

**ATTN: Jay Willms, Interim Director of Council Operations**  
**RE: Application for Interim Ward 4 Council Member Position**

**Dear Council President Rebecca Noecker, Council Vice President Hwa Jeong Kim,  
and Council Members Anika Bowie, Saura Jost, Nelsie Yang, and Cheniqua Johnson,**

My name is Sean Lim, I am a proud Queer first-generation Malaysian Chinese American, whose parents grew up in the same town in Malaysia, but only met each other after immigrating to Minnesota. They instilled in me the values I cherish today: service to others, and doing what we can to support our communities. I have deep roots in Ward 4, and first moved to Hamline-Midway as a renter in 2018, after finding housing in Minneapolis unaffordable. I quickly fell in love with all that Midway has to offer, and for years as a public transit commuter, I took the Green Line and buses to classes and work.

My background is in Environmental Sciences & Policy. I'm a community organizer, mutual aid practitioner, and artist who has spent the past eight years organizing across the Twin Cities, from helping to elect women and candidates of color to office, to winning legislation, and galvanizing Minnesotans for issue campaigns alike. In my career, I have consistently relied upon cherished relationships with community leaders, diligent policy research, robust community engagement, and all the tools in the toolbox of organizing to amplify the needs of organizations, mutual aid projects, and causes alike — centering youth organizing, education, environmental justice, and housing justice. Over the years, I have worked closely with elected officials across jurisdictions to advocate for city ordinances, and advance bills in legislative committees.

I will approach this Council role with the same level of dedication and love I have always given to this corner of the city and the people who call it home. In the past 7 years, I have knocked doors and talked to renters, home-owners and business owners across every single corner of Ward 4 in the heat, sleet, rain and snow. I will bring to this office with me a deep unwavering commitment towards championing responsive Constituent Services, ensuring that residents have their inquiries and requests heard and are connected to City departments or services that will meet their needs. On the Council, I hope to champion issues such as affordable housing, access to public transit, support for the arts & education, local small businesses, environmental justice, and building climate resilience in St. Paul. To engage with residents, I will meet people where they're at across the Ward with constituent surveys, office hours at local coffee shops, intergovernmental town halls, and community canvasses. I will also work to ensure young people and students in Ward 4 have a voice at City Hall.

Community engagement is my bread and butter - it is exactly what I do in my current role as the Director of Community Outreach and Engagement for the East Phillips Neighborhood Institute. I spearhead EPNI's community outreach efforts in East Phillips / Little Earth by engaging constituents & residents through educational presentations, bi-monthly office hours and hosting large monthly Community Meetings. I lead a community outreach team of 30+ members, including volunteers and community leaders. The East Phillips Urban Farm project is a monumental and historic Environmental Justice victory. Now, I ensure that community members and stakeholders are kept up-to-date and have access to the resources they need so their dreams & desires are reflected along every step of the planning process.

I found my first organizing home at the Minnesota Youth Collective (MNYC), originally based in Ward 4's iconic Spruce Tree Building, and now headquartered in the St. Anthony Park neighborhood that is home to so many local non-profits. At the age of 18, I became a UMN Campus Organizer and later an inaugural Organizing Fellowship cohort member. Over the course of 5 years at MNYC, I helped build the political power of young people and engaged youth across the State of Minnesotans to learn what issues matter most to them. Most recently, during my time as the Program Director, I managed and supported a Program staff of 17 at its peak and mentored a total of 19 Fellows over two years. Our Fellowship program invested in the leadership development of young organizers, predicated on a robust 10-week schedule that trained them to grow as leaders in their own right and make change in their respective communities. At MNYC, I also created and managed the execution of an annual Program Plan aligned with the organizational mission and assisted with the 5 year strategic plan. I also advocated at the Minnesota Legislature to help pass the Democracy for the People Act in coalition.

During the height of the Minneapolis Uprising in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Ward 4 was the hardest hit and most impacted corner of St. Paul, where small businesses along the University Avenue corridor like Bolé Ethiopian cuisine on my block burned to the ground. In the immediate hours following the murder of George Floyd, as local organizers we were called upon by the community to transform the MNYC office into a mutual aid hub. The first iteration was Emergency Medical Center #2, set up to collect emergency supplies, groceries and assemble supply bags for street medics. The second instance was a mutual aid project called St. Paul Camps Support, providing survival supplies to our unhoused neighbors St. Paul throughout the ongoing pandemic. Through SPCS, I helped steward a first-of-its-kind mutual aid fund and universal basic income for unhoused neighbors, with bi-weekly disbursements to 50 St. Paul residents!

During our 'No More Evictions' rally & march to demand a humane response to encampments, we presented a letter signed by 538 St. Paul residents and 25 organizations calling for a moratorium on enforcing any illegal camping ordinance, halting the disposal of personal belongings, adhering to the existing statewide eviction moratorium, and following best practices outlined by the National Homelessness Law Center. My work as a mutual aid practitioner has arisen out of a necessity, and an understanding that oftentimes many of the issues faced by everyday people, especially our most marginalized and vulnerable neighbors, result from our institutions not adequately meeting people's needs. That is why it is incumbent upon us to help one another and have a municipal government that listens to and works for everyone.

