

# People Community Environment

Inaugural Impact Report



Po Chen  
CEO

## Message from the CEO

I am pleased to present Anchor QEA's Inaugural Impact Report, which documents our focused efforts and progress toward integrating environmental and social sustainability into our business and culture in meaningful, impactful, and lasting ways.

Since the firm's inception, our success has been mission-driven, bolstered by a strong focus on ethical and sustainable business practices. In our pursuit of top-tier corporate citizenship, we are now elevating these practices by creating a program to guide, monitor, and continuously improve our sustainability commitments. This program focuses on three critical elements of our identity: our **People**, our **Community**, and our **Environment**.

As I reflect on the past year, our progress has demonstrated our unrelenting focus on serving our stakeholders. A few of the highlights I'm most proud of include the following:

- **Competitive and Equitable Compensation.** We retained two separate industry consultancies to conduct independent assessments of our staff compensation program to ensure we are competitive and equitable, and we immediately invested in necessary changes to achieve these financial goals.
- **Impactful Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Practices.** We worked with a DEI consultant to independently evaluate our diversity and inclusion programs and identify new ways to increase our positive impact.

- **Improved Governance and Oversight.** We implemented improvements in our governance and oversight programs by increasing the ratio of external members on our Board of Directors, hiring a director of project management, hiring a director of quality control, and heightening our cybersecurity standards.
- **Community and Social Engagement.** We provided financial support to over 75 different organizations in our community (resulting in more than \$88,000 in donations), volunteered at over a dozen community work events, and awarded \$20,000 in scholarships to eight college students, with half of the scholarships directed to BIPOC students.
- **Environmental Stewardship.** We committed to the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), pledging to a clearly-defined path to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Paris Agreement goals.

Our journey continues as we strive to be the best in our industry. Anchor QEA intends to take the following actions in the coming year:

- **Formalize Our People, Community, and Environment Program.** We will continue to work with an outside ESG consultant to integrate best sustainability practices with our mission and core values. We will establish goals and metrics and develop short- and long-term tactics to achieve these goals.

- **Set the Course for 2028.** As we develop our 5-year Strategic Plan, we will evaluate additional services to better support our clients' drive for environmental stewardship. This will also be an opportunity to strengthen our company's sustainability and resiliency mindset.
- **Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.** We will continue to work with an outside DEI consultant to refine our recruiting and onboarding programs and develop a more productive DEI structure.
- **Refine our Company Management Structure.** We will further refine our company structure to improve governance and service for all.

I am extremely proud of how we serve all stakeholders in alignment with our mission and core values. Through this ongoing journey of continuous improvement, we are fully committed to the focus and investments that will bring our environmental and social sustainability goals to life.

Onward and upward!

Po Chen  
CEO, Anchor QEA



# Highlights

Our mission, which has driven our commitment since our firm's inception, is **to improve the environment and our communities by solving challenging problems together with integrity and vibe.**

## People

Our people come first at Anchor QEA. They drive everything we do, and the company prioritizes helping them stay safe, rewarding them for a job well done, and providing opportunities for them to grow.

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**\$1.7M**

Anchor QEA contributions to staff 401(k) program

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**97%**

Staff who participated in our customized Compass learning and development program

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**0**

Days away restricted time

## Community

Anchor QEA's success is driven by the community that surrounds us locally, nationally, and globally, and so we believe it is our duty to contribute to their success as well. To strive toward this belief, we focus both on internal management measures driving our firm to be a better citizen and external direct measures serving our communities and stakeholders.

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**75+**

Non-profit organizations supported

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**> \$40,000**

Employee donations matched

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**\$20,000**

Given in scholarships (half to BIPOC students)

## Environment

Anchor QEA is strongly committed to environmental stewardship. We have implemented initiatives focused on waste minimization and recycling, and we provide our clients and communities with services allowing them to become better environment stewards.

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**Committed to the SBTi, pledging to evaluate our GHG emissions footprint and set GHG emissions reduction targets in line with a 1.5°C climate scenario**

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**Incentives provided for employees to commute via public transportation**

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**20% of revenue working with clients to improve climate resilience**



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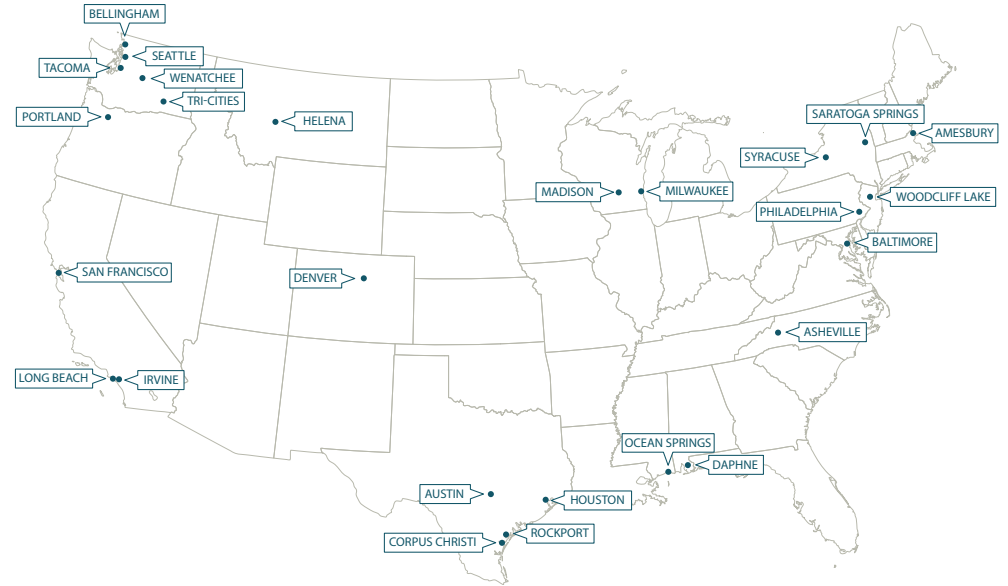
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# About Anchor QEA

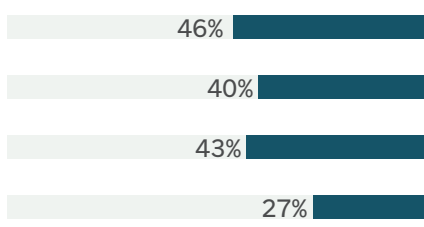
Anchor QEA brings together deep subject-matter expertise across a full range of engineering, environmental sciences, planning and restoration, and analytics services to tackle our clients' most challenging problems. Whether managing an entire program from inception to completion, or impacting critical stages of a process, every successful project begins by first assembling the best possible team from across technical disciplines and geography. We believe a multidisciplinary approach and partnership mentality are essential to solving the multifaceted environmental challenges facing organizations and communities.

Anchor QEA is a trusted leader in providing environmental science and engineering services. Our diverse expertise allows us to effectively serve industrial, energy, federal, state, local, and port and harbor clients across the United States. We have 492 employees in 26 office locations across the country, with headquarters in Seattle, Washington.

