JOINT MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & PUBLIC HEALTH WORKING GROUPS

September 24, 2020
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

MEETING SUMMARY

1. **WELCOME AND SELF INTRODUCTIONS**

Ping Chang, Manager of Compliance and Performance Monitoring Department at SCAG, welcomed all participants.

SCAG Staff:	*Webinar:*
Courtney Aguirre	*Rene Sala, City of El Monte*
Anita Au	*Rebecca Marsile, OC Health care Agency*
Tom Bellino	*Elizabeth Hiroyasu, the Nature Conservancy*
India Brookover	*Charles Guiam, City of Anaheim*
Ping Chang	*Jackie Martinez, Mott MacDonald*
Linda Jones	*Susan de Santia, Arellano Associates*
Dorothy Le Suchkova	*Kristopher Fortin, Safe Route Partnership*
	Lori Huddlestone, Metro
	Paul Martin, Mark Thomas
	Paul Black, Breathe SoCal
	Amanda Cobb, Ventura County City Division
	Carolyn Sims, SCE
	Nick Johnston, Tulare County Planning Division
	Scott Rigsby, SBCDPH
	Catherine St. George, W.O.R.K.S
	Barry Ross, Providence St. Joseph Health
	Curtis Gibbs, Community Action Partnership of Orange County
	Norman Ornelas, LA County Regional Planning
	Dave Simpson, TCA
	Miguel Ramos, LACDPH
	Ari Briski, Los Angeles City Planning
	Jazmine Johnson, Physicians for Social Responsibility
	Eva Malis, Amigos De Los Rios
	Haig Kartounian, SoCal Edison
	Jude Miranda- CT

2. **NATIONAL EQUITY ATLAS**
Jennifer Ito & Arpita Sharma, USC Equity Research Institute

Presentation Summary:
- The National Equity Atlas released a new data tool in July 2020 called the Racial Equity Index that is designed to help communities identify priority areas for advancing racial equity, track progress over time and set specific goals for closing racial gaps. It provides a snapshot of overall equity outcomes for cities, regions and states.
- The Racial Equity Index includes inclusion scores which measure how a given geography is doing compared to its peers (cities, regions, or states) in terms of racial gaps across indicators (median wage, unemployment, poverty, educational attainment, disconnected youth, school poverty, air pollution, commute time, and rent burden) and prosperity scores which measure how a given geography is doing compared to its peers (cities, region, or state) in terms of overall population outcomes for the nine indicators included in the index.
- Ms. Sharma demonstrated the tool and provided examples of what kind of data and analysis could be generated from the tool.
- Ms. Ito and Ms. Sharma could be contacted at info@nationalequityatlas.org.

Comments and Questions:
- Question: Regarding car access, are other modes like walking, transit, biking considered in this atlas?
  Answer: Yes, the data can be filtered to see commute times in public transportation.
- Question: Is the National Equity Atlas thinking of adding more environmental justice or climate indicators, or are you all pointing people to CalEnviroScreen and HPI instead (which have environmental/climate indicators)?
  Answer: We recommend user to utilize existing data tools that our partners have already created many of these indicators such as the CalEnviroScreen and the HPI. However, we are always open to feedback on indicators of interest that can be added to the tool. We believe in the variety of different tools.
- Question: Some cities that ranked high under your views seem surprising; Irvine gets a 76 for overall equity, and Plano Texas scored high for Black prosperity. Is there a bias towards cities that may have diversity, but a narrower band between lowest and highest wealth, even if that band is higher in terms of average wealth/prosperity?
  Answer: The person that would best answer the question is our data manager; we will follow up with you afterwards.

