



Equity Working Group Meeting

November 16th, 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

SCAG Staff:

Anita Au
Anna Van
Annaleigh Ekman (Presenter)
Elizabeth Carvajal (Presenter)
Gigi Moreno (Presenter)
Jeannie Ma (Facilitator)
Jennifer Martinez
Jesus Rodriguez
Leslie Cayton (Presenter)
Ma'Ayn Johnson (Presenter)

Webinar:

Alexia De La Torre, City of Fontana
Angel Garfio, Orange County Transportation Authority
Brendan Latimer, Caltrans
Caitlin Brooks, Ventura County Transportation Commission
Caroline Chen, LA County Planning
Cecily Session-Goins, City of Fontana
Claudia Manrique, City of Moreno Valley
Edgar Becerra, Paired Power
Edwin Peart, LeSar Development Consultants
Gail Shiimoto-Loehr, City of Mission Viejo
Jason Rosenblum, Arcadis IBI Group
John Moore, HACSB
Jude Miranda, Caltrans
Mairany Anaya, San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
Monica Montanez, City of Pomona
Robert Garcia, City of Orange
Wendy Strack, Orange County Council of Governments

MEETING SUMMARY

1. Welcome

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

Jeannie welcomed all participants and went over the session logistics with a reminder that the EWG History document is regularly updated. Jeannie also walked through a brief tutorial on how to read the Draft Connect SoCal 2024 Plan.

Links:

- Equity Working Group History: <https://scag.ca.gov/post/equity-working-group-ewg>
- Draft Connect SoCal 2024: <https://scag.ca.gov/connect-socal-2024-read-draft-plan>

2. Overview of Equity in Connect SoCal 2024

Elizabeth Carvajal, Deputy Director, SCAG | carvajal@scag.ca.gov

Elizabeth Carvajal presented an overview of how equity is addressed throughout Connect SoCal 2024. The presentation highlighted the recommendations of the Racial Equity and Regional Planning Subcommittee, which include applying a racial equity lens to the plan's implementation, following best practices in data and engagement, collaborating across agencies and equity initiatives, prioritizing community-based solutions in disadvantaged areas, and supporting anti-displacement and housing access policies. The presentation also covered the four goals (mobility, communities, environment, and economy) of



Connect SoCal and corresponding policy areas. For each goal, Elizabeth discussed how the plan relates to equity and resilience issues, such as housing, transit, climate, goods movement, broadband, and workforce development. She emphasized the vision of the plan to create and maintain livable and thriving communities that offer opportunities for all; to protect public health and natural resources through a sustainable, efficient and productive regional environment; and to foster a competitive and innovative regional economy that leverages technology and promotes inclusion. Examples of regional planning policies for each goal were showcased along with implementation strategies examples to follow them.

Questions and Answers:

- **Question:** For complete streets, is there consideration of providing low-speed vehicle lanes in order to enable NEV type hyper local micro mobility transit routes from neighborhoods to commercial centers? This could support both e-bike, e-trike, but also small electric GEM like vehicles/street-legal golf carts.
 - **Answer:** Elizabeth responded by encouraging the attendee to submit their comment as a question or recommendation to ensure that it is captured as a part of the public comment process.

3. Economic Impact Analysis Technical Report

Gigi Moreno, Senior Economist, SCAG | gmoreno@scag.ca.gov

Gigi's presentation detailed the Draft Economic Impact Analysis, which aims to assess the influence of planned expenditures on job growth, economic output, and co-benefits. Using traditional economic impact analysis and the REMI TranSight model, the analysis estimated gains to the economy from Connect SoCal investments, emphasizing improved transportation network efficiency. The presentation highlighted the Plan's potential outcomes, including job additions, GDP growth, and climate benefits. Notably, it addressed persistent wage gaps for Black, Hispanic, and women workers, emphasizing the economic inefficiencies and reduced innovation associated with such disparities. The Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy, adopted by the SCAG Regional Council in 2021, was cited as a framework for equitable economic growth. The presentation underscored the potential 17% GDP increase by eliminating racial and gender wage gaps, aligning with national studies. Exploring wage gap drivers revealed factors such as differences in employment rates, hours worked, and education, emphasizing the role of regional planners in creating inclusive and equitable economies.

4. Housing Technical Report

Ma'Ayn Johnson, Department Manager, SCAG | johnson@scag.ca.gov

Ma'Ayn presented the Draft Housing Technical Report, covering housing need, challenges in production, and equity-related analyses. The report outlined the region's housing needs, including an overview of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) demand for 1.3 million units and existing conditions of housing and households. Challenges in housing production, exacerbated by factors like COVID, stricter requirements, and funding issues, were detailed, emphasizing the gap between production and RHNA goals. Ma'Ayn elevated some responsive best practices, like new funding sources and SCAG's technical assistance, to address this shortfall. Equity-related analyses revealed disparities in substandard housing, cost burden, overcrowding, and displacement pressures, particularly affecting communities of color. Key takeaways underscored the disproportionate impact on communities of color and the need to address equity and historic segregation patterns. Ma'Ayn outlined SCAG's implementation strategies related to housing, emphasizing technical assistance, partnerships for aligned investments, innovative homeownership models, and community stabilization resources to mitigate displacement pressures and promote fair housing.

