

# VISION 2050



## Equity

### Briefing Paper

March 2019

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## Introduction

Between now and 2050 the central Puget Sound region is expected to grow by an additional 1.8 million people. While VISION 2040 envisions this growth as benefitting all residents of the region, growth could also exacerbate challenges currently facing historically marginalized communities.<sup>1</sup> Some of these challenges include unmet housing demand and supply, difficulty in accessing jobs, economic and cultural displacement, and inequitable access to opportunity for some residents.

The lack of equitable outcomes in the central Puget Sound region cannot be attributed to a single factor. Past government policies and existing neutral policies are some of the factors contributing to the inequitable outcomes impacting communities today. These factors and others require many solutions, some of which may begin to be addressed through VISION 2050 or continued work by PSRC or local jurisdictions.

Recent work at PSRC includes defining social equity and including it as a key outcome to evaluate the Regional Transportation Plan. The plan includes an [Equity Analysis Report](#) that evaluates the potential benefits and possible burdens of the plan's proposed transportation policies and projects on minority and low-income populations.

The VISION 2050 update presents a crucial opportunity to continue the consideration of how regional planning can result in equitable outcomes, how growth can benefit more of the region's residents, and how the region can mitigate displacement and improve access to opportunity.

In comprehensive plans and studies across the region, local governments are grappling with the same challenges. PSRC has an opportunity to provide direction and resources for local governments as they plan for the future of their communities.

This briefing paper provides background on PSRC's work on equity to date and provides additional information from peer organizations. It identifies the products PSRC will develop as part of VISION 2050 and considerations for how equity could be addressed in VISION 2050 and future PSRC work.

## Equity in VISION 2050

As the organization responsible for long-range planning in the region, PSRC has an important role in understanding and communicating the impacts that planning

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<sup>1</sup> These communities include Native and Indigenous peoples, communities of color, immigrants and refugees, people with low-income, and people with limited-English proficiency.

decisions have on communities. PSRC develops tools, policies, and actions that help policy makers evaluate and mitigate these impacts.

VISION 2050 presents an opportunity to consider equity throughout the plan, from health disparities to displacement to demographics and services for unincorporated communities.

Member jurisdictions are adopting policies and programs and creating toolkits and evaluation criteria related to equity. Many others have expressed interest in addressing social equity but require more resources to carry it out. Nationally, peer organizations are also incorporating social equity in their work programs, including providing data and analysis, adopting clear social equity objectives in long-range plans, and incorporating criteria in funding decisions.

### ***VISION 2050 Scoping Direction***

As part of [VISION 2050 scoping](#), the Growth Management Policy Board identified social equity as a critical regional issue for review and incorporation in VISION 2050.

Equity and social justice came up numerous times in scoping comments. Comments included recommendations to define equity, assess policies to see how they affect residents, and develop strategies to mitigate racial disparities and reduce economic and cultural displacement of residents and businesses.

### ***Regional Demographics***

As the region plans for 2050 it is important to understand recent demographic shifts and future demographics. Since VISION 2040 was adopted in 2008, the region's demographics have changed, in keeping with long-term trends. These demographic shifts include the region becoming more diverse and older. These and other trends are summarized in a [background trends overview](#), and in greater detail in the [Central Puget Sound Demographic Profile](#).

People of color represent 35% of the region's population, and 81% of the region's population growth since 2000. Many people of color choose to move to the region for the economic opportunities and the support and acceptance of immigrants and refugees.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> King County has long been a hub for immigrants and refugees. Since 1984, King County has received the fifth largest number of refugees in the United States. In 2010, 1,894 new refugees arrived in King County. Changing Demographics in King County, [https://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/DCHS/Services/Levy~/media/operations/DCHS/Levy/Docs/Changing\\_Demographics\\_in\\_King\\_County\\_revFINAL.ashx](https://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/DCHS/Services/Levy~/media/operations/DCHS/Levy/Docs/Changing_Demographics_in_King_County_revFINAL.ashx)

These new residents have filled critical needs in the workforce, started new businesses, and added to the region's rich cultural diversity. Women and people of color play an important role in the regional economy, especially as entrepreneurs and small business owners. Women and people of color together make up 65% of the labor force in the region. Approximately 20% of businesses in the region are companies owned by people of color, above the national average of 17.6%.<sup>3</sup>

The region's residents have among the most geographically diverse origins of any metropolitan region in the nation. A fifth of regional residents speak a language other than English at home, voicing more than 170 different languages in total.<sup>4</sup> The region has also seen growth in the number of people that report speaking English less than "very well." The number of people with limited English proficiency has grown by about 51 percent between 2000 and 2016 and account for 8 percent of the total regional population.<sup>5</sup>

Communities of color are concentrated in the more urban areas of the region, particularly along Interstate 5 and Interstate 405 corridors, with an especially strong presence in south Seattle, south King County, and central/south Tacoma (See Map 1).

Concentrations of poverty<sup>6</sup> also exist in the region's urban core, particularly along the Interstate 5 corridor in Snohomish County and in central and south Seattle, suburban south King County, Bremerton, and central and south Tacoma.

