



Director's Office of
Equity & Tribal Affairs (ETA)

PROGRESS REPORT: Race and Equity Action Plan (REAP) 2022-2024



Disclaimer: Commitment to Legal Compliance

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is committed to advancing accessibility and inclusion in all its programs, projects, and operations, as outlined in the 2022-2024 Race and Equity Action Plan (REAP) Progress Report. This report highlights efforts to improve transportation outcomes for all Californians, with a focus on addressing socioeconomic, environmental, and geographic disparities in underserved communities. All initiatives described herein are implemented in full compliance with applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to California Proposition 209, the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the California Privacy Rights Act (CPRA), the Information Practices Act (IPA), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), federal funding regulations such as 23 CFR Part 710 and 49 CFR Part 26, as well as state civil service rules and regulations.

Caltrans' equity initiatives prioritize race-neutral, data-driven, and inclusive approaches, using tools like the Transportation Equity Index (EQI) to identify and address disparities based on socioeconomic, environmental, and accessibility needs. Programs targeting underserved communities, including the Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO) Academy and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) initiatives, are designed to provide opportunities to all eligible individuals and businesses, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or other protected characteristics, in accordance with state and federal anti-discrimination laws. Where race-conscious measures are referenced, they are supported by documented evidence of disparities and are narrowly tailored to meet legal requirements, as required by federal DBE regulations. Data collection efforts, such as those involving Street Story or the EQI, adhere to strict privacy and security standards with appropriate safeguards to protect personal information and ensure transparency. Environmental initiatives, such as stormwater management, adhere to the requirements under the Clean Water Act. Training programs, including mandatory Implicit Bias Training, are designed to align with FEHA and focus on fostering an inclusive workplace without infringing on employee rights.

The outcomes described in this report are based on ongoing evaluations and may evolve as Caltrans refines its processes. Any claims of community benefits are supported by data-driven assessments, and Caltrans remains committed to transparency and accountability in its equity efforts. This report is not intended to confer preferential treatment or discriminate against any individual or group based on protected characteristics.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	03
MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR	04
INTRODUCTION	05
ACCOMPLISHMENTS	07
LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES FROM CALTRANS' EFFORTS TO ADVANCE EQUITY	30
CONCLUSION	33



Figure 1: Rancho Bernardo Transit Station along I-15 in District 11.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR

As we present the Progress Report for the 2022-2024 Race and Equity Action Plan (REAP, we reflect on the meaningful progress we have made and the continued journey ahead. Advancing equity is not a one-time effort, but a sustained commitment to improvements and transformation across all levels of our organization.

This report is a reflection and a roadmap. It reflects the impactful work that is happening across our Districts and divisions to make our transportation system safe, more accessible and more inclusive for all Californians. Progress reports such as this serve an important purpose. They allow us to reflect, pivot, elevate strategies, celebrate our success and identify where we must refine our approach to achieve even greater impact.

While much has been accomplished, the work continues. Together, we remain committed in our pursuit of equity. While much has been accomplished, the work continues. Together, we remain in pursuit of equity paving the way for lasting, continuous, and positive change that puts people and communities first.



Figure 2: ETA staff photo in September 2025.

INTRODUCTION



Figure 3: Los Angeles (LA) southbound LA Metro light rail train at the intersection of Pacific Coast Highway and Long Beach Boulevard in District 7.

Since 2020, Caltrans has strived to reduce disparities while improving outcomes for all. As a people first organization, Caltrans is committed to improving the quality of life for all Californians and therefore must contend with the systemic inequities and disparities created by the state transportation system. Caltrans' vital role as California's transportation department demands bold and decisive actions to eliminate barriers, enhance quality of life, and provide an accessible and safe transportation network for all Californians, however they travel.

In 2022, Caltrans published the department's second [Race and Equity Action Plan](#) (REAP). Developed to support implementation of the 2020-2024 Caltrans Strategic Plan, the 2022 REAP included 83 actions organized under the following four commitments:



People - We will create a workforce at all levels representing the communities we serve by improving our recruitment, hiring, contracting, and leadership development policies and practices.



Programs & Projects - We will meaningfully engage communities most impacted by structural racism in creating and implementing the programs and projects that affect their daily lives by creating more transparent, inclusive, ongoing consultation and collaboration processes. We will achieve our equity commitments through an engagement process where everyone is treated with dignity and justice. We will reform our programs, policies, and procedures to avoid harm to frontline and vulnerable communities based on this engagement. We will prioritize projects that improve access and provide meaningful benefits to underserved communities.



Partnerships - By leveraging our transportation investments, we also commit to increasing pathways to opportunity for minority-owned and disadvantaged business enterprises and for individuals who face systemic barriers to employment.



Planet - We commit to combating the climate crisis and its disproportionate impact on the frontline and vulnerable communities — such as Black and Indigenous peoples, communities of color, the people experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, and youth. We will change how we plan, design, build, and maintain our transportation investments to create a more resilient system that equitably distributes the benefits and burdens to Californians' current and future generations.

Implementation Status of 2022 REAP Actions

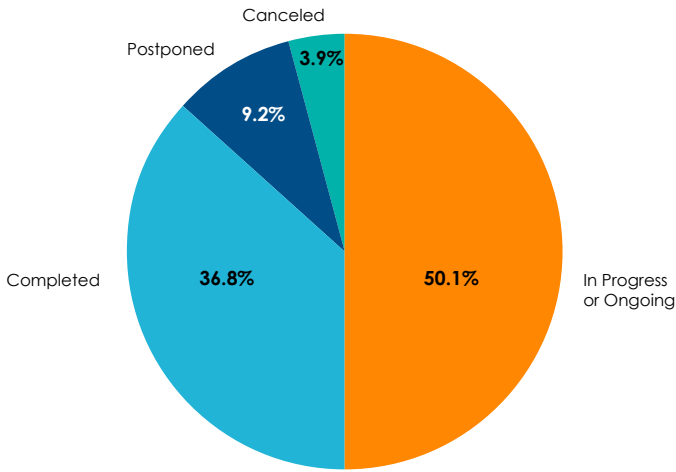


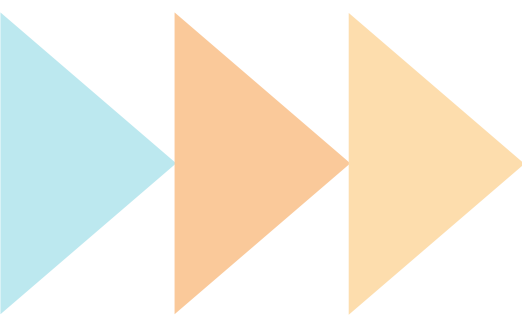
Figure 4: This pie chart depicts progress on 2022 REAP actions. Over 75% of the actions were completed or are in progress.

The purpose of this Progress Report is to highlight the progress Caltrans made between 2022 and 2024 to deliver on these four commitments. Although this report is not exhaustive of all the work Caltrans has done since 2022, it serves as a testament to Caltrans' dedication to create a more inclusive and resilient transportation network that benefits all communities, particularly communities most burdened and least served by the state highway system.

Organized under the four “P’s” outlined above, the 25 key accomplishments in this report highlight work led by both Caltrans' districts and Headquarters divisions and programs. The accomplishments include updating recruitment, hiring, and leadership practices. These efforts foster a workforce that reflects California's diversity, creating a broader pipeline for leadership and growth within the department.

