



Seattle Housing Authority
2018 Strategic Plan
Year-End Report

Mission and values

Mission

The Seattle Housing Authority's mission is to enhance the Seattle community by creating and sustaining decent, safe and affordable living environments that foster stability and increase self-sufficiency for people with low incomes.

Values

As stewards of the public trust, we pursue our mission and responsibilities in a spirit of service, teamwork and respect. We embrace the values of excellence, collaboration, innovation and appreciation.



Date published: April 15, 2019

Table of contents

Letter from the Executive Director	04
<i>2018 By the numbers</i>	
Demographics of individuals served	05
Demographics of households served	06
Program capacity	07
<i>2016-2020 Strategic framework</i>	
Organizational cornerstones	09
<i>Organizational cornerstones</i>	
Achievement highlights	10
<i>2016-2020 Strategic framework</i>	
Strategic directions and key objectives	13
<i>Expand housing opportunities</i>	
Create more affordable housing	14
Advance affordable housing policy	16
Diversify housing choice	17
<i>Promote quality communities</i>	
Preserve and promote high-quality housing.....	19
Connect people to opportunity	21
Strengthen community and service	22
<i>Improve quality of life</i>	
Enhance senior and disabled living	23
Economically empower people	24
Support youth achievement	25

Letter from the Executive Director

The Seattle Housing Authority's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan is the framework by which we pursue our mission to create and sustain decent, safe and affordable living environments that foster stability and self-sufficiency for people with low incomes. As we follow our strategic directions and work to meet our key objectives over the remaining two years of the current plan, we will continue to learn from experience, grow as an organization and adapt to the ever-changing Seattle community we serve.

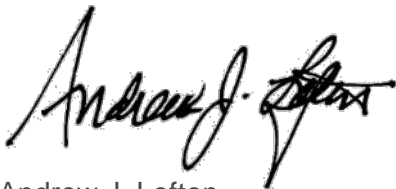
At the end of 2018, SHA was serving 34,984 people in 17,283 households. This is the highest number of people served since we adopted our current Strategic Plan – nearly a thousand more people than at the start of 2016. Through the hard work of staff in both our Housing Choice Voucher and Housing Operations departments, we welcomed 1,876 new households into stable housing in 2018. Our property management and community services staff continue to build strong relationships with and between residents. Through their efforts, along with staff across the agency, we continue to connect residents to opportunities to improve their lives by offering a wide range of services and forming strong partnerships with other service providers.

While we are proud of our progress in 2018, we know there are many more people in need of housing than we are able to serve, a crisis we can't solve alone. We will continue to work together with others in developing a larger regional solution to the lack of affordable housing so that all people with low incomes have access to safe, decent, affordable housing.

Every day, the more than 550 dedicated, innovative staff at SHA demonstrate the importance of the organizational cornerstones in our Strategic Plan. Their commitment to quality service, collaboration, respect, financial health, operational efficiencies, race and social justice, environmental stewardship and overall excellence means that thousands of children, seniors, veterans and other individuals have a place to live and grow, and a better chance at a brighter future.

I want to thank everyone who supports our work and helps ensure that we achieve the quality and levels of service reflected in our Strategic Plan.

Sincerely,



Andrew J. Lofton
Executive Director



Executive Director Andrew Lofton (L) receiving the 2018 Friend of Housing Award.

2018 By the numbers

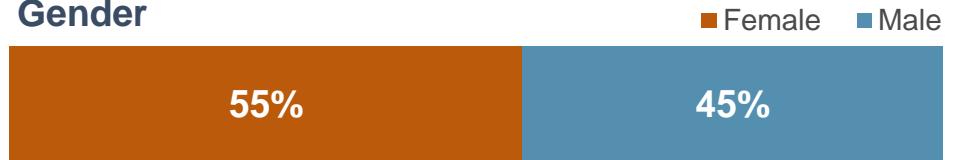
Demographics of individuals served



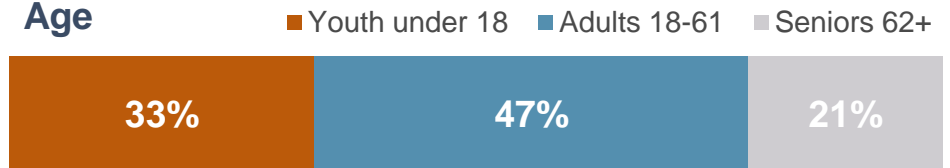
34,984

People served

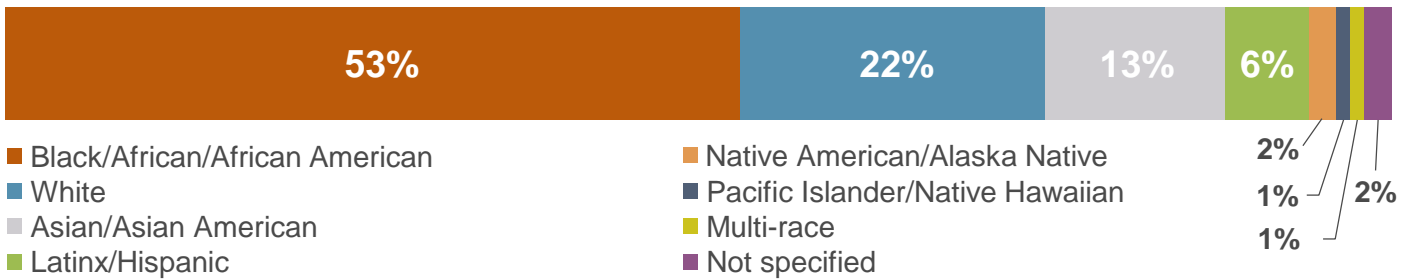
Gender



Age



Race and ethnicity

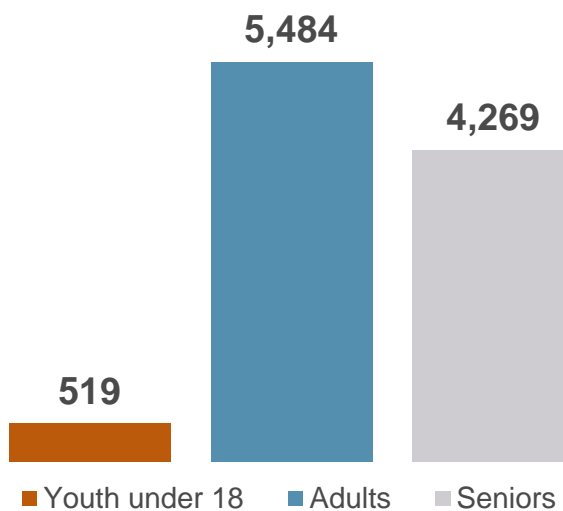


53 Languages spoken

Top non-English languages spoken:

1. Somali
2. Vietnamese
3. Amharic
4. Tigrinya
5. Cantonese
6. Spanish
7. Oromo
8. Russian

People with an identified disability



29%

(10,272 people)

Of total individuals served identified one or more disabilities.

2018 By the numbers

Demographics of households served

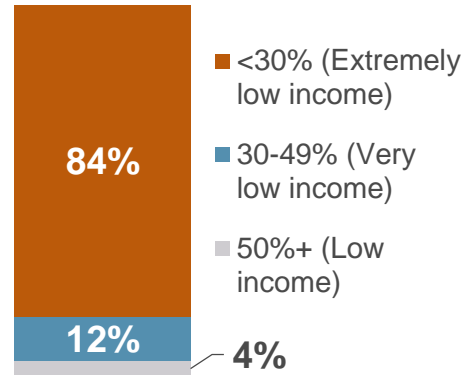


17,283
Households served



1,876
New households were admitted in 2018

Area Median Income¹



¹Distribution of households by Area Median Income.

