

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission**  
**Policy Advisory Council Equity & Access Subcommittee**

January 11, 2021

Agenda Item 6

**MTC Equity Update: Equity Consultant Bench**

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**Subject:** On-Call Equity Bench.

**Background:** An update was recently provided to the MTC Administration Committee on the agency's ongoing Equity Platform Initiatives at their December 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. Part of that update spoke to MTC staff's work to develop an On-Call Equity Bench for internal and external services. The presentation to this group is to provide the Equity and Access Committee with an overview of the purpose and function of the Equity Bench as a resource for implementing the Equity Platform, for building capacity among project teams to define equity goals and metrics, and to be a technical resource in how to anchor equity in our project implementation, delivery, and outreach. The bench is designed to assist MTC's goal of fostering closer relationships and contract opportunities for the region's Community Based Organizations (CBOs), and other underrepresented stakeholders.

The On-Call Bench will have five (5) categories that proposers can apply under. They are as follows:

1. **Internal Operations:** This focus area looks at the internal processes of the agency, including but not limited to designing an equity strategic plan, Human Resource recruitment practices, retention within the agency, trainings with a focus on racial equity, professional development, succession planning, contracting practices, cultural assessments, and mentoring opportunities. The goal of this category is to look at how organizational transformations advance equity and eliminate internal disparities.
2. **Investments & Policy:** Restructure protocols and procedures to assess and understand the impact of resource investments on systemically marginalized communities. This involves designing/applying an equity toolkit to assess policies/practices and evaluating through an equity lens the distribution of benefits and burdens, who pays, and who decides. Through data informed approaches both experiential and quantitative, understand the value, the role, and the sphere of decision-making related to transportation, affordable housing, micro-mobility, and other public infrastructure investments.
3. **Community and Partner Engagement:** MTC and ABAG are seeking to tap into the expertise and relationships of Organizations that are already active in communities within our nine-county region and enlist their assistance in engaging their community residents. We at MTC seek to advance authentic community engagement by deeply listening to communities to identify and co-develop solutions to on-going challenges within their areas. Partnering with existing Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and leveraging their subject matter expertise and their long-standing history in low income and Communities of Color to advance equitable outcomes is our primary goal.

4. **Innovation:** Using new technologies, apps, platforms and new mobility models to reflect the needs of low-income and communities of color as well as those workers who do not have traditional peak-hour schedules. Re-imagining, refocusing, or revitalizing traditional approaches to service delivery models or project management, into a nimble approach that anticipates the needs of low-income communities and communities of color in the region as it relates to the MTC/ABAG workplan (Transportation, Housing, Land Use, Economic Development).
5. **Environmental Justice:** Design and promote integrated strategies to shape healthy, prosperous, and inclusive communities through focusing on improved environmental outcomes and land use planning, investment, program delivery, and evaluation. This category focuses on improving the health, economic, and environmental justice outcomes by promoting strategies that understand the linkage between the different factors and aims to address historic underinvestment in certain areas.

**Who Can Use:** This is foremost a resource for MTC/ABAG staff but it has been developed with Cooperative use language that will allow any agency that supports that type of contracting the ability to either directly contract with an agency on the list or engage in a targeted RFP process.

**Highlights:** Recognizing that there are resource and capacity issues that can impact the participation of our contracting process by small Community Based Organizations, non-profits, and individuals, we have strived to create a process that is less restrictive but will still result in a diverse, qualified, and robust participant list.

We are implementing the following steps in an attempt to make the contracting process less restrictive for smaller organizations:

1. We have removed all *Required Qualifications* from the RFQ. Often these provide heavy barriers for smaller firms to navigate, so we have instead replaced them with a *Desired Qualifications* section. This will allow proposers to highlight their experience, their relationships in a way that focuses less on a more prescribed package of qualifications but instead brings forward their experience and technical expertise as it relates to each individual category.
2. Each Category will have a *Proposal Guide* that will provide a template for less seasoned proposers to follow so that navigating the application process will not rely strictly upon familiarity with the system and instead focus on the benefits that they will bring to any partnership with MTC.

