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DELTA VISION COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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- Russell Brooks, Red Eagle Soaring
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- Mike Tulee, United Indians of All Tribes Foundation

COMMUNITY ELDERS AND GRANTMAKERS

Community elders and experts from the grantmaking community also reviewed versions of this report. They are:

- Zamzam Abdulgani
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- Tony To

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Introduction

About the Delta Vision Project

A world that is racially equitable and just can only be achieved if the communities most impacted by injustice are involved in shaping policies and practices. With strong organizational capacity, communities of color are able to fully participate in civic engagement and advocacy around critical areas, such as environmental justice and education equity.

However, traditional models of capacity building tend to only be at the organizational level and focused on developing individuals. Traditional models often overlook the roles and responsibilities of funders, policy-making entities, and system actors, as well as the relationships these entities have with communities and organizations. Furthermore, traditional models of capacity building do not explicitly address racial equity, systems, and power, rendering them inadequate for communities of color.

A group of people of color-led capacity building organizations based in Seattle recognized these challenges and convened to create a model, tentatively called the Delta Vision. The Delta Vision, which builds on local wisdom, focuses on strengthening community-based organizations (CBOs) led by communities of color and transforming the relationships with the systems that impact them. The long-term aspirations of this group are:

- to unify people of color-led capacity builders,
- to implement and live out aspects of the model, and
- to effectively build the capacity of ethnic-based organizations.

The Delta Vision is still in its early stages. The Delta Vision proposes a holistic approach that simultaneously develops three core components of capacity on multiple layers of organization, community, and systems. (More detail on this can be found starting on page 25.)

In the course of pulling together a knowledge base for this endeavor, we, the planning team, have recognized that while certain layers and components of a model are detailed in this document, this is really about a greater vision. This transformational vision is one in which relationships built among all entities are authentic, trusting, and aligned in seeking out social justice. Ultimately, the Delta
Vision is about transforming ‘ways of being,’ not about assuming that there exists a checklist, technical qualities, or strategies and tactics that would universally apply across all communities.

The heart of the Delta Vision centers around the needs, wisdom, and voices of communities of color. We recognize that each community is unique in their perspective and needs. Our process in creating this report reflects our values of equity, inclusion, and prioritizing community voices. Seventy-five percent of our budget went to organizations of color who participated in the development of the Delta Vision. Our consultants who facilitated the Delta Project process were people of color from our local community.

The Delta Vision Planning Group

The planning group for the Delta Vision is composed of seven people of color-led organizations that provide capacity building services, such as leadership development, fiscal sponsorship, executive director coaching, legal assistance, grant writing support, and strategic planning facilitation. This group acted as a core thinktank and vehicle to drive the Delta Vision forward, drawing on their collective experiences working with ethnic-based organizations to propose an initial model, coordinate and gather vital feedback from the community partner organizations named below, and then synthesize the community feedback to shape what became the Delta Vision presented in this report.

The Delta Vision Community Partners

The community partners participating in the Delta Vision project, who include providers of direct services to communities of color in the Puget Sound area, generously advised the Delta planning group at pivotal junctures throughout the year, providing feedback on the emerging vision based on the specific experiences, perspectives, needs, and aspirations within their communities.

The Delta Vision Community Partners

- Kenyan Women Association
- Coalition for Refugees from Burma
- Entre Hermanos
- CASA Latina
- Center for Ethical Leadership
- LivingWell Kent
- MOTHER AFRICA
- Potlatch Fund
- Latino Community Fund
- Nonprofit Assistance Center
- OPEN DOORS
- Red Eagle Soaring
- Rainier Valley Corps
- Information & Referral Center
- United Indians of All Tribes Foundation
- Wayfind
Purpose and Audience for this Report

“My hope is to show, capture, and explain how racial bias prevents funders from doing well in trying to build capacity in communities, to bring to the surface, their own assumptions.”

PETER BLOCH GARCIA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
LATINO COMMUNITY FUND

“Capacity building is enabling individuals and organizations to perform their mission more effectively and efficiently. It is giving them the tools necessary, skills, and education to accomplish that.”

TACHINI PETE, PROGRAM DIRECTOR
POTLATCH FUND

“Communities in which we are rooted come with different histories, assets, and barriers. There is not a one-size-fits-all approach. For example, the ways leadership ‘shows up’ and the ways collaborations exist, are forged, and are nurtured — they are all different. We need a clear network of resources — that is well-equipped and well-resourced to serve communities of color in this region.”

SARAH TRAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NONPROFIT ASSISTANCE CENTER

This report is intended for audiences concerned about the well-being of communities of color in King County and the nonprofit organizations that serve them.

This includes leaders and practitioners of nonprofit organizations led by people of color that serve communities of color, entities that provide capacity building services to these nonprofit organizations, and local and national funders supporting community development and systems change in the Puget Sound region.

Special emphasis is given to recommendations and opportunities for action for funders — both public and private. Policy-makers and governmental entities that direct the allocation of resources to communities of color and partnering organizations may also benefit from this report’s findings, since the Delta Vision is an integrated approach in which mutual understanding and trust among system actors are essential to achieving racial equity and social justice.

The Delta Vision is based in part on local and national findings that call for greater and more equitable funding for communities of color in proportion to their representation in the population and their needs.1

Other studies have also substantiated the need for core operating support and the harmful effects of prohibiting funding of overhead costs (Eckhart-Queenan, Etzel and Prasad, 2016; Klotz, 2016). This critical issue is the symptom of a funding system that has reinforced the marginalization of communities of color due to structural racism and continued power imbalances between funders and nonprofits.

It is essential that relationships between funders and nonprofits become ones that are authentic, mutually respectful, and cognizant of the history of race relations in the United States in order to achieve and sustain equitable community development and social justice.

The Delta Vision project planning team and community partners are inviting further dialogue with funders to identify refinements, as well as opportunities for implementation and action.

1. See for example, the D5 Initiative www.d5coalition.org.
"My interest is how to pipeline more people, particularly those who are immigrants and refugees, into leadership programs, as well as learning from our program participants. Many at first did not see themselves as leaders.

“Leadership is traditionally defined by position, and mainstream views about what a leader should look like, talk like, and act like often overlook the leadership qualities of immigrants, refugees, and others on the margins.

“So, we are redefining leadership, increasing appreciation for cultural differences in leadership styles, and expanding who is profiled as a leader. Participants in our Immigrant Women Circles are being empowered to recognize their intrinsic leadership qualities. Many have adaptive leadership skills that are critical for leading in today’s increasingly diverse and globalized world.

“As one woman said, they have developed these skills out of necessity, from life experiences and situations they have faced. However, because they don’t speak English fluently, write well, or have a degree, they keep getting passed up for leadership positions even though they are strong adaptive leaders. ‘It is ironic and funny,’ she said. ‘Our [mostly white] managers are going to trainings to develop adaptive leadership skills. They are strong on technical leadership but do not have what is needed for these global times, for diverse communities and workplaces. They are feeling lost and incompetent dealing with complex social equity issues and fear becoming irrelevant. So, they are seeking new leadership skills that have always been there in our [immigrant and refugee] communities.’”

— Hla Yin Yin Waing

Executive Director
“At the community forums that we do, and we try to do as many as we can — we are told by the community members what the topics of the forum will be. I can say that the activities are open dialogues. The community forums do not have lecturers. Everyone is seated all around a table. We listen. We talk. We have a conversation. Then we ask everyone to spread the word of what we are going to do. This is carried out throughout the community, where people talk with their friends and families. Then in a forum again, we talk about our experiences as educators.”

— Joel Aguirre
Outreach Coordinator

“Providing back-office and administrative support allows our executive directors to focus on what they are best at: leading and organizing their communities. It allows them to lead with purpose and create change, without worrying about trying to access very different skill sets that are in service to their mission, but not at the core.”

— Uma Rao
Capacity Building Coach
Perspectives on Building Capacity

What’s Wrong with Traditional Models?

Often, community-based organizations serving communities of color find that traditional models of building capacity are not relevant to or do not grow the capacity of communities of color. Here, Puget Sound-area capacity building organization leaders speak out.

Current Models Aren’t Designed for Communities of Color

“We are creating a model, designed specifically for low-income communities and communities of color. Those categories, ‘low-income communities and communities of color,’ are diverse and includes many different cultures. Traditional capacity building models are designed for a singular white, majority culture. Our model is for a diversity of communities of color.”

JODI NISHIOKA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WAYFIND

Prioritizing Training Before Staffing Doesn’t Build Capacity

“Mainstream capacity building models tend to be about providing trainings to develop technical skills, such as creating budgets and fundraising. I was once a member of a grassroots Burmese community group. We were so excited to have received a capacity building grant and wanted to use the money to pay for staff, but instead, it was for us to attend training workshops and seminars. We were all volunteers, our time was very limited. One of the elders in the group asked, ‘Why do we have to go to a budgeting class when we don’t even have money to put in the bank?’ From my personal experience, that mainstream model does not actually build a community’s capacity.”

HLA YIN YIN WAING, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

Trust is Paramount

“We need to develop models for building trust and deepening partnerships around trust — when we do that, we can go further together.”

ANDREA CAUPAIN SANDERSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BYRD BARR PLACE

Traditional Models Discount Communities of Color

“In the traditional mainstream approach to capacity building, communities of color are framed negatively in a deficit-based way. Capacity building is used as a veiled term for ‘incompetency.’”

PETER BLOCH GARCIA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LATINO COMMUNITY FUND

POCs are the Experts of their Communities

“Traditional approaches to capacity building are often predicated on the idea that the problem lies within the organization, rather than the system in which it operates — the mainstream white culture doesn’t embrace different ways of being. In contrast, we build partnerships with community organizations. We assume our partners know their community best, are inherently resource-rich in leadership skills, innovation, grit, and other community assets — but are in a system that does not embrace their values, ways of being, history, and the journeys that got them to this country. Our services are co-designed with our community partners. We offer up the knowledge we have gained from working with hundreds of POC organizations over almost 20 years as a resource for them to consider what may be helpful in their own communities, but we do not dictate their path.”

SARAH TRAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NONPROFIT ASSISTANCE CENTER
Recent Models of Capacity Building from the Literature

Existing Literature

Existing literature provides guidance for reconsidering models of capacity building. In 2001, the Wilder Foundation listed about 20 factors critical for successful collaboration (Mattesich, 2001). These are:

• the collaborative group being seen as a legitimate leader in the community;
• mutual respect, understanding, and trust;
• multiple layers of participation;
• open and frequent communication;
• shared vision;
• sufficient funds, staff, materials, and time; and
• skilled leadership.

