

Lower Southeast Rising Area Plan – Racial Equity Summary – August 2021

Introduction

Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS), Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff held three focused and facilitated racial equity planning project start up meetings from January through March 2021. This meeting series focused on a community and City policy scan, initial research on historical and current racial disparities, reviewing a list of draft equity goals, identifying benefits and burdens, identifying potential strategies to eliminate burdens and enhance racial benefits, and discuss depth of community engagement, key stakeholders, and engagement strategies.

In May 2021, the racial equity questions were shared, and feedback was provided from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). In June 2021, the same racial equity questions were shared, and feedback was provided externally with the 18-member Project Advisory Committee (PAC). Committee comments are shown in *italics* throughout this summary.

Racial equity goals and their implications for the project

- **Increase commercial opportunities and neighborhood-serving businesses.** To incorporate equity into this analysis, this project should consider whose commercial needs are being least served, as well as their relative ability to have their needs met elsewhere.
- **Increase housing affordability and choices.** *To work towards ending houselessness and housing insecurity, this project will consider how to increase affordable housing, location of housing near services, increasing housing types, and first-time homeownership opportunities, as well as localized support for houseless individuals.*
- **Expand active and green transportation access.** To ensure that everyone, especially renters, low-income people, and BIPOC communities, can use an improved transportation network to access future jobs, education, and services, as well as reduce heat islands and improve air quality.
- **Improve public amenities in deficient areas accompanied with anti-displacement strategies.** To consult with the community and in coordination with the concurrent Anti-Displacement Action Plan on how best to incorporate anti-displacement and equitable community development work *with emphasis on BIPOC home, property, business ownership and wealth opportunities.*
- **Welcome collaboration for policy, technical expertise, and funding.** This project exists due to community advocacy and partnership in the grant application. Continued collaboration is essential so that project recommendations are both equitable, community-focused, and actualized.

If and how different communities of color may be impacted by a project

The Lower Southeast Rising Area Plan is scoped to consider land use and zoning code, transportation improvements and other public actions that may have significant impacts that directly and indirectly benefit and burden different stakeholders and communities. These include:

- Changes in the zoning code and/or map that may provide benefit to some parties or potentially create burdens for others, depending on the outcomes. This may include additional development requirements that have variable benefits and burdens.
- Transportation improvements that may directly benefit some communities while burdening others. This may include costs and benefits associated with different transportation modes and costs of infrastructure.
- Other public actions or improvements that may result in variable effects.

Strategies to engage impacted communities in decision-making

- Present to community groups, sharing information about the project
- Hold PAC Kick-off meeting and subsequent six to seven meetings
- *Mailers to all residents*
- Canvas priority areas to get feedback from residents
- Table at community events
- Work with neighborhoods to organize bike/walk tours
- Interview key equity community representatives to learn about existing issues and get input on priorities and outcomes with Latino Network as a potential partner
- Interactive online map survey, kick-off online survey, home-based business survey, etc.
- Fund community partners to help get survey responses and/or provide participation incentives
- Open houses and workshops (e.g., transit-focused workshop)
- Hold workshop/focus group with key equity community representatives to get focused feedback on alternatives with Latino Network as a potential partner
- Reengage with stakeholders previously interviewed to share how comments are being incorporated
- Meet as needed with stakeholders previously engaged to discuss the recommendations, next steps and answer outstanding questions

Potential benefits and burdens

	Air Quality, Climate, Health and Safety	Economic Opportunity and Wealth Creation	Affordability and Housing	Transportation Access
Benefits	Add green infrastructures (e.g., trees, streams) will reduce urban heat island effect,	Increased access to resources of health, wealth, and education	New housing opportunities (if providing new opportunities for housing options like	Lower traffic related injury and death

	Air Quality, Climate, Health and Safety	Economic Opportunity and Wealth Creation	Affordability and Housing	Transportation Access
	<p>improve air quality for residents</p> <p><i>Increased interest in small-scale community projects to contribute to better green spaces and safer streets</i></p>	<p>Business opportunities (if also include business development supports)</p> <p>With more housing and affordable housing near transit there is a time and money gain (reduced household costs)</p> <p>Could potentially provide construction jobs through MWESB contracting</p> <p><i>Increased home, property, and business ownership for BIPOC individuals</i></p> <p><i>Increased support for home-based employment/telecommuting (20-minute neighborhood)</i></p>	<p>apartments with inclusionary housing incentives)</p> <p><i>Expansion of anti-displacement programs</i></p> <p><i>Implement alternative living and housing concepts (e.g., multi-generational houses, shared houses for singles, cottage clusters, etc.)</i></p>	<p>Better connections between neighborhoods</p> <p>Increased access to services, transportation networks, and basic level of service</p> <p>Increased opportunity for recreation and physical activity (walking, biking, accessing parks, etc.)</p> <p><i>Develop more efficient transportation connections to work centers and express bus routes</i></p> <p><i>Develop pedestrian-friendly walking network (green/shady paths, decreased traffic, joyful sidewalks)</i></p>
Burdens	<p>Improved natural systems, in particular increased tree canopy, will increase property values and lead to displacement</p> <p><i>Potential loss of green space on private property with increased development</i></p>	<p>Displacement of smaller BIPOC owned businesses through increased commercial rent, etc.</p>	<p>Expedited gentrification</p> <p>Direct and exclusionary displacement</p> <p>Possibility of increased rents and home prices</p> <p>Land/property speculation</p>	<p>Loss of parking (if new street design does not include)</p> <p>Construction impacts (short-term)</p> <p><i>Changed daily routines can be problematic for the elderly and people with certain disabilities</i></p>

Other potential benefits and burdens brainstormed:

Benefits

- Elevating the awareness and concerns of this area to the City leadership and management
- Two bureaus (BPS and PBOT) working together and towards a more holistic approach
- Increased sense of neighborhood pride, belonging, and ownership
- Neighbor cohesion
- Stronger connections to the city
- *Potential for integrative urban culture*

Burdens

- Nature of this project being partially funded by the Transportation Growth Management (TGM) Program and the related constraints in timeline/scope and specific to this project COVID pandemic
- Equity issues are bigger than what can be supported in an area plan and concern about expectations
- Interactions with imperfect, harmful government systems/staff/processes (current and historic)
- Changes go beyond what some are comfortable with through this planning effort
- Potential loss of cultural assets
- Tokenization
- *Accepting change of ingrained lifestyle and value systems*
- *Frustrations with systemic oppression pattern (e.g., finances, knowledge of system and its changes, inherited cultural and social biases, acknowledgement of lived experience)*

Strategies to reduce harm and advance racial equity

- Transportation improvements will focus on “basic infrastructure” levels that address safety and not at a “main street” or placemaking level at this time.
- Where appropriate, allow for more temporal approach to BPS tools of “up zoning.” For example, consider comp plan map changes separate from zoning map changes.
- Context sensitive approaches to transportation, land use and other public action decisions.
- Consider community benefits

Additional notes from and needs for BPS leadership

To be discussed with BPS leadership.