

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: June 29-30, 2022

From: MITCH WEISS, Executive Director

Reference Number: 4.3, Action

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Subject: Approval of Interagency Equity Advisory Committee and Proposed Structure

Recommendation:

California Transportation Commission (Commission) staff recommend, in partnership with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), the Commission approve the proposal (Attachment A) to implement a standing interagency Equity Advisory Committee (Committee) and direct staff to issue a call for applicants in Summer 2022.

Staff recommends the formation of one interagency Equity Advisory Committee to provide valuable input and expert guidance to further equitable programs, policies, and guidelines within each partnering agency.

This recommended action represents another step forward in the implementation of the Commission's Racial Equity Statement.

Issue:

In January 2021, the Commission approved its Racial Equity Statement. That action began a year long process to empower the Commission's Equity Advisory Roundtable to provide recommendations on the establishment of a permanent equity advisory committee to help inform transportation decision making. The process began with a few foundational questions:

1. Should the Commission join with Caltrans and CalSTA to implement one or multiple committees?
2. What should the scope of the committee be?
3. Who should serve on the committee?
4. Should members be compensated?
5. How will recommendations from the committee be considered?

The Equity Advisory Committee (Committee) is intended to elevate diverse and historically marginalized voices to advise the Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans on how to achieve meaningful outcomes in transportation equity, environmental justice, and equitable economic opportunities, especially as related to transportation planning and programming. This purpose

has been developed through the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI), the Commission's Equity Advisory Roundtable, stakeholder feedback, Statewide Equity Listening Sessions, interagency collaboration, and public feedback.

Proposal

Staff from the Commission, Caltrans, and CalSTA worked collaboratively to develop the recommendation for one standing interagency Equity Advisory Committee (Committee). The following summarizes the recommendation. Additional details can be found in Attachment A.

1. One Committee will serve the Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans.
2. The Committee will advise the Commission, CalSTA and Caltrans on how to achieve meaningful outcomes in transportation equity, environmental justice, and equitable economic opportunities, especially as related to transportation planning and programming. Agency staff will collaborate with Committee members to refine the scope and priorities of the Committee once it is formed. Any significant scope changes requested will be brought back to the Commission. The Committee is anticipated to review, advise, and make recommendations on transportation related plans, programs and policies that include, but are not limited to:
 - State transportation planning guidelines
 - State transportation funding program guidelines
 - State transportation plans
 - Quantitative and qualitative metrics for evaluating equity benefits and outcomes
 - Incorporation of meaningful community engagement practices into all aspects of transportation work
 - Assessment of equitable outcomes in projects
 - Assistance with future Racial Equity Action Plans, as applicable
 - Development of recommendations regarding best practices to elevate equity in project planning and delivery
 - Development of a public participation guidebook
3. Membership is intended to focus on marginalized voices (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, rural communities, women and women identifying individuals, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual individuals and communities, older adults, youth, low-income, unhoused etc.) in California. The Committee will consist of experts in the following classifications.
 - Tribes and Indigenous Communities
 - Community-based organizations
 - Climate and air quality organizations
 - Housing and housing justice organizations
 - Statewide environmental justice and equity organizations
 - Individuals or organizations offering an accessibility and disability perspective
 - Community members reflecting different geographies and areas of the state, especially rural areas
 - Community and economic development organizations
 - Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE)

- Labor organizers and non-represented groups
 - Non-traditional industry (i.e. – shared mobility)
4. Committee members will be reimbursed for eligible travel expenses consistent with state procedures. The Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans continue work to identify a way to compensate committee members for their time and expertise, but currently lack the authority to do so. Strategies currently under investigation include procurement of discretionary grants or foundation funding.

Some state agencies have legislative authority to compensate advisory committees through a stipend process, whereas the Commission, Caltrans and CalSTA do not. The interagency team is carefully analyzing compensation mechanisms and amounts offered by similar State-level advisory groups including the Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group (California Energy Commission and California Public Utilities Commission) and the Environmental Justice Advisory Committee (California Air Resources Board) to inform the Commission's Annual Report recommendations to the Legislature.

The California Air Resources Board's *Draft 2022 Progress Report: California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection* notes in its assessment that there is need for further action in this area. The Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans continue to pursue long-term solutions to compensating Committee members for time and expertise.

5. It is important that members have a clear understanding of how feedback and recommendations will be incorporated into policies, programs, and procedures by each state agency. Each agency will report progress made in implementing or justification for not implementing Committee recommendations to the Committee. This can be achieved through active listening and openly communicating the status of committee recommendations, including challenges or limitations to the implementation of Committee recommendations.

This proposal is foundational in establishing organizational principles, membership guidelines and member involvement, the scope of the Committee, and a timeline for holding the first Committee meeting by the end of 2022. In addition, approval of the proposal will allow staff to move forward with a call for applicants, applicant selection, and meeting planning.

