

CHAPTER 03

PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

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This project sought to create a racial equity focused action plan to guide the growth and development of emerging mobility in San José.

The project team (City staff and its consultant team) recognized this as an important but challenging goal. We sought to co-create solutions with the community to move beyond traditional models of decision-making. Through this process, we uncovered community needs and necessary process changes far beyond the scope of our work. We learned how to communicate more effectively, how to share technical information in digestible chunks, and take in the community expertise we were being offered. We learned to be nimble, flexible, and iterative, to not only ask the community to lead, but to give them the tools and resources needed to do so.

But as we dove into the work, we realized how difficult it is to shape a new process while constrained by existing systems. For example, the timeline, steps, and deliverables for this grant-funded plan were defined well before consultants were hired

and the Equity Task Force was convened. Grant restrictions permitted little leeway to modify the timing and design of the process in discussion with the community.

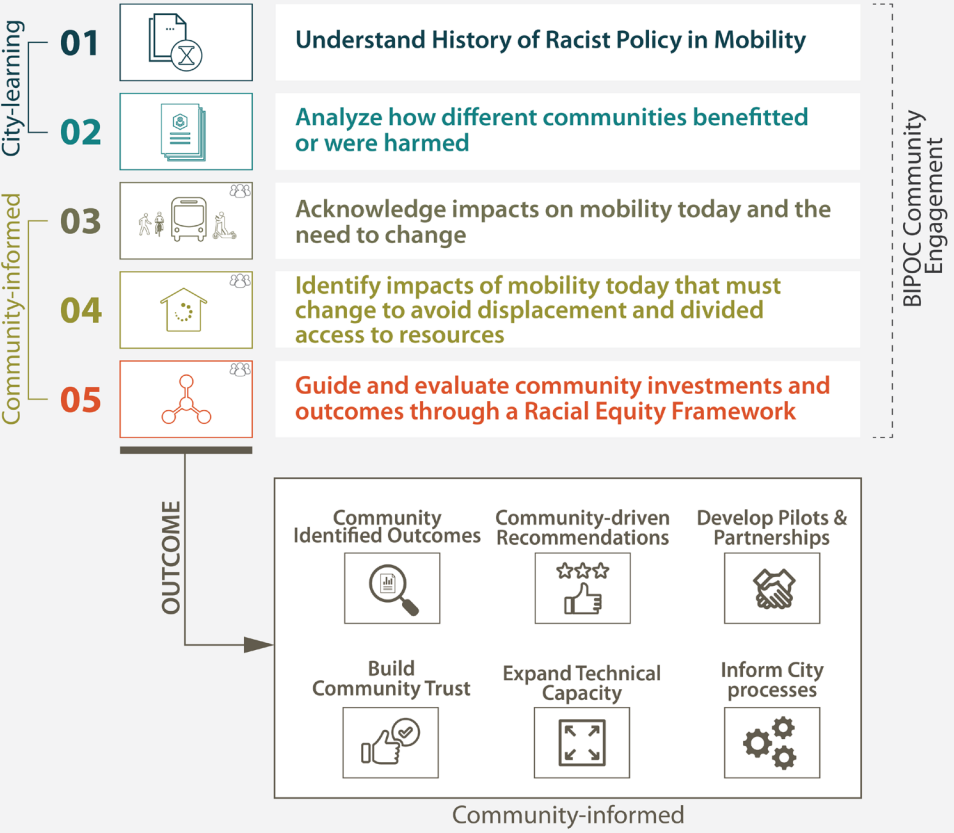
Part of the issue is the disconnect across systems—land use, housing, climate planning, economic development, and transportation all happen in parallel, but are not always coordinated, and rarely with community at the helm. Thus, we try and solve housing problems with transportation solutions. We try to mitigate harm caused by land-use decisions through environmental policies. And we ask busy community members, who have lives and jobs and families, to add to their workload by becoming experts in the technical parts of each planning process. Finally, we sometimes destroy trust by not responding, maintaining relationships, or continuing growth and evolution with community members.



HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND LEARNING PROCESS

MOBILITY VISION

The City of San José seeks to ensure all people have safe, affordable, reliable, and sustainable transportation options to access the opportunities and resources necessary to thrive. People can move freely, and communities can achieve their full potential.



Veggielution First Saturday pop-up event.

