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# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Engagement Plan – Design Phase

## 1. Introduction

Multnomah County strives to incorporate best practices in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) into the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge (EQRB) Project. The DEI Engagement Plan was developed to guide the project team in these areas and serves as a complement to the Public Involvement and Communications Plan, and includes:

1. An introduction to the project, guiding principles and County equity lens.
2. A summary of early assessment activities performed to help develop the DEI Engagement Plan, including:
  - a. Historical context research
  - b. Demographic research
  - c. Environmental justice and equity interviews
  - d. A DEI focus group
3. DEI recommendations to implement throughout the project.
4. Evaluation objectives and indicators to measure success.

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

Portland's aging downtown bridges are not expected to withstand a major earthquake. That is why Multnomah County is taking the lead on making at least one crossing earthquake ready. Located in the heart of downtown, the Burnside Bridge is a regionally established lifeline route across the Willamette River.

The project is now in the Design Phase after it completed a Feasibility Study in 2018 and an Environmental Review Phase in 2023, which will complete the design work for the Preferred Alternative identified during the Environmental Review Phase. Construction of the new Burnside Bridge is expected to start in 2026.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Below are the four principles that will guide the process and team throughout the life of the project.

1. **Education, transparency and solution-focused:** The goal is to build awareness of the important role this project plays in regional resilience and emergency preparedness, through regular and



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consistent communication. The project aims to build authentic relationships by thoroughly considering interests, issues and concerns in project solutions. The project wants to ensure input is valued and that it transparently communicates how the County makes decisions for the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Project.

2. **Accessible, inclusive and culturally responsive:** The project aims to provide equitable and accessible opportunities for the community and stakeholders so that they can help influence and shape the project. The project aims to reduce participation barriers in ways that are culturally responsive and create influence. All input opportunities are meaningful, purposeful and seek out those who may be impacted, by offering diverse ways for all people to participate in project conversations.
3. **Community benefit and industry readiness:** The project aims to create transportation opportunities that directly benefit historically underserved and marginalized communities. The project also aims to create diverse contracting opportunities in the design phase of the project.
4. **Coordination, commitment and agency alignment:** The project will work with other jurisdictions and County departments to achieve robust and informed public involvement, agency commitment and alignment throughout the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Project.

## EQUITY AND EMPOWERMENT LENS

The [Multnomah County Equity and Empowerment Lens](#) is a set of principles that aims to improve planning, decision-making and resource allocation to create a more equitable environment. This tool is comprised of five components--Purpose, People, Place, Process and Power. Each component utilizes a set of questions and processes that intends to:

- Deconstruct what is not working around racial equity.
- Reconstruct and support what is working.
- Shift the way we make decisions and think about this work.
- Heal and transform our structures, our environments and ourselves.

The Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project will apply the County's Equity and Empowerment Lens (the Lens) throughout the project to create a more equitable process and outcome for all. This lens will be utilized when the project team plans and evaluates engagement efforts. For example, the project team has implemented this lens in prior engagement evaluations, comparing the demographics of DEI and general engagement participants and county-wide demographics. The Lens was used to guide the development of this DEI Plan.

*See Appendix A to view Multnomah County's Equity and Empowerment Lens.*



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## 2. Assessment and Development of the Plan

To develop a meaningful and community-informed Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Engagement Plan, the project team conducted early assessment activities to gather information and recommendations for the Plan. A summary of activities and findings is provided below.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT RESEARCH

Recognizing the historical context for Black, Native American Tribes, Chinese, Japanese, Hispanic and low-income community members are important considerations to address in this DEI Engagement Plan due to their historic ties to the project area and region. The following highlights the significance of these populations.

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND NATIVE AMERICANS

The Burnside Bridge crosses the Willamette River. For more than 10,000 years, the Willamette River has supported people living in proximity to the river and along its shores as a major source of food, water, transportation and commerce.<sup>1</sup> The Willamette River has connections to federally recognized tribes in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, as well as non-recognized tribes including the Chinook Indian Nation; Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde; the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon; the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation; the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs; the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation; and the Nez Perce Tribe.

#### OLD TOWN, CHINATOWN AND JAPANTOWN

Neighboring the Burnside Bridge, the Portland Skidmore/Old Town Historic District has a rich community history and was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1977. In the late 1800s, many Japanese immigrants arrived in Portland, and this created a demand for hotels, bathhouses, and other services near the Burnside Bridge. This area was home to Portland's original Japanese community and was referred to as the city's Japantown, or *Nihonmachi*.<sup>2</sup> More recently in 1990, the Japanese American Historical Plaza was dedicated to the memory of those who were deported to inland internment camps during World War II, and this memorial is adjacent to the Burnside Bridge.

#### BLACK COMMUNITY

The proximity of the Burnside Bridge to the railroad and Union Station were major early employment areas for the first Black community members, creating the first Black neighborhood in Portland. Racial exclusion laws forbade the Black community from living in Oregon until the last law was rescinded in 1926. However, railroad employees who traveled for work were able to live in Portland. Work on the

<sup>1</sup> Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department (2007). Willamette River Recreation Guide, pg. 2. Retrieved from <https://digital.osl.state.or.us/islandora/object/osl:47485>.

<sup>2</sup> National Park Service (2018). Portland New Chinatown/Japantown Historic District. Retrieved from <https://www.nps.gov/places/portland-new-chinatown-japantown-historic-district.html>.



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railroad and supporting services were key economic opportunities for the Black community initially around Union Station.

In the 1940s, almost 99 percent of Black men in Portland were employed in services associated with the railroad industry such as cooks, porters, and laborers.<sup>3</sup> This history is an important consideration in shaping the diversity, equity, and inclusion planning efforts, recognizing the historical significance the surrounding area has for the Black community.

### **LATINO COMMUNITY AND DAY LABORERS**

Latinos have a heritage in this region that predates White settler society. In the 1800s, Latinos immigrated to Oregon to mine gold, organize and operate a mule pack system of transportation, and work as vaqueros, or cowboys. Through the decades, an influx of Latinos immigrated to Oregon primarily for agricultural work.<sup>4</sup>

Since as early as the 1970's an area near the east end of the Burnside Bridge has been a gathering place for day laborers, many of them Latino men, to seek work. In 1996 the Worker's Organizing Committee was formed in response to repressive tactics by public agencies that discouraged day laborers from seeking work in the area. Workers and community members subsequently founded Voz Workers' Rights Education Project in June 2000, to organize around day laborer and immigrant rights. For twenty-three years, Voz was located near the east end of the Burnside Bridge. They have recently relocated to NE Portland.

### **LOW INCOME AND SPECIAL NEEDS COMMUNITIES**

From Portland's earliest history, the Old Town neighborhood at the west end of the Burnside Bridge has been home to many of the city's residents living with low incomes and those suffering from addiction and mental health issues. Portland's oldest social service agencies are based in the blocks around the west end of the bridge. Newer agencies have sprung up in the neighborhood in recent decades to serve people in drug/alcohol recovery, house people experiencing homelessness and/or serve people who are escaping domestic violence. Old Town has the highest concentration of social service agencies and clients in the city.

### **UNSHeltered and Houseless Community**

Given the proximity to many social services and resources in downtown, a high concentration of people experiencing houselessness reside in the neighborhoods west of the bridge. The 2022 Point in Time Count for Homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County indicated that 323 households (not individuals), representing 21 percent of the unsheltered and houseless population, stayed in the

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<sup>3</sup> Oregon Historical Society (2019). Black People in Oregon. Retrieved from [https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/blacks\\_in\\_oregon/#.WBuitC0rJhF](https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/blacks_in_oregon/#.WBuitC0rJhF).

<sup>4</sup> Coalition of Communities of Color (2012). The Latino Community in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile, pg. 7. Retrieved from <https://www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org/research-and-publications/ccunsettlingprofile>.



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Downtown/Old Town/Pearl area.<sup>5</sup> This is the second-highest geographic location for unsheltered populations in the region after Gresham. In a news release on May 10, 2023, leaders from the three Portland-area counties released initial data on people experiencing homelessness in 2023. This initial data indicated that there was a drop in chronic homelessness in the Portland region, though it is not clear what the change was in downtown Portland.<sup>6</sup> A full Point in Time Count report for 2023 has not yet been published. Considering the findings from 2022 and 2023, access to the Burnside Bridge is crucial for the unsheltered and houseless population to access transit and social services on the west end of the bridge.

### TRANSIT DEPENDENT COMMUNITY

Those who are transit-dependent rely entirely on public transportation for getting to work, school, healthcare and daily necessities because they do not own cars or have other reliable transportation options. This group includes low-income individuals, people with disabilities, seniors, youth, and others who cannot drive or have limited access to private transport.

