

August 22, 2024

## **Attachment A: Strategic Growth Council Agency Updates**

Includes racial equity updates from the following State agencies:

- A. California Business, Consumer Services, and Housing
- B. California Department of Food and Agriculture
- C. California Environmental Protection Agency
- D. California Health and Human Services Agency
- E. California Natural Resources Agency
- F. California State Transportation Agency
- G. Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
- H. Racial Equity Commission

## A: California Business, Consumer Services, and Housing

**To:** California Strategic Growth Council and Members of the Public  
**From:** California Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency (BCSH)  
**Reporting Period:** September 2023 – August 2024

### Background

With more than 7,800 employees and a \$7.6 billion department-wide operating budget, BCSH is responsible for fostering a thriving, equitable and inclusive California. Through our oversight and support of twelve entities and over 36 boards and bureaus, BCSH funds and facilitates the preservation and expansion of safe, affordable housing; advances statewide collaborative efforts to prevent and end homelessness; licenses and regulates over four million professionals, businesses, and financial services and safeguards and enforces California’s civil rights laws.

### Updates

#### *Policy and Programs*

- The California Civil Rights Department (CRD) launched the California vs Hate Resource Line and Network, a non-emergency hate incident and hate crime reporting system to support individuals and communities targeted for hate. During its first year, the program had 2,118 contacts from members of the public seeking assistance, received 1,020 actual reports of hate based on the information provided and connected people in over 80% of California’s counties with 112 different types of services and support.
- CRD’s Community Conflict Resolution Unit (CCRU) works with communities to constructively manage or resolve conflict associated with discrimination and hate. During the past reporting period, representative matters include working with Pacific Islander communities to address alleged discrimination in access to public services and assisting the California Truth and Healing Council to address longstanding issues of equity faced by tribal nations and Native communities.
- The Department of Alcohol and Beverage Control (ABC) is assessing equity gaps in enforcement operations by overlaying activities with community partnership maps to identify disproportionate impact and is planning to publish an annual report on demographics of arrests to develop targeted, community-informed education efforts and provide additional equity training for sworn staff.
- The Department of Cannabis Control (DCC) incorporated equity data into its licensing system to track the number of businesses owned by people harmed by cannabis criminalization, referred to as equity businesses, view data related to the activity of equity businesses, and potentially target equity businesses with more direct technical assistance. DCC also created an equity retailer designation in the [Cannabis Unified License Search](#) so the public can identify and shop at equity businesses.
- The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) created a Tribal Homekey Program to improve grant accessibility to tribal communities. The changes included dedicated funds reserved exclusively for tribal communities, a streamlined

application process, and additional time provided for tribes to prepare and submit proposals.

- HCD staff continue to review local jurisdiction's housing elements for compliance with state housing element law, including an analysis of governmental constraints to the development of housing for the disabled and special needs groups and provide technical assistance in developing effective programs to remove or mitigate identified constraints.
- The Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) California State Athletic Commission extended an existing agreement and executed two new agreements with tribal nations to regulate combat sports on tribal land and ensure participant safety.
- The California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH) launched the Racial Equity Working group to embed equity in the [Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness](#) and ensure equitable homelessness interventions among member agencies.
- Cal ICH updated their data management and reporting system to allow for multiple races and ethnicity categories in which an individual identifies. Additionally, Racial Equity Funding Technical Assistance was provided to local homelessness response systems that supported equity-based lens interventions like trainings to improve culturally-responsive services and system coordination.
- Cal ICH also awarded \$20 million in flexible homelessness funding through the Tribal Homeless Housing and Prevention Program (Tribal HHAP). As flexible funding, this enables Cal ICH to support priority housing and homelessness projects identified by each tribe. Tribal HHAP solicited formal and informal tribal consultation to develop the program.

### ***Engagement and Outreach***

- Cal ICH solicited tribal consultation on the Action Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in the Spring of 2024. Cal ICH is utilizing feedback received to inform the Action Plan, including actions and priorities that will serve the needs of tribes.
- The California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) executed a targeted marketing and outreach campaign for the [Dream For All Shared Appreciation Loan](#) program. Diverse targeting included partnering with organizations who are trusted partners in Black, Latino, and Asian American communities, to effectively reach historically underserved communities.
- The Cannabis Control and Appeals Panel (CCAP) completed outreach to over 60 affinity bar associations in California and completed presentations designed for legal practitioners specializing in cannabis-related law to help potential appellants understand and exercise their due process rights.
- The DCC conducted interviews with equity business operators and stakeholders to gather feedback on the experience with State and local jurisdictions to create a more equitable cannabis industry and engaged local jurisdictions with newly created equity programs to provide advice and assistance on program development and implementation.



- The Department of Real Estate (DRE) is expanding outreach to diversify the pool of subject matter experts that participate in the DRE licensing exam development process to ensure that the exam represents the diversity of California and targeted outreach reaches more diverse candidates for licensure.
- DCA's Acupuncture Board released its strategic planning survey in four languages (English, Spanish, Chinese, and Korean). 75% of the surveys were completed in a language other than English.
- DCA's Contractors State License Board translated 10 examinations commonly taken by candidates to Spanish, including the Law and Business examination that is required of all applicants. For all other trade examinations and languages, accommodations are made for applicants to be joined by an approved translator during the examination.

### ***Workforce and Workplace Engagement***

- ABC created and filled the executive position of Equity Officer to oversee and advance intersectional equity efforts, both internally and externally, and is creating an Equity Advisory Committee aimed at fostering innovative solutions to embed intersectional equity, including racial justice.
- ABC Appeals Board staff and Board members have received unconscious bias training to ensure they are equipped with tools to acknowledge and mitigate their internal biases.
- CRD hired its first Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) coordinator whose role involves embedding equity in the department's recruitment, hiring, and retention efforts and updating internal policies and procedures to be maximally inclusive.
- DRE is participating in CalHR's pilot program of anonymous hiring to eliminate potential bias during the recruitment process, preparing an annual comprehensive DEI report to identify gaps and areas for improvement, and continuing to incorporate training to promote a more inclusive environment.
- HCD's Legal Affairs Division was awarded the silver seal from the State Bar of California's DEI leadership seal program.
- DCA prioritized DEI-related training for all staff. SOLID trainers, who are DEI-certified, created new DEI-related training courses and facilitated trainings from external DEI consultants, which resulted in over 2,000 DEI related course completions.
- CalHFA completed blind application reviews for all open positions to ensure applicants are treated fairly during the hiring process.

### **Next Steps**

- BCSH is working with departments to establish Language Access Plan minimum standards and will work with departments to create and implement Language Access Plans in 2025.
- BCSH is committed to strengthening our government-to-government relationship with California Tribes through meaningful engagement and consultation.
- BCSH will continue to lead the Agency-wide Community of Practice and focus on examining and addressing disparities in program outcomes.

## **B: California Department of Food and Agriculture**

**To:** California Strategic Growth Council and Members of the Public  
**From:** California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)  
**Reporting Period:** September 2023 – August 2024

### **Background**

The mission of CDFA is to serve the citizens of California by promoting and protecting a safe, healthy food supply, and enhancing local and global agricultural trade, through efficient management, innovation, and sound science, with a commitment to environmental stewardship.

The Farmer Equity Act (AB 1348) was passed in Fall 2017. This legislation was created to increase support and access to resources and information for the growing number of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers throughout California. Socially disadvantaged groups have been subjected to racial, ethnic, and gender prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities. Socially disadvantaged groups, as defined in AB 1348, are African Americans, Native Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanic, Latino/a, Asian Americans, and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islander groups. Other historically underserved groups of farmers include urban farmers, veteran farmers, women farmers, and LGBTQ+ farmers.

Since 2018, CDFA has worked with the Farm Equity Advisor to create new programs, policies, communications, and strategies for addressing racial equity, both within the agency as well as with our agricultural stakeholders. In 2021 and 2022, CDFA participated in the Capital Cohort on Race and Equity (CCORE) and created a draft racial equity action plan as a result of the department's participation in the cohort.

CDFA's racial equity action plan was released in Fall 2023, accessible at the following link: [CDFA - CDFA Racial Equity Action Plan \(ca.gov\)](#). CDFA is also updating the five- year strategic plan, which will be public in late 2024. The strategic plan will build upon the goals and vision of the REAP, and embed equity throughout the plan, in alignment with Executive Order N-16-22.

More information on the Farm Equity Office at the Department of Food and Agriculture can be found on the new webpage: [CDFA - Farm Equity Homepage \(ca.gov\)](#)

### **CDFA Racial Equity Action Plan**

CDFA has published a REAP, accessible at the following link: [CDFA - CDFA Racial Equity Action Plan \(ca.gov\)](#).

Throughout 2023, CDFA hosted staff work groups, listening sessions, and events to incorporate feedback from CDFA staff on this plan. This is CDFA's first REAP. It was developed as a component of the Capital Cohort on Race & Equity (CCORE) training that CDFA participated in 2020-21.

***CDFA BIPOC and Small-Scale Producer Advisory Committees***

Building upon the recommendations and mandates of AB 1348, the Farmer Equity Act, CDFA has created two new advisory committees to ensure historically underserved producers have a voice in CDFA programs, policies, and initiatives. The BIPOC Producer Advisory Committee and the Small-Scale Producer Advisory Committee were created in 2023, and the first official public meetings of the groups were in November 2023. These committees serve as one mechanism through which CDFA is embedding equity and ensuring underserved producers have an active voice and are guiding CDFA programs, policies, and initiatives. More information on the two committees can be found on their respective webpages. Each group meets quarterly, and all meetings are accessible through virtual participation.