Another example highlighted six factors for sustaining comprehensive community initiatives and achieving community-level outcomes (Trent and Chavis, 2009). They were:

• having a single broker or entity that holds the vision of the change efforts;
• clearly defined roles;
• alignment among interventions, resources, and geography;
• meaningful community engagement;
• competent leadership and staff; and
• strategic, cross-level relationships.

Advancing a framework with three parts, Kubisch and colleagues reflected on two decades of community change efforts and identified three domains: 1) internal alignment, 2) alignment with outside resources and power, and 3) evaluation and learning (Kubisch et al., 2010).

With respect to internal alignment, community change efforts have many programmatic elements and stakeholders, and they need to work together and be integrated into a meaningful whole (Auspos, 2010). Often, an anchor entity is created or restructured to manage the work.

Three requirements for effective internal alignment are:

1. clarity about core goals and principles of the community change effort,
2. an overall management structure that reflects those goals and principles, and
3. management systems that recognize the dynamic nature of the work and facilitate effective alignment of all the relationships and moving parts over time (Auspos, 2010).

With respect to external alignment, relationships with external power holders, resources, policies, and markets are a fundamental strategy for place-based work and systems change (Dewar, 2010). Dewar observed that external alignment has led many place-based initiatives to incorporate regional or metropolitan strategies, due to increased mobility by residents. Also, coalitions may become more inclusive of identity groups if place or “neighborhood” do not resonate with recent immigrants or youth, and a broad coalition is needed to achieve a particular vision or goal. An external alignment lens also surfaces themes, such as a shared vision; power; allies for collaboration, not control; formal and informal alignment; aligning strategy and capacity; the central role of residents in leading the work; alignment at institutional, organizational, and personal levels; and recognizing early wins (Dewar, 2010).

Finally, with respect to evaluation and learning, data and information are needed to refine strategy and demonstrate impact, but the very process of involving stakeholders in evaluation processes cultivates ownership and increases utilization.

Developments and the Seattle Area

The Greater Seattle area, Puget Sound, and Pacific Northwest have been the focus of capacity building studies that have yielded helpful insights. Ecosystem and sectors at the state and multi-state levels have been
examined to develop frameworks and identify needs. Collaboratives and initiatives at the city and county levels have also been reviewed.

One set of studies examined capacity building resources available to nonprofit organizations in Washington state (The Giving Practice 2009, 2012), and introduced a framework for understanding the capacity of the entire nonprofit sector, or the ecosystem, not just individuals and organizations. Researchers defined capacity building as “any service that enhances the organization’s (or group of organizations’) internal effectiveness at achieving its mission sustainably — in other words, services which strengthen the foundation or engine of the organization, not its specific programs” (The Giving Practice, 2012).

Eight essential elements of a healthy nonprofit ecosystem were identified:

1. an ongoing source of nonprofit board and management basics,
2. on-demand availability of in-depth organizational assistance,
3. ongoing ways to surface, educate, and sustain board and executive leadership,
4. trusted information and referral resources for “just-in-time” needs,
5. a community infrastructure that supports volunteerism,
6. the capacity to leverage technology in pursuit of mission,
7. organizing and advocacy capacity, and
8. a healthy funding and fundraising climate (The Giving Practice, 2012).

The report included some highlights of needs of rural communities, but no specific mention of the needs of racial and ethnic communities or a race and ethnic lens.

“The report included some highlights of needs of rural communities, but no specific mention of the needs of racial and ethnic communities or a race and ethnic lens.”

limited progress made by stakeholders — nonprofits, funders, and government — in creating a resilient nonprofit sector. The sector’s overall health has only minimally increased since the last annual survey, especially in organizational learning, data, and evaluation. Luma Consulting urged funders to support nonprofit collaborations (Luma Consulting, 2016). Capacity was framed as an organization accomplishing its mission, as self-reported. Collaboration was perceived as needed, but barriers included:

1. lack of capacity and time,
2. negative attitudes,
3. difficulty communicating, and
4. conflicts over mission and culture.

Race and ethnicity were not addressed specifically in the report (Luma Consulting, 2016).

Another report detailed the Nonprofit Assistance Center (NAC)'s assessment of needs within communities that NAC serves. NAC identified barriers and facilitators to assisting nonprofit organizations, as well as the role NAC can play to address needs (Forman, 2015). A key finding was the need for cultural competence and a racial equity analysis in capacity building, and that capacity building is most successful when relationships between capacity builders and nonprofits are sustained (Forman, 2015). Cultural responsiveness and racial equity lenses are also needed for funders, government departments, and mainstream agencies, not just nonprofit organizations. The report also called for greater flexibility, especially among funders, when
nonprofits attempt to communicate the value of their work and role in the community.

Specific initiatives in the past have yielded lessons also for consideration. The Holly Park public housing complex in Seattle was a community change effort, demonstrating “internal alignment” (Koo, 2010). Holly Park in the 1990s was a low-income housing project lacking many amenities and resources for the families who lived there, which were predominantly composed of African and Asian refugee families. The transformation of Holly Park into a multicultural mixed-income neighborhood was based on a model of shared vision and values, sustainable design, and successful public-private partnerships. Also, in Seattle, the White Center Community Development Association embarked on a change initiative in 2008, as part of the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Making Connections initiative. Consultant John Okagaki observed that a five-step data-driven improvement cycle model held promise but ultimately required internal ownership of the approach (Okagaki, 2010). Community leader Sili Mana’o-Savusa underlined this need for internal ownerships by noting the importance of the role of ‘Trusted Advocates’ in White Center, who are residents of the community that were essential for building trusted relationships with institutional partners (AECF, 2007).

Opportunities

In order to advance how we approach collaborative work — generally, as well as through racial and ethnic lenses — it’s been suggested that we modify current conceptualizations as well as refine components.

New Conceptualizations

Outlined here are four approaches to developing new concepts, from Kubisch, Joseph, Kania & Kramer, and Wolff.

APPROACH 1
After reflecting on two decades of comprehensive community initiatives, Kubisch and associates summarized seven areas of, future opportunities for development. They are:

1. redefining place,
2. demonstrating the value of community building,
3. defining sustainability and how to achieve it,
4. promoting mixed-income communities and avoiding displacement,
5. working effectively in weak markets and communities with weak civic infrastructure,
6. uniting systems reform with place-based change, and
7. addressing power imbalances (Kubisch et al., 2010).

APPROACH 2
Another alternative model to explore, one that is very different from traditional community change initiatives, is to begin with emerging activity and not a concept developed externally.

In this approach, a single external sponsor is replaced by multiple external partners, whose commitment is open-ended and evolving, not time-limited. No local organization will unilaterally design and manage the initiative. A perk of this ‘coalition of organizations’ approach is comprehensiveness, as each external partner have different specializations and areas of strength (Joseph, 2010).

APPROACH 3
A third opportunity has evolved from observers of the Collective Impact model (Kania & Kramer, 2011). A number of groups have sought to infuse the model with considerations about race and equity. For example, Tithe Urban Strategies Council proposed ways to fold in aspects of equity into the five conditions for Collective Impact. Disaggregating data by identity groups and
communicating messages that disrupt inequities are some suggestions (Williams, 2014; Ogden, 2017). Also, in 2017, the Interaction Institute for Social Change (IISC), based in Boston, challenged experts to consider Collective Impact from a racial justice lens. They developed questions explicitly examining racial justice among the five components of Collective Impact. For example, within the Collective Impact component of Backbone Organization, they ask, “How diverse, inclusive, and equity-minded is your backbone organization? How ready is your backbone to advance a racial justice agenda?” IISC also identifies a new component called “mutually reinforcing structures for equity,” not previously identified in the Collective Impact model (Ogden, 2017).

APPROACH 4
While seeking a new approach, Wolff identified six principles and effective tools for consideration when working in community-wide, multi-sectoral collaboratives. They are:

1. engage a broad spectrum of the community,
2. encourage true collaboration as the form of exchange,
3. practice democracy,
4. employ an ecological approach that emphasizes the individual in his/her setting,
5. take action, and
6. engage your spirituality as your compass for social change (Wolff, 2016).

Refining Components
At least three common components of other models have been critiqued. These components are 1) backbone organizations, 2) place, and 3) power.

BACKBONE ORGANIZATIONS
Critics assert that Collective Impact (Kania & Kramer, 2011) is overly technical, focusing on turnkey solutions instead of examining the adaptive challenges that can impede progress, such as how to build ownership among all partners for change, especially community members. The foremost example of this concern is the ideal that a backbone organization is required. (A backbone organization is the organization and members of its staff that coordinate collective impact efforts.) Most people believed backbone organizations could achieve collective impact on their own, not realizing that their role was supporting community leaders and members, to use data of all kinds together to change everyday behavior (Edmondson & Santhosh-Kumar, 2017). Rather than using a backbone organization model, perhaps what is needed is a focus on “backbone functions” and the different ways to ensure the critical ones are executed (Behrens IN Wolff, 2016), thus avoiding locating power and ownership in ways that are unintended. Furthermore, the role of a convening group could be clarified to one of coordination, communication, and facilitation. In this role, the convener provides guidance and tools for complex change processes that promote and support equity and justice (Wolff et al., 2017).

PLACE
The concept of ‘place’ often poses a challenge because there may not always be hard boundaries or definitions, and places may not map to residents’ sense of identity or their neighborhoods. Other challenges with the concept of place are increasing metropolitanism and smart growth, where boundaries shift due to economics, as well as in- and out-migration by residents of poor communities.

Earlier assumptions of place were too simplistic — that communities are isolated enough from their surrounding environments. Rather, communities are highly complex and open systems characterized by enormous mobility of residents, significant external political, economic, and market influences, and dynamic interplays of ethnic and cultural factors within diverse sub communities that live in relatively small geographic areas.

“For the field to advance, more realistic frameworks are needed to describe work in communities…” (Burns,
2010). Some suggested approaches include a network model that nurtures and sustains loose but meaningful relationships (Turner, 2010).

