

SEATTLE CHINATOWN INTERNATIONAL
DISTRICT PRESERVATION AND
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (SCIDpda)

A Community-Driven Approach to Resident Services



Leveraging its extensive experience as a community development organization, SCIDpda is building and integrating its resident services capacity to address the evolving needs of residents.

This case study offers practical strategies for organizations in the early stages of their resident services journey, as well as for those seeking approaches to better support diverse communities. SCIDpda has been able to launch a resident services program by:



1

Leveraging Deep
Community Expertise
& Knowledge



2

Fostering Culturally
Relevant Services to
Strengthen a Diversifying
Community



3

Integrating SCIDpda's
Roots in Community
Building with Resident
Services

Three case studies of [True Ground](#), [SCIDpda](#) and [Mercy Housing Northwest](#) highlight how community-driven, responsive resident services can help residents maintain housing stability, access opportunities and achieve their long-term goals. These reports were prepared and published by [Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future \(SAHF\)](#) with support from Amazon.

1. Leveraging Deep Community Expertise & Knowledge

An Organization Ingrained in the Community

Seattle's Chinatown International District (CID) is a sixteen square block neighborhood that has been central to the Asian American community in Seattle dating back to the early 1900s. The community has weathered the impacts of forced exclusion and home abandonment (such as the Internment of Japanese Americans in the 1940s), the disruption and displacement of residents and businesses caused by significant infrastructure changes (such as the development of Interstate 5 in the 1960s and the development of Kingdome Stadium), and other zoning changes which have threatened the community fabric and infrastructure. In 1973, an International Special Review District was established to protect the area's culture, revitalize the community, and stop unwanted development. Shortly thereafter, Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Development Authority (SCIDpda) was founded in 1975 by the community to continue this work of preservation and revitalization.

SCIDpda is a community development organization with more than 50 years of experience serving Seattle's Chinatown International District (CID).

While affordable housing development and preservation is a core strategy for SCIDpda, their roots and foundation are grounded in community organizing and community development. SCIDpda has built strong, collaborative relationships with residents, community members, and local businesses. Throughout their history, staff embedded in the community have formed trusted relationships with the CID's residents.



KEY DEFINITIONS

Resident services are the programs, services, and referrals that are provided in a housing context through trusted relationships, proactive engagement, and coordination across property operations and with community partners. Resident services are typically provided by dedicated services staff and through robust partnerships to support greater stability and resident wellbeing. Programs and services vary to meet the priorities of each community and can include eviction prevention initiatives, afterschool or other youth programs, food access support, health and wellness programming and navigation, financial and asset building, and more.

Housing stability is a resident's ability to remain stably housed. Threats to a resident's housing stability may include significant late rent and lease non-compliance. SAHF-member properties with resident services have lower rates of rent arrears, and lower rates of eviction-related moveouts.

SCIDpda's core areas of focus include:

- ▶ **Real estate development, commercial, and residential property management**
- ▶ **Third party property management services within the CID**
- ▶ **Community and economic development**
- ▶ **Community engagement and initiatives**
- ▶ **Resident Services (most recently beginning in 2021 and after staffing changes relaunched in July 2024).**

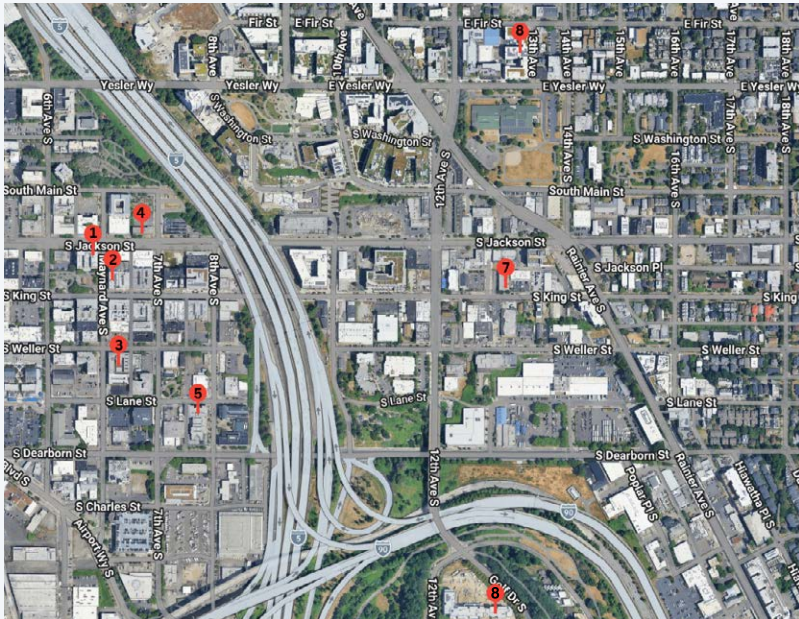
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Currently, SCIDpda owns or provides third party property management at 14 properties, eight of which are residential properties - all in the CID. In total, SCIDpda serves approximately 1,500 residents living in their buildings. Many of these buildings are historical, including an old hospital campus and hotel. Several of the buildings that SCIDpda provides third-party property management for are owned by residents

