

# Equity Pilot

## Project and Process Recommendations

Equity Advisory Committee

December 7, 2023



Puget Sound Regional Council



*We are leaders in the region to realize equity for all. Diversity, racial equity and inclusion are integrated into how we carry out all our work.*

[psrc.org/equity](https://psrc.org/equity)



## The region's vision for equity...

All people have the means to attain the resources and opportunities that improve their quality of life and enable them to reach full potential. Differences in life outcomes cannot be predicted by race, class, or any other identity. Communities of color, historically marginalized communities, and those affected by poverty are engaged in decision-making processes, planning, and policy-making.



# Presentation Overview

- **Brief Pilot Review**
- **Equity Projects**
- **Potential Revisions and Board Recommendations**
- **Schedule**
- **Q&A**



# Questions for the Equity Advisory Committee

- Were these the types of projects and responses you were expecting?
- Are there any elements of the Pilot you feel should NOT be included in the full project selection process?
- Is there consensus to recommend the changes put forth under Pathway 2?
- Given the results of the scoring, how should we distribute the funds for the Pilot?
- Is there anything else you would like to include in the recommendation?

# Brief Review: Project Selection & Pilot

- GOAL of the Equity Pilot:
  - Develop innovative ways to improve equity in PSRC's project selection process (e.g., questions and evaluation process)
  - PSRC process provides feedback loop into future planning, improving how transportation projects meet the needs of marginalized communities
    - Laying out expectations for future project submittals



# Equity Pilot Framework

From EAC feedback, January – May 2023  
Testing out two approaches for the pilot

## 1. Updating existing structure (Pathway 1)

- Update criteria
- Update guidance
- Increase equity criterion point values

## 2. Equity woven throughout all criteria (Pathway 2)

- Same criteria updates
- Same guidance updates
- Equity incorporated throughout



# Equity Pilot Framework – Pathway 1

## 1. Updating existing structure

- Identify the most marginalized communities impacted / improved by the project
  - Start with PSRC's 6 **equity focus population areas (EFAs)** and incorporate the **intersection of two or more EFAs** in the project area (e.g., in an area of higher percentages of both people of color and people with low incomes)
- Address community **outreach and engagement**:
  - Set expectations with **best practices and examples**
- Address the quality of displacement policies:
  - Connect to **Housing Opportunities by Place (HOP)** resources



# Equity Pilot Framework – Pathway 2

## 1. Equity woven throughout all criteria

- Identify equity populations **upfront, before all criteria**
- Include **addressing impacts / benefits to EFA populations within all applicable criteria**
  - Additional questions related to **access to jobs** and **improved safety**, specifically for **Equity Focus Areas (EFAs)**
- Equity criterion becomes Community Outreach and Displacement





# Equity Focus Areas (EFAs)

*Based on foundational work in*

## **VISION 2050 & the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)**

Six demographics used to measure and track disparities

People of  
Color

People with  
Low Incomes

People with  
Disabilities

Youth  
(Ages 5-17)

Older Adults  
(Age 65+)

People with  
limited English  
proficiency  
(LEP)

Equity Focus Areas (EFAs)

have higher proportions of members of these groups



# Equity Focus Areas (EFAs)

EQUITY FOCUS AREAS categorize places into three groups:

Above 50%

Above the Regional Average

Not above 50% or the Regional Average

People of Color

People with Low Incomes

People with Disabilities

Youth (Ages 5-17)

Older Adults (Age 65+)

People with LEP (Limited English Proficiency)

Example of Equity Focus Areas (People of Color)

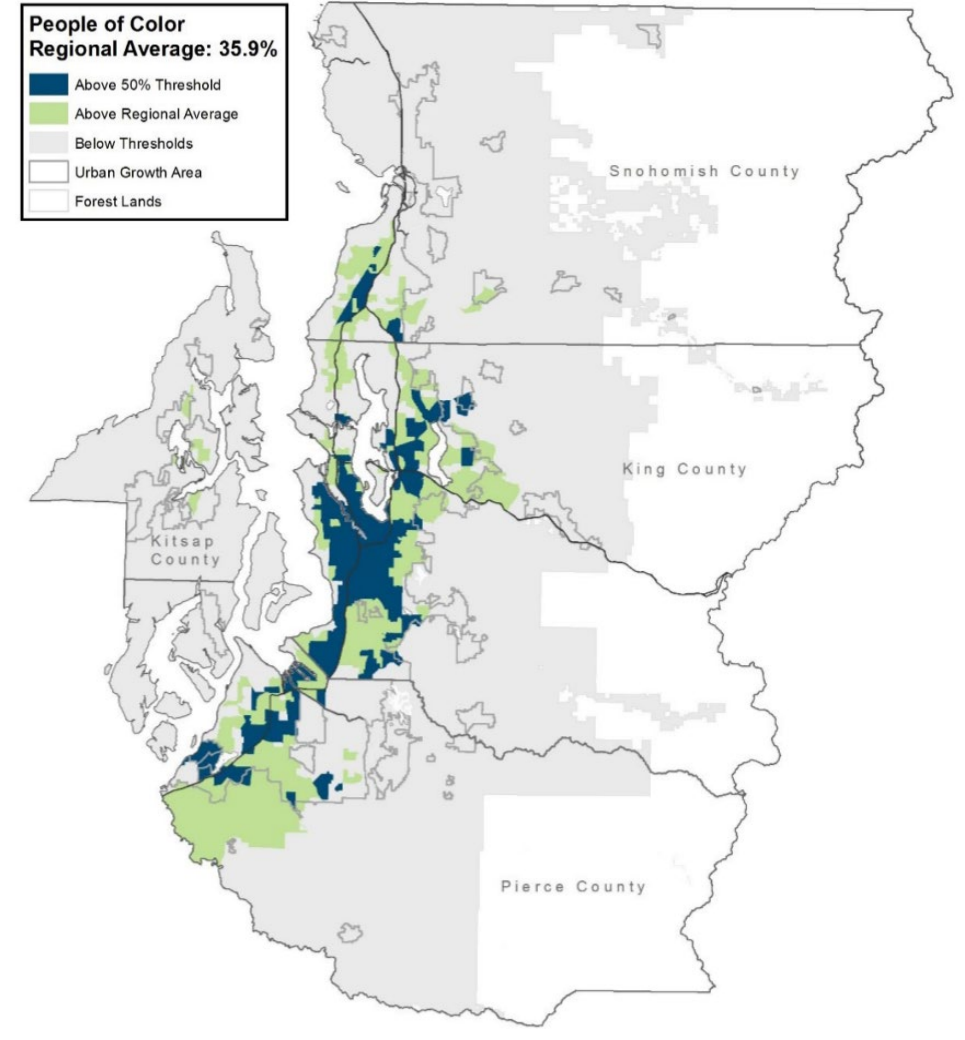


Image: PSRC Draft Regional Transportation Plan (1/13/2022);  
Figure 1, [Appendix F](#), page 13

# Logistics

- Every project responds to **both pathways**
- **One project per agency** to be submitted
- **\$6.01 million available**
  - **Cap funding** request at **\$1,000,000**
  - Total of **8 projects** submitted requesting a total of **\$6,354,283**



