



Sightline  
INSTITUTE

# 2020 Gratitude Report

# 2020

Sightline's mission is to make Cascadia a global model of sustainability—strong communities, a green economy, and a healthy environment.

## Smart solutions for a sustainable Northwest

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\* YIMBYtown coordination

\*\* Sightline Daily Editor

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



What a year 2020 was! An airless, isolating, and sometimes wrenching year. A surreal and occasionally triumphant year.

It was the year we realized that the global ecological emergency manifests itself not just in

superstorms and degraded landscapes but in infectious diseases as well: COVID-19, like so many species-jumping diseases before it, is a product of habitat destruction, wildlife trafficking, and shifting climate zones.

Now, as we finally approach herd immunity in the months ahead—in a headlong race between vaccination and viral mutation—we can also say it was a year of surprisingly large impacts for Sightline. **Thanks to you, we were able to adapt swiftly and keep moving forward for the values you and I share.** Those values, which Sightline has long defined as community, fairness, opportunity, and responsibility, are the organizing principle of this year's report.

But the organizing emotion is something else. It's gratitude. Your support and fellowship unleashed big wins for a sustainable Cascadia. We describe them in these pages.

Thank you!

**Alan Durning**, Executive Director  
SIGHTLINE INSTITUTE



# Values we share, Results we celebrate

Here are Sightline's core values—unchanged in decades—and highlights of how your support advanced them in 2020

## COMMUNITY

We are all in this place together, sharing its burdens and benefits, rising or falling together. Sightline stands for strong communities.

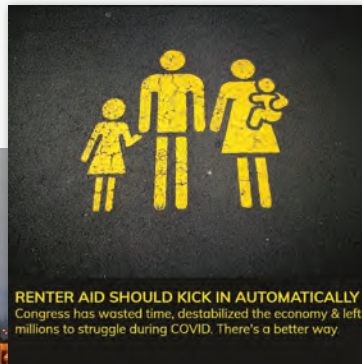
The Portland City Council re-legalized middle housing (house-scale buildings with multiple units) on almost every residential lot in the Rose City, the culmination of a six-year effort Sightline helped to lead. It is the best low-density zoning reform adopted anywhere in the United States—a big step forward for affordability, desegregation, and decarbonization.



## FAIRNESS

We stand for a well-governed economy that generates widely shared prosperity. We stand for public policies that support citizens equally.

Sightline contributed substantially to the Northwest Congressional delegation's decisive support for \$25 billion of federal rental assistance in the late December COVID relief package. The team published 15 articles on the topics and met with 16 members of the Congressional delegation or their staff. Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski was a key architect of the bill; we worked closely with her office on aid for renters.



## OPPORTUNITY

We stand for a society that generates opportunity: where all can thrive and where everyone has a chance to flourish.

Within months of the coronavirus hitting the United States, Sightline's Democracy team created state-specific guides to enhancing Vote By Mail options for all 50 states and distributed them to election officials and advocates. We focused on urging improvements in Cascadian and battleground states, and were gratified to see record high voter participation rates, driven in part by extremely high rates of voting by mail.



## RESPONSIBILITY

Our way of life depends on a healthy natural heritage and strong public institutions. We stand for stewarding our inheritance well.

After many years of hard work, in January 2021, regulatory agencies denied key permits for both the Jordan Cove liquified natural gas project and the Kalama methanol project. We are especially proud of our work on the Kalama methanol project, where Sightline's analysis of the project's carbon footprint seems to have been instrumental to Washington State's denial of the project.





