

Project Selection Process and Next Steps

May 7, 2026

Equity Advisory Committee (EAC)



Puget Sound Regional Council

Breakout Room Questions

- Are you comfortable with the final tool and set of indicators?
- Do you have a preference between embedding the Opportunity Index within existing criteria or creating a stand-alone criterion?
- Are there other specific questions you think should be included, related to opportunity and transportation investments?



Goals

- Identify locations with barriers and challenges experienced by underserved communities
 - Focus on outcomes and transportation disparities rather than individual characteristics
- Develop innovative ways to assess how transportation projects are addressing the needs of underserved communities
- Align process with current federal and state requirements



Initial Indicators from Last Month



Transportation System

- ▶ Access to Jobs via Transit
- ▶ Access to a vehicle
- ▶ Sidewalk Completeness
- ▶ Historic Transportation Investments



Amenities

- ▶ Proximity to Healthy Food
- ▶ Proximity to Parks
- ▶ Proximity to Medical Care
- ▶ Proximity to Libraries



Housing

- ▶ Homeownership
- ▶ Renter Cost Burden
- ▶ Home Value
- ▶ SNAP or Public Assistance Income



Economic

- ▶ Poverty
- ▶ Unemployment Rate
- ▶ High School Graduation Rate
- ▶ Access to the Internet



Indicator Feedback

- Consider Living Wage Jobs, not just any jobs
- Consider access to paratransit and other ADA services if replacing disability
- Home Value is a difficult indicator to include
- Consider housing vouchers as a possible indicator



Recommended Final Indicators



Transportation System

- ▶ Access to Living Wage Jobs via Transit
- ▶ Access to a vehicle
- ▶ Sidewalk Completeness
- ▶ Historic Transportation Investments
- ▶ Access to Paratransit and ADA service



Amenities

- ▶ Proximity to Healthy Food
- ▶ Proximity to Parks
- ▶ Proximity to Medical Care
- ▶ Proximity to Libraries



Housing

- ▶ Homeownership
- ▶ Renter Cost Burden
- ▶ Housing Vouchers
- ▶ SNAP or Public Assistance Income