# Equity Pilot Projects

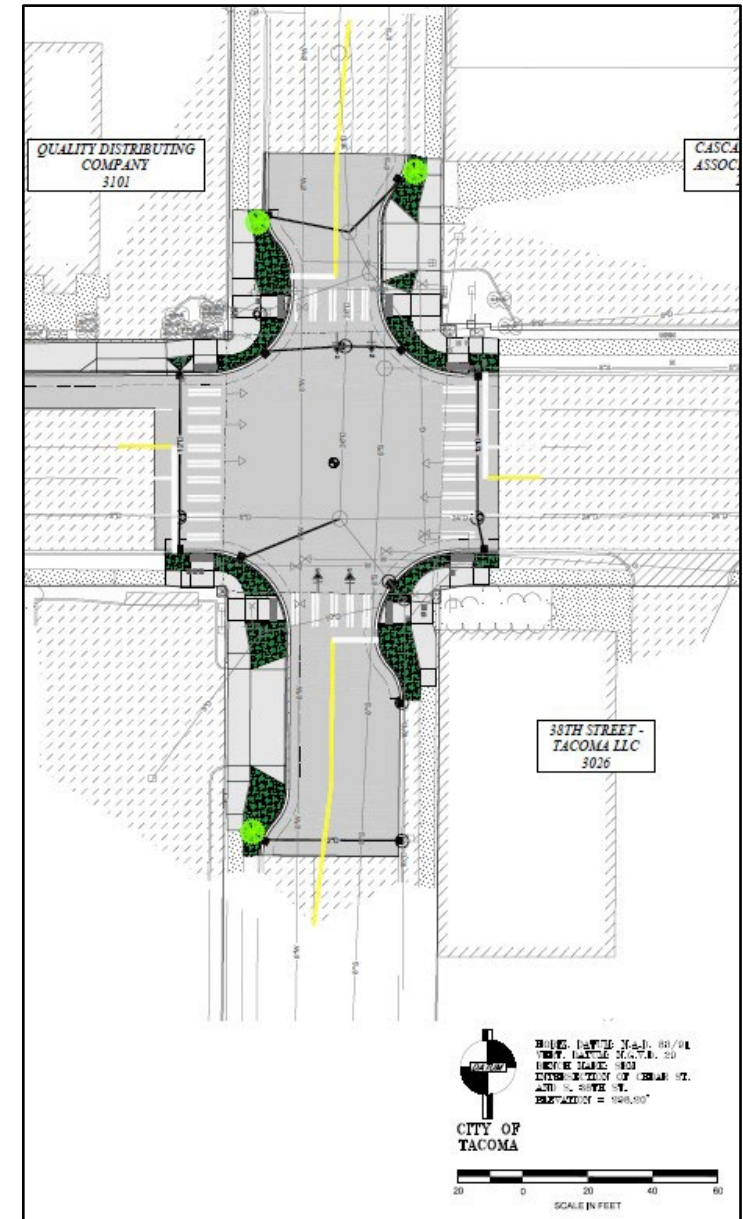


# Project #1 - Tacoma

## South 38th Street and South Cedar Street Pedestrian Improvements

### Project Description

- Fill in gap in sidewalk network and improve pedestrian crossing near Tacoma Mall



# Project #1 - Tacoma

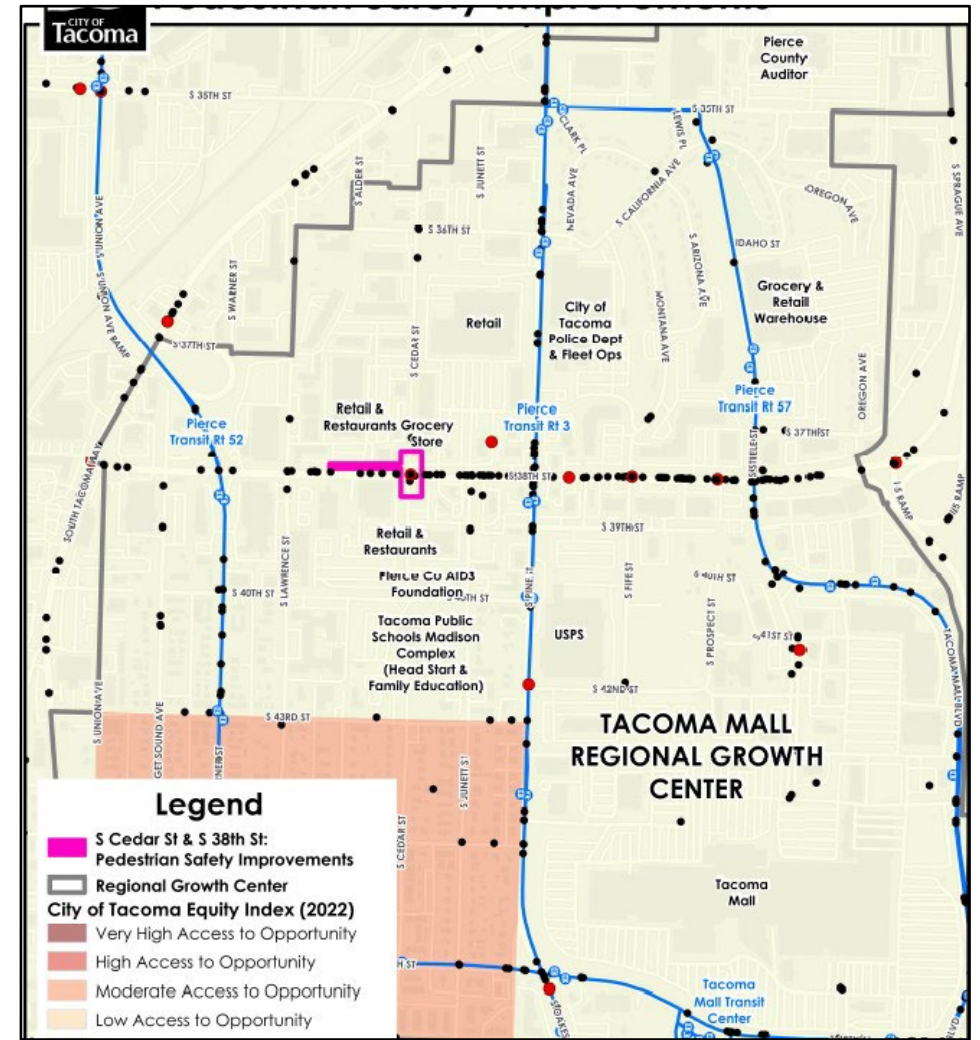
## South 38th Street and South Cedar Street Pedestrian Improvements

