

# We're working to eliminate disparities and expand access and mobility for all.

## EQUITY PLATFORM Overview



**Metro**

**Metro is committed to providing equitable service and project delivery, policymaking, and resource distribution. This means accounting for the different histories, challenges and needs of communities across LA County.**

**Transportation infrastructure, programs, and service investments must be targeted toward those with the greatest mobility needs first, in order to improve access to opportunity for all.**

## Equity Platform

Since 2020, there has been a spotlighting of the systemic racism, anti-Blackness, and broader injustices in America, which stems from discriminatory housing policies, exclusionary zoning, disproportionate law enforcement, infrastructure investments, and environmental burdens. While Metro has done much to support diversity, inclusion, and equity, even before 2020, we know we must do more to combat systemic racism and the socioeconomic inequities that exist in our region.

Metro's Equity Platform, adopted by the Metro Board in 2018, is a framework that guides how the agency works to address inequities and create more equitable access to opportunity through four main areas of action.

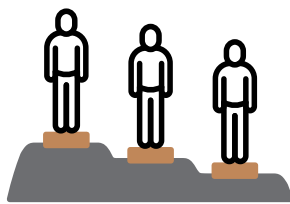
These areas are called the pillars of the Equity Platform:

- > Define and Measure
- > Listen and Learn
- > Focus and Deliver
- > Train and Grow

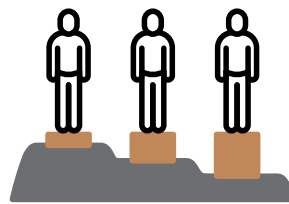
The Equity Platform is designed to inform, shape and guide every facet of the agency's business, on a continuing basis, to shape projects, investments, and new initiatives.

The platform is not a singular task or process that will be completed, but rather an agency commitment to incorporate equity into all facets of Metro's decision-making and budget allocation, and genuinely engage impacted communities in our processes, while continuously pursuing equitable outcomes in everything we do.

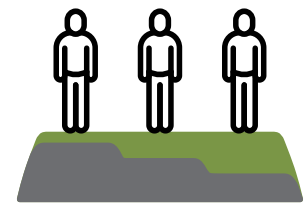
**Equality is not the same as equity, and ultimately we're striving for justice.**



**EQUALITY**

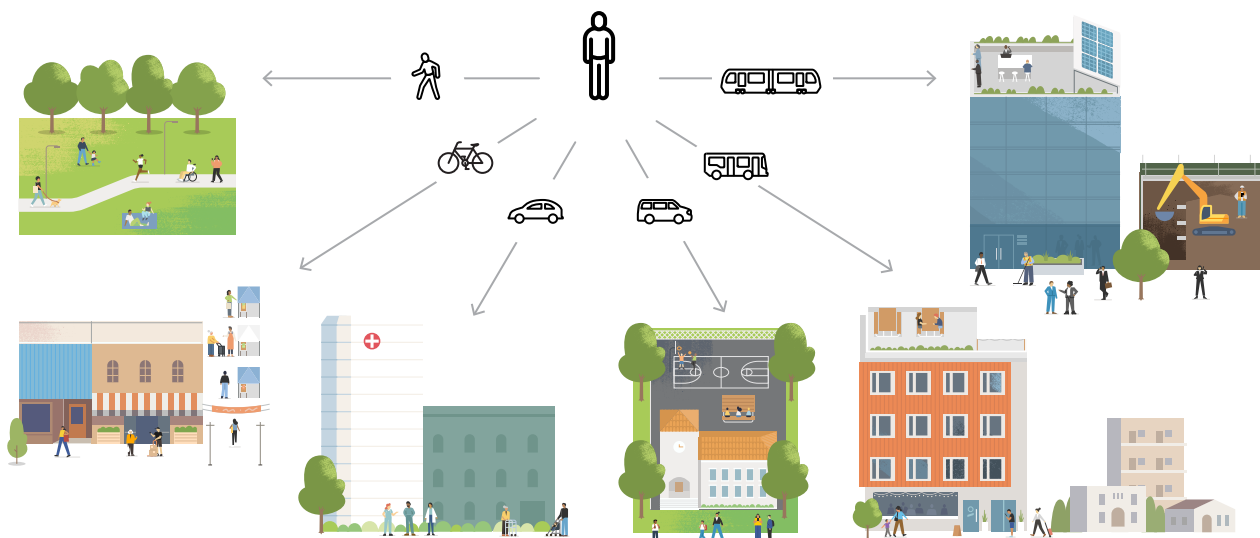


**EQUITY**



**JUSTICE**

**Metro recognizes that vast disparities exist in access to opportunities, including jobs, housing, community resources, healthy communities and mobility options. Transportation is an essential lever to enabling access and improving quality of life for LA County.**



