City of Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development

Equitable Development Initiative Impact Report

January 14, 2025

Prepared by:

CAI

COMMUNITY ATTRIBUTES INC

Prepared for:

Seattle

Community Attributes Inc. tells data-rich stories about communities that are important to decision makers.

Community Attributes Inc.
119 Pine St, Suite 400
Seattle, WA 98101

www.communityattributes.com

President and CEO:
Chris Mefford

Project Manager:
Cassie Byerly

Analysts:
Jolene Baldwin
Carly Bednarski
Kortney Cena
Michaela Jellicoe
Bryan Lobel
Elliot Weiss

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Impact Report accompanies the [EDI Program and Projects Status Report](), mandated by Seattle City Council. Since January 2024 EDI projects have contracted for over $24 Million and expended $15 Million. Most of the dollars spent have gone towards securing property. Where applicable, this report directs the reader to data, findings, or recommendations in the Program and Projects Status Report.

The Status Report includes a status update of each project funded by the Equitable Development Initiative (EDI) program, a result of the program evaluation and survey, potential future funding requests within the existing portfolio of EDI projects and identification of obstacles of completion of these projects. The Impact Report focuses on the experiences of organizations participating in the program from the grantee's perspective, and the local, city-wide, and national impacts that the program has had thus far. Project spotlights throughout this report showcase the range and impact that grantee organizations have had on their communities, and the impact that EDI has had for their organizations.

EDI was created from an understanding that Seattle's rapid growth has had negative impacts on its historically (and currently) marginalized communities and that inequity would continue to increase without intervention. Demographic trends show a decline in racial and ethnic population counts in neighborhoods throughout Seattle, and this research led to the 2015 vision for the city's future which established Seattle as *"a diverse city where all people are able to achieve their full potential regardless of race or means."* A displacement risk analysis revealed that historically redlined and disinvested communities would continue to bear the brunt of redevelopment pressures, regardless of the City's growth plans ([Community Context, Demographics, and Displacement Risk]()).

This realization spurred a collaborative planning effort between the Department of Planning and Development (now OPCD), the Office of Civil Rights, Race and Social Equity Taskforce (RSET), and South Communities Organizing for Racial Equity (South CORE), resulting in the creation of the EDI Advisory Board, Equitable Development Framework, Implementation Plan, and Financial Investment Strategy, which collectively formed Seattle's Equitable Development Initiative.

As of October 2024, over the course of nine funding cycles, EDI has awarded $116.4 million to 77 organizations that have worked towards

securing land ownership in Seattle to directly address the displacement of the communities they serve ([Funding History and Future Allocations](#)).[1] By mid-January of 2025, EDI will award another $22 million in funding to accelerate existing projects towards their next major development milestone and providing critical capacity-building investments needed to support projects reaching either interim or permanent operations phases of their work. These projects represent a variety of communities and services being supported throughout high risk of displacement areas in Seattle and range in their approach to addressing the six equity drivers established by Seattle and where they are currently in the development process. EDI organization progression has been classified in two phases, defined by pre- or post-site acquisition. An estimated 40% of organizations expect to complete their current phase with EDI in 2025 ([Project Status](#)).

When surveying grantees, respondents shared their successes and challenges during their project and their participation with EDI. Respondents expressed great success through the program in not only progression of the project through site acquisition or total completion, but also through the guidance and capacity building support that is offered in the program ([Project Success to Date](#)). This support has been vital for many organizations, especially those pursuing their first development project. Many of the obstacles faced are connected to the development and capacity needs for the project, with the majority of survey respondents identifying consulting, technical knowledge, and capacity as major obstacles faced ([Obstacles and Barriers](#)).

EDI supports local community-serving organizations to address specific community needs through diverse projects, each tailored to unique local challenges. The initiative has enabled grantees to impact their communities significantly, and the benefits reflect the diversity of the organizations and their goals ([Pro-Equity Direction](#)). On a local level, the EDI program is a powerful tool for inclusive grown, cultural preservation, and economic development that shifts power into the hands of marginalized communities, providing resources that empower them to apply their expertise towards implementation of strategies and solutions that benefit the public via access to ownership of commercial spaces and places were critical services and programming can be provided in more stable and long-term operating models that increase access to opportunity.

---

[1] Of the 77 projects, 75 remain active including nine projects that are complete and in the monitoring phase.

EDI supports crucial capacity building work, allowing community-based organizations to explore and execute site acquisition and development with minimal impact on their existing services or taking on substantial debt. The market itself is a primary driver of displacement in Seattle. Without EDI and programs like it, being a competitor in the Seattle real estate market is unattainable, and by supporting their participation, community-based organizations can work towards projects that otherwise would not be represented in the market.

For projects of the scale at which EDI grantees are pursuing, the estimated timeline is 7-10 years for market projects, based on development data from Seattle Office of Housing.[2] EDI projects are estimated to finish within similar timelines, thanks in part to the funding from EDI. One-third of organizations have received funding in three or more cycles. These long-term projects require secured funding to support and plan through the lifespan of the project, and EDI offers security to plan for their future (Funding History and Future Allocation).