POWER
Critics have faulted the community change field for not challenging entrenched power structures that maintain and reproduce advantages and disadvantages in the country. Inherent biases built into community-building guarantees marginalization. Real change in poor communities cannot happen when policies and systems are stacked (Kubisch et al., 2010). “The challenge to the field is to move beyond a focus on diversity and cultural appropriateness to address the institutional and structural dimensions of racism” (Kubisch et al., 2010). “In this domain, the work that remains includes both conceptual groundwork and testing of alternatives to address institutional and structural sources of inequity” (Kubisch et al., 2010). Relatedly, an opportunity for further development is how systems reform relates to place-based change. The assumption that place-based changes will trigger systems reform deserves closer examination. “It is akin to the tail wagging the dog” (Kubisch et al., 2010).

An example of such a systems approach, in the context of schools and education, considers race, power, and socioeconomics, as they relate to perception, communication, data analysis, decision-making, intervention design and implementation, and internal and external politics of school system functioning (Petty & Shaffer, 2011). Proponents assert that there are ways the funding world can incentivize capacity builders to strategically learn from and complement one another’s expertise, rather than competing with one another to support school systems and garner funding. A field building strategy for capacity building is a core component of transforming systems and must address three areas:

1. equitable, cultural, and relational,
2. structural and technical, and
3. functional (Petty & Shaffer, 2016).

The Takeaway
The Delta Vision detailed in this report draws upon a few key insights from the literature mentioned in the preceding sections. The Delta Vision attempts to put forth a view with the following new or added emphasis. First, the Delta Vision recognizes the holistic nature of capacity building and the need to apply a systems approach.

The Delta Vision not only takes organization and community levels into account but also integrates them with broader systems. The Delta Vision recognizes that all three are inter-related.

The Delta Vision attempts to explicitly address power. Power dynamics exist among individuals as well as organizations, especially between funders and grantee partners. Furthermore, the Delta Vision asserts that cultural competence and diversity are not enough. Confronting formal policies as well as attitudes and mindsets are essential to re-balancing power. The Delta Vision attempts to illustrate how power is experienced among people, in practices, and in places.

The Delta Vision also reaffirms prior critiques that models of capacity building must move beyond technical solutions and re-envision ‘ways of being’ and the relationships among funders and organizations led by people of color. Creating lists of organizational attributes are a starting point in assessing capacity, but to build capacity, we must re-examine values and principles as well as the quality of relationships. The Delta Vision emphasizes developing relationships that are authentic, understanding of culture and history, and ultimately supportive of community change and transformation.
“Without a doubt, any sort of model that does not address culture is missing the mark. Often, educators only look at statistics when examining low graduation rates. Sometimes, these educations overlook the impact of historical trauma, multigenerational trauma, substance abuse — things that are tied to a loss of culture — also impact dropout rates. However, Native youth who are connected to their Native culture in some way have a much higher likelihood of graduating.”

— Russell Brooks
Executive Director

“Practices, such as board governance and fundraising, have to be overlaid with cultural competency and responsiveness. They have to consider diaspora, immigration, war trauma, homeland politics, and the role of elders. Funders keep sending consultants to do, for example, strategic planning, but they do not understand that an organization may be dealing with all these cultural challenges that may affect its strategy. Not considering these contexts will result in failure.”

— Vu Le
Executive Director
Organizations Need Sustainable Leadership

RAINIER VALLEY CORPS

“Organizations need people there in the first place. A challenge with capacity building is we have this “teach someone to fish” philosophy. Well, what if there’s no one there at the pier? Funders keep sending people to workshops or sending consultants to develop a strategic plan, but these methods of capacity building might not work because many organizations don’t have people to implement what is learned at the workshops or to implement the plans. We have to invest in staffing.”

— Vu Le
Executive Director

Financial Resources Needed to Support and Retain Essential Staff

CENTER FOR ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

“In terms of people, we need money to hire people to get the job done. We have had tons of consultants to facilitate planning, but the reports sit on shelves, since we do not have paid staff to execute those strategies. So, it is about being able to hire talent from our community and having the money to pay them sustainably.”

— Hla Yin Yin Waing
Executive Director
“Organizations anchor communities. When they get displaced, it rips power away from the community. Whether that place is a physical environment or a virtual one, it is ownership of real and tangible assets that can move a community from surviving to thriving. It is critical to support projects like the Multicultural Community Center Coalition, which is working to create a community-owned and community-driven, multicultural, co-working space, or the redevelopment of Liberty Bank, which was the first Black-owned bank west of the Mississippi and today, is on the frontlines of the battle to fight displacement of the African American community from Seattle.”

— Sarah Tran
Executive Director
Rainier Valley Corps is offering fiscal sponsorship and operation support services to free up organizations’ time and allow them to focus on programmatic work. People often ask, ‘After two years, will these organizations spin off on their own?’ In this sector, there is the prevailing belief that successful organizations must spin off into their own organization. Because of this, some funders even refuse to support fiscally sponsored organizations. But we ask, ‘Why? If an organization under fiscal sponsorship is doing amazing work, why does it need to spin off?’ Our sector has to rethink how we are organized, as these outdated philosophies are detrimental to building the capacity of organizations led by communities of color.”

— Vu Le
Executive Director

We have a refugee community council. We have high school students and college students who are the council members. (In contrast, my role as executive director is to go out and look for funding.) The council builds a charter to form the project structure, which includes a president and vice presidents. These council members are becoming acquainted with this structure. These new leaders were charged with meeting with the larger community four times a year. The first meeting was to seek input on the challenges they were facing. With that input, they came back and came up with a project idea. They decided on the budget, who they will work with, and subcommittee membership. Our role as an organization was to support them, get food, and find funding. I consider that true capacity building. We were providing funding for the youth to do the work and sharing our wisdom and knowledge on civic engagement, yet letting them come up with ways to address their communities’ challenges.”

— Mona Han
Executive Director

Try Flexible Arrangements to be Sustainable
RAINIER VALLEY CORPS

Empower communities to identify and guide work
COALITION FOR REFUGEES FROM BURMA
Our Approach to Developing the Delta Vision

Balancing Power and Developing Strong Relationships

Establishing ‘norms’ among the Delta Vision planning team members for how to approach the work, as well as for how to relate to one another, was key. We sought to normalize the values and behaviors that we found to be important to balancing power and developing strong, collaborative, and authentic relationships. Balancing power is of paramount importance among and between organizations of color to prevent horizontal oppression. Relationships matter, and they need to be strong to advance the goals of the Delta Vision project.

These are techniques we continually implement to keep power balanced:

- **Listen deeply and actively.** Relationships among the Delta Vision planning team members and community partners are important. We do not seek to merely engage in a transactional process, but rather one that is transformational. To develop authentic and trusting relationships that have the power to change the way we work with one another, we need to deeply understand others’ experiences, needs, and aspirations.

- **Seek understanding while inquiring and assuming good intentions.** In the course of our work, we strive to be open to expanding our own perspectives and remain open to others’ perspectives.

- **Recognize the impact that statements have on others.** Certain statements may be delivered with good intentions, but they are sometimes received negatively. We strive to be cognizant of this in conversation with one another.

- **Recognize interdependence.** The success of this project depends on sharing resources with one another. This includes not only financial and informational resources but also resources that nourish our relationships and builds empathy.

- **Always look for opportunities to learn and grow.** Designing and implementing the Delta Vision can actually reflect the ideals of how we’d like nonprofit organizations, communities, and systems to be. We recognize that how we, as members of the Delta Vision’s planning team, coexist and support one another in the Delta Vision project may model how people work together in the future. We’ve found that challenges and conflicts are inevitable, but the challenges we did have served as opportunities to better formulate and practice the Delta Vision.
Phase 1: Planning and Document Review

The first phase of developing the Delta Vision involved drafting a preliminary project plan, pre-assessment interviews, and document reviews, as well as literature review. Here are more details on these actions:

**Preliminary project plan.** In this plan, we specified project goals, main activities, a project timeline, and the roles and responsibilities of the writer, facilitator, Delta Vision project planning team members, and Delta Vision community partners.

**Pre-assessment interviews.** These interviews were conducted with Delta Vision planning team members, who described desired goals, needs, expectations about process, differences in perspectives, and issues to be resolved by the group. (Discussion points from these interviews include: definitions of leadership, desire for a “logic model” or “theory of change,” and preferred approaches to dissemination.) Pre-assessment findings were presented and reviewed with the planning team, and refinement of goals and planned activities were subsequently incorporated.

**Document Review.** This report’s writing consultant reviewed key administrative documents to distill preliminary characteristics of the Delta Vision. The review also identified areas that require further specification as well as areas that require understanding, testing, and buy-in by other Delta Vision community partners and stakeholders. Key documents included: grant proposals, meeting notes, final reports to funders, promotional and advertising documents shared with nonprofit organizations seeking capacity building services, and client feedback. Key findings from the document review were incorporated into meeting presentations with Delta Vision stakeholders, related interview questionnaires, related articles and blogs, and this report.

**Literature Review.** The writing consultant conducted a brief literature review to describe the current state of documentation around nonprofit capacity building models and communities of color capacity building models. Delta Vision planning team members questioned the relevance and appropriateness of traditional models as they have been applied to communities of color, and key criticisms were summarized in the literature review. A brief review of select and illustrative writings contrasted existing models with preliminary, core components of the Delta Vision and highlighted opportunities for further development.
Phase 2: Gathering Perspectives, Vision Building, and Refinement

The second phase of developing the Delta Vision involved one-on-one interviews as well as community meetings with various individuals and partners. Here are more details on these actions:

SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER, 2017

Interviews with Community Partners. To further capture key stakeholders’ understanding of the Delta Vision — both its current components as well as what it should be or aspires to be — 13 individual interviews were conducted with Delta Vision project community members. Each interview lasted 30 to 60 minutes. *(For an interview guide, see page 50.)* Note that the project was originally named the Delta Model before being renamed the Delta Vision, at the guidance of our community partners. Here is a sampling of questions asked:

- “What does ‘capacity building’ mean to you? Please provide an example or story of how the capacity of your organization changed or was improved.”
- “From your perspective, what is the Delta Model? What are the most important parts of the Delta Model? Who is the Delta Model for? How does it work?”
- “People, Practice, and Place are parts of the Delta Model. What do each of these three components mean to you? Can you tell a story of how these were important to helping your organization improve? How did the Delta Model service providers use people, practice, or place?”

JULY 10, 2017

Delta Project Community Launch Meeting. At the Burien Community Center, 13 representatives from community partner organizations participated in a meeting to further understand project goals and consider preliminary designs of the Delta Vision. At this meeting, representatives reviewed project goals, plans and processes, key team members, and expected roles and responsibilities. Representatives also engaged in small group conversations to explore definitions of capacity building, describe “thriving” nonprofit organizations led by communities of color, and identify strengths of the community. In this meeting, there was preliminary consideration of people, practice, and place, which would later on become core components of the Delta Vision.

NOV. 16, 2017

Delta Vision Community Mid-Point Meeting. At the Tukwila Community Center, 14 representatives from community partner organizations and the Delta Vision planning team participated in a review of a draft of the Delta Vision. This draft detailed project goals and activities conducted to date as well as preliminary principles of the Delta Vision. At this meeting, community partners offered feedback on the proposed Delta Vision project, clarified understanding, questioned ideas and concepts, offered critiques, identified missing elements or aspects in need of further development, and offered stories, illustrations, and examples from their own perspectives.

“I’ve learned in this work, among immigrants and refugees, that there is so much wisdom in the way immigrant, refugee, and other communities of color do things. While some say, ‘You need to do it like this,’ we’re saying, ‘But we’ve been doing this for 50 years!’ We listen to each other. We listen to those in the circle. We check in. I want to make sure we tap into group wisdom and listen carefully to the community.”

JODI NISHIOKA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
WAYFIND
Phase 3: Draft Report Writing, Reviews, and Publications

The third phase of developing the Delta Vision involved various reports, publications, documentation, articles, and blogs, as well as a final community meeting. Here are more details on these actions:

“Paper of Color.” A “Paper of Color” (this report) provides an in-depth summary of the Delta Vision as well as its process. This report highlights the Delta Vision and its essential components, stories, and illustrations from Delta Vision planning team organizations (all of which provide different forms of capacity building services to communities of color) as well as Delta Vision community partners (which are primarily direct service and advocacy organizations based in communities of color). The report also shares the process of developing the Delta Vision and lessons learned, including major insights on navigating power and relationships in collaboration and challenges to traditional models of capacity building in communities of color.

Lessons Learned report. A Lessons Learned section of this report (read it on page 31) summarizes major successes, challenges, and insights resulting from the collaborative work of developing a model for capacity building. Perspectives from Delta Vision planning team members as well as Delta Vision community partners are highlighted through anecdotes and brief quotes.

Process Documentation. This brief report describes the process and approach to developing the Delta Vision. Highlights from communications activities and engagement events with community partners (e.g. launch, mid-point, and final community meetings), were documented. Other processes described include how community values were enacted and experienced during the project and how frameworks or approaches can ensure inclusivity, equity, and empowerment of communities of color. Other lenses considered include power, race, and systems approaches to community building.

Articles and Blogs. About six pieces, approximately 300 to 500 words in length, were produced for publication in print or online venues. The writing consultant worked with the Delta Vision planning team to generate topics and articles, which were written in a voice and style intended for nonprofit practitioners and the general public.

March 27, 2018: Delta Project Final Community Meeting. At the Wayfind, Nonprofit Assistance Center, and Living Well Kent shared office in Kent, representatives from community partner organizations participated in a final review and discussion of a near-final version of this Delta Vision report, titled “A Paper of Color.” Community partners validated major aspects of the paper, reviewed the paper for clarity and understanding, affirmed the accuracy and use of their voices, and discussed possible future steps.
“We need to change the model. Funders’ mentalities are in a ‘fixing mode’ — the funder knows better than you about what you need. The better, more trusting model is, ‘We believe you know what your community needs, so we will fund you to do that.’ What if funders just gave money? And then they came back to see what we did with the money? I think if you have a wise leader in the community, they can figure out what to do in the community. If you trust me, and give me more money, then I can build capacity to do better.”

— Ginger Kwan
Executive Director

“Many times, funders want to tell us what to do. Then they give funds to another organization. Then that other organization comes to us and tells us what to do. These other organizations tend to be bigger, have more staff, and have a better website. Funders assume that a small nonprofit is not going to have the capabilities. So, funding goes to a mainstream organization that does not have connections to communities of color in order to do the work. This is why the large organization contracts with small nonprofits, for a few pennies. This happens a lot. I think we should push against this with funders. I disagree with this and the way it is happening.”

— Lupita Torrez
Executive Director
For my organization, leadership is being in service to my staff, providing the best environment to thrive, and leading to our mission. It is being a servant leader. To be that, I have to nurture myself. So, I do mindfulness and take advantage of professional development opportunities, so I can stay sharp physically, mentally, and professionally. Also, there are ‘left brain’ or technical aspects (budget, charts) but also ‘right brain’ aspects to my work. People coming into our doors need more than just a set of policies and procedures. They need nurturing. And I don’t think of myself as the ultimate expert. We all bring something. So, I try to run a flat organization and provide that as a model to my peers. Again, it is being responsible to myself to show up in a healthy way. I value continuous learning, so when I’m out in the community, I’m exemplifying those things and hoping to bring our communities along in ways they haven’t seen in other leaders.”

— Andrea Caupain Sanderson
Executive Director

“Food Innovation Network (FIN) is an initiative of Global to Local. One of its objectives is to develop confident, efficient community advocates from various immigrant communities to inform the program of each community group’s cultural values, barriers, strengths, and challenges. The advocates identify and inform FIN by being engaged at decision-making levels, addressing power distance issues, and training in all areas of leadership development. They plan events, facilitate group meetings, host community kitchen events, and invite city officials. They attend city council meetings and choose the training of their need from a list of FIN partners. This has become an excellent pathway for immigrant community leaders to learn and understand the nature of their leadership identity and to be leaders in a role that supports the community.”

— Njambi Gishuru
Executive Director
The Delta Vision Framework

Layers and Components

The Delta Vision is a work in progress, and the high-level framework here should be considered preliminary. During the development of the Delta Vision, comprehensive lists of organizational, community, and system attributes were developed and can be found in the supporting documentation on pages 52–59.

The following sections make up an overview of the Delta Vision’s main characteristics. This approach was collaborative with extensive community partner input. In keeping with this approach, the Delta Vision is not owned by any one single organization but rather the collective partnership of the planning team. As the Delta Vision collective partnership evolves, further refinements and developments will be incorporated.

“The Delta Vision is not owned by any one single organization but rather the collective partnership of the planning team.”

Definition and Distinctions

The Delta Vision is holistic and considers capacity building at Organization, Community, and System layers. The Delta Vision builds and balances power to achieve racial equity and social justice through development in three areas: People, Practice, and Place.

The Delta Vision differs from other capacity building models in its recognition of how organizations relate to their communities and to one another, as well as its consideration of systems and policies, resources, and attitudes about people of color. Other models of capacity building have not adequately prioritized race and power or have not emphasized relationships of organizations to their communities and systems.
The Delta Vision “Cake”

Picture the Delta Vision as a cake made up of three layers:

- Organization
- Community
- System

The Delta Vision has also three components or wedges:

- People
- Practice
- Place

This cake has multiple shared touch-points and intersections, and it represents an integrated and holistic approach to capacity building led by people of color, for communities of color.

**Layers**

The Delta Vision approaches capacity building at Organization, Community, and System layers.

**ORGANIZATION**

The Organization layer refers to both formal and informal organizations, ones that are brought together to advance a core mission. While ‘typical organizations’ are those that have formal, legal status, within communities of color, there are many small or emerging initiatives, projects, organizing groups, or others operating outside a nonprofit structure that may also be considered organizations in this report.

The Delta Vision of capacity building focuses on nonprofit organizations that are led by people of color and that serve communities of color. Such organizations typically have a chief executive officer, a majority of board members, staff and/or volunteers, and a client or service population that is primarily made up of people of color. Organizational culture, values, and practices that strive to advance equity and justice are also often characteristics of organizations led by and serving communities of color.

**COMMUNITY**

The Community layer primarily refers to the individuals, groups, and residents of a geographic area but may also include residents from racial and ethnic, cultural, tribal, linguistic, immigrant, economic, religious, and gender identity groups. The Delta Vision focuses primarily on the Puget Sound area and includes specific regions and neighborhoods such as Everett, Kent, South Park, South King County, and Tacoma. Among communities of color, nonprofit organizations that belong in these communities not only serve residents within a community, but they also engage, build power, and collaborate with community members.

**SYSTEM**

The System layer refers to a network of institutions and entities that provide and acquire financial and social resources. Included are the policies and laws that govern transactions as well as the attitudes, skills, and behaviors that are accepted. The Delta Vision recognizes that nonprofit organizations and communities of color are situated within a larger system. At times, their position within that system may prevent them from exercising power and obtaining needed resources to be sustainable and to thrive. The Delta Vision describes a system where nonprofit organizations from communities of color have direct access to funders, are not inhibited by intermediary organizations, are supported to collaborate and not compete, and are positioned to have power within the system.
Components

People, Practice, and Place are the three key components of the Delta Vision. Each component can be found within each layer of the model — Organization, Community, and System — and has varying aspects.

**PEOPLE**

*People* refers to the leaders, board members, staff members, community stakeholders, and volunteers of a nonprofit organization. People may also refer to the formal and informal leaders from the community and the policy- and decision-makers, funders, and influential individuals within institutions and entities that allocate resources.

**PEOPLE IN ORGANIZATIONS**

In the Delta Vision, organizations led by people of color have leaders who understand equity, systems, power, race, intersectionality, and trust. These leaders come from the community and are equitable and transparent in their decision-making.

**PEOPLE IN COMMUNITIES**

In the Delta Vision, leaders from the community are respected community members and serve in key governance and visionary roles, often times over multiple generations.

**PEOPLE IN SYSTEMS**

In the Delta Vision, system leaders have a deep understanding of power, positionality, the interrelatedness of identities, and systemic oppression. They advance policies in partnership with communities to achieve equity.

**PRACTICE**

*Practice* is defined by the activities, mindsets, and ways of behaving. Practices take place at the organization, community, and system layers.

**PRACTICE IN ORGANIZATIONS**

In the Delta Vision, organizations led by people of color have programs designed for and by communities of color, other groups negatively impacted by structural oppression, and groups holding multiple intersectional identities.

**PRACTICE IN COMMUNITIES**

In the Delta Vision, nonprofit organizations serving a similar community collaborate and intentionally seek and access funding in coordinated ways with other organizations, in addition to seeking support for their individual organizations.