Regional shifts in poverty to more suburban areas of the region (see Map 2) follow a national trend of the suburbanization of poverty. These population shifts require many cities in the region to better understand the changing needs for transportation and other services.<sup>7</sup>

There is a disproportionate burden of poverty on Native and Indigenous peoples and people of color relative to their white counterparts. Black/African Americans (23.9%), American Indian/Alaskan Native (22.6%), and Hispanic (19.6%) communities experience the highest rates compared to the White population (8.1%).

An individual's race or income is demonstrated to have an impact on a variety of outcomes, including their health and ability to obtain housing. PSRC's [Health Briefing Paper](#) produced for VISION 2050 outlines many of the health disparities that

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<sup>3</sup> Amazing Place, PSRC (2017), p. 23. <https://www.psrc.org/our-work/regional-economic-strategy>

<sup>4</sup> Amazing Place, PSRC (2017), p. 42. <https://www.psrc.org/our-work/regional-economic-strategy>

<sup>5</sup> 2000 US Decennial Census, 2012-16 ACS 5-Year Estimates

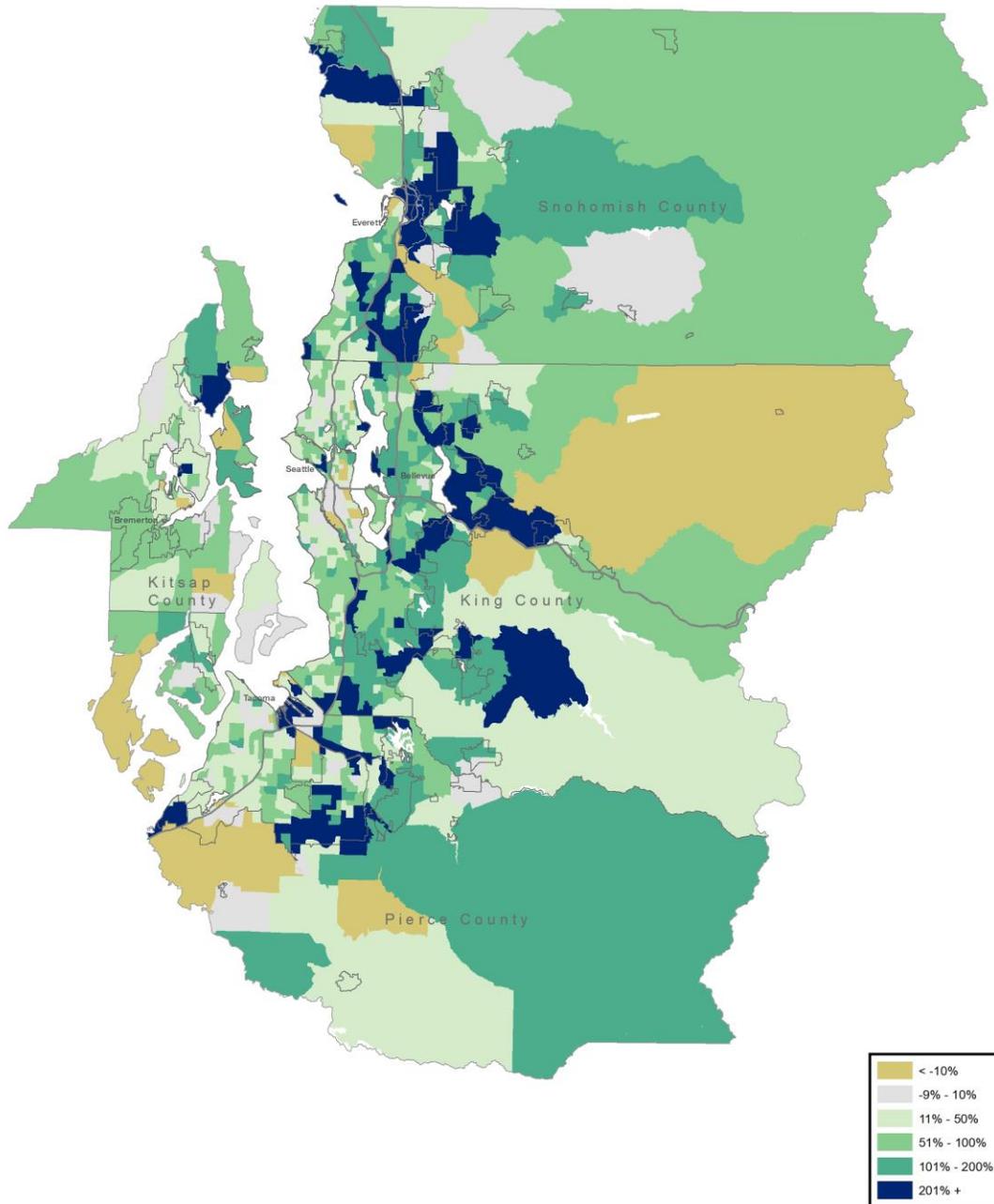
<sup>6</sup> The poverty threshold for a family of four is \$24,036. See "The 2016 HHS Poverty Guidelines" at <https://aspe.hhs.gov/computations-2016-poverty-guidelines>

<sup>7</sup> [Confronting Suburban Poverty in America](#), Elizabeth Kneebone and Alan Berube, Brookings Institution

communities of color and low-income communities face in the region. Similarly, the PSRC [Housing Background Paper](#) provides further information on housing accessibility and affordability.