At a city-level, EDI is actively moving forward Seattle's Equity Goals and works collaboratively and with support of other municipal departments to amplify these effects (EDI Relationship to Other Departments and Programs). The Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan prioritizes "monitoring growth in locations where low-income households and people of color are at risk of displacement."[3] Grantee site locations correlate with identified areas of high displacement risks and equity concerns and plan to support some of the most vulnerable within the city (Project Location and Overlap with Displacement and Equity). **The EDI program is the key mechanism through which the City of Seattle advances its long-stated racial and social equity priorities.**

The market itself is a major driver of displacement in Seattle, and EDI's flexible funding allows community-based organizations to pursue innovative, community-centered development projects that are that are not encouraged or supported within conventional market conditions and funding realities. **Many projects pursued by EDI grantees could not be reproduced by the market purely due to the ingrained cultural perspective and connection by having these services**

---

[2] Seattle Housing Levy Administrative & Financial Plan 2024-2026, Seattle Office of Housing, 2023.
[3] Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan, Office of Planning and Community Development, 2022.

directly from their own community. The most important motivation behind EDI projects is the focus on a project that is desirable to their communities ([Pro-Equity Direction](#)).

EDI focuses on creating cultural anchors that support community self-determination and prevent displacement. Many EDI organizations strengthen local economies by promoting their values and passing on the support they receive directly to their communities. EDI has awarded approximately $116.4 million over nine cycles, guiding public investments to address local needs. Grantees define their success largely by their ability to meet these needs, with 48% of surveyed organizations highlighting service delivery as a key success factor. By allowing community-based organizations to define their own success, EDI elevates the voices of historically underserved groups and reinforces Seattle's commitment to investing in their future.

As Seattle works to adopt the major update to the Comprehensive Plan in 2025, Seattle is again at the forefront of integrating race and social equity into urban development. EDI has been key to translating the City of Seattle's equity goals into tangible action, ensuring the principles of inclusion and sustainability guide the city's growth. Seattle is innovating in anti-displacement efforts by facilitating community ownership of space and investing in historically marginalized neighborhoods. This approach centers co-creation, ensuring investments are aligned with the needs and desires of local communities, and is reflective of the Continuous Improvement Philosophy (Continuous Improvement Philosophy). By combining long-term strategies for community empowerment with a focus on equity, Seattle is shaping a model for community development that is not only inclusive but also sustainably serving as a national example for other cities committed to addressing displacement and fostering equitable growth.

CONTENTS

Source: Byrd Barr Place.

Project Spotlight: Byrd Barr Place

See Participant Snapshots for more information.

Completed in 2020, Byrd Barr Place has renovated the 100+ year old historic Firehouse with inclusive, accessible design to add 1000+ SF of community gathering space. The project retains the building as a cultural asset for Seattle's Black community and expand its services, which include energy assistance and home heating, housing assistance and eviction prevention, and food bank and home delivery.

Program History and Structure

The origin and continued stewardship of EDI are rooted in ongoing community advocacy and joint planning efforts within historically redlined communities facing significant neighborhood change.

Deep collaboration around neighborhood plan updates in Othello, Rainier Beach, Chinatown/ International District, and Central District **uplifted community-led development as critical solutions to address ongoing displacement**. These projects ultimately comprised the EDI demonstration projects (elaborated on in the Equitable Development Implementation Plan) and their sponsor organizations comprised the Race and Social Equity Taskforce Coalition (RSET).

At the same time, communities led by South Communities Organizing for Racial Equity (South CORE) (a coalition of over 20 community organizations in the Rainier Valley) identified a lack of analysis of displacement risk during the 2015 Comprehensive Plan update process. Once a full displacement risk analysis was conducted for the growth alternatives, it became evident that no matter how the City planned for growth, communities who had been redlined and historically disinvested in would continue to bear the brunt of redevelopment and displacement pressures.

This confluence of events led to a planning effort between the Department of Planning and Development (now OPCD) and the Office of Civil Rights, in deep collaboration with RSET and South CORE to develop the EDI Advisory Board, Equitable Development Framework, Implementation Plan, and Financial Investment Strategy, all of which come together to eventually became Seattle's Equitable Development Initiative.

Project Spotlight: Cham Refugee Community
See Participant Snapshots for more information.

The Community Center project is a 12,000+ sq ft, multi-use facility where families, youth, elders and the community will gather and receive culturally and linguistically relevant programs and vital services. This Center will serve as a community-based hub where newly arrived immigrants, refugees, low-income families, are connected to services like housing, job placement, transportation, English classes, and family and youth support programs.

Source: Cham Refugee Community.

EDI in Action

Officially established in 2016, Seattle's EDI program works to **foster inclusive growth and anti-displacement though investing in community-envisioned and community-led solutions** to reduce disparities and meet the needs of people of color, low- and moderate-income persons, and other marginalized populations.

EDI funded projects acquire and activate culturally attuned commercial spaces and places, improving social capital and access to key resources and a broad array of determinants of equity.[4] Ownership of these spaces provides stability and allows these projects to offer public programs and services that benefit and uplift the

[4] Determinants of Equity Tool, King County, 2010.

communities in which they reside — especially low- and moderate-income, BIPOC, marginalized, and socially vulnerable populations.

Though focused on commercial space ownership, EDI projects also promote community economic development and increase access to jobs and training, transportation, food systems, childcare, parks, education, cultural amenities, affordable housing, health and human services, a healthy built and natural environment, safe neighborhoods, and community gathering spaces that preserve culture and promote inclusion and belonging.

Project Spotlight: InterIm CDA Uncle Bobs Place

"EDI funds can be used for ground floor commercial (non-housing) costs that are extremely difficult to find elsewhere. Our project could not get a commercial loan in today's post-covid economic climate, so the EDI grant funds made the project possible."

EDI Values

As an innovative approach to equitable development, the EDI program relies on values to inform and monitor the progress of their projects. Over nine funding cycles (does not reflect the 2024 funding cycle, which occurred after the reporting period), EDI has continued to develop these values to guide the program and shares them with each Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFA) / Request for Proposals (RFP). In alignment with Seattle's equity goals, the values listed below reflect desired outcomes and guiding principles for EDI.