5. Equity Analysis Technical Report

Annaleigh Ekman, Senior Regional Planner, SCAG | ekman@scag.ca.gov

Annaleigh presented the Draft Equity Analysis Technical Report, which aims to assess the potential impacts of the Plan on communities, focusing on both federally protected populations and priority communities identified by SCAG. Annaleigh



described the report's structure and then reported on key findings from the analysis, which is organized by the four Connect SoCal domains of mobility, communities, environment, and economy. The analysis revealed improvements for people living in Priority Equity Communities but underscored the need to prioritize racial equity in decision-making regarding policies, planning, programs, and projects. The presentation concluded with an overview of the Equity Resources for Action Toolbox, offering strategies for local agencies to enhance equity in their plans and projects, emphasizing the importance of addressing existing disparities for a more equitable future.

Questions and Answers:

- **Question:** An attendee asked for clarification throughout the technical report on the performance measure process, including how often the performance measures are updated and if results of the performance measure analysis are reported to the California Air Resources Board or any other agency as part of the monitoring of Connect SoCal 2024.
 - **Answer:** The [Performance Monitoring Technical Report](#) documents the process of developing the measures and the reporting. As for frequency, the measures are updated every plan cycle. There are some measures that require interim updates, so it depends on statutory requirements. If there are specific measures that they have questions about, SCAG offered to discuss them one-on-one.
- **Question:** Is there anywhere in the Equity plan on access to nature/biodiversity? Historically redlined areas have less access to biodiversity: <https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2023-10-11/historic-redlining-bird-biodiversity>. Here's the actual article on redlining and biodiversity: <https://academic.oup.com/condor/advance-article/doi/10.1093/ornithapp/duad044/7303192>
 - **Answer:** The Equity Analysis measures the percent of the population that can access a park, but there is not a specific metric for biodiversity in the Plan. SCAG encouraged the attendee to submit a comment with this question to ensure that it could be responded to formally.

6. Connect SoCal 2024 Wrap-Up

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

Leslie concluded the Connect SoCal 2024 Draft Plan presentation by sharing high level takeaways, next steps, and how to provide formal comments on Connect SoCal 2024. The Plan meets the state's 19% per capita GHG emission reduction target by 2035. Leslie underscored key strategies, such as land use, pricing/user fees, transit, and active transportation, included in the Main Book. Chapter 5 of the Main Book and the Performance Monitoring Technical Report document the performance measures for the Plan. Highlights from the performance measures included a 6.3% reduction in daily VMT and a 26.2% reduction in delay time.

SCAG is in the process of gathering comments on Connect SoCal 2024 until the comment period ends on January 12, 2024. SCAG is hosting Elected Official Briefings in every county of the region and is hosting virtual Public Hearings on December 4th, 5th, and 8th that will be screened in person at SCAG satellite offices. After reviewing and formally responding to comments, SCAG anticipates taking the full Plan to Regional Council for adoption in April 2024.

Attendees can read the draft plan, submit comments, and contact SCAG for questions via e-mail using the links below.

Links:

- Connect SoCal 2024 Page: [ConnectSoCal.org](https://connectsocial.org)
- Email: ConnectSoCal@scag.ca.gov
- Register for a public hearing in Dec.: <https://scag.ca.gov/connectsocial-zoom>
- How to Submit Comments: <https://scag.ca.gov/connect-social-faqs>
- Online Comment Form: <https://scag.ca.gov/connect-social-2024-comment-submission-form>



7. Announcements & Offers, Requests, and Connections

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

SCAG shared a poll on the effectiveness of this deep dive session on the Draft Plan and technical reports. The results are summarized in the following table:

Questions	Options	Results
Did you find this working group session helpful?	Yes	100%
	No	0%
Do you understand how to provide comments on Connect SoCal 2024?	Yes	100%
	No	0%
Which of the Technical Reports are you excited to read? Select all that apply?	Aviation and Airport Ground Access	20%
	Congestion Management	20%
	Demographics and Growth Forecast	30%
	Economic Impact Analysis	50%
	Equity Analysis	70%
	Goods Movement	10%
	Housing	60%
	Land Use and Communities	60%
	Mobility	40%
	Performance Monitoring	30%
	Project List	0%
	Public Participation and Consultation	0%
Transportation Conformity Analysis	10%	

Announcement: USDOT Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity: Recommendation Report

The subcommittees of ACTE are currently gathering public recommendations to compile a report that will influence the organization's priorities in shaping future programs, policies, and goals. Those interested in contributing recommendations can visit the USDOT Equity Action Plan and ACTE at <https://www.transportation.gov/civil-rights/acte>. Submissions can be sent to acte@dot.gov, and the ACTE is scheduled to discuss the USDOT Equity Action Plan and review recommendations on **Friday, January 5, 2024**. The official Recommendation Report is expected to be submitted in June 2024.

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.
- SCAG staff followed up after the meeting with an attendee who was having a problem with their microphone.

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 February 2024.