

**2024 SENATE BILL 1 ~~COMPETITIVE~~ PROGRAMS  
TRANSPORTATION EQUITY SUPPLEMENT**

Adopted August XX, 2024





On January 27, 2021, the California Transportation Commission (Commission) adopted its [Racial Equity Statement](#), which states:

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

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

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

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

- Work to build and strengthen relationships with community-based organizations, non-profits, advocacy organizations, and other equity experts and practitioners;
- Empower the Commission's Equity Advisory Roundtable and future related efforts to help inform transportation decision making;
- Strengthen understanding of community transportation needs and challenges through the forthcoming Community Listening Sessions;
- Ensure equity, public health, and robust public engagement via our planning and programming guidelines;
- Provide expanded opportunities for Commissioner and staff training related to diversity, equity, and inclusion; and
- Feature equity topics and elevate diverse perspectives in public meetings of the Commission.

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



The Commission developed this supplement in collaboration with members from the interagency Equity Advisory Committee and stakeholders as a resource for applicant agencies preparing project nominations for Senate Bill (SB) 1 Programs (Local Partnership Program, Solutions for Congested Corridors Program, and Trade Corridor Enhancement Program). The Commission endeavors to ensure program policies progress by embedding equity considerations in the project development, nomination, and selection process.

This supplement provides information on key statistics, benefits, and communication strategies that may be used during project development to yield more equitable outcomes. An applicant agency may use the information and strategies presented here to explain how a project incorporates advances transportation equity by responding to key questions in the project application.

- Was How did the agency engage communities in the project study area to identify their needs? Did the agency directly engage outreach conducted with disadvantaged or historically impacted and marginalized groups, including Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, displaced or unhoused persons, disabled persons, and low-income individuals or communities, within the project study area? How was their feedback incorporated into the project?
- How did the agency develop the project scope? Can the agency demonstrate its partnership engagement and collaboration with the disadvantaged or historically impacted and marginalized communities in the project study area?
- How did the agency assess if the project would cause any disparate impacts on the basis of race, color, socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, or national origin? If disparate impacts were identified, did the agency consider and incorporate alternate options as applicable additional strategies that would have a less discriminatory considered and included in the project?

Equitable practices should be considered through a project's lifecycle (planning, development, and delivery). This can include structural and procedural equity strategies like the examples provided in this supplement. Structural strategies reform planning practices to create inclusive, affordable, and resource-efficient transportation infrastructure, whereas procedural strategies provide special benefits to disadvantaged groups to create fairness in process. Mindful and meaningful inclusion and engagement are critical to successfully advance equity in transportation planning as well as project development and delivery.

Further, this document Agencies may use this supplement to incorporate support future efforts to equity equitable corridor improvement strategies and advance projects with more equitable outcomes in their comprehensive multimodal corridor plans, as required in the Solutions for Congested Corridors Program.



[To learn more about racial equity best practices, visit the California Strategic Growth Council's Racial Equity Resource Hub \(key focus hubs to consider: Creating Your Roadmap, Growing Awareness, Taking Action\).](#)

## **A. Example Indicators Used to Identify Disadvantaged or Historically Impacted and Marginalized Groups**

Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 39711, disadvantaged communities are identified based on geographic, socioeconomic, public health, and environmental hazard criteria. Disadvantaged communities may include, either of the following:

- (1) Areas disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative public health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation.
- (2) Areas with concentrations of people that are of low income, high unemployment, low levels of homeownership, high rent burden, sensitive populations, or low levels of educational attainment.

Recognizing localized differences [helps](#) to identify [disadvantaged or](#) historically impacted and marginalized groups. Some example indicators are included for reference below.