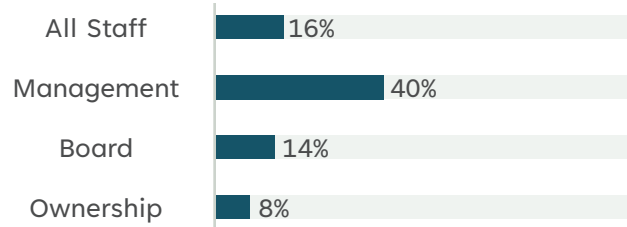


## Company Demographics

### Women



### Ethnic Minorities





# Anchor QEA's Mission, Vision, and Core Values

## Mission

To improve the environment and our communities by solving challenging problems together, with integrity and vibe.

## Vision

To be a growing company that is our clients' first choice for solving their most challenging problems and our employees' first choice as a company where they want to work.

## Core Values

Anchor QEA's core values are a declaration of our approach to all facets of life. Our values are apparent in the way we do business, in our deliverables, and in our relationships with clients, communities, and colleagues.

Our top priority is maintaining a work environment that promotes safety and wellbeing. We value service to our clients and coworkers and extend the effort to go the extra mile. We value taking initiative to develop professionally, make Anchor QEA better, and achieve new positive outcomes.

We cultivate vibe to maintain an environment that fosters inclusion, enthusiasm, positivity, and strong relationships. Through the quality of our work, we earn the respect of our clients and stakeholders and maintain our reputation for excellence. Finally, we take pride in our integrity by approaching our work and working relationships ethically, with honesty, good judgment, recognition of others' contributions, and respect for differences.

### *Safety*

Taking responsibility for safety and preparedness in the office and field through personal initiative, communication, and teamwork

### *Integrity*

Making choices about our work and relationships based on strong ethical standards and accountability

### *Vibe*

Cultivating a friendly, supportive, and fun work environment through open communication and teamwork within and external to Anchor QEA

### *Quality*

Demonstrating superior work in all aspects of the business

### *Service*

Providing technological leadership, job knowledge, and teamwork to our clients and coworkers

### *Initiative*

Contributing to a work environment that encourages and rewards creative solutions and provides opportunities for all employees



Anchor QEA's PCEAC will continue working with an outside ESG expert to finalize a strategy that reflects our mission, vision, and core values.



## Anchor QEA'S Impact/ Sustainability Approach

At Anchor QEA, we are committed to making a positive impact by operating responsibly and working with our clients to transform the environment and our communities for the better. Our mission, to improve the environment and our communities by solving challenging problems together with integrity and care, drives our dedication to operational excellence, superior quality, and environmental stewardship. We are motivated to develop projects that have meaningful and lasting impacts on our world.

Anchor QEA has formed a People, Community, and Environment Advisory Council (PCEAC) that is working with an outside ESG expert to develop a program that reflects our mission, vision, and core values. Our program's principles focus on three areas—**People, Community, and Environment**—to improve employee engagement, add value to our clients, ensure compliance, and grow company value. Ownership/leadership are committed to these principles. The PCEAC consists of Anchor QEA's CEO, Director of Human Resources, Chief Strategy Officer, a business unit representative, and the program's champion.

The PCEAC is responsible for developing the program's framework, assessing performance, assigning responsibilities, and holding leaders accountable. The framework will specify key performance metrics and indicators, based on our core values and principles, to allow us to continuously monitor our progress and self-correct as necessary. We will address each area equally, emphasizing our environmental, economic, social, and governance initiatives through the services we offer our clients, within our internal company operations, and through broader stewardship efforts across the community.

As our company history has shown us, being an environmentally and financially sustainable firm long-term will allow us to improve employee engagement, bring value to our clients and communities, ensure compliance, reduce operational risk, and grow company value.

## Anchor QEA's Impact/Sustainability Approach

### Framework

### People

### Community

### Environment

### Vision

Promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. Ensure a healthy and safe workplace. Empower our people to reach their true potential

Operate ethically to facilitate prudent risk management, ensure compliance, drive community development, and create value for our people, clients, and stakeholders

Operate as a sustainability-focused firm. Deliver innovative and resilient solutions to address our clients' complex challenges while safeguarding natural resources and ecosystems

### Goals

- Emphasize staff inclusion practices and measures to ensure equity that support diversity
- Continue prioritizing health and safety practices for all employees at work and beyond
- Enrich tailored employee training and professional development
- Promote opportunities for personal and financial wellness

- Establish ESG governance
- Emphasize business ethics and compliance
- Support disadvantaged communities
- Encourage industry participation
- Incentivize innovation
- Develop diverse and resilient supply chain

- Evaluate greenhouse gas emissions
- Manage energy, waste, and water footprint
- Foster environmental stewardship across Anchor QEA
- Integrate sustainability in services and highlight project impacts



# People



**11** Health and Safety

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**12** Employee Wellbeing

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**15** Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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**17** Learning and Professional Development

# Anchor QEA continues to focus on our most important resource—our people. Company success starts with employee engagement, and some of the measures we have introduced to enhance that include the following

## ***Company Direction***

Our mission, vision, and core values drive every decision we make. Our Strategic Plan and annual business plans are based on these guiding principles, and we assess each plan yearly to ensure they adhere to our standards.

## ***Clear Communication***

Clear, concise communication is vital. We hired a dedicated internal communication specialist in 2022 to improve our existing communications team. This hire along with better planning tools have enabled us to communicate more effectively.

## ***Safe Work Environment***

Safety is one of our core values—see our discussion on “Health and Safety” later in this section.

## ***Staff Wellness***

Providing staff health, social/emotional, financial, and cultural wellness is vital—see our discussion on “Employee Wellbeing” later in this section.

## ***Inclusive and Diverse Culture***

Cultivating and safeguarding a welcoming and engaging work environment where employees from different backgrounds feel valued and respected is critical—see our discussion on “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion” later in this section.

## ***Empowerment and Autonomy***

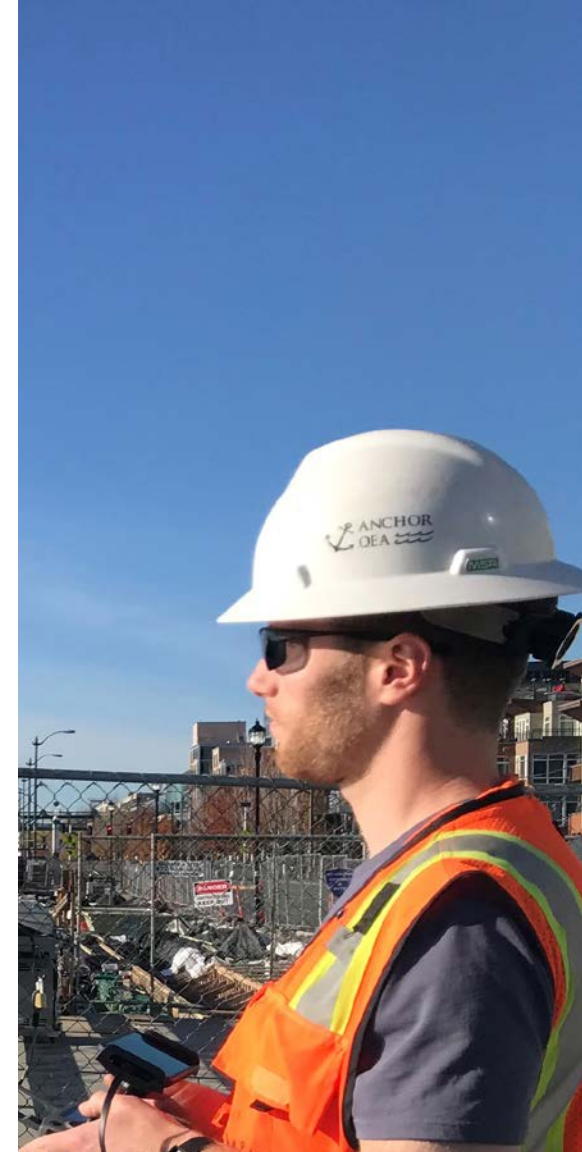
Giving employees the autonomy to make decisions within their roles and to have agency in how they accomplish their tasks can increase engagement. This is our core value of initiative—thinking beyond immediate and obvious goals to achieve more creative, comprehensive, or useful solutions by surpassing what is expected or established.

