**City of Seattle**

**Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) Summary Sheet**

**Cover Sheet and Questions**

**Department/Office:** Office of Sustainability and Environment

**Name of policy, program, etc. analyzed:** Equitable Road Pricing

**Names and titles of key staff that led this RET process:**

Edie Gilliss, Climate Initiatives Coordinator, OSE  
Kristin Brown, Climate Advisor, NRDC  
Danielle Friedman, Strategic Advisor, DON  
Joanna Valencia, Revenue and Capital Development Manager, SDOT   
  
With support from Congestion Pricing Leadership team, including:   
Lylianna Allala, Climate Justice Director, OSE   
Annya Pintak, Transportation Equity Manager, SDOT  
Monisha Harrell, Rule7 Consulting

**Dates of RET process** (e.g., 8/2015 – 10/2015)**:**

 9/2019 – ongoing

1. **List the racial equity outcome(s) that you set in Step 1 of the RET process.**   
     
   These RET outcomes were originally designed in anticipation of a congestion pricing policy, however, in late 2020 the City decided to pivot away from congestion pricing specifically, and instead to take a step back and examine equitable road pricing in a more holistic manner. These outcomes still hold true for any equitable road pricing policy and have been edited to remove specific references to congestion pricing. They include:
2. **Be Designed Through a Safe, Inclusive, and Equitable Process**   
   Any road pricing policy will be developed through an equitable process where priority populations, as defined and described below, are given decision-making authority around their own policy recommendations. We recognize that Black people and communities of color have experienced the most harm from COVID-19, so co-designing this policy safely will be paramount.
3. **Benefit People with Low Incomes, Black, Indigenous, Immigrant, Communities of Color, and People with Disabilities**The policy will prioritize distributing benefits to these priority populations who have currently and historically experienced disproportionate impacts of climate change, transportation burdens, and residents who are at high risk of displacement or have been displaced from the City of Seattle.
4. **Not Exacerbate Existing Burdens or Disparities**  
   Any road pricing policy must not exacerbate transportation and economic burdens for priority populations.
5. **Ensure Privacy Protections**Any road pricing policy must ensure the privacy of undocumented people and immigrants and refugees that are currently being targeted by the Federal government as they travel in and out of downtown. Road pricing will not use technology that may be used to harass or target BIPOC communities.
6. **Which stakeholders (groups and/or key individuals) did you engage in this RET? In what ways did you engage them?**

We primarily worked internally across multiple departments within the City, including: OSE, SDOT, and DON, with consultation and support from the Office of Civil Rights and a Monisha Harrell, an outside consultant. Through a collaboration with the American Cities Climate Challenge, we also engaged local transportation / equity advocates Front and Centered and Transportation Choices Coalition in brainstorming and reviewing the RET outcomes. We also shared our outcomes with the Environmental Justice Committee and Transportation Equity Working Group, both of which we intend to meet with and engage further in Q1 of 2021.

**3. Please describe up to five key benefits and/or burdens for people of color of this policy, program, project, or other decision, which the RET process helped you to identify or confirm.**

**Potential Benefits:**

* Revenue is prioritized and directly invested in reliable, safe, affordable public transportation for the priority populations identified above;
* Reduced congestion and travel times for people who have been displaced or gentrified and have been pushed out of the city core where they historically worked, worshiped, played, learned and lived;
* Reduced exposure to air pollution and increase health outcomes by reducing vehicle travel for people living near highways and who have been historically and currently impacted by pollution and climate change.

**Potential Burdens:**

* Increased cost or transportation for those who already pay a high share of their income for transportation;
* Negative impact on people who have to drive for work, ex: Ride-share drivers, domestic workers, shift workers, delivery and freight workers;
* Burden BIPOC-owned businesses downtown and surrounding areas;
* Potentially restrict access to social and city services due to cost of road pricing.
* Enforcement actions (in-person by the police or via debt-collection or court actions) that burden or exacerbate the economic harm experienced by BIPOC communities

**4. Please describe up to five key actions – things that you will do differently or begin to do now – of this policy, program, project, or other decision, which will increase opportunity and/or minimize harm for people of color.**

We have pivoted the work away from specifically trying to design a congestion pricing policy and will engage in a more holistic conversation with community and internal city-based equity working groups around how we might design an equitable road pricing policy that can create a progressive revenue source for public transit and support those who are most burdened by our current system.

**5. How will leadership ensure implementation of the actions described in question 4?**

Leadership is helping to support (financially and with staff capacity) the community-based engagement and will continue to ensure that the RET is front and centered in our community conversations. Leadership will ensure the City is held accountable to the conversations it is having with community, so as not to design a policy that could create burdens on BIPOC communities.

**6. How have/will you report back to your stakeholders? (This includes the people who were directly engaged in this RET process, those who will be affected by decisions made, and other departments or divisions impacted by the RET findings and the actions described in question 4.)**

We are planning listening sessions for Q1, and have weekly “leadership team” meetings and will reconvene our monthly IDT meetings to give progress and report back on decision being made. We will continue to collaborate with TCC and F&C to ensure we have external voices present and additional accountability measures.

**7. What additional racial equity issues did this RET reveal? Consider how these unresolved issues present opportunities for structural transformation (i.e. working across departments, and with other institutions and sectors to achieve racial equity).**

Performing the RET and engaging with community underscored the uncertainty and reticence community members have as to whether congestion pricing – or road pricing more broadly – can be done in an equitable manner. The potential burdens are very real concerns, but community members and city staff are also excited about the opportunity to fundamentally alter how our transportation system is funded in a way that is more progressive, sustainable, and beneficial to BIPOC communities. We discovered there is more education that must happen – we must be able to explain how our current system is broken to be able to uncover strategies to bring forth a more progressive and racially equitable transportation system.