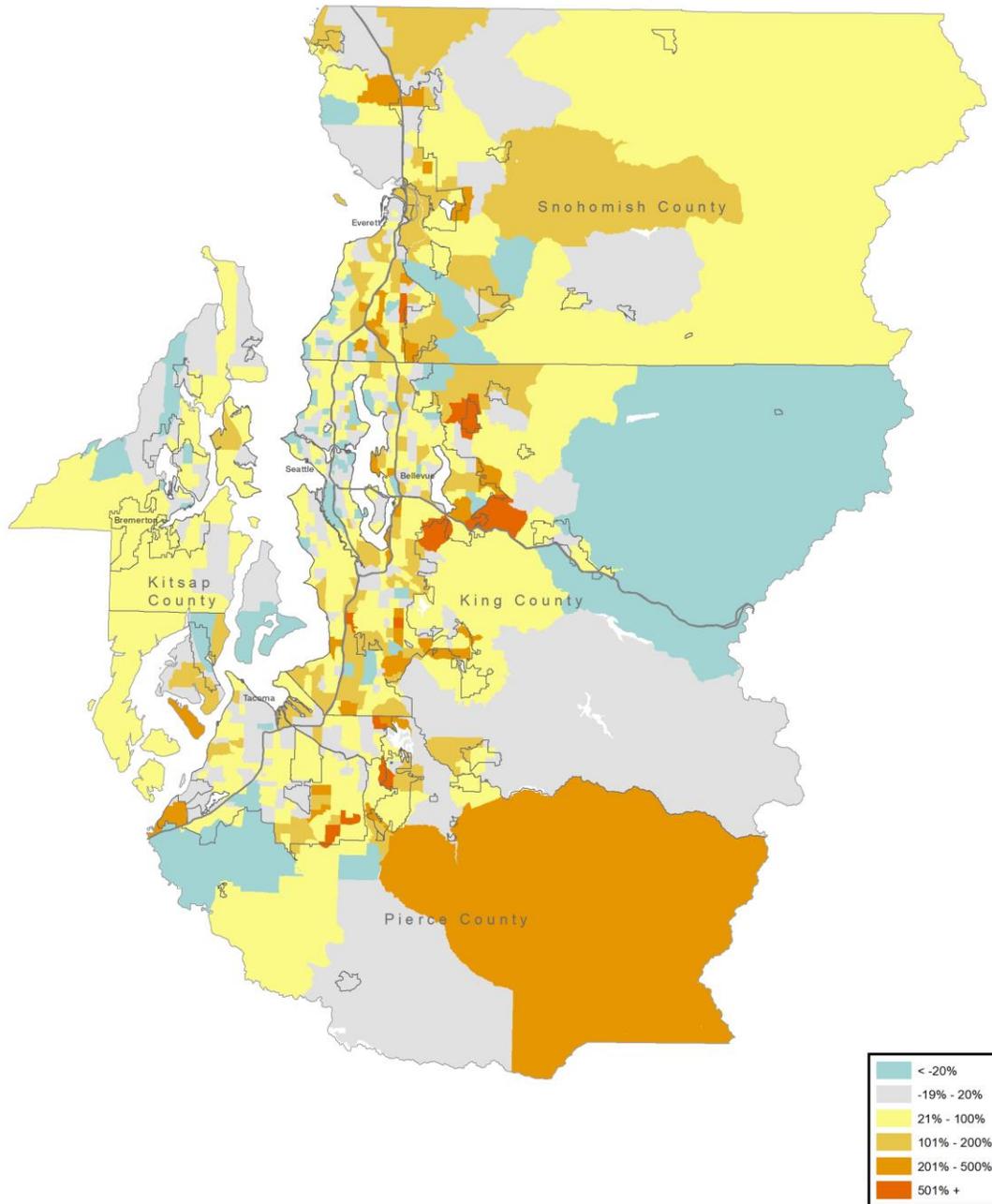
The [PSRC Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan](#), an appendix to the Regional Transportation Plan, provides additional demographic data and information on the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, youth, and individuals with limited incomes.

**Map 1: Change in Percent People of Color, Central Puget Sound: 2000-2016**



**Source: American Community Survey, 5-year estimates**

**Map 2: Change in Percent Below 200% of Federal Poverty Level, Central Puget Sound: 2000-2016**



**Source: American Community Survey, 5-year estimates**

## National and Local Work on Equity

Both nationally and locally organizations recognize the disparities that exist in outcomes for different communities. There is recognition of the past role of government in creating and maintaining racial inequities.<sup>8</sup>

One of the most widely recognized government actions that historically enforced racial segregation in American cities is “redlining,” or the delineation of geographic areas for investment.<sup>9</sup> This process, and even seemingly neutral policies that followed, have continued to enforce racial segregation across the nation, including in this region. To counteract this, many are turning to racial equity to better understand and address these past actions and the current disparities that exist.

[Race Forward](#), a national organization focused on building awareness, solutions, and leadership for racial justice, defines racial equity as both an outcome and a process. As an outcome, racial equity is achieved when race no longer determines one’s socioeconomic success; when everyone has what they need to thrive, no matter where they live. As a process, racial equity is applied when those most impacted by structural racial inequity are meaningfully involved in the creation and implementation of the institutional policies and practices that impact their lives.

