

# SDCI & OPCD RSJI Report to Council

## UPDATE ON 2023 RSJI WORK & RACIAL EQUITY TOOLKITS

May 1, 2024

**Nathan Torgelson**, SDCI Director

**Patricia Spears**, SDCI Co-Lead

**Rico Quirindongo**, OPCD Director

**Katie Sheehy**, OPCD Former Co-Lead



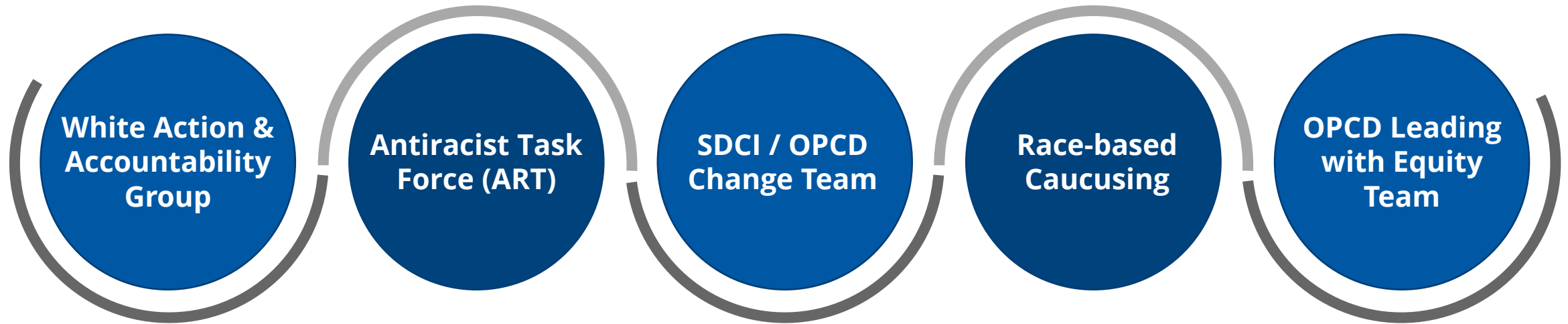
# Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the role that traditional Western-centric planning practices have played in harming, displacing, and attempting to erase Native communities. We commit to identifying racist practices, to practice allyship and strive to center restorative land stewardship rather than unsustainable and extractive use of the land.

We humbly recognize that we are on Indigenous land, the traditional and current territories of the Coast Salish people who have reserved treaty rights to this land, including the Duwamish, Suquamish, Muckleshoot, and Stillaguamish. We thank these caretakers of this land who have lived and continue to live here since time immemorial. Practicing allyship and striving.



# Race & Social Justice Ecosystem



The White Action and Accountability Group is committed to learning about the history and long-term harm and impacts of white supremacy culture, to acting on and interrupting racism within our organization and understanding to dismantle barriers to racial justice in our policies and practice

Our work focuses on identifying systemic racism within SDCI, including its leadership, policies, and practices, and correcting them with alternatives that center our commitment to RSJ and holding SDCI accountable to make these changes.

The Change Team is a group of employees who partner with leadership to identify and dismantle the racism that permeates every aspect of our work and our lives.

The BIPOC and White Caucuses are safe space, open forums for all people of color who work at SDCI and OPCD.

The Leading with Equity Team builds OPCD's capacity to advance and deepen our work toward achieve racial equity outcomes.

# Introduction & Overview

- 2022-2023 Accomplishments
- RSJI Challenges
- Racial Equity Toolkits
- 2024 goals



