



City of Edmonds Media Release

Office of the Mayor ~ 121 5th Ave N, Edmonds, WA 98020

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To: Media

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EDMONDS MAYOR NELSON TAKES ACTION TO ADDRESS RACISM AND BIAS

Mayor establishes Equity and Justice Advisory Task Force

(Edmonds, WA) - Black Lives Matter to me. Black lives matter in Edmonds and in this country. We cannot continue to allow any members of our community to be oppressed by systemic injustice and violence.

Those of us in local government must take a hard look within, listen, have honest conversations, be open to real change, and take tangible actions to support our African-American residents.

That is why today I am announcing the formation of an Equity and Justice Advisory Task Force to help identify and correct issues of systemic and implicit bias within city operations in response to the aggressions and inequities perpetrated on African-Americans around the nation and in our region. Their work will be focused on recommending resulting policies, procedures, or other changes that may be needed within our Police Department and at City Hall.

The Task Force is envisioned as being comprised of civic and business community members, as well as representatives from regional equity and inclusion organizations and city officials. The exact make-up is still being determined and will be announced when the Task Force is officially formed.

The singular focus of violence and mistreatment visited on black people in our society is an illness that must be rooted out and eradicated. Even if the most harmful examples of this mistreatment occur elsewhere, this work starts at home. No member of the law enforcement community or city government is immune from this illness. I want this Task Force to help inform me and my Administration

about any and all implicit or explicit forms of social injustice or bias that might exist in city government, and identify specific ways we can promote a community that is supportive to the African-American community.

As your mayor, I commit to making sure this Task Force provides meaningful and concrete solutions to addressing the racism and bias that may exist within City government, and the City will provide regular updates on the steps that have been taken to address these issues.

As we rebuild our economy from the ravages of COVID-19, we must take this opportunity to rebuild in a way that achieves greater equity, inclusion, fairness, and dignity for all members of our society – especially African-Americans who have been so disproportionately oppressed – as well as other marginalized populations.

Formation of this Task Force was also informed by foundational work performed by the Edmonds Diversity Commission over two years ago, which included a recommendation to consider forming an internally focused task force. The Advisory Task Force on Equity and Justice will meet regularly once formed and will report to Mayor Nelson, with assistance from staff.

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