

Regional Economic Strategy: Equity Data and Best Practices

Equity Advisory Committee

October 1, 2026



Puget Sound Regional Council

Today's Discussion

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Agenda:

- RES Update and Equity Data Overview (35 mins)
- Breakout Session (15 mins)
- Report Out (5–10 mins)

Discussion Questions:

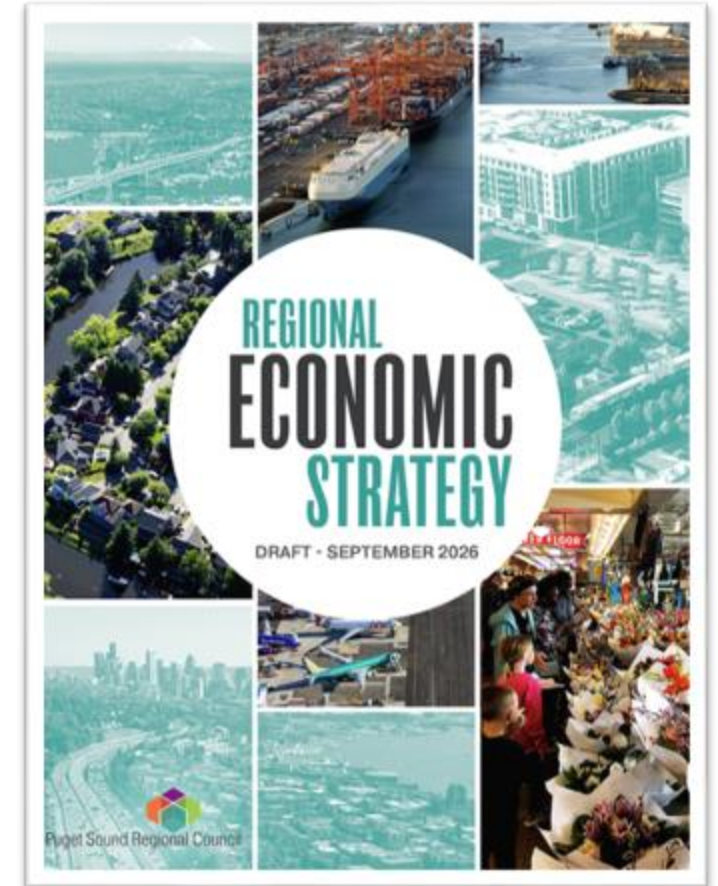
- Do the data measures presented provide useful insight into equitable economic opportunities and outcomes?
- Are there other economic development strategic areas or data measures that should be considered?



Regional Economic Strategy

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- Meets federal requirements
- Serves as the region's **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)**
- Meets U.S. EDA requirements for region to retain its **Economic Development District (EDD)** status
- Enables access to **U.S. EDA funding**
- Built on **other planning efforts**
- Shows **alignment across various efforts**



Timeline for Completion

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- **September:** EDD Board authorized release of RES for public comment
- **October: RES public comment period**
- **December:** EDD Board meets to adopt strategy
- **January:** Strategy transmitted to EDA for approval



Strategy Goals



Economic Conditions

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 Regional job losses

 Artificial intelligence

 Federal/State funding

 Business climate

 Housing/cost of living

 Talent attraction

 Tariffs/Trade

 World Cup

 Power capacity

 Major weather events



5-Year Strategic Blueprint

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Global Competitiveness

G1. Industry sectors

G2. Trade policies

G3. Innovation ecosystem

G4. Business recruitment & retention

G5. Tourism promotion

G6. Critical economic sites

G7. Freight mobility

G8. Inter-regional transportation

G9. Power capacity

G10. Business workforce needs



Business Climate

B1. Business & tax climate

B2. Regulations & permitting

B3. Economic development funding

B4. Downtown revitalization



Economic Opportunity

E1. Pre-K through 12 education

E2. Post-secondary education

E3. Local economic development

E4. Childcare

E5. Entrepreneurship & startups

E6. Broadband



Quality of Life

Q1. Growth management

Q2. Housing

Q3. Cost of living

Q4. Transportation

Q5. Access to arts & culture

Q6. Health & natural resources

Q7. Disaster preparedness

Focus of Local Economic Development

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Data from local Comprehensive Plan Economic Development Elements



Implementation

- RES identifies **existing and ongoing efforts** that are advancing strategies
- Flexibility to **include new initiatives and programs** over the period
- Designed to support **implementation by many partners**

