

## Engagement Plan

### Neighborhood

Southeast Como

\*(Mid-City Industrial residents extended member status by SECIA Bylaws)

### Time frame

January 1, 2023-December 31, 2024

### Introduction

Southeast Como Improvement Association (“SECIA”) has long identified a goal and aspiration to be a welcoming and inclusive neighborhood organization for the whole of our neighborhood, and all of the people and communities who make up our vibrant and diverse shared community. We *continue* to recognize the demonstrated enduring commitment to change; and the slow, hard work of realizing the changes that are needed to gradually become a more equitable and fully representative organization; such that many levels of meaningful participation and decision-making happen within the communities most impacted.

### 2023-24 Equitable Engagement Plan Update - A Continuum

Because Southeast Como Improvement Association (“SECIA”) continues to abide by its general framing principles, and regards our equitable engagement work as iterative and ongoing, we submit this updated version of the [original Equitable Engagement Narrative Plan](#) submitted for the current year, 2022. In this updated version, we integrate reflections on the five key components and guiding principles outlined in our original Equitable Engagement Plan that continue to drive and shape our continued equitable engagement work. These reflections on what we’ve learned from both our successes and failures over the last year inform our work ahead as we continue to implement our equitable engagement strategies over the next two years.

### Impact of SECIA Staff and Board Transition

In light of the forthcoming period of significant organizational transition, including both the turnover of more than half of the Board, all but one of the Officers and members of the Executive Committee, and staff, including the Executive Director; we identify the need for space during the first half of 2023 for further review, development and modification of the updated equitable engagement plan by the new organizational leadership. This particularly pertains to the need to further flesh out the details and specifics of the programming and projects selected to carry out the ongoing core principles and objectives of the equitable engagement plan.

Of note, *both* one of our most significant successes and one of our greatest continued challenges underscore this need. The exciting success of the recently completed October 2022 board election, which resulted in substantially increased representation of members of intersecting historically underrepresented communities, expands our opportunities to improve our connection and empowerment of these diverse communities, to help ensure that SECIA’s future programming and work is increasingly reflective and responsive to the needs, interests and priorities of these communities. At the same time, our increasing challenges with funding and related resource capacity limitations require that the new leadership be able to make decisions about specific 2023-24 program objectives and project priorities that they also deem as both realistic and feasible within the parameters of SECIA’s resource capacity.

In significant part because of the ongoing resource capacity challenges, several goals and objectives identified in our initial 2022 plan remain ongoing. Thus, our updated 2023-24 Equitable Engagement Plan is emerging as a continuation of the inaugural 2022 Equitable Engagement Plan. The updated plan

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integrates ongoing reflections on both the key components developed through the earlier development process, and an evolving set of key principles based on what we've been learning so far from both first year successes and challenges. It also identifies some next steps towards genuine connection and relationship-building within and beyond each of our identified historically underrepresented communities that will ultimately create the foundation for the [full spectrum of equitable community engagement](#)<sup>1</sup>, from raising initial awareness of SECIA and intentional action to improve global welcoming and inclusive accessibility to participation; to relationship and community-building through relevant and impactful events, projects and initiatives; to fully realized empowerment in decision-making for all historically underrepresented communities.

As we are set to begin the 2023-24 plan, we preliminarily identify a smaller subset of equitable engagement priorities and identified communities of focus to begin with, informed by both the progress made and work left to be done on strategies and objectives identified for 2022, and by further review of our updated 2020 Census neighborhood demographic data (as outlined in our [2023-24 Equitable Engagement Plan Table](#); attached as appendix). This shall be reassessed, midway through 2023, once the new board, officers and staff have had a chance to onboard and together adjust through the significant transition and become oriented to the organization and our equitable engagement work.

**Continued Community Engagement Objectives**

A primary focus of our ongoing equitable engagement work will continue to be on outreach, building connections and relationships with organizations and individuals that work and live in the communities that we have identified as historically underrepresented within SECIA. The broad strategies identified for implementing our initial 2022 plan will continue, although the scope and details of the multi-modal outreach work will need to be further determined by the incoming organizational board and staff leadership.