## Four Pillars



### 1: DEFINE AND MEASURE

To ensure equity, we must both understand it and define how it's measured, thus this pillar embraces the key task of defining and measuring "equity" as it relates to Metro's work.

*At Metro: Equity is both an outcome and a process to address racial, socio-economic and gender disparities, to ensure fair and just access – with respect to where one begins and the capacity to improve from that starting point – to opportunities, including jobs, housing, education, mobility options and healthier communities. Equity is achieved when one's outcomes in life are not predetermined, in a statistical or experiential sense, on their racial, economic or social identities; and it requires community-informed and needs-based provision, implementation and impact of services, programs and policies that reduce and ultimately prevent disparities.*

Metro created a community designation called Equity Focus Communities (EFCs) to help us identify where transportation needs are greatest. EFCs consider where there are higher concentrations of resident and household demographics associated with mobility barriers (low-income households earning less than \$60,000 per year; Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC) populations; and households that do not have a car). While the EFC category designation identifies the highest equity need communities at a macro level, Metro will work to measure and understand community conditions and priorities at the service, program and project level throughout our work. *See last page for the 2022 EFC Map and visit [metro.net/2022efcmap](https://metro.net/2022efcmap) for an interactive map.*

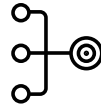


### 2: LISTEN AND LEARN

Metro is working to improve its efforts to listen and learn from the communities that we serve. We recognize that to increase access to opportunities for all, we must understand how to increase access for those who face barriers. No matter our intent, we will not be successful unless we work to address their needs first. Metro can only serve those with the greatest needs by understanding their needs through intentional listening.

Authentic listening and learning requires meaningful engagement. Community-driven conversations are essential, but they require trust. *In order for Metro to build trust, the agency must intentionally collaborate and listen to community experiences.* Our engagement efforts must also

work to ensure that community members are left feeling heard, reflected and respected. Hence, Metro must work to show how community input informs and shapes our decisions, actions, and investments.



### 3: FOCUS AND DELIVER

The Focus and Deliver pillar centers needs-based analyses to plan, build, invest and operate in a manner that removes barriers and supports increased access to opportunity for all. The Equity Platform is focused on results and change over time. Thus, Metro is developing tools to consistently identify disparities, their root causes, and strategies to address them, while improving access to opportunity for all.

Additionally, this pillar recognizes Metro's role as a partner in advancing equitable outcomes. There are areas outside of Metro's direct purview, including in housing, public health and economic development, that intersect with transportation and shape access to opportunities and life outcomes. *Metro must be a partner in addressing these issues through creating new partnerships and advancing existing relationships with local partners.*



### 4: TRAIN AND GROW

This pillar focuses on Metro as an organization and recognizes that successful implementation of the Equity Platform requires commitment, education and training, and prioritization of the pillars across Metro at all levels and in all departments.

