Racial Equity Early Action Plan

A Final Report from the Special Committee on Equity & Social Justice

May 2021

THANKS

SCAG would like to express our thanks to all those who provided input and feedback on the Racial Equity Early Action Plan, especially the following members of the Equity & Social Justice Committee:

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*A special thank you to **Mr. Charles Brown** of Equitable Cities for his support of the Committee's work.*

ABOUT SCAG

SCAG is the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization (MPO), representing six counties, 191 cities and more than 19 million residents. SCAG undertakes a variety of planning and policy initiatives to encourage a more sustainable Southern California now and in the future.

MISSION STATEMENT

To foster innovative regional solutions that improve the lives of Southern Californians through inclusive collaboration, visionary planning, regional advocacy, information sharing, and promoting best practices.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July 2020 SCAG's Regional Council adopted Resolution No. 20-623-2, affirming its commitment to advancing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout Southern California. SCAG recognized that for the region to become healthy, livable, sustainable, and economically resilient, it needed to dramatically improve outcomes for low-income families and communities of color. The resolution called for the formation of an ad hoc Special Committee on Equity & Social Justice to further develop SCAG's response to advancing equity throughout the agency's activities and advise SCAG's Regional Council on policies and practices to advance its resolved intentions. The Committee met on a quarterly basis starting in September 2020 and concluding in March 2021. This report provides a summary of the Committee's work and outcomes.

Special Committee Overview

The Committee was comprised of elected officials, nonprofit and private sector representatives, and university partners. The work of the Committee included reviewing and providing feedback on:

- An agency-wide working definition of "equity";
- Existing equity-related activities throughout SCAG's departments;
- The draft framework for the Racial Equity Early Action Plan; and
- The work plan for developing an Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy (IERS).

The Committee was focused on developing strategic recommendations for the agency for advancing equity across the region. To support the work of the Committee, SCAG staff researched equity definitions, analyzed agency efforts to integrate equity into its current work, assessed racial inequities across the region, developed a Racial Equity Framework and corresponding Early Action Plan, and conducted both internal and external outreach on each of these items, which are described below.

Equity Definition

Informed by research, best practices, peer agency review, and guided by input from the Special Committee, SCAG staff, and stakeholders, SCAG developed a working definition of equity that leads with race as a focal point in addressing the pervasive and deep inequities faced by people of color across the region. This definition will guide SCAG's work on equity over the years to come. Though all dimensions of equity will not be advanced at the same time, SCAG staff will develop the skills needed to address other facets of equity, and through sustained effort, SCAG will build capacity to apply this work to other inequities. The working definition of equity is detailed below.

> *As central to SCAG's work, racial equity describes the actions, policies, and practices that eliminate bias and barriers that have historically and systemically marginalized communities of color, to ensure all people can be healthy, prosperous, and participate fully in civic life.*

Evaluating Existing Conditions

Prior to developing a Racial Equity Framework and Early Action Plan, SCAG needed to acquire a better understanding of the agency and the region's existing conditions. To that end, SCAG staff conducted an equity inventory and developed a preliminary baseline assessment of racial inequities across the region. The equity inventory provided a snapshot of how SCAG currently integrates equity considerations into its work and identified additional areas where equity could be integrated. The preliminary baseline assessment of racial inequities (Appendix A) included data on 26 equity indicators that were grouped into categories aligned with Connect SoCal goals: Economy, Healthy and Complete Communities, Mobility, and Environment. The baseline conditions assessment provided a means to highlight opportunities for consultation and partnership with community-based organizations, partner agencies, and other stakeholders, and it is expected to help motivate more internal dialogue within the agency to meet the challenges of engaging in regional equity work. It also points to opportunities for deeper analysis of the data and the root causes of inequities, and potential areas for focus of future actions.

Racial Equity Framework

The Racial Equity Framework establishes overarching goals and strategies to advance racial equity through SCAG's policies, practices, and activities. It ensures that SCAG's equity-related work is aligned toward common goals and continues through actions pursued across the agency.

The Framework includes four overarching goals:

- **Shift Organizational Culture:** Focus SCAG's internal work and practices on inclusion, diversity, equity, and awareness.
- **Center Racial Equity in Regional Policy & Planning:** Bring equity into SCAG's regional planning functions.
- **Encourage Racial Equity in Local Planning Practices:** Promote racial equity in efforts involving local elected officials and planning professionals.
- **Activate & Amplify:** Communicate broadly SCAG's commitment to racial equity and join with others in different fields and sectors to amplify impact.

Each of these goals is advanced through a focus on the following three strategies:

- **Listen & Learn:** Develop a shared understanding of our history of discrimination and the structural barriers that continue to perpetuate the inequities experienced today.
- **Engage & Co-Power:** Create an environment where everyone is included, able to share their experiences, and equipped to talk about racial equity and inequities.
- **Integrate & Institutionalize:** Focus on systems change to improve racial equity. Center racial equity in all aspects of work. This involves internal and external systems change.

Racial Equity Action Plan

Based on feedback from stakeholders and input from the Special Committee, SCAG staff developed a draft Racial Equity Early Action Plan for the Committee to review. The Committee reviewed and discussed the Racial Equity Early Action Plan , and provided feedback to SCAG staff on how to improve and refine the actions. The draft EAP includes a total of 29 actions fairly evenly split across all the goals and strategies. Many of the actions can largely be initiated through internal process improvements or existing organizational development resources, but may require resources in future budget cycles depending on findings of initial internal assessment. Examples of actions include:

- Update SCAG's Strategic Plan to incorporate an equity vision and goals to guide the agency's work plans;

- Develop equity goals, policies, and metrics as part of Connect SoCal update, and conduct equity-focused outreach and engagement;

- Provide resources through the Sustainable Communities Program to promote Environmental Justice;

- Assess and align procurement policies with diversity goals;

- Include an Equity Assessment section in Staff Reports;

- Expand Toolbox Tuesday trainings to include sessions on racial equity;

- Explore developing a Research Program with University Partners; and

- Explore opportunities to partner to establish a "Planning University" for Community-Based Organizations and Stakeholders.

The Early Action Plan will guide the agency's efforts over the course of the upcoming years. However, it is intended to be a "living document," with opportunities to identify new actions and commitments over time. SCAG understands that the work of advancing equity requires continual listening and learning, and SCAG plans to update the plan on an annual basis, which will include soliciting input from stakeholders.

1 | OVERVIEW

Southern California's greatest asset is its diversity, particularly in its people. People of color currently represent roughly 70 percent of the region's population and are expected to make up an even larger share by 2045, when people of color will represent nearly 80 percent of the population. A range of economic and social impacts such as health outcomes, education, employment, housing conditions, rates of incarceration, and life expectancy, vary vastly in this region based on race, income, and census tract. For example, there is a disproportionate burden of poverty on people of color relative to their white counterparts.[1] The highest rates of poverty in the region are experience in Black (21.5 percent), American Indian/Alaskan Native (19.4 percent), and Hispanic (Latino) (19 percent) communities compared to the white (13.5 percent) population. Gaps in wealth between households reveal the effects of accumulated inequality and discrimination, as well as differences in power and opportunity.[2] The region's low-income families and communities of color also tend to reside in areas where they experience poorer air quality (e.g., areas near freeways and high traffic roads), resulting in more asthma emergency room visits. Analysis of regional conditions continues to reinforce that where a person lives significantly influences their life outcomes.

SCAG's July 2020 Resolution on Equity & Social Justice

Considering the region's known disparities and inequities, and moved by the deaths of Tony McDade, Elijah McClain, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd, among others, along with the national uprising in support of Black life, on July 2, 2020, SCAG's Regional Council adopted Resolution 20-623-2, affirming its commitment to meaningfully advance justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. SCAG declared its intent to end racial and social disparities internal to the agency, strengthen the way it engages and convenes to protect and expand community voice and power, and work in partnership with others to close the gap of racial injustice and better serve the region's communities of color. The resolution called for the formation of an ad hoc Special Committee on Equity & Social Justice to further develop SCAG's response to advancing social justice throughout the agency's activities and advise the Regional Council on policies and practices to advance its resolved intentions. The staff report accompanying the resolution outlined work for the Special Committee, including:

- Establishing an agency-wide definition of "equity" to ensure a shared understanding;
- Developing an equity inventory Report, which would catalogue the existing equity-related activities throughout SCAG's departments; and
- Establishing an Equity Framework containing indicators of existing inequities and disparities in the region, and how communities and people in the region experience SCAG's desired outcomes.

The Committee started meeting on a quarterly basis in September 2020 and concluded meeting in March 2021. The Committee was comprised of elected officials, nonprofit and private sector representatives, and university partners, and it was focused on developing strategic recommendations for the agency for advancing equity across the region.

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1 Larger census groupings conceal income inequalities within categories, depending on a variety of factors such as ethnic origin, experience (e.g., education), immigration status, length of time individuals and their families have lived in the US, and gender. For example, though Asians overall rank as the highest earning racial and ethnic group in the US, it is not a status shared by all Asians: nearly one in four Asians in California are working but struggling with poverty.
2 https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/02/27/examining-the-black-white-wealth-gap/

2 | DEFINING EQUITY

Equity Definition Methodology

In formulating a working definition of equity, SCAG convened a cross-functional working group of SCAG staff to undertake a data and research driven approach, utilizing best practices of equity definitions and related terms from across the region, state, and nation. The working group reviewed equity definitions from peer agencies within the state, including Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Sacramento Area Council of Governments, and San Bernardino County Transportation Authority. The review also included other national Metropolitan Planning Organizations, such as Oregon Metro (Portland Area MPO) and Metropolitan Council (Twin Cities MPO). After the collection and review of definitions and related terms, staff drafted an initial working definition, which then went through multiple rounds of review and feedback from the Special Committee on Equity & Social Justice, SCAG staff via an agency-wide survey, and through stakeholder feedback from SCAG's Regional Planning Working Groups.

Racial Equity

Informed by research, best practices, peer agency review, and guided by input from the Special Committee, SCAG staff, and stakeholders, SCAG identified leading with racial equity as a focal point in addressing the pervasive and deep inequities faced by people of color across the region. SCAG recognizes that challenging racism is essential if SCAG is to support the creation of a just and equitable society. Though all dimensions of equity will not be advanced at the same time, SCAG staff will develop the skills needed to address other facets of equity, and through sustained effort, SCAG will build capacity to apply this work to other inequities.

Working Definition

SCAG's goal is to advance equity, but depending on which group or person is queried, the definition of equity may vary based on their experiences, viewpoints, identities, or opinions. To better establish expectations towards advancing equity and to work towards one collective goal, SCAG's Special Committee on Equity & Social Justice, SCAG staff, and stakeholder groups contributed to the development of the following working definition of racial equity:

As central to SCAG's work, racial equity describes the actions, policies, and practices that eliminate bias and barriers that have historically and systemically marginalized communities of color, to ensure all people can be healthy, prosperous, and participate fully in civic life.

3 | EVALUATING EXISTING CONDITIONS

Prior to developing a Racial Equity Framework and Early Action Plan, SCAG staff needed to acquire a better understanding of the agency and the region's existing conditions. To that end, SCAG staff conducted an equity inventory and developed a preliminary baseline assessment of racial inequities across the region.

Equity Inventory

In fall/winter 2020, SCAG staff completed an equity inventory, which provided a snapshot of how the agency integrated equity considerations into its work and identified additional areas where equity could be integrated. The equity inventory included input from each major program area, including information on what was being done or could be done to advance equity, whether coordination or collaboration with other departments was occurring, the type of work activity (e.g., federal or state requirements, policy work, research programs, etc.), and how equity was being considered within the context of each unique program or project.

Inventory Recommendations

As evidenced by the work activities detailed in the equity inventory, SCAG staff have laid some important groundwork for further incorporating equity into the agency's planning work. However, to continue to advance equity, several actions need to take place. The recommendations represent a range of actions that could be taken over a period of time, as it is understood they may take considerable time and effort. These recommendations are now reflected in the Racial Equity Early Action Plan and a selection are highlighted below.

- **Training:** Staff would benefit from a variety of recurring equity-specific trainings to ensure that equity is consistently incorporated in their work, and that staff understand the dimensions and intersections of equity.
- **Guidance & Resources on Equity Integration:** Staff would benefit from strategic guidance to support intentional efforts to advance equity through all work activities. Guidance could take the form of guiding policies or documents, best practices guidance for reference, and/or plan, program, or project checklists.
- **Equity Performance Measures:** The agency would benefit from adopting performance measures to hold it accountable for implementation of policies, plans, programs, and projects that advance equity. Adopting performance measures would help with more accurately measuring the impact of efforts.
- **Centralized Coordination:** As the agency becomes more consistent with incorporating equity into its work activities, mechanisms for collaboration and information sharing should be developed and defining an agency-wide strategy will help provide the direction staff need to facilitate opportunities for collaboration.

Racial Equity: Baseline Conditions

In winter 2020, SCAG staff developed a preliminary baseline assessment of racial inequities across the region (Appendix A). The indicators were selected after considering Connect SoCal's vision to chart a path towards a more mobile, sustainable and prosperous region by making connections between transportation networks, between planning strategies, and between the people whose collaboration can improve the quality of life for Southern Californians, and the plan's goals. Connect SoCal's performance measures were also considered, especially those included within the Environmental Justice Technical Report. SCAG staff then completed a comprehensive review of inequity baselines or equity indices developed throughout California and across the nation. Following this research, a long list of potential indicators was produced and evaluated against the following criteria for data:

- Produced by a trusted source;
- Available consistently over time to produce a trend;
- Regularity of use by multiple public agencies;
- Applicability to SCAG (i.e., data is relevant to the impact of SCAG's work); and
- Disaggregated or broken down by geography, race, and ethnicity.

The resulting list of equity indicators was not intended to be exhaustive; rather it was meant to provide a broad series of intersecting inequities that could and should lead to further study, expansion and/or refinement. Equity indicators were grouped into categories aligned with the goals of Connect SoCal: Economy, Healthy and Complete Communities, Mobility, and Environment. The baseline conditions assessment provided a means to highlight opportunities for consultation and partnership with community-based organizations, partner agencies, and other stakeholders, and it is expected to help in motivating more internal dialogue within the agency to meet the challenges of engaging in regional equity work. It also points to opportunities for deeper analysis of the data and the root causes of inequities, and potential areas for focus of future actions.

EQUITY INDICATORS

Economic Vitality

ECONOMIC VITALITY
- $15 / HOUR
- MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE
- POVERTY
- WORKING POOR
- UNEMPLOYMENT

CONNECTEDNESS
- HIGH POVERTY NEIGHBORHOODS

Healthy & Complete Communities

AFFORDABILITY
- HOME OWNERSHIP
- HOUSING BURDEN

HOUSING QUALITY
- KITCHEN FACILITIES
- OVERCROWDING

ESSENTIAL SERVICES
- PLUMBING FACILITIES
- BROADBAND ACCESS

PUBLIC HEALTH
- HEALTH INSURANCE
- SNAP
- LIFE EXPECTANCY

HOUSEHOLD
- MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Mobility

ACCESSIBILITY
- ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT
- ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE & PARKS
- COMMUTE TIME
- HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT A VEHICLE
- TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM SHARE

SAFETY
- BIKE + PEDESTRIAN COLLISIONS

Environment

CLIMATE VULNERABILITY
- FLOOD HAZARD AREAS
- WILDFIRE RISK

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
- CALENVIROSCREEN3.0

PUBLIC HEALTH
- AIR POLLUTION INDEX

4 | RACIAL EQUITY FRAMEWORK

Upon acquiring a better understanding of the agency and the region's existing conditions, SCAG staff, working with the Committee, developed a Racial Equity Framework. The Framework was informed by a publication from Equity in the Center, Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture,[3] which provides insights, tactics, and best practices to shift organizational culture and operationalize equity, and by consultation with Mr. Charles Brown of Equitable Cities. The Framework provides a structure for SCAG's short-, medium-, and long-term work to incorporate racial equity into the agency's internal and external work.

The Framework establishes overarching goals and strategies to advance racial equity through SCAG's policies, practices, and activities. It ensures that SCAG's equity-related work is aligned toward common goals and continues through actions pursued across the agency. The Framework includes four overarching goals:

- **Shift Organizational Culture:** Focus SCAG's internal work and practices on inclusion, diversity, equity, and awareness.
- **Center Racial Equity in Regional Policy & Planning:** Bring equity into SCAG's regional planning functions.
- **Encourage Racial Equity in Local Planning Practices:** Promote racial equity in efforts involving local elected officials and planning professionals.
- **Activate and Amplify:** Communicate broadly SCAG's commitment to racial equity and join with others in different fields and sectors to amplify impact.

Each of these goals is advanced through a focus on the following three strategies:

- **Listen & Learn:** Develop a shared understanding of our history of discrimination and the structural barriers that continue to perpetuate the inequities experienced today.
- **Engage & Co-Power:** Create an environment where everyone is included, able to share their experiences, and equipped to talk about racial equity and inequities.
- **Integrate & Institutionalize:** Focus on systems change to improve racial equity. Center racial equity in all aspects of work. This involves internal and external systems change. Advancing Racial Equity in Southern California.

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3 Awake to Woke to Work: https://equityinthecenter.org/aww/, (accessed 13 January 2021).

GOALS

Shift Organizational Culture

Focus SCAG's internal work and practices on inclusion, diversity, equity, and awareness.

Center Racial Equity in Regional Planning & Policy

Bring equity into SCAG's regional planning functions.

Encourage Racial Equity in Local Planning Practices

Promote racial equity in efforts involving local elected officials and planning professionals.

Activate & Amplify

Communicate broadly SCAG's commitment to racial equity and join with others in different fields and sectors to amplify impact.

STRATEGIES

Listen & Learn

Develop a shared understanding of our history of discrimination and the structural barriers that continue to perpetuate the inequities experienced today.

Engage & Co-Power

Create an environment where everyone is included, able to share their experiences, and equipped to talk about racial equity and inequities.

Integrate & Institutionalize

Focus on systems change to improve racial equity. Center racial equity in all aspects of work. This involves internal and external systems change. Advancing Racial Equity in Southern California.

5 | SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS

In July 2020 SCAG's Regional Council made a commitment to advancing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout Southern California. The resolution called for the formation of an ad hoc Special Committee on Equity & Social Justice to further develop SCAG's response to advancing equity throughout the agency's activities and advise SCAG's Regional Council on policies and practices to advance its resolved intentions. The Committee that was formed was comprised of elected officials, nonprofit and private sector representatives, and university partners.

The Committee was focused on developing strategic recommendations for the agency for advancing equity across the region. The work of the Committee included reviewing and providing feedback on:

- An agency-wide working definition of "equity";
- Existing equity-related activities throughout SCAG's departments;
- The draft framework for the Racial Equity Early Action Plan; and
- SCAG's work plan for developing an Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy (IERS).

The Committee met on a quarterly basis starting in September 2020 and concluding in March 2021. During the first three meetings the Committee focused on specific informational items. Committee members provided feedback to SCAG on how it could consider advancing equity within the agency as well as across the region. The Committee recommended that SCAG prioritize focusing on racial equity, considering the disproportionate inequities experienced by people of color throughout the region.

Throughout the Committee's discussion of the topics detailed below, several recommendations surfaced that informed the development of the Early Action Plan. Committee members recommended that SCAG focus its equity efforts on areas where the agency could more readily make an impact, such as in planning for transportation or housing. Committee members noted that for topic areas outside of SCAG's control such as education, SCAG could prioritize capacity-building programs and expand partnerships with universities and other community-based organizations to support existing efforts. Committee members suggested that SCAG's role should be to provide leadership in racial equity work for local jurisdictions, agencies, and other metropolitan planning organizations. SCAG could accomplish this by leading by example through centering race and using disaggregated data to equitably direct resources. Finally, Committee members recommended SCAG use its power to motivate and inspire local jurisdictions to take on this work, providing incentives and expanding capacity to facilitate the centering of racial equity in local planning.

SEPT. 2020

- SCAG Overview and Work Program
- Committee Purpose
- Defining Equity
- Special Presentation on Transportation Inequities from Mr. Charles Brown of Equitable Cities: "Arrested Mobility"

NOV. 2020

- Regional Equity Discussion
- SCAG Activities:
  - Defining Equity
  - Equity Inventory
  - Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Work Plan
  - Public Participation Plan

JAN. 2021

- Draft Racial Equity Framework & Early Action Plan
- Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy – Work Plan & Draft Framework

MAR. 2021

- Early Action Plan
- Final Recommendations

6 | SUPPORTING OUTREACH

SCAG staff conducted both internal and external outreach to acquire an understanding of conceptions of equity, current and potential equity work, and ideas on actions SCAG could take to advance equity. The outreach is described below, sorted by each significant effort.

Equity Definition

In the summer and fall of 2020, SCAG developed a definition of "equity" to ensure a shared understanding of the focus of its work. In formulating a working definition of equity, SCAG convened a cross-functional working group of SCAG staff to undertake a data and research driven approach, utilizing best practices of equity definitions and related terms from across the region, state, and nation. After the collection and review of definitions and related terms, staff drafted an initial working definition, which then went through multiple rounds of review and feedback from the Special Committee, SCAG staff via an agency-wide survey, and through stakeholder feedback from SCAG's Regional Planning Working Groups.

Equity Inventory

In the fall and winter of 2020, SCAG conducted an internally focused equity inventory, which provided a snapshot of how the agency integrated equity considerations into its work and identified additional areas where equity could be integrated. The equity inventory included input from each major program area, including information on what was being done or could be done to advance equity, whether coordination or collaboration with others was occurring, the type of work activity (e.g., federal or state requirements, policy work, research programs, etc.), and how equity was being considered within the context of each unique program or project. The results of the equity inventory informed proposed actions included within the Early Action Plan.

Racial Equity Framework & Early Action Plan

To bring attention to SCAG's equity work and solicit input from a wider range of stakeholders, SCAG held a public meeting with all of its policy committee members on March 4, 2021. The meeting was focused on considering planning's historic role in exacerbating inequities that are seen across the nation and in the region. As part of the meeting, information was shared on the draft Early Action Plan, the baseline assessment, and an Early Action Plan online survey was released. SCAG staff also conducted outreach to stakeholders via the Regional Planning Working Group meetings and other committees including: Active Transportation Working Group; Environmental Justice Working Group; Natural & Farmlands Conservation Working Group; Public Health Working Group Transportation Safety Working Group; Emerging Technology Committee; Go Human Steering Committee; and Regional Transit Technical Advisory Committee. The public survey garnered over 120 individual responses, with all six SCAG counties represented across government, private, and nonprofit sectors. Feedback from the Special Committee, policymakers, Regional Planning Working Groups, and other stakeholders shaped the draft Early Action Plan and will continue to be considered as SCAG implements actions going forward. Key feedback from the Early Action Plan online survey and outreach is detailed on the following page.