We will continue to host public meetings and share information about our organization and what we're up to publicly via our email list and website. We will expand our social media presence and reach out to new partner organizations to build connections where we can mutually share and promote what we are working on. We will table and display flyers and yard signs in visible locations in the neighborhood to increase general awareness of SECIA.

We will continue to prioritize resources for door-knocking outreach, as our experience over the past two years has been that canvassing conversations have been such a valuable means of making new connections with people who may not otherwise be aware or involved with SECIA; yet capacity limitations, combined with continued reticence amongst volunteers to engage in this type of direct outreach through the ongoing pandemic (and with increased community safety concerns) have curtailed our efforts to significantly expand these activities. The frequency of previous efforts like our mailed newsletter to every address and distribution of "welcome packets" to new tenant residents during the late summer move-in season will also depend on continued reassessment of resources and efficacy.

Outreach to and through landlords and building managers to build connections and gain access to large apartment buildings to inform the residents about SECIA's activities, through listening sessions or smaller events of interest to the resident community, remains an ongoing goal. In 2022, we had particular success with building collaborative relationships with both newly engaged residents and management at one of the largest neighborhood tenant resident communities living in the Project in Pride and Living

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<sup>1</sup> [IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation](#),  
[https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum\\_8.5x11\\_Print.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum_8.5x11_Print.pdf)

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(PPL) and Riverton Cooperative Housing residential communities. The new connections that arose from shared concerns about community safety issues have continued to grow, and resulted in increased mutual connection and partnership, to continue to nurture. This is a success to be replicated in other tenant resident communities where we have not yet built this level of relationship and collaboration.

We will continue the goal of outreach to additional business owners in SE Como to promote their business to SECIA’s audience and ask them to promote SECIA to their audiences. We will also continue to develop current and new relationships with community organizations that serve our underrepresented communities in the Como neighborhood and reach out to them to learn from them and learn how to support them. We will use all the above methods to share an updated version of our community feedback survey, first developed in 2021, and due for further updating, informed by survey responses to date, to continue to use as an important research tool.

As reiterated during our 2022 Neighborhood Leader and Equitable Engagement training with UMN-CURA, and related organizational equity reflections and synthesis – our continued equitable engagement efforts must be implemented at both the programmatic and structural levels. We will continue efforts to improve the relevance of our events to historically underrepresented communities, building from successes experienced through our community-led “Como Kids” and “Connecting Como - Community Safety through Community Building” programming, to create community building events that draw from a variety of cultural backgrounds and promote intercultural exchange, learning and relationship-building. We will also continue to examine our internal structure to identify potential barriers to engagement for historically underrepresented groups and experiment with ways to remove those barriers, such as different meeting times and format. We will seek feedback from underrepresented individuals about what SECIA can do to make our spaces more welcoming and engaging as well as doing our own research on these issues and what other organizations have tried that may work for us.

Importantly, and drawing from important lessons from both successes and failures in 2022, we will continue our concerted efforts to meet people where they are at instead of requiring that they come to us to get involved in their neighborhood. We will interrogate our internal decision-making structures and consider ways that they can be reconceptualized and made more accessible to members of the neighborhood who are not heavily involved in SECIA. We will ask for community input at every step of this process.

**Key Components, Guiding Principles, & Lessons Learned To Date, Informing Next Steps for 2023-24 Equitable Engagement Plan**

What follows are brief summaries of the key components of our initial Equitable Engagement Plan for 2022, to be continued in 2023-24, and informed by what has been learned so far under an emerging and intersection set of guiding principles, and developing next steps.

**#1: Equitable Engagement Contextualized in Racial Equity Lens and Intersectionality**

**Where It’s At:**

SECIA established a Reimagining SECIA and Racial Equity work group process in 2021, in preparation for the development of our initial equitable engagement plan. The work group, in partnership with University of Minnesota Graduate Civic Leadership Program students, researched and drafted both a [Racial Equity Framework](#) and [Racial Equity Resolution](#) for board and community input.

