

# TRANSPORTATION EQUITY FRAMEWORK

## Part I: Values & Strategies



**DRAFT**

January 2021



**Seattle**  
Department of  
Transportation



# CONTENTS

4	<b>Letter from SDOT Transportation Equity Workgroup</b>
5	<b>Letter of Support from SDOT Transportation Equity IDT and RSJI Change Team</b>
6	<b>Glossary of Key Terms</b>
10	<b>Executive Summary</b>
13	<b>Transportation Equity Framework Part I: Values &amp; Strategies</b>
24	<b>Opportunities and Recommendations</b>
24	TEW Recommendations for Long-term Structure of SDOT Transportation Equity Workgroup
25	Opportunities for City, Countywide and Regional Coordination
27	<b>Appendices</b>
28	Appendix 1: Context Setting and Transportation Equity Framework Development Process
33	Appendix 2: Past and Present Context: Redlining and Gentrification in Seattle
38	Appendix 3: Current Events of 2020: Racial Injustice, COVID-19, and Climate Change
40	Appendix 4: Existing Equity Work and Efforts in SDOT
43	<b>Acknowledgments</b>

# LETTER FROM SDOT TRANSPORTATION EQUITY WORKGROUP

Dear SDOT, City Leaders and Community Partners/Stakeholders,

It's been an exciting journey serving on the Transportation Equity Workgroup (TEW) and to co-create SDOT's first-ever Transportation Equity Framework (TEF). The TEW has been an opportunity to provide communities who have not traditionally been involved in policy and strategic planning processes to have a voice. This document is an important step in addressing the transportation inequities and the injustice our Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and vulnerable communities experience, and we are honored to have the platform to contribute community-guided equity strategies for the framework.

Our view of transportation is holistic, where transportation is not simply about moving people or goods, but part of an ecosystem that contributes to the greater well-being and livelihood of BIPOC and vulnerable communities. All of the equity elements and drivers identified are key areas that contribute to creating an equitable transportation system. These drivers do not live in silos and are interrelated.

We believe transportation equity is underscored by two fundamental elements: **Community Engagement** and **Decision-making, Transparency and Accountability**. Building community trust and relationships is key to establishing transportation equity. Authentic and intentional community engagement and decision-making must be done with transparency and accountability to assess impact and determine whether historic inequities are being shifted.

Eight equity strategy drivers are identified as key components of transportation equity: **Safety, Mobility and Transportation Options, Transit Access, Infrastructure, Planning and Maintenance, Land Use, Housing and Displacement, Economic Development** and **Transportation Justice**. While some of these drivers may fall within the traditional purview of transportation planners and engineers - these strategies entail strong internal and external partner coordination to deliver on a holistically equitable transportation system for all to thrive.

The **COVID-19 pandemic** crisis has exacerbated these inequities and have disproportionately impacted our BIPOC communities. We have included our community-based analysis and recommendations on the intersections of **equity, public health and transportation**.

We recognize that community and government partnership is essential to creating equitable impacts and submit our recommendations to SDOT for continued collaboration with the TEW on creating a long-term structure and vision so that we may collectively work for transportation equity.

In Solidarity,  
Transportation Equity Workgroup

# LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM SDOT TRANSPORTATION EQUITY IDT AND RSJI CHANGE TEAM

Dear SDOT, City Leaders and Community Partners/Stakeholders,

**It is with honor and purpose that SDOT's Change Team and Transportation Equity Intradepartmental Team unite to support the creation, mission, and implementation of the Transportation Equity Framework.**

Since the early 2000s, the City of Seattle has recognized that racial and social justice issues require the collective organizing efforts of community activists and change agents within government. The Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) was launched under Mayor Greg Nickels in 2004 and has been reaffirmed by every mayor sworn into office since. This important piece of legislation made Seattle one of the first cities in the country to commit to dismantling institutional racism and race-based disparities in city government.

Along with other city departments, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) has a **Change Team** to advance the city's commitment to RSJI and develop change agents within the organization. SDOT's Change Team seeks to identify and address where inequities persist within the purview of SDOT's work so that we as city employees may better serve the public.

With roots in RSJI, SDOT's Transportation Equity Program in 2019 convened the **Transportation Equity Workgroup (TEW)**, a compensated workgroup of community stakeholders, to provide recommendations for the department's first-ever Transportation Equity Framework. SDOT also established an internal staff workgroup called the **Transportation Equity Intradepartmental Team (TE-IDT)**, with representatives from each division who have helped acquaint the TEW with SDOT's

work, provided feedback during the development of the Framework, and built support for the Framework among SDOT leadership and staff.

**Together, the Change Team and the Transportation Equity Intradepartmental Team comprise several dozen staff from across the organization who share a passion for making a difference and a commitment to advancing equity.**

We understand that many of the inequalities that exist in our transportation system and elsewhere are the direct result of generations of disinvestment, legal exclusion, dehumanization, and racialized violence against Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. As a dynamic and racially diverse cohort of employees who also live or work in Seattle, we join our fellow community members in the Transportation Equity Workgroup in determination to plant the seeds for shade that future generations can enjoy. We pride ourselves in our civic roles and see it as our responsibility to heed the demands of our community.

The Transportation Equity Framework sets forth a path grounded in community needs and visions to transform our transportation system into an asset that is truly equitable and just for our most vulnerable and disinvested neighbors. Through the aligned efforts of the Change Team, the Transportation Equity Intradepartmental Team, and SDOT leadership and staff, we look forward to integrating the strategies and implementation tactics outlined in the Transportation Equity Framework into our work.

In Solidarity,  
SDOT Change Team  
SDOT Transportation Equity Intradepartmental Team

# GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

**Accountable:** Responsive to the needs and concerns of those most impacted by the issues you are working on, particularly to Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and those historically underrepresented in the civic process.

*Source: City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative, Racial Equity Toolkit*

**Anti-displacement strategies:** Emphasizes community stability in the face of gentrification and displacement pressures as development occurs in a community and/or neighborhood. Anti-displacement strategies focus on improving and investing in communities without pushing people out, particularly centering Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities who have historically been most impacted as gentrification occurs in Seattle.

**BIPOC:** BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous, and all People of Color (BIPOC). It is a term to make visible the unique and specific experiences of racism and resilience that the Black/African Diaspora and Indigenous communities have faced in the structure of race within the United States. BIPOC is a term that both honors all people of color and creates opportunity to lift up the voices of those communities.

*Source: Race Forward, Moving the Race Conversation Forward*

**Displacement:** When existing residents or, businesses or other organizations move from their current residence or location even though they do not wish to do so:

- **Physical displacement** is the result of things such as eviction, acquisition, rehabilitation, or demolition of property or the expiration of covenants on rent- or income-restricted housing.
- **Economic displacement** occurs when residents and businesses can no longer afford escalating rents or costs of ownership and have to move out.
- **Cultural displacement** occurs when people move because their neighbors and culturally related businesses that they want to be close to have left the area, or when culturally related businesses or institutions themselves move away.

*Source: UC Berkeley Urban Displacement Project*

**Equality and Equity:** Equality is the measure of sameness. Equity is a measure of fair treatment, opportunities and outcomes across race, gender, class and other dynamics. This distinction is important. We are told that to be fair we must treat everyone the same (equal); however, when we recognize the legacy of institutionalized and structural racism we understand that differing people and communities need different resources (equity). In order to be equitable we provide specific, unique resources that will support people and communities getting their basic needs met and reaching their full potential. Sameness is not always fairness if the oppressed group remains disadvantaged.

*Source: Ellany Kayce. Transportation Equity Workgroup Member.*

**Indigenous peoples:** Are culturally and politically self-determining groups whose right to self-determination in North America, Hawaii, and the Pacific Islands began before the establishment of the US.

*Source: Indigenous Peoples: Terminology for the Fourth National Climate Assessment*

**Individual racism:** Pre-judgment, bias, stereotypes about an individual or group based on race. The impacts of racism on individuals including white people internalizing privilege and people of color internalizing oppression.

*Source: City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative, Racial Equity Toolkit*

**Institutional Racism:** Organizational programs, policies or procedures that work to the benefit of white people and to the detriment of people of color, usually unintentionally or inadvertently.

*Source: City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative, Racial Equity Toolkit*

**LGBTQIA+:** A common abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Pansexual, Transgender, Genderqueer, Queer, Intersexed, Agender, Asexual, and Ally Community.

*Source: University of Illinois Springfield, Gender and Sexuality Student Services*

**Long-Range Planning:** Process to create a vision for the future that includes goals, strategies, and implementing actions.

**Multimodal:** Refers to the various ways people use our transportation system, such as walking, riding a bicycle, taking transit, or driving a truck or personal automobile. It can also refer to a journey that employs more than one mode, such as walking to the bus stop and then taking a bus to your end destination. The vast majority of individual trips involve more than one mode.

**Public Space:** Places that are open and accessible to all people, including the public right-of-way (e.g., streets, sidewalks, squares, parks, and plazas that are not privately owned).

**Racial equity:** When social, economic and political opportunities are not predicted based upon a person's race.

*Source: City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative, Racial Equity Toolkit*

**Racial inequity:** When a person's race can predict their social, economic and political opportunities and outcomes.

*Source: City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative, Racial Equity Toolkit*

**Right-of-Way:** A strip of land legally established for the primary purpose of public travel by pedestrians and vehicles.

**Racism:** Prejudice, discrimination directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior. Race Prejudice + Systemic Power = Racism.

*Source: Standard Dictionary; Formula Source: Dr. Robin DiAngelo.*

**RSJI:** The City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) is a citywide effort to end institutionalized racism and race-based disparities in City government. RSJI builds on the work of the civil rights movement and the ongoing efforts of individuals and groups in Seattle to confront racism. The Initiative's long term goal is to change the underlying system that creates race-based disparities in our community and to achieve racial equity.

*Source: City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative*

**SDOT:** Seattle Department of Transportation.



**Structural Racism:** The interplay of policies, practices and programs of multiple institutions that leads to adverse outcomes and conditions for communities of color compared to white communities that occurs within the context of racialized historical and cultural conditions.

*Source: City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative, Racial Equity Toolkit*

**Unincorporated Regions:** These regions include areas that are not currently incorporated within the City of Seattle or another city but are within King County - White Center, Skyway, Riverton-Boulevard Park and East Renton Highlands.

