

Resolution Condemning and Combating Racism, Xenophobia, and Intolerance Against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

WHEREAS, The City of Jersey City is committed to inclusion and advancing equity and justice for people of all races, national origins, and ethnicities;

WHEREAS, The City of Jersey City is home to an estimated 262,075 residents, of which Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) comprise 25.1%;

WHEREAS, AAPI communities are immensely diverse, consisting of multiple ethnicities, hundreds of languages and dialects, wide-ranging socioeconomic characteristics, and distinct immigration patterns;

WHEREAS, The belief that AAPIs are a monolithic group and achieve universal success, also known as the “model minority myth,” perpetuates stereotypes, and masks the disparities within these communities, particularly among Southeast Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

WHEREAS, Racism and scapegoating toward AAPIs have persisted since the 19th century and contributed toward policies like the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which prohibited immigration of Chinese laborers, and introduction of the term “yellow peril,” which represented East Asians as dangerous and threatening to the United States;

WHEREAS, Racist policies continued into the 20th century with the Immigration Act of 1924 effectively banning all immigration from Asia; Executive Order 9066 in 1942 authorizing the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II; and others that have impacted Southeast Asian Americans, South Asians, Muslims, and Sikhs, among others;

WHEREAS, In 1982, the Asian American community mobilized for justice after Vincent Chin was murdered in Detroit, Michigan by two individuals who perceived him as Japanese and reportedly blamed him for the declining auto industry, making this one of the first widely known cases of a crime targeting an Asian American based on race;

WHEREAS, Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in New Jersey in March 2020, harmful and xenophobic rhetoric related to the geographic origins of this disease resulted in a rise in reported hate incidents and crimes against AAPI individuals, communities, and businesses throughout the nation;

WHEREAS, Stop AAPI Hate, a national coalition aimed at addressing anti-Asian discrimination amid the pandemic and founded by the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council, Chinese for Affirmative Action, and San Francisco State University’s Asian American Studies Department, documented over 2,800 hate incidents targeting AAPIs in the United States in 2020 since March 2020;

WHEREAS, In history and at this moment in time, we acknowledge the multiple harms and trauma that have existed and converged simultaneously in marginalized communities of all backgrounds in Jersey City;

WHEREAS, AAPIs in Jersey City are increasingly concerned about their safety and well-being, given the rise of racially motivated attacks and hate crimes in the region;

WHEREAS, Despite these increasing acts of hate and bigotry, AAPIs have made the City of Jersey City and our nation more secure throughout its history and during the COVID19 pandemic, with an estimated 2 million Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders serving on the front lines of this crisis as healthcare providers, as first responders, and in other essential roles;

WHEREAS, The City of Jersey City will work to ensure that all members of AAPI communities — no matter their background, the language they speak, or their religious beliefs — are treated with dignity and equity;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JERSEY CITY:

1. Hereby condemns and will combat racism, xenophobia, and intolerance against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders;
2. Will work with AAPI community partners in support of victims reporting hate crimes; AND
3. Will work jointly with members of the AAPI community to develop tangible, community-led solutions that acknowledge the experiences of AAPI residents, root out systemic racism, and uplift racial solidarity.