

Welcome! Today's Agenda

June 22, 2022

Please note this meeting is being audio and video recorded by the City

9:00

Welcome
Land Acknowledgement
Meeting Logistics
Quick recap

9:10

Facilitated Discussion
Applying the Racial Equity Toolkit to the Design Review Program

10:00

Quick Break

10:05

Costs/Benefits of Design Review:
Community Attributes: existing data research and proposed methodology

10:40

Design Review in comparable cities
Discussion of comparable cities to include in this analysis

10:55

Adjourn

Land Acknowledgement

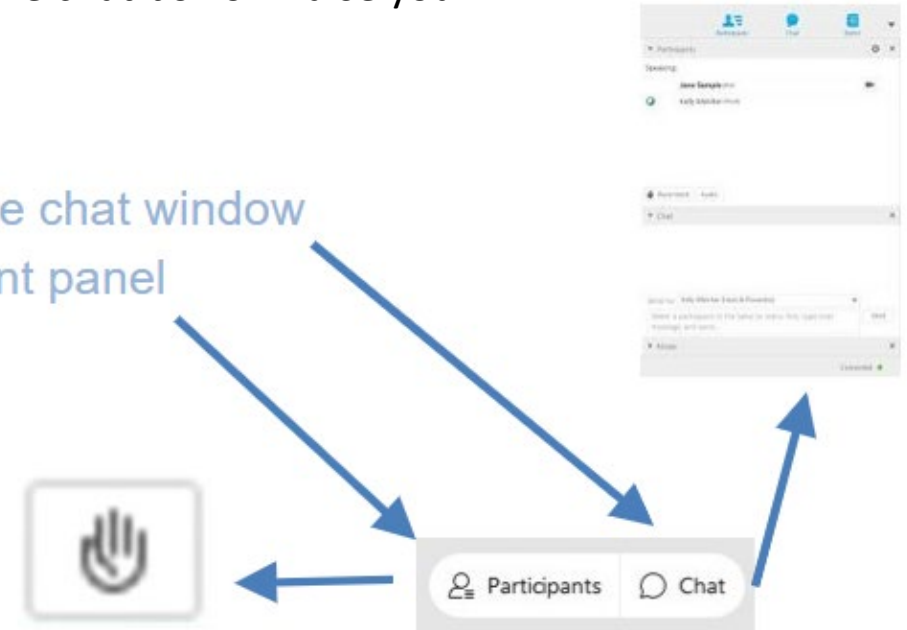
We acknowledge the role that traditional western-centric planning practices have played in harming, displacing, and attempting to erase Native communities. We commit to identifying racist practices, to practice allyship and strive to center restorative land stewardship rather than unsustainable and extractive use of the land.

We humbly recognize that we are on Indigenous land, the traditional and current territories of the Coast Salish people who have reserved treaty rights to this land, including the Duwamish, Suquamish, Muckleshoot, and Stillaguamish. We thank these caretakers of this land who have lived and continue to live here since time immemorial.

Meeting Logistics

- We will record the meetings and recordings will be available online at this website: <https://www.seattle.gov/sdci/about-us/who-we-are/design-review/design-review-stakeholder-meetings>
- All meetings will be held virtually and are only open to stakeholders. Please don't forward the invite since it creates technical problems.
- If Stakeholders have a question, they may enter those directly into the chat box or “raise your hand” in the Webex interface
- If you are able to, please turn on your camera

To reach the Host only, open the chat window
Or raise your hand in participant panel



Meeting Facilitators and Speakers

OPCD and SDCI Staff:

Shelley Bolser
*Seattle Department of Construction
and Inspections (SDCI)*

Magda Hogness
*Seattle Office of Planning &
Community Development (OPCD)*

Crystal Torres
*Seattle Department of Construction
and Inspections (SDCI)*

Paradigm Shift Seattle:

Ti'esh Harper
*Ti'esh Harper Consulting LLC and
Paradigm Shift Seattle*

Sofia Voz
*Sofia Voz Consulting LLC and Paradigm
Shift Seattle*

Community Attributes Inc.:

Cassie Byerly
Community Attributes Inc.

Elliott Weiss
Community Attributes Inc.

Racial Equity Toolkit

to Assess Policies, Initiatives, Programs, and Budget Issues



The vision of the Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative is to eliminate racial inequity in the community. To do this requires ending individual racism, institutional racism and structural racism. The Racial Equity Toolkit lays out a process and a set of questions to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, initiatives, programs, and budget issues to address the impacts on racial equity.

