

An Equity-Centered Approach to Transportation Projects

Nicole McDermott, AICP (Moderator)

Garet Prior, AICP (Panelist)

Rebecca Steiner (Panelist)

Johnell Bell (Panelist)

Jake Warr (Panelist)



Oregon Toll Program





Importance of I-5 and I-205 to Oregon



Urban Mobility Strategy Map






Currently Funded by HB2017

-  System Improvement Project
-  Bike/Ped Crossing Project

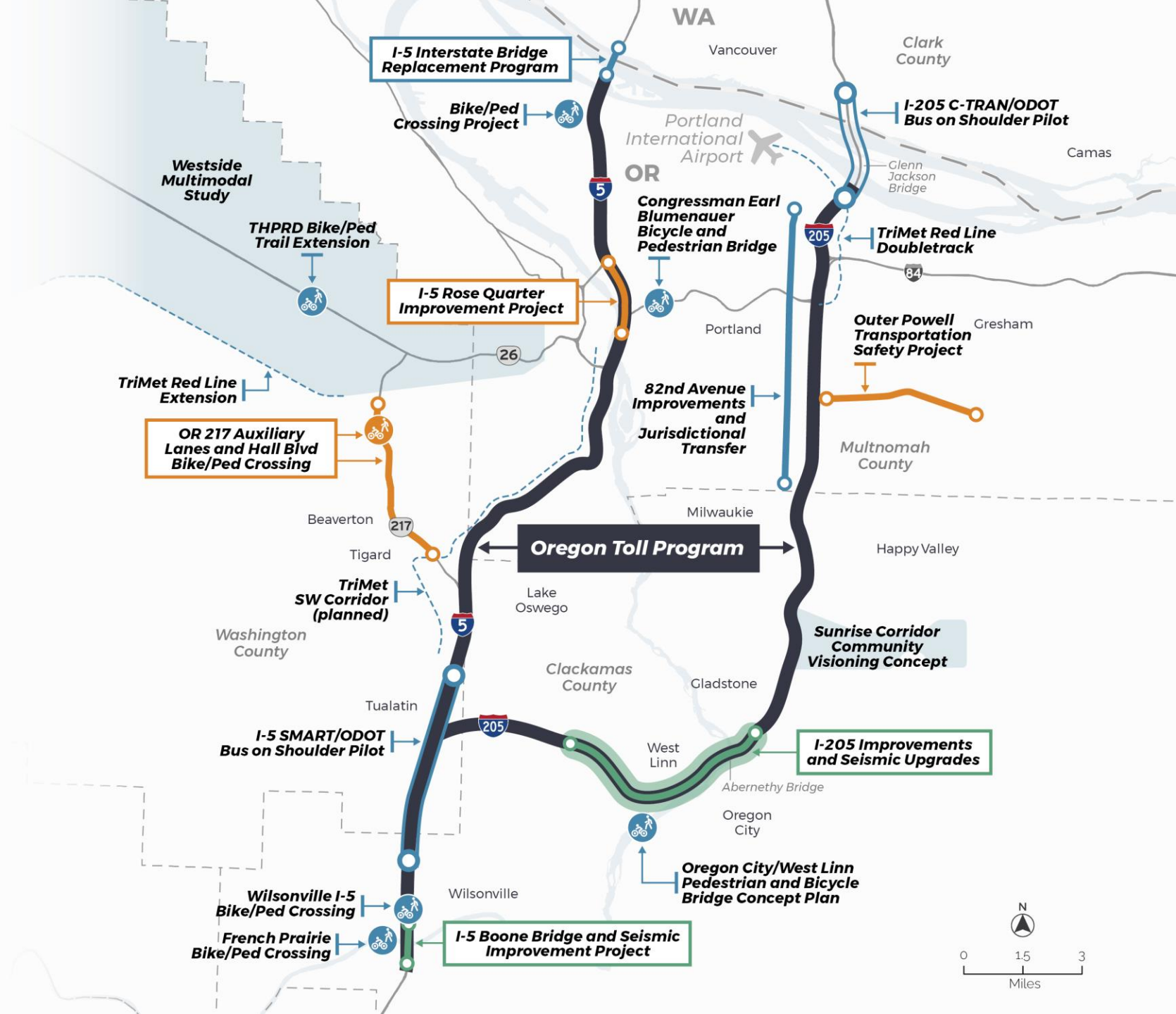
Made Possible with HB3055

-  System Improvement Project
-  Regional Mobility Pricing Project
-  I-205 Toll Project

Partner Project with ODOT Support

-  System Improvement Project
-  Bike/Ped Crossing Project
-  Bus on Shoulder Pilot
-  TriMet Project
-  Multimodal/Community Study

Note: Core project names are boxed





All lanes, all electronic, no stopping



Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee & Oregon Transportation Commission



