



City of Seattle Tree Equity Planning

Initial Analysis of Priority Locations

March 2026



Seattle
Office of Sustainability
& Environment

Identifying Priority Locations

Tree canopy equity describes how fairly trees are distributed across the city. We looked at multiple factors to identify priority neighborhoods for growing our urban forest in partnership with Seattle communities.

Priority factors included:

- Tree [canopy cover](#) of 25% or less
- Highest and second highest equity priority locations identified in the City of Seattle [Race and Social Equity Index](#)
- High heat
- High air pollution

Racial and Social Equity Priority Areas

- Census block group
- Presented in quintiles
- Racial and Social Equity Index¹ of:

Race & Language Origins

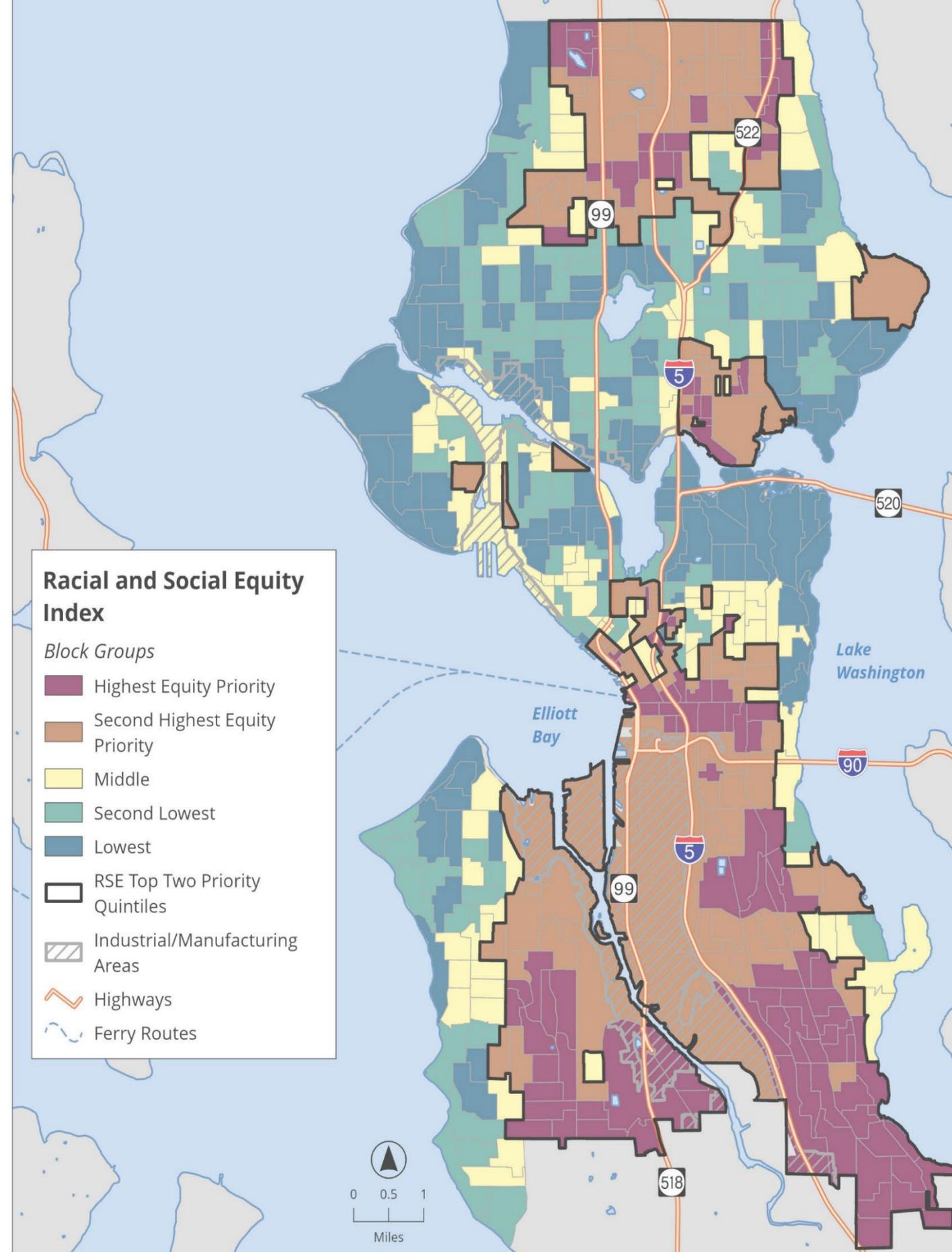
- Persons of color
- English language learners
- Foreign born