**Vulnerable Communities:** Communities who have historically and currently been erased, intentionally excluded and/or underinvested in by government institutions. SDOT's Transportation Equity Program and Transportation Equity Workgroup include:

- BIPOC communities
- Low-income communities
- Immigrant and refugee populations
- Native communities
- People living with disabilities
- LGBTQIA+ people
- People experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity
- Women and female-identifying populations
- Youth
- Aging adults
- Individuals who were formerly incarcerated
- Displaced and/or high-risk displacement neighborhoods

## CHART ON POWER DYNAMICS

Social Identity Categories	Privileged Social Groups	Border Social Groups	Targeted Social Groups	Biases with Power/"Ism's"
Race	White/Caucasian	Biracial/ Multiracial	Asian, Black, Latinx, Native/ Indigenous	Racism
Sex	Assigned Male at birth	Intersex	Assigned Female at birth	Sexism
Gender	Gender Conforming (Cisgender), Identify as Male or Female	Gender Ambiguous, Gender Queer, Agender	Transgender, Gender Queer, Intersex, Gender Ambiguous, Agender	Transphobia/ Trans* Oppression
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	Bisexual, Queer, Lesbian, Gay, Questioning, Aces (Asexual/Aromantic), Polyamorous	Bisexual, Queer, Lesbian, Gay, Questioning, Aces (Asexual/Aromantic), Polyamorous	Heterosexism, Homophobia
Social Status/ Class	Wealthy, Upper Class	Middle Class	Working Class, Poor, Low-Income	Classism
Ability/Disability	Temporarily Able-Bodied	People living with Temporary Disabilities, and/or "Invisible" Disability	People living with Disabilities (often physically identifiable)	Ableism
Religion	Protestant, Christian	Roman Catholic (historically), Spiritual	Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Atheism	Religious Oppression/ Intolerance
Age/Generational	Adults (Ages 35-55)	Young Adults (Ages 25-35)	Elders (55+) and Adolescents/ Children (25 and under)	Ageism/Adultism

*Note\* - You cannot enter a room as ONE identity or as one part of yourself. All your identities work together simultaneously. Your experience is based on the interplay of your identities within multiple dimensions of societal oppression.*

*Source: Office of Equity, University of Colorado, Matrix of Oppression*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Transportation Equity Framework (TEF) is a community-guided vision that serves as Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT's) "north star" when considering equity priorities on policies, programs and projects that most impact Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, and communities that have historically and currently been underinvested in by government. These include people with low-income, refugees, immigrants, people living with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ people, those experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, women and female-identifying people, youth, aging adults, people formerly incarcerated, and those at high risk for or displaced communities.

The TEF is for SDOT decision-makers, employees, stakeholders, partners, and the greater community to utilize as a roadmap to collaboratively create an equitable transportation system. Building from the City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI), the TEF addresses the disparities that exist in our transportation systems due to institutional racism. The key to begin undoing the transportation inequities communities, experience is to incorporate a racial equity framework in government policies and operations.

We began the TEF development process in Spring 2019 and included:

- SDOT staff, led by SDOT's Transportation Equity Program, with participation from the Transportation Equity Intradepartmental Team (TE-IDT)
- The Transportation Equity Workgroup (TEW), as described below
- KAYA strategik LLC, women minority-owned business enterprise (WMBE) consulting agency

Centering the voices of those most affected by transportation inequities, the TEW was charged with providing SDOT with equity-guided strategy recommendations to incorporate into the framework. The TEW consists of 10 community members with personal and professional affiliations with Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and with communities underinvested in by government. TEW members were provided with a stipend in recognition of the value of their participation.

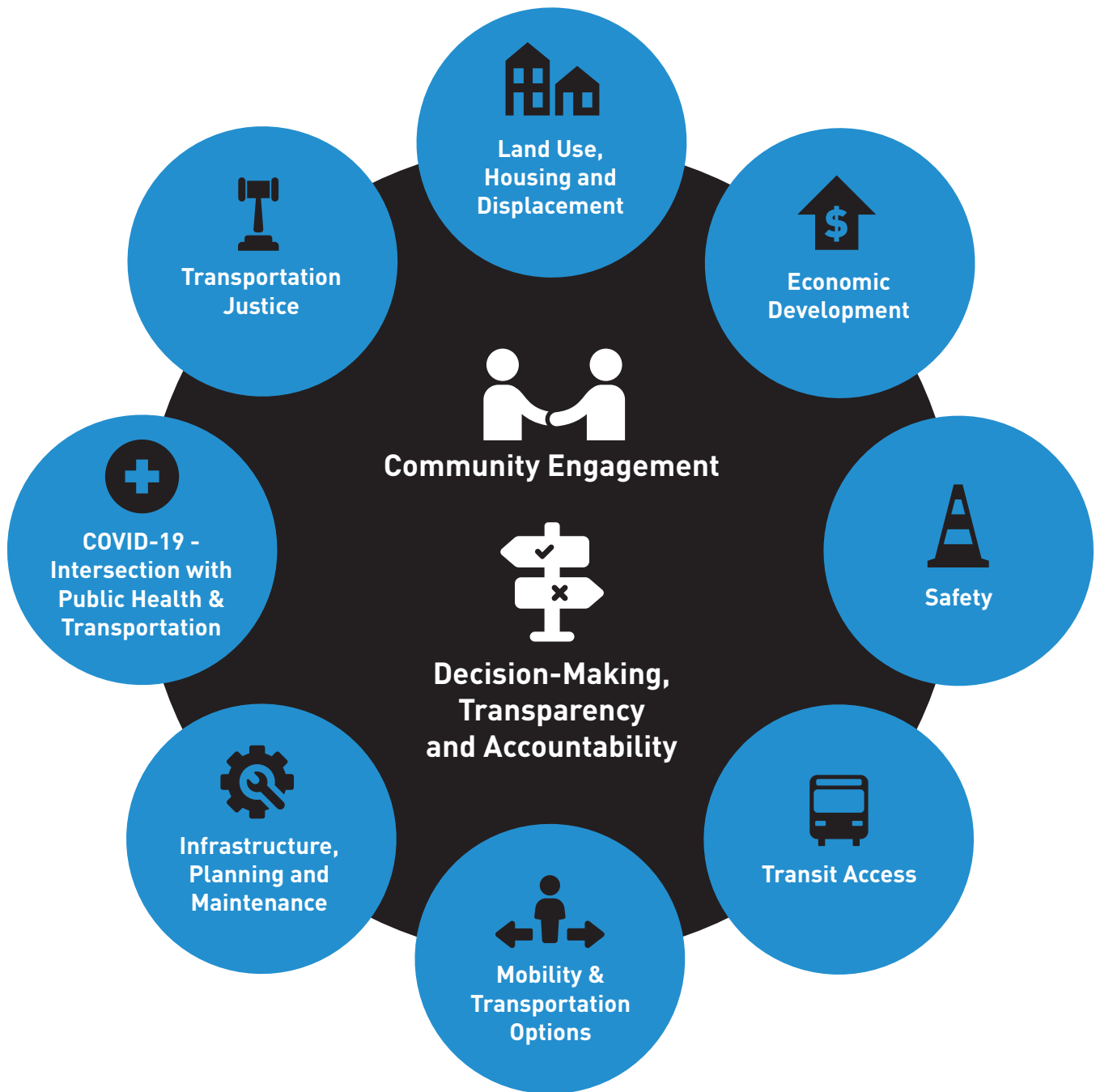
TEW members identified two fundamental equity strategy elements and eight strategy drivers. Each includes a value statement and recommended strategies. These were developed by TEW members with feedback incorporated from a community outreach process led by the TEW to vet recommended equity strategies with community.

In 2021, SDOT and the TEW will continue to co-develop the implementation plan component to the TEF while engaging communities and other City departments and transportation agencies as relevant. SDOT's Transportation Equity Program will also continue to provide capacity-building support to the TEW as the group collaborates with SDOT on a long-term structure and vision for the TEW.

# TRANSPORTATION EQUITY STRATEGIES

## 2 Fundamental Equity Strategy Elements

### 8 Equity Strategy Drivers





# TRANSPORTATION EQUITY FRAMEWORK

## PART I: VALUES & STRATEGIES

The Transportation Equity Framework (TEF) includes equity strategies identified and co-developed by members of the Transportation Equity Workgroup (TEW). TEW defined two fundamental strategy elements and eight equity strategy drivers that are pillars to achieving transportation equity; they center the voices of BIPOC communities and those who have historically and currently been underinvested in by government.

## FUNDAMENTAL EQUITY STRATEGY ELEMENTS

---

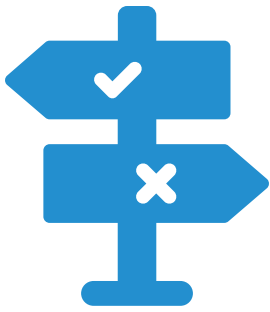


### Community Engagement

**TEW Value Statement on Community Engagement:** We believe community engagement is a holistic and on-going relationship building process where collaboration and partnership with community-based organizations and individuals are essential for culturally relevant outreach and engagement strategies with communities and individuals most impacted by institutional and structural racism.

#### TEW Equity Strategies for Community Engagement

- **1:** Incorporate community engagement as a standard practice across SDOT and have a feedback loop with impacted BIPOC and vulnerable communities including ongoing report backs, updates, and education. A successful engagement process includes transparency on how the community's actions have impacted positive outcomes.
- **2:** Prior to approaching BIPOC and vulnerable communities, consider the level of meaningful engagement SDOT seeks to have and provide capacity building support to community-based organizations and BIPOC individuals to conduct community engagement in partnership with SDOT. Capacity building includes providing funding support, technical assistance, project guidance and building knowledge for communities to navigate the transportation network and system.
- **3:** Create ongoing partnerships and receive guidance from community-based organizations and individual community members from BIPOC and vulnerable communities on culturally appropriate and meaningful engagement; this includes SDOT acknowledging and educating itself with values from the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative on how institutional racism impacts transportation inequities.
- **4:** Budget and build time for community engagement at all SDOT project phases, including the planning phase to keep impacted communities informed and collect feedback for project definition. Build trust with communities historically and currently underinvested in by government by engaging during the beginning and throughout the iterative process of a project phase, and provide educational tools so communities can easily understand and fully participate in the engagement process.