Income limits

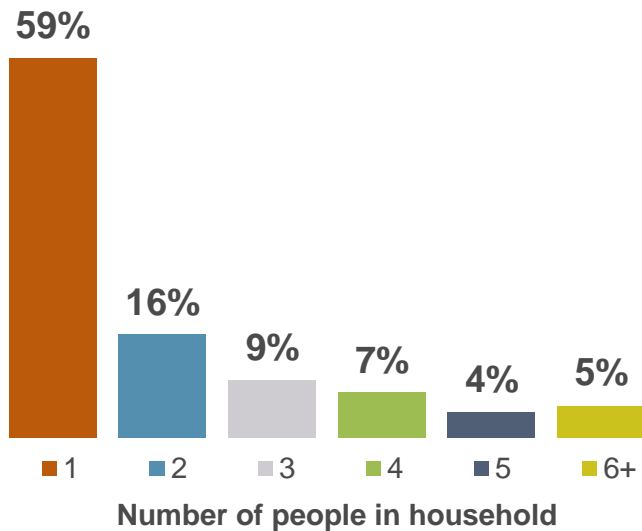
<30%
\$30,100

30-49%
\$40,100

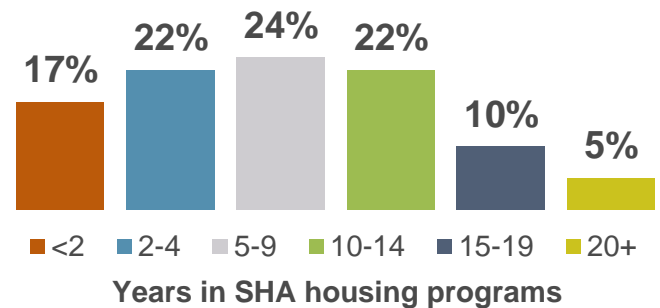
50%+
\$50,150

Based on 2018 family size of 4.

Household composition



Years of participation



Household type

Working-age non-disabled²
Elderly/disabled³



²At least one working-age non-disabled adult in the household.

³All adults in the household are age 62+ and/or have a disability.

Households with children⁴

Children in household
No children



⁴Households with at least one child under 18 years old.

2018 By the numbers

Program capacity

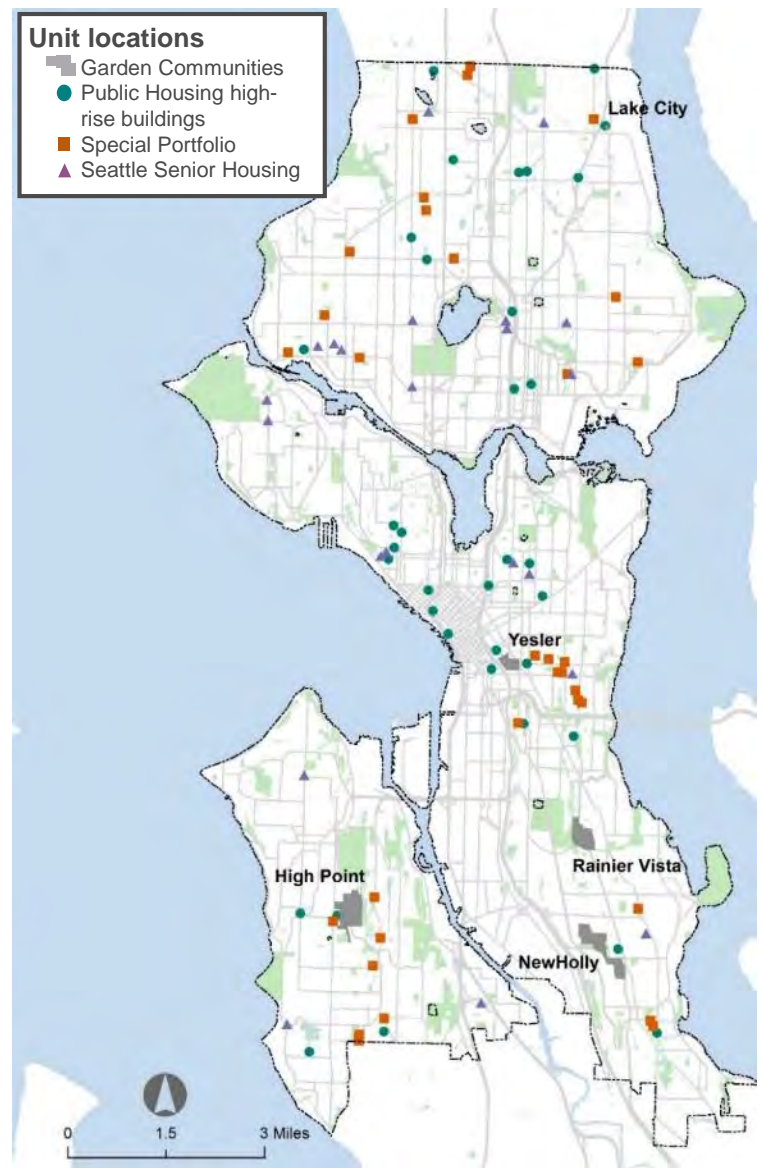


A family picking up a copy of “Baro Af Soomaali,” a picture-filled Somali alphabet book written by families in the NewHolly neighborhood. Photo credit: Melissa Ponder.

SHA owned and/or managed units

Seattle Housing Authority owns and/or manages 7,953 units in 361 locations throughout the City of Seattle. SHA’s “Garden Communities” are large communities that include a range of housing types and neighborhood amenities. High rises are typically public housing-funded buildings with mostly studio and 1-bedroom units. Seattle Senior Housing buildings are mostly 1-bedroom units reserved for seniors and adults with disabilities. Scattered Sites are stand-alone complexes located throughout the city. Special Portfolio locations include a variety of properties that don’t easily fit into the categories above.

7,953 SHA owned and/or managed units

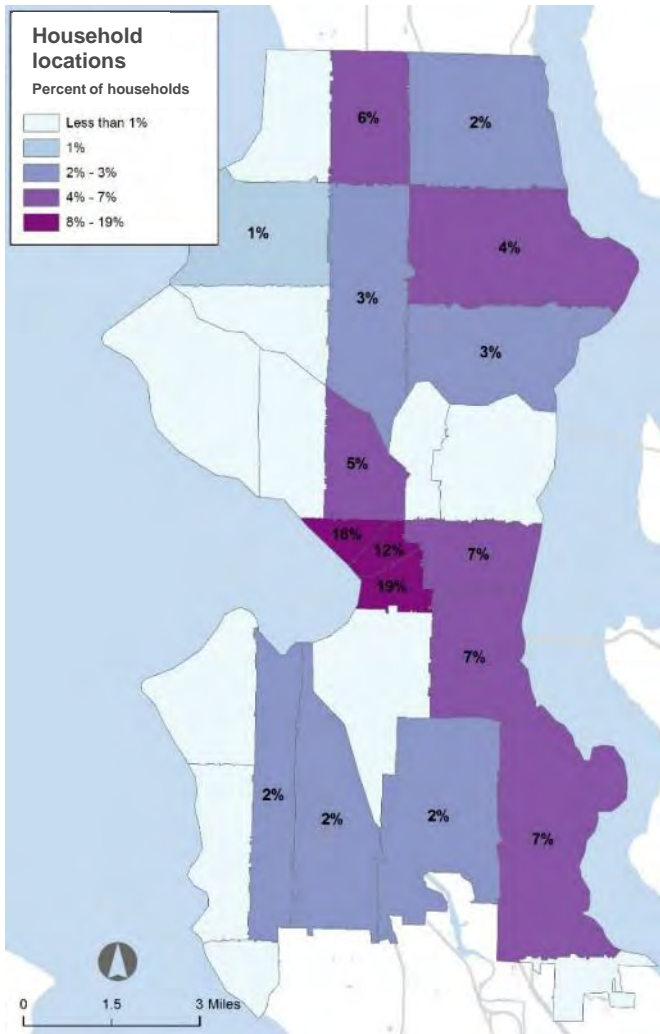


Location of Seattle Housing Authority owned and/or managed properties in Seattle; excluding 225 Scattered Sites locations.

