



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
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## SPECIAL MEETING

# SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

### REMOTE PARTICIPATION ONLY

**Wednesday, January 27, 2021**  
**3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

#### To Watch or View Only:

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**Call-in Number: 1-669-900-6833**  
**Meeting ID: 950 0168 9639**

***Please see next page for detailed  
instructions on how to participate in the meeting.***

### **PUBLIC ADVISORY**

Given recent public health directives limiting public gatherings due to the threat of COVID-19 and in compliance with the Governor's recent Executive Order N-29-20, the meeting will be held telephonically and electronically.

If members of the public wish to review the attachments or have any questions on any of the agenda items, please contact Rachel Wagner at (213) 236-1960 or via email at [wagner@scag.ca.gov](mailto:wagner@scag.ca.gov). Agendas & Minutes are also available at: [www.scag.ca.gov/committees](http://www.scag.ca.gov/committees).

SCAG, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), will accommodate persons who require a modification of accommodation in order to participate in this meeting. SCAG is also committed to helping people with limited proficiency in the English language access the agency's essential public information and services. You can request such assistance by calling (213) 236-1960. We request at least 72 hours (three days) notice to provide reasonable accommodations and will make every effort to arrange for assistance as soon as possible.



## Instructions for Public Comments

*You may submit public comments in two (2) ways:*

1. Submit written comments via email to: [ePublicComment@scag.ca.gov](mailto:ePublicComment@scag.ca.gov) by 5pm on Tuesday, January 26, 2021.

All written comments received after 5pm on Tuesday, January 26, 2021 will be announced and included as part of the official record of the meeting.

2. If participating via Zoom or phone, during the Public Comment Period, use the “raise hand” function on your computer or \*9 by phone and wait for SCAG staff to announce your name/phone number. SCAG staff will unmute your line when it is your turn to speak. Limit oral comments to 3 minutes, or as otherwise directed by the presiding officer.

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***In accordance with SCAG’s Regional Council Policy, Article VI, Section H and California Government Code Section 54957.9, if a SCAG meeting is “willfully interrupted” and the “orderly conduct of the meeting” becomes unfeasible, the presiding officer or the Chair of the legislative body may order the removal of the individuals who are disrupting the meeting.***

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### OUR VISION

Southern California’s Catalyst for a Brighter Future

### OUR CORE VALUES

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3. Indicate that you are a participant by pressing # to continue.
4. Remain on the line if the meeting has not yet started.
5. You will hear audio of the meeting in progress. Remain on the line if the meeting has not yet started.
6. During the Public Comment Period, press \*9 to add yourself to the queue and wait for SCAG staff to announce your name/phone number. SCAG staff will unmute your line when it is your turn to speak. Limit oral comments to 3 minutes, or as otherwise directed by the presiding officer.

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## SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

### SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Southern California Association of Governments

Remote Participation Only

**Wednesday, January 27, 2021**

**3:00PM**

#### **CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

*(The Honorable Rex Richardson, Chair)*

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Members of the public are encouraged to submit written comments by sending an email to: [ePublicComment@scag.ca.gov](mailto:ePublicComment@scag.ca.gov) by 5pm on Tuesday, January 26, 2021. Such comments will be transmitted to members of the legislative body and posted on SCAG's website prior to the meeting. Written comments received after 5pm on Tuesday, January 26, 2021 will be announced and included as part of the official record of the meeting. Members of the public wishing to verbally address the Special Committee on Equity and Social Justice will be allowed up to 3 minutes to speak, with the presiding officer retaining discretion to adjust time limits as necessary to ensure efficient and orderly conduct of the meeting. The presiding officer has the discretion to reduce the time limit based upon the number of comments received and may limit the total time for all public comments to twenty (20) minutes.

#### **REVIEW AND PRIORITIZE AGENDA ITEMS**

#### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

1. Racial Equity Framework & Early Action Plan 40 Mins.  
*(Kome Ajise, Executive Director)*
2. Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy - Work Plan and Draft Framework 45 Mins.  
*(Jenna Hornstock, Deputy Director of Planning)*

#### **ADJOURNMENT**



Southern California Association of Governments  
Remote Participation Only  
January 27, 2021

To: Special Committee on Equity and Social Justice

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S  
APPROVAL

From: Courtney Aguirre, Program Manager,  
(213) 236-1990, Aguirre@scag.ca.gov

Subject: Racial Equity Framework & Early Action Plan

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Information Only - No Action Required

