

TRB Consensus Study: ***Data, Metrics, and Analytic Methods for Assessing Equity Impacts of Surface Transportation Funding Programs***

Committee Meeting 3

Wednesday, March 9, 2022, 1:00 – 5:00pm Eastern

Zoom (register at https://nasem.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_mIV-3DywRma4ClxLQszC2w)

OBJECTIVE

The committee will hear from USDOT staff about currently available equity-related data sets and about the equity-related considerations in the process of choosing the FY 2021 RAISE grant awardees. The committee will also hear from a variety of state and local transportation practitioners who address equity issues in their work about their experiences and their preferences for data and methodologies.

OPEN SESSION (committee members, TRB staff, and members of the public)

1:00 Welcome

*Ashby Johnson, committee chair, Executive Director, Capital Area MPO
Katherine Kortum, study director, TRB Consensus and Advisory Studies*

1:10 USDOT speaker: data availability

Ed Strocko, Director of Office of Spatial Analysis and Visualization, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, US Department of Transportation

2:00 USDOT speaker: RAISE grants selection process

John Augustine, Director of the Office of Infrastructure and Innovative Finance, US Department of Transportation

2:45 Break

3:00 Panel of practitioners. 3-4 speakers, 10 minutes of presentation each, followed by discussion with committee

*Yvette Hernandez, Director of Capital Improvement Grant-Funded Programs, City of El Paso
Jeff LaMondia, Assistant Professor, Auburn University / Alabama Transportation Assistance Program
Anup Tapase, Principal Planner, Metropolitan Transportation Commission*

5:00 Adjourn

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, April 12, 2022, 1-5pm Eastern / 10am-2pm Pacific (virtual)

Statement of Task

The study committee will identify and advise on opportunities for using data, metrics, and analytic methods to better inform decisions for allocating and programming federal surface transportation funds to enhance equity for underserved communities. The committee will consult the definitions of equity and underserved communities contained in Executive Order 13985 and consider the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) interest in ensuring that its funding programs produce outcomes that are equitable for underserved communities in terms of environmental justice and access to jobs, school, food, health care, and other life needs and services.

In focusing on the surface modes, the committee will examine USDOT funding programs for highways, public transportation, and passenger rail service. While the study scope will not include programs for funding maritime and aviation infrastructure and services, it will include programs for funding surface transportation access to marine ports and airports. To keep the scope manageable, the committee will pay particular attention to those funding programs that it believes are likely to have the greatest impacts on equity for underserved communities.

The committee will review equity-related data, metrics, and analytic methods that have been proposed by researchers and that are being used in transportation and other sectors, by other federal agencies, and by state and local governments. The committee will examine the applicability of these data, metrics, and methods to USDOT decision-making criteria, assessing their practical value by considering how they could be used in administering some specific USDOT programs. On the basis of its review and assessments, the committee will advise on the most promising methodological approaches and requisite data for analyzing equity impacts considered at the national, state, and local levels.

In keeping with the Executive Order's interest in ensuring that prompt actions are taken to account for equity in federal transportation funding, the committee will consider how existing data sources, metrics, and analytic methods can be used for this purpose by USDOT in making decisions for its discretionary funding programs. Accordingly, it is expected that early in its deliberations, the committee will convene a public information-gathering session in which experts in transportation equity issues and analysis will be consulted for their ideas on how existing data sources, metrics, and analytic methods applicable to equity can be used in administering USDOT's discretionary funding programs.

While the application of existing data and analytic tools to discretionary programs can provide the earliest opportunities to elevate equity in federal surface transportation funding, it is expected that the committee will also consider and advise on ways that state and local governments can measure, analyze, and account for equity when using federal surface transportation funds that are allocated by formula. Should it find that existing data sources are insufficient and that new sources of data are needed to better account for equity in USDOT's discretionary and formula funding programs, the committee may recommend options for meeting these needs.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ashby Johnson, chair
Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

Elizabeth Sall
UrbanLabs

Tierra Bills
UCLA

Vince Valdes
Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

Marilyn Brown
Georgia Tech

Elizabeth Williams
Massachusetts DOT

Ronald Hall
Bubar & Hall Consulting

Jessie Jones
Arkansas DOT

Alex Karner
The University of Texas at Austin