In the context of transit dependence, the Portland region has witnessed a significant shift in individual transportation choices since 1996. In July 2023, there were 1.2 million rides recorded on TriMet, highlighting the continued dependence on public transit. The Burnside Bridge plays a pivotal role in facilitating transit access for the transit-dependent population. It currently hosts three bus lines – the 20, 12 and 19. These bus lines connect various communities to Downtown Portland, including areas as distant as Tigard, Beaverton, Gresham, and neighborhoods like Parkrose/Sumner, Woodstock and Montavilla. The bridge serves as a crucial nexus for transfers, enabling passengers to seamlessly transition to the Streetcar, the #6 bus line, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, TriMet MAX lines and other downtown bus routes. This connectivity is essential for meeting the mobility needs of the transit-dependent population in the Portland area.<sup>7</sup>

### DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

The following demographic summary provides a baseline understanding of existing demographic data within a mile of Burnside Bridge. The project team performed a demographic analysis in 2019 using the U.S. Census American Community Surveys 2011-2015 and 2013 -2017. This research has helped develop a robust public involvement approach to engaging the people most impacted by the project. Key highlights include:

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<sup>5</sup> Joint Office of Homeless Services (2022). 2022 Point-In-Time: Count of People Experiencing HUD Homelessness in Portland/Gresham/Multnomah County, Oregon, pg. 67. Retrieved from <https://multco-web7-psh-files-us2.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2022%20Point%20In%20Time%20Count%20of%20People%20Experiencing%20HUD%20Homelessness%20in%20Portland%20Gresham%20Oregon.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Multnomah County (2023). News Release: Chronic Homelessness Number Falls Across Tri-County Region in 2023 Point in Time Count. Retrieved from <https://www.multco.us/multnomah-county/news/news-release-chronic-homelessness-number-falls-across-tri-county-region-2023#:~:text=The%20full%20point%20in%20time,disparities%20and%20demographics%20in%20homelessness.&text=Multnomah%20County%20reported%20a%2016,to%202%2C610%20counted%20in%202023.>

<sup>7</sup> Oregon Metro (2016). You are here: A Snapshot of How the Portland Region Gets Around. Retrieved from <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/news/you-are-here-snapshot-how-portland-region-gets-around>.



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- The most common spoken languages other than English include Spanish, French, Russian/Polish/Other Slavic, Vietnamese and Chinese.
- Five percent of people have less than a high school education, compared to the state average of nine percent.
- 35 percent of people are in the low-income category, compared to the state average of 29 percent.
- 14 percent of households have a critical service gap for broadband internet, compared to the state average of 11 percent.

The project team identified high-level changes in some key findings using ACS 2017-2021 data, summarized below:

- 5,800 fewer people live within a mile of the Burnside Bridge than they did in 2019. This may be due the COVID-19 Pandemic, and/or to economic and housing factors.<sup>8</sup>
- Fewer elderly people live near Burnside Bridge than they did in 2019.
- There has been a 17 percent increase in the number of people between the ages of 18 and 64 years of age.

These are minor changes that will not impact the engagement tools and methods used in prior phases of engagement. Please see the data table below for more details or Appendix B, which reflects the demographics research performed in 2019.

**Table 1. Change in Key Demographics of People Living within One Mile of the Burnside Bridge from 2019 Compared to 2023.**

Demographic Factors	2019	2023	% Change
<b>Total residents</b>	45,944	40,144	-12.61%
<b>Race</b>	-	-	-
- Black	5%	5%	0%
- Latino	6%	8%	+2%
- White	81%	73%	-8%
- Asian	6%	7%	+1%
<b>Language other than English</b>	15%	13%	-2%
<b>Age between 18 and 64 years</b>	97%	80%	-17%
<b>People with disabilities</b>	16%	14%	-2%

<sup>8</sup> OPB (2023). Oregon Population Decline is Cause for Concern, Say Economists. Retrieved from <https://www.opb.org/article/2023/01/05/think-out-loud-oregon-population-decline-is-cause-for-concern-economists-say/>.



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## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY INTERVIEWS

The County conducted stakeholder interviews in 2019 to gain input and direction on how to bring diverse voices to the project and ensure an inclusive and equitable process. Project team members met with eight organizations representing historically marginalized communities including people with disabilities, low-income and homeless, day laborers, people of color, Native Americans, non-English speakers, senior citizens and minority contractors. Key interview findings include:

- Work collaboratively with culturally competent community liaisons to lead and perform the engagement.
- Contract with and pay community liaisons for their work as an extension of the project team.
- Use consistent staff when engaging community groups to build relationships, familiarity and trust.
- Provide food and childcare and incentivize participation with stipends or gift cards.
- Engage early in the process and ahead of key milestones.
- Be clear and consistent with communication.
- Focus engagement around areas of interest.
- Work collaboratively with organizations to identify and promote minority contracting opportunities and incentivize workforce development/training.

*See Appendix C for a detailed summary of feedback received during the interviews conducted in 2019.*

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION FOCUS GROUP

On April 25th, 2019, the project hosted a focus group of 18 agency professionals experienced in diversity, equity and inclusion work. The project team shared information to build an understanding of the project and the work done to date, followed by a discussion of diversity, equity and inclusion best practices and how to best integrate them into the project. The group also shared lessons learned in DEI to help ensure continual improvement, support and collaboration on the project moving forward. Key takeaways from the discussion include:

### **Meet people where they are and make participation convenient.**

- Attend and seek project input at existing events or meetings where key audiences are already comfortable and willing to share honest feedback.
- Incorporate online engagement for those who cannot commit to nighttime meetings.
- Think creatively about how people naturally gather – around food, such as a soup kitchen.
- Seek to reach various cultural groups through different media, meeting them where they already gather their information. Examples include radio, area churches or other religious gatherings.
- Survey people at transit stops on or near the bridge while they wait or onboard transit.
- Incentivize and compensate people to participate through childcare, food, and stipends.





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- Consider how to bring projects and agencies together to gain collective community feedback, rather than having separate meetings and committees and exhausting group representatives and agency staff. Make gathering feedback more efficient for all parties and do not ask for an overwhelming amount of input.

**Create relevant messaging and close the loop.**

- Government terms and transportation jargon can be confusing and something to keep in mind, especially when involving translation.
- Messaging should always answer the questions, “Why should I care?”, “How does this affect me?” or “How can I relate to this?”.
- Respond to feedback and close the loop by showing how feedback was incorporated and if it could not be incorporated, explain why.

**Recognize cultural differences and flex engagement activities.**

- Recognize that different subgroups within racial or cultural groups may have different opinions or interests. Do not assume that one voice represents an entire cultural group.
- Partner with culturally aware liaisons who understand the project and can connect with their communities to improve trust with participants.
- Determine how to best engage social service agencies and other community-based organizations. Create helpful and fun community events with project information sharing and gathering as the secondary activity. For instance, host an ice cream social or meal service as the primary point of the event and include project information and input opportunities. Use these events to build trust and gather feedback from community members who would not traditionally attend a project event.

**Ask important questions that enhance equity.**

- Use the County’s 5 P’s tool and questionnaire to consistently have conversations.
- Consider who benefits and who is burdened by improving the bridge, from an equity perspective.
- Consider what these groups are experiencing that might be different than the general public and whether the project impacts those experiences.

*See Appendix D for a complete set of meeting summary notes from the DEI Focus Group meetings conducted in 2019.*





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### 3. Recommendations and Implementation

In this section, strategies and tools are explored for equitable engagement. Multnomah County is dedicated to promoting inclusivity and meaningful participation. With DEI engagement, the project team aims to create a more equitable and just engagement process for everyone, where their voices are heard and valued.

#### **APPLY COUNTY'S EQUITY AND EMPOWERMENT LENS**

Use the County's Equity and Empowerment Lens as an overarching tool and standard of practice. Use the questions, tools, and tactics outlined in the 5 P's worksheet when engaging people and making design decisions.

*See Appendix A for the County's Equity and Empowerment Lens.*

#### **ALIGN WITH TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act declares that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of an entity. Multnomah County established the Title VI Plan for Transportation in 2016 and updated it in 2022. This DEI Plan, and engagement approaches within, aims to intentionally reduce barriers to entry and improve access to the project for all people, especially those that have been historically underserved. Throughout the Design Phase, the project will continue to implement strategies for ensuring all people are provided access to project information and engagement opportunities by publishing notices in multiple languages, translating materials, providing interpretation or language assistance support, to name a few.

#### **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF A SUBCONTRACTING AND DIVERSITY PLAN**

The EQRB Construction Manager / General Contractor (CMGC) will develop a Subcontracting and Diversity Plan. The plan will outline methods to recruit women, minority contractors and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) contracting firms to ensure the Construction Phase reflects the project's goals for employing a diverse workforce.

#### **DEVELOP AN INTENTIONAL ENGAGEMENT PROCESS**

Key activities and timing for engagement to allow for input and influence in the Design Phase are outlined in Figure1 below.



