2023 C/CAG San Mateo County Equity Framework Report

Photo Credit San Mateo County

Prepared for the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) by:

in partnership with

C/CAG
City/County Association of Governments
of San Mateo County

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Acknowledgements

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* Representatives served on the 2023 Equity Ad Hoc Committee

Executive Summary

In San Mateo County and across the nation, people of color and other underserved and underrepresented populations face persistently unequal economic, health, and quality of life outcomes. Public and private institutions have historically contributed to these inequities through laws, policies, investment decisions, and other actions. In San Mateo County, this included investments in transportation infrastructure that reinforced segregation, the practices of redlining and racial steering, and placing undesirable land uses in areas with high concentrations of people of color.

The City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) is committed to rectifying these, and other historic harms, by taking concrete steps to advance equity through its planning efforts, projects, programming, and role as a countywide funder that allocates millions of dollars into various programs and projects each year.

C/CAG commits to focusing on both process and outcome equity in its equity advancement journey. This commitment is defined below:

- Process equity prioritizes access, influence, and decision-making power for vulnerable and underserved communities.
- Outcome equity is the result of successful process equity and is demonstrated by tangible benefits for vulnerable and underserved communities (Amended from *Interstate Bridge Replacement Program Definition of Equity*, 2021).

EQUITY DEFINITION*:

"C/CAG defines equity as acknowledging and addressing historic & existing disparities so that race, class, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, or other demographics do not determine economic, health, and quality of life outcomes. Equity recognizes that members of our San Mateo County community do not all come from the same starting point, and it entails removing systemic barriers and providing customized forms and levels of engagement and support for underserved and impacted communities to remedy past harms and underinvestment."

* See C/CAG's full equity commitment statement and equity definition on pg. 56-57 of this report.

As part of the Equity Framework development process, C/CAG staff participated in a process of listing and reviewing their programs, plans, processes, and funding calls, followed by a series of conversations to identify strengths, gaps, challenges, and opportunities to improve process and outcome equity.

C/CAG's strengths and assets include:
- Influence as a countywide funder.
- Participation from every jurisdiction through 21 seats on the Board of Directors, and 9 standing committees with 123 seats.
- Experience leading multiple projects, programs, and planning efforts that incorporate equity goals, indicators, metrics, and proposed recommendations or actions.
- Equity-oriented hiring and human resources support from the County of San Mateo.

Gaps and limitations include:
- Limitations associated with being an agency that passes most of its funding through to other agencies and local jurisdictions, including:
  - Internal resource constraints for the agency's own projects, programs, and staffing needs, and
  - Intermittent community engagement efforts, resulting in a lack of community awareness of C/CAG's work and significant room to grow in building relationships with community-based organizations (CBOs).
- Uneven application of equity advancement in its programs, projects, planning efforts, and funding calls.
- Uneven Board, committee, and staff diversity and equity training and expertise.
- Inadequate representation of historically underrepresented populations on its committees.
- Lack of C/CAG-specific procurement and contracting policies and systems that facilitate participation from Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs).[1]

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[1] DBEs are for-profit small businesses where socially and economically disadvantaged individuals own at least a 51% interest and control management and daily business operations. African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific and Subcontinent Asian Americans, and women are presumed to be socially and economically disadvantaged. Other individuals can also qualify on a case-by-case basis. (Definition of a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise, n.d.).
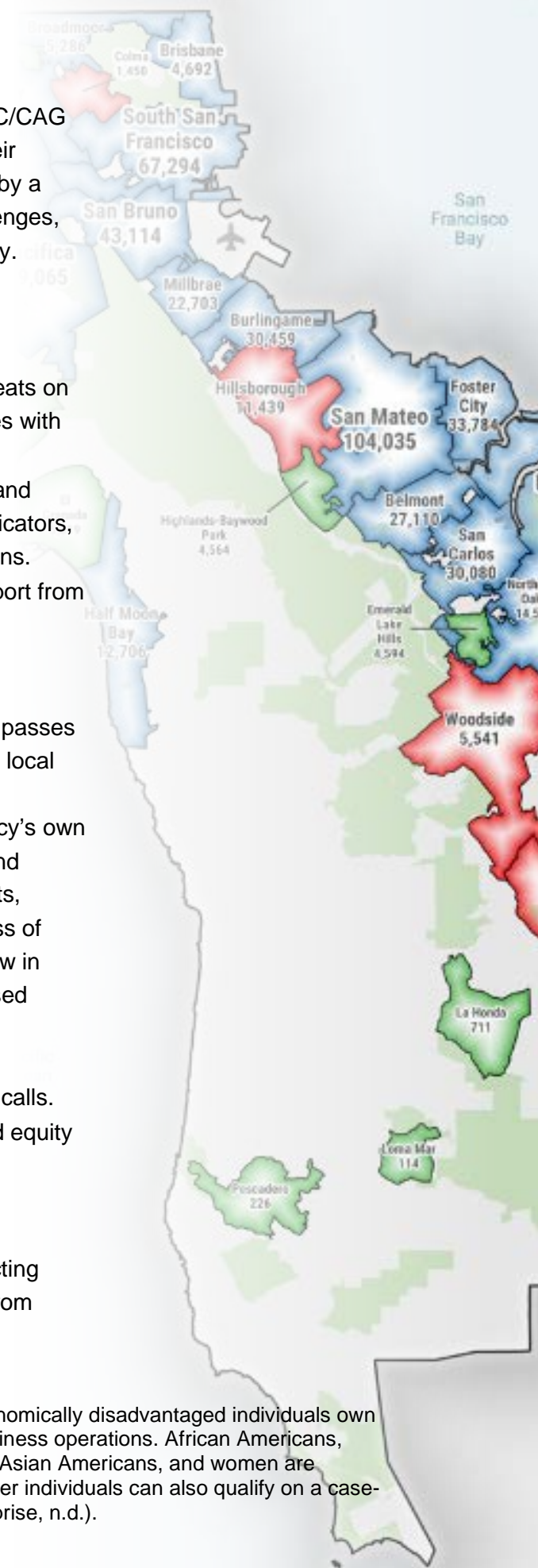
Through the development of this Equity Framework, C/CAG acknowledges that further improving on its strengths and addressing its agency's gaps and limitations will be no easy task, but has set goals, desired outcomes, and actions as part of a comprehensive Action Plan (Appendix VI) to make measurable progress. It has also laid out an Equity Approach and developed an Equity Planning Tool (Appendix VII) to create consistency across program areas and assist staff in meeting the spirit of its equity definition and commitment.

The following is the Equity Approach, or procedural steps, C/CAG staff will take in their work, as applicable to the agency's projects, programs, and planning efforts.

Embed equity in the project scope, direction, and approach early on

Center Equity Focus Area voices from beginning to end

Listen, reflect, report, and iterate

Select strategies to advance equity and avoid minimize burdens

Assess for optimal equity outcomes

Embed equity in the project scope, direction, and approach:
- Establish intended equity goals, outcomes, and performance measures.
- Structure the planning and engagement process around achieving equitable outcomes, using the Equity Planning Tool (in Appendix VII) as a companion resource. Identify and integrate potential equity-focused concepts and alternatives early in the process for consideration and evaluation.

Center Equity Focus Area voices in the process: [2]
- Develop a community engagement plan centered around Equity Focus Area (EFA) geographies and demographics potentially affected (benefited or impacted)
- Partner with EFA-serving Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and community leaders at each step of the process, including setting the direction, scope, & approach.
- Communicate purpose, scope, and implementation timeline throughout the process, and inform participants and EFA stakeholders of how input received was incorporated.

Assess for optimal equity outcomes:
- Identify who, what, where, when to focus on to address inequities & avoid further harm.
- Identify benefits & burdens of the activity and/or each alternative.

Select strategies to advance equity and avoid/minimize burdens:
- Finalize strategies based on the equity goals, outcomes, and performance measures, feedback obtained from equity voices, and analysis of benefits and burdens.

Listen, reflect, report, and iterate:
- Obtain perspective from equity stakeholders involved in the process, including opportunities for improvements for future efforts.
- Evaluate process and outcome equity effectiveness among lead and supporting agency staff, identifying lessons learned and adjustments for future efforts.
- Report results, lessons learned, and proposed changes to the design of the project, plan, or other activities to stakeholders involved in the process and to decision makers and advisory bodies through the new Equity Section in staff reports.

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[2] Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) is a term used in this report to refer to geographies of priority based on high concentrations of community and demographic indicators of interest from an equity perspective. When stating "EFA voices" or "EFA geographies and demographics" in this report, we are broadly referring to communities and populations with less historic and existing representation, fewer resources, unequal social, economic, environmental, and health impacts and outcomes, and generally greater needs and barriers. Various federal, state, regional, and countywide agencies have their own unique geographic area mapping approaches, indicators, and nomenclature, including California's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessments (OEHHAs) CalEnviroScreen, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTCs) Equity Priority Communities (EPCs), and C/CAG's San Mateo County Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (CBPP) EFA map.

These steps and best practices are reflected in the Equity Framework's intended Goals, Outcomes, and Actions, which are an expression of both C/CAG/s areas of growth and concrete commitments to maximizing the benefits of our wock for populations in greatest need.

Action Plan Goals include:

> *Goal 1:* Create and maintain internal equity reporting, feedback, coordination, and collaboration structures.
>
> *Goal 2:* Continually strengthen and maintain internal organizational understanding, resources, and capacity.
>
> *Goal 3:* Promote economic justice and shared prosperity through procurement opportunities.
>
> *Goal 4:* Infuse a pro-equity approach in projects, programs, plans, and funding calls to maximize benefits for Equity Focus Area (EFA) geographies and demographics.
>
> *Goal 5:* Build and maintain trust, transparency, and lasting relationships with EFA CBOs and leaders and the populations they serve.
>
> *Goal 6:* Use data and mapping to track and help achieve goals and intended outcomes.
>
> *Goal 7:* Provide countywide leadership.

Achieving equity outcomes requires continuous coordination, monitoring, evaluation, analysis, learning, and adjustments over time. The agency will regularly evaluate and report back to its decision makers, advisory bodies, and community stakeholders, and adjust efforts, as necessary. Many of the Action Plan's goals, outcomes, and actions will require a focused and sustained commitment, starting with the allocation of staff time, including in the form of a Staff Lead (Action 1), and financial resources in the agency's budget (Action 6).

To further support Framework implementation and coordination, C/CAG will convene the C/CAG Board of Directors (BOD) Equity Framework Ad Hoc Committee as needed (Action 2) and conduct an annual evaluation and update to the BOD, committees, and key stakeholders (Actions 3 and 4). In between the annual evaluation and update the BOD and committees, C/CAG staff will communicate benefits, burdens, and recommendations at the project, plan, program, and funding approval stage in a new Equity Section within staff reports (Action 21).

C/CAG sees this Framework and Action Plan as a living document that will be updated no later than 2030 as the agency progresses and new conditions and opportunities emerge.

C/CAG invites the San Mateo County community to partner in this journey to optimize community benefits, create greater community inclusion and trust, and bring San Mateo County closer to a more equitable future.

Introduction

C/CAG is an agency that, at any given time, is overseeing approximately $35 million each year in programs that address transportation, land use, stormwater pollution and water, energy, and climate change. The agency initiated this Equity Assessment and Framework Development Project to identify opportunities and support efforts to ensure the agency's programs, projects, plans, and funding calls help advance equity by addressing economic, environmental, health, and quality of life disparities in San Mateo County.

The intent of the Project was to establish a plan and approach to integrate equity into C/CAG's efforts by:

- Obtaining greater understanding of existing inequities, historic injustices locally, and equity connections to C/CAG's program areas,
- Defining equity and C/CAG's role in advancing equity in San Mateo County,
- Assessing how to increase equity awareness and capacity internally, and identifying opportunities to integrate equity into the agency's program areas, and
- Identifying and listening to leaders of under resourced communities and learning from the experiences of other public agencies.

To help C/CAG develop its Equity Framework and infuse Equity Focus Area (EFA) community perspective into the process, the agency hired a consultant team and provided funding for San Mateo County Community Based Organization (CBO) participation. The project included research, mapping, analysis, and ongoing dialogue with C/CAG staff, Board, and Committees, and from EFA serving CBOs and local agency partners.

Research — **Mapping** — **Analysis**

ONGOING STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE
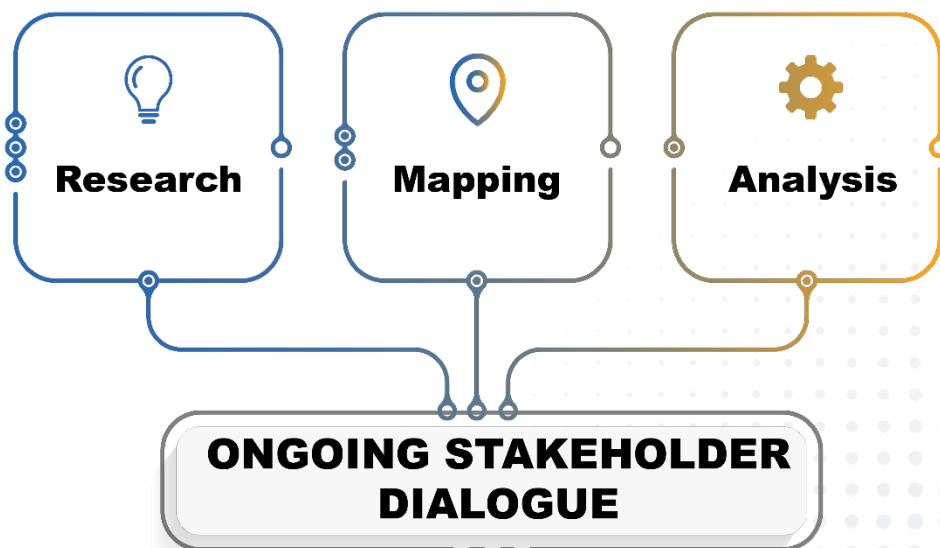
Framework Development Steps

The consultant team identified internal and external themes to guide C/CAG staff through a series of conversations to arrive at equity driven recommendations included in this report. In tandem to staff input, the consultant team obtained perspective and guidance from the C/CAG Board, committees, and agency and community partners. Other important inputs in the development of the Equity Framework and Action Plan Equity Focus Area were mapping and analysis of existing conditions and a review of equity frameworks and interventions at other government agencies.

1. C/CAG Staff, Board, CBO, and Peer Agency Input Gathering

A critical part of the process for developing the Equity Framework was engaging C/CAG staff in a series of in-depth conversations. Staff perspective and input was vital to informing the agency's Equity Definition, identifying program area strengths, gaps, and opportunities, and developing and refining the Action Plan.

Community-based perspective was also crucial to the development of the Framework. Early in the process, the project team entered a partnership with the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center (PCRC) to assist with bringing together conversations with other Equity Focus Area (EFA) serving CBOs and community leaders through the project's Community Working Group (CWG). Four CBOs were selected and compensated to participate in CWG meetings and to assist the project team in obtaining additional community leader input and perspective through one-on-one conversations, focus groups, and an online questionnaire. Compensated CBO's (in italics) and other organizations participating Community Working Group meetings included:

- *El Concilio of San Mateo County*
- Housing Leadership Council (HLC)
- *Nuestra Casa*
- *Samaritan House*
- Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC)
- *Youth Leadership Institute (YLI)*
- Youth United for Community Action (YUCA)

San Mateo County government agency peers were also essential to helping inform proposed equity-oriented practices and policies. To this end, C/CAG hosted Agency Partner Meetings to understand the experiences and lessons learned by other local agencies and opportunities for potential cross-agency alignment. Participating agencies included:

- Commute.org
- County of San Mateo, Executive Office Equity Team, and Office of Sustainability
- Peninsula Clean Energy
- San Mateo County Health
- San Mateo County Transit District
- SamTrans

Finally, the project also benefited from the leadership and direction of C/CAG's Board of Directors, Committees, and Board Ad Hoc Committee.

The following is a list of the Board, Board Equity Ad Hoc Committee, C/CAG Committees, staff, and Agency Partner and Community Working Group meetings held throughout this project process.

Body	Period
C/CAG Board of Directors (BOD) *6 Meetings*	April 14, 2022 - December 14, 2023
C/CAG BOD Ad-Hoc Committee *2 Meetings*	May 4, 2023 - August 2, 2023
C/CAG Staff *9 Meetings*	September 27, 2022 - August 23, 2023
Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) *2 Meetings*	January 26, 2022 - September 28, 2023
Congestion Management & Environmental Quality (CMEQ) Committee *1 Meeting*	November 28, 2022 - October 23, 2023
Congestion Management Program (CMP) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) *1 Meeting*	September 21, 2023
Resource Management & Climate Protection Committee (RMCP) *2 Meetings*	October 19, 2022 - September 20, 2023
Agency Partner Meetings *4 Meetings*	August 30, 2022 - July 21, 2023
Community Working Group Meetings *4 Meetings*	September 9, 2022 - November 30, 2022

The valuable input of these diverse stakeholders led to the following components of this report and Equity Framework:

- A historical context of inequity in San Mateo County.
- An agency definition of equity.
- Background on transportation, energy, water, air quality, and hazardous pollutants disparities and the lived experience of underserved, underrepresented, and impacted communities in San Mateo County.
- Opportunities to create more equitable processes and advance equitable outcomes through C/CAG's program areas.

2. Definition and Understanding of Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) Geographically and Demographically

The project team conducted Equity Focus Area (EFA) mapping and data analysis based on C/CAG's program area themes, to identify social, economic, environmental, health, and quality of life inequities in the county. The project team accomplished this through the following steps, with input and perspective from the C/CAG Board, Board Equity Ad Hoc Committee, C/CAG Committees, staff, and the Project's Agency Partner and Community Working Group meetings:

- Identification of geographic and demographic metrics of equity.
- Delineation of EFAs geographically and identification of existing tools for locating EFAs in San Mateo County with respect to C/CAG's program focus areas.
- Identification of equity impacts of C/CAG's work (expressed in the Existing Conditions section of this report).

Although a new countywide EFA map using a range of indicators was originally envisioned as part of Task 2, it was determined that a separate countywide process would be needed to develop such a map, with an extensive public and stakeholder engagement process. One of the next steps (Action 31) in the Framework is to update Equity Focus Area maps of each applicable C/CAG program area within five years and every five years thereafter based on available data, changing demographics and community conditions, EFA input, and other considerations. For the time being, C/CAG will continue to use the EFA map established through development of its Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan 2021 (Figure 1).

Another next step that was identified through this process is to align EFA mapping with that of other agencies, especially SamTrans (Action 32).

Figure I: San Mateo Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Source: 2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, 2021

3. C/CAG Programmatic Review and Equity Integration: Equity Framework

The final steps to develop the Framework consisted of an external and internal agency review of equity interventions and integrations. This consisted of:

- A peer review of equity interventions to learn from the experience of other agencies beyond San Mateo County with similar programs to C/CAG, and
- An internal analysis of C/CAG's existing program/project equity integrations and identification of equity gaps and strengths in C/CAG's operations and programs.

Building upon these conversations and the knowledge gained from the first two tasks, the consultant team, in close partnership with C/CAG staff, developed three primary vehicles or tools for adjusting C/CAG's approach moving forward:

- A detailed Action Plan for integrating equity into C/CAG's programs, projects, and other opportunities.
- A series of Procedural Steps to create greater consistency in the application of equity in C/CAG projects, plans, and programs.
- An Equity Evaluation Review Tool, consisting of a series of questions to help staff walk through various equity considerations when designing new projects, plans, and programs.

Program or topic-specific actions, such as those specific to C/CAG's role in transportation or climate, are not included in this report, but will emerge through an ongoing series of actions after Framework adoption, including:

- Conducting an annual evaluation of gaps, progress, lessons learned, and next steps towards meeting Equity Framework goals, outcomes, and actions, including project and program-level information collected from the Equity Section of C/CAG staff reports.
- Providing an Equity Framework overview and equity evaluation update to the C/CAG BOD and Committees and at least one additional relevant public meeting each year.

The C/CAG Board's adoption of this Equity Framework and Action Plan sets forth an ambitious undertaking for C/CAG staff and leadership. The Plan will be phased in over time to balance progress with both staff capacity and budgetary requirements for future actions.

Community Context

Initial content produced as part of the Equity Framework development process included:

- A historical summary that provides specific documented examples of how racist and discriminatory policies and practices that were prevalent across the US also occurred in San Mateo County, resulting in unequal outcomes across race and geographies where racial minorities were concentrated.
- A discussion of the location of areas of high concentration of underserved, underrepresented, and impacted demographics within what C/CAG refers to as Equity Focus Areas (EFAs).
- Existing conditions analysis of San Mateo County's EFAs and disparities across race.

San Mateo County Historical Summary of Discriminatory Policies, Practices, and Other Actions

One of the first steps in the development of C/CAG's Equity Framework was conducting a review of San Mateo County race-based historical policies, practices, and other actions related to C/CAG's program area themes. This historical summary was intended to provide a baseline local historical understanding to inform C/CAG's Equity Framework and its future equity advancement efforts. It was developed by first conducting a literature scan of online resources at the intersection of social equity, C/CAG's Program Areas, and San Mateo County and regional geographies. The summary of resources was then iteratively presented and refined through input from C/CAG's staff and from participants of the project's Community Working Group and Agency Partner meetings.

The content in the historical summary is largely focused on racism and discrimination in land use and housing, as those were the most documented examples. This research found numerous examples of discriminatory land use and public policy, ranging from violent displacement of Native American and Japanese American communities, housing redlining in Menlo Park and East Palo Alto, decrepit Latino farmworker housing, to Highway 101 dividing and polluting African American communities. Several examples of California's long history of genocide, dispossession of land, infringement of civil liberties, and other social injustices happened right in San Mateo County.

Racism in past local land use and housing policy and planning decisions is important to understand because of how it still negatively affects communities today and illuminates important policy interventions. However, it is important to note that this represents only a portion of inequities experienced by diverse communities, such as around gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, socioeconomic status, language, and physical ability. Furthermore, C/CAG's program areas extend beyond land use and housing.

California's Genocide, Forced Migration, and Land Dispossession of First Nations

Before European colonization, the Bay Area was home to tremendous biological diversity that helped support one of the densest populations of people living in the US. According to Parish (2018), "Approximately one-third of all Native Americans in the United States were living in the area now known as California prior to contact with Europeans". The Ramaytush Ohlone Nation spanned through San Francisco and San Mateo Counties and was composed of 10 politically independent tribes including the Aramai, Chiguan, Cotegen, Lamchin, Oljon, Olpen, Puichon, Ssalson, Urebure, and Yelamu (Terminology. (n.d.).

The period of colonization carried out by the Spanish, Mexican, and US governments facilitated and promoted theft of land, murder, and forced assimilation of Native people in what is now recognized by the State as a genocide (*Executive Order N-15-19*, 2019*)*. Before California statehood, "tens of thousands of indigenous people in coastal areas were brought to Catholic missions… where they were beaten, whipped, burned, maimed, tortured, and killed" (Parish, 2018). The result of these conditions, coupled with inadequate nutrition and the spread of disease, was the drastic decline in the state's Native population.

After California became a US state, the exploitation, repression, and murder of Native people continued in different forms. "Well-armed death squads combined with the widespread random killing of Indians by individual miners" resulted in the death of 100,000 First Nations people in the first two years of the gold rush (Parish, 2018). Meanwhile, "groups of slave raiders marauded through Indian villages, taking children from the arms of their parents, and killing adults who resisted… These children would then be sold off to White households… to become domestic slaves" (Schneider, 2021).

In San Mateo County, local tribes were stripped of 100% of their ancestral land, and many descendants' tribes have not received federal recognition (and the related legal and financial benefits) to this day. Despite the violence, theft, and oppression, a small percentage of Bay Area and California Native people were able to survive.

Today, the Bay Area and California is home to some of the descendants of these survivors, as well as Native Americans from other parts of the US. "The Bay Area has… one of the largest populations of Intertribal Indians in the country" (*Indigenous Populations in the Bay Area, n.d.*). Even so, the high cost of living and lack of economic opportunity have kept many Native Americans from being able to return to regions their ancestors once called home.

Discrimination in Land Use, Housing, and Infrastructure Laws, Policies, and Practices in San Mateo County

The way we have planned and built our cities and decided who could own property in San Mateo County has contributed to income inequality, public health disparities, inequitable access to opportunities, and political disenfranchisement. Race-based land use, housing, and infrastructure planning and development laws, policies, and actions adopted and practiced across California, the Bay Area, and San Mateo County were persistent and extensive. These include exclusionary zoning, redlining, racial steering, covenants and homeowner association bylaws, blockbusting, and transportation planning (Moore et al., 2019).

Racialized public and private actions created and reinforced segregation, including wealthy and White "high opportunity areas" and areas with high concentrations of low-income people of color and other disenfranchised demographics referred to today by planners as Equity Priority Communities (EPC's) or Equity Focus Areas (EFAs). EFAs were often separated from White communities by space or infrastructure, located in flood zones or places less desirable for development, and/or in unincorporated areas of the county with little political representation.

Daly City, North Fair Oaks, Belle Haven, and East Palo Alto are four examples of San Mateo County EFAs that have historical documentation on discriminatory land use, housing, and infrastructure policies. North Fair Oaks, for example, has never been incorporated as a city or annexed by the surrounding cities, which has resulted in a historical lack of representation, affluence, infrastructure, public services, and commerce (Shoecraft, 2022).

It is important to note that while the examples cited here are illustrative of the kinds of policies and practices that affected communities across San Mateo County, such documentation is uneven geographically, and other local forms of racialized discrimination, marginalization, violence, and theft have likely not been captured in the literature.

It is also important to note that the examples provided in this historical summary continue into the present in different forms, resulting in the reproduction of unequal outcomes. Some, but not all, local, regional, and state governments are only relatively recently beginning to make meaningful commitments and attempting to make measurable progress in addressing these historical injustices and discriminatory actions.

State Sanctioned Displacement

In addition to First Nations People, another group of people to be targeted early-on by federal, state, and local laws and policies resulting in loss of property or prevention of land ownership were Japanese Americans. "California adopted alien land laws in 1913 and 1920 with the purpose of driving Japanese farmers out of California agriculture and undermining the economic foundation of Japanese immigrant society" (Moore et al., 2019, p. 19-20).

Later, during World War II, Japanese Americans were forcibly removed from their homes and communities across the West Coast and placed in internment camps. The second largest temporary WCCA camp in the US was the Tanforan Assembly Center in San Bruno, which incarcerated 8,033 Americans of Japanese ancestry, mostly from the Bay Area (Linke, 2021). Forced internment… resulted in a massive loss of property and community in the Bay Area… The economic loss has been estimated at $1–$3 billion nationally (not adjusted for inflation). (Moore et al., 2019, p. 19-20)

Redlining, racial covenants, discriminatory lending, and homeowner association bylaws

Actors in the private sector and at all levels of government shaped the demographic make-up of communities across the region and the nation through multiple interlocking practices of exclusion such as redlining and federal lending policies. One of the San Mateo County communities cited in the literature is Daly City. The first homes in the Westlake subdivision in Daly City were sold in 1949 and were restricted to only White people (Moore et al., 2019, p. 35-37).

> Westlake in Daly City… was financed by the Federal Housing Administration… The only way you could [finance a development like Westlake] was to go to the Federal Housing Administration and make a commitment to never sell a home to an African American, to concede to the Federal Housing Administration's requirement that every deed in the home prohibit resale or rental to African Americans. And, on that basis, Daly City was built on a racially segregated, exclusively white basis… African Americans were instead concentrated in government created ghettos (Russo, 2020).

Private homeowner association bylaws were another segregationist tactic prevalent in San Mateo County. These bylaws included racial covenants that restricted the sale or lease to certain ethnic groups such as Black, Latino, and Asian people. "Racially restrictive regulations remained within homeowner association bylaws in some instances as late as the 1990s and 2000s, such as… Cuesta La Honda in San Mateo County" (Moore et al., 2019, p. 35-37).

Racial steering and blockbusting

The real estate community played a significant role in establishing and maintaining segregated neighborhoods by directing potential buyers to certain neighborhoods based on race, a practice known as racial steering (Moore et al., 2019, p. 51-52). Peninsula realtors forced most of the county's African American population east of Highway 101 into Menlo Park's Belle Haven community and East Palo Alto (Moore et al., 2019, p. 49-50). Many African Americans and other racial minorities living in Belle Haven and East Palo Alto wanted to buy homes in other areas but were "blocked in their efforts by the concentrated efforts of peninsula realtors to keep them within these clearly defined areas east of Bayshore Highway" (Bradshaw, 2019).

Another real-estate strategy practiced in San Mateo County is referred to as blockbusting. Real estate investors would sow fears of racial change in neighborhoods such as East Palo Alto, causing the rapid depopulation of an area's White residents. Real estate agents then sold these homes at an inflated price to African Americans and other racial minorities seeking the few opportunities for homeownership available to them (Moore et al., 2019, p. 51-52).

Land use and housing policy

Beyond the more direct forms of racialized land use, housing, and infrastructure planning and investment strategies and actions above are less obvious but nonetheless damaging land use and housing policies and practices. These include common practices by San Mateo County cities of established large minimum lot sizes, growth boundaries, and housing unit caps, which have increased housing prices and excluded certain populations. For example, in 1923 the Town of Atherton became one of the first jurisdictions in the county to establish minimum lot sizes (one acre minimum). Other cities soon followed suit (Moore et al., 2019, p. 34).

Other land use and housing policy actions with implications on segregation, gentrification, and inequality include underfunding of affordable housing, inadequate renter protections, and the inadequate production of homes for people of lower and moderate incomes. The lack of political will to build sufficient housing while encouraging economic development and job growth has resulted in housing costs that are out of reach for many and is one of the root causes of gentrification and displacement pressures affecting formerly redlined low-income communities of color across the Peninsula (Rein, n.d.).

Discrimination in Transportation Planning and Infrastructure

As was the case across the US, discriminatory housing and land use policy, planning, and practices in San Mateo County were paired with infrastructure planning and investments that were designed to serve White and wealthier demographics and segregate and exclude African American and other racial minorities. Local municipalities and private sector actors, federal, state, and local agencies made infrastructure investments that further segregated and harmed African American and other racial minorities in areas like Belle Haven and East Palo Alto.

A clear example was the building of Highway 101 that divided East Palo Alto and Belle Haven from the County's wealthier communities while providing access to employment and other needs for those that were allowed to purchase land in San Mateo County's suburbs. The county's history of development also included opposition to regional public transit improvements that would provide greater access for working class and minority populations, most notably Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) down the Peninsula.

The concentration of people of color and people of lower incomes into EFAs coincided with the placement of undesirable land uses, such as industrial facilities generating air, water, and noise pollution in those areas. Because many of these areas were unincorporated, residents had little power and representation to determine which uses to attract and which to exclude,

which in turn resulted in inadequate services and infrastructure, and a prevalence of environmental burdens (Layton & Johnson, 2019, pg. 4). "San Mateo County sited a disproportionate number of harmful industrial projects in East Palo Alto [before its incorporation], including the County landfill, the regional hazardous waste recycling plant, auto dismantling facilities and pesticide and herbicide producers" (Layton & Johnson, 2019, pg. 4). While these land uses benefitted the County, the economic and environmental consequences negatively impacted nearby residents.