3. Working with Contracts and Risk Management to reduce the limits of insurance that agencies must carry to better align with inherent risk of the contract itself rather than a "one-size-fits-all" approach. This will allow smaller agencies to not bear the burden of holding high levels of insurance for small dollar contracts; only having to increase that amount when a threshold is reached.

**Next Steps:** The RFP was posted in late December and we plan to bring a recommendation for the equity bench to the March 2021 Administration Committee for approval. We can also provide an update on the final bench actions to E&A in March or early April 2021.

**Recommendation:** This item is provided for information only.

**Attachments:** PowerPoint: On-Call Equity Bench

# On-Call Equity Bench

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January 11, 2021



## CATEGORIES



### Internal Operations

Internal processes of the agency



### Investments & Policy

Impact on systemically marginalized communities



### Community & Partner Engagement

Relationship-based engagement



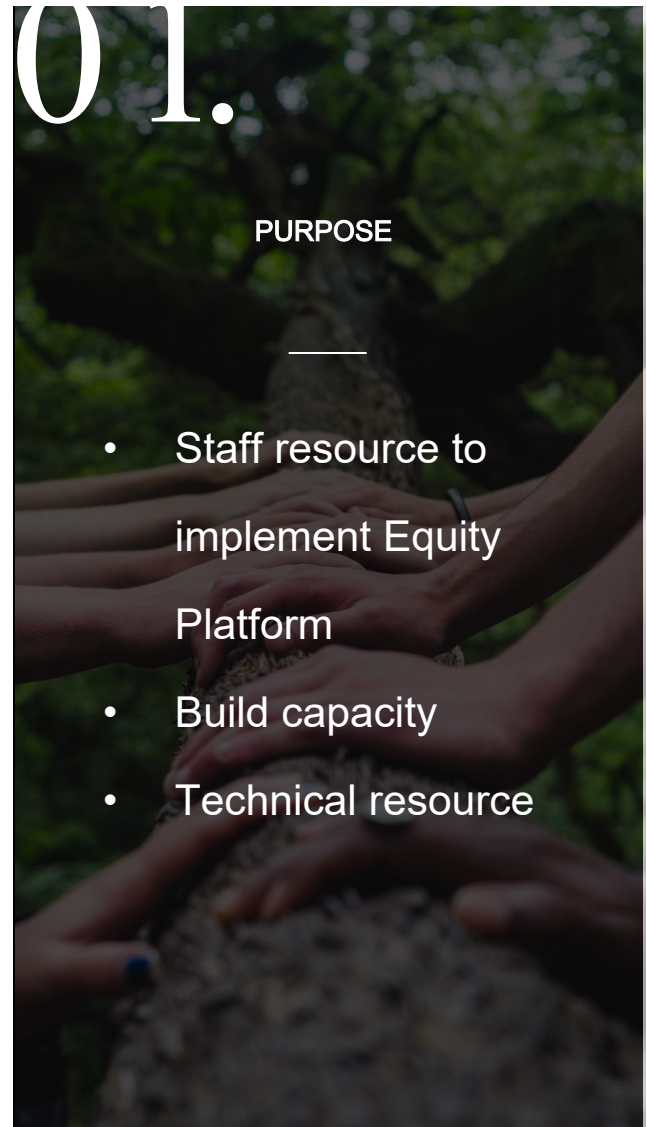
### Innovation

Technology to address needs of populations of color and/or people earning low-income



### Environmental Justice

Strategies to shape healthy, prosperous and inclusive communities



## PURPOSE

- Staff resource to implement Equity Platform
- Build capacity
- Technical resource

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## WHO CAN USE

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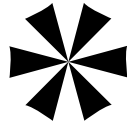
- MTC/ABAG staff
- Regional Partners
- Cooperative Use Language to directly contract or engage in RFP process

- Bidders conference
- Establishing review panels
- Committee/Commission action in March/April 2021

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## NEXT STEPS

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# THANK YOU

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