## Decision-Making, Transparency and Accountability

### TEW Value Statement on Decision-Making, Transparency and

**Accountability:** We believe transparent and inclusive decision-making in transportation equity means information should be culturally accessible, and voices of BIPOC communities and those who have intentionally been excluded are centered and educated to participate in the civic engagement process.

### TEW Equity Strategies on Decision-Making, Transparency and Accountability

- **1:** Transportation Equity Workgroup (TEW) is institutionalized within SDOT as a permanent advisory body to guide the department in taking active steps towards making thoughtful, inclusive and equitable decisions. TEW members must be financially compensated and include community members who identify as BIPOC and those from communities who have historically been excluded by government.
- **2:** SDOT leadership, workforce and advisory boards reflect the diversity of BIPOC and vulnerable communities who have historically and currently access the City of Seattle to work, worship, play, learn and live; this includes cultivating a workforce that includes communities who have been displaced from the city and from unincorporated regions. Representation of SDOT staff, leadership and advisory boards are important to ensure lived experiences and perspectives from BIPOC and vulnerable communities are included in the decision-making process.
- **3:** SDOT leadership must not only reflect the diversity of BIPOC communities but must embody the core beliefs towards racial equity, be held accountable and utilize its positionality to dismantle institutional racism and transportation inequities.
- **4:** Acknowledge and commit to remedying the inequities in the transportation system that have impacted BIPOC and vulnerable communities and rebuild trust by creating a culture of transparency that includes culturally relevant communications, educating communities on government decision-making processes and setting realistic expectations for both SDOT and the community.
- **5:** Coordinate data assessment and transparent data sharing among transportation agencies to ensure that BIPOC and vulnerable communities are not disproportionately burdened and that informed decisions related to revenue spending, are made to positively benefit communities.
- **6:** Building from the RSJI Equity Toolkit and with the guidance of the Transportation Equity Workgroup, create an SDOT equity checklist as a tool to ensure projects follow and include an inclusive community engagement model that meets RSJI guidance.

## EQUITY STRATEGY DRIVERS

---



### Land Use, Housing and Displacement

**TEW Value Statement on Land Use, Housing and Displacement:** We believe that land use and housing options must support and lower barriers for people with low-income, BIPOC, communities living with disabilities, and families to live in the city. Long-range planning must mitigate near-term adverse impacts that rapid, unchecked development can have on low-income BIPOC communities who have historically and currently accessed the city of Seattle to work, worship, play, learn and live. We believe urban planning policies must be accountable to BIPOC communities within the City's Equitable Development Initiative.

#### **TEW Equity Strategies on Land Use, Housing and Displacement:**

- **1:** Due to racist housing policies being compounded by our region's growth, comprehensive zoning policies must address the lack of affordable housing and displacement risks that BIPOC and vulnerable communities experience.
- **2:** As transportation growth is a catalyst to displacement of BIPOC and vulnerable communities, anti-displacement policies must be at the forefront of urban and transportation planning.
- **3:** When development planning occurs, there must be an alignment of strategies between Citywide workgroups, advisory boards, and committees to ensure BIPOC and vulnerable communities have equitable access to public and private transportation options as development occurs in their neighborhoods.
- **4:** Ongoing partnership and outcome alignment on the strategies and goals of the City's Equitable Development Advisory Board and the Transportation Equity Workgroup especially as it relates to the equity drivers.
- **5:** Equitable transit oriented development needs to prioritize affordable housing options for BIPOC and vulnerable communities who have historical and current ties to neighborhoods given the disproportional growth and displacement risks.
- **6:** Community informed neighborhood planning must be embraced and included in institutional decision-making by municipal departments, advisory boards, committees and the private urban planning and development sectors.
- **7:** Engage with the City's Equity and Environment Initiative, and prioritize and invest in transit services and projects that promote healthy environments and community by connecting BIPOC and vulnerable communities to green spaces accessible to everyone. This includes parks, walking trails, festival streets and other spaces.

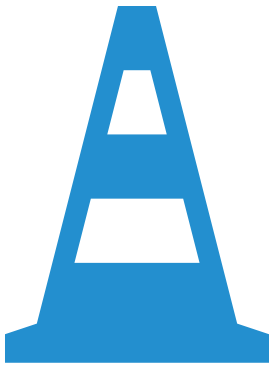


## Economic Development

**TEW Value Statement on Economic Development:** We believe our transportation system must advance economic mobility, opportunity and connectivity to develop healthy and safe neighborhoods and enable equitable access for BIPOC and vulnerable communities.

**TEW Equity Strategies on Economic Development:**

- **1:** As transportation growth is a catalyst to displacement of BIPOC and vulnerable communities, development needs to be leveraged to expand a variety of affordable housing options and employment opportunities for BIPOC and vulnerable communities, thus reducing the impacts on existing neighborhood assets.
- **2:** Promote economic opportunities for BIPOC and vulnerable communities and enhance community cultural anchors in the aim to provide access to quality education, training and living-wage career path jobs.
- **3:** Create a mobility framework that invests in preventing residential, commercial and cultural displacement and provides economic pathways for those who have been displaced to return.
- **4:** Ensure that existing BIPOC small businesses can operate and thrive in combating the impacts of development growth that correlates with transportation expansion.
- **5:** Prioritize investment in effective and affordable transportation that supports transit-dependent BIPOC and vulnerable communities.
- **6:** Reduce barriers for new and current BIPOC small businesses to operate, thrive and help build local cultural assets.

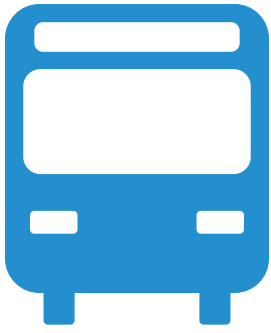


## Safety

**TEW Value Statement on Safety:** We believe our transportation system should be safe regardless of one's age, ability, location, income, language, race and/or how they choose to get around.

### **TEW Equity Strategies on Safety:**

- **1:** Develop culturally appropriate and holistic ways of gathering transit and transportation safety qualitative data with a sense of and/or perception of emotional, mental and physical safety from vulnerable communities including seniors, people living with disabilities and BIPOC communities.
- **2:** Explore and implement progressive sources of revenues to fund a citywide sidewalk revitalization program so that the City can take on greater maintenance and reconstruction responsibility, and increase pedestrian infrastructure investments in neighborhoods that have been redlined and experience disparities. This includes targeting investments in key communities such as Rainier Valley, Lake City and historically unincorporated King County regions including Skyway, White Center and other identified communities.
- **3:** In emergency situations, ensure critical information on safety and transportation services is distributed timely and includes cross-cultural ethnic communications.
- **4:** Pedestrian safety should be prioritized when creating crosswalk maintenance in areas including schools, senior centers, medical facilities and locations where there are higher populations of vulnerable communities.
- **5:** Create a community system of information sharing and collaborate on safety concerns and issues with stakeholders from vulnerable communities.



## Transit Access

**TEW Value Statement on Transit Access:** We believe in a transit system that is accessible, affordable, inclusive, respectful of people's time and equitably resourced.

### **TEW Equity Strategies on Transit Access:**

- **1:** Address barriers BIPOC and vulnerable communities experience on public transit from a holistic standpoint, this includes financial costs, route availability, ridership experience and other inequities impacting the community.
- **2:** Modify and broaden the existing eligibility for public transportation assistance to reduce inequities.
- **3:** Invest in accessible and community-specific communications methods regarding transit service changes or impacts; this includes incorporating multiple language accessible options as well as digital and non-digital platforms.
- **4:** Transit wayfinding, information and education is holistic and accessible, including addressing ease of use, translatability and universal visual language.
- **5:** Transit is a vital service that must be consistent and have long-term funding solutions that does not further burden low-income communities.



## Mobility and Transportation Options

**TEW Value Statement on Mobility and Transportation Options:** We believe there should be multiple affordable and accessible options for transportation and mobility for all people with an emphasis on those who are most vulnerable.

### **TEW Equity Strategies on Mobility and Transportation Options:**

- **1:** Create multi-modal strategies with a focus on how BIPOC and vulnerable individuals and communities can access these transportation options successfully; multi-modal integration should be more tailored to specific mobility needs within communities.
- **2:** Innovative ways for increasing flexible drop-off zones and parking capacity across the city for small businesses, social service agencies, childcare centers, healthcare facilities and individuals with disabilities.
- **3:** Equitable access to downtown requires a closer examination of affordable transportation options that low-income and working-class populations can access in multiple ways.
- **4:** Provide options of non-punitive and/or non-financial enforcement of transportation related fines and violations that significantly harm BIPOC and vulnerable communities.
- **5:** Continue to invest in first-/last-mile connections and prioritize affordable access for vulnerable communities as transit services expand.
- **6:** Reduce drive-alone vehicles by creating innovative, equitable and incentive-driven strategies with community buy-in to mitigate congestion and air pollution, in alignment with the City's Equity and Environment Initiative.

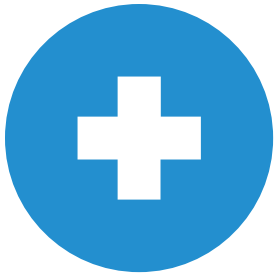


## Infrastructure, Planning and Maintenance

**TEW Value Statement on Infrastructure, Planning and Maintenance:** We believe solutions to infrastructure, planning and maintenance should be driven by quantitative and qualitative data that has been collected equitably, and solutions should come from public and private sector dialogue.

### **TEW Equity Strategies on Infrastructure, Planning and Maintenance**

- **1:** A participatory budgeting approach on how all revenue for essential transportation projects are invested; this plan should include metrics for decision-making and prioritize increased allocations for maintenance.
- **2:** Transit and transportation policies must be human-centered for the purpose of equitable infrastructure decisions; this includes mitigating costs for low-income and working-class populations.
- **3:** Transparent methods of how data is used to make decisions related to providing multiple transportation options (multimodal) and right-of-way sharing for traffic flow and travel lanes before altering roadways and neighborhood landscapes.
- **4:** Facilitate opportunities for business leaders from the public and private sector to come together with community stakeholders to address challenges related to short-term, and long-term infrastructure, and planning needs and priorities of BIPOC communities.
- **5:** Engage with community leadership prior to and during the onset of infrastructure planning before significant decisions are made that cannot be undone.
- **6:** Identify services or practices that were implemented during the COVID-19 response and assess the feasibility of continuity; this includes examining data related to usage for decision-making purposes.
- **7:** Reduce poor air quality by identifying eco-friendly construction and maintenance practices in BIPOC and vulnerable communities who disproportionately experience pollution.
- **8:** Create more public spaces intentionally designed for community gatherings that incorporate easy access to transit. These spaces should be created using a community-centered framework that draws upon the expertise of the community in all phases of the design process.