These committees are the first of their kind at CDFA and represent the agencies' efforts to embed equity throughout programs and policies, while simultaneously creating a mechanism for BIPOC and historically underserved producers to have a voice in CDFA programs, policies and practices.

***CDFA Internal Equity Initiatives***

**The CDFA Disability Advisory Committee (DAC)** continues the following:

- Awareness events and campaigns to fight the stigma associated with disabilities including Autism, mental illness, and invisible disabilities.
- Hiring Taskforce charged with attending various career fairs specifically for people with disabilities and connecting with organizations for people with disabilities to provide education and information on the Limited Exam and Appointment Program (LEAP), Reasonable Accommodations, and the state hiring process.
- ADA compliance taskforce tasked with auditing Department structures and documents for ADA compliance and developing an avenue for people with disabilities to grieve ADA concerns.

**The CDFA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee** continues to work to benefit the various marginalized identities within the Department and those who engage with the Department. CDFA's DEI Committee has hosted several panel discussions for various monthly celebrations, such as National Hispanic Heritage Month, Women's History Month, Asian American and Pacific Islander Month, and Pride Month. The DEI Committee is also working on collaborating with other State agencies to further this important work.

**Language Access Initiatives** – The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) has hired a Bilingual Services and Language Access Coordinator tasked with the duty of maintaining Language Access in accordance with the Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act. Upcoming initiatives include:

- Policy requirement that all external facing documents be available in at least Spanish, regardless of whether it meets the legal threshold. Enforcement began January 2024.
- Policy requirement to conduct a biennial language survey every even-numbered year to identify deficiencies in meeting the requirements of the Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act and to develop an implementation plan to correct any deficiencies.

- Policy requirement that all Public Contact Employees complete a Language Access training every 4 years, developed by the OCR, that gives direction on how to interact with limited English proficient individuals.
- Increase number of bilingual certified employees:
  - Current Number: 175
  - End of 2024 Goal: 250
- Encourage programs to incorporate more bilingual pay based on the needs with engaged stakeholders.
  - Current number of CDFA employees earning bilingual pay: 113
  - End of 2024 goal: 120

### ***CDFA Grant Programs***

CDFA continues to prioritize funding for socially disadvantaged producers and small-scale producers through a variety of programs:

- Climate Smart Agriculture Programs (HSP, SWEEP, AMMP, Dairy)
- California Underserved and Small Producer Program
- Beginning Farmer and Farmworker Training and Workforce Development Grant
- Urban Agriculture Grant Program
- Farm to School Grant Program
- Organic Transitions Pilot Program

In all these programs, staff are finding innovative ways to embed equity and prioritize funding for those most underserved groups. Practices include: extended application periods or staggered application periods to allow additional time for underserved or low-capacity organizations or producers, set aside funding for SDFR groups, extended or additional listening sessions offered in advance of development of the request for proposal to allow ample time for input on the program, flexibility in program delivery to include advance payments, materials available in languages other than English, and funding for technical assistance to ensure producers can successfully apply and have support throughout the duration of the funding. CDFA is building in racial equity concepts throughout the grantmaking process, ensuring more funding is allocated to those most historically underserved through grant programs.

### ***Technical Assistance (TA)***

- CDFA incorporated TA into 70% of all grant programs in 2023, and 86% of grant programs in which producers are directly eligible to apply. 2024 data will be available by the end of the calendar year, due to shifting grant program deadlines.
- CDFA hired a TA Coordinator within the Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation (OEFI) in Spring 2024, who now serves as the agency lead for TA, ensuring all of the climate smart ag grant programs have technical assistance embedded within the programs, as well as develop staff training on TA best practices. The TA coordinator is developing an annual training for all CDFA staff as well as grantees within the Climate Smart Ag grant programs.

- The CDFA Farm to School Program has hired sixteen regional staff who serve as technical assistance providers throughout the State for building bridges to participation in the Farm to School program. The regional staff have focused on Tribal engagement as a component of their outreach and engagement work.
- The CDFA Farm Equity Advisor continues to host an internal tribal outreach and Engagement Work Group to ensure that CDFA staff are continuously learning and sharing best practices on tribal outreach and engagement. This work group also participates in the annual Native American Day in September and develops internal best practices for tribal engagement.
- CDFA participated in an interagency forum and panel on TA and capacity building hosted by the California Health in All Policies Task Force, with the aim of informing and supporting state government practitioners in advancing equity through their TA and capacity building programs.

### Next Steps

CDFA has gone through an internal process to create a five-year Strategic Plan. Building on EO N-16-22, the strategic plan embeds equity and key metrics from the REAP to further the commitment to ensuring equity is at the forefront of all aspects of CDFA's work. Once the Strategic Plan is public in late 2024, there will be public listening sessions for both the REAP and Strategic Plan.

Development of a series of DEI trainings to be provided both in person and virtually to CDFA. CDFA is currently testing a first series of the training with a focus group. Further roll out and development of the training is expected between 2024 and 2025, with the aim of training front line supervisors across all divisions by 2025.



## **C: California Environmental Protection Agency**

**To:** California Strategic Growth Council and Members of the Public  
**From:** California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)  
**Reporting Period:** September 2023 – August 2024

### **Background**

CalEPA seeks to ensure public health, improve and maintain environmental quality, and vitalize the green economy for all Californians. CalEPA comprises 6 boards, departments, and offices (BDOs): California Air Resources Board, Department of Pesticide Regulation, Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle), Department of Toxic Substances Control, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, and the State Water Resources Control Board.

### **California Environmental Protection Agency Updates**

#### ***California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)***

In 2021, CalEPA implemented a Memorandum of Understanding with U.S. EPA Region 9 focused on collaborative efforts on enforcement and compliance assurance in overburdened communities. In December 2023, USEPA and CalEPA met with community leaders to gather feedback on implementation of the 2023 Action Plan and were provided insights and feedback. The joint 2024/2025 Environmental Justice Enforcement Action Plan renews CalEPA's commitment to enhanced, sustained engagement with residents in overburdened communities, institutionalization of the Rapid Response Task Force, and increased transparency and access to environmental compliance information. This approach will strengthen our connections with communities that include enhancing opportunities for information sharing across communities and improving communication across CalEPA's programs, Boards, Departments, and Offices.

#### ***California Air Resources Board (CARB)***

- The Office of Racial Equity filled four positions to coordinate implementation of racial equity policies across CARB and all its external facing policies, programs, and regulations.
  - A Racial Equity Inventory of CARB's programmatic work is being developed by University of California Santa Cruz and University of Southern California researchers (June 2024 to June 2027).
- CARB will release a Racial Equity Update on all racial equity efforts (Summer 2024). These efforts will be discussed at an informational CARB Board Meeting in early 2025.
- CARB will release a summary report of the Racial Equity Lens piloting exercises (Fall 2024)
- The 2016 Civil Rights Policy and Discrimination Process is being updated through a community engagement process. Adoption is anticipated in early 2025.
- Community Air Protection Program Blueprint 2.0 was adopted by the CARB Board in October 2023 and lists priority commitments that include centering racial equity and

civil rights. The Office of Community Air Protection expanded the Community Air Protection (CAP) Incentive Guidelines making it possible for more types of projects to receive funding based on community-driven solutions that reduce emissions and exposure to harmful pollutants.

- CARB announced the award of \$10 million in Community Air Grants to 42 local non-profit organizations and California Native American tribes for projects that focus on air pollution reduction efforts across the state.
- Internal Equity Section (IES) (established February 2023) advances diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) in CARB's internal operations. IES encompasses the Diversity and Racial Equity (DaRE) Task Force, workforce demographics, DEIB training, CARB's implementation of Executive Order N-16-22, and overseeing equity workgroups for each of CARB's divisions.
  - DEIB Training offerings, delivered by CARB's Racial Equity Training Team, include the Advancing Racial Equity at CalEPA curriculum (36% of all CARB staff have been trained, including 80% of managers); a Microaggression Training series; and avenues for staff to seek general guidance on DEIB topics or request assistance facilitating racial equity conversations. In June 2024, CARB began an in-house racial equity Train-the-Trainer Program. Successful trainer candidates will join CARB's Racial Equity Training Team in January 2025.
  - Continued progress on CARB's Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP), developed in response to Executive Order N-16-22, which includes four objectives for CARB to embed equity in internal and external operations.
- The Community Engagement Capacity Building team has groundtruthed a draft Community Engagement Model (CEM) with 19 community experts across 9 public meetings with over 200 attendees. The revised CEM is projected for release in December 2024. When complete, the Model will provide a tool to enhance CARB's equitable engagement with communities across California.

### ***Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR)***

- In Fall 2023, the Governor signed [AB 652](#), requiring DPR to convene an Environmental Justice Advisory Committee (EJAC) by January 1, 2026. The EJAC will provide recommendations to the department on meaningful engagement with communities most impacted by pesticide use, and incorporating environmental justice considerations into DPR programs, policies, and decision-making.
- DPR released a draft 2024-28 strategic plan in September 2023 for public comment and tribal consultation. The draft strategic plan includes four goals and fourteen subgoals that touch on meaningful engagement with disadvantaged communities and California Native American tribes, expanding culturally relevant education and outreach, prioritizing data collection and analysis, and creating an inclusive workplace through equitable recruitment and retention.
- In February 2024, DPR launched a pilot "language access hub," providing interpretation and translation services in more than 100 languages to County Agricultural Commissioners (CAC) and their staff to support activities related to their pesticide use



enforcement programs. Members of the public can request these services during an inspection, when reporting a pesticide illness or incident, when visiting or calling a CAC office, or receiving an inspection report, notice, email, or flyer.

