



First Year Report 2021





Dear Neighborhood Defenders,

December 2021

Earlier this year, we launched RAYO Planning to serve as a resource to communities across the country. **We fight for community self-determination and advocate for fair and affordable housing free of environmental hazards.** We believe that neighborhoods know their challenges, opportunities, and hopes for the future best. RAYO Planning works directly with communities to help them make a positive change.

In our first year we led a bilingual educational workshop on zoning and land use in West Oak Cliff located in Dallas, TX. The free workshop was done in partnership with the West Oak Cliff Coalition (WOCC) and Somos Tejas.

We also partnered with Dallas Truth Racial Healing and Transformation (Dallas TRHT) and presented to their Racial Equity Now 2021 cohort about "Community Transformation, Racist Policies & Grassroots Urban Planning." We also shared this presentation with the Building Collaborative Communities Class at Paul Smith's College in New York.

We joined the Coalition for Neighborhood Self-Determination in Dallas, TX and participated during the October press conference at City Hall. RAYO Planning shared a land and people acknowledgment and a self-determination pledge.

Lastly, in honor of the Day of the Dead, RAYO Planning partnered with the Dallas Mexican-American Historical League (DMAHL) to create an ofrenda for viewing in the North Oak Cliff Library in Dallas, TX. The ofrenda was titled "Steps to Nowhere" and focused on the lost spaces in Oak Cliff due to gentrification. The ofrenda also highlighted the importance of understanding zoning policies in the city.

There are many ways to support our mission that include: following us on social media, signing up for our newsletter, monetary donations, and recommending residents who would benefit from our assistance to reach out to us. Monetary donations specifically help us provide pro-bono services to low-income communities that have historically been redlined, disinvested and discriminated against.

Your support helps us grow and we thank you for it.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Victoria Ferrell-Ortiz".

Victoria Ferrell-Ortiz
Co-Founder & Treasurer
RAYO Planning Board Member

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Evelyn Mayo".

Evelyn Mayo
Co-Founder & Co-Chair
RAYO Planning Board Member

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Rangel".

Jennifer Rangel, MCRP
Co-Founder & Co-Chair
RAYO Planning Board Member

IN THE NEWS



News for North Texas

KERA
Our Body Politic
NEXT UP: 9:00 PM

NEWS RADIO INFO PODCASTS ART&SEEK KERA LEARN ABOUT MORE KERA

We're currently experiencing a server outage affecting some site content, and are working to get keranews.org back to normal

Arts & Culture

From altars to festivals, here's how North Texans can celebrate Día de los Muertos

KERA | By [Alejandra Martinez](#)
Published October 28, 2021 at 2:19 PM CDT



▶ LISTEN • 1:03

Día de los Muertos, which will take place Nov. 1 and 2, is a tradition that has been celebrated for thousands of years and traces back to indigenous tribes in Mexico. Altars are a huge part of the celebration.

"This altar is unique in that it centers spaces, so it offers a land acknowledgment saying this is stolen land," Ferrell-Ortiz said.

One of the businesses highlighted is [El Fenix Mexican Restaurant](#), which was located on Colorado Boulevard in Oak Cliff. After 72 years, it was demolished in the summer of 2020 to build eight-story apartments. Another is [El Corazon de Tejas](#), which closed its doors in 2017, but Ferrell-Ortiz said the pandemic reminded her of how a restaurant's demolition still stings years later.



Alejandra Martinez

Victoria Ferrell-Ortiz is the vice president of the Dallas Mexican American Historical League, an organization dedicated to preserving and recording Mexican American history in Dallas from the early 1800s to the present day.

Dispersed throughout Ferrell-Ortiz's *ofrenda* are note cards that explain the significance of each caricature or decoration. One reads: What do you do when your favorite restaurant closes?

The *ofrenda* is also a commentary on the gentrification of the neighborhood and highlights the importance of educating residents on zoning policies in the city.

"Oak Cliff is currently being developed and the community should be at the center of that and historical preservation," Ferrell-Ortiz said.