Socioeconomic Disadvantage

- Income below 200% poverty level
- Education less than bachelor's degree

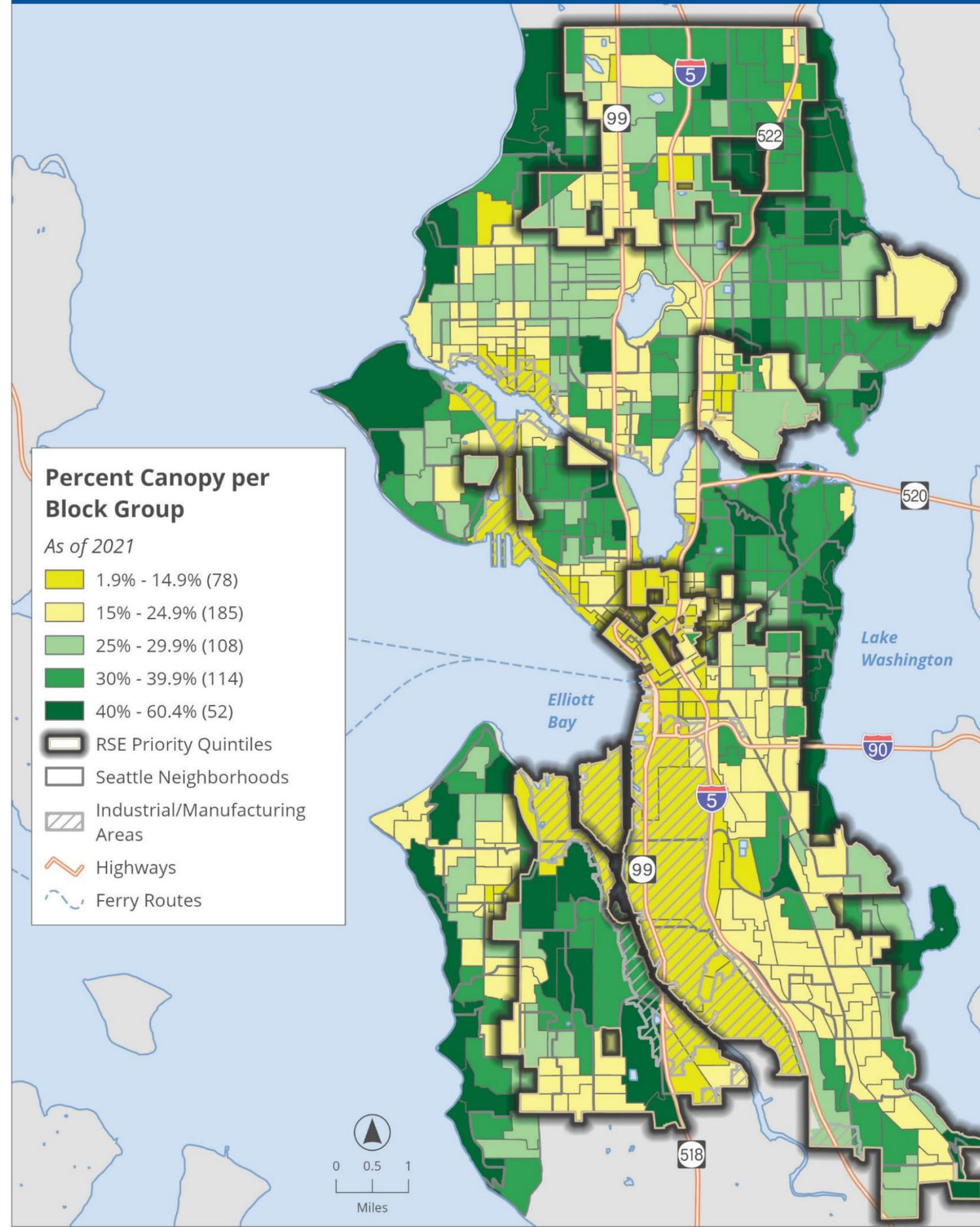
Health Disadvantage

- Low life expectancy
- No physical activity
- Poor mental health
- Poor physical health: diabetes, obesity, asthma
- Disability