- DPR is developing a statewide pesticide notification system, called “SprayDays California,” to provide the public with advance, transparent, and equitable access to information about agricultural restricted material pesticide applications prior to their use. DPR anticipates launching the statewide pesticide notification system in the first quarter of 2025.

### ***Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)***

- OEHHA focused on enhancing science communication and capacity building through cultural humility and language justice trainings. In the fall of 2023, OEHHA hosted a series of workshops on effective writing focused on how to simplify scientific language, incorporate visuals, expand bilingual resources, and provide accessible presentations to communities and different audiences.
- OEHHA is leading several collaborative efforts partnering directly with community-based organizations (CBOs) and Tribes to develop a community science model, improve CalEnviroScreen through a community-driven, co-designed approach, and ensure training for staff on equity and environmental justice principles across OEHHA.
- In 2023, OEHHA continued its collaboration with California Native American tribes for the Climate Indicators Report.

### ***State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB or Water Board)***

- In January 2024, the SWRCB released [its first annual report on the Racial Equity Action Plan](#), outlining progress on goals to equitably preserve, enhance, and restore California’s water resources for all Californians. The Annual Report, along with an [interactive online dashboard to track Action Plan progress](#), was presented at a Board meeting. Regional water boards, including North Coast, San Francisco Bay, Central Coast, Central Valley, Santa Ana, and San Diego, are developing or have completed their racial equity resolutions and plans.
- New equity-focused positions were hired, including a Workplace Equity and Inclusion Advisor, Equity and Inclusion Training Specialist, Equity Data Specialist, and Tribal Affairs Program Manager. A second racial equity survey was implemented, and results showed increased support for equity efforts.
- The Racial Equity Train-the-Trainer program has certified over 20 trainers and over 900 employees have participated in the course, “Advancing Racial Equity at the Water Board.” The Water Board Training Academy now offers on-demand DEI content. A Racial Equity Training Advisory Committee was convened and developed competencies to guide training assessments and development.
- Over the last five years, the Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience drinking water program has provided over \$831 million in grants for drinking water solutions in disadvantaged communities, completed 120 consolidations benefiting over



90,000 people, and has placed all 380 failing drinking water systems on a plan towards a long-term solution.

### ***Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle)***

- Under Assembly Bill 649 (Bennett, Chapter 492, Statutes of 2022), CalRecycle established the Office of Environmental Justice, Tribal Relations, Education and Outreach (EJTREO). In November 2023, CalRecycle appointed a Deputy Director to lead the office. As directed by AB 649, the purpose of the office is to ensure that CalRecycle's programs effectively engage and address the needs and priorities of disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, California Native American tribes, and farmworkers.
- In coordination with CalRecycle's Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, the office also leads the Racial Equity Team at CalRecycle which includes staff across all offices within CalRecycle to ensure efforts address the full scope of CalRecycle's programs and policies. The Racial Equity Team was established in 2022 to advance racial equity both within CalRecycle (internal) and for communities across California as it relates to CalRecycle programs and policies (external). The Racial Equity Team includes subgroups to address specific initiatives deemed a high priority to foster equity and better support communities of color. The subgroups include: Internal Racial Equity, Community Engagement, Grant Programs, Language Access, Disaster Debris Removal and Recovery, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and Tribal Engagement.

### ***Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)***

- DTSC has implemented 80% of the Racial Equity Framework Action Plan since its creation in April 2023. DTSC's Executive Sponsorship Team and the DEIB Advisory Council, consisting of 12 DTSC employees throughout the state, collaborated on the following:
  - Created internal surveys to set a baseline and measure improvement regarding the department's DEIB and employee experience. This included a department-wide employee scan (1100 employees invited to participate), listening tour with groups of employees and executives, and an organizational assessment.
  - Presented quarterly on topics such as Diversity in the Workplace, and Equity versus Equality, Racial Equity Experience, etc.
  - Distributed internal e-newsletter articles with first-person accounts of inclusion and representation.
  - Established affinity groups in conjunction with other CalEPA BDOs.
  - Standardized questions regarding DEIB and/or Environmental Justice in the recruitment (duty statement) and interview process.
  - Created a DEIB Anonymous Feedback Form available for comments and questions directed to executive leadership regarding DEIB.
- All managers are required to participate in a CalEPA Advancing Racial Equity training. Several have taken the training and it will continue to be offered throughout the year.



- Clean-up in Vulnerability Communities Initiative (CVCI) Equitable Community Revitalization Grant (ECRG) Program awarded Round 2 grants in Spring 2024 to 31 organizations including one tribal government. The grants assist with addressing environmental investigations and cleanups at sites in vulnerable communities throughout California.
- DTSC's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) is conducting CalHR's Biennial Language Access Survey which will identify resource shortfalls with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and will help DTSC respond to the needs of communities with LEP.
- OCR and the Office of Environmental Equity (OEE) are increasing the base of employees with bilingual certification to respond to growing need for on-going interpretation in diverse languages for many of DTSC's projects.
- OCR is beta testing two resources that may address growing language access needs: TEAMs Pro, which could be helpful with some interpretation or translation needs; and a new software that offers a certified translator or interpreter and can assist with American Sign Language.
- DTSC's Office of Civil Rights added the new position of Equity Analyst for the Department.

### Next Steps

- CARB is developing a plan to launch and implement the Racial Equity Lens to all CARB divisions, which includes an external engagement process.
- DPR will be finalizing the draft strategic plan in 2024 to align with resources allocated as part of the 2024-25 Budget Act.
- DPR's Internal DEI Workgroup is currently drafting proposals for a DEI "lunch and learn series" and in-person cross-cultural observance events. The workgroup anticipates launching these initiatives early 2025.
- OEHHA plans to launch a new multimedia training program focused on core racial equity learnings for all staff.
- SWRCB plans to distribute a third iteration of the racial equity employee survey.
- SWRCB will advance Tribal Beneficial Use designations across regional water boards.
- In 2024 and 2025, CalRecycle plans to train additional Racial Equity Trainers to launch Racial Equity Training with the goal of training all staff members by Spring 2026. Through the Racial Equity Team, CalRecycle will continue to focus on developing meaningful initiatives and resources to improve programs and support CalRecycle staff in advancing equity. In 2024, EJTREO plans to grow from two employees, to eight employees focused on the implementation of AB 649 to further strengthen CalRecycle's ability to better serve all Californians in the transition to zero waste in California.
- DTSC is preparing "train-the-trainer" for topics related to DEIB. The "train-the-trainer" work contributes to a roster of in-house subject matter experts for the coming months and years, allowing DTSC to have resources to train the entire Department.



- DTSC's OCR will be working with the Office of Environmental Information Management on a system to track requests received for information in other languages. This function will allow DTSC to recognize needs in a more timely manner.



## D: California Health and Human Services Agency

**To:** California Strategic Growth Council and Members of the Public  
**From:** California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS)  
**Reporting Period:** September 2023 – August 2024

### Background

At CalHHS, equity means giving individuals the help they need to achieve equal outcomes to others. This work requires acknowledging that individuals are starting from unequal places, some of which is due to historical and structural discrimination. Equity seeks to correct this imbalance. Our efforts continue to advance equity across the agency in collaboration with departments and offices.

As an example of an agency-wide equity initiative, CalHHS developed a Language Access Policy in May 2023. Over the course of the last year, CalHHS Agency, departments and offices have collaborated to implement language access plans. Departments and offices have posted their plans and are in the process of providing additional translation and interpretation services pursuant to their plans.

Through its Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Subcommittee, CalHHS continues to grow a community of practice to further operationalize and embed equity. Below are few examples of department and office equity initiatives active during the reporting period.

### Agency and Department Updates

#### ***California Department of Aging (CDA)***

CDA provides statewide leadership on the Governor’s Master Plan for Aging and is charged with implementation by CalHHS. The department’s Equity Advisory Committee on Aging & Disability advises CDA and helps inform the Master Plan for Aging to ensure that equity is embedded into the planning and implementation of activities, service delivery, and policies impacting older adults, adults with disabilities, and family caregivers, specifically those from Black, Indigenous, Latino/a, Asian-American, Pacific Islander, and LGBTQ+ communities.

In May 2024, in conjunction with Older Californians Month, CDA updated California’s Aging Resource Guide and distributed as an insert in 51 English and 25 ethnic media publications, totaling approximately two million copies. Additional distribution channels included Area Agencies on Aging, libraries, and pharmacies to reach a wider audience. The [printed Aging in California Resource Guide](#) is available in English, Chinese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, and Tagalog. An expanded [online version of the resource guide](#) is available.

#### ***California Department of Public Health (CDPH)***

**The Office of Health Equity’s Climate Change & Health Equity Branch’s** Tribal Climate Change Health Equity Policy and Program Specialist offered technical assistance for federally recognized and non-federally recognized Tribes across California, including a contract with the Pala Band of Mission Indians to develop a Tribal Heat Mitigation Plan; and a contract with the Tule River

Tribe to develop a Mitigation Plan that will include extensive analysis of climate-related hazards, vulnerable populations, health, and housing conditions. An interim Hazard Mitigation Plan annexed onto the Tulare County plan to gain access to funding from FEMA via the County has been completed. The team is supporting the Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake to develop a Climate and Health Vulnerability Assessment to identify locations, populations, and assets vulnerable to climate-related impacts. The Branch supported qualitative data gathering for a CDC-led Rapid Needs Assessment with the Hoopa Valley Tribe in the Fall of 2023, as well as a report on the project for the Tribe.

