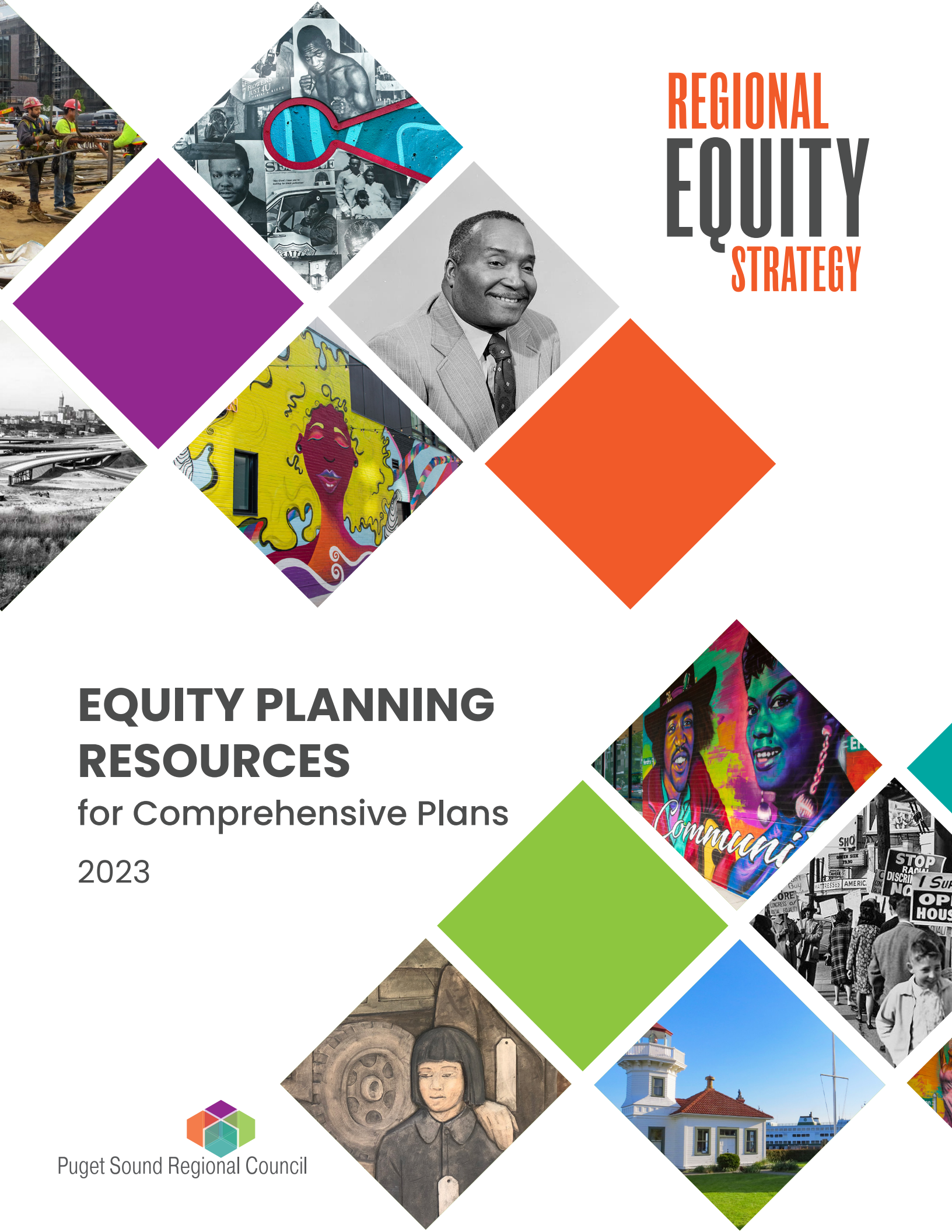


# REGIONAL EQUITY STRATEGY

## EQUITY PLANNING RESOURCES for Comprehensive Plans 2023



Puget Sound Regional Council





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## Introduction

Racial inequities continue to persist in the central Puget Sound region and, in some cases, are worsening over time. A long history of discrimination continues to cause disinvestment and denial of opportunity. The [legacy of structural racism](#) often places Black and brown lives on completely different trajectories than those of the region's white residents. On average, people of color and people living in poverty have less access to quality education; are more likely to be unemployed, underemployed, or working in lower-paying jobs; are more likely to pay too much for housing; and are more likely to have worse health outcomes. Inequities affect individuals, communities, and the entire region.

There is a clear relationship between equity and long-range planning. Planning has created and perpetuated discrimination through overt discriminatory practices, such as redlining, restrictive covenants, and urban renewal. Discrimination has also happened in more subtle and pervasive practices, like excluding marginalized voices from decision-making and using language that encodes bias, prejudice, or exclusion. On the other hand, planning and investments can also play key roles in making communities healthier and more equitable. Inequality is a multifaceted issue, but local governments can promote equity through planning and explicitly remove barriers in policies and regulations that perpetuate inequity.

PSRC develops data, guidance, and resources to support local planning and implementation of [VISION 2050](#), the region's plan for growth. VISION 2050 includes [policies and actions](#) throughout the plan to advance a more equitable region. VISION 2050 also includes an action (RC-Action-3) to develop the [Regional Equity Strategy](#), to identify strategies to center equity in regional and local planning work, including planning resources for local governments, guidance on community engagement, racial equity impact assessment resources, and a regional equity data tracker.

Beyond VISION 2050, recent changes to the state Growth Management Act require local jurisdictions to examine racially disparate impacts, displacement, exclusion, and displacement risk in housing policies. PSRC's [Equity Advisory Committee](#) also encouraged developing straightforward resources to center equity in planning. Surveys of local planners also identified the need for additional guidance and examples of integrating equity into plan elements.



This document compiles resources and example policies, organized by VISION 2050's main policy areas, to support jurisdictions in this process. PSRC's [Plan Review Manual](#) translates the policies in VISION 2050 to the local planning context. The comprehensive plan consistency tool includes provisions to address equity throughout local plans. For aspects of the checklist that address equity, this guidance provides background information, relevant planning resources, example policies, and data resources for local governments. By chapter, these policies and topic issues include:

### **Regional Collaboration**

- ☑ Prioritize services and access to opportunity for people of color, people with low incomes, and historically underserved communities to ensure all people can attain the resources and opportunities to improve quality of life and address past inequities (MPP-RC-2)

### **Environment & Climate Change**

- ☑ Support programs to ensure that all residents, regardless of race, social, or economic status, have clean air, clean water, and other elements of a healthy environment and prioritize the reduction of impacts to vulnerable populations that have been disproportionately affected (MPP-En-3-4, En-7-8, En-21)
- ☑ Address impacts to vulnerable populations and areas that have been or will be disproportionately affected by climate change (MPP-CC-6, CC-8, CC-Action-3, CC-Action-4)

### **Development Patterns & Regional Growth Strategy**

- ☑ Reduce disparities in access to opportunity and expand employment opportunities to improve the region's shared economic future (MPP-DP-2, Ec-8, Ec-13)
- ☑ Support inclusive engagement to ensure land use decisions do not negatively impact historically marginalized communities (MPP-DP-8)
- ☑ Reduce health disparities and improve health outcomes (MPP-RC-3, DP-18)
- ☑ Evaluate planning in areas for potential residential and commercial displacement and use a range of strategies to mitigate displacement impacts (MPP-DP-23, Ec-12)
- ☑ Metropolitan Cities: Provide additional housing capacity in response to rapid employment growth, particularly through increased zoning for middle density housing (MPP-RGS-7)

## Housing

- ☑ Identify potential physical, economic, and cultural displacement of low-income households and marginalized populations and work with communities to develop anti-displacement strategies in when planning for growth (MPP-H-12, H-Action-6)
- ☑ Promote homeownership opportunities while recognizing historic inequities in access to homeownership opportunities for communities of color (MPP-H-5)

## Economy

- ☑ Promote strategies and policies that expand access to opportunity and remove barriers for economically disconnected communities (MPP-Ec-13-14)
- ☑ Address and prevent potential physical, economic, and cultural displacement of existing businesses that may result from redevelopment and market pressure (MPP-Ec-12)
- ☑ Support, recognize, and empower the contributions of the region's culturally and ethnically diverse communities, institutions, and Native Tribes (MPP-Ec-15, Ec-17, Ec-20)

## Transportation

- ☑ Identify racial and social equity as a core objective when planning and implementing transportation improvements, programs, and services (MPP-T-9)
- ☑ Ensure mobility choices for people with special needs (MPP-T-10)

## Public Services

- ☑ Promote affordable and equitable access of public services, including drinking water and telecommunication infrastructure, to provide access to all communities, especially underserved communities (MPP-PS-2, PS-16, PS-22)
- ☑ Locate community facilities and services, including civic places like parks, schools, and other public spaces, in centers and near transit, with consideration for climate change, economic, social and health impacts (MPP-PS-18, PS-20, PS-29, DP-11)

Aspects of the comprehensive plan checklist address coordination with Tribes. PSRC has developed separate [guidance](#) on working with tribal governments.