When Do I Use This Toolkit?

Early. Apply the toolkit early for alignment with departmental racial equity goals and desired outcomes.

How Do I Use This Toolkit?

With Inclusion. The analysis should be completed by people with different racial perspectives.

Step by step. The Racial Equity Analysis is made up of six steps from beginning to completion:



Quick Recap

Responding to City Council Statement of Legislative Intent

This process will conduct a **Racial Equity Toolkit (RET)** analysis of the Design Review Program. SDCI and OPCD will report to the Council on the outcomes of that analysis.

Councilmember Dan Strauss has emphasized the work of the Design Review Stakeholder group:

“I look forward to hearing from the Stakeholder group as to whether the program creates barriers for our residents who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) whether they are public participants, applicants or Board members.

I want to know if the program creates or reinforces racial exclusion.

My goal is to further improve this important program so that it is more accessible while also more predictable and less complex.

SDCI and OPCD will be looking at the work of the Stakeholder group, and will also review national best practices for design review, investigate whether the program increases housing costs, study the outcomes and review times of the program, and analyze departures requested through the- program.”

Facilitated Discussion

Applying the Racial Equity Toolkit to the Design Review Program

Facilitators:

Ti'esh Harper

Ti'esh Harper Consulting LLC and Paradigm Shift Seattle

Sofia Voz

Sofia Voz Consulting LLC and Paradigm Shift Seattle

Objectives

During this time, participants will...

- Get grounded in the work of Step 1 of the RET
- Generate potential outcomes for a racially equitable Design Review program.



Working Assumptions

- Most stakeholders have had experience with Design Review
- Design Review will continue- we can't do an analysis of a program that doesn't exist
- There is deep investment amongst stakeholders in a racially-just, equitable Design Review process

Set Racial Equity Outcomes

Step 1. Set Outcomes.

Leadership communicates key community outcomes for racial equity to guide analysis.

What are the most important racially equitable community outcomes related to this project/program/decision?

This includes:

- *Specifically identifying racial group(s) that could be impacted negatively or positively by a City action or program.*
- *Identifying an increase or decrease/elimination in racial disparity in benefits/services.*
- *Centering the racial equity outcome around the needs and values articulated by community.*

What do we mean by racial equity?

BIPOC stakeholders have equitable access to:

- Information
- Decision-making and decision-making processes
- Establishing values that inform a program
- Shaping the narrative, or understanding, of an idea, concept, or experience
- Investment in building capacity to understand the context to contribute in manner that is relevant

What would you add to this list?

Purpose of Design Review

Design review is one of the requirements in the developing permitting process. Design Review Program encourages:

- Better design
- Appropriate site planning
- Preservation of neighborhood character
- Provides the forum for communication and participation between City, community, and developers.

Draft Outcomes

- ***Empower Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) to effect change by understanding the process, feeling comfortable participating, and having equitable access to decision-makers***
- ***Reflect the community vision by ensuring that the thoughts, opinions, and concerns of Seattle residents with diverse lived experiences are heard, captured, and used to shape the design of new development by the Design Review Board members, planners, and applicants***
- ***Create equitable power dynamics in Design Review meetings***
- ***Support equitable housing that meets goal for affordability, quality, and diverse housing types***
- ***Maximize benefits and minimize impacts to housing costs by working with BIPOC communities***

Process

- Individual Reflection
- Small Group Dialogue
- Whole Group Share

Brainstorm: Reflection

Based on the intended purpose and current implementation of Design Review, what are some potential racial equity community outcomes for the Design Review Program?

Next Steps

- Look for communication from us in the next couple of weeks to set up a 30-minute interview with Paradigm Shift Seattle. These will take place in July and August.

BREAK

5 MINUTES



Design Review Benefits and Costs

Existing data research and proposed methodology

Presenters:

Cassie Byerly
Community Attributes

Elliot Weiss
Community Attributes



Design Review Analysis

City of Seattle Department of Construction & Inspections



June 22, 2022

Agenda

- 1. Project Framing**
- 2. Analysis (so far)**
- 3. Next Steps**

Project Framing

Purpose of This Process

City Council wants to:

- Understand **outcomes** associated with Design Review.
- Identify potential **impact** of Design Review on housing prices, quantity, quality, location.
- Better understand where and how **inequity** impacts Design Review.