**The Office of Health Equity's Climate Change & Health Equity Branch** developed a curriculum for Community Health Workers on the health impacts of climate change and potential health improvements from energy efficiency and weatherization services such as weatherstripping, insulation, new windows, and energy-efficient appliances. Twenty-five Community Health Workers have been trained at Kaweah Health in Tulare County, where they assist mostly Latinx and Indigenous farmworker families to access weatherization and energy efficiency services provided by Proteus, Inc., to improve housing conditions and health outcomes such as heat-related illness and respiratory conditions due to wildfire smoke, air pollution, or mold.

### ***California Department of Social Services (CDSS)***

**Racial Equity and Implicit Bias Statewide Initiative:** The Racial Equity and Implicit Bias (REIB) Statewide Initiative is a CDSS effort to provide racial equity and implicit bias awareness education to staff and programs that support California's CalWORKs and CalFresh program participants. This Initiative began delivering workshops, collaboratives, and virtual learning opportunities since July 2023 and will continue through December 2024. Since September 1, 2023, the Statewide Initiative has delivered 346 individual sessions and has shared the curriculum and learnings at a variety of events, including participation in the 2023 CalFresh Healthy Living Forum. Conference attendees were able to experience condensed versions of two core workshops, REIB: The Change and Historical Roots of Racism in the Public Sector. Also, on November 14, 2023, a panel discussion was held at the Fall 2023 CalFresh Operations Roundtable, titled *Disrupting Poverty: Paving the Way to Equity and Inclusion*. This conversation with county workers from Calaveras County, Napa County and San Joaquin County highlighted their counties' DEI efforts and their experiences with the Statewide Initiative.

**Housing and Homelessness Division Tribal Engagement:** Through a Tribal Set-Aside from July 2022, the Department has awarded \$35 million to a total of 25 tribes and tribal entities for Bringing Families Home, Home Safe, and the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program. As of July 2024, 63 new tribal programs have been launched and are in various stages of implementation. Two additional tribal programs are expected to launch soon, for a total of 65 new tribal programs operating throughout the State via funding awarded under the Tribal Set-Aside. Additionally, \$570 million was made available for the Community Care Expansion Capital Expansion Program, with a five percent (\$28.5 million) Tribal Set-Aside. Of the \$28.5 million, \$9.5 million have been awarded to tribes to date with the remaining funds expected to be awarded soon.

### ***Department of Developmental Services (DDS)***





**Service Access and Equity Grant Program:** [Assembly Bill X2 1 \(Chapter 3, Statutes of 2016\)](#) established the [Service Access and Equity Grant Program](#) which awards \$11 million annually to community-based organizations and regional centers to implement strategies to reduce disparities and increase equity in Regional Center services. Regional Centers are contractors that work with DDS to deliver services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Grants are one of the many equity-based programs DDS has implemented to improve equity and access to DDS services, including to people who have historically not had access to DDS offerings. The grant program recently kicked off the 2024-25 grant cycle and is currently accepting new applicants. Over 260,000 individuals have been served statewide since the grant program was established in 2016.

**Community Navigator Program:** The Community Navigator Program equips Family Resource Centers statewide with navigators who have lived experience, share cultural, demographic, and linguistic backgrounds with the local communities and individuals they support. Built on the community health worker model, this initiative is one of the seedlings from Service Access and Equity Grant Program projects which include integradoras, promotoras, and navigators. Navigators walk alongside individuals and families to build trust and assist with overcoming barriers in accessing and utilizing regional center and generic services. Since 2022, over 80 community navigators have been hired across the state and approximately 4,500 families have received navigation support.

#### ***Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)***

DHCS developed a **Health Equity Framework** to guide efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate disparities in health care across population groups. The framework promotes addressing the root causes of health inequities through policies and practices, the integration of equity into all aspects of health system operations, the collaboration of community partners through a multisectoral approach to address social determinants of health, and emphasizes the intentional engagement and empowerment of historically marginalized and underserved communities in the design, implementation, and evaluation of health equity initiatives.

DHCS also launched its **Health Equity Roadmap** as part of California's broader health equity strategy, which is an ongoing, multiphase process to create a more equitable, person-centered Medi-Cal health care delivery system. DHCS' goal is to ensure access to quality, equitable health care for underserved groups, particularly Black, Indigenous, Latino/a, Asian-American, Pacific Islander, and LGBTQ+ communities.

#### ***Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC)***

In October 2023, the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) reconvened the Health Equity and Quality Committee to establish a benchmark for the Health Equity and Quality Measure Set, which was first established in 2022 with the goal addressing longstanding health inequities and ensuring the equitable delivery of high-quality health care across all markets. The benchmark for each measure was set at the national Medicaid Health Maintenance Organization 50th percentile and each aggregate and stratified measure result will be assessed

at this 50th percentile. The DMHC will begin receiving data on the Health Equity and Quality Measure Set in Summer 2024 and will produce the first report with the results in 2025.

The DMHC convened the Transgender, Gender Diverse, or Intersex Health Care Quality Standards and Training Curriculum Working Group to make recommendations to the Department, as required by Senate Bill 923 (2022). The Working Group's purpose was to develop a quality standard for patient experience to measure cultural competency related to the Transgender, Gender Diverse, or Intersex community and recommend a trans-inclusive training curriculum to be used by health care plan staff who are in direct contact with enrollees in the delivery of health care services. The Working Group met nine times from April 2023 to February 2024, in addition to hosting four statewide listening sessions in Fall 2023, which highlighted the intersection of racial and gender-identity discrimination, amongst other types of discrimination, as barriers to access to health care for members of the Transgender, Gender Diverse, or Intersex community. A report with the Working Group's recommendations was released in April 2024: [Transgender, Gender Diverse, or Intersex Working Group Recommendations](#).

The DMHC was awarded a [DEI Leadership Seal](#) by The State Bar of California in May 2024. This seal is bestowed upon employers of California-licensed attorneys and requires that they annually implement a rigorous set of action items that ingrain diversity, equity, and inclusion as priorities in the preservation and growth of their workforce.

### ***Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)***

To address racial and ethnic disparities in the disability community, DOR established its first ever Chief Equity Officer position in 2024. This executive level position is dedicated to the Department's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility efforts and will oversee DOR's newly established Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, & Accessibility Division.

DOR is committed to ensuring equitable and comprehensive services to support individuals with behavioral health disabilities, particularly those from communities of color. Each DOR district office has been working within their communities on initiatives to create or enhance existing programs and services to individuals with behavioral health disabilities, with a focus on incarcerated, institutionalized, and homeless populations. These populations are historically overrepresented by black and brown individuals due to systemic racism, redlining, and other practices that have disadvantaged people of color.

### ***Department of State Hospitals (DSH)***

DSH engaged in its Strategic Plan 5-year refresh and embedded equity in its mission, as well as objectives related to strategic goals. DSH has several members engaged in equity work, either as part of a division, a committee, or a volunteer Racial Justice and Equity workgroup (RJE). The stated mission for the RJE workgroup is, "Creating an equitable DSH community where the BIPOC experience is valued." The RJE workgroup contracted with a consultant to develop a speaker series which served to introduce, educate, and engage staff in the difficult conversations around race, racism, equity, and justice.

DSH also established a Research, Evaluation and Data Insights Division, under the executive leadership of a new Chief Data Officer. The division engaged in equity-related initiatives to improve access to timely treatment for individuals deemed as incompetent to stand trial on felony charges. DSH is engaged in developing data standards and governance to ensure equitable care across the department.

### ***Health Care Access and Information (HCAI)***

**HCAI announced its Certified Wellness Coach role, a new behavioral health profession focused on California's diverse youth population.** The role of Wellness Coach is inspired by successful programs and models from across the state and country, such as the [Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium's Behavioral Health Aid Program](#), which created a role to provide culturally relevant support for behavioral health and substance use needs. This role is designed to help build a larger and more diverse and representative behavioral health workforce that has the training and supervision needed to engage directly with young people where they live, study, and work. Wellness Coaches will offer non-clinical services, such as wellness promotion and education, screening, care coordination, individual and group support, and crisis referral. The model will supplement and support existing behavioral health roles, fill gaps in the current behavioral health workforce, and create a larger and more diverse workforce with whom youth can connect. HCAI worked with state universities and community colleges to develop curriculum that became available in Fall 2024 for interested candidates with no prior education or experience. Becoming a Wellness Coach requires obtaining a certificate. The Wellness Coach certificate will initially be free and annual scholarships are available to assist with educational and related training expenses. For more information, please visit HCAI [Certified Wellness Coach](#) website.

**HCAI has helped to make naloxone more affordable and accessible through CalRx.** On June 21, 2024, California announced that CalRx®-branded over the counter (OTC) naloxone nasal spray, 4mg, is available for free to eligible organizations or to certain organizations for \$24 per twin pack through Amneal Pharmaceuticals. The opioid crisis remains a major public health challenge, with thousands of lives lost each year due to overdoses. In 2021, Native American/Alaska Natives had the highest rate of fentanyl-related overdose deaths compared to individuals of other race/ethnicities. Black/African Americans had the second highest age adjusted death rate for fentanyl. Naloxone is a critical tool in combating the opioid crisis, capable of reversing opioid overdoses swiftly and effectively. By making CalRx®-branded naloxone nasal spray readily accessible, California is taking a significant step toward reducing the number of opioid-related deaths and ensuring that OTC naloxone is available when and where it is needed most.