These resources are a starting place to address equity in planning, and each community will need to determine its own approach. The comprehensive planning process is an opportunity to hear from everyone, including community members, nonprofit partners, city staff, elected officials, and others, on meaningful actions for a more equitable city and region.



## Community Summary

### **I'm interested in planning and equity, but I'm not a planner myself. How should I use this report?**

Comprehensive plans are an important opportunity to look at community inequities and define strategies for a more equitable future.

Jurisdictions in the central Puget Sound region are updating their comprehensive plans, with a state deadline to complete the work in December 2024. Comprehensive plans direct a jurisdiction's planning through the next 20 years across a range of planning topics, such as land use, housing, transportation, parks and utilities. Comprehensive plans typically include background discussion, data and analysis, goals, policies, and steps or actions required to execute a policy.

The primary audience for this report is planners, decision-makers, and other people interested in addressing equity in comprehensive plans. For non-planners, you can shape your local plan by attending planning commission meetings, contact your city council, and attending community engagement events for their jurisdictions.

For people who are interested in equity but are not as familiar with the ins-and-outs of local planning, this document provides examples of local policies and points out what works about those policies. This isn't an exhaustive list of potential topics or resources but can be a useful starting place to consider what policies to advocate for or support in your community

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>F-243a Results from the King County Equity Impact Review Tool will be used as an important consideration to identify and assess the impacts of proposed service changes, and the county's Equity and Social Justice principles should be used to improve residents' access to the determinants of equity.</p> <p>King County Comprehensive Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporates use of equity impact review tool in decision-making</li> <li>• Follow-through on principles to address equity and social justice in action</li> </ul>
<p>EQU 1.1 Burien shall analyze social equity impacts in the development of strategic plans, policies, programs, and budgets. Structured questions and equity impact analyses will be used to ensure that equity is considered in decision-making process.</p> <p>Burien Comprehensive Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporates regular analysis of social equity impacts in decision-making, including equity impact review tools</li> </ul>

Example policy from an adopted plan in the region

Why this policy is an effective example

Link to the plan, along with policy number to find it in the document

This document is a starting place for this work, and particularly focused on jurisdictions within the central Puget Sound region. There are many other reports and resources that discuss the role of equity in plans, and some of these are cited in this report. Planning is about continuous improvement, and every jurisdiction should continue to seek new ways to achieve more equitable outcomes for the people who live and work there.



## Regional Collaboration

The Regional Collaboration policies in VISION 2050 emphasize the value of coordinated planning to achieve shared outcomes. Among those shared goals is for all people to have the means to attain the resources and opportunities that improve their quality of life and enable them to reach their full potential.

### Racial and Social Equity

- ☑ Prioritize services and access to opportunity for people of color, people with low incomes, and historically underserved communities to ensure all people can attain the resources and opportunities to improve quality of life and address past inequities (MPP-RC-2)

Committing to prioritizing equity and eliminating past harms is a powerful statement for local governments. Prioritizing equity can be implemented through many means, including emphasizing specific implementation actions or programs, budgetary decisions, and community engagement.

A racial equity impact tool can be an effective tool to evaluate equity in new policies and programs. An equity impact tool is a systematic examination of how different groups will likely be affected by a proposed action or decision. Equity impact tools seek to reduce, eliminate, and prevent discrimination and inequities, often unconsciously replicated when not consciously addressed.

These tools are used to minimize unanticipated adverse consequences in a variety of contexts, including the analysis of proposed policies, institutional practices, programs, plans, and budgetary decisions. These tools are often used during the decision-making process and are used to inform decisions. Equity impact tools can also be used for monitoring and ongoing assessment.

### Planning Resources

- PSRC [Racial Equity Impact Assessment tool](#)
- Government Alliance for Race and Equity: [Racial Equity Toolkit](#)
- King County: [Equity Impact Review Tool](#)
- PSRC [Equitable Engagement for Comprehensive Plans](#). Equity impact tools often encourage the use of engagement techniques, such as focus groups. These can be effective techniques for gathering information about lived experiences and ideas from the community.

## Local Examples

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>F-243a Results from the King County Equity Impact Review Tool will be used as an important consideration to identify and assess the impacts of proposed service changes, and the county’s Equity and Social Justice principles should be used to improve residents’ access to the determinants of equity.</p> <p><a href="#">King County Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporates use of equity impact review tool in decision-making</li> <li>• Follow-through on principles to address equity and social justice in action</li> </ul>
<p>EQU 1.1 Burien shall analyze social equity impacts in the development of strategic plans, policies, programs, and budgets. Structured questions and equity impact analyses will be used to ensure that equity is considered in decision-making processes.</p> <p><a href="#">Burien Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporates regular analysis of social equity impacts in decision-making, including equity impact review tools</li> </ul>
<p>CI G1 Provide opportunities for inclusive and equitable community involvement. POLICIES CI 1.1 Promote racial and social justice, human and civil rights, and mutual respect to reduce intolerance, and reach out and bring people together in ways that build bridges between individuals and between groups.</p> <p><a href="#">Seattle Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasizes the importance of community engagement in decision-making</li> <li>• Supports holistic efforts to promote racial and social justice</li> </ul>

## Data Resources

- [Census Bureau](#)
- PSRC [Central Puget Sound Demographic Profile](#)
- PSRC [Community Profiles](#)
- PSRC Equity Tracker: [forthcoming]

## Environment and Climate Change

Low-income residents and communities of color continue to be disproportionately exposed to environmental harms, compounded by social and economic barriers. The lack of investment in these communities, coupled with historic and systemic racism, has resulted in a disproportionate exposure to pollution, less access to parks and open space, and more vulnerability to the risks of climate change.

### Access to a Healthy Environment

- ☑ Support programs to ensure that all residents, regardless of race, social, or economic status, have clean air, clean water, and other elements of a healthy environment and prioritize the reduction of impacts to vulnerable populations that have been disproportionately affected (MPP-En-3-4, En-7-8, En-21)

Advancing racial and social equity is an important goal. Reaching this goal allows all people to share in the benefits of a healthy environment. Tools and funding programs should advance racial equity and make it an integral part of conservation work.

### Planning Resources

- Environmental Protection Agency: [Environmental Justice](#)
- PSRC: [Regional Open Space Conservation Plan](#)
- National Recreation and Park Association: [Greener Parks for Health: Ensuring Equitable Access to Inclusive and Resilient Green Spaces](#)
- [The Equity Guide for Green Stormwater Infrastructure Practitioners](#)

## Local Examples

King County: [King County's Open Space Equity Cabinet](#) provides recommendations on policies, funding, programs, and engagement to ensure more equity in providing access to open space.

