



# INSTITUTIONAL RACISM: IT'S THE FOREST, NOT THE TREES.

The City of Seattle's Race and Social  
Justice Initiative

David Bayard | 5/23/17



# CITY OF SEATTLE RACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE (RSJI)



- A citywide effort to realize the vision of racial **equity**, working within City Government to get to the root cause of racial inequity: **institutional racism**.



# EQUALITY OR EQUITY?

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Equality: The state or quality of being equal

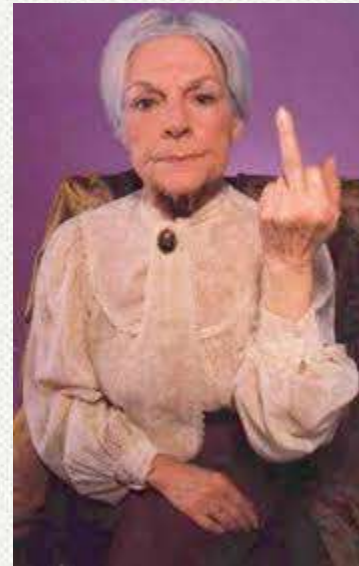


Equity: The quality of being fair or impartial  
"each according to their need"



# "CAN'T SEE THE FOREST FOR THE TREES"

- Individual Racism
  - Pre-judgement, bias, stereotypes or generalizations about an individual or group based on race. (City of Seattle, RSJI)





# "CAN'T SEE THE FOREST FOR THE TREES"

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- Institutional Racism

- Policies, practices or procedures that work to the benefit of white people and to the detriment of people of color, usually unintentionally or inadvertently. (City of Seattle, RSJI)
  - "Colorblind" decision making
  - "Squeaky-wheel" customer care policies
  - One-size-fits-all aid distribution
  - English-only outreach and communication strategies
  - Disciplinary processes (education)
  - Policing by Profile



## "CAN'T SEE THE FOREST FOR THE TREES"

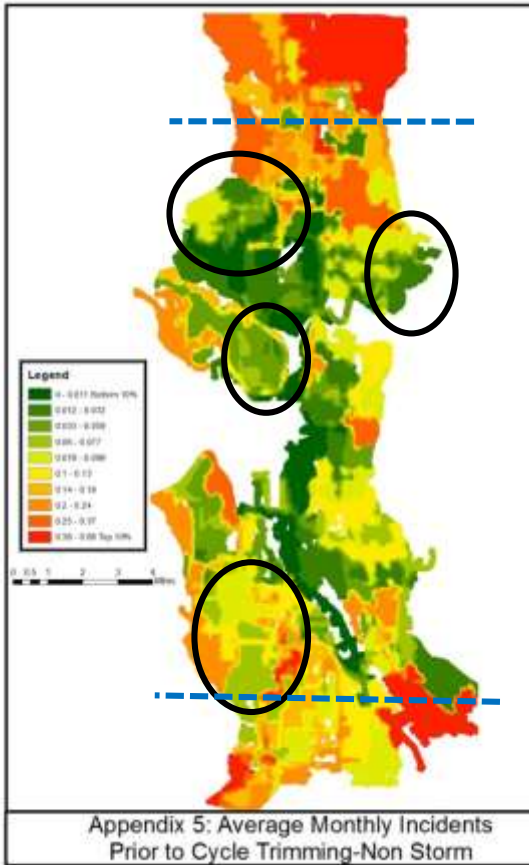
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- Why focus on Race?
  - Race has defined the story of the United States
  - All other cultural/societal disparities are magnified by race
  - Racism hurts everyone

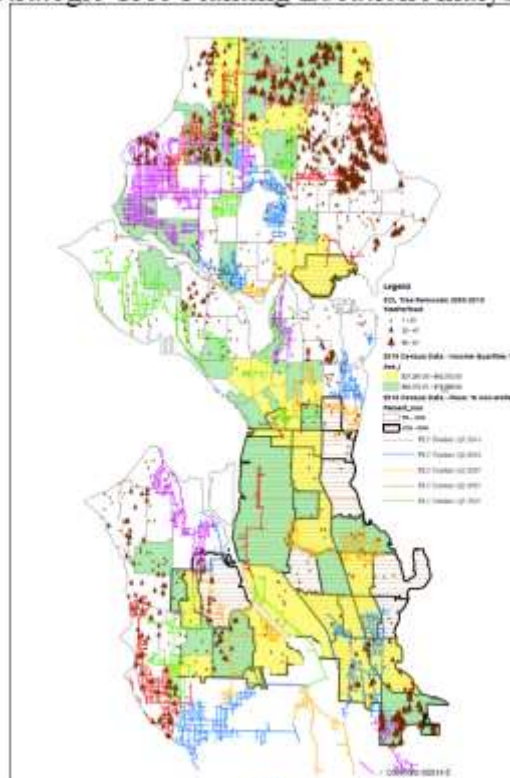
# RACIAL EQUITY AND URBAN FORESTRY: SEATTLE CITY LIGHT



