



Photo: Jocelyn RC

# Increasing Tree Equity and Decreasing Heat Domes

This summer was the hottest on record, leading to heat related deaths, wildfires, and climate chaos across the globe. In 2021, Washington experienced its worst heat wave in recent history, with 100 deaths between the week of June 26 – July 2. A quarter of those deaths occurred in King County, the state's most populous and diverse.

During heat events, Seattle and King County residents depend on tree canopy for its natural cooling effects, but not all neighborhoods have equitable tree coverage. According to the WA Environmental Health Disparities map, the industrialized riverways of the Duwamish and Green Rivers have the highest environmental health disparities and the highest population of immigrants and communities of color in the state. This same region has the lowest level of tree canopy and lost 3.5% canopy in the last five years. During heat waves, this can result in a 20-degree temperature variance compared to areas of the city with more trees. During the heat wave in 2021, ground temperatures in the Duwamish Valley exceeded 120° Fahrenheit.

Recently the Washington State Department of Natural Resources announced its adoption of the American Forests Tree Equity Collaborative, which will drive tree canopy investment throughout Washington's urban forests. In addition, Mayor Bruce Harrell announced a series of efforts to address the city's tree canopy goal of 30% coverage including:

- Plant 8,000 trees on public and private properties; plant 40,000 trees in parks and natural areas; perform maintenance on 40,000 trees.
- Implement a policy requiring three trees be planted for every healthy tree removed from city property, and two trees be planted for every tree that dies or is deemed hazardous or invasive.
- Develop a Tree Canopy Equity and Resilience Plan.

Seattle Parks Foundation is committed to ensuring the effectiveness of city, county and state initiatives focused on tree equity and canopy health. This summer we launched an ambitious effort to create the Seattle Tree Canopy Network. This network will bring together community-driven organizations throughout Seattle and King County and government agencies to address gaps in funding and coordination around tree canopy projects. Our goal is to bring public and private funds together in a coordinated large-scale investment in tree canopy where communities need it most. We will focus our work in four key areas:

1. Catalyzing community-driven canopy work
2. Connecting volunteers to meaningful tree canopy work
3. Growing green jobs, particularly in communities with low tree equity
4. Educating the next generation

Our grassroots community partnerships and relationships with government agencies make us well suited to be a convener of this work. But we can't do it without your support! We must build our team, and we need "all hands in the dirt" helping us ensure the success of this project.

[Learn More](#)

# Seattle Parks Foundation's First Partner Advisory Council

As fiscal sponsor to over 90 community projects throughout the region, we are constantly seeking insight from our partners to better serve them. From January through June we piloted a Partner Advisory Council, with members who represented projects focused on community building and recreation, and others who have been active for years to fundraise for the design and construction of new parks and public spaces.

Throughout the monthly sessions, attendees shared successes and

challenges of their projects, heard how others navigated similar scenarios, and contributed to our organizational planning and growth by providing feedback on current activities and policies in development.

The group accomplished an incredible amount in the six sessions, including building relationships that will bolster the efforts of those who champion thriving and equitable parks and public spaces.

Notable outcomes of the group include:

- Elevating SPF's awareness about the unique needs of groups that focus on activities and programming rather than capital projects, leading to greater activation of parks and healthy spaces.
- Supporting the update of our DEIJ Statement through reviews and feedback, in addition to comments

on our current language guidelines to ensure we are best representing the communities and partners we serve.

- Shaped our in-person partner celebration with a topic for our panel and ideas we implemented to promote conversation and a sense of welcome.
- Reviewed our practices around stipends and reimbursement leading to a clear policy that aims to reduce barriers for community participation.
- Gave feedback about the need for an orientation and the desire to connect across groups. As a result, our first partner orientation will take place in February, 2024!
- Reviewed the new website and participated in user testing to ensure partner needs were met prior to our launch in April.

The Advisory Council has been an invaluable resource to Seattle Parks Foundation and we are excited to welcome a second cohort in 2024.

## Looking for a way to unite your team in service?



50  
Volunteers



1  
city park



\$6,600 saved:  
SPR maintenance



10 yd<sup>3</sup>  
waste removed



16 yd<sup>3</sup>  
mulch distributed



Community  
donation

Our partners are often looking for volunteers to support their work in parks and public spaces! We create a tailored experience for you and your colleagues with consideration for your interests and abilities. The size and scope of projects varies based on the desires of your team. Get in touch to engage your team with projects throughout the region!



Mariner Moose and our President and CEO Rebecca Bear at Golden Gardens Park.

## MLB All-Star Beach Cleanup

On Saturday July 8th, Seattle Parks Foundation participated in a Beach Cleanup at Golden Gardens Park, as part of MLB All-Star Week. Over 150 community members came out to remove debris and trash from the beach. MLB staff were present, alongside nonprofit Players for the Planet, founded by former MLB star Chris Dickerson, and MiiR. Seattle Parks & Recreation provided the trash bags and collectors, and participants enjoyed a surprise appearance by Mariner Moose! Thanks to all who participated during this special volunteer opportunity and to MLB for their commitment to the environment. Seattle was proud to be host city for the 2023 All-Star Week!

