OUR PEOPLE, OUR PLANET, OUR POWER.

Community Led Research in South Seattle
develop a **culturally relevant analysis** of climate change

understand **how residents of Southeast Seattle think and feel** about climate change, policies meant to stem climate change, and climate change preparedness.

develop **local community leadership** in the movement for Climate Justice.
The Power of the Process: Community-Based Research

- **inclusive** research process
- **builds power** for the community
- gathering **information and stories** used to drive public policy
- centering the experiences of the **most impacted** in policy and decision-making
Grassroots Steering Committee

In order to bring the science to the sidewalk and talk to our communities about climate change, we needed experts from the community to help us figure out the right questions to ask.

- Young people, cultural workers, activists and organizers in the labor movement, black leaders, and students from South Seattle.

- All people of color, ages 23-45.

- Dedicated an average of 15 hours a month.
Research Tools

- Community Survey
- Organizational Leader Interview
- Community Roundtables
Grounding the climate conversation in the everyday experiences of our communities.

Table 1. Do these issues impact you in your neighborhood?

- Exposure to Mold 55% impacted
- Poor Indoor Air Quality 57% impacted
- Exposure to Diesel Exhaust 60% impacted
- Exposure to Toxic Chemicals 67% impacted
- Living Near Polluting Industries 71% impacted
- Pest, Insects, and Rodents 72% impacted
- Lack of Affordable Food 72% impacted
- Lack of Public Transportation 73% impacted
- Living Near Major Highways 74% impacted
- Lack of Affordable Housing 89% impacted

Legend: Impacted | Not Impacted or Don't Know
Affordable Housing Tops Community Concerns

- Displacement risk on the rise, especially for people of color and low-income people in South Seattle

- Displacement of low-income households undercuts GHG emissions reductions

- Displacement undermines any local efforts to build climate resilience

- Our communities are increasingly pushed into climate ‘hotpots’
  - Flood-prone areas
  - Neighborhoods with low tree cover
  - Near major sources of pollution
How do our communities perceive the impacts of climate change?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Extremely Concerned</th>
<th>Highly Concerned</th>
<th>Somewhat Concerned</th>
<th>Least Concerned</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rising Food Costs</td>
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<td>Loss of Fish and Shellfish Species</td>
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<td>Drought and Less Snow on the Mountains</td>
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<td>Increased Diseases and Health Concerns</td>
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<td>Heat Waves</td>
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<td>Flooding and Rising Sea Level</td>
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<td>Extreme Storms and Weather</td>
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<td>Cost to Heat, Cool, or Light Your Home</td>
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Climate change is a threat multiplier and worsens existing disparities.

- Food access
- Health
  - Urban heat island effect
- Cost of Utilities
- Exposure to environmental hazards
  - flooding in South Park and Georgetown
Our survey respondents were overwhelmingly supportive of carbon-reduction strategies.

The top solutions represented a mix of strategies:

1. Creating sustainable communities with reduced dependence on cars
2. Incentivizing clean or efficient energy
3. Increasing equitable access to the green economy
But only 24% of respondents thought that they were more likely to be impacted by climate change.

That’s not just a messaging problem. It’s a movement problem.
Changing the climate movement as we know it

- Talk about climate change in terms of the issues our communities already face and
- Center the voices and experiences of those most impacted
- Meaningfully engage with the grassroots in climate planning and decision-making
- Build local leadership by people of color to identify and develop community expertise.
Recommendation 1: Prevent displacement of our communities away from the urban core

1: Community Control of Development

2: Community Benefits Policy

3: Study Climate Impacts of Displacement
Recommendation 2: Engaging our Communities in Climate Resilience and Fighting Climate Change

1: Education and organizing in ways that are meaningful
2: Creating access to green careers for young people of color
3: Organizing to keep fossil fuels in the ground
Recommendation 3: Put Racial Equity at the Center of Climate Decision Making

1: Include Public Health in Climate Adaptation

2: Create a City-Wide Climate and Environmental Justice Board

3: Climate Adaptation Fund and Participatory Budgeting

4: All Carbon Reduction Policies Must Center Racial Justice
Recommendation 4: Build Local Economies for Resilient Communities

1: Locally-Centered Preparation and First Response as a Resilience Strategy
2: Locally Determined Economies
3: Targeted Local Hire
4: Prioritizing Equitable Energy Efficiency
Recommendations:

**Mitigation**
- Study climate impacts of Displacement
- Preserve and build affordable housing around transit
  - Community Controlled Development

**Adaptation**
- Establish a Climate Adaptation fund and administer the fund through Participatory Budgeting
- Integrate a public health focus in adaptation planning

**Decision-Making**
- Establish an Environmental Justice Board for the City of Seattle
- Center racial justice in climate policy and planning