HISTORY AND STORIES FIRST

As noted earlier, we conducted historical research to better understand how past local, state, and federal policy decisions shaped the experiences of San José’s BIPOC communities and their relationship with the City. While primarily focused on mobility and development-related policies, we also conducted research and community engagement to understand how the City’s history intersected with landmark housing, land use, and labor policy decisions that informed the design of the City’s transportation system and residents’ experiences of it.

We disaggregated data on the City’s disadvantaged communities by race to learn about existing racial inequities in the communities this plan impacts. We also conducted a spatial analysis of the City’s current demographic characteristics and existing mobility conditions to understand needs and gaps in San José’s transportation system. This analysis helped guide our community engagement efforts and the development of our goals.



Source: Winter Consulting

Veggielution First Saturday pop-up event.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

We solicited guidance from local community leaders, community-based organizations, human service providers, and others representing and serving BIPOC and other marginalized community members who have traditionally been left out of planning processes. These communities experience disproportionate barriers to transportation and mobility in San José. We listened to and learned from their experiences. We sought to understand the barriers and burdens they and their communities face and the future they were reaching for as it relates to self-determination and mobility.

Through community leader interviews, focus groups, in-person and virtual community meetings, social media posts, and online surveys, we gathered ideas on how to make emerging mobility work better in service of our communities. We then truth-tested ideas with those communities.

While the team worked with the city and community members to reach targeted populations, we recognize and acknowledge the limitations of the engagement process. We invited members of the senior citizen, disability, Indigenous, and unhoused communities to review and provide comments on draft documents, for example, but did not target them for inclusion in the co-creation of drafts. We have incorporated some of those omissions into our lessons learned and hope the city will continue to evolve in engaging directly with marginalized communities as it implements this and other plans.

EQUITY TASK FORCE (ETF)

The ETF was created with nine community leaders affiliated with community organizations that represent the City's diversity, particularly historically marginalized BIPOC communities. Members were key project and thought partners who provided insight into the concerns and priorities of their communities, facilitated and led community engagement in their communities, and helped set the direction and goals of the plan. In addition, ETF members played a pivotal role in:

- Pushing the City's thinking on how to thoughtfully and genuinely center racial equity in a city planning process;
- Defining and refining racial and social equity strategies and tactics in the context of this plan; and
- Determining how to keep the project accountable to the community once it is completed.

In line with current best practices, ETF members were compensated for their expertise and time in guiding the development of this plan. Paying community members, specifically members from BIPOC and underrepresented communities, increases the diversity and quality of participation in projects and processes. Often, factors such as time, transportation, childcare, and other obligations create barriers for meaningful engagement from communities, allowing only those with resources to participate.¹² Deep involvement from the ETF and the communities they were connected to was essential to the realization of this plan. They co-created strategies that prioritize and reflect the mobility needs of San José's culturally diverse communities and neighborhoods.

¹² <https://www.up-partners.com/news/2020/10/16/does-it-pay-to-pay-exploring-what-it-means-to-compensate-outreach-participants-cyfz2-jwgn6-x8srm>

During the course of the project, two members of the ETF left the area and consequently the task force, and two stepped down due to other obligations. One new member joined the ETF from an organization previously represented on the body.

EQUITY TASK FORCE MEMBERS



Adrienne Keel
Caminar, Inc.



Alan Gouig
LEAD Filipino



Helen Kassa
African American Community
Service Agency



Kiyomi Yamamoto
Law Foundation of
Silicon Valley



LaToya Fernandez
YouthHype



Lavere Foster
African American Community
Service Agency



Mayra Pelagio
Latinos United for a New
America



MyLinh Pham
Asian American Center of
Santa Clara



Paris Scott
Pars Equity Center



Peter Ortiz
Santa Clara County Board
of Education

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

The Public Advisory Committee (PAC) consisted of public agency representatives. Members provided technical advice and collaborated with the project team to develop an outcomes-driven, implementable plan. The PAC included staff from San José's Department of Transportation, Housing Department, Planning Department, Office of Immigrant Affairs, and Office of Racial Equity as well as staff from Caltrain, the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the County Public Health Department, and Caltrans' Integrated Travel Project. PAC members met four times during the project at key decision points. They shared insights from their agency's work, as well as ones gathered from their own equity-driven processes. Their input helped shape the recommendations and implementation plan.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) consisted of private mobility providers currently operating or planning to operate in San José as well as academics, investors, and non-profits focusing in this area. Company representatives provide services such as scooters, ride-hailing, electric vehicle charging, courier services, urban aerial mobility, and automated delivery robots. As with the PAC, the TAC met four times at key decision points in the planning process. They shared insights on technology needs, partnership models, and tactics that could help realize selected program and pilot concepts. Their input helped shape the recommendations and implementation plan.

