



## **The Center for People of All Races**

A voice and a hub for the Latino community  
as we advocate on behalf of our people  
and work to achieve social justice.

# **El Centro de la Raza STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018**

***“As a voice and hub for the Latino community for services, advocacy and social justice, we continue to grow our programs to strengthen and empower our communities.”***

– Roberto Maestas, Founder and David Gasca, Community Member

## **MISSION, VISION, PURPOSE, STRATEGIC VISION, CORE OUTCOMES**

### **Mission Statement**

El Centro de la Raza (The Center for People of All Races) is grounded in the Latino community. Our mission is to build the Beloved Community\* through unifying all racial and economic sectors; to organize, empower, and defend our most vulnerable and marginalized populations; and to bring justice, dignity, equality, equity and freedom to all the peoples of the world

### **Vision**

We envision a world free of all oppression, including but not limited to oppression based on poverty, racism, war, sexism, sexual orientation, gender identity and discrimination of any kind. We envision equal and equitable access to the resources that ensure a healthy and productive life for all peoples and future generations in peace, love, harmony, and humane world. As a voice and a hub for the Latino community for services, advocacy and social justice, we continue to grow our programs to strengthen and empower the Beloved Community\*.

### **Strategic History and Vision**

El Centro de la Raza is a hub of the Latino community in Seattle and the region. Twelve principals guide our work creating successful educational, human service, economic development, and asset building programs out of our well-utilized campus. We tell and document our glorious history for future generations. We are a passionate and effective advocate for the rights and opportunities of vulnerable and marginalized people.

El Centro de la Raza continues to respond to an inequitable world and societal conditions; and the evolving circumstances and needs of the populations we serve. El Centro de la Raza grows, remains relevant, responds in a caring and proactive manner to the needs of our community. We provide comprehensive programs across the entire lifespan; and continue to advocate to effect public policy with and on behalf of the people and communities we serve. With the opportunities that light rail brings to Beacon Hill and other communities, we must ensure community inspired equitable transit-oriented development, that provides greater access to child and youth programs, comprehensive services for families and seniors, important cultural events, social justice activities, affordable housing and economic development including small business creation and jobs.

### **Thirty Two Core Outcomes**

El Centro de la Raza strives to have a positive and measurable impact on people's lives. The organization uses evaluation tools to ensure that quantifiable, positive change occurs through the services we deliver. El Centro de la Raza provides free and subsidized culturally and linguistically competent services with established outcomes involving immediate, intermediate and long term milestones that help participants progress toward one of the "Thirty Two Core Outcomes," which are as follows:

1. People meet their basic food needs
2. People transitioning out of homelessness secure permanent housing
3. Youth and adults acquire job readiness skills, gain employment and retain jobs
4. Low and moderate income people become sustainable homeowners
5. People reduce debt, improve credit, increase savings and utilize equitable banking services
6. Homeowners reach resolution to prevent foreclosure
7. Homeowners successfully refinance their homes
8. Infants/young children meet development milestones and develop habits that support academic success
9. Young children are prepared to enter kindergarten
10. Children and youth acquire dual language and multicultural skills
11. Educationally marginalized students develop/strengthen positive educational habits and social skills that support cultural enrichment and academic success,
12. Older adults maintain the highest possible quality of life

13. People acquire/improve English language and literacy skills
14. Parents/guardians participate in children's learning
15. Community partnerships promote children's success
16. Youth are encouraged and better prepared to pursue and/or enroll in post-secondary education
17. Individuals and families in crisis receive immediate information, referral and services
18. Latino families and community members engage in Juvenile Justice advocacy and policy changes to dismantle the School-to-Prison Pipeline
19. Veterans increase access and awareness of human services, housing, and health resources
20. People receive access to legal services
21. People receive access to tax preparation services
22. At risk expecting mothers receive culturally competent pre, post and peri-natal services to increase healthy birth outcomes
23. Mothers participate in an empowerment support group
24. Professional, skilled and community volunteers participate to strengthen a sustainable volunteer program
25. Communities of Color decrease smoking habits and promote healthier lifestyles People advocate for community inspired equitable transit oriented development
26. Youth acquire technology skills
27. People acquire permanent affordable housing
28. Honor and promote our culture through events, celebrations and traditions
29. People make healthier food choices
30. Grow our economic development ventures as alternative revenue streams (Christmas Trees, Spanish Classes, Tamale/Cooking Classes, Parking Lot)
31. Build Plaza Roberto Maestas to develop affordable housing, additional community space, and economic and micro businesses
32. Community participants engage in civic involvement through activities such as voter participation, education and advocacy

