



Dear Julia,

We are excited to announce that Kai Andersen has joined our team as WSCO's new Equitable Development Director. He brings expertise and experience in urban planning rooted in community healing and racial justice. Kai helped develop a BIPOC livability workgroup with The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, and was a part of the The North Star Black Cooperative Fellowship, which focuses on Black American Cooperative Economics.

In a recent interview, he reflected on his new role at WSCO:

"We have a fresh, new lens on how we see urban planning. Urban planning is often learned in this linear and rational, more calculated and measurable stats-related story. I think that in terms of truth-telling, it's really important to lift up our lived experiences, and recognize that everyone is important in the planning process. It's important to hold development accountable, while also lifting up and going back to what real grassroots urban planning is about."

Kai is currently doing research on connecting autoethnography and the importance of safer Black-affirming spaces with community engagement processes and grassroots planning centered in Black cultural belonging. He credits local Black Feminist leadership for mentoring him in this work.

[Check out Kai's full video interview here!](#)



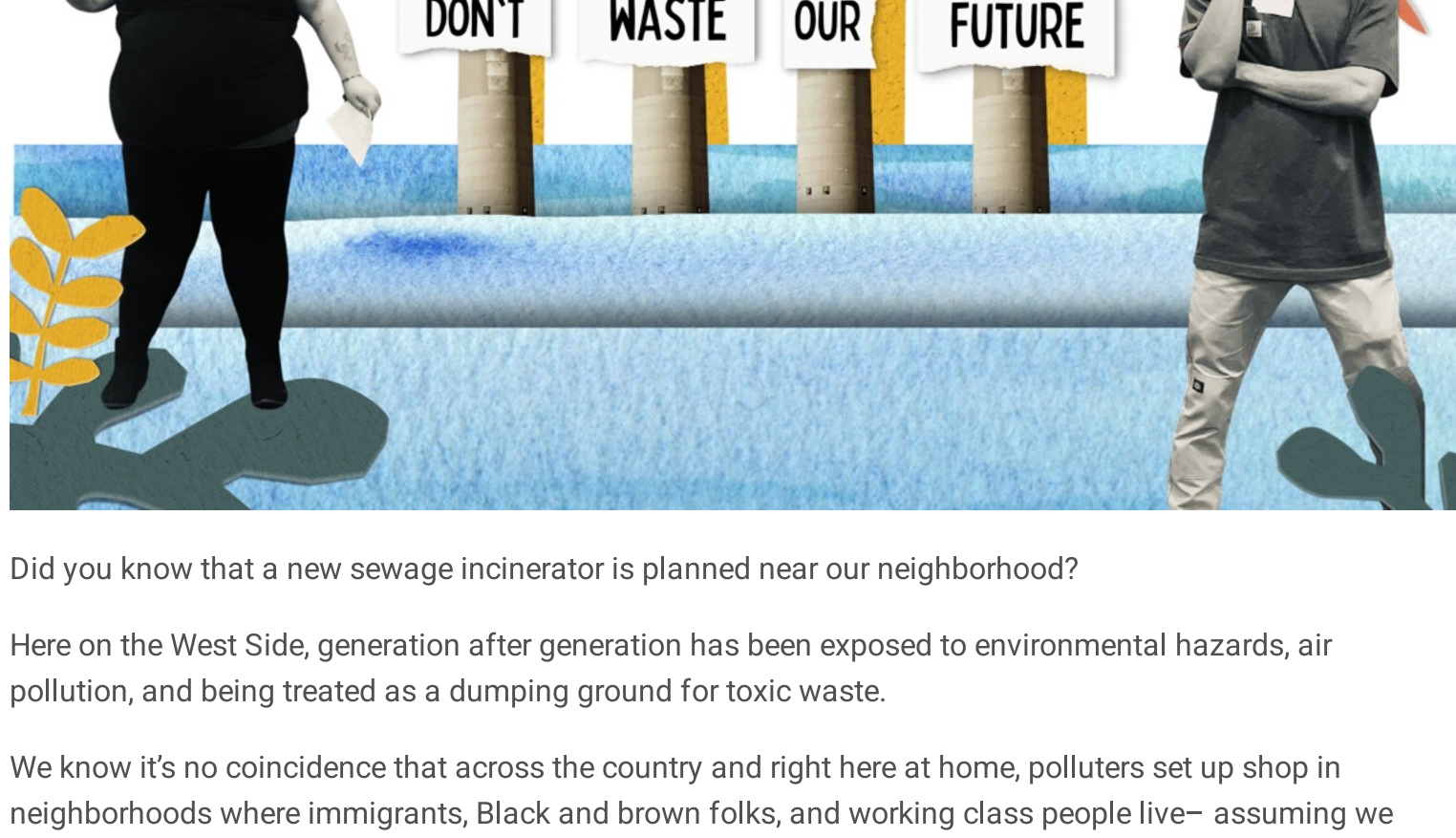
Record turnout at July's West Side Voices Forum!

Many thanks to all of our neighbors who came out this week for our monthly West Side Voices Forum. What an incredible turnout!

We discussed many important issues: West Sider GillEtté Kinnon-Williams (pictured, center, above), led a breakout session about the new free food [community garden at the top of the High Bridge](#). RaRa Navarro led a Community Care conversation about how we can show up for our neighbors in times of violence and crisis. Kai Andersen, Bella Mendoza, and [Dominique Diaddigo-Cash](#) led a session focused on community questions about a [new sewage incinerator](#) planned near the West Side. We also learned about how West Siders can make our voices heard in the [redesign process for Riverview Library](#) and the risks of a [new train merger](#) that could increase tar sands oil traffic through Saint Paul.

Sign up for next month's Voices Forum below!

RSVP



Did you know that a new sewage incinerator is planned near our neighborhood?