Purpose of Today's Discussion

- Establish a **foundation** of Design Review.
- Get your **perspective**.
- Introduce our **methodology** and **what comes next**.

Project Framing

Evaluation of Design Review

Social

What does structural racism mean in the context of design review?

How do we create guardrails to prevent that?

Cultural

Housing shapes the culture and character of our neighborhoods.

Who gets to decide and how?

Financial

What are the costs and benefits of design review?

Who benefits? Who bears the costs?

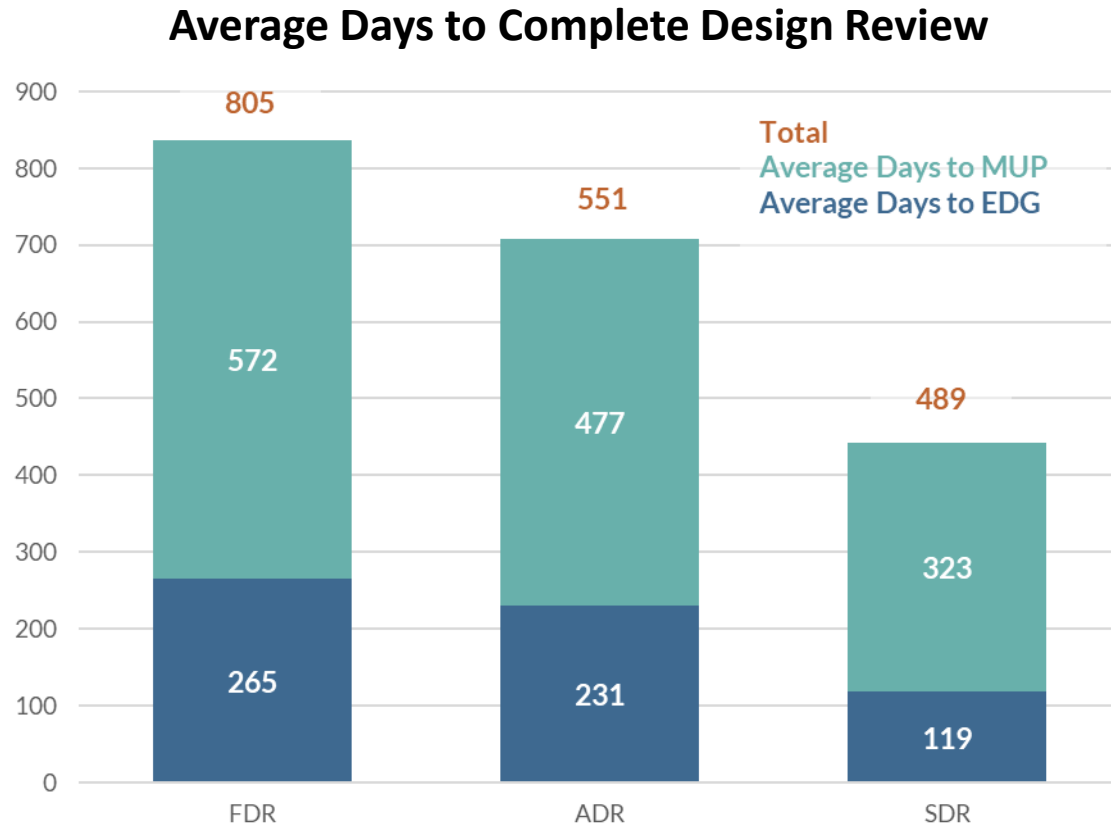
Project Framing Discussion

- What costs have we failed to identify, or need additional exploration?
- Where have we failed to give proper context to conversations around cost? What are the less visible costs incurred by unequal participation and other unintended consequences of Design Review?
- Are there aspects of Design Review that are not being discussed from a development costs perspective?