History of Social Justice Community Organizing in San Mateo County EFAs

It is important to acknowledge that over the course of the history shared in this document, there is a parallel history of survival, resistance, resilience, and organizing.

East Palo Alto, for example, is home to the Nairobi Movement, which made important local contributions and influenced activists across the nation and beyond (San Mateo County Libraries, 2022). Another often cited East Palo Alto example is Youth United for Community Action's (YUCA) successful campaign to close down Romic Chemical Corporation after decades of toxic contamination and health impacts in the community (Center for Health Journalism, n.d.).

Although East Palo Alto has a relatively well documented history of organizing and community empowerment, due in part to local efforts to document this history, diverse movements and campaigns for racial, economic, health, and environmental justice have also taken place over generations in EFAs across San Mateo County. These efforts, still to be fully documented, have helped move us closer to the ideals of democracy, equity, inclusion, and justice.

Photo Credit: Kim Springer

Existing Conditions and Disparities in San Mateo County Equity Focus Areas (EFAs)

C/CAG's work to advance equity must be grounded in an understanding of existing disparities in San Mateo County. While the agency cannot erase these disparities on its own, identifying and quantifying them can guide intervening strategies.

A multi-step mapping and data analysis process was taken to provide a snapshot of existing conditions related to C/CAG's program areas. This was done in order to provide a point of reference for the development of C/CAG's Equity Framework beyond the historical summary. The analysis focused on income and race and associated economic, transportation, housing, and climate disparities. As C/CAG

Figure 2: C/CAG Equity Focus Areas (EFAs)

Source: 2021 San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, 2021

embarks on actions related to evaluation, monitoring, and reporting, it will need to augment these maps and findings with new sources of data and methods of evaluating and understanding existing conditions and disparities to ensure greater accuracy and nuance in serving underserved and impacted communities.

The Existing Conditions analysis and research consisted of:
- Reviewing existing geographic and demographic indicators, maps, & tools.
- Identifying cross-agency and C/CAG program-specific interests.
- Developing indicators for consideration in the geographic assessment.
- Conducting mapping and existing conditions analysis of C/CAG program areas.
- Sharing results for feedback with C/CAG staff, Board of Directors, and Agency and Community Partner meeting participants.

Although a consolidated countywide EFA map using a range of indicators was originally envisioned, it was determined that a separate process with extensive public and stakeholder input would be needed to ensure fully representative maps. For the time being, C/CAG will identify underserved, underrepresented, and impacted communities by using regional, state, and federal agency maps and tools such as the Metropolitan Transportation Commission Equity Priority Communities map) or its existing Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan 2021 Equity Focus Area map (Figure 2) as applicable (*Active Transportation*, n.d.).

Existing Conditions Summary

Some of the takeaways from the Existing Conditions analysis demonstrate that inequities are real and measurable in San Mateo County, as they are nationally. The analysis found that:

- Income is unevenly distributed, with most communities of color experiencing significantly lower incomes overall than the White, non-Hispanic population. The exception to this is the Asian population, though some subgroups within this demographic have not fared as well economically.
- While the county has quality public transit options, driving still provides the greatest mobility. Access to vehicles, however, is lower for Black and Latino households.
- The option to work from home is not equally available to all, as many people of color have low wage service jobs requiring on-site presence. This can have a wide range of impacts, from transportation and childcare costs, higher exposure to infectious diseases such as COVID, to lesser ability to adapt to the local effects of climate change including exposure to extreme heat in outdoor working conditions.
- Homelessness is on the rise and several communities are at risk of displacement due to rising property values and associated rental costs – disproportionately impacting communities of color in the county.
- The county is experiencing many impacts of climate change, which are also falling disproportionately on communities of color and those with lower incomes.

EFA Leader Interview

"Inequality looks like most safety net resources going to people of color because they are just surviving. It looks like families working 2, or 3 jobs and multiple families having to share a home so they can make ends meet. It feels like fear of having to move away from all that you know just because you can't afford the high cost of living. It looks like making sacrifices if you do want to stay, like less time with family because you took an extra job or shift. It looks like skipping lunch so that your family can have dinner. Inequality in my community means that your family won't get a chance to experience the community you grew up in. Change is too slow, and we are being pushed further and further out."

Income and Employment

At just under $137,000, the median household income in San Mateo County is nearly double that of the U.S. median (which is about $69,000). This does not mean San Mateo residents are twice as prosperous as other Americans as they bear significantly higher costs of living. Nor does it mean that every community in the county is equal; some neighborhoods within Redwood City, Daly City, and South San Francisco, for example, have much lower median incomes compared to the county average (Figure 3).

Economic outcomes also differ significantly when disaggregated by race. By several measures, the county's Asian population – its largest community of color – has fared similarly to White non-Hispanic residents overall, although disparities exist between Asian sub-groups that data sources used for this report do not capture. All other communities of color experience lower median incomes and higher poverty rates compared to White residents (Figures 4 and 5).

Unemployment rates follow a similar pattern (Figure 6). The exception is Hispanic/Latino unemployment, which is similar to that of White and Asian populations. Despite maintaining high employment, Hispanic/Latino populations have higher poverty rates and earn a median income that is much lower due to low wages.

"

EFA Leader Interview

"I live in a community that day to day lives in poverty, in a county known to be one of the wealthiest in California. The local community is comprised of low-income families. Some of these parents must hold anywhere from 2 to 3 jobs just to make it by. There are low-income areas like these in the county that are segregated from the wealthy. The poor have worse school systems, unsafe drop-off and pick-up locations for kids, no traffic control, and roads in bad shape… Many low-income families are immigrants who have limitations to pursue an education or to obtain a better job with better pay. The economic system does not make any sense since the cost of living is higher than the minimum pay rate."

Figure 3: Median household income by census tract in San Mateo County

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau
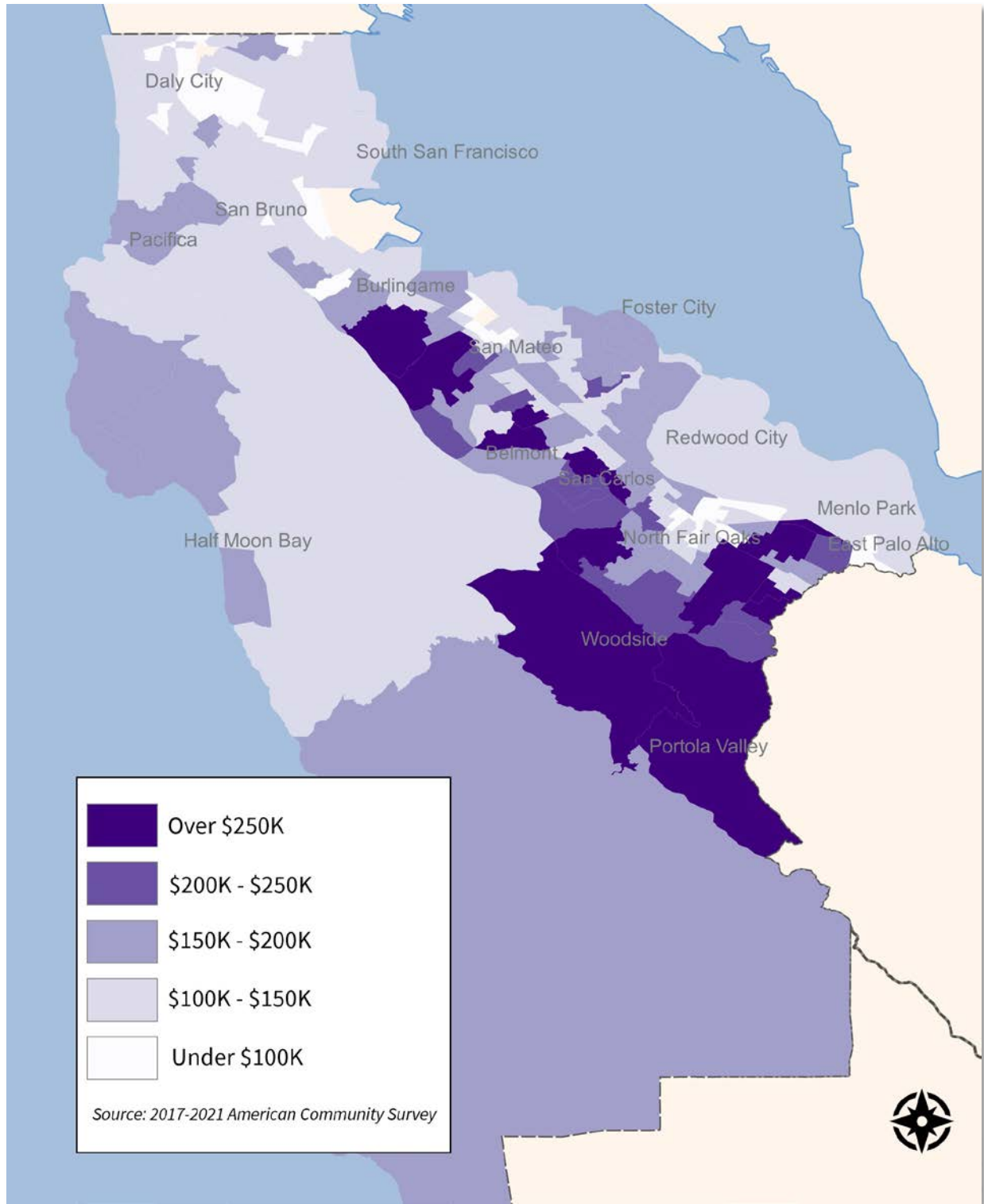
Figure 4: Median Household Income by Race/Ethnicity in San Mateo County

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau

Race/Ethnicity	Median Household Income
All	$136,837
White Non-Hispanic	$154,691
African American or Black	$90,064
American Indian or Alaska Native	$96,617
Asian	$154,260
Hispanic/Latino	$89,431
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	$128,147
Other race	$82,423
Two or more races	$123,272
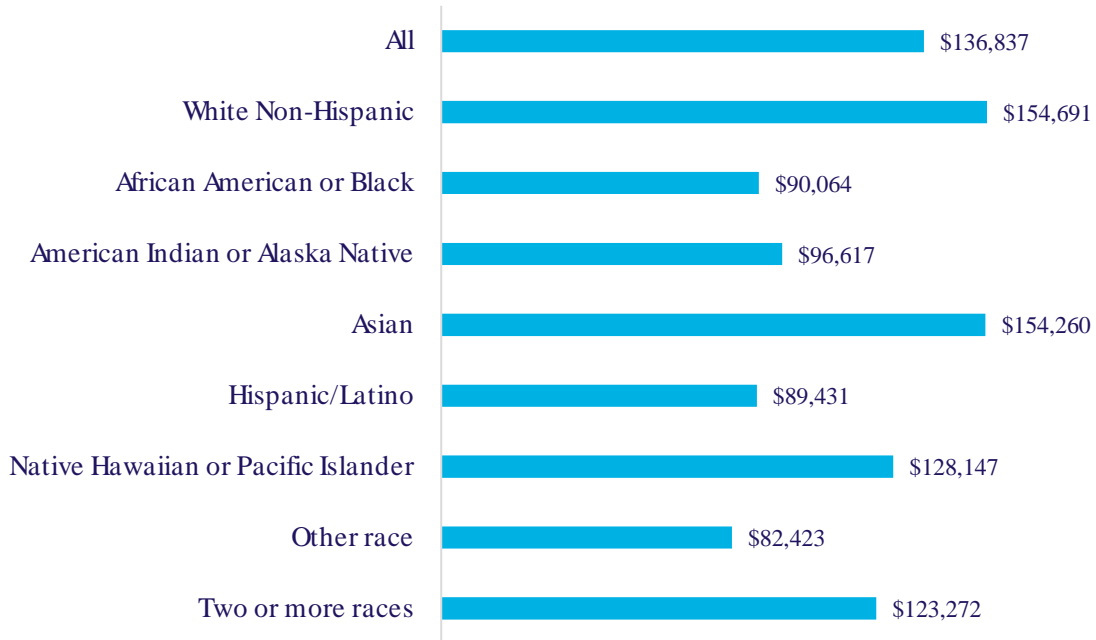
Figure 5: Poverty Rates by Race/Ethnicity in San Mateo County

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau

Race/Ethnicity	Poverty Rate
All	6%
White Non-Hispanic	5%
African American or Black	11%
American Indian or Alaska Native	14%
Asian	5%
Hispanic/Latino	10%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	11%
Other race	10%
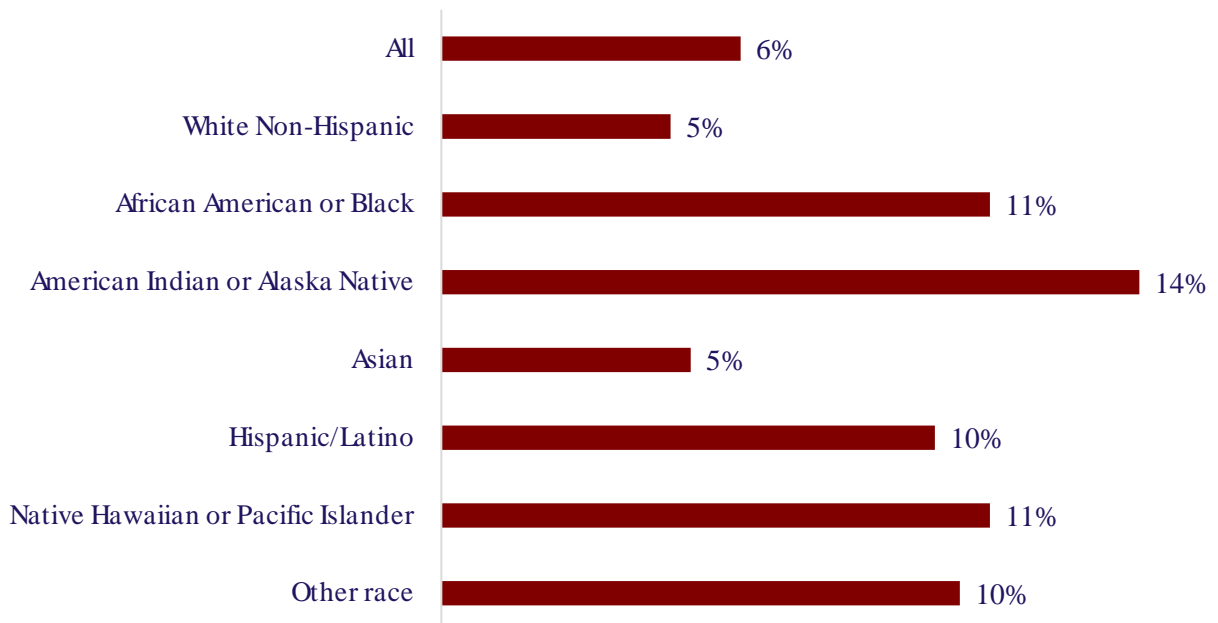
Figure 6: Unemployment Rates by Race/Ethnicity in San Mateo County

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau

Category	Rate
All	5%
White Non-Hispanic	4%
African American or Black	7%
American Indian or Alaska Native	16%
Asian	4%
Hispanic/Latino	5%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	11%
Other race	5%
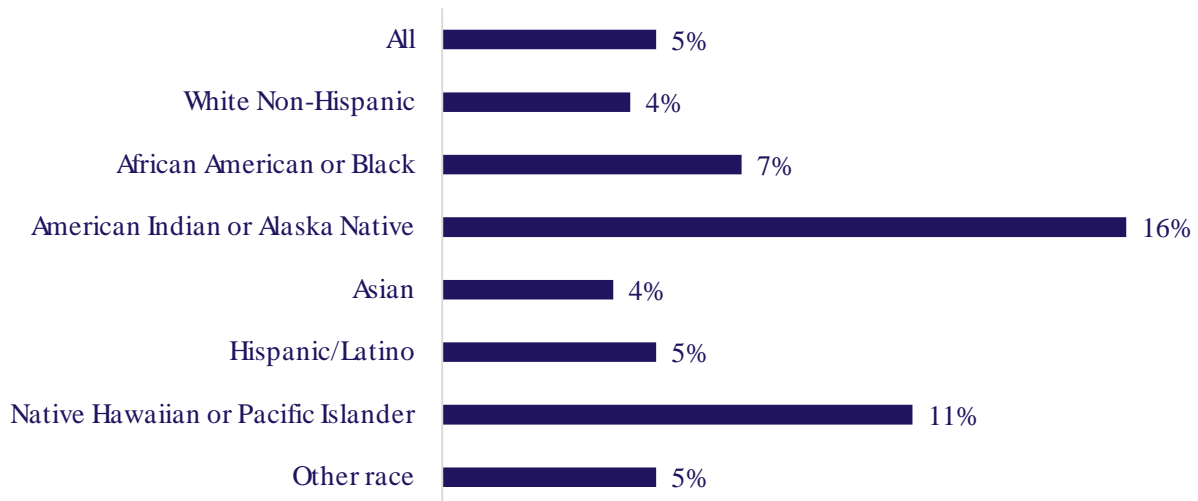
Transportation

As noted by the National Equity Atlas, "Everyone needs reliable transportation access and in most American communities that means a car" (*Car Access*, n.d.). San Mateo County communities are no exception to this as residents rely heavily on driving to get where they need to go. Most households in the county (95%) have at least one car, although Black households are twice as likely as White households to be carless (Figure 7).

At the same time, SamTrans, Caltrain, and BART make transit a practical option for some San Mateo County residents. San Mateo County commuters ride public transit at over double the national rate, including over 10% of Asian, Black, and Hispanic/Latino commuters (Figure 8). The share of workers taking transit is also relatively consistent across income levels (Figure 9). Initiatives are underway to make services more equitable by focusing on the needs of those who rely on transit most (*Equity*, n.d.; *Reimagine SamTrans*, n.d.).
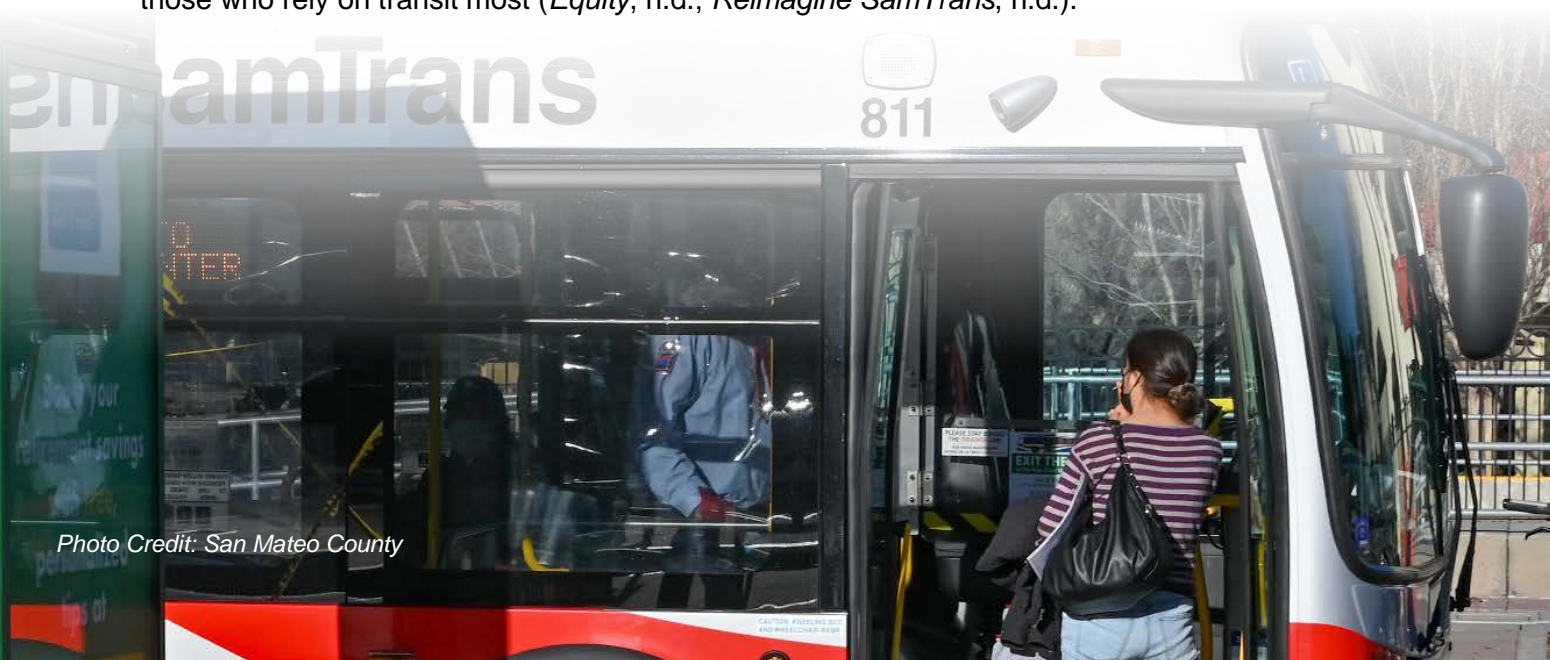
Photo Credit: San Mateo County

San Mateo County commuters spend an average of about 30 minutes getting to work; this is consistent across racial/ethnic groups (Figure 11), except for Hispanic/Latino workers whose average is about 27 minutes. How travel times have changed over the past decade, however, does not appear to be equal by race: Black workers have seen commute times grow to a greater extent than others since 2010 (Figure 12).

The COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on a disparity tangential to transportation: the option to work from home. Overall, 15% of San Mateo workers work from home, but a smaller share of Black, Hispanic/Latino, and American Indian/Alaska Native, and lower income workers do so less than others.[3] Hispanic/Latino workers and those with household incomes below $75,000 have not been able to take advantage of this cultural shift, with just 8% and 7% working from home, respectively (Figure 10).

Figure 7: Households without a vehicle by race/ethnicity in San Mateo County

Source: National Equity Atlas, 2020

All   5%
White   5%
People of color   6%
Asian   4%
Black   10%
Latino   7%
Mixed/other 6%

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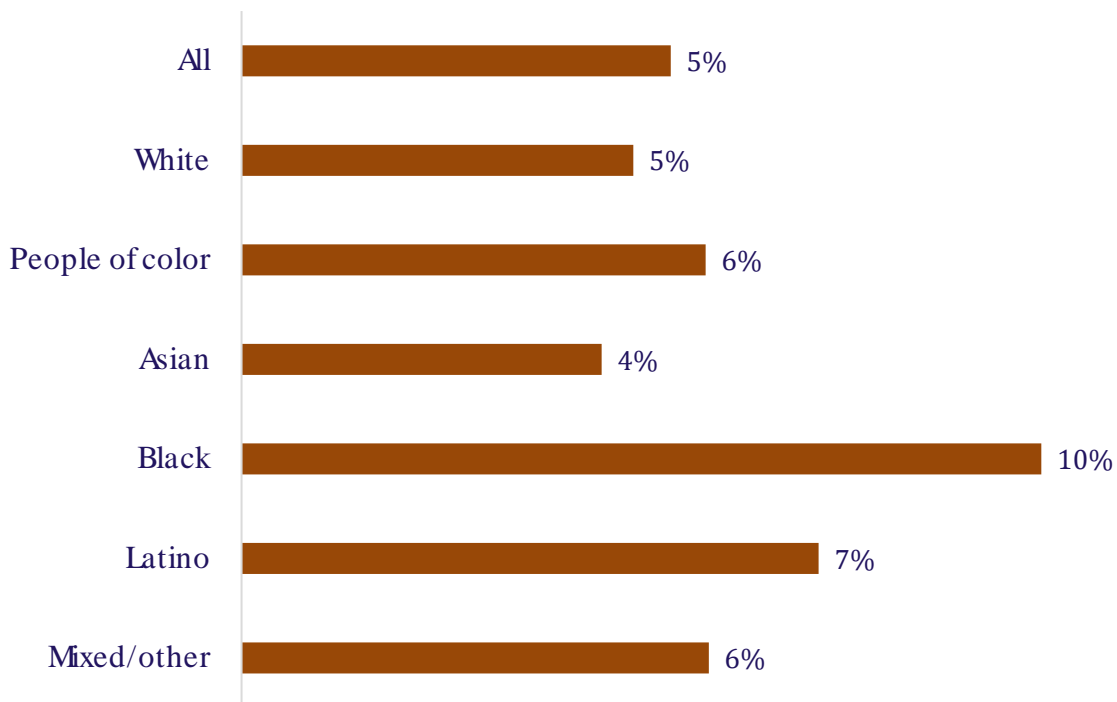
[3] These statistics do not fully reflect changes in commute patterns since the COVID pandemic.

Figure 8: Commute mode by race/ethnicity in San Mateo County

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau

	Drive alone	Carpool	Public Transit	Walk	Bicycle or other
All	72%	11%	10%	3%	3%
White non-Hispanic	79%	7%	7%	3%	5%
African American or Black	67%	11%	11%	6%	5%
American Indian or Alaska Native	69%	19%	3%	3%	6%
Asian	67%	13%	14%	2%	3%
Hispanic/Latino	69%	15%	9%	3%	3%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	69%	14%	8%	4%	4%
Other race	69%	14%	10%	3%	4%
Two or more races	73%	11%	9%	3%	3%

Figure 9: Commute mode by income level in San Mateo County

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau

Annual Household Income	Drive alone	Carpool	Public Transit	Walk	Bicycle or other
Under $25K	64%	14%	12%	6%	4%
$25K - $50K	69%	14%	10%	3%	3%
$50K - $75K	75%	10%	10%	2%	3%
Over $75K	76%	8%	12%	1%	3%

Figure 10: Working from home by race/ethnicity and income in San Mateo County

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau

Demographic Group	Percent working from home
All	15%
White non-Hispanic	18%
African American or Black	11%
American Indian or Alaska Native	12%
Asian	16%
Hispanic/Latino	8%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	16%
Other race	6%
Two or more races	18%
Household income over $75K	12%
Household income under $75K	7%

Figure 11: Average commute times by race/ethnicity (mins) in San Mateo County

Source: National Equity Atlas, 2020
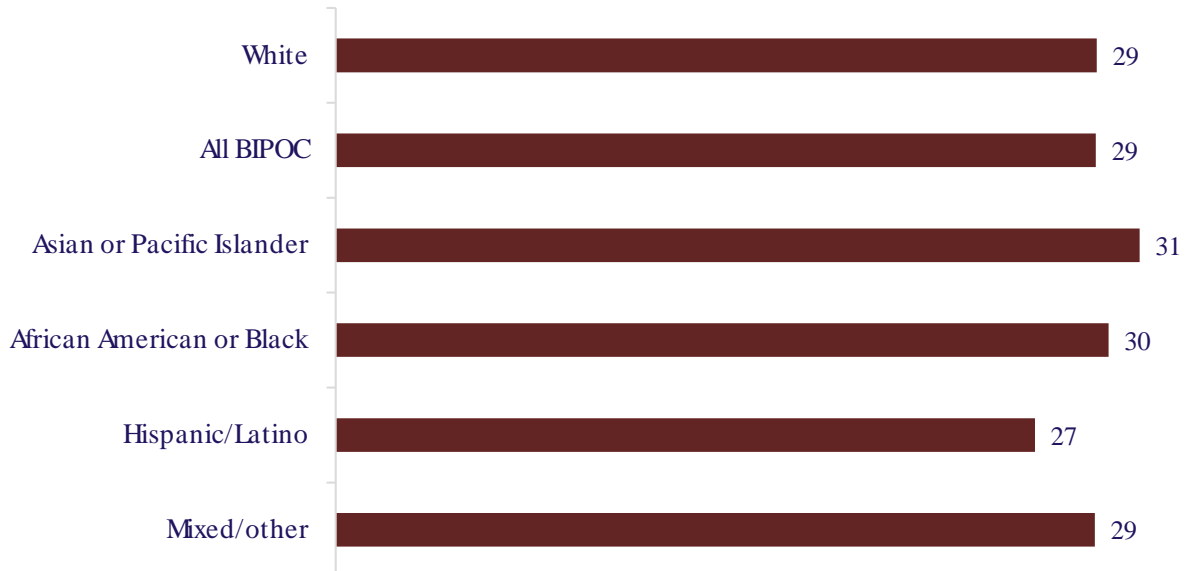
Figure 12: Percentage increase in average commute times by race/ethnicity, 2010-2019

Source: National Equity Atlas, 2020

Housing

Housing costs in San Mateo County are more than double national averages. Nearly half of renters and about 30% of homeowners pay more than 30% of their income on housing (Figure 13) (a widely accepted affordability threshold). Combined with the impacts of ongoing gentrification and displacement and a 44% rise in homelessness from 2017-2022, the county is amid a housing crisis – which is disproportionately impacting communities of color across the board (*2022 San Mateo County One Day Homeless Count and Survey*, 2022). In fact, people of color make up 84% of the population in census tracts identified as at risk of displacement by the California Estimated Displacement Risk Model.