- **Centering communities most impacted by displacement**: EDI values efforts that focus decision-making processes on structures of community development with clear accountability to impacted community members.
- **Community-driven strategies**: EDI believes in community self-determination, influence, and leadership. They know that

communities are resilient and resourceful, and that tapping into their own collective cultural cornerstones to curb displacement is key to ownership of initiatives and projects, as well as reducing invisibility.

- **Broad-based community development**: EDI values organizations that reflect the complexity of community needs, such as economic development, affordable housing, cultural development, education, healthcare, food sovereignty, and more.
- **Acknowledging historic injustices**: EDI regards efforts that are explicit about addressing systemic racism and the institutional barriers that exist for communities of color.
- **Accountability**: EDI supports efforts most likely to bring improvements to the lives of those impacted by displacement and lack of opportunity. They recognize that affected communities deserve strong, accountable, accessible, transparent, and culturally appropriate solutions, including ongoing oversight of government and other entities to address the negative impacts these communities have experienced.
- **Leverage resources and assets:** EDI supports efforts that leverage community resources and support the existing assets available to low-income communities that are not typically recognized or valued in community development processes.
- **Flexibility and interdependence**: EDI strives to create processes that reduce barriers to participation while providing a fair structure for all communities seeking to participate in the EDI. They recognize that all places and people are interconnected and commit to an approach of collective impact.
- **System change**: EDI funding is intended to advance projects that re-imagine the development process in a way that prioritizes long-term benefits and capacity for community members.

EDI PROCESS FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Application and Selection Process

EDI supports anti-displacement strategies and promotes economic development opportunities by supporting community-initiated projects that are designed and implemented by community organizations and populations that are at risk of displacement as the region grows. **The program prioritizes applicants who are best able to demonstrate a thorough organizational commitment to equitable development in the relationship between their organization and the community whose interests they seek to represent.**

Community organizations are encouraged to apply by the city and assisted during the process if needed. The EDI Notice of Funding Opportunity / Request for Proposals is shared with the community through an outreach campaign that includes newsletters, blogposts, social media channels, direct engagement with community, and preapplication workshops and webinars. EDI funds are awarded through this competitive solicitation process, where proposals are evaluated against criteria that is aligned with the EDI Implementation Plan and tailored annually by the City in partnership with the EDI Advisory Board to address evolving community conditions and unmet needs.

Project Spotlight: United Indians of All Tribes Daybreak Star Facility
See Participant Snapshots for more information.

As a major nucleus of Native American cultural activity and unique event space, Daybreak Star serves as a conference center, a location for powwows, and the headquarters of our organization and many of our services. The United Indians of All Tribes Foundation is completing repairs and upgrades to the Daybreak Star Center in Discovery Park to prolong its life and modernize its facilities.

Source: United Indians of All Tribes, History Link.

Application Process

For each funding cycle, applications are reviewed on several key factors. Applicants must be incorporated as nonprofits in Washington, though exceptions may be made for for-profit organizations that demonstrate strong accountability to impacted communities in Seattle**. The focus of the proposal must be on serving residents of the City of Seattle**, and applicants should be in good standing with any other open City of Seattle contracts, grants, or loans. Additionally, the proposed project must address at least three of the Equity Drivers outlined in the Equitable Development Implementation Plan. (Please see Pro-Equity Direction)

The evaluation criteria prioritize alignment with equity goals, community impact, and feasibility of completing the final project. Organizations or project partnerships submit proposals, which include project details, alignment with Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) goals, and an estimated budget. These proposals undergo a thorough review process by a community panel, EDI Board, and City staff.

Selection and Award

Applications are reviewed based on a system established by the work of [Social Justice Fund NW](#) but adapted for this EDI funding process.[5] Review takes scoring into consideration alongside EDI Advisory Board and program priorities of geographic distribution, type of project, and communities served.

Once proposals are reviewed, the Mayor's Office confirms awardees based on the panel's recommendations. The core criteria for selecting proposals are based on factors such as the depth of relationships, addressing equity drivers, the risk of displacement, access to opportunity, and project feasibility. Additional considerations include geographic and demographic distribution, balancing project types, and prioritizing gaps in services. **Awardees are chosen for their potential to contribute to equitable development and long-term impacts.** After the selections are made, both successful and unsuccessful applicants are notified, with feedback provided to those who were not selected to help improve future proposals. The awarded organizations establish contracts with the City, which outline the funding terms and conditions for project implementation.

Funding and Award Overview

Since EDI was authorized and funded in 2016, funding has come from a variety of sources including:

- The 2016 sale of surplus City property known as the Civic Square provided a one-time allocation of $16 million to stand up EDI with its first five projects.
- The 2019 Mercer MegaBlock property sale in South Lake Union provided funding for EDI and established a one-time $30 Million site acquisition program called the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF), a competitive grant process with the goal of leveraging the

---

[5] More information on the Social Justice Fund NW found here: https://socialjusticefund.org/

investment to achieve multiple community benefits, including affordable housing, affordable commercial spaces, cultural spaces, and childcare facilities.

- In 2020, the EDI Division renewed capacity-building funds with Advisory Board approval and awarded $1.8 million in COVID relief grants to 36 organizations that year. This total award is often referred to as the 78th EDI project.

- Ordinance 125442, a Short-Term Rental Tax (STRT), which allocated the first $5 million of collected tax towards "investments in community-initiated equitable development projects" provided funding from 2017 – 2019.

