



Puget Sound Regional Council

Transit Access Working Group Agenda

Date: Monday, January 22, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Online Meeting Only: Use Zoom Connection Information Provided Below

1. Welcome and Introductions (1:00 p.m.) – Gil Cerise, PSRC

2. Discussion/Possible Action: Review of DRAFT Transit Access Recommendation Report (1:10 p.m.)*

The purpose of this meeting is to review and provide feedback on the draft Transit Access Recommendation Report which outlines the working group's recommendations on next steps for PSRC's transit access work program. At the meeting staff will:

- Walk through the draft report developed based on the input received from jurisdictions and transit agencies and guidance from the working group (20 minutes).
- Engage the working group to discuss recommendations listed in the report (pages 10-11 of the attachment) in detail. (60 minutes).
- Finally, working group will agree or suggest revisions, and confirm to help PSRC develop the following tasks of the transit access work program (20 minutes).

Please come to the meeting prepared to provide comments on the draft report to PSRC staff.

3. Discussion: Looking Ahead and Next Steps (2:50 p.m.)

The working group will discuss potential next steps of the transit access work to close out the meeting.

4. Adjourn (3:00 p.m.)

*Supporting materials attached

Committee Compensation

Members can request compensation by first completing the [Outreach Compensation Eligibility Form](#), then filling out the [Committee Attendance Form](#). Please contact finance@psrc.org if you have questions regarding compensation.

Outreach Compensation Eligibility Form link:
(<https://us.services.docusign.net/webforms-ux/v1.0/forms/455efd9f7280040c29acc7e36f08329c>)

Committee Attendance Form link:
(<https://us.services.docusign.net/webforms-ux/v1.0/forms/29a8f25df107823c9ce247e9588bf044>)

Zoom Participation Options:

To join audio/video conference:

<https://psrc-org.zoom.us/j/88561869443?pwd=a1lyUWpYQUJQR2NGdTR5c3lUSINyZz09>

To join via cellphone (1-touch dial):

8335480282,,88561869443#,,,,*881094# US Toll-free
8778535257,,88561869443#,,,,*881094# US Toll-free

To join via phone:

833 548 0282 US Toll-free
877 853 5257 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 885 6186 9443
Passcode: 881094

Other Formats:

- Sign language, and communication material in alternative formats, can be arranged given sufficient notice by calling 206-464-7090, TTY Relay 711.
- العربية | Arabic, 中文 | Chinese, Deutsch | German, Française | French
한국어 | Korean, Русский | Russian, Español | Spanish, Tagalog, Tiếng Việt | Vietnamese, visit <https://www.psrc.org/contact/language-assistance>.

PSRC Transit Access Recommendation Report (DRAFT)

January 2024

Introduction

Transit is an essential component of the regional transportation system, connecting people to jobs, schools, friends and family, and essential destinations. Transit access refers to the ability of people to easily get to and use transit. The [VISION 2050](#) Regional Growth Strategy calls for PSRC to provide and encourage alternatives to driving alone and ensure access to and availability of reliable transit options. The region is served by nine transit agencies that provided over 221 million boardings in 2018. More than 80% of the trips to access transit were made by active transportation modes (walking and bicycling). The remainder of the trips were either made by private vehicles or a variety of pick-up/drop-off modes, including ADA Paratransit, community shuttles, Mobility On Demand (MOD) services, among others.

In 2016–2017, PSRC completed a multi-year assessment of transit access and published tools to assist local jurisdictions and transit agency stakeholders in improving transit access in the region, including the Transit Access Checklist, Toolkit, and Funding Matrix published in 2017, on the PSRC website at: <https://www.psrc.org/our-work/transit-access>. These tools were intended to be used with one another to help increase transit access at any location and used by jurisdictions, transit agencies, and other agencies to coordinate and collaborate on the assessment of transit access needs and opportunities across the region.

Existing PSRC Transit Access Tools

Transit Access Checklist is intended for use by stakeholders to provide a framework for conducting a comprehensive assessment of existing transit access conditions at any given location, framing questions under key characteristics such as urban form, transit service, and parking. It also includes suggested data sources that local agencies can use to complete the checklist.