> **EFA Leader Interview**
>
> *"Living costs have skyrocketed and have pushed the original community out because it's not affordable to live here anymore. People in my community have moved an hour or two away or out of the state entirely because they aren't able to afford to live here."*

A key strategy to address these issues is construction of new affordable housing. Unfortunately, efforts are falling short. Of the estimated number of new units required to meet housing needs of low and very low-income households from 2015-2023, just 10% had been permitted as of 2017 (*Affordable Housing Production*, n.d.). At that pace, the county will have met just 40% of the need by the end of 2023.
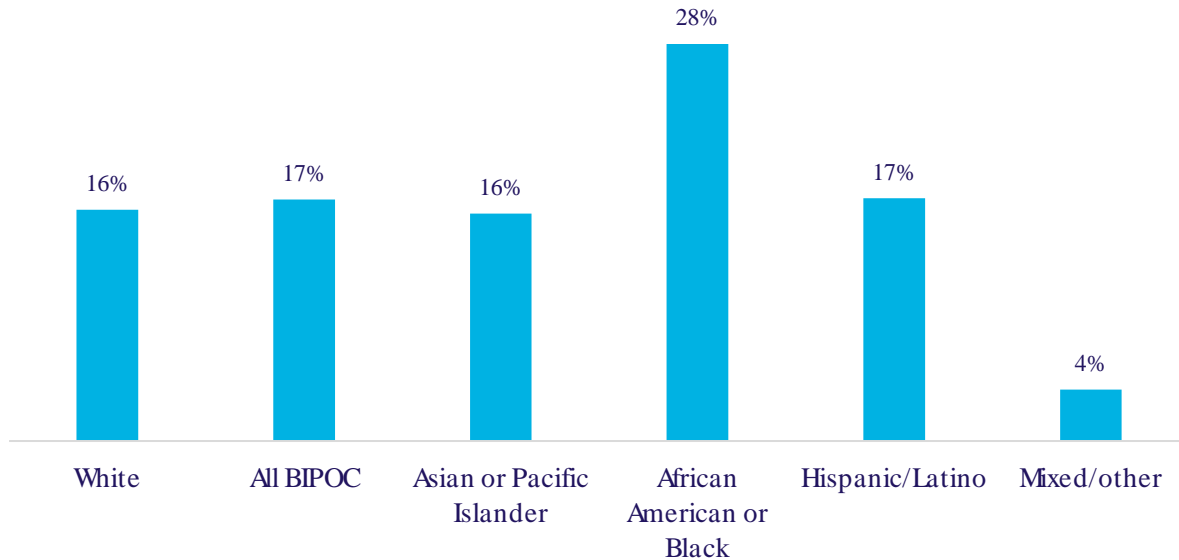
Figure 13: Housing costs in San Mateo County

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau

	San Mateo County	U.S.
Median gross rent	$2,599	$1,163
Renters paying over 30% of income on rent	46%	46%
Median housing costs for housing units with a mortgage	$3,885	$1,697
Homeowners paying more than 30% of income on home ownership expenses	29%	22%

Figure 14: Rent/Own Split by Race/Ethnicity in San Mateo County

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau

■ Rent household　■ Own household

	Rent household	Own household
All	40%	60%
White Non-Hispanic	34%	66%
African American or Black	53%	47%
American Indian or Alaska Native	61%	39%
Asian	37%	63%
Hispanic/Latino	57%	43%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	58%	42%
Other race	66%	34%
Two or more races	52%	48%
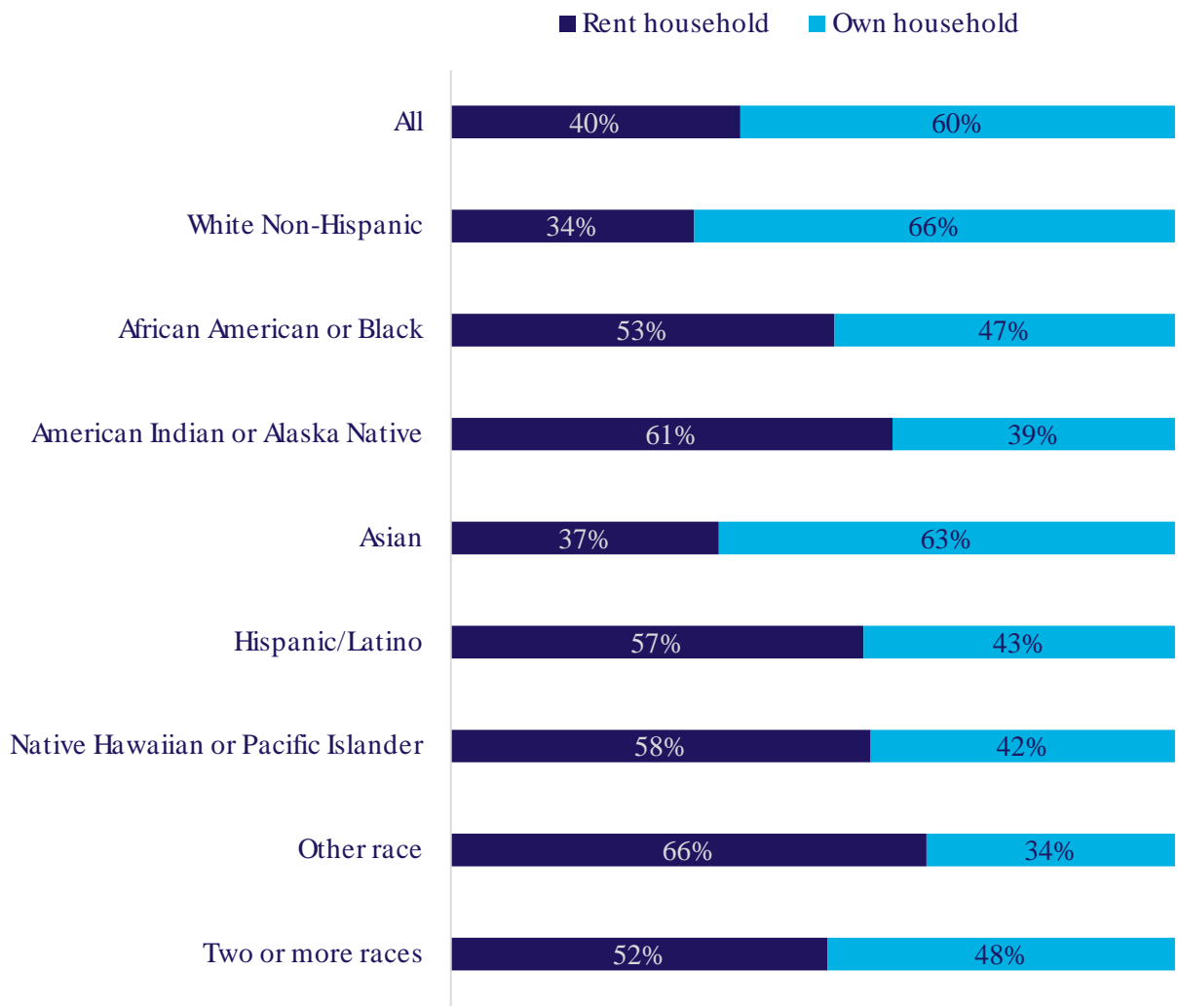
Figure 15: 2015-2017 Housing production in San Mateo County, as percentage of need

Source: Bay Area Equity Atlas
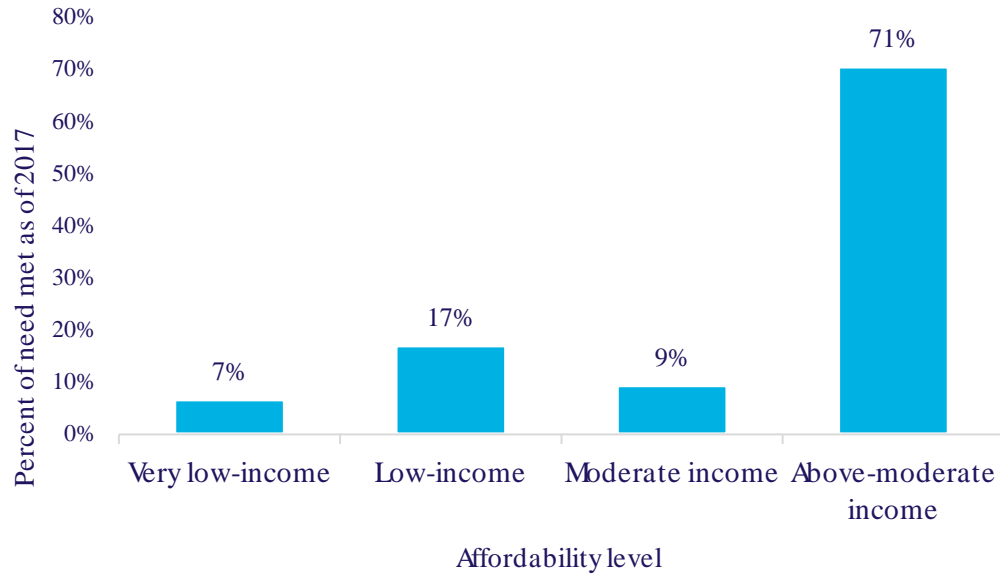
Figure 16: Gentrification Risk by Race (pct. of households) in San Mateo County

Source: UC Berkeley Urban Displacement Project; American Community Survey/Bay Area Equity Atlas
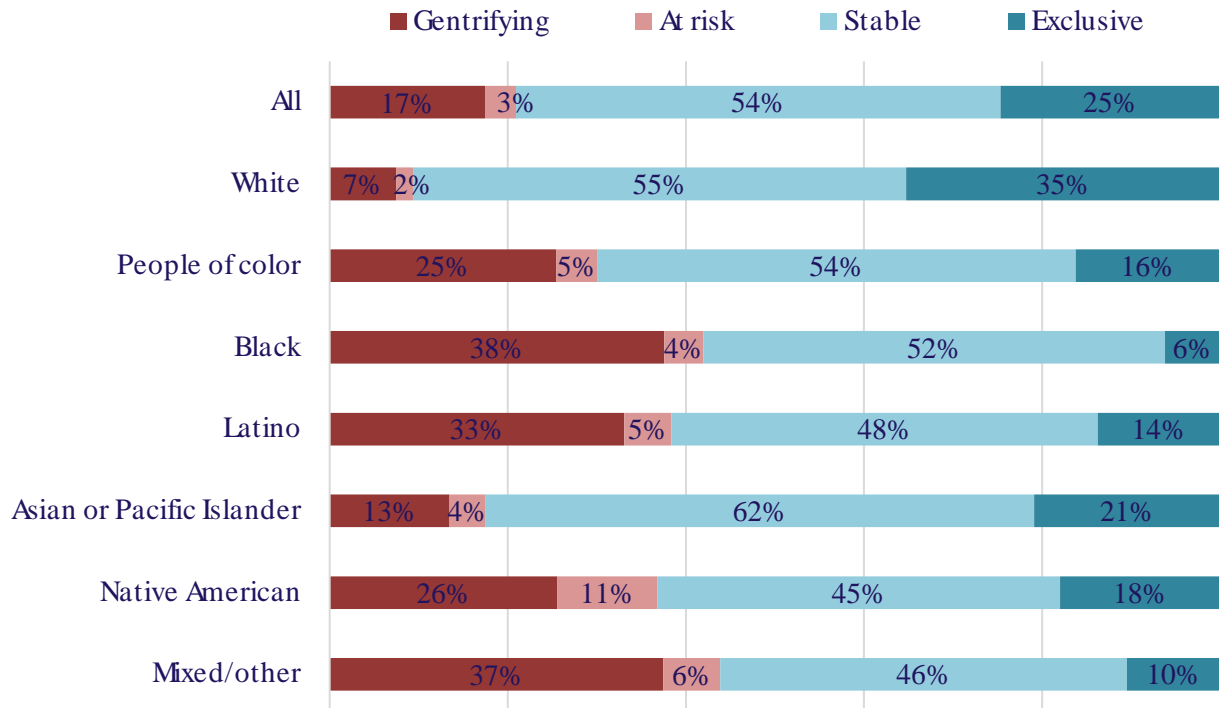
Figure 17: Census tracts identified as currently gentrifying or at risk of gentrification.

Source: UC Berkeley Urban Displacement Project
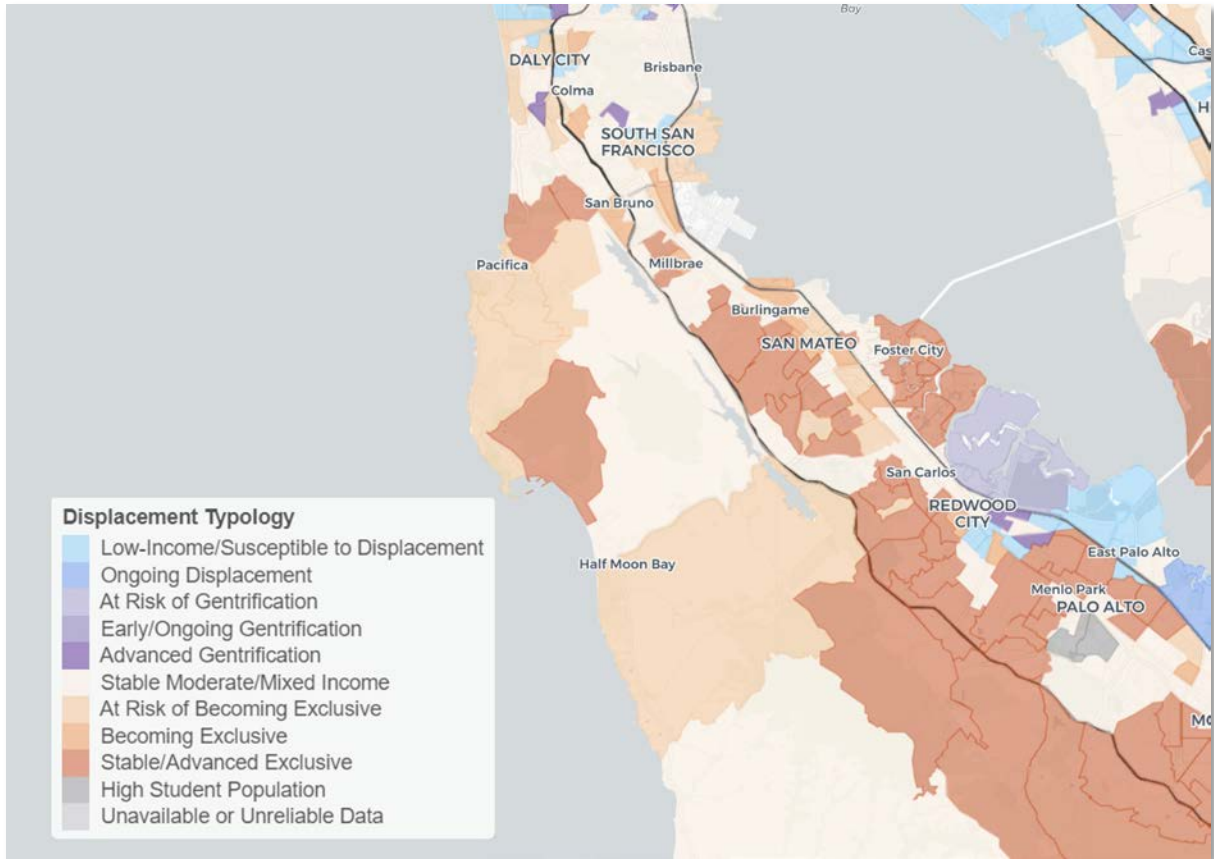
Climate

San Mateo County is experiencing the impacts of climate change, including flood risks due to sea level rise, heat exposure due to prevalence of impervious surfaces (e.g., roads and parking lots), increasing wildfires, and loss of agriculture, and these impacts are expected to get worse over time. Sea level rise alone could result in the submergence of 183 hazardous materials sites, 2 power plants and 19 electric substations, 25 miles of rail and 350 miles of local roads, 45 schools, and 7 wastewater treatment plants in San Mateo County assuming 6.6 feet of sea level rise and a 1% annual chance storm (*County of San Mateo Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment*, 2018).

Some San Mateo County households may opt to migrate to areas of the country where risks and impacts are lower (Hurdle, 2022; Bittle et al., 2023). This option requires not only the financial means to do so, but other kinds of flexibility, such as the ability to work from home. Consequently, those with lower incomes may be left to bear the brunt of these hazards.

As Figures 18 and 19 (below) illustrate, many low-income households and other vulnerable demographics in San Mateo County will be impacted by the climate change. Figure 18 shows areas with high concentrations of vulnerable populations (youth, seniors, people of color, people experiencing low income, people with limited education or English proficiency, households with a high housing and transportation cost burden, and rental households without access to a vehicle) that are at risk of impending sea level rise. Figure 19 shows geographic areas of concern for both environmental risks and community demographics as identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the White House Council on Environmental Quality. Priority focus areas include portions of East Palo Alto, North Fair Oaks, San Mateo, South San Francisco, and Daly City.

Figure 18: Vulnerable areas in San Mateo County at risk of inundation due to rising sea levels.

*Source: (*County of San Mateo Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment, 2018, *pg. 103)*
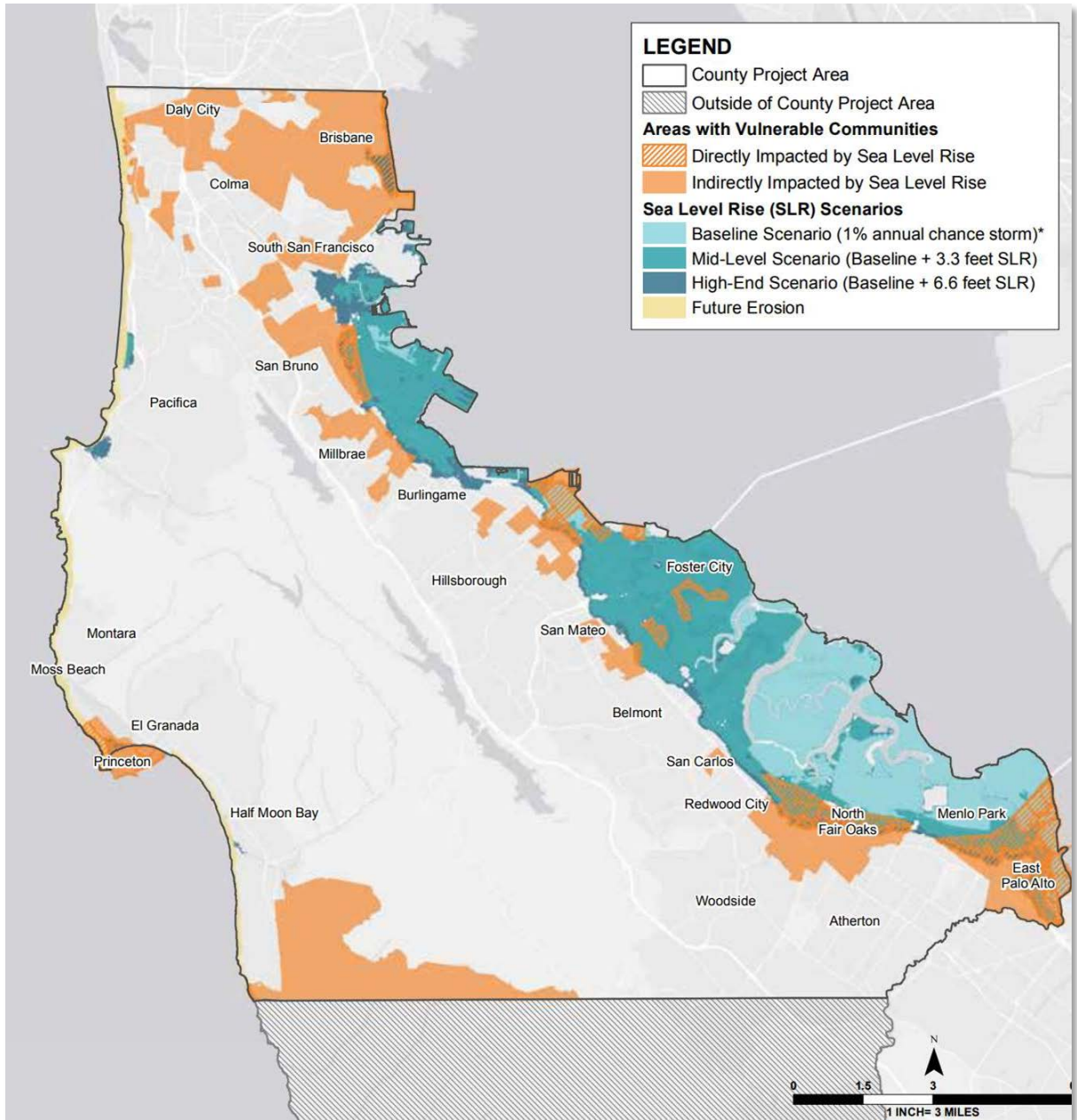
Figure 18: CalEPA and White House CEQ equity focus areas.

Legend:
- CalEnviroScreen "Disadvantaged Community"
- WHCEQ "Climate & EJ Community"
- Freeway
- Arterial street

Sources: CalEnviroScreen 4.0, White House Council on Environmental Quality Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool
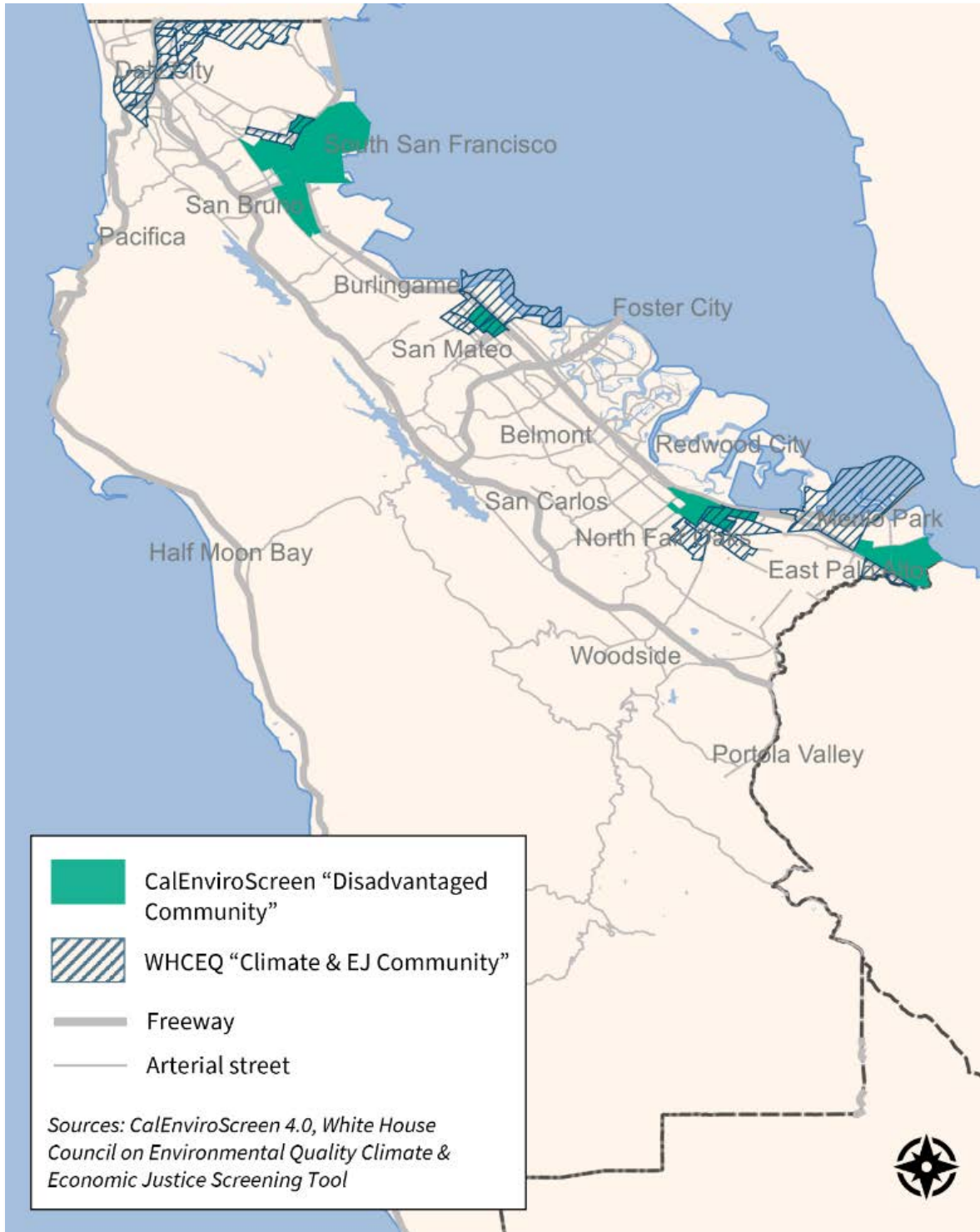
Agency Context

The following section provides context for C/CAG as an agency, the equity connections to its program areas, and an understanding of C/CAG's equity strengths, gaps, and opportunities. It also includes a snapshot of the equity-advancement experience of other agencies outside of San Mateo County. The conversations and content that this section represents was layered upon the community context in the prior section to arrive at C/CAG's Equity Commitment, Definition, Approach, Goals, Intended Outcomes, & Actions

C/CAG's Role in the County

C/CAG is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that deals with issues that affect the quality of life in San Mateo County, including transportation, air quality, stormwater runoff, hazardous waste, solid waste and recycling, land use near airports, and abandoned vehicle abatement.[4] This includes but is not limited to the following responsibilities:

- Planning for long range transportation improvements through its role as a Congestion Management Agency (CMA),[5]
- Developing the county's Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) Expenditure Program as Program Manager for AB434 40% Funds,
- Forming Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plans through its role as the area's Airport Land Use Commission,
- Leading the development and supporting the area's Hazardous Waste Management Plan and providing review and comment to the Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan as a facilitator of the Integrated Solid Waste Management Local Task Force,
- The Service Authority for Abatement of Abandoned Vehicles,
- Developing San Mateo County's Stormwater Management Plan as Program Manager for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).

C/CAG's members and representatives include:

- Atherton
- Belmont
- Brisbane
- Burlingame
- Colma
- Daly City
- East Palo Alto
- Foster City
- Half Moon Bay
- Hillsborough
- Menlo Park
- Millbrae
- Pacifica
- Portola Valley
- Redwood City
- San Bruno
- San Carlos
- San Mateo
- San Mateo County
- SMC Transit District and Transit Authority
- South San Francisco
- Woodside

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[4] Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs) are exercised when the public officials of two or more agencies agree to create another legal entity or establish a joint approach to work on a common problem, fund a project, or act as a representative body for a specific activity. Agencies that can exercise joint powers include federal agencies, state departments, counties, cities, special districts, school districts, and redevelopment agencies (Cypher & Grinnell, 2007).

[5] Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs) are county-level government agencies responsible for countywide transportation planning, including congestion management, design and construction of specific highway, pedestrian, and bicycle improvement projects, as well as promotion of transit-oriented development (*About VTA*, 2023).

Equity Connections Between C/CAG's Program Areas and Equity

C/CAG's program areas are wide ranging. C/CAG works on policies and plans related to land use and housing, transportation, energy, water/stormwater, air quality, and climate change. Each of these arenas have far reaching equity implications. C/CAG has an important role in contributing to equity advancement as part of a broader governmental effort to improve outcomes where needs and disparities are greatest.

It is important to keep in mind the following considerations when examining negative and positive impacts with regards to equity within each C/CAG program area:

- Those least responsible for social and environmental impacts created by our economic and political system are often those most harmed and less able to adapt.
- Race and class are a critical focus, but intersectional thinking that centers other underserved and impacted demographics is also important to consider and plan around, including but not limited to age, disability, and gender.
- Harm or improvement in one program area, such as transportation, can have implications for other areas, such as climate and air quality.
- A focus on those with the greatest needs can help maximize the benefits of public funding in San Mateo County by allocating resources where the opportunity for gains is greatest.
- Solutions to these issues are often complex and may need much greater investment than currently available, and call for collaboration across departments, sectors, jurisdictions, and specific communities.

Housing and Land Use

The way our cities and the San Mateo County region are shaped, and the quality, diversity, and availability of housing has major social equity implications. This includes:

- Economic, health, and wealth disparities,
- Housing affordability and homelessness,
- Segregation, gentrification, and displacement,
- Access to employment and other opportunities,
- Climate change impacts, and local and regional air pollution, and
- Energy consumption.

EFA Leader Interview

"We know we can never afford to buy a home in San Mateo County, so we will continue renting for now and eventually get pushed out of the county. Even if we could buy a place, the high prices would continue to be unattainable to so many in our community."

Low density suburban land uses, like strip malls and single-family homes are the predominant type of development in San Mateo County. The exception to this suburban character is the County's rural and open space lands, as well as compact and walkable areas concentrated around the Caltrain and El Camino Real corridors. These primarily low-density land use patterns have been paired with a wide range of inequitable land use and housing policies and actions. This includes historic segregation, inadequate low- and moderate-income housing production, and a lack of tenant protections and anti-displacement policies.

Only a limited number of people can still afford to live in San Mateo County, and this has wide-ranging implications for diversity, equity, and access. One Community Working Group (CWG) participant convened as part of C/CAG's Equity Framework Project, expressed that *"It is counterproductive to design a system where people are forced to commute from further and further away to workplaces. Employees are working here but spending elsewhere. It's unsustainable."*

> **"*It is counterproductive to design a system where people are forced to commute from further and further away to workplaces. Employees are working here but spending elsewhere. It's unsustainable.*"**

Photo Credit: San Mateo County

Transportation

The way transportation systems in the County have been designed has created public health and safety, affordability, access, and economic barriers and disparities, including among people of color with low incomes and people with disabilities (Rowangould et al., 2016, pg 151). Transportation-equity connections and trends include:

- The combined effects of racialized spatial segregation and suburban sprawl with highway construction that have resulted in most people in San Mateo County living in auto-dependent communities,
- The separation of low-income people of color from high-opportunity areas that have resulted in longer commute times for households that are transit-dependent and affordability impacts to low-income households that are forced to own and operate an automobile to access essential needs and opportunities,
- The regressive nature of most sources of transportation funding to pay for transportation infrastructure and services, and
- The resulting barriers to obtaining access to positive societal outcomes, including health, education, employment, and wealth (Dort et al., 2019, pg.1)

Furthermore, the way transportation and land use decisions have been made, combined with how economics plays a role in where people can afford to live (less desirable areas near highways resulting in lower cost housing options in those areas) has resulted in concentrated exposure of air and noise pollution from motor vehicles in areas where people of color and low-income people are overrepresented (Rowangould et al., 2016, pg. 151-152).

EFA Leader Interview

"My community has been underserved and neglected. We don't have any public parks. We don't have bike lanes. The lighting is scarce, and some streets are extremely dark at night. Sidewalks are non-existent in some streets. The community is dissected by two train tracks, therefore divided by those and other physical divisions."

Photo Credit: San Mateo County

Energy

Energy production, transport, consumption, and disposal have local and global consequences. The US is one of the world's largest energy consumers, resulting in an oversized impact on the environment. Within the US and other nations, people with higher incomes consume more energy compared to lower income populations. This overconsumption results in a greater amount of energy related pollution on a per capita basis.

The negative impacts related to the energy sector are diverse and profound. For example, in the US, natural gas stoves are a major source of indoor air pollution and a contributor to higher asthma rates among children. The building of communities around the automobile has resulted in dependence and excessive use of fossil fuels, which in turn have contaminated ecosystems and communities locally and globally.

Across these and other energy related issues, higher income nations, communities, and people tend to benefit the most from energy production and are more able to buffer themselves from the negative consequences. The inverse is also true of lower income nations, communities, and people. In the Bay Area and San Mateo County, these inequities manifest in many ways, including:

- the location of oil refineries and ports that concentrate air pollutants in lower income communities near these facilities, which tend to have higher concentrations of people of color, like Richmond.
- A disproportionate siting of toxic waste disposal sites, such as the former Romic facility in East Palo Alto, in low-income communities, and
- The air pollution impact to renters and homeowners living near major roadways with high levels of auto and truck traffic such as Highways 101, 84, and 92.

Energy equity has emerged as a key factor limiting population-wide uptake and access to energy efficiency, electrification, and weatherization, including questions related to energy costs, access to efficient and healthy homes, and who benefits economically the most from the energy sector (Drehobl et al., 2020, pg. 2-3). This includes the lack of access to renters and low-income homeowners of energy efficiency, electrification, and clean energy programs that can help save money.

Photo Credit: San Mateo County

Clean Water Access and Stormwater

Protecting our water supply and ensuring all have access to clean water is vital for the health and wellbeing of people and ecosystems. Although all people are affected by water related issues, higher income nations, communities, and individuals tend to have greater means and political influence to adapt. This includes getting access to clean water and avoiding or adapting to areas prone to flooding.

In Silicon Valley, one of the first sources of toxic pollution was mercury in waterways from mining during the Gold Rush. Later, the semiconductor industry became a major source of toxins in our groundwater. These and other historic water pollutants pose current day public health threats to low income and BIPOC populations and communities. Pollution exposures include mercury pollution fishing in the San Francisco Bay and differences in access to clean drinking water.