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**Figure 1.** Key Activities and Timing for Engagement during Design Phase

**Input on bridge form from disadvantaged communities**

- **Timeframe:** Summer 2024
- **Engagement Methods:**
  - Community Engagement Liaisons (CELs) Program/Small Group meetings
  - Online open house
  - Translations
  - Briefings
  - Social media outreach

**Input on aesthetic details from disadvantaged communities**

- **Timeframe:** Early 2025
- **Engagement Methods:**
  - CEL Program/Small Group meetings
  - Online open house
  - Translations
  - Briefings
  - Social media outreach

**Social Services/DEI working group meetings to inform impacts on disadvantaged communities**

- **Timeframe:** Early 2024 - 2025
- **Engagement Methods:**
  - Workshops
  - Focus Group Meetings
  - Briefings



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## TOPICS FOR COMMUNITY INPUT

Using the approaches described below, the project team will engage the community and seek input on:

- Bridge form, and architectural and aesthetic features.
- Key concerns and potential issues from communities most impacted (i.e., impacts to social service providers, low-income communities, etc.).
- Interests as they relate to cultural significance (i.e., historical sites, etc.).

## ENGAGEMENT APPROACHES

To guide the project's engagement process and achieve its goals of awareness building, transparency, inclusivity, and collaboration, the project team will use the following approaches throughout the project.

- **Engage early and ahead of key milestones to allow time for input and influence in decision-making.**
- **Recognize historically significant, traditionally underrepresented, and current populations.** Provide translations and interpretations into the top languages spoken at home (not including English) which include Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic. Recognize the historical relevance of the area to Chinese, Japanese, Black, Latino and Hispanic (including day laborers) community members. Engage these groups through focus groups, briefings, and activities that are relevant to their communities. Government-to-government outreach shall be implemented to engage Tribes. Collaborate with TriMet to reach transit-dependent community members.
- **Be where communities are.** Get involved with existing community gathering opportunities and Community Based Organizations where people are already convening and feel comfortable in a familiar environment (i.e., church groups, community festivals.) Share information through culturally specific media outlets (i.e., in-language radio stations, TV stations, and newspapers) where groups are already getting information. Be present with the intention to listen and build relationships, make project information sharing and gathering secondary.
- **Work with established community leaders to directly access key communities of interest through the Community Engagement Liaisons (CEL) Program.** Work collaboratively with culturally competent and trusted community liaisons to lead and perform engagement. Partner with people that reflect the community they are engaging in. Contract with and pay specific audiences to compensate where appropriate as an extension of the project team. Train and educate liaisons so they can be more effective in engagement and gathering meaningful input.



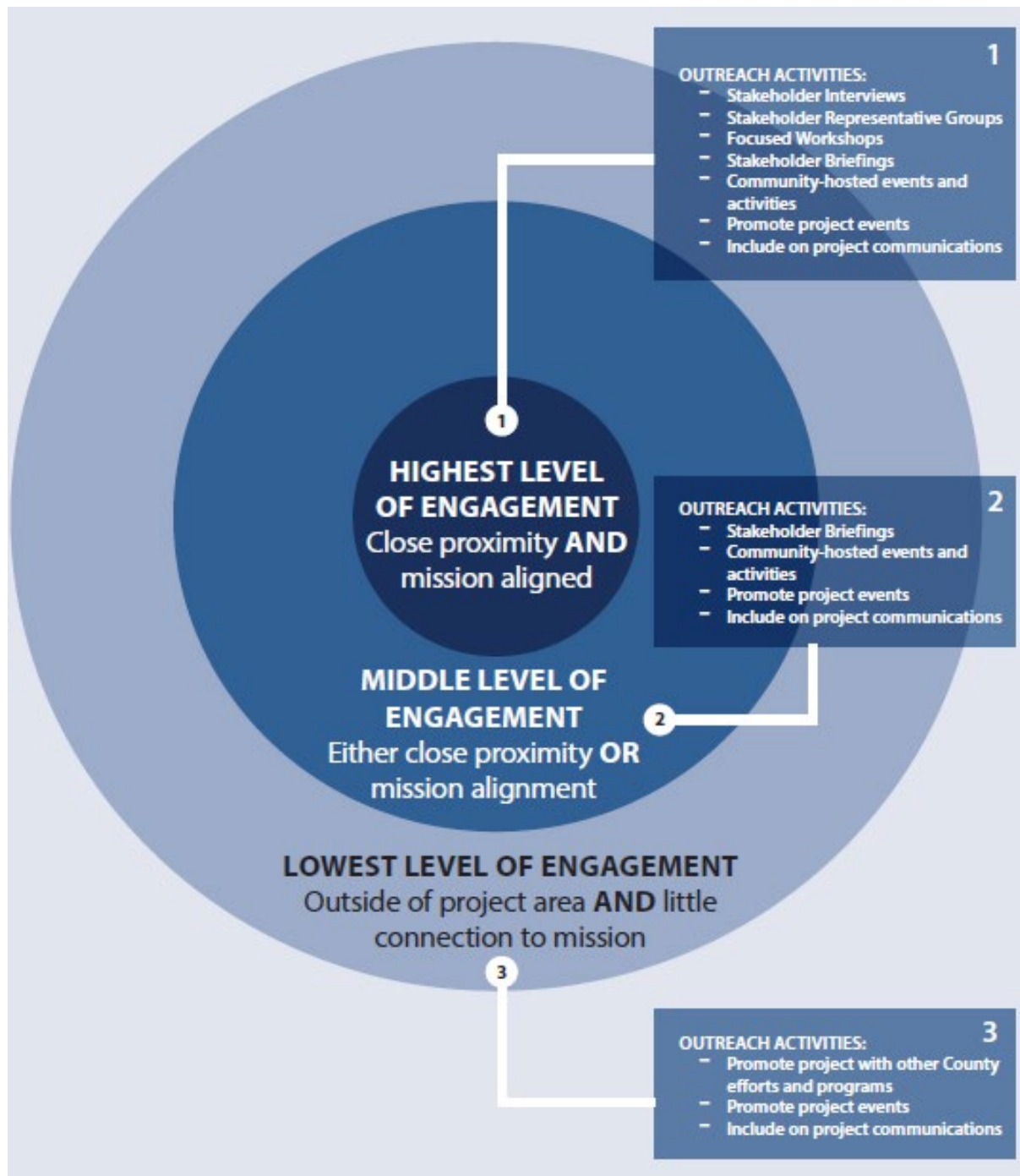
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- **Use an intentional engagement approach to reach key audiences.** Consider who benefits and who is burdened by the project and engage groups at various levels based on who is most impacted.
- **Tailor engagement activities.** Do not assume that all groups behave, engage, and consume information in the same way. Flex outreach activities so they are culturally appropriate to the audience being engaged. Recognize unique subgroups within broad populations. For instance, not all Asian groups are the same and there are a wide number of subgroups that identify as people of color, but they each have unique differences. Tailor approaches at the subgroup level.
- **Incentivize participation.** Provide food, childcare, and stipends or gift cards. Focus on hosting events that are helpful, fun and inviting first, but that also provide opportunities for project information sharing and input gathering.
- **Make information accessible (Section 508).** Use simple and plain language that is easy to understand, aiming for a sixth-grade reading level. Use graphics to explain technical information. Provide translations and interpretation services. Provide multiple ways to engage with the project and access information – in-person and online. The project team will work with a Digital Accessibility Team to comply with Section 508, which requires all Federal electronic content to be accessible.
- **Use time wisely.** Focus discussions and engagement around topics that are of most interest or concern to their communities. Go to people with information that answers the questions “Why should I care?”, “How does this affect me?” or “How can I relate to this?” Collaborate with other projects and agencies to engage collectively so community groups can provide input all at once and not be excluded from participation due to capacity to attend multiple meetings.
- **Close the loop.** At the start of meetings, report back to communities impacted about how their feedback has influenced the decision-making process. Offer space at the end of meetings for feedback on the process. Follow up with mail listservs when key decisions are made.

Below, Figure 2 illustrates the project team’s intentional engagement approach. This approach includes three levels of engagement: highest, middle, and lowest levels of engagement. Each level of engagement includes outreach activities that are aligned with the project purpose and need, and/or close in proximity to the project area, or API.