KEY FEEDBACK

GOAL 1
Shift Organizational Culture

- Institutionalize racial equity within SCAG by budgeting for dedicated a staff and/or a program to support racial equity capacity across SCAG's programs and policy areas. (EAP Action: Establish Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Awareness (IDEA) Team to oversee and update EAP)
- Ensure that all SCAG programs and policy areas track and report implementation in alignment with the Equity & Social Justice Resolution and the forthcoming Early Action Plan. (EAP Action: Establish Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Awareness (IDEA) Team to oversee and update EAP)

GOAL 2
Center Racial Equity in Regional Policy & Planning

- Continue to host public surveys, listening sessions, and forums to gather public input from advocates and community regarding racial justice and equity. (EAP Action: Update Public Participation Plan)
- Solicit feedback from racial and social justice groups, advocates, and communities of color during the updating of SCAG's internal policies and regional plans, and establish measurable protocols for implementing that feedback. Include and engage impacted communities early and often. (EAP Action: Update Public Participation Plan)
- Create observable indicators to measure if or to what extent participation from those groups/advocates/communities is being performed. This requires the publication of actions and steps that the division/entity/body agrees to perform moving forward. (EAP Action: Update Public Participation Plan)
- Host trainings and briefings for SCAG's elected leadership, staff, jurisdictions, and communities of color on racial equity and how to develop equitable plans. (EAP Actions: Offer equity training for Board members, including as part of Board Orientation; Expand Toolbox Tuesday trainings to include sessions on racial equity; Explore opportunities to partner to establish a "Planning University" for Community-Based Organizations & Stakeholders)

GOAL 3
Encourage Racial Equity in Local Planning

- Compile, publish, and update a list of racial and social justice groups and advocates that jurisdictions can connect with via outreach and hire as equity consultants to transparently and equitably compensate racial justice groups and communities of color for their work and providing feedback. (EAP Action: Provide resources for Community-Based Organizations engagement in Local Planning (e.g., Call for Collaboration, Go Human Mini-Grants, etc.))
- Provide and share best practices, case studies, and training including real life examples and toolkits of successful communities of color engagement in planning and policy-making and provide training on local equity planning for local jurisdictions. (EAP Actions: Support data requests, create tools for information sharing, Provide resources through the Sustainable Communities Program to promote Environmental Justice, Build planning capacity in low-resourced jurisdictions by providing staff support - e.g., Civic Sparks, Public Health Fellows)
- Improve action-oriented activities such as pilot and design-build projects that support implementation regarding racial equity (EAP Actions: Provide resources through the Sustainable Communities Program to promote Environmental Justice; Build planning capacity in low-resourced jurisdictions by providing staff support - e.g., Civic Sparks, Public Health Fellows)

GOAL 4
Activate & Amplify

- Use and be clear in moving towards community ownership of projects where public participation moves towards engagement and engagement moves toward community ownership of planning processes. (EAP Actions: Update Public Participation Plan, Explore opportunities to partner to establish a "Planning University" for Community-Based Organizations & Stakeholders)
- Use a qualitative and quantitative approach to including community stories and engaging local champions in regional planning. (EAP Actions: Explore opportunities to partner to establish a "Planning University" for Community-Based Organizations & Stakeholders; Prepare Annual Racial Equity Indicators Report)
- Advocate at the state, federal, and foundation level for resources to implement community engagement interventions to address disparities. (EAP Actions: Collaborate on a public information campaign to promote fair housing and reduce segregation, Develop Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy)

7 | COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Racial Equity Early Action Plan

Based on the discussions and feedback of the Special Committee as well as other stakeholders, SCAG staff prepared the draft EAP, which includes a total of 29 actions fairly evenly split across all the goals and strategies. The early actions include activities that can be initiated with existing resources through process improvements, leveraging current work activities, and forming new partnerships, as well as new efforts and programs that would need to be considered through the budget development process. The EAP is anticipated to be a "living document," with opportunities to identify new actions over time. It is a resource to begin to align and bring greater focus to opportunities to advance racial equity through SCAG's work. Upon Regional Council adoption, SCAG staff will take steps to begin implementing the EAP. SCAG anticipates that its newly formed Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Awareness (IDEA) Team will oversee implementation of and updates to the EAP, and that SCAG staff will provide the Regional Council with periodic updates to ensure progress and accountability.

GOAL 1 | SHIFT ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Listen & Learn	Engage & Co-Power	Integrate & Institutionalize
• Develop an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Awareness (IDEA) Education and Training Program • Conduct an externally led racial equity audit to further inform equity actions	• Establish an IDEA Team to oversee and update EAP • Assess and align procurement policies with diversity goals • Create an Equity Planning Resource Group to share best practices • Develop a Diversity Style Guide on standards for communicating	• Update SCAG's Strategic Plan to incorporate an equity vision and goals to guide agency work plans • Prepare an Inclusive and Equitable Talent Management Strategy

GOAL 2 | CENTER RACIAL EQUITY IN REGIONAL POLICY & PLANNING

Listen & Learn	Engage & Co-Power	Integrate & Institutionalize
• Offer equity training for Board members, including as part of Board Orientation • Include Equity Assessment section in Staff Reports • Prepare Annual Racial Equity Indicators Report	• Increase opportunity for participation in Policy Committees; Formalize Committee equity roles • Update Public Participation Plan • Form Regional Policy Working Group dedicated to Equity	• Develop equity goals, policies, and metrics as part of Connect SoCal update • Explore developing Research Program with University Partners

### GOAL 3 | ENCOURAGE RACIAL EQUITY IN LOCAL PLANNING

Listen & Learn	Engage & Co-Power	Integrate & Institutionalize
• Support data requests, create tools for information sharing • Expand Toolbox Tuesday trainings to include sessions on racial equity • Provide elected officials with fact sheets and tools to promote racial equity	• Provide resources for CBO engagement in Local Planning - e.g., Call for Collaboration, Go Human Mini-Grants • Build planning capacity in low-resourced jurisdictions by providing staff support - e.g., Civic Sparks, Public Health Fellows	• Refine equity goals and evaluation criteria used in Sustainable Communities Program • Provide resources through the Sustainable Communities Program to promote Environmental Justice • Identify opportunities to incorporate equity analysis in development of 2023 FTIP

GOAL 4 | ACTIVATE & AMPLIFY

Listen & Learn	Engage & Co-Power	Integrate & Institutionalize
• Collaborate on a public information campaign to promote fair housing, reduce segregation • Strengthen relationships with other MPOs	• Explore opportunities to partner to establish a "Planning University" for Community-Based Organizations & Stakeholders • Develop an Excellence in Equity Annual Award Program	• Develop Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy

APPENDIX

Racial Equity: Baseline Conditions Report
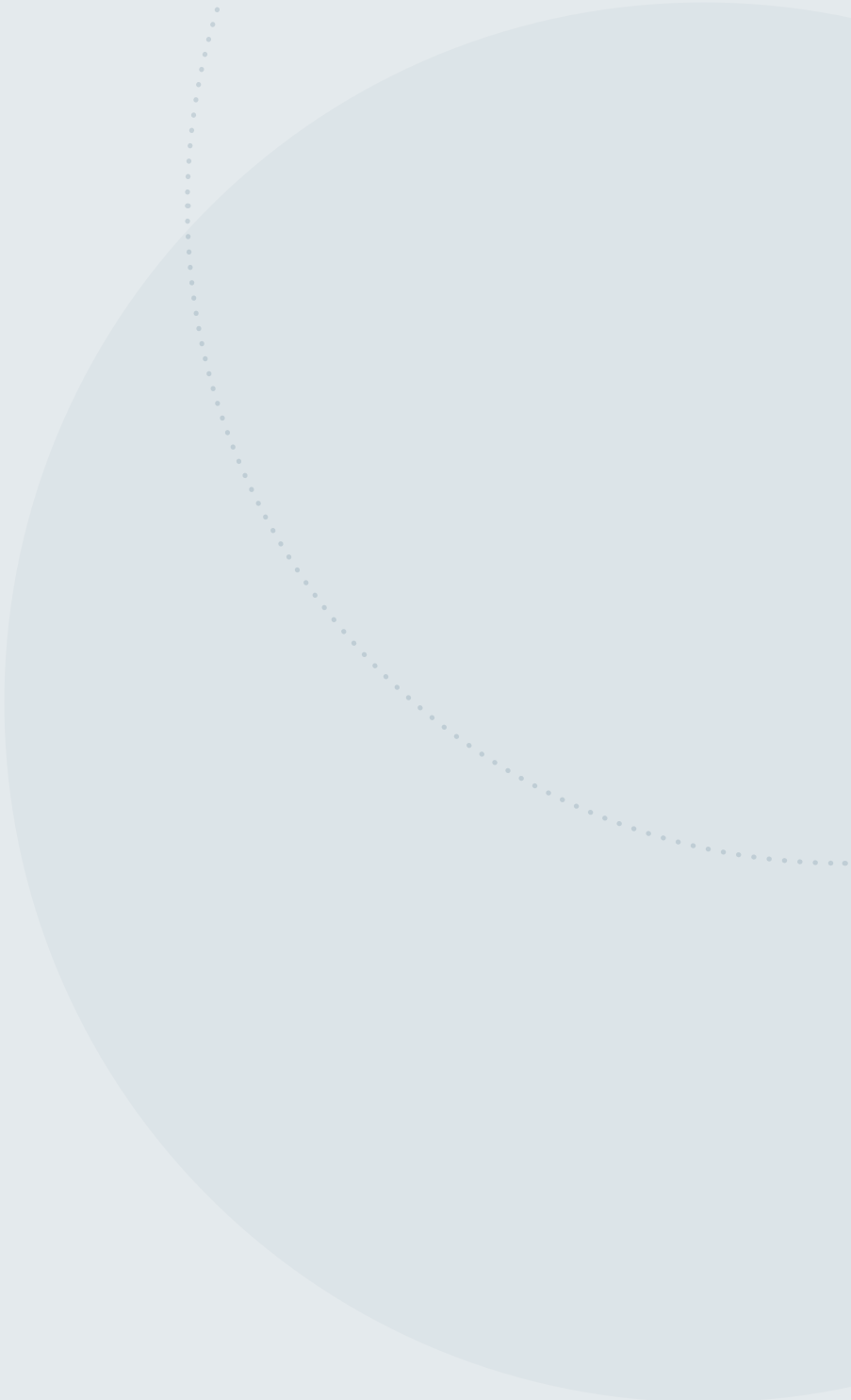
Racial Equity: Baseline Conditions Report

March 2021

Revised March 24, 2021

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ABOUT SCAG

SCAG is the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization (MPO), representing six counties, 191 cities and more than 19 million residents. SCAG undertakes a variety of planning and policy initiatives to encourage a more sustainable Southern California now and in the future.

MISSION STATEMENT

To foster innovative regional solutions that improve the lives of Southern Californians through inclusive collaboration, visionary planning, regional advocacy, information sharing, and promoting best practices.

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Table of Contents

Introduction

In July 2020, SCAG's Regional Council made a commitment to advancing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout Southern California. For the region to become healthy, livable, sustainable, and economically resilient, SCAG needs to dramatically improve outcomes for low-income families and people of color. To that end, SCAG's core function, its planning work, must directly address the long-standing systemic and institutional barriers that have fostered inequities in health, wealth, and opportunities. SCAG staff are developing an Early Action Plan to help facilitate the consistent integration of equity into its planning work. The purpose of this report is to highlight past transportation and housing policies and practices that yielded the inequitable conditions that exist today and provide a preliminary baseline assessment of racial equity in Southern California to inform future planning. These inequitable conditions fall into categories aligned with the goals of SCAG's long-range plan, Connect SoCal: Economy, Healthy and Complete Communities, Mobility, and Environment.

Brief History & Background

People of color currently comprise about 70 percent of the region's population and are expected to make up an even larger share by 2045, when people of color will comprise nearly 80 percent of the population. A range of economic and social impacts such as health outcomes, education, employment, housing conditions, rates of incarceration, and life expectancy, vastly vary throughout the region based on race, income, and census tract. For example, there is a disproportionate burden of poverty on Black, Indigenous, and people of color compared to their white counterparts: the highest rates of poverty are experienced by Black (22 percent), Native American (19 percent), and Hispanic (Latino) (19 percent) communities, compared to about 14 percent of the white population and about 12 percent of an aggregated Asian population.[1] When the category Asian is further stratified (i.e., Chinese, Korean, Thai, etc.), certain Asian communities experience a disproportionate burden of poverty.[2] Institutional and systemic racism experienced by these communities continues to impact their access to more mobile, sustainable, and prosperous futures in Southern California. The history of both the United States of America and California shows how race has played a role in the disparities and inequities that people of color experience today.

HOW TRANSPORTATION & HOUSING POLICIES IN THE 20TH CENTURY EXACERBATED INEQUITY

Despite both the ratification of the 14th Amendment in 1868, intended to provide equal protection under the law, and the 15th (1870) and 19th (1920) Amendments, which guaranteed citizens the right to vote, people of color have consistently not seen the full benefits of these rights. In 1896, the United States Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of "separate but equal" laws in the case of Plessy v. Ferguson, ushering in the Jim Crow Era of racial segregation and disenfranchisement.

During this era, major expansions in transportation infrastructure were encouraged by a stimulus of federal funding in California. In 1911, the newly established California Highway Commission implemented

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[1] Larger census groupings conceal income inequalities within categories, depending on a variety of factors such as ethnic origin, experience (e.g., education), immigration status, length of time individuals and their families have lived in the US, and gender. For example, though Asians overall rank as the highest earning racial and ethnic group in the US, it is not a status shared by all Asians: nearly one in four Asians in California are working but struggling with poverty.

[2] PRRI STAFF. "The Working Lives and Struggles of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California." PRRI, 2019. https://www.prri.org/research/the-working-lives-and-struggles-of-asian-americans-and-pacific-islanders-in-california/

federal policy direction toward the creation of the Interstate Highway System, which included the 1921 and 1944 Federal Aid Highway Acts. The Commission determined project locations, and both state and local officials routed new freeways through existing communities of color, displacing thousands of households through eminent domain. Much of this freeway construction was in service of a suburban housing boom that was explicitly segregationist. Racist policies and decisions also influenced the siting of other types of transportation infrastructure, such as commuter railways, and the delivery of transit services.

In 1934, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) was established to facilitate numerous tasks, including home financing, improving housing standards, making housing and mortgages more affordable, and increasing employment in the home construction industry in the wake of the Great Depression. However, while its core function was to insure home mortgage loans by banks and private lenders, encouraging them to make more loans to prospective home buyers, the FHA refused to insure mortgages in Black neighborhoods, often forcing them to move into urban housing projects, and leaving them unable to build existing wealth that comes in the purchase of a home. This FHA home-valuation system was known as "redlining" because maps created by Home Owners' Loan Corporation and the FHA used red to color code neighborhoods where Black residents lived to indicate these areas were too risky to insure mortgages.[3] The FHA also tacitly endorsed the use of restrictive covenants, which were private agreements attached to property deeds to prevent the purchase of homes by Black, Hispanic (Latino), Asian and Native American people.

Though the FHA announced that it would not insure mortgages with restrictive covenants in 1950, redlining lasted until the mid-1960s. In addition to redlining, people of color still faced many challenges, such as negligent landlords and chronic disinvestment, which intersected with an influx of Black residents seeking homes as a part of the "Second Great Migration," when major populations of Black residents migrated West during World War II.[4] People of color had few choices on where to live, and neighborhoods where they were allowed became overcrowded and often took on unhealthy living conditions. In Los Angeles County, this included neighborhoods such as South Central and the San Fernando Valley.[5] Many of these neighborhoods were located next to polluting industrial infrastructure, sped up by burgeoning industrial factories in the defense, garment, and automobile industries. Many of the highway infrastructure projects not only cleared existing neighborhoods, but also contributed to heavy air pollution that has led to ongoing asthma and health conditions in remaining residents.[6]

Even in neighborhoods where people of color found housing, they were threatened by violence and urban renewal policies. The Federal Housing Acts of 1949 and 1954 led to the demolition of neighborhoods inhabited by people of color. The Acts enabled the clearing of blighted areas and destroyed affordable housing units in urban areas. A core example of the impacts of the 1954 Federal Housing Act is the clearance of Chavez Ravine, a self-sufficient Mexican American community that for generations ran their own schools and churches and grew their own food. The City of Los Angeles approved the construction of thousands of housing units in Chavez Ravine (which was deemed blighted), and residents were forced out through various means. While residents were told that they would have first choice for homes in the

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[3] Terry Gross. "A 'Forgotten History' Of How the U.S. Government Segregated America." NPR, 2017 https://www.npr.org/2017/05/03/526655831/a-forgotten-history-of-how-the-u-s-government-segregated-america#:~:text=He%20notes%20that%20the%20Federal,were%20mass%2Dproducing%20entire%20subdivisions

[4] Kelly Simpson. "The Great Migration: Creating a Black New Identity in Los Angeles." KCET, 2021. https://www.kcet.org/history-society/the-great-migration-creating-a-new-black-identity-in-los-angeles

[5] Kelly Simpson. "A Southern California Dream Deferred: Racial Covenants in Los Angeles." KCET, 2012 https://www.kcet.org/history-society/a-southern-california-dream-deferred-racial-covenants-in-los-angeles

[6] N.a. "Between the 110 and the 405: Environmental Injustice in South Los Angeles." SCOPE, 2017. https://scopela.org/between-the-110-and-the-405-environmental-injustice-in-south-los-angeles/

proposed new development, public housing was never built, and the remains of Chavez Ravine instead became the site of Dodger Stadium.[7]

ADDRESSING PAST POLICIES & PRACTICES

Attempts have been made through various federal and state laws and regulations to identify and rectify the impacts of racially discriminatory policies, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI, Consideration of Environmental Justice, which discloses the benefits and burdens of proposed projects on minority populations and bars discrimination that is intentional and has unjustified disparate impact (policies that are, at face value, neutral, but discriminate against protected groups). More recent examples include Executive Order 12898 (1994), which requires that every federal agency make environmental justice a part of its mission by identifying and addressing effects of all programs, policies and activities on under-represented groups and low-income populations; and Senate Bill 115 (1999) which calls for "the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures and income with respect to development, adoption and implementation of environmental laws, regulations and policies" to be included in the development of General Plans.

In addition, recently adopted legislation is helping SCAG work towards improving the availability of housing for all residents. In 2018, the State of California adopted legislation requiring local governments to "affirmatively further fair housing."[8] Under state law, to affirmatively further fair housing means "taking meaningful actions, in addition to combatting discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics."[9] The new law has strengthened provisions of the State Housing Element law, which requires that general plans of all cities and counties plan for housing for all Californians.

As a regional planning organization, understanding the disparities and inequities resulting from geography and the built environment are central to SCAG's work to plan for a more racially just, equitable future. Connect SoCal includes an extensive Environmental Justice Technical Report with detailed analyses on current conditions and the consequences of the region's transportation projects on low-income communities and Black, Indigenous, and people of color. Connect SoCal also includes a robust, data-driven Public Health Technical Report, which is grounded in the Social Determinants of Health, a public health framework which is centered on the built environment and conditions in which we live, work, play and age.

As a government agency focused on planning, SCAG has the opportunity, and in some cases the legal obligation, to analyze and address the inequities that government and the planning profession have created by systemically driving and perpetuating societal differences along racial lines that have resulted in vastly different living and social conditions and access to opportunities. While SCAG considers potential impacts on people of color and low-income households in our regional growth, transportation, and economic development planning and analysis, SCAG recognizes that more affirmative approaches that seek to counter the effects of historic practices, like those being pursued through state housing law to overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities, are needed to advance equity and social justice across the region.

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[7] Elina Shatkin. "The Ugly, Violent Clearing of Chavez Ravine Before It Was Home to the Dodgers." LAist, 2018. https://laist.com/2018/10/17/dodger_stadium_chavez_ravine_battle.php

[8] AB 686 Summary of Requirements in Housing Element Law, California Department of Housing and Community Development Memorandum to Planning Directors et. al, April 23, 2020; AB 686, Ch. 958 (Santiago) Statutes of 2018.

[9] California Government Code § 8899.50 (a)(1).

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Language and terms are intricately connected to equity and representation and are evolving. The names of the following indicators used in this report are drawn from existing terminology used in their original data sources. They do not always represent current best practice, and in some cases, may in fact be offensive, triggering or erasing to some communities. The list below includes the demographic categories that are used in the following sections regarding the region's existing conditions.

- Black includes the category, Black or African American (not Hispanic or Latino), as defined by the U.S. Census.
- Hispanic (Latino) includes all populations that identify their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino in the U.S. Census.
- Native American includes the U.S. Census category, American Indian and Alaskan Native (not Hispanic or Latino).
- Asian/Pacific Islander includes the categories Asian (not Hispanic or Latino) and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic or Latino). Select analyses only address the category Asian (not Hispanic or Latino) or Pacific Islander (not Hispanic or Latino) and will be noted as such.
- Mixed/Other includes the categories Some Other Race (nor Hispanic or Latino) and Two or More Races (not Hispanic or Latino).
- White includes the census category white (not Hispanic or Latino).
- The designation "people of color" indicates the percentage of the population that does not identify as non-Hispanic white, inclusive of the following categories: Black, Hispanic (Latino), Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Mixed/Other.[10] People of color is both a helpful and unhelpful term: people of color puts anyone besides non-Hispanic white into one group, hiding the unique disparities that differ greatly among various populations. Yet at the same time, the term people of color recognizes the significant disparities that have endured over time as a result of historical discrimination and racism and highlights these inequities against non-white populations. This report uses this term to highlight the stark inequities in the region, while also further breaking down each indicator by race/ethnicity.
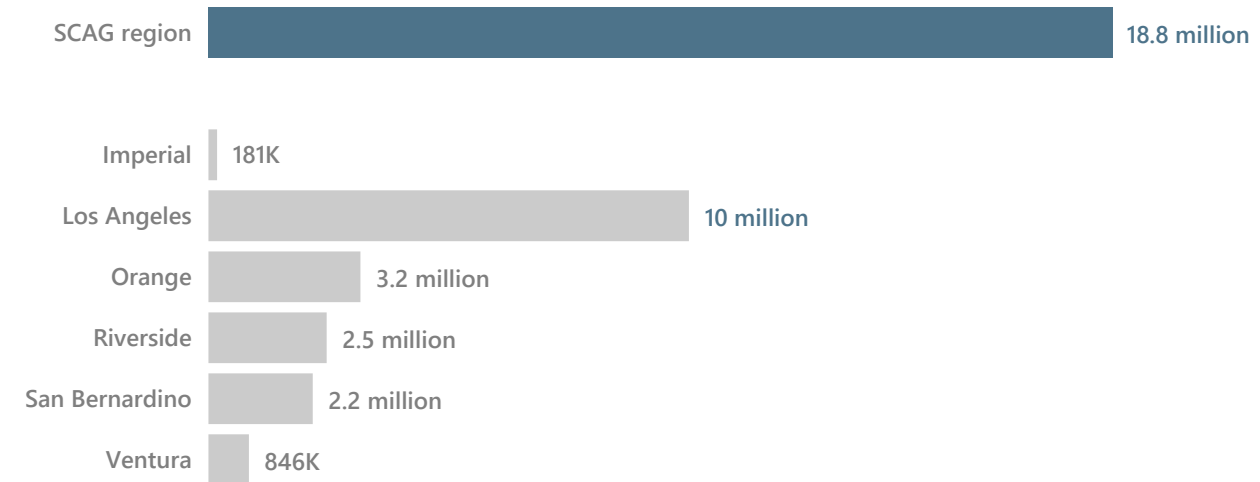
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[10] U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010 Decennial Census Summary Files, 2017 National Population Projections; Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2019 Complete Economic and Demographic Data Source.