2018 By the numbers

Program capacity

3,666 Collaborative housing units

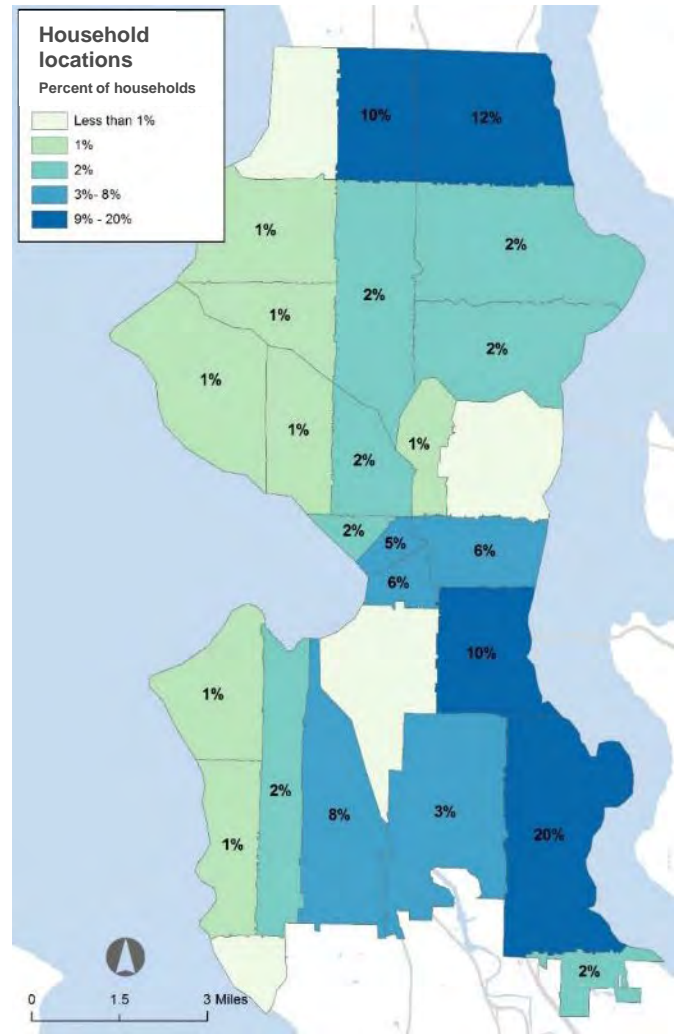


Distribution of collaborative housing units in Seattle by zip code.

What is collaborative housing?

SHA collaborates with other housing providers, typically private non-profits, by providing subsidy to units they own and operate to make the units affordable to a lower-income population. Collaborative housing providers are often able to pair services with the units so that they can serve specialized populations, such as previously homeless individuals and families.

7,039 Tenant-based voucher households



Distribution of tenant-based voucher households by zip code in Seattle; excludes vouchers used in SHA owned and/or managed units and 1,944 vouchers being used outside of Seattle ("port-outs").

How do tenant-based vouchers work?

Tenant-based vouchers program, a part of the Housing Choice Voucher program, is a subsidy given to households to enable them to rent with any eligible landlord in the city. SHA subsidizes the cost of rent and some utilities in the private market, and voucher holders pay the remainder based on their income.

2016–2020 Strategic framework

Organizational cornerstones

Seattle Housing Authority's organizational cornerstones reflect the agency's values in action. These qualities help form the foundation of how SHA advances its mission and pursues strategic directions. SHA's culture is driven by a commitment to excellence that continually strengthens these cornerstones.



Engaging service and respectful relationships

SHA is committed to providing consistently high-quality service and respectful interactions. SHA honors and assists participants and communities through service and engagement that recognize their unique needs and strengths.



Staff excellence

SHA is committed to recruiting, retaining, and developing people whose skills and dedication allow them to consistently perform at the top of their field. SHA trains and invests in a well-equipped workforce to support the agency's day-to-day operation in pursuit of its mission.



Partnership and coordinated action

SHA engages in partnerships and leverages resources to extend services beyond core housing programs. SHA aligns partners, programs and service delivery to accelerate progress on strategic directions.



Financial stability and efficiency

SHA manages its resources to maximize the impact and cost-effectiveness of its operations as well as the value and longevity of its assets. SHA focuses on strengthening its financial condition, streamlining service-delivery and being good stewards of the public trust to best serve people now and into the future.



Environmental stewardship

SHA incorporates environmental stewardship into daily practices and long-term decision-making to allow for more cost-effective investments, inventive approaches to complex sustainability challenges, healthier working and living environments for staff and participants and broader impact within the community.



Innovation

SHA actively pursues creative, innovative and impactful solutions to expand organizational capacity, improve service and meet participant and community needs. SHA continually uses high-quality information and effective analysis to plan and evaluate its actions.



Race and social justice

SHA is committed to delivering services in a culturally competent way, free of racism and prejudice, to minimize the impacts of poverty as well as to advance and support social justice. SHA strives to eliminate individual, institutional and systemic racism in its policies and practices.

Organizational cornerstones

Achievement highlights

Staff excellence

In 2018, the Seattle Housing Authority earned local and national recognition for outstanding quality of work and programming. Awards received in 2018 include the 2018 Urban Soccer Symposium Innovation Award from the U.S. Soccer Foundation, PCBC's Gold Nugget Award of Merit for Best Affordable Housing Community (Hoa Mai Gardens) and three Agency Merit Awards from the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials for Administrative Innovation (one each for outstanding customer service, LEAN inspection programs and Specialized Maintenance and Repair Training – commonly referred to as SMART). The SMART program also received NAHRO's National Award of Excellence. SHA's Executive Director received a Golden Scarf from the Seattle Sounders soccer team and a Friend of Housing Award from the Washington State Housing Finance Commission. To cap off a prosperous year, SHA had the distinction of being one of the first two housing agencies in the United States to receive national accreditation through the Affordable Housing Accreditation Board.



Rod Brandon, Housing Operations Director (second from left) and Pat Anardi, Impact Property Services Operations Administrator (furthest right), receive the NAHRO National Award of Excellence from NAHRO leadership in Washington, D.C.



(L-R) SPS Housing and Education Manager, Kathlyn Paananen, two parents from SHA's NewHolly community and SHA Strategic Advisor for Education, Roy Chan, presented at the Annie E. Casey Foundation Family-Centered Community Change convening in Memphis, TN in June 2018.

Engaging service and respectful relationships

Wanting to improve relationships with families and leverage families' expertise in their children's education, SHA partnered with Seattle Public Schools on a series of family co-design sessions held at the NewHolly Lee House. Beginning in January 2018 with six NewHolly parents and concluding in August with 22 NewHolly parents, co-design dialogues centered on families' experiences and ideas for the best use of a \$15,000 to improve youth education in their neighborhood. Working alongside families, listening to them and co-designing with them led to the funds being allocated to expanding mentorship opportunities between youth and adults within the community. The process of co-design helps to strengthen relationships with residents and leads to increased knowledge on both sides.

