

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: March 21 - 22, 2024

From: TANISHA TAYLOR, Executive Director

Reference Number: 1.13 Action

Prepared By: C. Sequoia Erasmus
Associate Deputy Director

Published Date: March 8, 2024

Subject: Interagency Equity Advisory Committee Chair and Member Remarks and Membership Recommendations

Summary:

In an effort to highlight efforts and accomplishments of members of the Interagency Equity Advisory Committee (Committee), Committee leadership will provide updates at regular meetings of the California Transportation Commission (Commission). Current Committee Chair William Walker will offer verbal remarks and has provided written remarks included in Attachment A. Member Stella Ursua has also provided written remarks included in Attachment B.

Additionally, interagency lead staff are proud to present recommendations for final Commission approval to fill two open seats on the Interagency Equity Advisory Committee.

Recommendation:

Staff from the California Transportation Commission (Commission), California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) recommend the Commission approve staff membership recommendations for two seats on the interagency Equity Advisory Committee (Committee).

Staff recommends Michelle Rousey and Andres Ramirez to serve on the Committee.

Issue:

A total of 47 individuals responded to the call for applicants for two seats on the Committee. Interagency lead staff prioritized recommending members who represent priority groups identified by Committee members and each of the three agencies, including people with disabilities, people representing migrant or agricultural worker communities, and people from rural and underrepresented geographies such as rural and unincorporated areas throughout the state.

Recommended Member Details***Michelle Rousey***

Michelle Rousey serves as the Chair of the Disability and Aging Community Living Advisory Committee convened by the California Health and Human Services Agency, on the East Bay Paratransit Advisory Committee, and on the Paratransit Advisory and Planning Committee. Michelle serves as a Consumer Advocate who gives voice to various Olmstead issues throughout local and state agencies. Ms. Rousey resides in the Bay Area and identifies as a person of marginalized gender or sexuality and a person with disabilities.

Andres Ramirez

Andres Ramirez has 19 years of experience advocating for equity in priority communities in Los Angeles County through community organizing and policy advocacy, and currently serves as the Executive Director at People for Mobility Justice. Andres Ramirez currently serves on the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority's Policy Advisory Council, the California Public Utilities Commission and California Energy Commission Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group, and the Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing Advisory Council. Mr. Ramirez represents Los Angeles County and identifies as a member of a community of color; a member of our state's migrant or immigrant population; and a person with disabilities.

Background:

The Interagency Equity Advisory Committee (Committee) is an advisory Committee established by the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), the Commission and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The Committee is intended to elevate diverse and historically marginalized voices to advise agencies on how to achieve meaningful outcomes in transportation equity, environmental justice, and equitable economic opportunities, especially as related to transportation planning and programming.

The inaugural cohort of Committee members were selected in October 2022. All 15 Committee members began their terms in March 2023. Committee member terms are staggered, and members in the inaugural cohort were asked to determine their ability to serve one- or two-year terms. Two members of the Committee stated their ability to serve one-year terms, and 13 stated their ability to serve two-year terms. Per the Committee Charter, adopted in September 2023, Committee members are eligible to serve up to three, two-year terms if reappointed.

Interagency lead staff released an open call for applications between January 11, 2024, and February 4, 2024. Due to statewide climate-related emergencies from multiple atmospheric rivers, interagency lead staff were asked to extend the deadline by one week. Staff agreed and the application closing date was moved to February 9, 2024.

Individuals appointed to the Committee will advise the Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans on how to achieve meaningful outcomes in transportation equity, environmental justice, and equitable economic opportunities, especially as related to transportation planning and programming.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Interagency Equity Advisory Committee Chair Report
- Attachment B: Interagency Equity Advisory Committee Member Report: Stella Ursua

California Transportation Interagency Equity Advisory Committee

Transportation Commission (CTC) | Transportation Department (Caltrans)
Transportation Agency (CalSTA)

Report to the March 21 California Transportation Commission Meeting

William Walker, EAC Chair

Santa Clara County Government Center, San Jose CA

March 21-22, 2024

Greetings Commissioners:

Although this is my first official California Transportation Interagency Equity Advisory Committee (EAC) Report to the Commission from the Chair, I was able to write an unofficial report for the January meeting in Modesto and an unofficial Chair's Report for the February 13 EAC meeting; both are attached. These reports will also be posted to a new [California Transportation Equity Blog](https://transitequity.substack.com) which can be found at <https://transitequity.substack.com>. This is a personal blog and an unofficial space where I can share events that members are attending and information about spaces where the community can engage with the EAC, Caltrans, CalSTA and the CTC. I will do my best to provide updates on what occurs at meetings and between meetings, and adhering to Bagley Keene and other public meeting laws governing the EAC.