## ***Recognition and Appreciation***

Acknowledging employees’ efforts and achievements goes a long way in boosting morale and engagement. We use structured and spontaneous methods to recognize employees’ key milestones, achievements, and performance with such awards as You Rock, Health and Safety, 5-year anniversaries, and spot bonuses for exceptional contributions.

## ***Community and Social responsibility***

Our “Community” section later in this report describes how we support employees in community and social responsibility initiatives that affirm a sense of purpose and engagement beyond daily tasks.



# Health and Safety

Safety is our most essential core value. In addition to adhering to national and local regulatory requirements, we invest in a culture of safety that goes above and beyond what is asked of us.

We invest in four dedicated health and safety staff, including a Director of Health and Safety, who drive our companywide health and safety strategy. They have established Health and Safety representatives in each of our offices as well as a Health and Safety Committee. The committee meets quarterly to address strategic health and safety issues, ensuring that best practices are shared and implemented consistently. Health and Safety office representatives meet quarterly to focus on office-specific health and safety concerns. They oversee crucial tasks such as first aid and fire extinguisher inspections, provide essential personal protective equipment (PPE), and address general safety inquiries.

We provide employees with the resources they need to make prudent safety decisions and maintain a safe and secure working environment. We offer proactive safety training to prepare our employees for potential hazards they might encounter. In 2022, we addressed good practices and processes to develop effective site-specific health and safety plans. Furthermore, our team members are trained to work on the most challenging work sites, including Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) sites, adhering to the rigorous standards of 29 Code of Federal Regulations 1910.120.



Anchor QEA's Playing It Safe program is a positive and proactive approach to improving safety at Anchor QEA. This program encompasses the use of new-task review, proactive safety-related actions, and safety-related events that should be recorded. Situations are identified that could prevent someone being injured or something getting damaged in the future. These situations are called Playing It Safe events and are viewed as learning experiences. Anchor QEA places emphasis on making this process streamlined and functional, with the simple goal of creating a safer workplace. Every employee can share Health and Safety-related successes, document lessons learned, and record/report Playing It Safe events.

## Example of a Playing It Safe Event

### *What Happened?*

Staff noticed that excessive dust was being generated by material import trucks driving on a gravel pad and dumping cap materials. Staff reminded contractor representatives to have the water truck wet down surfaces.

### *Why Did It Happen?*

Dust in the area was not properly controlled.

### *What Steps Can Be Taken to Avoid a Similar Situation in the Future?*

Implement and adhere to a dust control plan and stop work as necessary when excessive dust is observed until control measures can be put in place.

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Days away restricted time (DART)

0.94

Blended Experience Modification Rate (EMR)

0.47

Total recordable incident rate

Note: Metrics are for 2022





## VIBE

As one of our core values, Vibe means cultivating a friendly, supportive, and fun work environment through open communication and teamwork within and external to Anchor QEA.

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Motivating others through sincere enthusiasm for the job and the company

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Having a positive attitude, self-awareness, and healthy work/life balance

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Valuing quality relationships with coworkers, clients, and others in the community

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Displaying an appropriate balance between personal effort and team effort within and external to Anchor QEA

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Actively extending the good vibe into the community



## Employee Wellbeing

Because Anchor QEA's most valuable asset is our employees, we focus on providing them with resources and opportunities to thrive and reach their true potential. Our traditional benefits are industry competitive, but we also offer much more to help staff with physical, social/emotional, financial, and cultural wellness.

### Cultivating a Friendly and Supportive Working Environment

A fundamental aspect of our company culture is captured in our core value of Vibe. This extends to fostering wellness across our offices so that our workplace environment is friendly, supportive, and enjoyable. We achieve this through open communication and effective teamwork, always striving to maintain a positive attitude, foster self-awareness, and encourage a healthy work/life balance. We place immense value on building quality relationships among coworkers, clients, and community members while striking an appropriate balance between personal and team efforts. Furthermore, we actively extend this positive vibe into our broader communities, affirming our commitment to a making a positive impact in the world.

We operate under an "Open Door" philosophy, underscoring the importance of transparent conversations and two-way feedback as integral elements of our company culture. We firmly believe in providing employees with the freedom to voice their concerns and opinions, and we strongly encourage engagement and discussion across all levels of our organization. We provide quarterly performance reviews and feedback sessions between staff and managers to allow employees to understand their career progress and identify areas of potential growth.

## Employee Wellbeing

### Enhancing Physical, Social/Emotional, and Financial Wellness

At Anchor QEA, we take a holistic view of wellness by focusing on physical, social/emotional, and financial wellness.

#### Health Insurance

We offer a choice of medical plans (including a High Deductible Health Plan with a Health Savings Account [HSA] to which Anchor QEA contributes on our employees' behalf), vision insurance, and dental insurance. A flexible spending account (FSA) allows employees to set aside pre-tax money for approved expenses, such as health care and dependent care.

#### Physical and Mental Wellbeing

To promote maintaining a healthy lifestyle, we offer partial annual reimbursement for costs such as gym memberships, standalone fitness lessons or classes, and sports team dues. Our employees have access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that offers free, confidential counseling.

#### Travel Assistance, Leave, and PTO

We provide various types of travel assistance support for employees facing emergencies, as well as several leave programs and paid time-off benefits.

#### Retirement Plans and Life Insurance

We offer a 401(k) plan where a percentage of employee contributions are matched by the company, a college savings plan, and company-paid life and AD&D insurance plans and disability income protection (short and long term).

#### Life at Work

We organize activities among our employees to build a sense of community, initiate networking opportunities, and share the vibe. Our office vibe is expressed through shared meals, holiday parties, group outings, peer-to-peer awards, and community service. We are involved in volunteer and fundraising events year-round, which help employees become leaders in their communities.

#### Volunteer

Anchor QEA encourages employees to join volunteer efforts outside of their communities through our Volunteer Grant Program, which provides financial support for two employees to spend their vacations volunteering. We also have a Vacation Donor Program, through which an employee may transfer vacation accruals to another employee experiencing financial hardship due to a severe health condition or family emergency.