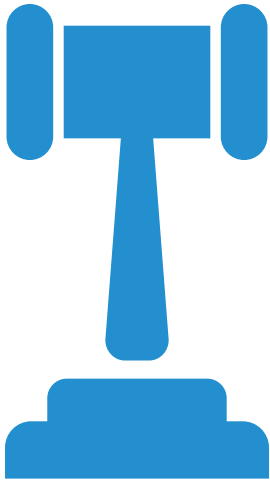


## COVID-19 - Intersection with Public Health & Transportation

**TEW Value Statement on COVID-19:** TEW recognizes COVID-19 disproportionately impacts BIPOC and vulnerable communities and therefore funding should be shifted to ensure safety, protection and education. We believe in a unified message and in action including education, outreach and safety, while also restoring confidence in using public transportation.

### **TEW Equity Strategies on COVID-19:**

- **1:** Develop coordinated and culturally-responsive outreach and education strategies with public health partners to assure communities accessing multi-modal networks that SDOT and its transportation partners are continuously making transportation systems COVID-19 safe. This should include specific tactics such as:
  - i. Mask wearing mandate
  - ii. Incorporate social distancing best practices
  - iii. Increase sanitizing of all facilities and transportation vehicles
- **2:** Provide PPE (personal protective equipment) such as face coverings and sanitization in public spaces including all regional public transportation conduits, such as but not limited to, buses, light rail, transit hubs, parking stations and other transportation spaces with a high volume of pedestrian traffic.
- **3:** Increase COVID-19 testing and ensure safety protocols are effective for transportation-related frontline workers who are exposed to the general public, including operators, maintenance staff and transit workers through partnership efforts with local public health and transit governments.
- **4:** Create and implement alternatives to transportation access that are equitable for low-income communities and COVID-19 safe, such as free and contactless admission.
- **5:** Preserve and expand transit routes to serve transit-dependent communities most impacted by COVID-19.
- **6:** Review, revise, and preserve transit routes to include important destinations such as daycare centers, healthcare and social service agencies, education, youth and senior facilities.
- **7:** During and beyond COVID-19, continue to create, develop and implement streets as public spaces that support human life, amplify voices of BIPOC and vulnerable communities; expand community public street use as shared resources and places of community capacity building.



## Transportation Justice

**TEW Value Statement on Transportation Justice:** We believe transportation must be affordable, accessible and just as it is an essential right for all people. We believe transportation laws and penalties are also a result of structural racism that have historically harmed, caused death and inflicted poverty on our BIPOC communities. We must also move towards decriminalizing transportation by redesigning existing laws and implementing non-punitive policies.

### **TEW Equity Strategies for Transportation Justice:**

- **1:** Create a new system of community safety that is not penal in nature and provides service linkage to communities in support rather than criminalizing or perpetuating cycles of racial inequities experienced by BIPOC populations.
- **2:** Create and amend transportation policies to have an anti-racist and decriminalized framework with the goal of establishing a fair and just transportation system.
- **3:** Develop non-financial alternatives for traffic and fare infractions, such as community service options, to address the cycle of poverty and financial burdens impacting BIPOC, low-income and working class populations.

# OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The TEF provides an opportunity to align strategies and elevate equity work across the city, county, and region as achieving transportation equity requires partnership and coordination with other City departments, transportation agencies, and stakeholders. Additionally, continued engagement with BIPOC communities and communities most impacted by transportation inequities should be a long-term practice embedded within government institutions.

## TEW RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LONG-TERM STRUCTURE OF SDOT TRANSPORTATION EQUITY WORKGROUP

The Transportation Equity Workgroup (TEW) recommends that the TEW be a permanently funded advisory body within SDOT. The TEW envisions a continued collaboration and partnership with SDOT as a community conduit that advocates for transportation equity. This permanence would not only expand the role of the TEW in key areas, but would ensure a sustained commitment to creating more equitable outcomes for BIPOC communities and other vulnerable populations.

This work requires an authentic and intentional community-engagement process. The TEW wants to be a highly visible means by which BIPOC communities can raise awareness, find solutions and bring about action on relevant issues affecting their lives and livelihoods. The presence of the TEW would increase SDOT's accountability to the community and grow its capacity for new and continued community partnerships. These relationships would strengthen SDOT's ability to continue taking active and informed steps toward creating a more just transportation system through

thoughtful and inclusive dialogue, resource allocation, policymaking and workforce diversity.

The TEW is a coalition of BIPOC individuals and communities advancing, increasing, and enhancing transportation equity centered on addressing issues impacting communities historically and currently disenfranchised by government. The TEW advocates with and is accountable to their community constituents; and recognizes that open and continuous dialogue with decision-makers policymakers, transit-partner agencies and frontline staff at the local and state level is critical to the effectiveness of our work. This includes the City Council, Mayor and Governor.

The TEW strongly recommends SDOT mandate financially compensating TEW members for their community expertise. This compensation should extend to any advisory role requested of TEW members by any department or division within SDOT or the City of Seattle and should be negotiated in consultation and collaboration with the Transportation Equity Manager.

These commitments would:

1. Demonstrate that SDOT values the time and expertise of community members who represent BIPOC communities and communities historically underinvested by the government.
2. Serve as a collaborative and influential role in the implementation of the Transportation Equity Framework as well as having it serve as an oversight body especially when unforeseen circumstances arise that disproportionately impact BIPOC communities.

3. Signal to BIPOC communities and other vulnerable populations that they have advocates within the community who partner with SDOT.
4. Acknowledge the challenges facing SDOT and its obligation to equitably respond to a changing landscape.
5. Make it easier for the TEW to collaborate with and support the efforts of other community-driven bodies like the King County Metro Equity Cabinet in ensuring greater equity within our transportation network.
6. Continue community capacity building and cultivating the leadership skills of all TEW members.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITY, COUNTYWIDE AND REGIONAL COORDINATION

SDOT's Transportation Equity Framework includes strategies for coordination and decision-making between SDOT, other City departments and regional agencies. There are many opportunities within the City to incorporate strategies from the Transportation Equity Framework to inform policies and investment recommendations such as the Citywide COVID-19 recovery and climate justice efforts. There is a role for SDOT to use the Transportation Equity Framework strategies to influence change through stakeholder relationship across the city, county and regionally.

Equity strategies for **Economic Development and Land Use, Housing and Displacement** will require closer partnership and coordination between SDOT and City departments such as Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD), Office of Sustainability and the Environment (OSE), Department of Neighborhoods (DON), Office of Housing (OH) and Office of Economic Development (OED).

Continued cross-partnership collaboration is recommended between SDOT, OPCD Equitable Development Initiative (EDI) staff and the EDI

Interim Advisory Board to align transportation solutions and system planning with the City's Equitable Development Initiative.

Additionally, ongoing partnership is recommended between SDOT, OSE Equity and Environment Initiative and the City's Environmental Justice Committee (EJC). There is an opportunity to align and coordinate strategies included in both the Transportation Equity Framework and the Equity and Environment Agenda to collectively address environmental issues and climate justice concerns impacting BIPOC communities.

Continued and intentional partnerships with regional state and federal transportation agencies such as King County Metro (KCM) and Sound Transit are also key in order to align and accomplish the equity strategies under **Safety, Transit Access, Mobility and Transportation Options and Infrastructure, Planning and Maintenance**. Continuing to strengthen partnerships and implementation coordination are recommended between SDOT, King County Metro, the Transportation Equity Workgroup and the King County Metro (KCM) Mobility Framework Equity Cabinet. KCM's Mobility Framework and SDOT's Transportation Equity Framework have shared equity goals and strategies in which a coordinated effort is necessary as SDOT shifts towards developing an implementation plan for the TEF.

SDOT's participation in the Transportation Equity Network Group (TEN) includes membership with equity staff from King County Metro, Sound Transit, Port of Seattle and Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC). This forum provides an opportunity to bring the strategies from the Transportation Equity Framework into a space where regional conversations regarding equity are discussed. The TEN group focuses on developing a network of transportation equity leaders throughout the region who are grounded in racial justice values.

12:56pm  
Broadway & Marion  
Broadway & Terrace  
Broadway & Yesler



# APPENDICES

# Appendix 1: Context Setting and Transportation Equity Framework Development Process

The creation and growth of SDOT's Transportation Equity Program, Transportation Equity Workgroup and development of the Transportation Equity Framework is rooted in the values of the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI). Collectively, these efforts form a beginning practice for SDOT to build intentional relationships with BIPOC communities.

## SDOT TRANSPORTATION EQUITY PROGRAM

In 2004, the City of Seattle established the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) to eliminate racial disparities and advance social justice through equitable policies, programs, and planning practices. The City's commitment to RSJI has led to the creation of several equity initiatives and programs over the years, including the Seattle Department of Transportation's (SDOT) Transportation Equity Program, established in 2017.

SDOT's vision is that Seattle is a thriving, equitable community powered by dependable transportation, and the department's mission to deliver a transportation system that provides safe and affordable access to places and opportunities. SDOT recognizes equity as a key value and believes transportation must meet the needs of communities of color and those of all incomes, abilities, and ages. Our goal is to partner with communities to build a racially equitable and socially just transportation system.

SDOT's Transportation Equity Program provides department-wide policy and strategic advisement on equitable, safe, environmentally sustainable, accessible, and affordable transportation systems that support Black, Indigenous and People

of Color (BIPOC) communities, low-income populations, people living with disabilities, and other communities historically and currently underinvested in by government. The program's principles center on building community trust through engagement and accountability, eliminating racial disparities, and mitigating the effects of displacement from transportation inequities.