Community engagement on the Draft Resolution and Framework, in the context of consideration of the lasting impacts of systematic and institutionalized racism, continued into 2022. Engagement efforts occurred through community participation in the Reimagining Work Group process, through our various print and electronic communication channels, and at our regular Board & Community meetings. Seeking

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to expand the active involvement of representative community members in the Reimagining SECIA and Equity work group is another goal over the next two years. While its core members have represented staff, board, and community volunteer perspectives, it has remained a small group that can benefit from new active members.

**What We're Learning: Intersectionality****Intersectionality Amongst and Within Tenant Resident Population**

One key consideration in the development of the initial Equitable Engagement Plan that remains relevant moving forward, is how intersectionality shows up in SE Como, amongst and within our historically underrepresented communities. As a primary example, now comprising approximately 79.4% of our neighborhood residents (up 3% per 2020 Census data), tenants remain, by far, the largest historically underrepresented group in SE Como, followed by young adults, at approximately 75.6% (up more than 8% over 2010 Census data). Undoubtedly, these groups include subsets of all the other identified underrepresented communities. For this reason, it follows that tenant-focused engagement continues to be a primary and priority focus of our overall equitable engagement plan and work.

Furthermore, we continue to recognize the importance of considering the broad and intersectional diversity within the tenant population. And with that, a tension is observed, in balancing both the importance of culturally specific understanding of barriers and approaches to engagement with identified groups; with also recognizing many different ways intersectionality shows up in our neighborhood, and its impact on engagement.

Of additional note, our equitable engagement plan and work goes beyond the nine historically underrepresented groups identified in the table, based on the most recently available 2020 Census and [Minnesota Compass data for SE Como](#). First, we are mindful that our engagement is inclusive of *all* historically underrepresented groups and communities, including those who are not represented in this data, such as the significant population of the LGBTQ+ community; as well as those who are members of relatively smaller demographic groups to our particularly neighborhood, such as the elderly or other ethnic or racial groups. Furthermore, we remain intentional that our engagement is inclusive of *all* residents and members, including those not identified as historically underrepresented. While the long-term contributions of historically well-represented populations like homeowners are not disregarded and continue to be valued; we also recognize that equity requires us to continually re-center our focus on our historically underrepresented communities. On balance with maintaining a broad and inclusive long-term scope of this work, capacity limitations do require us to focus our current year priorities within more realistic parameters.

**Equitable engagement contextualized in a Racial Equity lens**

We also hold the tension that while, as our Draft Racial Equity Framework identifies, acknowledging the ongoing impact of structural, systemic, and institutional racism must be where equitable engagement starts; equity in SE Como is also broader than racial equity alone.

Because the following five key principles identified in the [Draft Racial Equity Framework](#)<sup>2</sup> are both specifically relevant to racial equity and more broadly applicable to *all* equity considerations, and will continue to be integrated into our Equitable Engagement Plan:

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<sup>2</sup> SECIA's Draft Racial Equity Framework was initially developed in 2021 through the Reimagining SECIA & Racial Equity Work Group in partnership with UMN Graduate Civic Leadership Students Cody Hoerning, Claudia Santana, and Emily Padrutt, who researched example racial equity frameworks from other neighborhoods, counties, companies, and cities both locally and nationally, including [McKinsey & Company](#), [Carver County Parks & Recreation, in collaboration with CURA](#), [RacialEquityAlliance.org](#), [City of Portland, OR](#), and [City of Bloomington, MN](#).

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- **Efforts are Contextualized:** Racial Equity / Equity efforts by SECIA should be contextualized; they should be rooted in a knowledge of the historical and current systems of inequity.
- **Accountability:** A racial equity / equity lens must be applied to all initiatives carried out by SECIA. Every action either sustains inequities or promotes equity--there are no neutral actions.
- **Needs:** To address the needs of underrepresented residents, SECIA must know what those needs are. (This causes us to continually examine the relevance of SECIA’s work to historically underrepresented communities.)
- **Progress:** SECIA must track progress in equity work, share it with stakeholders, and increase stakeholder participation in equity work.
- **Partnership:** SECIA should partner with other neighborhood organizations to learn and share. ○ (This principle of the importance of exploring and developing partnerships or collaboration with both other organizations or groups already effectively serving historically underrepresented groups from whom we can learn; as well as with other organizations with whom SECIA can collectively improve this capacity, is an important component of our equitable engagement work.)