We are always grateful for the opportunity to get outside with our clients and colleagues—and Green Seattle Day is one of our favorite ways to give back to parks and forests in the Seattle area.

Staff from Anchor QEA's Seattle office spent the day at Herring's House Park, removing invasive plants from the Duwamish River shoreline. Their work helped make room for native, drought-tolerant trees and shrubs that will provide a more suitable habitat for blue herons, Caspian terns, and ospreys nesting near the park.

The Green Seattle Partnership is a collaboration between City of Seattle, community groups and non-profits, businesses, schools, and thousands of volunteers working together to restore and actively maintain the City's forested parklands.

## Employee Wellbeing

### Supporting New Employees through the Peer Mentoring Program

Starting at a new company can be very intimidating. To assist new employees with their wellbeing, we established a peer mentoring program that pairs each newcomer with a dedicated peer mentor to provide support and guidance during their early days at Anchor QEA. Peer mentors help newcomers get acclimated faster and more effectively, ensuring they feel at ease and safe to engage in constructive dialogue. In 2022, the Peer Mentoring Program successfully matched 116 new employees from 21 offices with 106 different peer mentors.







**Anchor QEA's vision and success depends on a continuous focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). This is what we believe:**

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Everyone is entitled to be respected and heard.

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Diversity makes us stronger.

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Everyone has a unique perspective and something valuable to contribute.

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Equity is essential for employee recruitment, hiring, pay, professional growth, and performance evaluation.

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

DEI principles directly align with our core values of integrity and vibe, which both drive how we interact with employees and stakeholders. We strive to foster an open, collaborative work environment where everyone feels respected and supported to contribute their unique perspectives and value. Having a diverse range of perspectives enables us to think differently, envision more creative and innovative solutions, and grow into a more resourceful organization. Ultimately, our vision and success depend on a continuous focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Our company policies prohibit discrimination, bullying, and harassment. We have a specific anti-harassment policy that specifies a procedure for reporting harassment and retaliation and ensures protection against retaliation. We provide a wide range of training courses focused specifically on inclusion and diversity and anti-harassment. General training courses are mandatory for all our employees,

and we have developed specialized courses for supervisors, as well as courses that cover state-specific training requirements on anti-harassment. Annually, we evaluate salary adjustments and promotions against gender and race biases.

Anchor QEA has had a formal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) program for over 5 years. In 2022, we hired an outside DEI consultant to assess our program and provide recommendations to improve our program. The consultant's first task was an internal labor market (ILM) analysis. An ILM is a quantitative assessment of attraction, progression, and retention of various employee groups within a company's workforce. This helped us understand the workforce profile and movement of each employee group within our workforce. Through this analysis, we identified that we needed to improve our recruiting/talent acquisition (TA) and onboarding processes.

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In 2022 and 2023, we worked with our DEI consultant to improve our TA process. As a result, we produced the Anchor QEA Talent Acquisition Recruiting Guide to better standardize our recruiting practices and mitigate biases in our processes. We firmly believe that diverse, engaged employees lead to better client service, which leads to the company's financial success and sustainability. Diversity makes us stronger. To thrive in this competitive market, we need to hire the best talent, get them engaged, and retain them. It is critical that we hire and retain the best staff no matter their age, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or any other personal features unrelated to job performance.

Our DEI consultant also provided recommendations regarding improving the effectiveness of our DEI program, including shifting the program from a self-appointed committee to a leadership-engrained Advisory Council comprising senior leaders to set our DEI strategy, assign responsibility for execution, monitor performance, and hold implementers accountable. This recommendation will be further integrated in the coming year, concurrent with the development of our PCE program.

### **Building on our DEI momentum to date, we plan to continue expanding our initiatives. In the coming year, we plan the following:**

Roll out of our Talent Acquisition Recruiting Guide to staff.

Complete and roll out our updated onboarding program to staff.

Formalize our DEI program oversight structure.

Complete an updated ILM study to identify additional, data-driven areas of focus necessary to enhance DEI across every aspect of our organization.



# Learning and Professional Development

Long-term investment in our most important asset, our people, is vital for our success. We strongly encourage employee growth and development through various training programs, seminars, and on-the-job training. Over the past 2 years, we updated and refined our formal learning and professional development program, now called Anchor QEA Compass. The Compass program provides tailored content focused on three broad career stages: early, mid level/transitional, and advanced.

Early stage content addresses business skills to help employees succeed and advance in their careers. Mid-level/transitional stage content helps employees with the transition to managerial or other leadership positions, focusing on crucial skills for more senior roles,

such as staff or project manager. Advanced stage content focuses on skills to address more complex people and project challenges, strategic thinking, and communication and business development. It supports our senior leaders to inspire others, drive innovation, and lead us into a better future.

The Compass program offers required and recommended courses in online, self-guided, and live/face-to-face formats. This way, our employees can access diverse, high-quality learning opportunities that are relevant to their work. Compass focuses on the following four categories of learning and development: compliance, career development, informal learning, and mentoring.

We also encourage employees to seek out opportunities to further their personal development through training programs, seminars, or other professional development courses. We provide support to help employees pursue these opportunities, including educational assistance, professional license and certification assistance, and professional membership and organization assistance.

## **Educational Assistance**

Our educational assistance program is designed to empower employees by enhancing their skills and fostering professional development. The program offers reimbursement for specific educational costs during a calendar year that benefit the company and the employee's professional development.

## **Professional Licenses and Certifications**

In many of our practice areas, professional licensing or certification is a prerequisite our employees must achieve to assume greater professional responsibility. Professional license and certification support covers the expenses for professional registration and the fees associated with license renewal and

maintenance, including continuing education. Furthermore, reimbursement is provided for the initial costs for professional license exam review courses and required study materials, such as books. These provisions apply for the acquisition of both professional certifications and professional licenses.

## **Professional Memberships and Organizations**

We strongly encourage our employees to get involved with professional organizations relevant to their field of work and benefit from opportunities for learning and capacity building, as well as establish meaningful connections across our industry. Our program sponsors up to two professional memberships per full-time employee from a pre-approved list of professional organizations.



**The Compass program provides tailored content focused on three broad career stages: early, mid-level/transitional, and advanced.**

**29,850 hours**  
Total time staff spent training in 2022



# Community



20 Company Management Measures

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23 Direct Community Measures

**Anchor QEA believes that we need to be a valuable contributor to the success of our communities—our mission is to improve the environment and our communities. To strive towards this belief, we focus both on internal management measures driving our firm to be a better citizen and external direct measures serving our communities and stakeholders.**



# Company Management Measures



## Governance

Anchor QEA is committed to implementing good governance principles in our daily operations and in the solutions we provide our clients. To improve our company governance, Anchor QEA established a Board of Directors (Board) in 2019. The Board ensures that the company operates effectively and efficiently, complies with all relevant laws and regulations, and develops and implements a long-term strategy that aligns with our core values and benefits our people, clients, environment, and stakeholders.