- Ordinance 125872 repealed this original ordinance and updated the city's code to align with the state's HB 2015, which stated that "payments made to a city must be used to support community-initiated equitable development and affordable housing programs." Funding to EDI from the STRT Fund began in 2020 and continues today.

- Ordinance 126393 created a new JumpStart Payroll Expense Tax (PET) Fund in the City Treasury and has allocated funding to EDI since 2022 and is an ongoing source of EDI funding.

Project Spotlight: Urban Family Community Association
Urban Family Community Space

Urban Family was founded by Paul and Shantel Patu, two individuals recognized in the Greater Seattle area as youth and family intervention experts and community leaders. Civic and community leaders have frequently called upon them to help stabilize neighborhoods under duress. Paul and Shantel have mitigated the influence of systemic poverty, oppression, gangs and youth violence by providing grassroots and collaborative leadership, intervention programs, training, and consultation. Their innovative approach to problem-solving has helped many youths and their families to make life-changing decisions.

Source: Urban Family Community Association.

Award Types

The EDI provides two types of critical financial support to grantees: Capacity-Building and Capital Funding. Funding cycles have specific criteria designed to respond to gaps in funding by project type, geographic focus, or to help projects from previous cycles. Organizations can apply for both types of funding simultaneously, which allows for a more comprehensive approach to project development, or only one depending on the identified gaps in their project funding.

For capacity-building, organizations can receive up to $75,000 per cycle to strengthen their ability to successfully deliver project outcomes. This funding is intended to help organizations build the internal systems, partnerships, and infrastructure needed to support long-term impacts from the proposed project.

Capital Funding is available for development-related activities, such as site and facility due diligence, acquisition, pre-development, and construction. The amount of capital funding available varies each year depending on the overall budget, with the largest funding cycle to date reaching $3.5 million in the Winter (October-December) cycle of 2023 (Funding History).

Funding Timeline and Repayment

Grants remain active for a minimum of two years, with the possibility of extensions depending on the project's progress and the continued availability of funds. If a project is unable to utilize its funds within this two-year period, it may need to reapply. Once awarded, projects are typically given up to five years to complete the development phase before transitioning into operations. During the operational phase, organizations must report on the project's impact and outcomes.

Notably, the repayment of the EDI award is structured through the provision of public benefits. These benefits can include services and programs that directly serve the community. The repayment is tracked through a Deed of Trust and Restrictive Covenant that remains in place until the full value of the capital award has been repaid. The repayment rate is determined by the amount of space used for public services and the number of hours those services are provided each year.

Project Spotlight: First AME Housing Association

"EDI funding came at a critical time for the project. As the first funding in, it helped leverage state funding 1 for 1 and enabled the project to start on time and be completed on budget."

Source: First AME Housing Association.

Process through the Grantee Lens

The EDI is designed to support organizations and coalitions led by communities impacted by displacement, particularly in Seattle, where rapid growth is putting pressure on vulnerable areas. The goal is to support long-term, multi-year initiatives that build community capacity, develop projects, and ensure ongoing implementation and reporting. Its goal is to spread funding across communities that have faced historical disinvestment and displacement pressures, complementing existing funding sources and filling identified gaps in available resources ([Success to Date and Obstacles to Completion](#)).

EDI has standard contracting deal terms, and each contracted organization has up to five years after site acquisition, to complete their project if it includes an acquisition within the EDI approved scope of work or is expected to reach their next major development milestone within two-years where an acquisition is not included. Upon completion of their scope of work, the project is expected to enter the permanent operations and annual reporting phase, however funded organizations may record interim service provision during project development if it aligns with their public benefits agreement and request partial consideration at the close of the project. EDI expects all grantees to make progress on their projects within the first two years of a funding award regardless of contract type, but do not specify a total maximum number of years for project completion unless it is a site acquisition contract. This structure ensures that the community continues to benefit from the project over time, while also providing a mechanism for accountability and sustainability. **Through this approach, the EDI program not only helps address immediate community needs but also fosters long-term, equitable development that directly benefits the neighborhoods most at risk of displacement** ([Project Location and Overlap with Displacement and Equity](#)).

At the early capacity-building stage, recipient organizations begin their learning curve, cultivating their understanding of the development process, building organizational and operational knowledge and abilities needed to plan and complete the project, and building the team of development consultants that will support successful project outcomes. Capacity-building is also where organizations learn about the City's processes for managing their contract, completing due diligence, planning for future phases of work, program limitations and requirements, and record keeping and reporting requirements.

As recipient organizations prepare for site acquisition, they must complete the due diligence activities required by the City of Seattle to

ensure the site can support the City's interests as a funder and the organization's interest as an owner and operator of the site. Funds for acquisitions are subject to execution and recording of an Agreement for Services contract, Deed of Trust, and Restrictive Covenant, and are disbursed directly through escrow, and other qualifying expenses for capacity-building or capital costs (also subject to execution and recording of an Agreement for Services contract, deed, and covenant) are by reimbursement.

Each request for reimbursement requires submission of an invoice, supporting substantiating documentation, any required work product called for in the scope of work as a deliverable, and a progress report for the invoice period. To determine allowable direct and indirect overhead expenses, and allowable and disallowable capital expenses that can be submitted for reimbursement under each recipient organization's Agreement for Services contract, EDI uses program guidance that aligns with current City procurement provisions.

Project Spotlight: Yəhaw' Indigenous Collective

Yəhaw' was able to purchase land under the EDI program and are interested in applying for future funding for continued site development.