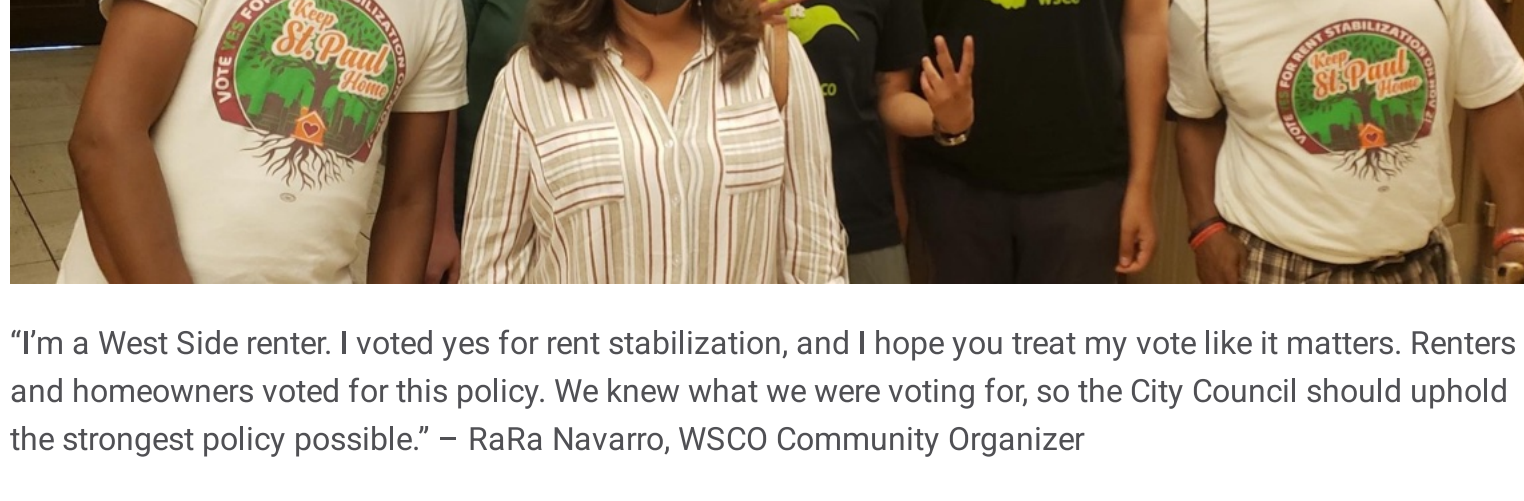
Here on the West Side, generation after generation has been exposed to environmental hazards, air pollution, and being treated as a dumping ground for toxic waste.

We know it's no coincidence that across the country and right here at home, polluters set up shop in neighborhoods where immigrants, Black and brown folks, and working class people live— assuming we won't speak out.

We have the right to be a part of decisions that impact the health and future of our families.

It's time to get informed, get organized, and take action together. Join us on July 23rd for a community gathering to learn about a new incinerator planned near the West Side, how it might impact your family, and what you can do about it.

RSVP



"I'm a West Side renter. I voted yes for rent stabilization, and I hope you treat my vote like it matters. Renters and homeowners voted for this policy. We knew what we were voting for, so the City Council should uphold the strongest policy possible." – RaRa Navarro, WSCO Community Organizer

Whether we rent our homes or own them, all of us deserve stable housing. But when rent goes up suddenly from one month to the next, families are left without anywhere to go. That's why Saint Paul showed up powerfully at the polls last fall, and passed a strong rent stabilization policy.

This week, City Council received a new report from the community, with recommendations for how to keep rent stabilization strong. At the same time, Corporate megadevelopers have been pushing the City to weaken protections for renters, which would destabilize our neighborhoods by pricing out renters— especially renters of color. In this crucial moment, we came together and showed our support for strong rent stabilization at City Hall, to make sure they know that we want them to respect the will of the people, who voted YES to keep Saint Paul home for all of us, not just the wealthy!

Interested in getting involved and taking action? Email our Programs & Organizing Manager Katrina Mendoza Garcia at katrinam@wSCO.org!



Beats and Seeds

The West Side Community Care Action Circle invites you to celebrate and connect with your neighbors! Join us on WSCO's vacant lot at 76 Baker Street East, across from Humboldt High School. We'll have space for community connections, resources, and some good snacks and refreshments. Wednesday, July 27th, from 6:00pm - 7:30pm.

Above: Selah Jacoway performs at the Baker Street lot in Summer 2021.

RSVP



Community Announcements

- Come to a [design Workshop: Transforming Riverview Library](#) on July 18
- GAP School is [now enrolling](#) for Fall 2022!
- [Volunteer in the Garden of Good Hearts](#)
- West Side Boosters [football registration](#) is open!
- Take a [survey from Parks and Rec](#)
- Support a food justice, neighborhood resilience, and local farmers this summer! [Sign up to volunteer at the West Side Farmers Market](#)
- Frontline worker pay: if you were an essential worker during the pandemic, apply by July 22 to receive a check from the State of MN. [Learn more here.](#)
- Check out "[Lost & Found: a walking performance for reckoning with our grief](#)" this summer on Raspberry Island
- Don't miss [Teatro del Pueblo's Gentrify This!](#) performance

Have a community announcement to share? Email genieve@wSCO.org!

#WestSideStrong

WSCO organizes people of West Side to build collective power to advance justice and racial equity in the community for all people. Our vision is a just, united, self-reliant West Side where all of our people are connected, safe, healthy and successful. We are West Side proud. We are West Side strong.

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Please note: WSCO staff are currently working via a hybrid model, both remotely and in-person. All in-person community events require participants to follow COVID safety precautions recommended by the CDC.