- **Median Household Income** – Is less than 80 percent of the statewide median based on the most current Census Tract (ID 140) level data. Communities with a population less than 15,000 may use data at the Census Block Group (ID 150) level. Unincorporated communities may use data at the Census Place (ID 160) level. Data is available at the [United States Census Bureau website](#).
- **CalEnviroScreen** – An area identified as among the most disadvantaged 25 percent in the state according to the California Environmental Protection Agency and based on the most recent version of the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool (CalEnviroScreen) scores (score must be greater than or equal to 39.34). The mapping tool can be found [here](#) and the list can be found under “[SB 535 List of Disadvantaged Communities](#)”.
- **Healthy Places Index** – Developed by the Public Health Alliance of Southern California, the Healthy Places Index includes a composite score for each census tract in the state. The higher the score, the healthier the community conditions based on 25 community characteristics. The scores are then converted to a percentile to compare it to other tracts in the state. Within the Healthy Places Index, a census tract must be in the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile or less to qualify as a disadvantaged community. The live map and the direct data can both be found on the [California Healthy Places Index website](#).



- **Extreme Heat Edition** – This is a tool developed by the Public Health Alliance in partnership with the UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation. The Healthy Places Index Extreme Heat Edition provides datasets on projected heat exposure for California, place-based indicators measuring community conditions and sensitive populations. It also provides a list of resources and funding opportunities that can be used to address extreme heat. More information about the tool and a live map can both be found on the [UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation website](#). This tool is a complement to the [California Heat Assessment Tool](#) funded by the California Natural Resources Agency as part of the state’s Fourth Climate Change Assessment.
- **Native American Tribal Lands** – Projects located within Federally Recognized Tribal Lands (typically within the boundaries of a Reservation or Rancheria).
- **Regional Definition** – Such as “environmental justice communities,” “equity priority communities,” or “communities of concern.” The regional definition must have been developed through a robust public outreach process that includes the input of community stakeholders and must be stratified based on severity. A regional definition of disadvantaged communities must be adopted as part of a regular four-year cycle adoption of a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) or Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) by a metropolitan planning organization or regional transportation planning agency per obligations with Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964. A regional definition of disadvantaged communities must be used for the region’s broader planning purposes rather than only to apply for SB 1 **Competitive** Program funding.
- **Caltrans Transportation Equity Index (EQI)** – A spatial screening tool designed to identify transportation-based priority populations at the Census block level. The Equity Index integrates transportation and socioeconomic indicators into three screens that all reflect low-income status and tribal land status: 1) transportation-based priority populations, 2) traffic exposure, and 3) access to destinations. The live map and detailed use instructions can be accessed on the California Department of Transportation’s website.
- **Other** – If an applicant agency cannot utilize the aforementioned indicators, an applicant believes that the project benefits a disadvantaged community, but the project does not meet the aforementioned criteria due to a lack of accessible information, it may submit another means of qualifying for consideration other documentation to demonstrate the project benefits a disadvantaged community. Suggested alternatives include:
  - Census data that represents an assessment of the project study area. The agency must submit a quantitative assessment (e.g.: a survey) to demonstrate that the population contained within the project study area boundary **includes**:
    - A median household income that is at or below 80 percent of the state median household income.



- A significant number of households at risk of displacement due to cost-of-living burden or project siting.
- A significant number of households receiving food stamps or public assistance.
- A significant population of seniors and elderly residents.
- A significant population of individuals with disabilities or mobility impaired residents.
- A significant population of single-parent households.
- A significant population of immigrant or foreign-born households.
- A significant population of veterans.
- A significant number of car-less households.
- A significant number of public transit users (including mobility impaired users).
- Unemployment measurements.
- Nearby amenities including shopping centers, health centers, schools, social services, and employment sites, or lack thereof.
- Traffic safety indicators including collisions and injuries sustained.
- Community derived safety information and indicators such as high-risk zones for pedestrians and cyclists, illegal dumping hot-spots, or school-safety priority zones
- Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities as defined by the United States Department of Transportation and identified using this mapping tool.