## Sightline in the news & online across Cascadia:

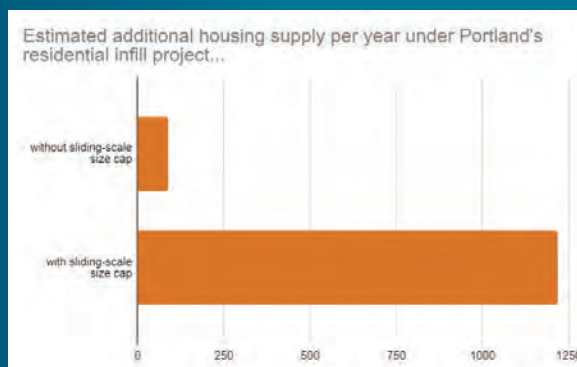
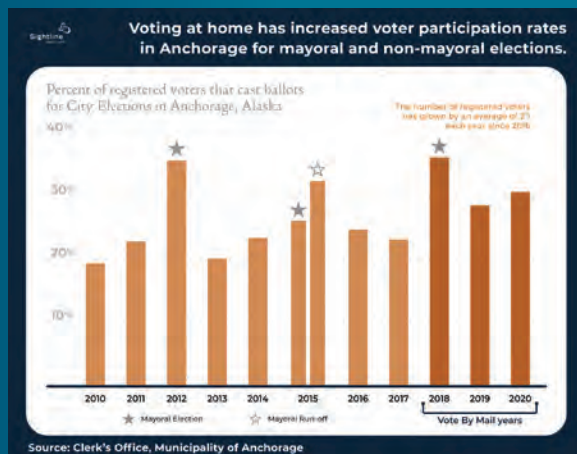
Sightline was quoted or cited in, or shaped the content of,

**300**  
media stories in 2020.

We averaged more than

**54,000**  
unique online visitors per month. Our total email and social media subscriptions grew to just over 85,500.

Sightline staff spoke at more than **22 events** across the Northwest – both in-person and online.



## PROFILE:

# Ruchi Sadhir

Sightline Board Member, Volunteer

## Finding a home in Cascadia.

My path led me to the Northwest in 2013, after a quarter-life crisis and subsequent career opportunities that awakened me to the fact that one could devote their professional life's work to the environment.

I grew up outside of Pittsburgh, a place known for coal mining, steel production, unhealthy air and polluted waterways, and with immigrant parents from India who came to this country with little money but an advanced degree and strong ideals.

They championed education, especially for girls, and had a strong push for me to become a doctor, an engineer, or a scientist. I chose the path of engineer, though from my earliest science classes I developed a passion for the environment. With the dawn of the internet, I found myself joining chatrooms about saving the whales and stopping old growth clearcutting, and even organized my school's first Earth club! My passions were largely a hobby, as I forged ahead in computer science engineering and then law.

The turning point for me was after a law clerkship supported by a public interest grant with the Environmental Defense Fund. Eventually, my work with the Obama Administration and U.S. Department of the



Interior brought me to Oregon for a project in 2013, and, instead of returning to Washington, DC, I stayed on when I joined the Oregon Public Utility Commission as a senior policy advisor. Now, within my role as Associate Director for Strategic Engagement at the Oregon Department of Energy, I get to work on an equitable clean energy transition by applying data driven solutions, building coalitions, and implementing systemic change to support a healthy future in Cascadia.



*I love that Sightline is focusing on democracy. For better or worse, I think politics is ultimately a reflection of all of us. Equitable democratic processes enable systemic change.*

### Crossing paths with Sightline.

During my time serving as Oregon Governor Kate Brown's energy and climate change policy advisor, I had the opportunity to meet Kristin Eberhard (Sightline's Director of Climate & Democracy). I was impressed with Kristin's work and all I learned about Sightline and its mission. It was clear that we were working with the same stakeholders and on finding thoughtful solutions to the same issues. We had coffee to share ideas and networks—and from there it was a short path to getting more involved as a board member.

### Keeping motivated in times of climate crises.

This is a tough one. You have to be an optimist to do this work, because honestly, it's pretty depressing. Those of us working in the environmental field see catastrophe on the horizon. Luckily, I've always been a glass-half-full person. And I remind myself of my own mission statement, my north star: I want to be part of leading the transition away from fossil fuels. That transition is crucial. In order to serve and strengthen people, animals, wildlife, the environment—to avoid all the impacts that will happen if we don't. I'm motivated by the importance to keep going, and to focus on the concrete methods of implementing systemic change.