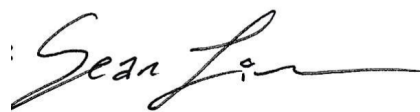
Since 2021, I have helped steward a local art collective based in Ward 4's South St. Anthony Park neighborhood - we are an autonomous network of 100+ artists, and organizers who've held various roles across movements, art projects, and campaigns. The studio and community third space we run hosts regular art builds and sees hundreds of community volunteers come through each month to create art for local community needs. We screenprint, make banners, signs, and help facilitate the rapid-response narrative messaging needs of on-the-ground movements. We believe that art making is world building. Through this studio, I have created artwork in support of the St. Paul Federation of Educators (SPFE) Local 28 BIPOC affinity group, TakeAction Minnesota, Mizna Arab Arts, the St. Paul Art Collective & St. Paul Art Crawl, LineBreak Media, SierraClub Northstar chapter, and many other Ward 4 - St. Paul based organizations.

I believe my professional background will be an invaluable asset to the work of the St. Paul City Council. Over the past decade, I have consistently organized to better the living conditions of those that have been systematically marginalized, harmed by policymaking, or completely excluded from the decision making table. My lived experience around advancing renter-centered policy, climate justice organizing, solidarity work with all of our neighbors, and track record as an organizer who has been deeply rooted in the fabric of Ward 4 will allow me to hit the ground running on day one. I would be honored to continue my record of advocating for, empowering and amplifying the needs of my neighbors if appointed as the Interim Ward 4 Council Member. Together, there is immense good that we can accomplish.

So many of the issues and decades long struggles we are collectively fighting for are reaching critical inflection points at this time in our history. We must approach these fights with service, commitment, and dedication.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

With immense gratitude, and in solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sean Lim". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Sean Lim, (he/him), 林佳軒

# Sean Lim (he/him/his)

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## EDUCATION

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University of Minnesota – Twin Cities Dual Degree - 3.96 GPA

- **Bachelor of Science, Environmental Sciences, Policy and Management (ESPM)**  
Concentration in Policy, Planning, Law, and Society (PPLS)
- **Bachelor of Arts, Political Science**

## PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

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East Phillips Neighborhood Institute (EPNI) – *East Phillips, Minneapolis, MN*

**Director of Community Outreach & Engagement, Team Lead** Jan 2024 – Present

- Building upon a historic environmental justice victory in Minneapolis, working to realize the East Phillips neighborhood's vision for a resilience hub and indoor Urban Farm (not toxic harm).
- Lead and oversee a Community Outreach Team of 30+ member-volunteers, including representatives from partner organizations, community leaders, and East Phillips residents.
- Advocacy at the Minnesota Legislature to advance \$5.7 million dollars in funding for the Urban Farm project in a statewide omnibus bonding bill, and a municipal amortization bill.
- Spearhead EPNI's community outreach efforts in East Phillips / Little Earth, engaging constituents, residents & stakeholders through popular education, neighborhood canvassing, and office hours.
- Ensuring that community members are kept up-to-date on project developments and their dreams & desires are reflected in the planning process through large monthly Community Meetings.
- Convening a Community Advisory Group of community leaders & neighbors; intake meetings with prospective tenants to help realize a novel community ownership & governance model.

The Paper Lantern Project – Minnesota

**Inaugural Cohort Member, Zine Contributing Member** May 2024 – Present

- An emergent AAPI Gender & Reproductive Justice Mutual Aid Fund & Arts Movement in MN.
- Contributing member of the first-ever PLP cohort (Summer 2024), forming new narratives through the arts and offering care-centered support through economic and cultural liberation.
- One of 19 AAPI contributors: 'Cut Fruit: Creative Offerings, Stories, & Art from Future Ancestors'
- Designed and mass printed a silk-screened 'Protect Trans Lives, Trans Lives are Forever' poster design to raise funds for PLP's Gender & Reproductive Justice Mutual Aid Fund for Queer + Trans AAPI Minnesotans

Resource Generation Minnesota (RG-MN) – Twin Cities, MN

**Resource Mobilization Working Group, Midwest Member Leader** Jan 2024 – Present

- Organizing in a team that has raised upwards of \$30,000+ for local Minnesota mutual aid efforts.
- Facilitated a \$20,000 match & \$14,000 fundraiser for a local Indigenous-led housing campaign.
- Organizing fundraiser house parties, and hosting virtual / in-person monthly chapter meetings.

RG Minnesota - Fall 2023 Praxis Cohort Member

Oct 2023 – Jan 2024

- Learning and building collective power, taking meaningful steps to change relationships to wealth.
- Gaining skills to act collaboratively towards the equitable distribution of land, wealth, and power.

The Southeast Asian Diaspora (SEAD) Project – Minnesota

**SEA Change Lab (SCL) Cohort Member, Winter 2024**

Feb 2024 – April 2024

- Cohort aimed at growing social empowerment and leadership development through storytelling.
- 10 emergent Southeast Asian artists & change makers, aged 18-25 from around the country.
- Interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, cross-generational approach through arts & advocacy.

