

Equity: a principle that recognizes how an institution or system harms certain groups of people with excessive burdens and deprives them of the benefits of that system and corrects that imbalance by committing more resources to and by heavily weighing the needs and influence of marginalized groups when considering policy.

Equity in Public Transportation is a policy and planning goal that that *integrates* all segments of the affected community in the decision-making process, seeks to provide communities and individuals with public transportation services that are *affordable, reliable, accessible, safe, and high-quality*; that prioritize *marginalized populations*, increase *access to opportunity*, and that are designed to *redress* past and present injustices and *prevent* future inequities.

- *Integrates community in decision-making* – Public transit services cannot be considered equitable if they are not based on meaningful engagement with all segments of the affected community. Riders should be considered owners, planners, and decision-makers in the development of public transport services. Traditional methods of public involvement, like meetings, print, and radio can be inconvenient, challenging, or impossible for some communities to engage with. Transportation agencies should take all necessary steps to ensure riders have the capacity to engage in decision-making.
- *Affordable* – Access to transit should never be contingent on one’s ability to pay. Transit investment should establish programs that provide fair relief for everyone who needs it.
- *Reliable* – This piece affects safety, accessibility, and access to opportunity.
- *Safe & Accessible* - Many factors in addition to disabilities and scarce service limit access to transit, including dangerous streets, discriminatory policing, and the lack of elevators at stations. Transit investment should eliminate the full range of limitations and achieve broad-based safety and universal access.
- *High-Quality*
 - Consider adding language about dignity of riders
 - “Rider experience”; being good stewards of public funding; bang for buck; ensure highest quality for public investment
 - Consider adding examples
 - Providing good information to riders (meetings, times, routes, frequency-based maps, basic signage)
- *Marginalized Populations* – marginalization describes the historic and current systemic exclusion or oppression that individuals and communities face as a result of racism, classism, ableism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination embedded in institutions.

- *Access to opportunity* – A community is not sustainable if it is cut off from economic and social activities like job opportunities, healthcare and other public services, and social facilities like schools or childcare centers. Equitable public transport must provide abundant, frequent, fast, and reliable connections to these opportunities.
- *Redress and Prevent* – In order to redress injustices and prevent future ones, they must first be accounted for. This is why it is imperative that all segments of the affected community be integrated into the decision-making process. Further, proactive review of the potential discriminatory impact of proposed activities—as opposed to waiting until a project is delivered to enforce civil rights protections—must be standard practice.