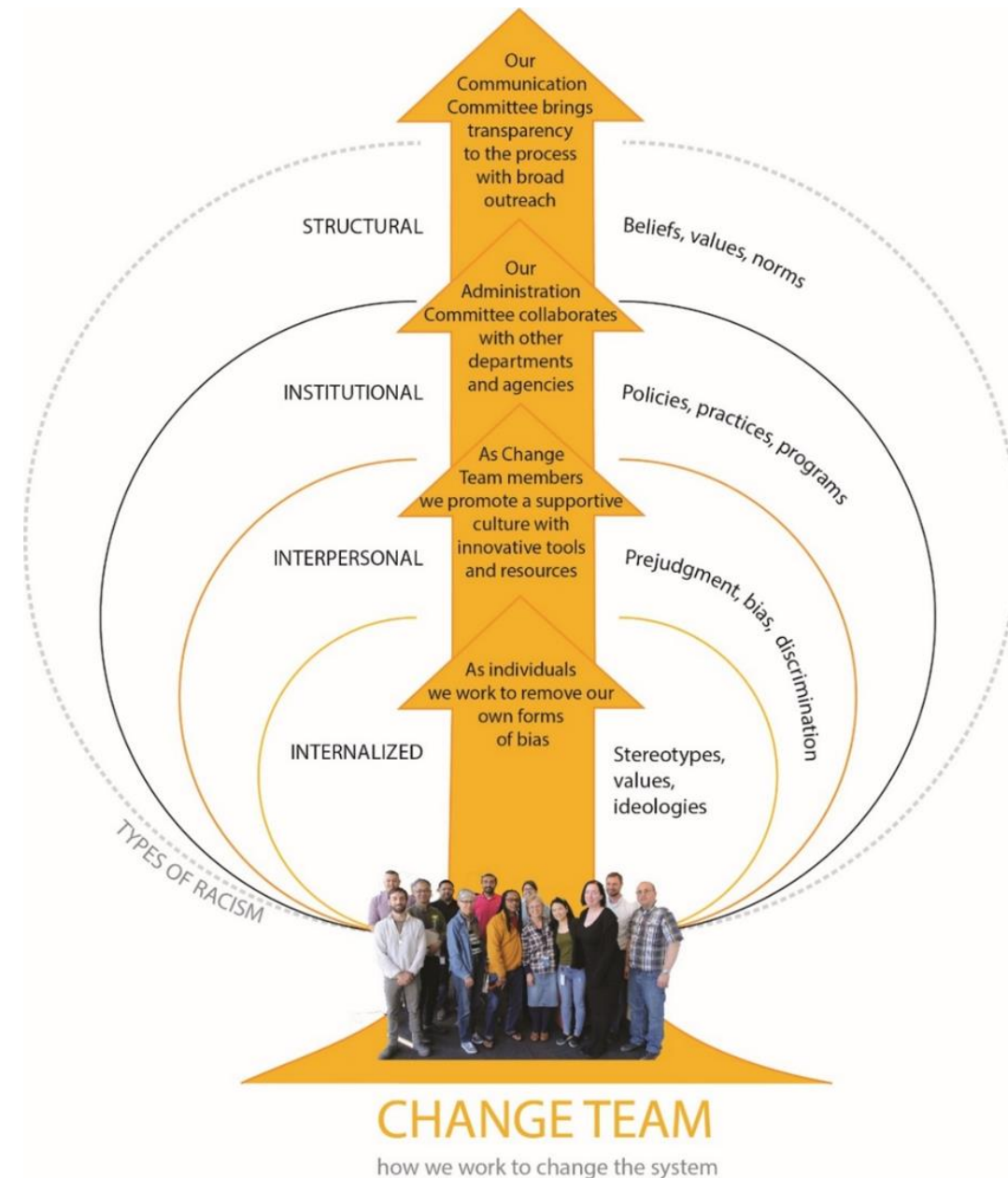


# 2022-23 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Change Team

### Training

- RSJI Change Team Reading Group — conversations that enliven and inspire our RSJ work
- Continued sharing *Land Use 101: Urban Planning as Settler Colonialism* presentation
- RSJI Community Conversations: Belonging, facilitated by Ben McBride of Empower Initiative
- OPCD/SDCI visits to “Nobody Lives Here” exhibit and redlining tour at Wing Luke Museum
- LEAP training for leadership in both departments
- Ongoing RET training by the Change Team
- Change Team onboarding training for new members



## 2022-2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Change Team

#### Taking action and continued engagement

- Provided feedback to SOCR to help shape the RSJI Ordinance
- Met with Mayor Harrell in August 2022 to address back to office concerns
- Hosted “Since I Been Down” film screening and discussion at City Hall
- Refined and promoted Accountability Agreements
- Advised on multiple Racial Equity Toolkits
- Reviewed Annual Omnibus Ordinance and Tree Legislation Expectations with an RSJ Lens
- Reviewed budget Change Requests for RSJ potential opportunities
- Participated in Equitable Development Zoning conversations
- Responded to controversial mural at SMT with ongoing, interactive art installation to promote transparency and collaboration
- Provided onboarding training for new Change Team members
- Continued support and networking with citywide Change Team co-leads, with meetings every month