**PRACTICE IN SYSTEMS**

In the Delta Vision, policies and procedures at the system layer, especially funding practices, are designed to support small people-of-color-led organizations directly. Funding through intermediary organizations, and the barriers and layers created by this practice, is avoided or executed only when resources are distributed fairly.
Place is a key component of capacity building among communities of color. Place includes a physical space to coordinate and conduct activities within geographic boundaries, but Place also embodies a perceived ownership by a community as well as position within a social and institutional structure. Place is welcoming of communities that intersect and embody race, class, gender, and abilities.

**PLACE IN ORGANIZATIONS**
In the Delta Vision, organizations led by people of color are rooted in the local community they serve.

**PLACE IN COMMUNITIES**
In the Delta Vision, community members perceive organizations as anchors for families and neighborhoods.

**PLACE IN SYSTEMS**
Within a system of organizations and institutions, people of color-led nonprofits are highly connected, accessed and accessible, and mutually trusted among other nonprofits as well as by entities providing financial and social resources.

**Power**

Building and balancing Power is central to the Delta Vision. Power is defined as the ability to influence or enable the social change needed to achieve racial equity and social justice. It is both a primary ingredient and a goal of the Delta Vision.

As a primary ingredient, Power already exists in the inherent strengths of communities, such as internal leadership, indigenous wisdom, resilience, and creativity. As a goal of the Delta Vision, Power is built for self-determination and community ownership of challenges and solutions that are essential for strengthening and sustaining communities.

However, as we build power, it is critical to recognize and address the dangers of horizontal oppression in order to not replicate exploitative dynamics from the mainstream that have harmed communities of color for generations. The liberation of all communities requires that we exist in support of one another, rather than on the backs of one another.

As such, it is critical that we challenge and resolve manifestations of horizontal oppression wherever they appear, including at the intersections of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, age, class, and national origin. Through building and balancing Power in these ways, we create thriving communities for all.

“When baking a cake, you need to put all of the ingredients together. Eggs, flour, sugar. You cannot have a cake without all the elements. Yet funders keep funding one ingredient at a time and wondering why capacity building is not working. People, stable office and program space, culturally-responsive practices — all of these components and more must simultaneously be funded. And we need to talk more about power. Without power, we can’t build capacity.”

**VU LE**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
RAINIER VALLEY CORPS

“Our communities can take more power, power can be increased, and our communities can be better able to have more control over their own affairs or business practices. You have to have more power to create change.”

**MARCOS MARTINEZ**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CASA LATINA
The 6 Key Principles of the Delta Vision

Throughout the development of the Delta Vision, planning team members and community partners have identified other key principles that should be found throughout the layers and its components. Essential to building and balancing power, principles that govern the Delta Vision are:

1. **Self-determination.** Communities and organizations should determine what is needed, how to address challenges, and areas for future growth. They should be at the table when decisions are made.

2. **Be community-led.** Community should be integrated within the process of capacity building. The community should be reflected in the organization’s leadership, processes, and decision-making.

3. **Prioritize racial equity.** Community and life outcomes should not be determined by race or ethnicity.

4. **Prioritize social justice.** Communities should benefit from fair and equitable distribution of resources.

5. **Value culture.** Everyone should honor the knowledge and wisdom from our diverse communities and how it enriches organizations, institutions, and the broader community when embraced.

6. **Care for one another.** We should care for each other and ourselves as well as commit to mutual accountability.

Theory of Change

An alternative approach to describing the Delta Vision is through a theory of change framework. A theory of change describes a desired end-state and an approach to achieving that ideal condition. The Delta Vision ultimately envisions organizations, communities, and systems as thriving, empowered, and equitable.

**Short-term and long-term outcomes**

For organizations, short-term outcomes include people-of-color-led organizations that have adequate financial resources; leaders, boards of directors, and staff who understand and behave in ways consistent with racial equity and social justice; adequate fund-raising staff and strategies; strategic plans, programs, marketing, advocacy, and data and evaluation systems that advance the core mission; and adequate and stable place and spaces to serve their communities well. Long-term outcomes are that organizations are empowered, have robust capacity to achieve their missions, and are sustainable and thriving.

For communities, the Delta Vision expects that in the short-term, communities are empowered, engaged, can access decision-making tables, and that people of color-led organizations serving communities of color collaborate. In the long-term, communities of color are forming decision-making tables of influence and driving initiatives forward that positively impact their communities and benefit the broader community through achieving a more equitable and just society. And collaboration between communities of color are characterized by healthy and trusting relationships.

Short-term and long-term, at the system level, all entities serving communities of color are inclusive, collaborative and not competitive, adequately funded, and anti-racist.

2. Intermediary organizations, and “backbone organizations” specifically, are separate organizations and staff that coordinate and provide supporting infrastructure for an initiative’s participating organizations. Not all intermediary organizations are alike, and the Delta Vision is most concerned with large, established, mainstream intermediary organizations that typically subcontract community outreach efforts to people-of-color-led organizations.

3. A framework of short- and long-term outcomes of the Delta Vision is presented in this document (see charts starting on page 56). Strategies, major activities, and tasks intended to achieve these outcomes as well as preliminary ideas of inputs needed were drafted during the project, but further work is needed to specify and refine a complete theory of change.
In the interest of understanding traditional leadership conflict within immigrant refugee community leadership, I initiated a conversation with seven community leaders regarding their acceptance as leaders in their own communities. I was not surprised to learn that they, being mostly women, and being the ones that bring communities to connect with needed resources, are not validated as leaders. I was not surprised, because as a woman who has been a leader in my community over 20 years, I have certainly experienced non-validation. After a length of time and experiences, I have proven myself. It is important to enhance support for these leaders, especially if they are newer in the country and are still learning the system. They are natural leaders and committed to supporting their communities through policy advocacy. In order to feel validated by the people they serve, they suggested to organizations that engage them, to play a role in presenting them as leaders and explaining the role and position with the organization. It is important for community organizations to dig deeper into this issue and to enhance support for cultural barriers. The seven leaders felt empowered to be given a platform to express their concern.

— Njambi Gishuru
Executive Director

Build Power and Confidence in Women for Policy Advocacy
KENYAN WOMEN ASSOCIATION

Too often, the responsibility to build one’s capacity has been laid solely on organizations when in fact, equity cannot move forward without growth, learning, and commitment from all the players in the ecosystem that we live in, and that especially includes individuals within institutions that hold resources and set policy. This is why a significant portion of Nonprofit Assistance Center’s work is to provide consultation and training to public and private funders to help them examine and challenge their individual and institutionalized biases, which in turn are embedded in their systems and inform their decisions impacting communities.

— Sarah Tran
Executive Director

Educate Funders and Examine Biases
NONPROFIT ASSISTANCE CENTER
Lessons Learned

Developing the Delta Vision

The Delta Vision project is an opportunity to envision a future not only for organizations led by people of color but also for the communities and systems in which they live. The initial stages of the Delta Vision project have generated excitement about new ideas and the possibility of different ways of relating to one another that lead to greater equity. Simultaneously, the process of thinking together, working together, and considering a better future has generated lessons. These are selected highlights of significant lessons learned along the way.

The Four Lessons

1. Live the values of the Delta Vision.
2. Challenge ourselves to think deeply and beyond the traditional.
3. Have challenging conversations about what it takes to work together equitably.
4. Speak to funders and build bridges.

LESSON 1

Live the Values of the Delta Vision

The Delta Vision planning team members intentionally sought to cultivate and sustain authentic relationships among themselves that were aligned to the Delta Vision’s values. These values include creating racial equity, honoring culture, caring for one another, and balancing power. Balancing power is of paramount importance among organizations of color to prevent horizontal oppression.

During the course of the project, many differing approaches and perspectives arose, which served as valuable opportunities to practice the values of the Delta Vision, which lie in direct opposition to many of the mainstream values operationalized in our society, such as competition, the prioritization of self-interest, independence, and white supremacy.

DECISION-MAKING

Decision-making is one form of exercising power, and the Delta Vision planning team sought consensus, transparency, and shared understanding when making decisions. One example was in defining the scope, or levels of the Delta Vision itself. Initially, multiple layers (individual, organization, community, and system) were
“Leadership is more than positional authority. It is the process in which people influence one another to maximize our collective efforts towards achieving a goal. When that goal is creating a just and liberated community, it requires that we challenge inequities and power differentials, even within communities of color, along lines of gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, age, and more. We cannot dismantle oppressive systems if we are oppressing one another. The Nonprofit Assistance Center, is committed to addressing these intersections by connecting and supporting women executive directors of color and creating space for difficult, but critical, conversations around internalized racism, gender, sexual orientation, and generational differences, within our learning communities.”

SARAH TRAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NONPROFIT ASSISTANCE CENTER

“Leadership is being in service to my staff, providing the best environment to thrive in, and leading to our mission. It is being a servant-leader. To be that, I have to nurture myself. So, I practice mindfulness and take advantage of professional development opportunities, so I can stay sharp physically, mentally, and professionally.”

ANDREA CAUPAIN SANDERSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BYRD BARR PLACE

identified and each member was asked to vote on which one they believed the model should focus on. The group struggled to agree on the same layer and through discussion, came to a shared understanding that the multiple layers were intertwined and must be represented. This multi-dimensional view of capacity building became one of the most distinctive features of the Delta Vision.

Other examples of collective decision-making included determining the focus of meeting agendas, ways to seek and incorporate input from community partners, and communicating with external and funding partners.

RACIAL EQUITY AND INTERSECTIONALITY

The Delta Vision planning team constitutes representatives from organizations led by and serving African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and other communities of color. Community partner organizations include those serving East African, Latino, LGBTQ, Native American, refugee, immigrant, and low-income communities in the Puget Sound area.

During the Delta Vision project, we had numerous conversations about what constitutes a ‘people of color-led organization’ — diving into critical questions about whether it goes beyond the demographic composition of board, staff, volunteers, and clients served, to include actual behaviors that reflect racial equity in practice. This led to important conversations about power-sharing and minimizing organizational hierarchy when it comes to decision-making.

NURTURE CARING RELATIONSHIPS

Numerous Delta Vision planning team meetings, as well as portions of our community partner meetings, were dedicated to learning about one another and taking care of one another through ‘check-ins.’ These times were opportunities for participants to share professional and personal anecdotes of successes, challenges, frustrations, and hopes.