On November 28, 2017, Mayor Durkan issued an Executive Order affirming her commitment to RSJI, including transportation equity. On January 2, 2018, City Council unanimously adopted Resolution 31773, providing their support for transportation equity and directing SDOT to bring together a committee consisting of community members most impacted by transportation inequities.

## TRANSPORTATION EQUITY WORKGROUP

In April 2019, SDOT created the Transportation Equity Workgroup (TEW), a group of ten compensated community members with personal and professional affiliations with Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and communities underinvested by government. TEW Members all personally identify as BIPOC and are connected to non-profits, community-based organizations or networks serving underinvested communities in Seattle-King County including:

- Low-income communities
- Immigrant and refugee populations
- Native communities
- People living with disabilities
- LGBTQIA+ people
- Those experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity

- Women and female-identifying
- Youth
- Aging adults
- Formerly incarcerated individuals
- Displaced and/or high-risk displacement neighborhoods

Goals for the TEW are to:

- Build community trust and partnerships through transparency and accountability between SDOT and communities underinvested in by government.
- Develop leadership capacity and a deeper understanding of SDOT and transportation systems.
- Learn and share understanding of transportation equity values and priorities.

For the 2019-2020 term, the TEW worked collaboratively to create community-guided equity recommendations to include in SDOT's first-ever Transportation Equity Framework (TEF), a framework for transportation equity goals and priorities for the department.

The following community members served on the TEW:

- Khatami Chau, Food Empowerment Education and Sustainability Team (FEEST)
- An Huynh, Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Authority (scidPDA)
- Ellany Kayce, Duwamish Tribe\*
- Kiana Parker, UW Center for Experiential Learning
- Kristina Pearson, Duwamish Tribe\*
- Phyllis Porter, Rainier Valley Greenways\*
- Rizwan Rizwi, Muslim Housing Services and TEW Co-Chair

- Chris Rhodes, Rainier Valley Corps
- Steven Sawyer, People of Color Against AIDS Network (POCAAN) and TEW Co-Chair
- Yordanos Teferi, Multicultural Community Coalition and representative of City of Seattle, Equitable Development Initiative (EDI)
- Christina Thomas, Rainier Valley Greenways\*
- Karia Wong, Chinese Information Services Center (CISC) and representative of City of Seattle, Environment Justice Committee (EJC)

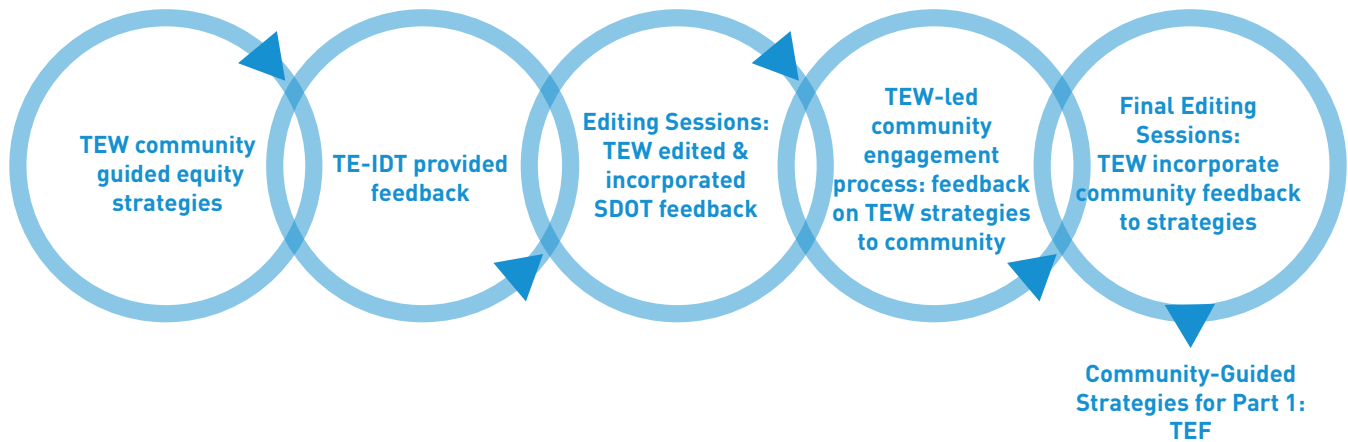
\*Indicates shared seats between primary and alternate TEW Members throughout the 2019-2020 term

## COMMUNITY-CENTERED: TRANSPORTATION EQUITY FRAMEWORK (TEF) DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Relationship building with TEW members was a key component of the TEF development process. For more than a year and a half, SDOT Transportation Equity staff created a culture of open communication, learning, and holistic engagement with TEW members. TEW Members regularly met as a group at least once a month throughout the TEF development process, with engagement support from SDOT Transportation Equity staff and consulting agency, KAYA strategik, a woman minority owned business enterprise (WMBE).

Additionally, SDOT created the Transportation Equity Intradepartmental Team (TE-IDT), an internal group of SDOT staff with representation from each division to elevate transportation equity within the department and to champion TEW's work throughout the TEF development process.

**FIGURE 1. 2019-2020: FEEDBACK LOOP PROCESS FOR TEF DEVELOPMENT**



SDOT's portfolio and workforce is large, with more than 1,000 staff across the department and ten divisions. The TE-IDT was an internal organizing strategy to better understand how equity functions in SDOT's wide range of portfolios, while also creating a feedback loop process so TEW members could receive guidance on their equity strategies as recommendations were being developed.

A key piece of authentic community engagement is to provide the tools and knowledge so community members have the information to be successful within their advisory capacity to the City. Prior to starting the TEF development process, TEW participated in an onboarding process as part of their initial orientation so that TEW members had the baseline tools and knowledge regarding SDOT to begin their roles on the workgroup.

In collaboration with TE-IDT staff, the Transportation Equity Program created an onboarding training curriculum for TEW members. All TEW Members were invited to participate in a two-day professional development summit where they engaged with SDOT staff and learned foundational content related to SDOT and Seattle's transportation system. The curriculum focused on information such as SDOT's budget, Seattle's transit system,

management of the right-of-way, master planning processes, and other introductory content. This onboarding process was not only beneficial for TEW Members but a good exercise for SDOT staff to engage and explain SDOT's work without technical jargon and in language that would be easily understood by community.

SDOT started the TEF development process in April 2019 and finalized the TEF in December 2020. This included onboarding TEW members, regular community engagement, and the completion of the TEF. Community engagement and implementing a community-centered process takes time; authentic relationships with community members includes being flexible and nimble from the traditional constraints government systems typically operate under.

In 2021, SDOT will continue to partner with the TEW to co-develop an implementation plan for the TEF. The framework will include near, mid- and long-term tactics to address the equity strategies. SDOT will continue to foster community engagement between TEW members and key SDOT staff, and also educate the broader department on the TEF as part of our internal process to develop the implementation plan. SDOT plans to share the TEF and implementation plan as a combined document to the public in quarter 3 of 2021.

**FIGURE 2. TIMELINE OF TEF DEVELOPMENT**



### **January to March 2019**

- Application and recruitment of Transportation Equity Workgroup Members (TEW) opened. 10 community members selected to participate on the TEW.
- SDOT staff on the Transportation Equity Intradepartmental (TE-IDT) team began meeting regularly and worked together to create onboarding content and curriculum for the TEW.

### **April to May 2019**

- Onboarding process for TEW started; held orientation and two-day professional development summit at Centilia Cultural Center where TEW members learned foundational content on SDOT and Seattle's transportation system.
- TEW members named key transportation equity issues prevalent within their communities.

### **June to November 2019**

- TEW reviewed transportation equity issues and identified equity topics for the Transportation Equity Framework.
- TEW created subcommittees and began crafting community guided strategies and recommendations for each equity topic.
- SDOT TE-IDT continued to regularly meet and strategize on how to elevate transportation equity within their respective divisions.

### **December 2019 to February 2020**

- TEW members workshopped and voted on value statements for each equity topic.
- SDOT TE-IDT staff provided feedback on TEW's draft value statements and community guided recommendations.
- TEW began regular editing sessions to refine and turn community-guided recommendations into equity strategies; incorporated SDOT TE-IDT staff feedback.

### **March-May 2020**

- TEW continued to refine value statements and equity strategies through regular editing sessions.
- SDOT-TE IDT staff began discussing existing tactics that currently address TEW's draft equity strategies and started socializing TEW's draft equity values and strategies with divisions.
- TEW started planning virtual community outreach activities to receive feedback from community on their equity recommendations for the Transportation Equity Framework.

### **June-September 2020**

- TEW created and opened their online survey for community members.
- TEW facilitated 6 online focus groups with community to receive feedback and thoughts on recommended equity strategies.

### **October-December 2020**

- Key SDOT staff from Transportation Equity, TE-IDT and RSJI Change Team provided written content editing to the Transportation Equity Framework.
- TEW incorporated community feedback and finalized value statements and equity strategies for the Transportation Equity Framework.

## TEW-LED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES

TEW members planned and implemented a community engagement process with their respective communities to receive feedback on TEW's recommended equity strategies for the TEF. Due to COVID-19, in-person community activities were not possible, so TEW shifted to holding outreach activities virtually via online focus groups and surveys.

Two meetings were held online with a total of 6 simultaneous focus groups on September 21 and September 24, 2020 with a total of 78 community members participating in the discussion. TEW members facilitated the focus group discussions and shared high-level themes related to strategies TEW created for each equity topics. Focus group participants were divided into virtual breakout rooms and TEW facilitators rotated through each room.

TEW also released online surveys as part of the community engagement activity. Surveys were created by TEW members and translated to 11 languages selected from top tier languages from both City of Seattle Office of Immigrants

and Refugee Affairs (OIRA) and King County Language Access Plan. Survey languages included: Amharic, Tigrinya, Somali, Oromo, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Korean, Khmer, Spanish, Simplified and Traditional Chinese. More than 3,300 community members participated in the TEW survey.

SDOT provided each TEW member's affiliated community-based organizations with a \$4,000 budget to support TEW's efforts in the community engagement process. TEW members collectively decided to use this budget to provide focus group and survey participants with incentives.

