Improving representation and participation opportunities for vulnerable populations, including seeking ways to overcome language and accessibility barriers;
7. Ensuring the development and implementation of inclusive recruitment and

- appointment practices for City Boards and Commissions, actively seeking candidates reflective of the city's diversity;
8. Actively monitoring, documenting, and addressing discrimination in the execution of city programs and activities as directed by Section 7.10 of the Vancouver City Charter;
 9. Improving access to and facilitating participation of persons with disabilities within all City services, programs, and facilities;
 10. Identifying, promulgating, and offering professional development programs for City Councilmembers, board and commission members, and City employees to enhance their understanding of and skills to advance equity, cultural competence, trauma-informed interaction and programming, and equitable and inclusive decision-making;
 11. Pursuing and supporting the development and implementation of equitable policies and services, using data and metrics such as the Vancouver Social Vulnerability Index where possible, and pursue continuous improvement in the same;
 12. Supporting and strengthening intergovernmental relations with the Indigenous Tribal Nations; and

AND WHEREAS, many other stories and actions have created Vancouver's current reality.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF VANCOUVER
THAT:

Section 1. Findings. The recitals set forth above, and the information supplied within Staff Report SR-_____, are adopted as findings in support of the action of the City Council in adopting this resolution.

Section 2. Vision Statement. The City Council hereby adopts the following Equity & Inclusion Vision Statement:

The Vancouver City Council is dedicated to creating an environment where individuals can live with dignity and opportunity and contribute to the health and vibrancy of the city. The Council actively works to ensure the safety and well-being of its residents, both physically and mentally and strives to make all aspects of living in the city attainable. In addition, the Council strives for community members to be able to express their true selves and feel a solid connection to the city.

Section 3. City Council Commitment. The City Council believes that our collective strength lies in our ability to embrace and celebrate our community's richness and is committed to fostering an environment where everyone who calls Vancouver home, or their place of employment, or visits, has equal opportunities for prosperity, participation, and quality of life. Consistent with this belief, and in addition to the initiatives outlined above, the City Council affirms its dedication to:

1. Adopting policies consistent with the Vision memorialized herein that recognize and _____ address those historical injustices that have been perpetuated by the code and _____

programs of the city, advance equity, eliminate structural and system barriers, and, through its example, extend Vancouver's influence beyond the city organization;

2. Promoting a better comprehension of the ongoing issues related to equity, fairness, and civic involvement and facilitating a practical plan for the City's continuous response to these issues;
3. Committing to working with all whom we represent and partner with, including residents, institutions, organizations, businesses, and other stakeholders, to achieve more equitable outcomes within the city;
4. Identifying and developing opportunities to elevate and enhance understanding of the history and stories of Vancouver's current and future vulnerable populations through civic leadership and involvement in community events, collaboration, policy, program, and project recommendations developed through the City's advisory boards, commissions, and authorities.

Section 4. Direction to City Manager. The City Council hereby directs the City Manager to continue the important initiatives outlined above, support the City Council in meeting its commitment to equity and inclusion, and seek new opportunities to advance equity within the resources and authorities provided for in the City Charter and by policy and budget action of the City Council.

Section 6. Effective date. This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption.

ADOPTED at a Regular Meeting of the Vancouver City Council this _____, of _____, 2024.

Anne McEnery-Ogle, Mayor

Attest:

Natasha Ramras, City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Jonathan Young, City Attorney