Organizational cornerstones

Achievement highlights

Financial stability and efficiency

The Seattle Housing Authority continues to be recognized for strong financial and risk management programs. For the 21st year in a row, SHA received the Government Finance Officers Association Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting. The award is given to organizations that demonstrate “significant accomplishment by a government [agency] and its management.” SHA also maintained its Standard and Poor’s AA credit rating, one of only four among U.S. housing authorities and the highest rating of any public housing authority.

Partnership and coordinated action

Zillow Group provided financial and in-kind support to SHA through their Home Project, a social impact project aimed at addressing housing insecurity. Zillow created a landlord-focused video for the Creating Moves to Opportunity project with the aim of recruiting new landlords to lease to voucher households. Zillow followed up with personal phone calls to their partner landlords to further increase outreach.

Environmental stewardship

In early 2018, Rainier Vista youth in the Refugee Women’s Alliance Community Club noticed an increase in litter in their community. In response, they designed a survey about the causes of the litter and potential solutions. Forty-seven community members of all ages were surveyed and the responses were analyzed by the Rainier Vista youth. They also inspected the property to identify where waste receptacles were placed and how visible they were. Ultimately, they concluded that the waste receptacles that did exist on the property were not visible enough to residents, who were therefore not using them when

disposing their litter. After sharing their results with property management, SHA agreed to fund an additional trash can in Rainier Vista’s Central Park and provide supplies for the youth to make the existing trash receptacles stand out based on the youths’ recommendations. The additional garbage can was installed over the summer and SHA staff supported the youth in decorating the seven existing receptacles as a summer project.



Rainier Vista youth conduct a neighborhood survey to improve their community. New and uniquely painted waste receptacles were a result of the community survey (inset).

Organizational cornerstones

Achievement highlights

Race and social justice

SHA's Human Resources department created a Race and Social Justice Change Team to analyze its practices through an equity lens to ensure that all staff, regardless of race, gender, ability and other qualities are receiving equal treatment. They also examined staff demographics to make sure that SHA employees represent the people served by the agency. To meet the goals set by the Change Team, HR undertook the following activities:

- Updating the SHA employee demographic reports to review them by department/division and job classification, disaggregated by race, gender, age and Section 3 hiring status.
- Convening employee focus groups to review SHA's recruitment processes and recommend improvements to support diversity in SHA's workforce at all levels. Information about preventing implicit bias was added to SHA's training for interview panelists and hiring managers.
- Piloting several programs designed to give staff tools and opportunities to advance their careers, such as temporary acting assignments, professional development courses and funding for continuing education.



The 2018 Race and Social Justice Committee: (back row, L-R) Bessie Scott, Ruth Landes, Denille Bezemer, Maria Ursua, Tera Oglesby, Gregory Antoine, Tier White; (front row, L-R) Valerie Scott, Eva Rubio-Reboca, Nancy Mondares, Henry Walker, Thaddeus Perry, April Griffith.

Innovation

SHA's Housing Operations and Housing Choice Voucher departments both debuted projects that featured new and improved technologies to improve efficiency and customer service.

Digitizing resident files: Housing Operations converted all resident printed files to electronic copies. Moving from a paper to digital format enables faster communication between team members and with residents and applicants. By converting to digital files, SHA will be able to respond to residents' accommodation requests more easily, process payment adjustment needs more efficiently and information can be shared between departments in a more timely manner to streamline other resident-initiated requests.

Piloting *HQS Touch*: HCV began field testing Housing Quality Standards mobile inspections through the use of a program called *HQS Touch*. HQS inspections are conducted by HCV inspectors to ensure that voucher-subsidized units are in compliance with safety and quality standards set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Based on a successful pilot program, HCV envisions that the use of the mobile devices will increase administrative efficiencies, guarantee more timely inspections for participating landlords and provide more accurate reporting of inspections to housing providers and program participants, resulting in enhanced customer service. HCV staff are currently fine-tuning the program with SHA's Information Technology department. The project should be fully rolled out by mid-2019.

2016–2020 Strategic framework

Strategic directions and key objectives

SHA's strategic directions are “big picture” outcomes that are expected to be the focus of the agency through 2020. Key objectives are measurable actions that guide policies and investment in pursuit of strategic directions.

Expand housing opportunities

SHA serves more people by cultivating additional resources and employing strategies that have the biggest impact on increasing Seattle's affordable housing choices.

Create more affordable Housing

Prioritize strategies and leverage resources to enable increased rental assistance and housing units for more people in need of affordable housing.

Advance affordable housing policy

Champion public policies that will increase the viability, availability and accessibility of affordable housing for people with low incomes.

Diversify housing choice

Expand available housing choices, demonstrate alternative housing models and preserve and increase access to neighborhoods throughout Seattle that would otherwise be out of reach for people with low incomes.

Promote quality communities

SHA invests in safe, quality housing and connects participants to communities, resources and services that are designed to meet their needs.

Preserve and promote high-quality housing

Provide safe, accessible, sustainable and attractive living environments that contribute to the quality of Seattle neighborhoods through preservation and redevelopment of SHA's housing stock.

Connect people to opportunity

Invest in communities through partnerships so that neighborhoods where participants live support access to opportunities such as good jobs, parks, transit, arts, high-performing schools and healthy living.

Strengthen community and service

Facilitate effective and supportive relationships and respectful interactions among participants, staff, partner organizations and neighbors so that people feel valued, proud and connected to the community they live in.

Improve quality of life

SHA partners to use housing as a platform to improve quality of life by enhancing health, supporting education and skill development and other services to help people reach their full potential.

Enhance senior and disabled living

Connect senior and disabled participants to the services they need and facilitate access to other housing choices along a continuum of care as appropriate.

Economically empower people

Assist participants in benefiting from education and employment to increase their economic security, skills, income, assets and financial well-being.

Support youth achievement

Promote access to high-quality learning opportunities for young children, youth and young adults that increase educational performance, college and career readiness and encourage lifelong well-being.

Expand housing opportunities

Create more affordable housing

Prioritize strategies and leverage resources to enable increased rental assistance and housing units for more people in need of affordable housing.

Serving more people

Despite unpredictable federal funding and Seattle's tight and expensive rental market, SHA remains dedicated to creating innovative ways to increase the number of people served. At year-end 2018, SHA served 34,984 people in all its housing programs. This is an increase of 987 since the beginning of the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan. The biggest gain in 2018 was in the number of tenant-based Housing Choice Voucher participants. Through a combination of strategies, SHA achieved its highest voucher utilization rate since 2012. Some of the strategies engaged throughout the year included:

- **Issuing more vouchers:** In 2018, HCV staff began drawing a greater number of households from the voucher waitlist, increasing the amount of successful lease-ups. HCV focused on setting ambitious issuance goals each month and ensured timely response to applicants.
- **Targeting families with children:** As a part of Creating Moves to Opportunity, SHA also drew more families from the HCV waitlist. Since families have more people per household, this increased the total number of people served (*see p. 18 for more on the CMTO program*).
- **Increasing the buying power of vouchers:** The Voucher Payment Standard is the maximum monthly value of each voucher. In September 2018, SHA raised the VPS to improve leasing success rates for voucher holders shopping in the private rental market.

New housing resources for homeless non-seniors with disabilities

For the first time since 2005, HUD made new Mainstream Vouchers available for households which include non-seniors with disabilities. SHA applied for and was awarded 79 of these new vouchers in late 2018. SHA is collaborating with King County and several homelessness, social service and medical agencies to use these vouchers to support households currently experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Increasing Seattle's affordable housing stock

SHA continues to add to Seattle's affordable housing stock not only through direct design and construction but also through partnerships with private and non-profit developers.

