



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

Office of Environmental Justice & Equity

Marsha Nelson

Chief Equity Officer

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Senate Bill 260

CDOT Office of Environmental Justice & Equity

- Passed in Spring 2021
- Required creation of an Office of Environmental Justice & Equity to:
 - Work directly with disproportionately impacted communities
 - Work with other department programs in project planning, environmental study and project delivery phases of transportation capacity projects
 - Identify and address technological, language, and information barriers that may prevent disproportionately impacted communities from participating fully in transportation decisions that affect health, quality of life, and access for disadvantaged and minority businesses in project delivery.
- Chief Equity Officer hired December 2021 to lead the Office of Environmental Justice & Equity in achieving these tasks.

Learn more at <https://leg.colorado.gov/sb21-260-bill-summary>



What is EQUITY360?

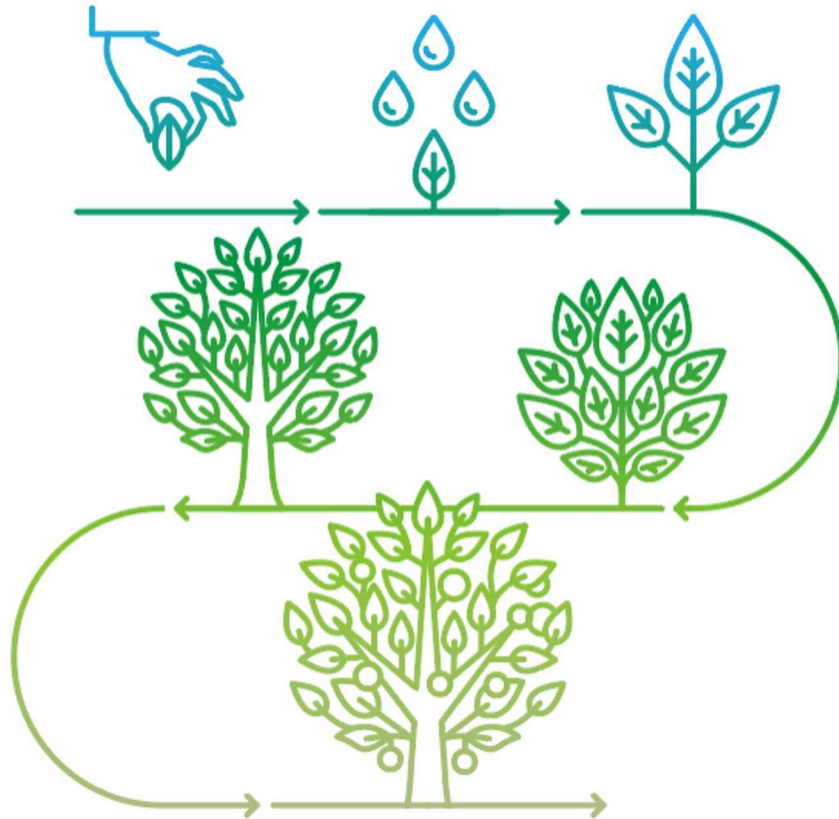
EQUITY360 describes an agency mindset and philosophy that establishes a holistic approach toward integrating equity, inclusion and diversity principles into processes, procedures and programs that directly impact the residents, businesses and visitors in which CDOT serves. This philosophy will guide the Office of Environmental Justice & Equity in developing strategic plans and initiatives over the next 3-5 years to embed EDIA principles into the CDOT organizational culture.

Mission:

Develop the best and most efficient route to equity, inclusion and cohesiveness.



Moving Beyond Compliance



With EQUITY360, CDOT is empowered to go beyond simply navigating regulations. This agency has an opportunity be a leader for Colorado through cultivating equity, diversity, and inclusion on a holistic, statewide level.