The accomplishments also showcase how Caltrans is prioritizing inclusive community engagement and building trust with historically marginalized communities. Through increased transparency, ongoing consultations, and active listening, Caltrans is working to address community needs. This includes designing projects and implementing programs that support climate resilience and protect vulnerable communities. Additionally, Caltrans is strengthening partnerships with small businesses, especially disadvantaged enterprises, increasing economic opportunities for those facing systemic barriers.

As we look to the future, our commitment to building an equitable and accessible transportation system that serves all Californians remains unwavering, improving lives and connecting communities through transportation.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PEOPLE

The following accomplishments highlight how Caltrans has worked to create a workforce that represents California through improved recruitment, training, hiring, contracting, and leadership development policies and practices.

Headquarters Accomplishments

Equal Employment Opportunity Program (EEO): Strengthening Organizational Culture through Inclusive Training

EEO has led a department-wide effort to foster a more just and inclusive culture at Caltrans by securing Executive Board support for mandatory Implicit Bias Training. Now required for all staff every two years, this training is part of a broader strategy to develop a culturally responsive workforce that effectively serves California's diverse communities. In alignment with Caltrans' ongoing commitment to equity and inclusion, this training encourages continuous learning and growth. It reflects real-time needs by equipping staff with practical tools to recognize and address bias in decision-making. This not only supports fair and informed decisions, but also helps improve community outcomes across the transportation sector. The training contributes to building a high-performing workforce and supports the goals of the Caltrans Strategic Plan: increasing efficiency, enhancing workplace culture, and promoting inclusive service delivery. By consistently implementing bias-awareness training and best practices, EEO strengthens Caltrans' values of integrity, engagement, innovation, accountability, and respect. Ultimately, this work helps build a sustainable culture of inclusion and continuous improvement throughout the department.

Office of Civil Rights: Expanding Job Training and Career Pathways

The [Heavy Equipment Operator \(HEO\) Academy](#) is an initiative by the Office of Civil Rights, designed to equip individuals with essential skills for high-demand careers in the construction industry, while promoting equitable access to opportunities. With the construction industry facing a critical



At Caltrans, equity begins with people and is strengthened through data. By combining inclusive practices with measurable tools like bias-mitigation training and workforce dashboards, we're turning equity from an aspiration into an everyday practice.

- *Shalinee Hunter*

Assistant Director of Equal Employment Opportunity Program (EEO)



Figure 5: HEO Academy students during a Tribal training in February 2023.

workforce shortage, the HEO Academy helps address this gap and provides equitable pathways for individuals from diverse backgrounds to enter the workforce. Beyond training, the HEO Academy offers supportive services such as childcare, housing assistance, transportation, personal protection equipment (PPE), and food support. These resources ensure that participants are fully supported, enabling them to focus on their training and future career success. Since its inception in 2023, the HEO Academy has successfully completed two sessions, with a third currently underway.

The academy achieved a 30% participation rate by women and engaged six different ethnic groups. Additionally, the academy boasts a 100% graduation rate for its first two sessions, and 65% of graduates secured employment within six months. This success aligns with the On-the-Job Training/ Supportive Services (OJT/SS) Program, which emphasizes diversity and equity in the transportation construction workforce. It specifically supports disadvantaged individuals, including women, minorities, and previously incarcerated persons.

In November 2024, the program expanded statewide, with nine academies scheduled to operate over the next three years.

30%

HEO Academy participation rate by women.

100%

HEO Academy rate for first two sessions.

65%

HEO Academy graduates secure employment within six months.

PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

The following accomplishments showcase how Caltrans is working to reform our procedures and processes to meaningfully engage communities, especially those most impacted or least served by the state transportation system. This includes developing new tools and leveraging existing resources to better engage with communities, understand community needs and challenges, and prioritize resources.

District Accomplishments

District 1 (D1): Data Driven Engagement and Tribal Collaboration for Meaningful Impact

District 1 in Northern California is setting a standard for inclusive, community-centered projects by prioritizing underserved communities, leveraging tools like [Street Story](#), and fostering strong collaborations with local Tribes. The integration of income demographic questions into Street Story has enhanced the District's ability to assess equity impacts and prioritize projects in low-income areas. Since its launch in July 2022, this online platform has empowered residents to report transportation issues, ensuring those most affected have a direct voice in planning solutions.

Since 2003, District 1 has hosted in-person Tribal Summits, bringing together nearly every Tribe from the District's four counties. During the COVID Pandemic, Tribal Summits continued with virtual meetings, in-person summits started again in 2022. Between 2022 and 2024, six summits provided a crucial space for Tribal leaders to engage with transportation planners, strengthening relationships and guiding culturally sensitive infrastructure that respects Tribal heritage and values.

District 1 continues to embed equity into every transportation initiative through data-driven decision-making, accessible engagement tools, and Tribal inclusion.

District 2 (D2): Empowering Community Impact with the Planning Viewer GIS Tool

District 2 prioritizes data-driven decision-making in transportation planning to ensure underserved



At Caltrans, we are advancing programs and projects that center people and data equally. By using tools like the Planning Viewer, we can better understand community needs and ensure that transportation decisions reflect those most impacted. This approach helps guide investments in safety, access, and mobility—building a more connected and inclusive California for all.

- David Moore
District 2 Director



Community engagement and collaboration serves as the core of Caltrans project planning and delivery. This report highlights our commitment to improving transportation outcomes for all.

- Gloria Roberts
District 7 Director

The Planning Viewer has been used

4,669

times to shape inclusive projects.



Figure 6: Tom Hicks presenting during a recruitment event in District 1 with Hoopa Valley and Yurok Tribes.



Figure 7: Buffered bike lanes and crosswalks at the intersection of State Route 33 and N. Ventura Avenue in Oak View, CA (District 7).

communities are not overlooked. A key achievement is the Planning Viewer, a Geographic Information System (GIS) tool launched in 2022 to support community impact assessments. Since its introduction, it has been used over 4,669 times, playing a crucial role in shaping more inclusive projects.

The Planning Viewer consolidates data from sources like the Caltrans Active Transportation (CAT) Plan and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Inventory (BPI). It helps planners visualize underserved populations and assess multimodal access to essential services. The tool guides infrastructure improvements by identifying mobility disparities such as pedestrian and bicycle enhancements in low-income areas. District 2 continues to advance inclusive and responsive transportation projects through data-driven planning.

District 3 (D3): Strengthening Tribal Relationships and Fostering Inclusion

District 3 is advancing partnerships with Native American Tribes to ensure their voices are heard in transportation planning processes. District Native American Liaisons (DNAL) and District Native American Coordinators (DNAC) host quarterly meetings with both federally and non-federally recognized Tribes and have strengthened relationships between Caltrans and Tribal communities. The quarterly meetings have facilitated early consultation in project planning, particularly during the pre-project initiation document and environmental scoping phases. Since 2022, at least 11 meetings were held with Tribes to review project plans, provide input on cultural sensitivity, and address concerns related to safety, infrastructure, and environmental impact. This collaboration led to traffic-calming measures and new traffic signals along State Route 45 to enhance safety for Tribal communities.

District 3 also supported Tribes in navigating the funding application process, resulting in grant awards for the Colusa Indian Community Council (CICC) and the Mechoopda Tribe for sustainable transportation planning. Additionally, more than 20 cultural sensitivity training sessions have been conducted for Caltrans construction teams, contractors, and maintenance crews since 2022.