Transit Access Toolkit identifies 60 distinct transit access improvements and organized them across eight strategic areas. The Toolkit was designed to help stakeholders understand how each strategic area increases access to transit and the roles played by various stakeholders in implementing access improvements. The Toolkit also documents benefits, costs, common issues and challenges, and regional examples of all access improvements identified.

The **Transit Access Funding Matrix** is intended to assist stakeholders in identifying potential funding opportunities for transit access strategies identified in the Toolkit.

To better connect people to transit, the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) specifically calls for developing and updating tools and resources to help identify where access to transit can be improved in the region. With the anticipated expansion of the regional transit network, it is projected that active transportation access to transit will rise from the current 83% to reach 90% of all trips accessing transit by 2050. In addition, jurisdictions, transit, and other responsible agencies will need to collaborate in their planning to facilitate various transit access modes around future station areas.

During the early project scoping phase, relevant committees identified potential ways for PSRC to support local jurisdictions and transit agencies as they work to improve transit access, including:

- **Clarifying stakeholder roles and responsibilities** throughout the process.
- **Providing data, tools, and resources** to support transit access work by local agencies.
- Seeking ways to improve **access to and from historically marginalized and underserved communities**.
- **Developing regional metrics** for tracking transit access improvements.

As part of the RTP implementation and in response to committee input, PSRC developed a transit access work program that began with a review of existing tools and resources in conjunction with updated data to help identify potential improvements to regional transit access assessments.

Ad Hoc Transit Access Working Group

To assist staff with technical expertise and lived experience, PSRC recruited an ad hoc working group to support the review and evaluation of existing tools, resources, and data through the development of case studies. PSRC's committee leadership assisted staff in identifying potential working group members with specific expertise and perspectives across the region. As a result, PSRC recruited stakeholders from diverse fields as described below:

- **Local jurisdiction staff** with expertise in land use planning, development, and infrastructure in the public rights-of-way, including sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and other facilities supporting access to transit, MOD, specialized transportation, and other modes.
- **Transit agency staff** with expertise in transit station and/or stop access and management of parking at park-and-rides.
- **Developers/architects** with expertise in Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and place-making.
- **System users** who can provide lived experiences to inform the transit access work, including mobility device users.
- **Additional perspectives** include public health and state perspective (WSDOT) on improving access to transit in the region.

The working group was charged with reviewing existing tools, developing a recommendation report, and providing input and guidance on future transit access tasks. The working group convened four times between May 2023 and January 2024, with input via email between meetings.

This report documents the findings from the working meetings and case study work and outlines recommendations for the next steps of the transit access work program.

Transit Access Case Studies

As noted in the previous section, the purpose of these case studies was to test PSRC's existing transit access tools to identify potential improvements and develop the next steps. This section highlights findings from the literature review, selection of case study sites, and summary of the case studies.

Literature review summary

Before beginning to look at case studies, PSRC reviewed recent studies and resources to build on the existing transit access literature review and to identify key characteristics influencing transit access. The review reaffirmed the use of previously identified key characteristics, including urban form, transit service, and parking, and identified additional details to these characteristics, like availability of MOD services and equity considerations as important elements for transit access assessments. The full literature review document can be found at: <https://www.psrc.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/2023transitaccess-literaturereviewfindings.pdf>.

Case Study Site Selection

PSRC solicited potential case study locations from various committees with stakeholders who have interests in transit access. PSRC consulted with working group members to select sites for the case study. Staff provided a preliminary review of potential sites, and the working group agreed to select five locations across the region, at least one in each county, that represent different contexts and transit access challenges. Based upon further working group feedback, the [Opportunity Score](#) and the availability of MOD programs were also considered when selecting final sites. The following are the sites selected for the case study:

- Wheaton Way Transit Center in Bremerton.
- Pacific Avenue and S 72nd Street in Tacoma.
- Tukwila International Boulevard Station in Tukwila.
- Judkins Park Station in Seattle (future light rail station under construction).
- Mariner Station in Unincorporated Snohomish County (future light rail station under consideration).