Analysis

- Literature review
 - ECONorthwest study
 - American Planning Association (APA) design review overview
- Community Attributes' analysis of Dept. of Construction and Inspections data
- Gaps and Dept. of Construction and Inspections next steps

Analysis: ECONorthwest Study

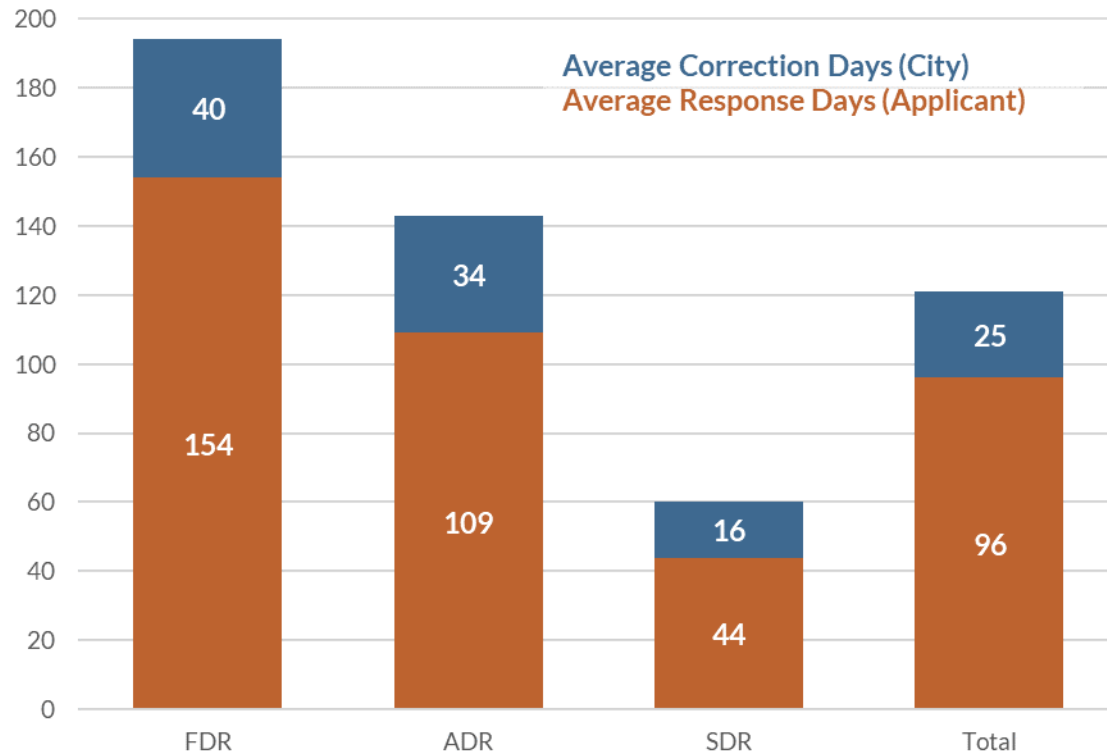


Source: ECONorthwest, 2021; CAI, 2022.

- **Early Design Guidance accounts for a large share of design review.**
 - Ranges from nearly 30% (FDR) to nearly half (ADR).
- According to an ECONorthwest analysis, developers believe design review time is increasing.
- *SDCI is currently refining this data.*

Analysis: ECONorthwest Study

Average Days in Corrective Cycle



Source: ECONorthwest, 2021; CAI, 2022.

Majority of time spent on making corrections is spent on the developer side.

