

3.10 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental Justice analyses, as described under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 12898, address disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations. The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) office of Environmental Justice defines environmental justice as,

“The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local and tribal programs and policies.” (US EPA, 1998).

The following discussion is intended to provide the basis for public discussion and HUD's review of the proposed redevelopment of Park Lake Homes pursuant to NEPA. Environmental Justice is not a SEPA requirement and no mitigation of impacts is required pursuant to SEPA (WAC 197 – 11 – 448).

HUD defines *low-income* through a comparison of annual household income for households of various sizes with the area median income. For the Park Lake Homes redevelopment project, the appropriate area median income for 2003 is \$71,900. HUD issues income guidelines for *extremely low-income households* (those with 30 percent or less of the area median income), *very low-income households* (those with 50 percent or less of the area median income) and *low-income households* (those with 80 percent or less of the area median income). The relevant 2003 federal income guidelines are summarized below (see **Table 3.10-1**).

Low-income population means any readily identifiable group of low-income persons who live in geographic proximity and, if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/ transient persons (such as migrant workers or Native Americans) who will be similarly affected by the Proposed Master Plan, policy or activity.

A *minority population* is considered to be present if the minority population percentage of the affected area is greater than the minority population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographic analysis (census tracts are generally considered appropriate). Guidance from the US Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) states that,

“[M]inority populations should be identified where either (a) the minority population of the affected area exceeds 50 percent or (b) the minority population percentage of the affected area is meaningfully greater than the minority population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographic analysis” (CEQ, 1998).

Table 3.10-1
2003 FEDERAL INCOME GUIDELINES

Household Size	30% Median	50% Median	80% Median
1	\$16,350	\$27,250	\$38,100
2	\$18,700	\$31,150	\$43,500
3	\$21,050	\$35,050	\$48,950
4	\$23,350	\$38,950	\$54,400
5	\$25,250	\$42,050	\$58,750
6	\$27,100	\$45,200	\$63,100
7	\$29,000	\$48,300	\$67,450
8	\$30,850	\$51,400	\$71,800

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 12/10/01

Minority Population means any readily identifiable groups of minority persons who live in geographic proximity and, if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons (such as migrant workers or Native Americans) who will be similarly affected by a proposed program, policy or activity.

Disproportionately High and Adverse Effect on Minority and Low-Income Populations means that an adverse effect is predominately borne by a minority population and/or a low-income population and that the effect will be suffered by the minority population and/or low-income population and is appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect that will be suffered by the rest of the population. The Civil Rights Act ensures that this potential for discrimination is identified and addressed without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability and includes the following adverse affects:

- destruction or disruptions of community cohesion (community separation);
- destruction or disruptions to access of available public and private facilities and services;
- adverse employment effects;
- displacement of businesses, housing, and people;
- tax and property value losses;
- actions injurious to the public's health (e.g., air, noise and water pollution); and
- actions harmful to the public's well being (e.g., aesthetic impacts and loss of recreational property).

Racial, sex, age, and income data from the 2000 US Census and income guidelines from HUD were analyzed to determine the location of low-income and racial minority populations. Federal guidelines for analysis of environmental justice issues were evaluated (see discussion below).

An extensive public involvement process was conducted as a component of this SEPA document, including environmental scoping meetings and periodic newsletters. The King County Housing Authority held several public open houses and coordinated with individual members of the community and community groups throughout the process. .

The location of minority and low-income populations potentially affected by the Proposed Master Plan was identified through review of census data for an area including and surrounding the project site. The area, which includes parts of both Seattle and King County, is covered by eleven census tracts (CT 113, CT 114, CT 115, CT 264, CT 265, CT 266, CT 267, CT 268.01, CT 268.02, CT 269, CT 270). These tracts represent the *environmental justice study area*. The Park Lake Homes housing development is located near the center of the area in CT 265.

The population in the *environmental justice study area* is used as a point of comparison for an identified *impact area population*. Tract 265, where the project site is located, is the *impact area* (see Figure 12). These Census Tracts provide the best available demographic information for the project site and the surrounding area as of the publication date of this document.