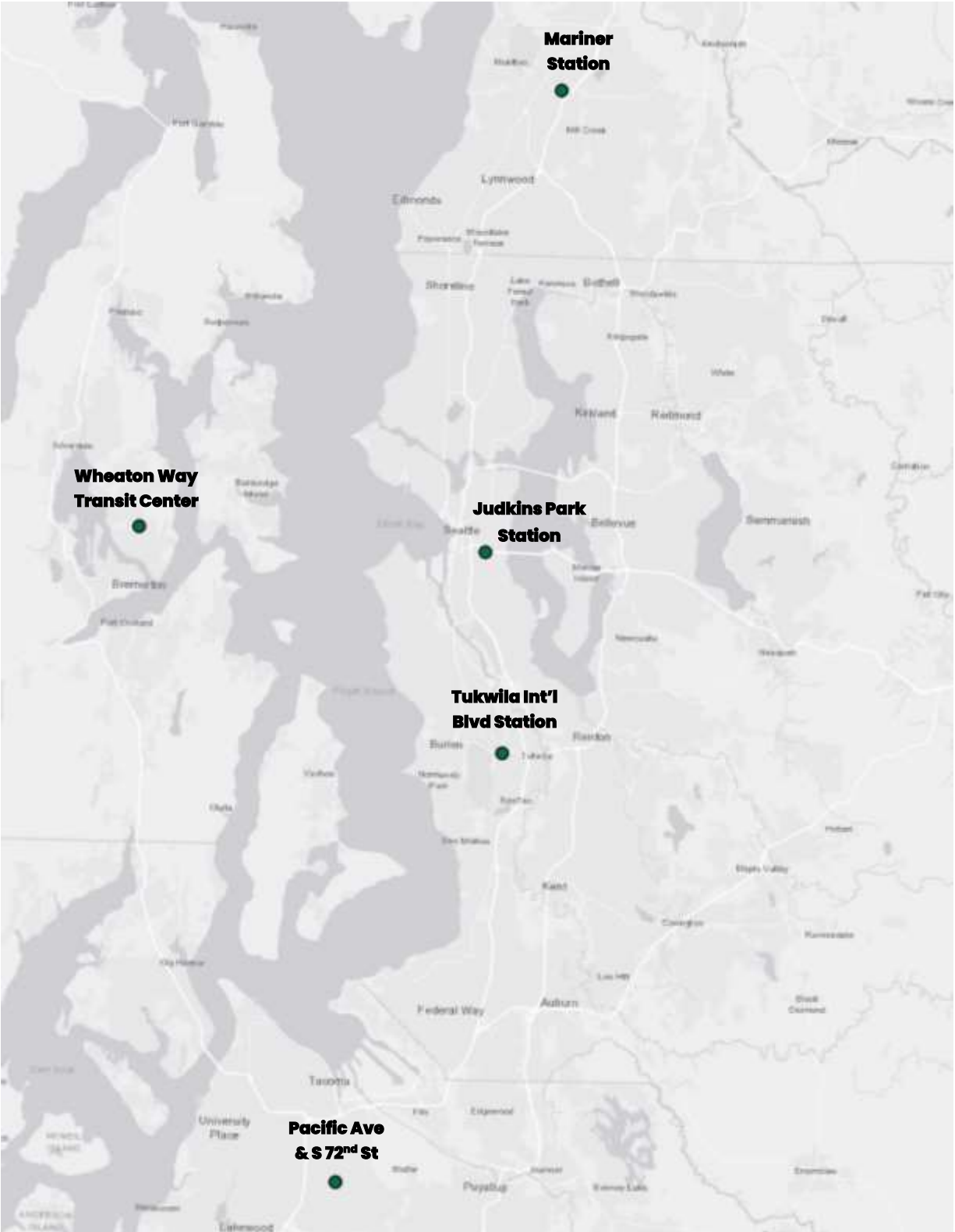


Figure 1 Transit Access Case Study Sites

Methodology

For each case study location, PSRC staff initially filled out the Transit Access Checklist using readily available resources and noted the questions that required more information or data. Then, PSRC sent data requests to relevant agencies, including jurisdiction and transit agencies. PSRC used data and feedback provided by the agencies to complete a checklist review of each site and then used the resources to connect access challenges identified through the Checklist with strategies described in the Toolkit.