- Neighborhood health and safety
- Low-income
- Transit and multimodal

Trauma-Informed Perspective



Recognize Signs of Community Trauma

Community members feel blamed rather than partners in creating positive change

Meeting daily needs outweighs planning for future

Disempowerment and lack of community ownership

Economic, educational, and employment uncertainty and instability

Health disparities

Long-term stress and negative mind and body impacts create doubt about future

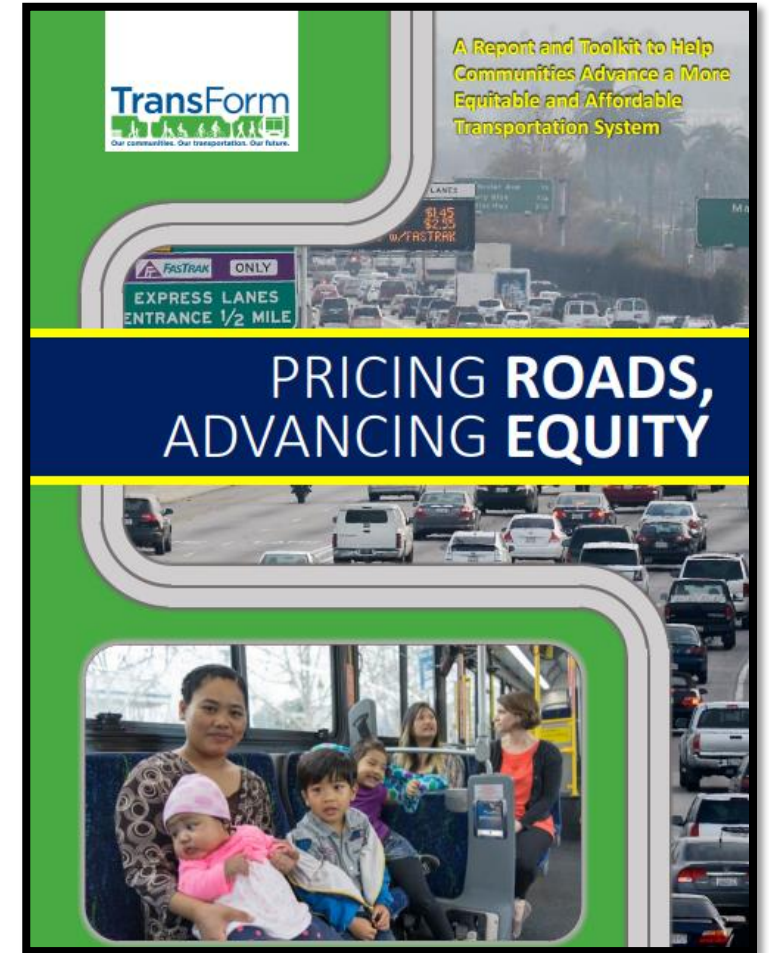
Reduction of material wealth and feeling of value

Loss of sense of place or community

Distrust, disconnection, and apathy

Historical community disinvestment

Oregon Toll Program: Equity Framework

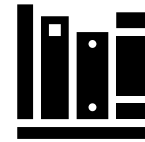


Technical NEPA Analysis

Equity Framework Communities

- People experiencing low-income or economic disadvantage
- Minorities (Race and ethnicity)
- People experiencing a disability
- Seniors (65+)
- Children (18 years and under)
- People with limited English proficiency
- Households with no vehicle access

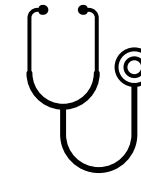
Social Resources



Libraries



Schools



Health Care facilities



Parks



Religious Organizations

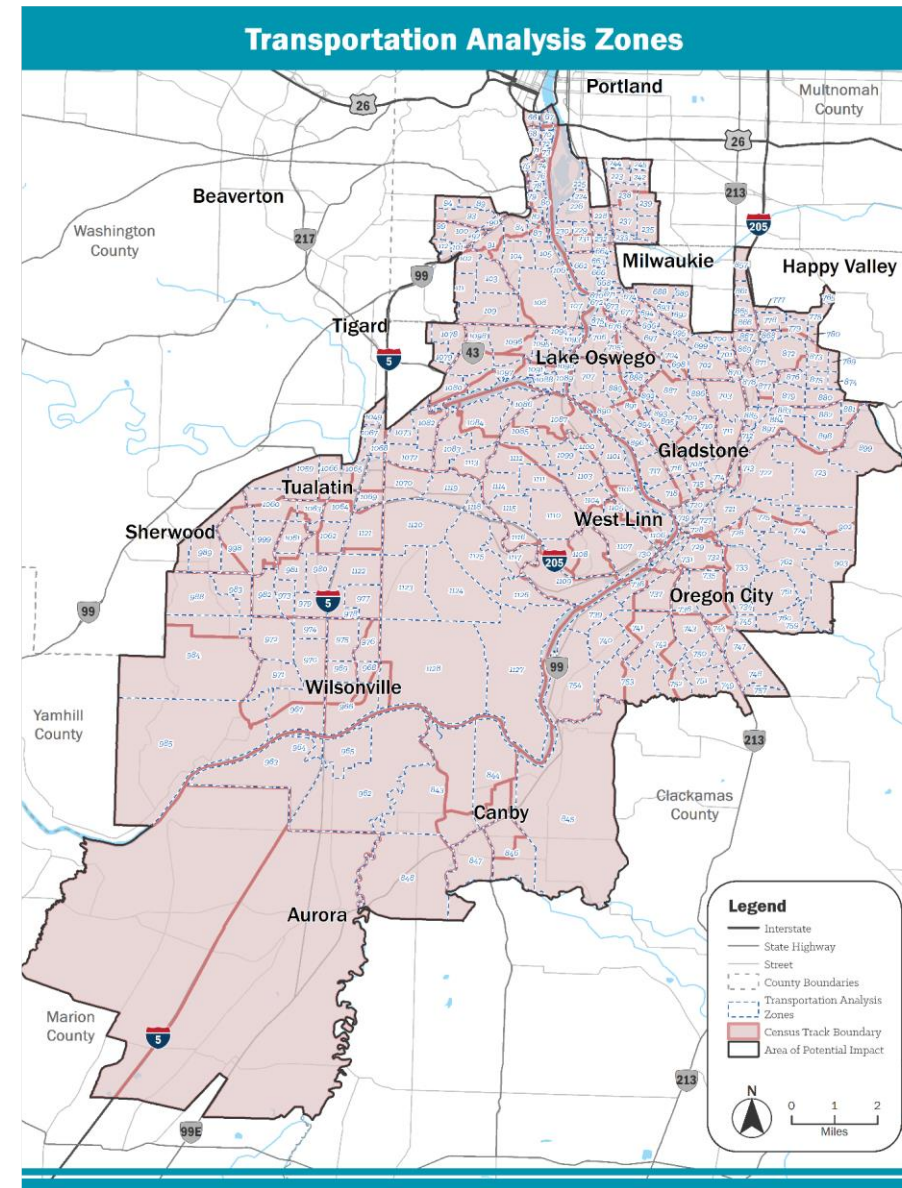
Equity Framework Analysis Approach

Accessibility Analysis:

Determine how many jobs, community places and medical facilities could be reached within a 20- or 30-minute drive or 30- or 45- minute transit trip for existing conditions, the 2045 alternative with tolling, and a 2045 alternative without tolling.