**#1: Equitable Engagement Contextualized in Racial Equity Lens and Intersectionality: Implementation Strategies Review**

<p><b>2022 Strategy 1(a):</b> Incorporate updated 2020 Census and MN Compass data to replace outdated demographic data, and review for necessary adjustments in our identification of historically underrepresented groups and corresponding equitable engagement planning.</p>
<p><b>Status:</b> Completed - SEE updated neighborhood demographics based on 2020 Census data in the <a href="#">2023-24 Equitable Engagement Table</a> (row 3); and comparison to previous 2010 Census data (row 4) used for demographics, identifying historically underrepresented communities in initial 2022 plan.</p>
<p><b>Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:</b> During new leadership’s process to review equitable engagement plan in the first half of 2023, continue to reassess impact of demographic changes on communities of particular focus for engagement.</p>
<p><b>2022 Strategy 1(b):</b> Revisit the Draft SECIA <a href="#">Racial Equity Framework</a> and <a href="#">Racial Equity Resolution</a>, and continue efforts to broaden community engagement and feedback to be incorporated to update and integrate into ongoing equitable engagement in all SECIA work and initiatives.</p>
<p><b>Status:</b> Continuing goal in 2023-24.</p>
<p><b>Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:</b> While the core tenants of the racial equity framework have been integrated into our equitable engagement plan and implementation, because progress and accountability are amongst those principles, a reevaluation of SECIA’s overall progress and renewed community engagement efforts on next steps are needed in the coming year.</p>
<p><b>2022 Strategy 1(c):</b> Follow up with scheduling training for board, staff and volunteers in partnership with CURA on neighborhood organizing through anti-racism/equity lens.</p>
<p><b>Status:</b> Completed 2-part neighborhood leader and equitable engagement training in January, June 2022 with CURA training staff and participating SECIA staff, board members and community leaders.</p>
<p><b>Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:</b> 1) Revisit and follow up on individual and small group equity commitments completed in the Part II July 2022 training; and 2) Follow up with CURA trainers to seek</p>

both a follow up organization-wide training session, and a specific Board Representation Training offered by CURA for new neighborhood board members of color, as measures to both fully support the new incoming members and to continue support and capacity building for growing organization-wide stake and efficacy in equitable engagement work.

**#2: Utilize data-driven neighborhood mapping**

**Where It's At & What We're Learning:**

At the outset of the 2021 Reimagining SECIA & Racial Equity process, SECIA partnered with CURA to help us build capacity to:

- a) Use a data-driven approach to understanding WHO lives and works in our neighborhood;
- b) Quantify and track the demographics, needs and interests of the SE Como community; and
- c) Inform a systematic, intentional approach to organizing and outreach prioritizing our historically underrepresented communities.

Through volunteer contributions in 2021 and 2022, SE Como neighborhood mapping data has been utilized in a number of ways to assist us in guiding and prioritizing outreach focused on our tenant residents. Relatedly, this mapping data has helped us start to better understand the concentration of property ownership in our neighborhood, as we consider the many different ways SECIA could use its resources to address housing issues, and continue to engage and co-create solutions.

**#2: Utilize data-driven neighborhood mapping**

**Implementation Strategies Review:**

<p><b>2022 Strategy 2(a):</b> Continue to develop and implement multi-modal outreach informed by neighborhood mapping.</p>
<p><b>Status:</b> In progress; continued goal for 2023-24. Mapping specific to identifying concentration of ownership was reviewed by the Land Use &amp; Development Committee and utilized for its housing survey started in early 2022 to better understand tenant needs and interests generally, and in a potential Land Trust program to support a path to affordable home ownership.</p>
<p><b>Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:</b> Neighborhood mapping can continue to be utilized in ongoing efforts to outreach, survey and connect with high population of tenant residents on continued tenant/housing issues, and other general outreach efforts.</p>
<p><b>2022 Strategy 2(b):</b> Continue to develop and implement new ways to utilize the property ownership data to inform developing efforts around addressing pressing issues of housing access and affordability of both rental properties and home ownership as a means of wealth building, as one key equity issue in SE Como.</p>
<p><b>Status:</b> In progress; continued goal for 2023-24.</p>
<p><b>Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:</b> SEE above notes on strategy 2(a).</p>
<p><b>2022 Strategy 2(c):</b> Continue to develop and implement a process for new outreach contact tracking and follow up; research potential resources and investments in more robust and sophisticated relationship management tools/software (E.g., Ourpowerbase).</p>
<p><b>Status:</b> In progress; continued goal for 2023-24. Through 2022 collaboration with the UMN graduate</p>

