

# Transportation Equity Caucus

## Transportation Equity Caucus 2023 Action Plan

### TEC VISION

Transportation is a crucial link to ensuring opportunity for all — connecting us to jobs, schools, housing, health care, grocery stores and much more. But millions of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and people living on low incomes live in communities where quality transportation options are unaffordable, unreliable, or nonexistent due to decades of disinvestment. Federal transportation policy choices — what we build, where we put it, who builds it, how we operate it, what energy powers it—have an enormous impact on our economy, our climate, and our health. We must invest in a manner that builds a nation where equity is at the forefront to ensure that all people can participate and prosper.

The Transportation Equity Caucus— formed by the nation’s leading civil rights, community development, disability, racial justice, economic justice, faith-based, health, housing, labor, environmental justice, tribal, public interest, women’s groups and transportation organizations — drives transportation policies that advance economic and social equity in the United States.

We are driven by the belief that every resident should have access to safe, accessible, affordable, and resilient transportation choices, a cornerstone of healthy communities. Public transit and quality pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure can connect residents to jobs, schools, and other critical services without a vehicle. They support physical activity and reduce health-harming pollution that is also one of the most significant contributors to global climate change. Highway, rail, and airport infrastructure, while critical to national commerce, must be environmentally just; must respect and protect BIPOC and indigenous lands; and must factor in the basic needs of residents in low-income communities and BIPOC to access the regional economy. All communities, no matter their makeup, deserve to enjoy the benefits of a quality transportation system.

The transportation and infrastructure landscapes have shifted due to the COVID pandemic and this once-in-a-generation investment in infrastructure through federal bills like Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). Rather than working to get things “back to normal,” we should leverage this changed landscape as an opportunity to transform what our multi-modal transportation systems look like, who it serves, and how it will be funded and operated. We should prioritize walking, biking, rolling, and transit options for more sustainable, safe, and efficient ways of getting around. We should ensure that highways, bridges, roadways and waterways provide access to national commerce in a manner that is environmentally just and resilient -- in a manner that provides equitable access to economic opportunity and that “does no harm” to places where we build them. This is the vision that the Transportation Equity Caucus seeks to deliver on through our work.

To achieve this vision, we will need to develop and strengthen deep and meaningful local, regional, statewide, and national partnerships across all sectors. Equity needs to be the driving force, and all participating entities must aspire to the same vision. The Transportation Equity

# Transportation Equity Caucus

Caucus is well suited to co-lead this movement because of our commitment to cross-sectoral equity work and experience with network building and partnership engagement.

As a Caucus, we have been able to draw in a diverse set of partners working at many of these points of intersection and are well-positioned to apply this breadth of expertise to developing a bold agenda that allows us to realize our vision of transportation equity.

## **Vision and Goals:**

We work collaboratively to transform the transportation systems in Black, Indigenous, and communities of color, low income communities, and other marginalized communities through research, advocacy, and communications strategies. **Together, we work to:**

## **Vision and Goals:**

- 1. Create Thriving Communities**
- 2. Enhance Transportation Affordability, Safety, & Accessibility**
- 3. Cultivate Reparative Investment**
- 4. Promote Generative Jobs & Wealth Creation**
- 5. Demand Government Transparency & Accountability**

## **ACTIVITIES**

In order to deliver on this Vision, the Transportation Equity Caucus enlists the following activities and strategies:

### **Areas of Action**

**Policy**—Policy advocacy and support with implementation is a large part of how the Caucus does its work. Many of our members have deep relationships and expertise in the federal policy arena and we leverage this to advance transportation equity at the national level. We will continue to engage in federal policy in 2023 and will look for opportunities to inspire & support state policy efforts in strategic locations across the country.

**Communications**—Communications and narrative strategies have always been a part of Caucus work, however, we have not had an explicit communications plan outlining all the activities and timelines for the work. Embedding social media and communications activities into our action plan will create a clearer picture of the work and how it aligns with our broader strategy. We plan to do more outward facing communications to energize and educate advocates and the general public around transportation equity topics. This is especially critical in the current landscape with all these federal resources flowing down to states and with a new Congress in 2023.