These trainings raise awareness of Tribal concerns and are set to become standard practice for future projects.

Further strengthening partnerships, District 3 collaborated with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California and the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation to install signage at key sites like the Donner Summit Overlook. These signs highlight Tribal presence and support language preservation through translations of local animals, plants, and landmarks. With a focus on continuous improvement, D3 remains committed to fostering an inclusive transportation planning process that respects and integrates Tribal perspectives.

District 5 (D5): Advancing Equity in Infrastructure and Community Engagement

District 5 created three new branches: the Complete Streets, Climate Change, and Equity Branch; the Community Engagement Branch; and the Investment Planning Branch. These new branches have provided a focused approach to inclusive infrastructure, climate resilience, and community-led planning—all central to promoting equity in transportation and development.

Through these branches, District 5 secured over \$7.3 million in grant funding for vital community projects such as the Salinas Valley Safe Routes to Schools Plan and the Watsonville-Santa Cruz Intercity Transit Study. These funds are helping improve access to active transportation and safe routes for vulnerable populations, particularly in areas that rely on walking and biking. Notably, the Lompoc and Oceano Complete Streets Projects will provide much-needed infrastructure to support active transportation users in disadvantaged communities. The District remains committed to developing a safe, accessible, and multimodal transportation system that serves everyone—especially those in disadvantaged areas.

The Community Engagement Branch has worked tirelessly to ensure that marginalized voices are not just heard, but integrated into the decision-making process, especially regarding transportation planning and project development. Through a comprehensive suite of outreach efforts—including surveys, public meetings, workshops, and pop-up events—the branch has fostered meaningful



Figure 8: D5 staff tabling for Caltrans Employee Affinity Groups at their Diversity Day event in October 2024.



Figure 9: D6 staff and community members conducting a walking assessment in 2024.

participation across diverse communities. In Morro Bay, for example, Tribal partners were invited early in the scoping phase of a pavement project—well before formal consultation would typically occur—allowing for sidewalk additions based on their input. In Chualar, the team insisted on a dedicated local meeting for a Main Street project. The event, hosted by the County Supervisor in Spanish at a neighborhood school, centered community language and leadership, with English translation provided for non-Spanish speakers. Overall, the branch has strengthened collaboration by partnering with local agencies and coordinating with community-based organizations, building lasting trust and ensuring transportation solutions are responsive to the unique needs of all residents. These collective efforts exemplify the branch's dedication to equity and community-centered decision-making, setting a strong foundation for continued progress.

Additionally, the Complete Streets, Climate Change, and Equity Branch focused on improving resilience in communities disproportionately affected by climate change. This branch ensured that climate adaptation strategies are embedded in transportation infrastructure projects, so vulnerable areas are better equipped to handle the impacts of environmental shifts, including key evacuation routes.

With the establishment of these new branches and strategic investments, District 5 remains dedicated to advancing equity in all its operations, ensuring that underserved communities are not only included in the conversation but empowered through thoughtful, community-centered development processes.

District 6 (D6): Community-Led Transportation That Reflects Local Voices

District 6 is addressing the unique transportation needs of underserved communities by ensuring infrastructure reflects the lived experiences of those who rely on it. A key effort is the Walk Assessment Initiative, which takes a grassroots approach to transportation planning and supports Caltrans Strategic Management Plan's goals of enhancing and connecting the multimodal transportation network as well as advancing equity and livability.



Launched in 2021, District 6 staff and local partners moved beyond traditional data collection to walk alongside residents in their communities, discussing their needs for safer, more accessible streets. What began as a small effort has expanded to over 15 walk assessments in cities like Avenal, Wasco, and Exeter, directly influencing the design of pedestrian crossings, bike lanes, and transit access for communities dependent on active transportation.

The initiative's impact has been widely recognized, including a feature at the 2024 San Joaquin Valley Conference as a model for community-driven change. Media coverage, such as ABC23 Bakersfield's report on the Taft Walk Assessment, has further highlighted the importance of active transportation and shifted public attitudes toward these projects. Walk assessments provide D6 the opportunity for early engagement with local partners and community members to help better understand the needs for all users of the transportation system, resulting in programmed projects that better reflect community ideas and needs; thus, fostering a stronger sense of community ownership, as residents were active participants in shaping their transportation future.

Beyond mobility, District 6 promotes economic equity through its Small Business Program, supporting small, disadvantaged, and veteran-owned businesses with outreach, training, and mentorship. The Construction Mentor Protégé Program (CMPP) pairs emerging businesses with established firms to expand opportunities in state contracts. While challenges remain in engaging businesses across the District's vast geography and economic landscape, these efforts contribute to long-term economic empowerment. By prioritizing community-led solutions and economic inclusion, District 6 is building a more equitable future for all.

District 8 (D8): Strengthening Tribal Relationships and Supporting Inclusion in Rural Native American Communities

District 8 is advancing engagement with Tribes in bi-monthly, quarterly and annual meetings (in-person or virtual). These meetings are facilitated by the District Native American Liaison (DNAL) in coordination with Program Project Management (PPM) and other staff to ensure the meetings



Figure 10: Participants at Caltrans' Sit With Us: Strengthening Community Engagement in Sacramento on February 04, 2025.

15+

Walk assessments have influenced the design of pedestrian crossings, bike lanes, and transit access for communities dependent on active transportation.



Figure 11: Community members riding on State Route 15 during an open street event in District 11 in 2023.

provide meaningful coordination and engagement. The intent is to provide early and frequent engagement to communicate and collaborate with Tribal Partners to promptly address any emerging issues or concerns. The meetings resulted in gathering data for a pre-project initiation document to provide information on the project area. This collaboration has led to strengthened relationships and improved communication between the District and the Tribes for projects on Tribal lands and on State routes. This collaboration led to a repair of a Tribal road connecting to State Route 371 that was previously damaged by a storm.

D8 supported Tribes in navigating the contract/agreement process on Tribal-led projects. Those efforts advocated for a streamlined process that includes collaboration with Tribal partners. The process culminated in moving forward with a Tribal-led Beautification Project with Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Indians. These collaboration and coordination efforts build and strengthen partnerships that contribute to implementing transportation solutions that equitably serve all Californians and implement the Department's mission, vision, and goals.

District 11 (D11): Equity Through Engagement - A Story of Change

District 11 is advancing equity by fostering deep community engagement and collaboration. Over the past two years, the District has actively partnered with community-based organizations (CBOs) and local residents to address challenges and implement solutions that improve quality of life in underserved areas. A key highlight was the Community Connectors Conference, co-hosted with Mundo Gardens and Smart Growth America, which focused on environmental justice, anti-displacement strategies, and equitable practices. Additionally, District 11's work within the San Diego Promise Zone has strengthened community partnerships through town halls, school events, and clean-ups, culminating in initiatives like the Bike, Walk & Beautify Freeway Closure Event, which encouraged active transportation and artistic expression.

One of the District's most impactful projects is the

Reconnecting Communities: Highways to Boulevards initiative (Mat Matayuum), a \$25 million effort to address the damage caused by I-805 freeway construction in Southeast San Diego and National City. The project integrates community healing, historical research, and environmental justice to reconnect neighborhoods and give residents a voice in the process. Complementing this, the \$800,000 Imperial Avenue Cultural Mural Corridor Project will install 13 murals celebrating local history and community pride, by advancing SR-15 underpass into a vibrant mural space funded by the Clean California Initiative.

