

Integrating Equity Into Transportation Decision-Making

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Topics we'll cover:

- Working definitions of equity
- Equity in policy plans
- Process and outcomes equity
- Existing data resources
- Using questions to start this work

Defining equity*

... at least for today's conversation

- Equity is **behaviors, actions, concepts, beliefs, and policies** that result in full human rights for those furthest from justice.
- We will achieve equity when aspects of a person's **identity or group membership** – such as race, ethnicity, income, age, ability, gender, and language – **no longer predict their life's outcomes.**

Equity work is:

Tangible

Meaningful

Manageable

Why should governments embed equity into plans, policies, programs, and investments?

- Our status quo is not neutral –a history of unjust and racist policies shaped how we allocate benefits and harms today
- The way government works shows what our values really are
- By doing equity work, we can serve the whole public
- Our communities are becoming more aware and sophisticated – and they expect government to do the same
- Title VI and Environmental Justice regulations require that we address inequities

Lead with statewide policy plans

- Raise the visibility of equity work as transportation work
- Recommend an equity lens – who should this work center?
- Use data to set a baseline for measuring progress
- Establish goals and desired outcomes
- Propose policy, strategies, and implementing actions
- Provide guidance for government partners still starting their own equity work

Aspects of equity that public agencies can address

Planning, policy, projects, programs, and services

Process: How do marginalized communities meaningfully participate in our decision-making?

Outcomes: Are our practices and investments moving our communities towards equity?

Operations

Workforce: Do our employees in all jobs and at all levels match the demographics of the places we serve?

Contracting: Do marginalized people benefit fairly from public contracts?

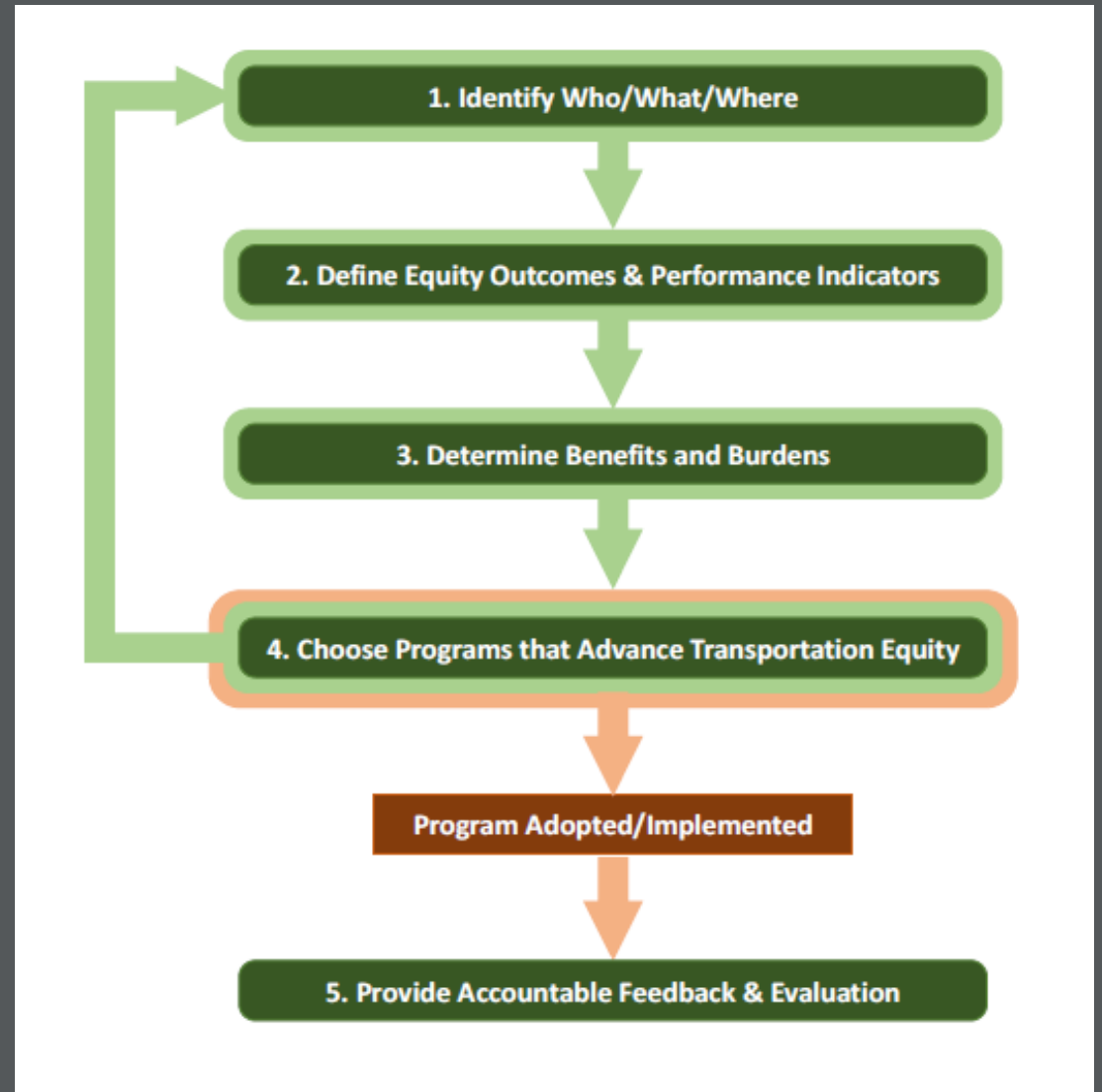
Process: Can marginalized communities participate in our decisions?

