

# Preparation for 2024 Regional Priority Ranking Process

Equity Advisory Committee • April 4, 2024



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)

# Goals

- Review the Consolidated Grant regional priority ranking process introduced at the March meeting.
- Discuss the following:
  - Which staff proposals for integrating equity most resonate with you?
  - Are there any other ideas to improve PSRC's Regional Priority Ranking Process?

# Terminology

- **Specialized transportation services** are transportation programs designed for people who have difficulty transporting themselves due to age, income, or disability.



ADA Paratransit



Accessible Shuttles/Vans



Volunteer Transportation

- **“People with accessibility and mobility needs”** refers to older adults, youth, people with disabilities, people with low incomes, people with limited English proficiency, and others.



# Consolidated Grant Program



**Eligible Applicants:** Nonprofits, tribes, public transit agencies, and local agencies in Washington state

**Consolidated Grant provides funds for:**

- Transportation programs serving older adults, people with disabilities, and others
- Purchases of new vehicles and other equipment
- Mobility management activities



# PSRC Regional Priority Ranking Process

1. Staff use **regional priority ranking factors** to review and organize the applications in an initial sorting:
  - Projects receive a **“Yes”** or **“No”** answer for each factor. Projects are then ordered by the total number of **“yes”** responses.
2. Committee uses **deliberation factors** to further distinguish applications.



# PSRC Regional Priority Ranking Factors

## #1. Project Type (Preservation vs. New/Expansion)

Preservation and capital projects that support existing programs at existing service levels receive a “yes.”

## #2. Support for PSRC’s Coordinated Mobility Plan

Projects adequately address at least one “High Prioritized Strategy” that addresses key mobility needs receive a “yes.”

# PSRC Regional Priority Ranking Factors

## #3. Uniqueness of Service

Applicants adequately explain the uniqueness of their programs AND how their projects do not duplicate others for similar target populations within the same geographic area receive a “yes.”

## #4. Financial Sustainability

Projects providing more than the federal minimum required match (operating: 50%, capital/mobility management: 20%) from local sources receive a “yes.”



# Deliberation Factors

- Geographical distribution of regional priority rankings
- Project types
- Agency equity (# of projects per agency)
- Compelling cases for agencies with limited resources
- Strategic application of Federal/State Funds
- Coordination
- Acknowledge importance of the Largest County Service Providers (safety net projects)



# Where is the equity factor?

Equity has not been included in the list of **regional priority ranking factors** used for staff review or **deliberation factors** used by the committee for their recommendations in the past.

## **We have 3 potential methods for integrating equity into this process:**

1. Evaluate engagement & communications
2. Conduct geographic analysis
3. Assess equity-related goals & performance

# Staff Proposals

**1. Evaluate engagement & communications.** Assess whether a project sponsor meaningfully engages individuals from equity focus areas (EFAs) when developing and maintaining programs.

- Pros: This element could encourage sponsors to implement more inclusive engagement strategies, which could help improve ridership or program participation.
- Potential issues/considerations: There is a need to discuss what constitutes "meaningful engagement" to help decide which projects receive a "yes."

**2. Conduct geographic analysis.** Identify programs that provide service to or through EFAs. This could be a stand-alone factor, part of the “Uniqueness of Services” factor, or a deliberation factor.

- Pros: PSRC can identify projects providing service to or through EFAs and help prioritize them.
- Potential issues: Regional-scale geographic analysis may not capture the true performance of programs. Also, programs providing countywide service would get a “yes” automatically, although they may not provide service to/from certain EFAs.

**3. Assess equity-related goals & performance.** Determine if a project sponsor develops and tracks equity-related metrics (e.g., ridership by equity populations) to achieve equity-focused goals.

- Pros: This will encourage sponsors to develop metrics to achieve regional equity goals. PSRC will have better data to assess the outcomes of specialized transportation programs.
- Potential issues/considerations: Discussion regarding standardization of metrics by project type would be needed.

# Poll

**Question:** Which of the proposals best integrates equity into the regional priority ranking process? (Select all that apply.)

## Proposals:

1. Evaluate engagement & communications
2. Conduct geographic analysis
3. Assess equity-related goals & performance



# Discussion



- Which staff proposals for integrating equity most resonate with you?
- Are there any other ideas to improve PSRC's Regional Priority Ranking Process?



# Next Steps

## **Spring 2024**

- Engage EAC & SNTC (March–May)
- Continued discussion and revision of call for projects materials

**June 18, 2024:** Call for projects published online

**Fall 2024–Early 2025:** Regional priority ranking deliberation and recommendation process

**July 1, 2025:** Awarded projects begin

**Continuous** improvement and updates to further equity goals





# Thank You!

**Gil Cerise**

Program Manager  
[GCerise@psrc.org](mailto:GCerise@psrc.org)

**Erin Hogan**

Associate Planner  
[EHogan@psrc.org](mailto:EHogan@psrc.org)



Puget Sound Regional Council