COMMUNITYWIDE ENGAGEMENT

Throughout the course of this project, we collaborated with the Equity Task Force to engage with the broader community to learn about their transportation challenges and needs, spread awareness about the project, and gather feedback on recommendations. We

used a variety of strategies to reach and collect feedback from underrepresented communities, individuals lacking digital tools or a stable internet connection, and non-English speakers. Our strategies varied as COVID infections peaked and waned. They included hosting virtual workshops in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese; facilitating digital focus groups led by CBO partners and other community groups; tabling at community pop-up events throughout the city; and hosting a community resource fair. We complemented the community meetings with a project website, updates on the Department's website, and an online survey. Details of engagement activities conducted throughout this project are provided in the Appendix.

EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Building on our historical research and community engagement, we conducted background research, held discussions with industry experts, and reviewed existing research on emerging mobility. We used this information to analyze emerging mobility trends and their potential impacts on racial equity, jobs, transportation, displacement, and other issues identified by the community. We looked at anticipated changes over the next five to eight years associated with emerging mobility trends, technologies, and business models to understand potential opportunities for and impacts to the transportation network and disadvantaged community members. We complemented the trends analysis with a review of academic literature and case studies research to help identify the potential positive and negative job impacts of electrification, micromobility services, and automated passenger and delivery vehicles.

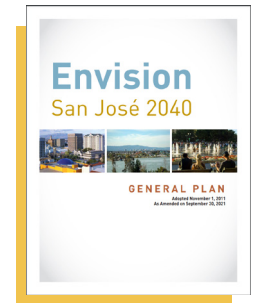
The chapters that follow summarize our findings, our work with the community, the steps we took, what we learned, and the recommendations generated through this collaborative process.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The City has adopted several foundational planning documents that established the overarching goals that informed this planning process:

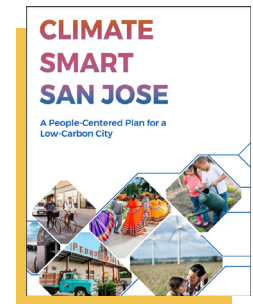
ENVISION SAN JOSÉ 2040 GENERAL PLAN¹³

Envision San José 2040 is San José's General Plan.¹⁴ Adopted in 2011 by City Council, it sets forth a vision and comprehensive roadmap to guide future development in San José through 2040. The plan establishes policies on topics that impact the city as a whole, including economic development, environmental stewardship, land use, and transportation. To reduce traffic congestion and pollution and increase public safety, the plan seeks to substantially increase the share of trips taken by walking, biking, and using public transit, and reduce those taken by driving alone.



CLIMATE SMART SAN JOSÉ¹⁵

Climate Smart San José outlines how San José can do its part to address climate change. Strategies to tackle climate change include transitioning to renewable energy and increasing access to renewable energy sources for people with limited incomes, densifying parts of the city to make walking, and biking more viable and expanding infrastructure that supports transit and active modes to reduce car dependency. It is a communitywide initiative for reducing air pollution, saving water, and improving quality of life. It is one of the first detailed city-led plans for reaching the international Paris Agreement's¹⁶ emission reduction targets. It establishes ambitious goals for renewable energy, water, transportation, and local jobs. Its transportation strategies include, among other things, shifting to electric-powered vehicles and accelerating the General Plan's goals to reduce drive-alone trips.



MOVE SAN JOSÉ

The Move San José Plan provides a path to realize the bold transportation goals set out in Envision San José 2040 and Climate Smart San José. It identifies projects, policies, and programs that will make it easier for residents to walk, bike, ride buses and trains, and share rides with others. Move San José is being developed concurrently and in coordination with the Emerging Mobility Action Plan.



