



**HOUSING  
DEVELOPMENT**  
*consortium*

July 19, 2019  
Seattle City Council  
RE: Equitable Development Initiative funding

Dear Seattle City Councilmembers,  
Seattle has experienced tremendous growth over the past decade, and the accompanying surge in housing costs has exacerbated the problems of a broken system that disproportionately impacts Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. Since 2016, the City of Seattle has reflected its commitment to equity, inclusion, and anti-displacement in the work of the Equitable Development Initiative (EDI). **Through our Race, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative, and the Anti-Displacement Policy Sub-Group, the Housing Development Consortium of Seattle-King County (HDC) sees housing affordability and accessibility as a racial justice issue. Because of this, we strongly urge Council to use the Short-Term Rental Tax to continue to fund the EDI program as well as find additional sources to strengthen the program.**

HDC is a nonprofit membership association with 180 members including nonprofit housing organizations, private businesses, and public partners that believe and are committed to the vision that "all people should be able to live with dignity in safe, healthy, and affordable homes." At HDC, we recognize the importance of affordable housing policies that ensure people of color who lack access are driving equitable solutions and outcomes.

The EDI is powerful in that it funds capacity building to get to the roots of inequities that would only continue in development processes with this resource gap. The EDI is a sustainable anti-displacement tool that is unique in its ability to support projects that are both shovel-hungry and shovel-ready. The EDI is an incredible program that has made strides in the effort of strengthening community-driven efforts that decrease displacement, emphasize equity, and create community power.

**Housing Development Consortium  
of Seattle-King County**

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Beyond the tremendous value of funding community driven projects, the EDI program and staff have the potential to consolidate promising practices that ensure and promote equity and broker relationships between community groups and those with housing technical expertise. We often hear from our members the need for a consolidated affirmative marketing resource and increase support for hiring women and minority owned sub-contractors for their developments. This is work that HDC would like to see EDI and OPCD lead on, and HDC would like to be a partner in supporting these efforts.

We support the dedication of revenue from the Short-Term Rental Tax to the EDI program as well as encourage the identification of other revenue streams to help increase available funds to meet the need.

HDC is committed to the work of equity and inclusion within the housing sector itself, the policies we advocate for, and the communities we help create. There's a long way to go on the path towards racial equity as we deal with a history of redlining and discriminatory housing policies, underlining a current landscape of disparate impact and defacto exclusion, but strengthening our commitment to programs like the EDI can help propel us along that pathway. HDC, along with the many partners in this work, urge you to think holistically and act sustainably as we work to address affordability and displacement, ensuring Seattle can grow and thrive in a way that works for everyone.

Sincerely,

Marty Kooistra  
Executive Director  
Housing Development Consortium of Seattle-King

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