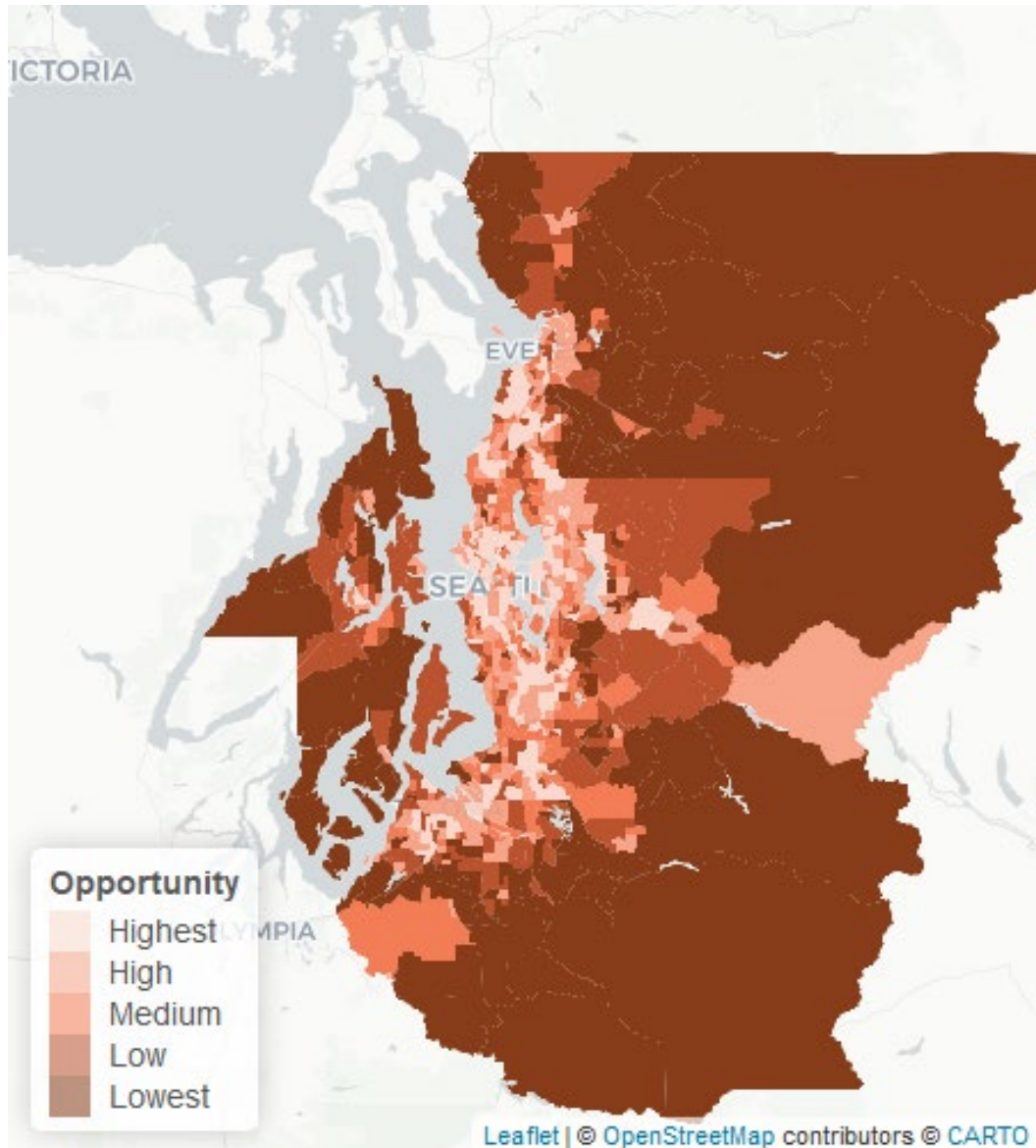


Economic

- ▶ Poverty
- ▶ Unemployment Rate
- ▶ High School Graduation Rate
- ▶ Access to the Internet
- ▶ Transportation Revenue Potential