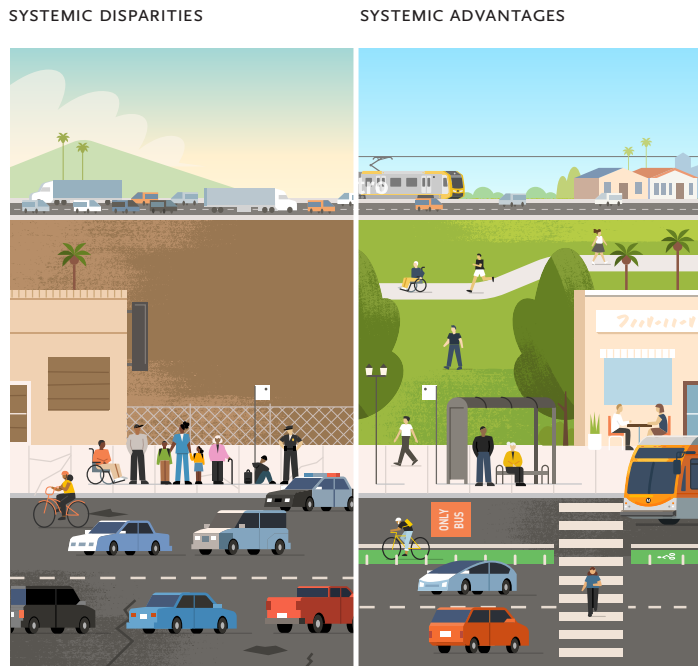
*We are committed to equity, as well as diversity and inclusion.* It's important that our agency staff reflects the diversity of the region and that we have an inclusive culture that encourages and respects the contributions of our diverse staff. Additionally, all staff must understand equity and their role in advancing and prioritizing it in their work. This will require training and activities to educate staff about existing disparities and inequities, as well as a framework for incorporating what is learned into our processes, programs, and policies in a way that eliminates those disparities and inequities.

We recognize our work must be iterative, and continued learning, consistent analysis, and adaptive approaches are key to facilitating more equitable processes and delivering and supporting more equitable outcomes.

Under the Equity Platform, we are working to identify and implement projects or programs that *reduce and ultimately eliminate disparities in access to opportunities*. Metro is committed to leading and partnering with others to create a more just society.

The following four graphics conceptualize how two disparate communities might fare under different scenarios.

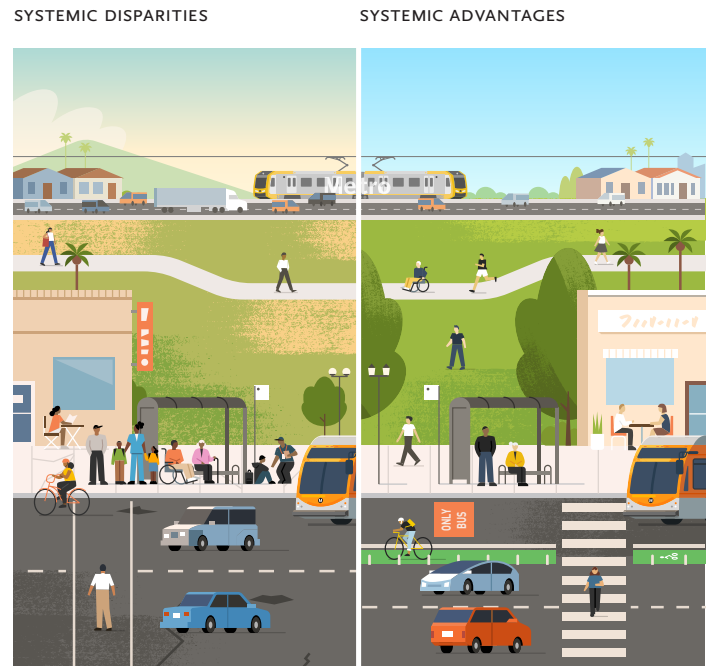
## HISTORICAL INEQUITY



Over time, *inequitable investment and service* can create vast disparities between communities. These disparities are visible in:

- > Air quality
- > Traffic congestion
- > Mobility
- > Housing
- > Open space options
- > Food access
- > Quality infrastructure
- > Few community development opportunities

## EQUALITY



“Equal” service and improvements to both communities does not account for underlying historic inequities and fails to reduce all disparities.

We strive for *equality of outcomes*, where everyone has equal opportunity, access, and rights. However, to reach *equality*, our approach must prioritize *equity* to counter systemic inequalities.

While some conditions may be improved, “equal” improvements may result in insufficient interventions, such as bus service and/or shelters that do not meet demand, or crosswalk, sidewalk and other infrastructure that is of poor quality in historically underserved communities.

## EQUITY

SYSTEMIC DISPARITIES



SYSTEMIC ADVANTAGES



*Equitable investments* consider existing disparities and can effectively reduce disparities between communities. Transit service, station amenities, and safety infrastructure meets the needs of the historically underserved community above.

However, because systemic inequities persist like a lack of affordable housing, accessible jobs, or other barriers that prevent people from being able to live in or access other communities, this scenario also requires ongoing intervention to maintain *equitable outcomes*.