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>9.3.3 Seek to fill gaps in parks, trees, and trails in underserved areas.</p> <p>9.5.2 Prioritize capital facility investments based on the following principles:</p> <p>a. Equity: The investment fills gaps in underserved areas, improves access for the young or elderly, or improves access for households in poverty or persons of color.</p> <p><a href="#">Everett Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritizes investments based on equity and identifies specific population groups</li> </ul>
<p>EQU 1.5 Burien shall develop its Capital Investment Plan with a goal of providing equitable access to municipal services such as roads, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, park facilities, and street trees.</p> <p><a href="#">Burien Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addresses spectrum of municipal amenities and environmental features</li> </ul>
<p>P-121 King County shall consider equity in the location, development and acquisition of its open space system to help in the reduction of health disparities and in the promotion of social and environmental justice.</p> <p>King County Comprehensive Plan</p> <p><a href="#">King County Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considers equity broadly in location, development, and acquisition of open space</li> </ul>

## Data Resources

- The Trust for Public Land's ParkScore tool calculates where residents do and do not have a 10-minute walk to a park. Information is also provided by race, income, and age.
- American Forests [Tree Equity Score](#) tool evaluates tree canopy cover and demographic characteristics. Ensuring equitable tree cover across every neighborhood can help address social inequities. The tool also shows how scores can be improved.



### **Disproportionate Impacts of Climate Change**

- Address impacts to vulnerable populations and areas that have been or will be disproportionately affected by climate change (MPP-CC-6, CC-8, CC-Action-3, CC-Action-4)

Climate change is an urgent environmental, economic, health, and equity threat. Communities of color, Indigenous people, and people with lower incomes are at higher risk due to greater exposure to climate-related hazards and often have fewer resources to respond to those hazards. PSRC has published [guidance](#) on addressing all aspects of climate change and resilience in local plans.

### **Planning Resources**

- Environmental Protection Agency: [Climate Change and Social Vulnerability in the United States](#)
- Front and Centered: [Accelerating a Just Transition in Washington State: Climate Justice Strategies from the Frontlines](#)
- MRSC: [Equity and Engagement in Climate Response](#)
- City of Providence: [Climate Justice Plan](#)

## Local Examples

City of Everett’s [Climate Action Plan](#) includes goals, strategies and actions for mitigating climate change and reducing emissions prioritized based on factors such as the potential increase for community resilience to the impacts of climate change and the potential for a positive impact on equity.

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>E-218 King County shall apply its Equity Impact Review process to help prioritize investments in making infrastructure, natural resources, and communities more resilient to the impacts of climate change.</p> <p><a href="#">King County Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasizes using data and analysis to inform community resilience</li> </ul>
<p>Policy EN-1.27 Assess the risks and potential impacts on both City government operations and on the community due to climate change, with regard to social equity..</p> <p><a href="#">Tacoma Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focuses on the risks to climate in the context of equity</li> </ul>
<p>Public Health Policy 10.41 Identify disproportionate health impacts from climate change – especially for vulnerable populations such as minority, low-income, elderly, very young, and disabled populations. Develop strategies to address these impacts, such as strategies in the City’s Hazard Mitigation Plan to identify neighborhood cooling centers for the elderly and those without air conditioning</p> <p>Goal 10.9 Assist vulnerable populations who are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change.</p> <p><a href="#">Everett Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies specific vulnerable populations and specific actions to support community resilience</li> </ul>

## Data Resources

There are many resources communities may use to identify vulnerable populations. PSRC provides interactive web maps with information on the region's demographics, including areas with a higher proportion of people of color, people with low incomes, older adults, youth, people with disabilities, and people with Limited English proficiency.

- WA Department of Health: [Environmental Health Disparities Map](#)
- US Climate Resilience Toolkit: [Social Vulnerability Index](#)
- PSRC: [Puget Sound Hazards Map](#)
- PSRC: [Community Profiles](#) and [Demographic Profile](#)



## Development Patterns & the Regional Growth Strategy

Growth and development can exacerbate challenges currently facing historically marginalized communities. The Development Patterns and Regional Growth Strategy chapters of VISION 2050 cover policies to address participation in the planning process, access to opportunity, health disparities, and displacement.

### Access to a Healthy Environment

- ☑ Reduce disparities in access to opportunity and expand employment opportunities to improve the region’s shared economic future (MPP-DP-2, Ec-8, Ec-13)

VISION 2050 acknowledges and works to remedy historic and contemporary inequities that have kept many low-income residents and people of color from accessing opportunities to improve their quality of life. Greater social and economic opportunities for current and future residents will result in stronger communities and a stronger region. Equitable transit-oriented development is an important strategy to support people of all incomes to access the benefits of transit investments.

### Planning Resources

- Enterprise Community Partners: [Advancing Mobility from Poverty Toolkit](#)
- PolicyLink All-In Cities Toolkit: [Equitable Transit-Oriented Development](#)
- Metropolitan Planning Council: [Equitable Transit-Oriented Development](#)

### Local Examples

City of Seattle: [Seattle 2035 Growth and Equity Analyzing Impacts on Displacement and Opportunity Related to Seattle’s Growth Strategy](#)

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>Policy EC-2.2 Encourage investment in, and alignment of, public efforts to reduce racial, gender, ethnic and disability-related disparities in income and employment opportunity.</p> <p><a href="#">Tacoma Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on active investments in addressing disparities</li> <li>• Emphasis on economic opportunity</li> </ul>
<p>ED-101a King County is committed to promoting equity and equality of opportunity in all economic development policies and programs, and to integrating these as factors into decision and policy-making efforts.</p> <p><a href="#">King County Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for equality in access to economic mobility</li> </ul>



## Data Resources

- Stanford University: [Measuring Mobility Toolkit](#)
- [PSRC Opportunity Mapping](#)
- Harvard University: [Opportunity Atlas](#)

PSRC's Opportunity Mapping Tool assesses the conditions in neighborhoods across the region. Decades of research demonstrate that neighborhood conditions and access to opportunity play a significant role in life outcomes. The premise of opportunity mapping is all people should have fair access to the critical structures and social infrastructure to succeed in life, connecting people to opportunity creates positive, transformative change in communities.

The tool combines measures of five key elements of neighborhood opportunity and positive life outcomes: education, economic health, housing and neighborhood quality, mobility and transportation, and health and environment. The neighborhood indicators are combined to create an overall "opportunity score" for each census tract, categorized between very low and very high access to opportunity. The tool can provide information on existing disparities in the region that may be exacerbated due to policy and planning decisions. It can provide a lens to evaluate planning and siting decisions. Communities should consider access to opportunity as they plan for the future.

## Inclusive Engagement

- Support inclusive engagement to ensure land use decisions do not negatively impact historically marginalized communities (MPP-DP-8)

VISION 2050 supports inclusive community involvement to ensure plans and policies identify the needs of diverse communities, protect and enhance cultural resources, and embrace community cohesion in the face of change.

Local planning should underscore the importance of community representation and hear from people often excluded from the planning process. Early inclusive engagement is also a key part of a racial equity assessment, outlined in the Regional Collaboration section.

