



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Get Moving 2020 – Racial Equity Analysis Summary

Introduction:

In December 2018, the Metro Council adopted a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update, following years of engagement that included more than 19,000 engagements with residents, community and business leaders, and regional partners. Through the extensive engagement that shaped the plan, Metro heard clear desires for safe, smart, reliable and affordable transportation options for everyone and every type of trip. The 2018 RTP is built on key values of equity, climate, safety, and congestion relief.

During work sessions in January 2019, Metro Council provided guidance on key outcomes, principles and the structure of a potential investment measure to help advance these values. Metro Council also approved convening of a diverse and regionally inclusive Regional Transportation Funding Task Force. The Task Force reviewed Metro Council direction and policy regarding the measure; identified additional desired outcomes; provided input to Council on priority corridors and region wide programs; and made recommendations for corridor investments. Further input was provided by county specific local investment teams and several community engagement opportunities.

Equity has been a core value in the development of the measure and this analysis provides a foundational step to ensuring equity goals are prioritized and that we are addressing a long history of disinvestment of our regional transportation system.

Background:

The Racial Equity Analysis builds on Metro's overall commitment to advancing racial equity as identified in the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (SPAREDI). More specifically the transportation funding measure creates an opportunity to advance the following goals:

- Goal A: Metro convenes and supports regional partners to advance racial equity
- Goal B: Metro meaningfully engages communities of color
- Goal D: Metro creates safe and welcoming services programs and destinations
- Goal E: Metro's resource allocation advances racial equity

Further, the transportation funding measure is a core strategy in implementing the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the findings of the Transportation Equity Analysis conducted in the Plan, which identified the need to prioritize transportation investments in marginalized and under-invested communities. The 2018 RTP Equity Analysis identified equity focus areas which are areas with high concentrations of people of color, people with limited English proficiency, and people in poverty and assessed how a long-term investment strategy would perform at increasing access, safety, and affordability for marginalized and under-invested communities at a board scale. Based on a geographical representation of corridors in the region 79% of the proposed projects are located in equity focus areas. This analysis aims to expand on our understanding of what the impact of these investments will be on marginalized communities, with a focus on Black, Indigenous, and communities of color.

Finally, the selection of the projects included in the measure was guided by the Transportation Task Force. The Task force identified a set of core values that guided their work. The analysis is also a response to some of the values and outcomes, including:

- Improving safety
- Prioritizing investments that support communities of color
- Making it easier to get around
- Supporting economic growth
- Increasing access to opportunity for low-income Oregonians
- Supporting clean air, clean water, and healthy ecosystems

Methodology:

This analysis was designed to explore how communities of color could benefit from the projects included in the transportation funding measure. This analysis identifies potential benefits and will be followed by the development of an accountability framework that includes mechanisms for achieving racial equity outcomes.

Data for the analysis was drawn from the **U.S. Census 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates¹** with an emphasis on Equity Focus Areas (EFA), which are areas with high concentrations of people of color, people with limited English proficiency and people living in poverty. For the purpose of the analysis, **People of Color Equity Focus Areas (POC EFA)** is the defining study area. There are limitations with using this data source including the inability to reflect the lived experiences of communities of color. We also acknowledge that future data collected by the U.S. Census will further refine conditions in the analysis.

Key Findings

The analysis identified three key findings that indicate measure investments would work to advance Metro's racial equity goals:

- 1. Project investments are strongly weighted toward areas where people of color live.**
 - **One quarter of the region's census tracts have both a high concentration of people of color and are located within the investment area**, which is defined as census tracts within ¼ of a mile from an investment corridor. **56% (935,200)** of the region's total population live within the investment area, while **63% (302,400)** of the region's people of color live in the investment area.
 - For the purpose of this analysis, **equitable investment is defined as levels investment of 25% or higher** in areas of the region where high concentrations of people of color live in order to address under-investment and dis-investment in communities of color.
- 2. More than half (59%) of the total corridor investments are located in areas of the region where high concentrations of people of color live.**
- 3. Safety investments are strongly weighted toward areas where people of color live.**
 - **50-60% of the measure's safety investments** are located within POC EFAs, which make up one-quarter of the region's census tracts. Investments include new sidewalk, safe marked crossings, new street lights and improved bikeway infrastructure.

¹U.S. Census 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/data-profiles/2017/>

- **More than three quarters of estimated crash reductions are located in POC EFAs over 20 years.**²
- 4. Investments in Transit Access are strongly weighted toward areas where people of color live.**
- 80% of Transit Signal Priority additions and 55% of new bus lanes are located in POC EFAs, which will improve the speed and efficiency of the transit system in these areas.
 - According to TriMet ridership surveys, 42% of the riders on the lines impacted by the measure are people of color, which is above the system average of 36%.

In summary, project investments proposed in the measure demonstrate intentional investment in areas where people of color live. The corridor level analysis provides further insight into specific investment indicators within each corridor that reflect advancement of racial equity goals. Together, this work suggests that communities of color stand to benefit from these investments – but Metro and our partners must be diligent to make these potential benefits a reality for communities of color, while minimizing harm and displacement.

Staff also conducted community engagement through virtual workshops to gather insight on community benefits and racial equity outcomes. The **Community Recommendations for Racial Equity Outcomes and Strategies** document summarizes input from community partners while incorporating best practices from the Parks and Natural Areas Bond and Regional Housing Bond. These recommendations will support Metro in identifying specific equity outcomes and strategies to realize potential benefits while minimizing harm to communities of color.

² Based on an analysis of safety performance of identified corridors and Highway Safety Manual principles, using documented Crash Reduction Factors also used by FHWA, ODOT and City of Portland.