## 2022-2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### **SDCI Antiracist Task Force**

- Finalized and adopted accountability agreement with ART, CT, and Executive Team to provide a working framework that addresses workplace discrimination, improves staff awareness and engagement on RSJ issues.
- Established effective communication and processes with HR to address any workplace-related concerns.
- Set up a process to allow staff experiencing workplace discrimination to report incidents to ART
- Participation in the following groups/meetings:
  - Our Workplace, Our Future
  - Zendesk (virtual Applicant Service Center)
  - SDCI Monthly Leadership
  - Space Planning
  - Continuous Improvement
- Regular monthly meetings with Nathan Torgelson
- Tear down white supremacy culture within City departments

## 2022-2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

# OPCD POC & White Caucuses

- Engaged staff who identify as a Person of Color as part of onboarding process
- Set the foundation for OPCD's Accountability Framework (ongoing)
- Partnered with the Office of the Ombud for trauma-informed training
- Established a shared facilitation structure allowing each person to lead, participate, breathe, grow, be seen, and learn in the space
- Co-designing all-staff retreat (ongoing)





## 2022-2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### OPCD Leading with Equity Team

- Updated our onboarding process for new staff to improve equity training.
- Reviewed job advertisements and updated standard language.
- Hosted conversations about office culture and participated in office wide trainings.
- Initiated and supported conversations on office space (art, meeting room names) to address harm, erasure, and invisibility and increase representation.
- Supported the finance division in providing feedback related to a self-analysis for CBO's "equitable budgeting rubric."
  - Finance and data analyst staff will be presenting to CBO, OCR and other department finance staff on some of our data tools to help inform decisions in policy making.
- Continued work on developing approach to compensating stakeholders, in partnership with CBO.
- Tracked and supported Racial Equity Toolkit processes and other key equity-focused projects.
- Drafted and reviewed OPCD's language access plan, project public engagement plans, and budgets to ensure they support interpretation and translation.

## 2022-23 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

# Indigenous Seattle

**Purpose:** uplift Indigenous values and practices within City planning to support grassroots decolonization and re-Indigenizing efforts

### Indigenous Seattle Internship

- Development of high-school internship pipeline
- Lushootseed renaming of OPCD conference rooms
- Native Neighborhood feasibility study support

### New Indigenous Planning Strategist position

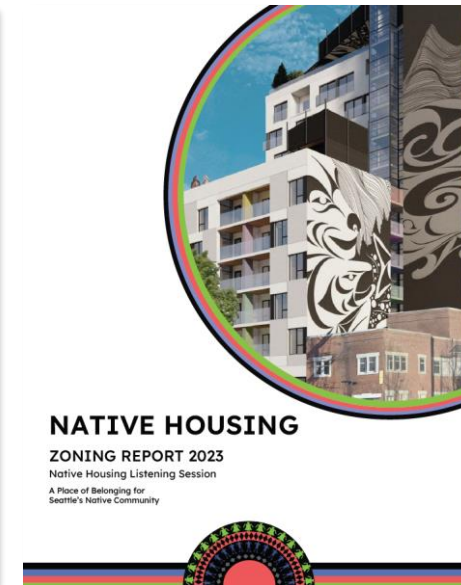
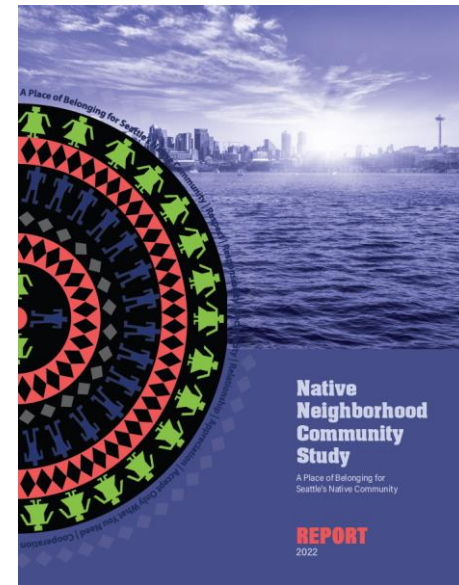
- Indigenizing the Comprehensive Plan by incorporating policies and narrative that will help the Seattle Urban Native community create culturally relevant spaces
- Incorporating Indigenous voices and perspectives in the subarea plans