On this Day of the Dead, Ferrell-Ortiz said she will remember the closed businesses "that are significant to us; to people of color and to our history."



NEWS DINING BEST OF MARKETPLACE EVENTS MAGAZINE

< Previous Next >

How Jennifer Rangel shines a light on urban planning for underserved communities

By Rachel Stone | June 30th, 2021 | All Feature Articles, All Magazine Articles, Coronavirus, Development, Nonprofits and Volunteers



Jennifer Rangel recently launched a nonprofit, RAYO Planning, with the mission of helping neighbors advocate for what they need. Photography by Kathy Tran.

Jennifer Rangel felt like an outsider growing up in Oak Cliff because her family didn't have a car, and their housing was often insecure.

She knows there are still kids in our neighborhood who feel like "a shadow" the way she did, and that's what keeps her motivated to fight for inclusivity in urban planning. Rangel recently launched a nonprofit, [RAYO Planning](#), with partners Evelyn Mayo and Victoria Ferrell-Ortiz.

They have a mission of helping communities understand planning concepts like zoning and land use, and they aim to teach neighbors to use their power against potentially harmful policies and to advocate for what they need.

Rangel was the 2012 valedictorian of [Molina High School](#) because she treated her grades like a paycheck. She told herself that the higher her grades were, the more money she could earn in the future so that her parents wouldn't have to work.

WHO WE ARE

BOARD MEMBERS:



Evelyn Mayo
Co-Founder & Co-Chair



Jennifer Rangel, MCRP
Co-Founder & Co-Chair



Victoria Ferrell-Ortiz
Co-Founder & Treasurer



Fran Mayo



Summer Payton



Jorge Jasso
Secretary



Carlo Chunga

"I'm an ancestor in the making. I think about the work I do and where I want my descendants to be in the future."

- Victoria Ferrell-Ortiz

WHAT WE DO

MISSION:

We fight for community self-determination and advocate for fair and affordable housing free of environmental hazards. We believe that neighborhoods know their challenges, opportunities, and hopes for the future best. RAYO Planning works directly with communities to help them make a positive change.

OUR SERVICES:



COMMUNITY EDUCATION:

We provide educational workshops, webinars, or information packets to level the playing field with big developers and assist resident's advocacy efforts for fair housing, environmental justice and community development.



DIRECT ADVOCACY:

We provide direct advocacy for residents dealing with a land use concern connected to environmental justice and fair housing. We research the issue, listen to the community's concerns and advocate on their behalf.



COMMUNITY PLANNING:

We work with neighborhoods interested in creating a grassroots land use plan for the future that addresses fair housing and environmental justice.

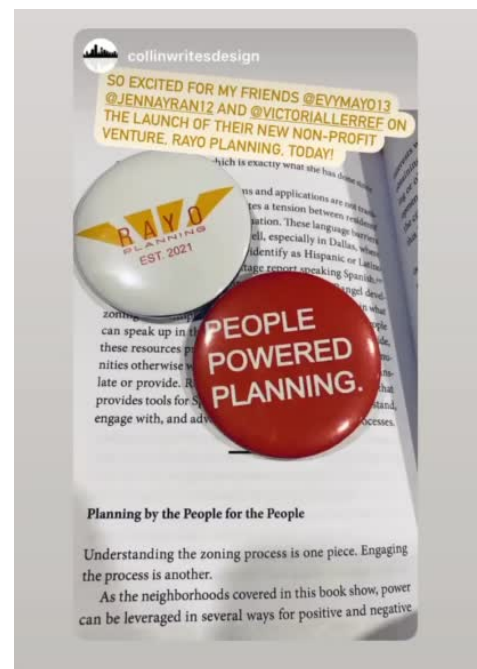


REFORMING CITY PLANNING:

Municipalities, banks and the federal government have caused systemic racism, therefore unsurprisingly Black and Brown communities do not trust them. We consult with municipalities working to redress their harm through neighborhood and city planning efforts on how to be truly inclusive and equitable going forward.