1 | Who Considers Southern California Home?

Southern California is home to roughly 19 million people, about half the entire state's population. One of the region's greatest assets is its diversity, not just in its geography, but in its people. People of color currently represent about 70 percent of the region's population and by 2045 are expected to grow to nearly 80 percent. In reviewing our current demographics, SCAG relied on the U.S. Census Bureau and American Community Survey 2019 1-year estimate and 5-year estimates.

Total Population

Nearly 19 million residents live in the SCAG region.

SCAG region	18.8 million
Imperial	181K
Los Angeles	10 million
Orange	3.2 million
Riverside	2.5 million
San Bernardino	2.2 million
Ventura	846K

Source: 2019 American Community Survey (1-year estimate), U.S. Census Bureau

Race/Ethnicity Distribution

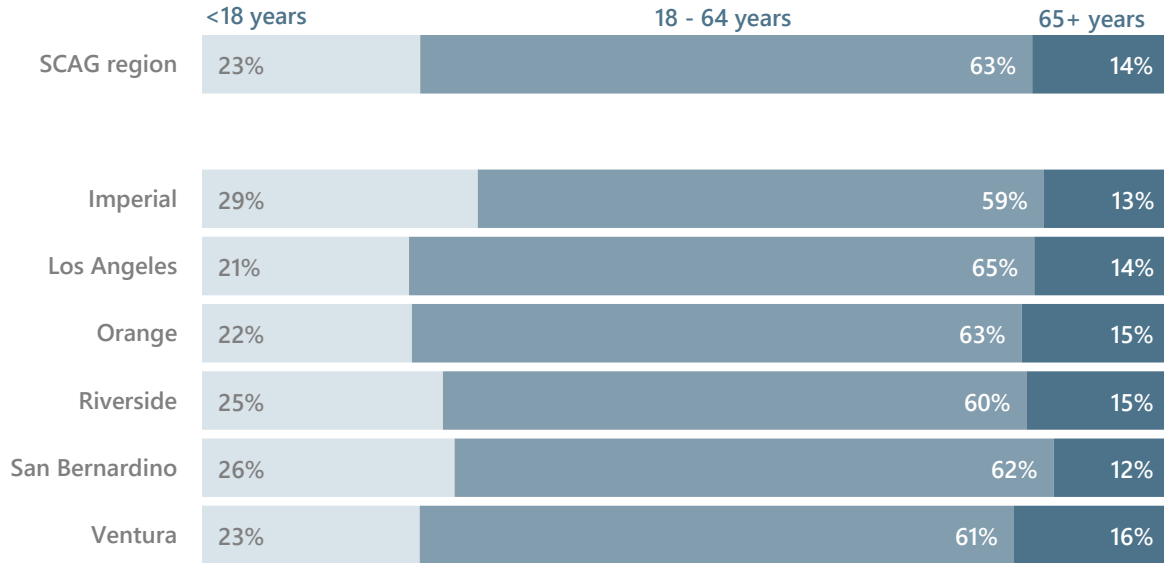**People of color make up over 70 percent of the region's population.**
Race/Ethnicity breakdown by county in the region.

Race/Ethnicity	Imperial	Los Angeles	Orange	Riverside	San Bernardino	Ventura	SCAG Region
Black	2.2%	7.8%	1.6%	6.1%	7.9%	1.7%	**6.2%**
Hispanic (Latino)	84.2%	48.5%	34.1%	48.9%	53.3%	42.7%	**46.8%**
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.4%	14.6%	20.6%	6.6%	7.3%	7.4%	**13.4%**
Native American	0.6%	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%	**0.3%**
Mixed/Other	1.0%	2.6%	3.0%	2.7%	2.7%	2.6%	**2.7%**
White	10.6%	26.2%	40.6%	35.3%	28.5%	45.4%	**30.8%**
People of color	**90.4%**	**76.3%**	**62.5%**	**67.4%**	**74.3%**	**57.2%**	**71.9%**

Source: 2019 American Community Survey (1-year estimate), U.S. Census Bureau

Age Distribution

Age Distribution by County

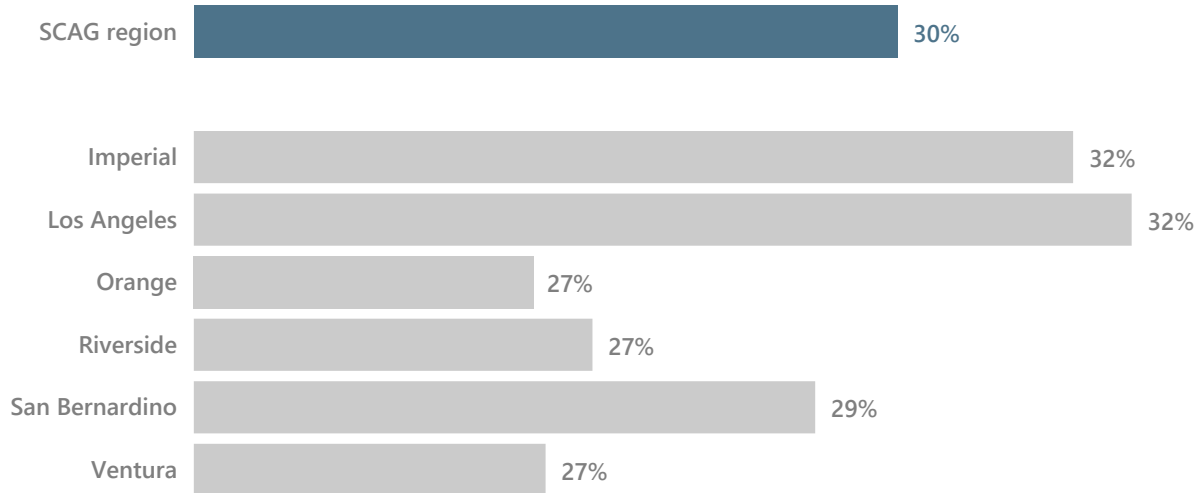|	<18 years	18 - 64 years	65+ years
SCAG region	23%	63%	14%
Imperial	29%	59%	13%
Los Angeles	21%	65%	14%
Orange	22%	63%	15%
Riverside	25%	60%	15%
San Bernardino	26%	62%	12%
Ventura	23%	61%	16%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey (1-year estimate), U.S. Census Bureau

Female-Headed Households

Regionally, 30 percent of households are female-headed households.

SCAG region	30%
Imperial	32%
Los Angeles	32%
Orange	27%
Riverside	27%
San Bernardino	29%
Ventura	27%

Source: Social Explorer Tables: ACS 2019 (5-Year Estimates), ACS 2019 (5-Year Estimates), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau

Linguistic Isolation

Regionally, over 1 in 10 residents experience linguistic isolation.
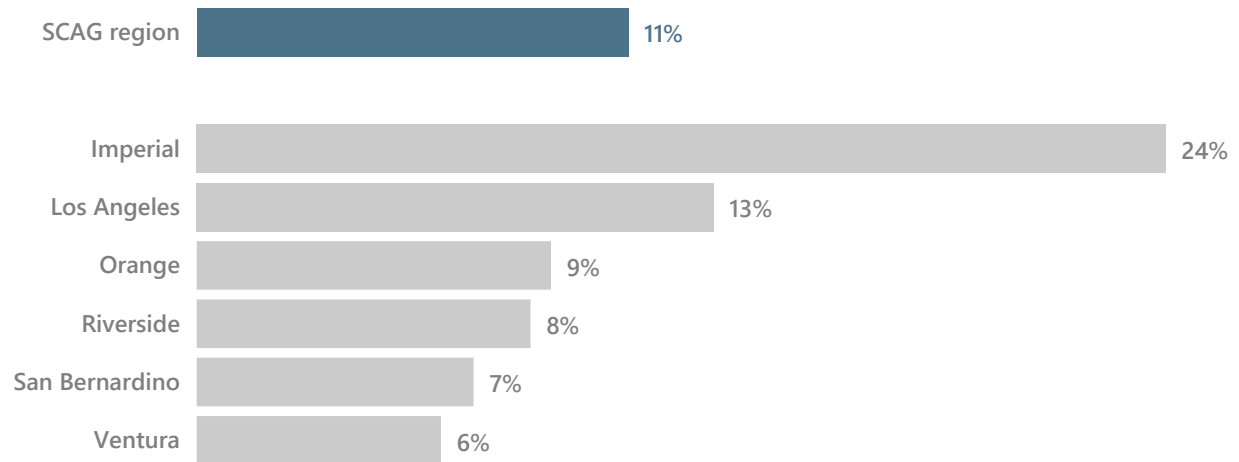
SCAG region **11%**

Imperial 24%
Los Angeles 13%
Orange 9%
Riverside 8%
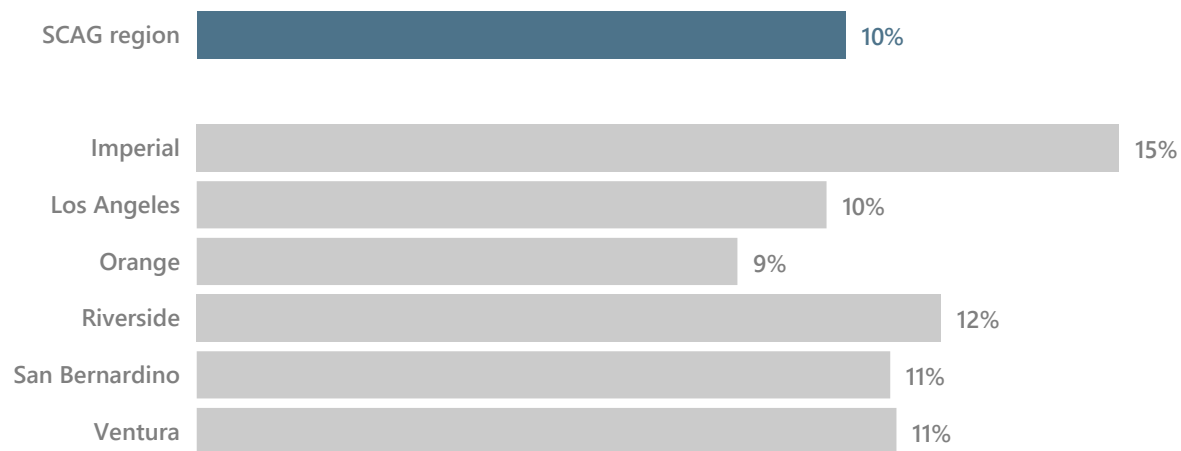San Bernardino 7%
Ventura 6%

Source: American Community Survey 2015 - 2019 (5-Year Estimates), ACS 2019 (5-Year Estimates), U.S. Census Bureau

People experiencing linguistic isolation are more likely to experience larger inequities as it can be more difficult to access resources, employment, healthcare, and other needs, furthering inequitable outcomes.[11]

People with Disabilities

1 in 10 residents identify as having one or more disabilities in the region.

SCAG region **10%**

Imperial 15%
Los Angeles 10%
Orange 9%
Riverside 12%
San Bernardino 11%
Ventura 11%

Source: American Community Survey 2015 - 2019 (5-Year Estimates), ACS 2019 (5-Year Estimates), U.S. Census Bureau

People with disabilities often face increased systemic barriers to resources and opportunities.[12] These experiences might be compounded when people with disabilities are racialized, and/or live-in poverty.[13] Regionally, nearly one in ten residents identify as having a disability.[14]

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[11] Linguistic isolation is measured in population for those aged 5 and above.
[12] (Center for Disease Control and Prevention 2020)
[13] (Artiles 2013)
[14] American Community Survey Tables: 2015 - 2019 (5-Year Estimates), ACS 2019 (5-Year Estimates), U.S. Census Bureau

2 | Economic Vitality

In considering economic equity and the corresponding indicators, SCAG consulted the National Equity Atlas, a detailed report card on American racial and economic equity.[15] The National Equity Atlas defines an equitable community as one where all residents, regardless of their race, nativity, gender, or zip code, are fully able to participate in a community's economic vitality, contribute to its readiness for the future, and connect to its assets and resources. A multitude of structural barriers, such as discrimination in the labor market and predatory financial practices, have prevented people of color from advancing and contributed to racial inequities in employment, income, and wealth. In the sections that follow, economic equity indicators for the region are highlighted, disaggregated by race and ethnicity, and other demographics whenever possible.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought increased recognition that improving economic health and achieving equity will require new approaches and strategies that address social, economic, and environmental factors that influence the economy. Pre-pandemic, the income gap grew faster in California than anywhere else in the nation. The wealthiest Californians have enjoyed a growing slice of the income pie, while the poorest households' share shrunk.[16] The pandemic has disproportionately impacted the least advantaged and most at-risk SCAG region residents, and low-resourced jurisdictions have seen larger impacts. Lower-income segments of the population at the regional levels have experienced dramatically higher job losses and economic disruptions related to the pandemic, and these were people who were already experiencing significant difficulties pre-pandemic. As the region moves forward to build an inclusive economic recovery strategy, efforts aim to ensure that the region's most disadvantaged populations can realize growth and opportunities.

Economic vitality indicators examine whether all people regardless of race or gender can access high-quality jobs, economic security, rising incomes, and entrepreneurship and homeownership opportunities. They also measure income inequality and job and wage growth in relation to overall economic growth. In the following section, economic vitality indicators are highlighted, providing a regional snapshot, disaggregated by race and ethnicity, county, and other demographics whenever possible.

> *"True economic recovery demands a more integrated, community-led, place- and people-centered approach—one designed to build upon community strengths and break down the structural inequities."*
> –Hanna Love, Tunua Thrash-Ntuk, and Jennifer S. Vey[17]

A note for interpreting the figures that follow: the designation "people of color" indicates the percentage of the population that does not identify as non-Hispanic white, inclusive of the following categories, Black, Hispanic (Latino), Asian/Pacific Islander, and Mixed/Other.[18]

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[15] (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.)
[16] California Budget Fiscal Year 2021: http://www.ebudget.ca.gov/budget/2021-22/#/BudgetDetail (Newsom January 8, 2021)
[17] Hanna Love, Tunua Thrash-Ntuk, and Jennifer S. Vey, "No more status quo: A community-led action plan for addressing structural inequity during COVID-19 recovery" (August 3, 2020)
[18] U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010 Decennial Census Summary Files, 2017 National Population Projections; Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2019 Complete Economic and Demographic Data Source.
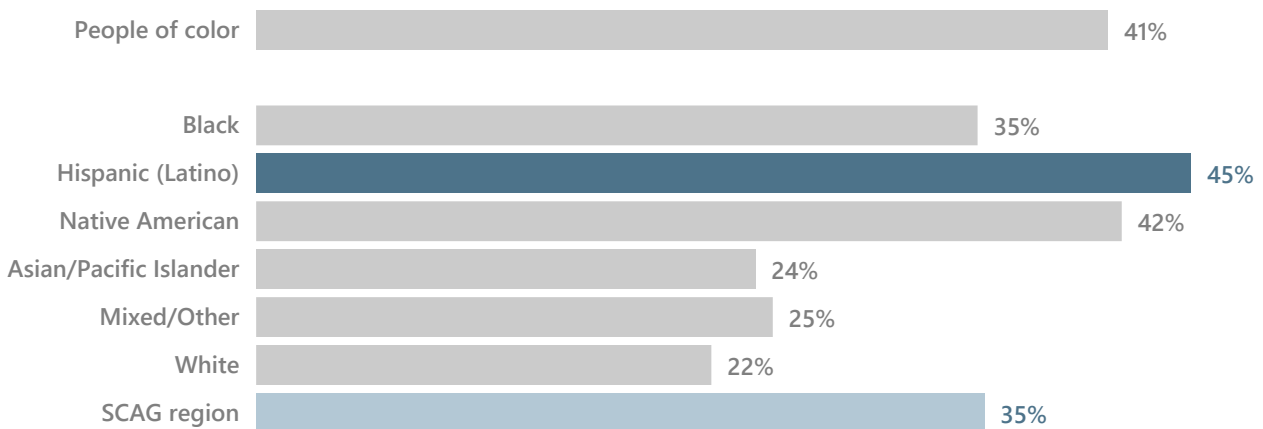
INDICATOR 1

Households Below 200% Poverty[19]

WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO LIVE IN POVERTY?

Lack of sufficient income has multiple negative consequences on health, well-being, and economic success. Children who experience poverty are at greater risk of starting school behind their peers, scoring lower on achievement tests, being unemployed and earning less as adults, and having poor health as adults.[20]

Nearly half of Hispanic (Latino) households lived **below 200 percent of the poverty line** in 2018, the highest among all race/ethnicity groups in the region.

Group	Percent
People of color	41%
Black	35%
Hispanic (Latino)	45%
Native American	42%
Asian/Pacific Islander	24%
Mixed/Other	25%
White	22%
SCAG region	35%

Source: IPUMS USA, National Equity Atlas

- There is a disproportionate burden of poverty on people of color relative to their white counterparts with 41 percent of people of color living in poverty across the region.[21]
- Overall, the percentage of residents that fall under the two hundred percent (200%) federal poverty level is significantly higher in every county for people of color than for white populations.
- Since 1980, white populations experienced the lowest poverty rates across the region compared to all other race/ethnic groups.
- Hispanic (Latino) (45 percent) and Native American (42 percent) populations experienced poverty at the highest rates compared to all other racial and ethnic groups in the SCAG region in 2018.
- About 25 percent of Asian/Pacific Islanders lie under the 200 percent federal poverty level, except for in Ventura County, where Asian/Pacific Islanders experience the lowest poverty rates as compared to other racial and ethnic groups.

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[19] The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is a measurement of the minimum amount of annual income that is needed for individuals and families to pay for essentials, such as room and board, clothes, and transportation. The FPL takes into account the number of people in a household, their income, and the state in which they live. The percentage of the population living below the indicated federal poverty threshold based on their family income, size, and composition. The federal poverty threshold in 2017 for a family of four with two children was about $25,000 per year (thus, 200% of the federal poverty threshold was about $50,000). In California, 200% of the federal poverty line was $52,400 for a family of four. (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.) (Covered California, Medi-Cal 2021)
[20] (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.)
[21] Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org, 1980 5% State Sample, 1990 5% Sample, 2000 5% Sample, 2010 and 2017 American Community Survey 5-year samples.
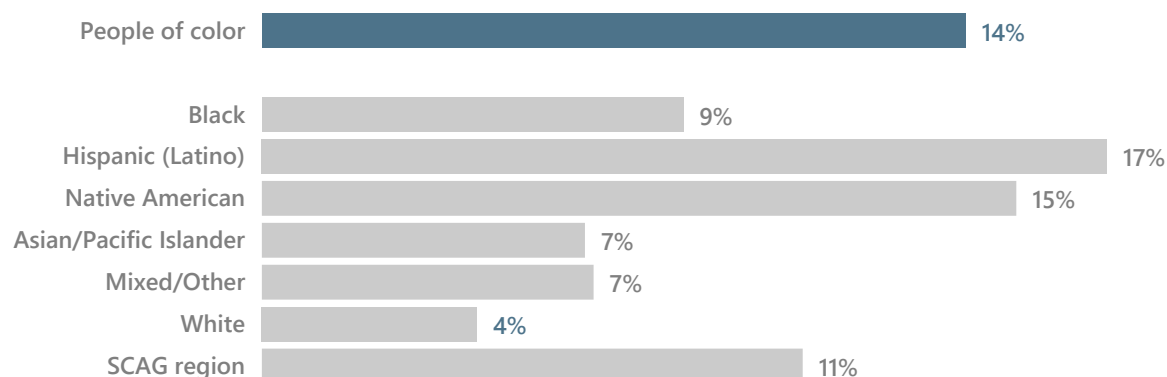
INDICATOR 2

Working Poor[22]

DO ALL JOBS PAY HOUSEHOLD-SUPPORTING WAGES?

Many full-time jobs do not pay enough to keep workers out of poverty, leaving them struggling to pay their bills and not able to invest in their future. Low-wage workers face the challenge of finding affordable childcare and experience greater family instability and worse health than higher-wage workers.[23]

Full-time workers of color were **three times more likely** than their white counterparts to **live in poverty** in the region.

People of color	14%
Black	9%
Hispanic (Latino)	17%
Native American	15%
Asian/Pacific Islander	7%
Mixed/Other	7%
White	4%
SCAG region	11%

Source: IPUMS USA, National Equity Atlas

- Regionally, people of color (14 percent) were considered working poor three times more than that of the white population (4 percent) in 2018.[24]
- The percentage of working poor has increased overall since 1980 from 7 percent of workers to 11 percent of workers, although Black and Mixed/Other populations experienced slight decreases.
- In 2018, across all race/ethnicity groups, Hispanic (Latino) workers were most likely to be considered working poor with 17 percent of full-time workers still living below two hundred percent (200%) federal poverty level. Hispanic (Latino) workers were most likely to be identified as working poor in Los Angeles County (21 percent), San Bernardino County (19 percent), and Orange County (18 percent).
- In San Bernardino County, Native American populations were significantly more likely than any other race or ethnic group to be identified as working poor at 27 percent, more than 15 percent higher than the regional average of working poor.[25]

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[22] The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is a measurement of the minimum amount of annual income that is needed for individuals and families to pay for essentials, such as room and board, clothes, and transportation. The FPL takes into account the number of people in a household, their income, and the state in which they live. The percentage of the population living below the indicated federal poverty threshold based on their family income, size, and composition. The federal poverty threshold in 2017 for a family of four with two children was about $25,000 per year (thus, 200% of the federal poverty threshold was about $50,000). In California, 200% of the federal poverty line was $52,400 for a family of four. (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.) (Covered California, Medi-Cal 2021)

[23] (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.)

[24] Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org, 1980 5% State Sample, 1990 5% Sample, 2000 5% Sample, 2010 and 2017 American Community Survey 5-year samples.

