

# Memorandum

**To:** EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**EAC Business Meeting:**  
March 11-12, 2025

**From:** STATE AGENCIES' EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

**Reference Number:** Tab 15 Information

**Prepared By:** Carolyn Craft Abrams  
Senior Advisor on Race and Equity  
California Department of Transportation

**Published Date:** February 28, 2025

**Subject:** Recap and Next Steps: Vision, Mission, and Foundational Principles for Transportation Equity

## **Summary:**

Members of the Interagency Equity Advisory Committee (Committee) will continue to discuss key considerations for the development of a vision and mission statement for the Committee, including foundational principles and objectives for improving equitable outcomes in transportation. The Committee continues to prioritize this effort to help inform a shared understanding of the Committee's purpose and desired impact. The vision, mission, and foundational principles can ultimately serve as the basis for relevant policies and objectives recommended by the Committee and practiced within each agency.

## **Background:**

At the August 2024 Committee meeting, members held an initial discussion regarding the development of a vision, mission, and foundational principles for improving equitable outcomes in transportation. At that time, members requested an opportunity to hold a more focused discussion in a workshop-style setting. On October 24, 2024, members of the Committee held an in-person workshop to discuss key considerations for the development of an effective vision and mission statement, including the process for how this would be completed. Members that participated in the workshop provided an update to the full Committee during their October meeting later that afternoon. A summary of the workshop can be found in Attachment A. On November 8, 2024, Committee members also received a survey soliciting draft vision and mission statements, along with suggested community organizations that could review the statements once they were developed. The survey questions are outlined in Attachment B.

Members of the ad hoc Safety and Climate Subcommittee were ultimately tasked with continuing this effort. The subcommittee met on November 25, 2024, and December 16, 2024 to discuss the development of these statements.

A compilation of all input, including the workshop, survey, and subcommittee meetings, was shared at the December executive meeting, when members participated in continued discussion on this effort with Commissioners and executives.

A vision and mission statement were not developed before the end of 2024 due to time constraints, but a strong foundation has been laid for the continuation of the discussion. Current committee members are encouraged to review Attachments A – J, which include a summary of the Committee workshop, as well as sample statements from federal and state agencies, commissions, and advocacy groups. Members will also receive a presentation at the March 2025 Committee meeting with a summary of input received last year. This information can help inform the scope of this effort moving forward.

**Attachments:**

- Attachment A: Summary of the October 24, 2024 Equity Visioning Session Workshop
- Attachment B: November 8, 2024 Committee Member Survey
- Attachment C: California Governor’s Executive Order N-16-22
- Attachment D: California Transportation Commission Racial Equity Statement
- Attachment E: Caltrans Equity Statement
- Attachment F: CalSTA Statement on Racial Equity, Justice and Inclusion in Transportation
- Attachment G: California Energy Commission and California Public Utilities Commission Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group Equity Framework
- Attachment H: United States Department of Transportation December 2023 Policy Statement: Equity and Access
- Attachment I: United States Department of Transportation December 2023 Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity Charter – Sections 1–3
- Attachment J: People for Mobility Justice Mission and Vision

**ATTACHMENT A:***Summary of the October 24, 2024 Equity Visioning Session Workshop*

On the morning of October 24, 2024, the Committee held a workshop to discuss and brainstorm ideas for an equity vision, mission statement, and foundational principles to apply to Committee work. Five committee members attended. Members provided input on strategies to develop the vision, mission statement, and foundational principles.

At the full meeting of the Committee, on the afternoon of October 24, members voted to develop the equity vision in a Subcommittee. Based on the current workload of each subcommittee, the Climate and Safety Subcommittee, chaired by Martha Armas Kelly, will continue to develop the vision.

At the workshop, members discussed the following questions:

1. Do you have a vision statement?
2. Do you have a mission statement?
3. Once there is a draft mission and vision statement, we'd like to get community input. What organizations and groups are you willing to share the final vision and mission with?

Workshop discussions then focused on who and what the vision should represent. Members expressed a need for the vision to reflect alignment with the communities and voices they want the statement to represent. To do this, members stated that input from communities with diverse perspectives, including low-income seniors, people with disabilities, non-drivers, environmental justice leaders, youth, and people from diverse geographic regions including rural communities was vital to success.

Members also identified a desire to expand the vision statement to look beyond focusing on individual corridors and include the importance of mitigating the negative effects of climate change, poor air pollution, or limited access to essential services such as broadband. Members added that an equitable vision for transportation acknowledges that high achieving transportation systems enable people to realize their potential by helping people get to where they need to go, especially in disabled communities where high levels of unemployment can be directly tied to a lack of access to adequate transportation.