The TEF offers SDOT the opportunity to reimagine the way we create and manage the City's transportation system. It does so by defining equity values and strategies that center the voices of communities that have historically been marginalized by government, and it addresses the transportation inequities caused by institutional racism. The Transportation Equity Framework provides a roadmap to delivering on the department's equity value to meet the transportation needs of BIPOC communities and those of all incomes, abilities, and ages.



## Appendix 2: Past and Present Context: Redlining and Gentrification in Seattle

Intentional design and disinvestment have created an increasingly inequitable city. Challenges, both past and present, also make way for opportunities to reimagine our transportation system and address the displacement of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities.

### SEATTLE'S GROWTH AND IMPACT OF DISPLACEMENT

Change is inevitable in cities, and it typically brings a mix of benefits and negative impacts. Seattle has been one of the fastest growing cities in the last few decades, especially since 2010. Seattle's transition from a "Boeing" town to an "Amazon" town has projected an image of progress and prosperity.

The markers of this prosperity are hard to avoid: gleaming new downtown skyscrapers, tech-companies' new offices a symbol of growth in jobs, and new housing, much of it in the form of high-rise condominiums and townhomes.

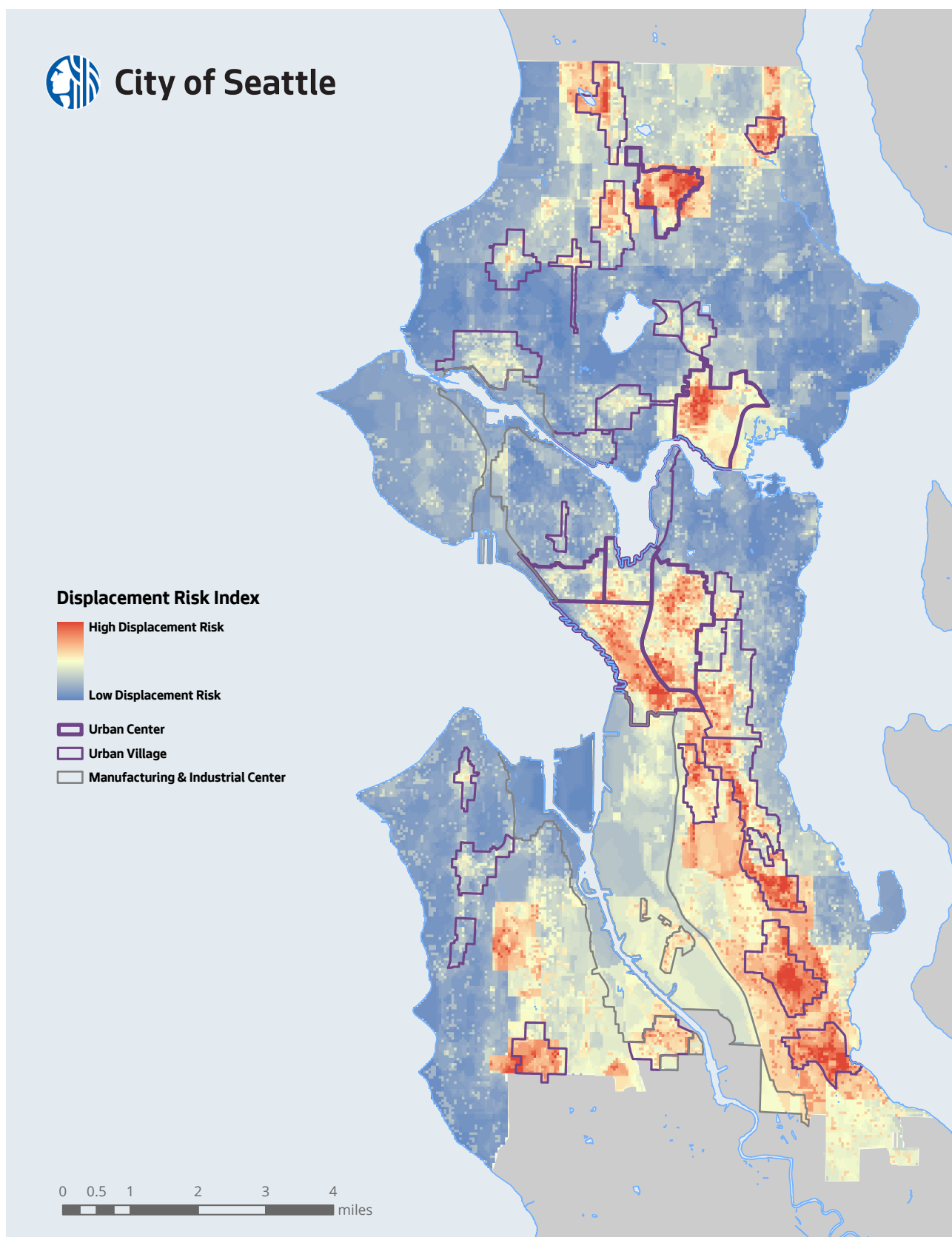
But not all have benefitted from the change; many others have experienced the downsides of all this growth and new wealth—from increased air pollution to gentrification that has led to higher housing costs and displacement to troubling levels of poverty and homelessness.

In the 1970s, Black residents made up 70% of the population in the Central District (CD). The practice of redlining forced many residents into this part of the city. In subsequent decades, the Black population in the CD dramatically declined. In the 2010s, Black residents made up less than 20% of the population in the district.

Today, Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) in Seattle are concentrated in the southeast part of the city. It is little to no surprise that southeast Seattle is home to the most vulnerable among us; has higher risk of displacement; and has lower access to opportunity relative to other parts of the city.

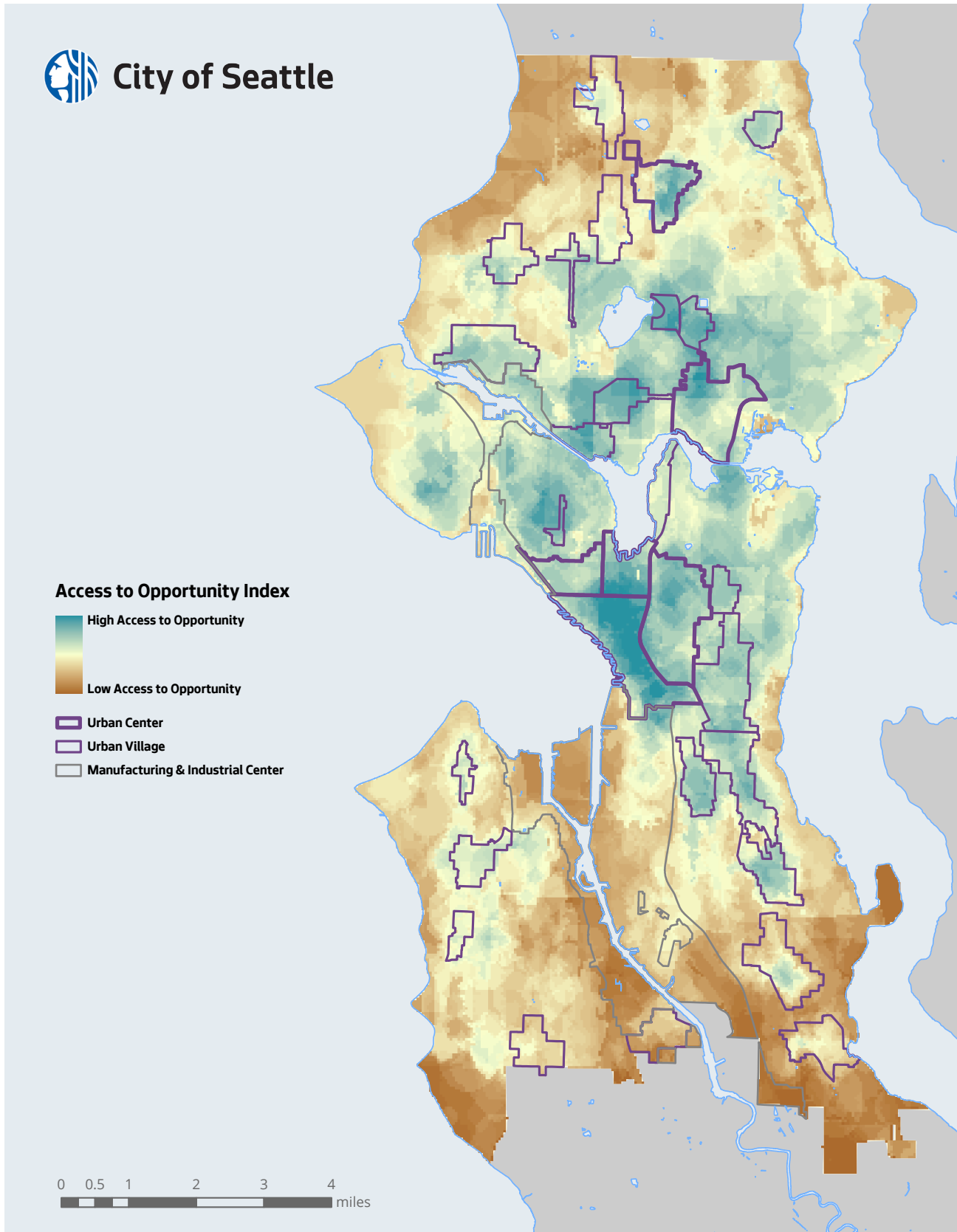
The following maps illustrate the areas in Seattle whose residents experience high displacement risk relative to other parts of the city (Figure 3. Displacement Risk Index map) and level of access to opportunity (Fig 4. Access to Opportunity map). The maps help frame the conversation of where investments could address equity issues around displacement and access to opportunity. For details on how the maps were created, please refer to the [Seattle 2035 Growth and Equity \(2016\)](#) document.

FIGURE 3. DISPLACEMENT RISK INDEX



Source: *Seattle 2035, Growth and Equity report*, May 2016

FIGURE 4. ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY



Source: *Seattle 2035, Growth and Equity report*, May 2016

For many BIPOC communities, gentrification and displacement have impacted their sense of community. The gentrification of the Central District is a stark reminder of the sadness and sorrow of displacement, and of the inequities BIPOC communities experience. There are countless stories. For some who have moved away and then later returned to their old neighborhood, the sense of belonging no longer remains.