LAUNCH DAY

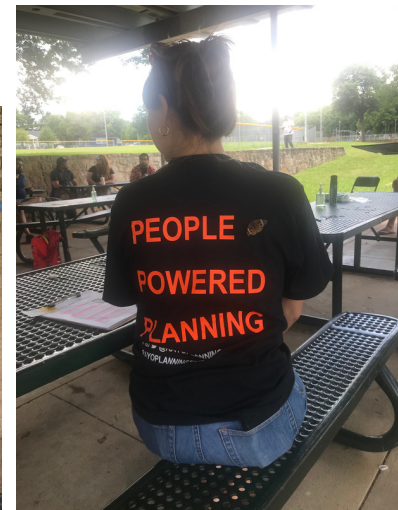
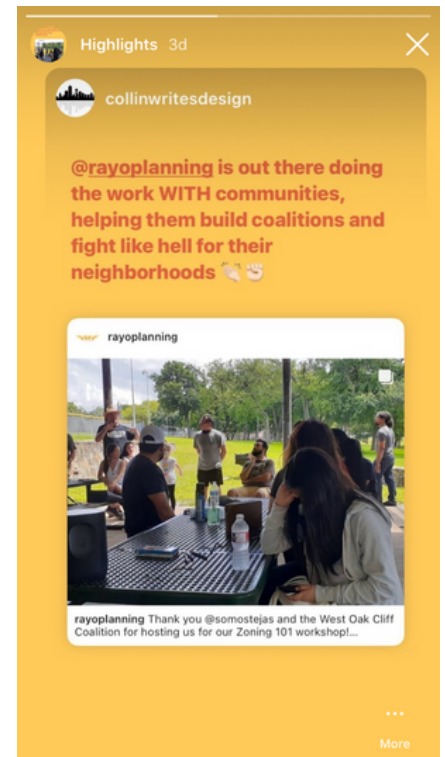
After a year of building the foundation of RAYO Planning, we publicly launched the nonprofit on Friday June 4, 2021. We hosted the grand reveal of RAYO Planning with family and friends.





ZONING WORKSHOP

In our first year we led a bilingual educational workshop on zoning and land use in West Oak Cliff located in Dallas, TX. The free workshop was done in partnership with the West Oak Cliff Coalition (WOCC) and Somos Tejas.





EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS

In order to address the core of today's inequities we believe that the entire story must be told. Therefore, we are pleased to share that we provided two educational sessions on "Community Transformation, Racist Policies & Grassroots Urban Planning" to students and professionals.

North Texas Region

We partnered with Dallas Truth Racial Healing and Transformation and presented to their Racial Equity Now 2021 cohort.

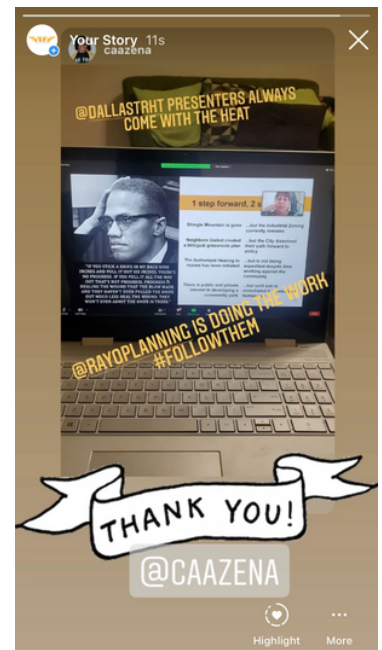


RACIAL EQUITY NOW

CHANGING CITY PLANNING, RACIST POLICY AND COMMUNITY POWER

A Conversation with

Jennifer Rangel & Evelyn Mayo: CO-CHAIRS, RAYO PLANNING



PAUL SMITH'S COLLEGE

New York

Students from the Building Collaborative Communities class at Paul Smith's College in New York, participated during our session. In 2022, several students will be working closely with RAYO Planning on their final master's project.



