

Seattle Public Utilities

Overview and Priorities

Seattle City Council Transportation and Utilities Committee
January 15, 2020

Services and Programs



Centering Priorities Around Customer Values



Rate affordability and predictability



Environmental leadership and climate change



Equity and environmental justice



Bureaucratic efficiency and streamlining

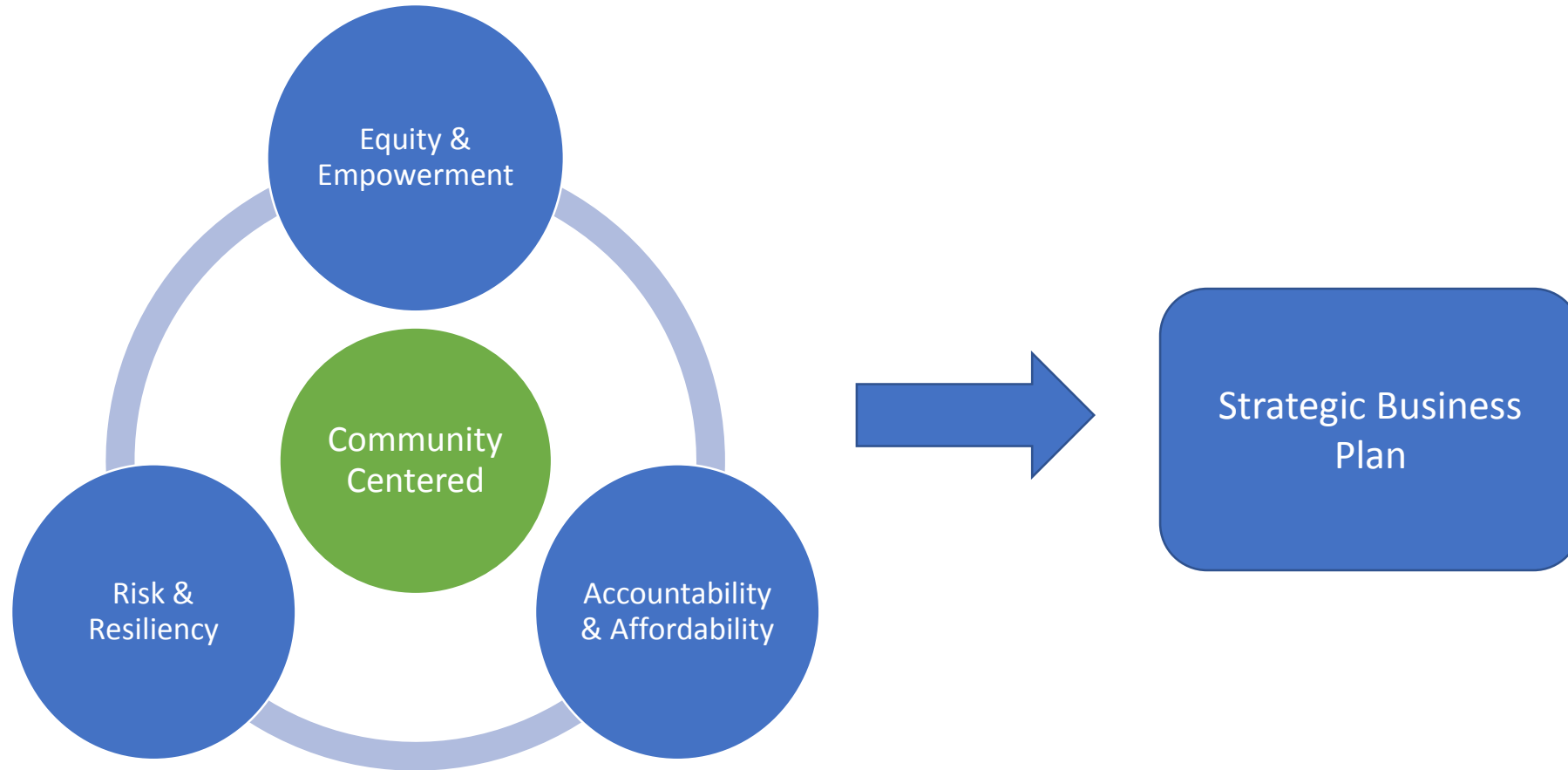


Using technology to improve services, cost, and safety



