



Meeting of the Equity Working Group

December 9th, 2021

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

The meeting was held via Zoom teleconference. A video recording of the meeting is available upon request.

ATTENDEE LIST

Presenters:

*Alison Linder, SCAG
Anikka Van Eyl, SCAG
Anita Gutierrez, City of Pomona
KeAndra Cylear-Dodds, LA Metro
Megan Taggart, City of Palmdale
Melanie McCann, City of Santa Ana*

SCAG Staff:

*Alison Linder
Anikka Van Eyl
Anita Au
Annaleigh Ekman
Antonia Izuogu
Courtney Aguirre
David Kyobe
Edward Venegas
Frank Wen
Leslie Cayton
Trish Sharma*

Webinar:

*Ana I. Bonilla, Public Health Alliance of Southern California
Brendan Latimer, Caltrans
Candice Vander Hyde, City of Lancaster
Daniel Lim, Torrance Transit
Edwin Peart, LeSar Development Consultants
Gail Shiimoto-Lohr, City of Mission Viejo
James Shankel, Caltrans District 7
Jazmine Johnson, PSR-LA
Jessica Nguyen, County of Ventura
Kathy Inman, City of Palmdale
Kimberly Luna, City of Menifee
Lori Huddleston, LA Metro
Ricardo Soto, City of Santa Ana
Rona Henry, Welcoming Neighbors Home
Sandra Espadas, National CORE
Serena Liu, Caltrans
Seth Contreras, Fehr & Peers
Susan DeSantis, Arellano Associates
Ugochi Anaebere-Nicholson, Public Law Center
Warren Whiteaker, OCTA*

MEETING SUMMARY

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Courtney Aguirre, Program Manager, Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) | aguirre@scag.ca.gov

Courtney Aguirre welcomed all participants.

2. LA METRO EQUITY TOOLS

KeAndra Cylear-Dodds, Executive Officer, Equity and Race, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LA Metro) | cyleardodds@metro.net

Presentation Summary:

KeAndra Cylear-Dodds from LA Metro discussed their three equity tools, including how they were developed, intended use, and strengths and limitations. The tools presented included Metro Budget Equity Assessment Tool (MBEAT), Rapid Equity Assessment (REA), and Equity Planning and Evaluation Tool (EPET).

KeAndra spoke about how LA Metro first embarked on equity with their Equity Platform, which uses four pillars to define



measures and practical applications for equitable approaches. LA Metro defines equity as a legal outcome and process that ensures fair and just opportunities. LA Metro uses equity tools to consider decisions and actions from an equity perspective and focuses on *people* in their projects, either the end-users, such as transit riders and bike path users, or those who live or work in the area.

In 2020, LA Metro developed its first equity tool: the Rapid Equity Assessment. In response to the emergency of the COVID-19 pandemic, LA Metro developed this tool as a method for finding equity lenses during an emergency. LA Metro's Board now requires the use of this tool in their Board Report process. The Rapid Equity Assessment tool, LA Metro's most used equity tool, is also used for projects outside of the budget process and projects of less substantial scope.

LA Metro's Metro Budget Equity Assessment Tool (MBEAT), launched in late 2020, staff identify the benefits and potential harms to specific groups and consider how more equitable decisions may contribute to fair outcomes. The first equity assessment integrated into one of Metro's agency-wide processes began with the mid-year budget for the fiscal year 2021.

Lastly, the Equity Planning and Evaluation Tool (EPET) helps ensure that equity is considered when planning and evaluating a project in a more substantive and in-depth process. The tool is comprised of six sections: connecting community results to project outcomes, analyzing data, engaging the community, planning for equitable outcomes, proposal implementation, and evaluate, communicate, and staying accountable.