civic leadership program, this student project was started, and a new outreach contact Excel database was developed and build with functionality based on our needs, and we have begun to utilize it, but it needs further improvements. Limited staff/volunteer capacity continued to constrict

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** 1) Complete current database to maximize intended functionality; 2) Prioritize additional staff/volunteer resources to focus dedicated efforts on new outreach follow ups, relationship building to increase successful examples of moving newly engaged individuals from one-time, event-based engagement to more sustaining involvement, driven by their interests.

**#3: More effectively engage a broader representation of community members through multi-modal communications and outreach**

**Where It’s At - Public-facing communications and outreach:** Another key component of the 2022 equitable engagement plan was to increase the accessibility, reach, and scope of Public-facing communications and outreach, as a means of achieving the preliminary, early stage engagement objectives of raising awareness of SECIA, informing and involving more residents through:

- Increased language accessibility;
- Improved engagement through both social media platforms and e-Comotion.
- Diversifying content and contributors (E.g., personally engaging content; diverse neighbor profiles); opinion exchange; other interactive user content; and possible advertisements.
- Expanding use of multi-modal (print and electronic) communication platforms for SECIA’s broad-based organizing and outreach campaign.
- Importance of physical place communications.
- Particular importance of spoken communications through trusted messengers for certain communities

**#3: More effectively engage a broader representation of community members through multi-modal communications and outreach**

**What We’re Learning; Implementation Strategies Review:**

**2022 Strategy 3(a):** Continue to prioritize **expanded language access** through translated materials, and providing access to interpreters when needed.

**Status:** Progressing; continued goal for 2023-24. In 2022, we began implementing our language access policies and practices, updated in late 2021. Beyond routinely including language/ADA access language notices on all flyers and other communications, we began routinely including translations on our event and meeting flyers. We continue to make available key documents translated in 4 main languages during events/outreach and through our website, and hosted an increased number of meetings and events with interpreters and interpreted materials, including our in-person annual meeting at our well attended Como Cookout event.

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** Review, update key document translations; find creative ways to expand communication channels to increase awareness of language access options to further grow participation for people with diverse languages; and increase number of meetings and events with interpreters.

**2022 Strategy 3(b):** Continue to prioritize funding for more staff with increased language capacity for outreach and engagement.

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**Status:** Progressing; continued goal for 2023-24. During 2022, we employed part-time intern staff with Somali and Spanish-language capacities. During the times when these interns were on staff and available, this provided some important capacity for communications with people speaking these languages at our events (e.g., pop-up outreach at Eid celebration, produce distribution events, Como Kids events) and during outreach (e.g., early 2022 door knocking for new housing survey).

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** Prioritize funding for additional staff / staff hours for staff with high demand language capacity, to further expand more consistent availability and utilization of these diverse language skills for welcome, connection and conversation with people with primary / preferred language besides English.

**2022 Strategy 3(c):** Gradually improving reach of electronic, social media communications; continue to develop more interactive features on our website to create another accessible forum for engagement.

**Status:** In progress; continued goal for 2023-24: While we have been working to improve both the diversity of content and reach of our neighborhood communications, there is still more work to be done to continue to engage new members of underrepresented communities through our various electronic and social media communications. In 2022, we increased the frequency of our electronic newsletter from bimonthly to weekly, and have gradually grown its subscription/open rates, primarily through engagement/sign-up at events.

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** Continue to build diverse followings, expand reach of social media channels; continue to diversify content and contributors in newsletters and interactive web content; explore collaborations with other neighborhoods to increase capacity to achieve these goals.