Implementation Partners

- PSRC
- Chambers of Commerce
- Ports
- Workforce development
- Educational institutions
- Industry sector organizations
- Businesses
- Foundations
- Associate Dev. Orgs. (ADOs)
- Department of Commerce
- Economic development orgs.
- Local jurisdictions

Challenge Seattle

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Keeping Puget Sound Strong: A Regional Plan for Jobs and Opportunity

- Released on September 14
- Focus on business and tax climate, regulations and permitting, regional industries, workforce needs
- Aligned with the RES

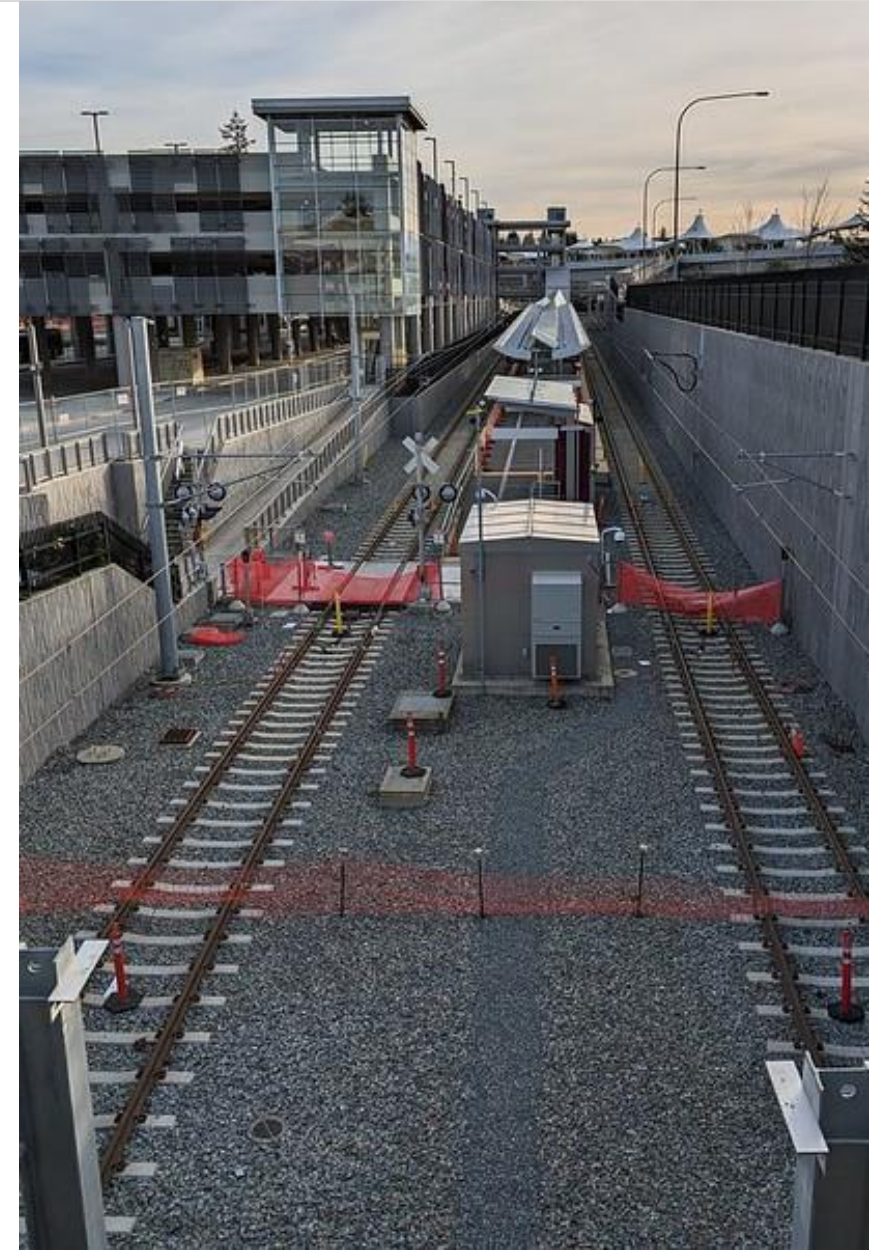
Playbook for Puget Sound Mayors

- Guide for local jurisdictions to create a culture of partnership



Goal: To establish tools and resources to help PSRC and local partners identify equity challenges and strategies related to their economic development work.

