



Sightline
INSTITUTE

1402 Third Avenue, Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98101

Smart solutions for a
sustainable Northwest

T 206 447 1880
F 206 447 2270
www.sightline.org

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SEATTLE, WA,
PERMIT NO. 6242

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Sightline
INSTITUTE

2023 Gratitude Report

2023

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

2023 DIRECTORS

Brynn Arborico
WASHINGTON

Shaw Canale, Treasurer
WASHINGTON

Alan Durning
WASHINGTON

Raymond Fung
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Wayne Lei, Secretary
OREGON

Nolan Lienhart
OREGON

Simka Marshall
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Kristin Martinez (Advisor)
WASHINGTON

John McGarry, Chair
WASHINGTON

Jason Pretty Boy
IDAHO

2023 STAFF

Michael Andersen
Senior Researcher,
Housing and Transportation

Kate Anderson
Senior Researcher, Farms and Forests

Dan Bertolet
Director, Housing and Urbanism

Alice Buckley
Senior Researcher and Montana Lead

Webster Chang
Digital Strategy Manager

Rachel Consolo
Human Resources Manager

Nakeshia Diop
Alaska Research Assistant

Alan Durning
Executive Director

Anna Fahey
Senior Director,
Communications and Campaigns

Catie Gould
Senior Researcher, Transportation

Shannon Grimes
Researcher, Democracy

Serena Larkin
Editorial Director

Jay Lee
Senior Research Associate, Democracy

Jeannette Lee
Alaska Research Director

Kate Macfarlane
Researcher, Housing and Urbanism

Nashrah M.
Donor Events and Engagement Manager

Emily Moore
Director, Climate and Energy

Leah Quinn
Senior Associate of Operations

Meaghan Robbins
Managing Director,
Development and Operations

Terry Satran
Senior Associate, Development

Alexa Woodard
Senior Manager, Development

2023 FELLOWS

Kristin Eberhard

Laura Feinstein

Daniel Malarkey

Julia Metz

Todd Newman

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTORS, EDITORS, AND REVIEWERS:

Ben Anderstone

Indra Arriaga

Anna Campbell

Penny Carrothers

Jade Chan

Iris Maria Chavez

Christina Claassen*

Barbara Clabots*

Trisha Comsti*

Bryn Davidson

Elias Law Group

Craig Engelking

Joanna Grist

Riley Kent

Marcy Lowe

Ewan McCartney

Tim McCormick

David Neiman

Daniel Oleksiuk

Devin Porter

Matt Stevenson

Alfred Twu

Sophie Wolfram

John Wyble

* Sightline Daily Editor

COVER PHOTO:
Hurricane Ridge,
Olympic National Park,
Washington State

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*"I live in the house
near the corner, which I have named
Gratitude." — Mary Oliver¹*



In its now 31 years, Sightline has never published an annual report. Rather, we publish a Gratitude Report, a testimony of thanks to you, the community of Cascadians numbering in the thousands who carry forward our shared mission of setting a global model.

Thanks to you, the year 2023 was arguably Sightline's most successful. Across the region, from the Cook Inlet to the Klamath River and from the Pacific Coast to the Continental Divide, we together effected changes that will resonate for decades.

Washington took our advice and will begin planning a post-carbon future for its five giant oil refineries.

Alaskan leaders defended from repeal their new system of open primaries and ranked choice voting.

And in housing, we helped push to adoption reforms that will allow hundreds of thousands of additional Cascadians to find affordable homes in low-carbon neighborhoods, close to work, shops, and parks. These reforms include various combinations—in British Columbia, Montana, Oregon, and Washington, plus Anchorage and Boise—of the legalization of backyard cottages, in-law apartments, duplexes and other "middle housing," elimination of burdensome parking mandates, and/or taller apartment buildings near transit.

The threats to our climate and democracy remain, of course, and other challenges abound. It's daunting; of course it is.

But in 2023, we Cascadians turned a corner, I believe, in the quest to build cities for a future beyond carbon. And there's hope in other domains as well, particularly on democracy this year.

Which is why I began with Mary Oliver's words: Thanks to your generosity, perhaps we all now live in a "house near the corner."

Thanks to your generosity, I certainly live—all of us at Sightline live—in gratitude,

Alan Durning, Executive Director
SIGHTLINE INSTITUTE

¹"The Place I Want to Get Back To," *Thirst* (Beacon Press, 2006).

2023 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

2023 was a year of unprecedented impact, fueled by your generosity. Together, we celebrated monumental milestones, forging ahead on our mission to make Cascadia into a global model of strong communities, a green economy, and a healthy environment. Your contributions made every achievement listed here possible.