Additionally, members attending the workshop highlighted that the statement should apply to all policies within agencies and should represent interconnectedness between equity issues and the roles of Caltrans, the Commission, and CalSTA. Members also identified other groups to collaborate with, such as the Transit Transformation Task Force, and the importance of attending community level events, such as those hosted by the California Highway Patrol.

Members sought to examine the importance of the language used in the statement, with encouragement to move away from terms like Disadvantaged Communities to more uplifting language, such as Opportunity Communities.

Members highlighted that implementing equity visions and statements is critical, noting that members should avoid wordsmithing language not associated with implementation. Some examples of useful models mentioned included the community engagement sections of the Senate Bill 1 Program applications and the Sierra Health Foundation publication “Engaging Youth: A How-To Guide for Creating Opportunities for Young People to Participate, Lead and Succeed” which identifies pillars of participation and the results of different levels of participation.

The visioning statement discussion ended with members identifying organizations and stakeholders they would commit to discussing the language of the statement with. Ideas included:

- The California Council for the Blind
- The National Federation of the Blind – California
- California Independent Living Councils
- The Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities, Humboldt
- The Caltrans District 1 and District 10 Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- High Schools, Colleges and Student Organizations
- Black Humboldt
- The Disability and Aging Community Living Advisory Committee
- Local School Boards
- CalWalks
- Faith Based Organizations
- Multi-lingual communities
- Rural Counties Task Force
- Tribal Chairmen’s Association of Northern California
- Hold a Town Hall

**ATTACHMENT B:**

November 8, 2024 Committee Member Survey

1. Name
2. Based on the materials previously shared with EAC members, which equity statements resonate the most with you?
  - a. California Governor’s Executive Order N-16-22
  - b. California Transportation Commission Racial Equity Statement
  - c. Caltrans Equity Statement
  - d. CalSTA Racial Equity Statement
  - e. California Air Resources Board Vision for Environmental Justice and Racial Equity
  - f. California Energy Commission and California Public Utilities Commission Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group Equity Framework
  - g. United States Department of Transportation Policy Statement
  - h. United States Department of Transportation Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity Charter – Sections 1 – 3
  - i. Transportation Equity Caucus Vision and Goals
  - j. People for Mobility Justice Equity Definition
3. Are there any other existing vision and mission statements that you would like to model the EAC vision and mission after?
4. Write your own vision statement.
5. Write your own mission statement.
6. Once we have a draft vision and mission statement, we'd like to get community input. What organizations and groups are you willing to share the final vision and mission statement with? Please list the names of all organizations and groups.
7. After consulting with all subcommittee chairs, the Safety and Climate Subcommittee will take the lead on the vision and mission development. Will you participate in the vision and mission development process at the upcoming Safety and Climate Subcommittee meetings?

**ATTACHMENT D:**

# **Racial Equity Statement**

## **California Transportation Commission Racial Equity Statement**

Published: January 27, 2021

The California Transportation Commission recognizes that throughout California's history, improvements to the State's transportation system have disproportionately benefitted some population groups and burdened others. The Commission condemns all forms of racism and is actively working to promote equitable outcomes through our programs, policies, and practices.

In the mid-Twentieth Century, California undertook a major expansion of transportation infrastructure aided by an influx of federal funding. While infrastructure improvements were being planned, designed, and constructed, Black, Indigenous, and other people of color were disenfranchised, lacked voting protections, and were underrepresented in government decision-making. New highways were frequently constructed through predominately Black, Latino, Asian, and low-income neighborhoods to meet the needs of primarily white suburban commuters, and through tribal lands. Racist policies and decisions also influenced the siting of other types of transportation infrastructure, such as commuter railways, and the delivery of transit services. The results of racial segregation and disinvestment of transportation funds in communities of color are still visible in cities today.

Californians who live in historically underserved communities are more likely to be negatively impacted by increased exposure to air pollution and noise from cars, trucks, ships, trains, and aircraft, and struck or killed by drivers when walking and biking. These vulnerable communities may have limited access to safe and affordable transportation options to connect residents to jobs, education, healthcare, and recreation. In addition, people of color may experience diminished safety and comfort while walking, biking, driving, or using public transportation as a result of racial discrimination in enforcement.

