

# EQUITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE PERFORMANCE METRICS

June 2022

## Introduction

The City of Seattle is conducting a major update of its Comprehensive Plan with the goal of adopting a new plan in 2024. The Comprehensive Plan guides City decisions about where to locate housing and jobs, and investments in transportation, utilities, parks, and other public assets as the city grows. The updated Plan, which we are calling the One Seattle Plan, will address new and long-standing challenges including racial equity, housing costs, access to economic opportunity and education, climate change, and more.

As part of this effort, the City will be conducting significant analysis of potential changes including the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) according to the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

This document shares preliminary performance metrics that could be used to guide future analysis on equity and climate topics. Following early public input on the Plan's vision and the scope of the EIS, these performance metrics could be amended. The final performance metrics will be used to answer key questions such as those below:

### Existing Conditions

- What historic policies or conditions led to current conditions?
- Are there historic inequities that persist today?
- Who/where is vulnerable?

### Impact Analysis

- What are the consequences or impacts of the different options and alternatives?
- What are the benefits and burdens on different populations?

### Mitigation Measures

- What measures could reduce harms or offer benefits to vulnerable communities?

## Definitions

**Race and Social Equity:** when all marginalized people can attain those resources, opportunities, and outcomes that improve their quality of life and enable them to reach their full potential. The city has a collective responsibility to address the history of inequities in existing systems and their ongoing impacts in Seattle communities, leveraging collective resources to create communities of opportunity for everyone, regardless of race or means. ([Seattle Resolution 31577](#) )

**Equity:** Everyone has fair and unbiased access to the resources they need to meet their fundamental needs and fully participate in the life of their community. ([Seattle Comprehensive Plan 2035](#) , [Glossary](#))

**Displacement:** The relocation of residents, businesses, or institutions from an area due to the burdens placed on them by the rising cost of housing or commercial space.

**Climate Vulnerability:** The propensity or predisposition of people, resources, ecosystems, infrastructure, and services to be adversely affected by climate stressors/hazards. Vulnerability encompasses exposure, sensitivity, potential impacts, and adaptive capacity. ([US Climate Resilience Toolkit](#), 2022)

**Objective:** A description of the City's intent or desired result.

**Performance Metric:** Measurable data or qualitative information used to track objectives.

## Equity

Prior to the start of the One Seattle Plan process, the City in conjunction with the organization PolicyLink, conducted a racial equity analysis of the current Comprehensive Plan. This work highlighted persistent racial disparities in Seattle related to housing, neighborhood access, and economic prosperity. The work raised concerns that our existing growth strategy is reinforcing a pattern of racial segregation and exclusion and identified numerous policies and tools that the City could consider to address existing disparities. The Alternatives under development for the One Seattle Plan EIS are meant to address some of the concerns by increasing the supply and diversity of housing in neighborhoods throughout Seattle.

- [Racial Equity Analysis \(July 2021\) – Engagement](#) , [PolicyLink recommendations](#) , [Council presentation](#) , and [Council memo](#) .
- [Equitable Development Monitoring program](#)

## Climate Change

The City is experiencing the impacts of climate change including extreme heat, smokey air from wildfires, sea-level rise, and extreme precipitation and flooding. Seattle created a climate action plan in 2011 and adopted a bold goal for the community to become carbon neutral by 2050. The City is not on track to meet all goals to reduce carbon pollution, and more coordination and action is needed. The City can also further implement climate adaptation and resilience strategies. Climate change and vulnerable communities will be considered in performance metrics to evaluate growth strategies and EIS alternatives.

- [One Seattle Plan Climate Change Brief](#) 

## Draft Metrics

Draft objectives and metrics to measure them are proposed below. An evaluation of growth strategy alternatives and proposed changes would be circulated at the time of the Draft EIS and Draft Plan.

Where metrics address population, it is anticipated the evaluation would address the overall population as well as considering Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color (BIPOC) and people with low incomes or areas with high displacement risk.

### Equity and Climate Metrics that will be analyzed through the EIS

Objective	Metrics
1. Increase the supply, diversity, and affordability of market-rate housing	A. Number of new units by type and area median income (AMI)
	B. Availability of units that are appropriate for families and multi-generational households
	C. Availability of lower-cost ownership units and qualitative discussion on availability to equity priority groups
	D. Qualitative discussion of effect on overall cost of existing housing in Seattle and the region
2. Increase the supply of income-restricted housing	E. Number of new income-restricted units by type and AMI
3. Reduce residential displacement, especially in high displacement risk areas	F. Estimated physical displacement (residents or households, citywide and in specific areas)
	G. Qualitative discussion of effect on economic displacement, citywide and in specific areas

Objective	Metrics
4. Improve mobility and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT)	H. Access to jobs via transit analysis (example map showing relative accessibility based on jobs that can be reached within 45 minutes) (citywide and in specific areas) I. VMT and VMT per capita J. Access to pedestrian network (citywide and in specific areas) K. Access to all ages and abilities bicycle network
5. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) consistent with GHG reduction targets	L. Air quality: GHG emissions and emissions per capita
6. Reduce exposure to air, noise, ground, and water pollution	M. Air: Amount and demographics of population living in areas with high exposure to air pollution N. Noise: Amount and percentage of population living near highways, arterials, flight paths, and industrial areas O. Environmental Hazards: Amount and percentage of population living in areas with high exposure to contaminated sites
7. Reduce vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change (extreme precipitation, heat, fire/smoke, drought, other)	P. Precipitation (extreme high): Amount and percentage of population living in areas with high exposure to flooding and landslides Q. Heat: Amount and percentage of population living in areas with high temperatures R. Heat: Amount and percentage of population living in areas with low tree canopy coverage S. Sea-level Rise: Amount and percentage of population living in areas affected by sea-level rise

It is anticipated the following metrics will be informed by the EIS but are anticipated to be evaluated through other planning efforts as the City develops the One Seattle Plan.

### Equity and Climate Metrics that will be analyzed through other efforts

Objective	Metrics
8. Reduce commercial displacement, especially in high displacement risk areas	T. Amount and location of commercial space available (citywide and in specific areas) U. Availability of land for development of commercial space V. Effect on cost of commercial space, citywide and by neighborhood
9. Reduce disparities in neighborhood choice and access to opportunity/key components of livability	W. Percentage of housing units within X distance of existing park X. Percentage of housing units within walking distance of a commercial district
10. Increase well-paid jobs that can be accessed without a 4-year degree	Y. Effect on availability of well-paid jobs that can be accessed without a 4-year degree



### More Information

The city is accepting comments on the draft metrics as part of the EIS Scoping period from June 23rd through July 25th. More information about the One Seattle Comprehensive Plan Update, including how to submit comments, are available at: <http://www.seattle.gov/opcd/one-seattle-plan>.