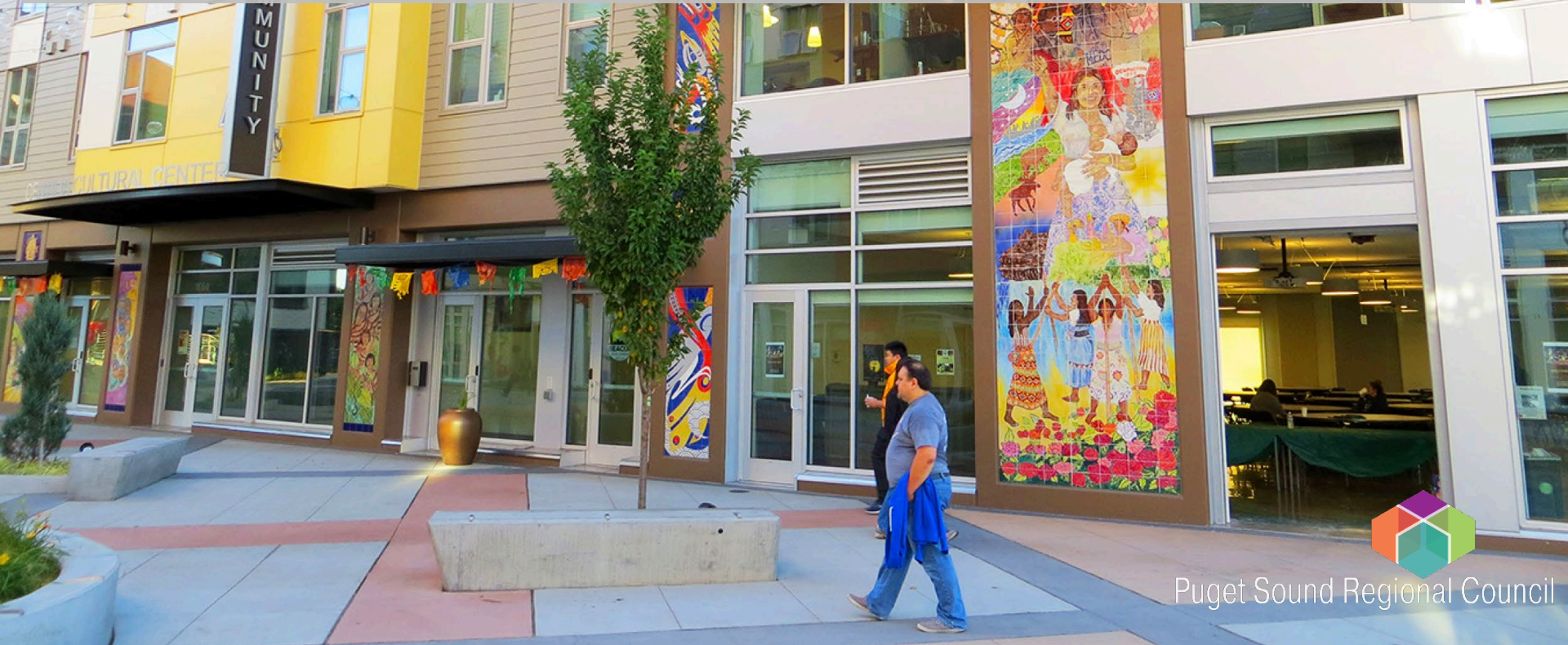


Equitable Engagement for Comprehensive Plans

Regional Staff Committee
December 15, 2022



Puget Sound Regional Council

Equitable Engagement

Guidance Document:
<https://www.psrc.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/equitable-engagement-guidance.pdf>



The Growth Management Act establishes a baseline for public participation as a component of the planning process. However, many traditional methods and approaches do not facilitate effective engagement with historically impacted communities.

Traditional outreach methods, such as online open houses, public hearings, and online surveys, often only reach a subset of community members. These community members are typically those who are already familiar with the local planning process and have the time to stay up to date with what is happening. As a result, many planning processes fail to adequately consider the perspectives of marginalized communities most impacted by planning decisions. This can lead to additional burdens on impacted communities, exacerbating disparities in the region.