Art Action Collective – 2482 University Ave. W., St. Paul, MN

**Mutual Aid Spokes Lead, Studio Steward, Core Team Member**

**Jun 2022 – Present**

- An autonomous network of artists, organizers, and mischief-makers, primarily based in Mni Sóta Makoce who've held various roles across movements, art projects; campaigns.
- Since 2021, our collective has stewarded a community studio space where we screenprint, make banners, signs, host hundreds of people every year, some on a one-time basis, others as more consistent collaborators.
- Multiracial, intergenerational local Art Action Collective hosting regular art builds for community.
- Resistance movements to prevent fossil fuel expansion, and fight social / environmental injustices. Fundraised \$60,000+ through the sale of prints for nationwide mutual aid efforts. St. Paul Art Crawl participant.
- Used artwork to increase public consciousness and solidarity with actions hosted by local labor unions

Minnesota Youth Collective (MNYC) – 2161 University Ave W., St. Paul, MN

**Program Director**

**May 2022 – Aug 2023**

- Supervised a Program Staff team of 19 people. Created and managed execution of Program Plan.
- Managed and mentored 19 fellows in 2022 & 2023 cohorts of 10-week Policy Fellowship Program.
- Oversaw creation of Annual Voter Guide (Twin Cities & Statewide), assisted with Strategic Plan.
- Worked in coalitions to help win historic pieces of statewide legislation at the MN State Legislature, i.e. the Democracy for the People Act in 2022 and the Minnesota North Star Promise
- Public advocacy at the City of St. Paul and City Council hearings for an array of issues & policies.

*Community Engagement Organizer*

**June 2021 – May 2022**

- Led MNYC's Mutual Aid organizing work with the St. Paul Camps Support mutual aid collective.
- Assisted with the 2021 Organizing Fellowship, helping to train 6 Campus + 4 Electoral Accountability Fellows.
- Base-Building and Electoral Work: issue campaigns in Minneapolis, programmatic events, mobilization.
- Engaged voters and assisted coalitions advocating for ballot initiatives on housing & public safety.
- Assisted with content creation and digital graphics for social media, designed literature.

*Lead Campus Organizer*

**August 2019 – June 2021**

- Built coalitions to expand voter registration across the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.
- Served as Student Group Co-Chair, engaged students about the issues that matter to them.
- Utilized a wide array of popular education & outreach tactics to meet students where they're at.

*Summer Organizing Cohort Fellow - 'At What Cost?' Campaign*

**June 2019 – August 2019**

- Co-wrote 20+ research documents identifying issues faced by Transgender youth in the Twin Cities.
- Ran a campaign to raise awareness about accessibility + financial barriers of Transgender youth.
- Engaged staff at the Hennepin County Commission to simplify the judicial name change process.
- Created a suite of artwork and stickers to distribute to the community and advance campaign visibility.

St. Paul Camps Support (SPCS) – Hamline-Midway - St. Paul, MN

**Mutual Aid Practitioner, Hub & Collective Leadership**

**Oct 2020 – Aug 2022**

- Ran a 2,000 square foot Mutual Aid Hub that directly met the needs of encampment residents.
- Led a Mutual Aid Collective of 50+ volunteers operational throughout Fall / Winter of 2020.
- Launched a first-of-its-kind Universal Basic Income / Mutual Aid fund for unhoused neighbors in STP.
- Raised and redistributed \$40,000+ directly to our unhoused neighbors across the City of St. Paul.
- Fundraising, Managing Social Media, Donation Intake, Itemization/Sorting, Hub Organization.

# Sean Lim

St. Paul City Council - Interim Ward 4 Council Member Application

## REFERENCES

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Below are local community organizers who have worked closely with me during my time at the East Phillips Neighborhood Institute (EPNI), Minnesota Youth Collective (MNYC), and other capacities in the past five years. They will be able to answer questions about my professional expertise, accomplishments, organizing skills, coworking dynamic, work ethic, strengths, and more.

Personal contact information (cell phone numbers and emails) will be provided upon request

**Donna Goodlaxon** (she/her/hers)

Ward 4 Resident

Community & Environmental Justice Organizer

**Janette Zahia Corcelius** (she/her/hers)

Ward 4 Resident

Community Organizer, MFT-ESP Local 59

**Nadia Shaarawi** (she/her/hers)

Ward 4 Small Business Employee

Producer, Director, Videographer - LineBreak Media

**Fmr. Rep. Karen Clark** (she/her/hers)

Member, Board of Directors, East Phillips Neighborhood Institute (EPNI)

Executive Director, Women's Environmental Institute (WEI)

Former Minnesota State Representative from South Minneapolis, 1981 - 2019

**CM. Aurin Chowdhury** (she/her/they/them)

Ward 12 Council Member, Minneapolis City Council

Chair, Intergovernmental Relations Committee

Vice Chair, Committee of the Whole

Member, Budget Committee / Business, Housing & Zoning / Climate & Infrastructure