"I*n December 2022, yəhaw' purchased land in Rainier Beach. The undeveloped parcel holds nearly a hundred trees, bisects Mapes Creek, and is located near public transit in a diverse multigenerational neighborhood. Working alongside Coast Salish Nations in one of the largest urban Indigenous populations in the country, Seattle is ideal for maximizing our impact through Indigenous art.*"

Source: Yəhaw' Indigenous Collective.

Grantees may begin providing services before finishing their project and are often operating during the second phase of the EDI process. Repayment based on services provided guarantees that the organizations and the site they acquired will provide community benefit in a long-term scale while their organization is operational. **By participating in the EDI program, the organizations have secured themselves as pillars of their community and committed themselves to providing services to the City.**

EDI Impact

The EDI program positively impacts communities and neighborhoods in which it invests through community-driven and equity-focused development. The impacts of EDI are also felt beyond the organizations and projects it funds. At a local level, the program has directly served communities that are at a high risk of displacement and equity concerns through working with their grantees (Project Location and Overlap with Displacement and Equity). These neighborhood scale impacts have implications for the city of Seattle's equity goals and contribute to Seattle's nationally recognized role as an innovator of fulfilling equity goals. The impacts described in this section are listed:

Local Scale Impacts
- Local communities directly benefit from the outcomes of the projects that EDI supports.
- EDI enables local community-based organizations to build up their organizational capacity.
- EDI empowers community-based organizations to join the development world and directly impact their communities.
- The majority of EDI-funded projects expect to be completed by 2030.
- EDI funding catalyzes compounding investment in anti-displacement and equity-based community development.

City-Level Impacts
- EDI advances Seattle's equity goals.
- EDI fills a development and investment gap in Seattle which the market is not equipped to fill.
- EDI supports the creation of community anchors that prevent displacement.
- EDI empowers community-based organizations to guide public investments to directly meet local needs.
- EDI secures long term public benefits and services through investment in the community organization's site acquisition.

Broader Impacts

- Seattle is a national leader in prioritizing equity in planning efforts and policy.
- EDI serves as a national example by demonstrating an innovative approach to enacting equity goals, investing in historically marginalized communities, and combating displacement.

Project Spotlight: Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle

The Eritrean Association in Greater Seattle (EAGS) was created in 1994 to support and build a stronger community among Eritreans who came to Seattle as refugees from Eritrea's war of independence.

Local Scale Impacts

EDI's work is built upon an organization's unique mission and goals for its community, with each grantee working to meet a specific, local need and addressing unique goals and challenges through development and organizational capacity building. Local scale impacts can be difficult to measure due to their diversity of goals and outcomes, and each organization's impact and success should be measured individually. One of the shared goals across EDI projects is to be completely self-sustaining following participation in the program. EDI does not continue adding funds to completed projects but does provide partnership via issue analysis, advisory services, and referrals during the contract period to support long-term success.

EDI empowers community-driven projects that provide a wide range of life-changing services.

Like the communities they serve, the benefits provided by EDI-funded organizations are diverse. These include some common benefits such as housing, food resources, cultural and art programming, community centers, and childcare services. These key features, along with the Equity Drivers supported by the organizations represent the scope of their impacts across their communities (Pro-Equity Direction). **The**

diversity of projects caters to different needs and desires of historically marginalized communities to secure their futures in Seattle, with a focus on anti-displacement and equitable development. One grantee wrote of the impact of working with EDI:

> *"[EDI] supports ethnic communities and helps with the historic trauma. It is empowering to know that we have fought for and carved out resources dedicated to Black, Brown, and LGBTQ+ projects and community space needs."*

For example, Byrd Barr Place completed its site acquisition in 2023 of its historic firehouse and in 2024 was able to celebrate 60 years of serving their community. Through the acquisition the organization gained the security of knowing that their services could continue to be offered in perpetuity. Through 2021 and 2022, **[Byrd Barr Place](#) served 12,300+ food bank visitors to get essential groceries and provided 1,279,000 pounds of food for people in their neighborhood**. Along with food services, **Byrd Barr Place also provided $1.9 million in rental assistanc**e, offering stability to Seattle residents in need.[6]

In addition, [Yəhawʼ Indigenous Creatives Collective](#), an organization founded in 2017, acquired 1.5 acres of land in South Seattle in 2022 and through artmaking and ecological education, are creating a welcoming community where Indigenous creatives can connect with others and the earth. They collaborate closely with tribes, nonprofit partners, and creative community to collectively nurture the land and one another for generations to come. Prior to land acquisition, Yəhawʼ organized events with over 400 Indigenous artists, and after land acquisition have hosted their first creative residency on the property. **They anticipate the ability to welcome over 100 artists annually to the arts center.**[7]

EDI enables local community-based organizations to build up their organizational capacity.

One of EDI's goals is to ensure organizations do not have to divert funding from their existing services to undertake a capital campaign or expand their scope of services. In addition to preventing service disruption, grantees report that EDI funds also provide them with funding and technical assistance to build their organizational capacity

---

[6] 2021-2022 Annual Report, Byrd Barr Place, 2022
[7] Yəhawʼ Indigenous Creatives Collective. More information can be found: https://yehawshow.com/

to sustain, grow, and thrive in their missions. **The majority of grantees (73%) saw the most benefit in the capacity-building support the program has offered them for their organization** ([Success to Date and Obstacles to Completion](#)). In the words of two grantees:

> *"Success for [us] looks like a self-sustaining operation with paid staff, frequent community events and transition to full ownership and management."*

> *"This project completely changes our level of support in our community and allows us to grow and build upon what's needed including our services and programs."*

EDI funding contributes to grantee organizations increasing their resiliency and sustainability. Simply **having EDI investment plays a major role in an organization's overall fundraising efforts**, often acting as a catalyst or stop-gap to ensure they can maintain momentum ([Funding History and Future Allocations](#)). This plays out differently for each organization. Some rely completely on EDI funding to see them through their project, while others can leverage EDI investment for other public or private investment. Capacity building funds for all organizations work towards self-sustaining operations that will continue to provide benefits after the contract with the City has ended.