### Supporting Sightline's mission as a board member.

Sightline's work completely aligns with my professional and personal values and efforts. The focus on data-driven solutions, coalition building—the sweet combination of analysis and building partnerships that provide perspectives that may otherwise not be a part of the political discourse.

### Speaking to the current moment.

I love that Sightline is focusing on democracy. For better or worse, I think politics is ultimately a reflection of all of us. Equitable democratic processes enable systemic change. We need to see our votes and voices translated into policy. We need to do more and do it more quickly. At the same time, the process needs to be inclusive. I think a lot about who is going to be left holding the bag. We need to be really thoughtful so that we don't end up with unintended consequences to the most vulnerable in our communities.

### Lifting up the wider community.

In our philanthropy, in addition to the environment, Ralph and I ensure we include annual giving categories such as animal welfare, veterans, civil rights, and media (supporting a free press); as well as international welfare—depending on what's happening in the world.

Ruchi Sadhir with her husband Ralph Mastromonaco, and daughter Sahana Preet

I'm also fortunate to serve on other boards, including the Portland-based Center for Diversity and the Environment. I really like how they get at the root causes in an effort to diversify the entire environmental movement by providing formal training, community building, and other community-based activities that provide support to environmental organizations and professionals of color.

### Looking ahead.

I have renewed hope after becoming a mom in 2020. I already had a lot of passion and drive—but now it's amplified even more as my daughter Sahana Preet grows up. We named her Sahana Preet, in part because it means “powerful love”—exactly what the world needs right now. Our family loves living in the Pacific Northwest, its accessibility to the outdoors and nature. I want to go hiking, camping, snow shoeing, and kayaking with her and share the beautiful places in Oregon that I have come to love in living here.



## Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2020

### ASSETS

Cash and investments	\$ 4,933,874
Donations and grants receivable	3,000
Other assets	214,097
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 5,150,971</b>

### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

#### Liabilities

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 300,324
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>300,324</b>

#### Net assets

With Donor Restrictions	1,001,861
Without Donor Restrictions	3,848,787
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>4,850,647</b>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$ 5,150,971</b>

## Statement of Activities

For the Year Ended December 31, 2020

### REVENUE

Grants	\$ 1,465,215
Contributions	652,758
Investment revenue	462,098
Fees for services and miscellaneous income	2,567
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>2,582,638</b>

### EXPENSES

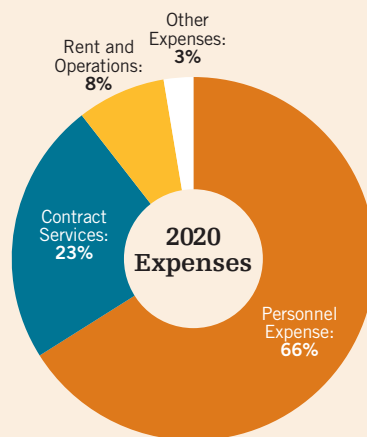
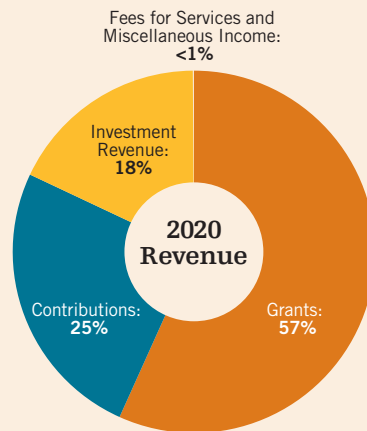
Personnel expense	1,363,605
Contract services	483,311
Rent and operations	163,082
Other expenses	54,286
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>2,064,284</b>
Change in net assets	518,354
Net assets, beginning of year	4,332,294
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 4,850,647</b>

## Change in Cash and Investments

For the Year Ended December 31, 2020

Net change in cash and investments	\$ 896,641
<b>Cash and investments, beginning of year</b>	<b>4,069,183</b>
<b>Cash and investments, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 4,965,824</b>

These figures are preliminary and have not yet been audited by an independent accountant. For a copy of the audited financial statements, please contact Meaghan Robbins by calling 888-447-1880 ext. 110.



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Smart solutions for a  
sustainable Northwest

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