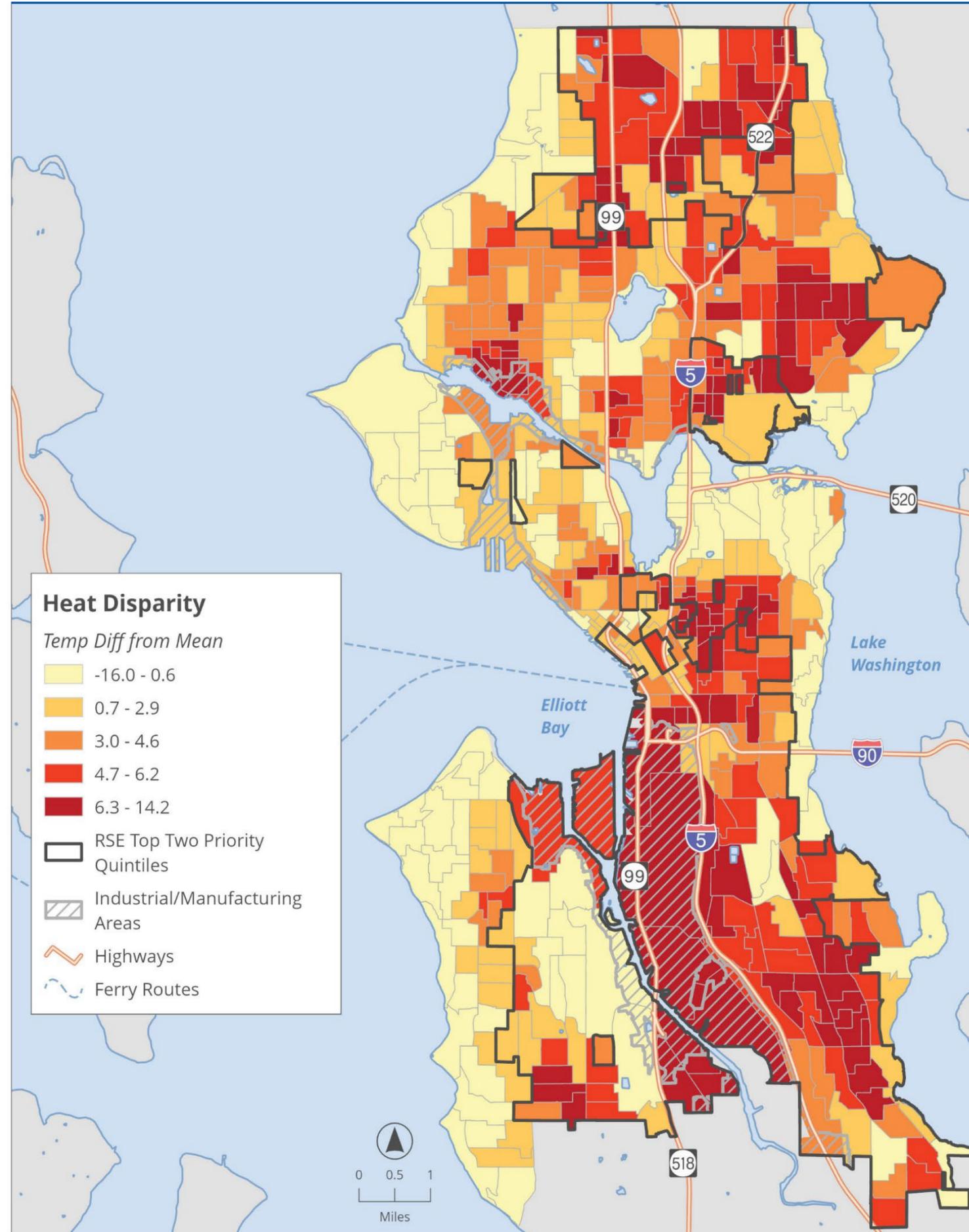
Percent Tree Canopy Coverage

- Census block group
- RSE priority quintiles outlined
- Industrial/Manufacturing areas hash-lined
- 2021 canopy cover data²