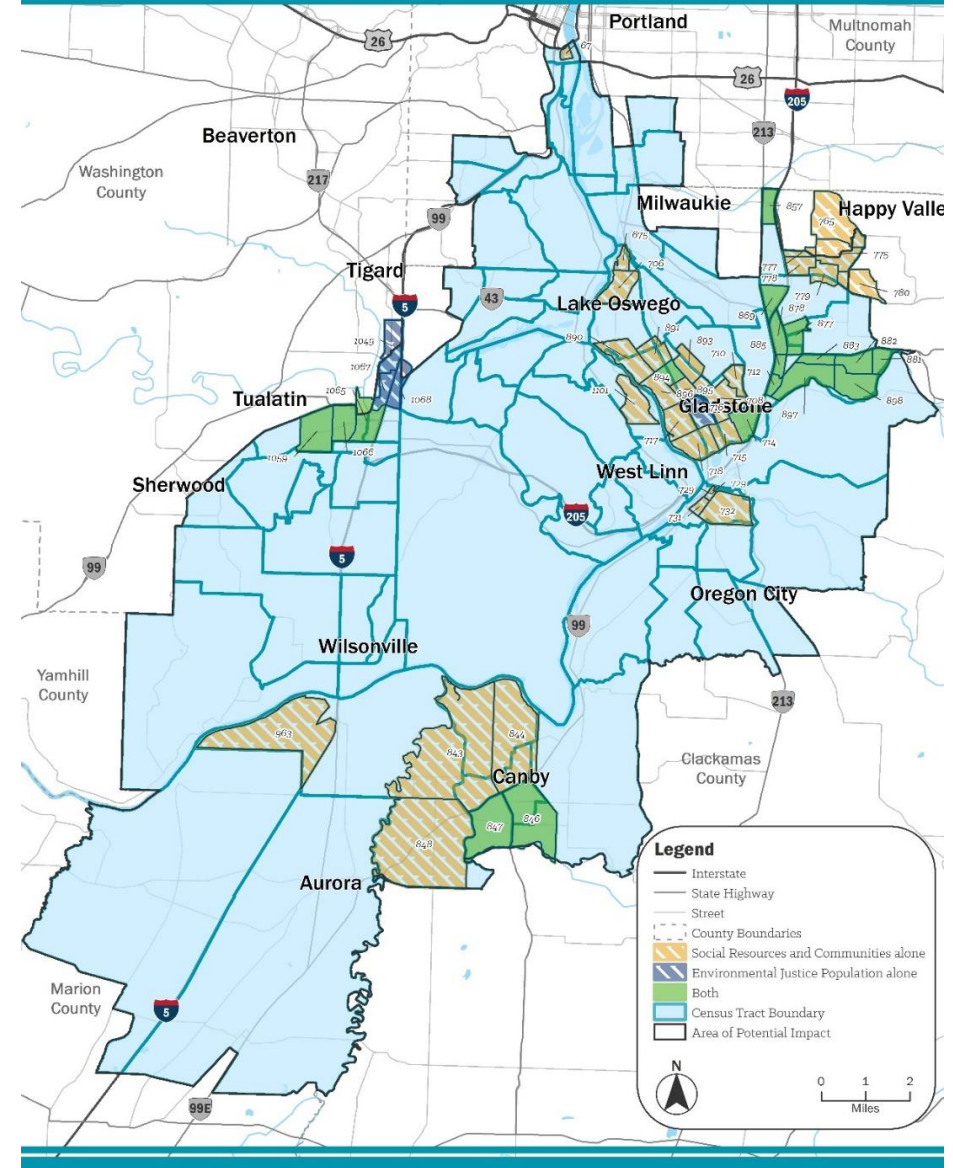
Travel Time Analysis:

Determine the potential travel time impacts to EFCs.



