



Seattle City Council

# 2011 annual report



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## Protecting the most vulnerable and supporting Seattle's communities

As 2011 started, the Seattle City Council established priorities to guide our legislative goals and decision-making throughout the year. As we close the year, we have met many of these goals, including adopting a 2012 budget that embodied "fund what we have, finish what we started," and focused on infrastructure and investment priorities. We are proud of the following accomplishments from 2011.

### Priority 1: Foster safe, just and healthy communities for all

- Reinvented Seattle's community centers, using data to alter service hours to better fit resident demand and saving more than \$1 million in annual operating costs.
- Developed several programs that provide financial and housing assistance for homeless families.
- Established a central fund for facility improvements at religious organizations that provide shelter and services for homeless families and individuals.
- Expanded the Families and Education Levy, providing funding to make sure every child in every school can excel and graduate from high school, prepared to succeed in college or the career of their choice.
- Created a new, separate office to address immigrant and refugee issues and to coordinate City activities in support of these communities.

### Priority 2: Build a livable city for our future

- Strengthened relationships with other Washington cities.
- Advanced the waterfront development efforts, the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement regional partnership and extended the Bluefield holdings partnership to serve Seattle interests in the Duwamish clean-up efforts.
- Adopted Seattle's single use plastic bag ban initiative and advanced the Yellow pages opt-out program.
- Created a new vision and guidelines for unique pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented neighborhoods in Capitol Hill's Pike-Pine corridor and the West Seattle Triangle.

### Priority 3: Invest public resources fairly and effectively

- Adopted a sustainable 2012 budget that invests in public safety and human services.
- Maintained the City's commitment to completing the Mercer West solution to the "Mercer Mess," and other infrastructure and transportation projects.
- Contributed \$1.9 million to the City's Rainy Day Fund.

## Rebuilding our economy



Economic recovery continued to be our primary focus in 2011, beginning with the preservation of Seattle's fiscal health during the legislative session in Olympia. These successes were the result of my **Seattle for Washington** campaign and goals

and specific actions created to make it easier to do business in Seattle.

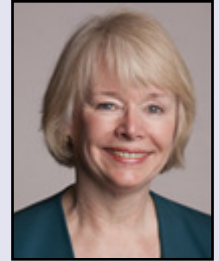
This year we created an **Industrial Development District** to spur cleaner industry in Seattle's industrial zones, advanced my **Local Food Action Initiative**, including development of a **Regional Food Policy Council** and passage of Seattle Farm Bill Principles to support healthy farms, food and people at the local and national levels.

We passed an ambitious new goal of **zero green house gas emissions** by 2050 and laid the foundation for a community process to meet it by taking steps toward advancing green energy by supporting **district energy initiatives** and adopting more rigorous guidelines for **green buildings**.

**Regional Development and Sustainability Committee Chair, Council President Richard Conlin**

## Partnerships power park system

When I look back on 2011, I recall lessons learned and great strides taken in how we govern.



As chair of Parks and Seattle Center, I saw both departments flourish. Partnerships are key to sustaining our park system. This was demonstrated through our Community Center exercise. We asked Parks to look at new models of operation and as a result we found \$1.23M in savings. More importantly, **we were able to keep the doors open at every center**, an accomplishment in these challenging times.

And the **Seattle Center welcomed their newest tenants, Chihuly and KEXP**. It's an ideal partnership and the kind we shall continue to seek out.

Necessity is the mother of invention. Our needs have remained the same, but our means have changed. Creative thinking has made it possible for us to reinvent the way we do things in government.

**Parks and Seattle Center Committee Chair, Councilmember Sally Bagshaw**

## Smart investments in public safety and education

The Council started the year preparing for a renewal of the City's Families and Education Levy. After months of review, Councilmembers presented a unanimous recommendation for a ballot measure doubling the size of the City's investment in its schoolchildren and raising the City's expectations for its schools and students. Voters embraced the challenge and **approved the Levy package** with 64 percent in November.



In a time of limited financial resources, the Council advocated for new approaches to public safety, including a **focus on the policing of geographically-concentrated crime** and a review of the effectiveness of the City's various **crime prevention programs**. Councilmembers approved a landmark agreement with King County on **jail usage** that will save the City millions of dollars.

The Council also passed legislation strengthening penalties to **deter wage theft** and continued to press for concrete, substantive improvements in the City's **police accountability** system.

**Public Safety and Education Committee Chair, Councilmember Tim Burgess**

## Making new development work for neighbors, saving treasures

We began 2011 in **South Downtown** where we overhauled land use rules to increase residential population and business success while **protecting historic and culturally important buildings**. The additional density will yield public benefits like affordable housing, open space, and streetscape improvements in Pioneer Square, Chinatown/ID, Little Saigon, and Japantown.