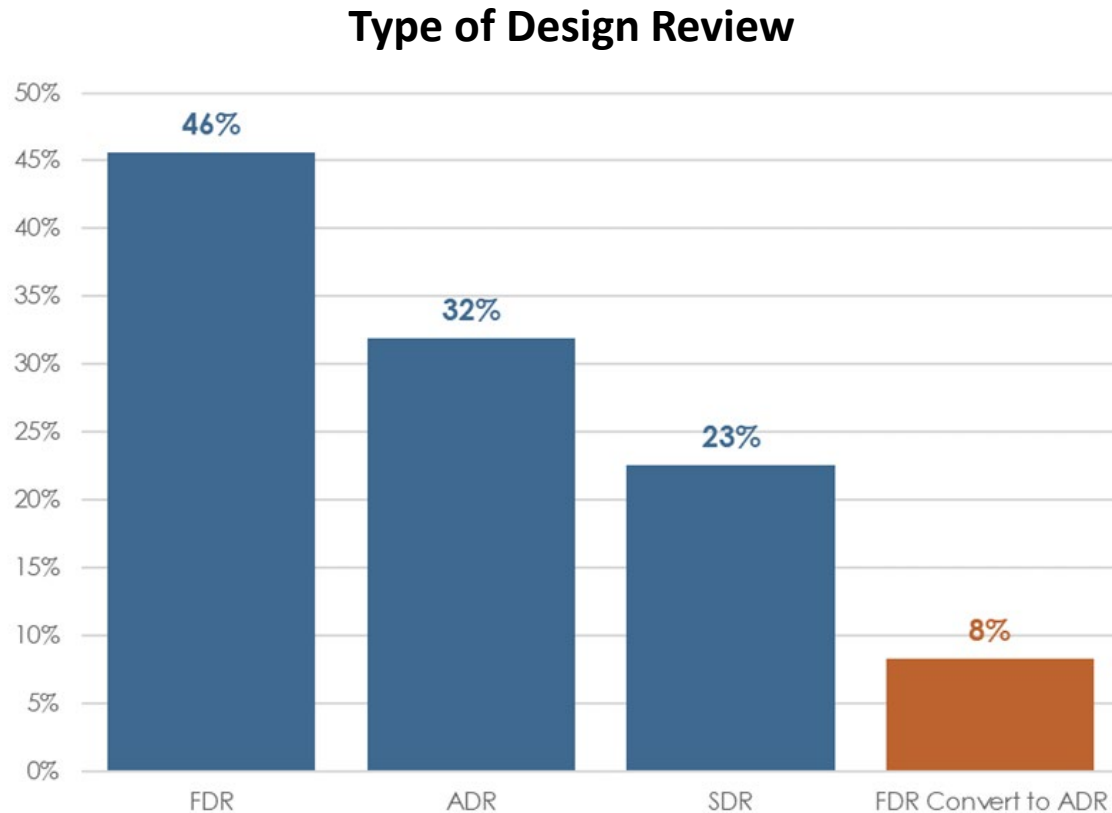
- **Total :**
 - 79% of days with applicant.
- **ADR:**
 - 76% of days with applicant.
- **FDR:**
 - 79% of days with applicant.
- **SDR:**
 - 73% of days with applicant.