New science has unveiled the potential of further threats to toxic groundwater exposure due to rising sea levels (Figure 19). A 2019 study of Bay Area groundwater flooding found the "most severe risk in the Silicon Valley area" (Plane et al., 2019, pg. 7). Another study found sites at risk of toxic exposure in the Bay Area due to rising groundwater "are disproportionately near low-income communities and communities of color" (Manke, 2023). As one Agency Partner meeting participant pointed out, *"we are still making decisions that result in further concentration of industrial land uses in proximity to low-income communities."* These land uses have the potential for future exposure to populations already burdened by pollution.

"We are still making decisions that result in further concentration of industrial land uses in proximity to low-income communities."

Photo Credit: San Mateo County

Figure 19: Areas at risk of rising coastal groundwater because of climate-induced sea-level rise, resulting in increased risk of groundwater pollution exposure.

Source: Plane et al., 2019, pg. 7
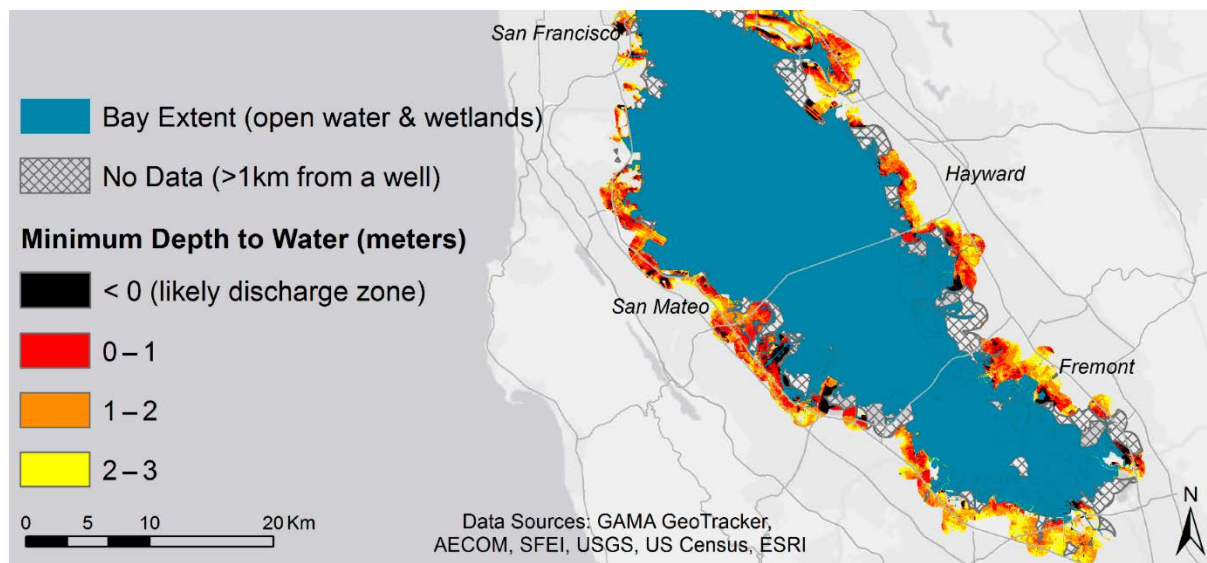
Many Equity Focus Areas located close to or east of Highway 101, such as East Palo Alto, Belle Haven, and North Fair Oaks, are more prone to flooding due to being lower lying communities and would be among the first to be threatened by rising sea levels. As one participant of the Project's Agency Partner meeting noted, *"There is a higher likelihood of flooding impacts in certain locations and related infrastructure issues around drainage, including lower income areas. Areas to implement improvements to avoid those impacts are typically a mile upstream in areas that may be higher income or may be in different cities."* This comment also highlights the need for collaboration across jurisdictions and departments.

"There is a higher likelihood of flooding impacts in certain locations and related infrastructure issues around drainage, including lower income areas. Areas to implement improvements to avoid those impacts are typically a mile upstream in areas that may be higher income or may be in different cities."

Air Quality and Climate Change

As is the case with other C/CAG program areas, those most responsible for air pollution and climate change impacts are often more able to buffer themselves from the impacts.

There are several examples of air pollution and carbon emission-related inequities in San Mateo County. For example:

- Low-income communities tend to have a deficit of green spaces and tree cover. This will become increasingly problematic as temperatures rise over time due to carbon pollution.
- Redlining and segregation have resulted in more affordable neighborhoods, like East Palo Alto, Belle Haven, and North Fair Oaks that are closer to freeways and more harmed by pollution.
- A lack of resource hubs, such as cooling centers (typically an air-conditioned or cooled building that has been designated as a site to provide respite and safety during extreme heat), in low-income communities to help mitigate extreme heat day health stressors experienced by the unhoused and other vulnerable populations (Widerynski et al., 2017).
- The potential for economic strain on low-income families and small businesses that do not have the resources to adapt to climate impacts such as rising sea levels on the one hand and new climate and air pollution policies and regulations on the other.

Internal Agency Assessment

Before considering equity recommendations, it is key to understand C/CAG's strengths, gaps, and opportunities. The project team set out to understand the full scope of C/CAG's programs, plans, and projects, provide an opportunity for staff to evaluate the extent of equity integrations within their work and future actions/steps, and present these insights for input to C/CAG Board, Committees and Agency and Community Partner participants to refine Equity Framework commitments.

The internal review process consisted of the following steps:
- The consultant team developed a list of questions grouped by agency-level operations, individual projects, plans, programs, and funding calls. Written interviews revolved around understanding how current projects, plans, programs, and funding calls address:
    - Goal setting and strategic direction
    - Measurement & assessment
    - Community engagement
    - Actions, commitments, and community benefits
    - Monitoring, reporting & accountability.
- C/CAG staff responded to prompts for their respective program areas in an equity interventions matrix document and participated in follow up small group discussions. In all, C/CAG staff evaluated over thirty projects, programs, and plans.
- The consultant team shared initial findings with C/CAG staff and agency and CBO partners via oral presentation for comments and feedback.

The final step consisted of developing a written summary. The following subsections detail findings across programs and projects.

Examples of C/CAG Equity Program and Policy Integrations

The **Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT)/Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Mitigation Program** will develop a menu of mitigations for reducing VMT and GHG emissions from infrastructure and development projects with a focus on addressing needs and providing resources to EFAs ("Scope of Work - Development of VMT/GHG Model Mitigation Program," 2022).[6][7][8]

The **Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan** led to the establishment of C/CAG's Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) and included equity criteria in the project prioritization process. The plan is updated every four to five years, and it is expected that C/CAG will continue to use and build upon the equity metrics in the plan. Progress updates will be communicated through public outreach, including community meetings and website updates (*2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*, 2021).

The **San Mateo County Shuttle Program** funds services to address first/last mile connections to regional transit, address gaps in bus service to employment centers, and to address mobility needs of transit dependent communities.[9] Equity criteria account for 25% of possible points in project scoring and require substantiation for how the project will benefit lower income communities, communities of color, seniors, or other vulnerable populations. In addition, all shuttles are free and open to the public. (*Shuttle Program Call for Projects Fiscal Year 2024/2025*, 2023).

The **Safe Routes to School Program** prioritizes school funding based on location within Equity Priority Communities (EPC's) & student free/reduced-price lunch enrollment. The program is managed by the SMC Office of Education (SMCOE). SMCOE surveys parents and students to measure the effectiveness of activities and provides quarterly and annual updates to C/CAG Board and Committees on program effectiveness (City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (*Safe Routes to School*, 2023).

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[6] Greenhouse gasses (GHGs) are any of the gases — including carbon dioxide, methane, and ozone — whose absorption of solar radiation is responsible for the greenhouse effect, in which the atmosphere allows incoming sunlight to pass through but absorbs heat radiated back from the earth's surface. Greenhouse gases act like a heat-trapping blanket in the atmosphere, causing climate change (Association of Bay Area Governments & Metropolitan Transportation Commission, 2024).
[7] Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) is a measure of the demand for vehicle travel on public roadways. Decreasing annual VMT per capita can directly improve air quality and the overall health of a population. Factors that can lead to VMT reduction include land use policies, active transportation infrastructure, economic factors, and other strategies to reduce car-dependence (VMT per Capita, n.d.).
[8] The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires public lead agencies to impose feasible mitigation measures as part of the approval of a "project" to substantially lessen or avoid the significant adverse effects of the project on the physical environment ("Mitigation Measures," 2020). A "mitigation measure" is designed to minimize a project's significant environmental impacts (*Significance and Mitigation Under the California Environmental Quality Act*, 2016).
[9] Transit dependent populations are populations, communities, or individuals that are more reliant on transit systems for access and mobility. Various indicators such as age, income, and access to a private vehicle are used to determine dependency (Jiao & Dillivan, 2013).

21 Elements helps support cities in adopting pro housing policies with a focus on addressing gaps in affordable housing production. C/CAG co-founded and provides ongoing funding for 21 Elements and with the County Department of Housing. A significant focus has been on AFFH Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) which includes an analysis of existing disparities. The initiative encourages improved community engagement, with a focus on special needs populations (*Home Page | 21 Elements*, 2023).

The **Sustainable Streets Master Plan** integrates complete streets with green stormwater infrastructure to support water quality, active transportation, and climate adaptation goals.[10] The Plan refers to a set of vulnerability indices to prioritize projects & equity-based indicators are included within the prioritization criteria. The engagement process included a series of pop-up events, focusing on diverse and multilingual populations. Outreach collateral was translated into multiple languages (*Sustainable Streets Master Plan – Flows to Bay*, 2023).

The **Lifeline Transportation Program** funds projects that improve the mobility of low-income residents. Eligible projects must be located within an EPC and identified in a Community Based Transportation Plan.[11] The program allocates 20 of 110 points in the evaluation criteria towards Coordination and Program Outreach with an emphasis on inclusive outreach to low-income populations (*C/CAG Lifeline Transportation Program Cycle 6 Call for Projects*, 2021).

One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) Program funds projects/programs that improve safety, spur economic development, and meet climate change and air quality improvement goals. C/CAG awarded 10 out of 145 points for projects that are located/supportive of an EPC/EFAs and 25 points for projects that demonstrate support from communities impacted by past discriminatory practices (*One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) 3 Program*, 2022).

The **SMC Express Lanes Project** constructed new express lanes along US 101 to reduce congestion, increase person throughput and improve travel time reliability.[12] An Equity Program was established that provides qualifying low-income participants with pre-loaded $100 FasTrak transponders or Clipper cards. Reporting includes Joint Powers Authority Board monthly program updates, periodic re-evaluation of program policies, and periodic updates to community groups and the public (*Home Page | San Mateo Express Lanes*, n.d.).

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[10] Complete Streets are safe, and feel safe, for all road users (Complete Streets in FHWA, 2022, November 22). Green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) is a nature-based solution to water quality issues that urban stormwater runoff causes. GSI systems intercept stormwater, infiltrate a portion of it into the ground, evaporate a portion of it into the air, and in some cases release a portion of it slowly back into the sewer system (What Is Green Stormwater Infrastructure?, n.d.). Climate Adaptation refers to strategies and actions to prepare for and adjust to the impacts of climate change, including water management and nature-based solutions (GCA.org - The Global Center on Adaptation, 2023).
[11] CBTPs are community-led plans to identify transportation challenges in low-income neighborhoods and develop strategies to overcome them (Community-Based Transportation Plans (CBTPs), 2023).
[12] Express Lanes are designated highway lanes that are free to travel in for carpools, vanpools, and other eligible vehicles and that give the option for solo drivers to pay a per-use toll to use the lane during designated hours of operation (What Are Express Lanes? What Are Their Benefits?, n.d.).

Strengths and Assets

C/CAG's role as a countywide funder:
One of C/CAG's biggest assets in helping advance equity in San Mateo County is its role as an infrastructure and programmatic funder. In some cases, C/CAG functions as the pass-through agency for state and federal funding to other countywide agencies and local governments. In these cases, it has varying levels of discretion in its approach to distributing the funds, including determining scoring criteria for equitable processes and outcomes. In other cases, when the source of funds is local, C/CAG has greater discretion in structuring the grant program. The One Bay Area Grant program and the Lifeline Transportation program are two examples of funding with equity stipulations that C/CAG administers. The San Mateo County Shuttle Program is an example of a C/CAG grant program where funds are obtained from local sources that include equity selection criteria.

Role in facilitating dialogue and collaboration across local municipalities:
With 20 cities/towns, San Mateo County has more cities and towns than any other Bay Area County. C/CAG is one of the few organizations in the County that has a seat on its Board of Directors for each city and the County Board of Supervisors. In addition, C/CAG has 9 standing committees with 123 seats. Including the Board of Directors and the 9 standing committees, C/CAG typically has 86 scheduled Brown Act meetings each year.

Focus on achieve equitable outcomes in many of the efforts it leads:
Many C/CAG-led plans, projects, and programs contain equity definitions, goals, or desired outcomes and require or encourage equity recommendations, commitments, or actions. In some of these cases, equity is a major emphasis or factor due to the original funding sources originating from state or federal funds. Examples of C/CAG equity-oriented initiatives where the funder explicitly calls for equity advancement to be incorporated include C/CAG's VMT/GHG Mitigation Program and Community Based Transportation Plans. Other C/CAG led or supported initiatives include an equity emphasis regardless of the source of funds, such as the Express Lanes Equity Program and 21 Elements Program.

Inclusion of equity criteria and other measurements in plans, projects, programs:
C/CAG incorporates equity indicators, metrics, or performance measures in numerous projects and programs. The agency had led the way through several examples, like utilizing equity criteria in program/plan prioritization (Sustainable Streets Master Plan and Comprehensive Bike Ped Plan) and tracking program outcomes, including geographic and demographic participation (SMC Express Lanes Equity Program and Safe Routes to Schools Program).

Equity-informed human resources support
Most C/CAG hiring & human resources functions are provided or supported by the County of San Mateo, which has increasingly strong internal equity systems and practices. C/CAG staff are encouraged to participate in equity training opportunities offered by the County.

Gaps and Limitations

Challenges in influencing or determining how grant programs are implemented:
Although C/CAG has the "power of the purse," it has some limitations over how the projects and programs it funds are implemented by cities and other local agencies. Successful equity advancement depends in part on the degree to which cities and other agencies receiving C/CAG funds prioritize and operationalize equity in their work. Furthermore, local jurisdictions representing Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) may have limited resources and staffing that can hinder their ability to apply for grants.

Other challenges that C/CAG has as a funder include the tensions between prioritizing equity versus geographic distribution in allocating grant funding. As C/CAG seeks to further prioritize areas of greatest need, it may face resistance, for example, from interests that prefer those funds be distributed evenly across geographies or populations. An additional challenge is that some original sources of C/CAG program funds do not have an equity focus.

Limited staffing resources:
Paradoxically, C/CAG's primary strength as a funder that funnels most of its resources externally into local jurisdictions means that it has relatively little funding for its own functions and needs. C/CAG's financial constraints can limit its ability to do everything it would like to do around equity advancement, and staff capacity was frequently cited as a major issue in internal conversations. There are only 11 staff at C/CAG at the time of this writing, with only one full time administrative staff person who also serves as the Board and SMCEL JPA clerk.

Limitations and barriers to conducting equitable community engagement and establishing meaningful relationships with EFA CBO's:
C/CAG's staff's time constraints, coupled by the large number of projects, programs, plans, and funding calls that they lead or support, can limit their ability to engage the community and sustain meaningful relationships with Equity Focus Area (EFA) CBOs and leaders.

In addition to limited time for community engagement and partnerships, the agency has no existing agency-level equitable engagement guidelines and/or formal longer-term relationships with CBOs to support equitable engagement. There are currently no agency and program wide equitable reporting, or accountability strategies nor is there an existing process to keep the board and community up to date on progress on equity outcomes, such as regular/annual updates to the Board and Committees or an online equity dashboard.

Beyond its own existing limitations, C/CAG's effectiveness in engaging EFA demographics and geographies is affected by external factors as well, including what staff perceive as a lack of interest in some of its programs in underserved communities and barriers to participation among renters, immigrants, and other EFA demographics.

Constraints in ensuring board, committee, and staff diversity and understanding of equity:

The diversity and commitment of any institution's leadership is key to equity advancement. In C/CAG's case, Cities and the County appoint board members (one representative from each city in the County, plus a member of the County Board of Supervisors), thereby intrinsically determining the diversity and equity commitment of the Board. Cities and county agencies also appoint many committee seats, whether it be city/agency staff or elected officials.

Some committee positions are open to the public, but those are rare. Furthermore, there tend to be more open positions on committees than applicants, so the C/CAG Board rarely has more than one option for candidates to appoint. Currently, there are no equity-oriented selection criteria for open seats, and there are no equity-focused committees within the organization.

C/CAG's staff are generally diverse; however, currently, there is only one African American and no Latinx/o/as on staff, a challenge that staff noted is an issue in their respective fields more broadly. Other factors limiting the diversity and capacity/understanding of C/CAG board, committee, and staff members include a lack of consistency in participation in equity training and onboarding opportunities.

A lack of agencywide equitable procurement and contracting policies:

C/CAG has no agency-level equity-oriented procurement or contracting commitments, standards, or practices; however, some specific project and program Request for Proposals (RFPs) have commitments for a minimum percentage of contract funding for Small Business Enterprise (SBE) and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs).[13] Typically, SBE and DBE requirements are set as guidelines in the original source of funds, but in some cases, there are untapped opportunities for C/CAG as the administering agency to go above and beyond such requirements.

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[13] A Request for Proposals (RFP) is the document used to solicit proposals from potential providers (proposers) for goods and services and includes the negotiation of all terms, including price, prior to contract award (The Institute for Public Procurement, n.d.). A Small Business Enterprise (SBE) as defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is a "small business" [for most industries] either in terms of the average number of employees over the past 12 months, or average annual receipts over time (What Is a Small Business?, 2020). DBEs are for-profit small businesses where socially and economically disadvantaged individuals own at least a 51% interest and control management and daily business operations. African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific and Subcontinent Asian Americans, and women are presumed to be socially and economically disadvantaged. Other individuals can also qualify on a case-by-case basis. (Definition of a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise, n.d.).

Opportunities

C/CAG Staff identified the following list of internal and external strategies and opportunities to further advance agency wide equity via individual and small-group input. These opportunities were further expanded upon, refined, and in some cases, omitted within the Equity Framework Action Plan after further vetting by staff, the C/CAG Board Ad Hoc Committee, and Agency Partner and Community Working Groups.

Internal equity:

- Explore reporting strategies such as quarterly board and end-of-year updates, and a required equity section for each staff report.
- Establish an equity working group that meets quarterly.
- Add an equity seat to relevant C/CAG committees.
- Identify ongoing equity training opportunities for staff.
- Offer an annual presentation to the Board from an equity expert.
- Explore opportunities for community capacity building on C/CAG agency issue areas.
- Explore opportunities for hiring support staff.
- Provide onboarding for new staff.

Communications & public education/outreach:

- Fully incorporate participatory planning principles when opportunities arise. A participatory approach is one in which everyone who has a stake in the intervention has a voice, either in person or by representation.
- Focus on areas of more significant need through targeted outreach, coordination and multilingual resources/videos, increased rebates/incentives, etc.
- Increase partnerships with CBOs to reach EPC demographics & geographies.
- Ensure committees clearly understand C/CAG's equity definition & direction.
- Communicate more proactively with the public, and EFAs in particular, on how decisions are made beyond the agency's numerous Board and Committee meetings.
- Curate more content on social media and websites to focus on relevant discussions/information for EPCs.

"

EFA Leader Interview

"How does C/CAG allow its staff members to pursue equity advancement? Many times, the system may be at fault and not necessarily the individuals working for that system. To have any impact, the system needs to gain some flexibility to be reshaped into something that works for those that continue to maintain that system."

Funding:

- Allocate more points for equity as necessary in project scoring for grant programs.
- Apply an equity lens to funding programs that do not already include equity-based metrics, outcomes, and reporting.
- Help cities that do not have the resources to pursue grants and obtain funding.
- Encourage primary funders to prioritize equity when not already included in funding programs.

Capacity building & countywide leadership:

- Help cities meet equity goals/standards in new state/federal requirements.
- Sponsor state legislation that reflects local equity interests or concerns.
- Support cities in gaining housing supportive community status through the Prohousing Designation Program by sharing equity best practices and other strategies.[14]

Broader economic opportunity:

- Emphasize leveraging new programs for workforce opportunity & consider increasing DBE goals for relevant projects/programs/plans.

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[14] The Prohousing Designation Program is a California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) program that provides incentives to cities and counties in the form of additional points or other preference in the scoring of competitive housing, community development, and infrastructure programs (*Prohousing Designation Program*, n.d.).

Peer Agency Review of Equity Interventions

In addition to looking internally within C/CAG to evaluate opportunities for the agency to advance equity, an external review of equity interventions and approaches was conducted to provide insights on strategies and actions that public agencies are using to advance equity. The review, included in the Appendix of this report, provides many impactful and innovative examples of equity advancement efforts and highlights some of the challenges and opportunities that agencies have confronted along the way.

Background

The external review was conducted to inform C/CAG's Equity Framework to adopt best practices and lessons learned from peer public agencies on strategies and actions that peer public agencies are using to advance equity. The review provides examples of equity advancement efforts and shares some of the challenges and opportunities that agencies have confronted along the way.

The project team prioritized ten agencies for the review and developed a list of interview questions, followed by desktop research and agency staff interviews with staff at each agency to learn about each agency's policies, plans, programs, projects, and practices. Draft agency profiles were created and shared with interviewees to ensure accuracy in reporting.

The agencies, departments, and programs featured in the peer review include:

1. Bay Area Housing Finance Authority
2. City of Sacramento
3. Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment Climate Change Program
4. County of Marin
5. King County, WA
6. Metropolitan Council, MN
7. Metropolitan Transportation Commission
8. San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency
9. Southern California Association of Governments
10. Washington County, OR

Highlights

The public agency interviewees shared that they have taken diverse approaches to equity advancement and that their agencies are on different points in their equity journeys. Several recurring themes surfaced in the conversations, including:

Equity has taken center stage relatively recently.
While some agencies were already conducting equity-oriented work prior to 2020, the racial justice unrest and national dialogues on racism led by Black Lives Matter and other activists deeply affected local, regional, and state governments and agencies and inspired many to take further action. Many subsequently created equity resolutions, frameworks, action plans, and established equity offices with staff to help implement agency commitments and advance internal and external equity after 2020.

Leadership on equity is critical at the top.
Equity work can be challenging. Leadership and commitment from decision makers and executive level staff is essential, particularly when equity advancement efforts face implementation challenges.

Innovation is a critical part of equity policy and practice implementation.
So much of past agency decision making and existing policy and planning requirements do not provide a strong point of reference for equity advancement. As such, combating racism and inequality demands that agencies and their public servants think proactively, creatively, and go well beyond existing precedent and requirements.

Internal equity efforts are not just external facing and strong internal infrastructure is needed to ensure success.
Strong internal systems are critical to have in place. The absence of diverse, inclusive, equitable, and just workplace cultures, processes, and structures can hamper the ability of agencies to pursue external equity advancement work.

Standardization is also a key component of successful equity driven implementation.
Creating consistency in how equity is applied within agencies across program areas and departments is important for measuring and increasing overall impact, external optics, and trust-building with EFA communities. Many agencies and their respective equity offices have prioritized establishing brand new systems, tools, training, and other forms of support to agency staff and departments/divisions.

Staff activation and empowerment is necessary.
All staff, regardless of whether their direct function is Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) oriented, must see themselves as equity practitioners and clearly understand the connections between their work and equity outcomes. In many cases, agencies have created internal equity working groups made up of staff from various departments to coordinate and drive equity forward within their agencies.

Accountability processes must be developed in tandem with equity policies.

Having equity-centered reporting and accountability processes is an area with room to grow for many public agencies; however, there are many approaches that agencies have pursued to make progress on this front, including establishing equity performance measures, equity dashboards, equity advisory committees, co-creation approaches, participatory budgeting, and tying project updates to agency budget cycles.

Equity efforts need to go beyond community engagement.

Many agencies have long been focused on creating more inclusive and transparent public engagement processes, but others have recognized the need to go further, including:

- Changing the way decisions are made and consulting with representatives and leaders of historically marginalized communities at the earliest stages of project/program design.
- Establishing equity goals and outcomes from the outset of projects and maintaining a clear focus on arriving at and delivering on meaningful equity action and commitments.

C/CAG's Equity Commitment, Definition, and Approach

One of the key steps in the Equity Framework development process was developing an Equity Acknowledgement, Definition, Commitment, and Approach to the agency's work. To help inform these products, examples of equity definitions from a wide range of agencies working on themes connected to C/CAG's program areas were shared with C/CAG staff, Board, Committees, and Agency and Community Partner meeting participants. These agency definitions are included in Appendix III of this report.

Based on the peer agency equity definitions and conversations over the arch of the process, the following themes emerged and provide the foundation for C/CAG's Equity Acknowledgement and Commitment statements, Definition, and Approach:
- Seek to understand and acknowledge the historic context.
- Focus on equity advancement and use existing harm-reduction requirements as the floor, not the ceiling.
- Distinguish between equity and equality.
- Both process and outcome equity are essential.
- Create an actionable definition that is relevant to C/CAG's mission & role.
- Collaborate with other agencies and potential partners to leverage strengths.

Equity Commitment

In San Mateo County and across the nation, public agencies and private institutions systemically discriminated against people of color through laws, policies, investment decisions and other actions. Other actions have also impacted people experiencing low incomes, people with disabilities, and other historically underrepresented and marginalized populations.

The City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) recognizes these actions led to existing unequal economic, health, and quality of life outcomes. We are also aware that discriminatory trends and actions are not just a thing of the past. New policies, technologies, and trends have in some cases made, and may continue to make, inequality worse.

As a countywide agency working across transportation, land use and housing, stormwater pollution and water, energy, and climate change, C/CAG commits to help rectify historic harms, underinvestment, and existing disparities associated with these program areas. We will remove systemic barriers and improve outcomes for those in greatest need and center the voices of EFA demographics through all relevant aspects of our work.

If we are successful in advancing equity around topics and issues associated with our programs and responsibilities, C/CAG will optimize the community benefits of our work, create greater community inclusion, and trust, and bring San Mateo County closer to a more equitable future.

Equity Definition

C/CAG defines equity as acknowledging and addressing historic & existing disparities so that race, class, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, or other demographics do not determine economic, health, and quality of life outcomes. Equity recognizes that members of our San Mateo County community do not all come from the same starting point, and it entails removing systemic barriers and providing customized forms and levels of engagement and support for underserved and impacted communities to remedy past harms and underinvestment.

To advance equity in San Mateo County, we will:
- leverage our operations and programs to help address longstanding disparities and ensure areas of greatest need have access to resources and investment they need to thrive,
- establish equity goals, performance measures, and targets, and report on progress over time,
- provide countywide leadership and work in coalition with public agencies, nonprofits, and other potential partners, and
- place communities at the center of the work we do, with an engagement focus on vulnerable, underrepresented, underserved, and impacted communities.[15]

In our equity advancement journey, we commit to focusing on both process and outcome equity.
- Process equity prioritizes access, influence, and decision-making power for vulnerable, underrepresented, and underserved communities.
- Outcome equity is the result of successful process equity and is demonstrated by tangible benefits for vulnerable, underrepresented, and underserved communities.

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[15] In this document refer to these populations and communities as "impacted," "underserved," or as Equity Focus Area geographies and/or demographics.

Equity Approach: Procedural Steps for Projects, Programs, and Plans

The following is the approach, or procedural steps, C/CAG staff will take in their work, as applicable to the agency's projects, programs, and planning efforts.

Embed equity in the project scope, direction, and approach:
- Establish intended equity goals, outcomes, and performance measures.
- Structure the planning and engagement process around achieving equitable outcomes, using the Equity Planning Tool (in Appendix VII) as a companion resource. Identify and integrate potential equity-focused concepts and alternatives early in the process for consideration and evaluation.

Center Equity Focus Area voices in the process:
- Develop a community engagement plan centered around Equity Focus Area (EFA) geographies and demographics potentially affected (benefited or impacted)
- When feasible, partner with EFA-serving Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and community leaders at each step of the process, including direction, scope, & approach.
- Communicate purpose, scope, and timeline throughout the process, and inform participants and EFA stakeholders how input received was incorporated.

Assess for optimal equity outcomes:
- Identify who, what, where, when to focus on to avoid further harm & address inequities.
- Identify benefits & burdens of the activity and/or each alternative.

Select strategies to advance equity and avoid/minimize burdens:
- Finalize strategies based on the equity goals, outcomes, and performance measures, feedback obtained from equity voices, and analysis of benefits and burdens.

Listen, reflect, report, and iterate:
- Obtain perspective from equity stakeholders involved in the process, including opportunities for improvements for future efforts.
- Evaluate process and outcome equity effectiveness among lead and supporting agency staff, identifying lessons learned and adjustments for future efforts.
- Report results, lessons learned, and proposed changes to the design of the project, plan, or other activities moving forward to stakeholders involved in the process and to decision makers and advisory bodies through the new Equity Section in staff reports.

These steps and best practices are reflected in the Equity Framework's intended Goals, Outcomes, and Actions, which are an expression of both C/CAG's areas of growth and concrete commitments to maximizing the benefits of our work for populations in greatest need. The Equity Evaluation Review Tool, included in the Appendix of this report, is intended to further assist C/CAG staff in applying this approach and best practices to their work.

C/CAG Equity Goals, Intended Outcomes, & Actions

C/CAG staff, with input and perspective gathered from community voices, agency partners, C/CAG Board and Committees, and the experience of other agencies obtained from the peer agency review, have put forward the following equity goals, intended outcomes and actions.

Many of the Action Plan's goals, outcomes, and actions will require a focused and sustained commitment, starting with the allocation of staff and financial resources towards high priority actions in the agency's next budget. The actions, which are significant in number, will not all be able to be implemented at once and will require ongoing monitoring, learning, and adjustments.

The Action Plan and Framework are intended to be living documents and eventually will need to be updated as new conditions arise, such as new sources of data, new and emerging threats and impacts to racial and social equity, and the agency's own internal needs, gaps, constraints, and opportunities.

The following is the structure of the Action Plan:

CATEGORY				
Goal			**Outcome**	
Actions				
Performance Measures:	**Reporting:**	**Implementation Timeline:**	**Resource Needs:**	**Implementation Status:**
Criteria used to evaluate progress or completion of action.	Describes the reporting process, who reports progress and to whom.	Staff's estimate of when the action will be implemented based on Fiscal Year or other deadlines if further study is required.	Identifies the level of effort or estimated costs if additional budget is required and represents a rough estimate.	Identifies the status of completion, with the qualification that even after "completion," many of these activities will continuously improve.

Category 1: Internal Equity (Organization and Administration)

Goal 1: Create and maintain internal equity reporting, feedback, coordination, and collaboration structures.

Outcome: The Equity Framework and Action Plan's intent, commitments, and progress is communicated and in a constant state of implementation, with learning and adaptation along the way.