**STRATEGIC PLAN:**

This item supports the following Strategic Plan Goal 2: Advance Southern California’s policy interests and planning priorities through regional, statewide, and national engagement and advocacy.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Following the November meeting of the Special Committee, SCAG staff have updated the working definition of equity to focus on racial equity and continued to develop the equity inventory and related recommendations. To provide structure for SCAG’s short-, medium-, and long-term work to incorporate racial equity into the agency’s internal and external work, staff have developed a framework for the Early Action Plan (EAP). Staff will provide a presentation on the draft EAP for review and discussion. Next steps include refining the EAP framework and incorporating existing and proposed actions based on Special Committee and other stakeholder feedback, and the findings of the equity inventory. A final EAP will be presented at the March Special Committee meeting as part of a series of additional deliverables to inform the Special Committee’s recommendations and final report to SCAG’s Regional Council.

**BACKGROUND:**

On July 2, 2020, SCAG’s Regional Council adopted Resolution 20-623-2, affirming its commitment to meaningfully advance justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, and declaring its intent to end racial and social disparities within the agency, strengthen the way it engages and convenes to protect and expand community voice and power, and work in partnership with others to close the gap of racial injustice and better serve the region’s communities of color. The resolution called for the formation of an ad hoc Special Committee on Equity and Social Justice to further develop SCAG’s response to advancing social justice throughout the agency’s activities and to advise the Regional Council on policies and practices to advance its resolved intentions. The staff report accompanying the resolution outlined work for the Special Committee, including:

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- Establishing an agency-wide definition of “equity” to build a shared understanding;
- Developing an Equity Inventory Report, which would catalogue the existing equity-related activities throughout SCAG’s departments; and
- Establishing an Equity Framework containing quantitative and qualitative indicators of existing inequities and disparities that exist in the region, and how communities and people in the region experience SCAG’s desired outcomes.

### Equity Definition

SCAG staff first tackled developing a definition of equity. In formulating a working definition of equity, SCAG convened an internal cross-functional working group (the Equity Work Group) of staff to undertake a data and research driven approach, utilizing best practices of equity definitions and related terms from across the region, state, and nation. After the collection and review of definitions and related terms, staff drafted an initial working definition, which then went through multiple rounds of review and feedback from this Special Committee, SCAG staff via an agency-wide survey, and through stakeholder feedback from SCAG’s regional planning working groups. Informed by research, best practices, peer agency review, and guided by input from the Special Committee, SCAG staff, and stakeholders, SCAG identified leading with *racial* equity as a focal point in addressing the pervasive and deep inequities faced by people of color across the region. SCAG recognizes that challenging racism is essential if SCAG is to support the creation of a just and equitable society. Though all dimensions of equity will not be advanced at the same time, SCAG staff will develop the skills needed to address other facets of equity, and through sustained effort, SCAG will build capacity to apply this work to other inequities. The updated working definition of equity for the Planning Division is as follows:

**“As central to SCAG’s work, racial equity describes the actions, policies, and practices that eliminate bias and barriers that have historically and systemically marginalized communities of color, to ensure all people can be healthy, prosperous, and participate fully in civic life.”**

### Early Action Plan

While SCAG staff continue to work on finalizing the equity inventory, which catalogues existing and potential equity-related planning work, and identifying and analyzing equity baseline data indicators, staff have begun crafting a framework for an overarching action plan for the Special Committee’s consideration. The draft Early Action Plan (EAP) is a critical step in ensuring that SCAG’s equity-related work continues to advance and that it endures for years to come, beyond the convening of this Special Committee. The EAP is intended to include a range of internally and externally focused actions, with the understanding that actions could be taken over a period of time, since they may take considerable time and effort. Staff anticipate that actions will be categorized as short-, medium-, and long-term, and that they will necessitate discussion and engagement with and support from internal and external stakeholders. Staff understand that the

work of advancing equity requires continual listening and learning, and that developing the EAP will be an iterative process, with opportunities to identify new actions and commitments going forward. Staff also recognize that to ultimately improve regional conditions, SCAG will need to partner with other agencies and institutions, across sectors, always putting community in the center of efforts.

The framework of the EAP was informed by a publication from Equity in the Center, *Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture*,<sup>1</sup> which provides insights, tactics, and best practices to shift organizational culture and operationalize equity, and by consultation with Professor Charles Brown of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. The framework of the draft EAP (**Attachment 1**) includes three strategies:

- Listen & Learn: Develop a shared understanding of our history of discrimination and the structural barriers that continue to perpetuate the inequities experienced today.
- Engage & Co-Power: Create an environment where everyone is included, able to share their experiences, and equipped to talk about racial equity and inequities.
- Integrate & Institutionalize: Focus on systems change to improve racial equity. Center racial equity in all aspects of work. This involves internal and external systems change.