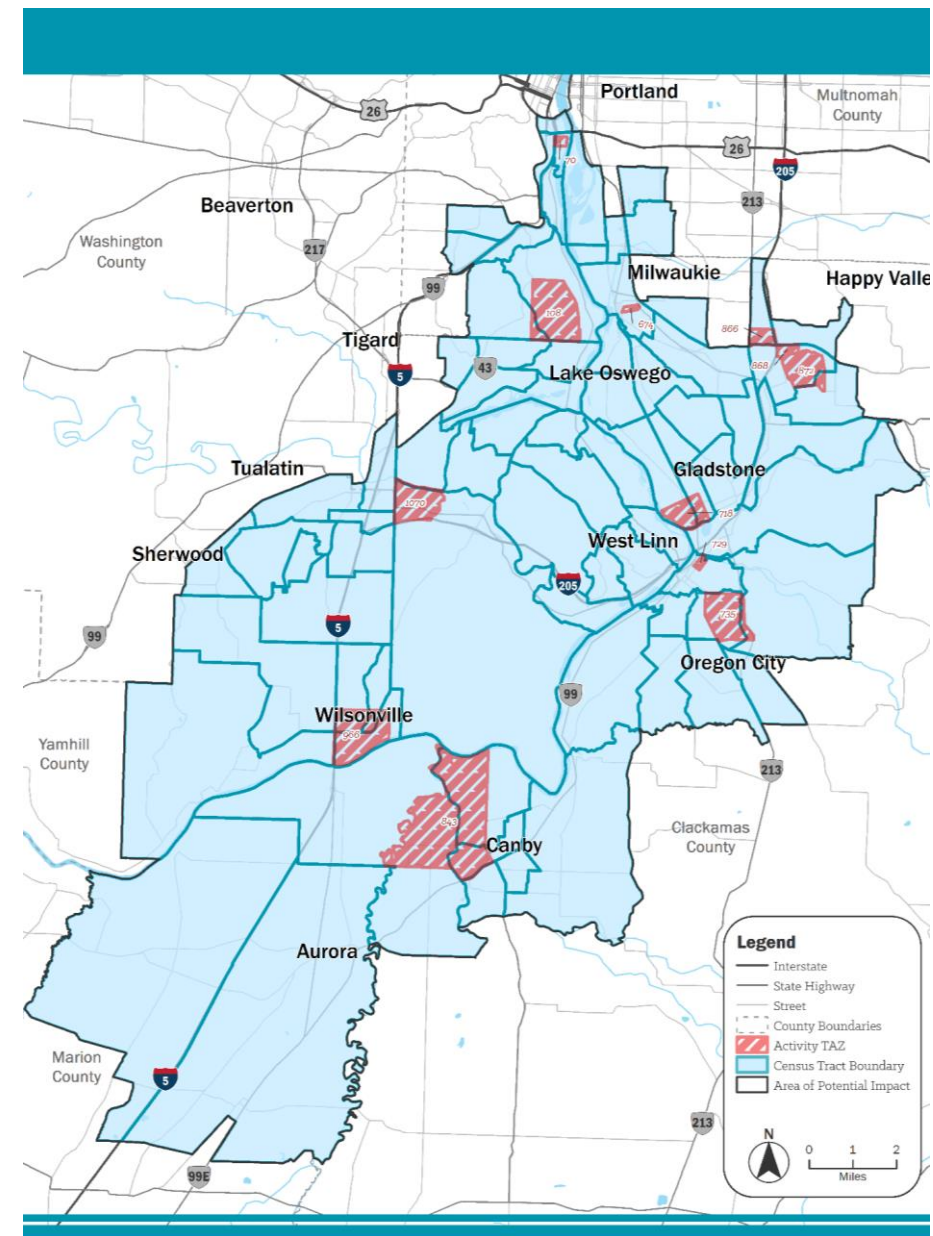
Home Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZs)

- Primarily where people reside.
- Based on demographic information.
- TAZs that had a higher proportion of one or more EFCs when compared to the respective county data.



Activity TAZs

- Where people may be attracted to travel such as jobs, schools, parks, religious organizations, or medical facilities.
- Based on high concentrations of social and community resources.