## Planning Resources

- [PSRC Equitable Engagement for Comprehensive Plans](#)
- [International Association for Public Participation](#)
- PSRC Housing Innovations Program: [Community Engagement Plans](#)

## Local Examples

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>Policy LU-1.1.1 Recognize and support people of color, indigenous and immigrant populations, and other individuals or groups who have historically been underrepresented in community goal-setting and implementation.</p> <p>Policy LU-1.1.2 Encourage the involvement of historically-marginalized groups when discussing policies that will impact their neighborhoods and communities. Provide outreach in multiple formats and languages.</p> <p>Policy LU-1.1.3 Consider the impact of City policies, programs and projects on groups whose voices may not regularly be heard.</p> <p><a href="#">Kenmore Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centering those who will be most impacted</li> <li>Emphasis on multiple formats and languages for community engagement</li> </ul>
<p>CI 1.3 Develop well-designed, responsive, culturally-relevant community involvement plans.</p> <p>CI 1.4 Build community capacity for meaningful and authentic community involvement, enhance the ability of community members, including those of marginalized communities, to develop the knowledge and skills to effectively participate in planning and decision-making processes.</p> <p>CI 1.5 Provide a wide range of opportunities for obtaining information and involvement in decision-making processes.</p> <p><a href="#">Seattle Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports community involvement plans for an intentional approach to engagement</li> <li>Emphasizes that multiple techniques are necessary to hear from community</li> </ul>
<p>Pol. EQU 1.4 When developing strategic plans, policies, and/or programs, the City should meaningfully engage with the communities who will be most impacted by the plan, policy, or program. Outreach and engagement efforts should actively seek input from voices that are historically underrepresented in civic decision-making processes, including BIPOC communities, immigrant communities, low-income communities, LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, and unhoused people. The City will meet communities where they are by adjusting and adapting to provide more inclusive outreach and engagement.</p> <p><a href="#">Burien Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific focus on meaningful engagement with most impacted communities</li> <li>Identifies specific demographic groups often underrepresented in the planning process</li> </ul>

## Data Resources

- [Census Bureau](#)
- PSRC: [Community Profiles](#)
- Cooperative Extension: [Using Focus Groups for Community Development](#)

## Health Disparities

- ☑ Reduce health disparities and improve health outcomes (MPP-RC-3, DP-18)

How residents live, work, and get around affects their physical, social, and mental well-being. Communities that are compact, with jobs, parks, services and amenities, and transit in walking distance, have better health and social well-being outcomes. Health risks and outcomes vary by place, race, and income. People of color and those with low incomes suffer from poorer health outcomes because they face more barriers to affordable, quality housing, health care, and healthy foods. Local plans should identify and address community-specific health disparities to improve health outcomes for all residents.

## Planning Resources

- Tacoma Pierce County Health Department: [Healthy Community Planning Toolbox](#)
- Tacoma Pierce County Health Department: [Tools for Healthy Rural Communities Resources](#)
- American Planning Association: [Planning and Community Health](#)
- WA American Planning Association: [Resource Guide for Healthy Community Planning](#)
- Centers for Disease Control: [Healthy Community Design Checklist Toolkit](#)
- PSRC: [Food Policy Blueprints](#)



## Local Examples

- Health Equity Guide: [Tacoma Creates Tools to Advance Health in All Policies](#)
- Puyallup South Hill Neighborhood: [Health Impact Assessment](#)
- [Bonney Lake](#) includes data on health outcomes in their comprehensive plan to support their plan analysis:

### 3.8 Community Health

A recent report released by the Tacoma/Pierce County Public Health Department indicates that the residents of Bonney Lake have a lower prevalence of coronary heart disease and asthma than the average for Washington and Pierce County; however, the City’s residents have other health risk like obesity, diabetes and poor mental health at higher rates than the averages for Washington.

RISK	WASHINGTON	PIERCE COUNTY	BONNEY LAKE
Obesity (adults)	25.6%	28.9%	27.4%
Coronary Heart Disease (adults)	3.4%	3.8%	2.5%
Asthma (adults)	15.0%	15.4%	14.0%
Diabetes (adults)	7.2%	8.2%	8.2%
Poor Mental Health Days (adults)	9.8%	11.0%	11.0%
Motor Vehicle Mortality (per 100,000)	7.6%	6.8%	7.2%

Table 2–3: Bonney Lake Health Risk<sup>18</sup>

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>OBJECTIVE 1.2 Promote the mental and physical health of all community members.</p> <p>Policy LU-1.2.7 Continue to support projects that improve the quality of both the built and natural environments to support a thriving community and reduce disparate health and environmental impacts, especially to low-income and disadvantaged communities. Clean air, water and soil, and a healthy ecosystem are critical for human health.</p> <p><a href="#">Kenmore Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasizes reducing health disparities</li> <li>Focuses on the role of the built and natural environment in health outcomes</li> </ul>
<p>Policy RP-205 Seek to reduce health inequities and proactively address issues of equity, social and environmental justice when evaluating and implementing its land use policies, programs and practices.</p> <p><a href="#">King County Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on proactively addressing disparities through implementation</li> </ul>

### Data Resources

- Tacoma Pierce County Health Department: [Healthy Community Planning Toolbox](#)
- WA Department of Health: [Washington Tracking Network](#)
- Community Health Assessments: [King County](#) | [Kitsap County](#) | [Pierce County](#) | [Snohomish County](#)

### Housing Capacity & Displacement

- Metropolitan Cities: Provide additional housing capacity in response to rapid employment growth, particularly through increased zoning for middle density housing (MPP-RGS-7)

This policy area is specific to displacement in the Metropolitan cities of Seattle, Bellevue, Everett, Tacoma, and Bremerton, but middle housing tools can be applied in all types of jurisdictions.

The [Home in Tacoma](#) project has focused on evaluating middle density, housing policy, and access to opportunity in Tacoma. The [City of Olympia](#) analyzed middle-density housing, and its website provides significant research, analysis, and policy examples on middle-density housing. [Spokane](#) has also worked to address middle density housing. The WA Department of Commerce also has [numerous resources](#) on developing middle density housing.

Additional information about displacement is available in the **Housing** and **Economic Development** sections.

## Housing

Housing access and affordability are goals of the state Growth Management Act and key policy areas in VISION 2050, the region's long-range plan for growth. Past and current housing practices have perpetuated substantial inequities in wealth, ownership, and opportunity, and they continue to create barriers to rectifying these conditions.

### Residential Displacement

- ☑ Identify potential physical, economic, and cultural displacement of low-income households and marginalized populations and work with communities to develop anti-displacement strategies when planning for growth (MPP-H-12, H-Action-6)

Success of both VISION 2050 and local plans depend on accommodating new growth without displacing existing residents and businesses to provide current and new residents the benefits of increased services, amenities, and infrastructure associated with growth. Displacement occurs when housing or neighborhood conditions force residents to move.

Displacement can be physical when building conditions deteriorate – or economic, as costs rise. Communities of color, low-income communities, and renter neighborhoods are at a higher risk of displacement due to a lack of financial resources, wealth disparities, and vulnerability to sudden rent increases.

Many areas with current and future high-capacity transit investments have higher displacement risk than other parts of the region. Cities and counties need to act swiftly to mitigate displacement risk and support inclusive growth near transit so existing and future residents are able to benefit from the opportunities these major transit investments can provide. Communities at low and moderate risk may have already experienced displacement and should consider tools to expand affordable housing options.

### Planning Resources

- PSRC Housing Innovations Program: [Increase Neighborhood Stability by Mitigating Residential Displacement](#)
- PSRC Anti-Displacement Report [forthcoming]
- City of Austin: [Displacement Mitigation Strategy](#)
- City of San Jose: [Citywide Anti-Displacement Strategy](#)
- Oregon: [Anti-Displacement and Gentrification Toolkit Project](#)
- University of Texas: [Texas Anti-Displacement Toolkit](#)
- WA Department of Commerce: [Guidance for Developing a Housing Action Plan](#)
- Boston Metropolitan Area Planning Council: [Managing Neighborhood Change: Anti-Displacement Strategies Toolkit](#)
- [Local Housing Solutions](#)
- [Urban Displacement Project](#)
- [All-In-Cities Policy Toolkit](#)

## Local Examples

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>H-124 King County shall work with partners to reduce and prevent displacement of very-low to moderate-income households from transit-oriented locations, to the extent possible; and shall strive to align affordable housing investments and transit investments in order to increase the quality of life of disinvested communities as measured by the Determinants of Equity.</p> <p><a href="#">King County Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on both preventing and reducing displacement</li> <li>• Connects affordable housing to transit investments</li> </ul>
<p>Policy 3.8A Encourage cooperation between the State, County, City, and other groups concerned with mobile home issues to increase opportunities for tenant ownership of mobile home parks.</p> <p>GOAL 3.9 Minimize the impacts of mobile home relocation on low and moderate income residents.</p> <p>Policy 3.9A Assist with identifying relocation options for mobile home park tenants forced to move due to mobile home park closure. Policy 3.9B Ensure that sufficient relocation plans are in place prior to the closure of any mobile home park.</p> <p><a href="#">SeaTac Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on displacement strategies for mobile home parks, which are often particularly at-risk to development pressures</li> </ul>