To learn more about LA Metro's Equity Tools and resources, please visit:

- Equity and Race website: <https://www.metro.net/about/equity-race/>
- Budget Equity Assessment Tool: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/b8zwt0vx0dgdkzm/budget-equity-assessment-tool.pdf?dl=0>
- Rapid Equity Assessment Tool: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/fqodubs1huc25po/rapid-equity-assessment-tool.pdf?dl=0>
- Equity Planning and Evaluation Tool: https://scag.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/PublicLibrary/Efe5dHOPZzOpk-fZ5s-qF8B_AHndj3rIEBk79n7Fz1BDQ?e=xZr2NG

Questions and Answers:

Question: What has it been like for you and for staff at Metro to develop the tools in the first place and decide on what tools you thought should be prioritized for early implementation or development?

Answer: In KeAndra's remarks, the rapid equity assessment tool was developed first and COVID helped them move very quickly since there were many changes and decisions to be made in the emergency situation. This tool also fit the needs for LA Metro's Board review process. LA Metro continues to work on their equity tools as they are "living documents" that are continuously being adjusted as staff learn more. LA Metro is currently refreshing the scoring criteria for the MBEAT and shared that it is a difficult task considering the diversity of projects that they fund.

Question: How do you handle the training and cultivating champions across staff and teams to ensure that these tools are helpful, and is there an approach that you found successful?

Answer: The Equity Liaisons, who are representatives from each department in the agency, have been very helpful in providing education and help to other staff. Equity Liaisons are trained how to use all of the equity tools with the guidance of Equity staff. LA Metro currently provides specific training for the tools (live and recorded versions) and trainings for Senior leadership and department heads. LA Metro is bringing on a consultant to develop broader agency-wide training that dive deeper into diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and how that knowledge can be applied with these tools. KeAndra also shared that the scoring aspect of MBEAT has increased the agency's attention to this tool, which led to more requests for training.

Question: What does community engagement look like in projects that cover a large geographical area? What policies affect



projects with large community outreach areas throughout the metro jurisdiction?

Answer: LA Metro is committed to community engagement and has several community engagement tools that were not shared today. The EPET has questions to help determine who the community is and identify who is most impacted. LA Metro partners and sometimes contracts with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) in the community and has a CBO Partnering Strategy tool. LA Metro has also begun compensating advisory council members to address some of the barriers that community members face in participating and incentivize regular participation. Despite it being just one county, LA Metro is still figuring out the best strategies for each of their communities.

Question: With 2022 right around the corner, are there any significant milestones you are working towards, or are you still in the weeds of it? Are you trying to get the existing tools refined and measuring how often they're being used?

Answer: KeAndra is currently trying to increase awareness of REA for LA Metro's Board Review Process. LA Metro is starting their budget process, so the Equity team is working with the CEO to refresh the MBEAT scoring criteria and trying to give the tool a more prominent role in decision making. The EPET is in the pilot testing phase, so the Equity team is currently testing the tool on a handful of projects and it will be finalized after receiving the results of the pilot and making any necessary modifications. The next decision to be made for the development of the EPET is the threshold for when LA Metro uses this tool, as opposed to the shorter REA.

For any further questions about LA Metro's Equity Tools, please contact KeAndra Cylear-Dodds at cyleardoddsk@metro.net.

3. **EQUITY IN ACTION: CITY OF POMONA RACIAL EQUITY STORY MAP**

Anita D. Gutierrez, AICP, Development Services Director, City of Pomona | Anita.Gutierrez@pomonaca.gov

Presentation Summary:

Anita D. Gutierrez, Development Services Director of the City of Pomona, shared the development and deployment of the City of Pomona's Racial Equity StoryMap. The City of Pomona partnered with Lincoln University's Center for Geospatial Solutions to build this StoryMap. Anita described the three key themes of the StoryMap, including redlining, freeway adjacency, and health equity. The StoryMap contains redlining maps; community profiles with education, income, and jobs data; a freeway analysis, an asthma rate map; tree canopy cover analysis; a parks and open space map; a climate risk map; zoning map; and a Hispanic/White population map.

One step towards meaningful recognition of communities of color in the City's history is the designation of Mount Zion Church as a local landmark, not for its architectural design features as all other landmarks in the City, but because it served as a space for a small Black community in Pomona to congregate amidst Federal redlining practices preventing Black homeownership in the same community.

