

Tree bark in Volunteer Park, photo by Jocelyn RC / Lightnotes.

Building Community Around Climate and Equity

As Seattle grows, the impacts of climate change—including extreme heat—are becoming more severe and inequitable. Communities of color and low-income neighborhoods often have fewer trees, which means they experience hotter temperatures, poorer air quality, and fewer health and wellness benefits.

Tree equity matters because:

- Low-income and Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) communities often have 50% less tree coverage than their white, wealthier counterparts.
- Tree canopy reduces urban heat by up to 10°F.
- Tree canopy plays an important role in stormwater management, keeping the Puget Sound and our lakes clean for people and fish.
- Neighborhoods with higher canopy coverage experience improved mental health and air quality.

Tree equity isn't just
about planting trees—it's
about sowing justice, and
the time to act is now.

Our partners in the **Tree Equity Network** share a common goal of protecting and building awareness about the importance of trees. The wide range of experiences, access, and expertise that exists within the network allows for cross-sector and cross-neighborhood collaboration. Sharing resources and connections among the network broadens each partner's ability to protect and plant more trees to benefit the health and well-being of people in our region.



Tree Equity Network Volunteer Day with Green SeaTac Partnership

The network aims to increase public awareness about the role tree equity plays in building a habitable and climate resilient environment. As a collective, we support grassroots and citywide efforts that advocate for policy changes, empower young environmentalists and foster a community of action-oriented King County residents who care about their neighbors.

Continued on page 6

Thank you to everyone who celebrated our 25th anniversary with us throughout the year!

Our outreach and activities connected us with new community projects, grassroots leaders, public space supporters, and park advocates. We are grateful for all the love and support.



Tomo Nakayama performing on stage at MOHAI, photo by Danny Ngan.

September 20, 2024

Love Parks Gala

In September, we hosted our first gala in 14 years: the Love Parks Gala at the Museum of History and Industry. It was a true delight to share the stories of our community award winners, celebrating their contributions to our shared spaces: Debbie McNeil, Robert Stephens Jr., and Paige Reischl. The evening included live musical performances by Tomo Nakayama, NĚSTRĀ, Tah-Jae Shanté and Tazz Enrico during our main program – along with Whitney Mongé during our VIP Reception! This event was made possible with lead sponsorship contributions from Amazon, Delta Airlines, Seattle Parks and Recreation, T-Mobile, and many others. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors and gala guests, we surpassed our fundraising goal for the night, increased awareness about the work of our community partners, and celebrated the milestone of 300 projects supported in 25 years.



Rebecca Bear with panelists at Town Hall Seattle, photo by Danny Ngan.

April 22, 2025

Earth Day Panel at Town Hall Seattle

On Earth Day, April 22, community members arrived at Town Hall Seattle ready to connect with over a dozen grassroots community and strategic partners and learn from a brilliant panel of solution-oriented leaders. Guests traveled from all over the region to attend our event on *Seattle's Innovation and Leadership in Climate Equity* featuring Joycelyn Chui from Restaurant 2 Garden, Howard Frumkin, M.D., Mickey Fearn, and Ashley R. Townes, Be'er Sheva Park Project Technical Advisor. *The Stranger's* Editor-in-Chief, Hannah Murphy Winter, moderated an invigorating conversation amongst our panelists as well as an audience Q&A session.

Prior to the panel discussion, our grassroots community partners shared their work and networked with guests in the Action Atrium, with robust conversations continuing after the event. We are grateful to *The Stranger*, Trust for Public Land, Alaska Airlines and Umpqua/Columbia Bank for their sponsorship of our Earth Day event.

Thank you for supporting the King County Parks Levy!

In August, voters had the opportunity to renew funding for over 250 parks, playfields, swimming pools, and hands-on learning destinations—in every city and across rural King County. We are grateful that the King County Parks Levy has been renewed with over 70% support from parks lovers like you. Thank you for voting with parks and public spaces in mind!



Nordstrom flagship employees volunteer with Friends of Lake Union Park.

May 2025

Corporate Engagement Restoration Events

We proudly hosted volunteer restoration events with partners like Amazon, REI, BNY, Nordstrom, and others this spring and summer. In April, Friends of Lake Union Park hosted Nordstrom flagship employees, who spent the day pulling weeds, picking up garbage, and wrangling invasive blackberry bushes. Amazon joined us at Denny Park, Bell Street Park, Urban Triangle Park, Lake Union Park, Cascade Park & Playfields, and Cheasty Trails & Bike Park during their Global Month of Volunteering in May. We also hosted a restoration session at Myrtle Edwards Park with Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR), where BNY employees worked alongside SPR's Senior Gardener. In June, we spent a day clearing up Crystal Springs Park with volunteers from REI, Green Tukwila Partnership, and Forterra.

We are grateful to everyone who volunteers their time and energy to help make our parks and public spaces better places. The impact of your generosity is felt throughout the Seattle area!



Paige Reischl, Kae-Lin Wang, Pamela Lim, and Ariel Wang, on the balcony of Washington 1000 during the Annual Partner Celebration.

June 5, 2025

Annual Partner Celebration

This year's Annual Partner Celebration at the Washington 1000 building brought our staff, board, and fiscally sponsored partners together for a memorable evening filled with meaningful connections, beautiful city views, and delicious food. Guests enjoyed hands-on creativity at our haiku and watercolor stations and shared their passion for open spaces and partnership with one another. They drew inspiration from our engaging keynote speaker, Paige Reischl, who discussed her experience with finding and growing a community around the Pathways Park project.

Events like this remind us how powerful our collective efforts can be. We're grateful for our partners' continued support and commitment—and we look forward to all that we'll continue to accomplish together.

Pop-Up Concerts in the Park

In July and August 2025, we presented free concerts on park stages throughout the city in celebration of our 25th anniversary. Local talent took the stage at each show in this Pop-Up Concerts in the Park series, celebrating communities throughout Seattle—from Magnuson Park Amphitheater to the Kubota Garden Terrace Overlook—and other beautiful outdoor spaces in between!



July 23
The Whags
Magnuson Park Amphitheater



August 20
The Residency Showcase
Volunteer Park Amphitheater



July 30
Black Stax
Dr. Blanche Lavizzo Park Stage



August 27
The Jaws of Brooklyn
Waterfront Park



July 9
REPOSADO
Seward Park Amphitheater



July 16
El Guanaco
Be'er Sheva Park Cultural Stage



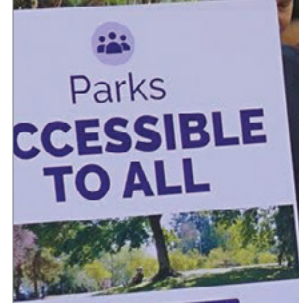
August 6
Elnah Jordan
Kubota Garden Terrace Overlook

All concerts featured opening sets by artists in The Residency program. Our Pop-Up Concerts in the Park series was generously sponsored by Amazon, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and Muckleshoot Indian Tribe. Thanks to the artists, our sponsors, and to everyone who came to dance, listen, and enjoy!

[Read about these concerts and see more photos!](#)

[Visit our blog](#)

Becoming a Global, Welcoming, and Climate Resilient City



SPF President and CEO Rebecca Bear speaks at 2022 Seattle Park District press conference in Pioneer Square.



“Genius is becoming something you were all along.”

– David Whyte, local poet

Seattle has a long and rich history of building public spaces that celebrate the natural beauty of our region and support the unique nature of our neighborhoods. Over 100 years ago, Seattle’s founders implemented the visionary Olmsted plan to create parks and greenways that have established a legacy of grandeur we still enjoy today.

Our city is on the cusp of another transition as we continue to welcome new residents and accommodate those already here.

Public spaces depend on the power of the collective to ensure they are made accessible to all, as spaces for connection, activation, and resilience.

As we plan for the future growth of our city, Seattle urgently needs both housing and green infrastructure to ensure we secure the quality of life we cherish for our future residents. As our climate changes and Seattle heats up, we have a unique opportunity to be a global green city by preserving the tree canopy and park spaces we have while building more

greenways, park spaces, and adding canopy to our heat islands.

Ensuring the character of our neighborhoods and the climate resiliency of the city is on the ballot this November – and every ballot in the foreseeable future.

The voices of the people who live, work, and recreate in our many varied neighborhoods need to be heard and included in the future design of our city.

November 4th is Election Day in Seattle, and we want to help you understand how the Mayoral and City Council candidates’ policies and experiences are aligned with parks and public spaces. This is a very important election when it comes to climate resilience and equity in our region. Visit our website to hear directly from candidates as we lead up to the November election.

[Learn more](#)

In addition to creating resources to help our community get to know candidates and understand how their priorities might align with a vision for a healthy vibrant city, Seattle Parks Foundation:

- 1 Takes a leadership role in advocacy for the Metropolitan Park District Levy (over \$1.2B secured in support of parks and public spaces since 2008).
- 2 Offers an advocacy platform to our community partners, enabling them to engage their networks in action around public space initiatives.
- 3 Fosters relationship building with community partners across public agencies and with elected officials, in support of projects that benefit the region.