### Equity Focus Populations:

- People of Color, People with Disabilities, and People with Low Incomes

### Project Benefits:

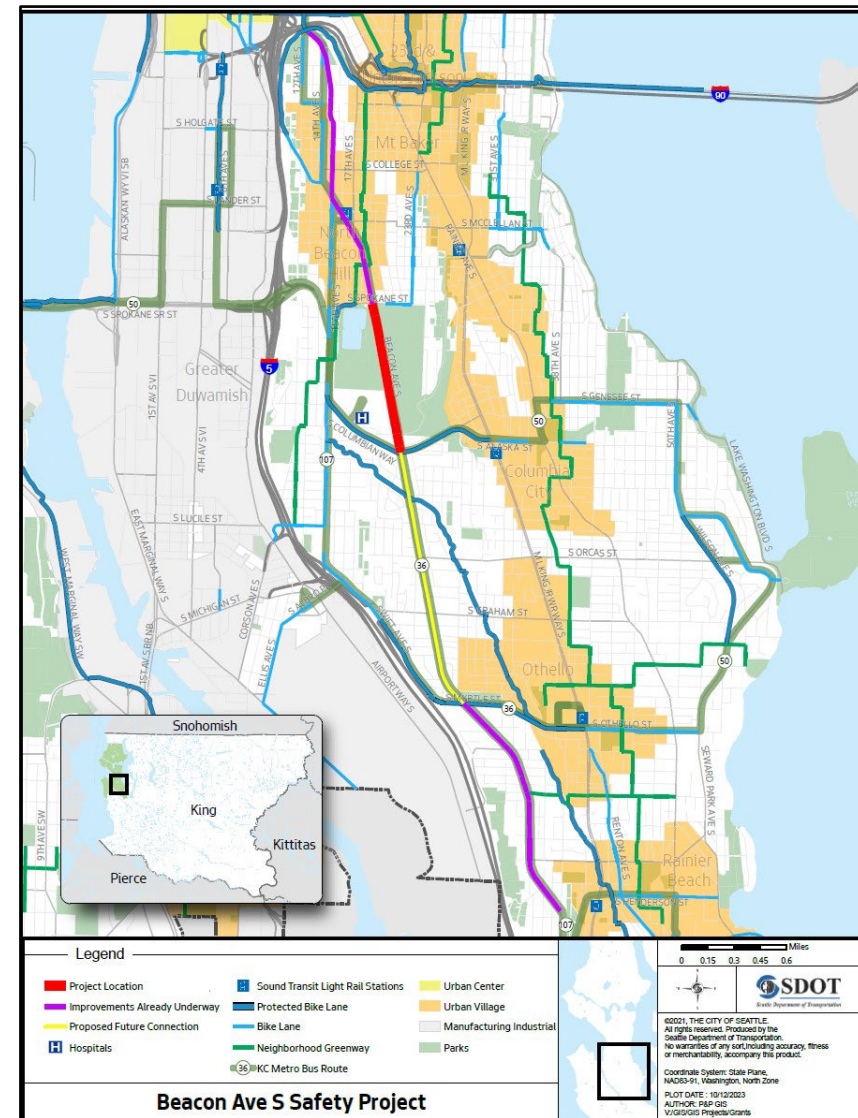
- Improve safety and access to services and transit



# Project #2 - Seattle

## Beacon Avenue South Safety Project Project Description

- Create a safe and direct route connecting the Beacon Hill neighborhood to Seattle's growing bike lane and regional trail networks
- Will extend initial segment currently being developed south through Jefferson Park



# Project #2 - Seattle

## Beacon Avenue South Safety Project

### Equity Focus Populations:

- Above regional average for all categories except older adults
- People of Color above 50% threshold

### Project Benefits:

- Improve access to jobs, services and regional transit
- Protected bike lanes provide another layer of safety



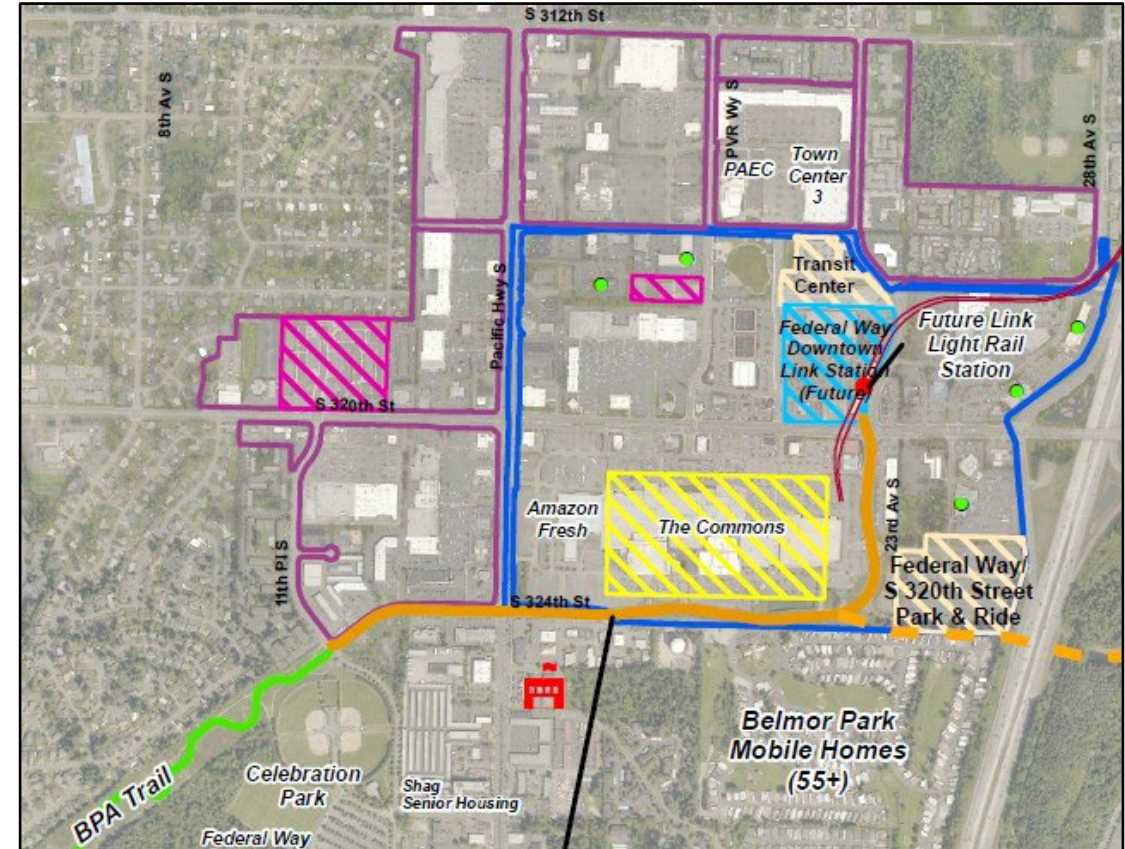


# Project #3 – Federal Way

## BPA Trail – City Center Extension

### Project Description

- Extend trail from current end point through city center to new LINK station
- Will include 2 or more enhanced crosswalks
- Part of a comprehensive project to improve access to and within regional center