Actions:

1. Establish an Equity Lead among C/CAG staff to help implement the Framework and Action Plan and support the use of new equity approaches and tools.
2. Convene and support the C/CAG Board of Directors (BOD) Equity Framework Ad Hoc Committee as needed to assist with Framework and Action Plan implementation.
3. Conduct an annual evaluation of gaps, progress, lessons learned, and next steps towards meeting Equity Framework goals, outcomes, and actions, including project and program-level goals and actions.
4. Provide an Equity Framework overview and equity evaluation update to the C/CAG BOD and Committees and at least one additional relevant public meeting each year.
5. Send C/CAG's Equity Framework and Action Plan to all elected officials in San Mateo County, with C/CAG's annual equity evaluation and progress updates.
6. Obtain additional sources of funding to help implement the Equity Framework and Action Plan and provide staff and leadership with needed support.

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>
> **EFA Leader Interview**
>
> *"Show up, come back, and report what changes have been made based on the community's feedback. Tell us what you're committed to doing, how, with whom, and keep us updated on what you're achieving or not, why, or why not, and how we can also get involved."*

Goal 2: Continually strengthen and maintain internal organizational understanding, resources, and capacity.

Outcomes:
- An increase in the number of staff, board, and committee members that are representative of EFA demographics and/or geographies.
- Staff, board, and committee members have a greater depth of credentials and/or lived experience relevant to equity advancement work.

Actions:

7. Consider adding equity focused seats to the Congestion Management & Environmental Quality (CMEQ) and Resource Management and Climate Protection (RMCP) committees.

8. Incorporate equity criteria in recruitment and selection of new candidates for open public committee member seats and encourage greater EFA geographic and demographic representation for appointed seats.

9. Conduct outreach to equity-focused CBOs to fill vacant public member seats for applicable committees (CMEQ RMCP)[16].

10. Explore developing a stipend policy for public members on C/CAG committees to increase the quantity and diversity of applicants for open committee seats.

11. Work with the County on all C/CAG Human Resources (HR) actions to identify opportunities to leverage their equity-oriented Human Resources Action Plan, staffing, and other HR resources.

Community Working Group Participants

"Staff participation in equity trainings typically is not enough. There needs to be additional mechanisms and resources to ensure that staff are bought into the training and that trainings are followed-up on with additional support."

"When you're hiring for new staff, look to hire people with an equity lens and expertise in cultural competency and equity advancement."

12. To the extent possible, incorporate equity expertise as a desired qualification in job descriptions for all relevant staff positions.

13. Ensure that the Equity Framework is included in all onboarding materials for C/CAG Staff, Board members, new staff, and Committee members.

14. All staff participate in an agency-wide diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) training on an annual basis and at least one equity-focused professional development

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[16] Congestion Management and Environmental Quality Committee (CMEQ) & the Resource Management and Climate Protection Committee (RMCP)

activity of their choice every two years, including County of San Mateo equity trainings available to C/CAG staff.

15. Provide the board with an annual presentation from an expert in the field on emerging equity themes relevant to C/CAG's activities.

Goal 3: Promote economic justice and shared prosperity through procurement opportunities.

Outcome: C/CAG creates more procurement opportunities for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE).

Actions:

16. Explore C/CAG's needs and goals around inclusive procurement and identify next steps and tools to achieve those goals.
17. Join a procurement platform so SBE and DBE businesses can sign up to receive notification of C/CAG procurement opportunities.

Category 2: C/CAG-Led Plans, Projects, Policies, Programs, and Grant Funding Opportunities

Goal 4: Infuse a pro-equity approach in C/CAG-led or sponsored projects, programs, plans, and grant funding opportunities to maximize benefits for Equity Focus Area (EFA) geographies and demographics.

Outcomes:

- Equity is integrated in the design of projects, programs, funding calls, and other actions and initiatives.
- All applicable planning efforts, projects, and programs assess equity needs, impacts, and benefits, and convey results to the public, C/CAG committees & board.
- C/CAG staff, board, and committees have a clear understanding of how and which programs, projects, plans, and grant funded programs and projects are advancing equity.
- C/CAG-led or sponsored programs, projects, plans, and funding improves outcomes in EFA communities.

Actions:

18. Use C/CAG's Equity Evaluation Review (EER) Tool to assist staff and decision makers in considering a range of equity considerations in the early stages of project, plan, program, and funding call design.
19. Include an appropriately- scaled equity analysis, assessing benefits and burdens of proposed actions, in all projects, programs, and planning efforts.
20. Provide the board and committees with a new Equity Section within staff reports to communicate benefits, burdens, and recommendations at the project, plan, program, and funding approval stage.
21. Establish reporting metrics relevant to C/CAG grant programs to evaluate and report on progress towards achieving equitable outcomes, including the percentage of funds benefiting EFA geographies and/or demographics.
22. Evaluate C/CAG grantmaking spending and consider changes to project selection criteria, including the number of points that are allocated for equity outcomes and equitable engagement, & the degree to which a local match for projects located in EFAs is required.
23. Leverage outside funding whenever possible to assist EFAs with technical assistance for applicable state and regional funding applications.
24. Center equity and climate resiliency in C/CAG's upcoming strategic planning.

Category 3: EFA Community Engagement, Empowerment, & Accountability

Goal 5: Build and maintain trust, transparency, and lasting relationships with EFA-serving CBOs.

Outcomes:

- Create an organized and centralized repository of CBO and community leader contacts for partnership, information sharing, and other engagement opportunities.
- Decision makers, EFA stakeholders, and the broader community are informed of progress towards meeting Equity Framework goals.
- EFA-serving CBOs are resourced to support C/CAG in reaching impacted and underserved populations and to provide valuable input and perspective.
- C/CAG projects, programs, planning efforts, and funding calls are increasingly effective at meaningfully engaging EFA-serving CBOs and other equity stakeholders.

EFA Leader Interviews

"Bring information to the people in their language and meet them where they are and in places where they feel safe."

"Hire and compensate community members and grassroots organizations to lead outreach to our communities, such as promotoras that are deeply embedded within neighborhoods."

Actions:

25. Design equitable public participation plans for relevant C/CAG plans and projects, including:
    - An emphasis on sufficient funding for outreach to areas of greatest need.
    - Use of equitable communication and public participation strategies tailored towards EFA audiences.
26. Incorporate adequate budget to support participation and input from EFA-serving CBOs and community leaders in C/CAG projects, grant proposals, and planning efforts (Obtain feedback on the methodology and funding amount from CBOs)
27. Establish and maintain a database of Equity Focus Area (EFA) contacts that C/CAG staff can use for communications and community engagement purposes.
28. Use C/CAG's EFA database to inform equity-focused CBOs of nonprofit funding opportunities within calls for projects, opportunities to serve on C/CAG Committees, and other opportunities to improve equitable public participation.
29. Complete a study on improving language accessibility in C/CAG's materials and website with plan for necessary updates.

Goal 6: Use data and mapping to increase understanding and awareness of existing disparities and opportunities to advance equity.

Outcome: C/CAG staff leverage data, mapping, and analytical tools that are improved over time.

Actions:

30. Establish and update an online equity dashboard, storyboard, and/or other data reporting and visualization strategies to share progress on data and performance measures relevant to C/CAG's Equity Framework, program areas, and activities.

31. Update Equity Focus Area maps and associated demographic indicators such as race, income, and seniors 75 years and over) for each applicable C/CAG program area within five years and every five years thereafter based on available data, changing demographics and community conditions, EFA input, and other considerations.

32. Work with other county-level agencies to coordinate mapping and data use, including opportunities to create unified Equity Focus Area maps.

Category 4: Countywide Leadership, Coalition Building, and Advocacy

Goal 7: Provide countywide leadership.

Outcome: Through actions within the agency and as part of its role as a regional convener, C/CAG is increasingly seen as a leader in equity advancement efforts in San Mateo County.

Actions:

33. Include equity in annual legislative priorities and actively support legislation that helps advance Equity Framework goals.
34. Help SMC cities and the County meet equity standards in new state/federal requirements, including obtaining HCD's Prohousing Designation, by sharing equity best practices and other strategies.[17]
35. Encourage regional and state standards that support C/CAG Equity Framework Goals, including within grants funding guidelines.
36. Support the next generation of equity focused planners and engineers, including exploring options for funding relevant scholarships for students in the region.

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[17] The Prohousing Designation Program is a California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) program that provides incentives to cities and counties in the form of additional points or other preference in the scoring of competitive housing, community development, and infrastructure programs (*Prohousing Designation Program*, n.d.). HCD is a state agency that develops housing policy, building codes and regulations and administers housing finance, economic development, and community development programs (Association of Bay Area Governments & Metropolitan Transportation Commission, 2024).

Appendices

Appendix I: References

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Appendix II: C/CAG Glossary of Equity Terms

The following glossary of terms borrows from multiple sources, including the County of San Mateo's Equity Resource Hub Glossary of Equity Terms and the Interstate Bridge Replacement Program Equity Framework (Washington State Department of Transportation & Oregon Department of Transportation, 2022). It is important to acknowledge that terms and their definitions can change with time and other factors, including geography and perspective, and we acknowledge that there is not necessarily one right answer.

Accessibility: The extent to which a space is readily approachable and usable by people with different cultures, backgrounds, geographies, linguistics, technological, transportation, and abilities. A space can be described as a physical or literal space, such as a facility, website, conference room, office, or bathroom, or a figurative space, such as a conversation or activity. A person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and integrated manner (City of Alexandria, 2021 / Disability Resource Office, 2022).

Accountability: Refers to the ways in which individuals and communities hold themselves to their goals and actions and acknowledge the values and groups to which they are responsible. To be accountable, one must be visible, with a transparent agenda and process. Invisibility defies examination; it is, in fact, employed in order to avoid detection and examination. Accountability demands commitment… Accountability can be externally imposed (legal or organizational requirements), or internally applied (moral, relational, faith-based, or recognized as some combination thereof) on a continuum from the institutional and organizational level to the individual level. From a relational point of view, accountability is not about doing it right; sometimes it is really about what happens after it is done wrong (International City/County Management Association, 2021).

Blockbusting: The practice of persuading people in an area to sell their homes cheaply by making them afraid that their value is going to fall, for example by suggesting that new people from a different social group or race are moving into the area (*Blockbusting*, 2023).

Colonialism: Colonialism is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another… The term colony comes from the Latin word colonus, meaning farmer. This root reminds us that the practice of colonialism usually involved the transfer of population to a new territory, where the arrivals lived as permanent settlers while maintaining political allegiance to their country of origin (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2017).

Community Engagement: A process that seeks the community's input and active participation to build cooperative and trusting relationships between the government and the community to ensure that decision-making is well informed. Equitable community engagement places emphasis on those who will be most adversely impacted by the policy/project/decision and those who are most often marginalized in those conversations (*County of San Mateo Equity Glossary*, n.d.).

Covenants: Restrictive covenants are legally enforceable agreements limiting how owners and renters can use a property as outlined in a real estate deed or contract. Covenants in residential property can apply to a range of details, from the appearance and style of housing (i.e., limitations on building height) to constraints on the kinds of activities that can take place on a property (i.e., raising livestock).

Racially restrictive covenants are clauses that specifically prohibit the purchase, lease, or occupation of a property by a particular group of people. In the early twentieth century, racially restrictive deed covenants prevented people who were not White from owning or even occupying property throughout urban and suburban areas. They were key mechanisms for promoting and maintaining the racial segregation of cities and neighborhoods across the country. While racially restrictive covenants often included language targeting a range of racial and ethnic groups, they especially targeted Black people during the first Great Migration (1910-1940), when millions moved to cities in the Northeast, Midwest, and West to seek new opportunities and to escape the racist violence that permeated the Jim Crow South. Racially restrictive covenants became increasingly common after 1917 in response to the U.S. Supreme Court decision Buchanan v. Warley, which ruled racial zoning practices unconstitutional.

The use of racially restrictive covenants involved the cooperation of a range of parties, including real estate agents and realty organizations; private individuals buying or selling property; banks and lending institutions; and municipal, state, and federal governments that both validated and enforced their existence. In 1948, the U.S. Supreme Court decision Shelly v. Kraemer deemed racially restrictive covenants unenforceable. Yet even after the 1948 ruling, racially restrictive covenants continued to be included in real estate deeds (*What Are Covenants? | Mapping Racism Resistance*, n.d.).

Cultural Competency: The ability of individuals and systems to respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, and faiths or religions in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, tribes, and communities, and protects and preserves the dignity of each (Child Welfare League of America, 2001).

Demographics: Statistical characteristics of human populations.

Disabled or Disability: "Disabled" is described as a general term for a physical, mental, developmental, or intellectual disability… "Disability" and "disabled" generally describe functional limitations that affect one or more of the major life activities, including walking, lifting, learning and breathing. Various laws define disability differently. While it is usually acceptable to use these terms, keep in mind that disability and people who have disabilities are not monolithic. (National Center on Disability and Journalism, 2021).

Discrimination: Actions based on conscious or unconscious prejudice that favor one group over others in the provision of goods, services, or opportunities. The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, and/or other categories. In the United States, the law makes it illegal to discriminate against someone on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. The law also makes it illegal to retaliate against a person because the person complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination, or participated in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit. The law also requires that employers reasonably accommodate applicants' and employees' sincerely held religious practices, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer's business (International City/County Management Association, 2021).

Disparity: A noticeable and usually significant difference or dissimilarity among population groups.

Displacement: The involuntary relocation of current residents or businesses… Displacement can result from any of a number of possible scenarios: foreclosure, eviction, rent increases, negligent landlords, and environmental catastrophe, for example. In the past, slum clearance, urban renewal, interstate highway system construction, and stadium construction created waves of displacement—some of which was an intended outcome of urban planning projects… The effects of displacement can include homelessness, loss of community, and loss of access to jobs and mobility. Displaced low-income residents often move to neighborhoods with fewer resources for economic advancement and quality of life. Moreover, displacement tends to create disparate impacts in the U.S.—Black and Latino residents are much more likely to face eviction than White residents, for example (Brasuell, 2022).

Diversity: Can relate to ability, capacity, race/ethnicity, ideology, gender, communication styles, or other characteristic or identity. Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another (Racial Equity Tools, 2021).

Environmental Justice: Environmental justice is 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. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys:
- The same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and
- Equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work (*Environmental Justice | US EPA*, 2023).

Equity: There are many definitions of equity, including agency-adopted definitions that are included in Appendix III of this report. One example of a definition comes from the International City/County Management Association (ICMA): Equity is the guarantee of fair treatment, advancement, opportunity and access for all individuals while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups and ensuring that all community members have access to community conditions and opportunities to reach their full potential and to experience optimal well-being and quality of life (International City/County Management Association, 2021).

Equity Focus Areas (EFAs): C/CAG's Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan defines EFAs as Census block groups that are within the top 25th percentile of each side of the county, as determined by median household income, percent non-White population, housing & transportation index, and percent zero car households (*2021 C/CAG San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*, 2021).

Equity Lens: A critical thinking approach to undoing racial and economic disparities by evaluating burdens, benefits, and outcomes to underserved communities (*City of San Antonio*, 2021).

Equity Priority Communities (EPCs): A term used by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to refer to census tracts that have a significant concentration of underserved populations… EPC geographies are based upon the following demographic variables:
- People of Color (70% threshold)
- Low-Income (28% threshold)
- Limited English Proficiency (12% threshold)
- Seniors 75 Years and Over (8% threshold)
- Zero-Vehicle Households (15% threshold)
- Single Parent Families (18% threshold)
- People with a Disability (12% threshold)
- Rent-Burdened Households (14% threshold)

If a tract exceeds both Low-Income and People of Color values or exceeds the threshold value for Low-Income and exceeds the threshold values for three or more variables (#3 to #8), it is categorized by MTC as an EPC (*Equity Priority Communities*, 2022).[18]

Ethnicity: A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, and ancestral geographical base. Ethnicity is not the same as race (International City/County Management Association, 2021).

Exclusionary Zoning: Laws that place restrictions on the types of homes that can be built in a particular neighborhood. Common examples include minimum lot size requirements, minimum square footage requirements, prohibitions on multi-family homes, and limits on the height of buildings. The origins of such laws date back to the nineteenth century, as many cities were concerned about fire hazards as well as light-and-air regulations. In the subsequent decades, some zoning laws have been used to discriminate against people of color and to maintain property prices in suburban and, more recently, urban neighborhoods.

Exclusionary zoning laws enact barriers to entry that constrain housing supply, which, all else equal, translate into an equilibrium with more expensive housing and fewer homes being built… Because exclusionary zoning rules drive up housing prices, poorer families are kept out of wealthier, high-opportunity neighborhoods. This, in turn, leads to worse outcomes for children, including lower standardized test scores, and greater social inequalities over time.

Research has connected exclusionary zoning to racial segregation, creating greater disparities in measurable outcomes… Restrictions in housing supply also limit labor mobility, because workers cannot afford to move to higher productivity cities that have high housing prices. This leads workers to remain in lower productivity places… Finally, exclusionary zoning contributes to the racial wealth gap (Rouse et al., 2021).

Discrimination: The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, and other categories (City of Alexandria, 2021).

Disparities: Avoidable, systematic differences in health and other outcomes adversely affecting economically or socially disadvantaged groups (*What Is Health Equity?,* 2017).

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[18] The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the transportation planning, financing and coordinating agency for the nine counties of the San Francisco Bay Area (Association of Bay Area Governments & Metropolitan Transportation Commission, 2024).

Gender: Gender includes gender roles, which are expectations [or constructs] society and people have about behaviors, thoughts, and characteristics that go along with a person's assigned sex... Gender is also a social and legal status as girls and boys, men, and women (Planned Parenthood, 2022).

Gender Identity: Since gender is a social construct, an individual may have a self-perception of their gender that is different or the same as their biological sex. Gender identity is an internalized realization of one's gender and may not be manifested in their outward appearance (gender expression) or their place in society (gender role) (San Mateo County Pride Center, 2022).

Inclusion and Belonging: Inclusion is a practice to make space for people and ensure people are included. Belonging is a sense of authentic participation and power in the design or development to not just be included in other people's spaces but to be a welcomed agent in the creation of the space with equitable distribution of power.

Inequities: A lack of fairness or justice in the ways resources are distributed between population groups. A particular kind of disparity that is not only of concern for being potentially unfair, but which is believed to reflect injustice (*What Is Health Equity?,* 2017).

Institutional Racism: Refers to the policies and practices within and across institutions that, intentionally or not, produce outcomes that chronically favor one racial group and/or put a racial group at a disadvantage. Institutional racism refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for Whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color (International City/County Management Association, 2021).

Limited English Proficiency Populations: Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. Federal laws prohibit discrimination based on national origin. (Washington State Department of Transportation & Oregon Department of Transportation, 2022).

Marginalization (Marginalized): The process that occurs when members of a dominant group relegate a particular group to the edge of society by not allowing them an active voice, identity, or place for the purpose of maintaining power (City of Alexandria, 2021)

People of Color: Political or social (not biological) identity among and across groups of people that are racialized as non-White. The term "People of color" is used to acknowledge that many races experience racism in the U.S, and the term includes, but is not synonymous with, Black people (City of Alexandria, 2021).

Often the preferred collective term for referring to non-White racial groups. While "people of color" can be a politically useful term and describes people with their own attributes (as opposed to what they are not, e.g., "non-White"), it is also important whenever possible to identify people through their own racial/ethnic group, as each has its own distinct experience and meaning and the more specific identifier may be more appropriate (International City/County Management Association, 2021).

People Living with Disabilities: People who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, people who have a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment (US Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, 2023).

Persons Experiencing Low Incomes: Individuals or households with income below the federal poverty level (FPL). In high cost of living regions such the Bay Area, local and regional government agencies sometimes adjust the FPL for what they consider low income.

Race: A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on certain characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly skin color), ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification. Racial categories subsume ethnic groups. Racial categorization schemes were invented by scientists to support worldviews that viewed some groups of people as superior and some as inferior. There are three important concepts linked to this fact:
- Race is a made-up social construct, and not an actual biological fact.
- Race designations have changed over time. Some groups that are considered "White" in the United States today were considered "non-White" in previous eras.
- The way in which racial categorizations are enforced has also changed over time. For example, the racial designation of Asian American and Pacific Islander changed four times in the 19th century. (International City/County Management Association, 2021 / City of Alexandria, 2021).

Racial Equity: Racial equity brings about clear, simple, direct remedies for historic and present-day structural and policy barriers producing racial disparities and disparate impacts. It is not merely a value; equity is a systemic shift. Race equity is actualized fairness and justice; and is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them (International City/County Management Association, 2021).

Racial Steering: "Steering" is the practice of influencing a buyer's choice of communities based upon one of the protected characteristics under the Fair Housing Act, which are race, color, religion, gender, disability, familial status, or national origin. Steering occurs, for example, when real estate agents do not tell buyers about available properties that meet their criteria, or express views about communities, with the purpose of directing buyers away from or towards certain neighborhoods due to their race or other protected characteristic (*Steer Clear of "Steering,"* 2020).

Racism: A complex system of beliefs and behaviors, grounded in a presumed superiority of the White race. These beliefs and behaviors are conscious and unconscious; personal and institutional; and result in the oppression of people of color and benefit the dominant group, Whites. Prejudice becomes racism when it is practiced by the economically, socially, or politically powerful. (City of Alexandria, 2021).

Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices (Racial Equity Tools, 2021).

Redlining: An illegal practice in which lenders avoid providing services to individuals living in communities of color because of the race or national origin of the people who live in those communities. Redlining, a practice institutionalized by the federal government during the New Deal era and implemented then and now by private lenders, has had a lasting negative impact. For American families, homeownership remains the principal means of building wealth, and the deprivation of investment in and access to mortgage lending services for communities of color have contributed to families of color persistently lagging behind in homeownership rates and net worth compared to White families (*Justice Department Announces New Initiative to Combat Redlining*, 2023).

Sexual Orientation: The scientifically accurate term for an individual's enduring physical attraction to members of the same and/or other gender(s), including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and heterosexual (straight) orientations (San Mateo County Pride Center, 2022).

Social Justice: A process, not an outcome, which (1) seeks fair (re)distribution of resources, opportunities, and responsibilities; (2) challenges the roots of oppression and injustice; (3) empowers all people to exercise self-determination and realize their full potential; (4) and builds social solidarity and community capacity for collaborative action (City of Alexandria, 2021).

Systemic Racism: An interlocking and reciprocal relationship between the individual, institutional and structural levels which function as a system of racism. These various levels of racism operate together in a lockstep model and function together as a whole system. These levels are individual (within interactions between people), institutional (within institutions and systems of power), and/or structural or societal (among institutions and across society) (Racial Equity Tools, 2021).

Structural Racism: Structural Racism in the U.S. is the normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional, and interpersonal – that routinely advantage Whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. It is a system of hierarchy and inequity, primarily characterized by White supremacy – the preferential treatment, privilege, and power for White people at the expense of Black, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, Arab and other racially oppressed people (City of Alexandria, 2021).

Stakeholder: Those impacted by proposed policy, program, or budget issue who have potential concerns or issue expertise.

Underserved: Refers to people and places that historically and currently have not had equitable resources or access to infrastructure, healthy environments, housing choice, etc. Disparities may be recognized in both services and in outcomes (*City of San Antonio*, 2021).

Appendix III: Example Public Agency Equity Definitions

Agency/ Department	Project/Plan/ Title	Equity Definition
Washington and Oregon State Departments of Transportation (DOT)	Interstate Bridge Replacement Project (IBR)	The Interstate Bridge Replacement program defines equity in terms of both process and outcomes. Process Equity means that the program prioritizes access, influence, and decision-making power for marginalized and underserved communities throughout the program in establishing objectives, design, implementation, and evaluation of success. Outcome Equity is the result of successful Process Equity and is demonstrated by tangible transportation and economic benefits for marginalized and underserved communities… Together, Process Equity and Outcome Equity contribute to addressing the impacts of and removing long standing injustices experienced by these communities.
Oakland DOT	Geographic Equity Toolbox	In Oakland, the City defines equity as fairness. It means that identity—such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, or expression—has no detrimental effect on the distribution of resources, opportunities and outcomes for our City's residents.
SFMTA	Racial Equity Action Plan	Racial equity is a set of social justice practices, rooted in a solid understanding and analysis of historical and present-day oppression, aiming towards a goal of fairness for all. As an outcome, achieving racial equity would mean living in a world where race is no longer a factor in the distribution of opportunity. As a process, we apply racial equity when those most impacted by the structural racial inequities are meaningfully involved in the creation and implementation of the institutional policies and practices that impact their lives.
San Jose DOT	Emerging Mobility Action Plan	The City of San José believes mobility is a human right. We, the staff of the City's Department of Transportation (DOT), want all people to have safe, affordable, reliable, and sustainable transportation options. That way, all San José residents have access to the opportunities and resources necessary to thrive…
City of Portland, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability	Climate Action Through Equity	Our vision for a climate-positive future cannot be achieved without advancing equitable outcomes and addressing existing disparities. These approaches must enlist a targeted universalism approach, where solutions begin with addressing the needs of those who are most vulnerable to climate change or experiencing disparate outcomes. Doing so will produce benefits for everyone.
City of Oakland	2030 Equitable Climate Action Plan	The City of Oakland is committed to being a leader in responding to the climate crisis in terms of ambitious policy and

		racially equitable implementation. That means equity in process – ensuring that those facing the greatest impacts are robustly represented in policy and program development – and implementation – ensuring that the benefits of… climate actions accrue first and foremost to communities that have been hit hardest by social and economic injustices.
California Department of Public Health, Climate Change & Health Equity Section (CCHES)	[Department Section Website](#)	Climate change and health inequities share similar root causes: the inequitable distribution of social, political, and economic power. These power imbalances result in systems (economic, transportation, land use, etc.) and conditions that drive both health inequities and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions… Fair and healthy climate action requires addressing the inequities that create and intensify community vulnerabilities, through strategically directing extra investments in improving living conditions for and with people facing disadvantage… The good news is that addressing climate change represents a significant opportunity to improve public health and advance health equity. Many actions that limit climate change also improve the health of families and communities and reduce health inequities.
San Diego Association of Governments, Prepared by The San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative at USD	[An Equity-First Approach to Climate Adaptation](#)	An equity-first approach to climate adaptation recognizes the disproportionate impacts of climate change due to existing factors, including but not limited to structural racism, income and wealth, access to resources, representation in government, renter status, health status, age, neighborhood conditions, and gender. Disproportionate impacts include both climate-related shocks and stressors that will affect social equity communities the most… The goal of the equity-first approach to adaptation is to "enhance marginalized communities' access to the services, infrastructure, and livelihoods required to sustain their well-being and potential for improvement, rather than exacerbating their vulnerability." At the same time, it is essential to recognize that communities more vulnerable to climate impacts have social capital and are likely already engaged in climate adaptation activities. Supporting the work communities are already involved in can enhance their overall resilience.
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency	[Agency website](#)	The concept of equality requires that everyone be provided the same things in order to succeed and live happy, healthy lives. Equity, in contrast, requires that we address the barriers to achieve the same outcomes and recognize that some groups or people are starting from a different place. Health equity means achieving the conditions in which all people have the opportunity to attain their highest possible level of health without limits imposed by inequitable policies, systems, and investments. Addressing environmental injustice from an equity perspective requires the MPCA work to decrease disproportionate air pollution exposures. It also requires the MPCA to increase opportunities for all Minnesotans to meaningfully participate in environmental decisions. It also means working with others to improve overall conditions that provide for a healthy life.

Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment	[Climate Equity Framework](#)	Effective climate change mitigation is essential to protecting all Coloradans, especially disproportionately impacted communities… The state is committed to using GHG reduction strategies as an opportunity to work toward racial equity and economic justice. Achieving this outcome requires us to commit to looking at issues and decisions through a new lens and to question long-standing processes and procedures. Who is involved in creating policy? Who influences policy decisions? Who stands to benefit from decisions and why? Are regulations being developed in ways that prioritize equity? Does input come from representative communities and a complete range of stakeholders? Are strategies being developed with a variety of needs and circumstances in mind and with direct input from communities? It is also important to keep in mind that while better engagement and representation are critical, they are no substitute for concrete and measurable action to address historical injustices and longstanding disparities…
Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)	[Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Climate Adaptation Planning](#)	CDC defines climate justice as: All people — regardless of race, color, national origin, or income — are entitled to equal protection from environmental and health hazards caused by climate change and equal access to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.
District of Colombia Department of Energy & Environment	[Equity Framework](#)	Equity refers to the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people. Pursuing equity requires the identification and elimination of barriers that prevent the full participation of people and exacerbate the unequal distribution of burdens across socially*, economically, or geographically defined groups. Achieving equity involves ensuring justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions and systems, and the distribution of resources, opportunities, and burdens. Equity is based on need, and an equitable future requires understanding the root causes of outcome disparities within society.
Cincinnati Office of Environment & Sustainability	[Office website](#)	Achieving energy equity in Cincinnati involves recognizing this unfair distribution of energy burden [defined as the percentage of a household's annual gross income that goes toward payment of annual utility costs], expanding the inclusion and participation of underserved communities in energy programming, and creating opportunities to make housing stock more efficient and reduce costs for our most vulnerable residents. These costs are often referred to as "energy burden," or the percentage of income a household spends on their energy needs. Lower incomes, less efficient housing, limited access to energy efficiency programs, and decades of discriminatory housing policies such as redlining can explain the higher energy burdens faced by these groups.