Furthering its commitment to sustainability, District 11 collaborated with South Bay Sustainable Communities to establish a Sustainability Center at Southwest Middle School, featuring a community garden, composting facilities, and native pollinator patches. Internally, the District has prioritized equity training through initiatives like the Superstaff Field Trips, where over 100 Caltrans staff visited neighborhoods like Logan Heights and Barrio Logan for firsthand insights into community needs. Despite challenges in coordinating diverse stakeholders and measuring long-term impact, District 11 remains committed to advancing equity by aligning transportation projects with community needs, fostering resilience, and ensuring an inclusive future.

Headquarters Accomplishments

Director’s Office of Equity and Tribal Affairs: Leading Innovation to Increase Access and Reduce Barriers

In Spring of 2023, the [Interagency Transportation Equity Advisory Committee \(EAC\)](#) was launched as a joint effort between the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), the California Transportation Commission (CTC), and Caltrans. The EAC is intended to elevate diverse and historically marginalized voices to advise the three agencies on how to achieve meaningful outcomes in transportation equity, environmental justice, and equitable economic opportunities. During its inaugural year, the EAC developed and adopted a charter to govern the committee and elected a Chair and Vice Chair, creating a foundation for the long-term sustainability of the committee. Since its establishment, EAC members have provided input on funding program guidelines, reviewed funding program applications, and advised on statewide policies and plans. Notable contributions included recommendations to implement the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI 2.0), strengthening the accessibility and complete streets components of the State and Local Transportation Needs Assessment (SB 1121), and updating the Senate Bill 1 program guidelines, with a primary focus on the



Figure 12: Interagency Equity Advisory Committee members pictured in Sacramento in March of 2025.

community engagement requirements. The EAC has been instrumental in providing advisory support and fundamentally impacts the way the agencies operationalize the principles of equity in their work.

In Spring of 2024, Caltrans launched Version 1.0 of the [Transportation Equity Index \(EQI\)](#). The EQI is a spatial screening tool that uses transportation and socioeconomic indicators to identify transportation-based priority populations at the Census block level. The EQI offers an innovative approach for measuring the benefits and burdens associated with our state's transportation system at a granular level. The EQI was designed with three screens: transportation-based priority populations, traffic exposure, and access to destinations. A robust internal and external engagement process informed the development of the tool, and additional outreach and training has continued since its release.

With the official launch of EQI, Caltrans began the next phase of work to integrate the tool into Caltrans policies and processes. One of the significant applications of the tool has included the use of EQI metrics in the Caltrans System Investment Strategy (CSIS). CSIS is an investment framework that uses a data-and performance-driven approach

to guide project evaluation, assessment, and prioritization for discretionary funding. CSIS measures a project's potential for accessibility to jobs and other destinations such as shopping, medical, and services. In addition, a project's potential to place new or exacerbate existing burdens on underserved communities are also assessed using the EQI tool. As the use of EQI grows, the tool will better position Caltrans to increase access to destinations through the state's transportation system, reduce burdens associated with the transportation system, and build equity into all facets of planning and project development.

Advancing Community Engagement Office: Developing Tools and Guidance for Meaningful Engagement

The Advancing Community Engagement (ACE) Office, formerly within the Division of Transportation Planning (DOTP) and now within the Director's Office of Equity & Tribal Affairs, leads efforts to advance equity by developing tools, processes, and guidance documents to assist staff across the department with designing and conducting meaningful community engagement.

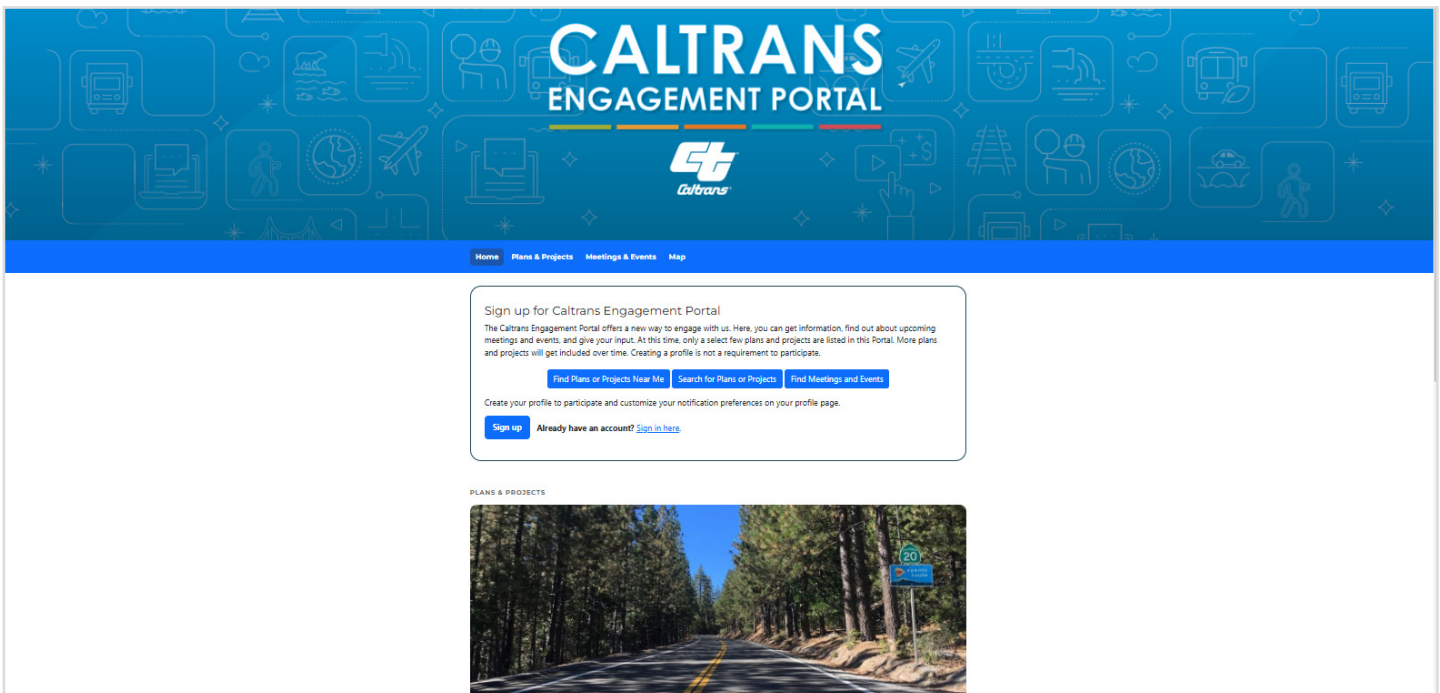


Figure 13: The Caltrans Engagement Portal interface as of September 2025.

ACE launched the [Caltrans Engagement Portal](#) as a pilot in 2024. This portal is intended to improve community engagement and provide a dynamic virtual platform to interact with and respond to the public. This initiative represents a shift toward a more inclusive and collaborative process that ensures transportation plans and projects reflect the needs of communities. This web-based platform provides a central repository for engagement activities across plans, projects, and project phases, enhancing internal knowledge of past engagement efforts and improving staff awareness of community needs. The pilot included 18 plans and projects to ensure the platform can adapt to diverse needs. Adoption and statewide use of the Caltrans Engagement Portal is anticipated in mid to late 2025.