**Figure 2.** Intentional Engagement Approach





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## ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION TOOLS

To fulfill the engagement approaches in this DEI Plan, the project team will utilize a variety of engagement and information tools as described in Table 2

Table 2. Engagement and Information Tools		
Tool	Description	Measures
<b>Briefings/Meetings</b>	In-person gatherings for sharing project information, particularly with community-based organizations and religious groups that serve priority communities.	Number of participants, number of comments, level of understanding of project information
<b>Focus Groups/Workshops</b>	Small group discussions or hands-on sessions aimed at gathering feedback.	Number of participants, number of comments
<b>Interviews</b>	One-on-one conversations to gather specific or in-depth insights.	Number of interviews
<b>Surveys</b>	Questionnaires to collect community input.	Survey response rate, simplicity of surveys
<b>Community Event Tabling and Displays</b>	Participation in community events, especially cultural ones.	Attendance, number of interactions
<b>Community Outreach and Postings</b>	Door-to-door outreach, posting printed materials at centers/markets, canvassing.	Outreach coverage, number of interactions, number of postings
<b>Translated Materials</b>	Identify, translate and disseminate project information materials including online open houses, surveys and factsheets.	Number of materials translated; accessibility (including website ratings, bounce rate and analytics)
<b>Community Engagement Liaisons (CELs) Program</b>	Coordinate with the CELs Program to provide translations of materials and interpretation for people with limited English proficiency.	Number of times CELs translate materials or provide interpretation services
<b>Local Media</b>	Engagement through newspapers, radio, and local TV, particularly with all language media outlets.	Media coverage, web traffic
<b>Text Message Updates</b>	Updates and reminders via text messages.	Number of texts, click rate
<b>Feedback Collection Boxes</b>	Collection points for written feedback from the community. This is especially important for community members with limited access to broadband internet.	Number of comments



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## APPENDIX A. EQUITY AND EMPOWERMENT LENS



# PURPOSE

## PEOPLE

Who is positively and negatively affected (by this issue) and how?

How are people differently situated in terms of the barriers they experience?

Are people traumatized/retraumatized by your issue/decision area?

*Consider physical, spiritual, emotional and contextual effects*

## PLACE

How are you/your issue or decision accounting for people's emotional and physical safety, and their need to be productive and feel valued?

How are you considering environmental impacts as well as environmental justice?

How are public resources and investments distributed geographically?

## ISSUE/ DECISION

## PROCESS

How are we meaningfully including or excluding people (communities of color) who are affected?

What policies, processes and social relationships contribute to the exclusion of communities most affected by inequities?

Are there empowering processes at every human touchpoint?

What processes are traumatizing and how do we improve them?

## POWER

What are the barriers to doing equity and racial justice work?

What are the benefits and burdens that communities experience with this issue?

Who is accountable?

What is your decision-making structure?

How is the current issue, policy, or program shifting power dynamics to better integrate voices and priorities of communities of color?

## Equity and Empowerment Lens



Multnomah  
County

Office of Diversity and Equity

Revised March 24, 2014

# ***Purpose Towards Racial Equity***

In a purpose-driven system, all partners at all levels align around transformative values, relationships and goals moving towards racial equity, integrating an emphasis on doing less harm and supporting actions that heal and transform.

## **Defining An Individual's Purpose:**

- ⇒ What is my purpose towards achieving racial equity?
- ⇒ What gets in the way of maintaining my purpose towards racial equity?
- ⇒ What do I need to maintain my purpose?
- ⇒ Purpose towards racial equity is also further clarified by our positions in the hierarchy.
  1. If you are a manager or other type of leader with positional authority, how can you further clarify your purpose so that you are leveraging the power you have?
  2. If you are at a lower level in the organization, what do you need from leadership in order to feel valued and a key contributor to the organizational purpose?
  3. How does your role and your purpose influence and align with?

## **Defining An Institution's Purpose:**

- ⇒ What is our institution's purpose towards racial equity?
- ⇒ How are we clearly defining that purpose, and where and how do we communicate that?
- ⇒ How can we ensure that our purpose is integrated into our policies, procedures, and practices?
- ⇒ How can we give our employees a greater sense of meaning in what they do around racial equity, so they feel more enthusiastic and hopeful about their work?
- ⇒ In what practical ways can our institution add more value around racial equity and do less harm?
- ⇒ Is racial equity the central theme in your recruitment and retention efforts?
- ⇒ Do you have the right people around you to achieve your purpose? If not, how can you move towards this reality?
- ⇒ How do you ensure individuals work together with leaders to align to the institution's purpose towards racial equity?



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## APPENDIX B. DEMOGRAPHICS RESEARCH



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April 2024

## Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Project

### Demographic Overview

Understanding the demographic landscape is vital for effective decision-making and community engagement. This report delves into a comprehensive demographic analysis completed in 2019, which will inform our overall engagement and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) approaches in this project's final design phase. The data used is derived from the U.S. Census American Community Surveys 2011-2015 and 2013 -2017, and maps were created using EPA EJ Screen, Social Explorer or PolicyMap.com.

#### DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE KEY TAKEAWAYS: 1-MILE RADIUS OF BURNSIDE BRIDGE

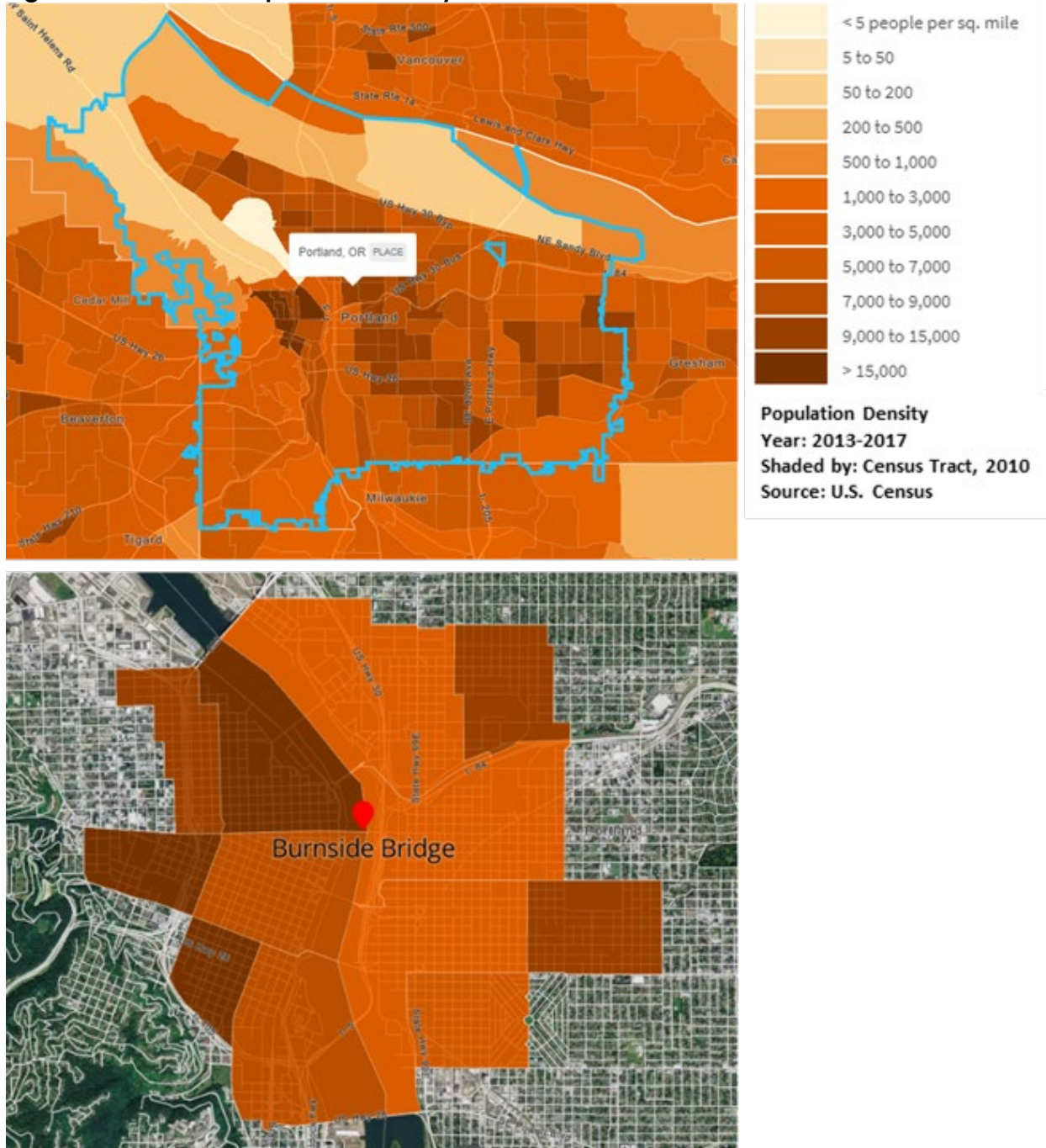
- Approximately 45,944 people live within a mile of the Burnside Bridge.
- 81 percent of residents identify as White Alone, six percent identify as Hispanic and Asian, and five percent identify as Black/African American.
- 15 percent of people speak a language other than English; most commonly spoken languages other than English include Spanish, French, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Arabic.
- 80 percent of the population is between 18 and 64 years of age.
- 60 percent of people have a bachelor's degree or more.
- The average median household income in the area is \$45,630.
- 16 percent of community members in the area have a disability; the most common types of disabilities include ambulatory (nine percent), cognitive (seven percent) and independent living difficulties (six percent).
- 38 percent of Households in adjoining Census Tract 106 have no internet access.

