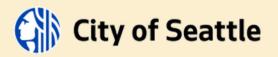
GREEN NEW DEAL OVERSIGHT BOARD 2025-2026 BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS





2025-2026 BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADVANCE CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Date: June 7, 2024

To: Mayor Bruce Harrell, Council President Nelson, Councilmember Woo, Councilmember Morales, Councilmember Hollingsworth, Councilmember Kettle, Councilmember Moore, Councilmember Rivera, Councilmember Saka, Councilmember Strauss

From: The Green New Deal Oversight Board Executive Committee

cc: Director Jessyn Farrell, Director Dan Eder, Climate Justice Director Lylianna Allala, Fiscal and Policy Manager Saroja Reddy, Policy Analyst Yolanda Ho, Fiscal and Policy Analyst Akshay Iyengar

Honorable Mayor Harrell and Esteemed Council,

The Green New Deal Oversight Board (GND Oversight Board) is writing to submit our 2025-2026 Biennium Budget Recommendations. Per <u>Green New Deal (GND) Ordinance 125926</u>, our Board's mission is to eliminate climate pollution in Seattle by 2030, advance frontline community resiliency and economic inclusion, and prioritize equity, social justice, and community-identified climate solutions. The GND Oversight Board does this by:

- Recommending systemic changes and budget priorities to the Mayor, City Council, City departments, and advisory boards
- Supporting departmental planning and implementation
- Coordinating efforts with City departments and related advisory groups

The GND Oversight Board both values Seattle's climate and environmental leadership to date, and also sees the need for continued deep investments in communities on the front lines of the climate crisis.

The 2021 heat dome alone <u>killed over 400 Washingtonians and sent thousands more to emergency</u> <u>rooms</u>. This tragic climate event is just one example of the systemic failures – across multiple sectors and institutions – to protect people from climate change and demonstrates the urgent need for life-saving climate investments for Seattle's communities.

Hotter summers, increased flooding and atmospheric rivers, droughts, and a regular and ongoing occurrence of poor air quality days each summer due to wildfire smoke and pollution are taking its toll. We know City leadership understands that public health and safety, livelihoods, our local economy, and our built and natural environments are on the line as these life-threatening climate events are only going to increase in severity and frequency in this decade and beyond.

Seattle is a <u>recognized global leader</u> in environmental policymaking and implementation, in large part because of the investments our City has made in advancing climate and environmental justice through the Green New Deal legislation. Seattle continues to make strides in its response to the climate crisis by putting race and social justice and frontline communities' needs at the heart of the City's investments. Under Mayor Harrell's leadership and with unanimous backing from City Council, we are on our way to decarbonizing large-scale commercial buildings via the Building Emissions Performance Standard (BEPS). BEPS demonstrates our City's capacity to urgently address complex issues connected to the climate crisis. The City's deep stakeholder engagement of both building owners and climate advocates to reach consensus on bold and transformative climate policies and investments gives communities hope that we can tackle the problem at scale when we work together.

Now, more than ever, Seattle's communities need climate solutions that make real, lasting impacts in their everyday lives. The Green New Deal for Seattle is the vehicle toward creating an inclusive workforce and improving environmental health outcomes, all while reducing our emissions.

The following three pillars for Seattle's Green New Deal outline the solutions to advance climate justice and build a better future for our communities:

- Address the climate crisis and environmental injustice: Support strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions while also mitigating environmental injustices.
- Invest in an inclusive, low-carbon economy: Promote living wage climate careers and advance small business development to bolster clean technology innovations, especially for those experiencing economic inequities such as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, women, and youth with the goal to create a diverse, inclusive, and equitable low-carbon economy.
- **Promote health and well-being in overburdened communities:** Deploy infrastructure and create strategies that reduce, mitigate, or eliminate environmental health inequities and invest in community-led solutions that foster resilience and safety.

We are confident that funding strategies to advance these pillars will directly benefit overburdened communities who bear the brunt of harmful climate impacts.