### ***Office of the Surgeon General (OSG)***

**Live Beyond Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Toxic Stress Awareness Campaign:** Through the Children & Youth Behavioral Health Initiative, OSG was allocated \$24 million to create a campaign to increase public understanding of ACEs and toxic stress with the goal of providing youth and young adults across California with the resources and strategies needed to manage toxic stress, overcome adversity, and end cycles of trauma. OSG held a series of

listening sessions with diverse youth and young adults, parents and caregivers, and community partners across the state, many of whom have been personally impacted by ACEs and toxic stress. Feedback from the listening sessions informed the development of the ACEs and toxic stress campaign, “Live Beyond.” OSG launched the Live Beyond ACEs and Toxic Stress campaign on May 1, 2024.

**Reducing Maternal Mortality in California:** In 2023-24, the California Surgeon General, recognizing the urgent need for action to address the maternal mortality crisis, convened a group of diverse community partners, government, health care, private, public, and non-profit sectors to form the core of a collaborative partnership that is working to leverage California’s investments and partnerships to improve the reproductive and maternal health and wellbeing of Californians.

### ***Office of Technology and Systems Integration (OTSI)***

OTSI played a key role in shaping the California Health and Human Services IT and Data Strategic Plan. The plan describes how cross-department collaboration in program, data, and technology will enhance services for all Californians. Through innovative, integrated, and secure technology and data solutions that equitably increase accessibility, quality, and affordability, OTSI is aiming to seamlessly address individual and community data and technology access needs across our State, striving for a Healthy California for All.

### **Next Steps**

Three CDPH staff members are currently participating in the Capitol Collaborative on Race and Equity Learning Cohort (CCORE LC) coordinated by State of Equity, and will finish in December 2024. CCORE LC is a foundational racial equity learning and capacity-building training cohort in which participants learn about, plan for, and implement activities that embed racial equity approaches into State government culture, policies, and practices. CDPH has participated in racial equity capacity building since the first cohort in 2018.

CalHHS will continue to advance several equity-focused initiatives aimed at improving community engagement strategies, expanding communications and language access services, fostering cross-collaboration among departments, harnessing data for decision-making, and building staff capacity to further operationalize equity. We look forward to the collaboration with agencies in the Racial Equity Working Group of the Strategic Growth Council.

## E: California Natural Resources Agency

**To:** California Strategic Growth Council and Members of the Public  
**From:** California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA)  
**Reporting Period:** September 2023 – August 2024

### Background

CNRA consists of 26 departments, boards, commissions, and conservancies responsible for administering programs to conserve, restore, and enhance the natural, historical, and cultural resources of California. The Agency's departments help the state become more climate resilient, expand access to parks and wildlands, and conserve California's remarkable biodiversity.

### Racial Equity Updates

CNRA hosted the Justice Rising Summit, the agency's first environmental justice and equity conference in Sacramento in March 2024. The in-person event in Sacramento included environmental justice advocates, tribal members, Agency leadership, department directors, and their EJ and equity leads, as well as other experts in the field. The day included featured speakers, panel discussions, and listening sessions, which informed an update to CNRA's environmental justice and equity policy.

CNRA released its first [Equity Year in Review 2023](#), a magazine style document that shares with the public how each of the Agency's 26 entities are advancing equity, environmental justice, and tribal affairs across California's natural resources. The 54-page annual review includes text and images and 1-2 pages devoted to each department, board, commission, or conservancy.

CNRA is releasing a report on opportunities for its Salton Sea Management Program to address community needs, as well as a commissioned report from Better World Groups Advisors that outlines a broad assessment of key community needs across the Salton Sea region ranging from more tribal engagement to increased public access. Over the past decade, community members near the Salton Sea have asked for multi-benefit restoration projects that provide community amenities and benefits. These benefits are critical in a region with historic underinvestment in infrastructure and service and where residents experience some of the highest rates of public health and environmental justice issues in California.

Staff from across CNRA have been working together on committees to design cultural heritage month celebrations. For the first time in July 2024, a committee welcomed Disability Pride Month to the series, a time to honor the history, achievements, and resilience of people with disabilities. This year's committee selected the theme "Awareness Empowers, Inclusion Strengthens: Know Us, Know California." Events will include a Secretary Speaker Series, an outdoor event, and a career panel on how inclusion strengthens California.

The California Coastal Commission added two new pages to its website: one dedicated the Commission's commitment to [affordable housing](#); and another on [Lower Cost Coastal Lodging](#), which provides resources for visitors seeking lower-cost lodging in the coastal zone, as well as

guidance for local governments and permit applicants related to overnight lodging policies and projects. The Coastal Commission is committed to providing maximum access and recreational opportunities for all, and to protect, encourage, and provide lower-cost visitor and recreational opportunities.

For the first time in the Department of Conservation's (DOC) history, Mixteco interpretation was provided alongside Spanish at a June 18 community meeting in Oxnard. Providing this option for local residents is one example of DOC's efforts to advance language accessibility. The Department's efforts to plug and permanently seal oil and gas wells has provided exciting opportunities to implement language justice goals. Meetings held in Arvin and Oxnard were led in Spanish, with interpretation provided in English. Local partnerships have been the foundation of their success. In Oxnard, the team partnered with the Mixteco/Indígena Community Organizing Project.

A Deputy Director of Career Pathways Program was added to California Conservation Corps executive team to work in close partnership with the California Natural Resources Agency and its departments, commissions, and conservancies to develop collaborative internship opportunities, identify existing career pathways for Corpsmembers, and develop new points of entry into civil service careers.

After years of discussion, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) transferred more than 40 acres of the historic Mount Whitney Fish Hatchery in Inyo County to the Fort Independence Indian Community, which is recognized as one distinct separate tribal government of the four Owens Valley Paiute Tribes. The Wildlife Conservation Board approved the no-cost transfer and was completed this year. The transfer marked CDFW's first ever land return to a California tribe.

In January 2024, the California Energy Commission (CEC) opened an informational proceeding focused on justice, access, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JAEDI) to continue a formal dialogue with the public and establish a record of stakeholder input from multiple perspectives, including those of California Native American tribes, local government, community leaders, environmental justice and environmental groups, and the public. The input received will be used by CEC to develop recommendations for further embedding the JAEDI principles into its efforts, programs, policies, and projects.

Progress is advancing with CAL FIRE's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Program and Research Development and Innovation Program to integrate specific metrics for diverse units and programs using the ArcGIS mapping system. This integration aims to foster a deeper comprehension of community demographics, including tribal locations statewide. Additionally, bilingual certified employee contact information in indigenous languages is being incorporated into the ArcGIS system as an indicator.

The California Coastal Conservancy is now offering technical assistance during office hours to help grant applicants during grant solicitations and onboard grantees post-grant award. The technical assistance office hours help answer grant program, project, and invoicing questions to make the process smoother for partners.

The Bay Area Conservation and Development Commission organized five workshops with community-based organizations in underserved neighborhoods to discuss the Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan and to gather feedback from residents on the plan's guidelines for all shoreline jurisdictions throughout California.

The Colorado River Board is working closely with Native American tribes in the development of the Post-2026 Operational Guidelines and Strategies for Lake Powell and Lake Mead. Within California, the Fort Yuma Quechan Indian Tribe President serves on the Board and the Tribe regularly participates in discussions with technical staff from water agencies reliant on water from the Colorado River.

The Department of Water Resources Racial Equity Office hired a Racial Equity Officer and Policy Advisor to assist the Department in formulating and administering racial equity policies, best practices for community outreach and engagement, and implementing racial equity strategies and actions.

The Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety's ongoing government-to-government consultation with California's Native American tribes will include tribal engagement in the development of the 2026-28 Wildfire Mitigation Plan Guidelines (WMP). Development of the 2026-28 WMP Guidelines will also continue to ensure that socially vulnerable communities, disproportionately impacted by wildfires, will be represented in the electrical corporations' wildfire mitigation planning.

The California Ocean Protection Council announced the [Environmental Justice Advisory Board for California's Coast and Ocean](#), who will help advise the State by providing valuable equity-focused insights and perspectives to better address the ocean and coastal needs of California communities. Collaborating with the new EJ Advisory Board is part of Ocean Protection Council's ongoing commitment to engaging community partners in ocean and coastal conservation and policy to ensure actions are equitably informed by California communities and provide meaningful benefits to communities statewide.

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy awarded just under \$1 million dollars in community enhancement grants to support community-based projects. Projects included a planning grant for the Suisun City Public Fishing Dock to create a sustainable and inclusive space for fishing, kayaking, and learning about the Delta ecosystem and an implementation grant for enhancements to the Isleton Museum to celebrate Asian American Heritage.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy executed tribal land-back grants of \$3.4 million resulting in over 1,500 acres of culturally significant ancestral land being transferred to three different California tribes (the Tubatalabal Tribe, the Greenville Rancheria of Maidu Indians, and the Mono Lake Kutzadika).

The State Lands Commission continued to implement its Environmental Justice and Tribal Consultation Policies, evaluating lease and permit applications through the lens of environmental justice and providing meaningful outreach and engagement with underserved communities and consultation with tribes. Staff conducted environmental justice outreach on numerous lease applications and projects, sending over 170 letters and engaging with 11

community-based organizations and 8 tribal governments. Staff participated in environmental justice engagement meetings and tribal working group meetings for the AB 525 Offshore Wind Strategic Plan.

The Tahoe Conservancy now offers live Spanish-language interpretation for its Board meetings. Live interpretation will enhance access to our meetings for the Spanish-speaking community and encourage broader, more welcoming, and more equitable community engagement.