#### **Rationale for Strategic Growth – Trends and Community Needs**

- A national recognition of the growing Latino population, its influence, contributions and importance in expanding the US economy in a global marketplace.
- The regressive tax structure combined with the unmitigated military defense budget reveals a lack of prioritizing human need resulting in disproportionate impacts to vulnerable populations
- As the result of “Deferred Action” by the Obama Administration, (undocumented youth have the opportunity to apply for work permits and Social Security numbers), an increased number of youth will have direct access to higher education and employment
- Comprehensive Immigration Reform legislation remains unaddressed by Congress
- The increase in hate crimes, hate speech, and anti-immigrant sentiments and action as a result of impending immigration reform, and the economic crisis
- As a result of increased detention, incarceration and deportation of undocumented Latinos; families are torn apart, and children are suffering from separation, which causes social and economic hardship. In addition, it benefits the prison industrial complex
- Corporations are making enormous profits at the expense of our people and are not paying their fair share of taxes;
- Growing income inequity and the alarming growth of people in poverty
- Impacts of sequestration: Higher unemployment, decreased unemployment benefits, reduced funding for human service programs impacting seniors, children, youth, and families.
- The need for affordable, permanent, stable housing is increasing
- Communities of Color were disproportionately harmed by predatory mortgage servicing practices and is an underserved consumer population affected by the foreclosure crisis
- Given the economic crisis and diminishing opportunity for employment, the increasing need for economic development and jobs is paramount, especially for middle class, low-income people and people in poverty.
- Children and youth are the most vulnerable population and our state is failing its paramount duty to provide basic education for all of our children

- Latino youth are not performing at the same level as their White counterparts which highlights the need to address the opportunity gap (achievement gap) and how educational success is measured
- Latino youth and communities of color are disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system due to the school to prison pipeline
- Latino youth are disproportionately suspended and expelled resulting in high dropout rates
- Latinos have limited education and access to healthy food and fitness options resulting in obesity, heart disease, diabetes and other preventable illnesses.
- As our country continues to fight wars the need for services for returning veterans is increasing
- Internalized, interpersonal, Institutional and structural racism continues to adversely affect communities of color
- Women and, in particular, women of color continue to earn less than their male counterparts
- Voting rights are being threatened in Communities of Color
- Leslea (pending).

## **STRATEGIC PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES FOR 2014-18**

El Centro de la Raza will continue to provide and maintain its programs in its four primary service areas; Child/Youth Programs, Emergency and Human Services, Education/Skill Building Programs, and Community Building/Development Programs. El Centro de la Raza identified the following strategic priorities for expanding its services and strengthening its infrastructure to address our community's current and emerging needs:

- 1.0 MEET EMERGENCY NEEDS/STABILIZE FAMILIES SUFFERING FROM THE ECONOMIC CRISIS**
  - 1.1 Prepare for and expand such emergency and survival programs as food, emergency housing, child care, senior programs employment services and foreclosure intervention, to meet the increased demand for these services as the economic crisis continues
  - 1.2 Track the growth in demand for such services to document the need for emergency social service funding
  - 1.3 Utilize tools like "Washington Connections" and "People to People" to assess peoples' eligibility for government entitlement programs
  
- 2.0 PREPARE MORE CHILDREN AND YOUTH FOR ACADEMIC AND LIFE SUCCESS:**

**Ensure that more young children, ages birth to 5, in our community meet developmental milestones and are ready for kindergarten; and their parents participate in their learning**

  - 2.1 Serve more children and families through the José Martí Child Development Center
  - 2.2 Expand offsite services for birth to age five populations with an additional four classrooms in 2015.
  - 2.3 Expand services for birth to age five populations with an additional three classrooms on site in 2016 at Plaza Roberto Maestas.
  - 2.4 Increase quality and comprehensiveness of parent education and involvement programs