3. **COVID-19 HEALTHY PLACES INDEX RESOURCE MAP**
Helen Dowling, Public Health Alliance

Presentation Summary:
- Public Health Alliance (PHA) is a coalition of nine local health departments, including Imperial County, City of Long Beach, Los Angeles County, San Bernardino County, Santa Barbara County, City of Pasadena, Riverside County, San Diego County and Ventura County, that represent half of the California population.
- The Healthy Places Index (HPI) is a peer reviewed mapping tool and its indicators are derived from publicly available data. As PHA believes that everyone should have the opportunity to live a healthy life, every indicator is tied to life expectancy.

- Every census tract in California is ranked by their HPI score based on eight indicators: economic, education, transportation, social, neighborhood, housing, clean environment, and healthcare access.
- The COVID-19 resource map is updated weekly and provides powerful linkages between COVID impacts and community conditions.
- For more information and updates on HPI, visit www.HealthyPlaceIndex.org. If you're interested in testing the beta platform or participating in the update of the policy guides, please contact helen.dowling@PHI.org.

Comments and Questions:
- Question: Why isn't Orange County a member of the Health Alliance being discussed?
  Answer: Orange County was previously part of the Public Health Alliance. However, we welcome public health staff from Orange County to participate in our working groups and are open to including Orange County in the leadership council should they be interested.
- Question: How often are the policy guides updated?
  Answer: While we have limited capacity to add more policies, we're in the process of adding more policies to the guides. We would love to include successful policies and are open to taking feedback and suggestions. Part of our platform update involves incorporating the policy guides directly into the map. For each geography, we are bringing in a function that will automatically elevate policy opportunities that are likely to have the most impact in that specific geography. We want to reduce the barriers for turning our data into action by presenting a curated set of policy actions for your neighborhood and city of choice.
- Question: That's amazing that you update COVID-19 data just about everyday! Is that work funded by the state?
  Answer: No, it is currently self-funded. We collect a large portion of the data automatically through an open data portal provided by the state. However, if anyone would like to advocate for PHA to get state funding, please do. Some of the information for the tool needs to be pulled manually and we understand that the state can provide it if there's enough demand for it.
- Question: How does the data on the HPI platform compare to some of the indicators used in CalEnviroScreen?
  Answer: We have slightly different definitions. We include four indicators from CalEnviroScreen that are associated with life expectancy. The CalEnviroScreen score is also considered in the overall HPI score. The HPI tool also allows the user to see the differences in communities identified in a side-by-side comparison.
- Question: Climate Resolve would be happy to provide resources on the policy guides as they relate to climate. What is the timeline on providing input into the guides?
  Answer: I'll reach out to you directly so we can chat about the details.
- Question: This is a useful tool to affirm what community-based groups have been saying. From an EJ perspective, I am seeing a clean air, ozone, asthma, and climate change indicators which will show how environmental justice communities have been disproportionately affected- but, have you considered including an infrastructure indicator to also show where there are existing oil drilling sites, refineries, or heavy industrial zones?
  Answer: We are in the process of developing and piloting a local version of the Healthy Places Index in San Diego. This local version will feature more local level data that may not be available at the state level. This is funded by UCSD and there is a significant interest in building out the environmental pollution hazard and EJ measure. We are building a functionality in the tool that will also carry out into the statewide HPI data to support point data, like locations of brownfields,

toxic releases, superfund sites, oil drilling, etc. If this data is available at the point level, we can integrate it into the HPI. We are also thinking quite intensely about how we can incorporate measures of climate change, adaption, mitigation, and exposure into the tool. We already include a curated selection of indicators around that in our decision support guide layers across the state. We recognize we need to take a slightly different approach specifically for climate exposures. We are working with UCLA to develop a version of the HPI tool that builds on the HPI platform focusing on extreme heat and includes indicators around vulnerable populations; it includes linkages to programs and resources for communities that will be impacted. We see climate change issues like sea level rise and drought as a growing concern in the future and are working on collecting data to add to the tool.