#### POPULATION DENSITY

The City of Portland covers an area of 145 square miles and is in the heart of Multnomah County. Approximately 657,526 people lived in the City of Portland in 2017.<sup>1</sup> In Portland, population density is highest in inner-city areas including the downtown area and between I-5 and I-205. Approximately 45,944 people live within a mile of the Burnside Bridge. Population density is higher in the area northwest of the bridge; the population by square mile in this area is about five times greater than the other surrounding areas (Figure 1).

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census. 2013-2017 American Community Survey (5-year estimate). Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/table-and-geography-changes/2017/5-year.html>.

**Figure 1: Estimated Population Density Between 2013-2017**



## RACE AND ETHNICITY

According to the latest census data, 78 percent of Portland residents identify as White, while 81 percent of the population within a mile radius is White. The Hispanic or Latinx population within the radius is almost half the amount compared to the rest of Portland.

**Table 1: Race and Ethnicity in 1-Mile Radius of Burnside Bridge, City-wide, State-wide**

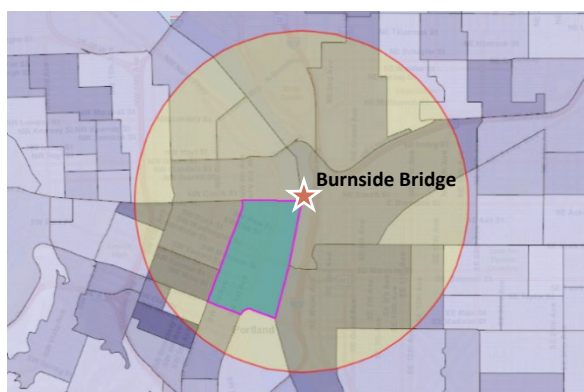
Race/Ethnicity	1-Mile Radius of Burnside Bridge	Portland	Oregon
White	81%	78%	85%
Black or African American	5%	6%	2%
Asian	6%	8%	4%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.6%	0.4%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.7%	0.8%	1%
Other	2%	2%	3%
Two or more races	5%	5%	4%
Hispanic or Latinx (any race)	6%	10%	12%

Red text denotes significant difference from city/state average or Burnside Bridge

## BLOCK GROUP WITH HIGHEST MINORITY POPULATION

The EPA EJ Screen tool highlighted Block Group 3, Census Tract 106 (Multnomah County, Oregon) as the block group with the highest minority population in the 1-mile radius around the Burnside Bridge, at 45 percent (Figure 2). The total population in this Block Group is 918, with 62 percent White, 16 percent Black, 17 percent reporting two or more races, and 12 percent Hispanic. Considering the White majority within a mile radius, this Block Group stands out with a significantly higher minority population than the surrounding Block Groups. Strategies to connect with organizations and groups located within this Block Group to reach minority populations should be used.

**Figure 2: Census Tract 106, Block Group 3**







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## LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME

Census data indicates that most Portland residents speak only English at home (81 percent), while 19 percent speak a language other than English. The most spoken languages other than English in the city include Spanish at seven percent, Asian/Pacific Island languages at six percent and Indo-European languages at five percent (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Languages Spoken at Home in 1-Mile Radius of Burnside Bridge, City-wide, State-wide**

	1-Mile Radius of Burnside Bridge	Portland	Oregon
Non-English at home	15%	19%	15%
Speak Spanish	4%	7%	8%
Speak other Indo-European languages	5%	5%	3%
Speak Asian/Pacific Island languages	5%	6%	3%
Speak other languages	1%	1%	1%

Red text denotes significant difference from city/state average or Burnside Bridge

According to 2012-16 ACS estimates, 88 percent of the population within a 1-mile radius of the Burnside Bridge speaks only English and 12 percent speak non-English at home. There are 288 households, about one percent, that are linguistically isolated, meaning a household in which only one person over the age of 14 speaks English “very well” or speaks English only. See list of predominant languages in Table 3 below.

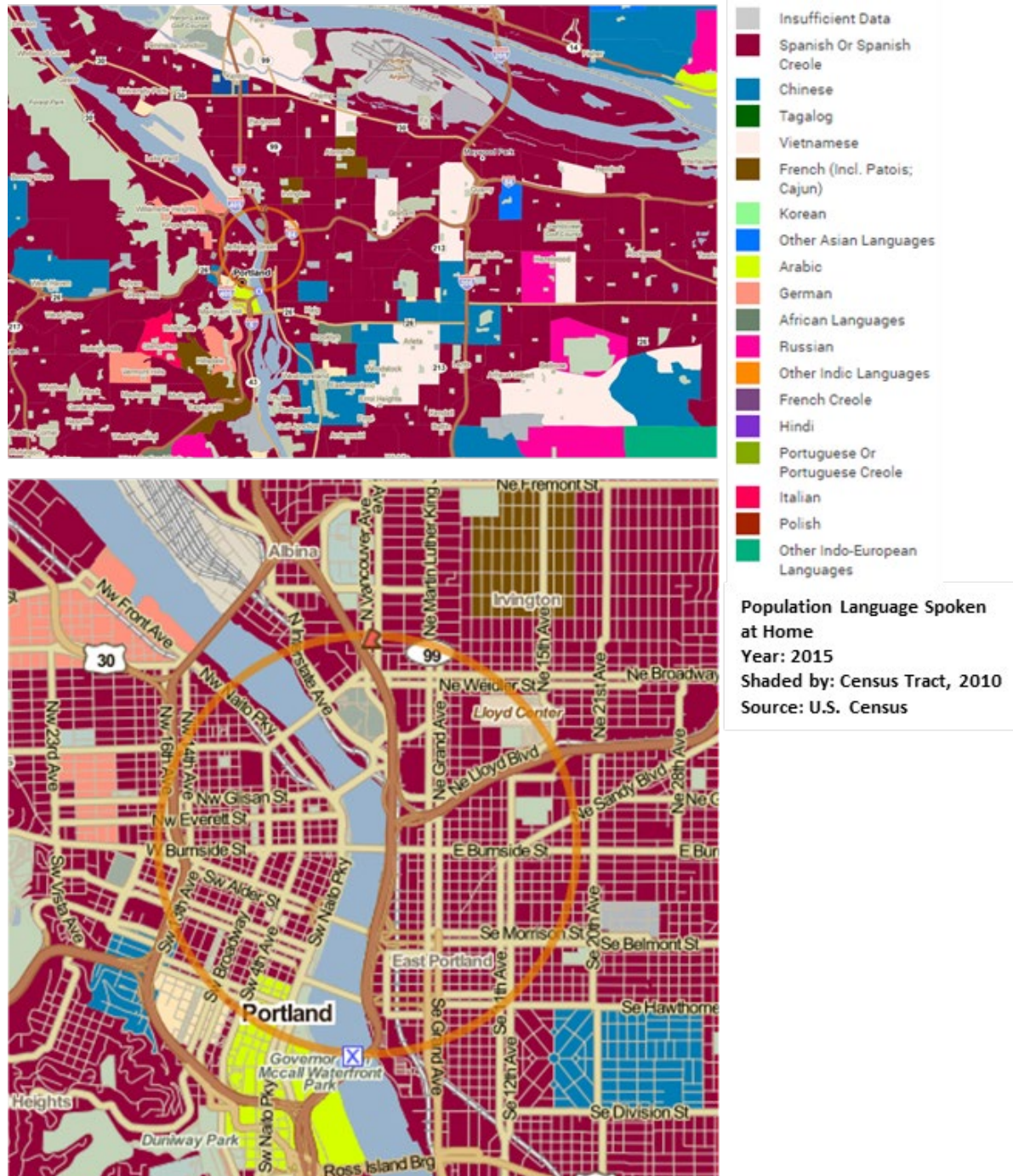
**Table 3: Population by Language Spoken at Home (persons ages 5 and above)**

Language	Total Persons (2012-16 ACS Estimates)	Percent
English	18,867	88%
Spanish	802	4%
German	144	1%
Chinese	231	1%
Vietnamese	114	1%
Arabic	268	1%

