City of Seattle
Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) Summary Sheet: Cover Sheet and Questions

Department/Office: Office of Sustainability and Environment
Name of policy, program, etc. analyzed: Outreach and engagement for the 2017 Urban Forest Stewardship Plan update
Names and titles of key staff that led this RET process:
Angela Bartlett – Energy Benchmarking team
Michelle Caulfield – Deputy Director
Sara Cubillos – Equity and Environment Initiative Advisor
Pam Emerson – Green Stormwater Infrastructure Advisor
Sandra Pinto de Bader – Urban Forestry Policy Advisor

Dates of RET process (e.g., 8/2015 – 10/2015)**:**
9/2015 – 12/2015

1. List the racial equity outcome(s) that you set in Step 1 of the RET process. *(Max 300 characters)*

- Intentionally engage people of color, immigrant, refugee, and low-income populations to participate in the Urban Forest Stewardship Plan (UFSP) update process, help shape policies, strategies, and actions in support of the urban forest.

  NOTE: The following are big-picture program outcomes we don't want to lose track of:
- All residents have access to information about how trees benefit their lives as well as the tools and resources to support their efforts to take care of trees.
- Urban forest services and benefits are equitably distributed throughout Seattle.
- City of Seattle investments to plant and maintain 'public' trees are equitably distributed.
- WMBE businesses have the opportunity to participate in City-run maintenance/care associated with Seattle's urban forest.

2. Which stakeholders (groups and/or key individuals) did you engage in this RET? In what ways did you engage them? *(Max 600 characters)*
An OSE interdisciplinary team representing urban forestry, green stormwater infrastructure, energy benchmarking and the Equity and Environment Initiative partnered up with the Seattle reLeaf Program Manager to work on this RET.

3. Please describe up to five key benefits and/or burdens for people of color of this policy, program, project, or other decision, which the RET process helped you to identify or confirm. *(Max 300 characters each)*
Benefits:
- Improved air quality and associated respiratory outcomes
- Stress reduction and overall well-being
- Reduced heat island effect and associated heat-related illness
- Increased property value (benefiting property owners)
- Opportunity to create jobs and economic development related to tree maintenance and/or tree preservation

Burdens:
- Increased property value (impacting renters)
- Tree maintenance (leaf raking, watering, pruning)
- Competing uses: solar access, daylight access, perceived housing conflicts, garden space
- Risk of trees falling or limbs falling (risk of property damage and power outages)
- Sidewalk heaving (safety)

4. Please describe up to five key actions – things that you will do differently or begin to do now – of this policy, program, project, or other decision, which will increase opportunity and/or minimize harm for people of color. *(Max 300 characters each)*
There wasn't a robust O/E process to gather input from target populations in the last UFSP update. Without inclusive O/E the City is not hearing from people of color, immigrant, refugee, and low-income populations and is creating policies that may not address the real needs of those communities.

1. The updated Urban Forest Stewardship Plan will specifically address equity issues and recommend equity actions based on the research and engagement done through the update process.
2. Move from an outreach to an inclusive engagement process. Engaging the community with an RSJI lens will inform policies and strategies in the updated plan.
3. Include dedicated funding to create and implement an outreach and engagement plan/strategy. Include focus groups as a means to engage target populations.
4. Determine whether translation and interpretation services will be needed to effectively involve underrepresented communities in the plan update process and provide opportunities for target populations to provide input, help shape policies, strategies, and actions in support of the urban forest.
5. Increase access to information for focus populations about how trees benefit their lives as well as the tools and resources to support their efforts to take care of trees.

5. How will leadership ensure implementation of the actions described in question 4? *(Max 800 characters)*
OSE has an internal RSJ team that continues to track progress on integration of RSJ approaches and frameworks into the department's various programs, projects and policies and the OSE management team has scheduled quarterly check-ins on RET projects to track ongoing implementation of the recommended actions in all projects.

6. How have/will you report back to your stakeholders? (This includes the people who were directly engaged in this RET process, those who will be affected by decisions made, and other departments or divisions impacted by the RET findings and the actions described in question 4.) *(Max 800 characters)*

OSE will apply this RET to the next UFSP update and will partner with the Equity and Environment Initiative Community Partners Steering Committee, faith-based organizations, and ethnic and social services organizations in order engage people of color, immigrant, refugee, and low income populations during the 2017 UFSP update process.

The team will engage NGOs focused on trees and urban forestry, such as Forterra, Earthcorps, Nature Consortium, Friends of Parks, Parks Foundation, Got Green, Puget Sound Sage and do focus groups with Seattle Housing Authority and other affordable housing providers as a way to engage low income communities.

As part of the plan update process, we will report progress on application of this RET to all stakeholders and include an equity section in the updated plan summarizing what we learned and make specific RSJI recommendations.

7. What additional racial equity issues did this RET reveal? Consider how these unresolved issues present opportunities for structural transformation (i.e. working across departments, and with other institutions and sectors to achieve racial equity). *(Max 800 characters)*
Real and perceived gentrification is an unintended consequence of tree planting and maintenance efforts by the City. Street and yard trees may increase property values, leading to higher taxes and may result in displacement – especially for renters. Engaging with non-profit partners and other City departments, such as the Office of Policy and Community Development, Seattle Housing Authority can provide opportunities to explore pathways to remove institutionalized racism.