In February 2024, California State Parks released the Path Forward Strategic Plan. The themes, goals, and objectives in the plan are based on the foundational elements of access, inclusivity, and equity to provide optimal public service, further strengthen partnership development, and empower the department's workforce. The plan can be viewed in full

here: [https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=30514](https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=30514)

### **Next Steps**

CNRA is developing an updated Agency-wide environmental justice and equity policy. The new policy is being developed with input from environmental justice advocates, tribal members and other interested members of the public. The document will cover a range of topics that CNRA departments oversee including public access, climate change, conservation, and more.

The Coastal Commission will be releasing the Coastal California Environmental Justice Mapping Tool (CCEJ Tool). This tool helps identify whether a project, policy, or program will disproportionately affect environmental justice communities and assists in implementing the California Coastal Commission's EJ Policy.

DOC engaged with a number of environmental justice community leaders to evaluate and improve the RUBIN Race and Equity-Focused Public Engagement Model. This feedback will be incorporated into a public engagement model and used in an annual training for California Natural Resources staff in 2025.

CDFW plans to search for its new JEDI deputy director as well as continue efforts to increase awareness and conservation of California's amazing biodiversity. Bolstering its R3 program, (Recruit, retain, and reactivate) CDFW will look to increase efforts to decrease barriers to participation in these efforts as well as increase awareness and support for conservation activities across the state.

CEC will continue improving its Energy Equity Indicators tool by refreshing its data visualization and mapping features. The Energy Equity Indicators tool provides information on different energy system metrics including affordability, reliability, efficiency, access to infrastructure, program availability, and clean energy adoption. Improvements will support public access to energy-related information that can be used to strengthen grant applications with quantitative analyses and enable state agencies to make more informed decisions on how to address the challenges faced by California communities that are struggling to meet their energy needs.

CAL FIRE's new draft Strategic Plan outlines six goals derived directly from community feedback. The Strategic Plan underscores a commitment to implementing Governor's Executive Order N-16-22, emphasizing equity, inclusive opportunities, and engagement with historically



underserved communities. Currently, the Draft Strategic Plan is under review by the Governor's Office

To address climate change impacts in a manner that more directly considers the Delta's most vulnerable populations, the Delta Stewardship Council will continue to develop its new Climate Change and Environmental Justice Program in the coming year.

The State Lands Commission received a nearly \$22 million federal grant to monitor and reduce methane emissions from oil and gas operations and for environmental restoration of well sites. Commission staff will focus on plugging and abandoning marginal conventional and idle wells in Long Beach near underserved and disadvantaged communities.

In September 2024, the Tahoe Conservancy is planning to finalize and implement its Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP), currently being drafted. The REAP outlines the Conservancy's commitment to several strategies to advance racial equity and improve community engagement, allowing for agency growth and better service for our communities

The Wildlife Conservation Board awarded grants in 2024 to the California Council of Land Trusts and the Resources Legacy Fund to provide technical assistance and capacity building for underserved communities and Native American tribes to develop conservation and restoration projects.

## F: California State Transportation Agency

**To:** California Strategic Growth Council and Members of the Public  
**From:** California State Transportation Agency  
**Reporting Period:** September 2023 – August 2024

### Background

CalSTA develops and coordinates California's transportation policies and programs to achieve the state's mobility, safety, equity, and environmental sustainability objectives. The Agency oversees the policies and activities of California's eight state organizations that deliver transportation-related programs and services and support the movement of people and goods throughout the state, including the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the California Highway Patrol (CHP), the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), the New Motor Vehicle Board (NMVB), the California Transportation Commission (CTC), the High-Speed Rail Authority (HSRA), the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), and the Board of Pilot Commissioners (BOPC).

### Update on Racial Equity Resolution Implementation

Under the leadership of Secretary Toks Omishakin, racial equity in transportation remains a focus of CalSTA and our departments.

### *Strategic Plans and Equity-Focused Actions Taken by Boards and Commissions*

- In April 2024, CalSTA launched its first ever strategic plan for the Agency. The new CalSTA Strategic Plan sets a vision that whoever you are, wherever you live, every person has access to a safe, sustainable, and convenient transportation system throughout California. The plan includes the goal to embed equity in all our programs, policies, and practices.
- Several other CalSTA departments created or updated their strategic plans this year consistent with Executive Order N-16-22, which directs state agencies and departments to take additional actions to embed policies and practices in their strategic plans to further advance equity.
- The new OTS Strategic Plan includes the goal to Advance Equity in Traffic Safety: Focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion to improve traffic safety outcomes for vulnerable and underserved populations.
- CHP has published its new 2024-26 Strategic Plan, which reaffirms the CHP's commitment to equity in the services provided to California's communities, as well as honors inclusivity and diversity in the Department's workforce.
- Caltrans released its new 2024-28 Strategic Plan, which includes equity goals to strengthen relationships and trust with communities through direct, meaningful, and transparent collaboration; reduce transportation disparities and improve multimodal connectivity in underserved communities; and increase investments in small and disadvantaged businesses and underserved communities.
- In April 2024, the NMVB unanimously adopted its 2024-30 NMVB Strategic Plan. Pursuant to Executive Order N-16-22, the plan, developed through an inclusive process



that incorporated input from NMVB staff, Board leadership, and the public, embeds initiatives advancing equity and enhancing engagement and public services to historically disadvantaged and underserved communities.

- In September 2023, the NMVB unanimously adopted two racial equity policies as recommended by the NMVB Ad Hoc Committee on Equity, Justice and Inclusion (EJI Committee): 1) requiring all new policy creation and any future policy amendments to first receive review by the EJI Committee before being considered by the Board, and 2) establishing a goal of filling at least 44 percent of NMVB public contact positions with bilingual employees. As of July 2024, all NMVB public contact positions are filled by bilingual employees.
- In December 2023, the High-Speed Rail Authority's DEI Taskforce agreed to regular reporting on various related metrics and benchmarks. Items of interest included reporting annual outreach efforts in impacted communities, annual reports on multilingual staff and multilingual staff outreach, and annual economic impact reports.
- In June 2023, the OTS developed a Public Participation and Engagement Plan establishing goals for connecting with identified underserved communities disproportionately impacted by traffic deaths and serious injuries.

#### ***Internal and External Engagement on Racial Equity Issues***

- The Interagency Equity Advisory Committee continues to support the work of the CTC, Caltrans and CalSTA. The Committee is intended to elevate diverse and historically marginalized voices to advise our agencies on how to achieve meaningful outcomes in transportation equity, environmental justice, and equitable economic opportunities, especially as related to transportation planning and programming. During the reporting period of September 2023 – August 2024, the full Committee will have convened seven times to conduct business. Additionally, members participated in workgroups, funding application reviews, program guidelines development and updates, public workshops, interagency staff briefings, and equity updates to the Commission.
- DMV launched a multi-phase Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) initiative in December 2023. The first phase includes a series of self-paced micro-learning courses on DMV University, including: Equity in the Workplace; Working Well with Everyone; Unconscious Bias; Workplace Culture; Privilege; Working with Different Generations; and Anti-Racism for Leaders.
- DMV reactivated or launched several employee affinity groups in 2024, including Black Employees United for Equality (BEUFE), Women @ DMV, Veterans @ DMV, Change Makers, and LGBTQIA+ @ DMV. The purpose of these groups is to provide a forum for discussion of issues affecting these communities in a safe and inclusive environment. Several mechanisms have enabled DMV and other agencies seeking to establish affinity groups, such as obtaining support from directorate, identifying an executive sponsor to encourage engagement and an analyst or staffer for a smooth launch (particularly in the start-up phase), and establishing template messaging and guidelines to raise awareness and communicate about the groups.



- In December 2023, the CHP's Equal Employment Opportunity office created and instituted a more contemporary, relevant implicit/explicit bias and cultural diversity training to enhance the Department's cultural competency. In January 2024, the training was administered statewide, and is now required for all departmental members, both uniformed and non-sworn.
- In August 2023, the High-Speed Rail Authority presented a 2024 training plan to the Authority's DEI Taskforce. This training plan included providing individual specialized DEI trainings for the Communications team and Station Planning teams, offering specialized training for other individual units/teams when needed, and providing alternating regular "Lunch and Learn Training" and "All Staff Training" sessions departmentwide.
- On May 22, 2024, McLaren Coaching led Caltrans Office of Civil Rights management through a "Race Matters in Leadership Workshop" to help managers facilitate hard conversations in the workplace. This was an intensive three-hour workshop to enhance leaders' skills in facilitating and navigating open and successful conversations about race.
- The Caltrans Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Infrastructure Program is planning its first public outreach event in the summer of 2024 to transparently address the needs and concerns of individuals with disabilities. The goal is to ensure that pedestrian infrastructure developments and maintenance comply with legal mandates and actively promote accessibility and inclusivity for everyone. Discussion topics include Caltrans' right-of-way pedestrian facilities, such as curb ramps, pedestrian signals, and sidewalks.

### ***Promoting Equity through Program and Planning Activities***

- In March 2024, Caltrans released its Transportation Equity Index (EQI) tool designed to help all Californians benefit from transportation projects and identify communities most negatively impacted by the transportation system, which results in high rates of traffic, crashes, and air pollution, as well as limited transportation options. The EQI tool will help inform project selection, program evaluation, and policy decisions, better align the transportation system to state environmental and equity goals and help address transportation-related inequities. Data will be used to identify transportation-based priority populations to help end harms created or made worse by the state's transportation system.
  - The first application of EQI is in the Caltrans System Investment Strategy (CSIS), which was recently completed in June 2024. EQI is being used to inform CSIS Disadvantaged Community Accessibility Metrics and make other designations around the transformative elements of proposals (such as avoidance of traditional practices that have led to historic burdens in disadvantaged communities). Applicant of EQI can also help identify elements of proposals that may leverage transformative transportation investments in low-income, tribal, or other historically disadvantaged communities.
- In June 2024, DMV launched a no-fail e-learning driver's license renewal course in Spanish. Customers renewing their driver's license with a knowledge test requirement



can now choose to complete the eLearning course in English or Spanish. In addition to the Spanish eLearning course, the DMV continues to offer its online knowledge test in 35 languages.