These three strategies apply across SCAG's core areas of focus and influence:

- Shift the Organizational Culture, which is focused on SCAG's internal work and practices.
- Center Racial Equity in Regional Policy & Planning, which refers to SCAG's regional planning functions.
- Encourage Racial Equity in Local Planning Practices, referring to how SCAG can influence the local elected officials and planning professionals with whom SCAG works and partners.
- Activate and Amplify, in which SCAG commits to communicating more broadly its commitment to racial equity and joining with others in different fields and sectors to amplify impact.

## Discussion

To facilitate a discussion on the draft EAP, SCAG staff will review the framework of the EAP and provide examples of current work underway that aligns with goals and strategies. Staff will then seek the Special Committee's feedback on the following:

1. Does the framework for the draft EAP capture the goals and strategy areas SCAG should prioritize in advancing racial equity in Southern California? Special Committee members should consider the desired end conditions in the region (i.e., What is the vision of the racially just future? What are the desired outcomes? And where could SCAG have the most direct influence in shaping this future?).
2. What early actions would the Special Committee recommend SCAG consider with its stakeholders to address the priorities in the draft EAP?

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<sup>1</sup> *Awake to Woke to Work*: <https://equityinthecenter.org/aww/>, (accessed 13 January 2021).

3. Where do members of the Special Committee see opportunities for partnership with their organizations or others working to advance racial equity in Southern California?
4. Outside of the draft EAP, are there other issues the Special Committee would like to address in its recommendations and final report to SCAG's Regional Council?

SCAG staff understand that development and implementation of the EAP will create opportunities for reflection and learning. Staff recognize that mistakes may be made. However, as the Government Alliance for Race and Equity advises, it is important that an agency and its staff provide a model of reflection and learning for others to emulate.

**Next Steps**

SCAG staff will incorporate feedback on the EAP from the Special Committee as well as feedback from internal and external stakeholders, including but not limited to SCAG Divisions and Departments, Technical Working Groups, Regional Planning Working Groups, and Policy Committees. The final recommended EAP will be presented at the Special Committee's March meeting as part of a draft report for SCAG's Regional Council on the work and recommendations of the Special Committee. In addition, staff will present the findings and recommendations from the Equity Inventory, which may be integrated into the EAP.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Funding for staff work on this issue is included in the Project 21-050.0169.08.

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

1. Draft Racial Equity Early Action Plan Framework

FOCUS: YEARS 1 – 3

# ADVANCING RACIAL EQUITY IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Framework for the Early Action Plan to advance racial equity.

**Overarching goals:**

1. Shift **organizational culture**
2. Center racial equity in **regional policy and planning**
3. Encourage racial equity in **local planning**
4. Activate and amplify **community**



STRATEGIES





Southern California Association of Governments  
Remote Participation Only  
January 27, 2021

To: Special Committee on Equity and Social Justice

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S  
APPROVAL

From: Jenna Hornstock, Deputy Director of Planning,  
(213) 630-1448, hornstock@scag.ca.gov

Subject: Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy - Work Plan and Draft  
Framework

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Information Only - No Action Required

**STRATEGIC PLAN:**

This item supports the following Strategic Plan Goal 1: Produce innovative solutions that improve the quality of life for Southern Californians. 2: Advance Southern California's policy interests and planning priorities through regional, statewide, and national engagement and advocacy.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

*In efforts to implement SCAG Resolution No. 20-623-2 (regarding racial and social equity) and President Rex Richardson's FY20/21 Work Plan, SCAG staff has developed a work plan for development of an Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy (IERS). The IERS Work Plan is based on the President's work plan phases of Listen, Convene, Catalyze. Early phases of listening and data collection occurred between July and December 2020 and culminated in the 2020 Economic Summit on December 1, 2020. Next steps will include holding a series of small convenings and drafting the IERS Strategy document, to be presented at the 2021 General Assembly.*

**BACKGROUND:**

The Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy (IERS) Work Plan was developed to deliver on President Rex Richardson's 2020/2021 Work Plan and also as an early activity under the Regional Policies category in the draft Racial Equity Early Action also being presented at the January 27, 2021 meeting of the Special Committee on Equity and Social Justice. The Work Plan is structured around the three work phases outlined in the 2020/2021 work plan, of listen, convene, catalyze. It builds on listening sessions and data collection produced between July and December 2020, as well as the Equity Indicators generated by the SCAG Equity Working Group, through the National Equity Atlas. The Work Plan was reviewed by SCAG's Executive Team, Chief Economist, the Economist Bench, President Rex Richardson and Professor Charles Brown.