When racial equity is achieved:

- People, including people of color, are owners, planners, and decision-makers in the systems that govern their lives.
- Past and current inequities are acknowledged and accounted for, and provide all people, particularly those most impacted by racial inequities, the infrastructure needed to thrive.
- Everyone benefits from a more just, equitable system.<sup>10</sup>

Many peer regions and local jurisdictions are operationalizing this work to achieve racial equity through studies and programs. The following sections provide a sample of this work.

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<sup>8</sup> Government Alliance on Racial Equity Resource Guide: [Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government](#)

<sup>9</sup> The National Housing Act of 1934 introduced redlining. Areas blocked off by redlining were considered risky for mortgage support and lenders were discouraged from financing property in those areas. This legislation was intended to ensure that banks would not over-extend themselves financially by exceeding their loan reserves, but it resulted in intensified racial segregation. University of Washington, The Seattle Civil Rights Labor History Project, Catherine Silva  
[http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/covenants\\_report.htm](http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/covenants_report.htm)

<sup>10</sup> Definition from Center for Social Inclusion: <https://www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/>

## Peer Regions

Other regional planning organizations have studies and work programs focused on equity. These include projects such as:

### ***Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Bay Area***

An [equity analysis](#) was conducted for Plan Bay Area 2040, the Bay Area's long range plan. In addition to federally required disparate impact and non-discrimination and environmental justice analyses, it analyzes the overall plan performance based on adopted equity measures. Specifically, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission adopted six equity-focused quantitative performance targets that were used to analyze the benefits and burdens of land use and transportation projects on disadvantaged communities. The performance targets are:

- Health benefits and burdens associated with air quality, road safety, and physical inactivity for high-income and low-income households.
- Share of lower-income household costs consumed by housing and transportation, compared to higher-income households.
- Share of affordable housing in areas prioritized for development, both within and outside of Communities of Concern.
- Share of low- and moderate-income households in areas prioritized for development that are at an increased risk of displacement, within and outside of Communities of Concern.
- Share of jobs that are accessible by auto and transit in congested conditions, within and outside Communities of Concern
- Share of middle-wage jobs in the region, within and outside of Communities of Concern.

### ***Metropolitan Council, Twin Cities***

The Metropolitan Council is working to advance equity in the region through investments and engagement. The [Equity in Action](#) page provides an overview of these programs and the agency's goals. Programs include the Community Choice Housing Program, which helps families find housing in areas of high opportunity and other supportive services, and the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program, which helps women- and minority-owned businesses win federal contracts. The Council has also analyzed the impact of [racial and ethnic disparities](#) in the region.

### ***Regional Plan Association, New York***

In 2017 the Regional Plan Association adopted [The Fourth Regional Plan](#) setting 20-year goals for the area's investments. Equity is an underlying feature of the plan, being one of its four key values: equity, prosperity, health, and sustainability. The agency

produced a [briefing paper](#) during plan development to highlight the impacts spatial planning has on inequalities and what the state of the region is on indicators of inequality and opportunity. The indicators included in the briefing paper are:

- Economic growth and inequality
- Racial and economic segregation
- Access to opportunity
- Quality of life and vulnerability

Each of these indicators were compared with the rest of the 10 largest metros in the U.S. using a variety of data points.

### ***Metro, Portland***

Metro adopted a [Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#) in 2016. The plan focuses on removing barriers for people of color and improving equity outcomes for these communities by improving how Metro works internally and with partners around the Portland region. The Strategic Plan is made up of several elements: the strategy itself; goals, objectives and actions to advance racial equity at the institutional and structural level; an implementation vision that includes participation of community members, Metro leaders and staff; an evaluation framework to measure efforts towards achieving the plan's goals; and an analysis and decision-support tool that will be used to incorporate racial equity into existing and future policies, programs, procedures, and services at Metro.

## **Local Work**

### ***King County***

Through the [King County equity and social justice program](#), the county is intentionally leading with racial justice to confront the historical and racial inequities that continue to exist in the community and organization. [The King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan, 2016-2022](#) envisions a future where equitable outcomes are ensured for all people in King County. The plan includes an implementation strategy with quantitative and qualitative performance targets, based on four strategies: invest upstream and where needs are greatest, invest in community partnerships, invest in employees, and do this with accountable and transparent leadership. The strategies inform goals for the major functions of the King County government, including: leadership, operations and services; plans, policies and budgets; workplace and workforce; community partnerships; communication and education; and facility and system improvements.

### ***City of Seattle***

The [Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative \(RSJI\)](#) is a citywide effort to end institutionalized racism and race-based disparities in city government. Informed by a three-year strategy, RSJI seeks to end racial disparities both in the city's governance and in the wider community through strategies, programs, and activities. The successes of RSJI so far include offering training for over 7,000 city employees on institutional racism, providing essential translation and interpretation services at all city departments, and increasing the number of contracts the city has with women and minority-owned businesses.