**2022 Strategy 3(d):** Continue to expand use of physical place outreach communications like flyers and yard signs, in multiple languages as an effective alternative mode, perhaps especially amongst those who are not yet familiar with SECIA, when effectively placed in frequented third places.

**Status:** Progressing; continued goal for 2023-24. We increased low tech communication methods like yard signs and flyers, and have expanded the regular use of multilingual flyers and yard signs.

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** Continue to expand consistent use of multilingual flyers and yard signs with creative, engaging messaging in places people regularly gather.

**2022 Strategy 3(e):** Continue to evaluate, improve community survey processes, accessibility to increase response rates, particularly amongst non English speakers and historically underrepresented communities, as one tool for both engagement and alternative input/decision-making.

**Status:** In progress; continued goal for 2023-24: while we did not accomplish the full scope of the goal of expansion of the utilization of our multilingual survey in 2022, we did increase other means of in-person and verbal connection and information gathering with communities who identified the importance of such means of outreach, over written surveys and formats, such as the Somali/East African community. (See below related strategy 4(a).)

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** Continue to expand both use of multilingual short survey and follow up, and continue to prioritize in-person and oral outreach and input gathering; continue to gather input from various communities about preferred modes of communication and meeting/gathering format and feel. (See below related strategy 4(a).)

#### #4: Learning and Applying a Relational Community Organizing Approach

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**Where It's At:** A fourth key component of the initial Equitable Engagement work plan has been to utilize a relational community organizing approach to better inform, engage, and empower historically underrepresented residents of SE Como:

- **Inform:** Build mutual awareness: Inform residents of SECIA and its initiatives; and learn about / connect with current interests & initiatives outside of SECIA in the neighborhood.
- **Engage** new members, emphasizing multiple onramps for involvement (volunteer, leadership, hiring).
- **Empower** new and historically underrepresented communities to inform organizational issue priorities, co-create solutions, and build collective power.

**What We're Learning:**

**"Going out vs. coming in:"** We continue to reflect on, and think about different ways we can meet people where they are at in our outreach, to seek out connection with people where they are already connected (e.g, at a resident community (like Project for Pride and Living/Riverton Cooperative resident community), a faith community (like Dar Omar Al Farooq), and in "third places" like Van Cleve park or local businesses) rather than relying solely on inviting people to SECIA's meetings and events, that may or may not be conveniently scheduled or feel welcoming, inclusive, or relevant. Efforts in 2021-2022 with direct outreach through a mostly staff-led door-knocking campaign were effective, although limited in scope. Some significant connections have been made through these efforts so far, and have led to engagement of newly connected residents signing up for SECIA communications and coming up to events. Subsequent efforts to broaden the scope and reach of this direct outreach, and strengthen follow up and relationship building to support more sustaining engagement, is a continued priority for capacity building in 2023-24.

**Focus on relationship-building with leaders and members of "communities within communities:"** Success making inroads with a historically underrepresented community relies in large part in our ability to build relationships and trust with leaders (or potential leaders) of "communities within communities," who can then in turn help grow the connections within their respective communities, and initiate and lead on ideas for new ways SECIA may be able to partner or collaborate in order to effectively address core needs and interests, and co-create solutions to issues identified by the community. This in turn creates new modes and forums for alternative decision-making.

Over the last two year, some new relationships have been forged in certain communities, and are in various stages becoming established and trusted. These emerging relationships, with individuals, local business representatives, or representatives of existing communities or groups, must continue to be cultivated, while new relationship building in other underrepresented communities in which SECIA is not yet well connected, also needs to be prioritized.

**Intentionally creating multiple levels of involvement:** Perhaps the most common feedback is that people feel connected through community-building events, particularly those that involve elements of cultural sharing, where people can get to know their neighbors, and that may offer something of value or address a direct need in the community (both new collaborative initiatives, like Free Produce Sharing, Drop-in Resource Day for Unsheltered Neighbors, Como Kids Meetups & Arts Programs, and established programs like the well established community gardens, and, for the first time, merging our largest annual Como Cookout community event with the annual meeting.