Photo: Leah Bostwick



# Beyond the Troll

## Exploring the Art Installations of Troll's Knoll

Have you ever explored the forest area beyond the Fremont Troll? Our partners Friends of Troll's Knoll work year-round to maintain and add to the beauty of the area, engaging with artists and community members alike to create an educational and interactive greenspace.



**Mushroom Garden Installation (2023)** by  
Jeremy Collison of Salish  
Sea Mushrooms



**Mushrooms Lantern  
Sculptures (2023):**  
Michiko Tanaka and  
HaiYing Wu



**Moss Turtle (2021):**  
Michiko Tanaka and  
Mach 2 Arts

**Moss Turtle Hokora  
(2022):** Michiko  
Tanaka and Marcos  
Everstijn



**Troll's Knoll Forest  
Arch (2022):** Sculptor,  
Kim David Hall



**Ponderosa Pine  
Toolshed Mural (2021)**  
by Norma Baum

They've also worked extensively with Seattle Department of Transportation, and this fall they'll begin a collaborative and necessary slope stabilization and planting project. Looking ahead, Friends of Troll's Knoll are planning for more signage about the space's trees and mushroom garden, and will continue planting to create an improved habitat for butterflies on the site.

## Speaking Up for Their Future

Many of our partners' projects engage directly with youth as volunteers, leaders, and innovators, ensuring decisions that impact the future of our region are guided by those who will be living in it.

## Youth-led Environmental Advocacy

Our changing climate is impacting the region through heat and smoke events, flooding, and threats to our food system. This is such a wide-ranging issue, and climate solutions need to be sought at every level.

Our partners Duwamish Valley Sustainability Association (DVSA) empower youth to take care of their health and care for their river. They provide opportunities for young people from communities of color to be trained in

(Continued on page 5)



In the **Adolescentes Animados** project, youth develop animated videos, 3D shots, articles, and advertising spots in order to educate the Duwamish Valley community on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.



With **Cuidadores de Agua**, DVSA trains youth in source control and physical-chemical parameters of water quality. They are gathering data to determine the best point for monitoring the health of the watershed.



The goal of their **R3made Organic Waste** project is to help the community understand the significance of organic waste on the environment by learning the history of food waste, reviewing infographics, and comparing statistics.

36%

of our partners' projects are focused on introducing neighborhood-based climate solutions like these. Learn more about our partners and other work to expand equity in public spaces, create activated parks and healthy people, and increase community and civic engagement.

[Learn More](#)

STEAM topics (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Math) to develop programs and projects that will grow healthier, more sustainable communities and help to jump start their professional careers.



**The Future is Solar** is another DVSA project where youth learn the basics of electricity by discussing the history of energy, how electricity moves, and the various methods of production and generation.

## Pathways Park Poetry

After over six years of preparation, fundraising, and planning, construction began this year to rebuild Burke Gilman Playground into Pathways Park. The Pathways Park Teen Advisory Team has been integral to connecting community needs to the development plans. As they became leaders of the project, they also realized the power of their voices. With encouragement from local poet Daemond Arrindell, they wrote a group poem to show people what they believe about themselves, inspired by their work to create a more accessible, inclusive, and welcoming space for all.

Pathways Park is anticipated to be completed in early 2024.

When you see me...  
You fear me  
You wouldn't like to see me  
with the weapon of education  
But I don't want revenge  
I want equality

I am more than...  
An angry Black woman  
I am an ocean  
I'm as powerful as my words  
And I hold my community together.

When you see me...  
You see weak  
Like I'm a puppet that can't  
stand up for myself.

I am more than...  
Someone who lets people  
control me.  
I am a waterfall.  
I am independent.  
I am a powerful force.

When you see me...  
You think loud  
You think my words will strangle you  
like a rope

I am more than...  
the sassy Black girl on your favorite  
TV show  
I am the earth  
If you give me respect, I will give you  
comfort  
I am the earth  
I am nurturing so you can feel calm.

When you see me...  
You see juvenile  
Like thunder  
You feel scared because I'm dark  
and bold.

I am more than...  
My stereotype.  
I am the sun.  
Shining bright  
Educated  
And looking for a future.

When you see me  
You feel the need to judge me  
Like you know me  
You think I can't speak up for myself

I am more than...  
The shy girl in the corner  
I am a volcano  
I can explode with kindness.

When you see me...  
You see Black  
You feel uncomfortable  
Like you'd rather stand on the bus  
than sit next to me

I am more than...  
My skin color  
I am sand.  
No two of us are alike.  
I'm an individual.  
A small piece of something bigger.