Acquisition and preservation

SHA's Board of Commissioners adopted an acquisition and preservation plan that will enable the purchase of up to 500 units of affordable housing across the city. Half of the units will be targeted for households considered extremely low-income (less than 30 percent of AMI) and half will be for moderately low-income residents (60 to 80 percent of AMI). SHA is using a combination of tax-exempt debt and operating subsidies already in use at the properties to finance the purchases.

In 2018, 331 of the 500 target units were identified:

- The purchase of the 69-unit Spring Lake Apartments on 35th Ave NE in Lake City was completed.
- Future purchases of three additional properties, totaling 262 units, was initiated and are expected to be completed in 2019.

By focusing on acquiring existing buildings, SHA is able to preserve affordable and family-sized units in neighborhoods where they are in short supply, such as in north Seattle. Current residents of the newly acquired properties will not be displaced nor experience a rent increase as a result of these purchases.



A view of the Yesler pedestrian pathway that connects the Yesler community to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Expand housing opportunities

Create more affordable housing

New units in SHA's pipeline

In 2018, SHA continued the redevelopment of the Yesler community. SHA is in the process of constructing 119 affordable apartments at Red Cedar, scheduled to be completed in spring 2019. Eighty of the units will be replacement units for Yesler Terrace residents while 39 are additional units reserved for households making up to 60 percent of AMI.

Several hundred affordable apartments are also in the design and permitting phases at additional Yesler building sites, at Lam Bow (West Seattle) and Othello Square (near NewHolly).



Construction progress of the Red Cedar apartment building located in Yesler from 201X to 2018; the building will open in 2019.

Spurring new affordable unit development by partners

SHA uses its leverage with partners and local developers to incentivize or even require development of affordable housing above and beyond SHA's own housing stock and subsidies.

In 2018, Vulcan Real Estate created 39 new affordable apartments for low-income households (80 percent of AMI and below) at Yesler, along with 156 market-rate units.

Also at Yesler, more affordable units by other developers were in the works:

- **Cyprus:** At year-end 2018, Vulcan was in construction on another 77 affordable and 189 market-rate units in the Cyprus complex. Cyprus is scheduled to open in spring 2019.
- **Modera First Hill:** Construction firm Mill Creek Residential is building 77 affordable and 213 market rate apartments in a new complex called Modera First Hill, scheduled for completion in 2020.

Supporting new construction by partners

SHA is also supporting the production of new affordable family housing within Seattle's Opportunity Neighborhoods (see p. 18 for more information on Opportunity Neighborhoods).

- **University of Washington:** SHA is partnering with the University of Washington to bring at least 150 affordable apartments to the University District. In 2018, SHA began a feasibility study for the site owned by the UW and the selection process of a qualified developer to build the project.
- **Habitat for Humanity:** Seattle Housing Authority donated several parcels of land adjacent to Lake City Court to Habitat for Humanity in 2018. Habitat will use the land to construct 16 family-size townhouses with three to four bedrooms each. The townhouses are reserved for low-income households to provide homeownership opportunities to households who are traditionally left out of the real estate market.

Expand housing opportunities

Advance affordable housing policy

Champion public policies that will increase the viability, availability and accessibility of affordable housing for people with low incomes.



(L-R) Seattle Parks and Recreation Interim Superintendent Christopher Williams, Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan, SHA Executive Director Andrew Lofton, Seattle City Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda and Seattle Sounders FC Owner Adrian Hanauer celebrate the opening of Yesler Terrace Park in August 2018.

Championing affordable housing

SHA partners with private, public and nonprofit organizations at the local, state and national levels to promote the interests of Seattle residents in need of affordable housing and champion full funding of important housing programs. Together with our partners, SHA worked actively in 2018 to educate lawmakers about the potential impacts of legislative proposals on low-income individuals and the ability of organizations and governments to create and maintain affordable housing.

Examples of successful legislation in 2018:

- Increasing the capital budget in the State Housing Trust Fund to create 3,500 more units of affordable housing.
- Banning source of income discrimination by landlords, including against renters using Housing Choice Vouchers, throughout Washington.
- Improving the federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, including a 12.5 percent increase of the Housing Credit, which provides funds for construction and rehabilitation of rental properties, and a measure that allows the program to serve households earning up to 80 percent of AMI provided that income averages meet certain requirements.

Leadership for Moving to Work Agencies

Moving to Work was established by Congress to provide selected high-performing housing authorities flexibility in their Housing Choice Voucher and Public Housing programs to implement locally-based strategies to increase housing choice, support resident economic self-sufficiency and improve cost-effectiveness. At year-end 2018, there were 39 MTW agencies in the US.

SHA obtained MTW status in the first cohort in 1998. MTW is integral to the entirety of the agency's operations, including enabling SHA's extensive commitments to Permanent Supportive Housing units throughout the City, maintaining and redeveloping SHA's own housing stock and providing services to residents and participants of all ages.

Protecting SHA's MTW benefits

Throughout the years, SHA has had to leverage legislative support and partner with the other 38 MTW agencies to ensure that the flexibilities intended by Congress are honored by HUD and that the program continues. As the need for this collective work increased over the last several years, the MTW agencies organized themselves informally under the MTW Steering Committee. SHA's Executive Director served as Chair of the MTW Steering Committee throughout 2018.

Forming an MTW industry group

Having proven the value of their collective power through many important issues, not the least of which was extending MTW contracts through 2028, and with Congress authorizing another 100 MTW agencies beginning in 2019, the current agencies decided to formalize the organization. This process has been spearheaded by SHA's Executive Director in collaboration with other MTW agency leaders. In 2018, a host organization was selected and the first staff were hired.

Expand housing opportunities

Diversify housing choice

Expand available housing choices, demonstrate alternative housing models and preserve and increase access to neighborhoods throughout Seattle that would otherwise be out of reach for people with low incomes.

Demonstrating and piloting new housing models

SHA has a long history of innovating to make the most out of the housing resources available. For nearly two decades, SHA has been expanding housing choices through strategies like creating mixed-income communities, spurring additional affordable housing development and providing subsidies to non-profit housing providers to enable them to provide permanent supportive housing to high needs populations. The following are examples of that spirit of innovation in action in 2018.

Home from School pilot

Studies show that mid-year student turn-over disrupts the education of all students in a school. SHA's Home from School pilot program helps families with students at Bailey Gatzert Elementary School who are currently homeless or unstably housed to find housing in the school's attendance zone in order to keep students in the same school year-round. Families receive Housing Choice Vouchers from SHA and case management services from a non-profit service provider to help them successfully locate an apartment in the neighborhood and settle in. In 2018, 29 families were receiving supportive services through this program. The pilot will continue through at least the 2018-19 school year and will be evaluated to inform future investments.

Rental housing assistance pilot

SHA and the City of Seattle partnered to launch the Seattle Rental Housing Assistance Pilot. In the two-year pilot, Seattle residents on SHA's HCV waitlist who are most at risk of losing their housing are targeted with funding from the City to provide short-term housing or rental assistance until they can be issued an SHA housing voucher. Households are also offered connections to other supports such as utility discounts and case management.



Kids hang out at Lake City Night Out, a community event that allows neighbors to get to know each other.



A woman and her dog attend the NewHolly Fun Fest where Neighborhood House hosted a community health fair.