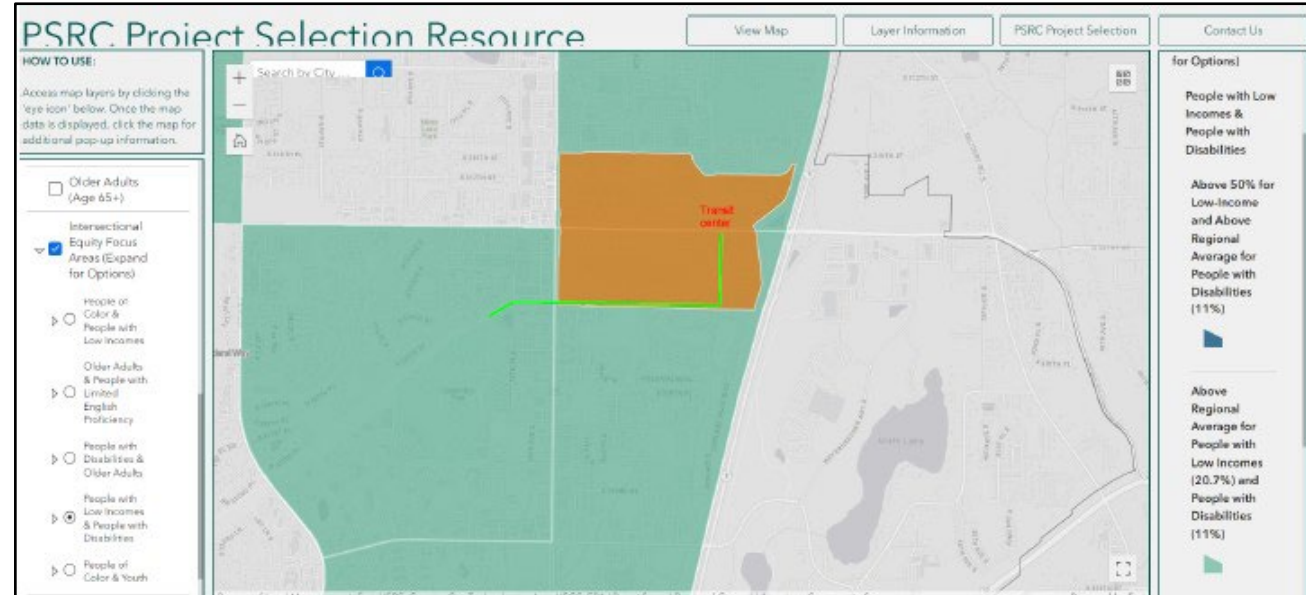


# Project #3 – Federal Way

## BPA Trail – City Center Extension

### Equity Focus Populations:

- People with Disabilities + Older Adults
- People with Disabilities + Low Incomes



### Project Benefits:

- Improve access to city center services and regional transit
- More space for people using assistive devices

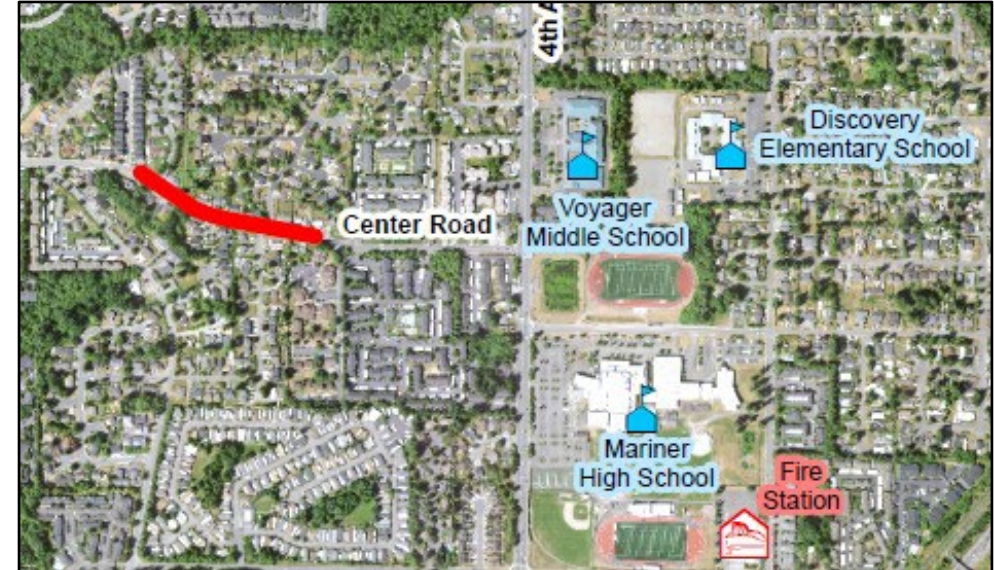


# Project #4 – Snohomish County

## Center Road Pedestrian Improvements

### Project Description

- Fill in gap in sidewalk network leading to three schools



# Project #4 – Snohomish County

## Center Road Pedestrian Improvements

### Equity Focus Populations:

- Above regional average for all categories except older adults

### Project Benefits:

- Improve access to schools, services and regional transit
- Promotes physical activity

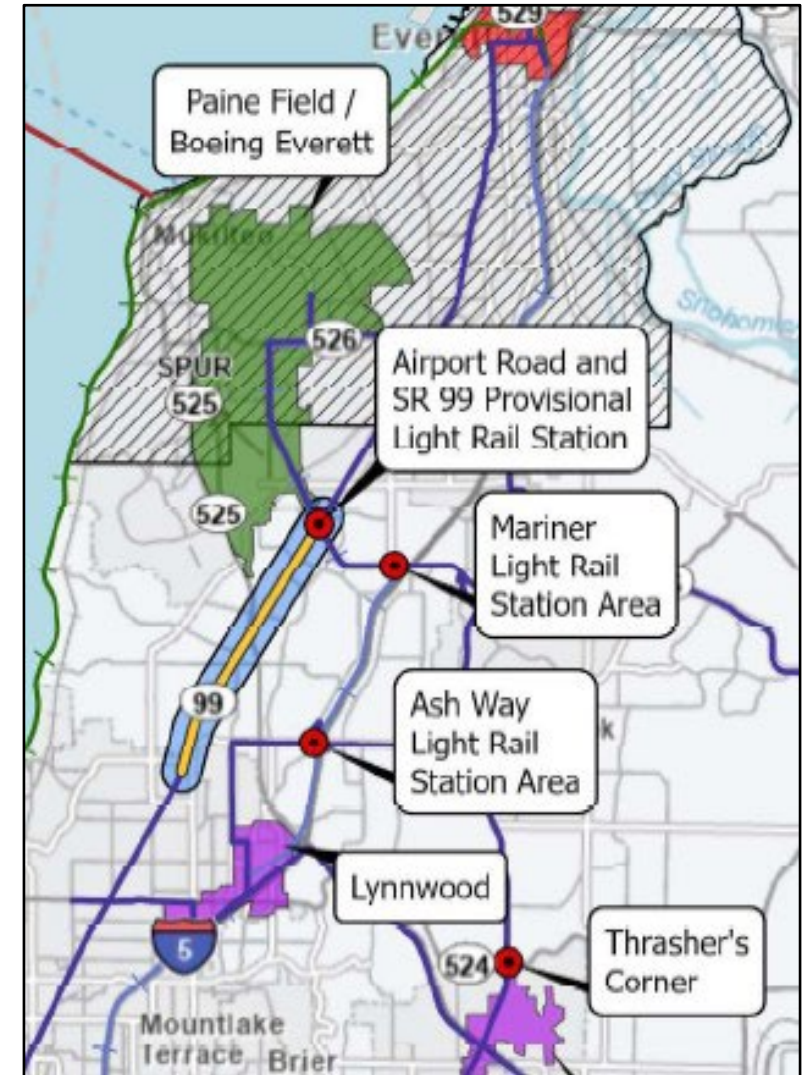


# Project #5 – WSDOT Northwest Region

## State Route 99 Preliminary Design Study

### Project Description

- Develop a plan for safety, transit reliability, and bicycle / pedestrian access improvements
- Evaluate signage improvements to make more appropriate for those with Limited English proficiency