¹³ Envision San José 2040 General Plan: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments/planning-building-code-enforcement/planning-division/citywide-planning/envision-san-jos-2040-general-plan>

¹⁴ A general plan is a local government's blueprint for meeting the community's long-term vision for the future. This vision guides long-range goals and objectives for all activities that affect local governments. Under California law, General Plans must be updated periodically (typically every 10 to 15 years) and within a specific timeframe

¹⁵ Climate Smart San José: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/environment/climate-smart-san-jos>

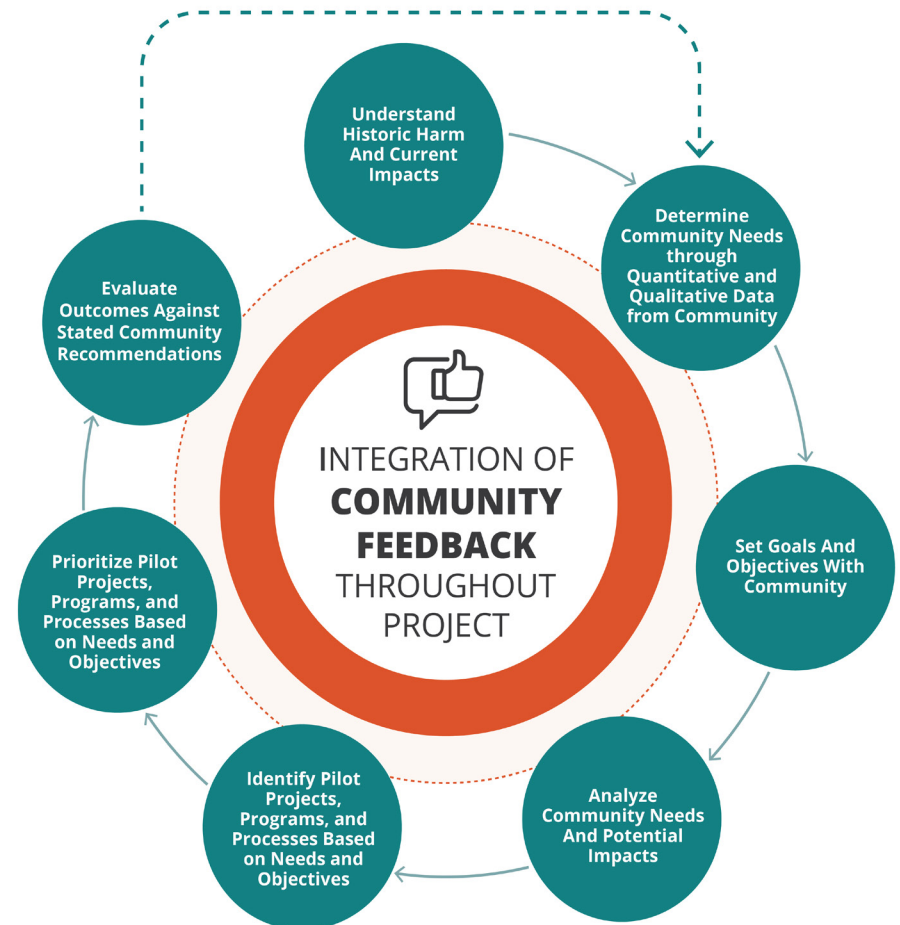
¹⁶ The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change adopted in 2015. It covers climate change mitigation, adaptation, and finance.

LEADING WITH RACE

Our philosophy and approach are rooted in racial equity. With the acknowledgement that the systems that create inequity affect multiple identities, our focus on racial equity targets the disparities created by historic planning practices and systemic racism, while creating a framework that tackles the complex inequities across gender, age, ability, income, and other individual and community needs. We recognize that racial inequities are deeply ingrained in governmental processes that often unintentionally perpetuate harm. Leading with racial equity provides the opportunity to proactively integrate racial justice in our decision-making, and ultimately our policies, practices, and institutional culture.

To achieve this, we used the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)¹⁷ racial equity toolkit as the foundation for how we approached this work. The toolkit presents a clear process for developing and implementing plans and projects that measurably advance racial equity. The framework, highlighted here, includes historical research and learning with the City, collaboration and co-creation with the community, and continued evaluation and iteration of outcomes. In pursuing racial equity, the City is seeking to improve conditions for all San José residents. To be effective, the strategies must address the reality that historically oppressed groups often have far less access to opportunities and resources. If we offer the same solution to all (equality) we will miss the fact that some groups may require different strategies to help them reach the same outcome (equity), due to historic factors. Definitions for key terms used throughout the plan include:

¹⁷ Government Alliance on Racial Equity. Racial Equity: Getting to Results. 2020.