**Ensure increasing numbers of children and youth, ages 6 to 18 to develop skills and/or habits that support academic success; and are meaningful and constructively involved in community life**

  - 2.5 Significantly expand bilingual and culturally enriched after school programs in middle schools from 74 children to an additional classroom including expansions in elementary and high schools. Expand life coaching and mentoring programs for high school age youth
  - 2.6 Provide financial education to middle school and high school age youth
  - 2.7 Sustain College Readiness coaching, currently serving 200 youth in middle and high schools, which includes securing scholarship funds
  - 2.8 Increase the Hope for Youth program, currently serving 300-400 youth
  - 2.9 Expand meaningful volunteer/community involvement opportunities for youth
  - 2.10 Provide computer literacy, leadership development and job training for youth
  
- 3.0 STRENGTHEN JOB TRAINING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT FOR YOUNG ADULTS/FAMILIES**

- 3.1 Expand job readiness training to offer internships and employment opportunities for young adults
  - 3.2 Continue to offer financial education and credit workshops
  - 3.3 Maintain the Lending Circles Program in partnership with the Mission Asset Fund in San Francisco
  - 3.4 Augment the Homebuyer program to 150 participants annually
  - 3.5 Increase home retention for 450 households annually Develop the Roberto Maestas Empowerment and Leadership Institute, a new program to promote greater civic engagement – so young adults can play a greater, more activist participatory and leadership role in their communities including voter registration and Get-Out-The-Vote. Identify these components on the organizational chart. Define the goals and activities of the institute.
  - 3.6 Expand opportunities for meaningful community involvement, including mentoring young people. Current opportunities include MLK Vista, University of Washington School of Social Work, LVC, Notre Dame AmeriCorps, workstudy and internships.
  - 3.7 Market economic development projects that create revenue for El Centro de la Raza programs and create employment opportunities like Spanish Classes, Tamale/Cooking Classes, Christmas Tree Sales, a pay parking lot, facility rentals, etc.
  - 3.8 Respond to the demand for comprehensive child development services by providing higher income families with dual language and multi-cultural curriculum as an economic development initiative
  - 3.9 Affirmatively further fair housing to help remedy discrimination in housing and promote fair housing rights
- 4.0 ENSURE THAT SENIORS IN OUR COMMUNITY MAINTAIN A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE**
- 4.1 Serve more seniors from the Beacon Hill community in onsite congregant meals program
  - 4.2 Expand health/wellness programs for seniors, e.g. nutrition education, exercise, gardening
  - 4.3 Increase quality of life programs for seniors
  - 4.4 Create a program to help with financial issues for seniors in response to identity theft and fraud to protect them from being victimized
  - 4.5 Create more of an all-day senior center program on-site
  - 4.6 Provide seniors with infrastructure and training to develop their technology skills, i.e. internet, email, social media, Skype and others.
- 5.0 PROMOTE SOCIAL JUSTICE EMPHASIZING IMMIGRATION REFORM AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**
- 5.1 Prioritize and effectively advance El Centro de la Raza's advocacy agenda of critical social justice issues that affect the Latino community and other communities of color , and the lack of immigration reform and the pressures that are placed on communities
  - 5.2 Work with youth to provide resources to determine eligibility and apply for Deferred Action
  - 5.3 Continue to advocate and secure resources to ensure that the emergency needs of Seattle's most vulnerable populations do not get overlooked during the economic crisis
  - 5.4 Develop and promote social justice leadership development, community engagement, and education
  - 5.5 Defend the community from hate crimes, hate speech, and anti-immigration sentiments and actions
  - 5.6 Collaborate with other organizations to demand comprehensive immigration reform
  - 5.7 Continue to engage and involve the community through voter registration education and Get Out The Vote
  - 5.8 Educate and engage our community on juvenile justice issues and policies such as Know Your Rights trainings, youth educational re-engagement, and the dismantling of school-to-prison pipeline
  - 5.9 Continue to participate with community members and organizations in addressing Police Accountability
  - 5.10 Advocating for the equitable distribution of resources and services supporting public transportation in low-income communities and communities of color

