

SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS 2024

Colleagues and Community Partners,

At the Department of Neighborhoods, our mission is deeply rooted in building authentic and trusting relationships with Seattle's diverse communities. These connections are crucial for engaging effectively with communities across the city, many of which have historically had little trust in government.

Our work highlights the importance of these relationships. Whether fostering equity in our P-Patches, amplifying community voices through strategic partnerships, investing in community-designed wealth-building projects, or supporting revitalization through preservation, these relationships allow us to prioritize community needs and ensure accountability to our guiding principles of racial equity and community-driven solutions.

As the engagement arm of the City, the Department of Neighborhoods collaborates with City departments to provide strategic planning, coordination, and support on community relations, focusing on increasing equitable engagement in communities most impacted by the City's growth and infrastructure needs. By partnering with us, your department gains a dedicated ally in community engagement strategy. This partnership ensures that engagement strategies resonate with historically impacted communities, leading to genuine and impactful community involvement.

Our Community Engagement Coordinators, Community Liaisons, Community Grants team, and numerous community partners demonstrate the strength and power of working closely with the community every day. Building relationships rooted in trust and shared humanity reinforces a fundamental truth: we are stronger together, as One Seattle.

We aim to create sustainable solutions, build resilient relationships with communities, and work tirelessly to build a city where everyone feels seen, heard, and valued. Thank you for your continued partnership and dedication to our shared mission.

Sincerely,

Jenifer Chao, Director, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods





Community Liaison Project Managers, Stanley Tsao and Lillian Young, pictured with a group of Community Liaisons.

CHINATOWN INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT (CID) COMMUNITY CAPACITY PROGRAM facilitates the internal citywide engagement with the CID Visioning Advisory Group, coordinating City planning efforts through a racial justice framework.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COORDINATORS serve as direct resources to community members, making it easier for residents to engage in their neighborhoods and beyond. They work tirelessly to foster relationships and collaborations with community members and connect them to the work of the City.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMISSION advises the City on priorities, policies, and strategies related to equitable civic engagement and public participation in City decision-making processes.

COMMUNITY LIAISONS are independent contractors from historically underrepresented communities, including immigrant and refugee communities, communities of color, seniors, youth, people with disabilities, and people experiencing homelessness. They bring deep expertise and strategy around the needs of their communities and support City projects through culturally relevant outreach and engagement.

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING works with community organizations, government agencies, and philanthropic partners to invest in community-centered approaches to closing the racial wealth gap.

EARLY COMMUNITY OUTREACH FOR DESIGN REVIEW encourages dialogue between developers and the community before building designs are complete. Our staff advise developers on their outreach plans and provide them with resources and tools to effectively conduct outreach.

EQUITY AND ENGAGEMENT ADVISORS collaborate with other City departments in designing and implementing project-specific outreach and engagement efforts across the City. They build trusting relationships between government and community and ensure that outreach and engagement efforts are centered on equity.

FOOD EQUITY FUND provides grants to community-based organizations working to create an equitable and sustainable local food system. The fund supports work led by those who experience the most food and health inequities: Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities, immigrants, refugees, people with low incomes, youth, and elders.



Community Engagement Coordinator, Alvin Edwards, with two Community Liaisons at a neighborhood event.



Beacon Food Forest, a Food Equity Fund project

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM is responsible for the designation and protection of more than 480 historic landmarks, as well as eight historic districts throughout Seattle. The program prioritizes cultivating people-centered preservation that is inclusive, community-driven, and centered in race and social justice.

FRONT Top: DON Strategic Advisor, Phyllis Porter (center), working on outreach for the Seattle Transportation Plan with Seattle Department of Transportation and Community Liaisons.

Center: The Panama Hotel, designated as a Historical Landmark in 2022.

Bottom: Director Jenifer Chao with Michael Neguse of Seattle Neighborhood Group



Food Equity Fund grantee Casa Latina successfully served over 2,800 meals for their day laborers and families. They've also supported 20 Latino immigrants in obtaining food permits and provided food related job training skills.

PEOPLE'S ACADEMY FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (PACE)

is a civic education program that helps residents learn how City government works, how they can get involved, and how they can organize their communities.

P-PATCH COMMUNITY GARDENING PROGRAM

oversees 90 community gardens located throughout Seattle, with a focus on supporting low-income and historically underrepresented communities. More than 3,500 gardeners use gardening space to build community connections and grow organic food, flowers, and herbs for their families and communities.



Historic Preservation Planner, Rebecca Frestedt (left), CID Community Capacity Coordinator, Sokha Danh (center), and Community Engagement Coordinator, Laura Jenkins (right), working in the Chinatown International District.

INDIGENOUS ADVISORY COUNCIL is a public commission representing Indigenous communities that advises local government on culturally grounded policy and systems changes that transfer power and resources to Indigenous communities.

MAJOR INSTITUTIONS AND SCHOOLS PROGRAM

provides a way for neighbors of large Seattle institutions (i.e. hospitals, universities, schools) to be involved in institutional development plans.

NEIGHBORHOOD MATCHING FUND provides matching dollars for neighborhood improvement, community organizing, and projects developed and implemented by community members. Examples of funded projects include community organizing, public art projects, cultural events, construction of community facilities, and so much more.



Girma Toke, Westcrest P-Patch Gardener: "We came to the shed and we see the sign with our language on it, saying 'Welcome!' It says welcome in my language!"

THE SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS IS HELPING OUR CITY BE AT THE FOREFRONT OF BRINGING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES TOGETHER TO EDUCATE AND CREATE SOCIAL CHANGE. GRACIAS!

- Monica Rojas, Mas Movimiento, Neighborhood Matching Fund Grant recipient



Vice Chair Jaimie Cruz of the Squaxin Island Tribe speaks at inaugural City of Seattle | Tribal Nations Summit.

SEATTLE RENTERS' COMMISSION provides information, advice, and counsel to the Mayor, Seattle City Council, and City departments regarding issues and policies affecting renters.

SEATTLE YOUTH COMMISSION is a group of 15 Seattle teens from all over the city who advise on City policies and discuss issues facing Seattle's youth.



"We continue to rebuild and reclaim our autonomy over our bodies and our community – something that colonization has aimed to strip us of for generations now."
- Eric Alpio, Diné (Navajo) + Filipino, for Native American Heritage Month

STORYTELLING is a core technique we use to build authentic relationships with community members and amplify the voices and experiences of the people we serve, particularly those in communities with a history of harm.

"I APPRECIATED THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK FREELY AND IN ANY FASHION ABOUT MY LIVED EXPERIENCE AS A SEATTLEITE." - Storyteller survey response



Local teacher and poet, Chelsey Richardson (right), stands with her daughter while holding up her illustrated portrait, drawn for her contribution to the DON storytelling project Reimagine Seattle.