



A Refresher on SACOG's Race, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative

**Information**

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**Attachments:** Yes

**Referring Committee:** Not Applicable

**Issue:**

SACOG annually has a presentation to refamiliarize current board members and introduce new board members to SACOG's Race, Equity, and Inclusion (REI) Initiative. This presentation will cover reasons for the initiative, work done to date, and upcoming work in 2025.

**Request:**

Approve

**Recommendation for Board:**

None; this item is for information. Staff recommends board members participate in the presentation with comments and questions to ensure the full board gains the same understanding of SACOG's REI work.

**Recommendation for Committee:**

Not applicable

**Background:**

For several years, SACOG worked with economic development partners—Greater Sacramento Economic Council, Valley Vision, and the Metro Chamber—to understand the Sacramento region's competitive advantages and weaknesses with similar regions across the country. We learned from a Brookings report that while our region was well-positioned in some ways, in others—most notably economic inclusion, or the degree to which people can participate in the economy—we were way behind other regions.

In addition, there has always been a general recognition that government is not good at engaging the public in decision making and planning, and the result is government investments that don't support, even harm, the people they're intended to serve.

Acknowledging these issues, SACOG's REI Initiative began in 2020, when the first REI Working Group (at that time comprised solely of board members) explored the role of racial equity in SACOG's work and recommended the board use a portion of its Regional Funding Program to create a community-focused equity planning grant program—Engage, Empower, Implement.

In 2021, the SACOG board expanded the REI Working Group to include public members with expertise in the fields of racial equity and public policy. That working group developed a [racial equity statement of change and commitment](#), which the board adopted in February 2022. The statement is the foundation of SACOG's REI work. Following through on the commitments in that statement, the 2021 REI Working Group then developed a [racial equity action plan](#), which the SACOG board adopted in October 2022.

To oversee, guide, and advise on the implementation of SACOG's racial equity action plan, the SACOG board appointed board and public members in 2023 and 2024. The board also asked the REI Working Group to make recommendations on any updates to the racial equity action plan that would increase its effectiveness. For the last two years, the REI Working Group invested time in reviewing, giving feedback and advising on the activities and products of SACOG's racial equity action plan. Some time was spent attending off-site board meetings and tours; some members attending SACOG board meetings to participate in REI presentations; some members met in ad hoc meetings to provide advice to staff on specific equity issues of programs; the majority of their time was spent as a full Working Group, hearing staff's presentation of information and providing real-time feedback. Attachment A describes 2024 progress toward each goal of the racial equity action plan.

At the end of 2024, the SACOG board adopted [revised goals and objectives for the racial equity action plan](#) and a [charge for the 2025-2026 REI Working Group](#). With these updates, the racial equity action plan focuses the SACOG board and staff on considering equity goals and community engagement principles in decisions, delivery of programs, and measuring our progress.

#### **Discussion/Analysis:**

After two years of implementing SACOG's racial equity action plan, the SACOG board and staff have gained a deeper understanding of the diversity of communities that comprise the Sacramento region, and a growing ability to design programs and policies to meet the needs of those diverse communities—in particular Black, Indigenous, Asian, Pacific Island, Hispanic/Latino, and other communities of color, along with low-income, rural, urban and other underrepresented communities—while advancing the regional goals of SACOG.

What the board will hear in the presentation of this item, is how SACOG's first attempts at considering equity goals and community engagement principles have yielded programs (Engage, Empower, Implement; Regional Funding Round; Mobility Zones) that every SACOG member can see themselves in, and that every SACOG member can participate in. The presentation will also cover why SACOG has an REI initiative, and what REI-related work is scheduled in 2025.

#### **Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:**

Included in the Overall Work Program/Budget

#### **List of Attachments:**

Attachment A: Racial Equity Action Plan Progress Report Year 2024