- Identify ways to better measure economic equity in terms of economic opportunity and outcomes for regional residents
- Identify economic development strategies that PSRC or others in the region can undertake to improve regional equity



Inclusive Workforce Development

- *Job training, partnerships, apprenticeships, barrier reduction*

Targeted Businesses Support

- *Access to capital, incubators, TA, supplier diversity*

Community Wealth Building

- *Public investments, organizational support*

Equity in Infrastructure and Land Use

- *Anti-displacement, TOD, targeted investments*

Data Disaggregation and Equity Metrics

- *Collection, assessment, reporting*

Governance and Community Voice

- *Representation, participation*

Targeted Industry Development

- *Pathways, hiring and recruitment*



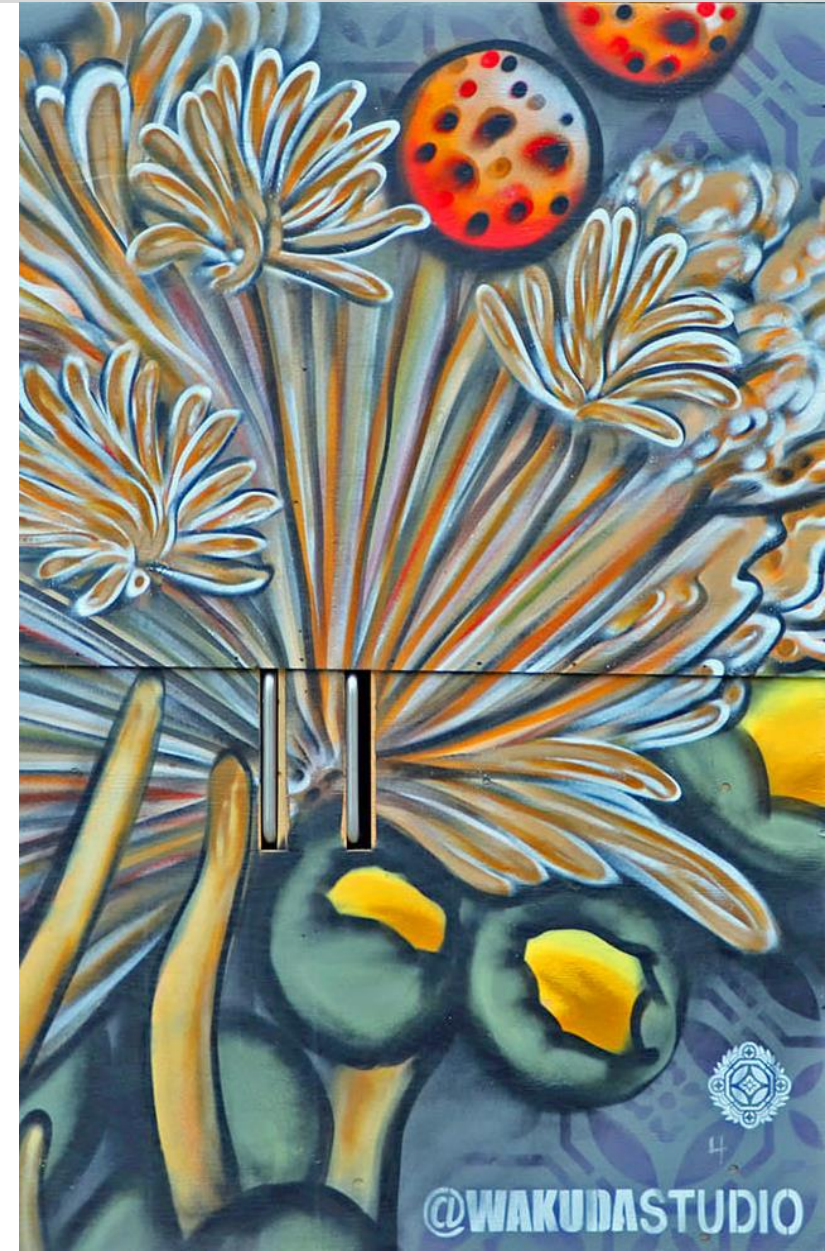
Discussed at
November 2025
RES EAC

Monitoring Equity in Economic Development

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Goal: Establish a data monitoring program to track how equitably the region's economic prosperity is shared across racial groups

- Identify 12–18 data measures to monitor economic opportunity and outcomes for the region's residents
- Regularly update and report on data measures to inform work of PSRC, Central Puget Sound Economic Development District, and key partners



Data Resources and Measures

- Existing PSRC work
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) from comparison metro areas
- Equitable economic development studies