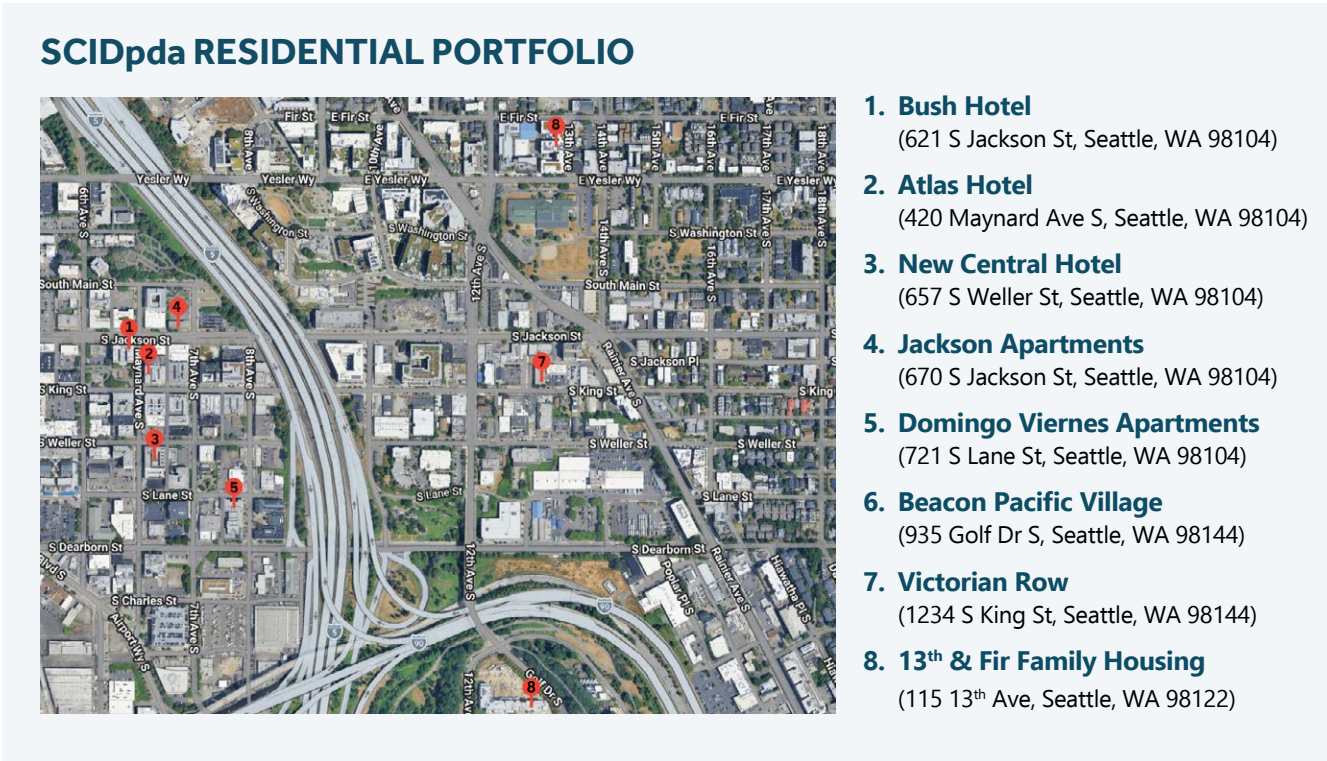
and local families that have lived in the community for a long time and have come to know and trust SCIDpda.

