Access to Low Poverty Neighborhoods

For question (1)(d)(i), refer to the Low Poverty Index in Table 12. The Low Poverty Index measures concentration of poverty by neighborhood. In effect, a higher value on this index indicates a higher likelihood that a family may live in a low poverty neighborhood. A lower value on the Index indicates that households in the protected group have a higher likelihood of living in a neighborhood with higher concentrations of poverty.

For question (1)(d)(ii) use Map 12, which shows residency patterns of racial/ethnic and national origin groups and families with children. The map also shows values for the Low Poverty Index with shading at the neighborhood (census tract) level. Darker shading (i.e. a higher value on the index) in a tract indicates a lower level of poverty. Lighter shading in a tract indicates a lower (worse) value on the Index and thus a higher concentration of poverty in that tract.

For question (1)(d)(iv), to the extent local policies and practices are discussed, local knowledge (as defined at 24 C.F.R. § 5.152) will be relevant.

**Access to Low Poverty Neighborhoods**

1. *For the protected class groups HUD has provided data, describe any disparities in access to low poverty neighborhoods in the jurisdiction and region.*

Non-Hispanic White and Asian households are more likely to live in low poverty neighborhoods than other racial or ethnic groups above or below the poverty line. Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Black households are least likely to live in low poverty neighborhoods in the jurisdiction or the region. Hispanic households are less likely to live in low poverty neighborhood in Portland than the region at large.

1. *For the protected class groups HUD has provided data, describe how disparities in access to low poverty neighborhoods relate to residential living patterns of those groups in the jurisdiction and region.*

Race Ethnicity

Most low poverty zones exist in west Portland and Central City, however most Hispanic and non-White households live at the northern and eastern peripheries of the Portland jurisdiction. Of the low poverty pockets that exist in the north and northeast, all are comprised 80% or more of non-Hispanic White households—with most of these pockets holding around 88% non-Hispanic White households.

 The R/ECAP zone just to the east of the jurisdiction is consensus tracts that are 48.42% and 45.69% non-Hispanic White. These tracts are relatively high poverty zones with LPI of 20.1-30.

National Status

The top international nations of origin for Portland households are Mexico, Vietnam, China, Ukraine, and Canada. Households with Mexican origin are most represented in the far north and outer east edges of the jurisdiction. Vietnamese households are represented across the east of Portland, Chinese households smattered lightly throughout the central city and throughout the east. Households from Ukraine are gathered in the far east of the jurisdiction and Canadian households are found throughout Portland. The R/ECAP zone shows now significant population of households with international origin.

Family Status

While families with children seem ubiquitous and evenly spread throughout the jurisdiction—Central City has markedly lower rates of such families.

 The R/ECAP zone is comprised about 56% of families with children and is a comparatively high poverty area to Central City.

1. *Informed by community participation, any consultation with other relevant government agencies, and the participant’s own local data and local knowledge, discuss whether there are programs, policies, or funding mechanisms that affect disparities in access to low poverty neighborhoods.*

Problem & Scope

Households of international origin and non-White households are underrepresented in census tracts such as Central City, north east, and central south east where poverty levels are the lowest. However, these households are highly represented along the north and east edges of the jurisdiction where poverty levels are higher. The east of the jurisdiction has the highest level of poverty.

What is the barrier

Central City, north east, and central south east—the areas in the jurisdiction with the lowest levels of poverty—have the jurisdictions most expensive neighborhoods. According to the State of Housing in Portland Report for 2016 the income of non-White households is lagging behind their White counterpoint’s income. The neighborhoods in which the average non-White households can afford are on the jurisdiction’s periphery.

Another layer of this problem is the gentrification and driving up of costs in areas previously more affordable to households of color. North east Portland is a good example. In previous decades the area had a high concentration of Black households (upwards of 50% of the total population), today the percentage of the area’s population that are Black households is in the single digits. North east Portland has become an incredibly desirable area to live and costs of development, housing, and accompanying amenities such as grocery stores have increased to accommodate the influx of higher income White households. This has pushed Black households further to the north and east of the jurisdiction.

The City’s Housing Bureau has an established N/NE Housing Strategy that channels funding into income restricted rental and homeownership housing opportunities based on extensive community feedback and a study of the area that included disaggregated demographic data and trends, historic City-funded projects, and an analysis of the disparate impact of those city projects.

Census maps make clear the need for more services and programming in the east—but this need has not yet been adequately met. Community outreach and study should be pursued to better understand the obstacles and needs of the households residing in the east and program dollars should be collected to attain results.

In attempting to meet the need of disparately impacted populations one quickly understands that the wealth disparities seen in the average racial minority and ethnic minority households is largely due to historically inequitable policies at all levels of government (redlining, racially discriminatory lending, housing harassment & discrimination, disparate targeting of minority neighborhoods for eminent domain projects etc.). The inability to directly target disparately impacted populations and the expectation that a government entity be successful rectifying historically rooted issues is hard to balance. While the historic and current need for Fair Housing laws is clear, more federal consideration should be taken of how governments can best achieve equitable outcomes for disparately impacted households under these laws.

Steps to alleviating the barrier

Currently the Housing Bureau implements the following programming to aid the integration of populations of color into low poverty areas of the jurisdiction:

* Inclusionary Housing. This city-wide program requires the developers of rental housing of 20 units or more to designate a portion of the units as income restricted to households making 60-80% AMI thus making buildings mixed income.
* N/NE Housing strategy as noted above
* Affordable Housing Bond. Bond funds will be allocated to building 1,300 a portion of which will be family sized, restricted at 0-30%AMI, go to communities of color, homeless or imminently homeless, displaced, and families with children households.