

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE:	Discussing Ordinance No. 880 - Amending the Shoreline Municipal Code to Modify any and all Masculine or Feminine Language to Gender-Neutral Nouns and Pronouns		
DEPARTMENT:	City Manager's Office		
PRESENTED BY:	Jessica Simulcik Smith, City Clerk		
ACTION:	<input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance	<input type="checkbox"/> Resolution	<input type="checkbox"/> Motion
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing	

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

The English language contains many words that have the word "man" in them (policeman, manmade, chairman) or that call out an individual's gender (she, her, sister, daughter). Gender specific words contribute to gender biases by making gender noticeable and important, treating it as a binary category, and perpetuating stereotypical ideas and views about gender.

Expanding the City's focus on equity and inclusion has been a City Council Goal since 2016, and in January 2017, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 401, stating that the City is an inviting, equitable, and safe community for all. Removing gender specific words in the Shoreline Municipal Code (SMC) would demonstrate that the City values all residents and treats them as an important part of the Shoreline community, especially those who have been marginalized and underrepresented.

Proposed Ordinance No. 880 would amend the SMC to prohibit the use of gender specific language and would eliminate any gender language currently existing within the SMC by replacing it with gender neutral language.

RESOURCE/FINANCIAL IMPACT:

If Ordinance No. 880 is passed by Council, the cost to update the Shoreline Municipal Code is approximately \$450 to \$750, which would be paid for out of the existing budget for the City's contract with the Code Publishing Company.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council discuss Ordinance No. 880 this evening; no action is required. Ordinance No. 880 is scheduled for adoption at Council's January 27, 2020 meeting.

Approved By: City Manager **JN** City Attorney **MK**

BACKGROUND

The English language contains many words that have the word “man” in them (policeman, manmade, chairman) or that call out an individual’s gender (she, her, sister, daughter). Gender specific words contribute to gender biases by making gender noticeable and important, treating it as a binary category, and perpetuating stereotypical ideas and views about gender.

Expanding the City’s focus on equity and inclusion has been a City Council Goal since 2016, and in January 2017, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 401, stating that the City is an inviting, equitable, and safe community for all. Removing gender specific words in the Shoreline Municipal Code (SMC) would demonstrate the City values all residents and treats them as an important part of the Shoreline community, especially those who have been marginalized and underrepresented.

Historically, ordinances were framed in the masculine and references to only “him” or “he” were common. Over time, to be inclusive of women, ordinances were drafted to reference both “him” and “her”. In recent years, awareness of transgender and gender nonconforming identities has grown and brought to light the importance of nonbinary gender inclusivity and vocabulary. Examples of recent gender inclusivity advances are the Merriam-Webster Dictionary amending the definition of the word “they” to include usage for referring to an individual person whose gender identity is nonbinary (September 2019); and the Washington State Department of Licensing offering Gender “X” on driver licenses, instruction permits, and ID cards (November 2019).

DISCUSSION

In August 2019, the City Council amended its Rules of Procedure to remove gender pronouns from the language to be inclusive of people who are gender nonbinary. To move Council’s policy direction forward, staff has since reached out to the Code Publishing Company to inquire about amending the Shoreline Municipal Code to make it gender neutral. Code Publishing informed staff that cities from Alaska to California have adopted similar policies, and they received their first inquiry about gender neutral codes in 2017. Code Publishing also performed a preliminary search of the Shoreline Municipal Code for gendered words and found the following:

- “(he|she|her(?:self)?|his|him(?:self))|man|woman)” - 261 hits;
- “(male|fraternal|sister|masculine|feminine|pregnant)” - 9 hits; and
- several other gendered terms like manhole, manmade, salesman, etc.

Proposed Ordinance No. 880 (Attachment A) would amend the Shoreline Municipal Code to require all ordinances and resolutions to be written in gender neutral terms unless a specification of gender is necessary and intended; and will give the City’s codifier the specific authority to edit ordinances as necessary to replace gender specific references with gender neutral references. Attachment B to this staff report lists gender specific words and the gender neutral terms that could be used in their place.

COUNCIL GOAL(S) ADDRESSED

City Council Goal 4 is to expand the City's focus on equity and inclusion to enhance opportunities for community engagement. The Council values all community members, including those who have been historically marginalized and underrepresented. Amending the Shoreline Municipal Code to make it gender neutral will be a step towards improving inclusion and equity within the City.