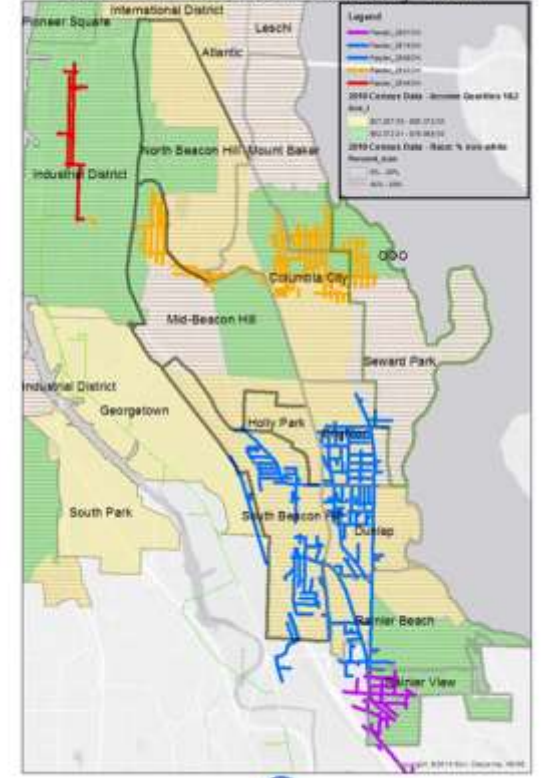
## Tree Removal/Replacement Analysis:



2014-2015 Seattle City Light Strategic Tree Planting Location Analysis



2014-2015 Seattle City Light SE District Urban Forestry Plan





# RACIAL EQUITY AND URBAN FORESTRY: SEATTLE CITY LIGHT

## Outreach:

- “Translation available” in 12 languages
- Post-transaction surveys can be anonymous
- Added pictures to door-hangers

**Seattle City Light**

Tear along perforation and mail back

1. Please rate your overall satisfaction with the level of service the tree trimming crew provided using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 is not at all satisfied and 5 is completely satisfied. If you don't know, or are undecided please mark 6.

**PLEASE CHECK ONE**

1. NOT AT ALL SATISFIED

2

3

4

5. COMPLETELY SATISFIED

6. UNKNOWN

2. Do you feel the notice you received made it clear why, how and to what extent the tree trimming work would be done?

Yes

No

I did not receive notice

3. Did the tree trimming crew leave your property clean and in the same condition they found it?

Yes

No

I'm not sure/I don't know

4. If you interacted with the tree crew, would you say they were courteous, polite and professional?

Yes

No

I did not interact with the tree crew

I'm not sure/I don't know

5. Would you like someone from Seattle City Light to follow-up with you to discuss the tree trimming crew's recent visit?

Yes

No

If you responded Yes to question 5, please provide us with your daytime telephone number:

Additional Comments:

Customer Name:

Address:

Translations available upon request.

Traducción disponible bajo petición • 根據要求提供翻譯 • 유호한 요구에 응하여 번역 • 根據要求提供翻譯 • Pagsasalin sa magagamit kapaag hiniling • 根據要求提供翻譯 • Hadaadili and codadadili turjubaan was lagau • 根據要求提供翻譯 • diyaarinayaa • Afzhan Hikaas Yoo Barbaadan Argacha Nidadesu • 根據要求提供翻譯 • Dich cung cấp theo yêu cầu

**Thank you for completing this survey.**  
Please detach along dotted line, peel & seal and mail this prepaid postage survey.

**Seattle City Light**

**THE NATION'S GREENEST UTILITY**

Seattle City Light is committed to ensuring safe and reliable power delivery to our valued customers. Vegetation has been the largest single cause of electrical outages on our system; we are changing that by performing regularly scheduled line-clearance work throughout our service territory.

Our arborists have identified vegetation on your property which must be trimmed to avoid electrical outages and reduce safety hazards. We will return in the near future to address these concerns; a service we provide at no additional cost to you. All useable firewood will be left on site and cut to length.

Please use the information below when contacting us so we can better address any questions or concerns you may have.

Feeder # \_\_\_\_\_ Site # \_\_\_\_\_

Inspector \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Our ISA Certified Arborists are always available for consultation and questions. For more information, please visit [www.seattle.gov/light/vegetation](http://www.seattle.gov/light/vegetation) or contact us at [SCLVegetation@seattle.gov](mailto:SCLVegetation@seattle.gov) or (206) 386-1733.

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## Training:

- All City of Seattle employees undergo 8-hour “Race: The Power of an Illusion” training
- Race and Customer Communication training for all contract Tree Trimmers, Arborists, Notifiers, Forepersons and Supervisors (Facilitated by SOCR)
- Veg. Mgmt. staff involved in City Light Change Team leadership and City of Seattle Core Team



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# THANK YOU!

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[www.seattle.gov/light/vegetation](http://www.seattle.gov/light/vegetation)