

March 16, 2021



Dear Chair Whitney, Vice Chair Kappler, and Houghton Community Councilmembers;

As elected leaders that share a deep love of our City and a commitment to ensuring Kirkland is one of the best places in America to live, work and play, the Kirkland City Council and the Houghton Community Council have had a long and collaborative partnership. This partnership helped unite our community and guide Kirkland through the unique tragedies and triumphs of the COVID-19 pandemic that erupted in Kirkland on February 29, 2020 and continue to this day.

This partnership was reaffirmed by an important and collaborative discussion that occurred on March 10, 2021 that included me, Councilmember Neal Black, Councilmember Kelli Curtis, and Houghton Community Councilmembers Rick Whitney, John Kappler and Larry Toedtli, regarding another national tragedy this past year: the killing of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 by police officers in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In Kirkland, there were protests and necessary calls to address social injustice and structural racism and to improve the safety and respect of Black and brown people in our community. The City Council unanimously adopted Resolution R-5434 (attached) on August 4, 2020. R-5434 affirms that Black lives matter and adopts a framework of long overdue actions to improve the safety and respect of Black people and help end not just structural racism, but all structural barriers to equality in Kirkland. R-5434 builds on the important work to create a community where everyone belongs that started with adopting R-5240 on February 21, 2017. R-5240 declares Kirkland a safe, inclusive and welcoming community.

The first two sections of R-5434 are focused appropriately on police accountability and transparency measures. However, Section 3 of the resolution directs the City Manager to evaluate possible changes to City organizational structures, programs, and policies, including the Kirkland Municipal Court, procurement systems, public art and community events, and land-use planning and implementation. One of the key actions to accomplish the goals of R-5434 is initiating a comprehensive equity assessment of all areas of City policy, practice and procedure, and proposed actions to address equity gaps.

Within the framework of R-5434, the City has worked to address the need for social justice and equity in policy and procedures throughout 2020. We are taking a hard look at how our actions continue a history of inequity by denying opportunities for those that have been disadvantaged by these structural barriers. To inform this work, we need to hear from those who are most impacted by our legislative policies. Section 4 of R-5434 calls for extensive community engagement and facilitation of citywide conversations about structural barriers to equality and policy and program solutions. At the February 16 City Council meeting, the Council authorized the City Manager to broaden our public outreach, which rightly began with Black community members, to all members of the Kirkland community. This outreach will include surveys, Town Halls, public hearings, social media campaigns and much more.

The City Council has always envisioned the Houghton Community Council (HCC) as being part of this important community dialogue. As a governing body with significant land-use authority, we believe it is necessary for the Community Council to partner with us again as we look critically at ways our community has inadvertently perpetuated barriers to equity and inclusion. We invite you to join us in this work of creating equity, justice and inclusion for everyone. We offer our staff and consulting resources to support the HCC in this effort. Together, we can realize a Kirkland where everyone feels – and knows – they belong.

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The City Council understands that 2021 is the year that the HCC will consider placing a ballot measure before the voters of Houghton to extend the HCC through December 31, 2025. When the six of us met, we did not realize that RCW 35.14.060 that governs community councils requires that a resolution for continuation needs to be filed "not less than seven months" prior to the end of the current term. This means action by May 31, 2021. We appreciate the March 15 email from Mr. Whitney highlighting both this requirement, and the need for candidates for the HCC to file by May 21, 2021.

However, this still does allow the HCC to defer action until the April HCC meeting. The City Council respectfully requests the HCC not act on the resolution at the March 22 meeting so that the members of the HCC have opportunity to participate in thoughtful discussions of how everyone in Kirkland can help eliminate structural barriers to equal opportunity.