**Tim Lehman**  
OPCD Indigenous  
Planning Strategist



**Dakota Murray**  
EDI project manager & former  
Indigenous Seattle intern



# 2022-2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Equitable Development Initiative (EDI)

### Administered a summer 2022 RFP and two 2023 RFPs

- Awarded new and existing community partners funding to support Capacity, Capital, Construction, Pre-development and Acquisition needs
- Released more than \$42 million in awards to 54 different community organizations in 2022 and 2023.

### Closed transactions for 6 organizations in 2023

- Education for All / Our Hope
- Friends of Little Saigon
- BIPOC STAHC
- Khmer Community of Seattle / King County
- yəhaw' Indigenous Creatives Collective
- United Indians of All Tribes Foundation

### Continued to house and grow the Indigenous Seattle Internship Program

The purpose of the internship is to cultivate new talent in the planning profession and build relationships with Indigenous planning professionals in the region.



*Satpreet Kahlon, Kimberly Deriana, Deriana's son Khalako and Asia Tail pose for a portrait on the land the yəhaw' Indigenous Creatives Collective purchased in South Seattle, on Friday, Jan. 6, 2022. (Grant Hindsley for Crosscut)*



## 2022-23 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Workforce Equity

- Seattle Youth Employment Program (SYEP)
- OPCD Indigenous Planning Strategist Hiring and Internship Program
- SDCI Updated Hiring Process training with more anti-racist and debiasing strategies
- SDCI hiring an equity advisor
- SDCI Monthly Cohort training and examination of topics including implicit bias, crucial conversations, relational culture, and antiracism
- SDCI Monthly Leadership Meetings work on the Leadership Expectations and Accountability Plan (LEAP) program – including the development of Equity Personal Action Plans and Departmental Equity Action Plans
- SDCI HR hired a new Leave and Benefits Advisory role.
- SDCI has built a Power BI tool for centralizing leave request.