We are proud to have you by our side in this work!

Alaska

In Anchorage, we helped legalize backyard cottages and in-law apartments (accessory dwelling units, or ADUs), contributed to an ordinance to bring more homes to downtown, and initiated building and land use code reforms for triplex and fourplex homes. We

joined many other Alaskans in successfully derailing efforts in the legislature to repeal the state's best-in-the-US model of open primaries and ranked choice voting. By helping Alaskans understand the benefits of electoral reforms, we helped dampen extremism, setting an example for other states.



Idaho

Our efforts in Idaho shaped Boise's zoning overhaul that loosened restrictions on ADUs and legalized middle housing citywide.

British Columbia

In British Columbia, our influence helped speed housing reforms that vaulted the province into the lead among all North American jurisdictions for allowing abundant housing in low-carbon neighborhoods: middle housing legalization in all single-family zones, apartments up to 20 stories near transit stations, and the end of excessive off-street parking-space mandates in many urban areas. After years of

obstruction, the movement for far more homes in walkable, transit-rich areas across the province finally succeeded.



Montana

In 2023, thanks to your generous support, Sightline added Montana to its portfolio to round out the eastern flank of Cascadia. We helped win the "Montana miracle," a suite of legislation that legalized ADUs and duplexes in most of the state, liberalized housing rules in commercial zones, and reduced parking mandates. Sightline also played a key role in laying the groundwork for electoral reform in the state through citizens' initiatives and legislative action.

Oregon

In Oregon, our advocacy efforts resulted in the launch of a state oversight system to hold cities accountable and overcome their tendency to block or slow-walk homebuilding by inventing ever more regulatory barriers. We also successfully defended 2022's statewide parking reforms and helped advance a referendum to the ballot on switching to ranked choice voting for statewide and federal races.



Washington

In Washington, we celebrated landmark victories with the passage of statewide middle housing legalization and ADU reform, among the strongest in the United States. We also helped secure wins on building code reform, permit streamlining, and environmental review for homes in low-carbon neighborhoods, while advancing online voter registration and strengthening automatic voter registration. Finally, Sightline successfully catalyzed a transition planning process for the five Cascadian oil refineries within the state's boundaries, marking a critical step toward a green energy future.

Sightline Institute in the media:

In 2023, Sightline Institute informed over

500 news articles. From the **New York Times** to the **Seattle Times**, the **Globe and Mail** to **The Guardian**, **OPB** to **KOMO News**, **Jacobin** and **Reason** magazines, our research helped shape conversations on key sustainability topics across Cascadia and well beyond.

Visitors to our website, which will undergo a refresh in 2024, viewed an average of more than

40,000 pages

per month. Among the most popular were our “cruel musical chairs” video explainer of the housing shortage, a critique of how Election Day maps can misrepresent voters, and a four-point takedown of “renewable natural gas.”

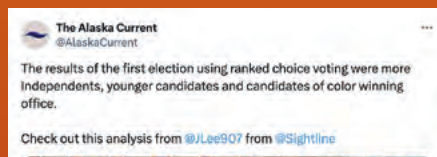
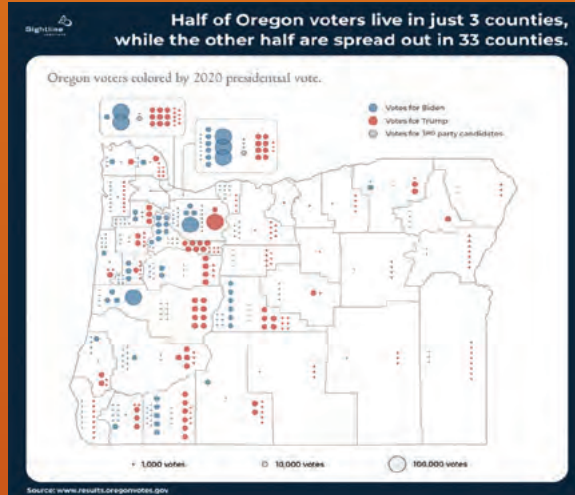
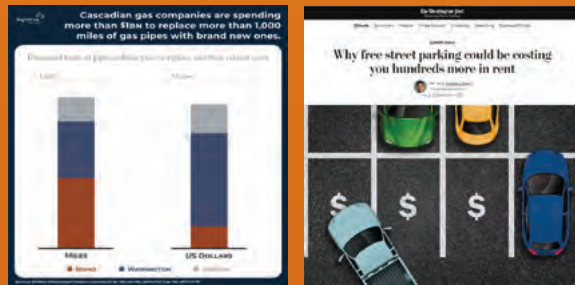
Sightline’s email newsletters continue to grow, counting nearly

29,000 subscriptions by the end of 2023—

including the relaunch of our popular “Flashcards” messaging mini-guides. And across Facebook, X, Instagram, and LinkedIn, Sightline had more than 32,000 followers, plus an additional 15,500 to researchers’ individual X accounts.