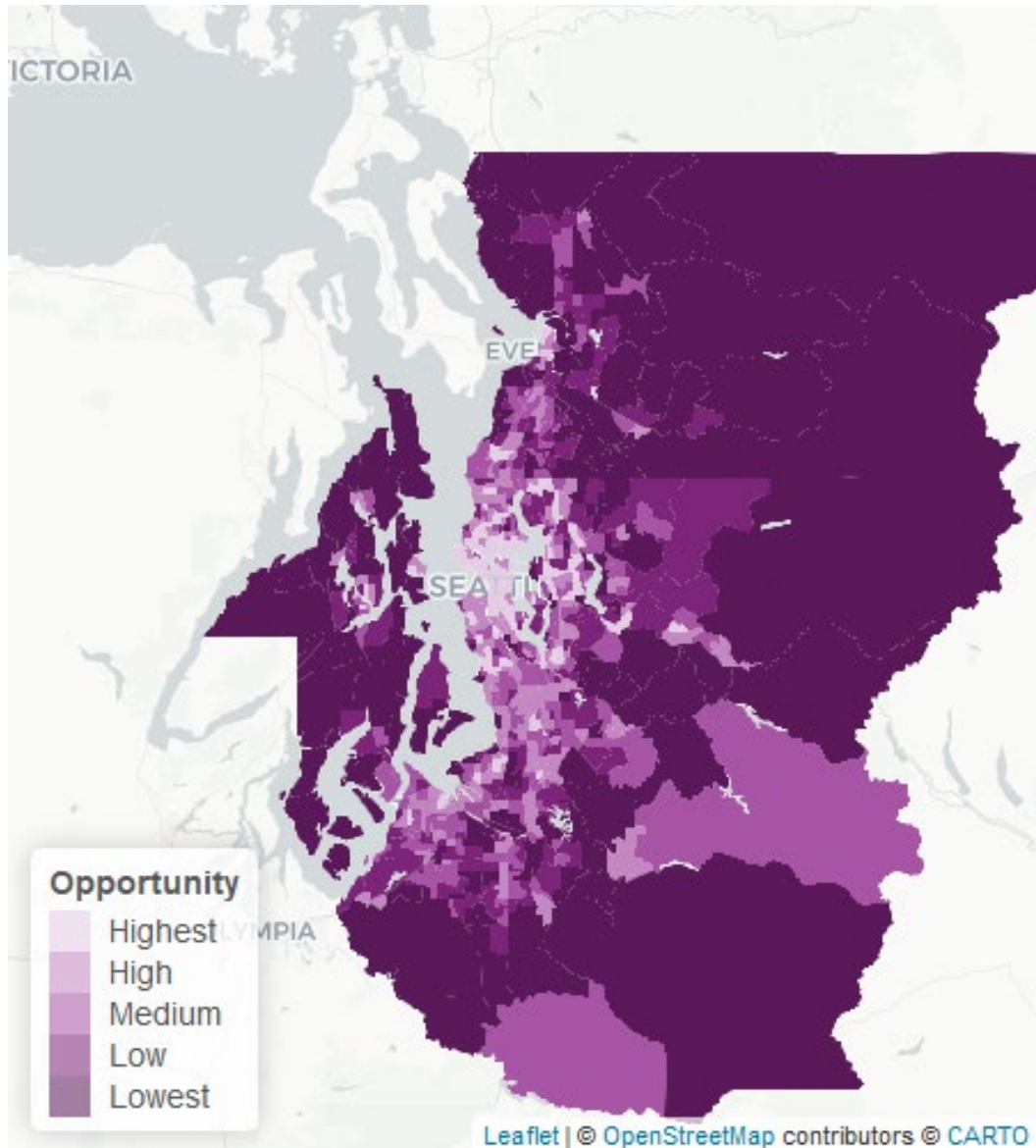
Recommended Transportation System Index



The summation of the staff recommend five (5) indicators combined into one value. The darker the color in the map, the higher the need