Further modifications were made to our Board in 2022 and 2023 to improve independent oversight and governance. The seven-seat Board now consists of three external directors who have no current relationship with the company that would present or appear to present a conflict of interest. The CEO now does not have an automatic seat on the Board. The four remaining directors are internal members elected by the Shareholders. If the CEO is elected by the Shareholders, the CEO cannot serve as the Board Chair. The Board has three subcommittees responsible for nomination and governance, compensation, and audit oversight.



## Ethics and Integrity

Integrity is a core value at Anchor QEA. We are committed to ethical and fair practices in business activities. We focus on making decisions based on strong ethical standards and accountability and expect all employees to conduct themselves with integrity and high ethical standards in all business activities. Anchor QEA has several policies to guide our staff in these areas, including our Code of Business Conduct and Ethics, Employee Guidebook, and Conflict of Interest Guidelines. These cover issues such as conflicts of interest, business code of conduct, integrity in business practices, corruption and anti-bribery, and whistleblower and non-retaliation policies. In addition, all staff are required to take an annual business conduct and ethics course.



## Company Management Measures



### Risk Management and Quality Control

Our stakeholders require solutions and designs that are safe, reliable, timely, and cost effective. This requires an unrelenting focus on quality. Anchor QEA is strongly committed to sound risk management and superior quality in all aspects of our work. Anchor QEA has hired both a Director of Project Management and a Director of Quality Assurance and Quality Control to oversee our project management and quality programs. We have a Quality Management System (QMS) that outlines a process that all staff use to conduct work and provides tools and resources to support all staff in accomplishing quality results. All employees are expected to participate in the QMS by actively applying its standards in their daily work.

There is inherent risk in every solution Anchor QEA develops, regardless of the project size. Risk is not always related to safety; it can cover a multitude of events within and out of our control. Because of this, Anchor QEA has established Project Risk Management Guidelines. These guidelines prescribe steps to reduce and mitigate risk, and this is covered in project manager and project risk management training for all of Anchor QEA's project managers.

### Anchor QEA's QMS

Our formal approach to quality that is founded on our active culture and dedication to the client experience. Our QMS is a live system, managed by the Quality Program, and powered by employees. The QMS is continuously improved to keep content relevant to employees and our corporate quality objectives.

Our QMS is documented in the QMS Manual, a web-based document that is updated regularly to reflect improvements to the system. The QMS Manual presents the expectations for how we do work at Anchor QEA.





## Company Management Measures



### Cybersecurity

We understand the significance of protecting client and other third-party data and information from cyber threats. Anchor QEA adheres to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Risk Management Framework. We have developed a cybersecurity policy, implementing a comprehensive cybersecurity protocol to ensure security and confidentiality of client and other third-party data and information. We are on track to achieve Level 3 of the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) necessary to meet federal cybersecurity standards. CMMC compliance means our computer systems, our data, and our clients' data meet a high standard of security. Part of this compliance is that all Anchor QEA staff are knowledgeable of cybersecurity risks and aware of how best to protect our data and systems. Employee awareness is a key component to keeping our data and systems safe.

Additionally, all our employees are required to complete annual training on cybersecurity as well as participate in phishing campaigns/training on a regular basis. We provide tools to assist staff in being vigilant, including tools to evaluate potential phish emails. In addition to self-audits, we hire third-party cybersecurity auditors every 3 years to become certified under the CMMC (v.2 Level 2). Beginning in 2022, Anchor QEA's IT department has held monthly cybersecurity governance meetings in accordance with CMMC guidelines.

# Direct Community Measures

## Community Engagement

Community service and charitable giving to support the places where we work, live, and play are central to Anchor QEA’s core values and engrained in our mission. Anchor QEA promotes opportunities for employees to become actively involved with community programs, events, and agencies through the giving of time and financial support.

Anchor QEA has a tradition of supporting non-profit organizations that provide service to people and the environment—our contributions are provided through monetary donations, volunteer efforts, fundraising events, and donations of materials toward causes or events. Our corporate **matching gift program** encourages giving on the individual level, through Anchor QEA’s offer to match monetary donations made by employees to 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations. In 2022, we matched over \$40,000 of employee donations.

A dedicated **Community Service Committee** plans special events throughout the year and finds opportunities for community involvement and charitable contributions. Each year, in the fall, the committee organizes a company-wide campaign that encourages staff to find charitable organizations with missions that are important to them and volunteer time. Each March, the company sponsors a company-wide fundraising campaign where teams work together to raise money to support local charities. Not only do these campaigns inspire staff to support their local communities, but they also bring staff together for a common goal.

We have made financial donations to over 75 organization in 2022 including:



Poshard Foundation for Abused Children



Traditionally, Anchor QEA staff in offices across the country come together at the end of the year to support the exceptional work of non-profits and charitable organizations during our annual, companywide Holiday Giving campaign. The end of the year invites reflection on what matters most, including the importance of helping others.

To facilitate efforts both meaningful and locally relevant, each office selects its own focus for Holiday Giving; however, all efforts share a dedication to Anchor QEA’s mission to “improve the environment and our communities by solving challenging problems together, with integrity and vibe.”

Holiday Giving typically bookends the season, beginning in December and carrying over into the new year. Offices around the country contribute to a variety of causes by providing for families experiencing homelessness, offering support to victims of domestic violence, ensuring children of families in need experience the joy of receiving gifts over the holiday season, and deepening ties with neighbors through a community center charity breakfast.





## Direct Community Measures

### Volunteer Grant Program

Anchor QEA provides financial support for up to two employees each year to spend their vacation volunteering through the Volunteer Grant Program. The Community Service Committee reviews proposals from employees stating where they want to go, what they want to do, and why they are passionate about the cause. The selected employees then share their experiences with coworkers through photographs and blog posts.

As an example, Anchor QEA funded a trip to Guatemala as part of the Volunteers Grant Program, which was taken by Michael Werth, a Principal Engineer from our Syracuse office. He traveled with a group of 12 people that helped build a home for a family in need, performed maintenance work at an orphanage, and participated in a feeding program in a rural village. They also brought clothing, shoes, solar-powered lights, and water filters that Anchor QEA secured through donations (some of which came from co-workers). Anchor QEA staff raised \$12,500 to support building two additional houses.

One of the families receiving a new house had many children and grandchildren living with them. The living conditions that this family endured were very difficult. Their existing home did not have a proper floor or walls, and the roof leaked when rain fell. There were only three beds between all nine people, and they struggled to purchase the necessary medicine to control the seizures that one of the children suffered from. Through the volunteer work by Mike and his team and the financial support of others, the living conditions were significantly improved for this family.

## Direct Community Measures

### Building Outdoor Classroom to Increase Kids' Time Outside

The Anchor QEA team in Asheville, North Carolina, has been excited to partner with the Ira B. Jones Elementary School community and Novus Architects, Inc., to offer pro bono services for the permitting and construction of an outdoor classroom. The North Carolina Schools Go Outside Grant was created to address the main barrier to getting kids outside during the school day: funding.

Field trips and outdoor experiences offer students opportunities to engage in hands-on activities and help foster creativity, problem-solving, independence, and engagement. With funding obtained by the school's Parent Teach Organization committee from the Go Outside Grant with considerable support from Asheville City Schools, this amazing space will provide students ample opportunities to start exploring—and learning—in a stimulating outdoor environment.