Each person volunteering a story gave us an opportunity to learn about one another, to offer a resource or a helpful idea, or simply to listen. The Delta Vision planning team shared instances of personal loss, frustrations with funders, confusion, and clarity with one another. Inter-personal conflicts were also confronted and resolved. As expressed by one of the planning team members, “Our time together is more like a fellowship than work.”
A key challenge throughout the project has been to think beyond what is known, and then to go beyond that — in particular, in thinking about systems and larger structures.

The initial project idea was focused on building capacity in communities of color centered on organizations and leaders. However, through further discussion, the group quickly realized we had to go beyond that, because the barriers and conditions that communities of color face are due to systemic issues, such as how organizations are positioned against one another, as well as often marginalized within mainstream structures.

We talked about how the structure of funding and grant-seeking was, in part, a source of competition, uncooperativeness, and continuous struggle. The planning team and community members asked one another, “How can we change this dynamic of competition? What would that change look like in our daily work? How could it strengthen our support of one another within communities of color?”

As one community partner described it:

“The system has set us up to be in competition with one another. How can we not be in competition if my organization has to go after funding? I have to be in competition. How can I not be in a non-competitive mode? But, if Washington state funders were funding in equitable ways, then perhaps we would not need to be in competition.”

A future phase of the Delta Vision would require proposing what such a new approach would look like. Emerging questions include: Should funding be equitable or proportional to need? How should we design funding approaches that adequately address access, distribution of resources, and outcomes?
The complexity of working together in a collaborative and non-competitive way becomes very real when funding is at stake.

One example of this involved a local funding opportunity. A few months into the Delta Vision project, a Delta Vision planning team member approached a funder with a request for funding for their individual organization’s work. However, this same funder was also simultaneously being approached by the Delta Vision collaborative, whom as a group had no idea that one of their core members was also applying for the same pool of funds. The funder remarked that the scope of the work looked similar between the two proposals and expressed concern about possible duplication and that the collaborative was unaware of the other member’s proposal.

This situation raised questions about information-sharing, possible overlap and competition among Delta Vision organizations, perceptions of discoordination within the Delta Vision project itself, and trust. The incident resulted in extensive, time-sensitive communication and additional relationship-building in order to resolve what felt like a breach in mutual support.

Ultimately, a joint letter was written by the entire Delta Vision planning team to the funder, explaining the Delta Vision planning team’s intentions as well as the individual organization’s perspectives on applying. Furthermore, an agreement among Delta Vision planning team members was reached to develop a chart or map describing each organization’s services and expertise to increase awareness of each other’s work and to assess potential overlap. Members also agreed to communicate with one another when funding opportunities are emerging, to inform one another of intentions to seek funding from common funders, and to support one another in conversations among funders of others’ proposal efforts.

“"I’m new as an executive director and to the fundraising field, so I do not have many relationships with foundations. Being part of the Delta Vision has enabled me to meet grant managers, and that has been helpful. These connections have started through the Delta Vision.”

HLA YIN YIN WAING
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CENTER FOR ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

Participants from the Native Arts Cohort Winter Convening
LESSON 4

Speak to Funders and Build Bridges

Funders play a major role in the development and sustainability of nonprofit organizations led by and serving communities of color — they hold a lot of power. For nonprofit organizations, speaking candidly to funders can be very challenging, especially when it comes to matters of racial equity, particularly as the majority of program officers and leadership within foundations are white. The Delta Vision planning team members shared with one another instances of attempting to communicate with and relate to funders and when those efforts were met with misunderstanding or, even worse, with disrespect and hostility. It is vital that we name those power dynamics and that funders consciously work to share power so that organizations can speak truthfully without fear of repercussion and together, make greater impact towards racial equity.

Power differentials also lie in the relationships of the Delta Vision planning team members, which are providers of capacity building services, and direct service providers. Capacity building organizations are also often gatekeepers, or bridges, between direct service providers and funders. This power needs to be used to increase access for communities, not controlling it.
“Communities are being pushed out due to gentrification. This disperses and damages or limits our capacity when we are all spread out. It’s a huge issue.”

— Jodi Nishioka
Executive Director

“Build Networks at All Levels for More Resources”

“I feel like local government is starting to help us build networks. They acknowledge that we have not had the resources that we should have. I am convinced it is not just for the good of our organizations, but rather the whole community. We are working for success at the higher levels: City of Seattle, King County, and state of Washington.”

— Mike Tulee
Executive Director
Recommendations

For Building Power in Communities of Color

These are our specific recommendations for organizations and funders in order to create change and build equitable power within communities of color.

The Four Recommendations

1. Fund the whole cake, rather than just a layer.
2. Have funders and policymakers hold themselves accountable.
3. Strengthen solidarity and prioritize equity.
4. Advocate for systems and policy change.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Fund the Whole Cake, Rather than Just a Layer

Provide financial support that brings organizations, communities, and system entities together and that seeks to build and balance power for communities of color at the following layers:

**Organization**

Give multi-year, unrestricted, core support. Communities of color must determine their own needs, solutions, use of funds, and staff development.

**Community**

Develop leadership in communities of color to strengthen the pipeline of future leaders with deep relationships in communities.

Restore community places to serve as anchors for communities and neighborhoods. Examine policies, including rent and housing development.

**System**

Develop people who hold power in funding and policy agencies to adopt a racial equity lens and who can advocate for allocating resources that advance social justice.

Fund collaboration, as well as individual organizations. Funders must support systems of organizations to learn, plan, and implement activities with and among one another, in addition to funding individual programs and projects.

Fund people of color-led nonprofit organizations directly. Fund nonprofits that have direct connections to the community, as many mainstream intermediary organizations do not possess the same direct connections and may pass on only a small fraction of financial resources to service providers.
RECOMMENDATION 2

Have Funders, Policymakers Hold Themselves Accountable

Funders and policymakers should engage with community and nonprofit leaders in authentic conversations about how funders are perceived.

They should ask the following questions both externally and internally:

- “How am I accountable to the community?”
- “Am I working with communities and nonprofit leaders to identify needs and develop solutions to local conditions?”
- “Is my own institution taking the initiative to question our practices, policies, and impacts on equity?”
- “Are we pursuing continued learning to strengthen our equity lens?”

These questions are the beginning of forging authentic, accountable, and transformative relationships between systems and communities.

While funders will put out RFPs for policy and systems change, they often do not see that the change needed applies to them as well. The very funding system perpetuates and reinforces inequity.

By engaging in deeper conversations about institutional racism, inequity, power and privilege, and white fragility, funders and policymakers will be more accountable and impactful in advancing equity.

“Community leaders come together to build skills together as well as discuss community concerns.”

SARAH TRAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NONPROFIT ASSISTANCE CENTER

“How do we, specific to our local region, find better ways to collaborate for the good of our respective communities? It’s confusing for organizations on their own but even more so among peers and the funding community.”

JODI NISHIOKA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
WAYFIND

“When partnerships work, it is because of equity. We understand our positionality, what our power dynamics are, and we try not to use it against each other. Instead, we bring our resources together.”

JODI NISHIOKA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
WAYFIND
Strengthen Solidarity and Prioritize Equity

The Delta Vision recognizes that the current economic system forces competition among nonprofit organizations serving communities of color. Nonprofit leaders need to build relationships, collaborate, and identify opportunities to support one another’s goals, while also building the capacity of their own organizations.

These leaders should be vigilant of counterproductive tendencies to compete.

Funders and community leaders need to collaborate to design a new system of funding that is more equitable and less competitive.

Advocate for Systems and Policy Change

Organization, Community, and System leaders should think deeply about what the future of the nonprofit sector looks like, one that inclusive of action, advocacy, and policy change.

Systemic change may take time, even generations; however, policies that impact fair housing, neighborhood development, access to healthy food, quality schools, and immigrant rights are all being enacted on a daily basis now.

“Effective leadership capacity includes the cultivation of positive and healthy nonprofit organizational culture.”

PETER BLOCH GARCIA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
LATINO COMMUNITY FUND

“Funders, especially individual donors or private foundations, will usually meet with people who look like them, and they tend to approach larger groups. Smaller grassroots organizations are not asked. Some of these larger organizations subcontract with a lot of community organizations, but they [are the main] contact with schools, so government agencies will go to them …The large (backbone) organizations take all the credit, and funding usually goes to them. The relationship to the funder is with them. These organizations get the money, and then they pass it to the grassroots organizations like breadcrumbs, to do some of the work. So, it is a struggle to have to prove that we can really do the work.”

ANONYMOUS

4. This person allowed for their quote to be published but asked that their name and nonprofit organization stay anonymous.
Community, funders, and organizations need dialogue and to learn together to identify and solve challenges

“...those who are most impacted by the problem are often the closest to the solutions, but their voices are never heard and their ideas rarely resourced. This is why we design and facilitate processes for public and private funders to partner with the community in not only identifying the most urgent issues occurring in communities — but also identify potential solutions and how funding can be aligned to properly resource them. That partnership often extends beyond the initial grant-making and results in learning communities where community organizations and funders can come together to evaluate and improve upon grassroots approaches — whether new or traditionally under-resourced — in a learning environment, not a punitive one.”

— Sarah Tran
Executive Director
Focus on People of Color
Clients, Native Students, and Staff

RED EAGLE SOARING

“Our students are Native. Some students are inter-tribal — more than one tribe or mixed race. Our board is Native-led, with one member who has close ties to the Native community and one who was adopted into a tribe. Among our teaching artists, mostly Native staff teach our youth. Our lead director for a summer play was a non-Native teaching artist who has credentials, and we brought her in to work with our youth and alumni. We don’t exclude, but we do focus on utilizing Native staff. However, there are also non-Native teachers who have specific skills and we want our youth to learn from them as well.”

— Russell Brooks
Executive Director

Recruit and Grow
Passionate, Non-Traditional Staff from Community

SOUTH PARK INFORMATION AND RESOURCE CENTER

“Capacity building is the core of community development. Our philosophy in building capacity is to identify natural leaders from the community and help them to strengthen their skills, instincts, and abilities. This approach has been successful in hiring staff with similar ethnic and socio-economic levels of our participants. This way of growing has helped us to implement the programs that the community needs. However, when we have the organization growing from two staff members to a solid structure of nine staff members, management needs another level of support. As we walk towards incorporation, we hope we can find an organization that can support our growth at this level.”