**6.0 ENSURE EL CENTRO DE LA RAZA REMAINS A VITAL CULTURAL CENTER AND LINK FOR AN EXPANDING LATINO COMMUNITY**

- 6.1 Continue to lead, support and promote the building of community and culture through the utilization of El Centro de la Raza's facility by other organizations and community groups. Promote and conduct periodic major cultural events and celebrations at El Centro de la Raza and surrounding communities that build community and promote cultural pride
- 6.2 Identify, develop and expand partnerships and collaborations with other organizations to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services to the growing Latino population that is leaving the inner city and moving to more affordable areas of King County due to increased housing costs and gentrification

**STRATEGIC CAPACITY BUILDING PRIORITIES FOR 2014-18**

To successfully achieve its strategic plan goals, El Centro de la Raza has identified the following capacity building priorities:

**1.0 STRENGTHEN FUND DEVELOPMENT AND COMPLETE BUILDING RENOVATIONS**

- 1.1 Build ongoing fundraising capacities, relationships and increase annual giving and major gifts
- 1.2 Secure sufficient private and governmental gifts and grants to complete building renovations
- 1.3 Secure added government contracts and United Way/foundation/corporate funding including economic development projects to support and expand programs to meet the needs of our growing population and to ensure targeted emergency assistance support during the continued economic crisis

**2.0 REFINE OPERATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

- 2.1 Continue to enhance the use of technology for more internal efficiencies and effectiveness
- 2.2 Upgrade phone system
- 2.3 Upgrade the computer and software package for boiler system
- 2.4 Upgrade elevator's mechanical components
- 2.5 Increase volunteerism and continue following the Volunteer Impact Plan and Policy, and increase the capacity of the volunteer program with an emphasis on targeting skilled and professional volunteers and in-kind services
- 2.6 Continue to enhance our agency emergency plan and implement policies and procedures for different emergency situations such as lock downs
- 2.7 Participate in the disaster case management program based on our capacity in case of a disaster
- 2.8 Continue to expand and promote the use of social media to and other press and public relation mechanisms to gain greater visibility
- 2.9 Evaluate and document best practices model in the provision of children and youth services
- 2.10
- 2.11 Upgrade technology infrastructure including Wi-Fi to provide greater community access throughout the campus to address the technology divide
- 2.12 Build an internet radio station (full time Jesuit Volunteer Corps or MLK Vista position)
- 2.13 Work with Rainier Valley Radio in establishing low power FM radio
- 2.14 Document current activities related to organization succession planning.
- 2.15 Conduct "Deep Dive" analysis of all elements of our information and technology infrastructure to recommend improvements, investment and strategies for a five year plan.

**3.0 COMPLETE PLANNING AND PRE-DEVELOPMENT WORK ON PLAZA ROBERTO MAESTAS AND BEGIN CONSTRUCTION – WITH AN EMPHASIS ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- 3.1 Develop a master plan for the entire El Centro de la Raza property including housing, parking and mixed use development

- 3.2 Continue to work with our community (King County and statewide) and the Beacon Hill neighborhood to receive their input in developing the plan for the community inspired equitable transit oriented development
- 3.3 Continue fundraising for Plaza Roberto Maestas
- 3.4 Continue to build business for the expansion of El Centro de la Raza services and programming as a result of Plaza Roberto Maestas
- 3.5 Work to create a business opportunity center to help develop micro-business opportunities and foster the growth of existing small businesses.

**4.0 STRATEGIC ENHANCEMENT AND EXPANCION OF CAPACITY AND PROGRAMS**

- 4.1 Redevelopment of the Beacon Avenue property
- 4.2 The development of townhouses on the north end of the property with underground parking
- 4.3 Investigate opportunities and acquire real property for further mixed use development in Seattle and King County
- 4.4 Creating additional early childhood multicultural education sites throughout Seattle and King County to address need and as an economic venture

**5.0 HISTORICAL PRESERVATION**

- 5.1 Continue to organize our historical archives. This includes documents, photos, art and artifacts and physical elements of our facility. Create electronic archives and a functional system for historic archives that is accessible to the organization and the community.
- 5.2 The completion and publication of El Centro de la Raza's history book authored by Roberto Maestas and Bruce Johansen
- 5.3 Messaging of tours and history presented to visitors of El Centro de la Raza.
- 5.4 Creation of a system to document our ongoing history as it occurs.