The Commission vows to create mobility opportunities for all Californians, especially those from underserved communities, to thrive in all aspects of life. The Commission will:

- Work to build and strengthen relationships with community-based organizations, non-profits, advocacy organizations, and other equity experts and practitioners;
- Empower the Commission's Equity Advisory Roundtable and future related efforts to help inform transportation decision making;
- Strengthen understanding of community transportation needs and challenges through the forthcoming Community Listening Sessions;

- Ensure equity, public health, and robust public engagement via our planning and programming guidelines;
- Provide expanded opportunities for Commissioner and staff training related to diversity, equity, and inclusion; and
- Feature equity topics and elevate diverse perspectives in public meetings of the Commission.

We uphold our dedication to serve and improve the quality of life for all Californians by continuing to prioritize transportation equity issues and ensuring all experience safe, affordable, and efficient transportation.

**ATTACHMENT E:**

# Caltrans Equity Statement

Acknowledgement

Published: Dec 10, 2020

[Download printable version \(PDF\)](#)

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) acknowledges that communities of color and under-served communities experienced fewer benefits and a greater share of negative impacts associated with our state's transportation system. Some of these disparities reflect a history of transportation decision-making, policy, processes, planning, design, and construction that "quite literally put up barriers, divided communities, and amplified racial inequities, particularly in our Black and Brown neighborhoods." <sup>1</sup>

Caltrans recognizes our leadership role and unique responsibility in State government to eliminate barriers to provide more equitable transportation for all Californians. This understanding is the foundation for intentional decision-making that recognizes past, stops current, and prevents future harms from our actions.

Statement of Commitment

We will achieve equity when everyone has access to what they need to thrive — starting with our most vulnerable — no matter their race, socioeconomic status, identity, where they live, or how they travel. To create a brighter future for all Californians, Caltrans will implement concrete actions as outlined in our [Race & Equity Action Plan](#) (<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/esta/race-equity/reap>), regularly update our Action Plan, and establish clear metrics for accountability in order to achieve the following commitments:

1. **People** - We will create a workforce at all levels that is representative of the communities we serve by improving our recruitment, hiring, contracting, and leadership development policies and practices.
2. **Programs & Projects** - We will meaningfully engage communities most impacted by structural racism in the creation and implementation of the programs and projects that impact their daily lives by creating more transparent, inclusive, and ongoing consultation and collaboration processes. We will achieve our equity commitments through an engagement process where everyone is treated with dignity and justice. We will reform our programs, policies, and procedures based on this engagement to avoid harm to frontline and vulnerable communities. We will prioritize projects that improve access for and provide meaningful benefits to underserved communities.

3. **Partnerships** - By leveraging our transportation investments, we also commit to increasing pathways to opportunity for minority-owned and disadvantaged business enterprises, and for individuals who face systemic barriers to employment.
4. **Planet** - We commit to combating the climate crisis and its disproportionate impact on frontline and vulnerable communities — such as Black and Indigenous peoples, communities of color, the people experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, and youth. We will change how we plan, design, build, and maintain our transportation investments to create a more resilient system that more equitably distributes the benefits and burdens to the current and future generations of Californians.

**ATTACHMENT F:**

## **CalSTA Statement on Racial Equity, Justice and Inclusion in Transportation**

Published: Jun 12, 2020

SACRAMENTO – California State Transportation Agency Secretary David S. Kim today issued the following statement on racially inequitable policies and practices within transportation systems:

“Transportation systems are about people and improving their quality of life. Unfortunately, those improvements historically have disproportionately benefitted certain segments of the population. Far too often, past transportation decisions quite literally put up barriers, divided communities, and amplified racial inequalities, particularly in our Black and Brown neighborhoods.

“The California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) strongly condemns systemic racism and discrimination in all forms, including those historically entrenched in transportation. Enhancing the lives of all Californians – particularly people of color and disadvantaged communities – by connecting individuals to jobs, healthcare, education and other opportunities lie at the heart of what we do and why.

“To that end, CalSTA firmly embraces racial equity, inclusion and diversity. These values are foundational to achieving our vision of a cleaner, safer, more accessible and more connected future.

“We will be part of the solution. We will promote policies and programs that reflect principles of diversity, equity and inclusion, and will work with stakeholders to identify areas of improvement. Through these and other efforts, transportation systems have the potential to achieve their intended purpose – to provide safe and equitable access to opportunity and truly enhance quality of life.”

**ATTACHMENT G:**

# **DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES ADVISORY GROUP EQUITY FRAMEWORK**

The impact of climate change on low-income and disadvantaged communities can exacerbate existing inequities but can also be an opportunity to level the playing field through intentional interventions that address climate impacts on these communities directly.

The Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group would like the State to adopt an Equity Framework to work in conjunction with the Guiding Principles of the Advisory Group set forth in the Charter of the Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group. The Equity Framework can be applied across all climate related policies, bills, proceedings, requests for proposals, etc. to ensure that equity is front and center when considering any climate investment/intervention in the State.

This Equity Framework is intended to guide the Advisory Group as it moves forward in discussing and commenting on various proceedings and programs before the CPUC and CEC ensuring that access and adequate resources reach the implementation stage and benefit communities in a meaningful and measurable way. This is the second draft of this document that incorporates all comments made at the August 21 Advisory Group meeting.

## **DEFINITION OF DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES**

As defined in the Energy Equity Indicators tool, the Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group (DAC AG) will adopt as the definition and advocate for equitable programming to reach all of the following communities (including community residents, workers, and businesses):

- ◆ CalEnviroScreen, as defined by Cal EPA,
- ◆ Tribal Lands,
- ◆ Census tracts with area median household income/state median income, less than 80%, and
- ◆ Households with median household income less than 80% of Area Median Income (AMI).

## **FRAMEWORK**

### **1. Health & Safety**

Energy policies and programs should be observed through the lens of public health to identify impacts and utilize findings to optimize the health and well-being of California's most vulnerable communities, as well as, advance health interventions related to climate change by

educating Disadvantaged Communities about disproportionate health impacts related to climate

change and providing ways to value health benefits and impacts, build resiliency, mitigate climate related illnesses, injury and deaths and reduce climate related healthcare costs.

## **2. Access & Education**

Access and Education are key to ensuring that Disadvantaged Communities benefit from clean energy technologies, energy efficiency, and other environmental investments by 1. focusing on special outreach efforts, 2. ensuring that these interventions are applicable and that the communities' interests and needs are represented, and 3. communities receive culturally relevant and sensitive education to prepare for climate resilience. The Advisory Group strives to remove barriers to participation, as identified in the SB 350 Barriers Report and other barriers, through means such as training, funding and support for CBO and educational institutions rooted in disadvantaged communities, ensuring community based businesses are competitive in solicitations, adequate information is disseminated regarding careers and education, and tracking and evaluating progress of such efforts is necessary for these interventions to be successful.

## **3. Financial Benefits**

All investments in clean energy technologies, energy efficiency, and other environmental investments, should benefit all disadvantaged communities directly providing financial benefits, incentives and cost savings while also considering affordability and rate impacts.

## **4. Economic Development**

Climate policies and programs should invest in a clean energy workforce by ensuring California has a trained and ready workforce prepared to improve our infrastructure and built environment as well as bring green technologies to market by: 1. Promoting and funding workforce development pathways to high-quality careers in the construction and clean energy industries, including pre-apprenticeship and other training programs, 2. Setting and tracking hiring targets for low-income, disadvantaged, and underrepresented populations (including women, re-entry, etc.) to enter these industries, 3. Ensuring that these careers are high-road, with a career-ladder, family-sustaining wages and with benefits, 4. Training the next generation of climate leaders and workers for the clean energy economy, and 5. Supporting small and diverse business development and contracting.

## **5. Consumer Protection**

Climate related policies and programs should not create incentives for predatory lending or exploitation of communities for financial gain. Programs should have adequate consumer protection measures, disclosures, and accountability measures to ensure that financially vulnerable customers are not taken advantage of or otherwise compromised.

**ATTACHMENT H:**

## THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON DC, 20590

**Policy Statement: Equity and Access December 18, 2023**

The U.S. Department of Transportation is committed to advancing equity, civil rights, racial justice, environmental justice, and equal opportunity. The simple yet powerful mandate of equity and access in transportation will shape and drive all Departmental programs and activities.

In accordance with Executive Order 13985, "Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities through the Federal Government," and Executive Order 14091, "Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government," the Department proactively works to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its federally conducted programs, activities, and services. This means that, among other things, the Department is committed to promoting equitable delivery of government benefits and opportunities, including advancing meaningful engagement with all communities and ensuring that government contract and procurement opportunities are available on an equal basis to all eligible providers of goods and services. The Department also will enforce Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 to ensure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or disability, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination in any DOT-funded program, activity, or service.

The Department is also committed to ensuring meaningful access to its programs, activities, and services for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP), in accordance with Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency." Providing appropriate language assistance requires identifying critical points of interaction with the LEP public, assessing LEP communities' particular language assistance needs, and determining how each of the Department's Operating Administrations (Oas) will ensure meaningful access for persons with LEP. The Department recognizes that the Oas and Departmental Offices have direct contact with persons and communities requiring language assistance. Accordingly, each OA and Departmental Office is responsible for implementing language access action steps consistent with the DOT Language Access Plan and must emphasize the importance of providing appropriate language access for its programs and activities.