- Meaningfully
- Safely
- Comfortably
- Conveniently
- In all stages
- With historical inequities being discussed and addressed

Outcomes: Are we structuring our practices and investments to move towards equity?

- Create well-defined equity goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, and time-bound
- Evaluate how alternatives perform against those goals
- Commit to choosing and funding options that advance equity
- Develop and fund programs for monitoring, evaluation, and course-correction

There are many ways to pursue process and outcomes equity, and great resources to help chart the course.



From TransForm's *Pricing Roads, Advancing Equity* (2019) <https://www.transformca.org/>

Discussion:

- What questions do you have about process equity?
- What questions do you have about outcomes equity?
- Where might this work fit into the 2022 WTP update or other WSTC efforts?
- What challenges could you see arising as the WSTC works toward equity?



Data can tell us where we're starting from, help us decide where we want to go, and let us track our progress.



Transportation is interconnected with:

- Land use
- Housing
- Economics
- Health
- Environment
- Disaster preparedness

... so let's use data to understand the links

Census data

- It's not perfect, but it's a good place to start
- Most useful for equity analyses at the block group level
- Major universities may have post-processed and adjusted data sets and mapping tools that they're willing to share
- Demographic information, but also housing, jobs, transportation, etc.

Land use and housing

- Census data can shed light on affordability, median housing value, renter vs owner occupancy, household size
- Property value data (typically kept by counties) can be used to understand gentrification and displacement trends
- Combining data sources for housing and jobs can reveal where there is a housing/jobs imbalance – increasing travel times and distances

Employment

- State employment data like number and location of jobs, industry, and wage can help illuminate worker needs and travel pattern
- Longitudinal Employer Household Data (LEHD) can identify patterns of transportation cost-burdened households

Education

- Percentage of students receiving free and reduced-price school lunch is an indicator of poverty
- High school graduation rates are linked to access to reliable transportation
- Percentage of students who take the bus can reveal first/last mile needs

Public health

- Asthma rates can be a useful proxy for exposure to poor air quality and for locating vulnerable populations
- Obesity rates can point to needs for active transportation and access to recreation
- Exposure to environmental hazards, natural disasters, and extreme heat all have health consequences

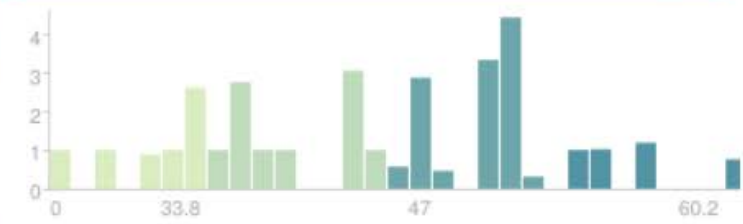
olympia wa

Municipality: Olympia, WA

H+T Costs % Income: 45%

Housing: 25% Transportation: 20%

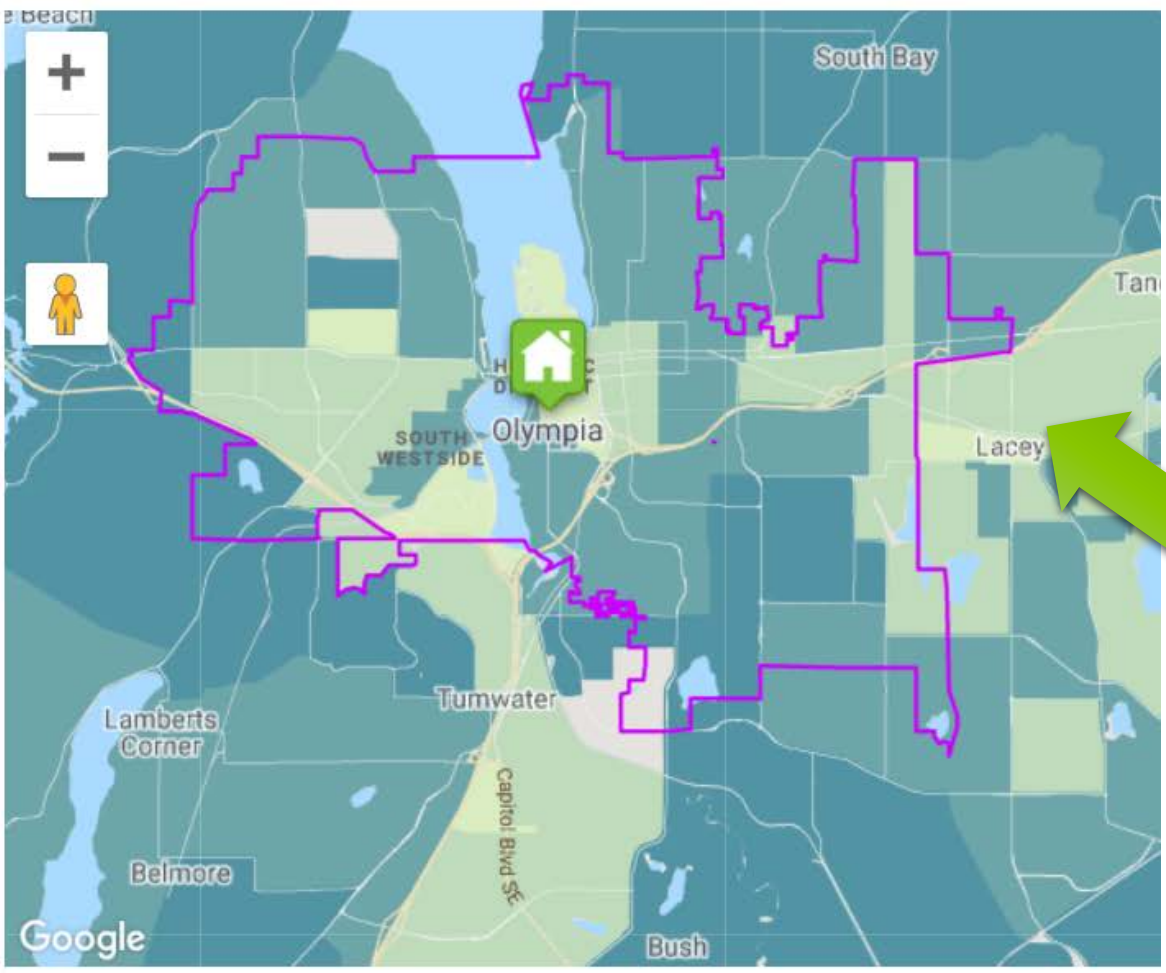
Housing + Transportation Costs % Income



Housing + Transportation Costs % Income
Average: 45% Range: 30 - 65

Population	Household	Neighborhood
< 24%	Population: 0	% of Population: 0%
24 - 36%	Population: 4,381	% of Population: 9.2%
36 - 45%	Population: 12,924	% of Population: 27.1%
45 - 54%	Population: 22,566	% of Population: 47.3%
54 - 66%	Population: 7,850	% of Population: 16.4%
66 - 78%	Population: 0	% of Population: 0%
78 - 87%	Population: 0	% of Population: 0%
87% +	Population: 0	% of Population: 0%
Total	Population: 47,721	% of Population: 100%

Household: Regional Typical Regional Moderate National Typical
Income: \$61,677 Commuters: 1.10 workers Household Size: 2.52 people



Look for integrated tools that reveal these linkages.