[25] Disaggregated data was unavailable for Imperial County (Black, Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Mixed/Other), Los Angeles County (Asian/Pacific Islander), Orange County (Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander), Riverside County (Asian/Pacific Islander), San Bernardino County (Asian/Pacific Islander), and Ventura County (Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander).
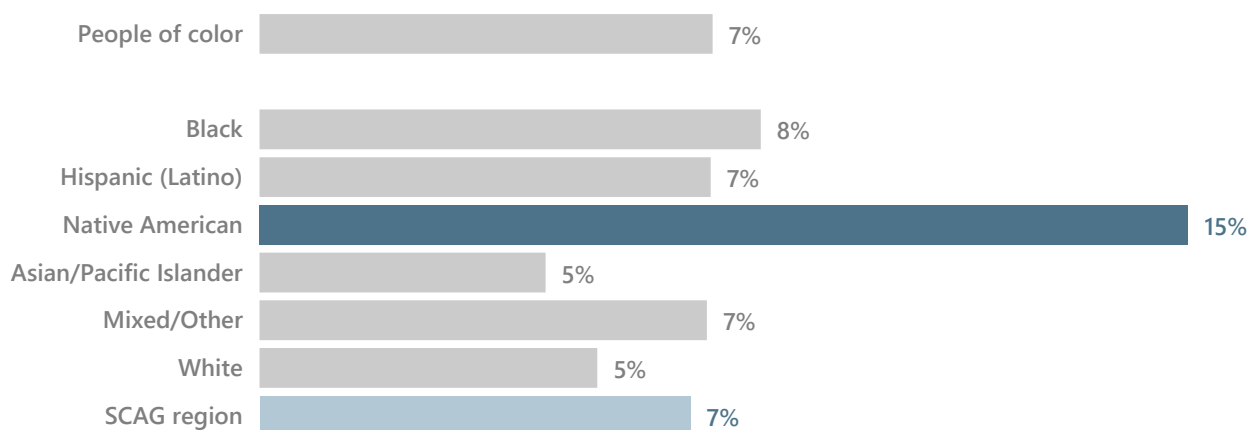
INDICATOR 3

Unemployment Rate[26]

CAN ALL RESIDENTS ACCESS EMPLOYMENT?

Employment is the predominant source of income for the vast majority of working-age people, and unemployment is strongly associated with poverty as well as physical and mental illness, drug addiction, and suicide. A reduced unemployment rate would help reduce racial inequities and create a stronger economy.[27]

Native Americans were **2 – 3 times more likely** to be **unemployed** than any other race/ethnicity group in the region in 2018.

Group	Rate
People of color	7%
Black	8%
Hispanic (Latino)	7%
Native American	15%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5%
Mixed/Other	7%
White	5%
SCAG region	7%

Source: IPUMS USA, National Equity Atlas

- Between 1980 and 2017, the average unemployment rate for people of color remained stable. This disparity shrinking was likely due to the bounce back after the recession. However, this growth was the result of increasing numbers of jobs with lower skills and lower wages.[28] While the disparity in unemployment between the white population and people of color had shrunk prior to the pandemic, the unemployment rate for people of color was still 38 percent higher.[29]
- Native Americans expressed a different, more concerning picture, with significantly higher rates of unemployment (15 percent) than any other race or ethnicity group in the region. In Riverside County, 21 percent of Native Americans experienced unemployment.[30]
- This differed widely under the COVID-19 pandemic: the region experienced 4 percent unemployment in February 2020, which rapidly grew to 18 percent by May 2020 due to significant losses among low-paying jobs, predominantly staffed by people of color.[31]

[26] The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is a measurement of the minimum amount of annual income that is needed for individuals and families to pay for essentials, such as room and board, clothes, and transportation. The FPL takes into account the number of people in a household, their income, and the state in which they live. The percentage of the population living below the indicated federal poverty threshold based on their family income, size, and composition. The federal poverty threshold in 2017 for a family of four with two children was about $25,000 per year (thus, 200% of the federal poverty threshold was about $50,000). In California, 200% of the federal poverty line was $52,400 for a family of four. (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.) (Covered California, Medi-Cal 2021)

[27] (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.)

[28] (Southern California Association of Governments 2020)

[29] Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org, 1980 5% State Sample, 1990 5% Sample, 2000 5% Sample, 2010 and 2017 American Community Survey 5-year samples.

[30] Disaggregated data was unavailable for Imperial County (Black, Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Mixed/Other), Los Angeles County (Asian/Pacific Islander), Orange County (Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander), Riverside County (Asian/Pacific Islander), San Bernardino County (Asian/Pacific Islander), and Ventura County (Asian/Pacific Islander).

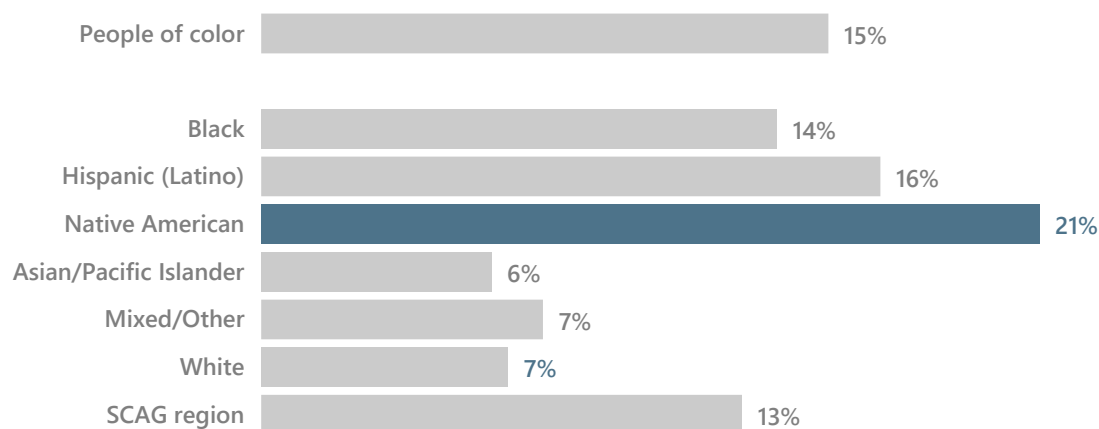[31] (Southern California Association of Governments 2020)

INDICATOR 4

Households Living in High-Poverty Neighborhoods[32]

ARE RESIDENTS CONNECTED TO OPPORTUNITES?

A long history of racial segregation in the United States, including in Southern California, led to the concentration of people of color in neighborhoods with concentrated poverty.[33] This concentration of poverty has led to neighborhoods with less access to jobs, services, high-quality education, parks, safe streets, and other essential ingredients of economic and social success. As the National Equity Atlas notes, "Across the nation, people of color—particularly African Americans, Hispanic (Latino)s, and Native Americans—are significantly more likely than their white counterparts to live in high-poverty neighborhoods, even if they themselves are not poor."[34]

Native Americans are **three times more likely** than white residents to live in a **high poverty area** across the region.

Category	Percentage
People of color	15%
Black	14%
Hispanic (Latino)	16%
Native American	21%
Asian/Pacific Islander	6%
Mixed/Other	7%
White	7%
SCAG region	13%

Source: IPUMS USA, National Equity Atlas

- Overall, an average of 15 percent of the region's people of color population live in high-poverty areas, two times more likely than white populations in the region.[35] When excluding Orange and Ventura Counties, the percentage of people of color living in a high-poverty area increases to an average of 20 percent of residents, 5 percent higher than regionwide.
- Across the region, Native Americans (21 percent) are the most likely to live in a high-poverty area as compared to other racial/ethnic groups.[36]
- Asian/Pacific Islander (6 percent) and white (7 percent) populations were the least likely to live in a high-poverty area as compared to other racial/ethnic groups.
- Approximately 16 percent of Hispanic (Latino) residents, 14 percent Black, and 7 percent Mixed/Other populations live in a high-poverty census tract. An average of nearly 13 percent of all residents across the region live in a high-poverty area.

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[32] The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is a measurement of the minimum amount of annual income that is needed for individuals and families to pay for essentials, such as room and board, clothes, and transportation. The FPL takes into account the number of people in a household, their income, and the state in which they live. The percentage of the population living below the indicated federal poverty threshold based on their family income, size, and composition. The federal poverty threshold in 2017 for a family of four with two children was about $25,000 per year (thus, 200% of the federal poverty threshold was about $50,000). In California, 200% of the federal poverty line was $52,400 for a family of four. (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.) (Covered California, Medi-Cal 2021).
[33] (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.)
[34] (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.)
[35] U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2017 American Community Survey 5-year Summary File; Geolytics, Inc., 1990 and 2000 Long Form in 2010 Boundaries.
[36] Disaggregated data was unavailable for Asian/Pacific Islander populations for all counties.
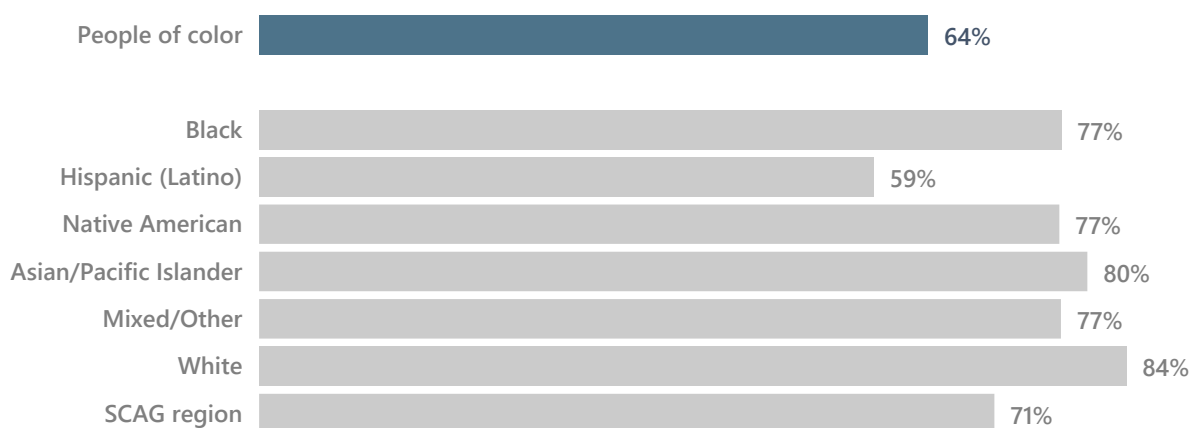
INDICATOR 5

Share of Workers Earning at least $15/hour[37]

CAN ALL WORKERS EARN A LIVING WAGE?

Higher wages improve living standards, provide greater workforce stability, reduce reliance on social safety-net services, and increase the tax base. California's minimum wage is currently $13 or $14 per hour, depending on the number of employees.[38]

In 2018, workers of color were less likely to earn an hourly wage of at least $15 than white workers.

People of color	64%
Black	77%
Hispanic (Latino)	59%
Native American	77%
Asian/Pacific Islander	80%
Mixed/Other	77%
White	84%
SCAG region	71%

Source: IPUMS USA, National Equity Atlas

- The share of full-time workers earning at least $15 an hour was lower in 2017 than in 1980. Overall, 71 percent of workers in the region earned at least $15 an hour in 2018, leaving 29 percent of the region's workers earning less than a minimum livable wage.[39]
- In 2018, 64 percent of workers of color earned at least $15 an hour while 84 percent of white workers did.[40]
- Hispanic (Latino) residents were the least likely to earn more than $15 an hour, with 41% of Hispanic (Latino) workers earning less than the livable wage threshold.
- After white workers, an average of 80 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander workers earned more than $15 an hour, 77 percent of Native American workers, 77 percent of Black workers, and 77 percent of Mixed/Other races.
- There are wide wage inequities by race and ethnicity among people with similar education levels: 52 percent of white people who did not graduate high school earn at least $15/hour, compared with 34 percent of people of color.[41]

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[37] The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is a measurement of the minimum amount of annual income that is needed for individuals and families to pay for essentials, such as room and board, clothes, and transportation. The FPL takes into account the number of people in a household, their income, and the state in which they live. The percentage of the population living below the indicated federal poverty threshold based on their family income, size, and composition. The federal poverty threshold in 2017 for a family of four with two children was about $25,000 per year (thus, 200% of the federal poverty threshold was about $50,000). In California, 200% of the federal poverty line was $52,400 for a family of four. (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.) (Covered California, Medi-Cal 2021)

[38] (State of California Department of Industrial Relations 2020)

[39] Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org, 1980 5% State Sample, 1990 5% Sample, 2000 5% Sample, 2010 and 2017 American Community Survey 5-year samples.

[40] Disaggregated data was unavailable for Imperial County (Black, Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Mixed/Other), Los Angeles County (Asian/Pacific Islander), Orange County (Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander), Riverside County (Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander), San Bernardino County (Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander), and Ventura County (Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander).

[41] Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org, 1980 5% State Sample, 1990 5% Sample, 2000 5% Sample, 2010 and 2017 American Community Survey 5-year samples.
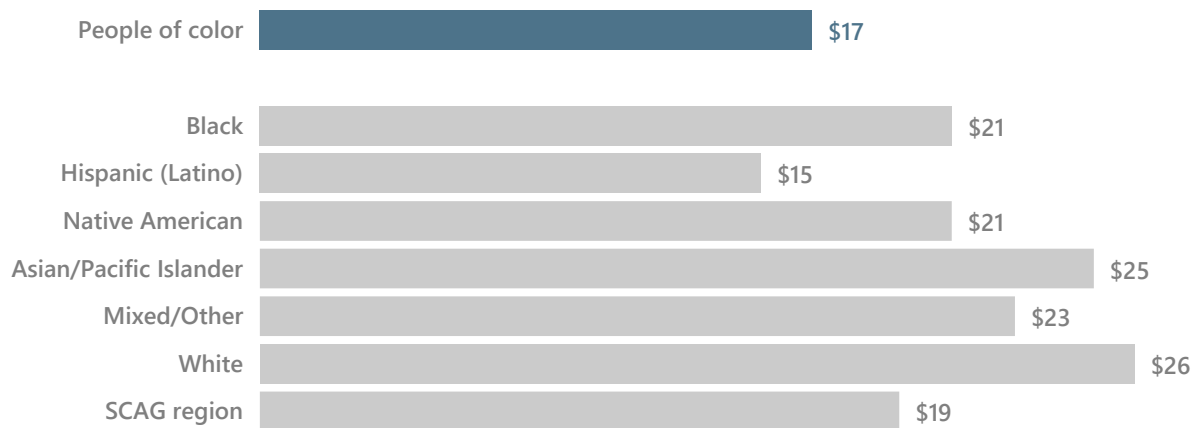
INDICATOR 6

Median Hourly Wage[42]

CAN ALL WORKERS EARN A LIVING WAGE?

Low wages and pay gaps by race and gender challenge workers and their communities, while reducing local spending and tax revenue. Rising wages for low-wage workers will boost incomes, resulting in more of the consumer spending that supports business growth and job creation.[43]

Workers of color make nearly **$10 less per hour** than their white counterparts, equating to a **nearly $20,000 deficit in pre-tax revenue.**

People of color	$17
Black	$21
Hispanic (Latino)	$15
Native American	$21
Asian/Pacific Islander	$25
Mixed/Other	$23
White	$26
SCAG region	$19

Source: IPUMS USA, National Equity Atlas

- From 1980 and 2018, the median hourly wage for workers of color decreased from $18 to $17 over the four decades.[44]
- Workers of color make nearly $10 less in median hourly wage ($17) than their white counterparts ($26). Assuming a 40-hour workweek, this equates to a nearly $20,000 deficit of pre-tax annual revenue.[45]
- White people with only a high school diploma have a higher median hourly wage ($22) than people of color with some college education or an associate degree at $20 per hour.[46]

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[42] The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is a measurement of the minimum amount of annual income that is needed for individuals and families to pay for essentials, such as room and board, clothes, and transportation. The FPL takes into account the number of people in a household, their income, and the state in which they live. The percentage of the population living below the indicated federal poverty threshold based on their family income, size, and composition. The federal poverty threshold in 2017 for a family of four with two children was about $25,000 per year (thus, 200% of the federal poverty threshold was about $50,000). In California, 200% of the federal poverty line was $52,400 for a family of four. (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.) (Covered California, Medi-Cal 2021)
[43] (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.)
[44] Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org, 1980 5% State Sample, 1990 5% Sample, 2000 5% Sample, 2010 and 2017 American Community Survey 5-year samples.
[45] Disaggregated data was unavailable for Imperial County (Black, Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Mixed/Other), Los Angeles County (Asian/Pacific Islander), Orange County (Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander), Riverside County (Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander), San Bernardino County (Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander) and Ventura County (Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander).
[46] Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org, 1980 5% State Sample, 1990 5% Sample, 2000 5% Sample, 2010 and 2017 American Community Survey 5-year samples.

3 | Healthy & Complete Communities

SCAG's long-range plan, Connect SoCal, charts a path toward a more mobile, sustainable, and prosperous region, and includes the goal of developing more healthy and complete communities. Analysis of regional conditions continues to reinforce that where a person lives matters. A range of economic and social impacts such as health outcomes, education, employment, housing conditions, the likelihood of incarceration, and life expectancy, vary vastly in this region based on race, income, and census tract. With more research establishing a significant link between public health outcomes and built environment characteristics such as housing, Healthy and Complete Communities indicators highlight existing public health and housing conditions in the region and how they vary between different communities, many of which have led to exacerbated outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic. To understand existing regional housing and public health disparities, SCAG consulted data from the 2018 5-year American Community Survey and the National Equity Atlas.
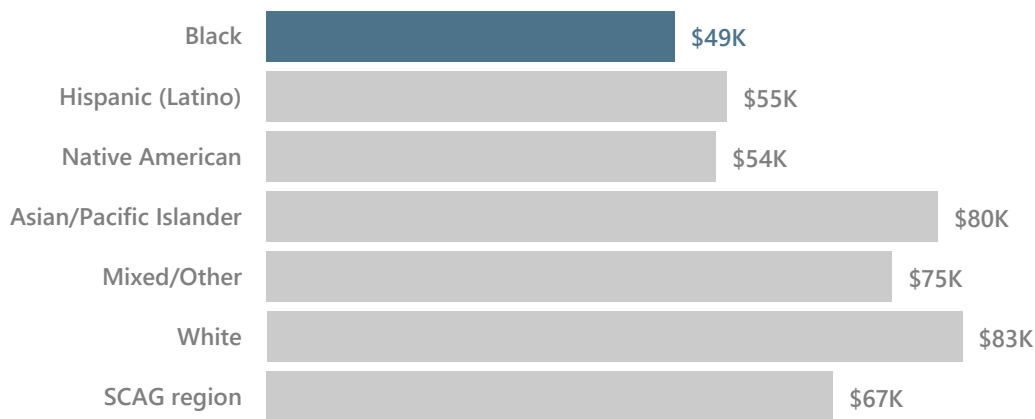
INDICATOR 1

Median Household Income[47]

HOW ARE HOUSEHOLDS PAYING FOR HOUSING?

The amount of median household income deeply affects the proportion of income spent on housing costs which can then divert income from other important obligations and necessities such as healthcare and education. While Asian/Pacific Islander households earn higher income across the region (though not as much as white households), other communities of color such as Black, Hispanic (Latino), and Native American households earn much less. Income levels significantly influence who is able to purchase a home in the region.

The **median household income** for **Black households** is **less than 60 percent** than that of the median household income for white households.

Race	Median Household Income
Black	$49K
Hispanic (Latino)	$55K
Native American	$54K
Asian/Pacific Islander	$80K
Mixed/Other	$75K
White	$83K
SCAG region	$67K

Source: 2018 5-Year American Community Survey

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[47] The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is a measurement of the minimum amount of annual income that is needed for individuals and families to pay for essentials, such as room and board, clothes, and transportation. The FPL takes into account the number of people in a household, their income, and the state in which they live. The percentage of the population living below the indicated federal poverty threshold based on their family income, size, and composition. The federal poverty threshold in 2017 for a family of four with two children was about $25,000 per year (thus, 200% of the federal poverty threshold was about $50,000). In California, 200% of the federal poverty line was $52,400 for a family of four. (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.) (Covered California, Medi-Cal 2021)

- White household income ($82,867) was the highest across the region, and nearly $3,000 more than the nearest community of color (Asian/Pacific Islanders, at $79,979).
- While Orange County has the highest median household income of all region's counties, Black, Hispanic (Latino) and Native Americans still earn less than the white population, a difference of over $32,000 for Hispanic (Latino) households, $23,000 for Native American households, and nearly $21,000 for Black households.[48]
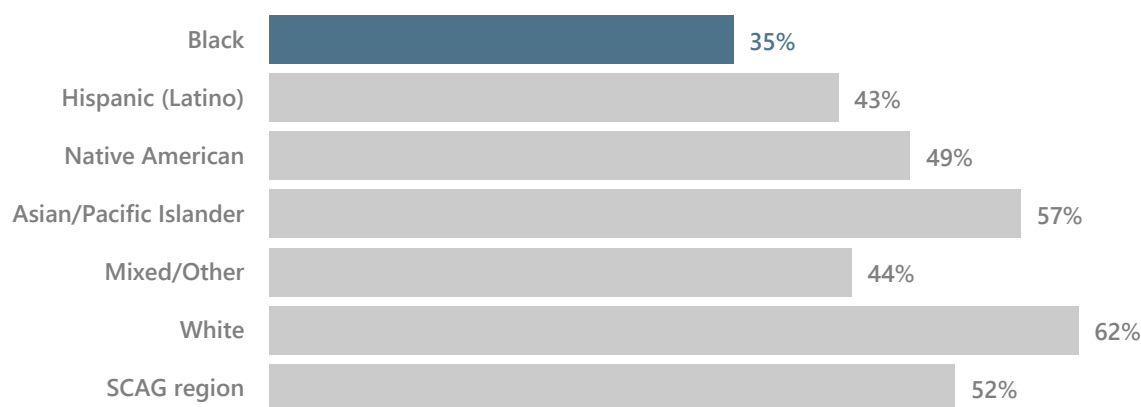
INDICATOR 2

Home Ownership[49]

WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO OWN THEIR HOME?

Homeownership has been identified as a significant contributor to wealth building.[50] Due to a history of restrictive covenants and discriminatory lending practices, many households of color have been locked out of owning a home and thus an opportunity to maintain and increase wealth between generations. The Great Recession exacerbated many existing inequities and set back communities of color in both homeownership rates and household wealth.[51]

62 percent of white households own their homes, nearly two times as many than that of **Black households (35 percent).**

Black	35%
Hispanic (Latino)	43%
Native American	49%
Asian/Pacific Islander	57%
Mixed/Other	44%
White	62%
SCAG region	52%

Source: 2018 5-Year American Community Survey

- Overall, there are more homeowners than renters in the SCAG region. The only county that has more renters than owners is Los Angeles County.[52]
- The percentage of owner-occupied households in the region was 52 percent in 2018. White households continue to lead the proportion of owner-occupied households (62 percent), compared to 35 percent of Black households and 43 percent of Hispanic (Latino) households.