- DMV was awarded a new grant, Visualizing Associations Between Community Characteristics and Safety Outcomes, through the Office of Traffic Safety. The project began on October 1, 2023, and will run until September 30, 2024. The goal is to facilitate objective and equitable approaches to allocating traffic safety funding in a way that addresses individual community needs. A draft version of the main deliverable – an enhanced version of the [California Crash Victim Data Dashboard](#) – will be presented at the upcoming meeting of the Traffic Records Coordinating Committee Executive Committee.
- DMV is developing a white paper that provides descriptive and inferential statistics regarding the demographic characteristics of crash-involved drivers (compared to the population of all drivers). The goal is to create information that may be used to identify areas – based on ZIP code – with populations that are disproportionately impacted by traffic crashes. The project is expected to be completed and submitted to the Strategic Highway Safety Plan Steering Committee in September 2024.
- In 2024, the OTS awarded the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) \$460,000 for 16 community-based organizations to implement equity-driven community engagement projects through the SCAG Go Human Community Streets Grant Program.
- OTS anticipates awarding, subject to federal approval, a grant to the California Department of Justice (DOJ) to produce a traffic stop video project required under Assembly Bill 2537 and implement a data dashboard for its Racial and Identity Profiling Act of 2015 (RIPA) work.

### ***Supporting California's Small and Disadvantaged Businesses and Creating Jobs that Benefit All California Communities***

- In June 2024, HSRA recognized another 14 students for completing the Central Valley Training Center pre-apprenticeship program, bringing the total number of graduates to 206. The pre-apprenticeship training program targets veterans, at-risk young adults, and minority and low-income populations in the Central Valley. Since the start of the project, the Authority has created more than 13,500 good paying construction jobs, with more than 70 percent going to individuals from disadvantaged communities.
- In January 2024, the HSRA Small Business Program established mechanisms for accountability, such as performance metrics and public reporting. This ensures that efforts towards racial equity are transparent, and that progress can be monitored.
- HSRA expanded the Authority's Business Advisory Council from 11 members to 25 to include a more diverse representation of small businesses in California.
- Since July 2023, HSRA hosted 18 small business events with a focus on racial equity in procurement and contracting and a target audience that aligns with AB 2019 and cohosted 22 small business events with organizations that have a focus on diversity and equity in procurement and contracting.



- Caltrans continues to work with the California Workforce Development Board to establish a workforce training diversity fund, to support California's High Road Construction Careers (HRCC) program, which is a systematic approach to industry-based workforce development, addressing equity, job quality, worker voice, and environmental sustainability. Caltrans has committed \$50 million from the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to be allocated over four years in support of the program. It is anticipated the funding will be made available to local HRCC partnerships early in fiscal year 2024-25.
- As of May 31, 2024, Caltrans has committed \$569 million to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) for federal fiscal year 2023-24, exceeding the department's triennial DBE goal of 22.2 percent. DBE certification applications are up 82 percent over the last federal fiscal year. Of the 318 newly certified firms between October 1, 2023, and July 5, 2024, 97 were Black-owned firms and 71 were Latinx-owned firms.
- In June 2024, Caltrans awarded a 3-year contract, valued at \$3.6 million, to Baker Technical Institute to deliver trainings to nine academies, training an additional 180 individuals through its On-the-Job Training, Heavy Equipment Operator Pilot Program.
- Caltrans launched its triennial Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA)-sponsored Disparity Studies to advance equity and measure the difference between how many minority contractors are available for contracts compared to how many were used on contracts.
- On June 5, representatives from more than 500 disadvantaged small businesses learned about contracting opportunities with the State at the first-ever Small Business Symposium, led by the California State Transportation Agency. Caltrans, the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development, and the Government Operations Agency participated in the event.

#### ***New Equity-Related Positions and Efforts to Create a More Diverse Statewide Workforce***

- At the end of 2023, the CHP committed to establishing a real-time demographic database of the race, ethnicity, age, and gender of current departmental members, broken down by classification, to identify any underutilized categories or non-job-related barriers. At the beginning of 2024, disability status was added to the categories for CHP applicants, and in May 2024, the CHP launched its Diversity Dashboard, which is currently being used to focus future uniformed and non-sworn recruitment and hiring efforts.
- The 2024-25 Budget provided HSRA one Staff Services Manager I to oversee the DEI work currently taken on by the Office of Strategic Communications. This position is currently being advertised and will take on the role of planning, developing, and implementing goals towards making the Authority a safe, equitable, and culturally inclusive department.
- In July 2024, the NMVB hired its first Equity Officer. The Equity Officer also serves as the NMVB Assistant Director (second organizational level executive). The NMVB Equity Officer supports and guides the work of the Board and its Ad Hoc Committee on Equity, Justice, and Inclusion.



- In continuation of the Board of Pilot Commissioners' initiative to diversify the pilot trainee applicant pool, the BOPC expects a permanent Committee on Diversity (Committee) to be created before the end of 2024. This work will be enabled in-part by BOPC staff providing staff reports to the Committee on other pilot organizations and/or government agencies providing piloting services and their initiatives to diversify pilots.
- OTS will augment staff with two full-time positions that will develop traffic safety topic-specific forums, build relationships with community-based organizations in underserved areas of the state and execute engagement events that guide how we advance traffic safety and make meaningful improvements in communities of color.
- With the establishment of the Director's Office of Equity and Tribal Affairs, a new Deputy Director position was created. Along with this change the office has expanded to include a Senior Advisor of Race and Equity that will be managing the Race and Equity Branch, an Equity and Data Policy Advisor and an Equity Strategy Coordinator. Both positions will help track and report the implementation of equity policies across Caltrans, holding Caltrans accountable to the goals and strategies of the Caltrans 2024-28 Strategic Plan with an aim for programs and projects to meaningfully engage, collaborate with, and leverage investments to support, benefit, and connect underserved communities.
- CalSTA is actively recruiting for its Deputy Secretary for Equity and Workforce.
- In 2024, the CTC awarded a contract that extends equity-focused training to all Commission staff as a 3-year, iterative and interactive series that supports staff to become proficient, engaged practitioners of transportation equity within each of their respective areas of focus.

### Next Steps

- OTS will continue its progress on initiatives and activities to achieve the goal and objectives in the OTS Equity Action Plan and to further advance equity in traffic safety.
- OTS is exploring the feasibility of establishing a resource for law enforcement agencies to receive analysis of their traffic stop Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA) data to inform their policies/procedures/traffic enforcement efforts.
- The Interagency Equity Advisory Committee will hold three additional meetings in 2024, in August, October, and December.
- During the 2024-25 calendar year, the CHP plans to expand the Native-Tribal Traffic Education Program statewide. The initiative is designed to improve the service provided to tribal communities while simultaneously enhancing trust by implementing a tailored approach to the numerous lifesaving traffic safety programs the CHP has to offer.
- As previously recommended by the Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, the CHP entered into contract with the California Policy Lab (CPL) to produce a report identifying trends and disparities with departmentally provided demographic stop data. A final version of this report is anticipated to be published on the CHP public website at the end of 2024.
- The CHP is currently exploring starting a statewide female mentoring program. The program, which is still in its early development stages, will be designed to support



women in law enforcement by promoting acceptance, inspiring inclusion, and encouraging the professional development of female law enforcement leaders through education, mentorship, and empowerment.

- DMV plans to launch a no-fail e-learning driver's license renewal course in Chinese in September 2024.
- DMV is developing additional employee affinity groups, including Latino/Hispanic, Indigenous Peoples, and Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI).
- DMV's next Strategic Plan is expected to be completed during the 2025-26 fiscal year. It plans to incorporate a racial equity vision and other elements that address DMV's support for and progress toward racial equity into that plan.
- Caltrans is researching and developing a concept to create a contractual obligation to hire a local, disadvantaged workforce on specific projects.
- Caltrans will be updating the Race and Equity Action Plan. In this iteration of the plan there will be an effort to have cohesive implementation of equity across the department.
- Caltrans continues to fund the participation of staff in the Capitol Collaborative on Race and Equity (CCORE). The current Caltrans cohort includes ten staff, coming from the Director's Office of Equity & Tribal Affairs, Director's Office of Sustainability, Division of Transportation Planning, District 10, and Project Delivery. The Director's Office of Equity and Tribal Affairs will be bringing the staff together during and after the CCORE cohort ends in December 2024 to encourage staff to look critically at current practices and policies and provide recommendations.
- The NMVB will develop a plan to improve the consumer mediation program by raising awareness and better advocating for consumers with an emphasis on historically disadvantaged and excluded communities.
- This year the HSRA is working to unbundle bid packages to create more opportunities for small businesses. The Authority's construction and architectural and engineering procurements historically have had very high contract values which made it difficult for small and disadvantaged businesses to compete as a prime contractor/consultant due to the lack of financial capacity and resources to meet the bid requirements.