---

“As a native of Seattle and a life-long property holder in the Central District I have been aware of the transportation barriers faced by people of color throughout our City. I distinctly remember as a child accompanying my grandmother as she took the number 2 bus from the CD downtown to pay her bills. Now, with gentrification, a lot of our community elders have relocated further making the transportation to doctor appointments, perform business transactions or just attend Sunday church service that much more important.”

—Chris Rhodes, Former Transportation Equity Workgroup Member (TEW)

---

## **HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF SEGREGATION AND REDLINING PRACTICES**

The practice and history of segregation and redlining practices in Seattle can be traced from the early 1900s until today. Explicit language and boundaries can be found in the policy, laws, maps, and home ownership deeds that displays and reinforces the system of severe racial discrimination in Seattle targeting not just African Americans but also Native Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, people of Latin ancestry, and also, at times, Jews.

Recent legislation has started to dismantle racial discrimination of segregation and redlining such as Senate Bill 6169, which makes it easier for neighborhoods governed by homeowners associations to rid themselves of racial restrictive

covenants; however, housing discrimination is still prevalent. Although no longer enforceable, many housing deeds in single-family units still have discriminatory language. The Seattle Office of Civil Rights continues to test apartment complexes for evidence of illegal discrimination and in 2014 found two-thirds failed (out of 124 selected properties), showing evidence of illegal treatment of potential renters on the basis of race, national origins, gender, or sexual orientation.

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS IN GENTRIFICATION AND DISPLACEMENT**

Seattle has been one of the fastest growing cities in the country the last decade. In April 2010, the city's population was 608,661. As of July 2019, the population estimate was 753,675—a 23.8% increase since 2010.

Seattle is also among the least affordable cities in the country. In August 2020, the median price for single-family homes and condos was \$780,126. This is over a 7% increase from the previous year.

In the last decade, the lowest the median value of single-family homes was \$363,000 in March 2012. Since then, the median value of a home in Seattle has more than doubled.

In 2018, the median household income was \$85,662. In 2019, the median income rose to \$102,500. But more than a quarter of households in Seattle make less than \$50,000. The majority of them are non-white, communities of color households.

Today, Seattle is among the top three most quickly gentrifying cities in the country. Washington, DC, and Portland, Oregon, are the other two cities. Over several decades, segregation, redlining, and urban renewal policies set the stage for relatively rapid turnover from historically Black and Brown neighborhoods to more affluent, often white and young, professional households. All this new wealth along with the City's investments in

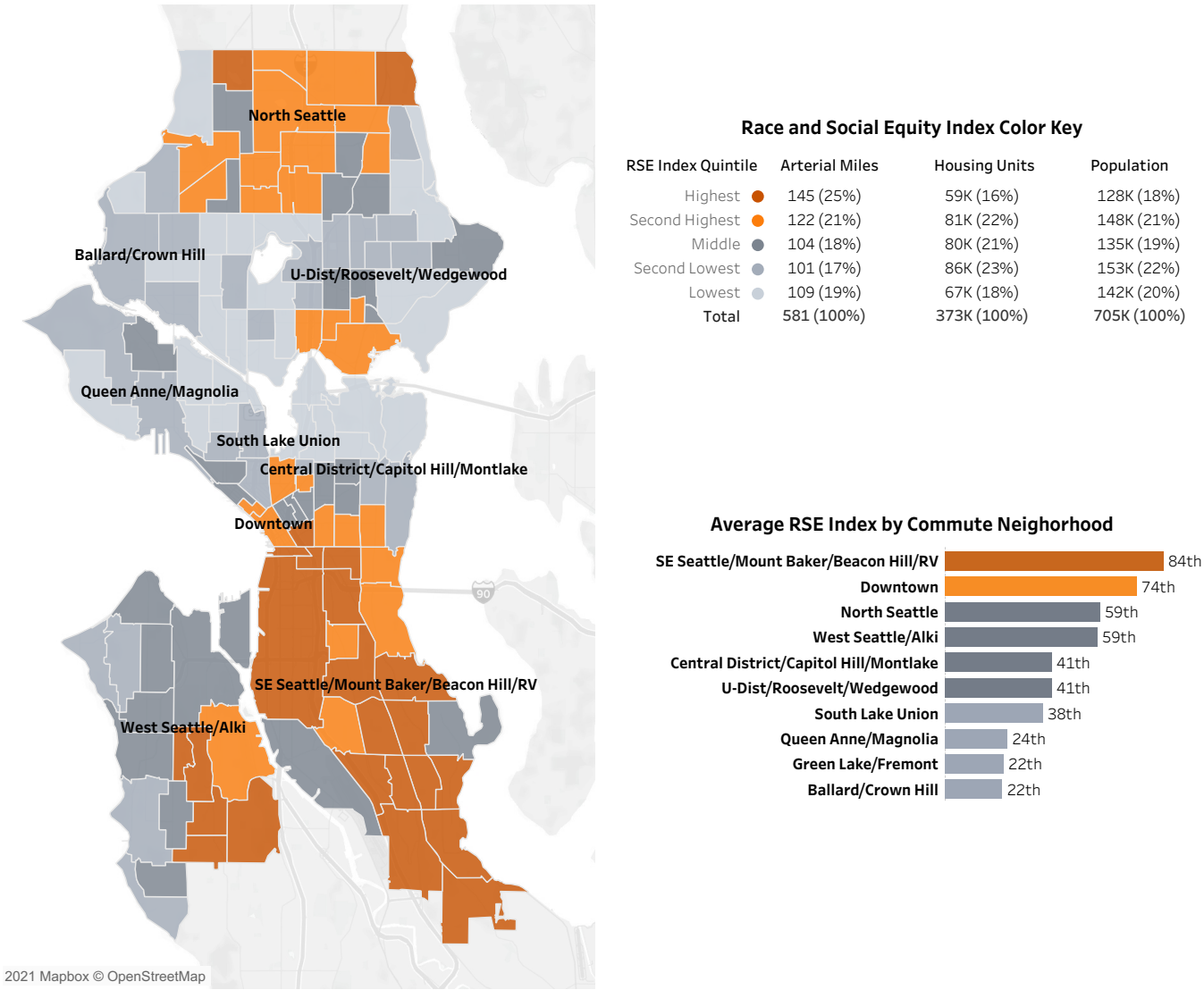
infrastructure quickly changes the look and feel of a neighborhood. To longtime residents and displaced residents from the neighborhood, it can seem like it happened overnight—this is what gentrification feels like.

To visualize and better understand the demographic distribution of vulnerable populations in Seattle, SDOT prepared a Race and Social Equity Composite Index based on elements of the Growth and Equity Index maps. It provides a glimpse into areas that are considered a priority when centering equity in our investments.

### RACE AND SOCIAL EQUITY COMPOSITE INDEX

The Race and Social Equity Composite Index combines information on race, ethnicity, and related demographics with data on socioeconomic and health disadvantages. The index ranks Census Tracts by priority and is correlated with percentages of People of Color, income, and adults living with disabilities. The color key is by composite index quintiles, each of which represent 20% of the Census Tracts in Seattle. Highlighted areas in orange and red depict the Race and Social Equity Index Priority Areas.

FIGURE 5. RACE AND SOCIAL EQUITY INDEX BY CENSUS TRACT AND COMMUTE NEIGHBORHOOD



2021 Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

## Appendix 3: Current Events of 2020: Racial Injustice, COVID-19, and Climate Change

The wake of 2020's crises related to police brutality, civil unrest, wildfires, and the public health and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic have exposed fractures in our transportation system. At the same time, these events provide us with the opportunity to take urgent action and respond with an equity-centered approach.

### DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 AND SDOT'S RESPONSE

In Seattle, there is large variation in which communities are impacted by COVID-19. Infection rates in Seattle communities with the highest displacement risk and highest proportion of marginalized identities (e.g., BIPOC communities, immigrants, people living with disabilities) are three times higher than areas with low displacement risk and community disadvantage. These impacts are manifested through a higher risk of exposure due to living and working conditions, as well as higher vulnerability due to underlying health conditions.

In King County, we know that as of September 28, 2020, BIPOC communities are at particular risk for the virus. Groups contracting the virus at elevated rates, compared to white residents include: Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders (6 times more likely), Latinx (5 times more likely), Black (3 times more likely), and Indigenous (2 times more likely).

The pandemic has presented a whole host of new challenges to which SDOT must respond, including fundamental changes to how we get around and how we access goods and services; an increased need for public space to meet public health protocols; and significant impacts to our local, regional, and global economy. It has also

laid bare and compounded the existing structural inequities that cause disproportionate impacts on communities marginalized by government, in particular BIPOC communities.

At the onset of COVID-19, SDOT focused on ensuring safe options for necessary travel and for essential businesses to continue to operate. One strategy reserved curb space for pick-up and delivery in front of essential businesses, including restaurants, to allow them to continue operating. SDOT also quickly enacted the Stay Healthy Streets initiative to enable more people to safely access the outdoor while maintaining proper social distancing protocols. Similarly, SDOT issued permits to allow outdoor seating in the right-of-way to enable participating restaurants to get back to business.

SDOT is also in the process of organizing additional efforts to respond to COVID-19 impacts. These efforts are centered around the following principles that focus on equity, meet public health protocols, and accelerate recovery:

- Prioritize transit, especially for essential workers
- Accelerate active transportation and foster "15-minute neighborhoods"
- Reduce drive-alone trips
- Maximize space for people
- Support local businesses and business districts
- Optimize goods delivery and supply chains

### POLICE BRUTALITY AND ANTI-RACISM RESPONSE

While not often considered in the purview of a transportation department, SDOT has taken active steps to respond to police brutality, the subsequent protests, and the need to elevate anti-racism

practice. This is an ongoing transformational practice in which our department is engaging.

In the past few months, SDOT has encouraged and enabled various anti-racist learning opportunities for staff. These included deeper conversations among racial and ethnic affinity groups, including the department's Black caucus calling out the need for deeper and more meaningful responses to racialized issues.

Other internal efforts continue to germinate. Currently, a diverse group of SDOT staff are actively re-imagining community safety and re-thinking the role of enforcement, especially as it relates to appropriate level of fines and infractions for activities in the city's rights-of-way, and exploring non-punitive actions and educational opportunities. Traffic violations and fare enforcements disproportionately impact Black communities, and our department is actively engaging in internal discussions and exploring ways in which we can change policies that cause harm.