This feedback speaks to a key principle SECIA has increasingly supported, of intentionally embracing, creating, and promoting different levels of involvement beyond board service and coming to meetings,

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like through community-building events, projects, initiatives, work groups or community-led committees; particularly recognizing this as an approach to overcome the perennial barrier to engagement of a highly mobile population of student renter residents, in particular; who may come with such great energy and passion to infuse into the organization for a short time, but who also move on relatively quickly.

#### **#4: Learning and Applying a Relational Community Organizing Approach Implementation Strategies Review**

**2022 Strategy 4(a):** Continue to tailor outreach approaches to culturally-specific needs and preferences and based in relationship-building, recognizing particular importance of spoken communications through trusted messengers for certain communities.

**Status:** Progressing; continued goal for 2023-24. In 2022, we progressed with gradual development and strengthening of some new relationships with members of some historically underrepresented groups, having the most notable success with leaders in the Somali and East African community, within one of the largest tenant communities in the neighborhood. Initial connections at culturally specific and pop-up outreach events where people gather, including Eid Celebration at Pop-up outreach at the park, led to relationship building with newly engaged community leaders. Continued responsive, in-person and language accessible engagement around community safety, identified as a top priority in the community, led to two community leaders running for the SECIA Board at the October 2022 annual meeting.

We continue learning more about how to better adapt and tailor communication and outreach approaches to the cultural preferences of certain communities, such as the importance of spoken communications, in-person meeting, and communications through trusted leaders in some East African communities. This also speaks to the critical importance of relationship and trust-building within communities, as further addressed in below principle #4(d).

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** Continue to strengthen new relationships, and prioritize support leaders newly involved with SECIA. Work to replicate and build upon this example of progression through the [full spectrum of equitable community engagement](#)<sup>3</sup> with other historically underrepresented communities; prioritizing communities making up a significant demographic in our neighborhood where we do not yet have connection and relationships with leaders and members of those communities, such as the Asian and Pacific Islander communities.

**2022 Strategy 4(b):** Seek out supplemental funding and resources to increase multilingual outreach staffing and staffing capacity for relational community organizing work.

**Status:** Not yet achieved; continued goal for 2023-24.

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** Plan to apply for supplemental grant funds with aligning equity goals to expand overall capacity for this work.

**2022 Strategy 4(c):** Ongoing assessment of various impacts of pandemic as barrier to community engagement; continue to assess necessary adaptations and long-term reconceptualizing, as necessary.

**Status:** Progressing; continued goal for 2023-24. In 2022, we made continued progress with returns to

<sup>3</sup> IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation,  
[https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum\\_8.5x11\\_Print.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum_8.5x11_Print.pdf)

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in-person events, and, specifically in response to identified needs from certain communities, made a gradual return to both in-person meetings and obtained grant funding to begin hybrid meeting formats, for longer-term accessibility of different meeting format needs and preferences.

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** Continue to improve capacity to most effectively utilize new hybrid meeting technology, to continue to improve long-term access across meeting formats.

**2022 Strategy 4(d):** Within the context of a key principal of embracing multiple levels of involvement, prioritize expanding capacity for relationship-building with newly engaged members to help move them from shorter-term levels of event or project-oriented engagement, towards more sustaining organizational engagement, to in turn build longer-term organizational capacity for developing future programming and more effective policy advocacy responsive to the needs and interests of newly involved members.

**Status:** Continued goal for 2023-24.

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** Continue to develop, promote the types of events, initiatives that may naturally lead to more enduring, and deeper organizational connection, such as smaller, community building events that connect and actively engage people around common interests: (E.g., multicultural cooking classes, community gardens); and more broadly and effectively promote Mini-grant program amongst historically underrepresented communities to promote meaningful connection through projects designed and implemented by newly involved community members

**2022 Strategy 4(e):** Address, work to strengthen SECIA’s capacity for issue advocacy (within allowable parameters) and outreach to further educate newly connected residents about this capacity, to then increase representative participation, co-create solutions and engage in decision-making in organizational advocacy on issues directly impacting members.

**Status:** Progressing; continued goal for 2023-24.

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** Continue to reassess 2023-24 specific goals under new organizational leadership.