RACIAL EQUITY

“Both a process and an outcome, racial equity is designed to center anti-racism, eliminate systemic racial inequities, and acknowledge the historical and existing practices that have led to discrimination and injustices to Black, Indigenous, Latino/a/x, Asian, and Pacific Islander communities. The racial equity process explicitly prioritizes communities that have been economically deprived and underserved, and establishes a practice for creating psychologically safe spaces for racial groups that have been most negatively impacted by the City’s policies and practices. It is action that prioritizes liberation and measurable change, and focuses on lived experiences of all impacted racial groups. It requires the setting of goals and measures to track progress, with the recognition that strategies must be targeted to close the gaps. As an outcome, racial equity is achieved when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes, and everyone can prosper and thrive.” - City of San José (February 2022)

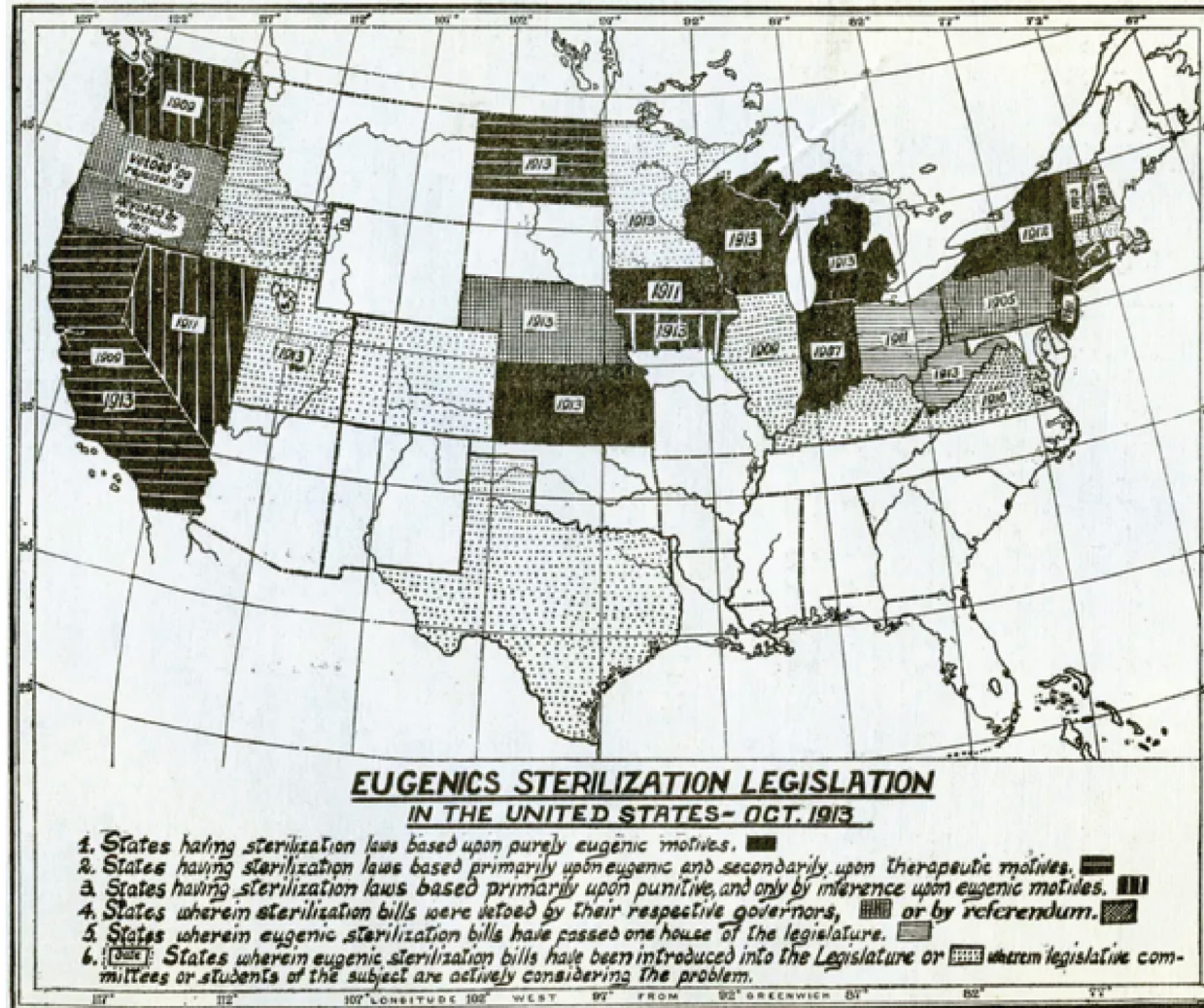


Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

RACE

“Socially and politically constructed category based on pseudo science “eugenics” which was assigned upon physical characteristics, such as skin color or hair type. Perceptions of race influence our beliefs, stereotypes, economic opportunities, and everyday experiences.”