Partnerships to build community and achieve goals

Community Centered Framework



Affordability + Accountability Focus Areas

**Capital Project
Planning and
Delivery**

**Efficiency and
Improvement**

**Partnership
Opportunities**

**Regulatory
Alignment**

**Budget and
Financial
Management**

**Customer
Assistance**

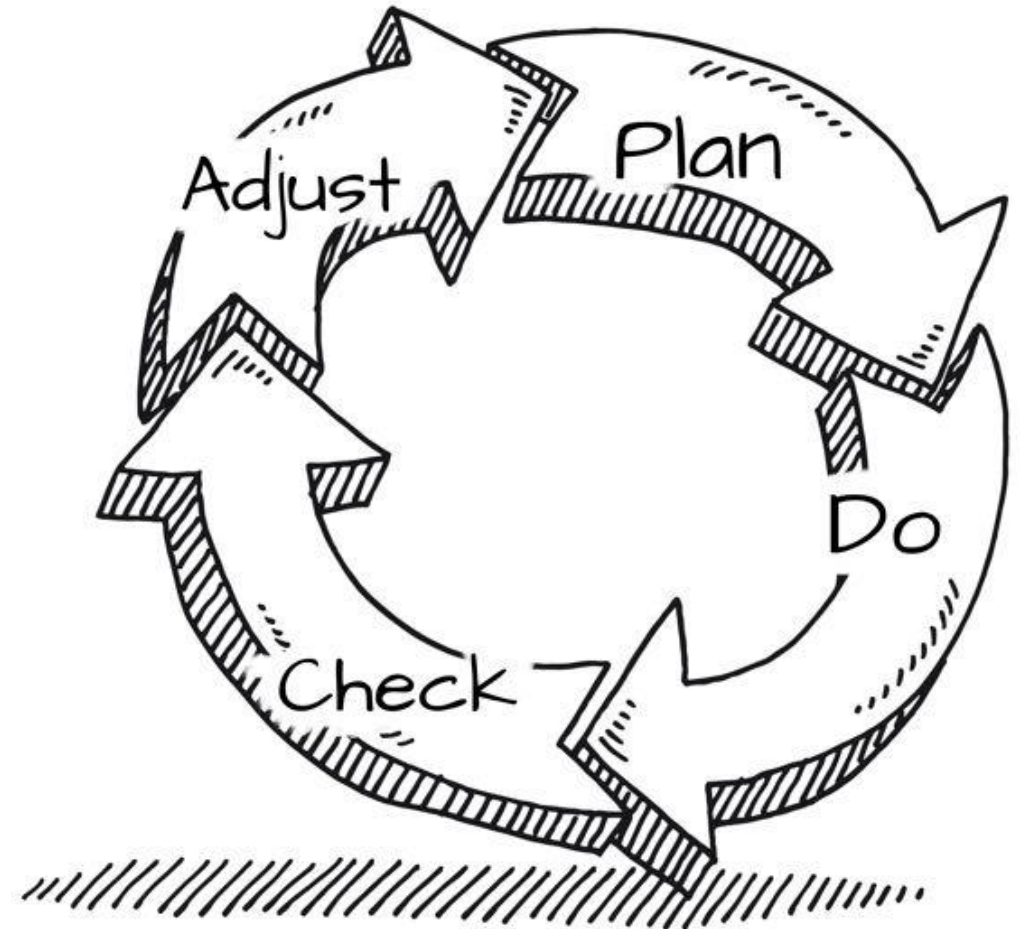
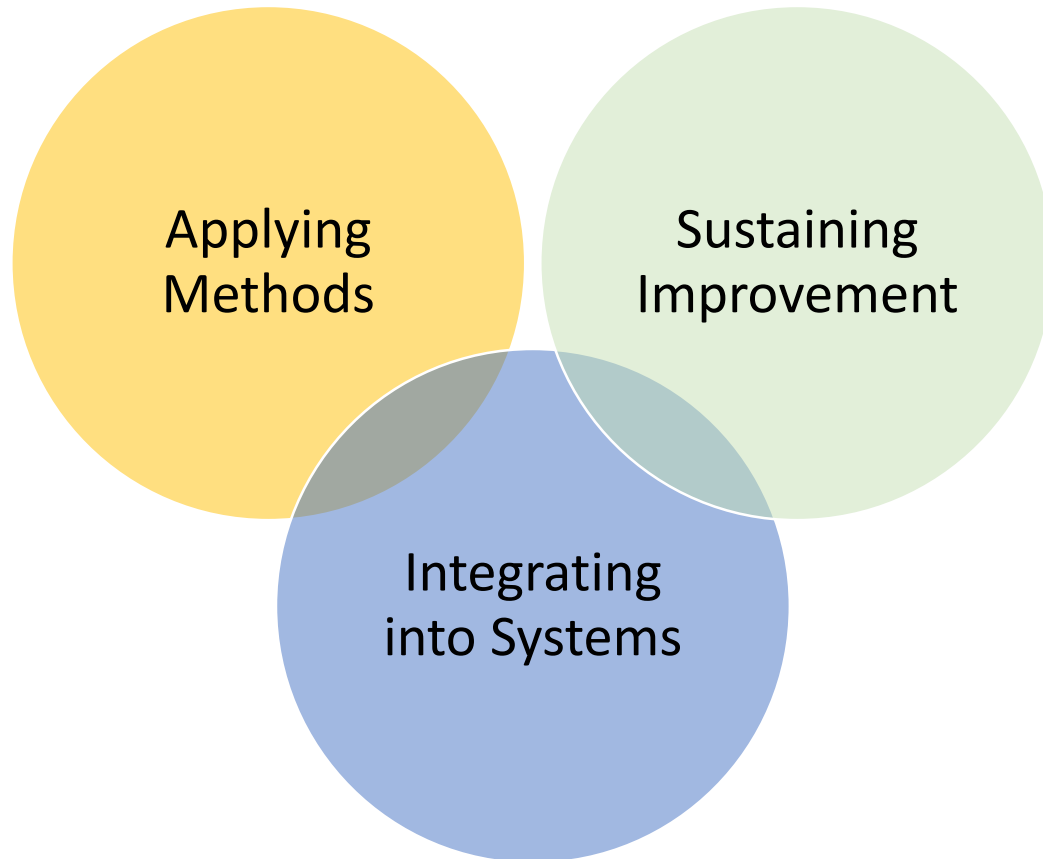
Capital Project Planning and Delivery