### ***Port of Seattle***

The [Port of Seattle's Office of Social Responsibility](#) promotes social impact, recommends policy, develops strategies for social responsibility, and ensures that the port's activities operate within a framework of equity, inclusion, and equal access. The values of the Office of Social Responsibility are:

- Endeavor to be a catalyst for equity and social impact throughout the port and in the communities served.
- Support individual and collective commitments and policies that promote social responsibility.
- Facilitate communication between the port and the region's socio-economically disadvantaged communities, minority advocacy organizations, and immigrant and refugee communities.
- Collaborate with port staff and external stakeholders to maximize the ability for people to achieve their full potential.

### ***City of Tacoma***

The [City of Tacoma's Office of Equity and Human Rights](#) implements the goals of the city's Equity and Empowerment framework. The framework makes equity a consistent guiding principle across all of the city's business and activities, and is composed of five goals:

- The City of Tacoma workforce reflects the community it serves.
- Purposeful community outreach and engagement.
- Equitable service delivery to residents and visitors.
- Support human rights and opportunities for everyone to achieve their full potential.
- Commitment to equity in policy decision making.

Similar to PSRC work on opportunity mapping, the City of Tacoma is partnering with the Kirwan Institute at The Ohio State University to develop a series of maps to assess the

conditions present in neighborhoods across the city. These maps and corresponding data will help policy makers address the most critical issues and target communities with the lowest levels of opportunity.

### ***Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department***

The [Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department Health Equity Program](#) looks to assess how health outcomes differ according to different population groups. A 2015 assessment found that health outcomes differ dramatically based on zip code within Tacoma and parts of Pierce County. Furthermore, it found that race/ethnicity, income, and education level all strongly impact health outcomes. This assessment includes a map breaking down health outcomes by zip code and will ultimately help inform how policy makers tackle the biggest issues and target the most vulnerable groups as they work to address health disparities in the city.

## **PSRC Work and Resources on Equity**

Recognizing that decisions about growth and community development are crucial in addressing equitable access to housing, services, transit, and employment, PSRC incorporates equity in its overall work program in several ways. PSRC includes environmental justice and equity analyses as part of planning, and has focused on improving its public involvement and outreach program.

### **Equity in VISION 2040**

#### ***Engagement***

Development of VISION 2040 included a robust outreach effort and equity analysis of measures for the Environmental Impact Statement. The [Environmental Justice Discussion](#), Chapter 6 of the document, includes an overview of outreach, demographic information, and an assessment of the plan alternatives to determine disproportionate impacts on low-income populations and communities of color.

Outreach for VISION 2040 included an Environmental Justice planning group, focus groups, and public workshops. The focus groups were judged to be the most effective and productive way to ensure that the issues and concerns of communities of color and low-income populations were incorporated into the Environmental Impact Statement analysis. Focus groups had a variety of findings, but the main interest of focus group participants was in the interrelationships between transportation, employment, and housing:

## Transportation

- Existing need for increased transit availability to and from low-income housing sites, current conditions lead to long commutes and other costs.
- Displacement to less dense or rural communities leads many low-income communities to experience reduced access to transit.

## Housing

- Lack of affordable housing in core urban areas, leading to higher transportation costs as people move to more dispersed locations in search of affordable housing.
- Zoning requirements restricting “missing middle” housing prevent the production of affordable housing.

## Employment

- Transit accessibility to jobs from home location.

### ***VISION 2040 Policies***

VISION 2040 includes policy direction to both guide and coordinate the development of local comprehensive plans, and to inform other regional long-range plans. VISION 2040 contains several policies and provisions related in some way to social equity. These [policies](#) appear in sections on the environment, housing, the economy, transportation, and development patterns. VISION 2040 calls for ensuring that all residents live in healthy and safe environments, preserving and expanding housing affordability, providing access to education and job opportunities, meeting diverse mobility needs, and building and maintaining a wide variety of community types to meet the needs of a diverse population.

Below are policies from the transportation and economy chapters used to inform how equity is considered in the most recent updates of the Regional Transportation Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy.

- MPP-T-22: Implement transportation programs and projects in ways that prevent or minimize negative impacts to low-income, minority, and special needs populations.
- MPP-T-25: Ensure mobility choices for people with special transportation needs, including persons with disabilities, the elderly, the young, and low-income populations.
- MPP-Ec-8: Promote economic activity and employment growth that creates widely shared prosperity and sustains a diversity of family wage jobs for the region’s residents.

- MPP-Ec-11: Address unique obstacles and special needs – as well as recognize the special assets – of disadvantaged populations in improving the region’s shared economic future.

However, most policies and strategies in VISION 2040 do not explicitly consider economic, cultural, or physical displacement of current communities and businesses in high growth areas. The Regional Growth Strategy distributes population and employment growth across the region but does not provide additional guidance on how local governments should consider displacement in the face of planned neighborhood change. Policies like MPP-DP-5 call for focusing a significant share of growth in regional centers but does not include accompanying policies to address potential community engagement or displacement of existing communities in centers and transit station areas.