Anita also shared about Pomona's continued equity work (funded and unfunded), including plans, policies, and ordinances (e.g., Housing Element, Complete Streets Ordinance, Zoning Code Update, Parks Master Plan, Environmental Justice Element, Anti-Gentrification policies); university and community partnerships; and using an interdisciplinary approach to connecting fair housing challenges with public health outcomes.

View the City of Pomona's StoryMap on Structural Racism here:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/c5b6b05808014b5a9e24cf82b2a4dd1b>

Questions and Answers:

Question: How long did it take to develop this story map, and what resources did you have to dedicate to the StoryMap?

Answer: The partnership between the City of Pomona and the Lincoln University Center for Geospatial Solutions was successful and helped the City complete the StoryMap analysis within two months. In addition, Anita and her team contributed information for the freeway and health equity analysis and conducted the interviews with residents to gather



their perspectives on health equity. Anita shared that this storytelling is an opportunity area for the StoryMap to be expanded.

Question: As you mentioned that it was a partnership with the University, is that available to others in our region? Where can we track or learn more about your equity efforts? Do you have a site or webpage highlighting the same?

Answer: Anita mentioned that the University is looking for partnerships, and currently, they are conducting StoryMapping pilots with the cities of Pomona, Long Beach, and Montebello. A specific webpage for Pomona's equity work is not yet available.

Question: What has the public/elected response been to the StoryMap?

Answer: Anita mentioned that the public/elected response has been very positive. She stated that the StoryMap has also spurred some great conversations on using data in policy decisions and has been a great way to show the community that the City is thinking about those issues.

For any further questions about the City of Pomona's Racial Equity Story Map, please contact Anita D. Gutierrez at Anita.Gutierrez@pomonaca.gov.

4. **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENT: CITY OF PALMDALE**

Megan Taggart, Planning Manager, City of Palmdale

Presentation Summary:

Megan Taggart from the City of Palmdale presented the City's brand new Health and Equity Element that incorporates health, equity, and environmental justice into their General Plan. In this presentation, the City of Palmdale presented the methodologies they used to determine Disadvantaged Communities under SB 1000 and the topics they incorporated into the General Plan.

Through preparing for the Health and Equity Element, the City discovered life expectancy in the City of Palmdale is four years less than the county average, and almost half of the population lives below the federal poverty line. Additional considerations on health were emphasized because the City of Palmdale is located in the Antelope Valley which has higher ozone levels and exceeds the countywide average rates of asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, obesity, and coronary heart disease.

The City of Palmdale used focus groups and other outreach mechanisms to determine the strengths, challenges, and threats. Megan presented five of the seven primary goals of the Health and Equity Element:

1. Provide access to affordable and high-quality produce
2. Promote access to high-quality health care
3. Encourage construction and maintenance of safe & sanitary housing
4. Provide a range of opportunities to exercise
5. Improve Air Quality

To read the Draft Health and Equity Element and learn more about the City of Palmdale's General Plan Update, please visit their website: www.Palmdale2045.org

Questions and Answers:

Question: What challenges did you face when developing the first environmental justice element? And why did you choose to do a standalone environmental justice element instead of incorporating EJ policies?

Answer: Palmdale is home to a large number of disadvantaged people. This required the City to be creative when it came to outreach efforts. Megan shared that they needed to implement the policies in a hands-on way. Several members of the City



Council are passionate about environmental justice, which enabled staff to create standalone policies that the City lacked. Data collected by the City suggested that healthy outlets and parks were not promoted, which led to a standalone Health and Equity Element.

Question: How would you describe your outreach process? Which methods did you employ?

Answer: Megan shared that the City conducted outreach in disadvantaged communities, specifically choosing places where people already congregated like places with food distribution, wraparound services, and other supportive services. Flyers were distributed and paper surveys taken during distribution days or events to directly engage with community members as they waited for their goods and services. The City also used banners and flyers displayed on their website and electronic reader boards. Megan noted that when they sent survey staff out to the City's transportation center, people were more likely to speak to the outreach team in the morning opposed to the evening commute time.

5. ENVIRONMENT JUSTICE GENERAL PLAN COLLABORATION: CITY OF SANTA ANA

Melanie McCann, AICP, Principal Planner, City of Santa Ana | newgeneralplan@santa-ana.org

Presentation Summary:

Melanie McCann from the City of Santa Ana shared the Environmental Justice policies incorporated into the City's General Plan. Melanie started the presentation with a robust timeline of community outreach for incorporating equity and environmental justice into the City's policies and goals spanning from 2015 to 2021.

Ricardo Soto, Senior Planner with the City of Santa Ana, presented the EJ outreach strategies. Ricardo shared about the extensive area of Santa Ana identified as an Environmental Justice area. Census tracts identified as EJ areas were overlaid with neighborhood boundaries to engage with long-standing and active neighborhood associations and groups. The City created a roundtable including those neighborhood groups and organizations that already work around EJ in the City to refine an outreach plan that would reach the most people. The resulting plan included ten virtual community forums, each focused on a different geographic area and an Open House that acted as a resource fair. City staff also developed a plan to use social media in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese; used outreach "kits" of fliers, surveys, lawn signs, and other publicity material to get the word out about the forums; and distributed an online survey.

Melanie shared a few of the potential policies and actions that were created as a result of the outreach work and incorporated as EJ policies into the Safety, Open Space, Community, and Land Use Elements; Community Engagement Actions; Air Quality & Water Hazards Actions; and Housing and Anti-Displacement Actions.

To learn more about the City's Environmental Justice policies and General Plan update, please visit the following links:

- Santa Ana General Plan Update webpage: <https://www.santa-ana.org/general-plan>
- Environmental Justice: <https://www.santa-ana.org/general-plan/environmental-justice>
- Draft General Plan document: <https://www.santa-ana.org/general-plan/draft-documents>

For further questions about the Environmental Justice General Plan Collaboration, please contact Melanie McCann or Ricardo Soto, Senior Planner at newgeneralplan@santa-ana.org.

6. SCAG EQUITY INDICATORS

Anikka Van Eyl, Junior Planner, SCAG | vaneyl@scag.ca.gov

Presentation Summary:

Anikka Van Eyl, Junior Planner with SCAG, provided a brief update on SCAG's Racial Equity Baseline Conditions Report (March 2021) and asked the Equity Working Group for input for refining the list of indicators. A poll was conducted during the presentation to ask three questions to the participants. The following table depicts the questions and results from the poll:

Question	Answer Options	Results (% of 8 poll participants)
Does your agency currently have a set of equity indicators you're measuring or evaluating?	Yes	2 (25%)
	No	4 (50%)
	Maybe	2 (25%)
Have you considered developing your own baseline conditions report?	Yes	4 (50%)
	No	2 (25%)
	Maybe	2 (25%)
Have you considered developing your own baseline conditions report?	Often	5 (62.5%)
	Rarely	2 (25%)
	Sometimes	1 (12.5%)

SCAG is looking to update the list of Equity Indicators with additional community input. SCAG is proposing the following changes:

Proposed Equity Indicators – 2022



Economic Vitality

Healthy + Complete Communities

Mobility

Environment

Connectedness

- Neighborhood Poverty*

Economic Vitality

- **\$15 / Hour**
- Median Hourly Wage
- Median Household Income*
- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Working Poor

Opportunity

- **Educational Attainment**

Affordability

- Median Household Income
- Home Ownership
- Housing Burden
- **Median Rent**

Housing Quality

- Housing Quality*
- Overcrowding

Essential Services

- Broadband Access

Public Health

- Health Insurance
- **SNAP**
- **Life Expectancy**

Accessibility

- Access to Employment
- Access to Open Space & Parks
- **Access to Transit**
- **Active Commuting**
- Commute Time
- Households without a Vehicle
- Transportation System Share

Safety

- Pedestrian & Bicyclist Collisions*

Air Quality

- Air Pollution Index

Climate Vulnerability

- **Extreme Heat**
- Flood Hazard areas
- **Substandard Housing**
- Wildfire Risk

Environmental Health

- CalEnviroScreen4.0*
- **Tree Canopy**

*Updated, renamed, or moved topic areas

SCAG would like to hear from you! SCAG left the following questions for participants of the Equity Working Group to consider as they think about the proposed changes to the Equity Indicators:

- What is your vision for an equitable region?
- Which indicators or topic areas are missing from this proposed list?