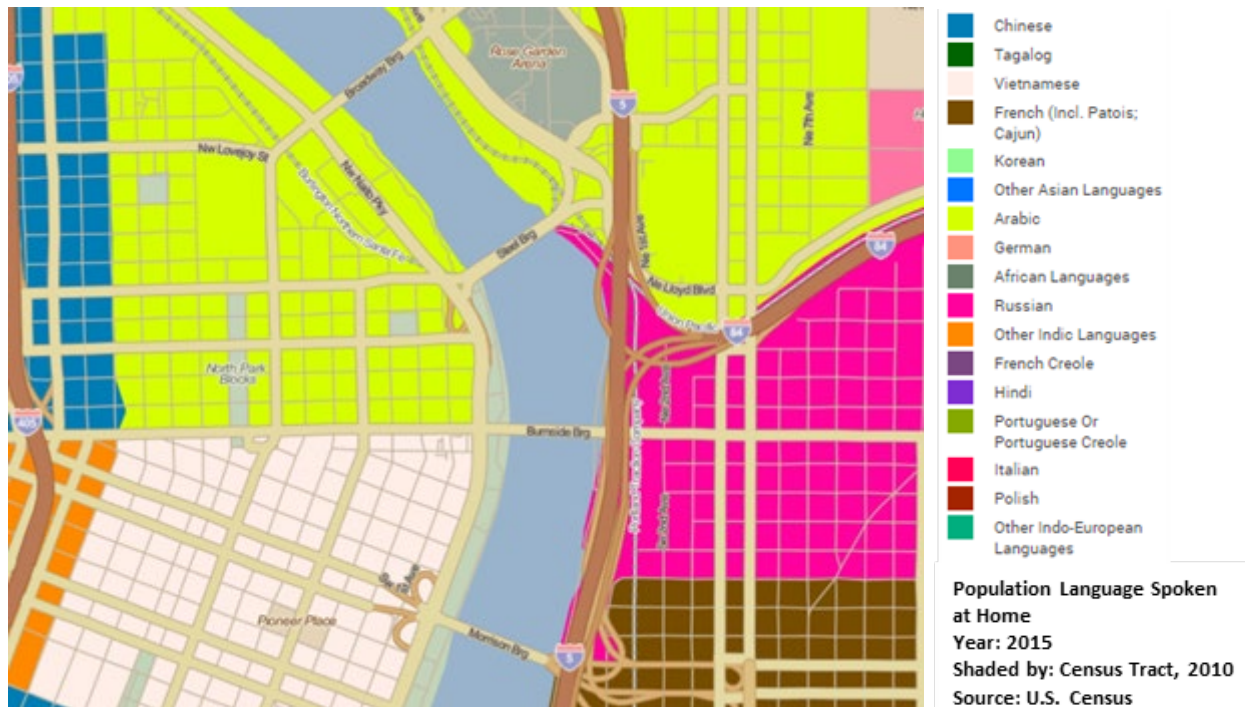
Figure 3 and Figure 4 below show a spatial view of the estimated percentage of different languages spoken at home by census tract in the city and within a mile of the Burnside Bridge. Within a mile of the Burnside Bridge, Chinese, Spanish, Vietnamese, French, Russian, and Arabic languages are the predominant languages spoken at home other than English.



**Figure 3: Predominant Language Spoken at Home (not including English) in 2015**



**Figure 4: Predominant Language Spoken at Home (not including English or Spanish) in 2015**

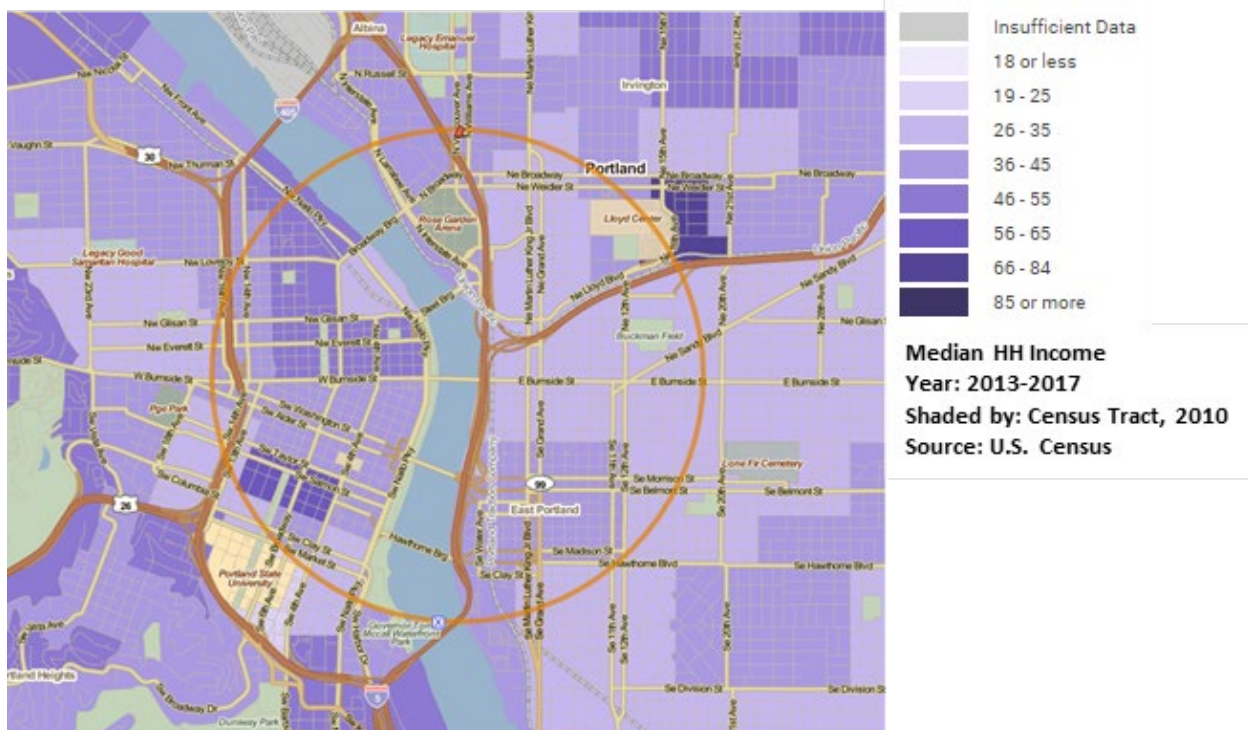




## AGE AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

80 percent of the population within a mile of the Burnside Bridge is between 18 and 64 years of age; this is 10 and 18 percent higher than city and state averages respectively. Figure 5 displays median age within the study area spatially.

**Figure 5: Estimated Median Age of all People between 2013-2017**



Educational attainment is 12 and 28 percent higher within a mile of the Burnside Bridge compared to city and state averages, with 60 percent of residents having a bachelor's degree or more.

**Table 4: Estimated Median Age & Educational Attainment in 1-Mile Radius of Burnside Bridge, City-wide, State-wide**

Age	1-Mile Radius of Burnside Bridge	Portland	Oregon
Age <18	5%	18%	22%
Age 18-24	13%	8%	9%
Age 25-34	31%	20%	14%
Age 35-44	15%	17%	13%
Age 45-54	10%	13%	12%



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Age	1-Mile Radius of Burnside Bridge	Portland	Oregon
Age 55-64	11%	12%	14%
Age 18-64	80%	70%	62%
Age 65+	15%	12%	16%
Educational attainment for population 25 years and over			
Less than high school	3%	8%	10%
High school graduate	10%	16%	23%
Some college	27%	28%	35%
Bachelor's degree or more	60%	48%	32%

Red text denotes significant difference from city/state average or Burnside Bridge

## INCOME

Median household income in the study area (1-mile radius of the Burnside Bridge) is lower compared to Portland and Oregon averages.

