

NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAMS

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INTRODUCTION

This paper provides an overview of City of Seattle's [Department of Neighborhoods](#) (DON). In general, DON provides services to build community and facilitate partnerships between the community and the City of Seattle. DON's 2016 budget is \$11.8 million and 55 FTEs.

In 2015, DON was reorganized around four functional areas: (1) outreach and engagement, (2) leadership development, (3) community investments, and (4) community assets. Within each functional area are several programs.

(1) Outreach and Engagement Program

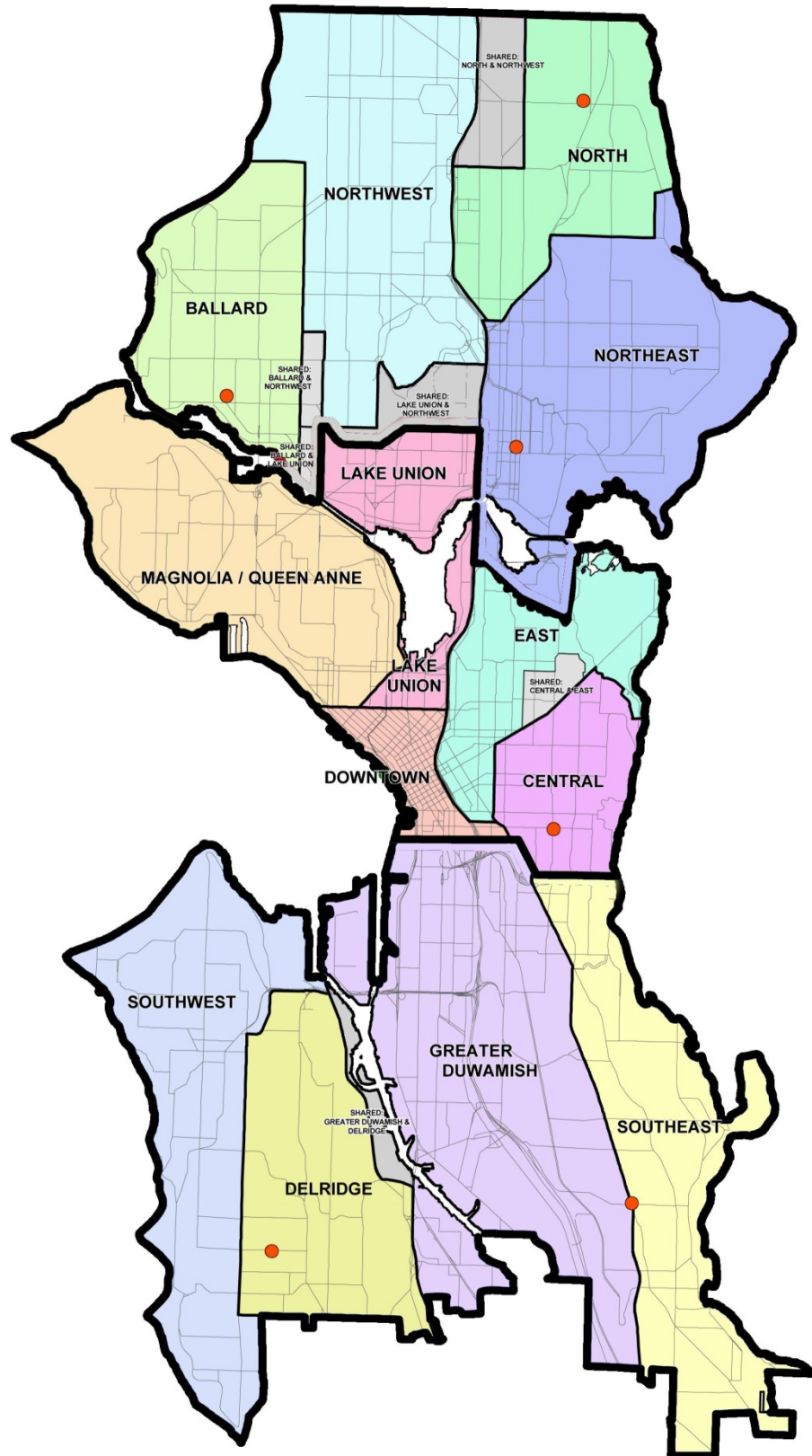
Outreach and Engagement is designed to increase access to information, resources and civic processes for historically underrepresented populations on behalf of City departments. This team strives to provide accessible and meaningful opportunities for community members to participate and provide input on issues, projects and initiatives.