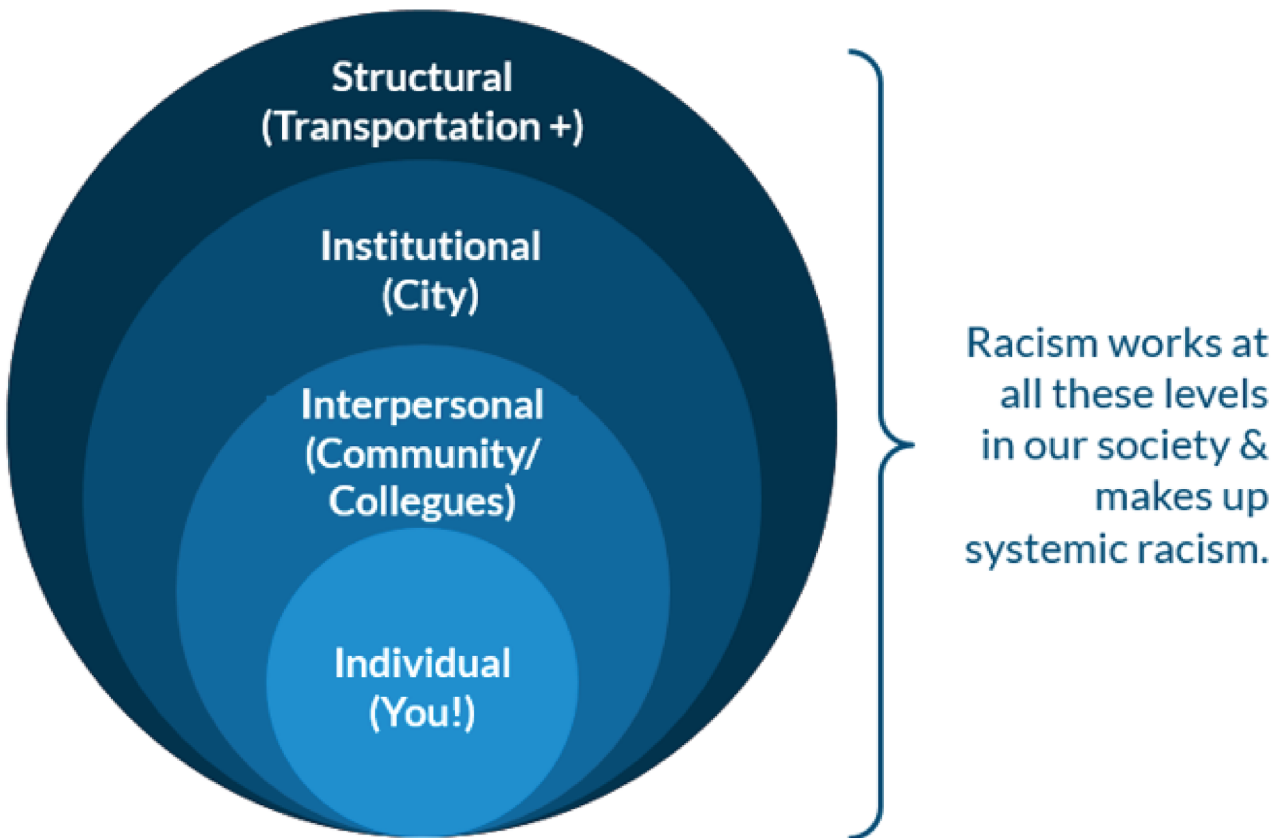
- Hollins and Govan: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.



Source: From the Collections of the Boston Medical Library

RACISM

“The marginalization and oppression of people of color based on a socially constructed racial hierarchy that privileges white people. Racism occurs at the individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural levels, resulting in systemic racism.”- Hollins and Govan: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.



Source: Nelson\Nygaard