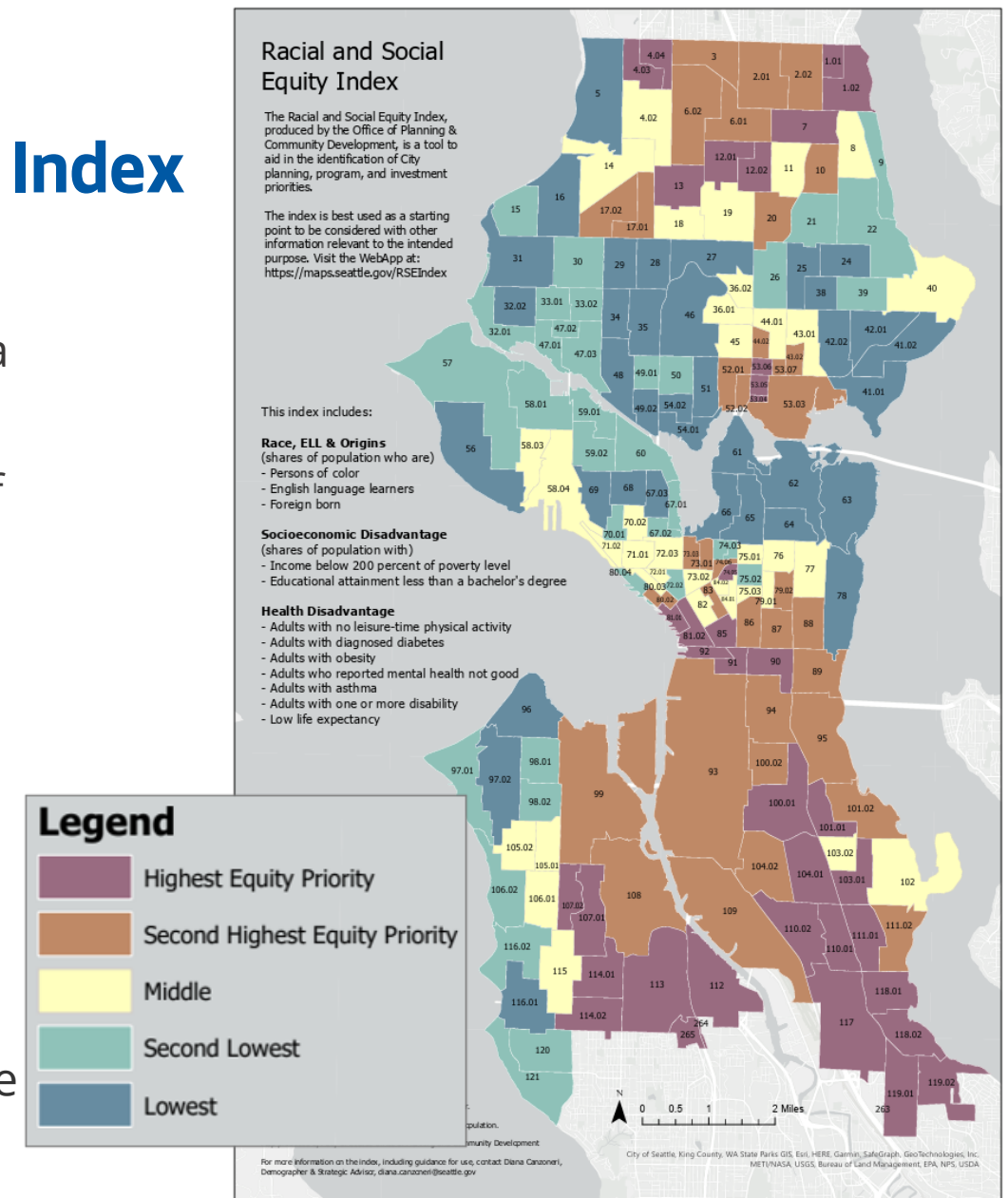
## 2022-23 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

# Update of Racial and Social Equity (RSE) Index

- The RSE Index provides departments with common set of data identifying where RSJI priority populations make up a relatively large shares of neighborhood residents
- Tool for informing design, prioritization, and evaluation of programs, plans, and investments
- Developed in 2017 by City Demographer in OPCD with interdepartmental consultation; updated in 2023

### Resources:

- [Interactive mapping app](#) and GIS layers
- [Users' Guide \(new\)](#)
  - info for getting started
  - details on the index and considerations for its use
  - examples of how departments are applying the index



# 2022-23 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Commissions

### Seattle Planning Commission

- Prepared four issue briefs to inform the draft Comprehensive Plan focused on equitable growth with actionable anti-displacement strategies, equitable access to public rights of way, and the need for a mix of affordable housing options
- Prepared DEIS comments for the Industrial and Maritime Strategy, West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions, as well as EIS scoping comments for the Seattle Transportation Plan and Comprehensive Plan, from the perspective of promoting racial and social equity
- Letter of support for Housing Levy renewal, citing the need for more affordable housing
- Built relationships with modal boards and the EDI advisory board to elevate the importance of the draft STP and Comp Plan, per our issue papers released in 2022
- Guided tour of Wing Luke museum exhibits *Resisters: A Legacy of Movement from the Japanese American Incarceration* and *Nobody Lives Here* and follow-up facilitated discussion with Planning Commissioners

### Seattle Design Commission

- Adopted an equity workplan to guide commission business practices, from commissioner recruitment through new models for holding commission meetings
- Conducted 3 commissioner trainings in RSJI principles, with support from Equity Matters NW
- Updated Commission policy on equity in the design of public spaces and places
- Developing an online resource highlighting equitable outcomes in the design of public spaces
- Cohosted the event *Indigenizing Public Transit: Learning from Māori Approaches to Transit Stations in Tāmaki Makaurau, Aotearoa (Auckland, New Zealand)* with Māori changemaker, [Elisapeta Heta](#).