## **PSRC Long-Range Plans**

### ***Regional Transportation Plan***

The [Regional Transportation Plan](#), adopted in May 2018, shows how the region intends to catch up and keep pace with expected growth through 2040. It includes investments made in road, transit, rail, ferry, bicycles, and pedestrian systems to support the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

Social equity and increasing access to opportunity were two of the key outcomes used to evaluate the Regional Transportation Plan. Equitable access to transportation includes having choices between various transportation options, ensuring that costs are affordable, and ensuring that travel times to destinations are reasonable for all people.

As an appendix to the plan, the [Equity Analysis Report](#) evaluates the potential benefits and possible burdens of the plan’s proposed transportation policies and projects on minority and low-income populations.

The plan defines social equity in this way:

“Social equity means all people can attain the resources and opportunities that improve their quality of life and enable them to reach full potential. Social equity also means that those affected by poverty, communities of color, and historically marginalized communities are engaged in decision-making processes, planning, and policy-making.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Regional Transportation Plan, PSRC (2018), p. 14, <https://www.psrc.org/our-work/rtp>

### ***Regional Economic Strategy***

Adopted in 2017, [Amazing Place](#) is a data driven regional economic strategy that identifies leading sectors and ways the region intends to sustain economic development.

The strategy has three big goals: open economic opportunities to everyone; compete globally; and sustain a high quality of life. Each goal is supported by specific strategies and initiatives to sustain and grow jobs throughout the region, for all residents.

In addition to traditional emphasis on economic development priorities such as transportation, education, international trade, and the region's business climate, the strategy includes advancing social equity and affordable housing as new areas of emphasis.

### **Other PSRC work**

PSRC produces a variety of work products aimed at implementing and monitoring the long-range plans. Since the adoption of VISION 2040, many of these work products included aspects of social equity and provide further guidance for the incorporation of this topic in VISION 2050.

#### ***Central Puget Sound Demographic Profile***

The [Central Puget Sound Demographic Profile](#) identifies geographic areas and populations of people in the region by race and ethnicity, income, age, disabilities, access to a car, and language spoken at home. The demographic profile is used by PSRC to examine impacts of plans and policies.

#### ***Growing Transit Communities***

The [Growing Transit Communities Strategy](#) calls for regional and local actions that respond to the challenges and opportunities in transit communities and represents major steps toward implementing the growth strategy in VISION 2040. The Strategy was developed in 2013 by the Growing Transit Communities Partnership, an advisory body of various public, private, and nonprofit agencies and organizations working together to promote successful transit communities.

The strategy has three goals:

- Attract more of the region's residential and employment growth near high-capacity transit.
- Provide housing choices affordable to a full range of incomes near high-capacity transit.

- Increase access to opportunity for existing and future community members in transit communities.

The Growing Transit Communities Partnership developed 24 strategies and identified specific actions for PSRC, transit agencies, local governments, and other regional partners. The recommendations address the three main goals for transit communities. As a whole, the strategies are a call to action for partners across the region to redouble efforts to create great urban places and build equitable communities around transit. Fully recognizing the strong policy foundation embodied in regional and local plans, as well as the innovative work in implementing those plans to date, the partnership makes these recommendations as a challenge to do more than is being doing today.

As part of the partnership, the [Regional Equity Network](#) was formed to focus on equitable development along the region's major transit corridors. The network convened over 40 organizations focused on equitable development, distributed \$450,000 to 40 community-based organizations (51 grants) to facilitate their participation and increase local capacity, influenced the Growing Transit Communities strategy, and deepened the discussion around equity in this regional planning process. This work was supported by a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This funding provided the resources to convene this group and distribute funding to local organizations.

### ***Planning for Whole Communities Toolkit***

The [Planning for Whole Communities Toolkit](#) is a planning resource developed by PSRC in 2014 that local jurisdictions can use to promote health, equity, and sustainability in plans, programs, and policies. The Toolkit provides information applicable for the entire region and was developed in collaboration with jurisdictions in South King County.

The Toolkit is divided into 25 resource guides describing specific tools and outlining guidance for local implementation and equity issues associated with implementation. While each resource guide is designed to stand alone, many are closely related and can be combined to create a suite of policies or programs that meets a jurisdiction's needs.

### ***Taking Stock 2016***

[Taking Stock 2016](#) is an assessment of the collective efforts of the region's counties and cities to implement VISION 2040, as viewed immediately following the 2015-2016 cycle of local comprehensive plan updates and looking ahead of the next update of VISION 2040.

Through a series of surveys and focus groups with local governments, it was revealed that many local plans address several dimensions of social equity, including some of the larger jurisdictions providing exemplary approaches. However, more work and resources are needed for all local jurisdictions to fully incorporate this topic into their planning activities. There's little statutory or regional policy guidance for local governments on social equity.

### ***TIP Environmental Justice Analysis***

PSRC integrates environmental justice and social equity considerations into the development of the [Regional Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#). The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) provides a summary of current transportation projects underway within King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties. These projects are funded with federal, state and local funds, including the most recent federal grants awarded through PSRC. All projects are examined in relation to their proximity to populations identified in the Central Puget Sound Demographic Profile.

## **VISION 2050 Equity Work**

As the region anticipates growth, PSRC is using data to have a better understanding of where this growth is going, who may be affected, and what policies could be enacted to mitigate concerns and provide the advantages of growth to all residents

PSRC staff are currently updating and developing tools that will be used to evaluate the performance of the Regional Growth Strategy alternatives during the SEPA review process. These tools will also be used to determine what policies may need to be enacted to mitigate negative outcomes through 2050 and to ensure that growth benefits all the region's residents.

