

Resolution in Support of City of Seattle Development of Low Income Housing on Surplus Fort Lawton Land

Whereas, the original name of Fort Lawton and Discovery Park since time immemorial since has been called in Lushootseed: [PKa'dz Eltue](#) "thrust far out" and were part of the ancestral lands of kinship bands of Duwamish, Suquamish, Muckleshoot, Tulalip Nations prior to the Point Elliot Treaty of 1885; and

Whereas, in the 1960s and 1970s the United States deeded a large portion of Fort Lawton in the Magnolia neighborhood to the City of Seattle (City) leading to the creation of Discovery Park and the Daybreak Star Cultural Center in response to indigenous community interests; and

Whereas, [Bernie Whitebear](#), of the Colville Confederated Tribes and his fellow United Indians Of All Tribes Foundation (UIATF) advocates, successfully negotiated a [99 year-lease on 20 plus](#) acres in November of 1971 of lands the United States Government had previously utilized as the historic Fort Lawton, with the options to **successive 99 year-plus lease renewals** in a legally-binding agreement; and

Whereas, Daybreak Star Cultural Center and the [United Indians of All Tribes Foundation](#) began building structures to support environmental security and sovereignty for Urban Indians on September 27, 1975; and

Whereas, in 1975, [Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 \(ISDEAA\)](#). 43 Title I of ISDEAA authorized federally recognized tribes freedom from federal decision making, providing self-determination, governance, and revised boundaries for tribal sovereignty, which was reinforced by the Title IV in 1994 for full funding and allocation of appropriations, to include housing; and

Whereas, the United States Government retained for military purposes approximately 34 acres at the northeast corner of Discovery Park; and

Whereas, in the early 2000s as part of a realignment of assets, the U.S. Base Realignment and Closure Commission designated the City as the entity entitled to repurpose the site; and

Whereas, the City prepared plans for development of the site to accommodate low income housing and additions of green space to Discovery Park, with completion of environmental review ([FEIS](#)) of a Fort Lawton Redevelopment Plan in 2019; and

Whereas, Seattle's urban indigenous people are at [high risk](#) of homelessness and housing insecurity; and

Whereas, the Seattle City Council in June 2019 ([Resolution 31887](#)) confirmed "the City's commitment to further fair housing" in support of the Fort Lawton Redevelopment Plan; and

Whereas, during [project planning](#) in preparation for site development the City determined that the infrastructure cost per unit of housing under the 2019 Plan is too high; and

Whereas, as a result of [extensive reassessment](#) of the Plan, the City has determined that an increase in the density of housing on the 34 acre site can be done that will:

- Increase the quantity of accessible low income house at a lower per unit cost,

- Not decrease the amount of open space that will be incorporated into Discovery Park,
- Improve the access infrastructure in a manner less impactful to forest canopy, and
- Further the goals of the City's Equitable Development Initiative;

Now therefore:

The 36th District Democrats enthusiastically supports the City proceeding with the revised Fort Lawton Redevelopment Plan as quickly as possible; and

The 36th District Democrats urges the City to prioritize the project to provide housing for urban indigenous households; and

The 36th District Democrats convey its strong support for this important project to the City Council, the Mayor, and the involved Federal Agencies.

Toby Thaler, PCO 36-1338

Adopted 21 Feb 2024