Additionally, divisions are carrying out regular learning sessions with the department's equity leaders about anti-racism and how we can infuse and strengthen our practice of it not only in the work that we do at SDOT but in everyday life.

## **CLIMATE ACTION AND NEED FOR CLEAN AIR**

2020's wildfires have been among the most destructive. They are a manifestation of the global warming crisis—the climate emergency. In its ongoing effort to address climate change, the City has prepared its own "Green New Deal" (GND)—a broad-based policy and set of actions to accelerate efforts to reduce carbon emissions. For its part, SDOT is collaborating with other City departments to carry out the GND. SDOT is also a key partner in the Transportation Electrification Blueprint—a recent plan to accelerate uptake of electric vehicles and help increase use of transit, walking, and biking as alternatives to fossil-fuel travel options.

By 2030, the City's goal is to reduce passenger vehicle emissions by 82 percent from the 2008 baseline. Based on emissions data through 2018, the City has reduced passenger vehicle emissions by only 3 percent. To achieve the 2030 passenger emissions goal, this means the City would essentially need to reduce emissions by 8 to 9 percent every year between 2021 and 2030. Slow and steady incremental progress will not get us to our goal. We need to hone our approach and accelerate our interventions to sharply reduce emissions, especially in the transportation sector.

The window of opportunity for us to address this is now, and for us to partner with communities to address the impacts of climate change. BIPOC communities living in underinvested areas have vocalized and advocated for key environmental justice issues such as the need for clean air, more green space and reduced pollution; there are steps we can urgently take to more rapidly mitigate climate change impacts especially in communities who are most vulnerable to this.

## **OPPORTUNITY FOR CONTINUED ACTION**

Altogether, SDOT's responses to 2020's crises are part of ongoing multi-pronged efforts to make the city a better place for all, but especially for communities who have been excluded and underinvested in by government. The seeds of these inequities, like in so many other cities across the country, were sown years ago, but there is an opportunity to take action. Recognizing that these inequities are nothing new can help us to reframe our responses and process, ensure that BIPOC and vulnerable communities benefit from the City's investments, and potentially alleviate past wrongs while making sure to not repeat past mistakes.

## Appendix 4: Existing Equity Work and Efforts in SDOT

Currently, SDOT is carrying out various equity-focused efforts as part of our citywide commitment and dedicated practice to include RSJI values and anti-racist principles into our everyday work.

### CITY OF SEATTLE, RACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE (RSJI)

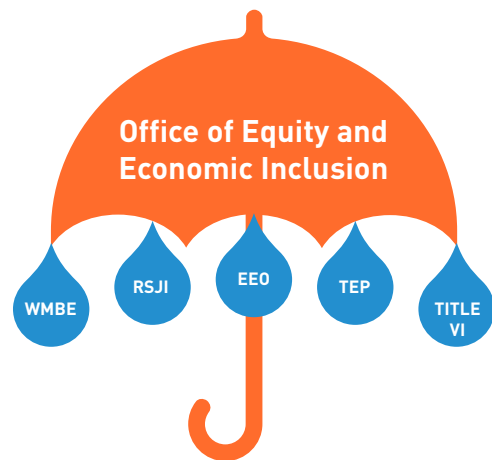
RSJI is the City's commitment to eliminate racial disparities and achieve racial equity in Seattle. Within SDOT, the RSJI mission is to end institutional racism, biases, and inequity in our transportation system, workforce, and intersections with institutionally racist systems.



The SDOT Race and Social Justice (RSJI) Change Team supports staff through guidance, training, and accountability to achieve SDOT's vision to eliminate institutional racism. SDOT RSJI Change Team includes four subgroups that focus on the following topics:

- **Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) Liaisons:** Support divisions in tracking RET progress and outcomes, and offer technical expertise to strengthen racial equity analyses.
- **Work Plan Liaisons:** Help SDOT division leaders identify, track, and report progress towards RSJI goals incorporated into the division's overall work plan.

- **Training:** Coordinates, tracks, and facilitates all SDOT staff trainings to meet the department's minimum of 2 hours RSJI courses annually. SDOT staff gain a level of understanding, comprehension and analysis to apply to their everyday work by taking RSJI courses.
- **Communications:** Highlight what the Change Team does, keeps RSJI top of mind in SDOT's work and recruit new staff to join Change Team.



### SDOT OFFICE OF EQUITY AND ECONOMIC INCLUSION (OEEI)

To further solidify our commitment to equity, SDOT has established the Office of Equity and Economic Inclusion (OEEI) within the department. OEEI is located in the Director's Office.

The Office of Equity and Economic Inclusion (OEEI) is responsible for leading the strategic vision and leadership in the planning, promotion and advancement of equity and diversity, and leads SDOT to measurable improvements. OEEI promotes and upholds equity at SDOT through internal advocacy and partnership with the



SDOT Change Team. OEEI encompasses several portfolios:

- **Women Minority Owned Business**

**Enterprises Program (WMBE):** The WMBE Program is a policy tool for increasing contracting equity within the City of Seattle. It is rooted in the Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative, Seattle Municipal Code 20.42, and Executive Orders 2010-05, 2014-03, 2019-06. The WMBE Program focuses particularly on women-owned and minority-owned businesses as those have been recognized as being significantly underrepresented within City contracts. The City's WMBE Program is implemented within each Department. The SDOT WMBE Program is implemented and managed

by the SDOT WMBE Advisor. The SDOT WMBE Program seeks to eliminate barriers through fostering support of WMBEs from within SDOT through internal advocacy, policies, and training, as well as externally through sharing resources and information with firms to facilitate outreach within the community.

- **Race and Social Justice initiative (RSJI):**

The Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) is the City's commitment to eliminate racial disparities and achieve racial equity in Seattle. The RSJI Advisor within OEEI works in coordination with the SDOT Change Team and serves as a subject matter expert to help the Change Team develop strategies for change.

- **Transportation Equity:** This program provides safe, environmentally sustainable, accessible, and affordable transportation options that support Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, low-income communities, immigrant and refugee communities, people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, LGBTQIA+ people, women and girls, youth, and seniors to thrive in place in vibrant and healthy communities, and to mitigate racial disparities and the effects of displacement.
- **Title VI:** The City of Seattle operates its programs, services, employment, contracting, or activities without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, sex, age, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, and applicable federal and local laws. Additionally, the City of Seattle prohibits discrimination in providing programs, services, or activities based on sexual orientation, gender identity, creed, religion, ancestry, political ideology, honorably discharged veteran or military status, participation in a Section 8 program, mother breastfeeding her child, and use of a service animal in public places, city employment, and contracting.
- **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO):** It is the policy of City of Seattle to provide a work environment free of prejudicial attitudes and actions is essential to the success of our agency. All employees are made aware of the intent and principles of City of Seattle's EEO Policy.

## EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS (ERG)

SDOT Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) strive to promote organizational and leadership development at all levels, build an internal support system for staff, and uphold diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. ERGs bring diverse cross-sections of SDOT together, spanning levels and units, to accomplish SDOT-

wide goals. ERGs have also been shown to enhance employee happiness, engagement, and the cultural climate within an organization.

The shared overall goal of SDOT's ERGs is to make SDOT an even better place to work. Through a joint effort, SDOT's POCA prompted and drafted content for the SDOT Director's official Black Lives Matter statement and will continue to be involved in prioritizing Black and Brown voices within the organization and for the City of Seattle.

SDOT ERGs include:

- **Black Employee Support Team (BEST)** - SDOT's Black Employee Support Team is a caucus that supports the development of SDOT's Workforce Equity agenda, particularly centering the perspectives of SDOT's Black employees.
- **RISE API** - RISE API stands for Rally for Inclusion, Solidarity, and Equity, Asian Pacific Islanders. SDOT's RISE API is a caucus that provides a safe space for SDOT's API employees to share experiences, learn new skills, promote the advancement of its members, and serve as a resource for their fellow coworkers. Activities include speaker seminars, sharing sessions, and social events.
- **Latinx** - SDOT's Latinx Caucus seeks to build community and connections across agencies and throughout the City and region, provide opportunities for professional development for members, and support the greater Latinx community including nonprofits, community-based organizations, and local businesses.
- **Anti-Racist White Allies** - SDOT's White Anti-Racist Allies is a caucus of SDOT employees who identify as white and work to dismantle racism through developing racial literacy skills, building resiliency and strategy, and having difficult conversations about whiteness and racism.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## **Transportation Equity Framework Development Team**

Annya Pintak, Transportation Equity Manager / Co-Chair of the TE-IDT, SDOT Office of Equity & Economic Inclusion

Radcliffe Dacanay, Principal Planner / Co-Chair of the TE-IDT, SDOT Policy & Planning

Cherry Cayabyab, KAYA strategik, LLC

SDOT Transportation Equity Workgroup members

SDOT Transportation Equity Intradepartmental Team (TE-IDT)

Michele Domingo, Manager, SDOT Office of Equity & Economic Inclusion

Kristen Simpson, TE Executive Sponsor, SDOT Chief of Staff

Naomi Doerner, Former SDOT Transportation Equity Manager

## **Transportation Equity Framework Contributors**

Belen Herrera, Nathalie Salazar, Margo Dawes, Jess Kim, Chisaki Muraki-Valdovinos, Allison Schwartz, Viviana Garza, Salma Siddick, Stephen Barham

## **Transportation Equity Framework Reviewers**

Michele Domingo, Barbie-Danielle DeCarlo, Tracy Krawczyk, Lizzie Moll, Dawn Schellenberg | SDOT

## **Special thanks to the following partners and stakeholders for their support throughout the Transportation Equity Framework development process**

Leslie Potts, Associate, KAYA strategik, LLC

Sokunthea Ok, Department of Neighborhoods (DON) Community Liaison

King County Metro

City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods

City of Seattle Office of Sustainability & Environment

City of Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development

SDOT is grateful and thankful to the Mayor's Office, SDOT Leadership, City Council, community leaders, as well City and partner agency staff, too many to be listed here individually, who supported the development of the Transportation Equity Framework.

The Seattle Department of Transportation  
700 5th Avenue, Suite 3800  
PO Box 34996  
Seattle, WA 98124-4996  
(206) 684-ROAD (7623)  
[www.seattle.gov/transportation](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation)



**Seattle**  
Department of  
Transportation

1.2021