When you see me...  
You see charity case  
You feel the need to help me  
But I don't want to be your cause for  
a march.

I am more than...  
Poverty  
I am a mountain.  
Standing tall  
As I'm climbing up reaching my  
goals.

We are more than what you see.

**Written by:**  
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# Rainier Beach Projects

As a historically redlined and underinvested neighborhood, Rainier Beach residents are at a high risk for displacement as neighborhood improvements are made. Project leaders have coordinated and connected across the neighborhood to reflect, uplift, and build capacity among community members so that current residents are able to enjoy these enhanced public spaces.



## Rainier Beach Skatepark

In 2007, the Seattle Citywide Skatepark Plan designated Rainier Beach Playfield as a potential site for a District Skatepark. Starting in 2018, CHAMPS Resource & Service Center and Parents for Skateparks have been hosting events to discuss a new skateboard park that would attract youth and provide a safe gathering place.

This is a community-led project and the design will naturally integrate skateboarding into the surrounding landscape and feature a mix of street and transition-style terrain, with elements for all age groups and ability levels. They hope to break ground in 2024.



## Be'er Sheva Park

The plans for an improved Be'er Sheva were cultivated during a robust community engagement process that truly reflects the dreams, wishes, and needs of the community. The Be'er Sheva Park renovation project is a multi-phased approach. The first phase included a comfort station mural which was completed by youth, young adults, and community members in June, 2021. The



## Detective Cookie Chess Park

In 2006, Seattle Police Detective Denise "Cookie" Bouldin started a chess club for Rainier Beach youth. Since then, Detective Cookie's chess club has provided a safe haven and created an opportunity for neighbors of all ages to interact and build community.

To honor her work and support local youth, a group of community leaders and volunteers formed the Friends of Detective Cookie Chess Park and worked to fundraise in support of a permanent chess park and community gathering space, which opened in September, 2022. This summer, a permanent sign was installed with artwork depicting Detective Cookie, sponsored by Rainier Beach a Safe Place for Youth.

next phase is the "Upland" renovation work that includes improved waterfront access, a concrete boardwalk, covered gathering spaces, lighted walking paths, BBQs and picnic tables, a cultural performance stage and artistic signage. The next two phases include the "In-Water" work, which will provide habitat enhancement for the Be'er Sheva shoreline followed by the fitness equipment and play area installation. Construction for phase two began in June, 2023.



## Rainier Beach Urban Farm & Wetlands

Operated by the Friends of Rainier Beach Urban Farm & Wetlands and Tilth Alliance, the farm is a 7-acre site dedicated to organic food production and distribution, environmental education, and wetlands restoration.

They celebrate the diverse people and cultures of Rainier Beach, working with community to gain skill and knowledge in food production, and towards achieving food and environmental justice. In addition to numerous educational and community outreach initiatives, RBUFW provides thousands of pounds of fresh, organic produce to community members annually to increase accessibility to nutritious and healthy food options.





Photo: Kae-Lin Wang

## The People Make the Place

Our partners unite community members in shared purpose to increase enjoyment, accessibility, and equitable access to parks and public spaces. Some are not based out of a particular location but rather find their “place” together, in community and civic engagement.

They create diverse and inclusive cultural and community spaces while celebrating each other. We are proud to serve as a nonprofit umbrella that enables these groups to raise money to support their growth.

### Welcome new partners!

Ampersand Bikes Club  
Bhutanese Community Resource Center  
Cal Anderson Park Alliance  
CANOES  
Connected Parks, Connected Community  
Green Lake Table Tennis Center  
Fix the Burke-Gilman  
Meadowbrook Luminaria Walk  
Meadowbrook Night Out  
Othello Park Alliance  
Outdoor Asian National  
Ridge to River Executive Steering Committee  
Tai Chi at Benefit Park  
West Seattle Alki Beach Pride

### Sign Up for eNews

Subscribe to learn more about the groups and volunteers we serve as they lead park and public space activities throughout the region.

[Sign Up](#)



Photo: OPA

The family-friendly **Othello Park International Festival** celebrated the many cultures and interests of SE Seattle on August 13th.

### Summer in Seattle Community Celebrations



Photo: Kae-Lin Wang

**Ampersand Bikes Club** offers monthly Ramen meetups and creates a welcoming space to foster safety and belonging for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color through food and bikes.



Founded by two Black women, **Alki Beach Pride** is an LGBTQ+ event that promotes awareness and inclusion for all ages and families to enjoy festivities “at the beach.”



Free **Tai Chi at Benefit Park** was offered in July and August as a peaceful, multi-generational, multi-cultural, and inclusive activity. Sessions were offered in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Cantonese.



Photo: Puget Soundkeeper

The **Duwamish River Festival** brought community together to Unite for Justice in South Park with information booths about climate and neighborhood initiatives, free food, music and more.



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Celebration**



**Create  
Your Own**



**Join  
a Race**

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