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>Strategy 3.1.2 Create an equity and social justice toolkit that identifies potential strategies to minimize displacement of existing businesses and residents. The toolkit should identify specific measures that address minority-owned businesses and communities of color living within the Urban Center.</p> <p>Policy 3.2 Minimize the amount of housing displacement created from development.</p> <p>Strategy 3.2.2 Identify properties at risk of housing displacement. Develop an inventory of affordable properties in the subarea (government-subsidized housing; rent-restricted affordable housing; and naturally occurring, market-rate affordable housing). Burien may reach out to these property owners to inquire about owners' intended, future use of their properties. The City of Burien is not likely to directly acquire property, but it could work with partners to ensure units are preserved. The inventory could build off Burien's building permit database, the County's assessor records, and Burien's Rental Housing and Inspection Program (RHIP).</p> <p><a href="#">Burien Urban Center Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies specific actions to address displacement, including analysis of properties that may be at risk</li> </ul>

- City of Seattle: [Seattle 2035 Growth and Equity Analysis: Analyzing Impacts on Displacement and Opportunity Related to Seattle's Growth Strategy](#)
- King County: [Skyway-West Hill and North Highline Anti-displacement Strategies Report](#)



## Data Resources

- Urban Displacement Project: [Housing Precarity Risk Model](#)
- City of Seattle: [Displacement Risk Indicators](#)
- Snohomish County: [Housing Characteristics and Needs Report](#)
- PSRC: [Displacement Risk Mapping](#)

PSRC's Displacement Risk Mapping tool is used to identify what neighborhoods in the region are at higher risk of displacement so policy makers can prevent it from happening in the future. Current neighborhood conditions can indicate areas where economic, physical, and cultural displacement may be more likely to occur.

Displacement risk is a composite of indicators representing five elements of neighborhood displacement risks: socio-demographics, transportation qualities, neighborhood characteristics, housing, and civic engagement. The data from these five displacement indicators were compiled into a comprehensive index of displacement risk for all census tracts in the region.

The Washington State Department of Commerce has also published [guidance about racially disparate impacts](#) in housing, which discusses other methods to assess displacement.

## Access to Homeownership

- Promote homeownership opportunities while recognizing historic inequities in access to homeownership opportunities for communities of color (MPP-H-5)

A history of public policies and private practices throughout the 20th century often excluded people of color from the housing market and has had lasting effects on housing access and homeownership, leading to substantial disparities in wealth and other outcomes.

Black homeownership in central Puget Sound region fell from 36 percent of households in 2000 to 30 percent today. This trend is steeper than the decline in the national rate for Black homeownership, which has dropped to 42 percent from 46 percent in 2000. Lower Black homeownership rates in the central Puget Sound may be, in part, due to the extreme lack of affordability throughout the region. Disparities in household income — \$57,300 for the typical (or median) Black household compared to \$95,000 for white households — contribute to the racial gaps in homeownership as white residents are also more likely to own their own home than Black residents across all income levels. This suggests other factors are limiting Black homeownership, such as racial wealth disparities and mortgage loan discrimination. Providing access to the housing market, along with preserving existing units to avoid displacement, are critical strategies to support homeownership.

## Planning Resources

- Civic Commons: [Black Home Initiative](#)
- WA Homeownership Disparities Work Group: [Improving Homeownership Rates for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in Washington](#)
- PSRC Housing Innovations Program: [Alternative Homeownership](#)
- PSRC Housing Innovations Program: [Preservation and Rehabilitation](#)

## Local Examples

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>Policy H-2.3 Coordinate plans and investments with programs that prevent avoidable, involuntary evictions and foreclosures.</p> <p>Policy H-4.11 Align plans and investments to support homeownership rates and locational choice for people of color and other groups who have been historically under-served and under-represented.</p> <p>Policy H-4.12 Facilitate a variety of ownership opportunities and choices by allowing and supporting the creation of condominiums, cooperatives, mutual housing associations, limited equity cooperatives, community land trusts and sweat equity.</p> <p><a href="#">Tacoma Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies specific opportunities to expand homeownership</li> <li>• Focuses on addressing groups historically excluded from the housing market</li> </ul>
<p>HO-43 Encourage individual homeowners to reinvest in their homes by providing information and referrals to other appropriate agencies, such as the King County Home Repair program.</p> <p><a href="#">Redmond Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasizes services to support preservation of existing units</li> </ul>

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>LU-4.30 Support first time homebuyer programs such as those available through the Washington State Housing Finance Commission and other similar private or not- for-profit programs with similar or better program elements and rates.</p> <p><a href="#">Lakewood Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies specific programs to expand homeownership</li> </ul>
<p>3.2.6 Strive to make alternative and affordable housing options available for residents currently living in substandard housing, such as pre-HUD code mobile homes.</p> <p>3.4.1 Continue to improve the condition of rental housing through administration of the Residential Rental Licensing and Inspection Program.</p> <p>3.4.2 Continue to support the maintenance, weatherization, rehabilitation, and long-term preservation or replacement of existing housing for low- and moderate-income residents.</p> <p><a href="#">Tukwila Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focuses on keeping current residents in their homes</li> </ul>

### Data Resources

- National Association of Real Estate Brokers: [2020 State of Housing in Black America](#)
- PSRC: [Regional Housing Needs Assessment](#)
- Homestead Community Land Trust: [Closed Doors Report](#)

## Racially-Disparate Impacts and Exclusion in Housing

☑ Identify and begin to undo local policies and regulations that result in racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing including zoning that may have a discriminatory effect and areas of disinvestment and infrastructure availability.

The region's housing landscape reflects more than market forces and conditions. It is also the product of decades of public policies and private practices that, throughout the 20th century, often excluded lower-income households, immigrant communities, and people of color from accessing housing and living in certain areas. Practices such as restrictive covenants, redlining, and loan discrimination limited where people could live based on their race. These actions contributed to patterns of white flight and racial segregation still seen today.

Together, past and current housing practices have perpetuated substantial inequities in wealth, ownership, and opportunity, and continues to create barriers to rectifying these conditions. Updates to the Growth Management Act and new policies in VISION 2050 now require housing elements to directly address inequalities and racial disparities and to identify long-term work needed to redress it.

## Planning Resources

- WA Department of Commerce: [Racially-Disparate Impacts Guidance](#)
- PSRC [Legacy of Structural Racism Interactive Report](#)
- Government Alliance for Race and Equity: [Advancing Racial Equity in Housing, Land and Development](#)
- Government Alliance for Race and Equity: [Racial Equity Toolkit](#)
- King County: [Equity Impact Review Tool](#)
- King County Countywide Planning Policies Housing Chapter: [Resources for Documenting the Local History of Racially Exclusive and Discriminatory Land Use and Housing Practices](#)
- PSRC [Equitable Engagement for Comprehensive Plans](#)



## Local Examples

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>Rising housing costs affect marginalized populations the most. Seattle has been shaped by its history of racial segregation and the economic displacement of communities of color. Over time, homeowners can gain significant wealth that they can pass down to their descendants, while renters face the risk of growing housing-cost burden. The result is significant economic disparity along racial lines. Addressing injustices and protecting marginalized populations is a primary focus of the Housing element of this Plan.</p> <p>H 1.3 Work to overcome historical patterns of segregation, promote fair housing choices, and foster inclusive communities that are free from discrimination through actions, such as affirmative marketing and fair housing education and enforcement.</p> <p><a href="#">Seattle Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicitly recognizes history of segregation and displacement</li> <li>• Identifies specific tools (affirmative marketing and fair housing education) to address housing discrimination</li> </ul>
<p>Goal H-2 Ensure equitable access to housing, making a special effort to remove disparities in housing access for black, indigenous and people of color, low-income households, diverse household types, older adults, and households that include people with disabilities.</p> <p>Policy H-2.1 Foster inclusive communities, overcome disparities in access to community assets, and enhance housing choice for people in protected classes throughout the city by coordinating plans and investments with fair housing policies.</p> <p><a href="#">Tacoma Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies specific population focus areas</li> <li>• Seeks to coordinate plans with fair housing policies</li> </ul>