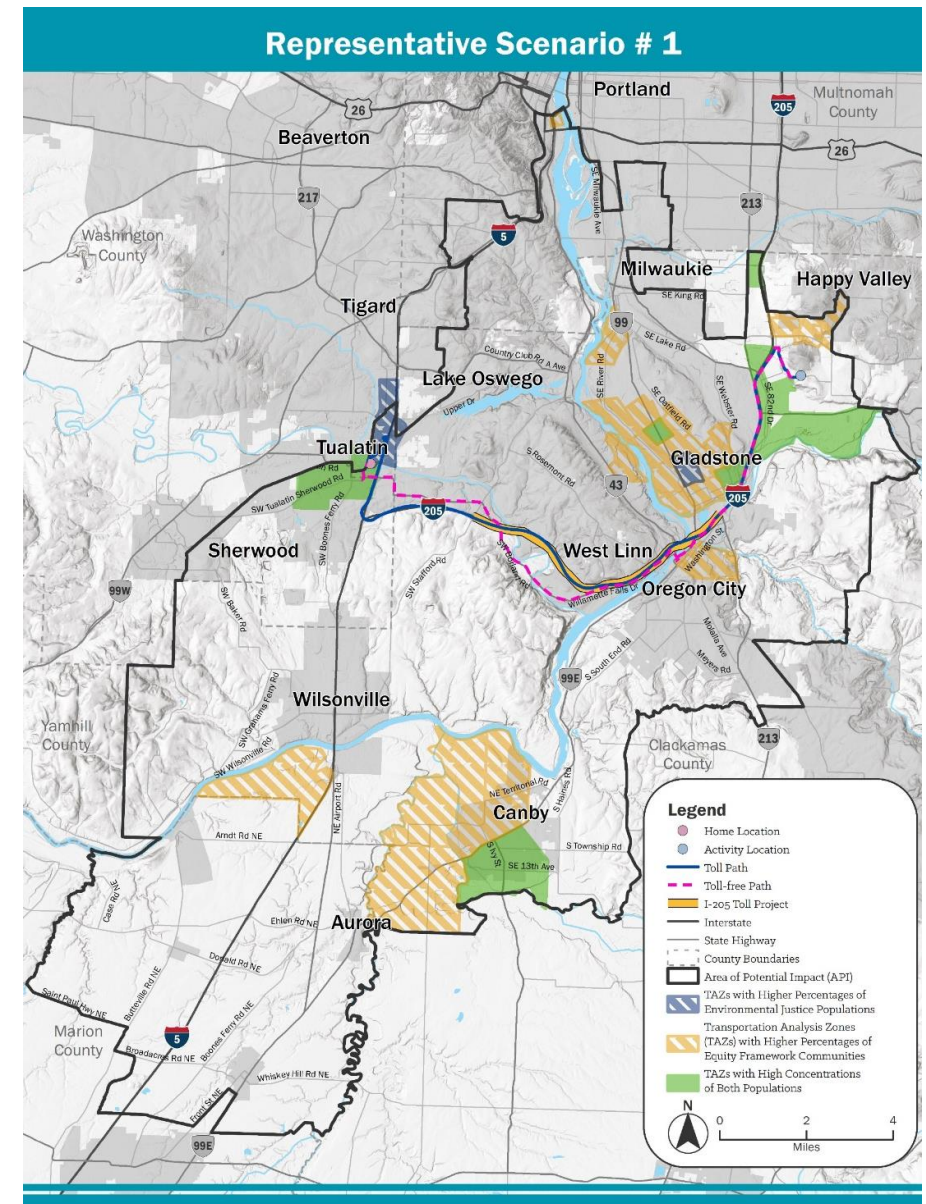


Accessibility Analysis

- The alternative with tolling would result in **the same or greater accessibility** to social resources for all households in the area of interest when compared with the alternative without tolling.
- EFCs would generally experience the same or greater accessibility than the general population.

Travel Time Analysis

| Scenario Description | Travel Time under Existing Conditions | Travel Time under Future 2045 alternative <u>without</u> tolling | Travel Time under Future 2045 alternative <u>with</u> tolling |
|---|---|--|---|
| Person A lives in Tualatin. They travel to Mount Talbert Nature Park once a week after work at 5pm to walk with their children and grandchildren who live in Gladstone. | The Toll Path trip takes 40 to 50 minutes. | The Toll Path trip would take 40 to 50 minutes. | The Toll Path trip would take 30 to 40 minutes. |
| | The Toll-free Path trip takes 40 to 50 minutes. | The Toll-free Path would take 50 to 60 minutes. | The Toll-free Path would take longer than an hour. |





How IBR is Centering Equity Washington APA

Johnell Bell, IBR Principal Equity Officer

Jake Warr, IBR Equity Lead



October 13, 2022



Setting the Context

Historical Context



Indigenous peoples have lived in and traveled to the Portland-Vancouver region since time immemorial, including in the immediate vicinity of the current Interstate Bridge. White settlement disrupted tribal communities in the early 19th Century, and the U.S. government removed most Indigenous peoples to reservations in the 1850s. This area along the Columbia river remains significant to indigenous communities today.



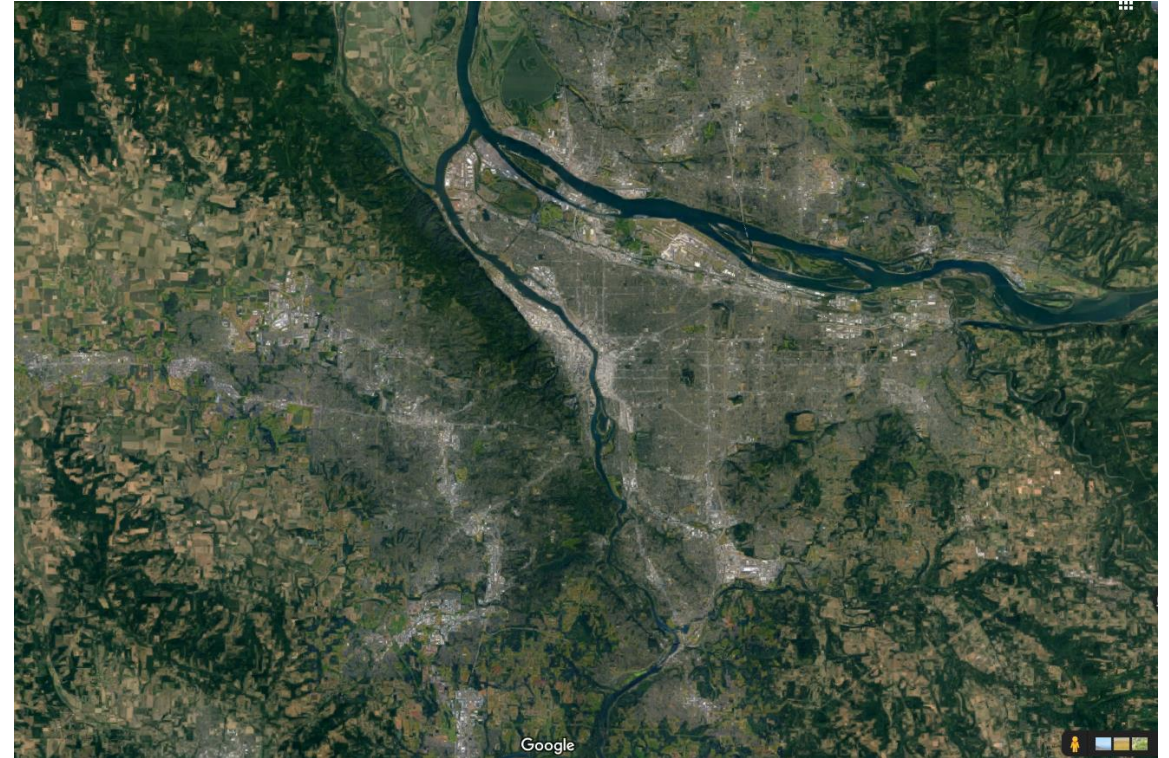
Adjacent to the Interstate Bridge lies **Vanport**, the site of a WWII housing development that flooded in 1948, forcing residents – about a third of whom were Black – to evacuate and killing at least 15.



The **construction of I-5** in the 1950's destroyed more than 1,100 homes in the Albina neighborhood of North Portland, just a few miles south of the Interstate Bridge.