### “Chalk the Trail”: Advocating for Outdoor Connectivity in the Community

In Fairhope, Alabama, Anchor QEA was a sponsor of the second annual “Chalk the Trail” fundraiser—an event that brings together art and outdoor living by inviting families and individuals to create dazzling chalk displays on sidewalks along the eastern shore of Mobile Bay. Chalk the Trail benefits the Baldwin County Trailblazers, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving walking and biking opportunities and encouraging citizens to safely use bike and pedestrian options. Event participants received goodie bags containing pastel chalk sets, snacks, and other fun giveaways; they were then given free rein to create unique designs in their designated sidewalk areas.



Engaging community members to fill the picturesque waterside walkways with colorful, unique artwork helps further the Baldwin County Trailblazers' objectives by increasing awareness about local trails, getting individuals and families outside, and raising funds for trail maintenance and development. Connecting cities and towns ultimately creates a public appetite for sidewalks in small areas and encourages a safe, outdoor community!



## Direct Community Measures

### Internships

Anchor QEA supports student education and development by providing summer internships in environmental engineering, landscape architecture, planning and permitting, and other technical fields. Interns experience a combination of hands-on fieldwork and a defined project within their scope of study, as well as the opportunity for exposure to other service areas within our firm. There are opportunities to work with senior- and principal-level professionals, assisting with project-related tasks and gaining insight into the world of professional consulting. Interns leave with a solid understanding of environmental consulting at the conclusion of the program.

**“I was exposed to a large and diverse group of engineers and scientists. This allowed me to work on many different types of projects and learn about many different disciplines and sub-disciplines.”**

2022 Anchor QEA Intern

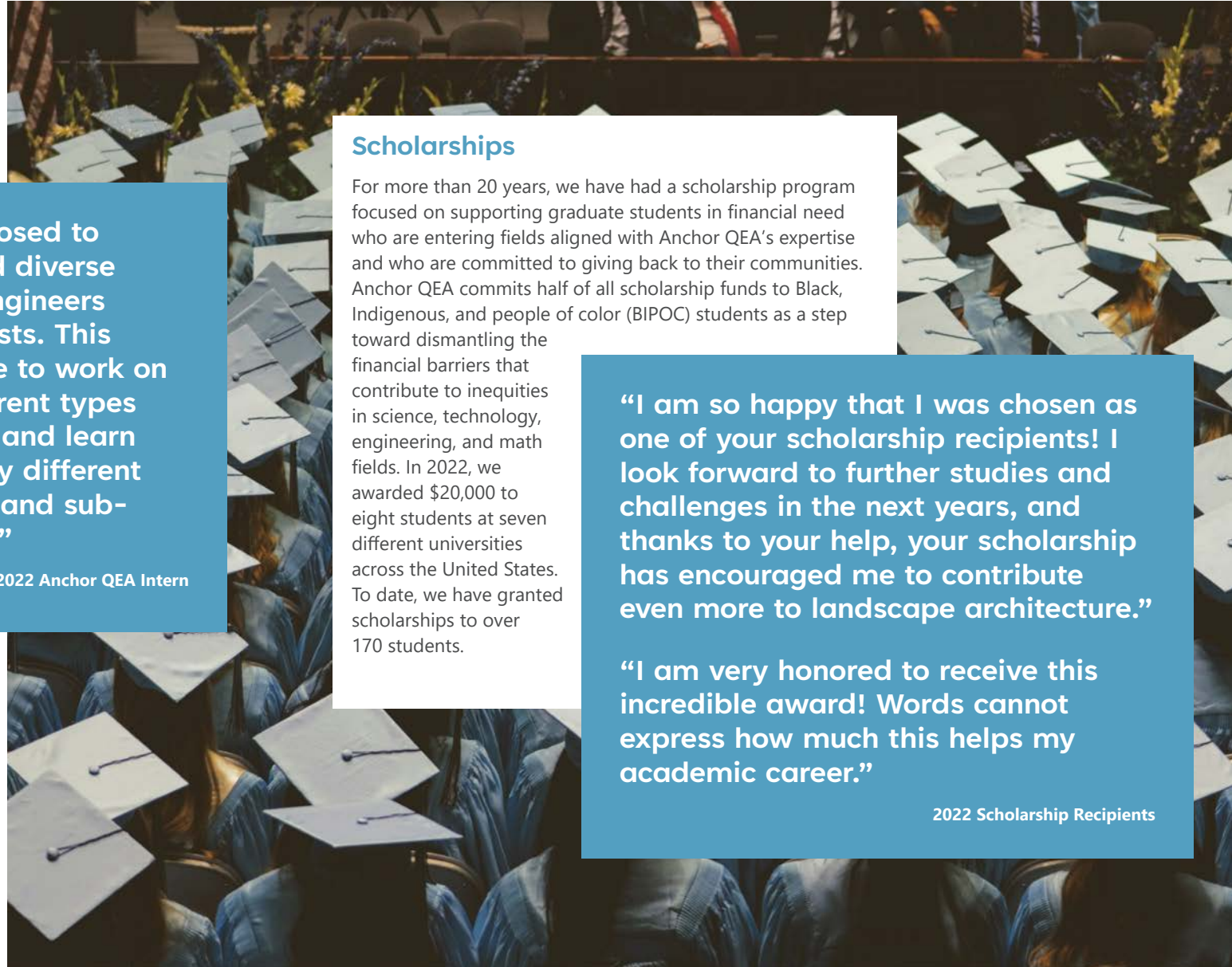
### Scholarships

For more than 20 years, we have had a scholarship program focused on supporting graduate students in financial need who are entering fields aligned with Anchor QEA’s expertise and who are committed to giving back to their communities. Anchor QEA commits half of all scholarship funds to Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) students as a step toward dismantling the financial barriers that contribute to inequities in science, technology, engineering, and math fields. In 2022, we awarded \$20,000 to eight students at seven different universities across the United States. To date, we have granted scholarships to over 170 students.

**“I am so happy that I was chosen as one of your scholarship recipients! I look forward to further studies and challenges in the next years, and thanks to your help, your scholarship has encouraged me to contribute even more to landscape architecture.”**

**“I am very honored to receive this incredible award! Words cannot express how much this helps my academic career.”**

2022 Scholarship Recipients







## Direct Community Measures

### Responsible Supply Chain

At Anchor QEA, we place immense value on producing high-quality work and maintaining our reputation for integrity and excellence. We recognize that to consistently provide high-value service we need to focus on maintaining a supply chain that is responsible, ethical, and resilient. As a company, we follow extensive ethical and responsible standards in our projects and working relationships. We strictly prohibit any form of forced labor or human trafficking in our projects and across our supply chain. To uphold our commitment and establish clear guidelines, we have an Anti Trafficking policy. The policy outlines specific protocols and procedures to ensure that our supply chain remains free from any form of exploitation and unethical labor practices. We expect every entity with which we have established a working relationship to follow the same standards and act ethically and responsibly, making our expectations clear from the first day of any engagement.