Summary of findings

Case Studies

Selected sites included both existing and future potential station areas across the region, served by a variety of transit options, including local bus, bus rapid transit (BRT), light rail, transit agencies' MOD programs, complementary ADA paratransit, and other transportation options. Below are the highlights of the case study findings of each site:

Wheaton Way Transit Center, Bremerton

Context Derived from Checklist:

- **Urban Form:** Superblocks, primarily commercial but surrounded by residential properties. The immediate station area is surrounded by high-density residential complexes. Experience frequent congestion because the transit center is located mid-block and can only be accessed from Wheaton Way & SR 303. Complete active transportation facilities are lacking near the station.
- **Transit Service:** the site is served by seven bus routes including three commuter and one express service connecting riders to other transit stations and a ferry terminal in Bremerton. This site provides covered waiting areas.
- **Parking:** 162 dedicated parking spaces are available with a 40% utilization rate.



Transit Access Improvement Strategies: based on the findings from the checklist, relevant transit access solutions can be found under the "Enhance street network connectivity." strategy.

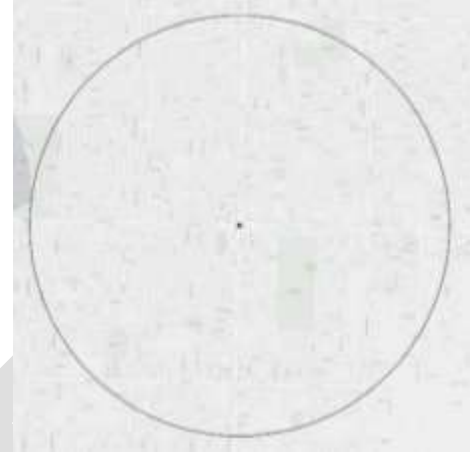
Key Stakeholders:

- Kitsap Transit
- City of Bremerton
- WSDOT

Pacific Avenue and S 72nd Street, Tacoma

Context Derived from Checklist:

- **Urban Form:** Located in superblocks and the site experiences frequent heavy congestion. The station area has sidewalks with some gaps and lacks bicycle facilities. The Pacific Avenue and nearby superblock commercials create an access barrier for transit users. Based on the review of WSDOT Crash Data, there are relatively high numbers of collisions with pedestrians and bicyclists in the station area.
- **Transit Service:** The transit user's experience seems like an issue with the current environment. Pacific Ave, in particular, is a major barrier for pedestrians and bicycle users trying to access bus stops. It appears that customer information and wayfinding at the bus stops in this station area could be improved and the perception of safety and security is poor.
- **Parking:** although there are plenty of surface parking lots near commercial properties, there is no dedicated parking or park-and-ride near this station. Agencies indicated that paratransit, shuttles, or taxis use adjacent parking lots for pick-up and drop-off.



Transit Access Improvement Strategies: based on the findings from the checklist, relevant transit access solutions can be found under the "Improve active transportation environment." and/or "Elevate the transit user experience." strategies.

Key Stakeholders:

- Pierce Transit
- City of Tacoma
- WSDOT

Tukwila International Boulevard Station, Tukwila

Context Derived from Checklist:

- **Urban Form:** The station area has a very high volume of vehicles with consistent congestion during the PM peak, typically on weekdays. Some major thoroughfares have sidewalks, although they may be incomplete and narrow, and no protected bicycle connections are available around the station.



- **Transit Service:** Buses and light rail provide service to many regional destinations in this area. Metro provides Metro Flex, a Mobility On Demand service to/from this station with 28 daily average rides. Metro and Sound Transit identified the station area as primarily a transfer point. There is a need for better customer information. Based on the Tukwila Crime Map, several crime incidents occurred near the station over the past year.
- **Parking:** there are about 600 parking stalls available at or above a 95% utilization rate. Transit agency staff indicated the parking lots are typically full by 8:30am. However, a relatively high percentage of riders seems to be accessing this station by a variety of modes other than personal vehicles.

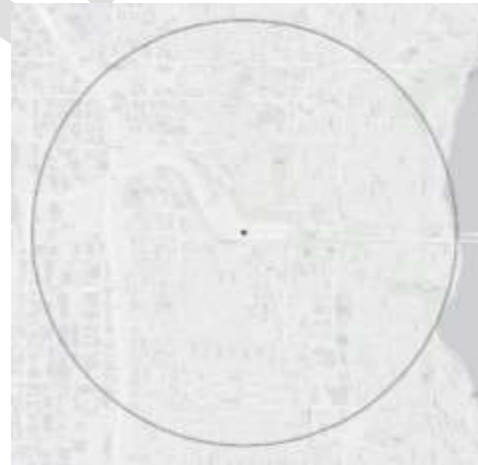
Transit Access Improvement Strategies: based on the findings from the checklist, relevant transit access solutions can be found under the “Improve active transportation environment.” and/or “Elevate the transit user experience.” strategies.