RESOURCE/FINANCIAL IMPACT

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Proposed Ordinance No. 880

Attachment B – List of Gendered Terms and Gender Neutral Replacement

ORDINANCE NO. 880

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON
AMENDING THE ENTIRETY OF THE SHORELINE MUNICIPAL
CODE TO MODIFY ANY AND ALL GENDER SPECIFIC
LANGUAGE TO GENDER NEUTRAL LANGUAGE.**

WHEREAS, the Shoreline Municipal Code (“SMC”) was established in 1995 when the City incorporated and currently includes gender-specific pronouns and terms such as he, she, man, or woman; and

WHEREAS, in January 2017, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 401 stating that the City is an inviting, equitable, and safe community for all and the 2019-2021 City Council Goals speak to improving inclusion and equity within the City; and

WHEREAS, it is the City Council’s intent to have the City’s ordinances and resolutions expressed in gender-neutral terms so as to reflect the City’s values of inclusion and equality; and

WHEREAS, the SMC needs to be amended to prohibit the use of gender-specific pronouns and terms, to eliminate any gender preference language currently existing within the SMC, and to replace such language with gender neutral terms;

**NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SHORELINE,
WASHINGTON DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. Amendments to Shoreline Municipal Code, Chapter 1.05 Code Adoption.

- A. Adding a New Section, SMC 1.05.025 Gender neutral terms.

All ordinances and resolutions enacted, adopted, or amended by the City shall be written in gender-neutral terms unless a specification of gender is necessary and intended. No ordinance or resolution is invalid because it does not comply with this section.

- B. Adding a New Subsection G to SMC 1.05.040 Codification authority.

G. Editing ordinances as necessary to replace gender-specific references with gender-neutral references.

- C. Amending Section 1.05.050 Definitions.

H. Gender. ~~The masculine~~ Gender-neutral pronouns includes the feminine and masculine genders neuter;

Section 2. Directions to City Codifier.

- A. Subject to final approval by the City Attorney, the City’s codifier, Code Publishing Company, has authority to update pronouns within every title, chapter, and section of the Shoreline Municipal

Code, when appropriate, as it exists on the effective date of this Ordinance to provide for gender neutral terms.

- B. Gender-specific subject (he, she), object (him, her), and possessive (his, hers) pronouns and gender-specific terms (man, woman) and gender-specific positions (chairman, policeman) shall be replaced by gender-neutral terms unless the specification of gender is necessary.

Section 3. Severability. Should any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance or its application to any person or situation be declared unconstitutional or invalid for any reason, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance or its application to any person or situation.

Section 4. Publication and Effective Date. A summary of this Ordinance consisting of the title shall be published in the official newspaper and shall take effect five days after publication.

PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL ON JANUARY 27, 2020.

Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Jessica Simulcik Smith
City Clerk

Margaret King
City Attorney

Date of Publication: , 2020
Effective Date: , 2020

Gender-Specific Terms	Gender-Neutral Titles of Office, Employment and Descriptors
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Agent
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Alternate member
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Applicant
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Architect
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Assessor
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Attorney
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Candidate
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Chief officer
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Clerk
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Complainant
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Consignee
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Councilmember
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Dancer
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Dealer
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Declarant
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Department director
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Deputy
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Designee
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Detainee
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Director
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Driver
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Employee
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Engineer
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Entertainer
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Examiner
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Executive
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Executor
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Felon
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Fire Marshal
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Franchisee
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Franchisor
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Guarantee
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Guarantor
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Individual
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Inspector
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Investigator
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Leaver
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Lessee
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Lessor
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Licensee

He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Lobbyist
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Manager
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Member
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Merchant
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Mortgagee
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Mortgagor
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Offender
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Officer
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Official
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Operator
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Owner
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Pawn broker
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Permit holder
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Permittee
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Person
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Physician
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Principal
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Prisoner
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Probationer
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Promoter
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Public records officer
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Purchaser
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Respondent
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Secondhand dealer
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Seller
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Servant
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Sheriff
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Solicitor
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Sponsor
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Station manager
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Suspended person
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Tenant
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Trespasser
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Trustee
He, She, Him, Her, His, Himself, Herself	The Vendor

Gender-Specific Terms	Gender-Neutral Replacement
Bondsman	Bail bond agent
Brother	Sibling
Chairman	Chair, chairperson
Craftsmen	Craftspeople, artisans

Fireman, Firewoman, Firemen, Firewomen	Firefighter, firefighters
Fraternal	Social
Heirs	Beneficiaries
Journeyman	Journey
Maiden name	Birth name
Male and female	People of different genders
Manhole	Maintenance hole
Manmade	Human-made, artificial, manufactured, machine-made, synthetic
Manpower	Human effort
Manpower	Workforce
Master	Captain, Skipper, Pilot, Safety Officer, Central
Men and women	People
Men or women	A single gender
Ombudsman	Ombuds, Investigating Official
Patrolmen	Patrol, Guards
Policeman, Policewoman, Policemen, Policewomen	Police Officer, Police Officers
Pregnant (woman, women)	Pregnant employee(s)
Repairman	Repairs, Repairer
Salesman	Salesperson, Salespeople
Sister	Sibling
Sorority, Fraternity	Collegiate Greek system residence
Sportsman	Hunters
The masculine pronoun includes the feminine	Words referring to a specific gender may be extended to any other gender
Watchmen	Guards