## Indigenizing Public Transit Design

Learning from Māori approaches to transit stations in Tāmaki Makaurau, Aotearoa Auckland, New Zealand with Māori changemaker, **Elisapeta Heta!**

**November 7, 2023  
4:00 to 5:30 pm PST**

**Join the meeting In-person at Seattle City Hall or online via Webex**



**INDIGENOUS ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Seattle Design Commission**

**SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL | DISTRICT 5  
COUNCIL PRESIDENT DEBORA JUAREZ**

## 2022-23 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Digital Equity

- In 2022, SDCI hired Continuous Improvement and Customer Experience experts who were able to fully execute work in 2023 that provided research within groupings of customers to understand more how they were engaging with technology so that we could better meet their needs. This work has helped us to create "personas" which are research-based customer models around which we can build more equitable digital experiences.
- In 2024, SDCI in partnership with Seattle IT will implement software tools that will allow us to do additional follow up with customers on how well our implemented technology meets their needs, and provide continuous improvement based on this feedback. This cycle will apply to employees, too, allowing the way work to consistently and constantly work better.

# Summary of 2022-2023 RSJI Challenges

## Obstacles and barriers

- Having dedicated time for this work
- Distance between people due to remote work and building trust with colleagues in a virtual environment
- Moving beyond reliance on individuals and getting whole department to take responsibility for RSJI work
- Emotional labor of the work is not accounted for
- Challenge of being harmed while attempting to improve
- Continued sense of urgency makes it difficult to be inclusive, encourage democratic and thoughtful decision-making, think long-term, and consider consequences
- Continued imbalance in access to power



# Summary of 2022-2023 RSJI Opportunities

## Removing the barriers

- Building relational culture; creating a culture of belonging and inclusion
- Centering the most impacted
- Having flexibility in scope, schedule, and budget allow capacity to work with communities and build relationships, rather than just completing projects to meet deadlines.
- Recognizing that equity work is the work and deepening equity work as a foundational piece of the work
- Building the culture of failing forward (knowing that white or males must only show potential of leadership, while women or BIPOC must reprove themselves over and over)
- Doing fewer projects better
- More funding for engagement and needs that arise mid-project
- Embedding racial equity, justice, belonging, and wellbeing into City of Seattle policies and processes
- Empower community groups and advisory boards to have a meaningful and actionable input in projects.

# Racial Equity Toolkits

## SDCI

- Boiler Program Update (2022)
- Small Business Liaison Position (2022)
- Tree Protection Update (2022)
- Economic Displacement Relocation Assistance (2022)
- Equity in Development of Environmentally Critical Areas (2023)

## OPCD (ongoing and in partnership with other departments)

- Light Rail Station Area Planning / ST3 (joint with SDOT and Sound Transit)
- Industrial and Maritime Strategy
- Comprehensive Plan Major Update
- Equitable Development Zoning

## JOINT SDCI/OPCD

- Design Review Statement of Legislative Intent



# OPCD Racial Equity Toolkits

## One Seattle Comprehensive Plan

**The One Seattle Plan is a roadmap for where and how our city will grow and invest in communities for the next 20 years and beyond. This RET examines historical and ongoing impacts of City growth framework & policies on BIPOC.**

### **2021: Racial Equity Analysis ahead of a full RET**

- What are the racial equity benefits and impacts of the current Urban Village Growth Strategy?
- What improvements would make the Comprehensive Plan and Growth Strategy more equitable?

### **Racial equity outcomes for the Plan, including:**

- Meaningful engagement with BIPOC communities so they can see themselves in updated Plan and in the future of the city
- Address housing needs of households and families of color
- More well-paid jobs for workers of color without a 4-year degree
- Increase affordable commercial space for small businesses owned by and serving BIPOC
- Mitigate displacement pressure with growth strategy and more housing choices

### **Updated our Displacement Risk Index**

#### **Focused engagement with CBOs representing communities historically excluded from planning work, for example:**

- Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA)
- Khmer Community of Seattle/ King County
- Wa Na Wari/ CACE 21
- sləp̓iləbəxʷ (Rising Tides) Indigenous Planning Group