# Project #5 – WSDOT Northwest Region

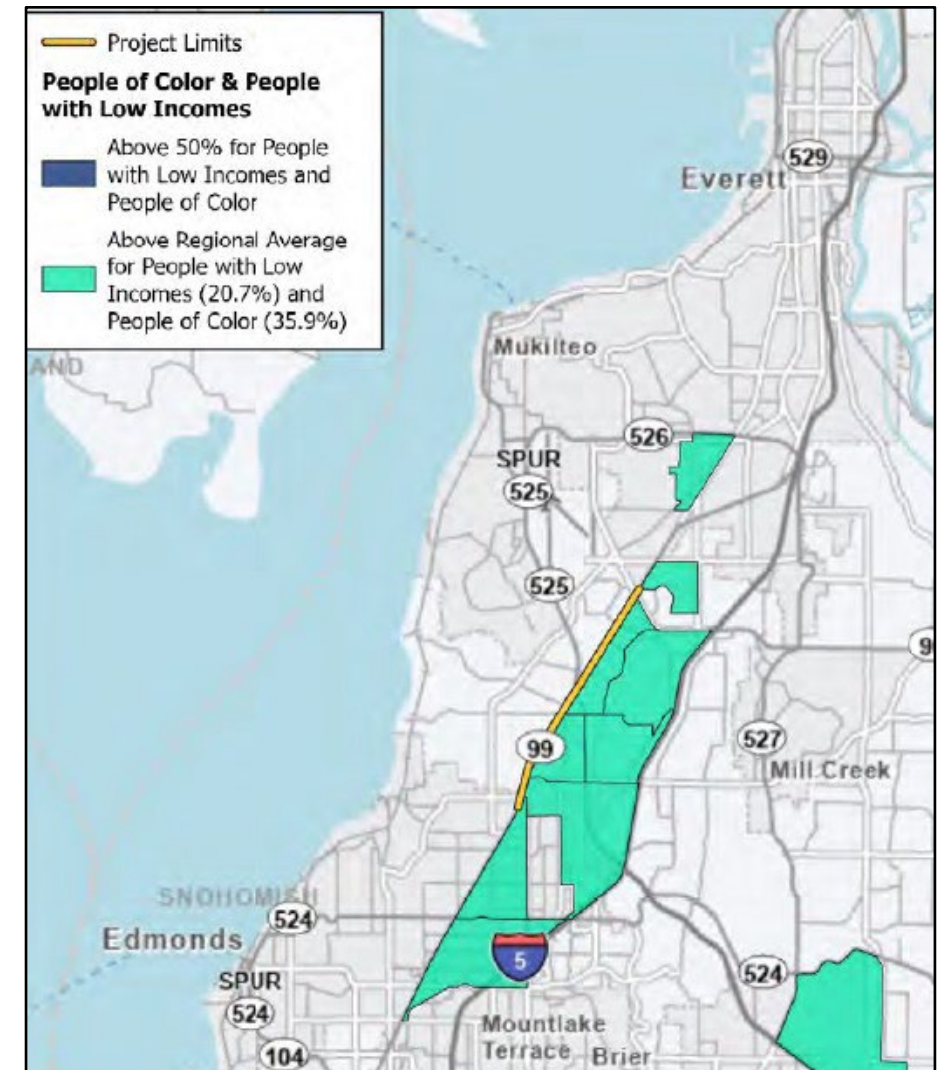
## State Route 99 Preliminary Design Study

### Equity Focus Populations:

- People of Color + People with Low Incomes above regional averages along entire corridor

### Project Benefits:

- Project purpose is to “create a safe and reliable corridor for all users while reconnecting bordering communities”

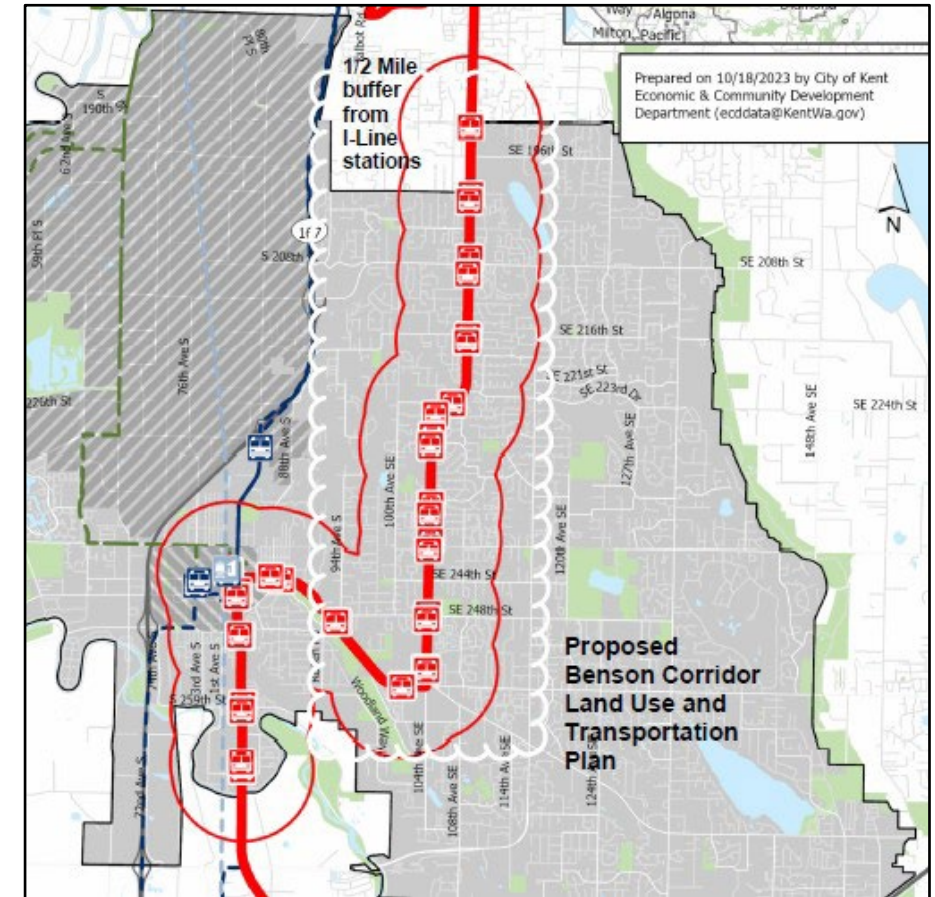


# Project #6 - Kent

## Benson Corridor "20 Minute Neighborhood" Plan

### Project Description

- Establish a vision and strategy to transform the corridor into a transportation efficient community
- Will result in a ready-to-implement plan that will streamline redevelopment



# Project #6 - Kent

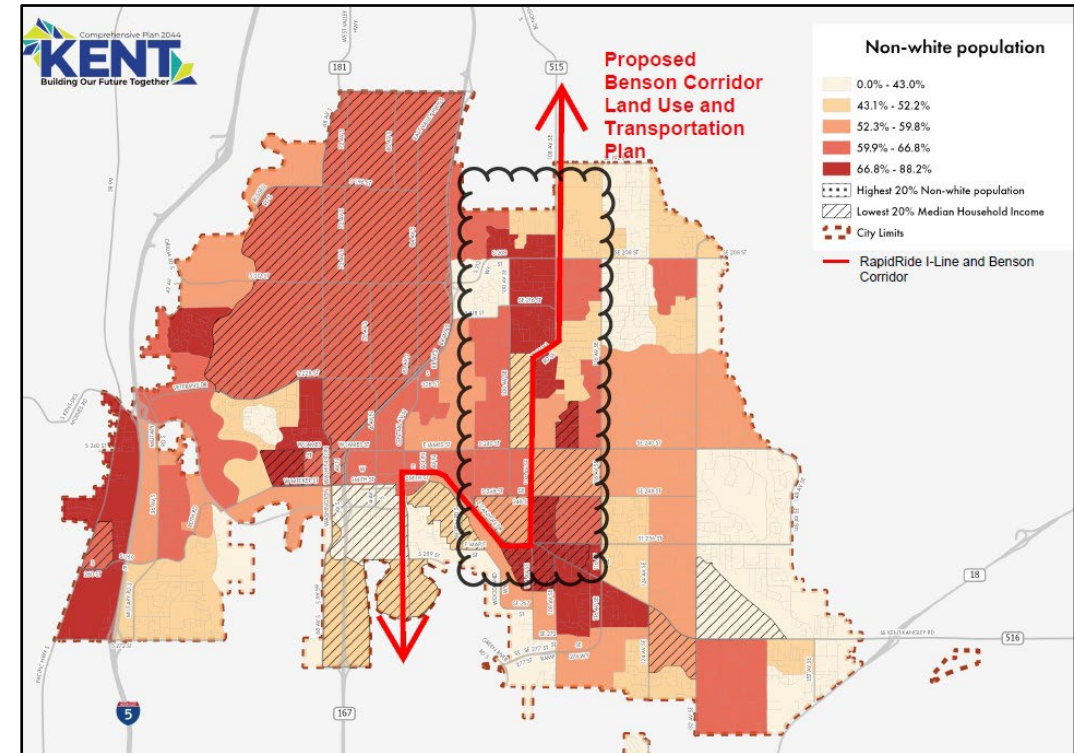
## Benson Corridor "20 Minute Neighborhood" Plan