— Analia Bertoni
Executive Director
“I’ve been involved with planning groups in my previous work with HIV prevention, where we participated in HIV planning throughout King County. We were part of a group that made decisions about how money was spent. In that case, the funder was the government, King County — yet King County was also the place where the work needed to be conducted. There were some instances where we needed to show health disparities and their impacts in order to advocate for allocation of resources. Groups of us were doing the work, and we worked together as best as we could, to band together and make the case for convincing the government and decision-makers to allocate resources to address disparities. But it was a complicated situation, working with the government. There are people within the government who are allies and are working to alleviate disparities, but there are structural and institutional barriers that, even with people who want to create change, we all have to struggle against, the structural inequities.”

— Marcos Martinez
Executive Director
The Future of the Delta Vision

Next Steps for the Delta Vision Project

The Delta Vision project is an exciting and needed exploration of capacity building among people of color-led organizations and the communities they serve. Delta Vision planning team members, community partners, and consultants have identified some options for future steps.

They include:

1. refining the vision;
2. developing and specifying strategies as well as tools, rubrics, and check-lists;
3. piloting and testing;
4. evaluating; and
5. funding.

This initial phase has focused on identifying the conceptual framework of the Delta Vision and offers early illustrations as well as some strategies. Additional suggestions, refinements, and inquiries are welcome from those seeking to improve the lives of those in our communities.

STEP 1

Refinements

Two areas need further conceptualization and refinement. Future support of the project should allow exploration of these topics in greater depth.

Time as a dimension

Delta Vision community partners observed that the Delta Vision and the specific aspects of each component may change over the life cycle of an organization. A key question is, “How can the dimension of time and the maturity of an organization be accounted for?” Time was also considered with respect to the ‘waves’ of immigrant communities coming to the Seattle area. We are asking, does the Delta Vision apply to communities of color who have been in Seattle for generations in the same way as it might to recent immigrants?
Place and space

Participants noted that the ideas of place and space are limited when considering migration, gentrification, and the increased use of virtual tools. The Delta Vision can use further specification of how place addresses these dynamics.

**STEP 2**

Strategies and tools, rubrics, and checklists

This preliminary presentation of the Delta Vision focuses on desired outcomes of Organizations, Communities, and Systems with respect to their components of capacity (People, Practice, and Place). The focus in this report has been at a conceptual level of the components. While this phase includes early discussions and identification of strategies to achieve desired outcomes, much more work is still needed.

General future approaches include trainings, coaching, peer learning communities or communities of practice, and research, but further specification, especially with respect to racial equity and power, must take place. For example, how might we guide authentic conversations between funders and nonprofit leaders regarding power? How can authentic and transparent relationships be nurtured — during and beyond the conclusion of a grant? This can be hard. One Delta Vision community partner noted, “In the everyday work of my organization, I don’t see how to influence power.”

Proposed strategies also included funding approaches such as core support as well as organizational arrangements, such as long-term fiscal sponsorship and shared workspaces.

The Delta Vision must describe how these strategies can be implemented in reality. In addition to strategies, specific tools to guide implementation of strategies are needed. Rubrics, checklists, curriculum, data collection instruments, playbooks, and virtual platforms are topics for consideration in a future phase.

**STEP 3**

Piloting, testing prototypes, and cases

Using the Delta Vision framework, participants should be invited to participate in a pilot. A pilot would include developing prototypes, gathering feedback on participants’ early experiences, adjusting and revising specifications, and refining details. During the pilot, documentation of the experience in a case would serve as a basis for future pilot versions and possibly a measurement baseline. One option would be to continue the partnership among the Delta Vision project planning team as well as among the Delta Vision community partners that contributed to this report.
Youth participants in AGE UP, an organization investing in the transformative power of youth in South Seattle, especially young women of color. AGE UP participated in the Nonprofit Assistance Center’s cohort program.

**STEP 4**

**Research, Learning, and Evaluation**

Related to piloting, a long-term view of the project should include a research and evaluation plan. The plan should include guiding research questions appropriate to the maturity of the Delta Vision and its details, operational measures of components, designs and analyses to detect implementation as well as outcomes, and reporting tools and learning events. These tools and activities are needed to ensure that evaluation stakeholders can discern if intended results are achieved, how to modify their approaches for improvement, and to what extent our understanding of capacity building among people of color-led organizations is advanced.

**STEP 4**

**Funding**

Multi-year funding would be critical to enabling further refinements, development of strategies and tools, piloting, and a research and learning agenda. Equally, if not more important, is the participation of funding partners willing to engage with the Delta Vision planning team and community partners in periodic deep discussions about power, race, and systems, as well as to take actions within their own institutions in ways consistent with the Delta Vision.
Summary and Conclusion

The Delta Vision is in its early stages and is poised to make further contributions. Planning team members and community partners have developed a tentative vision that is holistic, relational, and practical. It proposes three layers of focus and three components of capacity building. All are essential to developing the organizational capacity of ethnic organizations, as well as the general capacity of communities of color. These three layers are Organization, Community, and System, and the three components are People, Practice, and Place.

Furthermore, Power is a primary core principle throughout the Delta Vision, that must be built and balanced to enable communities of color to thrive. The optimization of all of these “ingredients” is necessary in order for capacity to develop. The absence of any one of these elements is the reason why capacity building has not been effective for communities of color and the organizations led by them in the past.

The Delta Vision is not simply a model, it’s a holistic and transformational vision where relationships among all entities and the pursuit of social justice and racial equity are authentic and trusting. The Delta Vision is much more about ‘ways of being’ than it is a set of checklists or strategies and tactics. The heart of the Delta Vision is centering the needs, wisdom, and voices of communities of color. While a work in progress, the Delta Vision seeks to reflect values of equity and inclusion prioritizing community voices in the conduct of the project itself.

Looking forward, Delta Vision participants are optimistic and eager to join with others seeking to enact a vision of capacity building for, and by, communities of color.
**Funders Should be Aware of Needs Based on Culture**

*MOTHER OF AFRICA*

“We need funders to understand our needs as a small organization struggling to meet growing community needs. We work with communities who are at a great disadvantage economically, educationally, racially, and more. Working with them requires a great deal of cultural competency and the provision of flexible funds to reduce barriers to their participation and integration in the larger society, such as transportation, childcare, interpretation, and food. We need funders to support our organization’s capacity and professional development of staff, instead of only funding programs. We need donors to reach out and invest in community-based organizations who are carrying the big load of serving new Americans.”

—*Risho Sapano*  
*Executive Director*

**Systems and government entities must change**

*LIVING WELL KENT*

“Changing the systems that exist takes a long time. It takes capacity, advocacy, education, and training. Our story of Living Well Kent started with communities of color who wanted healthy food access and justice. Many research studies show that Kent is the second unhealthiest city in King County. It is mainly communities of color that experience food insecurity in disproportionate rates compared to other communities. Since 2014, Living Well Kent has been working toward food policies and creating healthy food environments for Kent residents, including refugees and immigrants. We’ve partnered with and were supported in part by a grant through Public Health Seattle-King County Partnerships to Improve Community Health and Seattle Foundation’s Communities of Opportunity in policy systems and environmental change. Living Well Kent is well-positioned to continue all of these efforts to strive for positive health outcomes through changes in policies and environments to achieve an equitable food system for people of color in Kent.”

—*Shamso Issak*  
*Executive Director*
References


The Delta Vision Project, for the Delta Vision Planning Team Members

PRE-ASSESSMENT INTERVIEW GUIDE

OVERVIEW

Thank you for speaking with us. The purpose of this conversation is to inform the planning of the Delta Vision project. The project is sponsored by a group of Seattle nonprofit organizations, including the Nonprofit Assistance Center. We anticipate this interview to take about 30 minutes.

USE AND EXPECTATIONS

- Participation is voluntary. We encourage you to be candid.
- May we share portions of this conversation with Delta Vision planning team and community members?
- We plan to take typed notes. Is that OK with you?
- Do you have any questions for us?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Background

- Please briefly tell us about your organization and your role. Who does your organization serve? What are your main responsibilities?

Output

- What would you like from your participation in the Delta Vision project?
- What is your understanding of the goals and approach of the Delta Vision project?
- Are there goals, relationships, or insights that you would like from the Delta Vision project?
- What expectations do you have about approach or process? Does the proposed approach in the project plan embody values important to you?

Components

- What components and concepts are essential to the Delta Vision?
- People, Place, and Practice. Where did these components come from? What do they mean to you? What are examples of how they are essential to capacity building?

- How would you define “capacity building” and “leadership”?
- In what ways do traditional models of capacity building meet your needs? Or not? Consider communities of color.
- Who else from the community should be invited to the Community Launch on June 21?
- What advice do you have for us, as consultants, as we embark on facilitating the development of the Delta Vision?

5. This is an adjusted version of our interview guide. The first draft of this guide was written before this project was renamed the Delta Vision project.
The Delta Vision Project for the Delta Vision Community Partners

PRE-ASSESSMENT INTERVIEW GUIDE

OVERVIEW

Thank you for speaking with us today. The purpose of this conversation is to inform the Delta Vision project and the development of a model of capacity building for communities of color. We anticipate this interview to take 30–45 minutes.

USE AND EXPECTATIONS

- Participation is voluntary. We encourage candidness.
- You will be compensated for your time and participation. Has your organization signed the partner agreement?
- We may share portions of this interview in reports to be made public. Is that OK with you? Have you read and signed the interview waiver?
- We are not audio recording our conversation. And we will take typed notes.
- If we quote you and identify you in reports, we will give you an opportunity to review any text before publication, as well as decline to be quoted.
- Do you have any questions for us?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Background

- Please briefly tell us about your organization and your role. Who does your organization serve?

Defining “capacity building”

- What does capacity building mean to you?
- What should be the result of effective capacity building? For communities of color?
- What are essential components and principles of capacity building for communities of color?
- Think of essential components of capacity building, especially for organizations serving communities of color. What are 1–2 most important components?
- Think of parts of capacity, like leadership, the role of geography, or cultural competent practices. What are they?

- Think of essential principles of capacity building. What are 1–2 of the most important principles?

- What principles or values should guide capacity building? Consider racial equity, involving and empowering communities, or reducing structural racism.

Examples, stories

Recall a positive or successful time when capacity building occurred. Please share with us a story of what happened.