COMMUNITY TOOLBOXES FOR COLLECTIVE SELF-DEFENSE & CARE



The toolbox is/as manifesto for collective self-defense

Tools, strategies, recetas, meditations and stories for practicing art as coalitional gesture in collaboration with Virginia Grise & Adela C. Licona. This version of the toolbox is facilitated by Cara Mia Theatre together with local crews, comunidad, care-takers, and creatives. Victoria contributed a [Land Designation and Centering](#) with RAYO Planning.

[Access the toolbox here](#)

[Land Designation and Centering with RAYO Planning](#)





COALITION WORK

RAYO Planning joined the Coalition for Neighborhood Self-Determination in Dallas, TX and participated during the October press conference at City Hall. Victoria, our co-founder, shared a land and people acknowledgment and a self-determination pledge. Below is the excerpt:

Hello everyone, my name is Victoria Ferrell Ortiz and I am here today as a representative of RAYO Planning to share a story.

The story I am speaking of is the story of land. Right now we're standing in a space called Dallas in front of a building that was named "City Hall" but would like to uplift and honor the Indigenous People whose land these truly are, they are the Kikapoo, Tawakoni, Caddo, and Wichita. Comanche and Kiowa have also lived in this region although it was not often recognized as their homeland. I encourage you all to look into who they are and find ways to support them in the present. They are the owners of this land, contrary to what others have named the space. History is often told from the victor's perspective, from a white washed perspective.

Who is telling the history of our land?

Land, like the winged ones, four-legged ones, crawling ones, trees, rivers and lakes cannot speak in the manner that we do. We have meandered rivers. Prime example is the Arkikosa (trinity). We have sold animals and mined the earth's minerals for monetary gain. We have redlined and disenfranchised people to the point of erasure. Do not forget: The City of Dallas was built with stolen labor.

Today we honor the sacredness of community members who are in their power. Who come together under the union of a common vision. We honor the blood memory from our ancestors and history that runs through our veins like the Arkikosa.

I warmly invite you all to take a pledge with me.



COALITION WORK



Self determination pledge:

.....

I will do my best to honor myself, my lineage and community,
to protect our right to self determination.
I believe that neighborhoods know their challenges,
opportunities, and hopes for the future best.
I pledge to make this world a better place by being a steward
of my neighborhood plan and protector of affordable housing.



CULTURE & PLANNING

In honor of the Day of the Dead, RAYO Planning partnered with the Dallas Mexican-American Historical League (DMAHL) to create an ofrenda for viewing in the North Oak Cliff Library in Dallas, TX. The ofrenda was titled "Steps to Nowhere" and focused on the lost spaces in Oak Cliff due to gentrification. The ofrenda also highlighted the importance of educating residents on zoning policies in the city.



Watch it in [English HERE](#)

Watch it in [Spanish HERE](#)



RAYO Planning

SUBSCRIBE





SUPPORT OUR MISSION

There are many ways to support our mission that include:

- Following us on social media
- Signing up for our newsletter
- Monetary donations
- Recommending residents who would benefit from our assistance to reach out to us

Monetary donations specifically help us provide pro-bono services to low-income communities that have historically been redlined, disinvested and discriminated against.

Your support helps us grow and we thank you for it.



PayPal™

**To donate to
RAYO Planning:
[click here](#)**



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

All contributions, no matter the amount, make a positive impact to our organization.
We thank you for helping us further our mission.

Jorge E. Jasso

Collin Yarbrough

All other donors who wished to remain anonymous



Dallas Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation

To create a radically inclusive city by addressing race and racism through narrative change, relationship building and equitable policies and practices.

National Development Council

NDC's work focuses on HOMES, JOBS and COMMUNITY. Founded as a national nonprofit in 1969, NDC has worked for over 50 years fulfilling its mission to increase the flow of capital for investment in low-income communities. NDC directs capital to support the development and preservation of affordable housing, the creation of jobs through training and small business lending and the advancement of livable communities through investment in social infrastructure.



To donate to RAYO Planning: [click here](#)