Background:

From mid-2020 through early-2021, the Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans released racial equity statements highlighting each agencies strong commitment to equity. To implement these statements, each agency identified the development of an equity advisory committee as a tangible tool to implement meaningful change. This strategy was memorialized in the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI).

The Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans have coordinated to develop a Committee recommendation focused on elevating diverse and historically marginalized voices to advise the Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans on how to achieve meaningful outcomes in transportation equity, environmental justice, and equitable economic opportunities, especially

as related to transportation planning and programming. The Committee will help each agency work to achieve meaningful outcomes in transportation equity, environmental justice, and equitable economic opportunities, especially as related to transportation planning and programming. Forming the Committee is a priority of the Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans.

The staff recommendation represents more than a year of collaboration and strategy development between the Commission, CalSTA and Caltrans, the Equity Advisory Roundtable, and stakeholders. The presentation of a proposal that identifies a pathway to one interagency committee reflects the immense dedication and flexibility of all who were involved in the process. The Commission extends its gratitude to all involved.

Stakeholder Engagement and Development of the Staff Recommendation

Through engagement with the public, the Equity Advisory Roundtable, advocacy partners, regional and local agency partners, State agency partners, executive management from the Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans, including Commissioners, many consistent themes emerged regarding the Committee scope and membership; as well as how to ensure the Committee results in improved accountability and trust. These recommendations have been incorporated into the staff recommendation and reflect extensive collaboration and consensus building amongst agencies and the Equity Advisory Roundtable. The Equity Advisory Roundtable also highlighted that, to build trust, members should be respected for their time and expertise and compensated accordingly. The Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans continue to work to find feasible solutions to compensate Committee members for their time and expertise.

Equity Advisory Roundtable

In 2020, the Commission took action to form an Equity Advisory Roundtable to further implementation of its [Racial Equity Statement](#). Through the Racial Equity Statement, the Commission made a commitment to improving equitable outcomes in its public engagement processes, programs, and policy development. The Roundtable held six convenings of transportation equity experts from across the state. Roundtable members provided Commission staff with their expertise on several key initiatives including the formation of the policy recommendation for the interagency Equity Advisory Committee.

Additional information regarding Equity Advisory Roundtable efforts is available on the [Equity Advisory Roundtable webpage](https://catc.ca.gov/meetings-events/equity-advisory-roundtable-meeting) (catc.ca.gov/ meetings-events/equity-advisory-roundtable-meeting).

Equity Advisory Roundtable Concept Proposal

The Equity Advisory Committee (Committee) is intended to elevate diverse and historically marginalized voices to advise state transportation agencies, such as the California Transportation Commission (Commission), the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) on how to achieve meaningful outcomes in transportation equity, environmental justice, and equitable economic opportunities, especially as related to transportation planning and programming.

Organizational Principles

The Committee will make recommendations to the Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans. Recommendations will focus on tools and guidelines for transportation planning and funding programs. The Committee will meet pursuant to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. The Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans retain final decision-making authority.

Membership

Committee membership will consist of up to 15 members with 2-year staggered terms (some members in the initial cohort may have 1-year terms to allow for staggering).

Membership is intended to focus on marginalized voices (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, rural communities, women and women identifying individuals, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual individuals and communities, older adults, individuals with disabilities, youth, low-income, etc.) in California. The Committee will consist of experts in the following classifications.

- Tribes and Indigenous Communities
- Community-based organizations
- Climate and air quality organizations
- Housing and housing justice organizations
- Statewide environmental justice and equity organizations
- Individuals or organizations offering an accessibility and disability perspective
- Community members reflecting different geographies and areas of the state, especially rural areas
- Community and economic development organizations
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE)
- Labor organizers and non-represented groups
- Non-traditional industries (i.e. – shared mobility)

Application Process and Parameters for Involvement

Applications will be accepted through an open call for Committee member process. The application will consist of a form that provides an opportunity for applicants to express interest and qualifications. Staff from the Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans will be involved in the selection process. Prior to the first meeting, each agency will endorse Committee members through their regular approval processes.

Parameters for involvement in the Equity Advisory Committee (Committee) include the following criteria:

- The applicant must reside in California
- The applicant must clearly demonstrate and have a history of equity-centered personal or professional experience, community leadership, or be actively engaged in transportation equity, policy, programming, advocacy or related fields such as health, air quality, climate, housing justice, community and socio-economic development, etc.

Compensation

Committee members will be reimbursed for eligible travel expenses consistent with state procedures. The Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans continue work to identify pathways to compensate committee members for time and expertise, but currently lack the authority to do so. Strategies currently under investigation include procurement of discretionary grants or foundation funding.

Some state agencies have legislative authority to compensate advisory committees through a stipend process, whereas the Commission, Caltrans, and CalSTA do not. The interagency team is carefully analyzing compensation mechanisms and amounts offered by similar State-level advisory groups including the Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group (California Energy Commission and California Public Utilities Commission) and the Environmental Justice Advisory Committee (California Air Resources Board) to inform the Commission's Annual Report recommendations to the Legislature.

