



Date: October 22, 2024

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Author and title: Andrea Fernandez Landa, Program Analyst; Hilary Hobbs, Assistant to the Town Manager

Title: **Environmental Justice Assessment and update regarding Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Action Plan**

Jen Callaway, Town Manager

---

**Recommended Action:**

- (1) Accept the Truckee Environmental Justice Analysis report.
- (2) Receive an update regarding progress and next steps with the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Work Plan

**Discussion:**

One of Town Council's strategic focus areas for 2023-2025 is to *enhance communication and public outreach to facilitate community cohesion*. To advance this goal, in 2022 the Town established a community engagement division and added a staff position dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion. One of the tasks within the 2023-2025 workplan is to develop a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan, which will include an environmental justice assessment.

This goal also aligns with several actions in the 2040 General Plan, including the following:

- **Community Character Element Action Item CC-6.A: Public Outreach.** Review the Town's policies and programs related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Create policies for equitable public outreach, including targeted outreach to underrepresented community groups, ensuring the availability of bilingual materials and interpreters for all community meetings, and conducting meetings in accessible locations.
- **Community Character Element Action Item CC-6.G: Environmental Justice Program.** Conduct an analysis of Truckee's under-served communities that may not be identified as disadvantaged by California EPA, following the California Office of Planning & Research guidance on using community-specific data to identify under-served communities. As identified, develop appropriate environmental justice programs and/or an Environmental Justice Element per SB 1000.
- **Safety and Noise Element Policy SN-6.3: Inclusive Emergency Planning.** Ensure emergency planning is representative of the diversity of Truckee and provides members of disadvantaged populations meaningful opportunities to engage in emergency planning efforts.



**Environmental Justice Analysis:**

***What is Environmental justice?***

Under California Gov. Code, § 65040.12, "environmental justice" means the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Environmental justice is achieved when everyone, regardless of race, culture, or income, enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and of equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment.

### ***Environmental Justice Analysis Process***

On October 10, 2023, Town Council approved a contract with the Equity and Wellness Institute (EqWI) to support the Town in completing an Environmental Justice Analysis, Organizational Assessment, and an Action Plan.

The organizational assessment and environmental justice analysis processes included data collection and analysis, performed by EqWI. Data analysis considered both qualitative and quantitative data, including reviewing internal documents, data mapping, conducting over twenty confidential internal and external interviews, and a staff survey. Because many of the data sources (e.g. individual interviews) were confidential, the raw data from these sources has not been shared with the Town. The environmental justice analysis also included mapping of Town-wide data, review of Town documents included the General Plan and Climate Action Plan, Data that were mapped and analyzed included the following:

- Population density
- Locations of medical facilities, grocery stores, transit stops, trails, parks, and open space;
- Railroad and road noise extents;
- Fire maps;
- Fire hazard safety zones;
- Flood zones;
- Airport land use compatibility;
- Affordable housing -- with overlays of Census data for persons identifying as Latin American or Caribbean descent as well as proximity to the aforementioned amenities and hazards.

### ***Environmental Justice Findings***

The Environmental Justice Analysis did not identify any significant environmental justice issues within Truckee, although it did identify certain areas for continued focus. The Environmental Justice Analysis Report is provided as Attachment 1. The Report's three findings are:

- The term "environmental justice" is generally unknown or misunderstood by Town staff and the community.
- Although the Town does not seem to be experiencing significant issues related to environmental justice, some improvements could be made to reduce physical and economic barriers for people who face inequities.
- Town staff and the community do not have a full understanding of the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and/or the Emergency Response System.

These findings and recommendations to address each finding will be included in the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Action Plan and Strategic Priorities Workplan, which are addressed below.

### **Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Action Plan Update:**

As addressed above, the organizational assessment performed by EqWI was comprised of data collection and analysis including reviewing internal documents, data mapping, conducting over twenty confidential internal and external interviews, and a staff survey.

Beginning in January 2024, staff convened a nine-member Action Plan Steering Committee comprised of staff from each Town department and representing a range of backgrounds, position types, levels within the organization, and length of tenure with the Town. The Steering Committee met with EqWI at least monthly between January and August to provide input into the organizational assessment and to review and provide feedback on multiple drafts of the Action Plan themes, findings, and recommended

actions to address each finding. In addition to input from the Steering Committee, the Department Head team reviewed the draft themes, findings and recommended actions and met with EqWI and the Steering Committee to jointly discuss and refine the recommendations.

**Shifting from DEI to IDEA**

One of the early recommendations of the Steering Committee was to replace the Town’s use of the program name Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) with the name Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA). This recommendation reflects several advantages of IDEA, including the following:

- By placing "Inclusion" at the forefront, IDEA emphasizes creating environments where everyone feels welcomed and valued
- The term DEI can sometimes be viewed as politicized, which is not the intent of the Town’s program.
- Incorporating "Accessibility" directly into the acronym communicates that we want to ensure everyone has access to our programs and services.
- The word ‘idea’ is easier to use in logos and promotional materials and it’s easier to pronounce and remember
- IDEA translates seamlessly into Spanish as "IDEA", which literally means ‘idea’, and works both as an acronym and with each individual word that composes it (Inclusión, Diversidad, Equidad, y Accesibilidad).

For the reasons stated above the Action Plan project was renamed the IDEA Action Plan and the Town will begin utilizing this new program name.

**Next Steps**

Revisions to the draft themes, findings and recommendations is still in progress. Anticipated next steps include the following:

- Work with Steering Committee and Department Head input to finalize the themes and findings and develop and prioritize a suite of new actions, programs and policies to recommend as tasks in the 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities Workplan.
- Facilitate community engagement and input on these recommended initiatives through workshops and discussions with local Community-Based Organizations.
- Following adoption of the 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities Workplan, develop a public-facing Action Plan document detailing the IDEA program, highlighting its core objectives and planned actions.

**Summary:** Staff recommend that Town Council accept Environmental Justice Analysis Report and receive an update regarding progress and next steps with the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Work Plan.

**Priority:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Enhanced Communication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Climate and Greenhouse Gas Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Housing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Infrastructure Investment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Emergency and Wildfire Preparedness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Core Service

**Fiscal Impact:** Accepting the Environmental Justice Analysis Report will have no fiscal impact. As a next step, staff will be using this information to develop recommended IDEA-related tasks to include in the 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities Workplan. These recommended tasks will be presented to Town Council as part of the workplan development process. Some recommended tasks will have fiscal impacts, which will be considered at that time.

**Public Communication:** Agenda posting

**Attachments:**

(1) Environmental Justice Analysis and Executive Summary Report