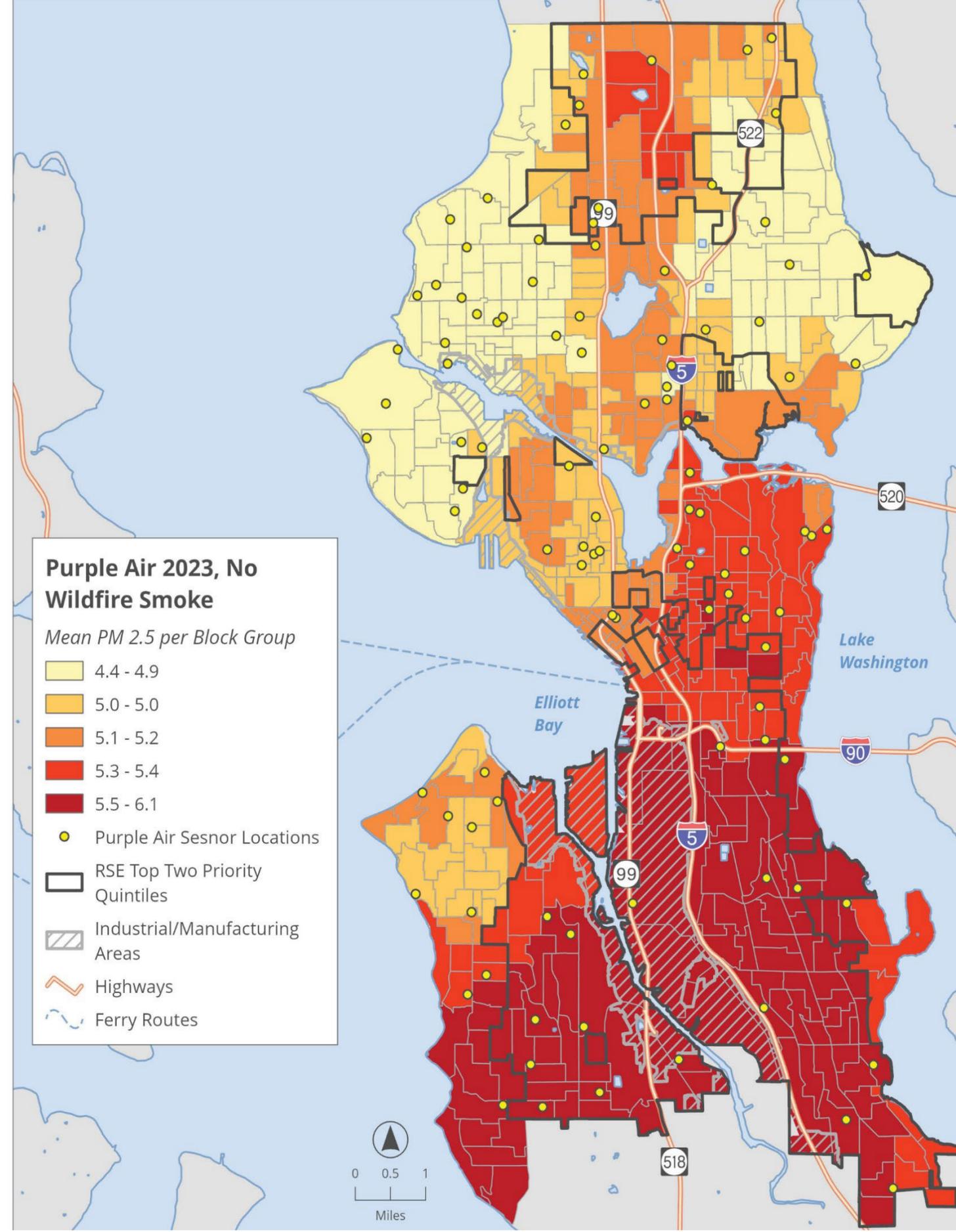
Surface Temperature

- Census block group
- Presented in quintiles, RSE priority quintiles outlined
- Industrial/Manufacturing areas hash lined
- Highest heat extremities from summer 2022 surface heat, difference from mean, retention in evening
- 30-meter resolution, Landsat satellite surface temp data³



Air Pollution

- Shows PM 2.5 (particulate matter (2.5 micrometers or smaller) in 2023
- Shown by block group, using a statistical method called Kriging
- RSE priority quintiles outlined
- Industrial/Manufacturing areas hash lined
- Puget Sound Clean Air Agency developed dataset⁴



Data Analysis Summary

All Criteria:

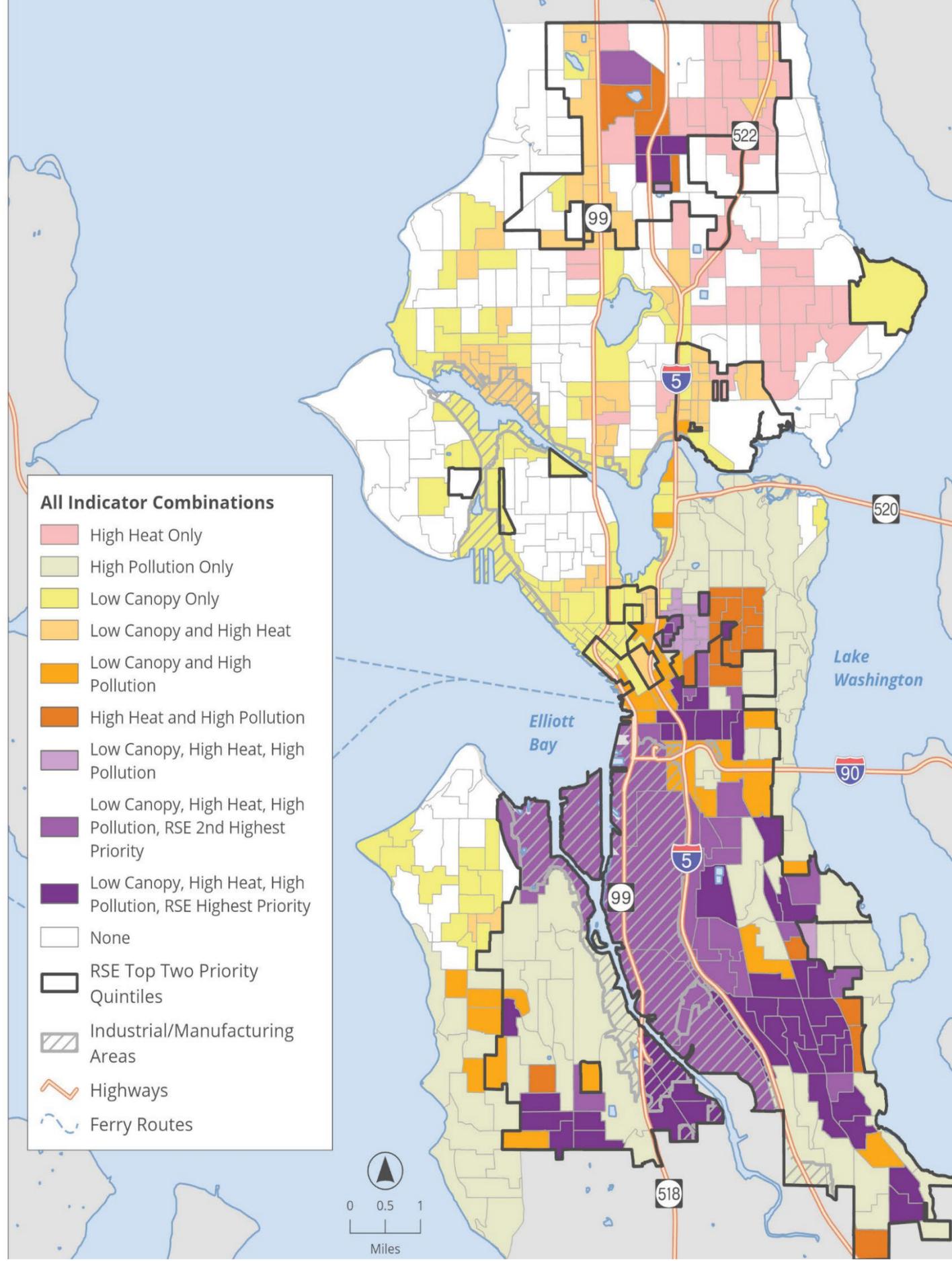
RSE Priority: highest quintiles

Tree Canopy: $\leq 25\%$ canopy cover, 2021

Heat Index: top two quintiles for heat retention in the evening, satellite imaging