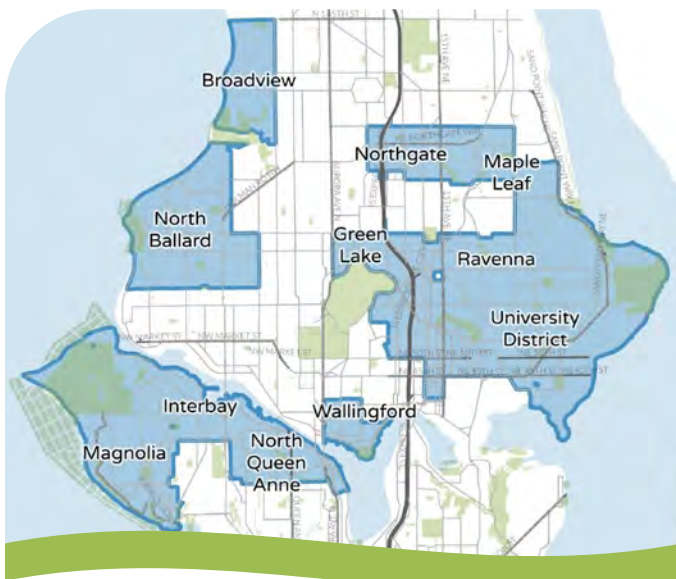
Expand housing opportunities

Diversify housing choice

Increasing neighborhood access for families with children

SHA's family-size housing is primarily located in a limited number of neighborhoods, and many neighborhoods in Seattle are out of reach for low-income households. Even households with Housing Choice Vouchers often end up renting in these same limited neighborhoods. While continuing the agency's strong commitment to high-quality communities, SHA also seeks to expand housing choice for Housing Choice Voucher participants.

A growing body of research shows that the neighborhood a child grows up in impacts their outcomes later in life, including college attendance and lifetime earnings. In 2018, SHA began piloting new strategies to increase access for families designated "Opportunity Neighborhoods." Different neighborhoods can provide varying opportunities at varying degrees for differing populations. For the purpose of piloting strategies for families with Housing Choice Vouchers, however, SHA designated neighborhoods that have promising long-term outcomes for low-income children and have lower rates of access for families served by SHA as Opportunity Neighborhoods.



Opportunity Neighborhoods for families with children in Seattle are shaded and outlined in blue.

Creating Moves to Opportunity Pilot

Creating Moves to Opportunity is a multi-year collaboration with King County Housing Authority and leading researchers and philanthropists across the US to develop and test effective, and hopefully efficient, strategies to expand access to Opportunity Neighborhoods for families with children participating in the Housing Choice Voucher program. CMTO is designed to give participating families the tools they need to decide if they want to live in an Opportunity Neighborhood and to make the move a possibility.

In 2018, SHA launched Phase I of CMTO. Families received specialized services in three main areas (housing search, rental education and flexible financial assistance) while still retaining choice about where they choose to lease. Program staff also work directly with landlords to engage them in the program, connect families to available units and to facilitate the leasing process. During the first year, 120 families participated in CMTO, and many of the families have already moved to Opportunity Neighborhoods in Seattle. CMTO is being evaluated by leading researchers in this field and may inform future mobility programs in other regions of the country.

Family Access Supplement

Rents in the designated Opportunity Areas are often higher than SHA's Voucher Payment Standard. SHA's Board of Commissioners approved a new strategy help families with children lease up and remain in designated Opportunity Neighborhoods. The strategy provides a supplement to the Voucher Payment Standard to qualifying households to make more units in these neighborhoods accessible and to help prevent families already leasing there from being pushed out due to rent increases.

Promote quality communities

Preserve and promote high-quality housing

Provide safe, accessible, sustainable and attractive living environments that contribute to the quality of Seattle neighborhoods through preservation and redevelopment of SHA's housing stock.

Sustaining decent, safe and affordable living environments

The Asset Management and Housing Operations teams work closely together to maintain the quality of housing SHA owns. SHA is continuously engaged in a number of projects aimed at preserving current housing stock, supporting residents in their tenancy and identifying funds to continue capital improvement. In 2018, SHA engaged in the following projects designed to improve both SHA-owned units and residents' quality of life:

Elevator modernization: There are more than 110 elevators in SHA properties. Keeping these elevators functioning well is a priority. Given the large number and the high costs and complexity, especially when a building has only one elevator, elevator modernization is an ongoing focus of SHA's capital program. In 2018, elevator modernization was completed at Bitter Lake Manor, Montridge Arms, Blakely Manor, Pleasant Valley and one of the Jefferson Terrace elevators (the rest of the elevators at Jefferson Terrace are scheduled for modernization in 2019).

Secure building access: SHA is implementing a security upgrade program in three phases, which includes the installation of card reader access and upgraded security cameras. Phase I was completed in 2018 covering six Seattle Senior Housing Program buildings (Bitter Lake, Gideon Matthews, South Park Manor, Reunion House, Pinehurst Court and Columbia Place). Phase II began in 2018 and is covering the remaining SSHP buildings, with completion expected in 2019. 2019 will also see the planning for Phase III, which includes SHA's high-rise buildings and select locations in the Garden Communities.

Keeping SSHP community rooms cool: SHA partnered with the City of Seattle's Office of Housing to install heat pumps in the community rooms of 20 SSHP buildings. These heat pumps will provide air conditioning for residents during the summer months, providing a respite from the heat for residents when temperatures soar.

NewHolly Phase I¹ Rehabilitation: NewHolly Phase I is the section of NewHolly that was developed first and is the closest to Beacon Hill. In 2018, SHA completed the rehabilitation of 305 units in NewHolly Phase I. Begun in 2016, the project was designed to address issues caused by water intrusion that resulted in premature damage to the structures. To address these issues, SHA completed a full envelope renovation of each unit, meaning that all roofing, siding, windows, trim, gutters and decks were removed and reinstalled. Water and other damage to the underlying structures were addressed at the same time. The whole project cost just over \$46 million dollars and was financed using a combination of four percent tax credits, tax-exempt bonds and the agency's MTW Block Grant funds. This project was completed without the need to relocate any residents, allowing them to stay in their homes during the project.

¹NewHolly Phase I is a stand-alone project, unrelated to the Phase II or Phase III redevelopment projects mentioned on p. 20.



Debuting in late 2018, the Yesler Blossoms sculpture by artists Alessandra Panieri and Dan Barsher honors the diversity of the Yesler community and its tradition and love of gardening. The sculpture was commissioned by Seattle Housing Authority and funded by The Kresge Foundation with support from Andersen Construction.

Promote quality communities

Preserve and promote high-quality housing

Partnering with residents

A key strategy for preserving the quality of SHA's housing opportunities is prevention. Residents are our valuable partners in this effort. However, occasionally residents can find the move-out process complicated. After some residents move out, staff find that they do not adequately report or repair damages to their apartment, or leave the unit in bad condition (such as leaving behind large amounts of belongings). In these cases, SHA staff must spend extra time and resources repairing the damages or paying outside companies to haul, store and/or dispose of materials.

Not only does this take time away from regular maintenance and preservation duties, it can also result in more hours spent preparing the units for new residents. Another potential consequence for former residents is a loss of deposit or being charged for some of the repair costs. To make it easier for residents to leave their units in good condition, SHA partnered pro bono with the behavioral design firm *ideas42* to develop and test new approaches informed by residents. SHA staff interviewed residents and other SHA staff to better understand:

- Obstacles experienced by residents at time of vacate.
- The impact of such obstacles on residents' ability to successfully move out.
- The impact on SHA's ability to quickly and economically prepare the unit for new residents.

Using this information, SHA generated ideas to address these challenges such as providing residents with moving assistance and increasing check-ins with SHA staff prior to move-out to ensure their tenancy is on the right track. Piloting of these strategies began in 2018 and will continue into 2019. The initiative is being evaluated to inform future practices.