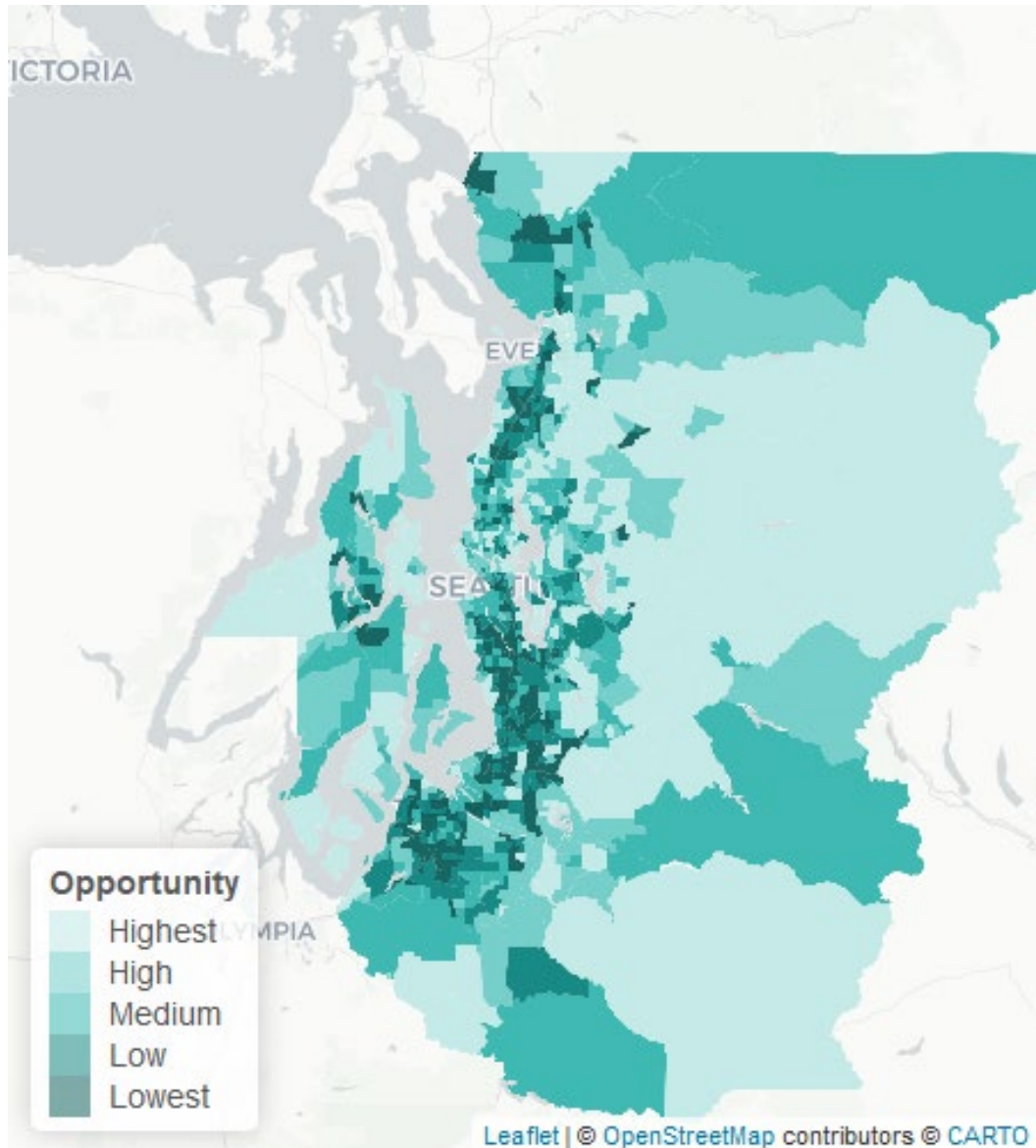
Recommended Amenity Indicators



The summation of the staff recommend four (4) indicators combined into one value. The darker the color in the map, the higher the need