2010-2020 Population Changes

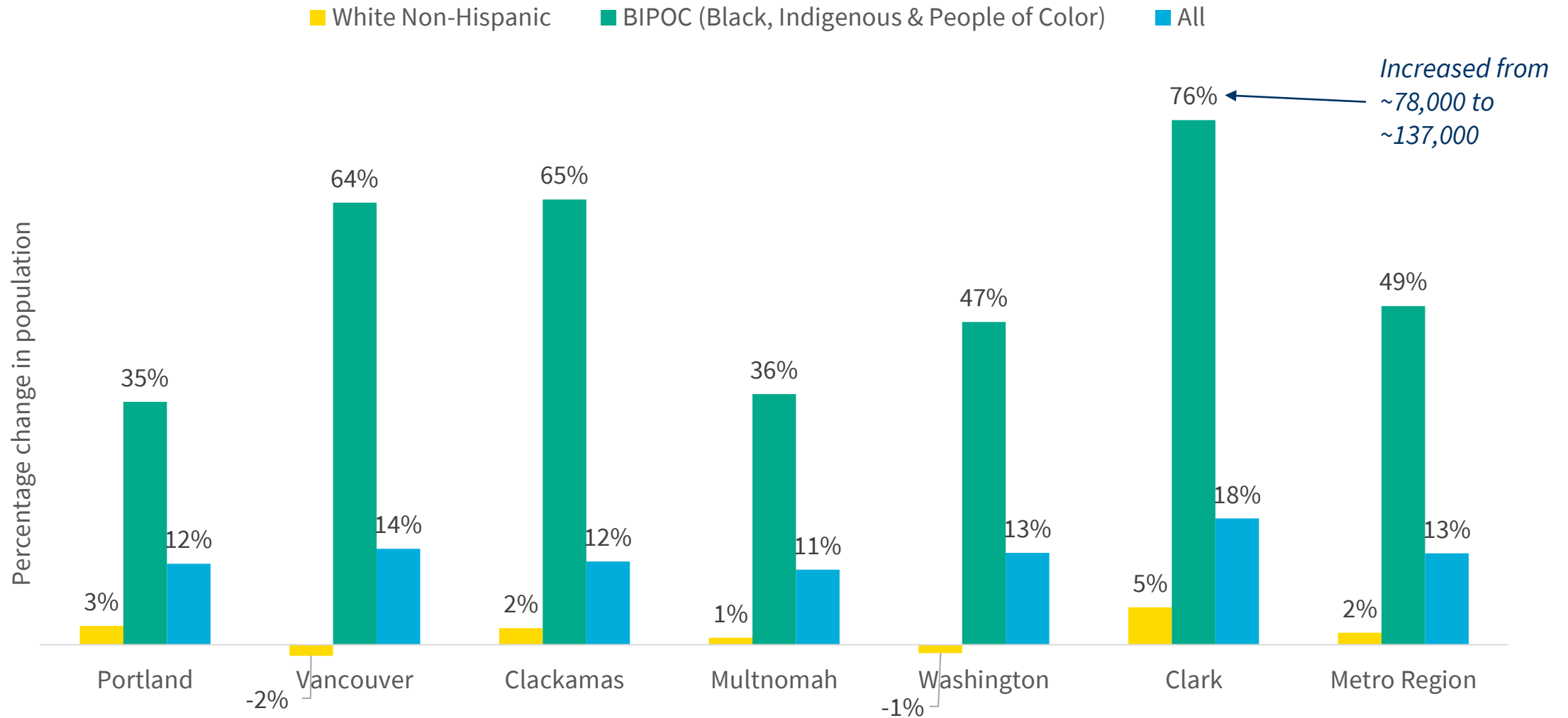
- ▶ The region* added over 274,000 residents from 2010-2020, a 13% increase.
- ▶ Most of the growth in the region was among people of color, increasing 49% over the past decade
- ▶ The region went from 20% to 32% of the population comprised of people of color



Sources: 2010 and 2020 US Census

**Region is defined as Clark, Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties*

BIPOC, White Non-Hispanic, and Overall Population Growth 2010-2020



Components of the IBR Equity Commitment

Program Equity Definition
(What does 'equity' mean in the context of IBR?)

Equity Objectives
(What do we want to achieve?)

Equity Framework

Measures of Success
(What do we want to measure, how will we measure it?)

Put into action
(Community engagement, design, construction specifications, etc.)

Equity definition

The Interstate Bridge Replacement program defines equity in terms of both process and outcomes.

Process Equity means that the program prioritizes access, influence, and decision-making power for historically and presently disenfranchised communities throughout the program in establishing objectives, design, implementation, and evaluation of success.

Outcome Equity is the result of successful Process Equity and is demonstrated by tangible transportation and economic benefits for equity priority communities.

Equity definition, cont'd

Equity priority communities are defined as those who experience and/or have experienced discrimination and exclusion based on identity or status, such as:

- BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color)
- People with disabilities
- Communities with limited English proficiency (LEP)
- Persons with lower income
- Houseless individuals and families
- Immigrants and refugees
- Young people
- Older adults

Together, Process Equity and Outcome Equity contribute to addressing the impacts of and removing long standing injustices experienced by these communities.