**Knowledge Sharing & Capacity Building**—One important role the Caucus plays is being a space for exchanging ideas and knowledge around the various issues we all work on and care about. We invite all of our members to a monthly call where we share updates on our work, we convene work groups to dive deeper on specific topics of interest, and we regularly share information and opportunities for action on our listserv. In 2023 we hope to reinstate virtual

# Transportation Equity Caucus

brown bag lunches as another opportunity to learn more about interesting and relevant transportation equity topics. This helps build shared knowledge and capacity of TEC members to engage in equity work and show up in respectful, meaningful ways. This also provides a platform to foster deeper and broader participation and engagement of BIPOC led and run organizations.

**Research**—Research and data collection/analysis is an important part of advocacy work. It has been lifted up several times by Caucus members as something we should be cultivating more resources and capacity to do. We did start an ad hoc research work group in 2020, but capacity and participation waned over time. Research and data around transportation issues would help make the case for why this work is important and how it can impact the quality of life for many communities. We hope to be able to bring in some dedicated resources and capacity to do more of this work in 2023 and beyond.

## Working Groups

The main forum for advancing our work is through our 4 established working groups: Co-led by Steering Committee members, our working groups meet regularly to discuss strategy, activities, and priorities within each topic area.

Work Group	Co-leads	Meetings	Top Priority Actions for 2023
<b>Removing Enforcement from Transportation Safety Strategies</b>	Oboi Reed, <i>Equiticity</i> Hester Serebrin, <i>Transportation Choices Coalition</i> Ken McLeod, <i>League of American Bicyclists</i>	1st Wednesday of each month at 11amPT/12pmMT/1pmCT/2pmET	-Publish removing enforcement equity standards document - Host webinar to highlight concerns around Automated Enforcement -Continue to work on NHTSA program reform
<b>Climate &amp; Transportation</b>	Axel Santana, <i>PolicyLink</i>	4th Monday of each month at 12pmPT/1pmMT/2pmCT/3pmET	-Work with select state DOTs on GHG & carbon emission reduction -Publish and disseminate principles document -Host webinar on plan to instill equity into state climate plans
<b>Federal Policy Implementation</b>	Caron Whitaker, <i>League of American Bicyclists</i> Dara Baldwin, <i>Center for Disability Rights</i>	2nd Monday of each month at 10amPT/11amMT/12pmCT/1pmET	-Host policy briefings on key issues -Host webinar/learning lunch on Approps process - Weigh in on appropriations, and be prepared to respond

# Transportation Equity Caucus

			to negative amendments. - Equity Action Plan watchdog
<b>Jobs &amp; Workforce</b>	Beth Berendsen, <i>Chicago Women in Trades</i> Jacky Grimshaw, <i>Center for Neighborhood Technology</i>	1st Wednesday of each month at 1pmPT/2pmMT/3pmCT/4pmET	-Host webinar series on key issues

## Policy Briefings

Our working groups have identified policy briefings as a key activity for 2023. These may be for Congressional staff for other Governmental agency staff, and/or media outlets. The nature and content of these briefings are still to be agreed upon, but we will likely be sharing information about our work and different priorities. The federal policy work group will lead these efforts with support from PolicyLink’s federal policy team and consultant.

- Federal Policy: Tentative Congressional Briefing—need to refine purpose before setting this up
- Removing Enforcement: Congressional briefing on alternatives to enforcement/1906 program

## Webinars

Another activity that our working groups want to prioritize is informational webinars. Our work groups want to highlight important topics such as automated enforcement and the intersections between climate and transportation. Our goal is to help educate and inform advocates, community leaders, and decision-makers of the various issues we work on and the importance of prioritizing transportation equity. The timing and delivery of webinars will be designed to advance the strategic learning and advocacy objectives of our core working groups, which will be developed through group work plans.