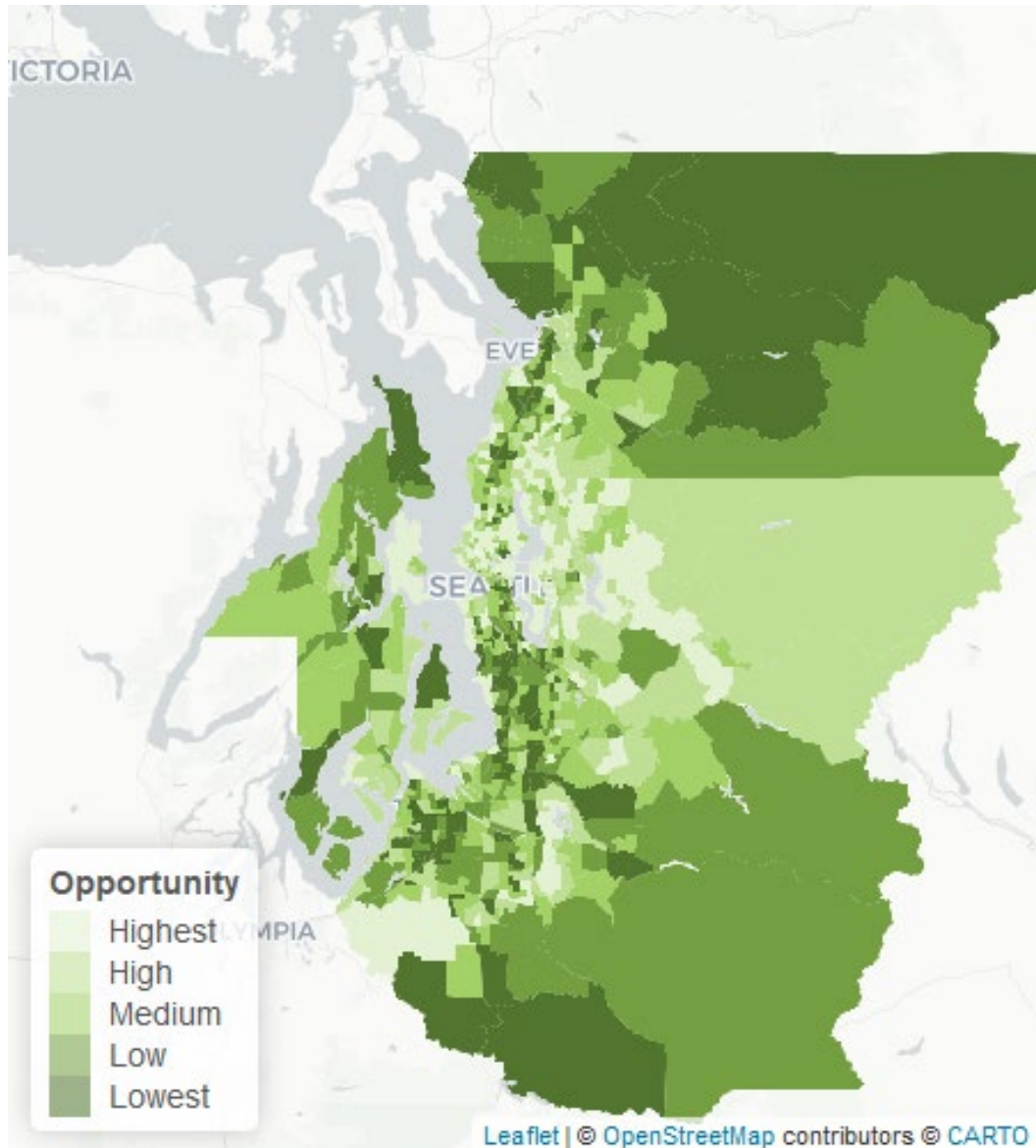
Recommended Housing Indicators



The summation of the staff recommend four (4) indicators combined into one value. The darker the color in the map, the higher the need



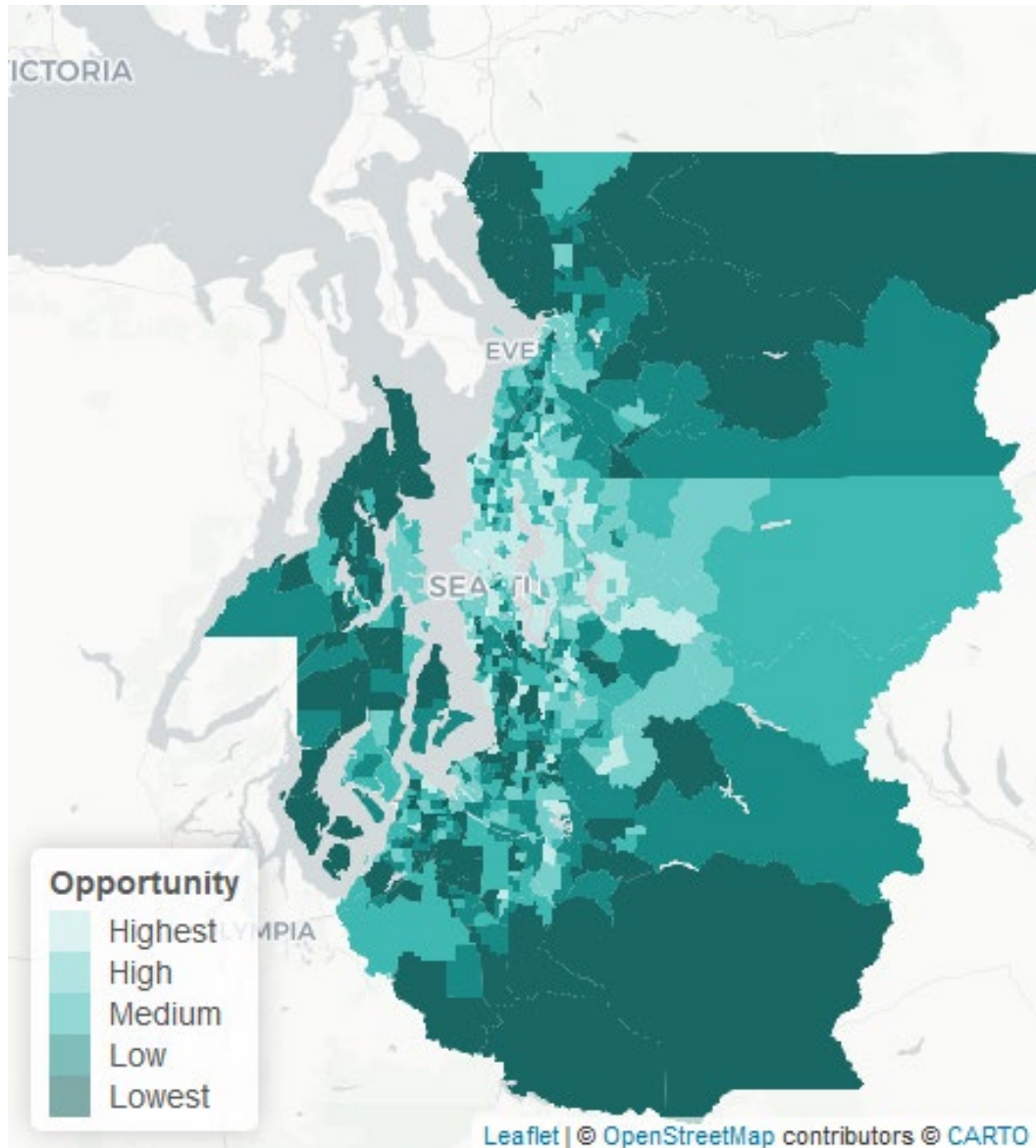
Recommended Economic Indicators



The summation of the staff recommend five (5) indicators combined into one value. The darker the color in the map, the higher the need



Recommended Final Index



The summation of the staff recommended eighteen (18) indicators combined into one value. The darker the color in the map, the higher the need



Questions



Project Selection Overview

- PSRC distributes funding from the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration for priority transportation projects
- Regional competitions support larger scale investments
- Countywide competitions support more local improvements and community areas
- Transit funding supports various transit agency capital needs, with a portion focused on supporting specific community areas
- Projects must first come from a local planning process



Funding Process

Step 1: Agency Planning

Cities, counties, ports, transit agencies, state agencies, tribal governments

-- develop projects as part of a comprehensive planning process

Step 2: Projects Submitted to PSRC

Projects meeting eligibilities for the federal funding programs -- and consistent with PSRC's policies and criteria -- are submitted into the competition

Wide variety of project types -- roadway, signals, freight, transit, bike/ped, alternative fuels, etc.

Step 3: PSRC's Competition

PSRC staff score projects based on the adopted criteria

PSRC funds matched with local, other funds -- projects must be able to use the federal funds within the specified time period



Eligible & Ineligible Projects

- Eligible projects:
 - Capital transportation projects
 - Roadway improvements – paving, signals, lanes, guardrails, etc.
 - Bicycle lanes, sidewalks, trails
 - Transit stations, buses, etc.
- Not eligible:
 - Transit service or operational details (for example, hours, route details, etc.)
 - Enforcement, staffing, etc.