### ***Social Equity Technical Support***

In spring 2018, PSRC hired consultants MAKERS and Rule Seven to assist in incorporating social equity into VISION 2050 and the agency's future planning work. Work items include interviewing regional and local organizations actively working on issues of social equity and conducting outreach on proposed equity analysis tools.

### ***Opportunity Mapping***

As part of Growing Transit Communities, PSRC partnered with the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at The Ohio State University to develop a series of maps to assess the relative access to opportunities across the region. These maps are being updated as part of VISION 2050.

To develop these maps, current neighborhood conditions, defined by broad categories such as education, economy, transportation, housing, environment, and health, are used as indicators of opportunity. The indicators for each neighborhood are added together to create an overall “opportunity score,” sorted into categories of very low, low, moderate, high, and very high access to opportunity.

This opportunity score and the associated mapping can be used to compare areas to determine where services are needed and where access improvements should be made connecting neighborhoods with low scores to those with high scores, and assess neighborhood scores in conjunction with their future growth allocations.

### ***Displacement Risk Analysis***

PSRC is developing a displacement risk analysis tool to evaluate and better understand the potential displacement pressure of growth on communities.

Displacement occurs when changing housing or neighborhood conditions force residents to move. Displacement can be physical, when building conditions deteriorate or improve, or economic, as costs rise. People of color and renters are at a higher risk of displacement.<sup>12</sup> It is known that several key factors drive displacement: proximity to rail stations and jobs centers, historic housing stock, and location in a strong real estate market.

The displacement risk analysis tool uses demographic, economic, and physical factors to evaluate the risk of displacement at the census tract level. Data is combined to create a composite index that represents the risk of displacement for a geographic area. A map will be produced to show areas at higher risk of displacement throughout the region.

This data will be used to assess how the different regional growth strategy alternatives assign growth to areas with higher displacement risk. This information may be used to consider changes to growth allocations and policies to address mitigating these concerns.

### ***SEPA Alternatives Analysis and Equity Analysis Appendix***

As part of the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), the growth alternatives will be assessed to determine if there are disproportionate impacts to communities of color and low-income populations.

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<sup>12</sup> University of California Berkeley. (2015). Urban Displacement Project. Available at [http://www.urbandisplacement.org/sites/default/files/images/urban\\_displacement\\_project\\_-\\_executive\\_summary.pdf](http://www.urbandisplacement.org/sites/default/files/images/urban_displacement_project_-_executive_summary.pdf)

In addition to this assessment of alternatives, an Equity Analysis will be included as an appendix to the Draft SEIS to provide additional information on existing conditions in the region, centers and station areas, and areas with concentrations of communities of color and low-income populations, as well as an overview of the assessment of the impacts of alternatives and mitigation strategies.

### **Engagement**

To support the VISION 2050 process, PSRC is reaching out to the public, members, and other stakeholders. Engagement efforts to date include online notices and newsletters, social media and blog posts, direct emails and letters to PSRC boards and committees, and in-person events. To include underrepresented populations, including people of color and low-income populations, PSRC has conducted and is planning additional outreach to include these communities.

PSRC continues to build on past relationships to continue engaging the community and make all outreach activities as accessible as possible. To do so, an increasing number of materials are translated into multiple languages, outreach materials are made available both electronically and in hard copy, and public meetings are held in locations accessible by transit and at accessible times.

### VISION 2050 Engagement Timeline



Past, ongoing, and future engagement opportunities for VISION 2050 with an equity focus are highlighted below.

### **Community Partners**

The Community Partners<sup>13</sup> are a group of local stakeholders convened during the update to the 2018 update of the Regional Transportation Plan that provide guidance

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<sup>13</sup> The Community Partners include: 350 Seattle, Affordable Housing Consortium Tacoma-Pierce County, Cascade Bicycle Club, City of Bellevue, City of Seattle, City of Tacoma, Downtown on the GO, Feet First, Forterra, Front and Centered, Futurewise, Healthy King County Coalition, HomeSight, HopeLink, Housing Consortium of Everett and Snohomish County, Housing Development Consortium of

to PSRC on outreach to communities, identify opportunities for collaboration with community groups, and inform other aspects of the plan.

PSRC has continued to meet periodically with the Community Partners to update VISION 2050. Discussion items to date have included Displacement Risk Analysis and Opportunity Mapping, community outreach, and the equity work plan and consultant.

Many of the organizations involved in the Community Partners group have submitted joint comment letters to PSRC during the scoping period and the development of alternatives.

### **Peer Networking Series**

PSRC hosts the [TOOLBOX Peer Networking Series](#), a series focused on best practices and resources for local planning and implementation. During the VISION 2050 update, PSRC is conducting quarterly three-hour work sessions to provide community members and local practitioners an opportunity to explore topics in depth. Information gathered during breakout discussions is communicated back to PSRC's Growth Management Policy Board.

These free events provide opportunity to learn more information about specific topics related to VISION 2050, become familiar with tools and resources, and discuss these topics in facilitated breakout groups.