VISION 2050 calls for PSRC to develop a regional equity strategy with tools, resources and strategies for centering equity, including best practices for ensuring equitable engagement. This guide is intended to help local jurisdictions consider new strategies and practices to build a foundation of equitable engagement for 2024 comprehensive planning efforts.

This guide includes four recommendations for conducting equitable engagement: identify communities most impacted, develop public engagement goals and outcomes, establish meaningful relationships and remove barriers to engagement. Each of these considerations includes an explanation, strategies to carry out engagement, and questions to consider. This guide can be used as a starting point for engagement. Resources linked throughout the document provide additional information on carrying out these strategies.



Equitable Engagement Considerations

Four Considerations:

- Identify communities most impacted
- Develop the right engagement strategy
- Establish meaningful relationships
- Make engagement easy



Identify communities most impacted

Resources/Strategies to Identify Impacted Communities

- **PSRC Community Profiles**: Use to better understand the socioeconomic composition of your jurisdiction
- **Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) Racial Equity Toolkit Assessment Worksheet**: Use to further identify the racial demographics of your area
- **PSRC Opportunity and Displacement Risk Mapping**: Use to identify most impacted segments of your population



Identify communities most impacted

Questions to Consider

- Do the populations you typically conduct outreach with reflect the diversity of the communities you serve?
- Are there areas in your jurisdiction at higher risk of displacement?
- Could planning decisions on growth and infrastructure exacerbate the displacement risk and, who would be most impacted?



Develop The Right Engagement Strategy



Resources/Approach for an Effective Engagement Strategy

- Engagement spectrums:
 - Use to communicate expectations about the purpose of the process
 - International Association of Public Participation (IAP2): [Public Participation Spectrum](#)
 - Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Boston: [Community Engagement Recipe Book](#)
- Communication to decisionmakers:
 - Develop clear documents and presentations that share engagement results
 - Invite community members to public meetings to share their view
 - Invite decisionmakers to community events



Develop The Right Engagement Strategy

Questions to Consider

- What level of decision-making are you planning and able to provide to the public?
- What are key milestones for decision-making in your update process?
- How much will this cost, including any compensation for participants?



Establish Meaningful Relationships

Strategies to Establish Meaningful Relationships

- Community Advisory Committees:
 - Standing committees composed of individuals who can speak to their community's needs, challenges, and opportunities can help create meaningful, long-term relationships between local governments and communities.
 - PSRC's [Equity Advisory Committee](#)
 - MRSC's [Advisory Boards and Commissions](#)



Establish Meaningful Relationships



Questions to Consider

- In what ways are you dedicating funding and staff time towards establishing relationships with community groups?
- How are you valuing people's time, effort, and expertise?
- In what ways are you working to build trust within impacted communities?



Make Engagement EASY!

Strategies to make engagement easy

- **Make public meetings accessible**
 - Choose meeting locations, times, and venues that make them as accessible as possible to as many people as possible. Provide multiple meeting options that cover different times, locations, etc.
 - Mobility For All has an [Inclusive Planning Toolkit](#)
- **Tailor outreach to preferences of identified communities**
 - Ensure materials are available in different languages, communicate using mediums preferred by communities, and utilize a mix of marketing resources.



Make Engagement EASY!

Strategies to make engagement easy

- Provide multiple ways to participate
 - Social, economic, and cultural conditions, and differences in ability, influence how people prefer to interact with others.
 - Provide different engagement options, including meetings, in-person and online open houses, focus groups, surveys, etc.



Make Engagement EASY!

Strategies to make engagement easy

- Compensation policies
 - Value the time and effort engagement requires by compensating individuals for their active participation.
 - [PSRC's Compensation Policy](#) includes surveys, focus groups, working groups, committees, and interviews with individuals and Community Based Organizations.



Make Engagement EASY!



Questions to Consider

- Are you providing information and marketing materials in multiple languages and through a diverse array of sources?
- Are you holding meetings/open houses in different locations and at different times?
- Are you providing amenities, like childcare, at public meetings?
- Are you facilitating different methods of providing input, to account for social, economic, and cultural differences?





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Thank You!