To achieve this work, the City must stay committed to the current legislated uses for the Payroll Expense Tax (PET) revenue. The PET revenue provides a clear pathway for City Departments to work collaboratively with one another and with community partners to tackle root causes of climate issues that matter most to Seattle's communities. In recognition of the City's current budget shortfall, we have developed recommendations that are focused on smart climate investments that build on current City work, leverage existing state and federal resources, and respond to the intersecting issues that voters care most about.

As a Board, we are energized by the policy successes of last year and will continue to support the City's commitment to urgently act to address the climate crisis. We welcome any opportunity to discuss our recommendations and strategies for advancing climate and environmental justice for Seattle's communities.

Respectfully,

Debolina Banifee

Debolina Banerjee () GND Oversight Board Co-Chair

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Peter Hasegawa GND Oversight Board Co-Chair

Nina Olivier GND Oversight Board Citywide Member At-Large

Green New Deal Oversight Board Executive Committee

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KEY STRATEGIES TO ADVANCE CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The GND Oversight Board's Budget Recommendations put these six key strategies for climate and environmental justice into action. Each recommendation includes icons for the strategies the recommendation would advance. If prioritized, these strategies have the potential to lift people out of poverty and revitalize our economy, protect human and ecosystem health, and ensure that every living being has what they need to cope with and adapt to our changing climate.



Promote climate resilience and protect health in frontline communities: Invest in proven Indigenous and community-led solutions that build social cohesion, increase public safety, and protect health and livelihoods at the scale needed to keep up with the pace of our changing climate. Implementing community-scale interventions that protect against extreme temperatures, wildfire smoke, flooding, and other hazards will ensure progress toward making sure every member of a frontline community is equipped to adapt to climate change.



Decarbonize housing while preventing displacement: Create and expand programs to decarbonize housing while ensuring all residents, regardless of income, can live in safe, affordable, efficient, and healthy homes. This includes single-family and large-scale, multi-family residences for renters and homeowners alike. Decarbonization strategies have the power to reduce emissions citywide and make homes more resilient to our changing climate.



Leverage federal & state dollars for green infrastructure: We are at a pivotal moment in the environmental funding landscape where our state and federal governments recognize the need to make deep investments in green technologies and infrastructure to mitigate and protect against the most harmful effects of climate change. Continue to invest City funds in order to maximize the potential for large contributions from federal and state governments that advance a Green New Deal for Seattle.

Develop our green and regenerative economy: The demand for climate-conscious technologies and green solutions continues to soar year after year. Investments in new market sectors in the green and circular economies now will pay off for generations to come.



Develop our workforce: Invest in workforce development for those underrepresented in the trades to ensure that there is sufficient supply of well-trained workers in the high-road jobs needed to achieve Seattle's climate goals while also paving the way for economic opportunities and generational wealth.



Advance environmental justice: To uphold the City's value of advancing racial and social justice, the City must work at the intersection of addressing environmental hazards and past racialized planning practices. This includes eliminating pollution starting in communities who are most overburdened by toxic waste as well as just and equitable climate action planning and investments that prioritize frontline communities.

CONTINUE TO INVEST IN EXISTING PROGRAMS THAT ARE SUCCESSFULLY ADVANCING CLIMATE JUSTICE

Continue Funding Existing City Climate Justice Initiatives

Investment: Maintain funding and staffing for ongoing Green New Deal Initiatives across City government. This includes but is not limited to: the Environmental Justice Fund, the Building Accelerator Program to support under-resourced buildings' compliance with the Building Emissions Performance Standard (BEPS), the Construction and Clean Energy Training Program that concretely increases access to economic justice and workforce development opportunities, and existing equitable transportation electrification work.

Rationale: The GND Oversight Board recognizes and applauds the City of Seattle for its climate investments made to date. As the pace of climate change impacts on Seattle's communities continues to increase, now is the time to double down on the City's commitment to reduce emissions and advance climate justice.