EDI empowers community-based organizations to join the development world and directly impact the physical space in their community.

EDI lowers the barrier to entry for real estate and capital development and assists community-based organizations through the development process. Having the support and resources to participate in, understand, and advocate in the development of their neighborhood benefits community organizations looking to combat displacement and create community-oriented spaces. Organizations expressed that challenges and barriers to their projects are often related to navigating the development process, and support from EDI has helped to address these challenges and fulfill their projects ([Obstacles and Barriers to Projects](#)).

> *"From day one, EDI staff has provided key technical support, clear information, and insight into the development process. Our site purchase involved multiple agencies, and EDI staff played a critical role in ensuring smooth coordination of the transaction."*

EDI funding also creates a foothold for frontline community organizations to engage in and drive development in rapidly changing areas in Seattle. Organizations like the Rainier Beach Action Coalition (RBAC) see the need for community-driven development in tandem with market-rate development in their neighborhoods and around high-demand and high-opportunity infrastructure investments.

> *"We're going to need some market-rate [housing] near the light rail station," Gregory Davis, managing strategist at RBAC, said, "to get some hearty development activity going.* ***We're not anti-development — but we want to make sure that there's community benefit associated with it and that it's built to support community safety."****[8]*

Participating in the EDI program not only supplies funding, but also navigation of the city development process and technical knowledge needed to move through it. Navigating this process is often a significant barrier to organizations and projects that are new to it or don't have access to traditional financing mechanisms. **Approximately one-third of respondents cite resources and guidance through the development and site acquisition processes as particular benefits to their involvement in the EDI program** ([Project Success to Date](#)). As one grantee states:

> *"EDI has been able to communicate with Seattle Permitting Dept which has made the process easier, as I do not speak 'permitting' language. Has also helped with keeping the project on track."*

The majority of EDI-funded projects are either actively providing services to communities or plan to be by 2030.

Progress toward project completion is one important metric for success for EDI organizations. **After engaging with EDI, grantees overwhelmingly see significant progress in both development and organizational capacity.**

Of the 75 active projects, nine have successfully achieved operational status at their site**. Completion of phase 1 (site acquisition) is a huge milestone on its own for EDI grantees, many of whom report they would not have been able to acquire land without**

---

[8] Rainier Beach Strives for Growth without Displacement, The Urbanist, April 2022.

EDI funding. Approximately half of EDI projects have acquired a site and are in development ([Project Status](#)). One of these organizations is the Frank and Goldyne Green Land Conservancy, who was able to purchase the 1909-built house that houses Wa Na Wari. While this secures a long-term lease for the community space, it's also a pivotal purchase for the founder Inye Wokoma, whose grandparents were long-time residents of the home, and who places the ownership in a structure now dedicated to 'stewarding cultural land.'[9]

Many projects are in pivotal points of their development process. Twenty-one projects are expected to finish by 2025, and a further 42 are expected to finish by 2030. These estimations capture the potential impacts across Seattle that will be felt with the security that comes with a functioning and operational self-sustaining project site that is under direct ownership of the organizations.

Source: Wa Na Wari.

Project Spotlight: Wa Na Wari
See Participant Snapshots for more information.

Referred to as a "container for Black joy," Wa Na Wari incubates and amplifies Black art and belonging while providing a safe space for organizing and movement building. Wa Na Wari is an active model for how Black art and culture can combat gentrification and displacement.

EDI funding catalyzes compounding investment in anti-displacement and equity-based community development.

While EDI continues to play a vital role in supporting the completion of EDI-funded projects, project funding data also shows that EDI's investment is compounded by additional outside investment in the EDI projects. City investment offers a path towards financial self-sufficiency and catalyzes additional investment in organizations – in both their EDI-funded projects and overall organizational mission.

---

[9] "With formation of conservancy and Black ownership initiative, Wa Na Wari secures its Central District home," Capitol Hill Seattle Blog, September 2024.

Approximately 90% of projects receive additional funding outside of EDI, while survey results show 18% of respondents feel that leveraging EDI funding was important in acquiring their additional funding ([Funding History and Future Requests](#)). At least 41 projects continue to rely on EDI for additional funding to complete their project, while 15 projects are self-sufficient and do not plan to apply for additional EDI funding to complete their project. **Planning for the future is vital for these projects, and securing funding is instrumental in that process.**

City-Level Impacts

The next level of EDI's impact is in the cumulative effect of all funded projects across the city. While each project serves a unique purpose, together they create a powerful, integrated movement toward anti-displacement and equity-driven policy goals.

EDI advances Seattle's equity goals.

One of Seattle's four core values outlined in its Comprehensive Plan is Race and Social Equity, where limited resources and opportunities must be shared; and the inclusion of under-represented communities in decision-making processes is necessary.[10] In addition, the plan prioritizes "monitoring growth in locations where low-income households and people of color are at risk of displacement." **EDI projects are located in and plan to support some of the most vulnerable neighborhoods and communities within the city** ([Project Location and Overlap with Displacement and Equity](#)). Projects have successfully shown co-location with communities with high displacement risk and high equity concerns. (**Exhibits 3 and 4**).