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[48] 5-Year 2018 American Community Survey, Calculations from Southern California Association of Governments.
[49] The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is a measurement of the minimum amount of annual income that is needed for individuals and families to pay for essentials, such as room and board, clothes, and transportation. The FPL takes into account the number of people in a household, their income, and the state in which they live. The percentage of the population living below the indicated federal poverty threshold based on their family income, size, and composition. The federal poverty threshold in 2017 for a family of four with two children was about $25,000 per year (thus, 200% of the federal poverty threshold was about $50,000). In California, 200% of the federal poverty line was $52,400 for a family of four. (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.) (Covered California, Medi-Cal 2021)
[50] "Equitable Housing and Homeownership." Greenlining Institute, accessed February 1, 2021. https://greenlining.org/our-work/economic-equity/homeownership/
[51] N.a. (n.d.) Equitable Housing and Homeownership. Greenlining Institute. https://greenlining.org/our-work/economic-equity/homeownership/
[52] 5-Year 2018 American Community Survey, Calculations from Southern California Association of Governments.

- In Los Angeles County, where only 46 percent of households are owner-occupied, Black households experience the lowest rates of homeownership at 33 percent, followed closely by Hispanic (Latino) households at 38 percent.
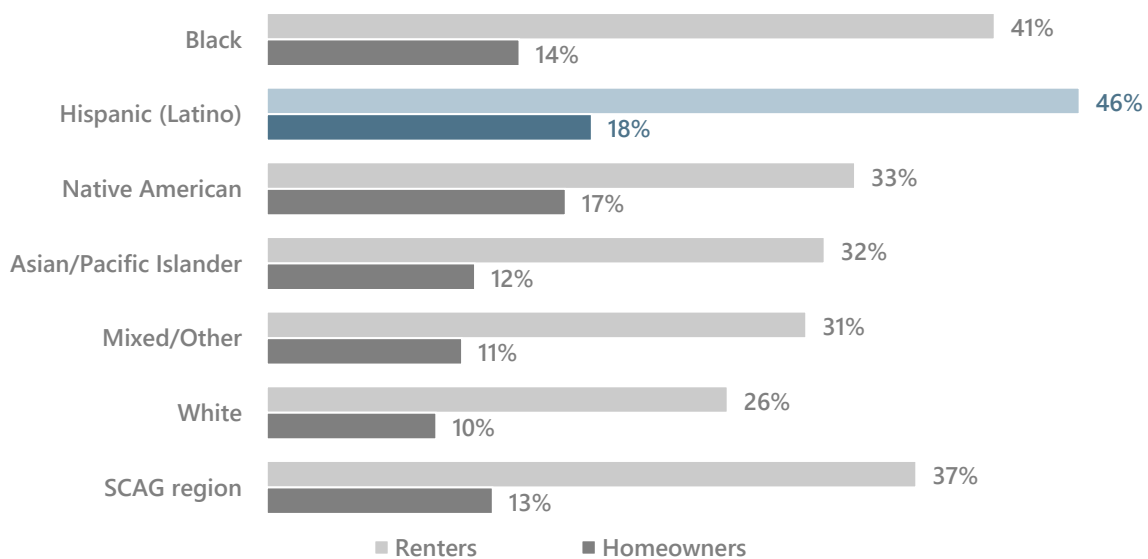
INDICATOR 3

Housing Burden[53]

WHO IS OVERBURDENED BY HOUSING COSTS?

Low-income households that are housing burdened (defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as those spending upwards of 30 percent of their household income housing- and rent-related costs) often spend less on food and healthcare costs, which can result in increased negative health outcomes. Housing burdened households also tend to choose housing in areas that may be lower cost but have longer commute times to jobs and urban centers with job opportunities, causing increased expenditures in transportation-related costs.

Hispanic (Latino) households are the most likely to be burdened by housing when renting or owning a home as compared to other racial/ethnic groups.

	Renters	Homeowners
Black	41%	14%
Hispanic (Latino)	46%	18%
Native American	33%	17%
Asian/Pacific Islander	32%	12%
Mixed/Other	31%	11%
White	26%	10%
SCAG region	37%	13%

Source: 2018 5-Year American Community Survey

- Across the region, Black, Hispanic (Latino) and Native American households—regardless of if they own or rent their homes—experience the greatest housing cost burdens: 46 percent of renting Hispanic (Latino) households, 41 percent of renting Black households, and 33 percent of renting Native American households spend over 30 percent of their income on housing costs compared to 26 percent of renting white households.
- The high burden of housing costs carries over to households that own their homes: 18 percent of Hispanic (Latino) home-owning households, 14 percent of Black home-owning households, and

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[53] This indicator denotes the share of households that pay upwards of 30% their household income on housing- and rent-related costs (severely cost-burdened is referred to as more than 50%) at the 200% Federal Poverty Line. Households living below 200% Federal Poverty Line for a four-person household with two children would be $24,465 in 2018 (U.S. Census Bureau).

17 percent of Native American home-owning households spend over 30 percent of their incomes on housing compared to 10 percent of white home-owning households.

- In Imperial County, where 84 percent of the population is Hispanic (Latino), almost 50 percent of households spend over 30 percent of their income on housing costs.[54, 55]
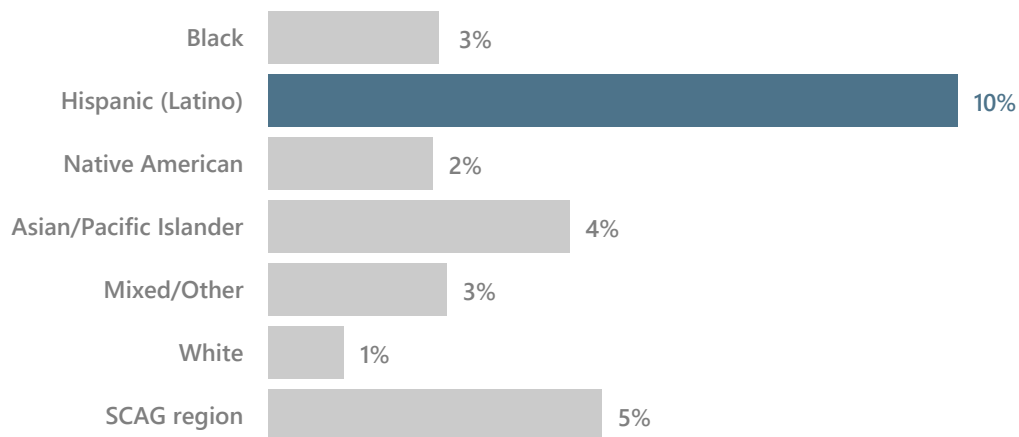
INDICATOR 4

Overcrowding[56]

WHO HAS ENOUGH ROOM AT HOME?

Households that are housing burdened are also at an increased risk of living in poor quality housing, overcrowded housing and living in housing located near high–volume roadways, as these options are typically less expensive. All of these situations increase the risk of negative health outcomes. The cost of housing can lead to choices to live in unsafe or poor-quality housing that can expose residents to toxins or other harmful conditions.[57]

Overcrowded housing can also lead to unsafe living conditions. Housing is considered overcrowded when there is more than one person per room in a given household (PPR).[58] Severe overcrowding is defined as more than 1.5 PPR in a given household. Overcrowded housing is a dangerous public health issue, as it increases risk of infection from communicable diseases, prevalence of respiratory issues and vulnerability to experiencing homelessness.[59]

1 in 10 Hispanic (Latino) households are **overcrowded.**

Category	Percent
Black	3%
Hispanic (Latino)	10%
Native American	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	4%
Mixed/Other	3%
White	1%
SCAG region	5%

Source: 2018 5-Year American Community Survey

- Across the region, there is a much higher likelihood for Hispanic (Latino) people to be living in overcrowded housing with about one in 10 living in overcrowded conditions or 10 percent, while white people have only about a 1 percent likelihood across the region.

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[54] ACS 2018, 5-year – SCAG calculations.
[55] ACS 2019, 5-year.
[56] Described as the likelihood of individuals living in housing units with more than 1.5 people per room. The Census Bureau notes that Persons-per-room is a common measure for overcrowding in housing and 1.5 is a widely accepted threshold above which there are impacts on health and personal safety.
[57] "Plan Performance: Public Health," Southern California Association of Governments, 2020. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/0903fconnectsocal_public-health.pdf?1606001755
[58] N.a. (2017). Office of Health Equity - Healthy Communities Data and Indicators: Percent of household overcrowding. California Department of Public Health. https://data.chhs.ca.gov/dataset/housing-crowding/resource/9cf0037a-62cd-48fc-8646-18086a1b5e53
[59] Ibid.

- Research found that the Hispanic (Latino) community in Southern California was severely impacted by COVID-19 as they are disproportionately represented in positive COVID-19 cases and deaths.[60] In addition, people living in more crowded housing units are more likely to contract the virus, thus demonstrating overcrowded housing is another example of how existing inequities have exacerbated the effects of public health crisis in certain communities.[61]
- Larger counties such as Los Angeles County, which also have higher housing costs, experience higher rates of overcrowding: 6 percent of housing units in Los Angeles County experience overcrowding, compared to about 5 percent across the region.
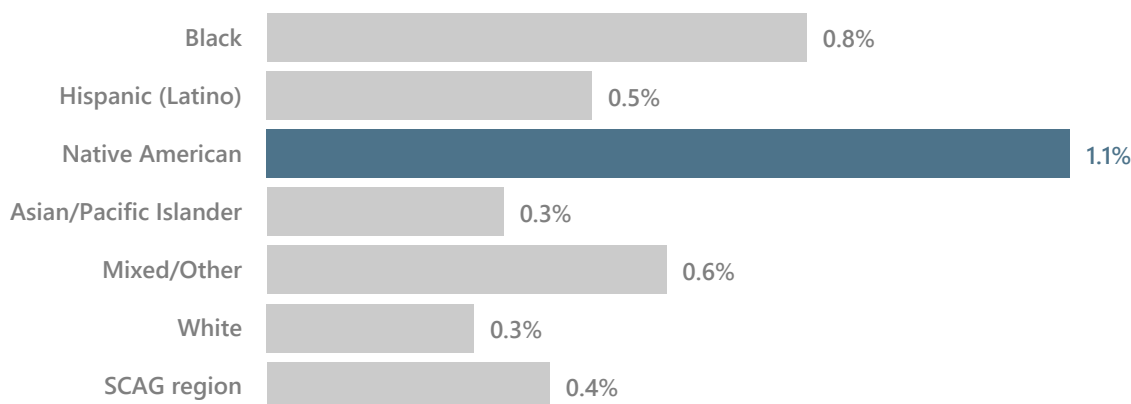
INDICATOR 5

Complete Plumbing Facilities

WHO HAS ACCESS TO SAFE SANITATION?

In addition to the affordability of housing, the essential amenities offered by a housing unit matters greatly in being able to maintain sanitation. The availability of plumbing facilities provides insight on who has access to necessary sanitation that helps keep residents safe and healthy. This is a particularly critical issue in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Native Americans are three times more likely to live in housing units without complete plumbing facilities than white households.

Race/Ethnicity	Percent
Black	0.8%
Hispanic (Latino)	0.5%
Native American	1.1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.3%
Mixed/Other	0.6%
White	0.3%
SCAG region	0.4%

Source: 2018 5-Year American Community Survey

- Across the region, greater proportions of Native Americans (1.1 percent) and Black (0.7 percent) people live in housing units without complete plumbing facilities more than two or three times likely than white people (0.3 percent).
- In Imperial County, more than 2 percent of Native Americans and Black people lived in housing units without complete plumbing facilities, significantly higher than other race/ethnicity groups (less than 0.15 percent).
- In Riverside County, 3 percent of Native Americans lived in housing with no complete plumbing while all other race/ethnicity groups fell below 0.65 percent living in housing without complete plumbing facilities.[62]

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[60] Villarreal, Alexandra. (Jan 11, 2021). "Everywhere you look, people are infected": Covid's toll on California Latinos. The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/11/covid-california-latino-cases-inequality
[61] N.a. (April 10, 2020). COVID-19 Cases in New York City, a Neighborhood-Level Analysis. The Stoop: NYU Furman Center Blog. https://furmancenter.org/thestoop/entry/covid-19-cases-in-new-york-city-a-neighborhood-level-analysis
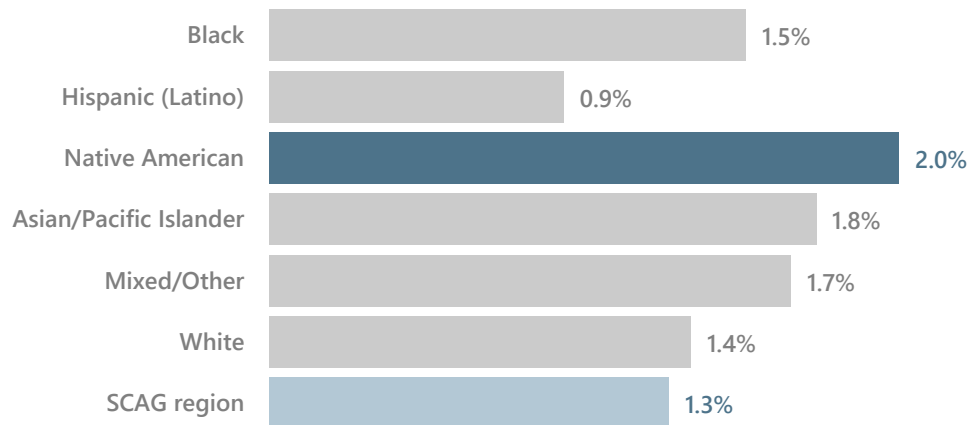[62] ACS 2018, 5-year – SCAG calculations.

INDICATOR 6

Complete Kitchen Facilities[63]

WHO HAS ACCESS TO IMPORTANT KITCHEN FACILITIES?

Without complete kitchen facilities, which include a sink with running water, a stove or range, or a refrigerator, it can become more difficult to prepare nutritious food and maintain sanitation. This in turn may lead to increased food insecurity and worsened health outcomes.[64]

Native Americans are more likely to live in housing units without complete kitchen facilities.

Race	Percent
Black	1.5%
Hispanic (Latino)	0.9%
Native American	2.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.8%
Mixed/Other	1.7%
White	1.4%
SCAG region	1.3%

Source: 2018 5-Year American Community Survey

- Across the region, more than 1 in 100 residents live in housing units without complete kitchen facilities at 1.3 percent. Regionally, Native American (2.0 percent), Asian/Pacific Islander (1.8 percent) and Mixed/Other (1.7 percent) populations are the most likely to live in housing units without complete kitchen facilities.
- In Imperial County, one out of every 20 Black residents live in housing units without complete kitchen facilities, significantly more than that of the county with 0.9 percent of residents living without kitchen facilities. Similarly, in Ventura County, three times more Black people live without complete kitchen facilities at 3.1 percent as compared to white people at 1.2 percent.[65]

INDICATOR 7

Broadband Access

WHO IS MISSING ACCESS TO HIGH-SPEED INTERNET?

High speed internet access, referred to generically as "broadband" and including both wired and wireless technologies, is considered as essential as electricity for daily life during the pandemic. Schooling, jobs, government services, medical care, and grocery shopping and many other consumer purchases, activities that once were performed in-person, have transferred to the internet. This dependence on
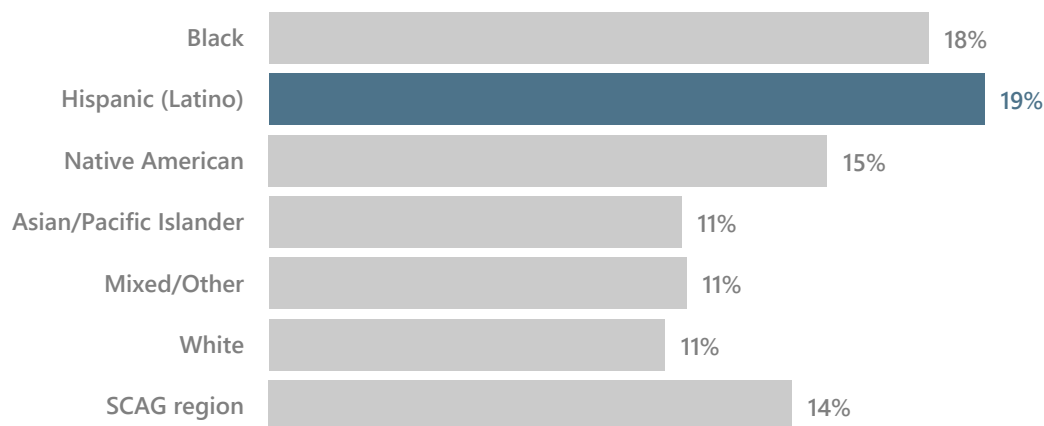
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[63] This indicator considers the availability of a sink and a faucet, a stove or range, and a refrigerator in a housing unit.
[64] N.a. (N.d.) No Kitchens: What does this indicator measure? Public Health Alliance of Southern California. https://phasocal.org/hdi-indicator-no-kitchen/
[65] ACS 2018, 5-year – SCAG calculations.

the internet for core functions is exposing a digital divide. Though internet usage and broadband access are at all-time highs, only 74 percent of households in California have broadband subscriptions at home – the type of internet speed people need to effectively engage in online activities such as school.[66] Gaps in access to broadband persist for low-income, less educated, rural, Black, and Hispanic (Latino) households. The COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated this divide, and it is evident that high speed internet will remain crucial for daily life, and households without access will be greatly impacted.

Hispanic (Latino) households are nearly **two times more likely** to **not have access to high speed internet** than white households.

Black	18%
Hispanic (Latino)	19%
Native American	15%
Asian/Pacific Islander	11%
Mixed/Other	11%
White	11%
SCAG region	14%

Source: 2018 5-Year American Community Survey

- Across the region, 19 percent of Hispanic (Latino) and 18 percent of Black households have no access to high-speed internet, more than any other racial or ethnic group.
- Native Americans also face limited access to high-speed internet: nearly 28 percent of Native Americans in Imperial County and almost 26 percent in San Bernardino County do not have access to high-speed internet. Nearly 26 percent of white people in Imperial County and about 16 percent in San Bernardino County do not have internet access.[67]

INDICATOR 8

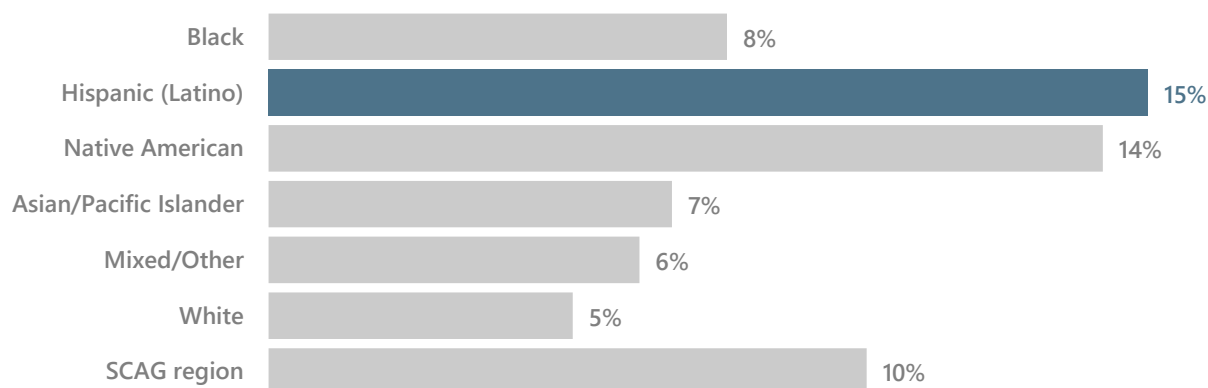# Health Insurance

WHO HAS ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES?

Insured individuals have better health outcomes as they have more access to health services and a greater variety of health services available to them. Insured individuals are less likely to use emergency services for routine procedures or conditions. Without access to primary care services, uninsured individuals are likely to utilize more emergency services for more routine procedures, and the overutilization of emergency services can lead to an increase in overall health care spending.[68]

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[66] Public Policy Institute of California. California's Digital Divide. https://www.ppic.org/publication/californias-digital-divide/
[67] ACS 2018, 5-year – SCAG calculations.
[68] "Plan Performance: Public Health," Southern California Association of Governments, 2020. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/0903fconnectsocal_public-health.pdf?1606001755

Across the region, a **larger percentage of the Hispanic (Latino)** and **Native American** populations **do not have health insurance** when compared to the white population.

Black	8%
Hispanic (Latino)	15%
Native American	14%
Asian/Pacific Islander	7%
Mixed/Other	6%
White	5%
SCAG region	10%

Source: 2018 5-Year American Community Survey

- Across the region, 15 percent of Hispanic (Latino) population and 14 percent of the Native American population do not have health insurance, compared to 5 percent of the white population.
- Nearly 25 percent of Native Americans in Riverside County do not have health insurance coverage—the highest percentage of any racial or ethnic group, in any county.[69]
- Los Angeles County and San Bernardino County experience the highest rates of missing health insurance coverage at 10 percent each.[70]
- The Hispanic (Latino) population is the most uninsured in four of the region's six counties (Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties), yet continue to work essential jobs with high COVID-19 exposure rates and continue to be disproportionately represented in the state's COVID-19 positive cases and deaths. [71, 72]

INDICATOR 9

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Recipiency[73]

WHO IS AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING FOOD INSECURITY?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of low-income families so they can purchase healthy food. Eligibility is tied to the federal poverty level.[74] In California, food insecurity is exacerbated by COVID-19: more than one in five Hispanic (Latino) and Black households with children are reporting that they are sometimes or often do not have enough to eat.[75]

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[69] ACS 2018, 5-year – SCAG calculations.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Hayes-Bautista, D. E. and Hsu, P. (April 24, 2020). Uninsured Working Latinos and COVID-19: Essential Businesses at Risk. UCLA Health Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture. https://www.uclahealth.org/ceslac/workfiles/Research/Uninsured-Working-Latinos-andCOVID19-Apr-23.pdf
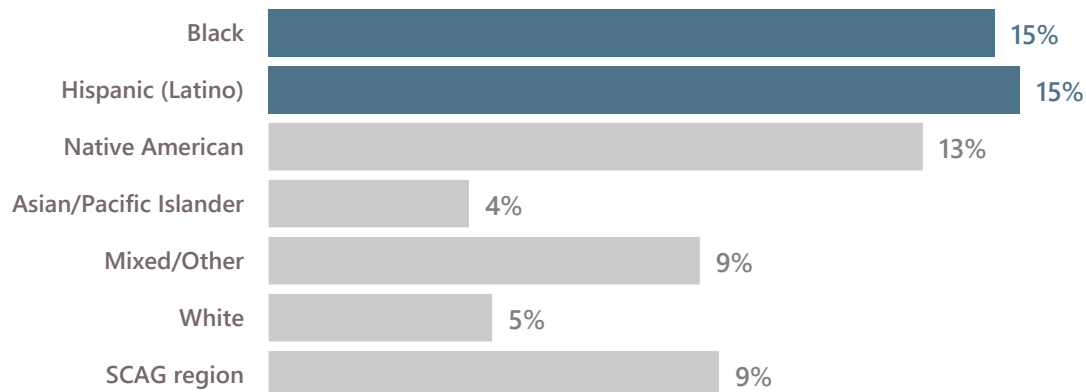[72] Villarreal, Alexandra. (Jan 11, 2021). "Everywhere you look, people are infected": Covid's toll on California Latinos. The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/11/covid-california-latino-cases-inequality
[73] Refers to percent of individuals who live in households in which at least one household member received SNAP.
[74] N.a. (n.d.) SNAP Benefits Recipients. Census Bureau. https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe/guidance/model-input-data/snap.html
[75] Ramos-Yamamoto, Adriana. (September 2020). Not Enough to Eat: California Black and Latinx Children Need Policymakers to Act. California Budget & Policy Center. https://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/snap-calfresh-california-black-and-latinx-children-need-policymakers-to-act/

Approximately 15 percent of both the Hispanic (Latino) and Black populations across the region receive SNAP benefits.