- Jobs and Workforce: Webinar series on jobs topics
- Removing Enforcement: Webinar on automated enforcement
- Climate: TBD
- Federal Policy: Webinar (or learning lunch) on Federal Appropriations process

## Written materials (memos, briefs, fact sheets)

As part of our work, we will also be developing some written materials—such as memos, briefs, and/or fact sheets—on a variety of transportation equity-related issues. These will be shared with the relevant government agencies, staffers and representatives, and advocates and community leaders as appropriate.

Alignment with working group

# Transportation Equity Caucus

- Climate: Climate and Transportation Principles; sign ons around GreenHouse Gasses (GHG) and carbon reduction rules/programs
- Removing Enforcement: Removing Enforcement Principles; Automated enforcement fact sheet; Sign on letters to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and other implementing agencies throughout the Administration
- Federal Policy: Comments to DOT on proposed rulemaking, Work plan for 2023 federal policy activities
- Jobs and workforce: TBD

*See Learning Lunch Topics for potential ideas for additional written materials.*

## Learning lunches

During our strategic planning meetings of 2021, TEC members highlighted the desire to learn more about each others' work and other relevant topics of discussion in the transportation equity world. Learning lunches have been hosted in the past as a way to exchange ideas and dive deeper into topics of interest. We plan to reinstate these informal sessions in 2023 and have started a list of potential topics for discussion.

- Please see this [link](#) for the descriptions of each topic and additional topics

## ***Changing the Rules through Policy, Advocacy, and Systems Change***

- Justice40 101
- Infrastructure Equity Standards Briefing
- Racial Equity Executive Order 101 + Racial Equity Governing Agenda 101
- Reconnecting Communities 101
- Inclusive Disability Policies within the Build Back Better Act
- Office of Management and Budget local hire initiative

## ***Strengthen Movement Infrastructure through Leadership and Capacity Building***

- Uplifting Models of Innovative and Transformative Equity Initiatives
- Community Co-powerment (Leveraging PL's CA Co-governance module)
- Detroit Disability Power: Social Justice Access Toolkit

## ***Reimagine Equitable, Resilient, Safe, and Environmentally Just Communities***

- Environmental Justice
- Reimagining Public Safety
- Mobility Hubs & Transportation Alternatives
- Emergency Preparedness + Climate Resilience
- Disability Justice
- Housing Affordability + Displacement

## Social Media

# Transportation Equity Caucus

As part of our broader goal to expand the communications activities of the Caucus, we plan to engage in more social media activity in 2023. PolicyLink has a communications team with social media capacity, which can be the main source of engagement. Other TEC members with such capacity are encouraged to get involved as their capacity allows.

Examples of kinds of posts we might do:

- Event announcements
- Campaign launches
- Pushing out written materials
- Tagging representatives in posts calling for action
- Calls to action for advocates

## **TEC In-Person Convening**

One of the main ways TEC members have built and strengthened relationships has been through our in person convenings. Due to the pandemic, we have not been able to meet for the past few years. We hope to be able to host an in person convening in the fall of 2023 (most likely in conjunction with a members' or transportation equity related conference).

Proposed Next Steps for convening

- Develop a brief survey that can be distributed across member networks to get agenda item ideas
- Work with Steering Committee members to use the survey data as well as incorporate their priorities
- Develop an outreach and engagement plan that includes spreading the word throughout the Caucus network, travel stipends for CBOs, language that encourages large advocacy groups to prioritize sending BIPOC staff, etc.

## **Recruiting/Onboarding**

- TEC Charter/Group Agreements
  - Once a member has joined the TEC, we will share our Charter with them. It explains the structure of the Caucus and how we work together.
  - It also outlines how we show up in spaces and explains group agreements
- TEC Recruitment/Onboarding
  - [New Member form](#)
  - Share this form with new and current members. Once an organization representative fills out the form, we will discuss their application with the Steering Committee (on our monthly Steering Committee calls).