In 2023, the development of a Statewide Community Engagement Playbook, was started to guide inclusive engagement practices across the department. The draft Statewide Playbook establishes clear principles for communication and guides staff on how to include diverse voices in transportation decisions. To support this work and the integration of the Caltrans Engagement Portal across Caltrans, District Community Engagement Coordinators were hired in all 12 districts in 2024. The District Community Engagement Coordinators assist district staff in developing public engagement plans for various types of projects and support the district with continuity in community engagement.

ACE is strengthening the department's engagement practices, ensuring transportation decisions reflect the needs of all Californians, particularly those historically excluded from the decision-making process.

Division of Design: Advancing Equity through Inclusive Transportation Design and Policy

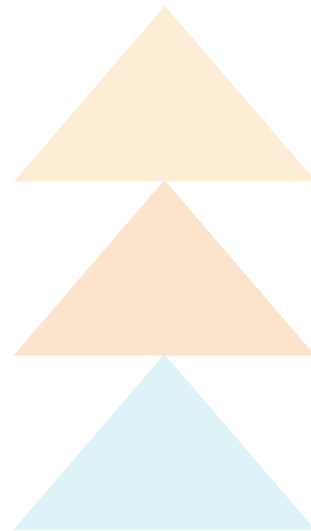
The Division of Design, including the Offices of Complete Streets Design and Landscape Architecture, is integrating equity into California's transportation planning and project execution. The Division's focus is on creating a transportation system that is inclusive, accessible, and sustainable, prioritizing the needs of historically underserved communities. Key milestones include statewide complete streets training, which elevated

18

Plans and projects were included in the Caltrans Engagement Portal Pilot to adapt to diverse needs.

12

District Community Engagement Coordinators were hired in 2024 to support the integration of the Caltrans Engagement Portal.



1,500+

Caltrans staff engaged at the Safety, Equity, and Climate Action Roadshow in 2022.

22%

of Caltrans forms updated to reflect more inclusive language and content.



equity-based decision-making and emphasized community context and multimodal transportation. The training introduced updates to design guidance, such as the Complete Streets Contextual Design Guidance and Main Street, California Guide, to ensure transportation networks are comfortable and connected for all users.

The Division also works to educate staff across the department. In 2024, the Division provided a training on Nighttime Visibility for Complete Streets to address pedestrian fatalities, especially at night, during the third annual Caltrans Safety Awareness Week. In 2022, the Division hosted the Safety, Equity, and Climate Action Roadshow, engaging over 1,500 Caltrans staff and promoting innovative solutions for more equitable Main Streets.

Additionally, ongoing initiatives, such as the development of a Strategic Risk Assessment for Complete Streets, will continue to ensure that equity is central to future transportation project decisions. The Division of Design is continually exploring ways to improve data collection, apply the EQI in decisions, and build on successful cross-disciplinary training. These efforts will ensure that transportation systems in California are inclusive and reflect the needs of all populations, particularly those historically underserved.

Business Forms Management: Designing with Inclusion and Access in Mind

The Forms Management Program at Caltrans plays a role in ensuring that all forms and processes are inclusive, accessible, and non-discriminatory, particularly for underserved communities. This initiative focuses on removing barriers related to technology access, language, and personal demographics—ensuring that no individual is excluded from Caltrans services. Each form is carefully reviewed to use inclusive language and promote diversity, with an emphasis on collecting demographic information in a respectful and unbiased manner.

In the past year, around 22% of Caltrans forms have been updated to reflect more inclusive language and content. The program has also expanded its commitment to accessibility by offering forms electronically for those with internet access, and hard copies for those without. Customer service

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

is available in multiple languages, further supporting Caltrans' goal of reaching all Californians, regardless of their background or technological capabilities.

Forms are designed to be user-friendly, ensuring equitable access to essential services. This responsive approach is shaped by feedback from Caltrans staff, the public, and other state agencies, allowing

the program to continually evolve and adapt to community needs. By focusing on equity in the design process, the program continues to strengthen Caltrans' ability to serve all residents fairly. The Form Management is committed to building on these successes, further embedding accessibility and inclusivity into Caltrans operations.



Figure 14: A busy day on the Pacific Coast Highway in the City of Long Beach in District 7.

PARTNERSHIPS

These accomplishments showcase the different ways Caltrans is leveraging resources and increasing pathways to opportunity for minority-owned and disadvantaged business enterprises and for individuals who face systemic barriers to employment.

District Accomplishments

District 4 (D4): Community Well-Being Economic Access at the Equity Empowerment Health Expo (2024)

In 2024, District 4 hosted its first-ever Equity & Economic Empowerment Health Expo, an event aimed at addressing systemic inequities and bridging socioeconomic gaps. The Expo brought together over 300 participants, including Caltrans staff, community leaders, and local organizations, to share knowledge and act toward long-term resilience. With more than 30 resource stations, the event provided guidance on health, financial literacy, economic empowerment, and LGBTQIA+ education.

Over 200 individuals received free wellness assessments, including blood pressure checks and mental health consultations. Ten panel discussions highlighted strategies to dismantle systemic barriers and promote inclusive solutions, while 150+ networking opportunities fostered partnerships among attendees. The Expo reflected Caltrans' Strategic Plan Values of collaboration, equity, people-first, and innovation.

The impact of the Expo was significant, offering attendees access to vital health services and guidance on financial and career empowerment. It also provided a platform for conversations that encouraged the development of inclusive policies. The event demonstrated District 4's commitment to addressing immediate needs while promoting long-term, equity-centered solutions.

District 7 (D7): Mapping Partnerships for Equity and Impact

District 7 developed the "[CBO Interactive Map](#)" to identify Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and further promote engagement with



Caltrans remains steadfast in advancing equity through strong partnerships that empower minority-owned and disadvantaged businesses. These collaborations drive innovation, foster community-based solutions to transportation challenges, and ensure that California's infrastructure reflects the diversity, strength, and needs of the communities we serve.

- David DeLuz

Deputy Director of Office of Civil Rights (OCR)



Figure 15: The flyer used for the D4's Equity & Economic Prosperity Health Expo on February 06, 2024.





Figure 16: The flyer used for the D9’s Native American Heritage Month Presentation Day on November 16, 2022.

the community. These organizations play a vital role in connecting the District with underserved communities and the CBO Interactive Map serves as a resource to inform how we can move projects forward together.

District 7 also developed the Equity & Public Engagement Playbook, which is a valuable resource for the District’s Community Engagement Coordinator (CEC) and Public Information Office (PIO) team to use when planning public engagement for plans and projects within the District.

District 9 (D9): Community-Centered Action for Shared Prosperity

District 9 has focused on strengthening relationships with Tribal communities, improving transparency around hiring, and making sure more people have access to opportunities within Caltrans. After conducting a district wide equity survey, District 9 identified communication gaps that were limiting awareness of job openings. In response, the District launched a public-facing job site and expanded outreach to local colleges, high schools, and Tribal partners to help ensure the applicant pool better reflects the communities the District serves.

District 9 also made it a priority to maintain regular outreach with Tribes in the region. During Native American Heritage Month, weekly educational messages were shared and the District hosted Tribal guest speakers and cultural exchange events, including with the Bishop Paiute Tribe. These activities helped deepen understanding, build trust, and support meaningful collaboration. While scheduling challenges occasionally limited participation, the District continues to look for ways to keep engagement consistent and respectful of Tribal capacity.