Repairing the exterior of an SHA-owned apartment complex located in south Seattle.

Capital financing initiative

In recent federal budgets, HUD appropriations for capital improvements has been underfunded, requiring public housing providers such as SHA to find ways to diversify funding sources through methods such as low-income housing tax credits, tax exempt bonds and other local and federal government grants.

In 2018, SHA refinanced NewHolly Phase II, NewHolly Phase III, Rainier Vista Phase I and Wedgewood Estates using tax exempt bonds. This activity enabled Seattle Housing Authority to leverage just over \$7 million in additional capital funds that will be used to rehabilitate the cottage units at Wedgewood Estates, perform interior upgrades at NewHolly Phases II and III and perform repairs to the exterior and interior of units at Rainier Vista Phase I.

Promote quality communities

Connect people to opportunity

Invest in communities through partnerships so that neighborhoods where participants live support access to opportunities such as good jobs, parks, transit, arts, high-performing schools and healthy living.



A mother and her young daughter play in Yesler Terrace Park. Growing up in a neighborhood with access to amenities like local parks can help a child gain more opportunities in adulthood.

Enhancing opportunity for all

SHA strives to ensure that all residents have access to high-quality neighborhoods. SHA invests in physical infrastructure, public and private partnerships, and supporting people to shape their communities into thriving spaces that work for them and their families.

Fostering community: Friends of the Community Farm at Rainier Vista partnered with Asian Counseling and Referral Services to re-activate the Rainier Vista Community Farm. The farm hosts residents and visitors as a platform to teach and promote healthy eating, environmental stewardship and community connection.

Digital equity: Information technology capacity is increasingly important for civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning and access to essential services. In 2018, the City of Seattle conducted a city-wide survey about technology access and literacy to inform future investments and program planning. SHA collaborated with the City to ensure that the voices of SHA residents were included. Results showed that only 77 percent of SHA residents have internet access at home (compared to 95 percent of Seattle residents) and that half of those who do not have access cite cost as a barrier. SHA continues to work with the City, residents and providers toward increasing digital equity.

Yesler Terrace Park grand opening: In August 2018, SHA celebrated the grand opening of Yesler Terrace Park with community members, partners and residents. The park is situated in the heart of the Yesler redevelopment and features several play structures, a splash park, basketball and soccer fields, open green space and panoramic views of Downtown Seattle and Elliott Bay. SHA and Seattle Parks and Recreation partnered with residents to create a shared vision that represents the diversity and community reflected in the residents of Yesler and surrounding communities and a neighborhood gathering space that can be enjoyed by residents for generations.



The Seattle Sounders' RAVE Foundation donated soccer balls to youth who attended the Yesler Terrace Park grand opening.

Promote quality communities

Strengthen community and service

Facilitate effective and supportive relationships and respectful interactions among participants, staff, partner organizations and neighbors so that people feel valued, proud and connected to the community they live in.

Customer service

Respectful, effective and high-quality service for residents is important to SHA and is highlighted in the Strategic Plan as both an organizational cornerstone and as a key objective. There are multiple ways that residents may experience customer service, including the speed and quality of responsiveness to requests for service and how they felt following an interaction with SHA staff. SHA strives to ensure that all interactions with residents are affirming and result in positive outcomes. The following are a few examples of SHA's advancements in 2018.

HCV adapts to increased voucher activity

With SHA's efforts to increase the number of Housing Choice Vouchers leased in 2018, there was a surge in activity. More households than usual were needing to complete the eligibility determination process and attend briefings. Additionally, after the private market Voucher Payment Standard was increased in September, the number of households successfully finding units to lease spiked in the fourth quarter.

HCV innovated to meet the increased work load by offering weekend voucher issuance appointments to households moving off the waitlist and by working on weekends to complete paperwork. While the time to complete priority processes like the "Request for Tenancy Approval" was longer than SHA's target goals, they were much better than they would have been if HCV had stuck with standard practices and HCV's extended hours supported more households in securing an affordable home.

Trauma-informed practices

In the second half of 2018, more than 60 SHA staff participated in trainings on trauma-informed care. Trauma-informed care is a method of interacting with customers that engages with the whole person, taking into account a person's past experiences and how traumatic experiences may result in behavior that is confusing or unpleasant. It teaches that people may react to situations differently than expected, and gives providers tools to communicate with and support clients who may be dealing with trauma in supportive and mutually-beneficial ways.

The trainings, conducted in partnership with Seattle Public Schools, engaged SHA staff in exploring how traumatic experiences could explain disruptive behaviors and strategies to build positive, supportive relationships with residents who may have suffered traumatic experiences. Throughout 2019, staff will use the tools they learned in these trainings to build toolkits and best practices for communicating with residents, tenants and applicants. These trainings and subsequent efforts are designed to improve practices, policies and systems so that SHA can provide better and more compassionate customer service.



SHA staff attend a trauma-informed care training session at the NewHolly Gathering Hall.

Improve quality of life

Enhance senior and disabled living

Connect senior and disabled participants to the services they need and facilitate access to other housing choices along a continuum of care as appropriate.



Denny Terrace residents showcase their artwork at the first-ever Denny Terrace Art Show; pieces shown ranged from wood sculptures to oil paintings.

Customer-focused programming

Seattle Housing Authority is committed to meeting the unique needs of its senior residents and residents with disabilities through a suite of wrap-around services and programming. SHA taps the knowledge of residents and staff to determine where unmet needs might be, and works with staff and community providers to offer home health care, legal services, community gatherings and other programming. Such services enhance health, promote community and provide security for residents with increased needs.

By the numbers

7,168

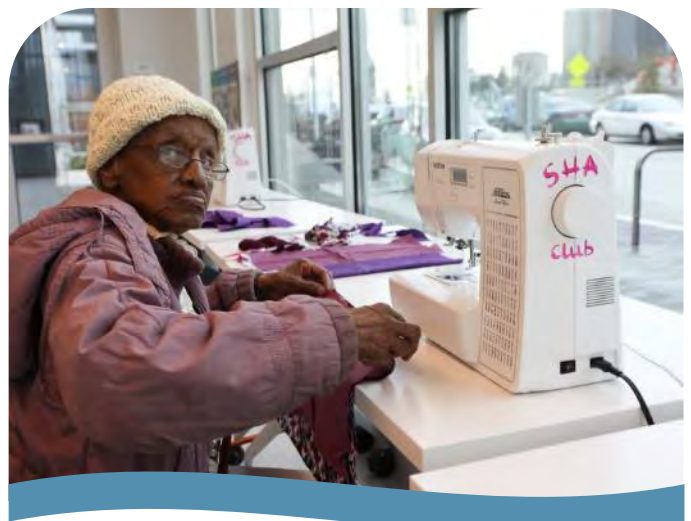
Senior citizens

6,003

Non-seniors with disabilities

Artistic expression: Denny Terrace residents hosted their inaugural Denny Terrace Art Show with great success. The show displayed paintings, sculptures and photography created and curated by the residents. The outstanding success resulted in a City of Seattle Arts and Culture grant to continue the showcase into next year.

Seniors in service: SHA's Aging in Place volunteer initiative wrapped up its first year in 2018. Seattle Senior Housing Program (SSHP) participants have been putting their talents and skills to use by volunteering with their neighbors. Led by an Americorps volunteer in partnership with Full Life Care, 50 of SSHP volunteer-residents coordinated and facilitated exercise groups, computer and technology classes, music performances and social groups. Together with non-SHA resident volunteers, the Aging in Place initiative provided 61 total classes and workshops to senior residents and residents with disabilities. Resident-led programs include: Tai Chi; computer basics; music performances; meditation; creative writing; watercolor; walking groups; and embroidery.