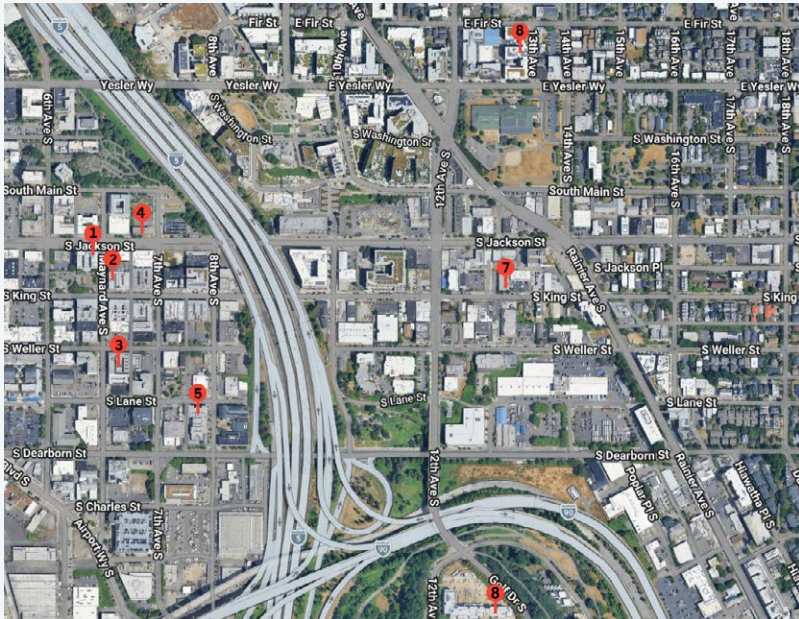
SCIDpda is in the process of significant expansion to meet a growing affordable housing need they see in the Chinese and immigrant community in the CID. This growing need has been driven by rising costs of living in Seattle, slow wage growth, and increased barriers to public benefits due to federal policy changes. In the last three years, the organization has added four new affordable housing properties (serving 375 households) to their portfolio, and SCIDpda is planning to develop an additional 70 affordable family apartments in the Little Sài Gòn area of CID. SCIDpda's expansion is not just focused on adding to the portfolio. Their newer buildings expand their footprint to the outer edge of the CID and are designed to meet the needs of a more diverse demographic - including both larger units and a mix of unit sizes that can house big families, single adults and couples - within the same building.

SCIDpda RESIDENTIAL PORTFOLIO



- 1. Bush Hotel**
(621 S Jackson St, Seattle, WA 98104)
- 2. Atlas Hotel**
(420 Maynard Ave S, Seattle, WA 98104)
- 3. New Central Hotel**
(657 S Weller St, Seattle, WA 98104)
- 4. Jackson Apartments**
(670 S Jackson St, Seattle, WA 98104)
- 5. Domingo Viernes Apartments**
(721 S Lane St, Seattle, WA 98104)
- 6. Beacon Pacific Village**
(935 Golf Dr S, Seattle, WA 98144)
- 7. Victorian Row**
(1234 S King St, Seattle, WA 98144)
- 8. 13th & Fir Family Housing**
(115 13th Ave, Seattle, WA 98122)



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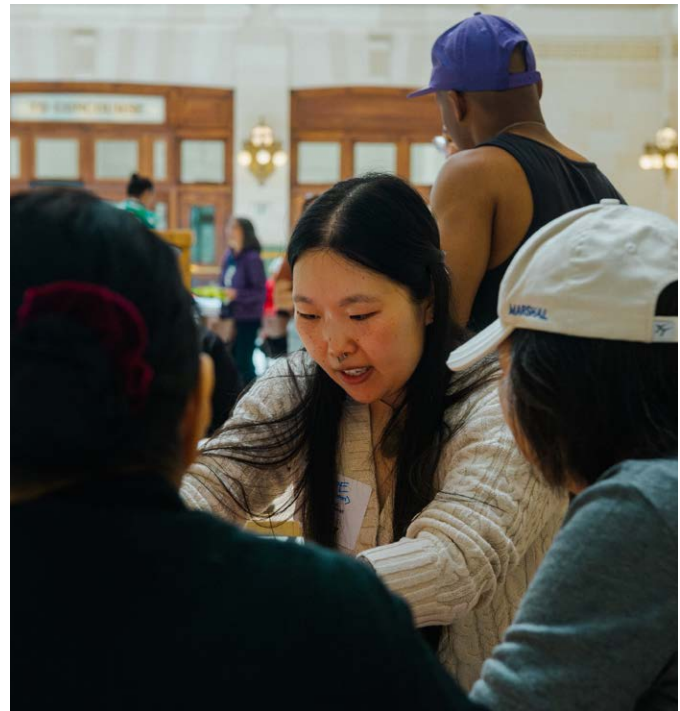
2. Fostering Culturally Relevant Services to Strengthen a Diversifying Community