### **Challenges identified through the RET**

- Centering input from BIPOC communities and creating transparent processes between City and communities
- Following through on the recommendations from 2021 and strong community input to rethink the urban village growth strategy, address housing needs, and redress neighborhood exclusion

# SDCI Racial Equity Toolkits

## Design Review - Statement of Legislative Intent

- SLI for SDCI to convene a stakeholder group in partnership with OPCD and report to Council on Design Review Program changes.
  - Concern about insufficient time to complete equity analysis caused initial consultants (Paradigm Shift) to withdraw from project; final report completed by Broadview Partners
  - CT requested continuation of engagement with stakeholder group and completion of RET
- Final report included analysis from Paradigm Shift
  - Report compiled list of recommended process and program improvements; because impacts on equity are not understood, CT recommends that these opportunities should not be considered or implemented without RET process

*"Slow down the process of reviewing the current Design Review program. It is clear the program needs to evolve, and it will take the right people, openness, and time to ensure that change happens responsibly and is replaced with a process that centers racial equity."*

Paradigm Shift Seattle, 2022



# Change Team Goals for 2024: Highlights

## PRINCIPAL GOALS

- Support employees of color
- Become anti-racist advocates
- Build relational culture at SDCI/OPCD
- Embed racial equity, justice, belonging, and wellbeing into City of Seattle policies and processes

## SPECIFIC GOALS

- Support and invest in relationships with Indigenous communities
- Create a shared RSJI resource library
- Learning more about how to implement elements of the RSJI Ordinance
- Additional walking tours or educational trips in community, building on those partnerships



# Leading with Equity Goals for 2024: Highlights

- Involving more people in internal OPCD equity work
- Coordinating equity efforts across multiple workgroups and with the joint Change Team
- Continue to support and review office-wide efforts, including:
  - Accountability framework
  - Equitable project management workbook
  - Conference room naming
- Continue to review and improve onboarding for new staff, interns, and commissioners
- Develop RSJI training approach for 2024, including quarterly community walking tours, in coordination with SDCI/OPCD Change Team
- Continuing work on culture shift, using internal resources and resources from external consultant, Office of the Ombud, and others
- Center racial equity in 2025 budget and review budget change request proposals
- Track and support Racial Equity Toolkits

# ART Goals for 2024: Highlights

- Hiring transparency and equity: The Same Treatment and Opportunities for all SDCI Staff and Prospects
- Leave and Remote Work Equity
- Management Accountability and Accountability Culture at SDCI: Trust and Allyship from our Leaders
- Make RSJ a Part of Every Project and Workplan: From Words to Action
- Digital Equity
- Replace White Supremacy Culture with Relational Culture

# Thank you!

## SDCI/OPCD Change Team

### SDCI

- Nathan Torgelson, Director
- Jared Bigelow
- Leslea Bowling
- Corey Buttry, 2022/2023 Co-Lead
- Irving Chu
- Linda Elwood
- Dean Greenleaf
- Carmen Groshong
- Christopher Ndifon, 2021 Co-Lead
- Qiana Norwood, 2022/23 Co-Lead
- Katrina Nygaard
- Danielle Priest, Executive Sponsor
- Patricia Spears, 2022/2023 Co-Lead
- Collin Tam, 2022/2023 Co-Lead
- Keary Uhlig
- Emilie Voight

### OPCD

- Rico Quirindongo, Director
- Ian Dapiaoen, 2022/2023 Co-Lead
- Lauren Flemister, 2022/2023 Executive Sponsor
- Magda Hogness, 2021 Co-Lead
- Robin Magonegil, 2022 Co-Lead
- Nick Welch, 2022/2023 Co-Lead
- Olivia Baker
- Katie Sheehy

### SOCR RSJI Liaisons

- Erika Pablo
- Davida Ingram

### Antiracist Task Force (SDCI)

- Jared Bigelow
- Eric Jenkins
- Robin Magonegil
- Onya Robertson
- Patricia Spears

### Leading with Equity (OPCD)

- Diana Canzoneri
- Lauren Flemister
- Rawan Hasan
- Melissa Wilke
- Brennon Staley
- Giulia Pasciuto
- Andrew Tran
- Alberta Bleck
- Seferiana Day
- Olivia Baker

SDCI & OPCD