

# Racial Equity Toolkit Assessment Worksheet

**Title of policy, initiative, program, budget issue:** Reduce Parks Maintenance Level of Service

**Description:** Reduce Park Maintenance Level of Service (LOS) from 60% to 52% system wide. This may have RSJI equity implications and so Parks is intentional in trying to minimize and mitigate any adverse impacts.

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☐ Policy ☐ Initiative ☐ Program ☒ Budget Issue

## Background on this Budget Issue

This is an example of a completed Racial Equity Toolkit Assessment for a budget issue where the Parks department needed to make a budget reduction to Parks Maintenance Level of Service by eight percent. The racial equity analysis was applied although some parts of the process could not be completed due to the limitations of the budget process.

## Step 1. Set Outcomes.

**1a. What does your department define as the most important racially equitable community outcomes related to the issue?** (Response should be completed by department leadership in consultation with RSJI Executive Sponsor, Change Team Leads and Change Team. Resources on p.4)

As it relates to RSJI, we aim to provide maximum access and opportunities to people of color and immigrant and refugee populations to Parks programs, facilities, and services. This includes ensuring that adequate resources are fairly distributed in these communities.

**1b. Which racial equity opportunity area(s) will the issue primarily impact?**

☒ Education  
☒ Community Development  
☒ Health  
☒ Environment

☐ Criminal Justice  
☐ Jobs  
☐ Housing

**1c. Are there impacts on:**

☒ Contracting Equity  
☐ Workforce Equity

☒ Immigrant and Refugee Access to Services  
☒ Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement

Please describe:

## Step 2. Involve stakeholders. Analyze data.

**2a. Are there impacts on geographic areas?** ☒ Yes ☐ No

Check all neighborhoods that apply (see map on p.5):

☒ All Seattle neighborhoods  
☐ Ballard  
☐ North  
☐ NE  
☐ Central

☐ Lake Union  
☐ Southwest  
☐ Southeast  
☐ Delridge  
☐ Greater Duwamish

☐ East District  
☐ King County (outside Seattle)  
☐ Outside King County

Please describe:

## **2b. What are the racial demographics of those living in the area or impacted by the issue?**

*(See Stakeholder and Data Resources p. 5 and 6)*

Level of Service for maintenance is currently set to be equal across each park category as described in number 2. Parks analyzed the race distribution of census blocks within 500 ft of different park types and found that the racial diversity near parks is the same as the racial profile of the City. However there are some broad differences that have surfaced within the park types. For example, Seattle is 31% non-white, but the population that lives 500 ft from Downtown Parks (100% LOS) is 40% non-white. The population that lives with 500 ft of Regional Parks (60% LOS) is 22% non-white. Refer to Appendix 1 for our complete analysis that breaks down 'non-white' into different categories at the different funding levels. We did not analyze ethnicity. For a visual analysis of the minority percent per census block across the city, refer to Appendix 2. Appendix 3 overlays census tracts with percent population 2x the poverty level. Visually, there are more census blocks with a high percent of minority populations in the South and fewer Regional parks (60% LOS) as alternatives to lesser maintained Mini and Neighborhood parks. We expect the service to be equal across races but not necessarily equitable depending on the vulnerability of the population. Studies have connected race and ethnicity to choice of recreational activity albeit walking in the parks, basketball, tennis, and using and restoring natural areas and trails.

## **2c. How have you involved community members and stakeholders?** *(See p.5 for questions to ask community/staff at this point in the process to ensure their concerns and expertise are part of analysis.)*

No – currently, the budget process does not allow for outreach relating to potential service reductions. Additionally, the reductions are spread across the majority of the city and not just one geographical area.

## **2d. What does data and your conversations with stakeholders tell you about existing racial inequities that influence people's lives and should be taken into consideration?** *(See Data Resources on p.6.)*

NA

## **2e. What are the root causes or factors creating these racial inequities?**

*Examples: Bias in process; Lack of access or barriers; Lack of racially inclusive engagement*

NA

## **Step 3. Determine Benefit and/or Burden.**

Given what you have learned from data and from stakeholder involvement...

**3. How will the policy, initiative, program, or budget issue increase or decrease racial equity?** What are potential unintended consequences? What benefits may result? Are the impacts aligned with your department's community outcomes that were defined in Step 1.?

The 52% will be distributed among parks in the following way: Downtown Parks will be funded at 100%, Regional parks will be funded at 60% (same LOS as 2012), Community parks will be funded at 50%, Mini/Neighborhood/Greenways/Greenbelts with recreational built assets will be funded at 45%, and Mini/Neighborhood/Greenways/Greenbelts without recreational built assets will be funded at 35% based on industry standards. The objective of the policy framework is to promote Access, Opportunity and Sustainability. The most highly used parks with the greatest diversity and investment in built recreational asset infrastructure are preserved at current levels (eg. Regional Parks and Downtown), Mini and Neighborhood Parks without these assets receive the least maintenance and irrigation. We are making a tradeoff for recreational built assets versus landscape assets. Given significant cuts in 2011-12, there are no staffing changes proposed to our natural area crew, tree crew, trail crew or Green Seattle Partnership, however Park Resources support for these activities will likely decline.

## Step 4. Advance Opportunity or Minimize Harm.

**4. How will you address the impacts (including unintended consequences) on racial equity?** What strategies address immediate impacts? What strategies address root causes of inequity listed in Q.2e? How will you partner with stakeholders for long-term positive change? If impacts are not aligned with desired community outcomes, how will you re-align your work?

**Program Strategies?** There may be potential unintended consequences and we expect these impacts to happen on the local park-by-park level. To mitigate these impacts, Park Resources managers and crew chiefs will be trained and coached with the use of the RSJI Toolkit as it relates to distribution of resources.

**Policy Strategies?** Based on what the evaluation results show, we may need to revise and or create new policies on how we allocate maintenance resources citywide to address RSJI equity.

**Partnership Strategies?** Parks may need to work with leadership from the communities affected to help develop these policies.

## Step 5. Evaluate. Raise Racial Awareness. Be Accountable.

**5a. How will you evaluate and be accountable?** How will you evaluate and report impacts on racial equity overtime? What is your goal and timeline for eliminating racial inequity? How will you retain stakeholder participation? Ensure internal and public accountability? Raise awareness about racial equity?

Parks may need to work with leadership from the communities affected to help develop these policies.

**5b. What is unresolved?** What resources/partnerships do you still need to make changes?

We will need to wait until the analysis is completed to identify these issues.

## Step 6. Report Back.