### Equity Focus Populations:

- People of Color + People with Low Incomes

### Project Benefits:

- Will enable the City to identify updates to zoning, design standards, and projects needed to realize the vision



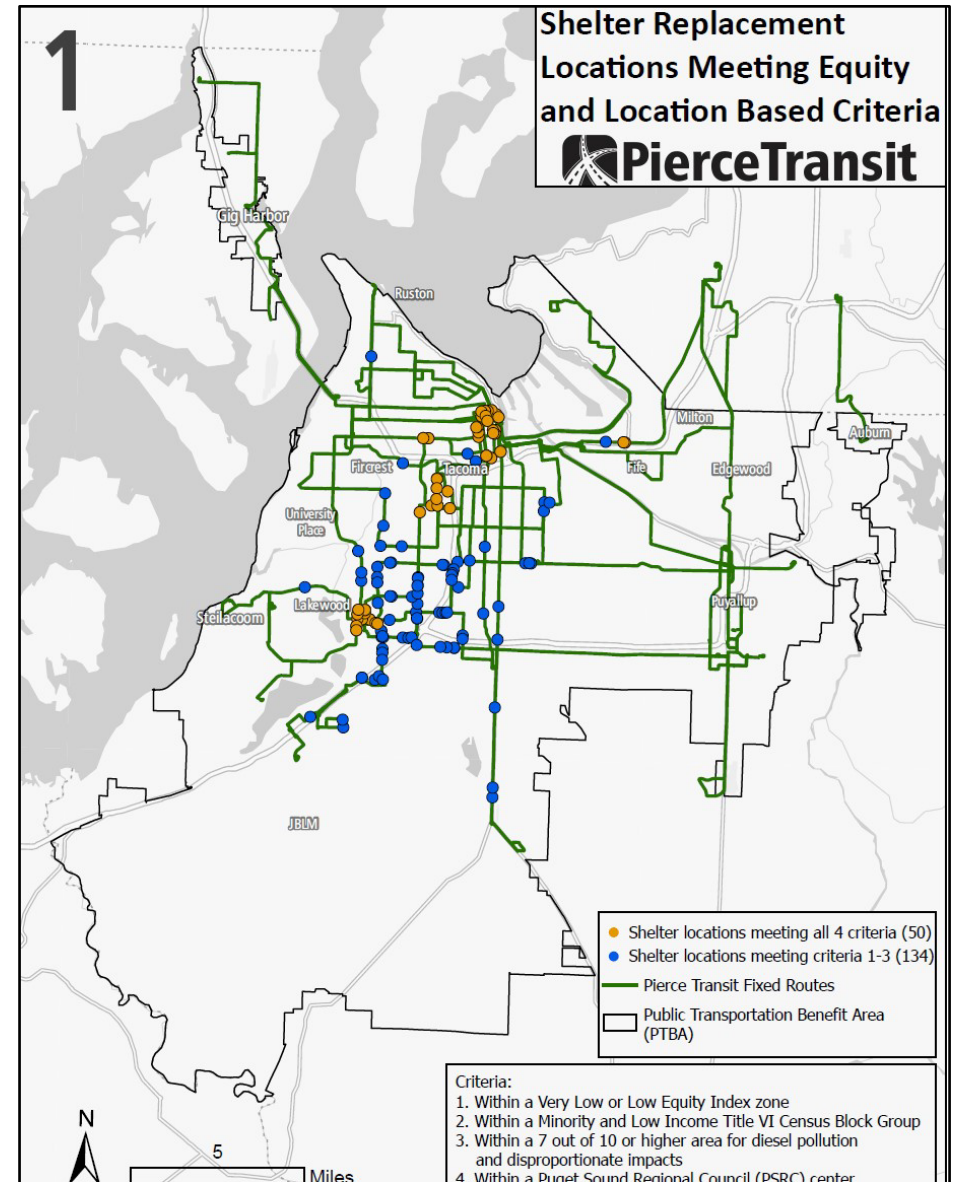


# Project #7 – Pierce Transit

## Equitable Bus Shelter Program

### Project Description

- Replace 40 shelters with upgraded design that includes interior illumination
- Shelters are designed to be more resistant to vandalism



