

Generational Wealth Initiative

How Seattle Can Address the Racial Wealth Divide

Melia Brooks, Director, Recovery & Reimagination Division
Jackie Mena, Community Wealth Investments Lead

Date
9/23/2022

Department of
Neighborhoods

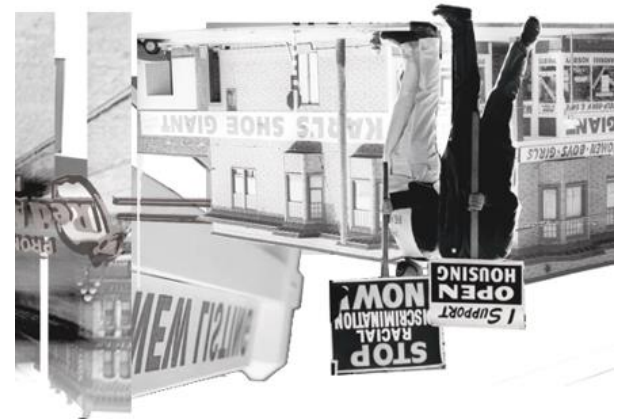


City of Seattle

*“Generational Wealth is a key to
liberating people of color
from systemic oppression.”
– Anna N’Jie-Konte*

Built ~~Inspired~~ by community

- Rooted in decades of community efforts, sparked by 2020 protests for racial justice
- Equitable Communities Initiative: *economic justice and*
Generational Wealth



What we know



Black workers in Seattle are three times more likely to be unemployed than white workers.



While Seattle's median income is more than \$85K, it is less than \$40K for Black households and less than \$32K for Native American households.



Just over 25% of Black Seattle residents are homeowners, compared to 50% of white residents.



The average White-owned business is valued more than twelve times higher than the average Black-owned business

Based on 2018 data presented in Prosperity Now's *Racial Wealth Divide in Seattle* report.

How We Create Impact



Vision For Impact

- Investments in BIPOC communities who have been most impacted result in cultural, political, and economic power.
- BIPOC communities are able to build the systems and institutions that enable communities to thrive.
- Opportunities in education, homeownership, land ownership, and business are attained equitably and lead to collective wealth.

What is Generational Wealth?

WORKING DEFINITION

Investments in **Generational Wealth** protect and grow assets that people are able to transfer between generations.

VALUES

- Grow and transfer knowledge
- Immediate action, long-term impact
- Regenerative assets, not one-time infusions
- Create pathways to *transformative* economic opportunity
- Invest proactively, not reactively

2022 Updates

We are on track to:

1. Build structures for community engagement and self-determination
2. Complete research of innovative strategies as prioritized by community
3. Create a City wealth-building inventory and grow the City's impact evaluation capacity
4. Make direct investments in support of community goals
5. Grow Citywide learning and integration

Community Engagement



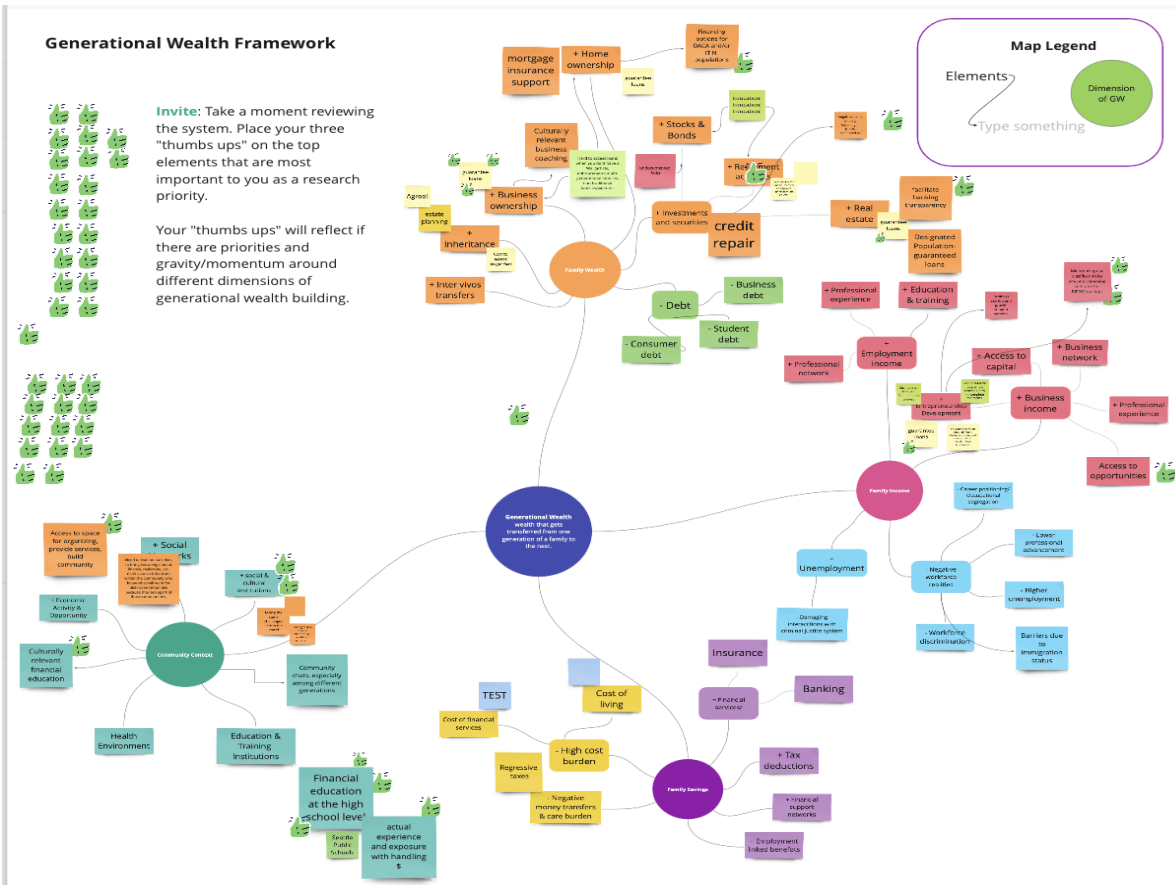
- Building a participatory process with our Community Round Table
- Learning from and connecting to existing efforts and community advocacy
- Elevating community voice through engagement at local events