One of the key lessons learned is the importance of proactive, sustained communication. District 9 works to ensure that Tribal perspectives are reflected in project decisions—especially for work that affects Tribal lands—by engaging early and maintaining open communication throughout the planning and design phases. By improving how the District shares hiring information and by maintaining open dialogue with Tribal communities, the District is

creating a more inclusive workforce and enhancing how it plans and delivers transportation projects.

District 10 (D10): Partnerships That Uplift and Empower Communities

District 10 is advancing equity through innovative partnerships and targeted initiatives addressing homelessness, economic opportunity, and youth engagement. A key focus has been the District's collaboration with St. Mary's Community Services in Stockton, a vital organization working to tackle the region's homelessness crisis. The District partnered with St. Mary's to address health, safety, and environmental concerns associated with homeless encampments along Mormon Slough, securing land leases and expanding services. One standout project is the Pathways Development, a \$16 million initiative providing 238 non-congregate housing units for individuals experiencing homelessness, alongside essential wrap-around services such as case management and outreach.

District 10 also played a key role in securing an \$11.1 million grant from the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH), which will help San Joaquin County engage 300 individuals and transition up to 150 into stable housing. Furthermore, the District partnered with Ready to Work (RTW), a program supporting individuals transitioning out of homelessness or the criminal justice system. Through job experience, life skills training, and shelter, RTW has helped participants secure full-time jobs and permanent housing. The District's involvement in the Caltrans Clean California program also provided paid opportunities for participants while addressing litter abatement in public spaces.

The District focused on youth empowerment through initiatives like the Mural Contest – Celebrate Diversity in Stockton. This contest encouraged local students to reflect on their community's diversity through art, with the winners' works showcased in a public mural. This project not only highlighted Stockton's cultural diversity, but also fostered stronger connections between Caltrans and local schools. District 10 also engaged in a community partnership with Little Manila Rising, a local non-profit. This organization focuses on health equity and environmental justice in South Stockton neighborhoods. The District worked with



Figure 17: Caltrans D10 staff partnered with Right to Work and provided paid opportunities for participants while addressing litter abatement in public spaces.



Figure 18: The poster designed to invite participants to a celebration reception for the Celebrate Diversity in Stockton Mural Contest.



Figure 19: Community members and District 4 staff engaging in conversation during a tabling event in the City of Oakland for the Vision 980 Study.

the organization to take staff on tours of Little Manila, a historic site in Stockton. The District continues to work with this organization on the possible planting of plants and shrubs in the Caltrans right of way that will help mitigate the impacts the freeways have on the health of the residents surrounding them through their Urban Forestry Program. Little Manila Rising is also an active participant in the District's Downtown Stockton Transformative Project after the District submitted a letter of support for the organization on a Reconnecting Communities planning grant application. District 10 is committed to supporting underserved communities through partnerships with non-profits.

Headquarters Accomplishments

Division of Construction: Supporting Diverse Business Success Through the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program

The Division of Construction at Caltrans is supporting diverse business success through transformative changes to the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program. After a 2020 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) review revealed critical gaps—such as underutilization of committed DBEs, improper terminations, and delayed payments—Caltrans took

swift action to bring the program into full alignment with federal guidelines. By mid-2021, the Division began piloting the B2Gnow software on ten contracts to improve payment tracking and DBE oversight. Simultaneously, updates to Standard Specifications clarified expectations around Commercially Useful Function (CUF) evaluations, reporting requirements, and DBE termination and replacement processes. These updates, including the utilization of B2Gnow, became mandatory statewide for contracts subject to the 2022 Standard Specifications, ushering in a new level of consistency and accountability.

To further support implementation and stakeholder collaboration, the Division launched a quarterly DBE Ad-Hoc Committee that brings together Caltrans, the Office of Civil Rights, FHWA, DBEs, and prime contractors. This ongoing forum fosters problem-solving, transparency, and shared ownership of program improvements. In 2024, the release of Contract Compliance Policy Bulletin 24-1 required districts to track and report compliance activities, resulting in 273 actions and 23 penalties in just six months. This work was supported by 40 newly-hired statewide subject matter experts. Through these changes, Caltrans is actively creating an inclusive and responsive contracting environment where DBEs are

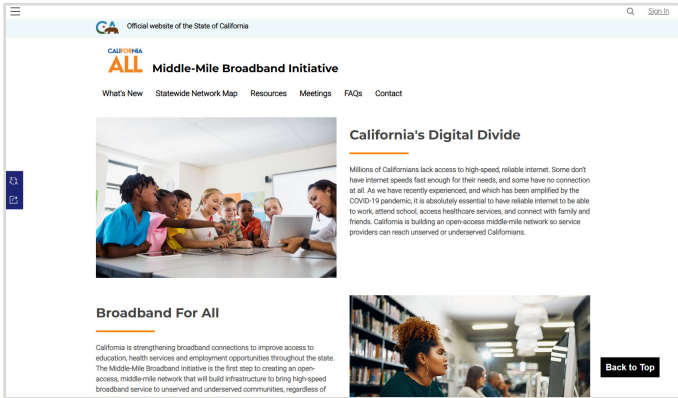


Figure 20: Middle Mile Broadband Initiative website.

770+

miles of fiber improving connectivity for residents.

not only given opportunities but are also supported, protected, and positioned for long-term success from bid to closeout.

Middle Mile Broadband Initiative: Bridging the Digital Divide in Underserved Communities

Caltrans is playing a critical role in addressing the digital divide in California by working in partnership with the California Department of Technology to expand high-speed internet access to underserved and unserved communities through the [Middle-Mile Broadband Initiative \(MMBI\)](#). With 91 miles of fiber and conduit currently under construction, and 212 miles having completed the environmental and permitting phases, Caltrans is bringing broadband infrastructure to historically underserved areas.

By collaborating with local communities and Tribal Nations, Caltrans is ensuring that these stakeholders' needs are considered in the planning and permitting processes, building trust and securing broader support for the project. A key example of the MMBI's impact is in Northern California's Region 1, where fiber construction is taking place in remote and underserved areas. This will enable residents to access essential services like online education, telehealth, and job opportunities, empowering them to thrive in a digital economy.

Once completed, the MMBI will have deployed over 770 miles of fiber, significantly improving connectivity for thousands of residents. The MMBI also fosters economic equity by encouraging small business participation in contracts and creating job opportunities in rural areas.

Division of Right of Way and Land Surveys: Creating Opportunities Through Affordable Housing

The Division of Right of Way and Land Surveys (RWLS) at Caltrans has made meaningful strides in its efforts to leverage excess state-owned land for affordable housing development. This initiative aligns with the California Government Code 14684.3 (2023) and the state's ongoing commitment to prioritize affordable housing, especially in underserved communities.

In July 2024, Caltrans implemented a new policy aimed at maximizing the use of excess land for affordable housing, provided there is no conclusive

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

evidence that state gas tax funds were involved in the original acquisition. If the land was acquired with federal funds or is located on an Interstate, Caltrans will work with the Federal Highway Administration to obtain the necessary approvals.

By releasing excess land for affordable housing, Caltrans is actively addressing the housing crisis in underserved communities. This approach supports

the initiative to expand the availability of housing in areas where the need is greatest, providing long-term, sustainable solutions for low-income individuals and families. Through continued collaboration and a focus on overcoming challenges, Caltrans continues to strategize for more inclusive housing solutions that can make a real difference in the lives of Californians facing housing insecurity.