## #5: Ongoing Structural Review, Analysis and Modifications

### Where It’s At:

In 2022, we began implementation of our updated Bylaws, approved in late 2021 as part of the comprehensive list of governance changes as a requirement for participation in the Neighborhoods 2020 Neighborhood Network and Equitable Engagement Fund. Our overhaul of our Bylaws has been one means of beginning to “interrogate and re-conceptualize internal decision-making structures,” as listed below in our broad goals and objectives.

## #5: Ongoing Structural Review, Analysis and Modifications Implementation Strategies Review

**2022 Strategy 5(a):** Throughout 2022, we implemented our updated Bylaws and continued to assess and address identified structural barriers to inclusion, as we begin to experience how some of the structural changes through our updated Bylaws work in practice.

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**Status:** In progress; continued goal for 2023-24. Board approved one amendment to restore improved access for the process of establishing resident member eligibility for voting. Elevating designated seats for undergraduate and graduate students to the same annual meeting membership voting process increased visibility and interest in these board seats amongst student residents.

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** Consider revisiting standard 3-year board term in favor of staggered, varying year terms to balance the consistency of longer-term involvement with accessibility for younger, shorter-term residents.

**2022 Strategy 5(b):** We will commit to the ongoing process of seeking and implementing feedback from historically underrepresented groups about:

- What are the experienced barriers to participation?
- What makes SECIA feel more welcoming AND personally empowering to participate in decision-making?
- What alternative structures can we build to prioritize this?

**Status:** In progress; continued goal for 2023-24. In 2022, we gained some valuable feedback on these areas for improvement, both through our continued community survey, and primarily through 1:1 conversations and relationship building.

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** Prioritize resources to expand capacity for both additional feedback gathering on structural equity/inclusion issues and proactive responsiveness and follow up to feedback collected.

**2022 Strategy 5(c):** Continue to consider ways to expand applications of the key principles reviewed throughout this plan to continue to move along the full spectrum of engagement, including intentionally embracing, creating, reorganizing around different levels of involvement, to ultimately create new alternative means of decision-making amongst historically underrepresented community members.

**Status:** In progress; continued goal for 2023-24. See above status/next steps note on above strategy 4(a).

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** Prioritize resources and efforts to fully support new board members bringing expanded representation to organizational decision-making to maximize their capacity to improve SECIA's mutual connection within their respective communities to further inform and adapt our specific approaches to employ the full spectrum of engagement within these communities.

**2022 Strategy 5(e):** Continue to evaluate and address organizational capacity issues, addressing both people and funding resource gaps.

**Status:** In progress; continued goal for 2023-24. In 2022, we held a SECIA Board planning retreat in February 2022 to collectively identify SECIA priorities, informed by community engagement/survey data and Part I equitable engagement CURA training and reflections process.

**Possible Next Steps for 2023-24:** 1) Continue to internalize and implement the principle of embracing multiple levels of engagement to align to the reality of the level of availability of a transient student and tenant population, with other demands to avoid volunteer burnout; 2) Continue to innovate ways to have a more distributed workload amongst the staff, board and community volunteer pool. 3) In 2023 board planning retreat, include application of core equitable engagement principles and organizational priorities to planning 2023 events/project calendar and timeline of benchmarks and

goals/objectives for the implementation of the updated Equitable Engagement Plan in 2023.

**Summary of Reflections Informing Future Equitable Engagement Objectives for 2023-24**

In the first year of our targeted equitable engagement, we raised awareness of SECIA in the neighborhood as a whole and increased community participation because of our increased general and targeted outreach efforts. We made meaningful progress in expanding the representation of underrepresented communities on our board of directors. This was possible because of the outreach work focused on lowering the barriers to engagement that many of our underrepresented communities face. We took the bold step of merging our very popular Como Cookout event with our annual meeting. This allowed our community to learn about SECIA and how SECIA can help them interface with our city and elected officials as a community. We aimed to bring new people into SECIA’s work and with the recent board election we have done that. While there is still work to be done, our board is more representative of our community. With the insights that this diversity provides we hope to build a stable and sustainable foundation for the future of SECIA and its work. We continue to hope that SECIA will be a central hub of activity for everyone in the neighborhood to get involved with, find connections with neighbors, and to contribute to projects they are passionate about.