SCIDpda serves a diverse immigrant community, with residents that speak Cantonese, Mandarin, Amharic, Tigrinya, Oromo, Tagalog, Vietnamese, French and Spanish as their first language. In addition to considering the cultural and lingual diversity of the community, SCIDpda is responding to an immigrant community in transition – with residents (many of who are single adults or couples) who have been living in the neighborhood and in SCIDpda properties for decades – and a growing population of more recent immigrant and refugee families who may have fewer connections and supports and have some differing priorities and needs.

Deepening Resident Engagement: A Dedicated Resident Services Function

During the COVID-19 pandemic, SCIDpda saw that underlying socioeconomic inequities like barriers to services and social isolation were exacerbated by systemic issues. The need became greater than property management staff's capacity. **SCIDpda's leadership recognized a need for a new organizational function - resident services coordination - to connect residents to resources and programming and support their housing stability and broader wellbeing.**

SCIDpda created a Resident Services Manager (RSM) role beginning in 2021, which was further expanded upon in 2024 after new staff joined the organization. The RSM builds on SCIDpda's long-standing community organizing and engagement model, but adds a dedicated staff function to support coordination of programs and services for affordable housing residents as well as



Jade Yan, Resident Services Manager [pictured center], engaging with SCIDpda residents at community event.

provide individualized resident referrals to the bountiful local resources available. The RSM works closely with the Community Initiatives department at SCIDpda to ensure residents are a part of larger community conversations and community development projects – alongside community members, business owners, and other stakeholders.

The individual RSM currently serves five (354 households) of the eight residential properties and remains a consistent presence, regularly onsite either in office space, hosting events, or in the lobby of buildings with limited community and meeting space.

The RSM has been able to build bridges between residents and the greater neighborhood (including in newer buildings where residents may not know each other as well), empowering residents through community development initiatives, civic education and engagement.

Starting Resident Services ‘From Scratch’ – Building the Tools & Processes for Success

As SCIDpda began the process of launching resident services, the organization recognized the need to develop core infrastructure and systems to identify priorities and support resident connection, including:

- I. Building the Systems and Goals to Implement Services:** The RSM established operational goals to support the resident services function and build capacity over time. These goals are focused on the development of data management systems, collection of resident feedback (through surveys and other mechanisms), staff learning & development opportunities, and growing relevant programming. SCIDpda is also considering the expansion of the resident services department over time, with plans to engage MSW practicum students as well as engage in grant management/development opportunities.
- II. Surveys to Collect Resident Feedback & Understand Priorities:** In collaboration with real estate development, the RSM created the first portfolio-wide, annual resident survey to assess resident priorities and satisfaction with services, interest in homeownership, and key social determinants of health that could inform services. Both the survey development and survey incentive were funded with grant support and distributed in a paper format – acknowledging residents may not be comfortable completing online surveys. Surveys were available in 10 different languages and hand-delivered to more than 500 residents. A level of anonymity was maintained by labeling each survey with an apartment number and ID number and allowing residents to return the survey to a lockbox or property manager. Paper survey results are manually uploaded to Survey Monkey for further analysis of resident priorities and impact of services.
- III. Partnership Development and Resident Referrals:** The RSM has expanded service partnerships and identified local, nearby resources relevant to residents - particularly populations new to the community and not historically engaged with SCIDpda. The RSM also helps residents access social services and navigate education and employment systems that may be unfamiliar to residents. For many older adults in the community, this has included referrals to social services and benefits available to remain independent and age in place. The RSM has helped residents of all ages navigate the school system, access out of school opportunities, and connect to employment resources and benefits. The RSM has collaborated with the Seattle Housing Authority, the public school system, and Office of Immigrant/Refugee Affairs.
- IV. Cross-Departmental Coordination and Collaboration:** Property managers, many of whom live in their buildings or locally, have a deep understanding and commitment to the community and its cultural context. Strategies to further build collaboration between the RSM and SCIDpda’s in-house property management staff have included ongoing check-ins with property managers, cross-training the RSM in property management responsibilities, and incorporating resident services information into the property operations handbook.
The RSM also collaborates with SCIDpda’s Community Initiatives staff to ensure resident voices are heard in community development and revitalization projects.