The California Air Resources Board's *Draft 2022 Progress Report: California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection* notes in its assessment that there is need for further action in this area. The Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans continue to pursue long-term solutions to compensating Committee members for time and expertise.

Member involvement

The interagency team understands that equity experts in all fields have experienced increasingly high demand for their expertise. With that understanding, we aim to co-create a membership involvement structure that provides meaningful opportunities for Committee member involvement. Additionally, as the Committee continues to take

shape, we hope to engage members to define realistic expectations for involvement. Membership involvement includes the following:

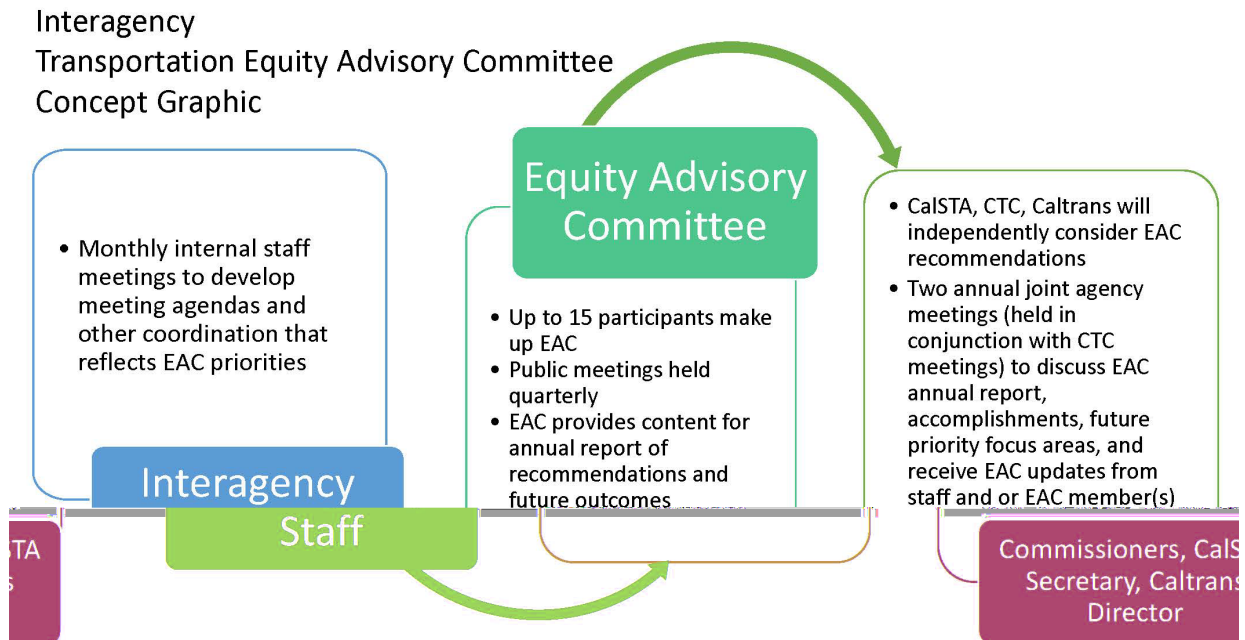
- Four public Committee meetings per year
 - Supported by staff from the Commission, CalSTA, and Caltrans
- Selection of a Committee Chair and Vice Chair to set meeting agendas and plan with interagency staff
 - Committee Chair and Vice Chair are recommended to meet once per month with agency staff
- Two joint public meetings with the Committee, the Commission, Caltrans Director or designee, and CalSTA Secretary, or designee
 - Held to coincide with Commission meetings
- Subject matter experts may be consulted individually to inform policy, procedure, or guideline development
- “Lunch and Learn” Opportunities
 - Optional opportunities to engage in a learning capacity with topics such as transportation equity, planning, policy, and programming
 - Publicly noticed, no agenda, no actions taken

Scope

The Committee is anticipated to review, advise, and make recommendations on transportation related plans, programs or policies that include but are not limited to:

- State transportation planning guidelines
- State transportation funding program guidelines
- State transportation plans
- Quantitative and qualitative metrics for evaluating equity benefits and outcomes
- Incorporation of meaningful community engagement practices into all aspects of transportation work
- Assessment of equitable outcomes in projects
- Assistance with future Racial Equity Action Plans, as applicable
- Development of recommendations regarding best practices to elevate equity in project planning and delivery
- Development of a public participation guidebook

Agency staff will collaborate with Committee members to refine the scope and priorities of the Committee once it is formed.

Concept GraphicNext Steps and Proposed Timeline

- July/August 2022
 - Call for applications
- Mid to late August 2022
 - Applications due
 - Application review
- September 2022
 - Informational meeting for all interested: meet the members and learn about goals for the Equity Advisory Committee
- October 2022
 - Commission action on Committee membership
- Fall/Winter 2022
 - Anticipated Committee meeting #1