

CDTC Equity Policy Development Proposal

Introduction

CDTC's staff and its Equity Advisory Committee have been discussing options for more strongly incorporating equity into CDTC's operations and major products. The enactment of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has greatly increased emphasis on equity in the transportation planning process. In addition, the Biden Administration and the Federal Highway Administration have made reconnecting communities and ensuring the inclusion of disadvantaged and under-represented groups in the planning, project selection and design process a priority. The federal discretionary programs resulting from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law have reinforced this priority by adding equity as a foundational program principle or as a project selection criterion. The need for CDTC, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Capital Region, to consider equity in its operations and planning process has never been greater.

At the same time, CDTC has been reassessing the purpose and role of its Equity Advisory Committee with thoughts of expanding its membership, making its business more transparent to our members, stakeholders and the public and to increase the overall impact of the Committee. Research was conducted by CDTC staff to see how other MPOs approach this topic. One resulting idea is for CDTC to define how it will address equity in its operations and planning process through policy. That idea was shared with the August 2022 Administrative and Financial Standing Committee and has resulted in a proposal to develop an Equity Policy for CDTC.

Proposal

If authorized by CDTC's Policy Board, CDTC staff would work with CDTC's Planning Committee, the Equity Advisory Committee, and other stakeholders to develop an equity policy to be adopted via resolution by CDTC. The resolution could cover a number of topics such as:

- Ensuring that equity is a regional goal and that progress toward this goal is measured in CDTC's planning work.
- Including robust representation from communities of color in CDTC boards, committees and staff that reflect the demographics of our region.
- Reviewing policies and programs to ensure equitable funding toward disinvested communities and jobs access.
- Addressing the needs of historically disadvantaged populations in the transportation planning and project selection process through enhanced Environmental Justice analysis, public engagement, and other activities.
- Providing additional support and a defining the role of CDTC's Equity Advisory Committee.

A policy could be developed for Policy Board consideration at its December 2022 meeting.