It is also the Department's ongoing commitment to ensure environmental justice is a part of our mission, in accordance with Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations." The Department

continues to develop programs, policies, and activities to address the disproportionately high and adverse human health, climate-related, and other impacts on underserved communities.

In addition to our statutory obligations, equity—as a matter of principle—is essential in all our interactions with the American public. The Department simply cannot fulfill its mission without recognizing equity as a driving force, and I am committed to ensuring that all communities have meaningful access to our Department’s programs and activities.

Pete Buttigieg

**ATTACHMENT I:****ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION EQUITY CHARTER**

1. **Committee Official Designation:** Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity.
2. **Authority:** The Committee is established under the authority of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. App. 2. The establishment of the Committee is in the public interest.
3. **Objective and Scope of Activities:**
  - a. The objective of this Committee is to provide independent advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation about comprehensive, interdisciplinary issues related to civil rights and transportation equity in the planning, design, research, policy, and advocacy contexts from a variety of transportation equity practitioners and community leaders. The Committee will only undertake tasks assigned to it by the Secretary, or his or her designee.
  - b. The Committee will operate in the context of the four DOT Equity Objectives, as defined in the Department's Strategic Plan:
    - o Expanding Access – increasing social and economic opportunity for historically overburdened and underserved communities by providing affordable, multi-modal transportation options and the development of a transportation cost burden measure.
    - o Power of Community – ensuring that individuals and communities have greater voice in transportation decisions that affect them.
    - o Interventions – committing to ensure that historically overburdened and underserved communities benefit from access to a generational investment in the nation's infrastructure through direct, hands-on technical support for transportation projects with local impact.
    - o Wealth Creation – removing barriers to building capital, expanding business networks, and attaining new skills and experience for small and disadvantaged businesses through increased USDOT contracting opportunities.
  - c. The main objectives of the Committee are to provide advice and recommendations to inform the Department's efforts to:
    - o Implement the Agency's Equity Action Plan and Strategic Plan, helping to institutionalize equity into Agency programs, policies, regulations, and activities;
    - o Strengthen and establish partnerships with overburdened and underserved communities who have been historically underrepresented in the Department's outreach and engagement, including those in rural and urban areas;
    - o Empower communities to have a meaningful voice in local and regional transportation decisions; and

- o Ensure the compliance of Federal funding recipients with civil rights laws and nondiscrimination programs, policies, regulations, and activities
- d. The Committee will make timely recommendations to the Secretary on pressing equity concerns using indicators of transportation's effect on community vitality such as economic development, connectivity, and public engagement to track best practices on advancing transportation equity.
- e. The Committee will submit a report to the Secretary once every two (2) years. The report shall identify Agency priority activities, evaluate their impact on advancing equity, and provide recommendations to promote a more equitable transportation system and further the Agency's Equity Objectives.
- f. The Committee will make recommendations that provide timely, comprehensive, inclusive advice to the Secretary on transportation-related public policy issues that advance equity in transportation and help the Agency to achieve its Equity Objectives.
- g. The Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity will engage directly with the internal Equity Council, its leadership team, and its subcommittees, as appropriate. Any such meetings will be open to the public, consistent with FACA.

**ATTACHMENT J:**

**People for Mobility Justice: Mission and Vision**

**Our Mission**

As a Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) collective, we seed critical consciousness about mobility justice across all communities.

**Our Vision**

People have the freedom and resources to move in public spaces with love and dignity.

**How We Make a Difference**

As educators, we act as bridges that connect community expertise with urban planning and policy advocacy through professional development activities with a range of audiences. As facilitators, we create safe learning environments where diverse, rooted communities can come together to build consciousness around mobility justice. As advocates, we build champions for mobility justice within transportation equity policy and planning.

**What is Mobility Justice?**

Mobility justice calls our attention to the fact that individuals face different challenges in transportation because the way we are socially controlled in public spaces manifests differently. To move toward more just mobility, we must end discrimination based on race, class, legal status, ability, gender, or age in how our travel is regulated and accommodated. PMJ acknowledges the intersections between transportation and the other parts of people's lives and we strive toward radical safety for all through multiracial organizing, self-determination, and economic empowerment.

**What is Transportation Equity?**

Transportation equity refers to correcting past discrimination in how public transportation benefits and burdens are allocated, maintained, and developed. Those who have had the least should be given the most. Mobility justice includes holding government agencies accountable to the principles they have set out in defining transportation equity and related topics such as environmental justice and transit justice.