Example: Improving Speed and Reducing Costs



Efficiency and Improvement

Example: Building Capacity for Continuous Improvement



Partnership Opportunities

Example: Partnership with South Park community-based organizations via the Center for Community Investment Grant



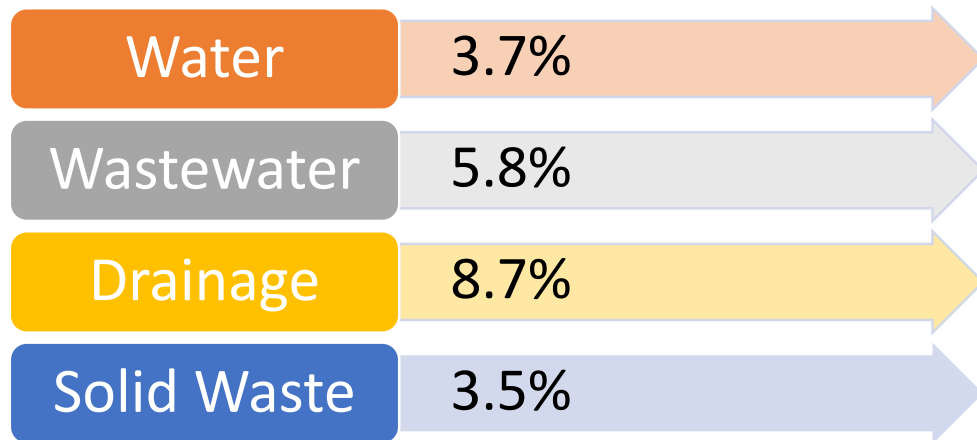
Regulatory Alignment

Example: Sewer Overflow Consent Decree



Budget and Financial Management

Example: Changing the Rate of Growth of Combined Utility Rates



Combined Rate Growth
(‘18-’23)