Air Pollution: top two quintiles for PM 2.5

 All priorities and highest RSE quintile by block groups in purple

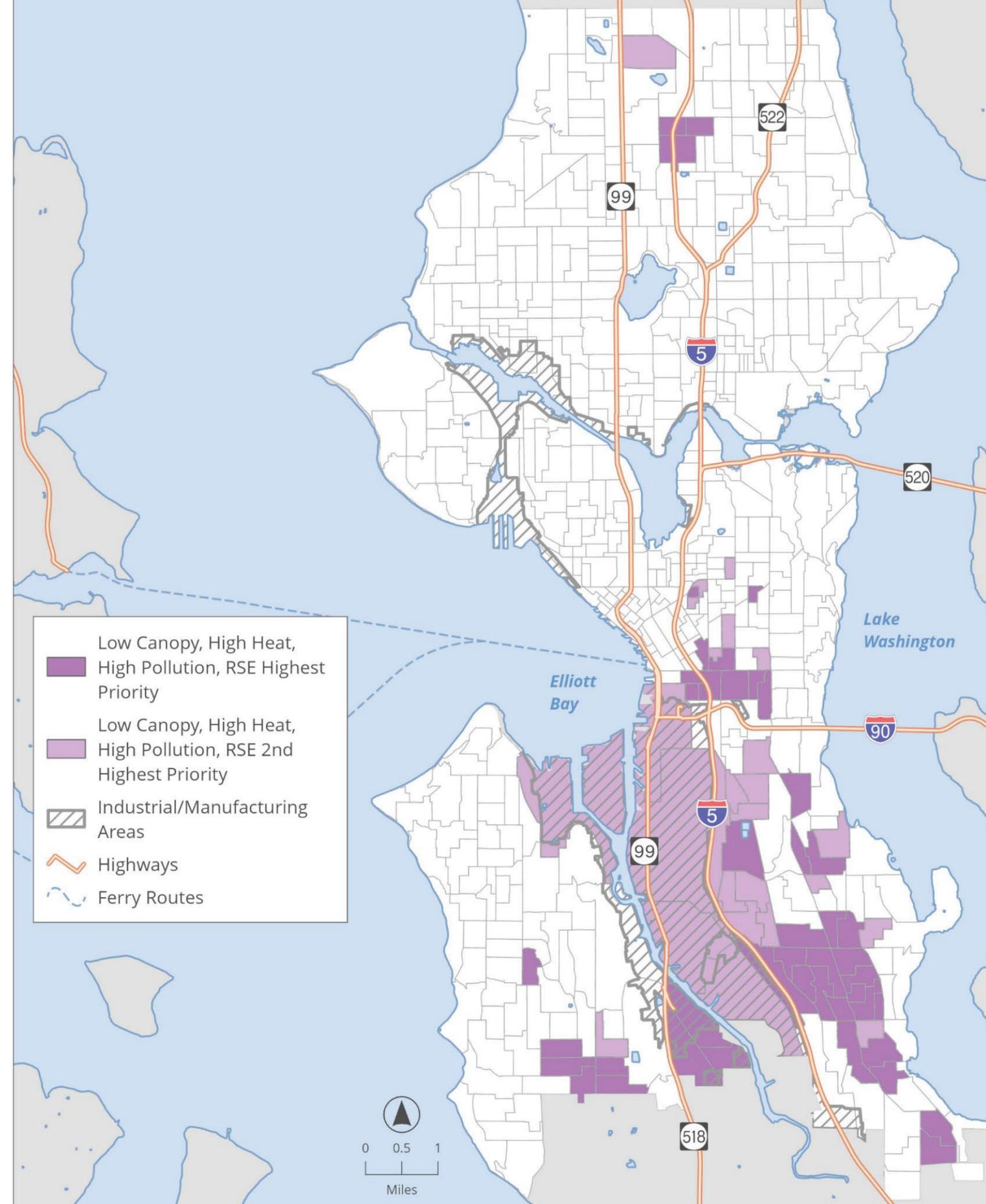


Priority Locations Identified

These locations register as the highest priority – block groups with all four indicators

The highest priority block groups are in seven geographies:

- Beacon Hill
- Central District
- Chinatown-International District
- Duwamish Valley
- Northgate/ Haller Lake
- Rainier Valley
- Roxhill/ Westwood



For All Maps

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Data Sources

1. City of Seattle, Racial and Social Equity Composite Index, Current, [Seattle GeoData](#). This index uses data from 2017-2021 Five-Year American Community Survey Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; 2020 Decennial Census, U.S. Census Bureau; estimates from the Centers for Disease Control' Behavioral Risk Factor, Surveillance System (BRFSS) published in the "The 500 Cities Project,"; Washington State Department of Health's Washington Tracking Network (WTN); and estimates from the Public Health – Seattle & King County (based on the Community Health Assessment Tool).
2. City of Seattle's Office of Sustainability and Environment and the University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Lab, [2021 Tree Canopy Assessment Report_FINAL_230227.pdf](#)
3. 30-meter resolution, Landsat satellite surface temp data. Block group average compared to the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue Metropolitan Statistical Area (Pierce, King, Snohomish Counties) average
4. Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, Data received June 2024, Purple Air Monitors, data representing 2023 season without wildfire smoke. Quality Control and calibration using [US EPA 2021 standards](#)