Center for Neighborhood Technology: H+T Affordability Index

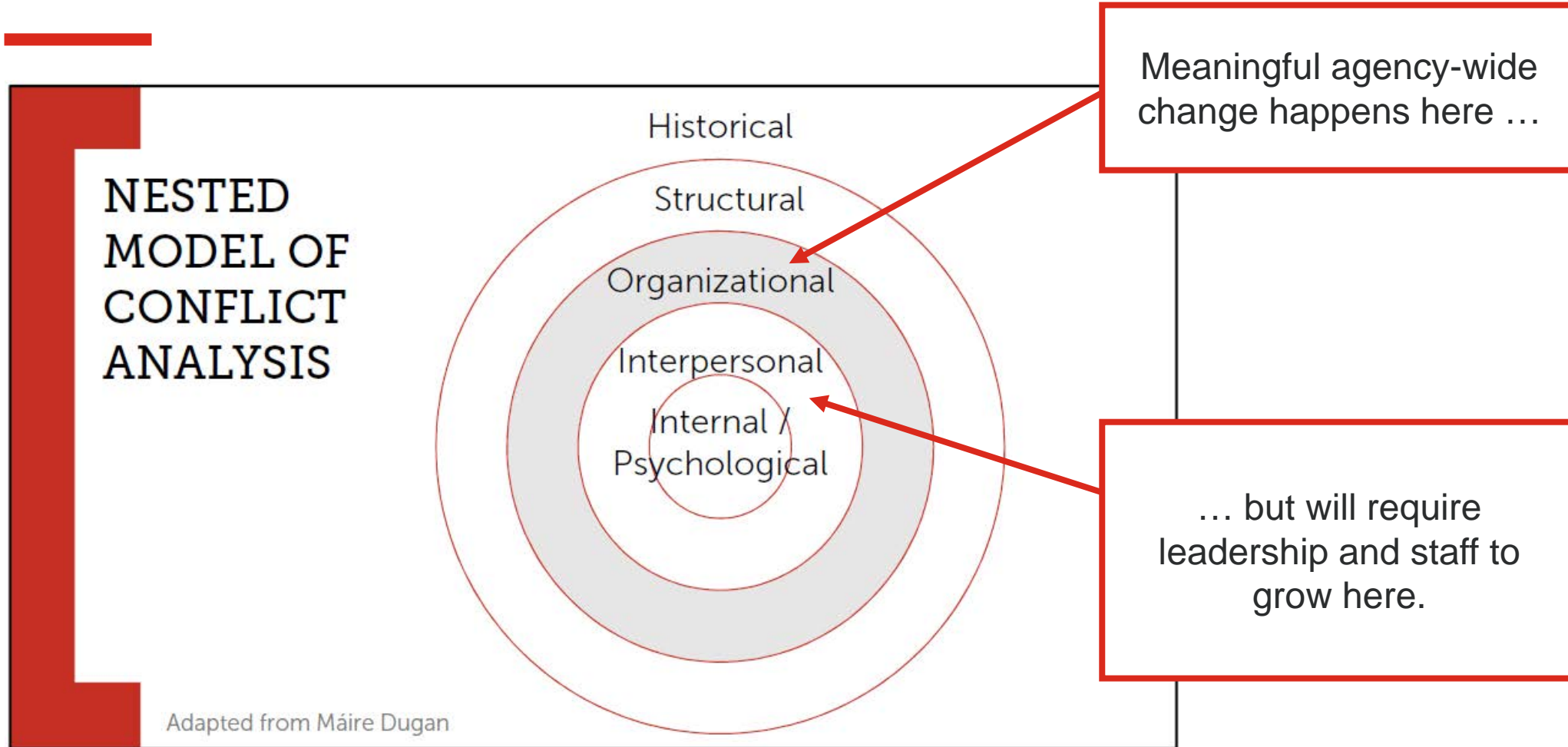
<https://htaindex.cnt.org/>

Discussion:

- What transportation linkages might inform how the WSTC assesses and works towards equity?
- What data sources interest you?
- What state and local government partners might be able to offer data and analysis assistance?



Preparing for institutional equity work



Good first steps

- Hire a firm led by BIPOC* folks to help leadership and staff build equity competence
- Gather an internal equity brain trust and provide support for them
- Hold peer exchanges with local, regional, and state agencies who are farther along in their work
- Read policy papers from GARE*, transportation equity/justice NGOs, and advocacy groups – and then talk to them!

Discussion:

- What next steps interest you?
- What actions would you like staff to explore?





Thank you

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