- **Neighborhood District Coordinators (NDCs)**
The nine neighborhood district coordinators (NDCs) act as liaisons between the City and community groups. The NDCs support neighborhood groups and neighborhood engagement, acting as a source of information. Split into three groups (north, central and south), coordinators work out of Neighborhood Service Centers.
- **City Neighborhood Council and Neighborhood District Councils**
In 1987, when DON was created, the City was divided into 13 neighborhood districts (see Figure 1) and a Neighborhood District Council was convened for each of the neighborhood districts. Each council includes representatives from community-based organizations located in the district, primarily community councils and neighborhood business districts. The 13 independent councils primarily act as information-sharing bodies.

The City Neighborhood Council is comprised of representatives of the Neighborhood District Councils. It seeks to provide a common neighborhood voice on issues of importance to community groups. Although created through a 1988 resolution, the City currently provides limited support to these groups.

- **Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) Outreach**
DON, in partnership with the offices of Planning and Community Development and Office of Housing, is responsible for eliciting meaningful public input into the HALA recommendations.

Figure 1: Neighborhood Districts



- Find it, Fix it Community Walks

In 2014, Mayor Murray initiated Find It, Fix It Community Walks; a series of Mayor-led walks that help improve neighborhoods one block at a time. DON provides logistical support to the Mayor's Office in coordinating these walks, which also include other city officials, police, and neighborhood residents.

(2) Leadership Development

The leadership development section of DON educates Seattleites to help them make positive contributions to their communities.

- People's Academy of Community Engagement (PACE)
PACE is an annual training program that provides skills to 25-30 emerging community leaders to enable them to be more effective in civic leadership.
- Public Outreach and Engagement Liaisons (POELs)
The POEL program contracts with expert community "bridge-builders" with ties to different ethnic and cultural communities. These bi-cultural and bi-lingual partners provide non-English-speaking participants comfort, familiarity and linguistic access to allow meaningful participation in the City's processes.
- Seattle Youth Commission
The Seattle Youth Commission is comprised of 25 Seattleites aged 13-19 who are appointed by the Mayor and City Council. The mission of the Commission is to connect youth to their elected officials.

(3) Community Investments

The community investments section provides funding resources for community members to enhance neighborhoods, improve quality of life, and empower people to make positive contributions to their communities. Funding sources include:

- Neighborhood Matching Fund (NMF) Grants
The NMF provides City funding to match community resources to achieve community goals. Grants are competitive and require community pledges of time and money. The NMF includes three levels of funding:
 - "Small Sparks" grants up to \$1,000, annually.
 - "Small and Simple" grants up to \$25,000, three times a year.
 - "Large Projects" grants up to \$100,000, annually. Both City staff and a community advisory committee members review proposals, with the City Council approving grants.

- **Neighborhood Park and Street Fund (NPSF)**
NPSF provides funds annually to neighborhoods for small-scale improvements to streets and parks. Projects can receive up to \$90,000. Community members nominate projects in February to be implemented by the City the following year.
- **Duwamish River Opportunity Fund**
The Duwamish River Opportunity Fund invests in community-building projects for the neighborhoods along the Duwamish River. It has been funded for three years.
- **Participatory Budgeting**
In 2016, the Seattle Youth Commission will lead a Participatory Budgeting pilot program through which Seattle youth and young adults will democratically decide how to spend \$700,000. Seattle youth will come together to brainstorm and vet ideas, develop proposals, and finally vote on how to spend the allocation. City departments will then implement the winning projects.

(4) Community Assets

Community Assets supports the physical characteristics and facilities that make neighborhoods unique.

- **P-Patch Community Gardening**
The P-Patch program oversees 88 community gardens throughout the City, comprised of 32 acres of P-patch space. The program matches community gardeners with P-Patches. The community gardeners work with DON to be stewards of the P-patches.
- **Historic Preservation**
The Historic Preservation program manages the designation and protection of more than 400 historic structures, sites, objects and vessels, as well as eight historic districts throughout Seattle.
- **Major Institutions and Schools**
This program convenes committees of neighbors of Seattle's hospitals, universities, colleges and public schools to provide meaningful input into the development plans for those institutions.