

Date: January 8, 2015

To: Seattle Public Utilities and Neighborhoods Committee
Councilmembers Sally Bagshaw (Committee Chair), Kshama Sawant (Committee Vice
Chair), Bruce Harrell (Member), Tom Rasmussen (Alternate Member)

From: Ray Hoffman, Director

Re: 2014 SPU Race and Social Justice Initiative Key Accomplishments

Listed below are key 2014 SPU accomplishments in regard to furthering the goals of the City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI). Accomplishments are grouped into the following categories:

- A. *Community Engagement and Customer Programs*
- B. *Internal Utility Decision Making Processes*
- C. *Inter-Department Planning and Coordination*

Related documents for many of these items (e.g. plans, reports, equity planning tools) are available upon request, and can be coordinated through email to bob.hennessey@seattle.gov.

A. *Community Engagement and Customer Programs*

1. SPU Strategic Business Plan (SBP) Community Outreach and Engagement

SPU conducted native language outreach to low income and limited English speaking customers to help initially inform *and* give feedback to SPU's Strategic Business Plan. The end-result is the SBP's recommended support for language and culture-specific outreach strategies, increased community education and partnerships, as well as the provision of equitable services. Funding for these outreach and engagement strategies was made possible through Council allocation of \$200,000 to support this specific effort.
SPU Contact: Karen Reed

2. Volunteer SPU Community Advisory Committees

Volunteer Community Advisory Committees (CACs) meet monthly to provide analysis and feedback on SPU's policies, programs and projects, and are committed to integrating RSJI and equity into the fabric of their membership and work. The Committees are aligned with each of our lines of business (solid waste; drainage and wastewater; and drinking water). Starting in late 2013 all Committee members received foundational

training on RSJI principles, and participated in the pre/post “Race: Are We So Different?” workshops at the Pacific Science Center. Three CAC members and three staff attended a three day in-depth “Power and Privilege: Tools for Change” training sponsored by the Center for Diversity and the Environment. Of 26 CAC members, 27% are people of color. *SPU contact: Sheryl Shapiro*

3. King Conservation District Seattle Community Partnership Grant Coordination

SPU is the city lead for the King Conservation District’s Seattle Community Partnership grant. SPU is responsible for coordinating with and advising KCD on outreach and stewarding of the application and review process. This past year SPU staff broadened informational outreach efforts to a more diverse set of potential applicants and held an open applicant workshop to discuss strategies for more inclusive engagement. This effort included working more closely with other departments. As a result the KCD received the most applications to date, including numerous new applicants and projects with diverse communities. The final recommended package included funding organizations that demonstrated strong working relationships with communities of color. *SPU Contact: Martha Neuman*

4. Greening Your Business Program Targeted Inclusive Outreach

The Greening Your Business Program directly engages commercial customers to adopt resource conservation-related practices which also potentially reduces their utility bill. This past year the Greening Ethnic Business Program applied SPU equity planning tools and directed efforts to focus on underserved communities in Southeast Seattle, with a focus on Spanish-speaking business owners. *SPU Contact: Phil Paschke*

5. Green Gardening Program with Underserved Communities

The Green Gardening Program provided targeted outreach and education to Spanish and Vietnamese-speaking landscape professionals about sustainable landscaping practices. Two Spanish-language trainings were offered reaching a total of seventy-seven attendees. In addition SPU hosted a meeting with a variety of potential partners to discuss collaborative opportunities for this audience. As a result SPU will survey landscape contractors about the skills and knowledge they would like employees to have for inclusion in future classes. A separate effort focusing on Vietnamese-speaking landscapers resulted in the development of a basic “Dos and Don’ts” informational brochure in English and Vietnamese. The brochure and articles in Vietnamese-language newspapers are planned for 2015. *SPU Contact: Nota Lucas*

6. Landscape Conservation Outreach with Underserved Communities

SPU’s Master Composter (MC) volunteers and Garden Hotline staff responded to over twenty-thousand questions on composting, recycling, waste reduction, pesticide alternatives, stormwater management and water conservation. New MC volunteers reflected Seattle’s diverse multi-lingual populations, and training was conducted for low-income youth in SE Seattle. Minority subcontractors guided Hotline outreach classes with African American, Native American, Hispanic, SE Asian, and East African communities. Print and video materials are available in many languages, and new

outreach is planned for 2015 with Nepali, Karen, Farsi-speaking, and French-African communities. *SPU Contact: David McDonald*

7. RainWise Inclusive Outreach

SPU's RainWise staff hired consultants from the African American, East African and Vietnamese communities to recruit RainWise participants in south and southwest Seattle. These outreach staff helped customers understand stormwater problems, "green" solutions and how to participate in the RainWise program (rain gardens and cisterns on private property). Outreach tools and techniques were adapted to interest these communities and connected with over two-hundred and eighty households. Of these, twenty-three have completed or are in the process of completing cistern and/or rain garden installations, eight are ready to meet with installation contractors to start installations, and thirty-five more have asked for follow up information. *SPU Contacts: Liz Fikejs and Daniel Sims*