To further solidify our commitment to excellence and provide additional assurance on the

transparency and integrity of our efforts, we participate in third-party certification programs. We are members of the ISNetwork and Avetta platforms and undergo rigorous evaluations and assessments, adhering to stringent industry standards and good practices. We expect the sub-contractors we engage with for projects to comply with similar stringent standards and demonstrate relevant certifications, depending on the nature of the services and the specific project. Our engagement with such organizations ensures that we are in alignment with industry benchmarks but also highlights our proactive approach to sustainable and responsible supply chain management.

Our priority in the near-term is to establish partnerships with industry associations to find underrepresented vendors, suppliers, and subcontractors more easily, as well as participate in industry sustainability efforts. We also plan to begin to conduct diverse supplier surveys to create a supplier database and formulate supply chain human rights priorities and human rights statement.

## Direct Community Measures

### Innovation

Innovation is a strategic priority for Anchor QEA, helping us better serve our clients and communities. The culture of innovation in Anchor QEA is best captured by our core value of Service: applying our expertise to address our clients' needs through innovative problem solving and extensive technical knowledge in our specialty areas.

Environmental data management, systems development, geospatial analysis, and visualization are some of the core services we provide. Our experts deploy the latest techniques and technologies, such as GPS-enabled applications, unmanned aerial systems (drones), and remote real-time monitoring systems. We use industry-leading commercial applications as well as custom-developed tools and applications during the entire project cycle, encompassing aspects from field data gathering to web-based presentation. Furthermore, we have established a market group that focuses specifically on research and development. Its key priorities are to evaluate emerging innovations and applications that use AI and machine learning capabilities and provide recommendations on how we can best integrate such technologies across Anchor QEA.

We are particularly proud of efforts to improve methods and technologies for assessing and remediating contamination from per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other emerging contaminants. Anchor QEA is nationally recognized for our capabilities to evaluate the relevance of PFAS and the fate and transport of the contaminants on site, develop conceptual site models to understand possible sources, establish fate and transport through numerical models, and conduct feasibility studies to evaluate remedial alternatives. In 2022, we invested in an R&D project to improve our knowledge of the transformation and transport of PFAS in groundwater to allow us to support our clients and communities with their PFAS issues. We will continue to fund future R&D efforts to further our technical knowledge.



## Innovation Highlight

### ***Using Machine Learning Models to Evaluate Raptor Relocation for Red-Tailed Hawks at Portland International Airport (PDX)***

The Port of Portland has initiated a raptor management program at Portland International Airport (PDX) to mitigate wildlife-related risks, including the relocation of red-tailed hawks to distant locations. This non-lethal approach is designed to reduce the potential for human-wildlife conflicts and the safety hazards associated with wildlife-aircraft collisions. The Port of Portland's inquiry explores variables such as bird age, sex, release timing, and site distance to determine their influence on relocation success, thereby assessing the viability of this alternative method.

Anchor QEA leveraged advanced machine learning techniques, including Classification and Regression Trees with Random Forest and Generalized Logistic Regression with exhaustive model screening to create models and evaluate variable significance in predicting relocation success. The selection of the most appropriate model was based on a comprehensive assessment of fit, bias-variance tradeoff, and predictive accuracy.

Our approach outperformed previous studies utilizing Generalized Linear Regression, offering an improved predictive accuracy of the relocation operation's success and a more insightful understanding of the critical variables affecting successful relocation. As a result, we provided the Port of Portland with a robust evaluation of the raptor relocation program and recommendations to enhance its success rate.



# Environment



- 31** Environmental Management
- 32** Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 33** Sustainability and Resilience in Projects



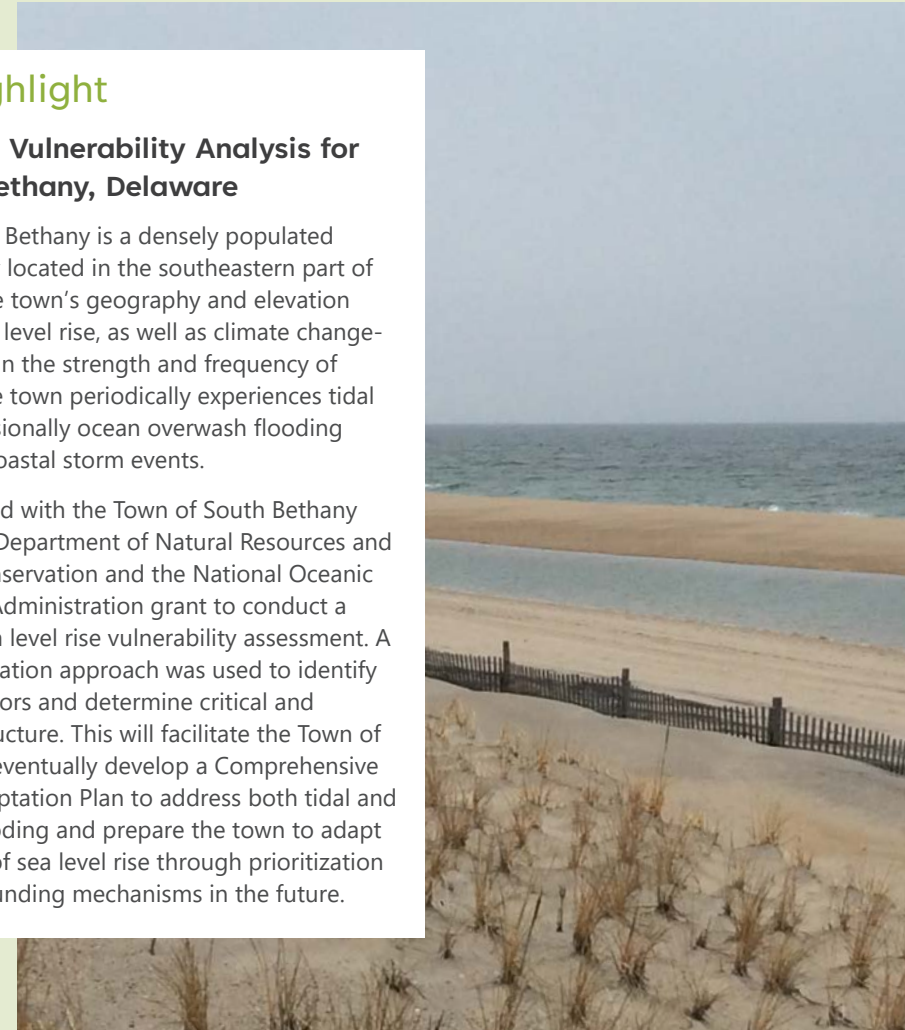
**Anchor QEA is committed to reducing our environmental footprint and helping our clients attain their goals of being better environmental stewards. We currently have several measures managing our environmental footprint, but we are committed to further reducing our impact and increasing our sustainability measures. A notable achievement is our commitment to the SBTi, pledging to evaluate our greenhouse gas emissions footprint and set greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets in line with a 1.5°C climate scenario. As we develop our 2028 Strategic Plan, we will evaluate additional services we can offer our clients to better assist them with their continuous drive for improvement.**

## Project Highlight

### **Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Analysis for the Town of Bethany, Delaware**

The Town of South Bethany is a densely populated coastal community located in the southeastern part of Sussex County. The town's geography and elevation put it at risk to sea level rise, as well as climate change-induced increases in the strength and frequency of coastal storms. The town periodically experiences tidal flooding and occasionally ocean overwash flooding during the worst coastal storm events.