# Project #7 – Pierce Transit

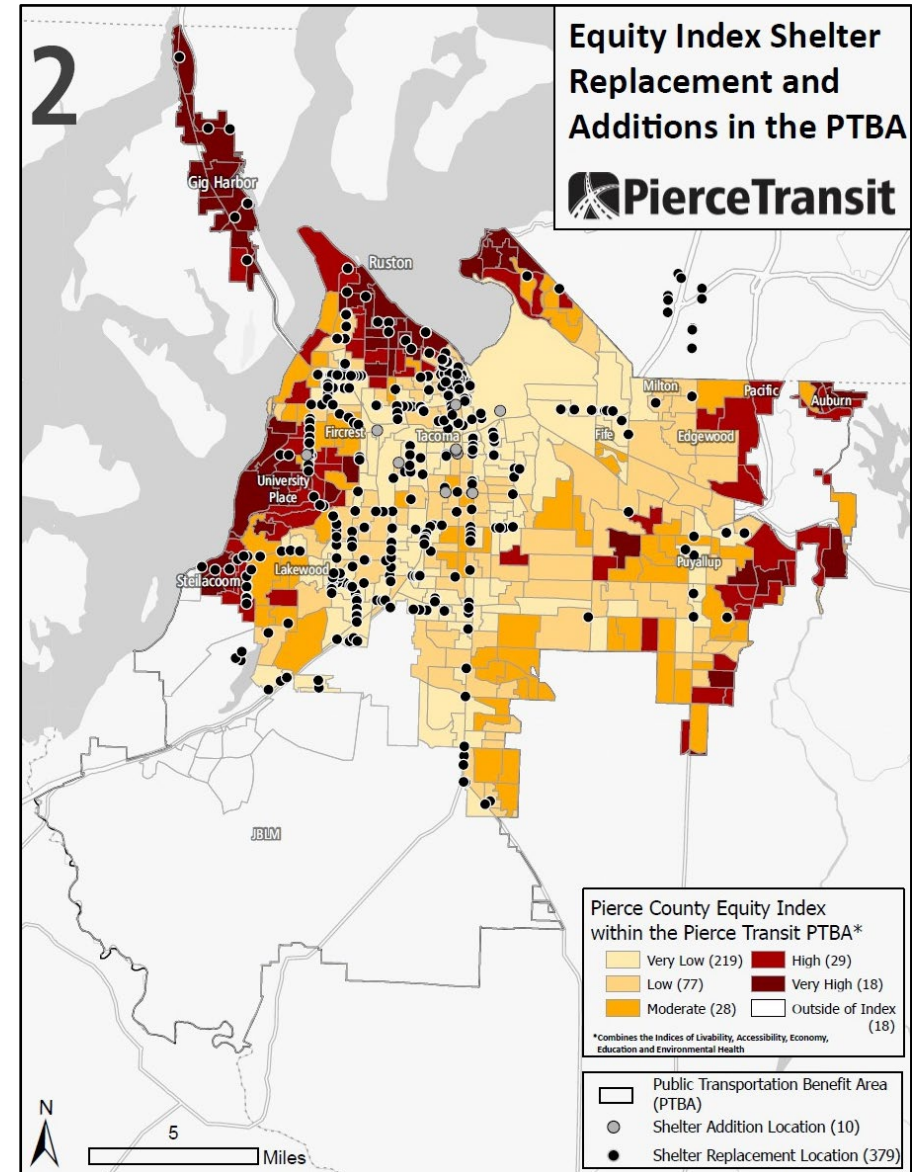
## Equitable Bus Shelter Program

### Equity Focus Populations:

- People of Color, People with Low Incomes, Youth, and Older Adults

### Project Benefits:

- Improve passenger safety, security, and comfort

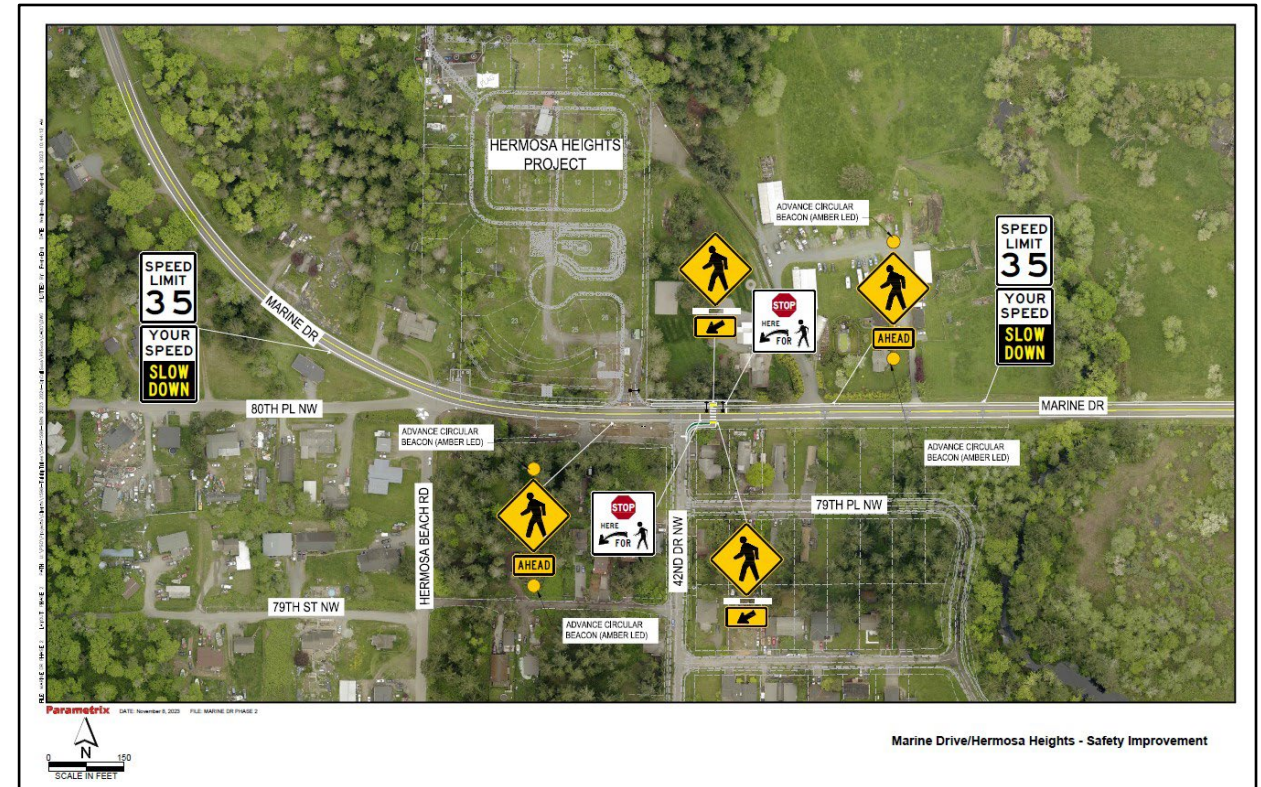


# Project #8 – Tulalip Tribes

## Marine Drive / Hermosa Heights Safety Improvements

### Project Description

- Includes new vehicular turn lanes, pedestrian crossing islands, sidewalks, and signing to control vehicular speeds



# Project #8 – Tulalip Tribes

## Marine Drive / Hermosa Heights Safety Improvements

### Equity Focus Populations:

- Above regional average for People with Low Incomes, People with Disabilities, Youth, and Older Adults

### Project Benefits:

- Improve safety for all road users
- Better connect residents with jobs and services
- Direct employment benefit to tribal citizens (TERO Program)



# Potential Criteria Revisions

# Safety and Security



# Equity Pilot: Language Revisions

## Criteria: Safety and Security

### Pathway 1

- No changes

### Pathway 2

- Specific to the **equity populations identified above, describe how the project will improve safety and/or address safety issues currently being experienced by these communities.**



# Staff Takeaways

## Safety and Security

- Pathway 2 encourages a more intentional response related to safety improvements for specific equity populations
- More points to allocate would be useful to distinguish across projects and allow higher quality responses to rise to the top
- PSRC's boards are currently discussing increasing the point values for the Safety criterion overall





# Equity Pilot Framework: Point Allocation

Under **Pathway 1**, Equity increased to 20 points; under **Pathway 2**, Equity questions woven throughout all other criteria and points updated accordingly

CRITERIA	Point Values - Current	Point Values - Pathway 2
Development of Centers (adopted Policy Focus for PSRC funds)	30	25
Circulation, Mobility and Accessibility	27	28
Equity ( <b>Pathway 2 - Outreach and Displacement</b> )	10	12
Safety	8	10
Air Quality / Climate Change	20	20
Project Readiness / Financial Plan	5	5
TOTAL	100	100



# **EAC Recommendation #1**

## **Safety and Security**



# Air Quality and Climate Change



# Equity Pilot: Language Revisions

## Criteria: Air Quality and Climate Change

### Pathway 1

- Is the project located in an area identified as a **7 of 10** for **diesel pollution and disproportionate impacts** in the Washington Environmental Health Disparities map?

