



Equity Working Group Meeting

July 20th, 2023

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

The meeting was held via Zoom teleconference. A video recording of the meeting is available upon request. The meeting presentations are available [here](#).

ATTENDEE LIST

Presenters:

Jacob Wasserman, UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies
Thomas Crowley, City of Rialto
Elizabeth Hurst, Inland Empire Utilities Agency
Jaqueline Favors, SCAG CivicSpark Fellow
Matthew Aldama, SCAG CivicSpark Fellow

SCAG Staff:

Anita Au (Presenter)
Annaleigh Ekman
Jeannie Ma
Leslie Cayton (Presenter)

Webinar:

Angel Garfio, Orange County Transportation Authority
Brendan Latimer, Caltrans
Caitlin Brooks, Ventura County Transportation Commission
Cesar Aranguri, Indigenous Ark Urban Technologies
Deborah Enos, Council for Watershed Health
Denise Truong, Kimley-Horn
Frank Yokoyama, City of Cerritos
Gail Shiimoto-Lohr, City of Mission Viejo
Golnaz Sarram, LLG Engineers
Jasmin Kim, City of Oxnard
Jessica Nguyen, County of Ventura
Jessica Rodriguez, City of Moreno Valley
Jillian Gallard, Los Angeles Department of Transportation
Joseph Cabral, Clean Power Alliance
Linda Kelly, Fathers and Mothers Who Care (FMWC)
Liza Munoz, Inland Empire Utilities Agency
Mairany Anaya, San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
Stephen Dopudja, Dpudja & Well Consulting, Inc.
Wendy Strack, Orange County Council of Governments
Winnie Gee, City of San Jose Department of Transportation
Yolanda Baber, Mark Thomas



MEETING SUMMARY

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Jeannie Ma, Assistant Regional Planner, SCAG | ma@scag.ca.gov

Jeannie welcomed all participants and reminded the meeting participants that the EWG History document will be regularly updated: <https://scag.ca.gov/post/equity-working-group-ewg>. SCAG also shared a poll seeking input on the direction for future EWG meetings and topics. The results are summarized in the following table:

Questions	Options	Results
What actions have you already taken to advance equity in your jurisdiction?	Still trying to figure it out	62%
	Having conversations with community	46%
	Developed equity framework or platform	31%
	Adopted equity resolution	23%
	Developed Equity Action Plan	23%
	Provided training for staff	23%
	Developed equity tool	23%
	Implemented targeted programs	15%
	Other (Please type your response in the chat)	8%
What type of presentations should EWG focus more on for future meetings?	Local and regional examples of equity efforts and best practices within the region	85%
	Local and regional examples of equity efforts and best practices outside of the SCAG region	54%
	Larger discussions of equity and environmental justice at the federal and state levels	23%
	Academic research on equity related topics	23%
	Other (Please type your response in the chat)	0%
What are the top 3 topic areas you would like to learn more about at a future meeting?	Climate Vulnerability	38%
	Economic Development	38%
	Equitable Community Outreach & Engagement	38%
	Housing Impacts (including Gentrification & Displacement & Jobs-Housing Imbalance)	38%
	Access to Everyday Destinations, Public Utilities, Quality Transit, & Transportation	31%
	Air Pollution & Health Impacts (including Regional Impacts & Impacts Along Freeways & Corridors)	31%
	Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety	23%
	Freight & Goods Movement Impacts	23%
	Broadband/Internet Access	0%
	Other (Please type your response in the chat)	0%



2. THE IMPLICATIONS OF FREEWAY SITING IN CALIFORNIA

Jacob Wasserman, Research Project Manager, UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies | jacobwasserman@ucla.edu

Jacob Wasserman presented two case studies based on the freeway installations in South Pasadena and Pacoima during the 20th Century that resulted in the displacement of communities and residents who were predominantly people of color and low income. The presentation provided a detailed historical overview of the cities and the racial implications behind planning the I-210 freeway in South Pasadena and the SR-118 freeway in Pacoima. The studies analyzed alternative and unchosen routes considered during the planning stages that would have displaced fewer communities of color and preserved more neighborhoods. Overall, the construction of the freeways led to the displacement of primarily residents of color, the perpetuation of racial segregation, the destruction of homes and businesses, home devaluations, and environmental hazards.

Questions and Answers:

- **Question:** An attendee asked for Jacob’s opinion on AB 833 and the use of freeway caps to rectify displacements caused by freeway installations primarily in disadvantaged communities researched by Caltrans and to get opinions on whether it is considered greenwashing.
 - **Answer:** With the caveat that UCLA ITS does not take positions on legislation, Jacob stated UCLA ITS is currently researching freeway capping through Caltrans funding in Colton, Fresno, and San Diego where freeway capping started in the 1990s. Jacob provided additional details on the varying effects that freeway capping has on neighborhood connectivity and communities and the merits of the approach as long as it is done thoughtfully and addresses the needs of the communities.
- **Question:** On slides 32 to 34, what is the difference between “Hypothetical footprint” and “Actual footprint” and why were they used in this analysis?
 - **Answer:** The images of the freeways were superimposed on the unchosen routes, but the hypothetical footprint did not include ramps and interchanges as there was no direction on where these would be placed. The first table shows the chosen and unchosen routes with the hypothetical footprints (only the freeway path) but the table showing the actual footprint includes ramps and interchanges, which adds more space in terms of acreage, therefore increases population displaced and housing units lost.
- **Question:** Is there similar research being done within or outside the SCAG region?
 - **Answer:** Jacob mentioned Dr. Adam Millard Ball’s research on *Equity in Street Connectivity and Freeway Severance*. Jacob also mentioned the 580 Freeway in the City of Oakland on the 580 and the Embarcadero Freeway in San Francisco.
- **Question:** Has this type of analysis been conducted for the metro lines? Has an equity analysis of the metro line routes been done?
 - **Answer:** Jacob responded that although this research project did not explore transit lines, his research does focus on transit. In one study on the A Line and Green Line route, they found negative rider effects such as hearing loss and there are issues with the colocation of metro lines and freeways in terms of displacement. UCLA ITS has not done research on it, but that it may be a potential research topic in the future.

Links:

- Research Project: <https://www.its.ucla.edu/project/the-implications-of-freeway-siting-in-california/>
- StoryMap: <https://www.its.ucla.edu/portfolio-items/freeways-redlining-racism-storymap/>
- Freeways' effects on connectivity: <https://www.its.ucla.edu/project/equity-in-street-connectivity-and-freeway-severance/>



3. CARMEN RAMIREZ AWARD FOR EQUITY: RECYCLED WATER COLLABORATION

Tom Crowley, Utilities Manager, City of Rialto | tjcrowley@rialtoca.gov

Elizabeth Hurst, Chino Basin Program Manager, Inland Empire Utilities Agency | ehurst@ieua.org

Tom Crowley presented on the IEUA and the City of Rialto's Recycled Water Collaboration as the first recipient of SCAG's Carmen Ramirez Award for Equity. Tom provided a detailed overview on the project design and processes that established a 50-year recycled water purchase agreement with the City of Rialto and the IEUA. This collaboration is expected to increase new water supplies for the Chino Basin through the Santa Ana River and the Pacific Ocean. The IEUA will develop and operate an Advanced Water Purification Facility with a 70,000-acre capacity, groundwater injection facilities, pump stations, new wells, and connection lines between the Agency's wastewater plants and the city's recycled water distribution system. The program will develop new drought proof local water supply, protect endangered species, and restore native habitat with the Santa Ana Watershed.

Questions and Answers:

- **Question:** Any recommendations on how to start water recycling facilities for other cities?
 - **Answer:** Tom responded that creating a new system would be extremely costly to build the infrastructure for recycled and drinking water systems. Tom stated that there is no single method to use recycled water and recommended that it might be effective to find a customer who could find more value in recycled water to reduce imported water demands and find a way to meet community needs. Elizabeth referenced the steady flow of recycled water supply and the centralized system of groundwater within the Chino Water Basin. Elizabeth also advised to take stock of water supply portfolio and create a centralized water system to ensure heavy water users, like parks and schools, are set-up with a dual pipeline to take advantage of recycled water when it becomes available.
- **Question:** How can we bring awareness to cities about these opportunities to use recycled water?
 - **Answer:** Elizabeth responded that her service area developed a Recycled Water system in the 2000s, and that the City of Chino was primarily agricultural land that experienced a growth in development. The Water Basin Managers worked with the cities and incorporated recycled water in the building codes despite initial fears of recycled water. Elizabeth recommended the WasteReuse Association as a great resource for plants affected by salinity and cities looking at water reuse who can share the information to local areas.

4. CLIMATE EQUITY COMPENDIUM

Jaqueline Favors and Matthew Aldama, SCAG CivicSpark Fellows

Jackie and Matt provided an overview of the Climate Equity Compendium, a resource document for local jurisdictions to incorporate climate equity within the planning processes. The presentation included the development of the compendium and the compilation of resources through surveying and conducting outreach with cities who have high concentrations of Disadvantaged Communities. Based on the survey results, the compendium provides resources on the following categories, funding and staff capacity, the need for access to data and useful tools, model policies and best practices, and law compliance assistance. The compendium is expected to be available in Fall 2023 and SCAG staff will continue to provide technical assistance for any local jurisdiction's efforts on climate equity.

Questions and Answers:

- **Question:** Is there a contact or a link for technical assistance?



- **Response:** Request technical assistance here: <https://hub.scag.ca.gov/pages/request-technical-assistance>

This resource will be shared with the EWG as an announcement in future meetings. For questions about the Climate Equity Compendium, please contact Anita Au, at au@scag.ca.gov.

5. CONNECT SOCIAL 2024 UPDATE

Leslie Cayton, Associate Regional Planner, SCAG | cayton@scag.ca.gov

SCAG staff provided an update on Connect SoCal 2024, including a recap of the outreach efforts, changes to the vision because of community input, an overview of policy categories and goals, feedback from stakeholders, completed and upcoming milestones, and an update on the Policy Development Framework. The anticipated release of the Connect SoCal 2024 Draft is October 2023.