The City contracted in January with Chanin Kelly-Rae Consulting to conduct the City's equity assessment. The scope of Ms. Kelly-Rae's contact includes interviewing Kirkland City Councilmembers as well as members of the HCC and the Planning Commission. We have asked her to expedite this process with the HCC. The City Council is requesting that the HCC defer action to place an extension on the ballot until Ms. Kelly-Rae has completed her interviews with members of the HCC and some focused outreach can be completed and presented to the HCC. We believe this can be accomplished before the HCC meets in April. I will also be presenting this letter and request to you at the March 22 HCC meeting on behalf of the full Council.

If you have any questions, please contact me at [psweet@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:psweet@kirklandwa.gov) or City Manager Kurt Triplett at [kttriplett@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:kttriplett@kirklandwa.gov).

Sincerely,

CITY OF KIRKLAND

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Penny Sweet". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Penny" and last name "Sweet" clearly visible.

Penny Sweet  
Mayor

Attachment: Resolution R-5434

## RESOLUTION R-5434

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND  
AFFIRMING THAT BLACK LIVES MATTER AND APPROVING THE  
FRAMEWORK FOR KIRKLAND TO BECOME A SAFE, INCLUSIVE AND  
WELCOMING COMMUNITY THROUGH ACTIONS TO IMPROVE THE  
SAFETY AND RESPECT OF BLACK PEOPLE IN KIRKLAND AND END  
STRUCTURAL RACISM BY PARTNERING WITH THOSE MOST AFFECTED

1 WHEREAS, On February 21, 2017 the City Council adopted  
2 Resolution R-5240 declaring Kirkland a Safe, Inclusive and Welcoming  
3 Community for all people; and  
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5 WHEREAS, following adoption of Resolution R-5240, the City has  
6 taken many budgetary and policy actions to make progress towards this  
7 goal but recognizes there is still much more to be done to achieve  
8 equity, justice and inclusion for everyone; and  
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10 WHEREAS, since the tragic killing of George Floyd by a police  
11 officer on May 25, 2020 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, there have been  
12 dozens of protests, marches and rallies in Kirkland calling for an end to  
13 structural racism and for the City to demonstrate that Black lives matter;  
14 and  
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16 WHEREAS, at the June 16, 2020 City Council meeting, the  
17 Council issued a formal statement to the community on issues of  
18 structural racism and injustice and requested that the City Manager  
19 develop "a framework for a citywide response to the issues of bias and  
20 racism towards our Black and brown community members" to be  
21 presented at the July 7, 2020 Council meeting; and  
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23 WHEREAS, the June 16 statement also asked the City Manager  
24 to bring to the July 7, 2020 Council meeting "a request for necessary  
25 resources for early implementation actions and community-wide  
26 conversations on these critical topics"; and  
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28 WHEREAS, the Eastside Race and Leadership Coalition has for  
29 several years brought together local stakeholders from across the  
30 community in pursuit of a vision in which the diversity of leaders in local  
31 government, social service and non-profit organizations, commerce and  
32 education sectors reflect those living in the communities, and that the  
33 decisions they make respect the cultural and social differences of those  
34 living, working, learning and growing in these communities and  
35 eliminate barriers that would otherwise keep them from achieving their  
36 fullest potential; and  
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WHEREAS, several notable Black leaders from the Eastside Race and Leadership Coalition formed a group called the Right to Breathe Committee, and since June 12, 2020 have been engaging the City in discussions and have called upon the City to abolish systemic Anti-Blackness to ensure equal justice, provide oversight and accountability through equitable shared decision-making that embodies the phrase "nothing about us without us", and de-escalate encounters involving people enforcing laws and rules against Black people; and

WHEREAS, community members have encouraged the City to evaluate police policies against the national Campaign Zero's "8 Can't Wait" campaign to end police violence, and to commit to President Barack Obama's four part "Mayor's Pledge", which includes: reviewing the City's police use of force policies; engaging the Kirkland community by including a diverse range of input, experiences, and stories in the review; reporting the findings of the review to the community and seeking feedback; and reforming the City's police use of force policies;