What are we hearing?

- Generational wealth is not just about money, it is about community **well-being and wellness**.
- Building wealth is a way to **stay in place** and protect communities in the long term.
- Generational wealth is not a one-strategy solution, it's a framework that can help us impact everything from day-to-day experiences to a whole **community context**.
- Generational wealth is about **power and ownership** over your lived experience.

“Stability, mobility, freedom”- Kelvin Dankwa

Research of Strategies



- Understanding the problem locally and opportunities for building wealth
- Defining investment focus areas based on communities most impacted.

Early Findings

How we invest matters

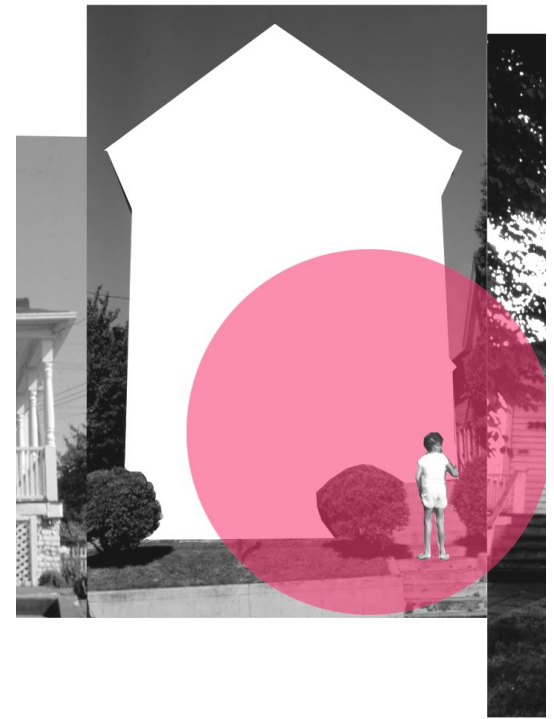
- Need to address all 4 areas of wealth-building to achieve economic mobility
(Family income, Family savings, Family wealth, Community context)
- Strategy areas for research and beyond:
 1. Broad-based worker ownership
 2. Community-controlled capital
 3. Community ownership of real estate
 4. Progressive procurement
 5. Equitable small business ecosystems
 6. Wealth retention and asset protection programs

Inventory & Impact Evaluation



We know the City is already investing in wealth building.

- What are our investments?
- What is the impact of our investments?
- What are our goals and how will we know we are advancing them?



Early Findings

- Missing capacity and resources to track and evaluate our impact
- No unified way to target communities *equitably*
- Funding source and funding type matter
- There is desire from departments to participate in shared strategic planning

Wealth Building Education & Empowerment

Funding pilots that cultivate long-term economic empowerment through education and innovative learning structures.

Pilots will:

- Help individuals, families, and/or communities gain the knowledge to overcome barriers to building wealth
- Present a learning and support structure for participants that can help build power and set the groundwork for transforming unjust systems
- Be tailored to meet the unique needs and dreams of those most impacted by the racial wealth divide

Citywide Learning & Integration

- Citywide learning and opportunities
- Applying innovative research to reimagine City programs and investments
- Growing our monitoring program and evaluation capacity
- Increasing access and community capacity through education and empowerment



Key Takeaways

1. The City needs a strong vision and structure to organize behind
2. Equity requires measuring impact and evaluating investments
3. We must translate research into action
4. Invest in Citywide learning and integration

What's next?

- Finalize SLI response
 - Preliminary report due January 2023
 - Final report due August 2023