Category	Percentage
Black	15%
Hispanic (Latino)	15%
Native American	13%
Asian/Pacific Islander	4%
Mixed/Other	9%
White	5%
SCAG region	9%

Source: 2018 5-Year American Community Survey

- Black, Hispanic (Latino), and Native American households have higher rates of receiving SNAP, at 15 percent and, 15 percent, and 13 percent, respectively, across the region.
- In Imperial County, more than 25 percent of Black, Hispanic (Latino), and Native American persons live in a household where one member is receiving SNAP benefits. Over 30 percent of Mixed/Other individuals in Imperial County also live-in households where at least one household member received SNAP.

INDICATOR 10

# Life Expectancy at Childbirth

WHO IS LIKELY TO LIVE A LONGER LIFE?

Life expectancy is one indicator of how health outcomes can vary between different communities of people. While the gap between the life expectancies of Black, Hispanic (Latino), and Native Americans generally narrowed over the years recorded, COVID-19 has greatly disrupted these gains as Black, Hispanic (Latino), and Native American populations were approximately three times more likely to die of COVID-19 than white people nationwide (as of December 2020). [76, 77]

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[76] Yong, Ed. (December 29, 2020). Where Year Two of the Pandemic Will Take Us. The Atlantic.
https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2020/12/pandemic-year-two/617528/
[77] Ibid.

In 2015, the average life expectancy for a Black person was 77 years, which was the lowest of any racial/ethnic group in the SCAG region.
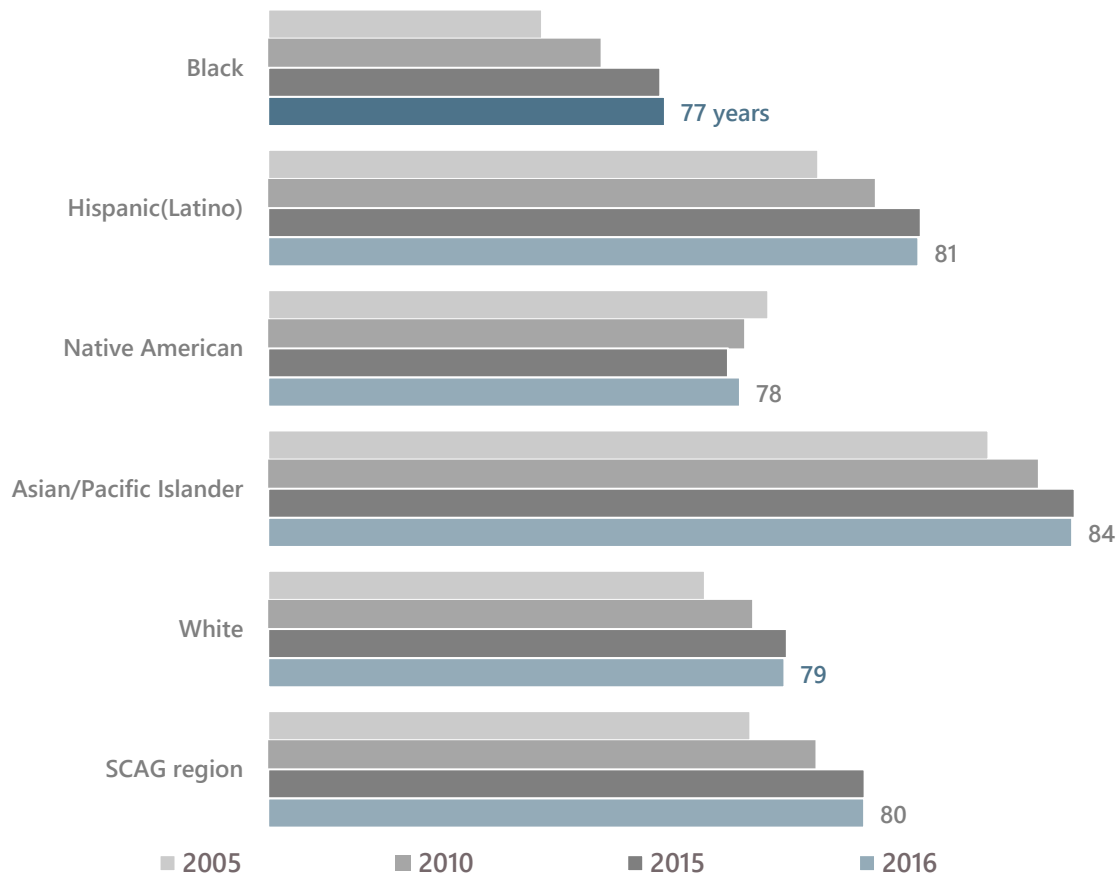
Source: National Equity Atlas

- In 2016, white individuals had an average life expectancy of 79 across the region, compared to Asian/Pacific Islanders, who had an average life expectancy of 84—the highest across the region.
- Native Americans across the region experienced consistent decreases in the average life expectancy, from 78.7 in 2005, to 78.2 in 2010, and 78.0 in 2015.
- While there were increases in life expectancy for both Black and Hispanic (Latino) individuals in the region (with the biggest increase being from 2010 to 2015 for Black individuals), COVID-19 has depressed previous increases.[78]

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4 | Mobility

It is widely understood that transportation and land use decisions determine access to opportunities and have far-reaching effects on equity and social justice.[79] Transportation links people to places, allowing them to move between home, work, play and community services. A community's land use pattern can determine the distribution of these activities and destinations, which when combined with transportation options, impacts the ability of a household to meet their daily needs. Historically, patterns such as racial segregation, gentrification, and displacement, have limited communities of color's accessibility to essential services and overall mobility.[80] Mobility indicators measure who can access job opportunities, transportation, parks, and more.[81] To understand existing regional mobility disparities, SCAG analyzed data from the National Equity Atlas, Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS), Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS), U.S. Census American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample, and the SCAG Regional Travel Model, Socioeconomic Growth Forecast and Regional Household Travel Survey.

INDICATOR 1

Access to Employment[82]

DO ALL RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT?

Accessibility to various destinations, in particular employment opportunities, is foundational for social and economic interactions to meet basic needs. As an indicator, accessibility is measured by the spatial distribution of potential destinations, the ease of reaching each destination, and the magnitude, quality, and character of activities at potential destination sites.[83] The number of destination choices that people have is equally crucial: the more destinations and the more varied the destinations, the higher the level of accessibility.[84] While not included in the below data on accessibility, travel cost is also an important element of accessibility. This methodology also does not differentiate between high versus low wage employment; individuals are more likely to commute farther for higher wage jobs.[85]

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[79] (Wilson, Hutson and Mujahid 2008)
[80] (Trounstine 2020)
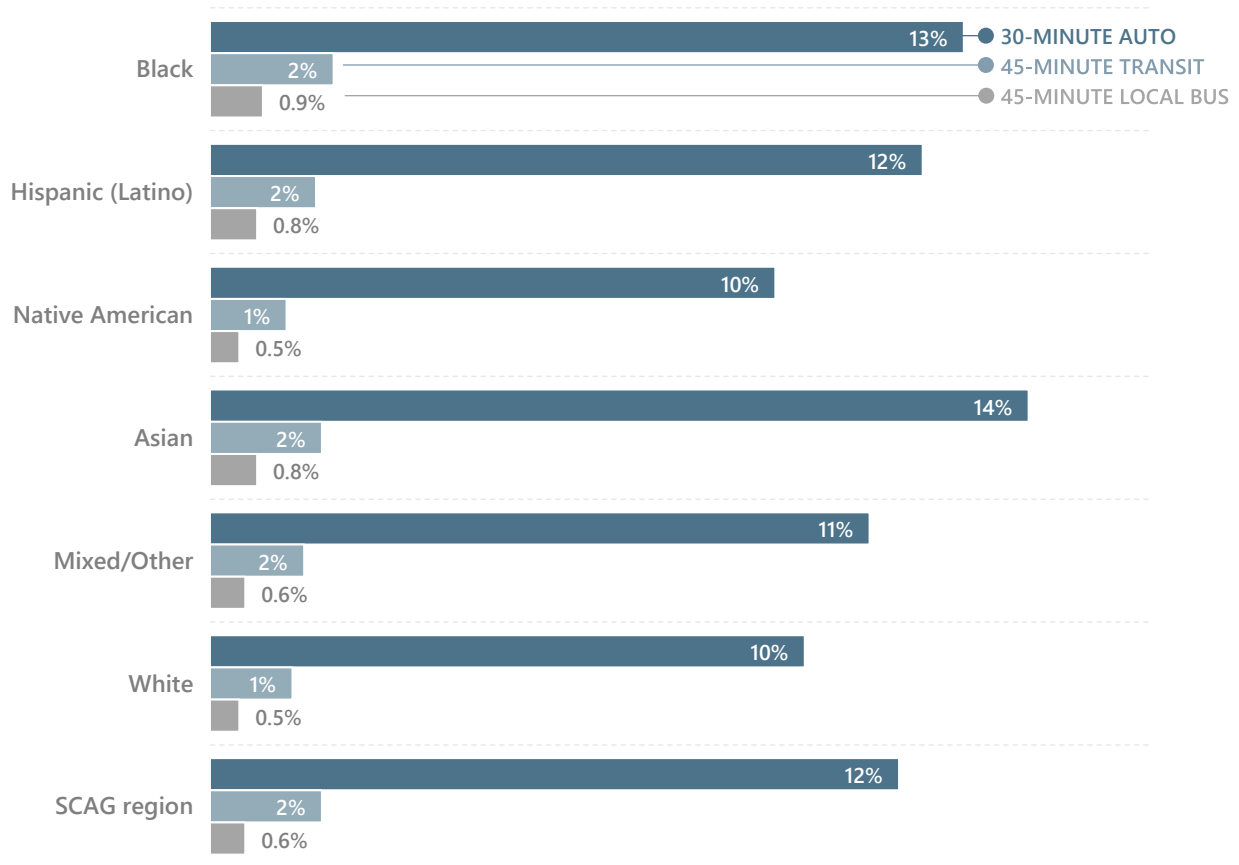[81] PolicyLink/USC Equity Research Institute, National Equity Atlas, www.nationalequityatlas.org.
[82] Accessibility to employment and shopping measured the share of regional destinations that are reachable between work and home or between retail stores and home within 30 minutes of travel by automobile, and 45 minutes of travel by transit during the evening peak period (5pm to 7pm). Travel time by transit took into account factors incurred by riders that impact total travel time, such as the accumulation of initial wait time, transfer wait time, access walk time, egress walk time, transfer walk time, and in-vehicle time. In addition, accessibility is measured for all transit (bus and rail included) and exclusively for bus service. Accessibility is measured for all transit (bus and rail included) and exclusively for bus service.
[83] (PolicyLink, USC Equity Research Institute n.d.)
[84] Measured as the percent of regional employment accessible for each demographic group.
[85] (Kneebone and Holmes 2015)

Native Americans can reach the **lowest percent of employment opportunities** in the region via all transportation modes compared to all other racial/ethnic groups.

Group	30-Minute Auto	45-Minute Transit	45-Minute Local Bus
Black	13%	2%	0.9%
Hispanic (Latino)	12%	2%	0.8%
Native American	10%	1%	0.5%
Asian	14%	2%	0.8%
Mixed/Other	11%	2%	0.6%
White	10%	1%	0.5%
SCAG region	12%	2%	0.6%

Source: SCAG Regional Travel Model and Socioeconomic Growth Forecast

- Across the region, Native Americans have the lowest accessibility to employment opportunities in the region compared to other racial/ethnic groups by car, with less than 10 percent of employment destinations in the region within reach.[86] Within a 45-minute transit commute, less than 1 percent of employment destinations are accessible for Native Americans in the region, and only 0.5 percent of employment opportunities are accessible by local bus.
- People have access to the lowest percentage of employment destinations in the region at 0.6 percent via automobile in Imperial County, followed by 3.3 percent in Ventura County, and 3.7 percent in Riverside County.
- Imperial County has the lowest accessibility to jobs at 0 percent via a 45-minute transit commute than any other county when examining accessibility by transit. However, regionally, all employment within a 45-minute commute by transit is marginal, with only 1.7 percent of all employment destinations within reach for any demographic group.
- Across the region, Asian/Pacific Islanders have the greatest accessibility to employment destinations, accessing 14 percent of all employment sites within a 30-minute drive.
- Geographically, Orange County provides the greatest employment accessibility within a thirty-minute (30-minute) drive to access the largest number of employment destinations in the region. Overall, nearly 17 percent of employment destinations in the region can be reached by the average resident.

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[86] Measured as the percent of regional employment accessible for each demographic group.

INDICATOR 2

Access to Open Space & Parks[87]

DO ALL RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE AND PARKS?

Local parks and other natural lands are important amenities for residents' quality of life. Residents who live near parks have easier access to recreation and other outdoor activities (e.g., walking, biking, hiking, etc.), providing numerous physical, mental, and social benefits.[88] The region is diverse in its open space resources and offers a wide variety of public parks as well as national parks, state parks, and numerous county parks. Not all parks are created equal, however, and many neighborhoods do not have access to a variety of public resources.[89] For instance, some neighborhoods have more natural lands, some parks are better maintained, some are built so that those with disabilities can enjoy them, and some parks are safer. In addition, there is a greater need for urban green spaces and trees to cool and offset warming temperatures from the impacts of climate change which are known to disproportionately impact communities of color and low-income populations.

Black residents can access the **least percentage of local parks** in the region **within a 30-minute drive** compared to other racial/ethnic groups.
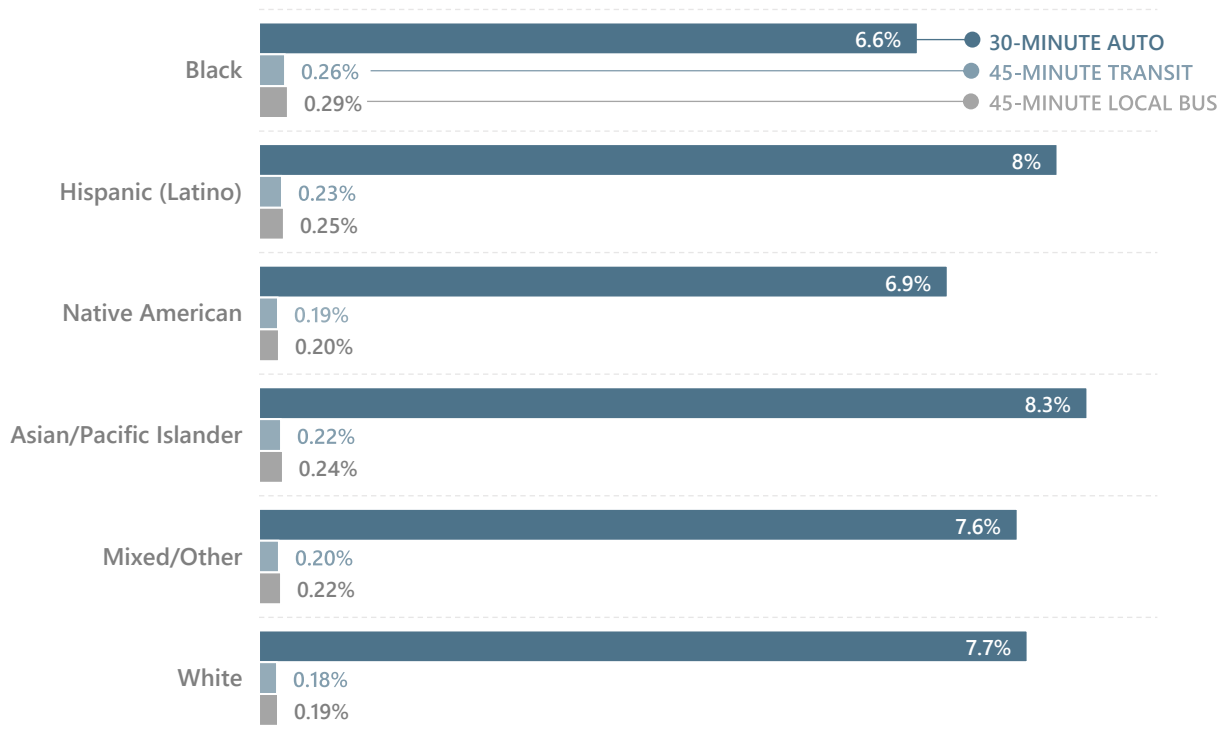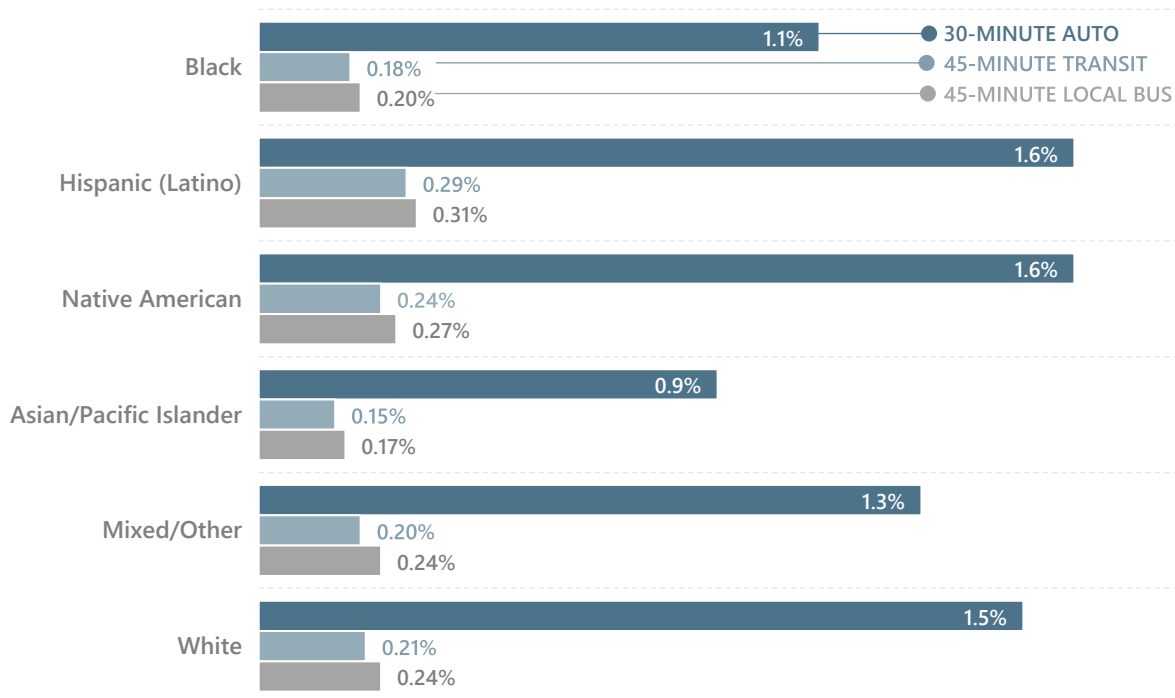

Source: SCAG Regional Travel Model and Socioeconomic Growth Forecast

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[87]Accessibility to parks is defined as the percentage of park acreage that may be reached within 30 minutes of travel time by automobile or 45 minutes by transit.
[88] (Gies 2006)
[89] (Grinspan, et al. 2020)

Asian/Pacific Islanders can access the **least percentage of other natural lands** in the region **within a 30-minute drive** compared to other racial/ethnic groups.

Source: SCAG Regional Travel Model and Socioeconomic Growth Forecast

- On average, Black residents have the least access to local parks via a 30-minute drive, with 6.6 percent of local parks in the region accessible to Black residents as compared to the average share of local park acreage in the region accessible to all residents at 7.5 percent.
- Just 0.9 percent of other natural land acreage is accessible to Asian/Pacific Islanders within a 30-minute drive, the lowest of any other racial/ethnic group. However, on average, Asian/Pacific Islanders can reach the highest percentage of local park acreage by car, with 8.3 percent of the region's local park acreage accessible, more than any other racial/ethnic group.
- All demographic groups have limited access to local parks and other natural lands via public transportation rather than via automobile. When analyzing only natural lands, there is very limited access for all groups to national and state parks via transit. Overall, transit and local bus provide very limited access to local parks and other natural lands. Households of color disproportionately do not own their own vehicle, resulting in even more reduced access to local parks and natural lands.

INDICATOR 3

Average Travel Time to Work

DO WORKERS HAVE SHORT COMMUTES TO THEIR JOBS?

Long commutes are linked with worse physical and mental health, including higher rates of obesity, stress, and depression.[90] Employers also suffer from high turnover and employee dissatisfaction, and the public is

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[90] (Public Health Alliance of Southern California n.d.)

affected by heightened congestion, high carbon dioxide emissions, and increasingly worsening air quality as a result of pollution.

Black residents who take the **bus, rail, taxi, or ferry to work** experience the **longest commute at just over one hour** compared to all other race/ethnic groups and transportation types.