Our goal is to ensure Seattle continues becoming the beautiful, vibrant, global green city it strives to be. Join us and ask our city leaders to do the same this November!



Tree Equity Network Volunteer Day with DNDA

Building Community Around Climate and Equity

Continued from page 1

Ultimately, the Tree Equity Network addresses gaps in funding and coordination around urban tree canopy projects across King County by:

- Connecting tree advocates and civic leaders to push for common sense policies that support both tree protection and housing density.
- Hosting interactive and educational workshops that intentionally engage youth.
- Bringing local, private, and foundation funds together in a coordinated large-scale investment in tree canopy where our communities need it most.
- Collaboratively generating initiatives and efforts with high impact and large community buy-in.
- Educating more of the community on why this work matters - and engaging them in it, too!

Individuals and organizations from Seattle and South King County who are passionate about and invested in protecting trees and spreading awareness about their importance in climate resilience are part of the Tree Equity Network:

- Beacon Hill Council
- Birds Connect Seattle
- City of Burien Parks & Recreation
- Delridge Neighborhoods Development Association (DNDA)
- Duwamish Alive Coalition
- Dirt Corps
- Environmental Coalition of South Seattle
- Emerald Alliance for People, Nature and Community
- Green Seattle Partnership
- Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area
- Serve Ethiopians WA
- Tree Action Seattle
- Trees and People Coalition
- Trees for Seattle Parks
- 90+ individual participants

Civic engagement is vital to the success of our network. We foster coalition-building through community engagement and collaboration. From intensive workshops to restoration work parties, the Tree Equity Network has been busy!

Network Meetings

- **Good News Workshop:** Environmental Coalition of South Seattle, Trees and People Coalition, and the City of Seattle Office of Sustainability and Environment gave presentations about youth and community engagement.
- **Rooted in the Future: Who, What, How?:** King County gave a presentation about their Heat Mitigation Strategy and government involvement in tree equity. Dirt Corps also shared about their Outdoor Innovator Program and the value of thoughtfully engaging young people in environmental work.

Workshops

- Intro to Urban Forestry Management
- Implicit Bias Training

In March, YMCA Earth Service Corps hosted their annual Environmental Symposium at University of Washington. Our Program Manager of Urban Climate Resilience Projects Celeste Staples had the opportunity to present the workshop Branches of Hope: The Power of Trees and The Power of You to over 30 high school students.



YMCA Earth Service Corps Environmental Symposium in March 2025.

Restoration Work Parties

In April and August, Burien Parks & Recreation, Delridge Neighborhoods Development Association, Dirt Corps with Trees for Seattle, Green SeaTac Partnership, and Green Seattle Partnership hosted five restoration work parties at different parks and greenspaces throughout King County.

Interested in joining Tree Equity Network to cultivate greener, healthier neighborhoods in King County?

[Get involved](#)

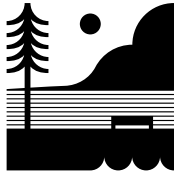
Welcome New Partners!

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come Out Seattle • Crown Hill Emergency Hub • Friends of Bryant Park • Fruits to Fronds Restoration • Meadowbrook Community Gardens and Orchards (MCGO) • Montañistas de Washington • Nosotros En Naturaleza (NEN) • Ochre Outdoor Learning • Olympic Hills Emergency Hub • RAVEN (Radio Access and Volunteer Emergency Networks) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ReuMo • Rewild Eastlake • Seattle Adopt a Street Program • Sirius Astronomy • Stone Ave N. Mural • Waters Median Project |
|--|---|

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](#)



SEATTLE PARKS
FOUNDATION

PO Box 3541
Seattle, WA 98124-3541

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT NO. 6933

Tania Mueller pulling ivy.

Maximize Your Impact

Did you know that thousands of companies match donations made by their employees to organizations like ours?

Tania Mueller, an avid volunteer with A Cleaner Alki, has a portion of her salary automatically deducted and donated to support their efforts through her employer. Her employer then makes a contribution for her volunteer hours – and matches her donation. Triple the impact!

Follow Tania's lead and ask your employer whether they offer automatic donations or other employee giving options. If not, you may still be able to get your contribution matched after-the-fact by submitting your donation receipt. Make a donation today and use the Double the Donation search bar to get started.

[Donate Today](#)