“Thank you, Sightline team, for the smart, creative work and dedication to keep Cascadia sustainable.”

SHANNON, SEATTLE



STAFF PROFILE:

Anna Fahey

Senior Director of Strategy

When I first heard about Sightline Institute, it was 2006. I was sweating through a busy summer in eastern Washington, managing a campaign in the fourth congressional district by day—the vast, sparsely populated center of the state stretching north from the Columbia River nearly to the Canadian border. And by night, putting finishing touches on a thesis for my master’s in communications, a laughably heady analysis of “hegemonic masculinity” in the Southern Baptist Convention’s political maneuverings.

My congressional candidate never stood a chance. But I had caught the political bug, thrilling in the pace and immediacy of life on the campaign trail. I was listening to people from all walks of life, hearing their stories, and talking with them about their hopes, dreams, and priorities. I was stumping in the back rooms of Denny’s restaurants and far-flung rural Rotary clubs, hearing from apple growers, nuclear reactor workers, sport fishing conservationists, and rural homemakers. I was learning how to digest “kitchen table” policy priorities and boil them into *kitchen table messages*.

Who knew I was taking the first steps on a path I’d stay on—at Sightline?

I had planned to start a PhD program, but Sightline held an irresistible promise: it would keep my feet on the ground, putting words to work in pursuit of real-time, real-world solutions. I joined the team and I’ve never looked back!





My life has changed a lot since then; I got married and became a mom (times two). I traded in the city life for my hometown, returning to the little island community where I grew up, beachcombing and working on my parents' commercial fishing boats. These days, I'm exploring my old haunts, the beaches and woods, with my kids.

My work at Sightline has evolved just as dramatically. Early on, I studied and crafted narratives about broad concepts (e.g., the commonly held values that align environmentalists; basic climate science—a.k.a. "it's real"). I graduated to devising metaphors and "social math" to break down complex topics: housing shortages; zoning for low-carbon, affordable cities; cap and trade; proportional representation; the dangerous magnitude of proposed coal exports. Sightline's framing recommendations were always open-source, and we shared messaging research and tips with communications practitioners and advocates via our "Flashcards" emails. For many years, we only occasionally met with elected officials or commented on specific bills.

Today, we meet with legislators all the time. Plus, we regularly roll up our sleeves to work together with local and tribal leaders, community groups, issue

advocates, and cross-partisan coalitions to develop targeted communications strategies—with the explicit aim to usher specific bills into law.

This policy engagement can be behind-the-scenes or public-facing. We're getting the hang of both the art and science of mapping political pathways, navigating opportunities and obstacles, and deploying Sightline's signature combo of targeted and coordinated communications, from talking points and testimony to videos, press strategy, opinion research, and case-making. (Guess what? Housing solutions are salmon solutions!)

In other words, today, and looking forward, I'm back where I started: I'm lucky enough to be in the thrill of "campaign" mode, where the pace is fast and the real-world stakes and potential impacts are big. I'm connecting with people about their kitchen table concerns and translating wonky, complex policy ideas into everyday language. I'm mapping public policy to what matters: to opportunities for our kids and grandkids, to our health, to our hopes and dreams for our communities, and to our shared values that drive us to take care of the places we love—the Cascadian places we call home.

Anna



Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2023

ASSETS

Cash and investments	\$ 5,599,578
Donations and grants receivable	1,903,740
Other assets	59,790
Total assets	\$ 7,563,108

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$ 56,938
Credit Cards	(424)
Other Current Liabilities	414,971
Total liabilities	471,484

NET ASSETS

With Donor Restrictions	1,306,234
Without Donor Restrictions	5,785,390
Total net assets	7,091,624
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 7,563,108

Statement of Activities

For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

REVENUE

Grants	\$ 3,923,594
Contributions	728,316
Investment revenue	373,814
Fees for services and miscellaneous income	97,796
Total revenue	5,123,519

EXPENSES

Personnel expense	2,256,234
Contract services	491,546
Rent and operations	107,891
Other expenses	189,254
Total expenses	3,044,925
Change in net assets	2,078,594
Net assets, beginning of year	5,013,030
Net assets, end of year	\$ 7,091,624

Change in Cash and Investments

For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Net change in cash and investments	\$ 596,592
Cash and investments, beginning of year	5,002,987
Cash and investments, end of year	\$ 5,599,578

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.