Some of the strategies implemented by the RSM to further build community and support resident stability include:



► **Trust Building, Cultural Competence & Humility** — The RSM maintains a consistent presence through regular office hours and hosts relevant programs, events and services to build trust and relationships with residents. They approach their work with cultural humility, an eagerness to learn more about other cultures, backgrounds and values, and a commitment to break down communication barriers. Services and programs are tailored to be culturally relevant and responsive to resident priorities.



► **Translation & Language Support** — Staff, including the RSM and property managers, often speak two or more languages. Where there are still language barriers, staff utilize translation services such as [Language Line](#), which provides telephonic interpreters to speak with residents in real-time, often in under five minutes. Local partners also act as referral points to community resources and networks for residents with language barriers.



► **Community Building & Crisis Intervention** — Community building events and other forums have been focused on addressing safety concerns in the larger CID raised by some residents. Other community building events also function to provide opportunities for civic engagement, outreach, and education. To further help residents through difficult situations, property managers are trained in crisis de-escalation training provided by the RSM.



Public Safety Training for SCIDpda residents

SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY SAFETY INITIATIVES

SCIDpda works to ensure residents feel safe in their community and home. Initiatives to support this have included hosting a public safety training and town hall with police and local partners, as well as a **Know Your Rights** training with an immigration lawyer. The RSM and SCIDpda Community Initiatives staff collaborated with local businesses to create safe spaces for immigrants and connected with local agencies including the Office of Immigrant/Refugee Affairs. SCIDpda hosts regular community-building events – such as bingo, holiday events, and indoor gardening – to help further feelings of safety and improve social connection amongst residents.

3. Integrating SCIDpda's Roots in Community Building with Resident Services

Building relationships with local partners and SCIDpda's community initiatives work have helped residents feel connected in their communities. SCIDpda's Community Initiatives department supports SCIDpda and community residents, business owners, and other stakeholders on community development projects. Their areas of focus include business assistance, neighborhood design, and safety. The Resident Services Manager has worked closely alongside the Community Initiatives team to build community.

Early Success and Future Growth

SCIDpda continues to build the infrastructure needed to identify resident priorities, support relevant programs, and measure impact. Over the past two years, SCIDpda's Resident Services Manager has been able to foster trust and build strong community relationships and partnerships.

In 2025, early indicators of engagement and relationship-building include:

- ▶ **240 annual resident survey responses (significant 47% response rate)**
- ▶ **326 one-on-one meetings with residents**
- ▶ **28 community programs and workshops with 680 individual participants**
- ▶ **Collaborations with at least 28 local, nonprofit and government organizations**

SCIDpda MURAL INITIATIVE



Pictured Above: The most recent mural was completed by artist Adden Joule (Instagram: @existentialcircus) at 13th and Fir Family Housing in June 2026. This mural was informed by community engagement efforts in November 2025.

The RSM has worked with the Community Initiatives staff to gather feedback from residents on local mural projects in the community and buildings. While SCIDpda has a long history of engaging the community, the RSM has strengthened this engagement with residents of SCIDpda buildings to inform design and revitalization projects. Community engagement sessions during after-work hours have included presentations from mural artists, translation services, and activities for children to successfully engage residents.



CONCLUSION

The growing, diversifying community calls on staff to grow and adapt resident services to meet new challenges and continue to ensure positive outcomes for residents. Some of this foundation has been laid and can be expanded as SCIDpda adds to their resident services staff capacity, including hiring MSW practicum students. SCIDpda is deeply ingrained in the local community as an organization created by the community. SCIDpda has a clear, ongoing commitment to invest in resident services tailored to meet these shifting priorities of residents.

As SCIDpda's portfolio continues to grow, their investment in resident services will allow them to ensure current and future residents remain stably housed and are able to achieve both short- and long-term goals for themselves and their families.

Starting Your Resident Services Journey

SAHF's Framework and a System of Resident Services Coordination, informed by a Community of Practice of resident services practitioners, defines key capacities, approaches, and structures to systematically and thoughtfully frame and implement resident services. This Framework can help organizations implement resident-centered practices and processes to support greater resident well-being through impact-driven services.

