



## General Government Committee

### Discuss Process and Options for Forming a City of Olympia Human Rights Commission

**Agenda Date:** 7/22/2020  
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#### **Title**

Discuss Process and Options for Forming a City of Olympia Human Rights Commission

#### **Recommended Action**

**Committee Recommendation:**

#### **City Manager Recommendation:**

Discuss the process and options for forming a City of Olympia Human Rights Commission and forward a recommendation to City Council for review and approval.

#### **Report**

##### **Issue:**

Whether to discuss the process and options for forming a City of Olympia Human Rights Commission and forward a recommendation to City Council for review and approval.

#### **Staff Contact:**

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#### **Presenter(s):**

Olivia Salazar de Breaux, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator, Human Resources  
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#### **Background and Analysis:**

The City Council forwarded to the General Government Committee (Committee) a referral to request the development of a Human Rights Commission (Attachment A). The referral requested the Committee to develop the best process to scope and populate a new commission. The referral also stated that community members most impacted by social and institutional racism needed to be integral to the development of the commission and its resulting work plan.

As is highlighted in the referral, Olympia will not be the first community to create an advisory commission to address social and institutional racism. There are other established models all with

differing names, charges, roles, authority, and positions. To support identifying an approach that will meet our community's unique needs, staff will share several options for how to approach forming a commission (Attachment B).

**Traditional Approach.** This approach follows a process the City currently uses to identify and appoint members to other advisory committees and commissions. This process comprises of the General Government Committee accepting applications, reviewing applicants, and appointing new members.

**Participatory Leadership Approach.** This approach includes hosting community conversations and focus groups to collaborate with a broad diversity of community members, particularly those who are marginalized and most impacted by social and institutional injustice, to contribute to forming the commission's make-up, mission, and responsibilities.

**Hybrid Approach.** This approach melds a traditional approach to forming a commission with greater community engagement. Council first appoints half the commission members, who then host a participatory leadership process to inform the commission's role and identify new and emerging leaders to fill the remaining positions.

To support the discussion, staff will share what is being learned from conversations with community members and community groups on issues of social equity and justice and findings from research on best practices. The discussion will include the importance of identifying a name of the commission that is representative of the role, scope, and responsibility of the commission.

**Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):**

There is significant interest from the Olympia community to address systemic racism and inequality. Input that staff and City Councilmembers are receiving from citizens strongly supports a process that is highly inclusive, pays specific attention to the concerns and experiences of marginalized community members, as well as fosters and repairs trust among the City and citizens.

**Options:**

1. Direct staff to establish new advisory commission using one of the staff identified approaches discussed and forward to full Council for review and approval.
2. Direct staff to establish a new Advisory Commission using an approach identified by the General Government Committee and forward to full Council for review and approval
3. Direct staff to come back to the General Government Committee at a later date with a different approach to establishing a new advisory commission.

**Financial Impact:**

N/A

**Attachments:**

City Council Referral Request  
Options