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For Work Plan implementation, SCAG staff will be supported by the consultant firm of Estolano Advisors, with additional research and support from the UC Riverside Center for Social Innovation and the SCAG Economist Bench.

The **Work Plan** phases include:

1. Understand Economic Recovery Planning Efforts to Date (from May 2020 – Nov 2020). Completed work includes outreach through the Summer 2020 listening tours and related working groups and data collection, including development of the COVID Vulnerability Indicators, Economic Summit Briefing Book and National Equity Atlas Racial Equity Indicators.
2. Inventory of Resources (Dec 2020 – March 2021). This work includes: literature review of best practices in economic development and driving policy work through a racial and social equity lens; catalog of economic and community development organizations in each region; research economic recovery efforts underway at the regional, state and federal level; and reference list of public funding sources for economic development. This research and resource inventory will be completed by staff with some consultant support and the final work products will be included as an appendix to the final IERS.
3. Draft Principles and Framework for the IERS (Jan 2021). Staff will develop a presentation deck that provides the draft framework for the IERS. The deck is for discussion purposes and will guide the convenings and feedback sessions that follow. The deck will include: (1) data on racial equity indicators pertaining to economic opportunity; (2) draft guiding principles for the IERS; and (3) draft focus/strategic areas for the IERS. The draft deck, along with the IERS workplan, will be presented to the President’s Committee on Racial and Social Equity on January 27, 2021. Feedback will be incorporated prior to the convenings described in Step 4.
4. Small Group Convenings and Survey (Feb – March 2021). Staff will hold 20 – 30 convenings to vet the draft principles and strategic focus areas, learn about existing efforts across the region, identify strategies from stakeholders and practitioners and identify opportunities for coordination and collaboration. The topic areas, structure, and final list of participants in these convenings will be informed by conversations with SCAG’s public affairs team, President’s Special Committee on Equity and Social Justice, the GLUE (Global Land Use and Economics Committee), SCAG’s economist bench, and completed with consultant support. There will be an emphasis on ensuring that the convenings are racially diverse. Preliminary thoughts on targeted stakeholder groups for the convenings include:
  - 1) **Leaders in key sectors** – entertainment, healthcare, hospitality, manufacturing, bio-tech, technology, energy

- 2) **Developers** – urban and infill, affordable and market rate, commercial and residential
- 3) **Community Based Organizations** that work on economic and community development
- 4) **Foundations** whose mission includes community and economic development
- 5) **Labor Unions and their partners**
- 6) **Workforce training/education/development** – academic and training institutions
- 7) **Municipal entities** that work on economic development, such as Economic Development Corporations, economic development departments
- 8) **Financial sector** – banks and CDFIs/intermediaries

Some of these convenings should be divided by region (have multiple meetings to cover the perspectives of each region) and others can be one sector-based group with “breakout” sessions.

In addition to the convenings, staff will administer a survey to further secure feedback on the draft principles and strategic focus areas for the IERS. Survey questions will be developed with consultant support.

5. **DRAFT IERS Plan (March – April 2021).** Staff will combine the initial research and listening/convening as well as extensive feedback on the draft IERS framework to develop the final IERS. The final IERS will be presented at the 2021 General Assembly and to the Regional Council. The plan will reiterate the final principles and strategic focus areas and provide a set of recommended next steps. These next steps will provide a clear indication of what SCAG can do versus where SCAG can partner, incentivize, and/or leverage resources. The IERS will be augmented with a bibliography of reference and resource materials developed in Step 2.  
SCAG will develop a web landing page dedicated to this work along with a resource hub.

### **The Draft Principles**

Based on an extensive literature review and input from SCAG’s Executive Team and consultants, staff has developed the following draft principles to guide discussion:

- A. Center racial and gender equity** – The IERS will focus on strategies to close the wealth and income gaps across race and gender. Its recommendations will uplift strategies to improve outcomes for communities of color, who have been hit hardest by the economic crisis stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Historically, we know that during times of economic recovery and expansion, these same communities are often left behind and excluded from fully accessing the benefits of a growing economy. We must chart a new path for this recovery so that we do not repeat past shortcomings. As the data suggests, by centering racial and gender equity in our strategies and implementation, we stand to increase the economic impact of our investments.
- B. Rebuild our region’s middle class** – A thriving middle class makes for a thriving economy. We want to build an economy in which every individual and family has economic stability

and security so that they can more fully participate in local and regional economies. Right now, we have a segment of our population, predominantly people of color, that works full-time yet lives below the poverty line. As the economy grows during our recovery, we must ensure that the region's workforce benefits from the value it creates. We can rebuild Southern California's middle class through income growth and wealth generation. We know that we can help lift people out of poverty and into the middle class by focusing on high road employment – increasing the number of family-supporting jobs, ensuring accessible pathways to jobs, and creating opportunities for families to invest their savings in wealth generating vehicles.

