GUIDANCE AND RESOURCES FOR POPULATIONS SERVED, HEALTH AND EQUITY

As adopted in the 2018 Policy Framework for PSRC's Federal Funds, the project evaluation criteria for PSRC's 2018 project selection process address how projects may improve health, equity, safety, mobility, etc. for various populations within the project area.

Project sponsors are asked to identify the populations and user groups within their project area, and identify how the project is providing a benefit to those populations. Benefits may be improved access to jobs and services, a safer transportation route, reduced emissions to a highly impacted community, or other benefits.

PSRC has provided an interactive web map to assist sponsors in answering these questions. The web map will allow sponsors to zoom to the geographic area in which their project is located, and choose from a variety of data layers, including the following:

- PSRC's regional demographic profile, with information on the following populations:
  - Minority populations
  - Households in poverty
  - Elderly populations (age 65+)
  - Disabled populations
- The top 10% of "highly impacted communities" from an air quality and environmental justice perspective, as identified by the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency
- Growing Transit Communities Opportunity Index
- Designated T-1 and T-2 freight routes

Each of these layers is further described below, with some additional guidance for how sponsors might utilize the information provided in the web map. The web map also provides information on the location of regionally designated growth and manufacturing/industrial centers and the federally designated rural/urban boundary, as an additional resource.

Please note: this is not a comprehensive inventory of all data that may be available to sponsors regarding various populations within their project area, or data that may assist sponsors in addressing how their project improves health and equity. Sponsors are welcome to provide more community-specific data if it is available, and are encouraged to contact their county health departments or other local resources for further assistance. For example, King County has tools and resources available such as the Equity Impact Review tool and maps featuring key demographic data within the county related to equity. Pierce County also has Health Equity Maps available, related to a variety of measures including income and environmental health.

PSRC Web Map Data Layers

Regional Demographic Profile
In January 2016, PSRC updated the "Central Puget Sound Regional Environmental Justice Demographic Profile." The profile includes key demographic data on minority and low-income populations in the region, as well as other populations of interest such as the elderly and disabled. The data is based on the 2010 U.S. Census and the 2014 American Community Survey.

The web map layers indicate percentages of each population within U.S. Census block groups:

- Percentage of minority populations within a given Census block group; as a reference point, the region-wide total of minority populations is 33.6 percent
- Percentage of households within a given Census block group above the federal poverty threshold; as a reference point, the region-wide poverty rate is 11.3 percent
- Percentage of disabled populations within a given Census block group; as a reference point, the region-wide total is 11.4 percent
- Percentage of elderly populations (defined as age 65 and older) within a given Census block group; as a reference point, the region-wide total is 11.7 percent

Sponsors should review the data in the web map to determine if their project impacts areas with any of the populations above, and if so identify how the project might provide benefits to these populations. For example, is the project improving access to jobs or services, improving safety, providing additional modes, reducing emissions of air pollutants, or providing other benefits?

Highly Impacted Communities

The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency has defined highly impacted communities as "geographic locations characterized by degraded air quality, whose residents face economic or historic barriers to participation in clean air decisions and solutions." In 2014, the agency conducted a screening exercise to identify these communities using the following criteria:

- Diesel pollution
- Household income
- Health sensitivity
- Industrial density
- Race
- Limited English proficiency
- Primary wood burning households

The web map layer identifies the top 10% of Census blocks meeting the highest number of total criteria above. Sponsors should review the data in the web map to determine if their project impacts any of these areas, and if so identify how the project might improve health conditions for these populations. For example, if the project has the potential to reduce air pollutant emissions, particularly from diesel sources. This could be the result of a reduction in freight truck idling, reduction of overall vehicle miles traveled, the introduction of alternative fueled vehicles, etc.

More information on this topic may be found on the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency's website at: http://www.pscleanair.org/documentcenter/view/2323.

Growing Transit Communities Opportunity Index

As part of the Growing Transit Communities program, a geographic analysis of opportunity in the Puget Sound region was conducted, analyzing factors such as housing and neighborhood quality, education, jobs, transportation and health. A series of maps were created illustrating communities where opportunities were both high and low related to these factors. These maps focus solely on the urban, rather than the rural area, due to availability of data.

The web map provides data on the Comprehensive Opportunity Index, which is the compilation of all five factors. Areas are identified as ranging from very low to very high opportunity. Sponsors should review

the data in the web map to determine if their project impacts areas of moderate or below opportunity, and if so identify how the project might improve opportunity for these locations. For example, if the project is improving access for these communities to jobs and/or services, improving safety or providing additional modes, reducing emissions of air pollutants, etc.

More information on the Opportunity Mapping may be found [here](#).

Freight Routes
The web map identifies state-designated T-1 freight routes, defined as corridors carrying more than 10 million tons per year, and T-2 freight routes, defined as corridors carrying between 4 to 10 million tons per year. Sponsors may identify if their project is on or affects one of these routes, and if the project will improve the flow of freight traffic.