## B. Example Equity Benefits

The following are ways to achieve transportation equity: Advancing equity in transportation results in a more diverse, affordable, accessible, and efficient transportation system for everyone. Equitable transportation projects can:

1. Increase access to social, educational, and economic opportunities and amenities, including (but not limited to) shopping centers, health centers, schools, community organizations, museums, social services, transit centers, and employment sites.
2. Reduce travel times, congestion, and pollution.
3. Improve access to ~~and safety of~~ active transportation and provide alternatives to automotive options.
- 3.4. Improve safety of active transportation and non-motorized modes of travel in the community and the corridor.
- 4.5. Enhance opportunities to increase physical activity ~~through~~ by encouraging use of active transportation.
6. Enhance opportunities to encourage use of zero-emission modes of travel.
- 5.7. Increase access to accessible facilities and infrastructure with first-and-last-mile connectivity to accommodate all types of travelers, especially mobility impaired users.

## C. Example Community Inclusion and Engagement Strategies





Below are four examples of community engagement strategies that may be completed during the project delivery process to ensure equity. Meaningful community engagement requires sustained interactions and consistent, transparent communications to build trust through every step of the project planning process—from first thought to last action. This is especially important in disadvantaged and historically impacted and marginalized communities. These are some examples of potential strategies:

1. Identify, ~~reach out to~~contact, engage, and include the perspectives of disadvantaged or historically impacted and marginalized groups. Public outreach should include traditional forms of communication, including phone calls, mailers, flyers, and in-person events as many marginalized groups often lack access to computers and the Internet. Provide resources in multiple languages and formats based on community needs (e.g., non-native English speakers, or persons living with visual or auditory impairments, etc.).
- 2-6. Develop relationships with community-based leaders, groups, or organizations, such as environmental justice groups, religious or spiritual leaders, well-known individual advocates and community organizers, local pedestrian and bike advocacy groups, public school leadership, local transit riders, long-distance commuters (super commuters), linguistically or physically isolated groups, seniors and elders, and youth individuals and groups. This can also include community members who may face ~~extreme societal~~ barriers including formerly incarcerated; undocumented persons; individuals with disabilities; displaced and houseless unhoused persons; and lesbian, gay, transgender, and queer communities. ~~Demonstrate how community perspectives were included or integrated into the project.~~
3. Collaborate with community-based groups and organizations to establish a local or regional project study area organization or committee (e.g., planning, oversight, advisory, steering, etc.) with decision-making authority to empower community leaders and solicit quality community input and feedback through the project planning process.
4. Demonstrate how community-identified and community-driven perspectives were solicited and included or integrated into the project purpose and need or scope.
5. Survey and collect information on non-motorized travel demands and disadvantaged groups' unmet mobility needs. Use this information to develop transportation improvements to address these needs.
- 2-6. Develop relationships and conduct meaningful engagement with tribal governments and incorporate their feedback into the project planning process.
- 3-7. Collaborate, fund, or contract with local organizations to support community engagement and project completion steps efforts in the project planning process.
- 4-8. Prioritize community identified high-need areas, such as those identified through robust community engagement.
- 5-9. Prioritize contracting strategies that benefit disadvantaged or historically impacted and marginalized communities such as the communities identified in this supplement.
10. Ensure stability in neighborhoods and communities through the successful implementation of short-term and long-term anti-displacement strategies and policies consistent with federal and state law.



## D. Example Anti-Displacement Resources

1. [California Department of Housing and Community Development Final 2020 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice](#) – Report detailing impediments to fair housing and recommendations for anti-displacement strategies.
2. [Urban Displacement Project](#) – Comprehensive website with reports, data mapping, and resources for California local, regional, and state entities.
3. [Framework for Evaluating Anti-Displacement Policies](#) – Criteria that can be utilized to better understand the ways that certain policy tools can be used to address the needs of vulnerable groups impacted by displacement.
4. [Greening Without Gentrification](#) – Ongoing study that identifies and classifies parks-related anti-displacement strategies.
5. [Transit-Oriented Development Without Displacement: Strategies to Help Pacoima Businesses Thrive](#) – Research study focused on commercial anti-displacement strategies that can support a predominantly immigrant-owned small business community.