Expand Clean Heat Program: 30 x 30 Campaign to Install 30k Additional Heat Pumps by 2030 and Invest in Electrification

Investment: The Clean Heat Program is on track to meeting the goal of transitioning all oil tank-heated homes to electric heat pumps by 2030. Build on the success of the Clean Heat program with the following investments:

- Accelerate electric appliance adoption through the 30 X 30 campaign. The Clean Heat Program would target a goal of 2,000 households for full conversions by pairing existing state and federal funds with GND allocated funds.
- Offer additional incentives for households in Seattle to go beyond heat pumps to electric water heating and cooking. These incentives should include specific provisions to ensure households that rent also receive the benefits of this program, such as outreach to landlords and property managers about property upgrade incentives.
- Ensure that this work creates good green jobs with provisions including prevailing wage, apprenticeship utilization standards, and targeted local hire.
- Develop an implementation plan in coordination with City Light to leverage state and federal funding for life-saving and cost-saving home weatherization and electrification measures such as: insulation and air sealing, advanced window technologies, energy recovery ventilation systems, passive solar heating and cooling, solar thermal systems, and smart thermostats and zoning systems.



Rationale: Extreme heat is the number one killer of all climate-related events combined. The 2021 heat dome alone <u>killed over 400 Washingtonians and sent thousands more to</u> <u>emergency rooms</u>. Seattle residents' health depends on developing a myriad of decarbonization and weatherization strategies to create more climate-ready homes as extreme heat events are expected to occur with more severity and frequency. Transitioning to heat pumps as well as other home weatherization and electrification measures offers multiple benefits such as heating, cooling, indoor air quality, energy efficiency, and cost savings.

Expand the Clean Buildings Accelerator for Affordable Multifamily Housing Buildings

Investment: Build on the existing Clean Building Accelerator Program to focus on coaching, project management, and capital support for under-resourced nonprofit and affordable multifamily buildings that need to comply with the Building Emissions Performance Standard (BEPS).

Other considerations:

- Proactively identify opportunities to leverage state Climate Commitment Act (CCA) and federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funds for the clean energy transition.
- Work done through the Clean Building Accelerator Program should use priority hire and apprenticeship utilization requirements or development agreements with local unions to provide good green jobs.
- Identify potential collaboration points between OSE, OH, and SHA, such as creating a BEPS Accelerator program specifically for affordable housing within OH.
- Create position(s) for programmatic staff to manage funding and culturally relevant tenant outreach.
- Identify metrics for success that ensure that the City is making strides toward its climate and equity goals, and report on those metrics on a biennial basis.

Rationale: An estimated <u>400 nonprofit or affordable housing buildings</u> in Seattle will need to transition away from fossil fuels in order to comply with BEPS. Meanwhile, low-income residents in these buildings have few resources to cope and are among the most vulnerable to the harmful effects of heatwaves and wildfire smoke events. These residents would benefit greatly from the cost savings by living in a more energy efficient home. To support this transition toward clean energy and protect many of Seattle's lower income residents' health and pocketbooks, under-resourced building owners will need project management support, coaching, and technical assistance for capital upgrades.

Invest in Climate-Ready Community-Serving Facilities

Investment: Fund a two-pronged approach to create a network of community and City owned climate-ready facilities to support the: 1) implementation of strategies outlined in the forthcoming Citywide Resilience Hubs Plan and 2) Municipal Energy Efficiency Program's (MEEP) existing work to upgrade community-serving facilities in frontline communities.

- Invest in the implementation of strategies outlined in the forthcoming Citywide Resilience Hubs Plan which will include recommendations for how community-owned facilities can effectively operate a resilience hub for everyday needs while also being ready to respond before, during, and after a disruption or emergency. City investments now can support community-based organizations in their efforts to leverage federal funds for community resilience strategies and capital improvements.
- Continue to invest in MEEP to support upgrades of City-owned community-serving facilities for clean energy and climate resilience. Specifically, transition gas boilers to heat pumps, upgrade existing HVAC systems for air filtration, ensure a highly reliable grid, and utilize clean energy solutions like solar and backup batteries.