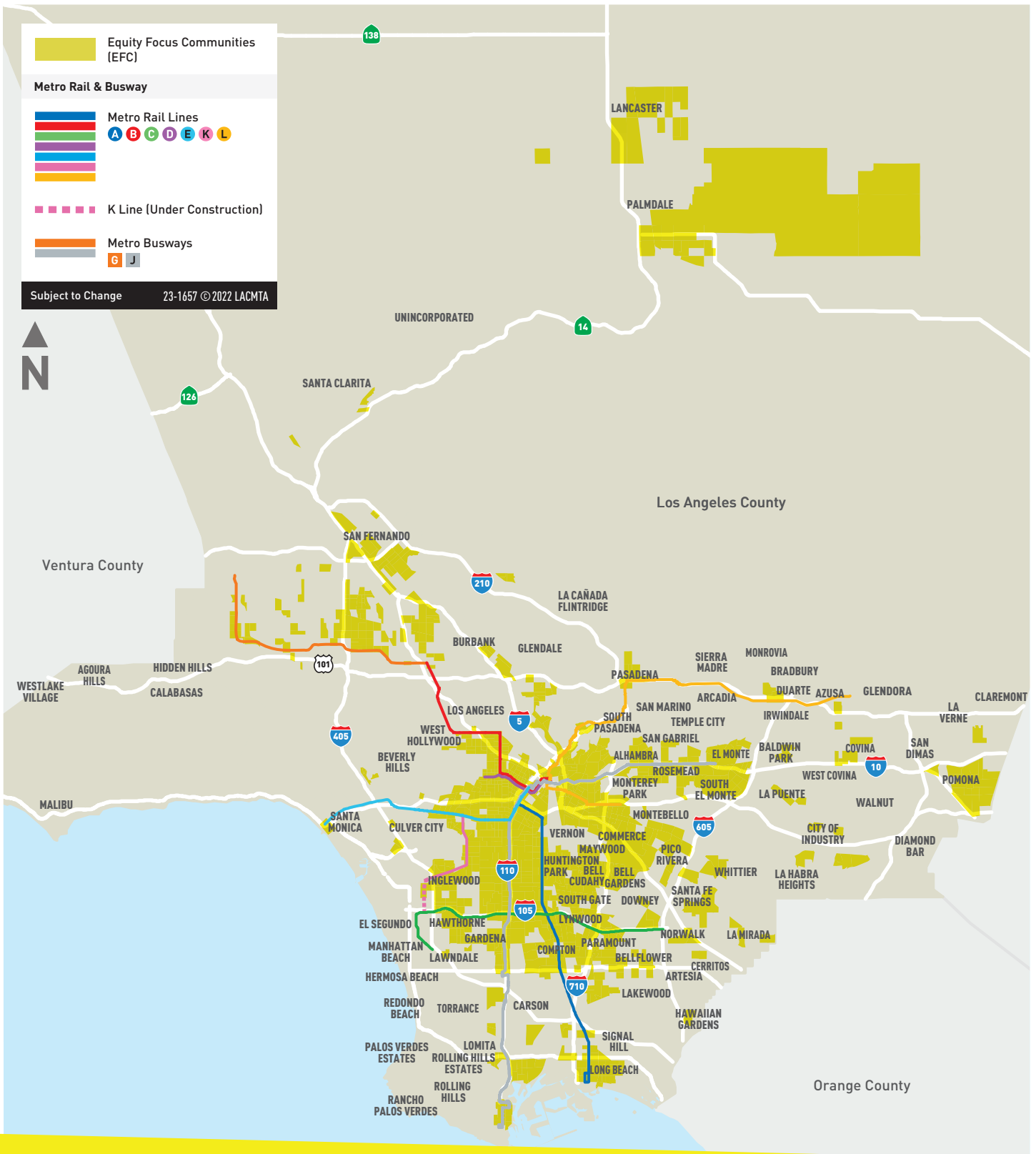
## JUSTICE

SYSTEMIC JUSTICE



We strive for *justice* to achieve communities where underlying barriers are removed, all people enjoy access to opportunities, and disparities do not exist.

# METRO-DESIGNATED EQUITY FOCUS COMMUNITIES



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