Key Stakeholders:

- Sound Transit
- King County Metro
- City of Tukwila
- City of SeaTac
- WSDOT

Judkins Park Station (Future Station), Seattle

This station is under construction to be open in 2024 as part of Sound Transit’s East Link Extension and is located in the center of I-90. There are bus stops nearby which will make local bus transfers easy to connect to light rail.



Context Derived from Checklist:

- **Urban Form:** The area has a mix of uses. By 2050, a fair amount of population growth (58%) and a significant amount of employment is expected (80%). There is a gap in sidewalks North of the station on Rainier Ave S. There is no bicycle parking, though some storage may be available in the future.
- **Transit Service:** Current bus routes connect riders to many key destinations in the greater Seattle area. King County Metro suspects that there are medium to high levels of pick-up/drop-off usage in the station area, and they identified the station as a primary transfer point.
- **Parking:** there is no dedicated parking lot for the current station area. Sound Transit is working closely with nearby communities to minimize potential parking impacts to

surrounding neighbors and businesses, as the new station will bring increased demand for parking in the area.

Transit Access Improvement Strategies: based on the findings from the checklist, relevant transit access solutions can be found under the “Improve active transportation environment.” and/or “Elevate the transit user experience.” strategies.

Key Stakeholders:

- Sound Transit
- King County Metro
- City of Seattle
- WSDOT

Mariner Station (Potential Future Station), Everett

Mariner Station is one of the potential light rail stations Sound Transit is considering for their Everett Link extension project (expected to provide service 2037-2041).



Context Derived from Checklist:

- **Urban Form:** the site is in a commercial area with residential properties around. Currently, the bicycle lanes along 128th and Airport Road are not protected or buffered. There were several collisions involving bicyclists and pedestrians in an immediate station area in the past 5 years according to the WSDOT’s Crash Data Portal. Per local staff, there is a fair amount of people jaywalking, not at a marked or signalized crossing along 128th.
- **Transit Service:** Currently, at Mariner Park and Ride (used as a proxy for this future site), there are less than 1,000 average weekday boardings with very little transfer or drop-off activity happening. There is a Swift Bus Rapid Transit Station (connecting Blue & Green lines) within a mile distance from this site.
- **Parking:** Mariner Park and Ride is nearby with a low utilization rate. Private parking lots are available adjacent to this site.

Transit Access Improvement Strategies: based on the findings from the checklist, relevant transit access solutions can be found under the “Improve active transportation environment.” and/or “Improve access via local transit and drop-off modes” strategies.

Key Stakeholders:

- Sound Transit
- Community Transit
- Snohomish County

Staff collected feedback from local agencies on using the Checklist to assess transit access needs and context of each site and providing data for PSRC to complete the assessment. Here are some highlights heard from local staff:

- It is **difficult to answer** some checklist questions due to a lack of reliable and/or relevant data. Some agencies expressed difficulty determining the availability of data resources, accessing recent and accurate datasets, and which agency is responsible for providing data for which checklist questions.
- While the existing checklist seems to ask relevant questions, some local staff suggested including **additional questions**, to consider equity considerations or MOD-related components and/or new technologies when evaluating transit access needs.
- There are many questions in the checklist and many answers in the checklist that **require additional notes and explanations**.

The ability to facilitate collaboration between agencies is the key benefit of using existing transit access tools. PSRC identified the following as areas for potential improvement in these tools:

- Existing tools are lengthy and static, requiring significant staff time and effort to use and they are not fully interconnected. For example, data is often difficult to access or cumbersome to request from jurisdictions and transit agencies. Also, it is difficult to identify the key characteristics of each site as the **Transit Access Checklist** does not provide the context review results automatically.
- The **Transit Access Toolkit** does not provide further guidance or assistance to develop shared transit access responsibilities among stakeholders.
- The **Transit Access Funding Matrix** is outdated, and the connection between the matrix and other elements of the PSRC transit access tools is unclear.
- None of the tools fully address key topics like equity, safety, and new technologies. Also, the tools do not provide a clear method to evaluate the transit access needs of future station locations. Tools are unable to distinguish the most impactful transit access improvements.

