

Passport to 2044: Equity Impact Assessments

Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated August 2023

This document compiles frequently asked questions on PSRC's Racial Equity Impact Assessment ([DOCX](#)) ([PDF](#)) as it relates to local comprehensive plan updates. A webinar on the tool and other resources are available on [PSRC's website](#).

Scaling to Fit Your Community

What about smaller jurisdictions working under consulting contracts, limited budgets, and limited timeframes?

Response

- Scale the application of the REIA to fit your capacity. For example, start by applying it to one comprehensive plan chapter or significant policy issue that is important to communities of color.
- Use off-the-shelf data PSRC has made available such as [displacement risk](#) and [opportunity mapping](#).
- Prioritize limited engagement resources on communities of color most impacted by inequitable growth (ex. Low-income renters of color).
- Use in-house communication resources to be transparent about how to influence decision making at each stage of the planning process, especially the early agenda setting.
- Use in-house resources to report on progress and communicate transparently during implementation through annual work plan reviews and budget processes.
- Incorporate racial equity criteria and competencies into your RFPs and consultant contracts scopes of work.

Are there existing examples of other cities using an assessment and how have these impacted outcomes in plans?

Response

- The City of Seattle's [Growth and Equity Analysis](#) shaped the city's growth strategy to direct comparatively less growth to high displacement risk areas and more to high opportunity areas. It also provided the basis for equity policies to be included throughout all Comprehensive Plan chapters.

- New York City’s [Equitable Development Data Explorer](#) is used by planners and property owners proposing land use changes to complete Racial Equity Reports that help decision makers center racial equity in planning decisions.
- Findings from the City of [Portland’s health equity analysis coupled with community-led engagement](#) established equity goals and land use and community development implementation priorities for the [West Portland Town Center Plan](#).
- [Arlington County Virginia’s Missing Middle Study](#) provided the historical research of racial inequities and current day disparities related to housing and land use that supported the case for allowing up to six units of housing in areas formerly zoned for one.
- A [Racial Equity Index](#) informed the [City of Spartanburg Comprehensive Plan](#)’s goals for racial equity.

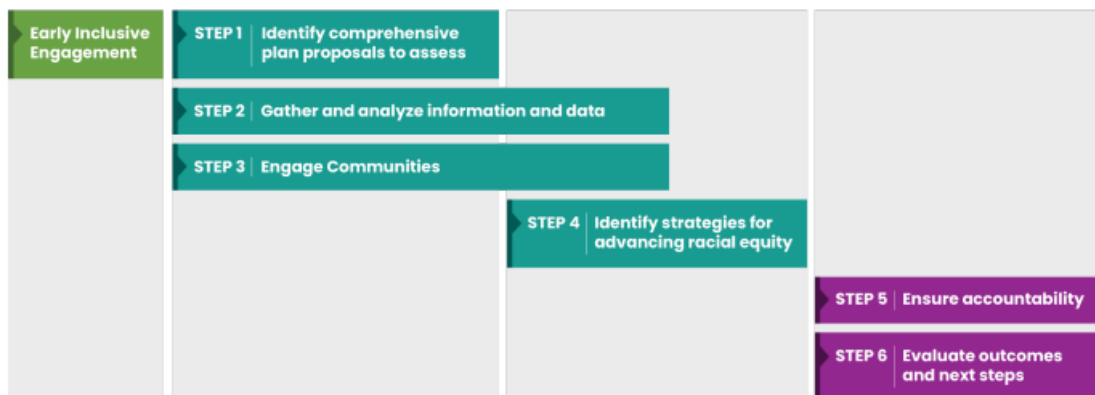
Where to Start

Following initial community engagement is a good opportunity to start this process by identifying key issues from these conversations and diving further into how they may impact racial equity.

Comprehensive Plan Development Process



Equity Impact Assessment Steps



Support and Training

What support is available from PSRC for doing this work?

PSRC staff are able to help with starting using the tool and incorporating it into your planning process. More information on this program of support will be available soon.

In the meantime, below are some resources to assist with the process.

Engagement Resources:

- PSRC [Equitable Engagement for Comprehensive Plans](#)

Data Resources:

- [PSRC Community Profiles Dashboard and RDI Measures](#) (coming soon)
- WA Department of Commerce: [Housing Guidance Webpage](#): Includes resources directly related to RDI.

Planning Resources:

- PSRC [Equity Planning Resources for Comprehensive Plans](#)

Is there a benefit to multiple cities using the same tool?

Response

Racial equity practitioners in planning, housing, and community development agencies can join [GARE's Housing, Land, and Development Network](#), a peer-to-peer learning community on the GARE Network portal which also meets monthly to share best practices and promising policy innovations. Many members piloting the use of racial equity tools are sharing best practices and supporting each other in using these new tools.

REIA and the Our Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update

How does this fit into our periodic update process?

This tool should be used throughout the planning process and can be returned to during different phases as more materials are gathered. Following initial community engagement is a good opportunity to start this process by identifying key issues from these conversations and diving further into how they may impact racial equity.

Is this type of work expected to be an appendix item to the comprehensive plan?

This assessment is not a requirement for local comprehensive plans, but could be a beneficial way to incorporate [equity related policies and actions from VISION 2050](#) into your local plan.

Can this level of detail be incorporated into a Housing Element narrative?

The Housing Element would be a useful place to include detail on demographics, inequities, and policy assessments related to housing.

Other Questions

What if my city has a low share of people of color? How do I do engagement?

On engagement, you may try casting a wider net to reach people who may want to live in your jurisdiction but don't currently. Regional or countywide organizations might be good resources to reach out to. People of color who work in and/or for the city may have thoughts and insights about the community too.

Other suggestions include reaching out to religious institutions in town, hiring a liaison that is well connected within the community, and hiring an outreach consultant to conduct surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions.

Example organizations:

- Local Housing Authorities
- Other Housing Organizations: [Cocoon House](#)
- Refugee & Immigration Organization: [Refugee & Immigrant Services Northwest](#)

Resources:

- PSRC [Equitable Engagement for Comprehensive Plans](#)
- PSRC [Passport to 2044: Equity Session on Equitable Engagement](#)