Since its inception, EDI has invested in community-driven strategies in neighborhoods characterized by a history of racially driven disinvestment and significant populations of marginalized communities. **EDI is one of the few local programs that provide flexibility to invest in community-driven projects with a variety of benefits and goals.** It is also one of few that can be utilized with support from affordable housing funding to complete construction of multi-use facilities that provide both affordable housing and community spaces.

---

[10] Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan, Office of Planning and Community Development, 2022.

EDI fills a development and investment gap in Seattle which the market is not equipped to fill.

Many grantees' visions do not align with market trends, which often expedite redevelopment of sites and landmarks that are seen as both culturally significant and essential to citywide goals like economic revitalization or development of housing. EDI funding allows organizations to preserve or acquire spaces that keep communities intact while also asserting their role in the redevelopment of their neighborhoods. As one grantee put it:

> *"We want to control and own our land and facility to make our vision come true and ensure we can continue to serve communities."*

Key features of EDI projects are often uses that are in high demand but are costly to develop in market rate projects, such as affordable housing, daycares, community centers, and affordable small business space. Projects like the Shared Space Foundation/Duwamish Tribal Services partnership have been transformative for their site. The Heron's Nest project marks the first-ever effort to support the rematriation of land to the Duwamish Tribe, with the potential to greatly influence the Tribe's recognition efforts.[11]

> *"The Heron's Nest property was a dump site with a dilapidated house and degraded forest stands before we began our work, and now it's a community center buzzing with skills trainings, forest restoration, arts classes, a greenhouse, a tool library and more."*

With the property now cleaned and revitalized and new facilities in place, there is abundant space for a wide range of impactful community programs, educational initiatives, cultural events, traditional practices, gardening, farming, and more. **EDI funds projects which may not happen otherwise,** while simultaneously reducing the potential for displacement due to site redevelopment by securing community ownership of pivotal sites. In addition, **49% of projects who have been awarded EDI funds have been able to either obtain land ownership or improve their existing** sites to better serve their communities and reduce future chances of displacement of their services from their neighborhoods.

---

[11] The Heron's Nest, 2024.

"Locking down an asset for our community will continue to serve our residents for generations to come."

Funding is a significant barrier for organizations to acquire land and develop in Seattle. EDI injects funds into disinvested communities and allows community organizations to act as developers, making them more competitive with market rate developments in pace and funding. Estimations from grantees suggest a project takes 7-10 years to complete. Seattle Office of Housing (OH) has a similar 7-year timeline allotted in their Seattle Housing Levy Administrative & Financial Plan that funds similar affordable housing projects by experienced developers.[12] Over the eight years that EDI has funded projects, nine projects have been completed, ranging from full redevelopment of a site to renovations of existing spaces. An additional 25 projects are currently estimated to be completed by the end of 2025, which would result in 45% of projects funded by EDI completing in under the 10-year timeline, with many reaching operation significantly faster ([Project Status](#)). With the support from EDI, community organizations have been able to match similar timelines of experienced developers as well as timelines set out by OH. Along with being able to complete their projects on a similar schedule compared to the market, grantees also acknowledge the support that funding gives in the real estate market. As one grantee notes:

"Having secured EDI funding in hand allowed [us] to be an aggressive buyer in a difficult market and has allowed us to pursue new funding sources with seed capital already in hand."

Furthermore, EDI supports projects with community-oriented components and services built in, features which many developers must partner with local non-profits, government, or service organizations (i.e. health and human services, housing and homelessness services) to deliver to the market. In this way, EDI projects bypass what can become a tedious and difficult process to incorporate community-driven space or services in a development. For example, Chief Seattle Club leads with a unique Native worldview that shapes the services they provide. They have developed housing services unique and tailored for their community. Two of the eight housing and services projects have been funded by EDI and offer a variety of resources including day centers, women's clean and sober houses, elder housing, and transitional housing. These programs could not be reproduced by the

---

[12] Seattle Housing Levy Administrative & Financial Plan 2023, City of Seattle, 2023.

market purely due to the ingrained cultural perspective and connection by having these services directly from their own community. As one grantee said:

"A culturally relevant building that reflects our community's values of caring for the needs of everyone holistically. Each commercial space is managed by an organization that has the capacity and funding to operate without constant stress of grant apps."

EDI targets economic development toward marginalized groups and supports the creation of community anchors that prevent displacement.

Many EDI grantees share a central goal to create a community anchor which contributes to anti-displacement efforts. Grantees feel strongly that their services and support are instrumental for their communities and help reverse decades of housing, economic, and cultural displacement. For example, one grantee reports:

"[Our project] remains an important cultural anchor for SE Seattle in a new expanded facility where they are acknowledged, supported and recognized as a fabric of a diverse and equitable Seattle."

Many EDI grantees work toward community and economic empowerment through their own organizational values. The Nehemiah Initiative, which has received capacity building funds from EDI, in turn supports Black Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) in Seattle to develop land with affordable housing and community spaces. Their advocacy led to the Religious Organization Owned Property zoning ordinance, which increases affordable housing potential on parcels owned by religious organizations. They also run the Nehemiah Studio with the University of Washington, which pairs graduate students with Black-owned religious organizations to explore their development potential. There are a variety of goals and impacts throughout the city that are supported by EDI, which looks to grantees like:

"[Having our project] up and running and serving the CID community as a vibrant community gathering place, strengthening the sense of community, lifting up community history and culture, strengthening the sense of community."

"Healthy black and brown trans communities, youth, adults, families, and elders moving from residents to financial security and home

ownership backed by the full support of community throughout their time at [our organization]."

EDI empowers community-based organizations to guide public investments to directly meet local needs.