Equity Objectives

| Mobility & Accessibility | Physical Design | Community Benefits | Economic opportunity | Decision-making processes | Avoiding further harm |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| Improve mobility, accessibility, and connectivity, especially for lower income travelers, people with disabilities, and historically underserved communities who experience transportation barriers. | Integrate equity, area history, and culture into the physical design elements of the program, including bridge aesthetics, artwork, amenities, and impacts on adjacent land uses. | Find opportunities for and implement local community improvements, in addition to required mitigations. | Ensure that economic opportunities generated by the program benefit minority and women owned firms, BIPOC workers, workers with disabilities, and young people. | Prioritize access, influence, and decision-making power for underserved communities throughout the program in establishing objectives, design, implementation, and evaluation of success | Actively seek out options with a harm-reduction priority, rather than simply mitigate disproportionate impacts on historically impacted and underserved communities and populations. |

Operationalizing the Equity Framework

The Equity Framework informs the development of:

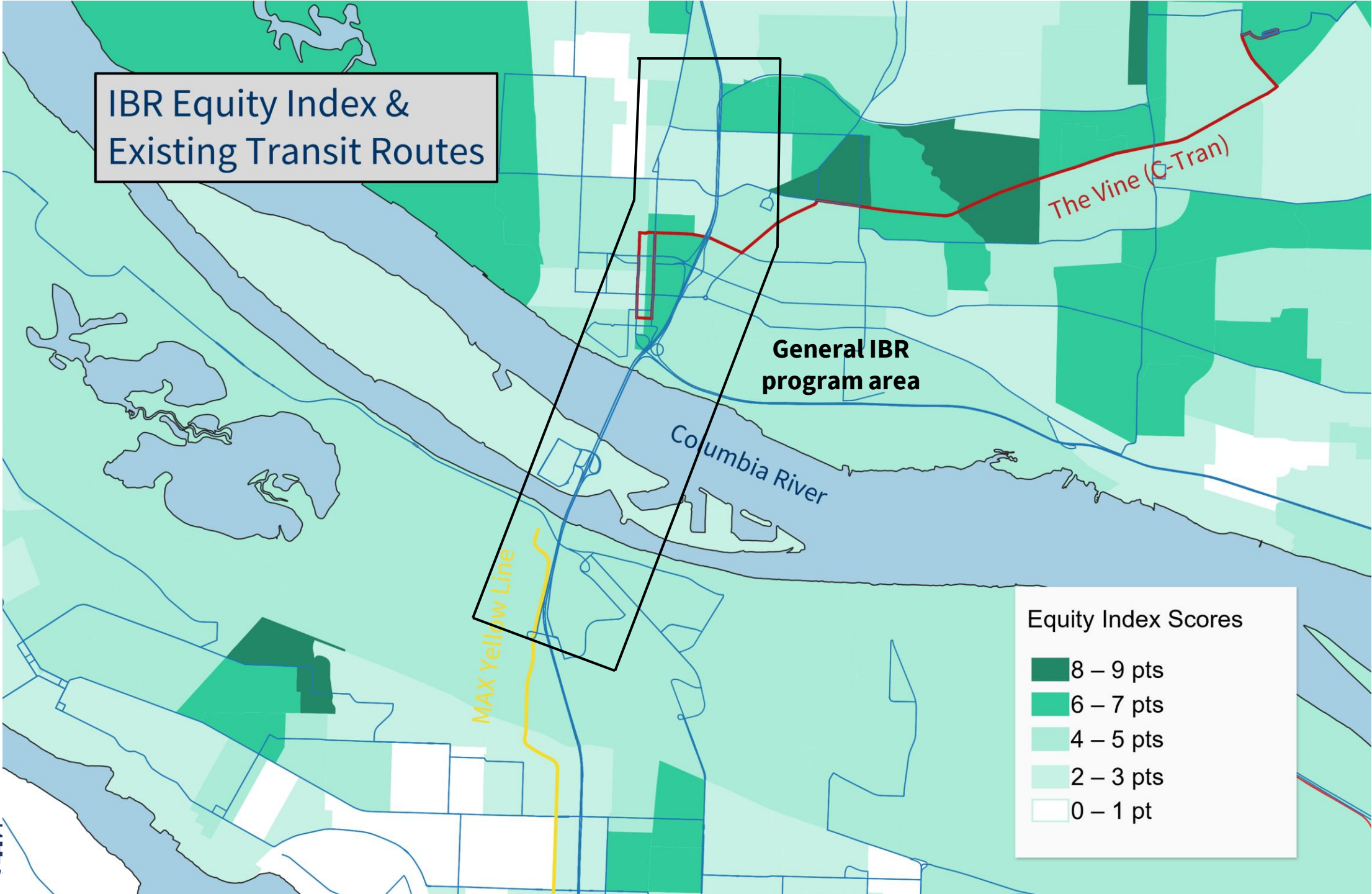
- Components of the Modified LPA
- Performance measures
- Community engagement approaches
- Accountability measures

Equity Advisory Group (EAG)

- ▶ **Comprised of 3 types of members:**
 - Representatives of partner agencies
 - Representatives of community-based organizations
 - At-large community members
- ▶ **Provide recommendations directly to the Program Administrator**
 - Ex. Equity Definition & Framework, Equity-focused Screening Criteria
- ▶ **Engaged on all the elements of the Modified LPA to provide input on equity implications**
- ▶ **Will be integral to development of a Community Benefits Agreement/Community Workforce Agreement that advances our Equity Framework**

Example: Informing the “Modified Locally Preferred Alternative” (MLPA)

IBR Equity Index & Existing Transit Routes



General IBR program area

Columbia River

The Vine (C-Tran)

MAX Yellow Line

| Equity Index Scores | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Dark Green | 8 – 9 pts |
| Medium Green | 6 – 7 pts |
| Light Green | 4 – 5 pts |
| Very Light Green | 2 – 3 pts |
| White | 0 – 1 pt |