For more information, see these **Connect SoCal 2024 Resources:**

- Joint Policy Committee Info: <https://scag.ca.gov/joint-committee>
- Connect SoCal 2024 Policy Subcommittee info: <https://scag.ca.gov/subcommittees>
- Racial Equity & Regional Planning Subcommittee Final Agenda and Draft White Paper: <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/rerp011923fullagn.pdf?1673571909>
- Connect SoCal 2024 Page: <https://scag.ca.gov/connect-social>
- Email: ConnectSoCal@scag.ca.gov

6. EQUITY ANALYSIS APPROACH UPDATE

Anita Au, Planning Supervisor, SCAG | au@scag.ca.gov

SCAG staff provided an overview on the equity-related take-aways from the Connect SoCal 2024 Outreach Process. The results of the outreach process presented several key themes on the region's perspective on equity. The presentation also included an overview of Equity Performance Measures along with updates on the racial equity baseline conditions. SCAG staff highlighted the Bicycle and Pedestrian Collision Fatalities Injuries section (the section will include an overlay between the High Injury Network and Priority Equity communities) and presented the initial take-aways from the neighborhood change and displacement section (initial take-aways on gentrification in neighborhoods). The Equity Team showcased updates on the existing conditions of the Equity Performance Measures and featured case studies (originating from the Transportation Equity Zones) on the local impacts of mileage-based user fees in rural and urban areas on different commute lengths from Adelanto to Victorville and North Hills to El Segundo.

The next steps for the Connect SoCal 2024 Equity Analysis will be to release the draft within Fall 2023.

Questions and Answers:

- **Question:** The top (Connect SoCal) survey results is for the region to have fast, frequent, and reliable transportation options. Was safety mentioned in any of the survey questions and results? The attendee suggested to emphasize the significant degree of loss of transit ridership based on safety issues.
 - **Answer:** The additional answers under "other" emphasized the need for safer transit and will be described in the Equity Analysis.
- **Question:** What is the geographical alignment to Transportation Equity Zones (TEZs)?
 - **Answer:** TEZs are a census-tract level geography developed by the [Mobility and Innovation Pricing Report](#), where the full methodology is described.



- **Question:** An attendee asked if SCAG’s data on bicyclist and pedestrian injuries and fatalities could be used to identify local areas where community members and County Transportation Commissions could collaborate to identify areas that require safety improvements.
 - **Answer:** SCAG developed a Regional High Injury Network (HIN) to identify the roadway segments with the highest concentration of fatalities and serious injuries on our network. SCAG staff provided a link to the SCAG [SoCal Transportation Safety Resource Hub](#) which features information on HIN, an interactive map to locate areas with HIN and downloadable data. SCAG staff added a caveat on the bicyclist and pedestrian injuries and fatalities chart featured in the presentation, where the only race data for collisions themselves are based on one person (not always self-identified) as is reported through the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS).
- **Comment:** Neighborhood groups and communities do not have the resources to access the data and may not have the appropriate guidance and training to utilize the data to improve safety within their communities.
 - **Response:** SCAG staff stated that the [SoCal Transportation Safety Resource Hub](#) provides resources, guidance, and assistance. SCAG staff also mentioned that SCAG’s Local Information Services and Local Planning teams provide assistance on safety related impacts, capacity building, and planning.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS & OFFERS, REQUESTS, AND CONNECTIONS

Jeannie Ma, Assistant Regional Planner, SCAG | ma@scag.ca.gov

United States Department of Transportation Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Grant Programs:
<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/rcnprogram>

- The USDOT is opening applications for its **Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant Programs** to fund projects that prioritize disadvantaged communities, aim to improve access to daily destinations, foster equitable development, and reconnect communities by removing transportation barriers. Applications are due **September 28, 2023**.

Offers, Requests, and Connections:

- **SCAG staff** informed attendees to provide feedback and input that will help frame future meetings and topics, such as transportation safety-related topics and the HIN.
- **Request for SCAG:** Will the Equity Analysis have an early release to lessen the impact on readers who want to comment on the plan?
 - **Response:** Connect SoCal 2024 and all the technical reports will be released at the same time with a 60-day comment period. However, SCAG will consider an early release and discuss the idea internally to determine if it is feasible while meeting internal deadlines and review processes.
- **Request for SCAG:** Will EWG dedicate a meeting on the Equity Analysis for attendees and participants to receive an immediate overview of the report and an opportunity to comment on the Equity Analysis?
 - **Response:** SCAG staff will consider an EWG session that solely focuses on the Equity Analysis during the Connect SoCal comment period.

If you have questions about this meeting, please feel free to reach out to Anita Au (au@scag.ca.gov) or Annaleigh Ekman (ekman@scag.ca.gov). SCAG also encourages participants to reach out if you have a topic, project, program, tool, or resource that you think should be highlighted in a future meeting. The next Equity Working Group meeting is expected to be held in October



2023.