During the Chair's Report, we heard from two members who welcomed us to the region:

Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Deputy Director for Planning and Programs Kacey Lizon welcomed us to the Greater Sacramento. SACOG is a 28-member metropolitan planning organization and council of governments comprised of six area counties and 26 cities.

- Deputy Director Lizon discussed SACOG Racial Equity Action Plan, adopted in 2022, and aligned with the efforts of the CTC and Caltrans racial equity strategies. The REAP directed SACOG to address disparities in the region through:
 - o Listening and learning from stakeholders
 - o Act on own as a council of governments with planning, policy and programming funding of processes
 - o Monitor work over time
 - o Serve and learn with SACOG members
- The REAP addresses operations, programs and board practices
- Community engagement processes
- Scrutinize procurement and contracting processes and make each more open to more organizations to have opportunities to do business with SACOG

- Examine program design to evaluate them over time, measure their equity impact, and apply to future SACOG practices

Founding EAC member ***Nailah Pope Harden introduced Dave Moore from Civic Thread (formerly Walk Sacramento) an equitable community engagement organization serving Greater Sacramento*** (city, county) and the six-county SACOG region. The organization:

- Addresses language barriers for participants in planning processes
- Provides compensation to demonstrate to community members their time is valued
- Chooses meeting venues and event types that are comfortable for and preferred by hard to reach communities because they are generally part of the affected community
- Designs strategies to secure impactful, positive change for communities through innovative engagement tools (i.e. participatory budgeting, implementing safer streets infrastructure)
- Address historical harms to communities, esp. of color and ensuring new development does not destabilize or displace vulnerable community members.

February 13 was the final meeting for members Nailah Pope Harden and Axel Santana. We wish them both well on their future endeavors and their voices on the EAC will be dearly missed.

I provided an update to the Committee and Staff in regard to ***development of scheduling future EAC meetings, a suggested Ad-Hoc Committee structure, and suggestions for future ex-officio membership***. EAC members, EAC staff, and members of the public all agreed that there are some challenges in ensuring we are creating space for members to meaningfully and effectively serve while providing the insight on how our State should move forward its Subcommittee structure community engagement efforts without limiting it to the six-meeting schedule that the EAC adheres to each year. We will devote time to discuss this at our April 2024 virtual meeting. We also hope to hold a second Bagley Keene Open Meeting Act overview, a presentation from Caltrans on Excess Lands, and reports from members. Many thanks to Commissioner Lugo, agency staff and leadership, and members of the public for attending our February 13 meeting, as well as anyone else I may have missed.

In the 6 meetings we have held since March of 2023, we have ***approved our charter, elected officers, and attended a number of staff briefings and guidelines development meetings for a number of different strategies at the three agencies***. In the next six meetings, we look forward to partnering with staff, Commissioners, and members of the public to ensure that the expertise of EAC members is drawn upon in a manner that is meaningful for EAC members and for those we advise. We thank you for embarking on this experiment and look forward to it yielding a transportation system of which we can all be proud.

Cordially,

William Walker, Chair - Interagency Equity Advisory Committee

Chair's Report to EAC

William Walker, Chair

Sacramento Area Council of Governments

February 13, 2024

A new electronic home for Chair's Updates:

<https://transitequity.substack.com>

On behalf of members of the California Transportation Interagency Equity Advisory Committee, I would like to welcome everyone to the State Capitol, the City of Sacramento, and the Greater Sacramento Region.

We are grateful to our hosts the Sacramento Area Council of Governments and Civic Thread. Big shout out to the District 3 Staff and members who happen to be from that region!

