



## GOAL TWO: RACIAL EQUITY IN CITY ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICES

**The Race and Social Justice Initiative is making a real difference in the lives of Seattle residents, businesses and City government.**

The Race and Social Justice Initiative is committed to achieving racial equity in two key areas:

- Outreach and public engagement.
- Programs and services.

### EQUITY IN OUTREACH AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

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The City of Seattle holds a lot of public meetings – but do the participants reflect the diversity of our communities? Who does the system serve, and who are left out of the process?

Despite staff, public dollars and good intentions, the City's outreach and community engagement efforts often have appeared uncoordinated, inconsistent and exclusive. Communities of color frequently view the City's efforts as "a waste of time" or "not for us." Immigrant and refugee communities experience additional barriers to having their voices heard.

With RSJI, departments have begun to use a toolkit for inclusive outreach and public engagement. The toolkit offers innovative strategies and a step-by-step process for City employees to help ensure that the voices of communities of color are part of the City's planning processes. In communities where non-English speakers live, departments provide free translation and interpretation for public meetings and events.

### PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

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The City operates and funds numerous programs and services – but do those programs equitably serve communities of color? Are City programs and services accessible to those communities?

To achieve racial equity in City of Seattle services, departments have begun to ask themselves a simple question: "*How does this action further racial equity?*" RSJI's Racial Equity Toolkit guides work teams across City government to write budgets, evaluate programs and shape new initiatives. The toolkit builds racial equity into the City's work from the outset, instead of as an afterthought.

# TOGETHER, WE CAN ACHIEVE RACIAL JUSTICE IN SEATTLE.

## SOME OF RSJI'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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### IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE ACCESS

- All City departments provide free language interpretation on request.
- Departments have translated all key service information into Seattle's six most commonly spoken languages.
- The Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Board provides ongoing guidance to the Mayor, City Council and departments.

### INCLUSIVE OUTREACH AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- To update neighborhood plans in Southeast Seattle, City staff dramatically expanded outreach to historically underrepresented communities. Hundreds of residents who had never attended a public meeting helped write new development plans for their communities. The effort received the Governor's Smart Communities Award for outstanding achievement in creating livable and vibrant communities.
- Department representatives meet regularly to coordinate the City's new engagement strategies and share what's worked in different neighborhoods.

### PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- The Mayor's Youth and Families Initiative includes racial equity as a key component of strategies to find solutions to the challenges that youth and families face in Seattle.
- The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) developed social equity criteria to help prioritize transportation improvements. SDOT worked with neighborhood District Councils to serve communities typically left out of the City's Neighborhood Street Fund process.

### LEARN MORE ABOUT RSJI

Visit [www.seattle.gov/rsji](http://www.seattle.gov/rsji) or call the Seattle Office for Civil Rights at 206.684.4500