Figure 21: Participants at Caltrans' Sit With Us: Strengthening Community Engagement listening session held in Sacramento on Rosa Parks Day, February 04, 2025.

PLANET

This section showcases work done by districts and Headquarter divisions to update how Caltrans plans, designs, builds and maintains our transportation investments to create a more resilient system that equitably distributes the benefits and burdens to California's current and future generations.

District Accomplishments

District 12 (D12): Journey Towards Equity - Bridging Gaps and Building a More Inclusive Future

By centering the needs of underserved communities—particularly communities of color—District 12 has transformed public spaces and created more inclusive, safe, and sustainable environments. A key initiative has been the Clean California program, which supported projects like the pocket park in Santa Ana renamed La Artista Artesia Pilar Park. Located in a historically significant Mexican-American neighborhood, this park now features a stormwater capture system that improves both environmental outcomes and public safety, reflecting the District's commitment to equitable urban development.

The District's data-driven approach further reinforces its equity efforts. Through a GIS mapping tool, District 12 identified service gaps and litter hotspots in underserved areas. In 2022 alone, this led to the removal of over 139,000 cubic yards of waste from high-need neighborhoods. By targeting resources where they are most needed, the District ensures cleaner, safer public spaces for all residents.

District 12 also demonstrated leadership with its Equity Study for the I-5 Managed Lanes Project. Although not required by federal law, the District proactively assessed potential impacts on disadvantaged communities. This study incorporated community feedback and best practices to inform equitable policies, illustrating how the District prioritizes mobility and mitigates harm for vulnerable populations.



Caltrans is advancing climate action with care and accountability, integrating sustainability and equity into how we plan and deliver our work. By learning from the past and centering people and the environment, we're shaping a transportation system that supports healthier, more resilient communities across California.

- *Eric Sundquist*

Deputy Director, Director's Office of Sustainability



Figure 22: District 12 staff conducting outreach for the I-5 Managed Lanes Project.



Figure 23: An example of the “Let’s Change This to That” public education campaign funded through Clean California for the Los Angeles area.



Headquarters Accomplishments

Division of Equipment: Deploying a Greener Fleet to Reduce Health Disparities

The Division of Equipment has taken action to reduce health disparities caused by vehicle pollution, particularly in underserved communities across California. By transitioning to a cleaner, more sustainable fleet, Caltrans is addressing the harmful impacts of diesel particulate matter and nitrogen oxide emissions—pollutants linked to asthma, heart disease, cancer, and other serious health issues in communities located near high-traffic corridors.

To date, Caltrans has deployed 1,190 light duty-electric vehicles to its over 12,000-unit fleet, Caltrans deployed the first ever hydrogen sweeper and a battery-electric sweeper. Additionally, the first heavy-duty electric transport truck was added to the fleet in November 2024 followed by an electric cargo truck shortly after. These zero-emission vehicles are contributing to cleaner air and healthier living conditions, especially in communities disproportionately affected by transportation-related pollution. This transformation directly supports Caltrans’ equity goals and reflects a commitment to improving public health outcomes.

Caltrans remains focused on expanding its green fleet initiative as part of its broader effort to become the greenest government fleet in the nation. These efforts are helping to ensure that regardless of zip code all Californians benefit from cleaner, safer, and more equitable transportation systems.

Division of Environmental Analysis: Advancing Equity through Stormwater Management and Community Impact Analysis

The Division of Environmental Analysis (DEA), through its Stormwater Management Program and Environmental Management Office (EMO), has made significant strides in promoting equity within California’s transportation projects. The efforts of the Stormwater Program focus on ensuring that disadvantaged communities receive support in managing stormwater pollutants, while the EMO is committed to incorporating equity into community impact analyses for transportation projects. Both initiatives reflect the Division’s dedication to addressing environmental and community needs.

Caltrans helped treat

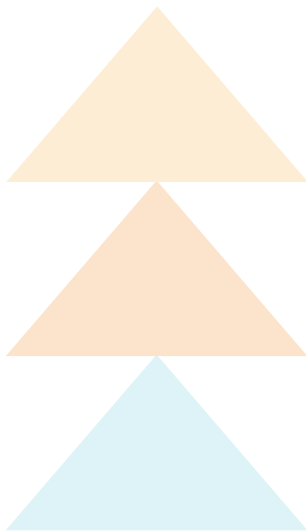
72,000+

acres of stormwater pollutants and trash in disadvantaged communities.

Caltrans contributed

\$294M

to reduce pollution in disadvantaged communities.



Caltrans is required to comply with the statewide Stormwater National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, which aims to control pollutant discharges from the rights of way. The program also includes compliance with the Construction General Permit, regulating stormwater pollution from construction activities. These efforts are part of broader efforts to protect the waters of the United States, restore impaired waterbodies, and ensure that water quality standards are met. The program involves partnerships with local municipalities to implement stormwater treatment systems, benefiting underserved communities in these Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay areas.

The cooperative stormwater management partnerships have allowed Caltrans to contribute to the creation of regional treatment systems that reduce pollution in disadvantaged communities, ensuring compliance with stormwater mandates while helping municipalities achieve their goals economically. Caltrans helped treat over 72,000 acres of stormwater pollutants and trash in disadvantaged communities, contributing \$294M toward these efforts. These efforts align with broader goals of improving water quality in impaired receiving waterbodies and ensuring environmental equity in urban areas.

In March 2022, the EMO released a fact sheet titled "Considering Equity in Community Impact Analysis for Projects" with input from the Community Impacts Analysis Working Group. This guidance provides a framework for integrating equity into project-specific analyses, ensuring that the impacts on disadvantaged and underserved communities are considered in the environmental documentation of transportation projects. This initiative aims to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts, fostering a more equitable approach to transportation planning and project development. This guidance provides a framework for integrating equity into project-specific analyses, ensuring that the impacts on disadvantaged and underserved communities are considered in the environmental documentation of transportation projects.

Division of Transportation Planning: Advancing Climate Resilience for Vulnerable Communities

DOTP is advancing equity through its work with the

Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) federal aid program. In collaboration with the Division of Environmental Analysis, Asset Management, Caltrans districts, the California Transportation Commission, and local and regional transportation agencies, DOTP has been instrumental in integrating equity into the [PROTECT program](#), which prioritizes climate resilience for underserved communities disproportionately impacted by climate stressors.

Since its inception, the PROTECT program has provided formula and discretionary funding that supports climate adaptation planning studies and capital improvements. These investments are designed to improve resilience in disadvantaged communities affected by sea-level rise, flooding, wildfire, and extreme heat. A key element of the program is the [State Climate Resilience Improvement Plan for Transportation \(SCRIPT\)](#), which has saved the state over \$10 million in cost-sharing requirements and is expected to generate additional savings throughout the duration of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Through these efforts, PROTECT is advancing long-term resilience in areas that are most vulnerable to climate change, helping to ensure that underserved communities receive much-needed support and resources for climate adaptation.

By refining processes, fostering partnerships, and overcoming challenges, DOTP is ensuring that the state's climate resilience efforts are inclusive and impactful for those most in need.