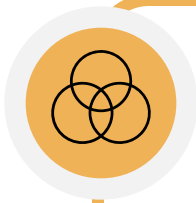
Data Requirements

- Data is available, reliable and trusted
- Supports regular updates and time series analysis
- Includes race and ethnicity detail
- Is region-specific
- Informs highest priority equity strategies



Proposed Equity Data Measures

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Background

- Household Income
- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Labor Force Participation



Economic Opportunity

- Kindergarten Readiness
- Educational Attainment
- High Opportunity Occupations
- Access to Living Wage Jobs



Quality of Life

- Homeownership Rates
- Renter Cost Burden
- Health Insurance Coverage
- Internet Access



Business Climate

- POC & Women Owned Firms
- Opportunity Zones



Global Competitiveness

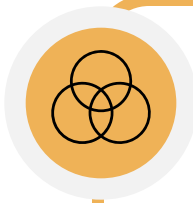
- High Opportunity Industries

Icebreaker Poll Questions



Proposed Equity Data Measures

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Global Competitiveness

- High Opportunity Industries



Background

Household Income

Poverty

Unemployment

Labor Force
Participation



What does it tell us?

Basic indicators of regional economic challenges and well-being

Why does it matter?

Highlight racial gaps and disparities in access to economic opportunity as well as directional change over time





Economic Opportunity

Kindergarten
Readiness

Educational
Attainment

High Opportunity
Occupations

Access to Living
Wage Jobs



What does it tell us?

What equity strategies does it inform?





Economic Opportunity

Kindergarten Readiness

Educational Attainment

High Opportunity Occupations

Access to Living Wage Jobs



What does it tell us?

Strong early predictor of long-term educational and economic success

What equity strategies does it inform?

Early education access and quality





Economic Opportunity

Kindergarten
Readiness

Educational Attainment

High Opportunity
Occupations

Access to Living
Wage Jobs



What does it tell us?

Attainment of (a) high school diploma, and (b) Bachelor's degree is strong predictor of economic success and higher lifetime earnings

What equity strategies does it inform?

K-12 education quality, job training, apprenticeships, college planning, financial support, barrier reduction





Economic Opportunity

Kindergarten
Readiness

Educational
Attainment

High Opportunity Occupations

Access to Living
Wage Jobs



What does it tell us?

Living wage occupations with 5,000+ projected job openings through 2034 specified by race and gender

What equity strategies does it inform?

Strategies that support people of color and women in pursuing employment opportunities in high growth living wage occupations



High Opportunity Occupations

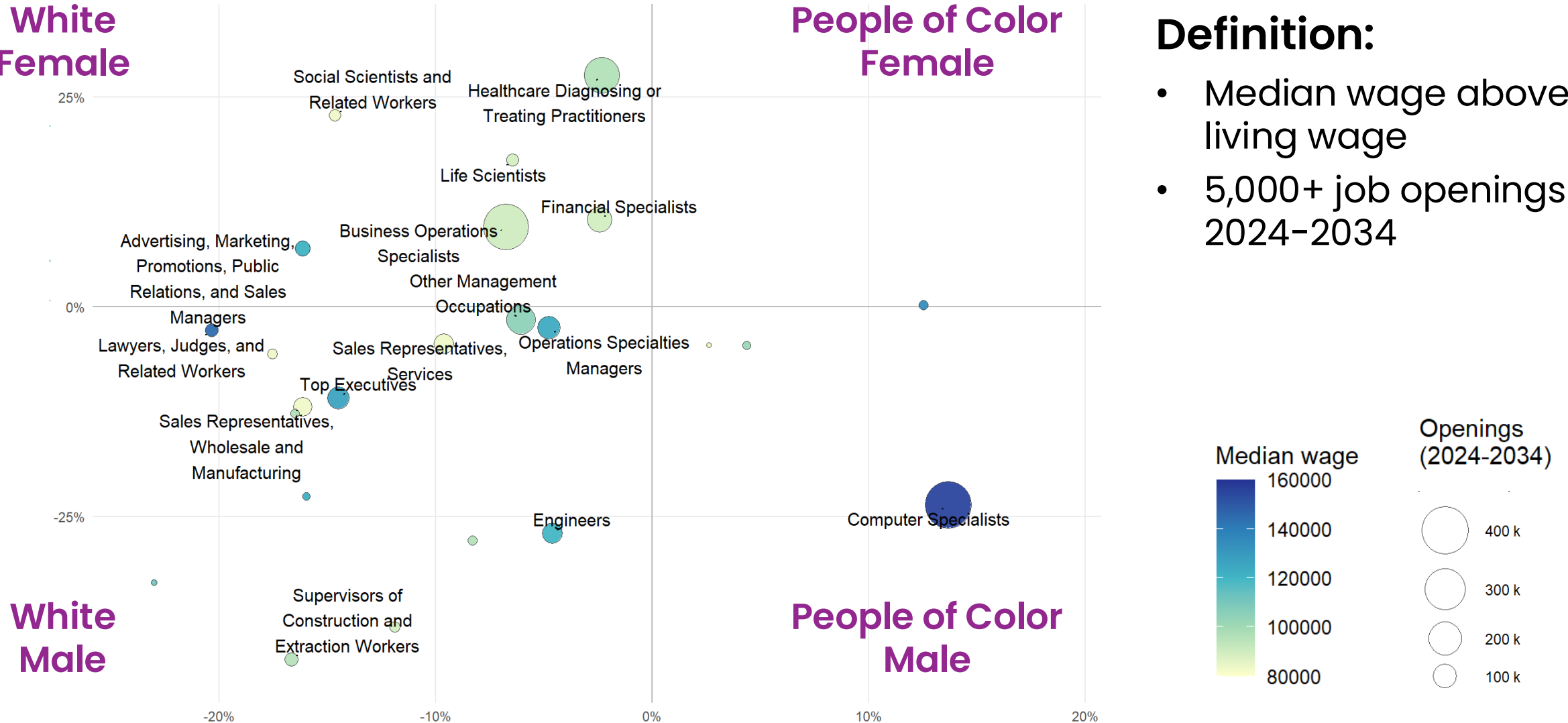
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White
Female