Scenic Tour Office of Environmental Justice & Equity

Justice Branch



Environmental Justice

Integrates community engagement & outreach into planning & project delivery processes to impact agency decisions

Equity & Environmental



Nondiscrimination Compliance

Project delivery & compliance: Ensures compliance with regulatory requirements (state & federal)

Workforce

Establishing a diverse applicant pool & linking people to work-based learning to help them be successful



Civil Rights and Business Resource Center

Project Delivery

Small Business Compliance (DBE and ESB Program)

Labor Compliance (Certified Payroll)

Subrecipient project oversight

Prompt Payment (subcontractors, subconsultants, vendors, and suppliers)

On-The-Job Training Program

External Programs

Title VI

ADA Title II



Increased Strategic Community (public citizens & traveling public)

Engagement & Outreach to Impact Decision Making



Bridge connections
between
community &
agency

Individuals, community-based organizations, other public agencies, students, and academia

Robust training series for CDOT personnel on Transportation Equity and Environmental Justice expectations

Develop CDOT Environmental Justice expectations for projects

To include equity analysis and LEP (language translation) requirements

Increased integration in planning efforts

Leverage recent restructure of planning process to ensure Environmental Justice is incorporated early



Helping develop the highway construction labor workforce through work-based learning, training, and other methods:

OJT Supportive Services (FHWA construction only)

Increase the number of minorities and women in OJTs/RAPs

Highway Construction Workforce Partnership Grant - Commercial Drivers License Pipeline

Identify, train, and place workers in highway construction careers

2017 - Central 70 was part of the first HCWP pilot - created WORKNOW





Exciting Initiatives & Opportunities

Adult Workforce Investments



Cradle to Career Investments



Grades: K - 3

Grades: 4 - 8

Grades: 9 - 12

College & Trade





2022 Accomplishments

Environmental Justice and Equity



EQUITY360

- Agency model to establish a holistic approach toward integrating EDI lens into policies, process and procedures.



Title VI Program

- Innovative multi-year approach w/ equity-focused initiatives to improve meaningful and intentional outreach and engagement for all by prioritizing DI communities and LEP populations.



Environmental Justice (Environmental Justice Action Task Force)

- Participation on EJATF
- Support development of CDPHE environmental complaint process
- Garnered support from regional environmental managers to adopt EJ Analysis process for all categorical exclusion (CatEx) projects. This will be included in the updated NEPA manual
- Created NEPA Environmental Justice working group to comment on EJATF recommendations, approve the EJ analysis process and advise on future EJ topics.



ADA Transition Plan

- Updated the CDOT ADA Transition Plan to include enhanced data collection and dashboard systems as well as updated practices in project delivery.



2022 Accomplishments Environmental Justice and Equity



Transit DBE Program

- Updated to allow for evaluating specific contracting opportunities for goal-setting on FTA-funded transit contracts.
- Began development of FTA DBE Program Manual
- FTA State Management Review (SMR) finding: Insufficient documentation of monitoring DBE compliance of contractors



Small Business Programs

- Assessing and restructuring the Emerging Small Business (ESB) Mentor Protege program.
- Hosting listening sessions for internal & external stakeholders to evaluate existing program & make enhancements.
- Developing approach to increase program awareness/ participation w/in CDOT region offices & specialty staff



Enhanced Contractor Compliance Programs

- Began requiring Local Agency highway projects (professional services and construction) be entered into software systems to better monitor DBE utilization, prompt payment, On-The-Job Training and certified payroll. Increases accuracy of federally mandated reporting.
- Initiated use of compliance systems on select FTA-funded projects as a pilot program



Workforce Development

- Collaboration with OIM for ZEV workforce development grants
- Collaboration with Traffic Engineering for flagger recruitment and retention research
- Slated to award \$170k to CCA for their Civil Construction Academy
- Proposed on OEDIT's Opportunity Now grant for a CDL apprenticeship pilot program
- Initiated a solicitation for a statewide workforce needs assessment
- Initiated discussions with CDOC about paying for second-chance individuals to get their CDLs
- Collaborating w/ACEC-CO, CDLE, CDHS, Emily Griffith, & APWA to build talent pipeline of New Americans w/engineering backgrounds



Transportation is the common denominator that builds communities.