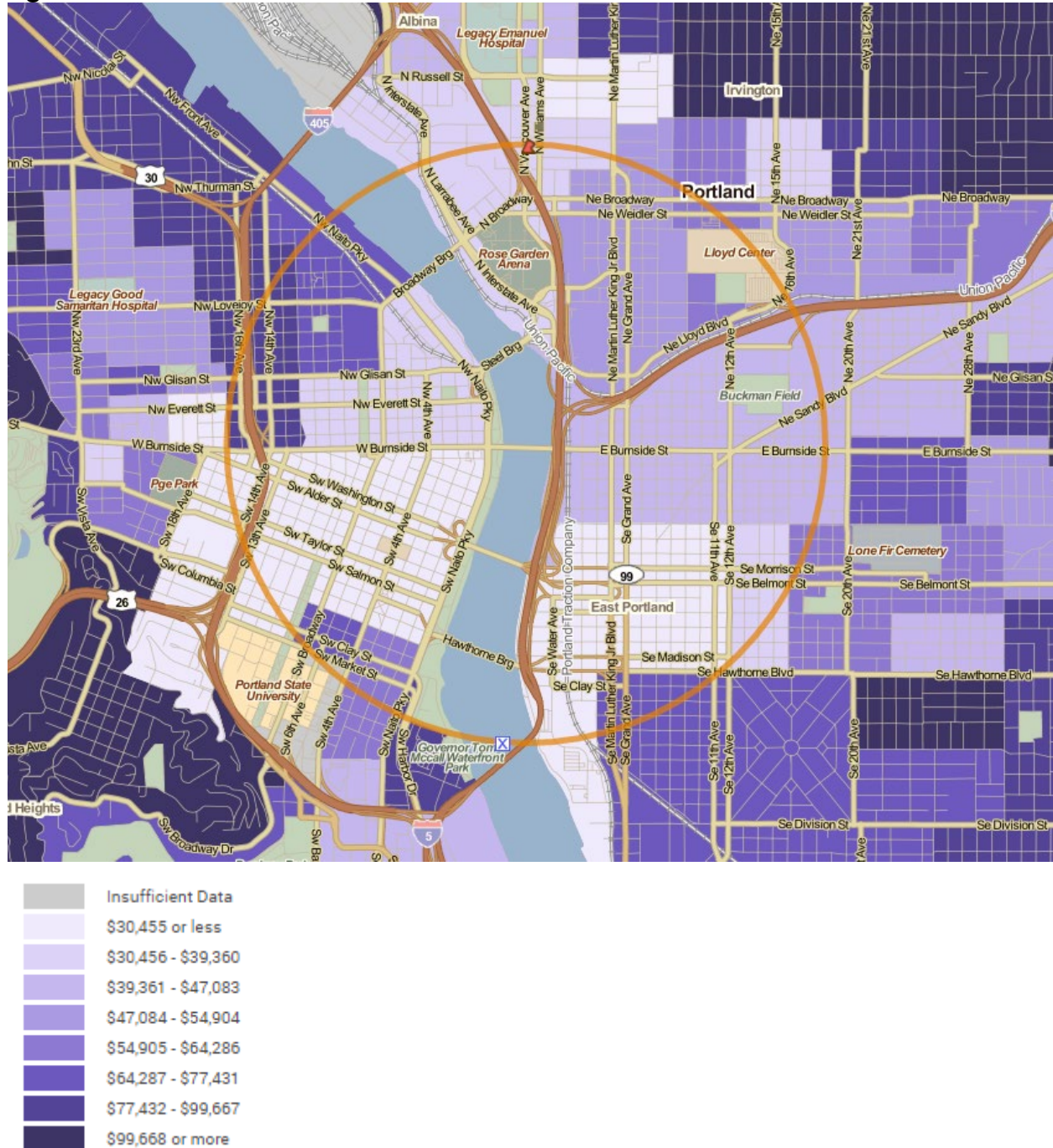
**Table 6: Median Household Income in 1-Mile Radius of Burnside Bridge, City-wide, State-wide**

Geography	Income	Difference in Median Household Income Compared to Study Area (\$)	Difference in Median Household Income Compared to Study Area (%)
Study area	\$45,630	-	-
Portland	\$61,248	+\$15,618	+26%
Oregon	\$56,119	+\$10,489	+19

Red text denotes significant difference from city/state average or Burnside Bridge

Figure 6 below shows a spatial distribution of median incomes within a mile of the Burnside Bridge. Higher median incomes are concentrated north of the Burnside Bridge while lower incomes are concentrated south of the bridge.

Figure 6: Median Household Income between 2013-2017



## COMMUNITY MEMBERS WITH DISABILITIES

According to the latest Census data, 16 percent of community members living within a mile of the Burnside Bridge have a disability, which is higher than the city (13 percent) and state (15 percent) rates. The most common types of disabilities within a mile of the Burnside Bridge include ambulatory (9 percent), cognitive (7 percent) and independent living difficulties (6 percent).

**Table 5: Community Members with Disabilities in 1-Mile Radius of Burnside Bridge, City-wide, State-wide**

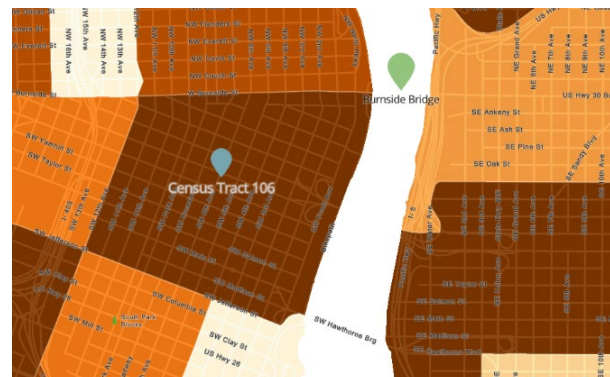
	1-Mile Radius of Burnside Bridge	Portland	Oregon
Percent of population with a disability	16%	13%	15%
Disability type			
Hearing	4%	3%	5%
Vision	3%	2%	3%
Cognitive	7%	6%	6%
Ambulatory	9%	6%	8%
Self-care	3%	3%	3%
Independent living	6%	6%	6%

**Red text** denotes significant difference from city/state average or Burnside Bridge

## INTERNET ACCESS

Census Tract 106 (Figure 7) has 38 percent households with no internet access, which is 740 of the 1,964 households in the tract. This percentage is more than double the surrounding census tracts. There is no block group data for this factor, but Block Group three, Census Tract 106 (mentioned above) falls within this tract. This tract raises considerable equity concerns.

**Figure 7: High Percentage of No Internet Access in Census Tract 106 Compared to Surrounding Tracts**







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## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The findings above provide a baseline understanding of existing demographic data within a mile of the Burnside Bridge, Portland, and Oregon. This information is intended to inform the development of a robust public involvement plan for the Environmental Review phase and Design Phase of the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project. Based on the demographic data presented, below is a list of considerations for project staff to ensure a responsive public engagement plan.

- Project materials should be translated into the top languages spoken at home not including English, which include Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Russian, and Arabic.
- Interpretation support for top languages spoken at home not including English must be considered for engagement activities.
- Accessibility needs of community members with disabilities must be considered when planning public events.
- A range of feedback tactics should be considered for all income levels – online, print, social media, videos, in-person events, etc.
- Prioritize in-person outreach in areas with high percentages of no internet access and especially considering areas with low internet access.
- A range of targeted outreach activities that adapt to cultural, language and accessibility needs, and interests should be considered.





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## APPENDIX C. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & EQUITY INTERVIEWS SUMMARY



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# Environmental Justice & Equity Interviews Summary

**Project:** Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge

**Subject:** Environmental Justice and Equity Interviews Summary - Draft

**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2019

## Overview

Multnomah County strives to incorporate best practices in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion as they relate to the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project. In an effort to develop a meaningful Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan for this project, the project team conducted initial Environmental Justice and Equity interviews in the early stages of the Environmental Review phase.

The purpose of these interviews was to gain input and direction from organizations representing historically marginalized communities to better inform the development of the DEI Plan.

Organizations representing the following populations were identified and contacted in request for an interview:

- Low income and homeless/houseless
- People with disabilities
- People of Color
- Native Americans
- Non-English speaking
- Senior citizens
- Contracting community

Participants were asked questions around the following topics:

1. Topics of interest related to the study and any potential issues and concerns their communities may have related to the project.
2. Opportunities and challenges engaging the populations they serve, as well as how to remove barriers to entry and be meaningful in approach.
3. Draft DEI Plan objectives and which items are most important to prioritize in the Plan.
4. Additional organizations representing historically marginalized populations that the project team should engage throughout the project.

Project team members interviewed representatives from eight organizations representing the communities listed above. Overall, participants were interested in topics of the environmental study



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that would have a more direct impact on the populations they served – such as transportation, displacements and relocations, environmental justice and equity, public services, neighborhoods and social environment, and health impact assessment.

A common theme amongst the majority of interviewees was the importance of working collaboratively with culturally competent community liaisons to lead and perform the engagement with their communities. They emphasized the importance of contracting with and paying the community liaisons for their work as an extension of the project team. In addition, it was repeatedly noted that when engaging diverse populations, the project team should provide food and childcare at the event and incentivize participation with stipends or gift cards. Early and consistent communication and engagement is important to make sure their communities have the same opportunities to be involved and provide input.

Another common theme amongst interviewees was the interest in future minority contracting opportunities. People emphasized the importance of early workforce development and training programs so the minority contracting community can obtain the skills and resources needed for future jobs on the project. People expressed interest in opportunities for their organizations to collaborate with Multnomah County on potential programs and trainings.

When asked to review and provide feedback on the draft DEI Plan objectives, the majority of people that reviewed the objectives said they looked good overall. Some folks said that the top three were of most importance to their organization and the people they serve including 1) conduct an accessible, inclusive and culturally responsive engagement process, 2) use feedback to inform outcomes, and 3) leverage opportunities to build industry readiness. Several people said they would share internally with staff or committees doing DEI-related work and provide any feedback to the team at a later point.

A list of 44 diverse organizations in the community was shared with participants. They were asked to review the list and let the team know of any additions. In several cases, people said it was a good and complete list. Some additional organizations were recommended to be added. Of the additions, Cascade Behavioral Health and Catholic Charities were most frequently stated.