Seattle Housing Authority hosts sewing classes for residents for recreation or to learn new, marketable skills.

Improve quality of life Economically empower people

Assist participants in benefiting from education and employment to increase their economic security, skills, income, assets and financial well-being.

JobLink

Revitalizing SHA's adult employment and education program

SHA redesigned its adult employment and education program and, in January 2018, launched JobLink. The new program is better equipped to meet residents where they are at, support their progress and connect to in-demand jobs. JobLink can help tenants find a job right away, enroll in workforce-focused training and education, get a higher-wage job or start a small business. JobLink also aims to support a larger number of eligible residents from across the agency's housing programs.

Outreach partners

Getting the word out about the new services and opportunities is essential to JobLink's goal of increase the number of participants. A communication strategy is underway to help staff throughout the agency talk with residents about the employment and education opportunities available to them.

Among JobLink's enthusiastic outreach partners is a group of trusted professions who interact with a variety of residents every day: SHA's maintenance team. Maintenance staff learn about key information so they can speak with residents about the program. They also leave JobLink magnets on refrigerators and flyers in living rooms so residents have handy access to program information.



Solomon Hall, Maintenance Mechanic, engages potential JobLink participants by leaving program information in units (see inset) after fulfilling work orders.

2018 JobLink accomplishments

80%

Increase in enrollment

89%

Increase in job placements

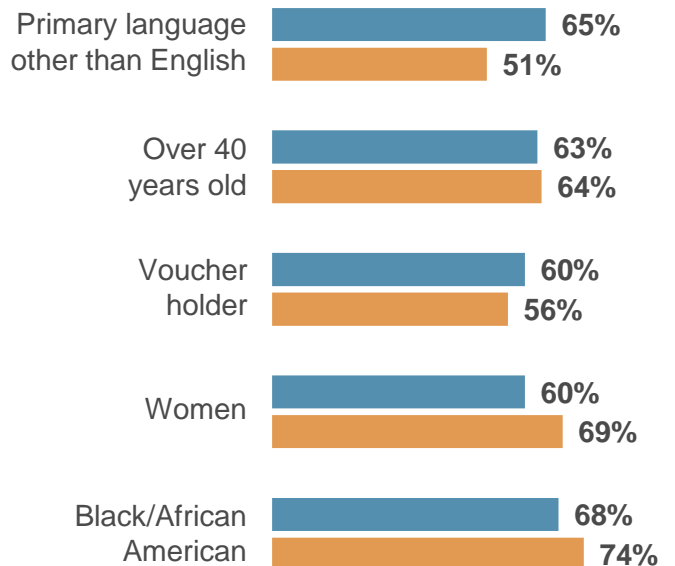
\$16.70

Average hourly wage
(from job placement)

Based on 2017 baseline data.

Enrolled vs eligible residents

■ Eligible residents ■ JobLink enrollees



Improve quality of life Support youth achievement

Promote access to high-quality learning opportunities for young children, youth and young adults that increase educational performance, college and career readiness, and encourage lifelong well-being.

Supporting student attendance

SHA and Seattle Public Schools have been partnering for several years to support increased educational outcomes for the agencies' shared students. Recognizing that strong school attendance is a foundational step in student learning and a predictor of future achievement, SHA and SPS made attendance the primary focus of the partnership.

Piloting school- and community-driven strategies

Informed by student and family engagement, shared data and school/community-specific collaborations, SHA and SPS piloted a variety of strategies to support student attendance in 2018.

Back-to-school campaign: SHA and SPS collaborated on improving information access for families and generating enthusiasm at school. Preliminary data indicates that SHA student attendance improved in the first month of school in 2018 compared to the prior year.

Family co-design: Families at NewHolly collaborated with SHA and SPS staff over eight months in 2018 to provide insights for improving their students' education and to determine how to invest \$15,000. They determined that a group mentorship program would provide the most benefit for their students.

Group mentorship: Following the recommendations from the family co-design partners, a group mentoring program was launched at NewHolly in fall 2018. About 60 NewHolly students ages 8-16 are participating in a weekly Leadership & Enrichment Club designed to expose the youth to positive adult role models and enhance the students' leadership skills.

Attendance partnership schools

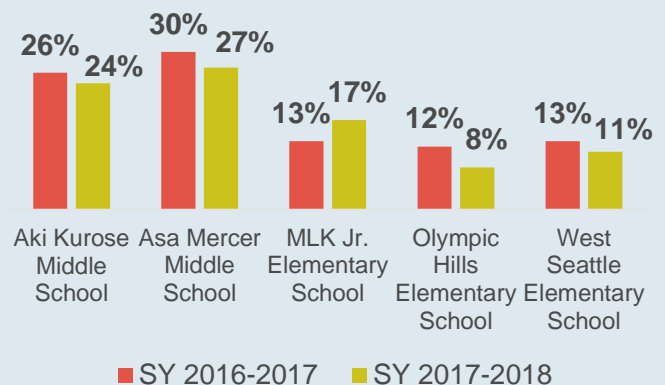
SHA and SPS invited schools with large numbers of SHA resident students to apply to be Attendance Partnership Schools for the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years. Five schools with a shared commitment to family engagement and student success were selected for a two-year pilot. Activities were developed in partnership with SHA and SPS staff, educators and families, tailored specifically to each school's needs.

In the first year of the program, strategies included:

- Attendance challenges within and between schools, where students competed for pizza parties and other prizes.
- Specialized information sessions for families, such as learning how to use Student Portal, the online tool for parents to monitor attendance and student information.
- Community-based listening sessions at SHA properties.
- Family home visits.
- Coordinating with tutoring sites to replicate successful attendance practices.

Rates of chronic absenteeism and the attendance gap between SHA and non-SHA students decreased in four out of the five partner schools.

Chronic absenteeism rates



Improve quality of life Support youth achievement

High school and beyond

Youth leadership: Teens at NewHolly and Rainier Vista founded the Youth Leadership Board in 2018. Their first year activities included initiating Seattle's first youth-led Teen Summit, featuring Seattle Chapter Black Panther founder Aaron Dixon, and presenting to youth development professionals about effective youth engagement and leadership techniques and approaches at the 2018 Elevate Youth Voice - Schools Out Washington - Bridge Conference.

SHA scholars Dream Big! In 2018, SHA's Higher Education Project Committee awarded nine scholarships of \$1,000 each to students in SHA's housing programs, bringing the total to 26 scholarships awarded in this Strategic Plan cycle. Recipients from 2018 have excelled academically, proven themselves to be leaders of their communities and shown remarkable persistence and perseverance. Award winners include a student who volunteered her time to lead a cheer team at her local middle school, a future scientist who discovered her love of science through an internship with Public Health, a proud immigrant who wants to be a nurse in order to give back to his community and a young person who created a documentary on the gentrification occurring in her neighborhood. These students are leaders in their communities and inspire those around them to achieve. SHA is proud to be able to provide these scholarships and is dedicated to supporting all students to achieve.



CFO Shelly Yap (left) and Teha discuss education and career goals.



Education Engagement Specialist Saadia Hamid (right) shares a story about Filsan's educational success.



(L-R) Youth tutoring volunteer Winnie Sperry, Teha (recipient), Executive Director Andrew Lofton, Filsan (recipient) and Destiny (recipient) at the Dream Big! Scholarship reception.



Destiny (center) and her family are all smiles celebrating her educational achievements.



Seattle Housing Authority

190 Queen Anne Ave. N.
P.O. Box 19028
Seattle, WA 98109-1028

206.615.3300
711 or 1.800.833.6388

seattlehousing.org



Date published: April 15, 2019