We pushed to **enliven vacant lots** and sites of stalled construction projects by allowing property owners to temporarily locate active uses, like retail sales kiosks, mobile food vending carts, or art installations, in exchange for allowing owners to host short-term parking.

To enliven Seattle's streetscape and provide start-up business opportunities we eased street food regulations in an effort to increase the amount of **food carts and trucks** on public and private properties.

By the end of the year we approved changes in zoning, development standards and bonus programs for **Pike/Pine, West Seattle** and **Roosevelt** with the goal of shaping great places.

Committee on the Built Environment Chair, Councilmember Sally J. Clark

## Making a difference without breaking the bank

This year Council was again able to **protect vital services for Seattle's most vulnerable**. Our 2012 budget increased human service funding, expanded services for homeless families, provided funds for **uninsured health care** and replenished the city's Rainy Day fund. The budget reflects our priorities, protecting those in need while **making wise decisions for the future**.



As the city's Retirement System chair, I led the effort to keep the system healthy and sustainable.

This year we also **strengthened our City Auditor's office** by creating an Audit Committee to guide the Auditor in assessing **results-oriented government**. This will help us efficiently deliver city services in the face of shrinking resources.

Finance and Budget Committee Chair,  
Councilmember Jean Godden

## Energy savings and technology access for our students

As Energy Chair, the City achieved the lowest power rates among the country's 24 largest cities, **40 percent lower than the national average**. With the help of the City Light Review Panel, we conducted extensive community outreach in 2011 and are on-track to complete a six-year Strategic Plan to maintain reliable service, a sustainable infrastructure, conservation and rate stability.

In 2011, we created the **Great Student Initiative**, a program that provides 16,000 low-income Seattle Public School students with low-cost broadband Internet access and free computer training.

Our policy to **deploy energy saving LED streetlights** is ahead of schedule and under budget, already saving the City money.



This year, Council funded a body-mounted camera pilot for police officers to **enhance public safety and community accountability**.

Energy, Technology and Civil  
Rights Committee Chair,  
Councilmember Bruce Harrell

## Healthy and safe communities



This year, the Council recognized that a healthy workforce is a productive one and established Seattle as a national leader by passing legislation that requires employers to provide **paid leave** when employees or their family members fall ill or victim

to domestic violence. We also passed legislation regarding the **medical use of cannabis**, including minimum community and enforcement standards and will continue this work in 2012.

On any given night, Seattle's 3,800 shelter spaces are full and there are about 1,700 people without shelter. This year the Council passed legislation committing to a work plan to meet the **survival needs of people** without shelter that includes: creation of basic standards for **encampments hosted by religious entities**; support of a new winter shelter in Lake City and a **Community Advisory Board** to guide the shelter's operation; and **\$445,000 in new funding** for services for homeless families and established a goal that no family should be unsheltered by 2013.

**Housing, Human Services, Health, and Culture Committee Chair, Councilmember Nick Licata**

## Moving forward on transportation

Following the August public vote, the Council signed agreements with the State that protect Seattle during construction of the deep bored tunnel. Work is already underway and **the southern mile of the viaduct is history.**

This year we successfully worked with our regional partners to **improve Metro Transit's productivity**, resulting in the state legislature authorizing additional funding to avoid devastating bus cuts. Working with SDOT, we continue to identify new sources of funding for road repair and maintenance to replace declining gas tax revenue.

Also launched this year, the **Third Avenue Transit Corridor Initiative** will revitalize a street where thousands of transit riders, shoppers and workers travel every day.



**Transportation Committee Chair, Councilmember Tom Rasmussen**

## Committed to Seattle's people and environment

This year the Council created a **Safe Parking Pilot Program** that will provide a safe, legal place to park at night and access to basic services to help people living in their cars. We expanded the **Utility Discount Program** in City Light and the **Emergency Assistance Program** in Seattle Public Utilities, two services to help keep the lights on and the water running for low-income households.

Council also passed a resolution to make City government more accessible and responsive to **Seattle's immigrant and refugee communities**, now 17 percent of Seattle's population.

Furthering our **Zero Waste agenda**, we launched a yellow pages **phonebooks opt-out program**. So far, more than 67,000 homes and businesses have opted out, saving more than 300 tons of paper. We also passed a **ban on single-use plastic carry out bags** to protect Puget Sound and marine waters and reduce unnecessary waste. Council passed a resolution adopting some of the most aggressive carbon emissions targets of any major city in the country in the sectors of transportation and building energy efficiency.

**Seattle Public Utilities and Neighborhoods Committee Chair, Councilmember Mike O'Brien**