4. **EQUITY IN ACTION**
   Lauren Vasquez, City of Monrovia

   Presentation Summary:
   - The City of Monrovia is a small city with a $130 million yearly budget and includes 40,000 residents. However, the City Council recognized the need to eradicate systemic racism, so they formed an Ad Hoc Committee on Equity and Inclusion to evaluate policies and procedures to ensure they are equitable.
   - The Ad Hoc Committee, which includes a speech pathologist, police lieutenant, a pastor and a professor, will report recommendations to the City Council.
   - The committee has met twice to date and discussions included the City's demographics and terminology of inclusion and equity. Future discussion topics will include the City's recruitment process, municipal codes, policies and procedures.
   - Ms. Vasquez can be contacted at lvasquez@ci.monrovia.ca.us.

   Comments and Questions:
   - Question: Are any of the committee members in the racial justice group in Monrovia people of color? Answer: Yes, there are.

   Anita Au, SCAG on behalf of Katie Balderas, City of Long Beach

   Presentation Summary:
   - In June 2020, the Long Beach City Council unanimously voted to adopt a Framework for Reconciliation which contained four key steps to ending systemic racism:
     o Acknowledging the existence and long-standing impacts of systemic racism in Long Beach and the country
     o Listening to accounts and experiences of racial injustice, inequity, or harm to community members
     o Convening stakeholders to analyze feedback from the listening sessions and racial disparity data to recommend initiatives that shape policy, budgetary, charter, and programmatic reform
     o Catalyzing action that includes immediate, short term, medium term, and long-term recommendations for the city council's consideration
   - The City conducted 15 listening sessions and used the feedback to develop strategies and recommended actions outlined in the full report. The full report and additional information can be found on the Office of Equity's Reconciliation website: http://www.longbeach.gov/health/healthy-living/office-of-equity/reconciliation/

Carolyn Sims, SoCal Edison

Presentation Summary:
- In August 2020, Southern California Edison (SCE) committed to address diversity and equity internally and externally and has partnered with nonprofits and other organizations in support of recognizing racism as a public health crisis.
- SCE's commitments internally and externally around diversity, equity and inclusion are mainly focus on the African American population. For example, SCE committed $1 million of shareholder funds over the next five years to advance racial equity in communities SCE serves.
- Additional internal and external efforts can be found on SCE's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion website: https://energized.edison.com/stories/diversity-equity-and-inclusion.
- Carolyn Sims can be contacted at Carolyn.Sims@sce.com.

Natalie Hernandez, Climate Resolve (Information presented via chat)

Summary:
- Climate Resolve has updated their mission statement to include an equity approach. For more information, please visit: https://www.climateresolve.org/mission/.
- Natalie Hernandez can be contacted at nhernandez@climateresolve.org.

5. **CONNECT SOCAL UPDATE**
Anita Au & Courtney Aguirre, SCAG

Presentation Summary:
- Connect SoCal was adopted in its entirety on September 3, 2020 and the final document can be found here: https://www.connectsocal.org/Pages/Connect-SoCal-Final-Plan.aspx. Please review the final versions of the Environmental Justice and Public Health Technical Reports. We anticipate sharing updates on implementation of the plan at future Working Group meetings.
- In July 2020, SCAG's Regional Council adopted a resolution to address social equity within SCAG. The resolution included the formation of the President's Special Committee on Equity and Social Justice, developing an agency-wide definition on equity, an equity inventory, an equity framework and an updated public participation plan.
- The first meeting for the President's Special Committee on Equity and Social Justice will be held today, September 24, 2020 from 3:00pm – 5:00pm and it is open to the public.

6. **SCAG SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM UPDATE**
Hannah Brunelle, SCAG

Presentation Summary:
- The Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) is a technical assistance program that provides direct resources for local jurisdictions and agencies for local planning and serves as a key implementation tool for Connect SoCal.
- The first call for applications, which opened in September 2020, prioritizes active transportation and safety.
- Learn more about the SCP Call for Applications at the Application Webinars on October 7 from 1:00pm – 3:00pm and October 21 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm.