



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Mayor announces \$1 million investment in neighborhood business districts**

*Seattle Jobs Plan funding improves business climate and creates jobs*

SEATTLE – Today Mayor Mike McGinn joined neighborhood business district leaders and local business owners at Thompson’s Point of View in Seattle’s Central District to announce a \$1 million investment in 18 neighborhood business districts as part of the Seattle Jobs Plan.

“We all love Seattle’s neighborhood business districts,” Mayor McGinn said. “The programs we’re announcing today not only help these specific neighborhoods, but create jobs and add to the vitality of our entire city.”

Small businesses employ 72 percent of Seattle’s workforce and contribute 35 percent of the city’s business tax revenues, totaling \$55.4 million. Our local neighborhood business districts serve as the location and incubators for many of the city’s small businesses. The Seattle Jobs Plan specifically targets investment in Seattle’s neighborhood business districts.

“What goes on around my business is just as important as what goes on inside my business,” said Gail Thompson, owner of Thompson’s Point of View. “I’m excited about this investment in our 23<sup>rd</sup> and Union business corridor to help us, the business and property owners, get organized to improve our local neighborhood business climate.”

The Office of Economic Development (OED)’s *Only in Seattle* Initiative supports investments in neighborhood business districts, and focuses on the following strategies to create healthy business districts:

- Business attraction and retention (business mix to serve residential needs);
- Marketing and promotion (events, social media, farmers markets);
- Clean and safe initiatives (graffiti removal, dumpster free alleys, lighting);
- Physical improvements (streetscape, catalytic development projects, façade, art); and
- Business-focused organizational capacity building to sustain the effort, such as Business Improvement Area (BIA) formation.

The local business communities in these neighborhoods have developed comprehensive, multi-year strategies in which the city is investing a total of \$655,000:

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- Capitol Hill \$145,000
- Central District \$100,000
- Chinatown / International District \$185,000
- MLK (Rainier Valley) \$125,000
- Pioneer Square \$100,000

"I moved my company to Pioneer Square because we were excited about the vibrant, urban environment with exciting amenities for our associates," said Dan Greenshields, president of ING ShareBuilder. "I'm excited that this investment from the city will allow Pioneer Square to increase its economic development and retail recruitment to improve the diversity of our retail mix."

In addition, focused investments of \$247,500 to support from one to three strategies will be made in these neighborhoods: Ballard, Beacon Hill, Columbia City, Rainier Beach, University District and White Center.

The city will invest an additional \$40,000 to expand the *Only in Seattle* marketing campaign, which highlights the hidden gems of shopping and dining in Seattle's neighborhoods ([www.onlyinseattle.org](http://www.onlyinseattle.org)). The following neighborhoods will join the *Only in Seattle* marketing effort: Belltown, Capitol Hill, Greenwood-Phinney, Madison Valley, Queen Anne, South Lake Union, and the University District.

The Office of Economic Development also will invest \$35,000 to build strong business-focused organizational capacity to sustain the efforts of neighborhood business districts Business Improvement Area (BIA) formation in the following neighborhoods: Ballard, Belltown, Capitol Hill, Central Area, Greenwood-Phinney, Lake City, Madison Valley, Pioneer Square, University District, and West Seattle; and \$20,000 for farmers market support in neighborhoods across the city.

OED will fund and manage this program in partnership with Impact Capital, a Seattle-based community development financial institution serving underserved communities throughout Washington.

"In addition to working with business and property owners in our neighborhood business districts, we are focused on providing direct services to businesses to help them grow and compete," said Steve Johnson, director of the Office of Economic Development. "You can learn more about our services at [growseattle.com](http://growseattle.com), including financing products."

### **Seattle Jobs Plan**

Mayor Mike McGinn's vision for next-generation economic development that creates a sustainable economy with shared prosperity in Seattle and the Puget Sound region was launched in August 2010. It consists of new and existing policies, programs and investments designed to help create quality jobs, protect the environment, and ensure that taxpayers get true value from the city of Seattle's public investments. For more information, visit [www.seattle.gov/jobsplan](http://www.seattle.gov/jobsplan)

### **City's Office of Economic Development (OED)**

OED supports a healthy business environment and empowers companies to succeed and grow. We provide services directly to businesses through advocacy, retention and expansion assistance, and workforce development. OED has several financing options for businesses, including options for small to medium to large businesses. Visit [www.growseattle.com](http://www.growseattle.com) to access city services for businesses, and for more information about our office, visit [www.seattle.gov/economicdevelopment](http://www.seattle.gov/economicdevelopment)