### Pathway 2

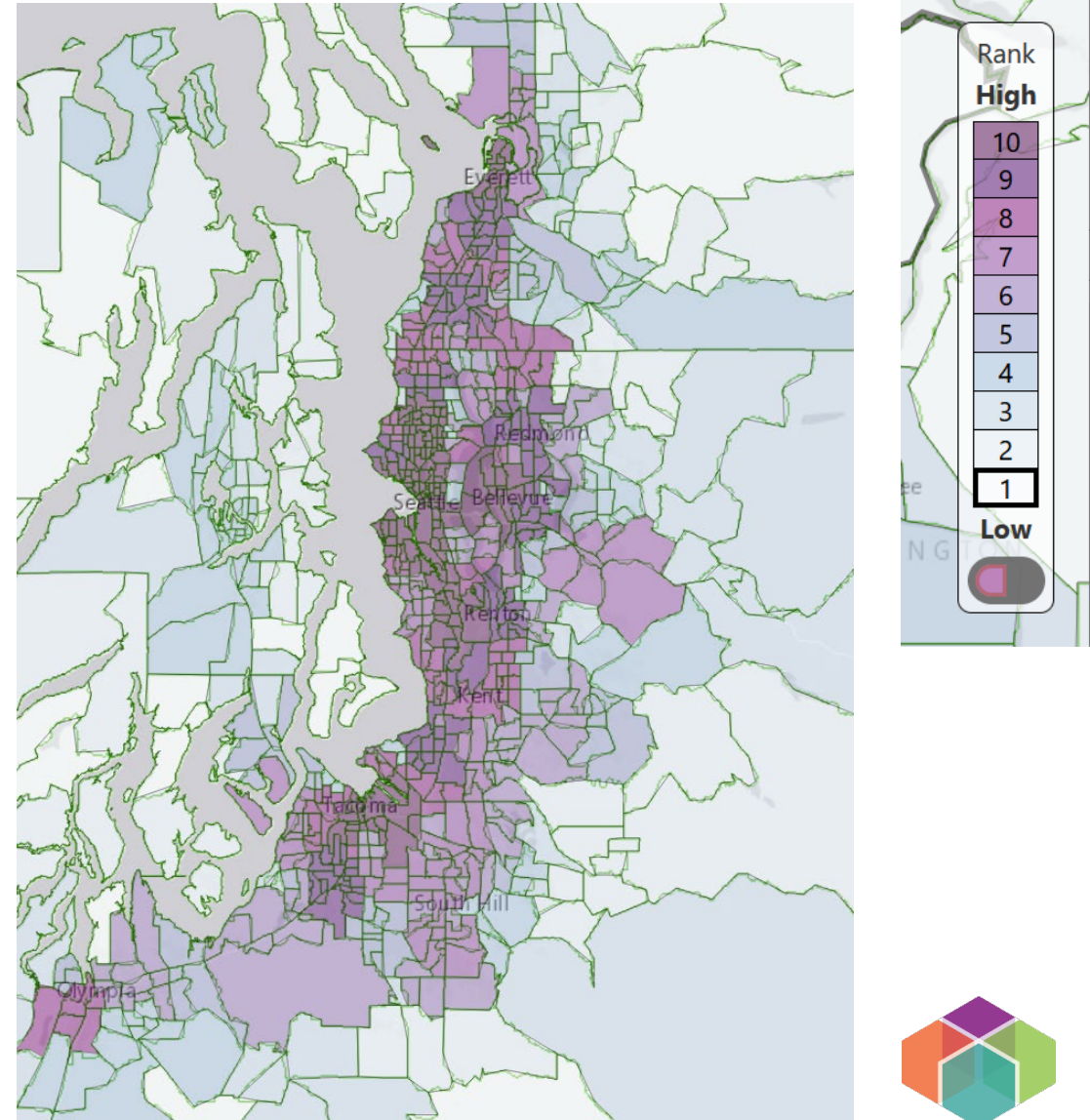
- Language same as Pathway 1



# Staff Takeaways

## Air Quality and Climate Change

- A majority of Census Tracts in the region are identified as 7 or above for this measure.
- There appears to be somewhat limited value in the use of the 7-10 factor from the WA Environmental Health Disparities map, although projects outside these Census tracts could be submitted into the competition
- Going higher on the scale could provide more differentiations— e.g., above 8



# **EAC Recommendation #2**

## **Air Quality and Climate Change**



# Additional Questions and Observations

# Additional Observations

Overall, staff felt the inclusion of equity throughout all criteria added value to the process and responses:

- Brought more focused attention to addressing equity within each project
- Encouraged more thoughtful and comprehensive responses
- Applicants need more assistance in understanding certain questions – e.g., how the transportation project impacts specific populations within a community
- Just asking questions not enough – education and guidance necessary





# Additional Observations

While not all questions fully addressed by Pilot applicants, progress takes time

- Staff comfortable with including all of the remaining criteria updates contained in the Pilot
- Commitment to improving education and guidance moving forward



# Funding Process



# Project Rank, Scores, and Funding Request

## 2023 Equity Pilot Program Project Ranking & Funding Request

Sponsor	Project Title	Pathway 1		Pathway 2		Request
		Rank	Score	Rank	Score	
Tacoma	South 38th St. & South Cedar St. Pedestrian Safety Improvements	1	76	1	76	\$ 1,000,000
Seattle	Beacon Avenue South Safety Project	2	71	2	69	\$ 865,000
Federal Way	BPA Trail - City Center Extension	3	67	3	68	\$ 600,000
Snohomish County	Center Road Pedestrian Improvements	4	52	4 (tied)	49	\$ 485,000
WSDOT	SR 99 Preliminary Design Study	5	51	4 (tied)	49	\$ 1,000,000
Kent	Benson Corridor 20-minute Neighborhood Plan	6	47	6	43	\$ 750,000
Pierce Transit	Equitable Bus Shelter Program	7 (tied)	43	7	42	\$ 1,000,000
Tulalip Tribes	Marine Drive / Hermosa Heights Safety Improvements	7 (tied)	43	8	41	\$ 654,000
Total						\$ 6,354,000



# **EAC Recommendation #3**

## **Funding Process**



# Pathway 2



# Pathway 2 Highlights

- Identification of **equity populations** and **most marginalized** moved to top of document.
- Description of how the project will expand **access to jobs** for the Equity Focus Areas (EFAs)
- Inclusion of how the project addresses **redundancies** and improves **resiliency**
- Identification of the **existing disparities** for the EFAs and most marginalized moved
- Description of public **outreach** process reflected in PSRC's **Equitable Engagement Guidance**
- Identification of **anti-displacement strategies** reflected in the Housing Opportunities by Place (HOP) tool
- Description of **safety issues** experienced by EFAs addressed by the project
- Identification of **diesel pollution and disproportionate impacts**



# EAC Recommendation #4

## Pathway 2 Part 1



# EAC Recommendation #5

## Pathway 2 Part 2





# Development Schedule

**July 26** – Pilot development: overview meeting, review outline of proposed approach

**August 10** – Pilot development: review initial draft updates, dual pathway structure

**August 28** – Pilot development: review final draft updates, final dual pathway structure

**September 7** – Pilot development: review final pilot materials with EAC

**Mid-September** – Launch pilot

**November 2** – Review preliminary Pilot findings with EAC

**November–December** – EAC finalizes project and process recommendations



# Development Schedule

July 26 – Pilot development: overview meeting, review outline of proposed approach

August 10 – Pilot development: review initial draft updates, dual pathway structure

August 28 – Pilot development: review final draft updates, final dual pathway structure

September 7 – Pilot development: review final pilot materials with EAC

Mid-September – Launch pilot

November 2 – Review preliminary Pilot findings with EAC

**November–December** – EAC finalizes project and process recommendations



# Questions for the Equity Advisory Committee

- **Were these the types of projects and responses you were expecting?**
- **Are there any elements of the Pilot you feel should NOT be included in the full project selection process?**
- **Is there consensus to recommend the changes put forth under Pathway 2?**
- **Given the results of the scoring, how should we distribute the funds for the Pilot?**
- **Is there anything else you would like to include in the recommendation?**

# Thank You

Doug Cox  
Principal Planner  
dcox@psrc.org

Kelly McGourty  
Director of Transportation Planning  
kmcgourty@psrc.org

Charles Patton  
Program Manager, Equity Policy & Initiatives  
cpatton@psrc.org