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>H-118 King County shall actively promote and affirmatively further fair housing in its housing programs, and shall work with all of its partners to further fair housing in its regional role promoting housing affordability, choice and access to opportunity for all communities, especially those communities that bear the burdens from lack of investment and access to opportunity; and shall work with residents and stakeholders to help them understand the rights protected by federal, state, and local fair housing laws and shall help to promote equitable housing practices for protected classes through fair housing education and enforcement.</p> <p><a href="#">King County Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies broad set of strategies to advance fair housing</li> </ul>

**Data Resources**

- PSRC: [Racial Residential Segregation](#)
- University of Washington: [Race and Segregation in WA Counties and Cities, 1940 - 2020](#)
- University of Washington: [Racial Restrictive Covenants Project Washington State](#)
- WA Department of Commerce: [Racially Disparate Impacts Data Toolkit](#)



## Economy

A healthy economy is vital to creating and maintaining a high standard of living and quality of life for all residents. The region faces historical inequities regarding economic opportunities and outcomes for residents. PSRC has published guidance on addressing all aspects of economic development in local plans.

### Access to Opportunity

- ☑ Promote strategies and policies that expand access to opportunity and remove barriers for economically disconnected communities (MPP-Ec-13-14)

PSRC's Opportunity Mapping assessed and demonstrated neighborhood conditions and access to opportunity play a significant role in life outcomes. VISION 2050 leverages the opportunity for local plans to expand access to opportunity and advance racial equity through economic policies. When creating new policies, planners can use the Opportunity Mapping tool to identify existing disparities and evaluate planning decisions.

### Planning Resources

- Enterprise Community Partners: [Advancing Mobility from Poverty Toolkit](#)

### Local Examples

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>Rising housing costs affect marginalized communities. Policy ED 1.3 Prioritize assistance to commercial districts in areas of lower economic opportunity with high concentrations of small locally-owned businesses.</p> <p><a href="#">Seattle Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognizes the importance of small and locally-owned businesses</li><li>• Prioritizes support to low opportunity areas to increase opportunity in neighborhoods in the long-term</li></ul>
<p>Policy EC-2.2 Encourage investment in, and alignment of, public efforts to reduce racial, gender, ethnic and disability-related disparities in income and employment opportunity.</p> <p>Policy EC-2.3 Improve access to contracting opportunities for minority-owned, woman-owned, and emerging small businesses</p> <p><a href="#">Tacoma Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognizes the role in government contracting in supporting small businesses</li><li>• Integrates racial equity into the municipal budgeting process</li></ul>

## Data Resources

- PSRC Opportunity Mapping: [Opportunity Mapping](#)

## Commercial Displacement

- ☑ Address and prevent potential physical, economic, and cultural displacement of existing businesses that may result from redevelopment and market pressure (MPP-Ec-12)

As communities grow and change, commercial displacement may result when businessowners are priced out of local real estate markets, as either rent or property tax increases become unaffordable. Residential and commercial displacement are often deeply interrelated – when residents are displaced, local businesses can lose their patrons and be forced to move or close. Small business owners are most at risk and, like residential displacement, often located in communities of color. VISION 2050 recognizes that rising land values, population, and job growth contribute to a commercial displacement crisis. Local plans are a critical tool for preventing future displacement from occurring.

## Planning Resources

- Urban Displacement Project: [Cultural, Commercial, and Industrial Displacement Research](#)
- Small Business Anti-Displacement Network: [Toolkit](#), [Strategies](#), and [Case Studies](#)
- Redmond: [Small Business Displacement](#)

## Local Examples

- City of Seattle: [Commercial Affordability](#)

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>Policy 7.2.1 Promote the local use of special small business financing and management assistance programs. Help identify facilities which may be used for small business startups, including older structures which may be suitably reused for business purposes.</p> <p><a href="#">Gig Harbor Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific actions to alleviate financial burdens for small businesses</li> <li>• Specific programs that can be tracked over time to monitor business activity and outcomes</li> </ul>
<p>Seek new tools to support the creation of spaces attractive and affordable to businesses threatened with displacement so that small locally-owned businesses are able to remain in their neighborhoods.</p> <p><a href="#">Renton Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes the need for new and innovative tools to support small businesses</li> <li>• Targeted specifically at at-risk businesses</li> </ul>



## Data Resources

- Commercial Affordability: [CoStar data](#)
- Business Births & Deaths: Jurisdiction’s business license records
- Surveys & Focus Groups with existing and former business owners and residents

## Culturally and Ethnically Diverse Communities

- ☑ Support, recognize, and empower the contributions of the region’s culturally and ethnically diverse communities, institutions, and Native Tribes (MPP-Ec-15, Ec-17, Ec-20)

VISION 2050 recognizes that the region’s culturally and ethnically diverse communities contribute to vibrant local economies through small business ownership and cultural spaces. Jurisdictions know the value of local historical and cultural context best, and local plans can recognize, preserve, and empower cultural and ethnic communities, institutions, and Native Tribes. These unique assets help create jobs and opportunities, but opportunities and resources are not allocated equitably. Policies in local plans can work to set intentional goals and policies that advance racial equity and strive for the inclusion of all in the unique design, cultural identity, and opportunities for connection in the region’s communities.

## Planning Resources

- Brookings: [Black-owned businesses in U.S. cities: The challenges, solutions, and opportunities for prosperity](#)
- US Department of Commerce: [Minority Business Development Agency](#)
- US Department of Commerce: [The Contribution of Minority Business Enterprises to the U.S. Economy](#)





## Local Examples

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>ED 5.2 Enhance arts and culture activities in order to attract creative-class workers, living wage employers, and tourists to Seattle, as well as to enrich our overall culture of innovation.</p> <p><a href="#">Seattle Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draws a connection between cultural activities and economic development</li> <li>• Recognizes the value of the cultural economy on workforce recruitment</li> <li>• Action-oriented by focusing investments into a specific area</li> </ul>
<p>Policy ED-39 As appropriate, work with other jurisdictions and agencies such as state and federal agencies, Tribes, the Port of Bremerton, the cities, the Kitsap Economic Development Alliance (KEDA), Port Orchard Chamber of Commerce, and the Kitsap County Public Utilities Districts, in marketing and developing the City of Port Orchard.</p> <p><a href="#">Port Orchard Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognized the importance of partnerships in economic development</li> <li>• Names several institutions to work together towards a common goal</li> <li>• Acknowledges the important role Tribes play in economic development</li> </ul>

## Data Resources

- Business Births & Deaths: Jurisdiction’s business license records
- Local Interviews & Focus Groups

## Transportation

Transportation planning, facility construction, and operation have often exacerbated racial disparities in the name of growth. Ensuring mobility for all people in our region, especially historically marginalized and underserved communities, is critically important to the health of the region and equitable outcomes in other areas, such as employment and housing.

### Racial and Social Equity

- ☑ Identify racial and social equity as a core objective when planning and implementing transportation improvements, programs, and services (MPP-T-9)

Transportation should enable social and economic opportunities by providing equitable access to affordable and reliable options for all residents. An equity-focused approach considers both the positive and negative impacts of planning, building, maintaining, and operating transportation facilities (e.g., streets & roadways) and services like public transportation. Transportation planning processes should consider if services and benefits are being provided in historically marginalized and underserved communities at the same level as other communities. For example, are these communities as likely to have access to frequent transit service? Similarly, are negative externalities, like pollution, emissions, and siting of maintenance facilities, disproportionately burdening these communities more than others?

