

# DRISI

CALTRANS DIVISION OF RESEARCH,  
INNOVATION AND SYSTEM INFORMATION

# Research

# Notes

Planning, Policy  
&  
Programming

NOVEMBER 2023

Project Title:  
Community Engagement Difficulties  
Metric for Pilot Equity Index

Task Number: 3994

Start Date: June 30, 2022

Completion Date: June 30, 2024

Task Manager:  
Stuart Mori  
Associate Transportation Planner  
stuart.mori@dot.ca.gov

## Community Engagement Difficulties Metric for Pilot Equity Index

Develop an Equity Indicator that will Measure Community Engagement.

### WHAT IS THE NEED?

The Caltrans Office of Race and Equity (CORE), over the course of 2021-2022 will pilot a suite of equity analysis tools that centers around the creation of multi-indicator metric referred to as an Equity Index.

There is a notable gap in the scientific literature on an equity indicator of this type, and it has been deemed as a crucial component to obtaining a comprehensive Equity Index to be piloted by the Department. Therefore, the creation of an equity indicator that measures the quantity and quality of community engagement is essential for a successful pilot trial of the Equity Index.

### WHAT ARE WE DOING?

We will conduct an extensive literature review for methodologies on creating public sector community engagement indicators in an equity context. The study will propose novel methodologies for creating a community engagement equity indicator metric and a scoring scale within a California context and run the proposed community engagement equity indicator through several scenarios of varying geographic California regions and analyze results.

### WHAT IS OUR GOAL?

The goal of this research request is to have a durable, versatile equity indicator metric that will accurately measure the level of community engagement in a given geographic region and be inserted into a larger Pilot Equity Index. The metric will be utilized for future Equity Index Pilot projects as the Department continues to refine and integrate the Equity Index.



DRISI provides solutions and  
knowledge that improves  
California's transportation system

## WHAT IS THE BENEFIT?

This study will help the Department develop an equity indicator that will measure the level of community engagement in a specific geographic area. It will also help the Department understand and measure equity in the State. It will also help measure the disparities faced by disadvantaged groups over time. Furthermore, these indicators can support policy development, demonstrate the effectiveness of current policies and initiatives, and highlight areas where new policies and initiatives may be needed. By making data publicly available, they increase transparency and accountability, allowing the Department an inside view into the disparities in the State and where progress is—and is not—being made.

## WHAT IS THE PROGRESS TO DATE?

A kick-off meeting was conducted on August 8, 2022. The researchers identified current community engagement processes at Caltrans, reviewed the literature and Caltrans plans and materials. Panel provided comments on the literature review. The draft community engagement indicator report was provided on October 24, 2023.

## IMAGE



Image 1: Equity-Centered Community Engagement Strategy