Division of Business Operations: Promoting Sustainable Commute Options

The Division of Business Operations, Office of Business Services oversees the Commute Management program for Caltrans Headquarters in Sacramento, implemented in partnership with the Transportation Management Association (TMA). The program highlights Caltrans' commitment to sustainable transportation options for its employees, helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions generated by Caltrans employees and providing support to employees that may not own a car or be able to drive.

In 2024, the Commute Management program released its annual report detailing the progress made in collaboration with the Transportation Management Association (TMA). This report underscores the successful implementation of sustainable transportation initiatives that empowered employees. The program offers a variety of initiatives, such as biking, transit, events, and the transformative impact of the Guaranteed Ride program. This program ensures that if a staff member who commutes via walking, biking, carpooling, or transit faces an emergency, their rideshare service (Uber, Lyft, or taxi) will be covered by the department.

These efforts made sustainable transportation more accessible and affordable, reducing greenhouse gas emissions generated by staff commuting to work in the Sacramento region.



Figure 24: Caltrans HQ promotes sustainable commute options like this light rail train from Sacramento Regional Transit.

LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES FROM CALTRANS' EFFORTS TO ADVANCE EQUITY



Figure 25: Caltrans staff from District 11 riding a light rail train in San Diego as part of a Superstaff Field Trip to visit neighborhoods for firsthand insights into community needs.

The efforts undertaken between 2022 and 2024 have provided valuable insights into the challenges and successes of initiatives aimed at eliminating disparities and improving outcomes for all, highlighting the importance of communication, collaboration, adaptability, and stakeholder involvement. By learning from these experiences, Caltrans builds a foundation for more inclusive, sustainable solutions that benefit historically underserved communities. Below is a summary of key lessons learned, best practices, challenges and future considerations.

KEY LESSONS LEARNED

- **Overcoming Resistance and Securing Support:** Caltrans faced challenges in gaining support for new tools and initiatives, including resistance from middle management and a lack of direction from leadership. These challenges emphasized the importance of securing strong leadership support and educating staff across all levels on how initiatives support implementation of the Caltrans Strategic Plan or policies, or other state plans, policies and laws. Patience, persistence, and continuous education was essential for successfully integrating initiatives into everyday operations.
- **Effective Coordination and Communication:** Managing diverse voices across teams and districts posed significant challenges. Establishing clear communication channels, regular meetings, and structured feedback loops improved collaboration, alignment, and decision-making. The need for cross-sector communication and internal alignment was crucial in ensuring that equity goals were consistently integrated throughout project lifecycles.
- **Sustained Community and Stakeholder Engagement:** Ongoing engagement with communities, Tribal nations, contractors, and other stakeholders was critical. Early and consistent involvement-built trust, addressed concerns, and helped integrate equity goals throughout project planning and execution. Sustained engagement ensures that initiatives reflect community needs and priorities.
- **Adaptability and Responsiveness:** The landscape of equity work often changed, requiring flexibility. Programs that could adjust to new insights or unforeseen challenges kept equity at the forefront, ensuring that initiatives remained relevant and effective. Flexibility in program delivery, such as offering both virtual and in-person sessions, allowed greater participation from diverse communities with varying access and schedules.
- **Building Trust in Underserved Communities:** Trust-building with marginalized populations,

particularly those experiencing homelessness or other forms of social marginalization, was critical for successful outreach and program participation. Establishing authentic relationships with communities ensured greater engagement and increased the likelihood of successful implementation.

- **Stakeholder and Industry Buy-in:** Gaining support from stakeholders and industry partners was essential for successful implementation. Whether adopting new technologies or expanding training programs, securing champions for initiatives helped ensure their widespread acceptance and successful adoption.
- **Balancing Competing Interests:** Managing differing priorities from multiple stakeholders was an ongoing challenge. Careful planning, strategic communication, and patience were necessary to balance interests while achieving equitable outcomes. This was particularly important when addressing the diverse needs of communities, Tribal nations, and industry stakeholders.



Figure 26: School children and parents walking within a marked crosswalk along State Route 96 in District 2.

BEST PRACTICES

- **Structured Collaboration:** Regular meetings, feedback loops, and cross-divisional collaboration helped foster a sense of shared ownership and improved decision-making. These interactions enhanced knowledge-sharing, ensuring that equity goals were aligned across teams and divisions, and creating a collaborative environment for solving challenges.
- **Pilot Programs and Testing:** Pilot programs allowed for the testing of new ideas or tools before full-scale implementation, minimizing risks and refining strategies. This approach helped ensure that larger initiatives were more successful, providing valuable insights and adjusting before broader rollouts.
- **Clear Instructions and Training:** Providing clear instructions and training ensured that all stakeholders, especially those using assistive technology or new tools, could effectively participate in initiatives. Accessibility was a priority in ensuring that equity goals were met and that all communities were served equitably.



Figure 27: Caltrans staff engaging with community members during California Native American Day at the State Capitol in 2024.



Figure 28: Equity Advisory Committee member, Peggy Martinez, and D1 Caltrans staff crossing a road in Arcata, CA in June 2024.

- **Engagement with Diverse Communities:** Early and consistent engagement with underserved and Tribal communities ensured that their needs were addressed, built trust, and helped accelerate project timelines. This engagement led to better outcomes, as community members were able to directly contribute to the planning and implementation of initiatives.
- **Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusion:** Providing cultural sensitivity training for staff, particularly those involved in construction and direct community engagement, helped build better relationships with diverse communities, including Native American Tribes. This sensitivity fostered respect and understanding, which significantly improved trust and cooperation.
- **Strategic Partnerships and Networking:** Building partnerships with labor unions, workforce development agencies, and community groups provided essential support and resources. These networks contributed to the sustainability and success of initiatives, leveraging external expertise and expanding outreach efforts.
- **Engagement with Diverse Communities:** Early and consistent engagement with underserved and Tribal communities ensured that their needs were addressed, built trust, and helped accelerate project timelines. This engagement led to better outcomes, as community members were able to directly contribute to the planning and implementation of initiatives.
- **Regulatory Complexity:** Navigating complex regulations delayed progress, especially in projects with legal and procedural constraints. Streamlining processes and providing clearer guidance for district teams could reduce these challenges and improve the speed of implementation.
- **Ongoing Learning and Communication:** While significant strides have been made, ensuring universal understanding and acceptance of equity goals remains a challenge. Continued training, clearer communication, and inclusive feedback loops are necessary to solidify these gains and integrate equity deeply into Caltrans' organizational culture.
- **Internal Collaboration and Scaling Initiatives:** Challenges with internal resource-sharing and the scaling of successful initiatives across districts highlighted the need for a centralized platform to share best practices, equity resources, and program models. This would foster greater alignment and collaboration within Caltrans, enhancing overall impact.

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

- **Resource Constraints:** Limited staffing and resources, particularly at the district level, often

CONCLUSION

Caltrans' commitment to advancing equity through collaboration, stakeholder engagement, adaptability, and cultural sensitivity has provided valuable lessons in creating a more inclusive transportation system. By focusing on continuous community engagement, leveraging cross-sector partnerships, and maintaining flexibility, Caltrans has made significant progress

in ensuring equitable outcomes for historically underserved communities. The lessons learned from these efforts will guide future initiatives and further integrate equity into transportation planning, creating a more sustainable and inclusive infrastructure system for California.



Figure 29: Staff from the Director's Office of Equity & Tribal Affairs posing with Safety Sam at the 2024 Statewide Caltrans Leadership Summit.