- C. Contribute to a climate ready region** – This recovery will be one that respects our workforce and respects our natural resources. As an agency committed to reducing GHG, we can curb the physical, social, and economic impacts of climate change. The IERS will focus on investments that prepare our region for the worsening impacts of climate change such as drought, wildfires, flash floods, and extreme heat. We will seek out opportunities such as adopting and advancing clean technologies, maximizing infill development, and investing in green, multi-benefit infrastructure.
- D. Tailor our strategies** – While many of the overarching needs in our subregions are shared – more jobs, growing sectors, updated infrastructure – we know that a “one-size fits all” approach is inappropriate. The IERS will include strategies that are crafted to reflect the unique needs and opportunities of different subregions and sectors. We will work with local stakeholders to understand what would be most effective in supporting each sector and sub-region's economic recovery, where we can leverage existing assets and efforts, and those with whom we can partner.
- E. Reflect new and diverse voices** – As we know from our experiences and heard from Thomas Friedman at the 2020 Economic Summit, SCAG's impact on our economy will be greatest when we build “Complex Adaptive Coalitions” and work with partners. The IERS will reflect voices from a broad range of stakeholders working across sectors and disciplines to grow a clean and inclusive economy. The strategies we outline will require us to make “the table” bigger, so that we can have more voices and partners engaged in this work. We believe that including a broader range of perspectives in the strategy and its implementation will support aligned and sustained impact.

### **The Draft Strategic Focus Areas**

The draft strategic focus areas were developed through a literature review, an effort to align with anticipated federal funding that will emerge through President Biden's Build Back Better plan, and review from the SCAG Executive Team and consultants. Using the principles to guide, shape and prioritize recommendations, the IERS will recommend key actions in each of the following focus areas:

- 
- A. Transportation** – We will aim to advance a clean and accessible transportation system that meets the needs of historically marginalized communities and increases connectivity and accessibility to high-opportunity jobs. We expect to identify projects of regional significance that support a clean transportation future, hold the promise of creating new, equity-ready jobs, and be ready to move forward in implementation.
  - B. Housing Production** – This section will identify strategies to support production of a range of housing to meet the needs of different householders at all income levels. This will help us ensure that we can have greater jobs-housing balance with critical workforce housing available near jobs. In addition, building new housing will generate new equity-ready construction jobs.
  - C. Infrastructure** – In this focus area, we will identify foundational and catalytic infrastructure projects that will change the trajectory of our regional economy. These will be projects of regional significance that will create accessible, high-quality jobs and help to close the gap in long-term economic outcomes. Much needed infrastructure includes broadband, a smart grid, stormwater management, water recycling, and other green infrastructure.
  - D. Sector Based Strategies** – The IERS will identify top needs of growth industries and sectors that provide the greatest opportunities for middle class, family supporting jobs – jobs that are accessible and have meaningful career ladders within the industry. These sectors will vary across subregions as they leverage local assets, and the same industries’ needs and challenges may vary across sub-regions. This section will also identify strategies for SCAG and its partners to help local early-stage firms within these sectors access capital and space and expand their operations and their workforce.
  - E. Human Capital** – To truly improve the lives of Southern Californians, we must ensure that individuals and households have access to the supports they need to thrive in their jobs and pursuit of economic mobility. We acknowledge that a range of underlying obstacles, barriers, and circumstances stemming from institutional racism in our country’s policies affect historically marginalized communities’ ability to fully participate in the economy. These obstacles include lack of access to affordable transportation choices, unaffordable childcare and mental/public health services, financial obligations that prevent individuals from completing critical training programs, and more. Job creation via land use strategies and infrastructure investments alone will not pull our region out of the current economic crisis – we must invest in people.

Staff will seek feedback on the draft principles and strategic focus areas from the Special Committee on Equity and Social Justice, the GLUE council, and through the survey and convenings.



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**NEXT STEPS**

SCAG staff will incorporate feedback from the Special Committee on the draft principles and strategic focus areas and will schedule the small group convenings in February and March 2021. An update report will be provided to the Special Committee at the March 2021 meeting and the final Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy will be presented at the May 2021 General Assembly.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Work associated with this item is included in the FY 20-21 Overall Work Program (055-1531.01, So Cal Economic Growth Strategy).