The EDI program has awarded approximately $116.4 million over nine award cycles. Due to their long-lasting outcomes, this investment in individual communities is impactful across all communities. **EDI is the only program in Seattle that is investing in community organizations with flexibility,** which allows those who know the community best to determine what services or spaces are needed most. Surveyed grantees define success in their work as their ability to meet the following community needs (**Exhibit 1**).

Exhibit 1. Respondent Descriptions of Success, Grantee Survey
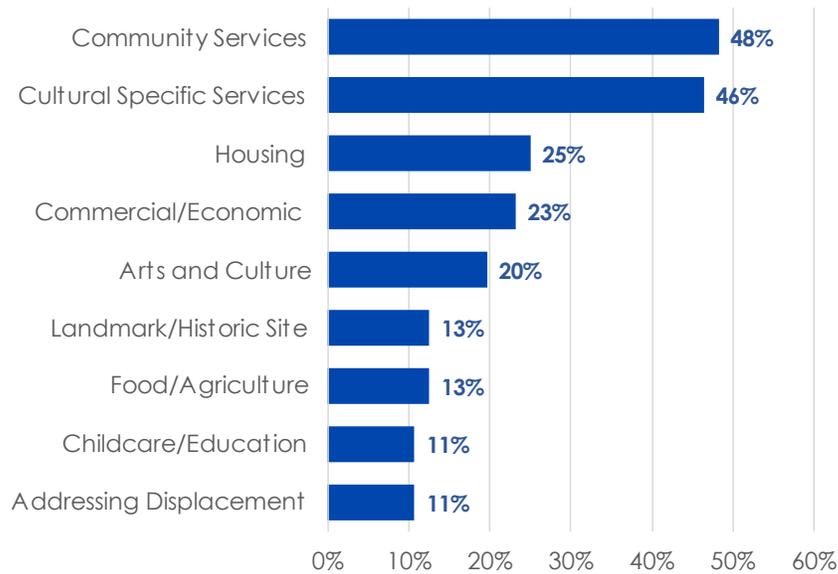
Source: EDI Grantee Survey, 2024; CAI, 2024

When asked about their vision of success for their projects, approximately half of respondents describe the community benefits that their project will provide**. For 48% of survey respondents, it is their ability to deliver services to the community that defines success for their organization**. Services include those for the surrounding neighborhood or their community in the greater Seattle region, and the acquisition of land or physical space for their project increases the quality and range of services they are able to provide. Culturally specific services for a community's identified needs (46%) are also commonly discussed as success for respondents. For example:

"Success looks like opening applications for families and elders, getting our "certificate of occupancy" for the beautiful units that we built for them and the amenities that come along with them, and the community is proud the building is there."

Other common milestones for success include provision of affordable housing (25%), commercial spaces or economic development support (23%), and arts and cultural spaces (20%) being secured for their neighborhoods. Putting the power to define their own success into grantees' hands is a crucial element of the EDI program, as it elevates the voices and needs of historically underserved communities and empowers them while at the same time expressing Seattle's investment in their futures. As one grantee said:

"Our plan is to sustainably cultivate an Indigenous arts campus, where Native artists can heal their connections to each other and the land, with public walking trails and cultural programs to benefit all our neighbors."

Broader Impacts

By explicitly prioritizing equity in its comprehensive planning, programming, and policies, **Seattle has positioned itself as a national leader in embedding equity considerations at every level of decision-making**. Through the EDI program, the City of Seattle tangibly moves these priorities forward and remains on the cutting edge of innovation to enact anti-displacement efforts and support community development.

Seattle is a national leader in prioritizing equity in planning efforts and policy.

Seattle was a national leader in planning when it made social equity one of the core values of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan. In 2015, Mayor Murray and the Seattle City Council unanimously approved Resolution 31577, which not only affirmed the City's core value of race and social equity, but also defined terms and directed staff to use an Equity Analysis to identify current disparities, create and report on equity measurements, and establish a stewardship structure that includes the expertise of those most negatively impacted by inequitable growth so that marginalized people can benefit from, and not be displaced or overly burdened by future growth.

Project Spotlight: Cham Refugee Community

The Community Center project is a 12,000+ sq ft, multi-use facility where families, youth, elders and the community will gather and receive culturally and linguistically relevant programs and vital services. This Center will serve as a community-based hub where newly arrived immigrants, refugees, low-income families, are connected to services like housing, job placement, transportation, English classes, and family and youth support programs. This holistic approach is critical for their success because navigating these systems is challenging and may cause families and individuals to lose out on vital services.

Source: Cham Community; Community Center Rendering.

Currently in the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan, the City is once again on the leading edge of planning for equity, this time by making Race and Social Equity a central core value and articulating the City's vision, goals, and policies to align with this value. **Today, the EDI program is the primary mechanism through which the City**

of Seattle advances its long-stated racial and social equity priorities.

EDI serves as a national example by demonstrating an innovative approach to enacting equity goals, investing in historically marginalized communities, and combating displacement.

EDI is innovative in its unique approach to anti-displacement by providing a pathway to community ownership of space and addressing the long-term sustainability of neighborhoods. It stands out for its focus on investing in historically disinvested communities by prioritizing co-creation, ensuring that investments align with and support the desires and existing programs of the community. This dual focus fosters a more inclusive and empowering model for community development that is not seen in other public programs across the country which focus on equitable development.

Project Spotlight: Estelita's Library
See Participant Snapshots for more information.

"[EDI] has been the vanguard of funding, showing other funders that we have a viable vision and plan and as a result we have received additional financial support because of EDI funding."

Source: Estelita's Library.