8. Low-Income Water Conservation Assistance

Participation in the Toilet Replacement Program for low income residents was notably higher in 2014 than previous years. Single family household participation almost doubled from three hundred and thirty-two to six hundred toilet fixtures replaced through October. Due to targeted outreach efforts multifamily participation was higher than previous years, with over two-hundred and fifty fixtures replaced in seven buildings in the Seattle area. *SPU contact: Billie Fisher*

B. Internal Utility Decision Making Processes

9. SPU Strategic Business Plan (SBP) Service Equity Action Plan

A core element of SPU's recently adopted SBP was the approval of 'Action Plans' highlighting key issues to further advance the Mission, Goals, and Values of the utility. The Service Equity Action Plan was reviewed by key customers and adopted by SPU executive leadership. A team of Service Equity Subject Matter Experts are reviewing all other adopted Action Plans and efficiency measures to identify and prioritize potential service equity issues as warranted. As a result, action plans or efficiencies will not have racially inequitable impacts over the six-year course of the SBP. *SPU Contact: Steve Hamai*

10. Women and Minority Business Enterprise (WMBE) Consultant Selection Decision-Making Process

SPU has embedded racial equity accountability into key internal decision-making processes, including the Community Outreach and Engagement Consultant Selection process. Service equity factors are now built into large capital improvement-funded project plans, and there has been an increase in consultant prime contracting of WMBE firms for all community outreach-related efforts. WMBE sub-consultant utilization has been increasing consistently since 2011. *SPU Contact: Vicky Schiantarelli*

11. Corporate Asset Management Stage Gates Equity Accountability

SPU adheres to a rigorous decision making process as part of the Stage Gates Governance System for all Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) valued over \$50,000 with total life-cycle costs. Service equity review and completion of equity planning tools have been expanded and are now required as part of the Stage Gate 2 with the Asset Management Committee as the governing body. (Service equity accountability had previously been incorporated into Stage Gate 1 and the Initiation early-planning and approval phases.) *SPU Contact: Kim Serwold*

12. Drainage and Wastewater System Planning

SPU incorporated service and ratepayer equity into program design by evaluating the quality of data received through complaints, using an equity criterion in developing the master planning schedule, and requiring use of the equity toolkit in master planning. *SPU contact: Holly McCracken*

C. Inter-Department Planning and Coordination

13. Cross Departmental Application of Service Equity Planning Tools to the Utility Discount Program (UDP)

SPU worked to apply customized racial equity planning tools to UDP with a cross department team of staff from Seattle City Light, Human Services Department, and the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs. Used in conjunction with information gathered from customer focus-groups, the end-result was a set of recommendations and action steps to improve UDP program access and re-enrollment. *SPU Contact: Tracey Rowland*

14. Environmental Justice Listening Session with Mayor Murray

SPU staff organized a Spring 2014 listening session with key organizations and individuals connected to environmental justice issues and communities of color. At this event the Mayor heard directly from frontline communities – those communities most impacted by exposure to toxic pollutants, under investment in healthy housing, green space and transportation, and other harmful elements in our environment. As a result the Mayor directed the Office of Sustainability and Environment to work in partnership with SPU and other city departments to engage communities and further refine partnerships required to achieve environmental justice. *SPU Contact: Sudha Nandagopal*

15. Equity & Environment Initiative (EEI)

The Office of Sustainability and Environment and SPU's Environmental Justice and Service Equity Division are drivers in the design and roll-out of the multi-year EEI. This initiative will create long-term opportunities for organizations and individuals connected to environmental justice issues and communities of color to engage in the city's environmental efforts. The four main components of the EEI are the development of a core community steering committee to provide oversight and guidance on the initiative, a sustainable partnership model to build capacity in these frontline communities, an

internal service equity review of all city-led environmental programs, and an environmental agenda for Seattle centered on equity. *SPU Contact: Michael Davis*

16. Comprehensive Plan Equity Review – Utilities Element

SPU staff, including the SPU Change Team, provided an in-depth service equity review of the draft Comprehensive Plan’s Utilities Element. As a result the Utilities Element contains a Service Equity Statement as well as additional new (draft) service equity-specific goals. Inclusion of service equity language and goals in the Utilities Element will influence the further inclusion of equity goals into SPU-specific line of business plans (e.g. Solid Waste Plan, Drinking Water Plan, etc.). *SPU Contact: Mark Jaeger*

17. Citywide Food Waste Requirement

In preparation for the January 2015 citywide requirement to place all food waste into garbage can containers, a team of SPU staff have applied the SPU equity planning tools and are directing targeted outreach efforts to engage limited English speaking commercial business owners and multi-family residents. *SPU Contact: Brett Stav*

cc: Kate Joncas, Deputy Mayor
Robert Feldstein, OPI
Patricia Lally, SOCR