A big thank you to our devoted staff from Caltrans, CalSTA and the California Transportation Commission:

Abby, Mark and Secretary Omishakin

Carolyn and Alexis

Sequoia, Destiny, Justin, Doug and Director Taylor

Anyone else I may have missed?

A big thank you to Vice Chair Armas-Kelly for all her support and for being in all the places we cannot be.

A big thank you to the EAC members. It's been quite a year. Looking forward to today's meeting where we will begin to formalize and as one member stated in their survey response, codify, what we do as a Committee.

The following are the meeting agenda items for today:

General Public Comment for items not on the agenda, approval of meeting minutes and finalizing our schedule for the year;

Informational items on EAC focus areas and the Interagency Workplan, a discussion on our expanded leadership, our ex-officio membership, and a presentation from our friends at Civic Thread.

We will also receive staff updates from the Commission regarding Senate Bill 1 Program Guidelines Development, from CalSTA on the Draft Housing and Transportation Interagency Work Group Anti-Displacement Memorandum, and from Caltrans on Excess Lands Presentation.

We will end with Member Reports, a Closing, Next Steps, and from any members of the public who were unable to address the Committee.

Really excited to hear from SACOG and Civic Thread, and we will hand it over to them without any further adieu.

Regards,

William Walker, Chair

California Transportation Interagency Equity Advisory Committee

California Transportation Interagency Equity Advisory Committee (EAC)

*Transportation Commission (CTC) / Transportation Department (Caltrans)
Transportation Agency (CalSTA)*

*January 25-26, 2024 Report
Prepared by William Walker, EAC Chair*

1. INTERNAL TRANSITIONS AND RECRUITMENT

New Beginnings: My name is William Walker, and I am very honored to serve as the inaugural chair of the Interagency Equity Advisory Committee. Many thanks to our first Vice Chair, Martha Armas Kelly, and to Founding Member Nailah Pope-Harden, who put in a great deal of ground work as an advocate and community leader for more equitable spaces in transportation and government, and penned the letter to the Commission in 2020 that allowed for the EAC to exist today. Also a big thank you to CTC Staffer Sequoia Erasmus, the 2020 California Transportation Equity Roundtable, Commissioners, Transportation Secretary Toks Omishakin, and the many other Interagency Staff and Community Leaders that make this work in this particular capacity possible.

Commission Leadership: We also look forward to the Chair and Vice Chair for the Commission to be elected at January's regular meeting in Modesto. We are also very honored to have Assemblymember Lori Wilson (Suisun City) and Senator Lena Gonzalez (Long Beach) join as ex-officio Commissioners and as chairs of their respective legislative Transportation committees. Their districts in the suburbs of our two largest population centers are rapidly growing and are largely regions that are majority underrepresented groups: Black, Latina/e/o/x, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Indigenous/Native American. I look forward to their expertise on transportation issues and getting to know their vision of what is to come.

Equity Committee Departures: Many thanks to Nailah Pope-Harden and Axel Santana for their work both in the transportation equity space, and their many hours of commitment to establishing the inaugural Interagency Equity Advisory Committee. Definitely looking forward to where their next moves are, and we are looking for meaningful ways to keep our alumni members involved.

Commission Changes: Many thanks to Commission Chair Lee Ann Eager, for her leadership and service as Chair. I have learned a lot by watching how she governs. Her ability to lead meetings with over a

hundred reports to approve each time, her willingness to hear from all perspectives on an issues by doing her best not to limit public comment, and her willingness to allow EAC members who attend regular meetings to participate in all aspects of Commission meetings including the tours in meeting communities and networking events with Commission and State agency staff, local and regional staff, and the community among others. Another huge farewell to Commissioner Michele Martinez who definitely models, for me, a way to bring in a human element to the policy issues we address. Her voice is deeply missed here.

Applications for EAC Member Vacancies due February 4: We thank the Commission and Staff for advertising far and wide the two upcoming vacancies on the Equity Advisory Committee. I have already informed the schools I have relationships with as a graduate researcher with the University of California Institute for Transportation Studies (Berkeley, Davis, California and Irvine). I also shared with a number of schools I am affiliated with in the Bay Area and will continue to work with EAC members to blast this information far and wide among advocates in the intersectional transportation organizing space (housing, environment, labor, et al).

2. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERSHIP TO THE EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Per staff recommendation, the EAC is working to develop a framework for how we include feedback from partner agencies and constituencies that impact the interagency decision-making process. In addition to EAC member perspectives on this, we are interested in who Commissioners, Staff, Stakeholders and the community at-large would like to see in this role. Please feel free to let us know at transportationeac@dot.ca.gov. Big shout out to Commission Regional Activities Moderator Rich Murphy (also from San Luis Obispo Council of Governments), and Patricia Chen at Los Angeles Metro, who had both reached out regarding this item last March. We now have a structure to explore this.

3. EAC AND CTC/EAC EXECUTIVE MEETINGS UPDATES

At the December EAC meeting, we received an update and provided comments to CalSTA staff on the CalSTA Strategic Plan. At the December 8 Executive Meeting, we were joined by Vice Chair Guardino, and Commissioners Grisby, Lugo and Norton. We received remarks from Secretary Omishakin and several leadership staff. We are grateful for the meaningful engagement from all levels of our Interagency structure and look forward to future conversations. We will continue to look at opportunities for members to take on leadership roles or continue to participate in the many issue briefings and guidelines updates.

4. CHAIR'S CORNER

Considering the work it takes to participate in volunteer positions like the EAC, it will be difficult to ask every member to contribute to this monthly update, but anyone who wants to provide anything to share with the Commission will be allowed and encouraged. I wanted to highlight a few items I came across unrelated to our EAC action items:

- A. A big shout out to Member Alex Contreras who pinned an editorial on the Interstate 10 Highway Emergency in November of last year: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-11-22/la-reopened-the-i-10-freeway-but-it-should-have-boosted-transit>

- B. Member Randy Torres Van-Vleck served as a panelist on the California Bicycle Coalition California Bike Summit pre-Summit last November: <https://cal.streetsblog.org/2023/11/17/sneak-preview-of-the-california-bike-summit-webinar>
- C. EAC Staff Member Sequoia Erasmus recently presented her research on Advancing Transportation Equity at the 2024 Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting in Washington D.C. earlier this month (January 2024) <https://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/circulars/ec281.pdf>
- D. Along with another transportation nerd friend of mine, we traveled to all 101 Los Angeles Metro Rail stations in a matter of 10 hours once December (2023) day. I look forward to compiling photos and sharing findings with you all.

**We will formalize the Chair's Update above so you can hear more about what the fifteen members are up to over the course of the year. Thank you for reviewing this first attempt.*

5. CLOSING

Word is out. The world knows there is an EAC. On my LinkedIn page, Ann Cheng, a colleague, friend, former Mayor and City Council Member of El Cerrito, and leader within the California American Planning Association asked:

“What is built on [vacant] lots [from canceled freeway projects]? Who designs, finances and occupies these places post-redevelopment? [...] Has the Equity Advisory Committee shaped, discussed or made any new equitable parking [policy recommendations]?”

To prove to you all I am well aware of Bagley-Keene Act restrictions, I did not respond to that LinkedIn post comment. But I will let you all know, reading this report, that a whole world is waiting for the EAC to engage around these critical issues. We intend to do so and thank you for your support!

Interagency Equity Advisory Committee Member Update

Stella Ursua

The Electric Truck Research and Utilization Center (eTRUC) project, funded by the California Energy Commission (CEC), seeks to create a California research hub to facilitate and accelerate the electrification of the heavy-duty (HD) drayage vehicle market in key areas.

Project Goals and Objectives are to:

- Advance Research, Development, and Demonstration (RD&D) activities that extend the delivery range of large weight class battery electric trucks beginning with drayage operations.
- Engage broad stakeholders with a 'Community-First' approach and use input to promote equity and workforce development opportunities in priority communities.
- Plan, design, and deploy innovative, scalable public corridor charging strategies for HD electric trucks, beginning with drayage trucks.

The eTRUC project has established multiple advisory committees to gather information, disseminate project findings, and solicit stakeholder feedback and perspectives. GRID Greater LA is tasked with convening and facilitating two advisory committees for the project, the Community-First Technology Advisory Committee (CTAC) and the Workforce Development Advisory Committee (WDAC). You can learn more by visiting the project website at etruc.org.