AVERAGE TRAVEL TIME TO WORK (MINUTES)
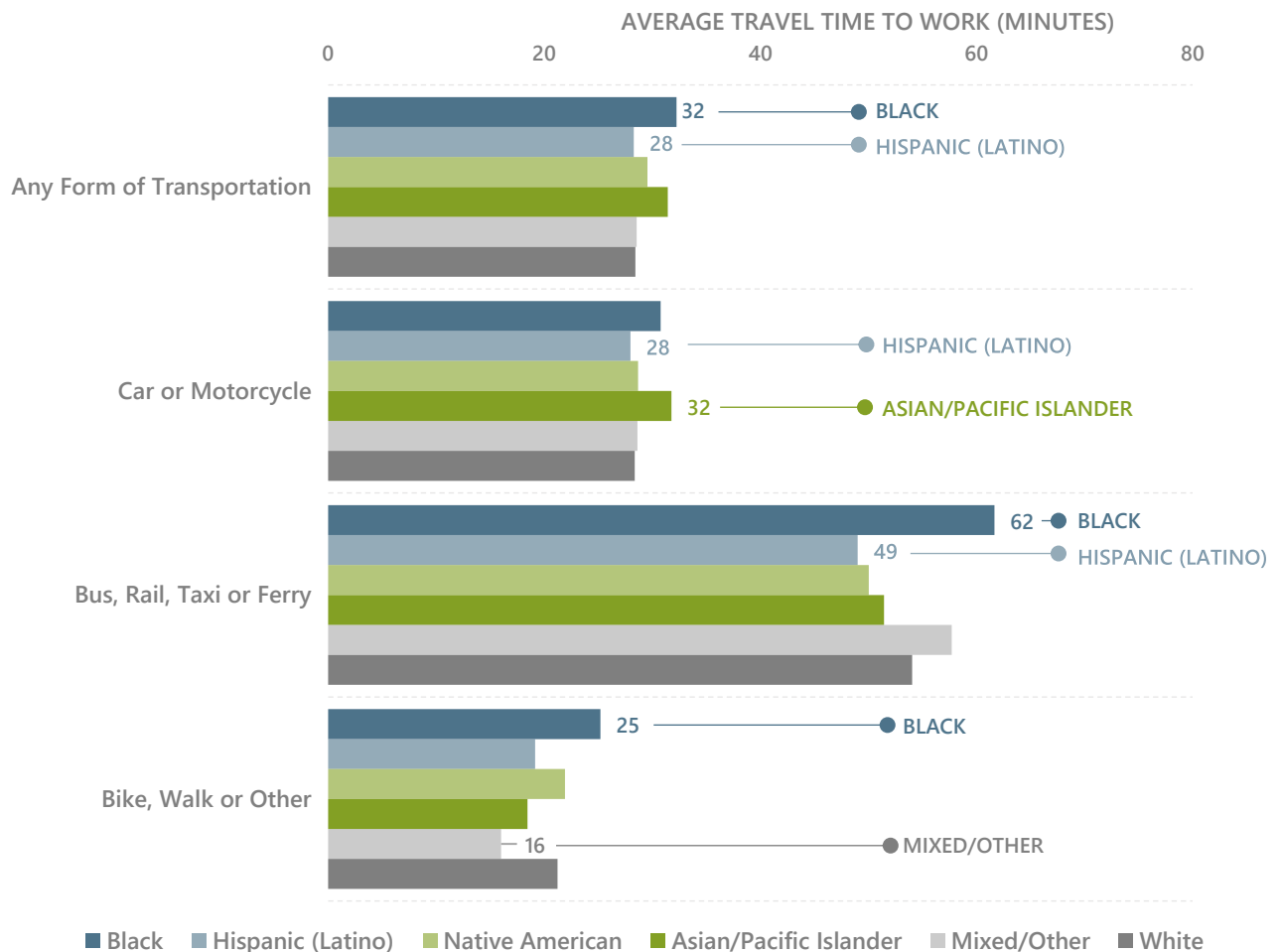
Source: National Equity Atlas, American Community Survey PUMS

- Across the region, Black residents experience the longest commutes to work via bus, rail, taxi, or ferry, at over one hour, or 62 minutes, as compared to all other racial/ethnic groups. Black households are also the least likely to own their own vehicle at nearly 13 percent. When biking, walking, or using another mode of transportation, Black residents commute an average of 25 minutes. Overall, Black residents travel a little over half an hour at 32 minutes to work using any form of transportation.
- On average, Hispanic (Latino) residents tend to have shorter commutes than other racial/ethnic groups, by car or motorcycle (28 minutes), bus, rail, taxi, or ferry (49 minutes), and overall, any form of transportation (28 minutes).
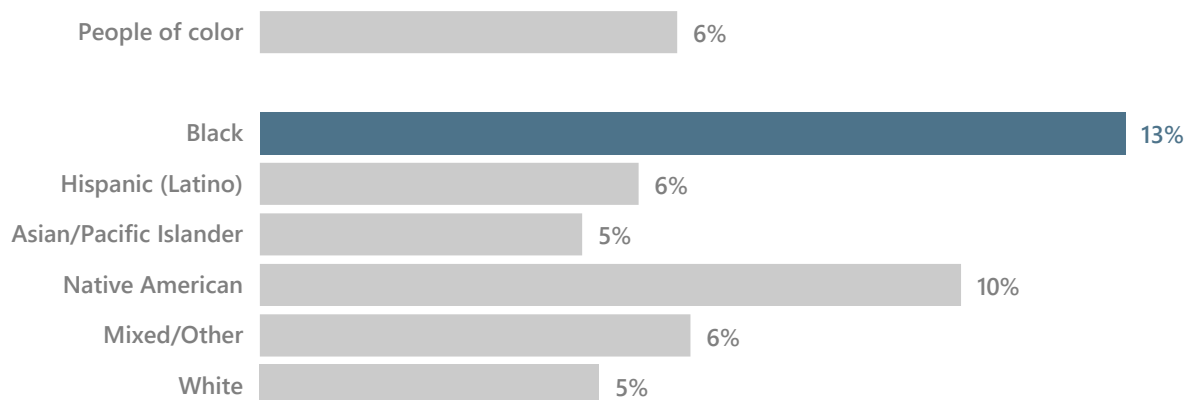
INDICATOR 4

Households Without a Vehicle

DO ALL HOUSEHOLDS HAVE RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION?

Everyone needs reliable transportation access and in most American communities, due to land use configuration, that means a car.[91] Reliable and affordable transportation is critical for meeting daily needs and accessing educational and employment opportunities located throughout the region. Much of the region's current built environment is primarily oriented towards the automobile. Throughout the region, the share of households without a vehicle has gone down substantially since 2000, from 10 percent to just over 7 percent.[92] A private vehicle should not be a requirement for full participation in social, civic, and economic life, as it is unaffordable and burdensome for many people. To address this significant issue, the built environment needs to become more supportive of non-car trips and more non-car forms of transportation need to become more reliable.

Regionally, **1 in 8 Black residents do not own a car**, the highest of any other race/ethnic groups.

People of color	6%
Black	13%
Hispanic (Latino)	6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5%
Native American	10%
Mixed/Other	6%
White	5%

Source: National Equity Atlas, American Community Survey PUMS

- One in eight Black households (13 percent) do not own a vehicle, the highest rate of any demographic group. Additionally, 10 percent of Native Americans do not own a vehicle across the region.
- Overall, 6 percent of people of color across the region do not own a vehicle.
- White and Asian/Pacific Islander households have the highest rate of vehicle ownership with 5 percent of white households and a little less than 5 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander households who do not own a vehicle.

INDICATOR 5

Share of Transportation System Usage

WHO USES DIFFERENT TYPES OF TRANSPORTATION MODES?

Overall, people of color are more likely to use transit and active transportation modes to reach destinations than white residents.[93] Communities of color and low-income households have been shown

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[91] PolicyLink/USC Equity Research Institute, National Equity Atlas, www.nationalequityatlas.org.
[92] ACS PUMS
[93] (Anderson 2016)

to have higher rates of walking and bicycling as well as experience higher rates of fatalities and collisions.[94] This indicator breaks down the usage of various transportation modes by race/ethnicity relative to each population's share of all travel.

Share of Transportation System Usage
Race/Ethnicity breakdown across the region.

	Auto Mode	Bus	Commuter Rail	Urban Rail	Non-Motorized	Others	Total Usage
Black	6.9%	8.7%	6.7%	8.0%	7.5%	5.7%	**7.0%**
Hispanic (Latino)	36.2%	41.3%	34.7%	39.4%	37.5%	29.6%	**36.4%**
Native American	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	**0.3%**
Asian/Pacific Islander	15.1%	13.1%	15.7%	13.9%	14.6%	17.5%	**15.1%**
Mixed/Other	2.5%	2.4%	2.5%	2.4%	2.5%	2.6%	**2.5%**
White	38.9%	34.1%	40.1%	35.9%	37.6%	44.3%	**38.8%**

Source: 2012 Household Travel Survey, with 2016 Supplement. Processed by SCAG Modeling staff

- By race/ethnicity, Hispanics (Latinos) disproportionately use more bus and rail than the rest of the share of total population. 41.3 percent of bus and 39.4 percent of urban rail trips are made by Hispanic (Latino) residents. Hispanic (Latino) residents make up a total of 36.4 percent of all trips via any transportation mode.
- Overall, white residents take significantly more trips via any transportation mode than any other racial/ethnic group, accounting for nearly 38.8 percent of all trips in the region, despite making up only 31 percent of the population. White residents take disproportionately higher trips by automobile at 38.9 percent of trips, more than all other race/ethnicity groups.
- Usage of the transportation system by low-income households is disproportionately high for other modes, particularly bus, rail transit, passenger rail, walking, and biking. However, all usage for any race/ethnicity group via any mode must first consider an individual's access to the transportation mode including factors such as vehicle ownership, access to transit, safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists, and more.

INDICATOR 6

Highest Rates of Bicycle and Pedestrian Collisions

WHO IS AT THE HIGHEST RISK FOR A COLLISION?[95]

Making walking and bicycling safer and more convenient transportation options is key to attracting more people to choose these healthy alternatives.[96] Bicycling or walking along roadways near motor vehicles is often perceived as dangerous and reducing hazards in the pedestrian and cycling environment is a primary strategy toward achieving the region's goal of promoting healthier, more active communities.

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[94] (Sandt, Combs and Cohn 2016)
[95] 2016 population breakdown of SCAG region and high concentrated area of bike and pedestrian collisions
[96] (Pucher and Dijkstra 2003)

This indicator is used to identify patterns of active transportation hazards and potential risk disparities among the various communities in the region, evaluating incidences of motor vehicle collisions involving bicyclists and pedestrians in communities.

To identify where most of the collisions are occurring, SCAG created a High Injury Network at a regional scale.[97] High Injury Networks identify stretches of roadways where the highest concentrations of collisions occur on the transportation network.[98] Currently, the majority of the High Injury Network is in areas identified as being disadvantaged communities, with approximately 66 percent of auto-pedestrian and auto-bicycle fatal and serious injury collisions occurring in these areas.[99] Improving transportation safety in these areas is particularly critical when considering the higher non-motorized mode share of people of color.

Hispanic (Latino) residents are the **most likely to live in high-risk** areas for **pedestrian- or bike-involved collisions** as compared to all other race/ethnic groups.
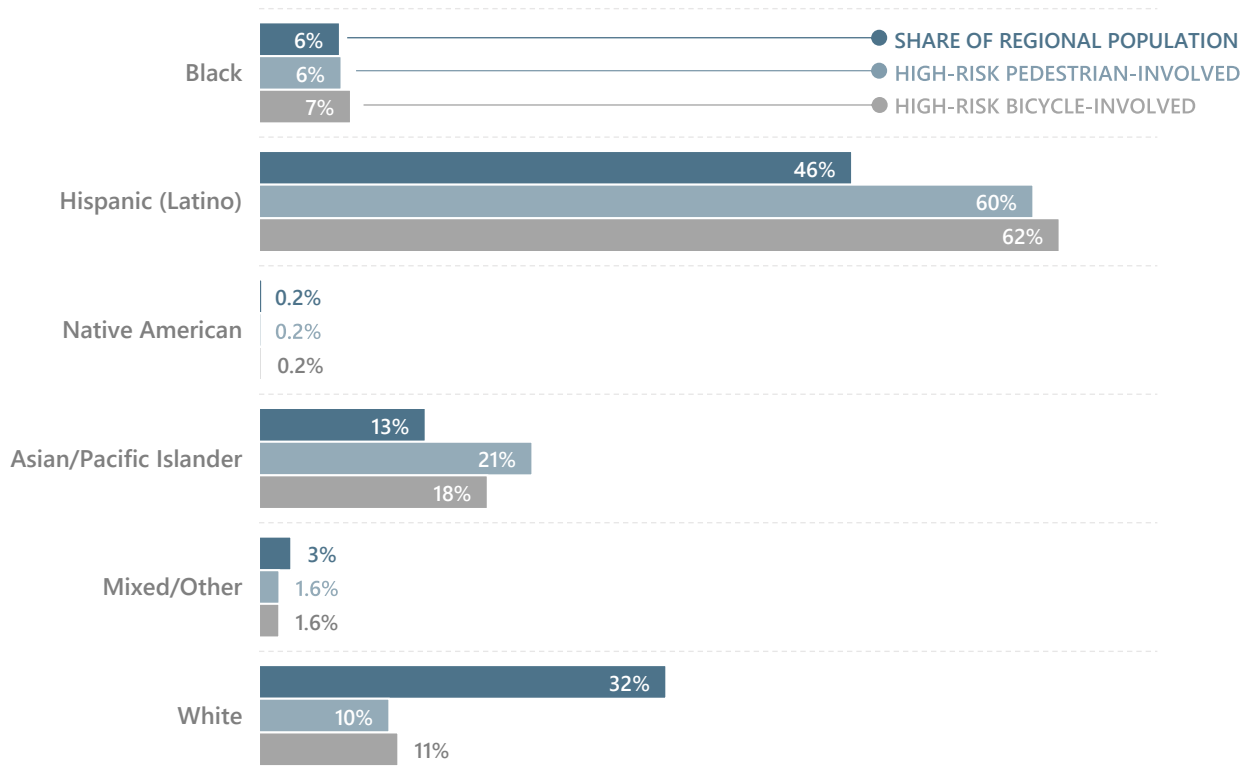
Source: SCAG, SWITRS, TIMS, 2016

- Hispanic (Latino) residents are at a significantly higher risk for a pedestrian-involved collision at 60 percent or a bicycle-involved collision at 62 percent than any other racial/ethnic group in the region, disproportionately higher than their share of the overall population at 46 percent.
- White residents have a much lower risk for a pedestrian-involved collision at 10 percent or bicycle-involved collision at 11 percent than any other racial/ethnic group in the region, nearly one third lower than their share of the overall population at 32 percent.

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[97] (Southern California Association of Governments n.d.)
[98] (Southern California Association of Governments n.d.)
[99] (Southern California Association of Governments n.d.)

5 | Environment

Historically, people of color have been provided less protection from poor environmental conditions, living in closer proximity to highways, highly traveled roads, industrial plants, and other sources of pollutants.[100] The most disadvantaged bear the consequences of environmental degradation, even if many contribute little to the underlying causes. The Environmental indicators highlighted below are focused on climate vulnerability and pollution exposure, representing a subset of issues negatively impacting communities of color. To understand existing environmental disparities, SCAG consulted data from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, California Building Resilience Against Climate Effects (CalBRACE), California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2014 National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment (NATA), the U.S. Decennial Census, and the 2017 5-year American Community Survey.

INDICATOR 1

Climate Vulnerability[101]

WHO IS MOST VULNERABLE TO CLIMATE CHANGE?

Existing conditions show that people of color and low-income populations are at a greater risk for experiencing negative impacts from climate change, such as extreme heat, flooding, and other events.[102] These populations often have fewer resources to respond or adapt to climate-related issues, and experience higher rates of chronic diseases, which increases their susceptibility to climate threats. In addition, lack of air conditioning and transportation options may exacerbate vulnerability in heat prone areas, and access to cooling centers may be limited. The ability to adapt to climate change is critical to prevent further heightened disparities in health outcomes across populations.[103]

WHO LIVES IN A FLOOD HAZARD AREA?[104,105]

Climate change is projected to alter precipitation patterns, increase the intensity of major storm events, and increase risks of floods throughout the region.[106] Consequently, many communities are at risk for devastation from floods, disproportionately people of color and low-income communities.[107] Flooding may cause serious health impacts and risks that include death and injury, contaminated drinking water, hazardous material spills, and increases in the populations of disease-carrying insects and rodents.[108] Other negative impacts can include damage to critical infrastructure, as well as community disruption and displacement.[109]

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[100] (PolicyLink/USC Equity Research Institute n.d.)

[101] Climate vulnerability provides a population analysis by race/ethnicity for areas potentially impacted by substandard housing, sea level rise, wildfire risk, or extreme heat effects related to climate change.

[102] (Shonkoff, Morello-Frosch and Pastor 2011)

[103] Rudolph, L., Harrison, C., Buckley, L. & North, S. (2018). Climate Change, Health, and Equity: A Guide for Local Health Departments. Public Health Institute and American Public Health Association.

[104] Flood hazard analyzes the percent population of a flood-prone community and demonstrates areas within the 100-year Flood Hazard Zones (one percent annual chance of occurring) and 500-year Flood Hazard Zones region-wide (0.2 percent).

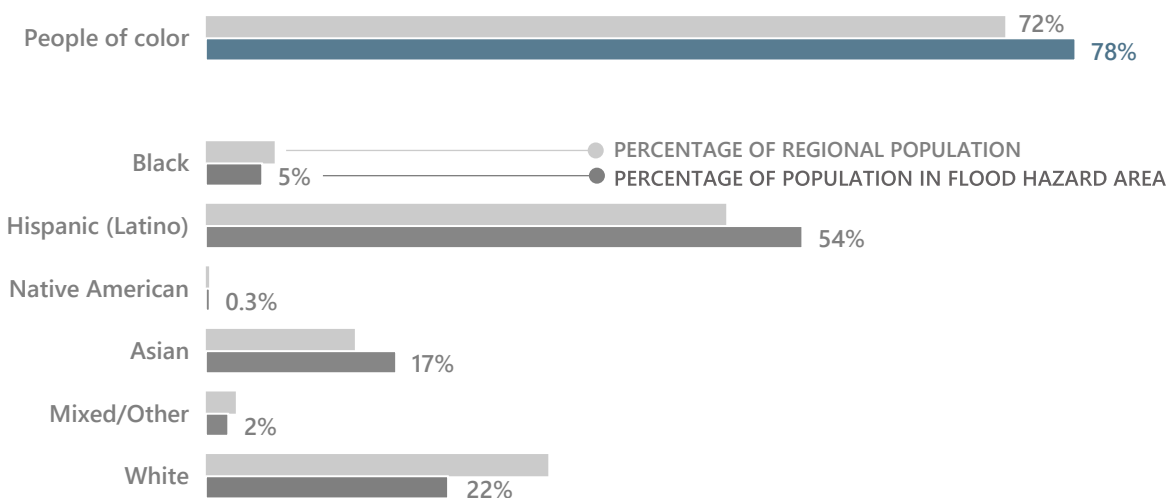[105] (Federal Emergency Management Agency 2020)

[106] (United States Environmental Protection Agency 2020)

[107] (Center for Social Solutions 2020)

[108] (World Health Organization 2021)

[109] Handmer, J., Y. Honda, Z.W. Kundzewicz, N. Arnell, G. Benito, J. Hatfield, I.F. Mohamed, P. Peduzzi, S. Wu, B. Sherstyukov, K. Takahashi, and Z. Yan, 2012: Changes in impacts of climate extremes: human systems and ecosystems. In: *Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation* [Field, C.B., V. Barros, T.F. Stocker, D. Qin, D.J. Dokken, K.L. Ebi, M.D. Mastrandrea, K.J. Mach, G.-K. Plattner, S.K. Allen, M. Tignor, and P.M. Midgley (eds.)]. A Special Report of Working Groups I and II of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, and New York, NY, USA, pp. 231-290.

People of color are disproportionately **more likely** to live in a **100-year Flood Hazard Zone at 78 percent,** despite making up 72 percent of the overall population.

People of color — 72% / **78%**

Black — PERCENTAGE OF REGIONAL POPULATION / PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION IN FLOOD HAZARD AREA — 5%

Hispanic (Latino) — 54%

Native American — 0.3%

Asian — 17%

Mixed/Other — 2%

White — 22%

Source: 2019 SCAG, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Census

- People of color disproportionately live in 100-year and 500-year flood hazard areas, comprising 78 percent of the population living in 100-year Flood Hazard Zones and 78 percent of the population residing in 500-year Flood Zones.
- Hispanic (Latino) communities are the most likely to reside in a 100-year flood hazard area, making up 54 percent of residents at high risk, yet only making up 47 percent of the regional population.
- Asian/Pacific Islanders are also at an increased risk, consisting of 17 percent of those who live in a 100-year flood hazard area, yet only comprising about 13 percent of the overall population.
- White residents make up about 31 percent of the overall population yet are proportionately less likely to live in a 100-year flood hazard area as compared to other racial/ethnic groups. 22 percent of those who live in a flood hazard area are white residents.

WHO IS AT RISK FOR A WILDFIRE?

Warmer temperatures combined with longer dry seasons have resulted in more wildfires in recent years.[110] Large fires statewide are anticipated to increase from roughly 58 percent to 128 percent over the next several years.[111] As a result, air quality, water quality and even food production and energy pricing will be affected. These extra costs are expected to impact low-income communities more severely, in turn disproportionately impacting communities of color.

The climate in Southern California continues to be increasingly hospitable to wildfires. Smoke from wildfires can contain over 10,000 substances (particulate matter and gaseous products of combustion) and expose the population to $PM_{2.5}$ for months at a time.[112] $PM_{2.5}$ from wildfires increases the amount of

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[110] Handmer, J., Y. Honda, Z.W. Kundzewicz, N. Arnell, G. Benito, J. Hatfield, I.F. Mohamed, P. Peduzzi, S. Wu, B. Sherstyukov, K. Takahashi, and Z. Yan, 2012: Changes in impacts of climate extremes: human systems and ecosystems. In: *Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation* [Field, C.B., V. Barros, T.F. Stocker, D. Qin, D.J. Dokken, K.L. Ebi, M.D. Mastrandrea, K.J. Mach, G.-K. Plattner, S.K. Allen, M. Tignor, and P.M. Midgley (eds.)]. A Special Report of Working Groups I and II of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, and New York, NY, USA, pp. 231-290.
[111] California Public Utilities Commission, SCAG, 2019
[112] (California Air Resources Board, California Department of Public Health 2019)

hospital visits and the risk of mortality.[113] Air pollution from wildfires is estimated to cause 339,000 deaths per year worldwide.[114] According to the California Department of Public Health, there are around 1.5 million people who live in fire hazard zones who are at a higher risk of being exposed to the effects of $PM_{2.5}$.[115]

Wildfire Risk by Race/Ethnicity
Race/Ethnicity breakdown by County

Race/Ethnicity	Imperial	Los Angeles	Orange	Riverside	San Bernardino	Ventura	Total
People of color	-	5%	4%	7%	5%	11%	6%
Black	-	4%	5%	7%	5%	15%	7%
Hispanic (Latino)	-	4%	2%	6%	4%	8%	5%
Native American	-	7%	6%	10%	9%	15%	9%
Asian	-	9%	6%	11%	7%	25%	12%
Pacific Islander	-	3%	3%	7%	5%	11%	6%
Mixed	-	12%	9%	11%	9%	25%	13%
Other	-	8%	8%	10%	8%	21%	11%
White	-	17%	10%	12%	12%	28%	16%
SCAG region	-	8%	6%	8%	7%	20%	

Source: California Building Resilience Against Climate Effects, California Public Utilities Commission 2019, Cal FIRE, U.S. Census, SCAG

- Across the region, white residents are the most likely to live in very high wildfire risk areas, with 16 percent of all white residents in the region at risk. In Ventura County, 28 percent of white residents live in high-risk areas.
- Asian (25 percent), Mixed (25 percent), and Other (21 percent) populations make up the next largest proportions of residents who live in wildfire risk areas in Ventura County.
- Native Americans face high wildfire risk in Riverside County with 10 percent of Native Americans living in high-risk areas. In addition, 12 percent of white, 11 percent of Mixed, 11 percent of Asian, and 10 percent of Other residents are all at high risk for a wildfire, living in high wildfire risk areas.