This document summarizes the feedback received and recommendations for performing diverse, equitable, and inclusive engagement. Input from these interviews will be used to inform the development of the DEI Plan and further be incorporated holistically into the project's overall Public Involvement Plan (PIP).



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## INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

The project team conducted interviews with people from eight locally established community organizations that represent various environmental justice or historically marginalized populations. A list of the participating organizations and the populations they serve is provided below.

Organization	Populations Served
Coalition of Communities of Color (CCC)	People of Color
National Association Minority Contractors of Oregon (NAMCO)	Minority contracting community
Native American Youth & Family Center (NAYA)	Native American
JOIN	Low income; homeless/houseless
A Home For Everyone	Low income; homeless/houseless
Ride Connection	People with disabilities
Voz	Low income; homeless/houseless; People of Color
Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization (IRCO)	Non-English speaking; People of Color

## Key Findings

### INTEREST AREAS – ISSUES – CONCERNS

Interviewees provided input on aspects of the project that are of most interest to them and the people they serve. A list of study topics was presented to participants for their review. Below is a summary of key points that were expressed.

- Interest in contracting opportunities and early workforce development and training programs, including innovative pre-apprenticeship programs that seek to remove barriers that make it challenging to participate (i.e., language, homelessness, citizenship, etc.).
- Interest in mitigation ideas and solutions that tie back to community and culture, particularly with people that have a historic connection to the area.
- Concern about impacts to social service providers that would impact time, location, and access to services and housing.
- Concern around displacements and relocations, including “sweeps,” where people experiencing homelessness are forced out of public spaces. In addition, concern was expressed regarding potential displacement or relocation of social service providers, shelters, low income housing, and resources serving environmental justice populations – both during construction and as a result of the project.
- Concern around potential impacts to MAX line and buses, as this is most common mode of transportation for low income communities. Also, impacts to ADA access.



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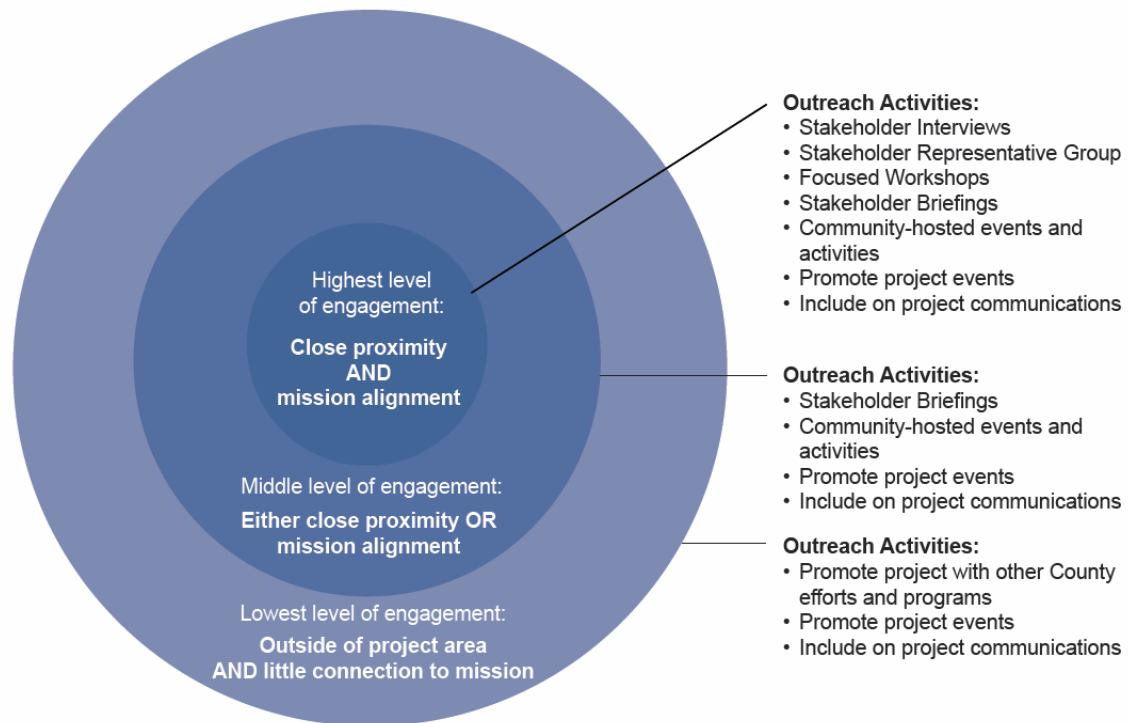
- Interest in potential opportunities to have amenities for public on or under the bridge, such as bathrooms, showers, and phone charging stations.
- A desire for the project team to keep in mind that many environmental justice populations have a historic connection to downtown and the area around west Burnside, specifically homeless, Chinese, Japanese, Native American, and African American populations.
- The following Environmental Study Topics were of most interest to participants.
  - Transportation – particularly transit and ADA
  - Displacements and relocations
  - Environmental justice and equity
  - Public services
  - Neighborhoods and social environment
  - Health Impact Assessment – particularly how noise, construction, changes to dwelling spaces, and resources may have psychological effects

## ENGAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Interviewees were asked about opportunities and challenges engaging the communities they represent. Below is a list of key recommendations.

- Work collaboratively with culture specific community engagement liaisons and be consistent with the staff that engages with key groups in order to build comfort and trust.
- Provide training for liaisons about the project so they can more effectively engage and communicate with community members.
- Provide compensation for liaisons.
- Provide stipends or gift cards for community member participation.
- Provide food and childcare for participants at engagement events.
- Provide both paper and electronic forms of information and engagement tools, and utilize graphics to explain things as much as possible.
- Provide translation and interpretation services.
- Good advance communication is essential, perform engagement efforts well ahead of key milestones to make sure all groups have the same opportunities to be involved and provide input.
- In-person engagement is preferred and most effective.
- Solicit input at community organization committee and member meetings, including environmental justice and equity committees.
- Convening workshops, listening sessions, and focus groups are good ways to engage. Focus on areas of interest and where input has influence. There was interest expressed in potential workshops or focus groups on equity, minority contracting, and social services.
- Bridge tours would be a beneficial and fun way to engage. Make sure to recognize the connections a particular community might have to the bridge and study area.
- Engage with other agencies doing this work to learn about what is working well and what is not.

- Identify contracting opportunities, workforce development programs, and trainings in collaboration with community organizations. Engage early so workforce is ready by the time work begins. Consider developing a separate minority contracting strategy for this project.
- For engagement strategy, use a tiered approach with 1) more targeted engagement efforts and resources going towards those most impacted by the project, 2) a mid-level of engagement for those less impacted by project but may have an inherent connection or interest in project mission, and 3) a low level of engagement with those not directly impacted by the project and with little connection to its mission.



## DEI OBJECTIVES

Project staff shared draft DEI objectives and asked for feedback. The majority of people that reviewed the objectives said they looked good overall or that the top three were of most importance to their organization and the people they serve including 1) conduct an accessible, inclusive and culturally, responsive engagement process, 2) use feedback to inform outcomes, and 3) leverage opportunities to build industry readiness.

Additional comments related to DEI objectives included:

- Obtain input directly from community members
- Interest in leadership development opportunities for clients



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- Make technical information accessible (understandable and available in different languages)
- Interest in sharing the objectives internally with staff or committees doing DEI-related work and getting back to the project team with any comments.

### ORGANIZATIONS TO ENGAGE *(ADDITIONS TO EXISTING LIST)*

A list of over 45 diverse organizations were shared with participants. They were asked to review the list and provide any additional organizations that they thought should be added to the list and engaged throughout the project. Some provided additional insight about the organization, noted in parenthesis below.

- Maybelle Clark MacDonald Center (at NW 5th and Couch; do outreach to Single Room Occupancy (SRO) buildings in Old Town; they operate assisted living center)
- Innovative Housing Inc. (they own affordable housing near the bridge)
- Catholic Charities (located in inner SE Portland; they focus on outreach and housing)
- Life Works (they operate the West Wind)
- Portland Police Bureau (interview them regarding homeless issues near bridge)
- St. Francis Dining Hall (main meal site on inner east side)
- Street Roots
- Cascadia Behavioral Health
- Blanchet House (faith-based program with meals and jobs in Old Town)
- El Progreso Hispano
- Dignity Village/Right to Survive
- American Rehabilitation Association (NARA)
- Portland Street Medicine
- PDX Wave (COP/PBOT program that focuses on wheelchair accessible vehicles)
- Independent Living Resources
- Oregon Commission for the Blind
- Self-Enhancement Inc.
- Oregon Tradeswomen
- Japanese Cultural Center on Naito by park
- Japanese American Community League (JACL)