California State Water Resources Control Board	[Resolution… Strengthening Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Access, Inclusion and Antiracism](#)	Racial equity occurs when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes, and outcomes for all groups are improved. Because race intersects with many, if not all, other marginalized identities, prioritizing and addressing racial inequities improves outcomes for other marginalized communities. The Water Boards are working toward a future where we equitably implement our mission to preserve, protect, and restore drinking water & water resources for all Californians, and where: race no longer predicts the access to or quality of water resources a person receives, race is not a predictor of professional outcomes for our employees, and we consistently apply a racial equity lens to our decision-making processes.
Montgomery County, MD Department of Environmental Protection	[Watershed Restoration Suitability & Equity Mapping Tools](#)	The Department of Environmental Protection is dedicated to improving stream health and water quality. With a county as diverse as Montgomery, our department strives to foster strong partnerships with communities and continue to evaluate our processes to address innovation and equity in our watershed planning and design. Our focus is cleaner water and restoring ecosystems naturally for our entire community.
US Environmental Protection Agency	[Agency website](#)	Environmental justice (EJ) is 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 no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental, and commercial operations or policies. Meaningful involvement means: People have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health; The public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision; Community concerns will be considered in the decision-making process; and Decision makers will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.
California DTSC Office of Environmental Equity	[Office website](#)	An environmental equity approach recognizes disparities in the distribution of environmental benefits and burdens within and across communities and seeks to meet individual and community needs. In order to promote environmental justice, we must challenge existing disparities and the decision-making processes that keep historic injustices and present-day barriers in place. As a broader concept, an equity approach involves "leveling the playing field" and working to correct and address systemic barriers.
Washington Department of Ecology - Office of Equity &	[Department website](#)	Everyone has the right to live, learn, work, and play in a clean, safe, and healthy environment, regardless of race, ethnicity, language, or income… Today, not all communities share the benefits of environmental protection equally. Low-income communities experience more

Environmental Justice		drinking water contamination. People of color are more likely to lack access to parks and green spaces in their neighborhoods. The effects of climate change are already visible for many vulnerable communities. Many of these same populations face disproportionate exposure to harmful chemicals in their neighborhoods and in consumer products. As we work to protect land, air, and water, we include environmental justice principles in our work. This will help eliminate injustices and inequities that exist in many Washington communities today.
The White House	[Memorandum on Redressing Our Nation's and the Federal Government's History of Discriminatory Housing Practices and Policies](#)	The Federal Government has a critical role to play in overcoming and redressing this history of discrimination and in protecting against other forms of discrimination by applying and enforcing Federal civil rights and fair housing laws. It can help ensure that fair and equal access to housing opportunity exists for all throughout the United States. This goal is consistent with the Fair Housing Act, which imposes on Federal departments and agencies the duty to "administer their programs and activities relating to housing and urban development . . . in a manner affirmatively to further" fair housing. This is not only a mandate to refrain from discrimination but a mandate to take actions that undo historic patterns of segregation and other types of discrimination and that afford access to long-denied opportunities.
California Coastal Commission	[Environmental Justice Policy](#)	The California Coastal Commission's commitment to diversity, equality and environmental justice recognizes that equity [defined in the context of social and racial equity, where "equity" refers to the fairness of achieving outcomes for all groups and no one factor, such as race, can be used to predict outcomes] is at the heart of the Coastal Act, a law designed to empower the public's full participation in the land-use decision-making process that protects California's coast and ocean commons for the benefit of all the people… The agency is committed to ensuring that those opportunities not be denied on the basis of background, culture, race, color, religion, national origin, income, ethnic group, age, disability status, sexual orientation, or gender identity… The Commission will use its legal authority to ensure equitable access to clean, healthy, and accessible coastal environments for communities that have been disproportionately overburdened by pollution or with natural resources that have been subjected to permanent damage for the benefit of wealthier communities. Coastal development should be inclusive for all who work, live, & recreate on California's coast & provide equitable benefits for communities that have historically been excluded, marginalized, or harmed by coastal development.
California Department of Housing	[Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing - Guidance for All Public Entities](#)	Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing: Meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected

and Community Development	[and for Housing Elements](#)	characteristics. Specifically, affirmatively furthering fair housing means taking meaningful actions that, taken together, address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replacing segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns, transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and fostering and maintaining compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws. The duty to affirmatively further fair housing extends to all of a public agency's activities and programs relating to housing and community development.
State of Oregon	[Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan](#)	Equity acknowledges that not all people, or all communities, are starting from the same place due to historic and current systems of oppression. Equity is the effort to provide different levels of support based on an individual's or group's needs in order to achieve fairness in outcomes. Equity actionably empowers communities most impacted by systemic oppression and requires the redistribution of resources, power, and opportunity to those communities. Racial Equity means closing the gaps so that race can no longer predict any person's success, which simultaneously improves outcomes for all. To achieve racial equity, we must transform our institutions and structures to create systems that provide the infrastructure for communities to thrive equally. This commitment requires a paradigm shift on our path to recovery through the intentional integration of racial equity in every decision.
King County, WA Office of Equity and Social Justice	[Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan 2016-2022](#)	Equity is fundamental to the society we seek to build. It is an ardent journey toward well-being as defined by those most negatively affected. Our end goal is for full and equal access to opportunities, power, and resources so all people may achieve their full potential. The process of advancing toward equity will be disruptive and demands vigilance. Being "pro-equity" requires us to dismantle deeply entrenched systems of privilege and oppression that have led to inequitable decision-making processes and the uneven distribution of benefits and burdens in our communities. Similarly, we must focus on those people and places where needs are greatest to ensure that our decisions, policies, and practices produce gains for all.
San Francisco Planning Department	[Citywide Racial and Social Equity Action Plan](#)	The City of San Francisco defines racial equity… as a set of social justice practices, rooted in a solid understanding and analysis of historical and present-day oppression, aiming towards a goal of fairness for all. As an outcome, achieving racial equity would mean living in a world where race is no longer a factor in the distribution of opportunity. As a process, we apply racial equity when those most impacted by the structural racial inequities are meaningfully involved in the creation & implementation of the institutional policies and practices that impact their lives.

Appendix IV: Peer Agency Review of Equity Interventions

Background: BAHFA is a relatively new legal entity, part of the Bay Area's Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) suite of entities. The Authority is focused on creating regional solutions to address affordable housing needs. It is undergoing an Equity Framework development process that will help guide the development of its Business Plan.

Commitment & Approach: MTC's Equity Platform forms the foundation of BAHFA's equity approach. In addition to the Equity Platform, BAHFA has developed a proposed Equity Framework, which is the foundation of its Business Plan (*BAHFA Draft Equity Framework*, 2023). The Framework aims to:

- Articulate BAHFA's commitment to advancing equity and set objectives for BAHFA's impact on equity through its programs, guided by overarching goals.
- Define metrics for measuring impact of programs.
- Provide a regional framework for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.

The Framework approach includes:

- Discrete objectives for protection of residents from displacement, preservation of existing affordable housing, and production of new homes (3 P's), as well as cross-cutting goals that span across or do not fit neatly within the 3Ps.
- Accountability & Implementation Strategies.
- Program Design & Prioritization Using the Equity Framework.
- Addressing Barriers to Equity - including legislative, legal, and revenue elements.

Measuring & Reporting: BAHFA developed equity metrics that are broken down by program activities and outcomes. Staff will prepare an annual report with its metrics and objectives.

Equitable Engagement: BAHFA's Equity Framework Objectives include a commitment to "advance community participation among historically marginalized populations… with an intentional focus on organizations who are accountable to and part of communities most impacted by housing unaffordability" (*BAHFA Draft Equity Framework*, 2023). BAHFA has one advisory committee, and according to staff, geographic, demographic, and sector balance (public, nonprofit, private) were key in the selection process. The agency also had an Equity Working Group within the BAHFA's Business Plan, and staff emphasized that equity/racial justice-forward criteria were core to the selection process. "One of the important elements was to form the EWG with members that have meaningful relationships with and some accountability to EPC's."

Background: The City of Sacramento's Office of Diversity & Equity (ODE) has primarily focused its work on internal equity advancement efforts, particularly on workforce equity. The Diversity & Equity Manager identified three priority areas: complete the GARE Learning Cohort, establish an equity and inclusion training for city staff, and develop a strategic racial equity action plan. in 2018: equity and inclusion training and developing racial and equity competency (*Race & Gender Equity Action Plan 2020-2025*, 2020).

A pillar of the City's internal equity advancement efforts is its [Race and Gender Equity Action Plan](#) (RGEAP) 2020-2025. The Action Plan "outlines key steps to ensure staff are equipped with tools and knowledge to integrate racial and gender equity into their work and departments as a whole" (*Race & Gender Equity Action Plan 2020-2025*, 2020). The Plan includes 14 outcome action strategies, as well as an implementation matrix that includes community indicators, outcomes and actions, timeline, accountability, performance and measures, and a column to show progress over time. Staff shared that the Plan has been an instrumental tool to anchor the City's equity work. "If you're doing racial equity DEI work, you need to have a vision and a coordinated effort of some type guided by a strategic plan."[19]

As a first step towards laying out a plan for citywide external equity advancement work, the City has started the [Sacramento Centered on Race and Equity (SCORE) Initiative](#). The initiative will focus on racial justice and equity priorities "that come from the community as the first test cases of how the City will coordinate the work, who's going to do what by when with what resources, and how we are going to measure if we are moving in the right direction or if we need to refocus the work, creat[ing a] structure for accountability" (SCORE Initiative, 2023).

Commitment & Approach: The City has three full-time staff in the Office of Diversity of Equity and one FT staff who serves as the racial equity senior advisor to the Mayor (a role established in June 2022). ODE has been working to activate and empower City staff to be change agents and give them the tools and knowledge base to implement the Action Plan. "It's about getting folks familiar with equity tools, providing them with equity training and capacity building, while also planning for the future. Part of the key is for staff across the agency to see themselves as equity practitioners. It's about helping people understand why this is important, how it connects to themselves and their teams, and helping them think through the right questions".[20]

One example of the kind of tools developed by ODE in partnership with other City departments is the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Interim Rapid Response Tool. The tool helps managers of ARPA funds distribute them equitably or think about what they need to do to improve that process moving forward.

Measuring & Reporting: ODE staff shared that the City has identified performance measures at a citywide level, and departments are currently working on developing their own workforce

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[19] Quote from staff interview
[20] Quote from staff interview

equity performance measures. All ODE resources are designed to be public facing, which has been important in informing the community of the City's progress. Workforce equity dashboards and audits are publicly available. One example is the [City Employee Diversity and Workplace Climate Survey](#), the results of which the public can access online.

Implementation: Staff shared that the City's Racial Equity Committee and Department Equity Teams are key to advancing the RGEAP. ODE staff have engaged with all departments about advancing workforce equity. Every department has its own RGEAP Equity Team.

Externally, ODE staff noted that some City departments have been doing equity centered work for several years and ODE is now just beginning to align with these efforts to support them. Current external equity-focused projects driven by teams that ODE staff are aware of include the Cannabis Opportunity Reinvestment and Equity (CORE) program and transportation, sustainability, health, and environmental justice efforts such as those highlighted further below.

Hiring & Procurement: The City's Action Plan found that gender parity is high, but race/ethnicity is not as reflective of Sacramento. The City is currently implementing mandatory equity training for those on interview panels. They also created a citywide hiring manual in 2019 that includes a focus on DEIB. It has since been updated to include new equity-centered procedures around blind hiring, exams, mandatory trainings for interview panelists, and current HR compliance regulations. The goal is that this is a living document to be updated as workforce equity moves forward.

Equitable Engagement: The City established a Racial Equity Ad-Hoc Committee in 2021, which became the Racial Equity Committee in January 2022. The partnership between this council body and the community's Racial Equity Council and Alliance began in mid-2022. This partnership is the foundation for the work of the SCORE Initiative. "The Racial Equity Alliance [is] an interconnected network of advocates, activists, and organizations working together to imagine a bold vision of racial equity and justice in Sacramento… The City's Racial Equity Committee's mission is to help the City Council align its advancement of racial equity in City decision-making with the impacts resulting from City policy, budget, and service delivery decisions. It provides a space to help coordinate the various City racial equity initiatives, efforts, metrics, and best practices into a holistic Citywide informed approach" (*SCORE Initiative*, 2023).

Challenges & Opportunities: Challenges cited by ODE staff include lack of city-wide training, alignment around responsibility of implementing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) vision across all departments, and at times a lack of alignment with the City Council.

According to ODE staff, external equity advancement is operationalized differently across departments and there is no tool or lens adopted Citywide. For example, no public engagement guidelines exist citywide and formal relationships with CBOs differ by department. Staff pointed to centralizing the City's community engagement approach and guidelines and coordinating engagement citywide as key opportunities, leveraging the approach, relationships, and best practices of the Office of Innovation and Economic

Development. ODE staff are now working on a repository to centralize external equity efforts, and this work is now being brought together under the SCORE initiative, highlighted above.

Examples of Programs, Projects, Plans, and Processes:

Food Justice Initiative: A Food Justice Task Force was launched "to ensure that our most vulnerable communities recover in an equitable manner from the COVID Pandemic and that our city has sufficient, healthy, and accessible food for all". Part of this initiative includes an ARPA Food Justice grant program, which is focused on increasing "access to fresh food by distributing meals and grocery items direct to families, youth, immigrants/refugees, seniors and other vulnerable populations and/or expanding food pantry sites or farmers market accessibility" (*Food Justice*, n.d.).

CORE Program for Office of Cannabis Management: The CORE program was created to "assist individuals and communities who are facing barriers to starting cannabis businesses due to the historical disparate enforcement of cannabis crimes… General program benefits may include but are not limited to: business plan development, business monitoring, coaching on access to capital, business needs assessment, loan readiness assessment, market assessment, data and research strategies and support… employee training, and regulatory compliance" (*CORE Program*, 2022).

Figure 20: TPP Initial High Priority Projects Summary

Source: Initial Prioritization, 2022

70% on the Vision Zero HIN

80% 100% support biking support walking

90% will improve streets with poor pavement quality that serve a lot of people

95% benefit communities that lack basic transportation infrastructure

Transportation Priorities Plan: The Plan included deep community engagement and included equity as one of five project prioritization criteria. Of significance, the outcomes of the Plan's Initial Prioritization were quantified, and 95% of the plan's high priority projects will benefit communities that lack basic transportation infrastructure like sidewalks (*Initial Prioritization*, 2022).

Background: In 2019, a key climate justice bill was passed by Colorado's legislature, House Bill 19-1261 Climate Action Plan to Reduce Pollution. The Bill directs the Air Quality Control Commission to consider and adopt GHG emission reduction rules, including identifying communities disproportionately impacted by climate change to both address the climate crisis and reduce pollution in those communities. "The statute directs the Commission to consider and prioritize the benefits of regulatory compliance… to disproportionately impacted communities… [and] requires that impacts of potential rules on [these communities] be evaluated and that stakeholder input be solicited on advantages of different regulatory measures" (Colorado Air Pollution Control Division, Department of Public Health & Environment, 2023).

After passage of the legislation, the agency's Climate Change Program developed a [Climate Equity Framework](#) "The Framework is a guidance document that outlines ways the state can build equity considerations into the greenhouse gas reduction rulemaking process to help achieve better outcomes for disproportionately impacted communities in Colorado" (Colorado Air Pollution Control Division, Department of Public Health & Environment, 2023).

In 2021, HB21-1266 Environmental Justice Disproportionate Impacted Community was signed, which drove the creation of an [Environmental Justice Action Taskforce](#) (EJATF). The taskforce developed best practices and provided more granular recommendations, based in part on public comments solicited over nearly a year through surveys, focus groups, and other input options.

Commitment & Approach: CDPHE leadership signed an organizational pledge to advance equity, declared racism a public health crisis, convened an Environmental Justice (EJ) Action Task Force, established an Environmental Justice Unit in the Air Pollution Control Division, and hired an EJ Ombudsperson and a Director of Culture, Strategy, Equity, and Innovation.

The agency has multiple equity frameworks and equity definitions, albeit on a programmatic level (not agency-wide), including the Climate Equity Framework. According to staff, "the Climate Equity Framework has shaped the direction of community engagement around rule making across different program areas. It's been a helpful tool, in part because it's a public document with a public commitment, and as such is an accountability lever".

Measuring & Reporting: The Climate Change Program tracks and reports changes in air quality and household energy burden, as well as efficacy of stakeholder engagement on an online dashboard. When a new regulation goes to hearing, staff also include a Climate Equity Considerations Attachment at the end of the staff report. Staff shared, "we've started to show

how we're changing the outcome to improve health and well-being. Now this information is available to the commissioners and to the public, so people can hold us accountable." The attachment includes the following questions, along with staff's response:

- How did the Air Pollution Control Division (Division) encourage community input and participation in the rule development process? How was community input used?
- How will this rule impact cost for disproportionately impacted communities?
- What are the financial benefits of compliance and are they being directed toward/prioritized within disproportionately impacted communities?
- What are the potential negative and positive impacts of the rule on physical and mental health? How can negative health impacts be minimized, and positive impacts maximized for disproportionately impacted communities?
- What barriers and benefits exist for disproportionately impacted communities to adopting proposed mitigation technologies? How are barriers addressed & benefits maximized?
- How can the rule improve community resilience or quality of life for people living in disproportionately impacted communities?

Implementation: Climate Change Program staff shared that most of their work since the Framework's adoption has been focused on stakeholder engagement related to new greenhouse gas regulations and addressing co-pollutants. Over the last two years the Program has received more funding from the state legislature, which has helped them expand their climate justice work and to do their work differently. Staff explained that as the EJ Action Task Force recommendations are codified, all state agencies will transition to using more updated, specific, tools, recommendations, and actions.

Equitable Engagement: The Climate Equity Framework and Environmental Justice (EJ) Action Task Recommendations provide detailed engagement guidelines. The EJ Program also recently launched a community connector program to formally contract and partner with CBOs.

Challenges & Opportunities: Staff shared that they are trying to go above and beyond preventing harm, not just in regard to air quality, but also in consideration job impacts, implications on small businesses, impacts on household energy burden, and on those potentially impacted by regulations. "We have a set of climate equity principles, including access to technologies and creating customized solutions tailored around a community or population's needs. Not everyone is going to have rooftop solar and a tesla. What resources do we have to support them? A lot of the time these types of funding needs are outside of the regulation, but it's what is needed to support success. How do we create funding, programs, and technological support to improve access?"

Examples of Programs, Projects, Plans, and Processes:

[Colorado EnviroScreen](#): EnviroScreen is used to inform permitting decisions and inspections. The data can also help drive community engagement and funding decisions. Staff shared "the tool has helped us see the pollution and other factors that are happening in a more objective, quantifiable way. It has changed the conversation for us in a big way."

Figure 21: Colorado Environmental Justice Mapping Tool

Source: Colorado EnviroScreen Environmental Justice Mapping Tool, 2022
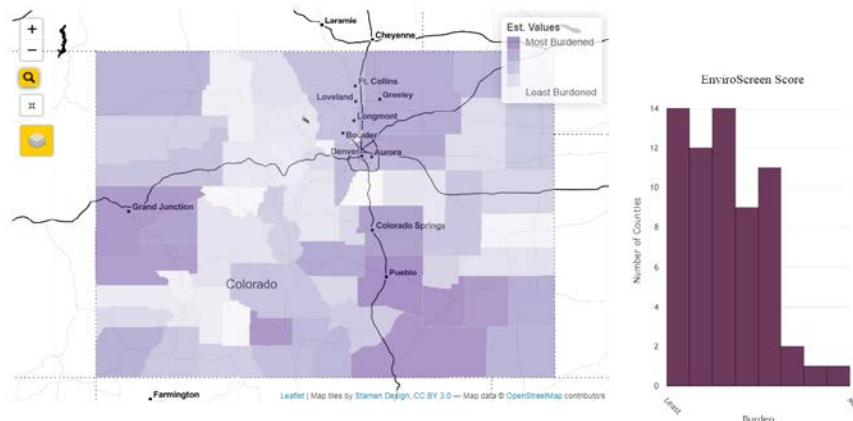
[Colorado Greenhouse Gas Metrics Dashboard](#): The dashboard will feature various equity measurements, including stakeholder engagement, household energy burden, and air pollution reduction (ozone, PM). According to staff, the agency is working earnestly to make data more available to the public and easier to understand through this tool.

[2022 Climate Community Engagement Workshops](#): The agency organized a series of workshops focused on reaching communities they don't typically hear from. They had meetings in trusted locations for the community, in the evenings, offered stipends, and had third party facilitators. Staff shared that "a regulation is very specific, so it can be frustrating for community members to participate in that kind of typical process. The format of these workshops allowed us to hear larger/bigger picture issues and visions that people have for their neighborhoods. Having these conversations was very valuable. Agency staff incorporated what they heard into their implementation plans."

[EV Equity Dashboard](#): DPHE staff shared Colorado Energy Office EV Equity Dashboard as another good example of the state's externally facing equity efforts. The dashboard "includes a landing page that shows EV registration trends on a year-over-year basis and the locations of investments made under three transportation electrification programs. The landing page links to eight different views that provide statewide maps of socioeconomic characteristics, health indicators, vehicle registration, charging infrastructure, modeled travel behavior and traffic estimates, and utility rates" (Colorado Energy Office, 2023).

Background: The County of Marin's Office of Equity was established two years ago. Its mission is to "establish the County of Marin as an anti-racist, multicultural workforce committed to accountability, transformational change, and community engagement." According to staff, their work and responsibilities are growing and two of their primary areas of focus are leading the County's Participatory Budgeting project and recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce, particularly people of color. "There are a lot of conversations going on regarding how to reduce the number of people of color leaving the County. We're having lots of internal conversations through working groups and gaining a good perspective. For example, recently established a mentorship program."

Commitment & Approach: The County's [Race Equity Action Plan](#) was completed in 2022 and has three major priorities: housing, economic opportunity, and mental health. The Action Plan is organized by goals, actions, accountability, timeline, and performance measures. The Office of Equity has a leading role in monitoring and evaluating implementation of the REAP, and reporting milestones to the community. The REAP also established an implementation team composed of community members, local and county agency staff, and community organizations, divided into priority area work groups (*Marin County Race Equity Action Plan*, 2022).

Equitable Engagement: The County identified five priority communities through their participatory budgeting process. Staff shared that different departments have their own approach and level of commitment to engaging these communities and identification of equitable outcomes for the services they offer. "One of the conversations we're having internally is that many departments are doing engagement work and want to improve their engagement approach and tactics. We're thinking about creating an internal working group so when it's time to do external engagement, we have a more effective model".[21]

Examples of Programs, Projects, Plans, and Processes:

[Participatory Budgeting](#): The County has allocated $2.5 million in ARPA funds to provide $10,000 - $250,000 grants for community-supported projects. "Community members propose ideas, turn their ideas into grant proposals, and vote on which proposals to fund."

The selection process has two stages. The first one is to hear new service or new infrastructure proposals and whether they advance equity. The County is offering grant writing support services and will have nonprofits available to assist with matchmaking between individuals and potential nonprofit fiscal sponsors. The proposals will be reviewed and roughly 50-70 proposals will be voted on by Marin County residents.

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[21] Quote from staff interview

Five target communities are the focus of Participatory Budgeting (PB) investments. The communities were identified using the [California Healthy Places Index](#), which measures life expectancy and other health equity related outcomes down to the Census Tract level.

Staff noted that they are considering different outcomes they want to focus on, including increased participation from target communities, particularly in future PB cycles. "We would like to see those communities start incrementally making progress to catch up with Marin County as much as possible."[22]

Project updates will be provided to the Board of Supervisors and a web portal provides updates and information to the public. The web portal has an online mapping tool that shows all the ideas that were collected and those selected for the next phase of review. There will also be updates via social media and communication with nonprofits. Next PB cycle will start a few months after the current cycle ends, including reflecting and learning from the prior cycle to inform the next one.

Staff shared there are many benefits to the PB process. "A lot of people are very excited about their input becoming a reality, and they get really excited about the process itself. Furthermore, all of the ideas we're getting, we're rerouting to various departments and seeing how this might help advance equity across the board".

Staff shared that based on their experience thus far, they have already begun to identify areas where they can improve in the next cycle. This includes making connections with trusted organizations in the community that are held in high esteem well before the PB process starts and partnering with those organizations as much as possible so they can provide input on what outreach and engagement is going to look like and get buy-in from these organizations early in the process. "We're going to reach out further in advance of the PB process in the ideas phase - not just when it's time to submit applications. One of the things we've learned is that people need to have a relationship and trust with our department, so developing those relationships by being out in the community, showing up to events, and supporting organizations in what they're doing is essential".

This is the first time PB is happening in Marin County, and staff are hopeful that it will be part of the County's budget moving forward. "At this time, it's too soon to tell, but what we've seen from other areas where PB has been around is that the funding has increased over time."

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[22] Quote from staff interview

Background: In 2016, King County adopted its first **Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan**. The plan's focus areas include leadership, operations, and services; plans, policies, and budgets; workforce and workplace; community partnerships; communication and education; and facility and system improvements. The Plan guides the County's policy direction, decision-making, planning, operations and services, and workplace practices. The plan is in the process of being updated and includes:

- A shift to addressing root causes of inequities, rather than a reactionary approach.
- Creating actionable and measurable objectives.
- Providing flexibility and openness for innovation and adaptation.

Figure 22: King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

Source: Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan 2016-2022, n.d.)

LEADERSHIP, OPERATIONS & SERVICES				
Goals	**Invest upstream and where needs are greatest**	**Invest in employees**	**Invest in community partnerships**	**With accountable and transparent leadership**
1. Develop effective and accountable leadership for advancing ESJ **2.** Develop an organization where all employees are change agents **3.** Visibly and public display progress on ESJ **4.** County operations, programs and services are pro-equity and reflect ESJ values	■ ESJ values guide department and agency operations, programs and service delivery ■ Operations and services – including allocation of resources – reflect our ESJ values of investing upstream and where needs are greatest	■ Increase employee sense of responsibility to advance ESJ ■ Improve staff and leadership proficiencies in delivering services that respond to changing demographics	■ In County operations, programs and services, collaborate with other King County and external service providers ■ Technical assistance and resources deployed to community organizations, in support of services and operations	■ Elected leaders and directors are ultimately responsible for ESJ ■ Visibly display progress on plan ■ Biennial "Plan – Do – Check – Adjust" of ESJ Strategic Plan with implementation plans
PLANS, POLICIES & BUDGETS				
Goals	**Invest upstream and where needs are greatest**	**Invest in employees**	**Invest in community partnerships**	**With accountable and transparent leadership**
1. Department and agency business plans include analyses of equity impacts **2.** Policy guidance incorporates ESJ values and analysis **3.** Budget decisions, rates, and allocations reflect the values and strategies of the ESJ strategic plan	■ Provide new resources on demographic conditions for planners, analysts and project managers ■ Develop improved equity analysis tools for plans, policies, and budgets ■ Ensure budget instructions and decisions support upstream investments ■ Assess all fees and rates to identify opportunities to create a more equitable structure	■ Train leaders, planners, analysts, and project managers on the use of demographic data and equity impact tools ■ Ensure budget allocation leads to a more equitable workplace	■ Increase use of community engagement guide in planning and policy processes ■ Explore and pilot a participatory budgeting process	■ Provide coaching and tools for agency leadership to develop explicit policy guidance ■ Develop measurement tools and a public reporting framework for ESJ Strategic Plan implementation ■ County advocacy at the State results in a more equitable funding structure for services most needed by residents

The County's Office of Equity and Social Justice (OESJ) has internal and external roles to help standardize equity and support equity advancement across King County's multiple departments and 17,000 employees. OESJ's internal roles include supporting teams within each of the County's departments and developing tools for staff. OESJ Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Managers act as advisors, consultants, facilitators, and thought partners within

each department. OESJ also supports [Employee Affinity Groups](#) with OESJ team members resourcing those spaces.

OESJ has a range of external roles, including:
- Investigating complaints for unincorporated areas of the County.
- Ensuring accessible and equitable government services to the county's diverse language communities through the [Language Access Program](#); and
- Assisting the County in standardizing and conducting meaningful and inclusive community engagement.

Commitment & Approach: OESJ is closely involved with equity advising in various policies, programs, and policies, including lifting up disability justice work, which became an issue of increasing concern during the pandemic.

OESJ is engaged in Civil Rights work as a key element of equity advancement across the agency. "Ugly stuff can come up during equity advancement work. People don't get promoted, they start feeling harassment, retaliation, etc. Without a strong Civil Rights division and structures, equity can become unstable and amazing performers that are people of color may leave the organization."

OESJ helps create standardization of equity practices and procedures through its multiple "lines of business", including developing and ensuring effective use of equity advancement tools and resources, such as their [Equity Impact Review](#) (EIR) tool. The EIR tool is intended for staff to use at the very onset of larger projects, policies, and programs to identify, evaluate, and communicate the potential positive and negative impacts of a policy or program on equity. OESJ shares [examples](#) on its webpage on how the tool has been used by its various departments.

Equitable Engagement: King County's approach to developing the racial equity outcomes starts with [community engagement and co-creation](#). "Co-creation uses an active and ongoing participatory process. It assumes shared power, responsibility, accountability, and decision-making with community members. We center on those most harmed by inequality… [and engage] with community members on strategy at the earliest possible moment… They guide our initiatives, goals, methods, and analyses" (*Community Engagement & Co-Creation*, 2023).

Most of the OESJ lines of business have a community structure that they regularly partner with. OESJ staff are actively and continuously engaged with the community. "You can't actually do this work effectively if you're not in a relationship with the community you're trying to serve. Being deeply connected with the community helps us be stronger advocates. It is our job to be community advocates and champions as well as transforming the internal systems."

Challenges & Opportunities: According to OESJ staff, their biggest structural challenge is accountability. "The overall accountability of doing this work is not well distributed. How do we make equity advancement work tangible for every single employee? How can accountability be structured that demonstrates progress but also daylights vulnerabilities?" Staff noted that there are existing layers of accountability such as employee appraisals and certain types of

training, and yet they are still not where they would like to be. They cited lack of resources for staff to track progress and unpack the work as a key issue. "Unpacking the work is essential, but most staff don't have the bandwidth the way the work is structured. It's important to request more resources because lack of time and resources undermines accountability."

Examples of Programs, Projects, Plans, and Processes:

Community Compensation Project: This OESJ project builds out best practices and develops standard guidance around compensation for community members across departments.

Mobility Framework: King County Metro went through an extensive community process to develop its Mobility Framework to inform how Metro allocates transit service, invests resources, and updates its policies. The framework includes guiding principles, recommendations, a best practices review, and demographic and travel trends in King County (*King County Metro's Mobility Framework*, n.d.).

Metro co-created the Framework with its Mobility Equity Cabinet, composed of 23 community leaders representing low-income communities, Black, native and communities of color, immigrants and refugees, limited-English speaking people, and people with disabilities. The Cabinet "drove the development of Guiding Principles and recommendations, worked with Metro to direct the consultant analysis and research, and helped draft the Framework document" (*King County Metro's Mobility Framework*, n.d.). The Framework recommendations are organized under the following "thematic areas": Investments; Surrounding Land Use; Innovation; Workforce; Engagement (*King County Metro's Mobility Framework*, n.d.).

2024 Comprehensive Plan Update: King County's state-mandated once-in-a-decade comprehensive plan update will focus on policies related to racial equity, affordable housing, and climate change. Staff set up an equity working group during the first phase to help policy drafters understand the specific needs of the community. As one of the first phases of the project, the County shared Draft Executive Conceptual Proposals, including an extensive set of pro-equity proposals, and solicited public feedback.

Equitable Development Initiative: The Community and Human Services Department's is in the process of initiating an Equitable Development Initiative. "An equitable development initiative considers past policy decisions, historic inequities, and current conditions to improve access to opportunities to the most affected communities and allocate resources and investments, such as capacity building and capital funds, to communities at risk from displacement." King County is adapting Seattle's version of the initiative for their own context. They will be assessing various types of development, from housing to transit infrastructure, recognizing where communities are facing displacement and finding remedies.

Background: The Metropolitan Council is a regional policy, planning, and service-providing agency for the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metro area. The Council's program areas include transportation, wastewater treatment and water supply planning, housing, community development, planning, and parks (*Who we are*, n.d.).

Commitment & Approach: The Council's [Equity Strategy & Framework](#) is organized around workforce equity, community engagement, and investments and procurement goals and impact areas. Implementation of these goals and impact areas includes evaluating and measuring performance, allocating resources to Council-wide equity work, and embedding equity in Council operations, planning, and investment decisions (*Metropolitan Council Equity Strategy and Framework*, 2020).

And although the agency increased its commitment and focus on racial equity starting in 2020, the first time equity was prioritized as a regional outcome dates back to 2014 with the [Thrive 2040](#) long range visioning process. Staff noted that at the time "it was really controversial. We've found that now, ten years later, there is widespread agreement about equity being a top two outcome, and we fully anticipate it will be a central outcome in the Thrive 2050 plan update".