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[113] (California Air Resources Board, California Department of Public Health 2019)
[114] (Johnston, et al. 2012)
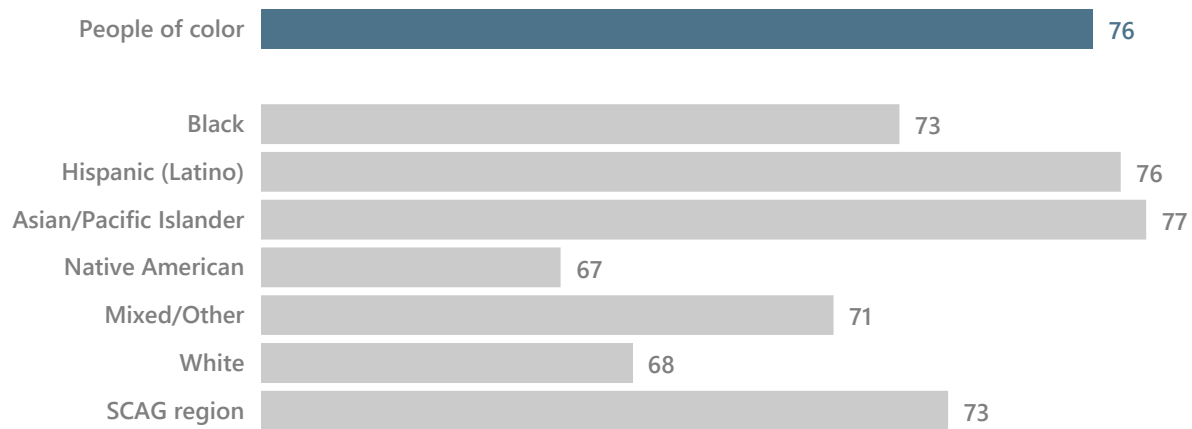[115] (California Air Resources Board n.d.)

INDICATOR 2

Air Pollution Exposure Index[116]

CAN EVERYONE BREATHE CLEAN AIR?

Healthy neighborhoods are free of pollution and toxics that undermine safety, health, and well-being.[117] People of color are more likely to live in neighborhoods with high levels of air pollution, corresponding to a higher risk for many serious health issues like respiratory problems, heart disease, cancer, and premature death.[118] Children are particularly vulnerable to air pollution because they breathe more air relative to their size and their organs are not fully developed. A disproportionate share of people of color and low-income communities live near freeways and industry, exposing communities to higher rates of exposure to all sources of air pollution, as measured via an index score developed by the National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment (NATA).[119] This index of exposure to air toxics can be further examined by cancer and non-cancer risk.

People of color face **greater exposure to air toxics** for **environmental pollution** from all sources (index score of 76).

People of color	76
Black	73
Hispanic (Latino)	76
Asian/Pacific Islander	77
Native American	67
Mixed/Other	71
White	68
SCAG region	73

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1999, 2011 and 2014 National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment (NATA); U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census Summary File 3, 2010 and 2017 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Summary File.

- In general, people of color face a significantly higher exposure to air toxics for enironmental pollution from all sources with an index of 76, as compared to white residents at 68. suggesting that the average pollution exposure for people of color in the region is equivalent to the census track that ranks in the 76th percentile nationally in pollution exposure. Native Americans face the lowest exposure to air toxics for environmental pollution from all sources at an index of 67.
- When specifically examining exposure to toxics that pose a cancer risk, the air pollution exposure index for people of color of 68 is six points higher than the index for white residents at 62.
- The air exposure index for cancer risk for Asian/Pacific Islanders is the highest in the region at nearly 70. Hispanic (Latino) populations follow close behind in exposure to air toxics that pose risk of cancer at 69.

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[116] Index of exposure to air toxics for cancer and non-cancer risk (combined and separately). Values range from 1 (lowest risk) to 100 (highest risk) on a national scale based on the distribution across census tracts nationwide. For example, a value of 65 for Latinos in a given region suggests that the average pollution exposure for Latinos in that region is equivalent to the census tract that ranks at the 65th percentile nationally in pollution exposure (i.e., has more exposure than 64 percent of U.S. tracts but less exposure than 35 percent of tracts).
[117] (PolicyLink/USC Equity Research Institute n.d.)
[118] (Hajat, Hsia and O'Neill 2015), (Research Divsion n.d.)
[119] (United States Environmental Protection Agency n.d.)

- Reviewing air pollution that poses a non-cancer risk but instead poses a respiratory hazard, the air pollution index for people of color at 78 is eight points higher than the index for white populations of 70, indicating communities of color are more at risk for asthma and other respiratory problems.
- Overall, Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic (Latino) populations experience the highest exposure to air toxics that pose respiratory hazards with an index score of 79 respectively, indicating the average pollution exosure for Asian/Pacific Islanders and Hispanic (Latino)s is equivalent to the census tract nationwide at the 79th percentile for air pollution exposure.

INDICATOR 3

CalEnviroScreen[120]

WHO IS MOST VULNERABLE TO THE GREATEST POLLUTION BURDEN?

Pollution continues to be a major public health concern in the region, as air pollutants exacerbate chronic conditions and disproportionately affect people of color and other vulnerable populations (children, pregnant women, older adults, outdoor workers and populations with a disability).[121] In general, rates of chronic diseases related to air quality in the region have been on the rise or remained constant for at least the past five years.[122] In addition, impacts from climate change further exacerbate air quality issues and affect the well-being of residents.

The California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool, also known as the CalEnviroScreen 3.0 (CES) score, provides a weighted value that takes into account a series of pollution burden indicators and population characteristics to calculate a score based on the average of exposures and environmental effects and the average of health and vulnerability factors for population characteristic indicators.[123] The CES score measures the relative pollution burdens and vulnerabilities in one census tract as compared to others, capturing the disproportionate impacts on sensitive populations using indicators of potential exposure to pollutants and environmental conditions (e.g. ozone, pesticides, toxic releases, traffic, hazardous waste).[124] Higher percentile values (95 – 100th percentile as the highest) represent a higher cumulative impact, due to greater pollution burden and a higher vulnerability to pollution burden due to sensitive populations and socioeconomic factors, as compared to other communities.

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[120] California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool 3.0 (CalEnviroScreen 3.0) is published by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. This tool measures pollution burden as a combined score that includes indicators of potential exposures to pollutants and environmental conditions (e.g., ozone, pesticides, toxic releases, traffic, hazardous waste). The pollution burden scores are averaged by majority race/ethnicity of census tracts. From CalEnviroScreen SCAG looks at the overall percentile score, PM2.5 percentile and pollution burden percentile.
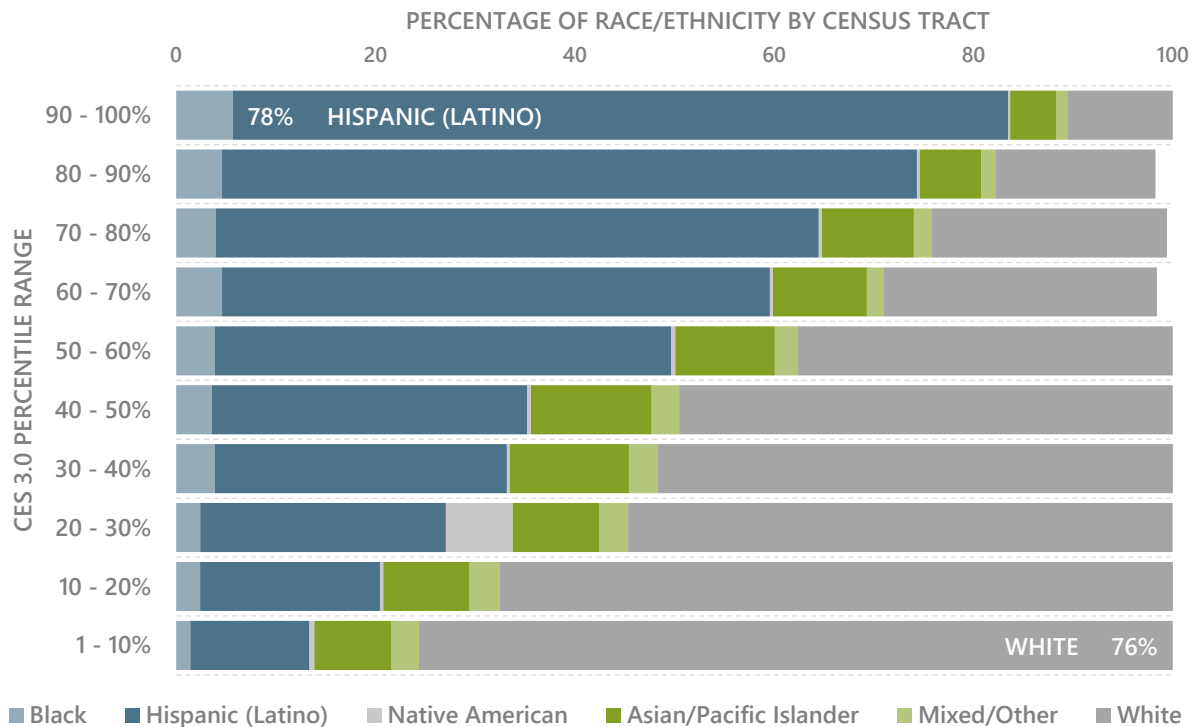[121] (Hajat, Hsia and O'Neill 2015)
[122] (Research Divsion n.d.)
[123] (Rodriquez and Zeise 2017)
[124] (Rodriquez and Zeise 2017)

Across the region and in every county, **Hispanic (Latino) residents** make up the **largest percentage of residents** in census tracts with **CalEnviroScreen scores in the 90 - 100th percentile range**.
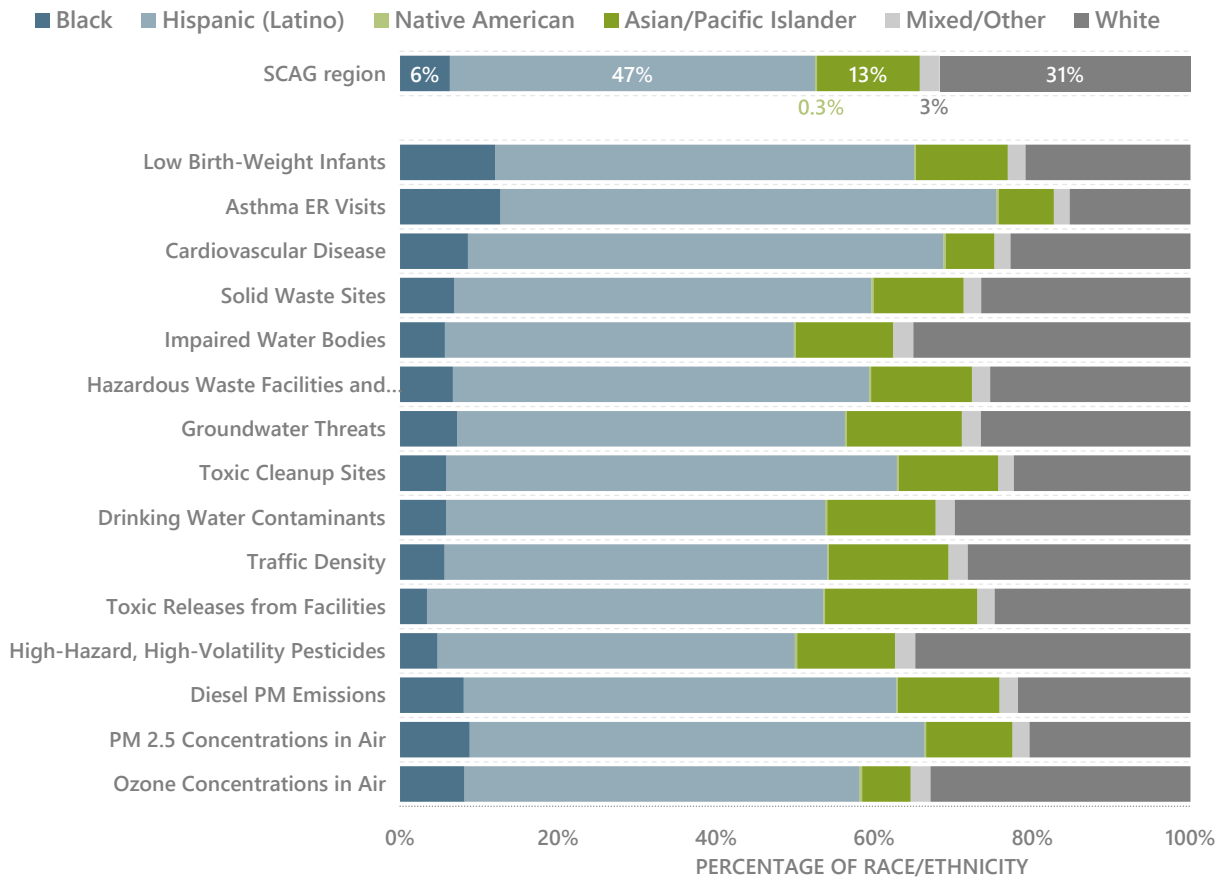
PERCENTAGE OF RACE/ETHNICITY BY CENSUS TRACT

Source: CalEnviroScreen 3.0, 125 U.S. Census, SCAG

- Across the region and in every county, Hispanic (Latino) residents make up the largest percentage of residents in census tracts with CalEnviroScreen scores in the highest percentiles, exposing the inequitable distribution of pollution burden and vulnerabilities across race and ethnicity groups. Hispanic (Latino) residents make up 78 percent of residents in the 90 – 100th percentile range, despite comprising only 47 percent of the overall population.
- White residents disproportionately live in the census tracts with the lowest CES scores in the 1 – 10th percentile range. Census tracts with the lowest scores are comprised of 76 percent white residents, despite white residents making up only 31 percent of the overall population.
- Overall, Imperial County has the highest CES score of the six counties at nearly 40, ranking in the 74th percentile. 92% percent of residents in the highest CES percentile ranges in Imperial County are Hispanic (Latino), burdened with the greatest pollution and community vulnerabilities of all racial/ethnic groups in the region.
- Ventura County had the lowest CES score of the counties in the region, with cumulative impacts in the 36th percentile. However, people of color in the county disproportionately live-in census tracts with the greatest pollution burden and community vulnerability, with 94 percent of residents in the highest percentiles (90 – 100th) Hispanic (Latino).
- The predominance of people of color in the census tracts with the greatest pollution burden and community vulnerability reaffirms the historical environmental harm caused to communities of color.

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[125] Note not all percentile ranges equal to 100% due to the NA or missing percentiles values in the CalEnviroScreen 3.0. Indicators that include missing values ("NA") are PM2.5, Traffic, Drinking Water, Low Birth Weight, and all socioeconomic factor indicators. In these cases, missing values were assigned no percentile (given an "NA") and did not contribute to their overall CalEnviroScreen score. For example, if a census tract was missing both and PM2.5 and Traffic the denominator of the exposure indicators was adjusted to five instead of seven indicators.

WHO LIVES IN THE HIGHEST REGIONAL EXPOSURE AREAS?

Population in the Highest Regional Exposure Areas by Race/Ethnicity

Legend: ■ Black ■ Hispanic (Latino) ■ Native American ■ Asian/Pacific Islander ■ Mixed/Other ■ White

SCAG region	6% — 47% — 13% — 31% (0.3%, 3%)

Categories (top to bottom):
- Low Birth-Weight Infants
- Asthma ER Visits
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Solid Waste Sites
- Impaired Water Bodies
- Hazardous Waste Facilities and...
- Groundwater Threats
- Toxic Cleanup Sites
- Drinking Water Contaminants
- Traffic Density
- Toxic Releases from Facilities
- High-Hazard, High-Volatility Pesticides
- Diesel PM Emissions
- PM 2.5 Concentrations in Air
- Ozone Concentrations in Air

X-axis: 0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

PERCENTAGE OF RACE/ETHNICITY

Source: CalEnviroScreen 3.0, SCAG

- Hispanic (Latino) residents make up 63 percent of the population in the highest regional exposure areas for asthma emergency room visits, and 60 percent of the pollution in areas for cardiovascular disease, although they only comprise 47 percent of the overall population.
- Black residents, comprising 6 percent of the overall population, make up 13 percent of the population in the highest regional exposure areas for asthma emergency room visits, and 12 percent of those with low birth-weight infants.
- Asian/Pacific Islanders disproportionately live in the highest regional exposure areas for toxic releases from facilities at 19 percent, significantly higher than their share of 13 percent (of the regional population.
- Native Americans make up 0.34 percent of the population in the highest regional exposure areas for ozone concentrations in the area, although they make up just 0.25 percent of the overall population. Hispanic (Latino) residents make up 50 percent of the population in the highest exposure to ozone concentrations and Black residents make up 8 percent.

6 | Key Terms & Concepts

By defining key terms and concepts, the quality of dialogue and discourse on equity can be enhanced. Many of these key terms and concepts have evolved over time. The key terms and concepts listed below are intended to reflect current usage. It should be noted that many of these key terms and concepts have evolved over time. The key terms and concepts listed below are intended to reflect current usage. Preferred language is always evolving and each person's identities, life experiences, and understandings will influence the preference for a given term.

Discrimination
The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, and other categories. In the United States the law makes it illegal to discriminate against someone based on race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. The law also makes it illegal to retaliate against a person because the person complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination, or participated in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit. (A Community Builder's Tool Kit; U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, "Laws Enforced by EEOC")

Diversity
A multiplicity of races, genders, sexual orientations, classes, ages, countries of origin, educational status, religions, physical, or cognitive abilities, documentation status, etc. within a community, organization or grouping of some kind. (Racial Equity Tools Glossary, 2019)

Equity
Fairness and justice in policy, practice, and opportunity consciously designed to address the distinct challenges of non-dominant social groups, with an eye to equitable outcomes. See also: Racial equity. (University of Washington Diversity and Social Justice Glossary)

Ethnicity
A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, and ancestral geographical base. (Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. Marianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin, editors. Routledge, 1997)

Explicit Bias
Explicit biases are negative associations that people knowingly hold. They are expressed with conscious awareness. Example: sign in the window of an apartment building reads: "whites only." (Government Alliance for Race and Equity)

Implicit Bias
Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Implicit biases have been shown to trump individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess. (State of the Science Implicit Bias Review 2013, Cheryl Staats, Kirwan Institute, The Ohio State University)

Inclusion
Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and

decision/policy making in a way that shares power. (University of Washington Diversity and Social Justice Glossary)

Institutional Racism

Institutional racism refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people of color. (Racial Equity Tools Glossary, 2019)

Examples: Government policies, known as redlining, that explicitly restricted the ability of people to get loans to buy or improve their homes in neighborhoods with high concentrations of Black people. City sanitation department policies that concentrate trash transfer stations and other environmental hazards disproportionately in communities of color.

Intersectionality

A term created by Black lawyer and scholar Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw to describe how race, class, gender, age, and other aspects of identity intersect and inform the experience of individuals or groups of people. For example, a Black woman in America does not experience gender inequalities in the same way as a white woman, nor racial oppression in the same way as does a Black man. Each intersection produces a distinct life experience. (Intergroup Resources, 2012, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw)

People of color

Often the preferred collective term for referring to non-white racial groups. Racial justice advocates have been using the term "people of color" (not to be confused with the pejorative "colored people") since the late 1970s as a unifying frame across different racial groups that are not White, to address racial inequities. While "people of color" can be a politically useful term, it is also important whenever possible to identify people through their own racial/ethnic group, as each has its own distinct experience and meaning and may be more appropriate. (Racial Equity Tools Glossary, 2019)

Power

Power is unequally distributed globally and in U.S. society; some individuals or groups wield greater power than others, thereby allowing them greater access to and control over resources. Wealth, whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms through which power operates. (University of Washington Diversity and Social Justice Glossary)

Prejudice

A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics. (Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative, A Community Builder's Tool Kit)

Privilege

Advantages and benefits systemically accorded, often by default, to a person or group. Privilege is best understood intersectionality because colorism, documentation status, economic class, and education, can all accord distinct privilege within racial and ethnic groups. (Colors of Resistance Archive)

Race

For many people, it comes as a surprise that racial categorization schemes were invented by scientists to support worldviews that viewed some groups of people as superior and some as inferior. There are three important concepts linked to this fact: Race is a made-up social construct, and not an actual biological fact. Race designations have changed over time. Some groups that are considered "white" in the United States today were considered "nonwhite" in previous eras, in census data and in mass media and popular culture (for example, Irish, Italian, and Jewish people). The way in which racial categorizations are enforced (the shape of racism) has also changed over time. For example, the racial designation of Asian American and Pacific Islander changed four times in the 19th century. That is, they were defined at times as white and at other times as not white. (Racial Equity Tools Glossary, 2019)

Racial Equity

Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. Racial equity describes the actions, policies, and practices that eliminate bias and barriers that have historically and systemically marginalized communities of color, to ensure all people can be healthy, prosperous, and participate fully in civic life. (Source: Center for Assessment and Policy Development)

Racism

Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices. Other ways to consider racism include: Racism = race prejudice + social and institutional power; Racism = a system of advantage based on race; Racism = a system of oppression based on race; Racism = a white supremacy system. (Racial Equity Tools Glossary, 2019)

Racial Justice

The systematic and proactive fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all. Racial justice—or racial equity—goes beyond anti-racism. It is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity. (Racial Equity Tools Glossary, 2019)

Social Justice

Justice in terms of distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society for all social identity groups. (Racial Equity Tools Glossary, 2019)

Structural Racism

The normalization and legitimization of processes and dynamics that provide advantage to white people while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. Structural racism may be difficult to locate in an institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms. (Racial Equity Tools Glossary, 2019)

Examples: We can see structural racism in the many institutional, cultural, and structural factors that contribute to lower life expectancy for Black and Native American men, compared to white men. These include higher exposure to environmental toxins, dangerous jobs, and unhealthy housing stock; higher exposure to and more lethal consequences for reacting to violence, stress, and racism; lower rates of health care coverage, access, and quality of care; and systematic refusal by the nation to fix these things.

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