Sessions have included housing availability and affordability, land use and transportation technology, and social equity.

The December session focused on social equity included presentations from guest experts and round table discussions to consider how regional planning efforts can promote equity at the local level. Presentations and materials shared at the work session are available [on the Toolbox web page](#).

Four themes were consistent throughout the small group discussions: 1) The need for data on displacement and other demographic changes to better inform more equitable planning; 2) The need for resources and tools to support local equity work, especially for smaller cities and towns; 3) The desire for VISION 2050 to be centered around

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Seattle-King County, King County, King County Metro, Kitsap Public Health, Metro Parks Foundation, NARAL, One America, Pierce County Conservation District, Pierce County Coordination Transportation Coalition, Pierce Transit, Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, Puget Sound Partnership, Puget Sound Sage, Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Puyallup Watershed Initiative, Regional Equity Network, Seattle Public Schools, Seattle-King County Public Health, Sierra Club Washington, Snohomish County Health District, Sound Outreach Services, Sound Transit, Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, Transportation Choices Coalition, The Nature Conservancy, The Wilderness Society, Washington Environmental Council, Washington State Department of Health

advancing racial equity and recognition of the impacts the region's growth will have on communities; and 4) The importance of working with historically underrepresented communities to ensure community voices are represented in regional planning.

### **Focus Groups**

Focus groups were conducted in fall 2018 to allow key stakeholders that address social equity issues to weigh in on proposed equity analysis tools to be applied to VISION 2050 and tactics for furthering community outreach.

Focus groups conducted in Bremerton, Shoreline, and SeaTac addressed data availability and needs, outreach techniques, and how to incorporate equity into VISION 2050.

### **Public Opinion Survey**

In early 2018 during scoping, PSRC conducted a [statistically valid public opinion survey](#) to gather feedback from residents living in the central Puget Sound region. The survey asked about growth and growth-related topics including housing, environmental stewardship, access to services, and regional growth management planning and coordination. In addition to English, the survey was available in Spanish and Chinese – for both the online and phone versions of the survey – to include populations with limited English proficiency. A statistically valid number of Spanish and Chinese speaking households were contacted to ensure responses were representative of the sample

In addition to the statistically valid survey, an [online survey](#) was made available during plan development. The online survey included the same questions as the statistically valid survey and was made available in Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Korean, and Vietnamese in addition to English.

To distribute the survey to low-income and minority populations, PSRC leveraged contacts at community-based organizations. The survey was also available in printed format as requested.

In the seven months it was open, the online survey received more than 2,000 unique responses.

### **Future Outreach**

In spring 2019 PSRC will host a multi-part event to engage high school students in the planning process. To find interested school districts, teachers, or other venues for participation, PSRC reached out to networks of educational professionals, local staff and elected officials, and the Community Partners.

PSRC may conduct in-person comment opportunities during the draft plan. These listening sessions will be geographically dispersed and take accessibility needs into consideration when being developed.

## **Considerations for VISION 2050**

This section provides questions for the Growth Management Policy Board to consider in the development of VISION 2050.

### **Defining Equity**

PSRC's 2018 Regional Transportation Plan uses a definition of social equity to evaluate the plan. Equitable access to transportation in the plan includes having choices between various transportation options, ensuring that costs are affordable, and ensuring that travel times to destinations are reasonable for all people.

To recognize the impacts race and institutional and structural racism have had on existing disparities, many national organizations, peer regions, and PSRC member jurisdictions are leading with racial equity. Racial equity is both an outcome and a process for achieving inclusive representation in the planning and decision-making process. Racial equity acknowledges and accounts for past inequities and provides universal benefit from a more just, equitable system.<sup>14</sup>

Focusing on racial equity provides the opportunity to introduce a framework, tools, and resources that can also be applied to other areas of marginalization.<sup>15</sup>

### **Question for VISION 2050**

Is there any additional information needed to center racial equity in VISION 2050?

### **Incorporation of Equity in VISION 2050**

VISION 2040 has four parts: Part 1. Toward a Sustainable Environment: A Framework for the Future; Part II. Regional Growth Strategy; Part III. Multicounty Planning Policies; and Part IV. Implementation.

References to equity are dispersed throughout these topical chapters, including in [goals and multicounty planning policies](#).

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<sup>14</sup> Center for Social Inclusion: <https://www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/>

<sup>15</sup> Government Alliance on Racial Equity -- <https://www.racialequityalliance.org/about/our-approach/race/>

### **Question for VISION 2050**

How should equity be addressed in separate sections of the plan?

#### ***Regional guidance on social equity***

VISION provides regional guidance for local governments on setting local priorities and laying the groundwork for actions to achieve the regional growth strategy. Previous work, including Taking Stock 2016, identified that many local jurisdictions require more resources to fully incorporate equity into local plans.

### **Question for VISION 2050**

What do local jurisdictions need to know to better incorporate equity into local plans?

#### **Equity at PSRC**

The direction to further incorporate equity in PSRC work extends past the development of VISION 2050. Following direction from members, national best practice, and continued understanding of disparities that exist, equity will continue to be an important part of PSRC's work program. PSRC will continue to work with its members and stakeholders to better understand how regional planning can contribute to equitable outcomes for all of the region's residents.