

PROCLAMATION

A Proclamation Honoring Samuel Assefa for Service to the City of Seattle

- WHEREAS,** Director Samuel Assefa served as the first Director of the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) since the department’s inception; and
- WHEREAS,** Director Assefa is a nationally and internationally recognized leader in urban planning, bringing a forward-thinking and equitable approach to shaping the built environment; and
- WHEREAS,** Director Assefa is the first East African department director in the City of Seattle’s history; and
- WHEREAS,** During his time at OPCD, Director Assefa oversaw planning for one of the fastest growing cities in the United States; and
- WHEREAS,** Director Assefa spearheaded implementation of the Equitable Development Initiative, which provides assistance and funding for community-based organizations and development projects that respond to displacement pressures and advance equity in historically marginalized communities; and
- WHEREAS,** Under Director Assefa’s leadership, OPCD led the implementation of Mandatory Housing Affordability, which will create thousands of desperately needed affordable housing units in Seattle and has already raised more than \$66 million for affordable housing; and
- WHEREAS,** Director Assefa helped establish criteria for Mutual and Offsetting Benefits property transfers in response to community, which has allowed for the transfers of properties like the Central Area Senior Center and Byrd Barr Place in the Central District; and
- WHEREAS,** Director Assefa brought perspective as an immigrant and refugee after coming to the United States as a teenager fleeing a coup in Ethiopia; and
- WHEREAS,** Director Assefa attended Harvard University, Carnegie Mellon University, the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he earned his Bachelor of Architecture, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he earned a Master of City Planning; and
- WHEREAS,** In San Francisco, Director Assefa served as the Director of Special Projects in the Department of Planning and Development, where he worked on transit-oriented development, industrial design guidelines, and downtown development; and
- WHEREAS,** In Chicago, Director Assefa was the Director of Land Use and Planning Policy for the Department of Planning and Development, as well as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Economic and Physical Development for Mayor Richard M. Daley; and

WHEREAS, In Boulder, Director Assefa served as the Senior Urban Designer in the Department of Community Planning and Sustainability, where he directed the Sustainable Streets & Centers Project and advised on urban design policies; and

WHEREAS, Director Assefa led transformational change for the City of Seattle as Director of the Office of Planning and Community Development from June 30, 2016 to March 26, 2021;

Now, therefore, The Mayor and The Seattle City Council proclaims Monday, March 29, 2021 to be

Sam Assefa Day

Mayor Jenny A. Durkan

Council President M. Lorena González

Councilmember Lisa Herbold

Councilmember Debora Juarez

Councilmember Andrew J. Lewis

Councilmember Tammy J. Morales

Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda

Councilmember Alex Pedersen

Councilmember Kshama Sawant

Councilmember Dan Strauss