Planned in SBP: **5.2%**

Actual: **5.0%**

SBP Update

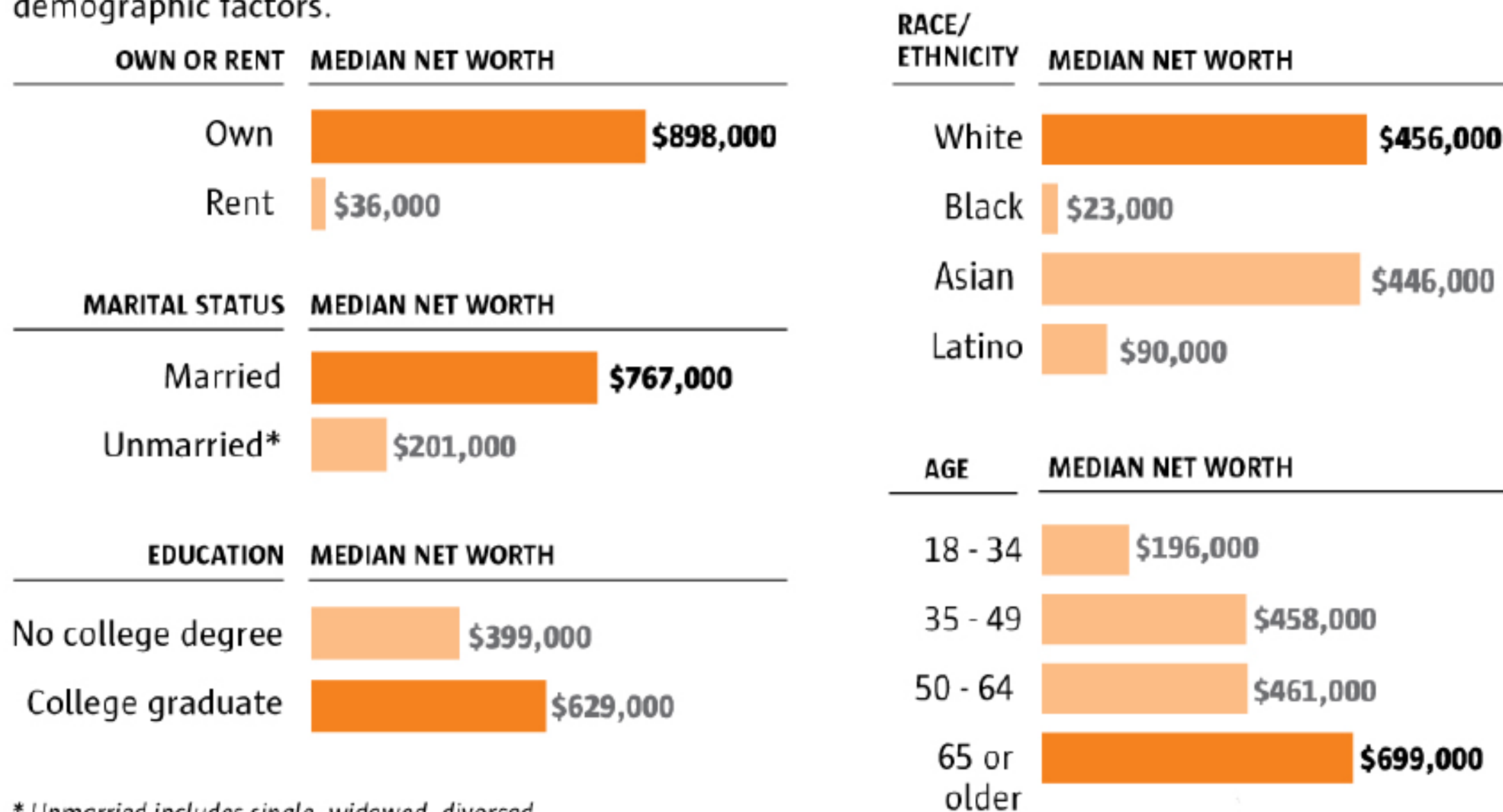
Customer Assistance

- **1 in 9 Seattle residents** (11%) lives beneath the **poverty** line.
- There are also **significant wealth disparities** along racial and other lines (see next slide).



Seattle's net-worth gap

The median household net worth varies greatly depending on home ownership, race and other demographic factors.



* Unmarried includes single, widowed, divorced

Source: Acxiom NetWorth Gold/Nielsen

MARK NOWLIN / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Customer Assistance

Example: Key Affordability Programs



Utility Discount Program (UDP)

Income qualified program - up to 70% of the State Median Income (SMI)

Provides a 50% discount on every SPU bill (and 60% discount on every Seattle City Light bill)

Currently provides discounts to 34,000 households



Emergency Assistance Program (EAP)

SPU-specific program

Income qualified - up to 80% of the SMI

Provides one-time assistance (annually), up to 100% of the outstanding bill, with a limit of \$448.

Households with children can qualify 2x per year.

Customer Assistance

Example: UDP Self-Certification Pilot

Basic Idea:

Allow households to enroll in the UDP by **only attesting to** qualifying household information (e.g. household size, income) through a “fast-track” application form.

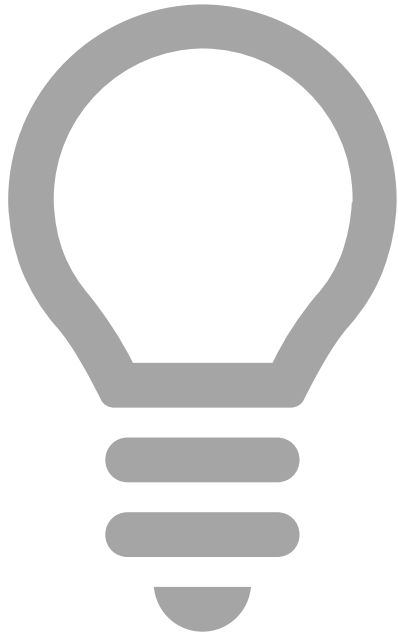
Purposes of the Pilot:

1. Increase enrollment of qualified households
2. Develop and test more efficient auditing techniques
3. Test cost effectiveness for program administration



Customer Assistance

Example: UDP Shut-off Prevention Pilot



Basic Idea: Reduce SPU's shut-off rate for households enrolled in the UDP below 1%.



Purposes:



1. Test new predictive modeling to better identify customers in need of assistance



2. Test the effectiveness of expanded Emergency Assistance Program



3. Test the effectiveness of new modes of messaging and communication

Thank you

