

# Mayor Durkan Announces More Than Eight Million in Investments To Support The Duwamish Valley In 2022 Budget Proposal

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*Community members joined Mayor Durkan and City staff at the Duwamish Waterway Park to announce and celebrate these investments.*

Today, Mayor Jenny A. Durkan announced more than \$8.5 million in proposed 2022 budget investments to support the Duwamish Valley neighborhoods of South Park and Georgetown.

Investments will center around expanding youth leadership and capacity building in the Duwamish Valley, funding essential improvements to community gathering spaces, improving mobility and access to greenspace and the Duwamish River, Seattle's only river, improving air and environmental quality, and supporting local businesses and workforce development.

“This announcement is another important step forward to realizing the community’s vision of a more inclusive, equitable, and vibrant Duwamish Valley,” said Mayor Jenny Durkan. “With these investments, we strive to honor the needs of these communities and reverse years of inequities and environmental injustice to build a more just and prosperous Duwamish Valley for all.”

Since 2016, the City has worked closely with community-based organizations in South Park and Georgetown to understand the community’s vision for the rapidly changing neighborhood where many residents and businesses are acutely feeling the pressures of displacement and the impacts of environmental degradation and climate change. In 2018, Mayor Durkan released the [Duwamish Valley Action Plan](#), setting forth a series of actions and strategies to expand economic opportunity, make environmental progress, and increase investments in the South Park and Georgetown communities.

The proposed budget prioritizes investments in these key areas for the Duwamish Valley Program and will build on grant-funded work establishing a Duwamish Valley Resilience District. These efforts are also intended to advance the goals and principles of the Green New Deal by focusing on job creation and a just transition away from fossil fuels, and the City’s Transportation Electrification Blueprint and Maritime and Industrial Strategy. Significant budget components include:

- \$4.3M for building, energy, and community resilience improvements to essential gathering spaces in South Park and Georgetown.
- \$1.75M to improve 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. S and the street end park to safely link the Georgetown community to its only waterfront access.
- \$1M to fund a one-time program of incentives to convert polluting, diesel-powered heavy-duty vehicles to operate on clean electric power for operations in the Duwamish Valley. These include vehicles like drayage trucks, school buses, and other fleets.
- \$850K to support neighborhood businesses, advance clean energy workforce development, green industrial lands, and advance priorities of the Industrial & Maritime Strategy.

- \$693K for youth leadership development, community capacity building, and recreational programming.

“From our youth to our immigrant and refugee neighbors, to our small business owners and workers, the Duwamish Valley communities have long experienced disinvestment, over-planning, and under-delivery of City services and projects,” said Paulina López, a South Park resident and Executive Director of the Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition. “I commend the City and Mayor Durkan for taking such an intentional and comprehensive approach to ensure our youth, our community receives the investments needed to yield health, environmental, and economic benefits for years to come.”

“I am incredibly excited about the opportunities these investments present for everyone in the Duwamish Valley, both residents and industries,” said Sam Farrazaino with Georgetown Steam Plant Community Development Authority and Equinox Development Unlimited LLC. “These investments will help us implement recommendations in the Maritime & Industrial Strategy related to greening industries, support for local businesses, and workforce development. And how about those funds to improve 8th Ave. S.? Georgetown residents will finally have the waterfront park they deserve and be able to safely access the Duwamish River! We are ready to roll up our sleeves and continue working with the City to advance climate and community resilience in our communities.”

Seattle’s Duwamish Valley Program is a multi-departmental effort jointly led by Seattle’s Office of Sustainability & Environment and Office of Planning and Community Development to advance the environmental justice and equitable development goals outlined in the [Equity & Environment Agenda](#) and [Equitable Development Implementation Plan](#). Focused on the Duwamish Valley neighborhoods of South Park and Georgetown, the program is driven by environmental justice guiding principles, [racial equity outcomes](#), community input, and a commitment to community-led planning.

“The Duwamish Valley has supported resilient communities since time immemorial – from the fishing and winter campgrounds of the Duwamish Tribe to the people living in it today, but we know these communities also face unprecedented burdens” said Alberto J. Rodríguez, the City’s Duwamish Valley Advisor and co-lead of the Duwamish Valley Program. “The Duwamish Valley communities are working to adapt and thrive in the face of climate change impacts related to sea level rise, pollution, and environmental injustice, and these investments are a result of years of community advocacy, inclusive engagement, and work to achieve environmental justice and equity. I am proud to be part of this work and to continue to learn from and support these communities.”

In addition to these budget investments, Mayor Durkan recently signed a bill directing the Office of Housing to acquire two adjacent parcels that provide 18,000 sq. ft. of developable land for new affordable housing in South Park, and the Seattle Parks & Recreation department recently acquired a one-acre property on South Elmgrove St. to expand the Duwamish Waterway Park and provide flexible and accessible community space.

The City of Seattle also received a \$600,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to work with community partners in the Duwamish Valley on a strategy that will improve health, increase community resilience, and adapt to the impacts of a changing climate, including creating a Duwamish Valley Resilience District.

Mayor Durkan will deliver her annual budget address and transmit her 2022 Proposed Budget to the City Council on Monday, September 27.