RESOLUTION NO. 39892

A RESOLUTION establishing a Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, to be composed of eleven members and an alternate, for the purpose of better engaging Tacoma’s immigrant and refugee communities; and to work with community partners, City departments, and within the City’s Equity and Empowerment framework to identify and advance positive outcomes for members of refugee and immigrant communities related to access to and participation in Tacoma’s economic, cultural and civic life and to employment, economic development, public health, student achievement, citizenship, public safety, criminal justice, civic engagement, language access, and protection of civil rights.

WHEREAS the City wishes to be recognized as a livable and progressive international city, regarded for the richness of its diverse population and natural setting, and

WHEREAS Tacoma is home to many immigrant and refugee communities, and the City recognizes the value of cultural diversity and its contribution to the City’s civic and economic identity, and

WHEREAS the City is committed to improving the lives of all its residents, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or language, and

WHEREAS the City passed the Welcoming Cities and Counties Initiative, which encourages communities to create more welcoming, immigrant-friendly environments that maximize opportunities for economic growth and vitality, and supports all efforts to make the City more vibrant, inclusive, and welcoming for all, and

WHEREAS the City adopted an Equity and Empowerment Framework consisting of five elements: (1) City of Tacoma Workforce Reflects the Community it Serves; (2) Purposeful Community Outreach and Engagement; (3) Equitable

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Service Delivery to all Residents and Visitors; (4) Support Human Rights and Opportunities for Everyone to Achieve their Full Potential; and (5) Commitment to Equity in Policy Decision-making, and

WHEREAS language and cultural barriers may compromise equal access to government services and programs, and

WHEREAS the City Council is working to enhance and improve both the relationship of City government with refugee and immigrant residents, and access to City services and resources for these communities, and

WHEREAS the City Council desires to take proactive steps to strengthen ongoing efforts to address existing and emerging needs of immigrant and refugee communities by the creation of the Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs;

Now, Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

Section 1. That the Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (“Commission”) is hereby established for the purpose of better engaging immigrant and refugee communities, with the goal of reducing barriers to immigrant and refugee access to and participation in Tacoma’s economic, cultural, and civic life. The Commission will work with community partners, City Commissions, Boards and Committees, City departments, and within the City’s Equity and Empowerment framework to identify and advance positive outcomes for members of refugee and immigrant communities related to employment, economic development, public health, student achievement, citizenship, public safety, criminal justice, civic engagement, language access, and protection of civil rights.
A. Commission Composition.

1. The Commission shall be composed of eleven members, to include one youth or young adult member under the age of 25 at the time of appointment. An alternate member will also be appointed.

2. In making appointments to the Commission, all efforts shall be made to maintain biographical, gender and sexual orientation balance and to include one youth or young adult member under the age of 25 at the time of appointment. An alternate member will also be appointed.

3. The Commission should meet on a regular basis with the Tacoma Human Rights Commission and the Tacoma Area Commission on Disabilities.

4. Each Commissioner shall serve for a term of three years. No member shall serve more than three consecutive terms. If a member is appointed to fill the duration of an unexpired term, then that term shall qualify as one of the three consecutive terms if the portion of the unexpired term actually served is one year or more. To start, all appointments shall be staggered rotations and terms.

City Council will coordinate appointments to ensure the representation goals in this subsection are met. All members shall demonstrate experience or expertise with immigrant issues, as well as a commitment to all immigrant and refugee communities. The City Council will coordinate appointments to ensure the representation goals in this subsection are met. All members shall demonstrate experience or expertise with immigrant issues, as well as a commitment to all immigrant and refugee communities. The City Council will coordinate appointments to ensure the representation goals in this subsection are met. All members shall demonstrate experience or expertise with immigrant issues, as well as a commitment to all immigrant and refugee communities.

Tacoma, To the extent possible, membership should be from African communities, Latino communities, and Asian/Pacific Islander communities. A majority of the members should be immigrants or refugees. All members shall demonstrate experience or expertise with immigrant issues, as well as a commitment to all immigrant and refugee communities. The City Council will coordinate appointments to ensure the representation goals in this subsection are met. All members shall demonstrate experience or expertise with immigrant issues, as well as a commitment to all immigrant and refugee communities.

Terms begin March 1 and end the last day in February.
B. Commission Duties.

1. The Commission shall have the duty and power to study problems and issues specifically impacting the immigrant and refugee communities in the City of Tacoma and provide written recommendations, context, and input to Tacoma’s policy makers, including to the Mayor, City Council, City Manager, and City Department heads, toward the development and implementation of programs, services, and practices specific to the purpose of furthering immigrant and refugee access to and participation in Tacoma’s economic, cultural, and civic life.

2. The Commission may hold community meetings, consult with other City Commissions, Boards and Committees, public agencies, civil rights organizations, representatives of employers, labor unions, faith based institutions, professional associations, community organizations concerned with and advocating for immigrants and refugees, social welfare organizations, and any other associations, organizations, and institutions as directed by the City Council or as the Commission shall deem advisable to engage in a constructive, integrative, and meaningful way with immigrant and refugee communities, to connect immigrant and refugee communities with allies and stakeholders, to provide education by raising awareness about available resources and opportunities, to identify mutual community challenges and opportunities and develop potential partnerships between Tacoma’s immigrant and refugee communities and the City, and to promote recognition of the contributions of foreign-born residents to the economic and cultural vitality of Tacoma.
3. If requested, the Commission will collaborate with, assist, and make recommendations to any public officials, jurisdictions, departments, public or private organizations, community groups or other individuals or entities regarding the development and implementation of programs, services and practices specific to the purpose of furthering immigrant and refugee access to and participation in Tacoma's economic, cultural, and civic life.

4. Annual Workplan. The Commission shall develop an Annual Workplan and an Annual Report of each previous year's work. The Annual Report shall include a summary of Commission accomplishments and challenges, as well as recommendations on how the City can continue to develop and implement programs, services, and practices specific to the purpose of furthering immigrant and refugee access to and participation in Tacoma's economic, cultural, and civic life. The Commission shall brief the assigned City Council Committee on its Annual Workplan and Annual Report.

5. Rules of procedure. The Commission may establish protocols and rules of procedure as are necessary to carry out the duties and functions of the Commission.
Section 2. That, in order to advance its mission, the Commission will be provided staff support on behalf of the City of Tacoma.

Adopted ________________________

 _______________________________________
 Mayor

Attest:

_____________________________________
City Clerk

Approved as to form:

_____________________________________
Deputy City Attorney