## **G: Governor’s Office of Planning & Research (OPR)**

**To:** California Strategic Growth Council and Members of the Public  
**From:** Governor’s Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (Formerly the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research)  
**Reporting Period:** September 2023 – August 2024

### **Background**

The State Planning and Policy Development (SPPD) branch of the Governor’s Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (Formerly the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research) is California’s comprehensive planning agency, advancing intergovernmental collaboration among state and local partners. SPPD focuses on issues of land use, community development, climate adaptation, research and education, and economic development. SPPD works with State agencies, regional planning organizations, and local jurisdictions on land use planning. SPPD also publishes guidance for local communities and practitioners and allocates direct investments to improve conditions for historically underinvested in communities. The programs within SPPD include the following: SPPD Programs include the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program (ICARP), Military Affairs, Planning and Community Development, Judicial Streamlining, State Clearinghouse, and Special Projects. The State Planning and Policy Department’s vision is to integrate racial equity through collaboration with state partners and local communities so that All Californians regardless of their racial and economic background thrive and are resilient, both physical and mentally, in their communities and environments.

### **Updates**

#### ***The California 5<sup>th</sup> Climate Assessment***

- New staff positions are focused on empowering tribal and indigenous partners: The Office is hiring for a tribal liaison to support government-to-government consultation with tribal and indigenous communities across the state. The Office is hiring for a Senior Fifth Assessment Tribal Research Engagement Specialist to uplift traditional and indigenous knowledges throughout the climate research process.
- New research initiatives are focused on exploring climate impacts to underserved and underrepresented communities with a focus on climate justice opportunities.
- The Fifth Assessment is updating a report on Racial Equity and Climate Justice to explore how climate change is disproportionately impacting underserved and underrepresented communities and exploring opportunities to improve equitable climate resilience outcomes.

#### ***Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Grant Program***

- The EHCRGP is currently selecting grantees for its first Round of funding. Extensive outreach to community-based organizations (CBOs) representing communities of color was done in partnership with the Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications. Over 50% of applicants to the program are CBOs. The program is

currently working on ensuring that racial equity and heat equity training is a component of the services provided to grantees that are working on extreme heat planning and implementation projects across the state.

### ***Regional Resilience Grant Program (RRGP)***

- The Regional Resilience Grant program announced \$21.8M in awards in 2023. The program exceeded its set-aside goals for disadvantaged communities and California Native American tribes. 86% of funding is going to regional partnerships involving California Native American tribes and/or partnerships serving predominantly Disadvantaged Communities. 9 of the 16 awarded projects are lead or co-lead by a California Native American Tribe.

### **Next Steps**

- The 5th Assessment team is in the process of identify coordinating lead author and other author roles, conduct engagement to develop the scope of new research initiatives that are focused on exploring climate impacts to underserved and underrepresented communities with a focus on climate justice opportunities.
- SPPD is committed to advancing racial equity through its first Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP) for 2024-2026. The agency has undergone structural change that has stalled the final approval of the REAP. This is a big priority for the team and exists as a living document that seeks to embed racial equity into all operations and externally facing activities through strategic planning. The internal-facing activities will include workplace culture and diversity, while the external-facing work encompasses policy, funding programs, and public engagement. The plan is organized into ten outcomes, each accompanied by actionable steps and accountable parties. By addressing historical injustices, fostering inclusivity, and promoting economic empowerment, SPPD seeks to realize a vision of California for All. The plan is a dynamic framework, subject to regular evaluation and improvement, with a focus on achieving goals by 2026.
- SPPD staff will also continuously evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies, share better practices, and develop new goals, continuing into SPPD's next Racial Equity Action Plan in 2027.

## H: Racial Equity Commission

**To:** California Strategic Growth Council and Members of the Public  
**From:** California Racial Equity Commission  
**Reporting Period:** September 2023 – August 2024

### Background

California's Racial Equity Commission (Commission) was established as part of Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-16-22, mandating state entities to embed and institutionalize racial equity strategies across their policies, programs, and initiatives. The Commission been charged to develop a statewide Racial Equity Framework (Framework) no later than December 1, 2025. The Framework will include strategies to advance racial equity and address structural racism, budget methodologies and budget equity assessments, and data collection and analysis, including disaggregation of data and application of proxies for race. The Commission is also charged with providing technical assistance to state agencies and local government and ensuring community input and feedback.

### Updates from the Racial Equity Commission

**Commission Meetings and Leadership:** The Commission has met on January 24 (Sacramento), March 21 (Delano), and July 17 (Riverside) to conduct the business of the Commission, hear from the public, and engage community organizations. Below are some key highlights of those meetings:

- On January 24, the Commission selected Dr. Luke Wood, President, Sacramento State University and Simboa Wright, Vice President, SEIU 721 as Chair and Co-Chair, respectively. The Commission received welcoming remarks from Cabinet Secretary Ann Patterson, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom and approved its inaugural bylaws.
- On March 21, the Commission approved its committee structure and heard from Erwin Chemerinsky, Dean, UC Berkeley Law, and Lisa Holder, President, Equal Justice Society on Proposition 209 and Race Conscious Strategies. Later that day, a panel of local leaders, including Dolores Huerta, discuss efforts in Kern County to advance racial equity.
- On July 17, the Commission learned from the Executive Director about the activities with each Committee to date, discussed potential research topics for University of Southern California Graduate Students, and selected a logo to facilitate its branding moving forward.

**Commission Committees:** The Commission has organized itself into the following committees to help facilitate the work of the full body.

- **Executive Committee** (Standing) includes Chair Wood and Co-Chair Wright.
- **Data Committee** (Standing) includes Commissioners Matthews, Pastor, and Richardson.
- **Budget Equity Committee** (Standing) includes Commissioners Bowles, Kim, Maldonado, and Onodera.

- **Implementation and Technical Assistance Committee** (Standing) includes Commissioners Hendrick, Kim, Onodera, and Salas.
- **Framework Development Committee** (Ad Hoc) includes Commissioners Pastor and Richardson.
- **Fundraising Committee** (Ad Hoc) includes Commissioners Maldonado and Salas.

To date, the Data (July 17), Budget Equity (May 9), Framework Development (June 14), and Fundraising (June 28) Committees have met and provided reports at the July 17 Commission meeting. The Commission Committees leverage the subject matter expertise of Commissioners and the meetings themselves while providing an opportunity to hear from local practitioners on best practices, methodologies, and tools to advance racial equity.

**Community Meet-n-Greets:** The Commission staff actively collaborated with local community-based organizations to host local Community Meet-n-Greets. To date, the Commission has had Meet-n-Greets in Lamont (March 20), South Central Los Angeles (May 8), and Riverside (July 16). The purpose the Meet-n-Greets is to meet community members where they are, provide information on the efforts of the Commission, and facilitate interactive activities to learn more about the community's assets, challenges, and opportunities with a racial equity lens. Each Meet-n-Greet features a local organization highlight. The structure of public meetings can be intimidating and requires residents to meet a high threshold for engagement. This structure reduces barriers to receiving feedback and engaging with community residents and stakeholders. We specifically look to host events and activities in the late afternoon/early evening to allow those with work or other commitments to be able to attend. We also ensure at least two Commissioners are in attendance to have direct interaction with the community.

**Informing Framework Development through an Asset Analysis:** The Commission staff is working with the Possibility Lab at UC Berkeley and the State of Equity at the Public Health Institute to implement an asset analysis of current racial equity activities, best practices, and opportunities across state government. The purpose of the survey and key informant interviews is to better understand where state agencies, departments, and commissions are on their racial equity journey to ensure the Framework is responsive to their needs.

**Lessons Learned with Community Engagement:** Commission staff continue to iterate strategies for hosting public meetings to better meet the needs of community including ensuring language access, including American Sign Language, and determining how to best capture experiences within community and local jurisdictions and develop a strategy that adequately ensures that it informs the development of the Framework. The Commission is committed to modeling best practices in community engagement and empowerment strategies, moving from practices that "inform" communities, to "involve," then to "collaborate," then to "defer to" communities to better shape transformative public policy that meets community needs and advances equity ([Spectrum of Community Engagement](#), 2019).

## Next Steps

**Upcoming Meetings:** The Commission has scheduled upcoming meetings on September 17-18, 2024 (Bay Area), and December 18-19, 2024 (Sacramento). Additional 2025 dates and locations are as follows:

- March 2025 (Salton Sea / Imperial Valley)
- June 2025 (Monterey / Salinas)
- September 2025 (Klamath / Weed)
- December 2025 (Sacramento)

It is likely that the Commission will schedule additional meetings to ensure it meets the charge outlined by Executive Order N-16-22. The September Commission meeting will feature a Community Engagement Committee meeting and local Community Meet-n-Greet.

**Asset Analysis:** The Commission staff anticipate the dissemination of the Asset Analysis survey and to conduct key informant interviews between August and October 2024. The Commission staff are working with the Administration to develop a list of individuals throughout a variety of agencies and departments to receive and respond to the survey.

**Community Engagement Strategy:** The Commission continues to explore and refine its community engagement strategy. The Community Engagement Committee's September meeting will focus on how the Commission can strengthen its strategy as a model for other agencies and departments. This Committee will also explore how it will translate the information received through its Meet-n-Greets and other community engagement opportunities to inform the Framework.

**Website Updates:** The Commission staff will be working to update the website to ensure information is readily available for the public, community organizations, and governmental agencies. We are committed to streamlining access to information about the Commission and its activities.

**Follow Up:** We look forward to further engagement with Council agencies and advancing racial equity in partnership with the Council. If your agency is interested in learning more about the Commission or engaging with Commission on its efforts, please contact Dr. Larissa Estes, Executive Director at [larissa.estes@opr.ca.gov](mailto:larissa.estes@opr.ca.gov).