ADR: Administrative Design Review

FDR: Full Design Review

SDR: Streamlined Design Review

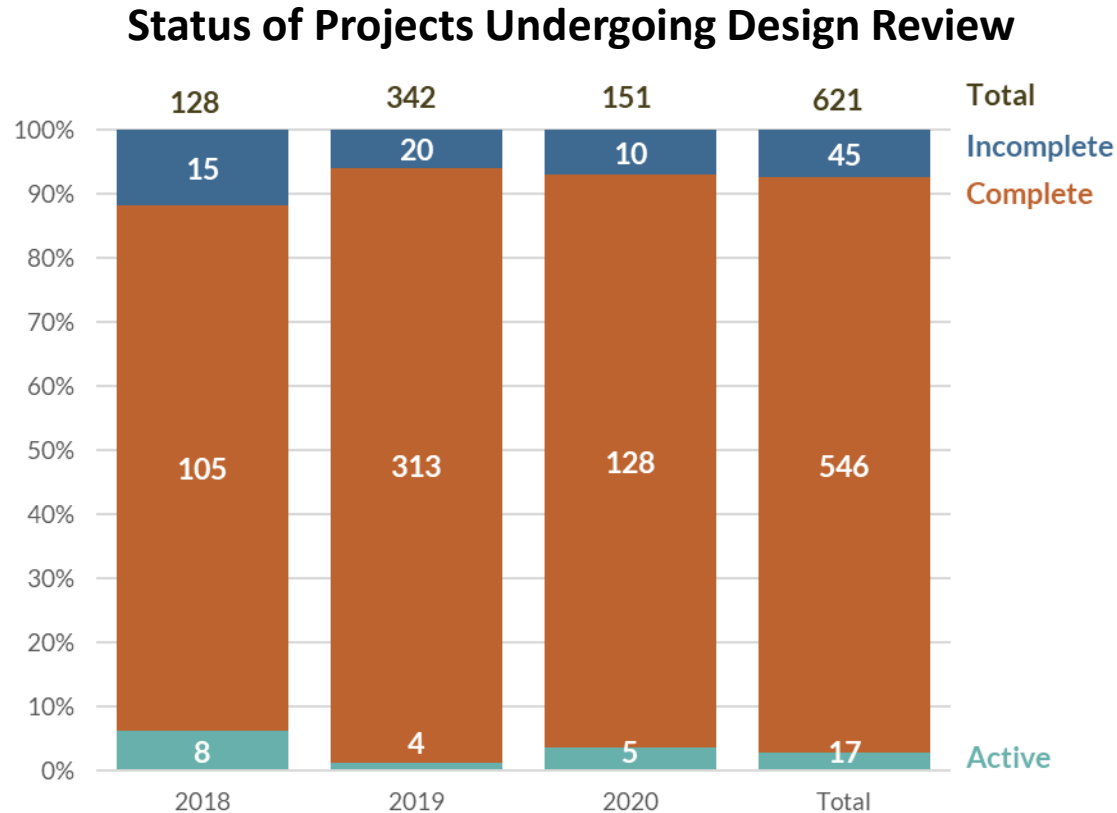
Analysis: SDCI Data



Source: City of Seattle, July 2018 to April 2020; CAI, 2022.

- Data from SDCI covering July 2018 to April 2020.
- From July 2018 to April 2020, **621 projects** began Design Review.
- **Nearly half go through full review.**
- Of the roughly one-third that went through ADR, **8% (35 projects) converted to ADR using Council’s COVID-related legislation.**

Analysis: SDCI Data

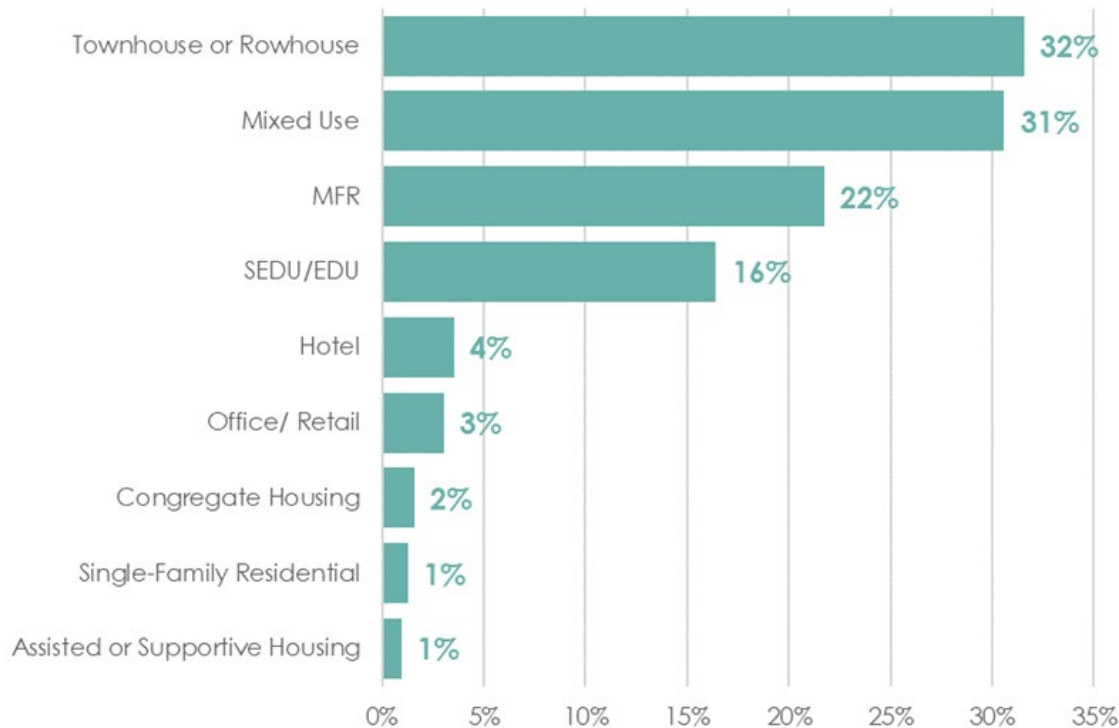


Source: City of Seattle, July 2018 to April 2020; CAI, 2022.

- **621 projects** began the Design Review process.
- **88% of all projects** received a final decision.
- Approx. **7% of projects** had not received a final decision.
- Another **3% of projects** remain **active** or open.

Analysis: SDCI Data

Land Use of Projects



Source: City of Seattle, July 2018 to April 2020; CAI, 2022.

- Design review applies to **commercial and multi-family** projects.
- **Townhouses and mixed-use development combine for more than half** of all projects.
- Other multi-family residential projects make up another 22% of projects.
- About 100 small efficiency dwelling unit or efficiency dwelling units account for 16% of projects.