### Planning Resources

- US Department of Transportation: [Transportation Equity](#)
- Center for Neighborhood Technology: [Tools for Equitable Mobility](#)
- Center for Urban Transportation Research: [Transportation Equity Needs Assessment & Project Prioritization](#)
- Puget Sound Regional Electric Vehicle Collaborative: [Equity Resources](#)
- PSRC: [2022 Regional Transportation Plan – Appendix F: Regional Equity Analysis](#)
- WA State: [Transportation Equity in WA's Cities and Catalog of Tools and Methods](#)



## Local Examples

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>3.8 Equity in Transportation Support the transportation needs of traditionally underserved neighborhoods and vulnerable populations, as listed under Goal 2, through investment in equitable modes of transportation and equal spending throughout the City, in addition to potential catch-up investment for areas in need as necessary.</p> <p><a href="#">Tacoma Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledges importance of investment in various modes to meet transportation needs</li> <li>• Creates opportunity to use additional funding in historically underserved areas (catch-up investment)</li> </ul>
<p>T-108 King County shall consider equity impacts and benefits when planning, developing, and implementing transportation programs, projects and services.</p> <p>T-308 Road projects and programs shall be implemented in ways that avoid or minimize negative impacts for people of color, low-income communities, people with limited English proficiency, immigrant and refugee populations and others who may have limited transportation options, such as students, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities. Projects and programs shall seek to provide tangible, positive benefits.</p> <p><a href="#">King County Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly states racial equity as a factor in transportation investment decisions</li> </ul>
<p>As part of performance monitoring of the comprehensive plan, Tacoma considers equity impacts, measuring the percent of need met within ¼ mile of disadvantaged communities, such as those with low incomes or many zero-car households.</p> <p><a href="#">Tacoma Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing implementation monitoring supports accountability for plan objectives</li> </ul>

## Data Resources

- [PSRC Visualization Tool](#)
- [PSRC Data Portal](#) – Equity Population Layers
- PSRC Regional Transportation Plan data dashboard [forthcoming]
- PSRC Equity Tracker [forthcoming]

## Mobility and Access for All

- Ensure mobility choices for people with special needs (MPP-T-10)

People with special transportation needs are those who are unable to transport themselves due to their age, income, or ability. According to Washington state law, RCW 81.66.010, people with special transportation needs are “those people, including their attendants, who because of physical or mental disability, income status or age, are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation.”

People with mobility challenges have unique experiences with different socioeconomic backgrounds and different types of transportation needs. In many cases, a person falls into multiple categories, such as older adults with a disability or youth with low incomes. It is also important to note that people with special transportation needs have similar mobility needs as the general public, and yet because of their specific mobility challenges, access to transportation can be a greater burden. Investments specifically designed to address the needs of marginalized groups and those with mobility challenges often end up benefiting all users of the transportation system.

## Planning Resources

- PSRC [Coordinated Mobility Plan](#) – the Regional Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, developed by PSRC in coordination with partners, as part of the Regional Transportation Plan development
- [Washington Statewide Human Services Transportation Plan](#) – the Statewide equivalent, developed by WSDOT in coordination with partners

## Local Examples

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>Policy T-6.7: Implement transportation programs and projects in ways that prevent or minimize impacts to low-income, minority and special needs populations. As required by applicable state and federal regulations, Kirkland should continue to make sure that all citizens are involved in decision making about transportation projects and that impacts (such as health, environmental, social and economic impacts) do not fall disproportionately on vulnerable populations.</p> <p><a href="#">Kirkland Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeks to avoid additional impacts on populations with mobility challenges</li> <li>• Acknowledges the importance of community engagement</li> </ul>
<p>T-101a King County should seek to ensure that its system of transportation services and facilities serves the mobility needs of disadvantaged communities and people with limited transportation options, including people of color, low income communities, people with limited English proficiency, immigrant and refugee populations, students, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities</p> <p><a href="#">King County Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies specific priority populations, including immigrants and refugees</li> <li>• Includes a commitment to facilitate transportation needs, not just minimize burdens or negative impacts</li> </ul>
<p>Policy T-1.2.5: Ensure pedestrian facilities are designed consistent with ADA guidelines and that existing infrastructure is updated per the city's ADA Transition Plan to accommodate users of all ages and abilities. Design curb cuts, ramps, and other facilities to accommodate pedestrians with a disability or mobility challenges</p> <p><a href="#">Kenmore Comprehensive Plan.</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporates implementation of the ADA Transition Plan to improve mobility and accessibility for pedestrians with disabilities or mobility challenges.</li> </ul>

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>TG 3 Meet people’s mobility needs by providing equitable access to, and encouraging use of, multiple transportation options.</p> <p>T 3.3 Consider the income, age, ability, and vehicle-ownership patterns of populations throughout the city in developing transportation systems and facilities so that all residents, especially those most in need, have access to a wide range of affordable travel options.</p> <p>T 3.13 Prioritize bicycle and pedestrian investments on the basis of increasing use, safety, connectivity, equity, health, livability, and opportunities to leverage funding.</p> <p>T 3.22 Assess the affordability and accessibility of existing and potential transportation options in order to better inform decisions affecting the equitable provision of transportation services.</p> <p><a href="#">Seattle Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactively focuses on expanding benefits and travel options for underserved communities</li> <li>• Identifies the need to leverage funds to improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure</li> </ul>

### Data Resources

- PSRC [Community Profiles](#)



## Public Services

Public services are essential to the day-to-day operation of the region, helping make communities safe, healthy, prosperous, and resilient.

### Affordable and Equitable Public Services

- ☑ Promote affordable and equitable access of public services, including drinking water and telecommunication infrastructure, to provide access to all communities, especially underserved communities (MPP-PS-2, PS-16, PS-22)

The health of the region’s residents depends on whether they have fair and timely access to high-quality, affordable, and conveniently located public services. Equitable access to these services will require identifying gaps in services and planning for expanded or improved services and facilities.

### Planning Resources

- US Water Alliance: [Racial Equity Toolkit](#)
  - [Advancing Racial Equity Across the Water Sector: A Toolkit for Utilities](#)
- Seattle Public Utilities: [Racial Equity Planning and Analysis](#)
- King County: [Equity Impact Review Tool](#)

### Local Examples

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>Policy LU-2.1: Work with regional and state entities when public capital facilities are considered for location in or near the City to ensure that impacts and benefits are equitably dispersed.</p> <p><a href="#">Kent Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focuses on proactively working with other public entities to consider equity implications</li></ul>
<p>I-101a Equity and social justice principles will be used by King County as an important consideration in developing zoning and development regulations governing public and private uses, in siting public facilities, and in evaluating land use decisions. Results from the Equity Impact Review Tool will be used where appropriate.</p> <p><a href="#">King County Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Incorporates equity impact tool to evaluate siting decisions</li></ul>



## Data Resources

- [Census Bureau](#): demographic information on your community
- [Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map](#)

## Community Facilities and Services

- ☑ Locate community facilities and services, including civic places like parks, schools, and other public spaces, in centers and near transit, with consideration for climate change, economic, social and health impacts (MPP-PS-18, PS-20, PS-29, DP-11)

Community amenities and services are critical to neighborhood stability, health, and opportunity. Parks, community centers, and human services help build a sense of community by fostering social connections and providing much-needed support for residents. Parks can provide health benefits for residents, providing opportunities for recreation, mental wellness, and play space. Jurisdictions should be thoughtful about marrying investments in parks with anti-displacement strategies so current residents can enjoy these benefits in the future.