3.10.1 Affected Environment

The project site is located in the unincorporated White Center area of King County just south of the Seattle city limits and the West Seattle neighborhood. Land uses in the vicinity of the project include single-family and multifamily residential uses, service and retail uses. Section I of this document provides a discussion of the existing area land uses, population, and overall socioeconomic conditions. Refer to Section I for further detail.

Low-Income Population

The 2000 census reports median household incomes for King County and Seattle of \$53,157 and \$45,736 respectively. Median household incomes for the census tracts in the environmental justice study area are shown in **Table 3.10-2** for comparison. The median incomes for all study area census tracts are below that of King County and all but four fall below that of Seattle. Census Tract 265, the location of the project site, has a median household income \$16,285, which is significantly lower than all of the surrounding area. It is roughly comparable to 30 percent of the median income for a *one-person household* by HUD standards.

The King County Housing Authority reports an average household income of \$11,730 for existing community residents. Approximately 88.5 percent of households (499 households) have incomes less than 30 percent of the area median income. An additional 10.1 percent (59 households) have incomes at 50 percent or below of the median income.

Table 3.10-2
 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

Census Tract	1999 Median Household Income
King County	\$53,157
Seattle	\$45,736
113	\$46,838
114	\$36,849
115	\$51,132
264	\$40,291
265	\$16,285
266	\$49,861
267	\$49,641
268.01	\$37,838
268.02	\$40,839
269	\$43,781
270	\$45,431

Source: US Census 2000; Huckell/Weinman Associates.

Minority Population

Table 3.10-3 provides a summary of the Park Lake Homes environmental justice study area racial, sex, and age demographics.

Racial minorities make up 42 percent of the total population within the study area. Countywide, racial minorities are 21 percent of the total population. In Census Tract 265 however, racial minorities comprise nearly 70 percent of the total population. The minority population is predominately Asian (40 percent of the total population).

The existing community is also home to a significant immigrant population. Sixty-five percent (65%) of the population is from a country other than the United States. Other countries of origin include Vietnam, Cambodia, Somalia, Iraq, Iran, Ukraine, American Samoa, Ethiopia, Russia, Sudan, Afghanistan, and Bosnia.

Senior Citizens

Both the study area and Census Tract 265 have relatively young populations (30 percent and 40 percent less than 20 years of age). The percentage of people over 60 is roughly comparable in the two areas—13 percent in the study area and 12 percent in Census Tract 265.

Table 3.10-3

DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STUDY AREA

Geographic area		Gender		Age			Race					
Census Tract	Total Pop.	Male	Female	Age < 20	Age 20 to 59	Age 60+	White	Black or African American	American Indian & AL Native	Asian	Other	Hispanic or Latino* (of any race)
113	5,975	2,971	3,004	1,696	3,551	728	3,227	605	94	1,199	465	571
114	7,904	3,932	3,972	2,118	4,822	964	3,968	960	150	1,355	942	1,136
115	4,173	2,011	2,162	820	2,722	631	3,422	183	48	262	71	208
264	5,824	3,037	2,787	1,580	3,449	795	3,398	567	77	723	722	1,009
265	2,640	1,208	1,432	1,053	1,282	305	822	286	40	1,062	143	170
266	2,123	1,092	1,031	577	1,253	293	1,319	90	40	478	92	192
267	5,611	2,817	2,794	1,554	3,138	919	4,008	238	100	567	446	597
268.1	4,961	2,497	2,464	1,316	3,083	562	2,558	490	103	857	644	800
268.2	5,117	2,635	2,482	1,628	2,905	584	2,552	291	93	1,267	640	740
269	1,505	747	758	443	879	183	1,000	60	36	205	112	138
270	3,228	1,677	1,551	950	1,883	395	2,143	108	72	407	306	426
Total Study Area	49,061	24,624	24,437	13,755	29,046	6,359	28,417	3,878	853	8,382	4,583	5,987
Study Area Composition	100%	50%	50%	30%	59%	13%	58%	8%	2%	17%	7%	12%
CT 265 Composition	100%	46%	54%	40%	49%	12%	31%	11%	2%	40%	5%	6%

Source: US Census 2000.