WHEREAS, this resolution incorporates elements of the "8 Can't Wait" and "Mayor's Pledge" initiatives and is also intended to create a path to progress on the goals of community stakeholders seeking change;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Kirkland as follows:

Section 1. The City Manager is hereby directed to develop Transparency strategies to allow the community and the Council to understand how the City as an organization is performing. These strategies shall include but are not limited to:

- a. Developing a police "use of force" public dashboard;
- b. Evaluating enhancements to the existing police dashboard that help guard against bias in police action;
- c. Developing a School Resource Officer public dashboard;
- d. Developing a Human Resources public dashboard;
- e. Developing a Human Services public dashboard; and
- f. Other strategies identified by the community and the Council.

Section 2. The City Manager is further directed to develop Accountability strategies to allow the community and the Council to understand the City's current police use of force policies and identify possible changes to such policies. These strategies shall include but are not limited to:

- a. "8 Can't Wait" police use of force policy review;
- b. Contracting for third party policy use of force review and use of force data evaluation and analysis;
- c. Structured Council use of force policy and data deliberations;
- d. Evaluating options for independent civilian oversight of police use of force.
- e. Developing a police body camera pilot program; and
- f. Review of national best practices for alternatives to police for

90 serving those experiencing homelessness, behavioral health  
 91 issues, drug addiction and other community challenges.  
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93 Section 3. The City Manager is further directed to develop  
 94 further Accountability strategies to allow the community and the Council  
 95 to understand and identify possible changes to other City organizational  
 96 structures, programs, and policies. These strategies shall include but  
 97 are not limited to:

- 98 a. Evaluating implementation of a community court to reduce  
 99 disproportional impacts on traditionally marginalized  
 100 populations;
- 101 b. Contracting for a comprehensive City organizational equity  
 102 assessment to identify gaps in diversity, equity and inclusion  
 103 in all areas of City policy, practice and procedure, and to  
 104 identify proposed actions steps to address these gaps;
- 105 c. Conducting a comprehensive review of City procurement and  
 106 contracting processes and documents to eliminate barriers  
 107 for disadvantaged businesses enterprises to compete for City  
 108 projects;
- 109 d. Evaluating whether public art, public symbols, special events  
 110 and City programming in Kirkland are welcoming to all  
 111 community members;
- 112 e. Expanding the diversity of public art, symbols, events and  
 113 programming to be more inclusive; and
- 114 f. Other strategies identified by the community and the  
 115 Council.  
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117 Section 4. The City Manager is further directed to develop  
 118 Community Engagement strategies to facilitate citywide conversations  
 119 about structural racism and policy and program solutions. These  
 120 strategies shall include but are not limited to:

- 121 a. Community engagement process centered around Black  
 122 people;
- 123 b. Targeted additional stakeholder engagement including  
 124 Indigenous people and people of color, with a focus on  
 125 including intersectional voices;
- 126 c. Town Halls, virtual meetings and small group discussion;
- 127 d. Surveys, mailers and social media campaigns;
- 128 e. Council retreat and public hearings; and
- 129 f. Other strategies identified by the community and the  
 130 Council.  
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132 Section 5. The City Manager is further directed to develop  
 133 Funding strategies to implement the entire framework set forth in this  
 134 resolution. These strategies shall include but are not limited to:

- 135 a. Funding an outside review of police use of force;
- 136 b. Funding a body camera pilot project;
- 137 c. Funding community engagement strategies;
- 138 d. Reserving additional funding to implement ideas from  
 139 community engagement, a national best practices review,  
 140 and the equity assessment; and
- 141 e. Meeting other funding needs identified by the community



142 and the Council.

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Section 6. The City Manager is hereby directed to return to the Council by August 4, 2020 with funding recommendations for Council authorization to implement the elements of the framework resolution.

Passed by majority vote of the Kirkland City Council in open meeting this 4 day of August, 2020.

Signed in authentication thereof this 4 day of August, 2020.

  
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Penny Sweet, Mayor

Attest:

  
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Kathi Anderson, City Clerk