Equitable Engagement: The Council's Equity Strategy and Framework lays out several community engagement impact areas, including incorporating outreach and engagement plans early in the process for all capital projects and large planning efforts. Staff shared that while the Framework has been helpful, commitment to concrete engagement actions, in particular those that influence decision making, is essential. "If we don't get to change decision making and how we operate, engagement won't lead to changing outcomes."

One example of a way in which equity has become infused in decision making is the agency's establishment of the [Equity Advisory Committee](#) in 2015 after the adoption of Thrive MSP 2040 (*Equity Advisory Committee - Metropolitan Council*, n.d.). Committee members include geographic and demographic diversity, including people of different races, incomes, abilities, and backgrounds (*Establishment of Metropolitan Council Equity Advisory Committee*, 2015).

Challenges & Opportunities: Staff shared that the makeup of its boards and committees has major equity implications, and yet staff has minimal influence on demographic representation among decision makers at each local agency assigned to and represented on the Council boards and committees. "When we've had better, more diverse representation, it has really impacted the conversation. Each county has their own process for determining all the many boards and commissions, and the Board makeup is ingrained in state law so there's only so much we can control. We could send a stronger message to our members and of course to resident appointments that we have more direct influence over."

Another challenge highlighted by staff is reporting and accountability. "When funds are allocated, how was the funding actually used and how equitable was the process and outcomes in the end"? Staff noted that there is accountability woven into some elements of the Council's grantmaking role, including that the local agencies must report any changes to the original project submission back to Council staff. That said, staff explained that changes at this level do not help capture a wide range of potential inequitable actions or approaches by local agencies in implementing Council-funded projects. Staff shared that there are before and after studies that show outcomes of Council-funded projects, but these typically take place many years after a project is completed and rarely, if ever, dig deep enough to daylight gaps and opportunities for improvement with an equity lens.

Examples of Programs, Projects, Plans, and Processes:

Transportation Policy Plan 2050: The Council is in the process of updating its long-range transportation plan with a stronger equity advancement emphasis. "We're moving towards intentional actions in the next plan going beyond disproportionate harm and we measure it."

Equity Evaluation of Regional Transportation Investments: The Council is also conducting an evaluation of processes that fund, plan, and select regional transportation projects. The evaluation will "review transportation investment processes, create an equity evaluation framework and tool, pilot equity evaluations of investment processes, and recommend strategies and actions for implementation and continued improvement" (*Equity Evaluation - Metropolitan Council*, n.d.). Part of the evaluation includes forming an Equity Policy Group to co-create the "framework and tool for evaluating transportation investments, inform their methods, analyze the findings, and create the recommendations and outcomes of this work" (*Equity Evaluation - Metropolitan Council*, n.d.). Committee participants, who are made up of equity voices, will be compensated to prepare and participate in meetings.

Regional Solicitation: The Council's long-range transportation planning division uses federal funding to put out a regional solicitation every two years for roadways including multimodal elements, transit and Travel Demand Management (TDM) projects, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.[23] Equity, community engagement, and affordable housing are among the selection criteria, and staff shared that there's been a steady progression in the use and acceptance of equity criteria as part of the solicitation since it was added in 2014 for every application category. In the first year, applicants were scored based on the benefits the project provided and mitigation for any negative impacts, and the maximum score possible was scaled based on project location in relation to percentages of people of color or with low incomes. Since then, the equity measure has evolved from that approach, from defining the community, who it will serve across demographics, what the engagement approach has been

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[23] TDM is a collective term for the many different approaches to make it easier for individuals to shift behavior away from driving alone and promote less overall driving and traffic on roads (Association of Bay Area Governments & Metropolitan Transportation Commission, 2024).

and will be, and what the anticipated benefits and impacts will be. "It's a good way to get the applicant to think about their project and the concept of who the project is helping."

According to Council staff, incorporating equity-oriented criteria and ensuring strong proposals from applicants has not been without its challenges. Staff have learned that it takes a fair amount of communication, explanation, and training with project applicants, so they learn to do some of the up-front work necessary to submit a competitive proposal. For example, some applicants have struggled with and resisted the inclusion of equity-focused qualitative selection criteria. "It's been a hard shift, particularly for the engineers. They want to compete on a technical level, but we're asking them to make a shift to qualitative metrics".

Some local agencies have also pushed back on providing information about how community engagement molded their application. "What they have told us is that they need to get the money first, and then they will engage the community. Our perspective is that you probably shouldn't be applying for funding if you haven't talked to the community."

Council staff are considering changes to the application process and requirements to improve the quality of submissions including making engagement a funding requirement or increasing the point allocation. The Solicitation currently allocates between 9 and 18 percent of the points for equity, depending on the application category. "On the policy level we're saying equity is really important, but you can't say this is your top priority and only allocate 10%".

Staff reflected that they likely haven't changed what projects are being submitted, but "even if we don't change what projects we receive, we're changing how the implementers are thinking about equity and training our local partners. It's not just about which projects we fund; it's training all these practitioners to think in a different way".

METRO Blue Line Extension Anti Displacement Effort: As a result of community concerns regarding displacement impacts of Metro's planned Blue Line light rail extension, the Council is partnering with Hennepin County on "a first-of-its-kind community oriented anti-displacement initiative [and contracted with] the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) to convene an Anti-Displacement Work Group to study and recommend anti-displacement strategies" (_Building Prosperity, Preventing Displacement_, 2023). The Group published its recommendations in May 2023 for public review and the agencies will continue to partner with the community on implementing the recommendations to maximize community benefits of the light rail project.

Background: Developed in 2019 and formally endorsed by the Commission in 2023, MTC's Equity Platform is the guiding approach to how the agency seeks to advance equity. The platform's pillars include:

- Listen and Learn: MTC's public engagement program emphasizes listening to residents, advisory committees, and local governments to identify challenges and deliver solutions.
- Define and Measure: Using success metrics advances transparency and accountability, and new data will signal whether or not our policies are succeeding.
- Focus and Deliver: Bring an equity lens to providing planning, funding, coordination and technical assistance to cities, counties, transit agencies and other partners to bring the region together I[Share knowledge] and work with partners across sectors… to solve the Bay Area's layered, multi-sector challenges… and make investment decisions based on that information.
- Train and Grow: The MTC equity agenda requires… ongoing training [across the agency] for continual evolution and improvement" (*Equity Platform*, 2023).

Commitment & Approach: The agency established its Access(ibility), Culture, and Racial Equity (or "ACRE") Office in 2022 to coordinate internal and external equity efforts and projects. ACRE staff emphasized the importance of leadership, including the former Executive Director who made institutionalizing equity within the agency's practices a major priority. "In the past we never really talked about equity. We talked about serving low-income people and persons with disabilities, but there wasn't the language or policy or framework that we could all get behind."

Figure 23: MTC Equity Platform Approach

Source: Equity Platform, 2023
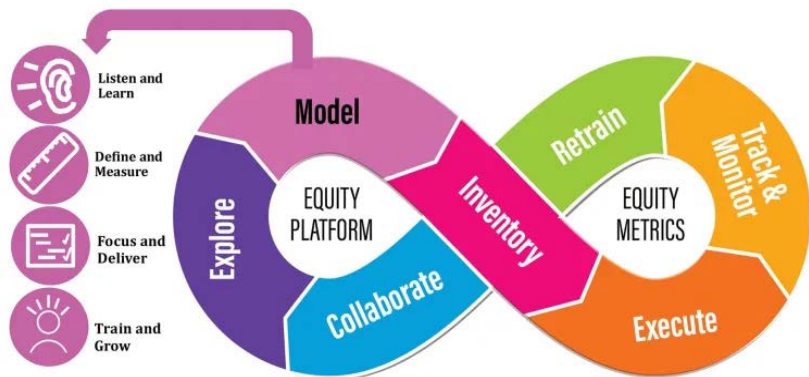
MTC has a Policy Advisory Council, including its Equity & Access Subcommittee, whose mission is to advise the Commission, "incorporating diverse perspectives relating to the environment, the economy and social equity… Members have extensive life experience, work, academic or volunteer backgrounds that focus on economic, environmental and equity issues" (*Policy Advisory Council*, 2023).

Implementation: ACRE staff shared that the agency is actively engaging peer staff to determine what an equity lens looks like across programs and projects. This includes identifying project-specific equity considerations and ensuring project managers are being intentional in developing an equity agenda. "It's not always easy, especially when a project, such as a capital project, is mostly already baked. It can be a challenge to figure out how to navigate each project to improve the conditions for people on the ground."

Equitable Engagement: According to ACRE staff, there has been an intentional effort in engaging Equity Priority Communities (EPC's).[24] This includes the agency's public outreach pop up events tied the Plan Ban Bay Area 2050, 70% of which are in those geographic areas. The agency has multiyear contracts with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to do sustained engagement work. "This wasn't typical and is an example of investing in our community partners."

Challenges & Opportunities: A focus area for the ACRE Office has been internal work, including hiring, training, and working with the agency's recruiter to infuse an equity lens in job postings and outreach. "We have very few people with outward facing disabilities but we're a transportation planning agency, so that becomes a problem. If you're not living that life, then in some ways you can never really truly understand the large and small barriers faced daily by people with disabilities. Educational barriers are often a challenge for certain populations, but we haven't done equivalencies. Solving this challenge would give us a wider pool of applicants, including people with lived experience."

The agency recently mandated introductory-level equity training for staff to help establish a shared baseline of understanding and capacity. "This work to build capacity within ourselves is ongoing. That's the hardest. Can we get a baseline set of knowledge among staff across the agency, including training that all staff have gone through and completed?"

The agency is currently undergoing an Equity Assessment & Roadmap project to identify the landscape of projects and initiatives at addressing equity and identifying needs and gaps. Phase I was focused on developing an equity inventory. Phase II, which is now commencing, will focus on identifying needs and gaps. Phase III will identify recommendations and an equity roadmap tailored for MTC. Staff noted that obtaining an equity baseline and moving the needle on that baseline is going to take sustained work, ongoing resources, and consistent commitment over time. "For example, we have a new Executive Director, plus ongoing turnover on the Board. Everyone is at a different place as far as their knowledge and skill sets in advancing equity."

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[24] Equity Priority Communities are census tracts factored for demographic characteristics including people of color, low-income, Limited English Proficiency, zero-vehicle household, seniors over 75, people with disabilities, single-parent households, and rent-burdened (paying over 30% of income on housing) (*MTC Plan Bay Area 2050 Equity Priority Communities*, n.d.).

Staff noted that it can be a challenge to identify the most impactful equity advancement strategies and to gauge the impacts of the agency's work outside of engagement outcomes. "Are you dismantling racist and unequal structures or simply doing something that brings about greater benefits to EPC's? It's really difficult to measure benefits to the ability of people to live and thrive in the Bay Area."

Examples of Programs, Projects, Plans, and Processes:

Plan Bay Area 2050: Plan Bay Area serves as the region's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS).[25] It includes thirty-five strategies that are oriented around equitable outcomes, including an emphasis on serving the needs of Equity Priority Communities (EPCs) (*Plan Bay Area 2050*, 2023). The plan was illuminated by equity stakeholders through the Regional Equity Working Group and focused engagement of EPCs throughout the 4-year process.

Part of the PBA process included a project performance assessment. The assessment evaluated over 90 projects, with metrics that included equity. Of particular significance in the process was the ability for project submissions to be re-worked by their respective sponsors to improve equity performance if the assessment's results showed sub-par performance. Furthermore, projects in the evaluation included the standard public agency submissions, along with non-profit and general public "transformative project" submissions selected by an expert panel. "Highest performing projects identified in the assessment… had strong benefit-cost ratios, were most resilient to an uncertain future and/or had strong potential to advance equity" (*Project Performance Assessment*, 2022).

MTC's Bay Trail Equity Study: The Bay Trail Equity Study reflected a multi-step process to apply the agency's Equity Platform to Bay Trail planning, projects, and other opportunities to make the network more accessible and welcoming to all people in the region. Phase I of the study was focused on the Platform steps of listening and learning and defining and measuring. It included historical literature review, an existing conditions analysis, and interviews with Equity Priority Community leaders and residents (*Bay Trail Equity Strategy*, 2023).

Long term funding for CBO engagement work and local government capacity building: Staff shared that they are in the process of establishing a permanent funding source for CBOs to be compensated for engagement work. A separate fund source is also in the process of being established to support local governments for a variety of needs including grant management, training, capacity building, participatory budgeting, and professional development.

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[25] A Regional Transportation Plan guides a region's transportation investments for a period of at least 20 years. Updated every four years, it is based on projections of growth in population and jobs and the ensuing travel demand. Required by state and federal law, it includes programs to better maintain, operate and expand transportation. A Sustainable Communities Strategy is an integrated land use and transportation plan that all metropolitan regions in California must complete under Senate Bill 375. (Association of Bay Area Governments & Metropolitan Transportation Commission, 2024).

Background: Various SFMTA programs, projects, and processes included an equitable approach before the establishment of its Office of Racial Equity & Belonging (OREB) in 2021. Since then, OREB has assisted the agency in furthering its internal and external equity advancement work. Prior to OREB formation, staff led the development of the agency's internal operations-focused Phase I Racial Equity Action Plan. Phase II of the Plan is expected to commence soon and will be largely externally focused, including around community engagement topics. After the OREB office was established, the MTA hired a Racial Equity Officer and began hiring additional permanent positions to fill needed roles. According to OREB staff, these hires have been essential to allowing the department to do impactful work.

Measuring & Reporting: The MTA tracks and reports on a range of performance metrics tied back to its Strategic Plan, including equity metrics. The reporting of metrics, while still in progress, are posted on an online dashboard, as shown below (SFMTA, 2023).

Figure 24: Percentage of eligible population utilizing free or discounted Muni fare programs

Source: SFMTA *Percentage of eligible population utilizing free or discounted Muni fare programs, October 2023*
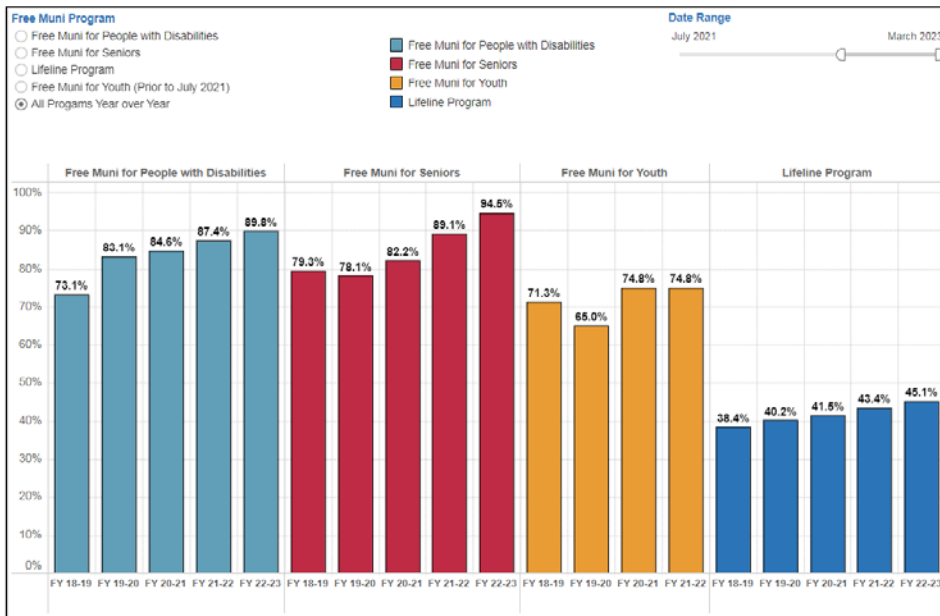
The MTA also has a Youth Transportation Advisory Board that has helped expand who the agency is reporting to and hearing from directly, in this case, young people, a demographic often missing from public meetings.

Challenges & Opportunities: According to OREB staff, diversifying the workforce is both a challenge and an opportunity. Their Phase I report showed that the agency's leadership is primarily White and male, with many people of color in entry level frontline positions. Changing

this reality will be a challenge, but staff shared that they're making progress on hiring, including recruiting from increasingly diverse sources, and reducing the burden of hiring processes on potential applicants. Another challenge is the balancing act between short term and long-term efforts. "How much do we focus on changes that can be implemented quickly vs longer term systemic changes? We should think about how impactful the changes are and for whom."

Examples of Programs, Projects, Plans, and Processes:

MUNI Service Equity Strategy: is a process to identify and correct transit performance disparities. The Strategy focuses on eight Equity Neighborhoods and seniors and people with disabilities, and it establishes performance measures for routes serving these neighborhoods (*Muni Service Equity Strategy*, 2022). Each neighborhood Strategy and associated performance measures are updated every two years and reported back to the Board of Directors in time to inform the agency's two-year budget cycle process. This process creates an accountability feedback loop with both the Board of Directors as well as the Equity Neighborhoods. Planners also see the focus on short term easily implementable actions as an asset that results in tangible improvements and a sense of follow-through on community needs.

Community Based Transportation Plans (CBTP): The MTA's CBTP's include a funding plan and a commitment that all recommendations will be implemented within 5 years. Staff noted that this was intentional in order to ensure the plan does not sit on the shelf and that that action is taken. CBTP's include strong process equity and participatory planning principles and practices (SFMTA, 2023c). Two examples include the Visitation Valley and Portola CBTP and the Bayview CBTP. The Visitacion Valley & Portola CBTP includes a commitment to "document and share what we hear in community conversations and what our approaches are towards decision-making… deliver actions that reflect community desires, and value lived experiences of the community, especially those not often heard in traditional decision-making venues" (SFMTA, 2023b).

The Bayview CBTP includes $600,000 for community priorities determined through participatory budgeting. "Participatory Budgeting is a democratic process where residents come together to come up with ideas, develop them into real projects, and vote on where the money will go" (SFMTA, 2023a).

Background: In 2020, the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent nationwide protests motivated the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to take a firmer stance on racial equity. The agency adopted a resolution in 2020 stating their commitment and initial steps towards equity advancement. A Special Committee on Equity & Social Justice, made up of elected officials, non-profits, universities, and other voices was formed to guide the first year of the agency's work after the resolution's adoption. Through the Committee's conversations, the agency defined equity and conducted an equity inventory to assess where they had integrated equity and where they could do more. This led to the agency's baseline conditions assessment and the development of a Racial Equity Early Action Plan (EAP).

Other committees, teams, and working groups have since been established by SCAG:

- An IDEA Team (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, & Access) led by the Human Resources Department is focused on internal agency-wide equity advancement opportunities, and an Internal Equity Work Group composed of SCAG Planning staff researches, discusses, and advises the agency on addressing racial equity issues.
- A Racial Equity and Regional Planning Subcommittee, made up of elected officials, met 4-5 times to guide and shape policies to include within the long range plan (RTP/SCS).
- A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Equity Working Group is convened on a bi-monthly basis to provide a space for MPOs across the nation to connect, support, and learn what others are doing. It now consists of 250+ members over 30 states.

Commitment & Approach: SCAG's Racial Equity Baseline Conditions Report states "for the region to become healthy, livable, sustainable, and economically resilient, SCAG needs to dramatically improve outcomes for low-income families and people of color. To that end, SCAG's core function, its planning work, must directly address the long-standing systemic and institutional barriers that have fostered inequities in health, wealth, and opportunities" (*Racial Equity: Baseline Conditions Report*, 2021).

According to SCAG staff, Board leadership and direction, including the adoption of the agency's equity resolution, has been very important in staff's ability to continue addressing racial equity in their work.

Measuring & Reporting: SCAG's Racial Equity Baseline Conditions Report is an existing conditions assessment of racial equity in Southern California that helps inform their planning efforts. The report has been updated annually since 2021 and includes indicators around the themes of economy, communities, mobility, and environment. SCAG also created a story map to better communicate the indicators to the public. They also provide annual EAP progress updates to the Board of Directors to demonstrate accountability over time.

Figure 25: SCAG Story Map

Source: The State of Racial Equity in Southern California
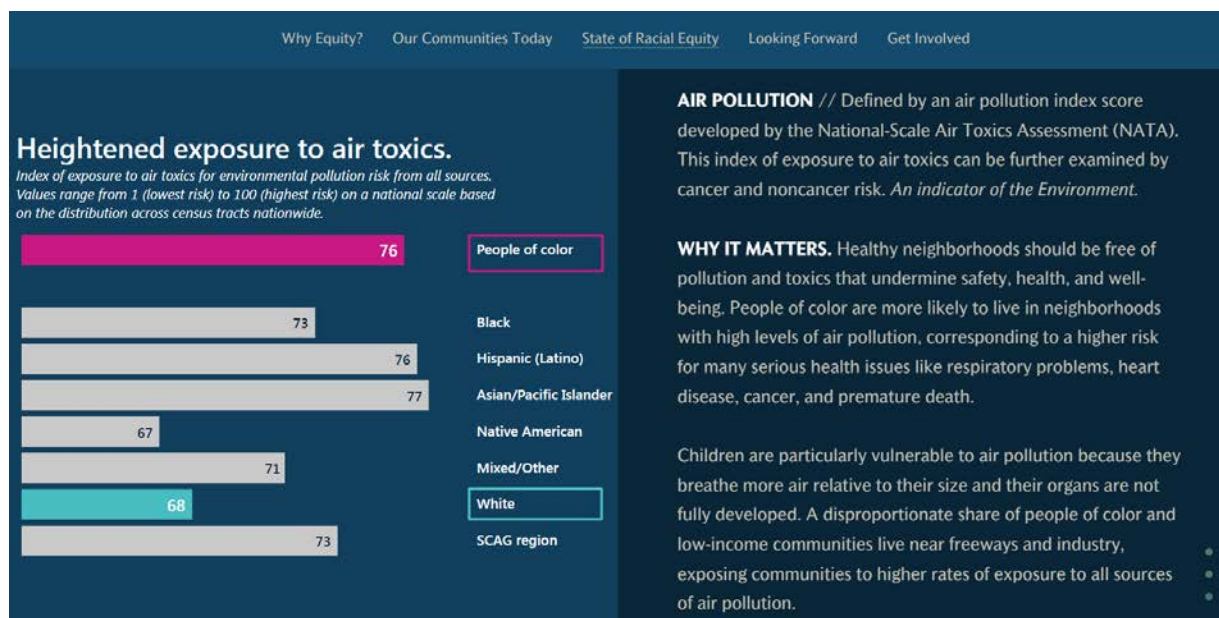
Implementation: In order to execute the Board's direction, SCAG staff noted that the agency has hired more staff with knowledge and experience in equitable planning strategies. SCAG's Racial Equity Early Action Plan has 29 actions and the following goals:

- Focus SCAG's internal work on inclusion, diversity, equity, and awareness.
- Bring equity into regional planning functions.
- Promote racial equity in efforts involving elected officials and planning professionals.
- Communicate our commitment to racial equity and join with others to amplify impact.

Each of these goals is advanced through three strategies:

- Listen & Learn – Develop a shared understanding of our history of discrimination and the structural barriers that continue to perpetuate the inequities experienced today.
- Engage & Co-Power – Create an environment where everyone is included, able to share their experiences, and equipped to talk about racial equity and inequities.
- Integrate & Institutionalize – Center racial equity in all aspects of work.

Challenges & Opportunities: Staff shared that administrative barriers to partnering with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) have been challenging for all parties. They are attempting to address this issue through a clear and consistent approach across the agency.

Another struggle is the agency's relationships with tribal nations. The agency has received feedback that the number of outreach and meetings the tribes can be overwhelming. As a result, staff are trying to be more mindful and reduce the number of meetings by coordinating

across departments & teams. The agency has also struggled with land acknowledgement. "Many of us are interested and want to learn, but we haven't made any agency-wide decision."

Finally, staff shared that it can be a challenge for the agency, as a voluntary joint powers authority, to live up to its equity values. "None of our members are obligated to be a part of SCAG. We're three years out of the social justice uprisings of 2020. It was an opportunity at the time that was not passed up, but our leadership is always going to change."

Examples of Programs, Projects, Plans, and Processes:

Sustainable Communities Program (SCP): SCAG's sustainability planning grant programs provide resources and technical assistance to local governments for planning efforts that help implement regional plans. The latest SCP Call for Applications on Civic Engagement, Equity & Environmental Justice includes the following equity-oriented goals:

- Provide planning resources to local jurisdictions for active transportation and multimodal planning efforts, sustainability, land use, and planning for affordable housing.
- Promote, address, and ensure health and equity in regional land use and transportation planning, close the gap of racial injustice, and better serve communities of color.
- Encourage regional planning strategies to reduce motorized Vehicle Miles Traveled and greenhouse gas emissions, particularly in EJ communities" (*Sustainable Communities Program Call for Applications*, 2020).

According to staff, part of the goal of the program is to foster ground-up planning with stronger partnerships with community groups. It provides funding to local agencies and encourages them to partner with CBOs and local stakeholders. SCAG staff went through in-depth outreach with jurisdictions and nonprofits that don't normally apply to these types of funds. 20-25 of 50 points of the Proposed Scoring Criteria are allocated towards Priority Populations (5 points), Repairing Historic/Current Inequities & Priority Population Benefits (5 points), Inclusive, Diverse, and Equitable Engagement (5 points), Priority Populations Engagement (5 points), and Reciprocal Relationships and Impact (5 points).

Building Equity Across the Region (BEAR) Internal Racial Equity Toolkit: BEAR provides guidance to SCAG staff on improving equitable outcomes in their planning work. Staff are in the stage of trying to simplify the tools to make them more user friendly, then will be trying to implement and ensure they are being utilized across the agency.

Background: In February 2020, the County Board of Commissioners adopted a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion resolution. As part of the resolution, the County committed to establishing an Office of Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement (OEICE), including hiring a Chief Equity Officer and additional staff to manage equity, diversity and inclusion and community engagement strategies and activities.

Two foundational bodies were created to "steer, develop and support implementation of the County's proposed equity changes and commitments."
- The community-led Advisory Council on Racial Equity, whose members are "appointed by the Board of Commissioners and made up primarily of county residents and community partners with lived experience of racial or ethnic inequality" (*Adoption of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan*, 2021).
- The internally focused Equity Leadership Council (ELC) to coordinate strategic planning across departments, purchasing practices, hiring and recruitment strategies, employee training and education related to DEI, and the creation of employee affinity groups.

The County launched six subcommittees under a staff Equity Leadership Council (ELC). The ELC meets quarterly and includes all Department Directors, the County Administrator, Sheriff, one representative of the County Board (*Adoption of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan*, 2021). OEICE staff support the ELC committees.

Commitment & Approach: According to OEICE staff, Washington County is at an early phase of its equity practice and is prioritizing building the foundation of their Civil Rights work. Staff shared that they have spent almost two years conducting training and making forward progress on discrimination, harassment, and retaliation free workplace. "That's been empowering to staff. We see staff gain an understanding that yes, you do have rights."

Other Civil Rights work includes using an equitable policy development process to update the County's bilingual pay policy. OEICE has also been focused on understanding workload impacts, impacts to promotion, access to training and development opportunities. More recently, the Office has allocated staff to programmatic areas like housing, land use, and transportation.

Measuring, Reporting, & Accountability: Progress made in the councils and committees are delivered to the full board in a quarterly and annual report demonstrating policies changed and including metrics of change. "The Board is the accountable body for adopting proposed organizational policy changes" (*Adoption of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan*, 2021).

Implementation: OEICE has twelve staff with a $2 million budget, including five community engagement team staff, a policy team, and procurement, finance, scheduling, admin support. Staffing consumes most of the OEICE budget. The Office also contracts some facilitation and training services. OEICE staff emphasized the importance of having administrative support and the importance of having dedicated personnel focused on implementing policies within the County's many departments.

Challenges & Opportunities: OEICE staff shared some of the challenges in identifying where inequities exist within the organization due to a lack of key performance indicators (KPI's) and regular reporting outcomes at the departmental level to the Board.

Another major challenge that staff shared is the concern of maintaining the commitment of leadership over time, especially as Civil Rights and equity work becomes more challenging to implement.

Examples of Programs, Projects, Plans, and Processes:

Budget Equity Tool: OEICE led the development of the County's Budget Equity Tool, which is a set of equity-focused strategies and questions used to drive informed and targeted decision-making about the allocation of government resources. The tool is being used as a procedural step within the County's larger budgeting process, including identifying how to stick together a balanced budget in the context of the County's existing budget deficit. It includes five strategy areas and associating questions and is organized into three parts, including Civil Rights compliance (Part A), addressing data, community engagement, quality of services, and targeted resources (Part B), and process evaluation questions (Part C) (*Washington County Budget Equity Tool FY22-23*, 2022).

The types of questions posed, and the respective strategy areas include:
- Ensuring equitable access to programs and services: accommodations, translation, and interpretation
  - What dollar amount [and percent] of your budget is your Org Unit allocating for accommodations, translation, and interpretation?
  - What number [and percent] of your staff receive a bilingual pay differential?
- Using data to make decisions that advance equity
  - What data on client utilization, quality, and outcomes did you use to develop your proposed budget?
  - What data disaggregated by race/ethnicity/language did you consider?
  - What racial inequities exist in access, quality, and outcomes of your services?
  - How did consideration of this data drive your allocation of resources to address identified racial equity gaps in access, quality, and outcomes?
- Engaging impacted communities in decision-making

- How did you engage Black, Indigenous, Latina/o/x, Asian and Pacific Islander, and immigrant and refugee communities in the development of your proposed budget?
  - What did the communities most impacted by inequities tell you about their priorities and unmet needs?
  - How did you incorporate that community feedback into your proposed budget?
- Improving equity in the quality of services: culturally specific services
  - How are you investing in culturally specific services?
  - Which community-based organizations are you contracting with for the design/delivery of culturally specific services?
  - What dollar amount [and percentage] of your Org Unit's budget is allocated for culturally specific services?
- Targeting resources
  - How will you target resources in your proposed budget to improve outcomes for Black, Indigenous, Latina/o/x, Asian and Pacific Islander, and immigrant and refugee communities experiencing inequities in access and quality of services?
- Process Evaluation
  - What did your Department/Org Unit accomplish by using this tool and what did you learn about equity in the budget process?

The Tool's results are presented to the Board annually and include any noteworthy investments that departments identified. Staff explained that by tracking annual budgetary allocations and decisions, the expectation is that the County will see an increased investment in equity over time. OIECE staff shared that "the budget equity tool is really powerful. It gives us the opportunity to highlight what different departments are doing. There's been quite a bit of learning from this."

Appendix V: Inventory of C/CAG Programs, Projects, and Plans

C/CAG leads, partners, supports, funds, and obtains funding for a wide variety of programs, projects, plans, and policy work in San Mateo County. As a first step in assessing the extent of the agency's equity integrations, C/CAG staff provided an initial inventory of (combined) over thirty different plans, projects, programs, and funding calls that have been completed, are in progress, or are expected/planned to commence soon. The inventory below includes a brief description, funding source, and associated program area. Program areas include transportation, land use, housing, stormwater, climate action and adaptation, and water and energy conservation. These efforts and initiatives are funded by a wide range of local, regional, state, and private funding sources.

