Draft Environmental Justice (EJ) Framework

Imagine 2050 Regional Development Guide

Equity Advisory Committee

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Defining Environmental Justice

Environmental Justice is:

the right for all residents to live in a clean, safe environment that contributes to a healthy quality of life
Concept is centered in grassroots values

Building upon 50 years of a grassroots movement

• Centered in 17 Principles of Environmental Justice
• Honoring roots and upholding contemporary actions of Environmental Justice movement and people
• Acknowledging and working to co-create solutions to repair harm from government agencies
• Applying Environmental Justice principles and actions to a regional government context
What is an Environmental Justice framework?

The EJ Framework is:

- An approach to embedding environmental justice into the Council’s policy and planning processes.
- A set of assessment tools and approaches to mitigate unjust decisions and conditions, and to maximize environmental benefits.
- A method for uncovering Council actions that contribute to disparate exposure and unequal protection from environmental hazards.
- Taking Civil Rights and subsequent laws further in government.
Build on existing Council work

Adopted Council Plans

• Work is rooted in the:
  • Context of relationships between people and their environment
  • Integration of EJ principles into practices and policies as part of the 2050 RDG

• Informed by:
  • Community engagement with overburdened communities
  • Multi-disciplinary EJ Task Force
  • Review existing EJ frameworks
  • Partnership with CURA
Conditions for success

Grounded in the Council’s Equity Framework:

Expand the scope of how we measure the **efficacy of Council projects** through a broad environmental justice lens.

Build upon current Council structures and processes to define **environmental justice as a necessary and explicit component of Council work.**

Reconcile the Council with overburdened communities through **shared environmental justice values.**
Environmental Justice Framework

People-centered, data-driven decision making

Prioritized engagement with overburdened communities

Community benefits beyond harm mitigation

Contextualized

Community-centered

Reparative
Framework Component 1: People-centered, data-driven decision making

Data from lived experiences of overburdened communities inform decisions

- Understand environmental history by valuing and integrating lived experience via quantitative and qualitative data
- Identify, address, and be transparent about practices that may perpetuate environmental injustice
- Address environmental harms not accounted for by existing regulations
Framework Component 2: Engagement and collaboration

Prioritized engagement with overburdened communities

- Build *reparative, respectful* relationships aware of community autonomy and capacity
- *Early and iterative* engagement processes with time needed to give informed input
- *Co-create* with community partners
- Collaborate with partner agencies
Framework Component 3: Community benefits

Community benefits beyond harm mitigation

• Ensure that benefits of Council work and investments meet community’s self-identified needs
• Provide transparency about investments and benefits
• Document and publicly report EJ-related benchmarks and metrics
Next steps

Building upon EJ commitment from adopted Council plans

- Direction from adopted Council plans and federal funding guidelines
- Assessment criteria (health, affordability and economic stability, community values, engagement, and cultural preservation, accountability, climate adaptation, land stewardship and Indigenous relations)

Embedding environmental justice principles across our planning efforts

- Conducting policy review (transportation, land use, housing, parks, water resources, climate, natural systems)
- Developing metrics and implementation measures
- Coordination with Council agency partners
Expanding the public comment process

• IAP2 Spectrum of Engagement and coordination with other RDG teams
• Potential methods include:
  • Group conversations
  • 1:1 meetings
  • Attending existing organization meetings
  • Community organization-suggested ways to remain engaged
• Desired actions
  • Providing translations and disability accommodations
  • Physically meeting communities where they feel comfortable
  • Providing times outside of 9-5 work hours
  • Offering compensation
  • Informing communities how their feedback informed our work
Questions for feedback

• What groups do you recommend with engage with for the public comment process?

• What methods of engagement do you recommend?
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