Other Considerations for MEEP Investments:

- Prioritize community-serving facilities in frontline communities, such as the City's designated anti-displacement zones.
- Installation work should utilize City's existing Community Workforce Agreement.
- Identify opportunities to leverage existing state and federal funding such as state Climate Commitment Act funds or qualifying federal Inflation Reduction Act Direct Pay projects to recoup installation costs.
- As the City invests in these upgrades, include opportunities for community cohesion, education, and resourcing through programmatic investments such as a tool or emergency preparedness resource library, trainings, etc.
- Work with existing City engagement specialists and liaison programs to do focused outreach about the services these community-serving facilities provide to groups who are <u>most at risk of experiencing disproportionate health impacts from climate</u> <u>events such as</u>: BIPOC communities, people with low-incomes or wealth, youth, older adults, pregnant people, linguistically isolated people, outdoor workers and indoor workers in substandard work environments, people with disabilities or chronic illnesses, people experiencing homelessness, and the LGBTQ+ community.

Rationale: Heat waves, flooding, and wildfire smoke events are becoming our new normal and Seattle's residents and workers need safe and accessible places to seek refuge and protect their health during and after a climate-related emergency. The City must invest in the strategies included in the forthcoming Citywide Resilience Hubs Plan as well as Cityowned community-serving facilities, specifically in frontline communities, to meet the needs residents and workers have at the scale of the climate crisis.



Create Green Jobs by Greening our City

Investment: Implement greening strategies in formerly redlined neighborhoods and frontline communities while also creating long-term green jobs with low barriers to access.

- Make initial investments to fund the implementation of actions included in the Sustainability Goal from the <u>Mayor's Recommended Seattle Transportation Plan</u> such as: planting more trees and native plants, creating and maintaining urban gardens, building green roofs and vegetated spaces, planting trees and greenery at bus stops and other major transit centers, and increasing green stormwater infrastructure.
- Invest in the ongoing work at Seattle Parks & Recreation to create pathways for green jobs in urban forestry and ensure the inclusion of considerations for equitable hiring pathways that create and maintain economic opportunities for women & BIPOC workers.
- Invest in the implementation of strategies from the forthcoming Tree Canopy Equity Plan.

Rationale: The benefits of planting trees, landscaping with natural elements, and installing permeable materials are a core strategy for climate resiliency in cities worldwide. Investing in Seattle's green spaces in BIPOC communities who are <u>disproportionally losing canopy</u> <u>cover</u> provides multiple benefits such as: mitigating the heat island effect and stormwater pollution runoff, protecting and restoring natural habitats, improving human and ecosystem/species health outcomes, sequestering climate pollution, advancing Seattle's climate and environmental justice goals, and creating green career pathways.

WMBE Support Program

Investment: Leverage existing state funding for Women and Minority Business Enterprises (WMBE) contractors by investing City resources that would increase technical capacity and equitable equipment access for WMBE contractors in order to meet the City's existing WMBE goals. The City currently has funding to support WMBE contractors, but additional funding is needed to coordinate these resources to ensure WMBE contractors have access. Specific investments could include:

- Targeted funding for training programs
- Low- to no-interest leases or grants for business and project equipment
- WMBE contractor tools and resource libraries
- Cash incentives to purchase electric vehicles and electric bikes for business purposes

Rationale: The City has an opportunity to make substantial investments in WMBE businesses as more state and federal funding becomes available for workforce development, clean energy, and climate resilience. Investing in WMBE contractors gets at the heart of Seattle's value of advancing race and social justice by continuing to increase the diversity of the City's contractor pool at a pivotal moment when the global economy is transitioning from fossil fuels to clean energy and climate resilience measures are needed now more than ever.





Climate Workforce Development Industry Roundtable

Investment: Fund the engagement for and implementation of a Workforce Roundtable to discuss and plan for the future of the climate workforce. This Roundtable should engage diverse stakeholders, including youth, tribal members, organizations that support career pathways for BIPOC communities, and the reentry population.

Rationale: This initiative aims to foster inclusivity and equity in workforce development to ensure that communities at the margins of society benefit from emerging opportunities in the green economy. The Climate Workforce Roundtable would serve as a collaborative platform to address unique barriers these groups face and would develop targeted strategies that enhance access to and participation in the green economy.

INVEST IN CUTTING-EDGE AND LIFE-SAVING CLIMATE TECHNOLOGIES AND PROGRAMMING

Study the Establishment of a Rooftop Solar Development Program at Seattle City Light

Investment: Fund a feasibility study at Seattle City Light to identify how the utility could become a full-service solar developer. The utility would partner with property owners to perform marketing, planning, installation, and maintenance to enable a rapid build-out of rooftop solar energy

Considerations for the feasibility study:

- Include financial modeling to show whether and how this program could be selfsustaining, in addition to showing what kinds of start-up investments are needed.
- Describe how rooftop solar could provide economic benefits for property owners.
- Discuss workforce needs for this program and assume in its modeling that additional jobs are created in targeted local communities using the City's existing Community Workforce Agreement.
- Describe ways in which this program could exist cooperatively with existing solar developers, especially by filling in gaps in the market.

Rationale: We need drastically more renewable energy than we currently produce. Putting solar panels on rooftops has the potential to help meet that demand, avoid complex disputes over siting large-scale facilities, and put money into the pockets of schools, community non-profits, and everyday homeowners. Rooftop solar can provide City Light with energy to meet its own shortfalls during peak demand in the summer. A 30% rebate for materials and labor from the Direct Pay provision of the Inflation Reduction Act makes this an ideal time to build out solar capacity. Having City Light do this work is an effective way to ensure that this work gets done on a large scale, quickly, while creating high-quality jobs.



Climate Resilience through Cultural Preservation and Land Restoration

Investment: Fund a study at Seattle Public Utilities which identifies paved-over streams, wetlands, and possible other areas of cultural significance in Seattle which could be daylighted and restored for Indigenous cultural preservation, heat wave mitigation, urban flooding management, water pollution reduction, and salmon recovery.

Other considerations:

- This study will need to include time for Tribal Consultation with local Tribes to ensure proprietary cultural resource knowledge is managed and kept by local Tribes.
- Consult with Indigenous sustainability leaders who have experience with mapping traditional harvesting areas, PNW native plants, Indigenous food and medicine systems, and/or ecosystem restoration.
- Identify which projects are in environmental justice communities.
- Estimate the number of jobs created if the work is done by SPU under the existing Community Workforce Agreement.
- Identify what resources are needed for long-term site maintenance and place-based education about Indigenous history and cultural significance, ecosystem restoration, and climate resilience.

Rationale: Seattle's Thornton Creek restoration is a climate resilience success story. Thornton Creek and its 11.6 square mile urban watershed are on the ancestral lands of the Duwamish peoples. Today, the Muckleshoot Tribe co-manages fisheries throughout the watershed. Once a heavily polluted waterway that dangerously flooded at least once a year, Thornton Creek is now a thriving local ecosystem. Daylighting the creek has restored the health of the waterway, reduced stormwater runoff, helped mitigate heat waves and provided much-loved greenspace for the local community. Notably, the creek hasn't flooded since restoration in 2015, despite multiple major storms; and in 2018, endangered Chinook salmon returned to spawn for the first time in twenty years. Local community members are now working with the Indigenous peoples of the area to re-name the natural area with a Lushootseed name, recognizing its historical, cultural and ecological significance, and the Indigenous peoples past and present who have stewarded the land we all call home.

Seattle should build on the Thornton Creek model and scope citywide restoration projects that can help us manage the impacts of climate change while building healthy environments, community resilience and good green jobs. This work should be done in partnership with local Tribes, so that ecosystem repair is interwoven with cultural preservation, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and healing from Seattle's colonial history.



Healthy & Sustainable Homes Navigator Program

Investment: Provide funding to expand existing City liaison programs to connect lowincome residents with the full suite of City home-related upgrade services such as: weatherization, electrification, water conservation, tree planting, fire alarm installations, side sewer replacements, minor home repairs, emergency preparedness resources, and other measures that support healthy homes, and mitigate economic displacement and gentrification. Liaisons would ensure that low-income residents are aware of existing services and would support residents as they navigate access to eligible services.

Rationale: In addition to the climate crisis, Seattle is facing a gentrification and housing displacement crisis. This investment aims to increase access to existing low-income homeowner rebate programs that are often difficult to successfully navigate. Access to these services could address immediate health and maintenance concerns in homes while delivering other home upgrades that reduce climate emissions and allow low-income or fixed-income homeowners to remain in their homes.

MAINTAIN CURRENT INVESTMENTS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

Maintain Current Allocation of Payroll Expense Tax Dollars for its Legislated Uses

Investment: Refrain from covering budget deficits by re-allocating Payroll Expense Tax (PET) dollars. Continue to invest in Payroll Expense Tax initiatives that communities need now more than ever. Maintain the intended allocations for the PET Revenue, including the 9% allocation for Green New Deal implementation. The GND Oversight Board also recommends maintaining the other legislated allocations for the PET revenue which include 62% for affordable housing, 15% for small businesses, and 9% for the Equitable Development Initiative.

Rationale: The PET is the first and only City revenue source that funds community-led solutions that advance equity, reduce pollution, and take steps toward ensuring community resiliency in the face of climate change. Maintaining PET funding for its intended purposes, especially amid a budget shortfall, provides multiple benefits for Seattle's communities at a time when community members need it the most. PET dollars fund initiatives that support the City's <u>topline priorities</u> of public safety, public health, economic development and our local economy, affordable housing and anti-displacement measures, and good governance – all of which advance climate justice and the City's climate goals.





Green New Deal Oversight Board Members

Name	Board Seat
Susan Balbas	Environmental Justice Representative
Debolina Banerjee	Environmental Justice Representative, Co-Chair
Lizzie Baskerville	Frontline Representative
Steve Gelb	Workforce Training Specialist
Camille Gipaya	Youth Representative
Peter Hasegawa	Labor Union Representative, Co-Chair
Rachel Heaton	Tribal Representative
Eunice How	Environmental Justice Representative
Nancy Huizar	Frontline Representative
Hannah Lindell-Smith	Youth Representative
Emily Myers	Labor Representative
Nina Olivier	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Specialist, At-Large Member
Andrea Ornelas	Labor Representative
Emily Pinckney	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Specialist
Matt Remle	Frontline Representative
Stephanie Ung	Frontline Representative
Jess Wallach	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Specialist
Keith Weir	Labor Representative
Ken Workman	Tribal Representative

KEY DEFINITIONS

FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES



The communities that experience disproportionate environmental harms and risks due to exposures, greater vulnerability to environmental hazards, or cumulative impacts from multiple stressors; these include Black people, Indigenous peoples, sovereign tribal nations, communities of color, immigrants, refugees, youths, elders, houseless people, disabled people, LGBTQ+ people, people with low and no income, and people who work in outdoor occupations.

FOCUS AREAS The geographic areas, defined broadly by zip code or neighborhood, where communities of color, immigrants, refugees, people with low-incomes, and limited-English proficiency tend to live, which are also areas highly impacted by socioeconomic and environmental challenges.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Green New Deal Oversight Board connects frontline community-led voices and the Seattle city government to eliminate Seattle's climate pollution by 2030, while resolving racial, social, and economic inequities. We do this by:

- Recommending systemic changes and budget priorities to the Mayor, City Council, City departments, and advisory boards.
- Supporting departmental planning and implementation.
- Coordinating efforts with City departments and related advisory groups pursuant to <u>Ordinance 125926</u>.

CORE VALUES

The Green New Deal Oversight Board adopted the following values which guide the way we enact our mission.

- We act with mindful urgency to accomplish our vision and mission.
- We listen to and are guided by frontline communities.
- We engage, consult, and obtain consent from impacted tribal nations. We practice having an open mind and cultural humility.
- We seek to build trust and reliability with respectful, honest, caring, and transparent interactions within and outside the Green New Deal Oversight Board.
- We are guided by accurate information, science, and community experience and insight.
- We seek to creatively solve problems and conflict by addressing the root causes and will not accept false solutions that continue extractive practices and/or prioritize profits over communities.

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