Analysis: External Assessments of Costs

ECONorthwest study divides the cost of design review into increased project time and additional costs due to design changes.

SDCI is working to refine and better understand what cost means and who bears it in design review.

Fees related to design review account for 5% to 8% of development costs (APA).

SDCI is working to understand 1. the share of project costs that go to design review and 2. the variability and impact on community if those costs change.

Additional costs are particularly harmful to affordable developments and affordable units in market rate developments (APA).

SDCI is working to understand who is impacted and in what ways.

Analysis Discussion

- How can our analysis identify impact of structural racism on Design Review costs? What are the current Design Review sticking points that perpetuate inequity in the development process?
- What does cost mean to you? How would you describe or quantify the relative impact of increases to costs due to materials changes, consultant costs, project delays, or other factors related to Design Review in Seattle?
- What is the most important data to evaluate the Design Review program, related to racial equity?
- How could a faster Design Review process help or harm racial equity?

- **Data review**
 - **Stakeholder interviews**
 - **Report**
- Identify changes in the design review timeline since the program update in 2018.
 - Contextualize design review with other required reviews (e.g., environmental, zoning).
 - Best practices review of design review and peer programs (SDCI and CAI).

- **Data review**
- **Stakeholder interviews**
- **Report**

Research considerations:

- What are the actual costs of design?
- Who currently benefits and bears the costs of the Design Review Program?
- How can life cycle and long-term cost savings of better-quality design be better incorporated into the consideration of development going through design review?

- **Data review**
- **Stakeholder interviews**
- **Report**

CAI will conduct interviews with industry professionals that will focus on:

- Costs and benefits associated with design review.
- Who reaps the benefits and who bears the costs?
- Equity in participation and outcomes.
- General outlook on development in Seattle.
- Potential impact on affordable housing projects or projects in underserved areas.

- Data review
- Stakeholder interviews
- Report

Interview considerations:

- Is Early Community Outreach being used effectively for quality community and City engagement?
- Who is left out of this conversation about design review from a racial equity perspective?
- Who do we need to reach out to in order to improve racial equity?

- **Data review**
- **Stakeholder interviews**
- **Report**

CAI will create a report that summarizes our findings regarding:

- Outcomes associated with the City's Design Review Program.
- Inequities in participation and outcomes.
- Themes from stakeholder interviews regarding design review and development in Seattle.

- Data review
- Stakeholder interviews
- Report

Report considerations:

- What is the impact of perceived vs. actual costs?
- What is the long-term benefit of better-quality design and who benefits?
- What is and should be discretionary about design review?
- What guardrails can the City implement to prevent delays and improve racial equity?

Next Steps: Discussion

In our analysis to identify the costs and benefits of Design Review as it relates to racial equity:

- Are we talking to the right people?
- Who's missing?
- Are we asking the right questions?
- What's missing?

cai community
attributes inc

Thank you!



Design Review in Other Cities

Comparable cities with Design Review Requirements

OPCD and SDCI will be gathering data about design review in cities that are comparable to Seattle.

“Comparable” to Seattle in things such as:

- Size
- Rate of growth
- Geographic constraints (water, mountains, etc.)

Stakeholder suggestions for cities that we should include in this study?

What's Next?

Paradigm Shift Seattle will reach out to stakeholders to schedule individual interviews over the summer

Our next meeting will be September 28

Please let us know if you have not received your stakeholder meeting invitations for September-December

Keep practicing and learning!

- [Racial Equity Toolkit – questions and worksheets](#)
- [Building a Relational Culture](#)
- [Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative: Why We Lead With Race](#)
- And many more resources on the [City of Seattle RSJI website](#)
- Race Implicit Association Test [here](#) or [here \(choose the Race IAT\)](#)
- Read/keep learning – such as Blind Spot (Banaji and Greenwalt), Whistling Vivaldi (Claude Steele), Micro-aggressions in Everyday Life (Derald Sue)
- Check out media such as [Colorlines](#), [The Root](#) or [This Week in Blackness](#)

A photograph of the Space Needle in Seattle, Washington, taken during a vibrant sunset. The tower is silhouetted against a sky filled with orange, yellow, and purple clouds. The city of Seattle is visible in the background, with houses and trees. The text "THANK YOU" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font on the right side of the image.

**THANK
YOU**