Name	Description	Period	Funding	Program Area
San Mateo County Energy Watch (SMCEW)	Assists local governments, schools, non-profits, and small businesses in accessing energy efficiency programs, trade professionals, and financing opportunities. Provides coordination, outreach, referrals, and educational resources to help community members pursue energy efficiency projects. Partners include PG&E and C/CAG. Administered by the County of San Mateo Office of Sustainability.	Ongoing	Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)	Energy/ Climate
RICAPS	Provides planning, policy, and implementation support to cities on climate action. Implemented by the County Office of Sustainability (OOS), in partnership with Peninsula Clean Energy, and in collaboration with sustainability staff across the county.	Ongoing	PG&E, PCE, C/CAG	Climate
Laundry to Landscape Proposal (LLP)	Supports property owners in transitioning their turf lawns to water efficient landscaping. C/CAG is actively seeking funding to convert the pilot program into a longer-term four-year program. The proposal would waive building permits to run laundry water to landscaping. The intent is to train low-income plumbers, landscapers, gardeners, and other tradespeople to conduct 10 installations to earn certification and be listed as trained	One-time pilot, proposed for four-year program	TBD	Water

	installers on the project website. The process will build content for educational websites and help educate homeowners and local building departments.		
Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Program	A collaborative effort between C/CAG and the San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) to encourage and enable school children to walk and bicycle to school. Implements projects and activities that improve the health, wellbeing, and safety of children, resulting in less traffic congestion and vehicle emissions caused by school-related travel.	Ongoing, annual call for projects	Sustainable Transportation Planning (STP) Grants / San Mateo County Measure M ($10 Vehicle Registration Fee)	Transportation
Congestion Management Plan (CMP)	Identifies strategies to respond to future transportation needs, develops procedures to alleviate and control congestion, and promotes countywide solutions.	Recurring, updated every two years	Transportation Fund. C/CAG administers the fund. Members pay into the fund.	Transportation
County Transportation Plan (CTP)	Articulates long range transportation planning goals and objectives to promote consistency and compatibility among all transportation plans and programs within the county. Supports an integrated system-wide approach to transportation planning that considers the countywide transportation network.	Long-range plan, periodically updated (2001, 2017, 2026)	STP Grants (MTC)	Transportation
Lifeline Transportation Program (LTP)	Funds projects that result in improved mobility for low-income residents, address transportation gaps identified in welfare-to-work, Community Based Transportation Plans (CBTPs), and other documented strategies. Guidelines are set by MTC. Program administration delegated to countywide congestion management agencies (CMA's).	Ongoing, with the grant making process taking place every three years	State and federal funding (State Transit Assistance (STA), Prop 1B, and Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC 5307)	Transportation
Community	Addresses mobility needs of residents of	CBTP	Metropolitan	Transportation

		reports are utilized over time in identifying eligible projects for LTP funding	Transportation Commission (MTC), Lifeline Transportation Program, Measure M, and STA fund the activities in the CBTPs	
[Based Transportation Plan (CBTP)](#)	Equity Priority Communities and other disadvantaged populations. Countywide Transportation Authorities (CTAs) lead the planning process, working collaboratively with community members, CBOs, cities, transit operators, and other stakeholders to identify mobility challenges and prioritize transportation solutions. San Mateo County's completed CBTPs include East Palo Alto, Bayshore (Daly City), North Central San Mateo, and South San Francisco/ San Bruno.			
[One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) Program](#)	Provides a policy and programming framework for investing federal transportation funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to projects and programs that improve safety, spur economic development, and help the Bay Area meet climate change and air quality improvement goals. OBAG Cycle 3 emphasizes investment in Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and Equity Priority Communities (EPC's) and allows for a broad range of project types to support Plan Bay Area 2050 goals. PDAs are locally and voluntarily identified locations within existing communities that present infill development opportunities, and are easily accessible to transit, jobs, shopping, and services (Association of Bay Area Governments & Metropolitan Transportation Commission, 2024).	Ongoing with renewed grant cycles every 3-4 years. OBAG Cycle 3 provides funding for projects from 2023 to 2026	STP Grants/ Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program	Transportation
[State Transportation Improvement Program](#)	Administers a multi-year capital improvement program of transportation projects on and off the State Highway System.[26]	Updated at least every four years	State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)	Transportation
[Planned Dumbarton Corridor Pre-](#)	Explores design options to connect the Dumbarton Bridge to Hwy 101 while improving local traffic and additional benefits to East	One-time	SM County Transportation Authority	Transportation

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[26] Capital Improvement Program (CIP) lays out the financing, location, and timing for capital improvement projects over several years. A capital improvement project—also called a capital project— is typically a permanent structural change to a property or asset to prolong its life, increase its value, or enhance its capabilities. Some examples of capital projects include building a new library… or repaving streets (OpenGov, 2023).

[Project Initiation Documents (PID) Study](#)	Palo Alto and Belle Haven, including improved connections, recreation, and green infrastructure.[27]		with local funds from San Mateo County Economic Development Association
[VMT/GHG Model Mitigation Program](#)	Will develop a menu of mitigations for reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from infrastructure or development projects in San Mateo County. Caltrans requires that mitigations address and provide resources to low-income communities.	One-time	CalTrans with a local match of C/CAG General Funds	Transportation
[San Mateo County Express Lanes](#)	Planned and constructed 44 miles of new express lanes on US 101 to reduce congestion, increase person throughput, and improve travel time reliability. The management and operation of the Express Lanes is governed by the San Mateo County Express Lanes Joint Powers Authority. Due to equity concerns, the JPA sponsored a study that led to the creation of a Community Transportation Benefits Program. The first phase of the program provides funding for a $100 transit credit on a Clipper card (annual benefit) or a $100 Toll Credit on a transponder (one-time benefit) to qualifying individuals who choose to enroll.	Ongoing	Federal, State, Local funding, and Private Loans	Transportation
[US 101/ SR 92 Short-Term Interchange Improvements Project](#)	Conducted a Preliminary Planning Study (PPS) to address congestion and safety concerns in the vicinity of the US 101 / SR 92 interchange. This project carries forward the proposed short-term area improvements, which focus on addressing existing deficiencies.	One-time	State and Local Funds	Transportation
[Smart Corridor Program](#)	Launched a countywide traffic management program that installs Intelligent Transportation Systems (e.g., CCTV cameras, vehicle	Ongoing	California Transportation	Transportation

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[27] Green Infrastructure refers to measures that use plant or soil systems, permeable surfaces or substrates, stormwater harvest and reuse, or landscaping to store, infiltrate, or evapotranspirate stormwater and reduce flows to sewer systems or to surface waters. Green infrastructure elements can be woven into a community at several scales, including a row of trees along a major city street, constructing a wetland near a residential housing complex, or protecting large open natural spaces (United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 2023, October 2).

	detection, dynamic signs, and fiber network) to help manage day to day traffic and non-recurring incidents. A non-recurring incident is a traffic incident, such as a vehicle crash, vehicle breakdown, or other special event, that causes a reduction in highway capacity and/or an increase in demand. Traffic incidents are a significant cause of congestion delays that motorists encounter every day on roadways (Amer et al., 2015).		Commission (CTC) Local Partnership Program (LPP), State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Measure M
Measure M Vehicle License Fee	Imposed an annual fee of ten dollars on motor vehicles registered in San Mateo County for transportation-related traffic congestion and water pollution mitigation programs. 50% of net proceeds are allocated to cities/the county for local streets and roads and 50% are used for countywide transportation programs, such as transit operations, regional traffic congestion management, and Safe Routes to School.	Ongoing, over 25 years	Measure M	Transportation
Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) County Program Manager Fund	Funds projects to reduce air pollution from motor vehicles. 40% of funds generated within San Mateo County are allocated to C/CAG to distribute funds to qualifying projects that reduce air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and traffic congestion by improving transportation options. Historically, C/CAG has funded Commute.org (Countywide Voluntary Trip Reduction Program), BART shuttle program, carpool programs, bikes on buses, quick build bike/pedestrian projects, arterial management projects, and the Smart Corridor.	Ongoing	Air District (40% of $4 vehicle registration fee)	Transportation
Local Roadway Safety Plan (LRSP)	Will identify existing conditions of the county's roadway network and provide a framework for systematic safety improvements in the areas of engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency response. Twelve jurisdictions in the county currently have a completed or in-progress LRSP. The Countywide LRSP will focus on developing a LRSP for the remaining nine jurisdictions, but the plan will also incorporate and highlight completed/in-progress LRSPs.	Recurring, LRSPs are generally updated at least every five years	STP Planning (MTC)	Transportation

21 Elements	Helps support cities in adopting pro housing policies - particularly related to affordable housing. Actively working on Housing Element updates, including finding housing opportunity sites.	Ongoing	Funded by C/CAG and County Department of Housing	Housing
Shuttle Program	Funds local shuttle services to address first/last mile connections to regional transit, gaps in bus service to employment centers, and other mobility needs of transit dependent communities.	Ongoing	CRP	Transportation
Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Policy	Provides guidelines for analyzing the impacts of land use decisions made by local jurisdictions and is implemented during the environmental review process. Requires that the TDM plan include strategies that can fully reduce the demand for new peak-hour trips. Provides a menu of TDM measures and corresponding trip reduction credits.	Ongoing		Transportation
Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) Model	Provides a new countywide, web, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS)-based tool to be able to evaluate transportation effects of land use projects under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) by C/CAG member agencies.[28]	Ongoing		Housing/ Transportation
Legislative	Facilitates C/CAG's state advocacy program, including taking positions on bills and funding requests, and federal funding requests.	Ongoing	General Fund	Legislative Advocacy
Regional Land Use - Transportation Integration	Provides a long-range strategic plan (Plan Bay Area 2050) that combines the efforts of the Regional Transportation Plan and the Sustainable Communities Strategy. Focuses on developing equitable strategies to address the interrelated elements of housing, economy, transportation, and environment. C/CAG staff routinely tracks progress and provides input every four years to MTC and member agencies throughout the update process.	Ongoing	STP Planning (MTC)	Housing
Comprehensive Bike Ped	Provides a framework to help CCAG improve walking and biking conditions in the county.	Updated roughly		Active Transportation

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[28] The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires public agencies to consider the environmental consequences of their discretionary actions to inform government decisionmakers and the public about potential environmental effects and prevent significant, avoidable environmental damage (Governor's Office of Planning and Research, n.d.).

Plan (2021)	Recommends connected network of biking/walking facilities based on best practices and equity areas.	every 10 years (2000, 2011, 2021)		
TDA Article 3	F funds bike and ped projects bi-annually. C/CAG's Bike and Ped Advisory Committee (BPAC) reviews and scores applications and makes project recommendations.	Ongoing, every two years	Local Transp. Fund (LTF), State Transit Assistance Fund (STA)	Active Transportation
Shared Micro Mobility	Investigates the feasibility of a micromobility program, compiles research and best practices, and develops program guidelines for local jurisdictions.[29]	One-time		Active Transportation
Regional Water Board MRP Compliance	Supports local cities in submitting mandated water compliance reports to the state.	Ongoing, annually		
Sustainable Streets Master Plan	Provides a multi-phase comprehensive master plan of sustainable streets opportunities at the countywide scale seeking opportunities to integrate "complete streets" with green stormwater infrastructure to support water quality, active transportation, and climate adaptation goals	One-time, likely updated in the future	Caltrans and local match from C/CAG's AB1546 funds	Stormwater/ transportation
Safe Routes to School (SRTS) and Green Streets Infrastructure Pilot Program Call for Projects	Funds municipalities to build Integrated SRTS/Green Infrastructure Program projects.	One-time pilot program	Measure M (congestion management) and AB 1546 (regional stormwater)	Stormwater/ transportation
Countywide Stormwater Resource Plan	Provided a countywide watershed-based green infrastructure opportunity analysis at multiple scales (site, street, regional) for all applicable public parcels and roadways;	One-time, likely updated in the future	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) fees and	Stormwater

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[29] Micromobility refers to any small, low-speed, human- or electric-powered transportation device, including bicycles, scooters, electric-assist bicycles, electric scooters (e-scooters), and other small, lightweight, wheeled conveyances (Price et al., Spring, 2021).

			Measure M Regional Stormwater
[Regional-Scale Stormwater Management in San Mateo County Project](#)	Assessed countywide multi-benefit regional-scale stormwater capture opportunities and funded five projects provided funding and financing, as well as credit trading feasibility analyses.	One-time	State General Fund Grant through Mullin's office	Stormwater
[Flows To Bay website and social media](#)	Conducts public outreach for the Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program	Ongoing	NDPES fees	Stormwater
[Rain Barrel and Rain Garden Rebate program](#)	Provides rain barrel/cistern rebates up to $200 per barrel with matching funds from local BAWSCA agencies and $300 incentive for rain gardens installed with a qualifying lawn replacement project under BAWSCA's Lawn Be Gone! program.	Ongoing	NPDES fees and matching funds from participating Bay Area Water Supply & Conservation Agencies (BAWSCA) / local jurisdictions	Stormwater

Appendix VI: Equity Action Plan Matrix

Category 1: Internal Equity (Organization and Administration)

Goal 1: Create and maintain internal equity reporting, feedback, coordination, and collaboration structures.

Outcome: The Equity Framework and Action Plan's intent, commitments, and progress is communicated and in a constant state of implementation, with learning and adaptation along the way.

Actions	Performance Measures	Reporting	Timeline	Resource Needs & Implementation Status
1. Establish an Equity Lead among C/CAG staff to help implement the Framework and Action Plan and support the use of new equity approaches and tools.	Equity Lead established	Annual Report The equity lead staff person reports to the Executive Director, shares progress, and helps facilitate action at periodic all-staff meetings.	FY 2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
2. Convene and support the C/CAG Board of Directors (BOD) Equity Framework Ad Hoc Committee as needed to assist with Framework and Action Plan implementation.		Ad Hoc Committee provides progress updates to the board on actions reported in annual report.	Ongoing as needed	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
3. Conduct an annual evaluation of gaps, progress, lessons learned, and next steps	Percent of Equity Framework Actions by Status	Annual report shared with Committees and	FY 2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing*

towards meeting Equity Framework goals, outcomes, and actions, including project and program-level goals and actions.	compared to Implementation Timeline.	Board of Directors (BOD) and posted on C/CAG's Equity Framework webpage, including updates to community equity indicators over time.		Status:
4. Provide an Equity Framework overview and equity evaluation update to the C/CAG BOD and Committees and at least one additional relevant public meeting each year.	Annual Equity Framework overview and update completed and disseminated publicly	Annual Report timed to the budget process, with follow up public meetings.	FY2023-25	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
5. Send C/CAG's Equity Framework and Action Plan to all elected officials in San Mateo County, with C/CAG's annual equity evaluation and progress updates.	Upon completion	Reported annually in C/CAG Equity Report	FY 2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
6. Obtain additional sources of funding to help implement the Equity Framework and Action Plan and provide staff and leadership with needed support.	Additional new staff, funding, and resources secured to implement the Action Plan	Provide update in annual Equity Report to C/CAG Board	FY 2023-24 & Ongoing	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:

Goal 2: Continually strengthen and maintain internal organizational understanding, resources, and capacity.

Outcomes:
- An increase in the number of staff, board, and committee members that are representative of EFA demographics and/or geographies.
- Staff, board, and committee members have a greater depth of credentials and/or lived experience relevant to equity advancement work.

Actions	Performance Measures	Reporting	Timeline	Resource Needs & Implementation Status
7. Consider adding equity focused seats to the Congestion Management & Environmental Quality (CMEQ) and Resource Management and Climate Protection (RMCP) committees.	Discussion on Board addition of "equity seats" completed, and a seat should be added if requested by Board	Staff report and Annual Report	FY 2023-24 & FY 2024-2025	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
8. Incorporate equity criteria in recruitment and selection of new candidates for open public committee member seats and encourage greater EFA geographic and demographic representation for appointed seats.	Equity criteria integrated into recruitment document and recruitment staff report to Board	Staff reports to Board via staff report and in Committee & BOD Annual Report	FY 2023-24 Upon recruitments	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
9. Conduct outreach to equity-focused CBOs to fill vacant public member seats for applicable	Use CBO distribution list for recruitments	Staff reports and Annual report	FY 2023-24 Ongoing	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:

committees (CMEQ RMCP).[30]				
10. Explore developing a stipend policy for public members on C/CAG committees to increase the quantity and diversity of applicants for open committee seats.	Assessment completed; future policy drafted	Annual Report	Conduct study on best practices for stipends for public members. TBD	Resource Needs: *Staffing & Stipend costs* Status:
11. Work with the County on all C/CAG HR actions to identify opportunities to leverage their equity-oriented Human Resources Action Plan, staffing, and other HR resources.	Ongoing opportunity discussions with County HR	Provide updates, if any, to C/CAG Board	FY 2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
12. To the extent possible, incorporate equity expertise as a desired qualification in job descriptions for all relevant staff positions.	Percentage of successful recruitments in which equity expertise was included as a desired skill	Executive Director reports to C/CAG Board on new hires and includes information on equity credentials, if any	FY2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
13. Ensure that the Equity Framework is included in all onboarding materials for C/CAG Staff, Board members, new staff, and Committee members.	Number of C/CAG, board members, new staff, and committee members provided Equity Framework in onboarding materials	Percent reported in annual Equity Report	FY 2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:

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[30] Congestion Management and Environmental Quality Committee (CMEQ) & the Resource Management and Climate Protection Committee (RMCP)

14. All staff participate in an agency-wide diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) training on an annual basis and at least one equity-focused professional development activity of their choice every two years, including County of San Mateo equity trainings available to C/CAG staff.	Percentage of staff participating in equity-focused trainings/professional development activities	Staff report learnings from trainings at all-staff meetings and percentage reported in annual Equity Report	FY 2023-24 & FY 2024-25	Resource Needs: Estimated *$10,000 -$25,000 per year for equity training/professional development* Status:
15. Provide the Board of Directors (BOD) with an annual presentation from an expert in the field on emerging equity themes relevant to C/CAG's activities.	Annual presentation completed	Annual Report	FY 2024-25	Resource Needs: Estimated costs of $5,000-$10,000 and *Staffing* Status:

Goal 3: Promote economic justice and shared prosperity through procurement opportunities.

Outcome: C/CAG creates more procurement opportunities for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE).

Actions	Performance Measures	Reporting	Timeline	Resource Needs & Implementation Status
16. Explore C/CAG's needs and goals around inclusive procurement and identify next steps and tools to achieve those goals.	Assessment of needs, goals, and interventions completed. Increased percentage of contracts that include DBE requirements	Update in annual Equity Report	TBD	Resource Needs: Estimated *Consultant costs of $75,000* Status:
17. Join a procurement platform so SBE and DBE businesses can sign up to receive notification of C/CAG procurement opportunities.	Identify and join 1-2 most applicable platforms. Addition of RFP question asking how proposers (especially DBEs) heard about procurement opportunity.	Report outcomes in Annual Report, based on RFP question responses	FY 2024-25	Resource Needs: *Staffing; a potential cost to join a platform.* Status:

Category 2: C/CAG-Led Plans, Projects, Policies, Programs, and Grant Funding Opportunities

Goal 4: Infuse a pro-equity approach in C/CAG-led or sponsored projects, programs, plans, and grant funding opportunities to maximize benefits for Equity Focus Area (EFA) geographies and demographics.

Outcomes:

- Equity is integrated in the design of projects, programs, funding calls, and other actions and initiatives.
- All applicable planning efforts, projects, and programs assess equity needs, impacts, and benefits, and convey results to the public, C/CAG committees & board.
- C/CAG staff, board, and committees have a clear understanding of how and which programs, projects, plans, and grant funded programs and projects are advancing equity.
- C/CAG-led or sponsored programs, projects, plans, and funding improves outcomes in EFA communities.

Actions	Performance Measures	Reporting	Timeline	Resource Needs & Implementation Status
18. Use C/CAG's Equity Evaluation Review (EER) Tool to assist staff and decision makers in considering a range of equity considerations in the early stages of project, plan, program, and funding call design.	Percentage of projects, plans, programs, and funding calls for which staff used the EET.	EET use details presented in staff reports to BOD, for discussion and iteration	FY 2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
19. Include an appropriately-scaled equity analysis, assessing benefits and burdens of proposed actions, in all projects, programs, and planning efforts.	Percentage of projects, plans, programs, and planning efforts that included a completed equity analysis	Staff reports and Annual Report.	FY 2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:

20. Provide the board and committees with a new Equity Section within staff reports to communicate benefits, burdens, and recommendations at the project, plan, program, and funding approval stage.	Section added to relevant staff reports and presented to committees and board	All Staff reports	FY2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
21. Establish reporting metrics relevant to C/CAG grant programs to evaluate and report on progress towards achieving equitable outcomes, including the percentage of funds benefiting EFA geographies and/or demographics.	Equity reporting metrics and evaluation process for C/CAG grants established	Staff reports and Annual Report	FY2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
22. Evaluate C/CAG grantmaking spending and consider changes to project selection criteria, including the number of points that are allocated for equity outcomes and equitable engagement, & the degree to which a local match for projects located in EFAs is required.	Grantmaking spending evaluation process reviewed and updated at specific intervals Percentage of call for projects funding allocated within EFAs	Staff reports and Annual Reports	FY 2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:

23. Leverage outside funding whenever possible to assist EFAs with technical assistance for applicable state and regional funding applications.	Number of EFAs benefitting from C/CAG technical assistance	Reported in annual Equity Report	FY 2023-24 & Ongoing	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
24. Center equity and climate resiliency in C/CAG's upcoming strategic planning.	Comprehensive equity and climate resiliency language inclusion in Strategic Plan RFP & document	Report to C/CAG Board in annual Equity Report	FY 2023-24 Upon launch of Strategic Planning	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:

Category 3: EFA Community Engagement, Empowerment, & Accountability

Goal 5: Build and maintain trust, transparency, and lasting relationships with EFA-serving CBOs.

Outcomes:

- Create an organized and centralized repository of CBO and community leader contacts for partnership, information sharing, and other engagement opportunities.
- Decision makers, EFA stakeholders, and the broader community are informed of progress towards meeting Equity Framework goals.
- EFA-serving CBOs are resourced to support C/CAG in reaching impacted and underserved populations and to provide valuable input and perspective.
- C/CAG projects, programs, planning efforts, and funding calls are increasingly effective at meaningfully engaging EFA-serving CBOs and other equity stakeholders.

Actions	Performance Measures	Reporting	Timeline	Resource Needs & Implementation Status
25. Design equitable public participation plans for relevant C/CAG plans and projects, including: a. An emphasis on sufficient funding for outreach to areas of greatest need. b. Use of equitable communication and public participation strategies tailored towards EFA audiences.	Qualitative evaluation of EFA participation in C/CAG projects, programs, plans, and policies; communications platforms and strategies metrics	Report to Board via Equity Section in Staff reports and Annual Report	FY 2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
26. Incorporate adequate budget to support participation and input from EFA-serving CBOs and community leaders in C/CAG projects, grant	Percentage of total outreach dollars budgeted for EFA serving CBO engagement	Staff reports and Annual Report	FY 2023-24	Resource Needs: *Estimated at $30,000 per major project. (Grant applications would*

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proposals, and planning efforts (Obtain feedback on the methodology and funding amount from CBOs)				*include funding for CBO participation)* Status:
27. Establish and maintain a database of Equity Focus Area (EFA) contacts that C/CAG staff can use for communications and community engagement purposes.	Establishment of EFA CBO database and annual update	Report Establishment and updates in the annual Equity Report	FY 2023-24	Resource Needs: *Estimated $5k-$10k each year* Status:
28. Use C/CAG's EFA database to inform equity-focused CBOs of nonprofit funding opportunities within calls for projects, opportunities to serve on C/CAG Committees, and other opportunities to improve equitable public participation.	Percentage of EFA CBOs in the C/CAG database engaged in projects, programs, plans, and policies. Perceptions of access to C/CAG's programs and opportunities or actual engagement via annual CBO survey	Annual Report	FY 2023-24 & Ongoing	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status
29. Complete a study on improving language accessibility in C/CAG's materials and website with plan for necessary updates.	Completion of study and plan; identify vendors and budget to help translate communications materials	Report to C/CAG Board on completion of study and plan	TBD	Resource Needs: *Estimated $30,000 for consultant review* Status:

Goal 6: Use data and mapping to increase understanding and awareness of existing disparities and opportunities to advance equity.

Outcome: C/CAG staff leverage data, mapping, and analytical tools that are improved over time.

Actions	Performance Measures	Reporting	Timeline	Resource Needs & Implementation Status
30. Establish and update an online equity dashboard, storyboard, and/or other data reporting and visualization strategies to share progress on data and performance measures relevant to C/CAG's Equity Framework, program areas, and activities.	Establishment of a public-facing dashboard	Annual Report	FY 2024-25	Resource Needs: Estimated *$20,000 to establish online visual* Status:
31. Update Equity Focus Area maps and associated demographic indicators such as race, income, and seniors 75 years and over) for each applicable C/CAG program area within five years and every five years thereafter based on available data, changing demographics and community conditions, EFA input, and other considerations.	Completion of five-year update	Annual Report	TBD Every five years in alignment with census data updates.	Resource Needs: *Estimated $200,000 to update mapping.* Status:

32. Work with other county-level agencies to coordinate mapping and data use, including opportunities to create unified Equity Focus Area maps.	Completion of unified EFA maps with other participating agencies	Report any updates to C/CAG Board, Committees	TBD	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:

Category 4: Countywide Leadership, Coalition Building, and Advocacy

Goal 7: Provide countywide leadership.

Outcome: Through actions within the agency and as part of its role as a regional convener, C/CAG is increasingly seen as a leader in equity advancement efforts in San Mateo County.

Actions	Performance Measures	Reporting	Timeline	Resource Needs & Implementation Status
33. Include equity in annual legislative priorities and actively support legislation that helps advance Equity Framework goals.	Inclusion of "Equity Section" in Legislative Priorities document.	Annual Report	FY 2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
34. Help SMC cities and the County meet equity standards in new state/federal requirements, including obtaining HCD's Prohousing Designation, by sharing equity best practices and other strategies.	Percentage of cities + County that hold HCD Pro Housing designation	Reported annually in C/CAG Equity Report	FY 2024-25	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
35. Encourage regional and state standards that support C/CAG Equity Framework Goals, including within grants funding guidelines.	Percentage of external sources of funding that include equity as a criterion	Reported annually in C/CAG Equity Report	FY 2023-24	Resource Needs: *Staffing* Status:
36. Support the next generation of equity focused planners and engineers, including exploring options for funding relevant scholarships for students in the region.	Established and funded C/CAG equity-oriented scholarship annually	Reported to C/CAG Board when established and reported annually in C/CAG Equity Report. Post info on C/CAG website.	FY 2024-25	Resource Needs: *Estimated at $5,000 to $10,000 and Staffing* Status:

Appendix VII: Equity Planning Toolkit

Introduction:

The following tool is composed of a series of questions intended to assist C/CAG staff in applying an equity lens when crafting the approach to programs, plans, projects, and funding calls.[31] The questions borrow from the Seattle Public Utilities [Equity Planning Toolkit](#). The tool is a starting point for C/CAG staff to begin using in their work but should be amended over time to meet the unique needs of the agency and its diverse functions.

How to use the tool:

C/CAG staff will use the tool to apply to early planning for projects, programs, plans, and other activities. By sharing the responses to the Review Tool with other staff for feedback, the expectation is that:

- equity process and outcomes for each individual activity will be improved,
- staff unfamiliar with using the tool and applying an equity lens to their work gain greater proficiency, and
- greater consistency in the application of equity principles and approaches across program areas will be achieved.

At the end of each planning, program, project, and funding call process, C/CAG staff report back on equity outcomes, lessons learned, and proposed changes to the design of the project, program, plan, funding call, or similar activity moving forward.

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[31] An equity lens is a critical thinking approach to undoing racial and economic disparities by evaluating burdens, benefits, and outcomes to underserved communities (City of San Antonio, 2021).

Respond the following prompts with members of your team:

Project name:
Lead staff:
Additional staff involved with responding to the prompts below:
Geography of activity:

Activity relevance:
- Does this activity (plan, program, policy, or funding call) have any relevance for equity advancement and/or Equity Focus Area (EFA) geographies or demographics?
  - ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Will this activity create greater disparities in the community it affects?
  - ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered no to the above questions, skip the rest of this tool. If you responded yes to either question, continue responding to the following questions.

Equity Review Questions and Considerations:

Staff should use the questions below as guidance in thinking through various considerations and factors. Not all questions will be applicable in all circumstances.

1. **How will you set, or encourage/require grantees to set, the project direction and scope to address historic & existing inequities and avoid further harm to Equity Focus Area (EFA) geographies and demographics?**
   a. What underserved and impacted communities and demographics may be affected (positively or negatively) by this activity?
   b. How might this activity affect (positively or negatively) racial or socioeconomic disparities?
   c. What are the goals and intended outcomes for this activity?
   d. How might the goals/outcomes be created or amended to further advance equity in San Mateo County?
   e. Has there been consultation/communication with leaders/representatives from these communities in crafting the direction/scope to the proposed plan, project, program, or funding call? How has input from leaders/representatives from these communities been incorporated in this activity?

2. **How will you or grantees obtain a greater understanding of disparities related to the activity? How will benefits & burdens to EFA geographies & populations be identified?**
   a. Will you evaluate (or encourage/require grantees to evaluate) whether disparities have occurred related to the activity and/or are occurring related to the activity?

b. Will the activity include or encourage analysis of the costs and benefits for EFA geographies and demographics? If so, what will/might the analysis consist of?

a. How will you include or encourage the identification, consideration, and selection of strategies to advance equity and avoid/minimize burdens?

b. What evaluation measures/metrics will you include or encourage to identify the degree to which disparities exist and/or be ameliorated?

c. What information, including qualitative and quantitative data, is needed to understand the costs and benefits of this activity?

3. **How can the community engagement plan/approach for this activity be structured to help lead to equitable participation?**
   a. What are the key milestones and decision-making points in the process?
   b. What EFA geographies or demographics will require more-targeted outreach or engagement to ensure equitable participation and outcomes?
   c. How will you ensure or encourage greater participation and influence of under-represented, historically impacted, and/or currently underserved communities and demographics?
      i. How will you or grantees provide the necessary information to participants to ensure they can provide informed and meaningful input?
      ii. How will you or grantees ensure that your outreach and engagement efforts are culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate?
      iii. Are there opportunities to leverage the outreach and engagement efforts of other current or planned C/CAG or partner agency initiatives?
      iv. What resource needs do you have to ensure meaningful engagement? If administering a funding call, what requirements or incentives will you include to help ensure sufficient resourcing for equitable engagement?
      v. Was there funding included or encouraged in the activity for CBO and community partnerships and participation? If so, to what degree and for what purposes and steps in the process?
   d. When and how will you or grantees keep stakeholders and participants in the process informed of key milestones and decision-making points?
   e. How will input received over the process be used? How will equity stakeholders be informed of how input received influenced the activity or decision?
   f. How will you or grantees measure the degree to which you were able to achieve equitable participation in the process?
   g. How will activity outcomes be reported back to equity stakeholders?

4. **What steps will be taken or encouraged to ensure shared prosperity, including equitable procurement and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) participation?**

5. **As a result of answering the previous questions, identify next-step tasks and considerations. Be sure to incorporate them into your timeline and work plan.**