

Transit Watch



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Identifying Opportunities: Task Force Recommendations for a More Inclusive, Diverse, and Equitable Association Encourages a New Vision Forward

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The last year has seen intense focus on historically under-acknowledged challenges that relate to diversity, equity, and inclusion across the country. Even in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic — which caused unprecedented drops in public transit ridership, abrupt school shut downs, organizational and personal financial hardships, and most of all, the tragic deaths of over 63,000 Californians out of nearly 620,000 people across the United States — the inequities in our society led to demonstrations throughout the nation. People were in the streets walking along the routes where we usually provided transit service demanding equity, inclusion, and improvements throughout our communities. Although the vast majority of California transit agencies and a number of private sector businesses were in full-on financial survival mode, we who provide the public benefit of mobility, stable jobs to our communities, and reliable service to our riders, not only understood the need to act, but that the time to act was now!

California Transit Association Chair Kate Breen added this timely item to her agenda and the Executive Committee unanimously agreed to form the [Inclusive, Diverse and Equitable Association \(IDEA\) Task Force](#) to develop a plan to guide the Association's inclusion, equity, and diversity efforts and provide resources to the public transit agency and business members. I was humbled when Chair Breen asked that I lead this important effort as the IDEA Task Force Chair. I was joined by Alva Carrasco as the IDEA Task Force Vice Chair in leading a group of 17 very dedicated volunteer public and private sector transportation professionals as we tackled the important work of creating an environment that encourages inclusion and equity throughout our industry.

Together the Task Force, over a course of five months, meeting every other week even in the midst of our agency and business challenges, developed a vision for the Association and identified opportunities to center racial justice, inclusion, diversity, and equity within the Association's policy positions, advocacy endeavors, educational offerings, and governance structure.

REPORT OVERVIEW

We recommended changes in the areas of industry education, Association governance, and policy that we believe will guide the Association and its members toward a more inclusive, diverse, and equitable Association. We have specific, measurable goals, which include prioritizing racial justice, transportation equity, and the furtherance of workforce equity in the Association's educational content delivery plan; review of committee membership to ensure staff from diverse backgrounds participate in standing committees; and incorporating equity analyses when reviewing future legislative bill proposals considered for inclusion in the State and Federal Legislative programs. Also included is a helpful glossary, which defines important terms.

On behalf of the IDEA Task Force, I am pleased and proud to share the plans that we developed for you in the ["Actions for a more Inclusive, Diverse, and Equitable Association" report](#). Our IDEA Task Force will continue to meet as frequently as quarterly to review progress toward implementation of the recommendations.

MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE

Beverly Greene, Executive Director of External Affairs, Marketing and Communications, AC Transit (Chair)

Alva Carrasco, Assistant Vice President of Transit and Rail National Business Line Transit, WSP (Vice-Chair)

Doran Barnes, Chief Executive Officer, Foothill Transit

KeAndra D. Cylear Dodds, Executive Officer of Equity and Race, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Johnny Dunning, Jr., Department Manager of Scheduling and Customer Advocacy, Orange County Transportation Authority

Diane Feinstein, Transportation Manager, City of Fairfield

Mark Fisher, Director of National Sales, New Flyer of America

Kellie Irving, Regulatory Compliance and Civil Rights Officer, Long Beach Transit

Wendy Lau, Manager of Office of Civil Rights, San Mateo County Transit District

Lora Mallory, Director of Operations, NorthWest Region, First Transit

Macy Neshati, Chief Executive Officer, Antelope Valley Transit Authority

Veronica Siranosian, Vice President of Digital Innovation, AECOM

Deanna Smith, Civil Rights Officer, Monterey-Salinas Transit

Julia Tuer, Manager of Government Affairs, San Diego Metropolitan Transit System

Kenya Wheeler, Principal Transportation Planner, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

Maceo Wiggins, Director of BART Office of Civil Rights, Bay Area Rapid Transit District

Kellie Zalewski, Operations Manager, Marin Transit

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