People of Color
Female

Definition:

- Median wage above living wage
- 5,000+ job openings 2024-2034



White
Male

People of Color
Male

High Opportunity Low Barrier Occupations

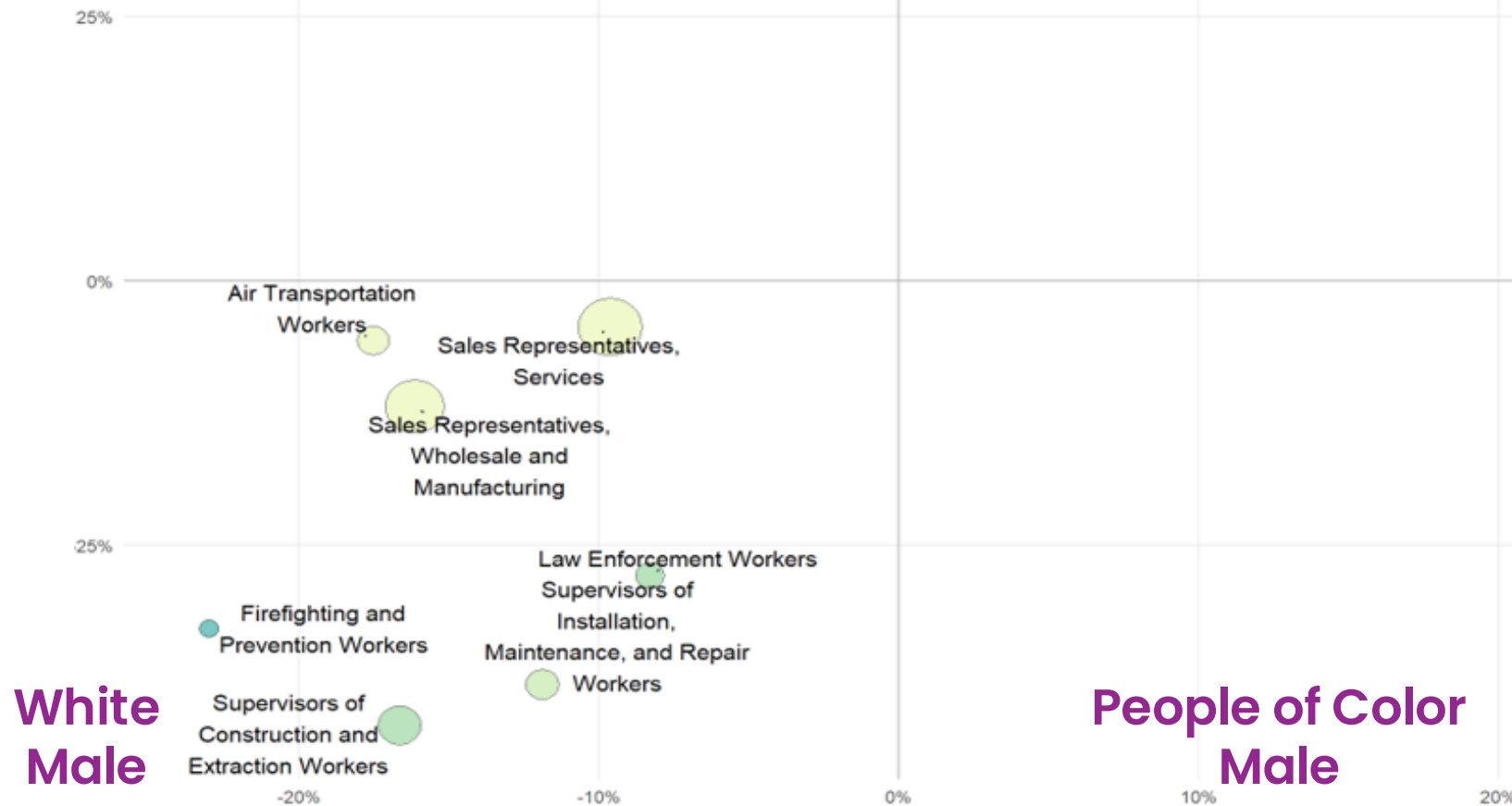
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White
Female

People of Color
Female

Definition:

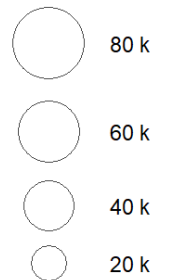
- Median wage above living wage
- 5,000+ job openings 2024-2034
- Bachelor's degree not required



Median wage

160000
140000
120000
100000
80000

Openings
(2024-2034)





Economic Opportunity

Kindergarten
Readiness

Educational
Attainment

High Opportunity
Occupations

**Access to Living
Wage Jobs**



What does it tell us?

Measure of transit and transportation access to living wage employment opportunities

What equity strategies does it inform?

Public investments to improve transit and transportation access to living wage jobs in strategic geographic areas





Business Climate

POC and Women
Owned Firms

Opportunity Zones



What does it tell us?

What equity strategies does it inform?





Business
Climate

**POC and Women
Owned Firms**

Opportunity Zones



What does it tell us?

Measure of access to economic opportunity and support for people of color and women entrepreneurs

What equity strategies does it inform?

Access to capital, business incubators, technical assistance, supplier diversity





Business Climate

POC and Women
Owned Firms

Opportunity Zones



What does it tell us?

Demographic/race characteristics of communities selected for federal Opportunity Zone 2.0 program

What equity strategies does it inform?

Federal investment, geographically-targeted economic development





Quality of Life

Homeownership
Rates

Renter Cost
Burden

Health Insurance
Coverage

Internet Access



What does it tell us?

What equity strategies does it inform?





Quality of Life **Homeownership Rates**

Renter Cost
Burden

Health Insurance
Coverage

Internet Access



What does it tell us?

Access to primary economic avenue for
generational wealth-building

What equity strategies does it inform?

Increase low- and moderate-income home
buying opportunity, homebuyer education,
financing, address discriminatory practices





Quality of Life

Homeownership
Rates

Renter Cost Burden

Health Insurance
Coverage

Internet Access



What does it tell us?

Key indicator of economic and housing insecurity

What equity strategies does it inform?

Increase very low-, low- and moderate-income rental production, public subsidy, renter advocacy





Quality of Life

Homeownership
Rates

Renter Cost
Burden

Health Insurance Coverage

Internet Access



What does it tell us?

Employed persons with workplace-provided private health insurance coverage

What equity strategies does it inform?

Employer support for employee economic security and well-being





Quality of Life

Homeownership
Rates

Renter Cost
Burden

Health Insurance
Coverage

Internet Access



What does it tell us?

Critical service to support household access to information, education and government services and business functions and activity

What equity strategies does it inform?

Public and private infrastructure investment, reduced cost access for low-income households and small businesses





Global Competitive- ness

High Opportunity
Industries



What does it tell us?

What equity strategies does it inform?





Global
Competitive-
ness

**High Opportunity
Industries**



What does it tell us?

Living wage industries with 5,000+ projected job growth through 2034 specified by race and gender

What equity strategies does it inform?

Employment pathways, employee training, employer recruitment and hiring



REAP Equity Data Project Timeline



Final Deliverable

- Monitoring report in Powerpoint format



Discussion Questions:

- Do the data measures presented provide useful insight into equitable economic opportunities and outcomes?
- Are there other economic development strategic areas or data measures that should be considered?



**Questions
or
Comments?**

Thank You!

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