## Planning Resources

- AARP: [Livable Communities](#)
  - [Publications and Resources](#)
- National League of Cities: [Livable Communities: Innovative, Inclusive, and Equitable Cities](#)

## Local Examples

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
CSI(D): Provide public facilities and services conveniently and equitably throughout the community and ensure that the prescribed Level of Service standards are pursued.  <a href="#">Bremerton Comprehensive Plan</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supports convenient and distributed community services</li></ul>
GOAL 3.1 Maintain and enhance the quality of life for all community members by providing and supporting effective and accessible human services that are culturally relevant, physically accessible, near adequate public transportation, affordable, and immediate.  <a href="#">SeaTac Comprehensive Plan</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focuses on the importance of services and facilities accessible and near transit</li></ul>

POLICY EXAMPLE	WHY THIS WORKS
<p>Capital Facilities Element: Over the next twenty years, the City will aim to ensure that Seattle’s capital facilities and programming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to a high degree of personal and public health and safety;</li> <li>• Are equitably distributed based upon Seattle’s Race and Social Justice principles and the different needs of individuals and communities;</li> <li>• Provide services that are relevant to neighborhoods throughout the city and are consistent with each community’s priorities;</li> <li>• Support the City’s goals of protecting and restoring the natural environment, in particular to reduce the impacts of and adapt to climate change;</li> <li>• Encourage the healthy physical, educational, and cultural development of children and adults;</li> <li>• Provide space for the city’s growing population to gather, connect, and build community;</li> <li>• Respond to increasing diversity, changing technology, and additional demand on limited facilities; and</li> <li>• Are resilient to the effects of natural and human-made disasters.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Seattle Comprehensive Plan</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasizes the role of race and social justice in providing for community facilities</li> </ul>

### Data Resources

- PSRC: [Transportation System Visualization Tool](#) – provides information on the transit network, as well as demographic characteristics
- AARP: [Livability Index](#)
- [Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map](#)

# Incorporating Equity into Planning and Policy

## General Policy Resources

There are a variety of useful national resources and examples on equity to help inform comprehensive planning and implementation:

- [PolicyLink: All-In Cities Toolkit](#)
- National League of Cities: [Race & Equity](#)
- Municipal Research and Services Center: [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Resources for Local Governments](#)
- American Planning Association: [Planning for Equity Policy Guide](#)
- International City/County Management Association: [Equity and Inclusion Toolkit](#)
- National League of Cities: [Municipal Action Guide: Advancing Racial Equity in Your City](#)
- [Policy Map](#)

## Equitable Community Engagement

VISION 2050 emphasizes the importance of equitable engagement to support local planning. Public participation is an integral step in comprehensive planning for several important reasons. Engaging stakeholders, especially from historically marginalized communities, can empower participating communities in public policy and decision-making processes and work to address past harms and inequities. Their nuanced understanding of the barriers their communities face can provide a more holistic understanding of problems and equips staff to address these issues moving forward. PSRC's [Equitable Engagement Guide for Comprehensive Plans](#) provides more information on engaging stakeholders in the update process. The guide can be used as a starting point for engagement and includes resources for carrying out these strategies.

## Plan Evaluation Framework

Many cities and counties are interested in an analytical framework to understand equity in a comprehensive plan. An equity analysis of an entire plan is challenging because plans address many facets of public policy. There are multiple approaches planners can consider in reviewing their comprehensive plan.

There are several local examples of equity analyses:

- [Seattle: Racial Equity Analysis of Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan and Urban Village Strategy](#)
- [King County Skyway-West Hill Community Service Area Subarea Plan \(Appendix C\)](#)
- [North Highline Community Service Area Subarea Plan \(Appendix B\)](#)

There are a variety of examples of [racial equity toolkits](#) that can help proactively evaluate and center equity in policymaking. PSRC has developed a [tool](#) to evaluate comprehensive plan proposals. Given the scope of a comprehensive plan, it may not be feasible to use a tool on the full plan, but the main steps can inform analysis of a comp plan:

- Clearly identify the purpose of the proposal
- Analyze data
- Engage with community
- Analyze benefits, burdens, and ways to mitigate
- Implement
- Track accountability

PSRC included an [equity analysis](#) in the VISION 2050 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to evaluate the impacts growth alternatives might have across a variety of measures. The equity analysis considers how the alternatives may affect people of color and people with low incomes, focusing on impacts in areas with particularly high concentrations of those communities today.

PSRC's Regional Transportation Plan included an equity analysis as an [appendix to the plan](#). The analysis focuses on a range of residents who may have special transportation needs: people of color, people with low incomes, older adults, youth, people with disabilities, and people with limited English proficiency.

Commerce's [Racially Disparate Impacts](#) in Housing guidance includes a framework that may be useful in reviewing housing, and other aspects of a comprehensive plan. The guidance recommends an approach to review and classify policies in the comprehensive plan that may be supportive, insufficient, or challenge a jurisdiction's ability to address racially disparate impacts and exclusion in housing. The guidance advises engaging impacted community members before evaluating policies to reduce bias in the interpretation of outcomes and lead to policy solutions that better address the experience of impacted communities.

**Figure 1: Example of Policy Evaluation Framework**

CRITERIA	EVALUATION
The policy is valid and supports meeting the identified housing needs. The policy is needed and addresses identified racially disparate impacts, displacement and exclusion in housing.	<b>S</b> Supportive
The policy can support meeting the identified housing needs but may be insufficient or does not address racially disparate impacts, displacement and exclusion in housing.	<b>A</b> Approaching
The policy may challenge the jurisdiction’s ability to meet the identified housing needs. The policy’s benefits and burdens should be reviewed to optimize the ability to meet the policy’s objectives while improving the equitable distribution of benefits and burdens imposed by the policy.	<b>C</b> Challenging
The policy does not impact the jurisdiction’s ability to meet the identified housing needs and has no influence or impact on racially disparate impacts, displacement or exclusion.	<b>NA</b> Not applicable

Source: WA Department of Commerce Racially-Disparate Impacts Guidance

Many comprehensive plan updates use language that has been carried out over multiple years. Plans and policy language can, often unintentionally, use language that connotes exclusion or encodes bias. The policy evaluation should review for terminology that encodes prejudice, racially informed presumptions or promotes exclusion.



The [City of Redmond](#) has identified a series of questions to consider for goals, policies, and programs in each plan element. Staff will review each chapter and policy in the Comprehensive Plan and all new proposed policies to support the implementation of this theme. The review focuses on:

- Will this positively serve historically marginalized communities?
- Will this positively address the priorities of affected communities?
- Will this policy allow the project team to advance pro-equity opportunities?
- Will this reduce known disparities?
- Will this have a positive impact on addressing community priorities and concerns?
- Will this policy allow the implementation process to stay connected with communities?
- Will this policy allow project course corrections to be handled if unintended consequences are identified?

## **Implementation**

Policy implementation and regular monitoring should always go hand in hand. Comprehensive plans should be structured in a way that encourages regular monitoring of outcomes and pays timely attention to the changing needs of the community. Planners should regularly monitor the indicators to explicitly tie back to policies and implementation items in the plan. A robust plan for monitoring economic objectives will help cities meet their equity goals and make targeted updates to policies and tools.

Developing a list of implementation actions based on policies in the plan will help jurisdictions keep track of progress to put the plan into action. Regularly tracking what actions have been taken to implement the plan will maintain accountability to the public.

Zoning is an important tool to implement a comprehensive plan. The American Planning Association developed the [Equity in Zoning Policy Guide](#) provides guidance on how to review zoning regulations around three topics:

- Equity in the “Rules” of zoning – what the substantive rules of zoning allow, prohibit, or incentivize in different parts of the community.
- Equity in the “People” in zoning – who is involved in drafting the rules and incentives, who is notified and engaged in whether to change those rules for different areas of the community, and who is involved in enforcement.
- Equity in the “Map” of zoning districts – where the rules are applied through zoning maps and whether that reduces or reinforces exclusion and segregation in America.

Racial inequities have been an enduring part of public policy in this country. Local plans are an opportunity to acknowledge harms, identify opportunities, and chart a more equitable future. There is no blueprint for a plan that fully addresses systematic inequality – it will take cities across this region and country to test new ways to improve outcomes and benefit all residents.