Recommendations

VISION 2050 Regional Growth Strategy includes a goal to attract 65% of residential growth and 75% of employment growth to regional growth centers and within walking distance of high-capacity transit station areas by 2050. The RTP adopted in May 2022 identifies improving access to transit as one of the key policy focus areas for achieving the Regional Growth Strategy and further calls for the region to develop and update tools and resources to help identify where access to transit can be improved in the region with an emphasis on active transportation access. Creating convenient and safe connections, particularly for pedestrians and bicyclists, will be critical for ensuring that transit is a viable choice for users as the region grows and the high-capacity transit system expands. By the year 2050, over 50% of households in the region will be located within a half-mile radius of an integrated, high-capacity transit system, with transit ridership anticipated to triple the current levels.

Summary of recommendations

As noted in the case study findings, transit access tools can help local agencies better coordinate and share responsibilities to improve existing or future transit access needs in any given area. Based on the working group discussion and committee outreach, below is the summary of recommendations:

- **There is a need for more clear and comprehensive information on roles and responsibilities by agencies.** This could be achieved by facilitating a regional discussion where transit access stakeholders can discuss shared responsibilities and overlapping roles and potentially develop clearer guidance on how to determine transit access responsibilities and roles early in the planning and implementation process. Agencies can discuss how to work together to best implement transit access improvements based on each site's unique characteristics (e.g., urban form, transit service, parking). Agencies can also share transit access best practices, challenges, solutions, and resources, while a neutral party, such as PSRC, facilitates the coordination and provides technical assistance (e.g., data sharing).
- **Automation and streamlining of the tools with readily available data can help local staff assess transit access needs and opportunities more easily.** There is potential to enhance the interactivity and user-friendliness of transit access tools by creating a web-based tool. This work could benefit local agencies in accessing and utilizing PSRC's regional transit, active transportation, and demographic data, which could assist their local planning work. Working group members also proposed simplifying the Transit Access Toolkit which contains sixty. One promising suggestion for automation would be to develop a transit access context typology and an automated tool, similar to the PSRC's [Housing Opportunities by Place](#) tool. This automated tool would direct users to a subset of transit access improvement strategies tailored to their specific transit access context, making the process more efficient and impactful.

- **Integrate new themes, including equity, safety, and new technologies, as identified as emerging characteristics influencing transit access in the literature review, to transit access tools.** The diverse set of issues noted above can be incorporated into transit access work in a variety of ways. Many of these elements could be incorporated into automated tools if adequate data is available. If the data is not readily available, continued work on developing data for use on these topics would be in order. In terms of equity, a key outcome of this process is to explore the question of “who” in relation to transit access and ensure that people with accessibility and mobility needs and those who have been historically underserved are included and benefit from transit access improvements. PSRC can work with relevant stakeholders, like the Equity Advisory Committee and Special Needs Transportation Committee to discuss incorporating these new themes into the tools. Also, the tools can refer to the latest data and resources like the PSRC’s [Opportunity Mapping Index](#), [Displacement Risk Mapping](#), or [Transportation System Visualization Tool](#). These resources will help assess transit access needs more easily without contacting multiple agencies for data.
- **Develop guidance on equitable engagement and outreach for transit access.** This can build upon PSRC’s existing [Equitable Engagement Guidance](#). The guidance on transit access engagement will support relevant agencies in engaging communities that have traditionally not been part of the transit access conversations and decision-making processes. Also, agencies can strengthen their current process of collecting information from diverse transit users and make transit access improvements that meet their needs.

In addition to the above list, the working group expressed interest in exploring opportunities to prioritize funding for projects that do the most to improve transit access in areas identified with the most need. This could be achieved in various ways building upon the recommendations noted above.

Next steps

As a regional convener and data hub, PSRC is in a unique role to provide technical assistance in support of local agencies working to achieve regional transit access goals. The above recommendations will help PSRC to develop the next steps of the transit access work program and roll them into the next Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) work for further implementation. Transit access planning work incorporated into the adopted RTP can influence future projects selected for funding and implementation to achieve the goals of VISION 2050.

Recommendations of this report will be shared with PSRC’s committees and boards to provide prioritized direction on elements included in the RTP and those that may be implemented sooner.