Framework Options

Exploring two approaches for the new project selection process

1. Option 1: Opportunity Index woven throughout all criteria

- Update criteria with Opportunity Index
- Opportunity related questions woven into different sections

2. Option 2: Opportunity Index as stand-alone criterion

- Update criteria with Opportunity Index
- Opportunity related questions included in a separate section
 - Allows for the option to address new topics



A photograph of a modern transit station. A white train is stopped at the platform on the left. On the right, three cyclists wearing helmets and jackets are standing with their bicycles. The ceiling is decorated with colorful, abstract art pieces, including a large purple and pink fish-like sculpture. The text "Option 1: Opportunity Index woven throughout all criteria" is overlaid in white on the image.

Option 1: Opportunity Index woven throughout all criteria

Project Evaluation Criteria

Project evaluation criteria:

- Development of Centers
- Circulation, Mobility and Accessibility
- Outreach and Displacement
- Safety
- Air Quality / Climate Change



Option 1: Woven throughout all criteria

- One question in each criteria that will explore how projects serve communities in a Low / Lowest area on the Opportunity Index
- On either the full Index or within one of the four categories

CRITERIA
Development of Centers
Circulation, Mobility and Accessibility
Outreach and Displacement
Safety
Air Quality / Climate Change



Option 1: Woven throughout all criteria

Example Questions:

- How will the project improve access to living wage jobs for residents living in areas of Low Opportunity
- How will the project address disparities or gaps in the transportation system in areas of Low Opportunity
- How will the project improve safety in areas of Low Opportunity

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Option 1: Woven throughout all criteria

- Pros of Option 1:
 - Encourages consideration of improving opportunity for underserved areas as foundational across criteria
 - Similar to previous process
- Cons of Option 1:
 - Within each criterion, one question among many
 - Questions must align with topic areas of current criteria (e.g., safety)

CRITERIA
Development of Centers
Circulation, Mobility and Accessibility
Outreach and Displacement
Safety
Air Quality / Climate Change



A photograph of a modern transit station. A white train is stopped at the platform on the left. Three cyclists are on the platform on the right. The ceiling is decorated with colorful, abstract art. The text "Option 2: Opportunity Index as stand-alone criterion" is overlaid in white.

Option 2: Opportunity Index as stand-alone criterion

Project Evaluation Criteria

Project evaluation criteria:

- Development of Centers
- Circulation, Mobility and Accessibility
- Outreach and Displacement
- Safety
- Air Quality / Climate Change



Option 2: Stand-alone criterion

- Will include a series of questions that will explore how projects serve communities in a Low / Lowest area on the Opportunity Index
- On either the full Index or within one of the four categories

CRITERIA
Development of Centers
Circulation, Mobility and Accessibility
Outreach and Displacement
Safety
Improving Opportunity
Air Quality / Climate Change



Option 2: Stand-alone criterion

Will include the same questions dispersed throughout Option 1 - e.g., how will the project:

- improve access to living wage jobs for residents living in areas of Low Opportunity
- address disparities or gaps in the transportation system in areas of Low Opportunity
- improve safety in areas of Low Opportunity

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Option 2: Stand-alone criterion

- Pros of Option 2:
 - Improving opportunity for underserved areas is more highlighted as a stand-alone criterion
 - Provides an opportunity for additional questions
- Cons of Option 2:
 - Some overlap with other criteria
 - Becomes a separate topic, rather than foundational throughout

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Option 2: Stand-alone criterion

Example of potential additional question:

- How will the project expand access to amenities (e.g., healthy food, parks, medical care, etc.) for residents living in areas of Low / Lowest Opportunity

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Next Steps

- EAC feedback / guidance on Opportunity Index and criteria taken to Transportation Policy Board and Regional Project Evaluation Committee
- Criteria and Policy Framework for 2027 process developed
- Return to EAC in the fall for report-out before launch of competitions





Thank You!

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Puget Sound Regional Council