- Who was involved? What organizations or groups?
- What was successful about it? How were communities of color involved? And impacted?
- What were lessons learned?

Challenges

- What are 1–2 main challenges or problems you see with traditional approaches to capacity building?

Advice

- What advice do you have for building capacity among organizations that serve communities of color?
- For providers of capacity building services?
- For funders?

Closing

Thanks so much for your time today. We will use your answers to inform and develop a new model of capacity building. We plan to share with you our progress later this year.

- Do you have any questions or last thoughts you would like to leave with us?
## November 2017

### Delta Vision Project Summary: Planning Team, Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Byrd Barr Place</th>
<th>Center for Ethical Leadership</th>
<th>Latino Community Fund</th>
<th>Nonprofit Assistance Center</th>
<th>Potlatch Fund</th>
<th>Rainier Valley Corps</th>
<th>Wayfind</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohort Model</td>
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<td>Trainings</td>
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<td>Legal Assistance</td>
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<td>Leadership Development</td>
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<td>Executive Director Training</td>
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<td>Fiscal Sponsorship</td>
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<td>Direct Services*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic Planning Facilitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Systems Work with Funders</td>
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</table>

*Includes services to clients of the organization, such as case management, rental assistance, food pantries, counseling, etc.*
## Delta Vision Project Summary: Planning Team, Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Byrd Barr Place</th>
<th>Center for Ethical Leadership</th>
<th>Latino Community Fund</th>
<th>Nonprofit Assistance Center</th>
<th>Potlatch Fund</th>
<th>Rainier Valley Corps</th>
<th>Wayfind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Geography</strong></td>
<td>Central District, Seattle</td>
<td>King, Pierce, Snohomish, Kitsap counties, nationwide</td>
<td>King, Pierce, Snohomish, Yakima counties, WA state</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>Pacific Northwest (WA, OR, ID, MT)</td>
<td>Rainier Valley, South King County</td>
<td>Washington State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Areas</strong></td>
<td>poverty, civic engagement, economic security, education, health</td>
<td>investing in community, capacity building, civic engagement, advocacy</td>
<td>systems change, social justice, organizational capacity building, movement building, leadership</td>
<td>grantmaking, capacity building, leadership development, social justice, advocacy</td>
<td>leadership development, capacity building, funder advocacy, social justice</td>
<td>legal services for nonprofits and micro-entrepreneurs, social justice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Populations Served</strong></td>
<td>low income, African Americans, and Black</td>
<td>communities of color, nonprofit organizations</td>
<td>Latinx youth, adults</td>
<td>communities of color, immigrants, refugees, working class, LGBTQ</td>
<td>Native Americans, urban, rural, tribal communities, low-income</td>
<td>communities of color, immigrants, refugees</td>
<td>low income, communities of color, micro-entrepreneurs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FTE Staff</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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</table>

*Includes services to clients of the organization, such as case management, rental assistance, food pantries, counseling, etc.
# Delta Project Summary: Community Partners, Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Partner</th>
<th>Founded</th>
<th>Fulltime Staff</th>
<th>Primary Geography</th>
<th>Focus Areas</th>
<th>Populations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Casa Latina</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>employment, economic opportunity, community organizing</td>
<td>immigrants, day laborers, domestic workers, Latinx</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coalition for Refugees from Burma</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>South King County</td>
<td>education, advocacy, capacity building</td>
<td>refugees, immigrants, multi-lingual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entre Hermanos</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>health, worker rights</td>
<td>LGBTQ, people with AIDS, immigrants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenyan Women Association</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>South Seattle</td>
<td>economic/entrepreneurial pathways, leadership development, health</td>
<td>Central East African (CEA) immigrants, CEA asylees, and CEA refugees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Living Well Kent Collaborative</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>health, food access, education, policy</td>
<td>low income, communities of color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Africa</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>~1</td>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>leadership building, advocacy, health &amp; safety, homelessness prevention, economic empowerment, celebrating culture</td>
<td>African refugees, African immigrant women and their families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Doors for Multicultural Families</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>~18</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>early learning, family support &amp; engagement, parent education, youth development, senior caregiver, adults with disabilities, civic engagement</td>
<td>multi-lingual, communities of color, special needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Eagle Soaring</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Seattle, King County</td>
<td>performing arts, youth development</td>
<td>Native youth, inter-tribal</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Park Information and Resource Center</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>South Park, Seattle, South King County</td>
<td>health, economic development, leadership and education, citizenship, voting, immigration, human services</td>
<td>immigrants and non-immigrants, Latinx women and families, communities of color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Para Los Ninos</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Highline</td>
<td>education, community development, parent engagement</td>
<td>Latinx community</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Indians of all Tribes Foundation</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>early childhood education, housing, elder care, workforce development</td>
<td>Native Americans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Delta Vision Layers Chart — Organization

### STRATEGIES “HOW”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGIES “HOW”</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secure funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- by engaging with funders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- by getting funders to understand needs of small orgs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to support overhead, indirect costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop and training leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- from among the community (pipeline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- from among current staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- with abilities, knowledge, and community perspective — not just those with expected educational backgrounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- in ways that are sustainable, financially and personally</td>
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<tr>
<td>- through coaching, peers, similar backgrounds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop a board of directors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide support for</td>
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<tr>
<td>- multilingual staff and complexities of program supports</td>
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<tr>
<td>- professional development and meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide training for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- organization staff to have “deep conversations” with funders</td>
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<tr>
<td>- funders to reduce bias, understand “whiteness”</td>
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<tr>
<td>- staff to develop grant-writing skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide training for creating strategic plans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide program training</td>
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<tr>
<td>- social media skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>- food and meals for gatherings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide training for</td>
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<tr>
<td>- analyzing data</td>
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<tr>
<td>- collecting data</td>
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<tr>
<td>- database administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>- report writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop financing and physical space strategies by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- subsidizing office space</td>
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<tr>
<td>- co-locating multiple nonprofit organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- defining “space” as places where communities of color thrive, work, play, and learn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### OUTCOMES “WHAT”

#### LONG-TERM WHAT

**Organizations are empowered**
- to determine their needs, |
- to choose areas of growth, |
- to solve the challenges they face, and |
- to acquire needed resources. |

**Organizations have capacity**
- to achieve their mission |
- to be guided by their vision |

**Organizations achieve their missions**

**Organizations are sustained, survive AND thrive**

#### SHORT-TERM

**Organizations that have adequate financial resources**
- have more funding |
- have funding that is equitable to their populations’ representation and the region |
- have sustained funding over multiple years |
- have ownership of tangible assets (real estate, hard assets, access to credit) at amounts similar to established organizations |

**Organizations have leaders who**
- come from and understand the community |
- understand equity, systems, power, race, and trust |
- understand service |
- are able to manage time, resources, partners, funds, space, transportation |
- have vision |
- are able to adapt to changing environments |
- are well structured |
- have networking and outreach skills |
- have a “human factor,” are nurturing |
- cultivate positive organizational cultures |
- are skilled in financial management |
- are skilled in staff management and HR policies |
- seek continuous learning in self and others |

**Organizations have boards of directors**
- who are in agreement about vision, direction |
- that are good cultural fits |
- who are trained in finances, HR, policy and advocacy, engaging with mainstream audiences |
- who are in compliance with state and federal laws |

**Organizations have staff**
- who come from the community |
- in sufficient numbers for basic operations, to fulfill mission |
- who “job-share” across multiple small organizations |

**Organizations have fund-raising staff and strategies that**
- engage and manage funders effectively |
- collaborate with policymakers who allocate resources |
- collaborate with others who have resources |
- get funders to understand challenges of multicultural, -lingual organizations (e.g. life/death, DACA) |
- boost grant-writing skills |
- communicate with funders in mutually respectful, non-racially biased ways |

**Organizations have strategic plans**
- that serve as blueprints for alignment |
- allocate staffing, physical resources, financial resources, technology |
- that plan and establish a process for growth |

**Organizations have programs**
- to serve immigrants, communities of color |
- that can be further developed and changed |

**Organizations have marketing and communications**
- are visible, at the table, front lines |
- have sustained visibility |

**Organizations have data and evaluation systems**
- to gather and analyze data |
- to write reports with quantitative and qualitative data |
- to tell the story of the organization and its clients |

**Organizations have place and space**
- that is physical |
- that serves as a base of operations |
- that is rooted in the community |
- that is perceived as anchors for families and neighborhoods |
- that is part of the local infrastructure |
- that enables weaving and avoids turf building |
- that provide economies of scale (reduced rent, utilities) for multiple small nonprofit organizations |
- that can stand gentrification and mobility
## The Delta Vision Layers Chart — Community and System

### STRATEGIES “HOW”

**COMMUNITY**

- Develop partnerships with communities

- Develop respectful ways for nonprofit organizations to co-exist:
  - cross-referencing one another
  - communicating about grant-seeking opportunities
  - raising awareness, educating one another about systems, power, and positions

- Developing funding models that facilitate collaboration:
  - funding both individual organizations and collaboratives

**SYSTEM**

- Create awareness, educating stakeholders’ about power dynamics & positionality; challenge systemic oppression

- Develop new funding models; change existing funding structures

- Minimize or eliminate “intermediary” organizations’ roles

### OUTCOMES “WHAT”

**LONG-TERM**

- Low-income and immigrant communities thrive

- Collaboratives are healthy, trusting, and in coordination

**SHORT-TERM**

- Communities are empowered
  - to guide the work

- Communities are engaged
  - from the beginning of processes,
  - in assessing and determining needs, and
  - in determining how services are delivered.

- Organizations collaborate
  - to understand the system,
  - to expand networks to identify resources,
  - to trust one another (have authentic relationships),
  - with POC and tribal organizations seek and access funding collaboratively,
  - to be aware of and coordinate with one another,
  - to avoid duplication and unwanted convergences,
  - to communicate clearly to the community and to funders each nonprofit organizations’ role, and
  - to advocate for one another

- The system helps immigrants and low-income communities thrive

- The system is anti-racist

- The entire system is “lifted up”

- The system is inclusive (e.g. not a “good ‘ol boys club”)

- Small nonprofit organizations are not made to compete with one another

- Small nonprofit organizations, led by people of color, are funded directly to serve communities of color, not through an intermediary
To learn more about The Delta Vision, please email info@thedeltavision.org.

The Delta Vision
Building Capacity for and by Communities of Color

A Paper of Color

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