- Which indicators might be helpful for your community?
- Which indicators might be less valuable or unnecessary?

If you have thoughts to share or questions to ask SCAG about the proposed equity indicators, please contact Anikka Van Eyl at vaneyl@scag.ca.gov.

To read the Baseline Conditions Report, please visit: https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/racialequitybaselineconditionsreport_03242021revision.pdf

To view SCAG's Toolbox Tuesday Training, Equity in Action: Evaluating Baseline Community Conditions, please visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBB88dpuaHo>

To view a list of potential Equity Indicators and data sources, see: <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/tt062221-equity-indicators-baseline-conditions.pdf?1624914576>

Questions and Answers:

Question: How about Education as an Indicator?

Answer: SCAG is currently considering adding "Educational Attainment" as an indicator of Economic Vitality.

For further questions on SCAG's Equity Indicators, please contact Anikka Van Eyl at vaneyl@scag.ca.gov.

7. **SOCAL GOODS MOVEMENT COMMUNITIES FREIGHT IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY**

Alison Linder, Senior Regional Planner, SCAG | linder@scag.ca.gov

Presentation Summary:

Alison Linder briefly shared the kick-off of a new study called the SoCal Goods Movement Communities Freight Impact Assessment. She expressed a desire for the Equity Working Group to be involved in the project since it connects to the equity and environmental justice challenges shared during these meetings.

The study will focus on 6-8 communities that represent various challenges faced throughout the region. SCAG hopes to engage new audiences through innovative outreach strategies, including social media and a TikTok Challenge, where SCAG will ask communities to highlight issues they think are most important. The project will also develop a toolkit focused on strategies for workforce development, public health and air quality improvement, and communications and engagement best practices.

SCAG is hosting a virtual workshop on January 18th from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM to kick off the project and discuss the community selection process. This is an opportunity to learn about the goods movement issues that the region is facing.

For further questions about SCAG's SoCal Goods Movement Communities Freight Impact Assessment, please contact Alison Linder at linder@scag.ca.gov.

8. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Anita Au, Senior Regional Planner, SCAG | au@scag.ca.gov

Due to time constraints, Anita Au, SCAG, was not able to share the following announcements but have provided them in the powerpoint for participants to revisit at their leisure. The announcements include:

- An **Equity in Action: Developing Equity Tools, Toolbox Tuesday Training** is scheduled for **January 25th, 2022 at 1–2:30 PM**. If you're interested in attending, please register here: <https://form.jotform.com/SCAGweb/toolbox-tuesday>. If you're interested in previous Toolbox Tuesday trainings, please visit: <https://scag.ca.gov/toolbox-tuesday-online-training-materials>.
- **CalEnviroScreen 4.0** was released in **October 2021** and included updated data for all indicators, improvements on



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some calculations, and a new indicator (Children's Lead Risk from Housing). For more information, please visit:
<https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40>.

- **SoCal Goods Movement Communities Freight Impact Assessment Virtual Workshop** is scheduled for **January 18th, 2022, at 11:00 AM-1:00 PM** and includes the project kick-off and a discussion of the community selection process. Contact Alison Linder (linder@scag.ca.gov) for more information.
- **SCAG invites the public to review and comment on our new Draft 2022 Public Participation Plan**, available on SCAG's website at: <https://scag.ca.gov/post/share-your-input-draft-2022-public-participation-plan>. Comments may be sent to the Public Participation Plan team at update@scag.ca.gov until the comment period closes on December 31st at 5 PM.

The meeting presentations are available [here](#). If anyone has any questions or follow-up questions, please feel free to reach out to Anita Au au@scag.ca.gov or Courtney Aguirre at aguirre@scag.ca.gov. SCAG also encourages participants to reach out if you have a topic, project, program, tool, or resource that you think should be highlighted in a future meeting. The next Equity Working Group meeting will be held in March 2022.