Anchor QEA worked with the Town of South Bethany under a Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration grant to conduct a comprehensive sea level rise vulnerability assessment. A multi-criteria evaluation approach was used to identify the town's risk factors and determine critical and vulnerable infrastructure. This will facilitate the Town of South Bethany to eventually develop a Comprehensive Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan to address both tidal and storm induced flooding and prepare the town to adapt to the challenges of sea level rise through prioritization of resources and funding mechanisms in the future.



## Project Highlight

### Spokane River Salmon Release

Hundreds of onlookers gathered along the shore of the Spokane River during the summer of 2022 to witness the release of 146 adult Chinook salmon into the waters below Sandifur Bridge.

The Spokane Tribe and other Upper Columbia United Tribes have worked to reintroduce Chinook salmon into the upper Columbia River after the species nearly disappeared due to habitat blockage from hydroelectric dams. Anchor QEA staff joined the volunteers transferring the salmon hand-by-hand down the bank to the river.

Salmon have long been an essential part of the Columbia River Basin habitat, and their return can positively impact the health of humans, wildlife, and plant species.



## Environmental Management

Anchor QEA's long-standing internal sustainability program focuses on cultivating a culture that promotes environmental stewardship. Our sustainability committee helps guide internal environmental management efforts and integrate sustainable practices. Current initiatives are focused on waste management and recycling and environmental stewardship in the community.

Across our offices, we strive to reduce, reuse, and recycle solid waste. We have operations staff providing employees information and recommendations to reuse and recycle waste. We submit electronic deliverables, when permitted, encouraging clients to review electronic versions of documents and correspondence. We use paper created from recycled materials and promote in-office recycling of electronics, copier toner, coffee pods, batteries, and fluorescent light bulbs.

Our offices regularly organize and participate in restoration activities across the country in alignment with our community engagement initiatives. Our community engagement efforts, when possible, focus on communities that face environmental challenges. As a company, we celebrate Earth Day each year through

various environmental-focused volunteering activities. We inform our employees about our environmental management initiatives and ways they can participate with dedicated sustainability microsites.

As we continue to further our impact and sustainability measures in the coming years, we will implement new measures, including the following:

- Conducting office sustainability surveys to gain insights to specify more comprehensive environmental management initiatives and recommendations across all our offices.
- Working with our suppliers, vendors, and subconsultants to improve the sustainability footprint of our supply chain.
- Establishing sustainability training to support our environmental stewardship efforts internally and enhance the sustainability footprint of the solutions we provide our clients.



# Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Energy consumption and the associated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from our business activities are our most significant sources of environmental impact. Currently, we implement various initiatives focused on energy efficiency and reducing our GHG emissions, including the following:

- Striving to procure more energy-efficient equipment and lighting fixtures, aiming for Energy Star-certified equipment when possible.
- Utilizing cloud-enabled technology to reduce the electricity needed to power our equipment.
- Providing a remote work policy allowing employees to work remotely to avoid commuting to and from the office.

- Offering incentives for employees to commute via public transportation.
- Investing in more efficient vehicles for our employees to use when they must travel for project work.

We have committed to the SBTi and will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of our GHG emissions footprint within the next 2 years to set reduction targets aligned with a 1.5°C climate scenario. With this commitment, we will measure our impact, evaluate the significance of each source of GHG emissions, and specify targeted initiatives to minimize them. This way, we can develop data-driven initiatives and implement a successful GHG emissions reduction strategy.



## Project Highlight

### Electric Vehicle Roadmap for the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration

Anchor QEA developed an electric vehicle (EV) roadmap to transition the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MPA MDOT) to 100% zero emission vehicles by 2033.

The EV roadmap was developed as a StoryMap with embedded planning tools and emissions dashboards to help MPA MDOT make informed decisions regarding costs, infrastructure, planning, emissions savings, and electricity demand.





# Sustainability and Resilience in Projects

Our expertise across a full range of engineering, environmental sciences, planning and restoration, and analytics services empowers us to make significant contributions to sustainability through the solutions we provide for our clients. Since our inception, we have offered advanced services to help our clients better serve their communities, focused on improving resiliency, integrating natural resources management, and conserving, protecting, and enhancing ecosystems. We regularly incorporate sustainable and resilient design principles into our solutions, always seeking opportunities to provide economical and cost-effective solutions that promote environmental management and restoration, protection of human health, and community empowerment.

We design restoration solutions to improve and sustain ecosystems, providing integrated water resources, water quality, and water conservation services. Our experts conduct functional habitat assessments to support habitat prioritizations, cost-benefit analyses, and Natural Resource Damage Assessments, determining the required restoration needed to offset ecosystem impacts.

Through our sustainable management services, we evaluate remedial alternatives for environmental impacts and the long-term sustainability of a project, using environmental footprint as a key evaluation metric. The metrics considered include GHG emissions, the likelihood of environmental spills, and beneficial reuse opportunities such as utilization of dredged material for marsh creation, wetland restoration, and coastal resiliency.

We have extensive experience in evaluating nearshore marine environments, developing and implementing shoreline and coastal protection solutions, evaluating sea level rise impacts on coastal resiliency, designing and constructing coastal restoration solutions, and supporting waterfront and port development projects. Using a field evidence-based approach combined with sophisticated coastal models, we predict the vulnerability of the coast and associated infrastructure to climate-induced changes such as sea level rise, frequent storms, and flooding events. We provide solutions to our clients that will be resilient against our changing climate.

## Project Highlight

### **Peconic Estuary Climate Ready Assessment Services, Peconic Estuary Partnership, Riverhead, New York**

The Anchor QEA team developed a Climate Vulnerability Assessment (CVA) to assess the risks and vulnerabilities of the natural resources within the PEP and SIN regions due to climate change. Our work included organizing and leading stakeholder meetings and performing multi-criteria decision assessments.

Based on the finding of the CVA and the reprioritized critical lands, Anchor QEA, working with the Nature Conservancy, proposed the following:

- Habitat restoration projects focused on living shorelines.
- Natural system enhancement to promote climate resiliency and water quality improvements.



# Moving Forward

With critical initiatives already in motion or about to begin, we are excited to continue to improve in the future.

We are continuing to work with an outside ESG expert to further our PCE program that reflects our mission, vision, and core values. As with everything we do, the program's principles will focus on three areas of critical importance for our long-term sustainability—**People, Community, and Environment**. We plan to establish aggressive goals in alignment with our principles, create tactics to achieve these goals, develop and monitor performance indicators to measure our progress, and continuously adjust as necessary.

Anchor QEA's ownership and leadership is committed to supporting our employees in their growth and development and wellbeing, making an impact in our communities, reducing our company's footprint, and supporting our clients' quest to become better environmental stewards.