Equity in the screening process

- ▶ From late 2021 to early 2022 the EAG worked to develop a set of equity-centered screening criteria in the following areas (consistent with full menu of screening criteria):
 - Aesthetics
 - Air Quality
 - Congestion Reduction
 - Cultural Resources
 - Diversions
 - Land Use
 - Neighborhoods and Populations
 - Noise
 - Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
 - Mobility
 - Modal Choice
 - Travel Reliability
 - Safety
- ▶ Criteria were aligned with the program’s Equity Objectives

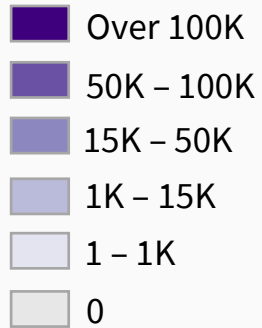
Equity in the Screening Process

Examples:

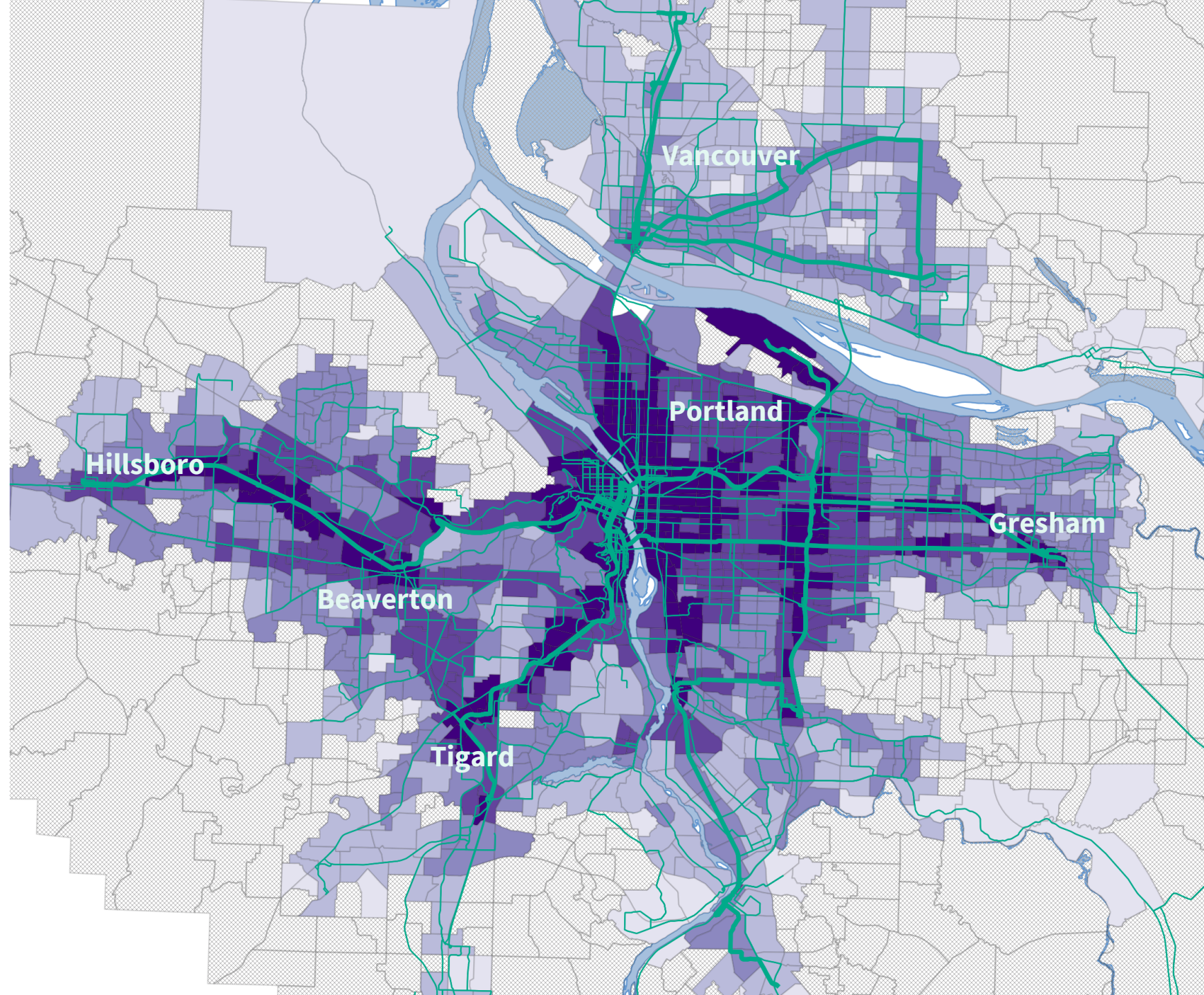
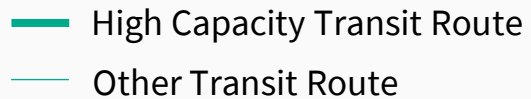
- ▶ Population from equity priority communities within ½ mile of high-capacity transit station
- ▶ Jobs and services accessible within 30/45/60 minutes via transit and driving for equity priority communities
- ▶ Proximity of design option's pedestrian infrastructure to vehicle lanes (potential noise)
 - Particularly important to blind or low vision pedestrians who rely on sound to navigate
- ▶ Approximate area of developable remnant parcels post-construction

From where can people reach the most jobs via transit?

Number of jobs accessible in 45 mins, midday



Source: Metro 2045 Model



Key Takeaways

- **Developing an equity framework** keeps the project team accountable and centers equity at each step in the process
- **Meaningful and continuous engagement** of historically and currently underrepresented and underserved communities can generate change in the way a project is planned and executed.
- **Qualitative and quantitative data can be used to evaluate impacts** to historically and currently underrepresented and underserved communities, leading to a better understanding of potential impacts and appropriate mitigation.
- **Long-term monitoring and continued engagement** is needed to ensure a project leads to equitable outcomes.

