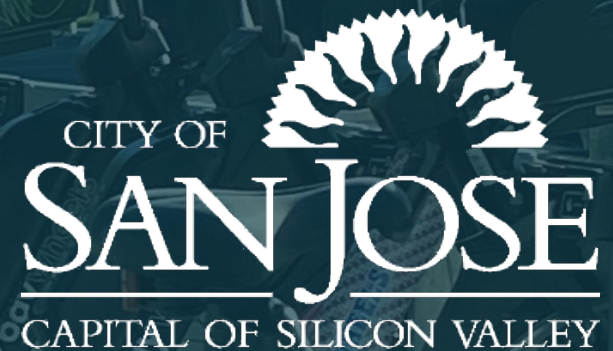


SAN JOSÉ

EMERGING MOBILITY ACTION PLAN

Final Report



April 2022

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CITY STAFF

Laura Stuchinsky, DOT Emerging Mobility Program Lead (Project Manager)
Jessica Zenk, DOT Deputy Director, Planning and Project Delivery
Ramses Madou, DOT Division Manager, Planning, Policy and Sustainability
John Brazil, Transportation Options Program Manager
Emily Breslin, DOT Climate Smart Lead
Grasielita Diaz, DOT Associate Transportation Specialist
Jonathan Yuan, DOT Shared Micro-Mobility Program Manager
Sarah Abroff, DOT Emerging Mobility Special Projects
Xiomara Aguirre, DOT Emerging Mobility Intern
Colin Heyne, Public Information Manager
Nicole Ortega, Public Information Representative II
Natasha Opfell, DOT Associate Transportation Specialist, Planning

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

LaToya Fernandez, YouthHype
Lavere Foster, African American Community Service Agency
Alan Gouig, LEAD Filipino
Helen Kassa, African American Community Service Agency
Adrienne Keel, Caminar, Inc.
Peter Ortiz, Santa Clara County Board of Education
Mayra Pelagio, Latinos United for a New America
MyLinh Pham, Asian American Center of Santa Clara
Paris Scott, Pars Equity Center
Kiyomi Yamamoto, Law Foundation of Silicon Valley

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Alisa Arce, Santa Clara County Public Health Department
Greg Beverlin, Santa Clara County, Fleet & Facilities Department
Melissa Cerezo, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)
Aiko Cuenco, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)
Lidia Doniz, Santa Clara County Public Health
Matias Eusterbrock, formerly City of San José Planning
Rebecca Fischer, formerly Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD)
Jacklyn Joanino, San José Housing Department
Zulma Maciel, San José Office of Racial Equity

Jesse Mintz-Roth, DOT Vision Zero
Sabrina Parra-Garcia, San José Office of Immigrant Affairs
Dan Provence, Caltrain
Shannon Simonds, Caltrans ITP
Krute Singa, MTC
Wilson Tam, DOT Planning

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Adam Cohen, UC Berkeley
Mariko Davidson, Ford Mobility West Coast
Andrew Dick, ElectrifyAmerica
Anna Dietrich, Community Air Mobility Initiative (CAMI)
Yolanka Wulff, Community Air Mobility Initiative (CAMI)
Colin Hughes, Lyft Bay Wheels
Chris Pangalanan, Uber
Danielle Harris, Elemental Exceleator
David Rodriguez, Kiwibot
Heidi Guenin, MobilityData.io
Jascha Franklin-Hodge, Open Mobility Foundation (OMF)
Josh Johnson, Spin
Ryan Westrom, Ford Mobility East Coast
Andrew Dick, ElectrifyAmerica
Ryan McCarthy, ElectrifyAmerica
Peter Slowik, The International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT)
Shaz Umer, formerly GrubHub
Tina Hu, ProspectSV

CONSULTANT TEAM

Nelson\Nygaard
Winter Consulting
Sam Schwartz Engineering
Toole Design
Tamika Butler
Ellis & Associates

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Shane Curtin, San José Public Library
Joshua Ishimatsu, San José Housing Department
Kristen Clements, San José Housing Department

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHAT IS THE EMERGING MOBILITY ACTION PLAN?

The City of San José (City) wants all people to have safe, affordable, reliable, and sustainable transportation options to access the opportunities and resources necessary to thrive, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, age, or income. To that end, the Department of Transportation¹ seeks to leverage its limited regulatory power to nudge emerging mobility companies to fill gaps in existing transportation services, complement and enhance public transit, and make their services accessible to the city's communities of color and low-income neighborhoods.

Our challenge is to center the diverse communities of San Jose and their experiences, needs, and priorities—specifically Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), such as Latino/a/x, Asian, and Pacific Islander communities, and communities that have been historically disenfranchised, and their experiences, needs, and priorities as we prepare for unknown shifts in transportation technology and business models.

Prior to this plan, there was no overarching strategy for addressing equity in emerging mobility. In partnering with the community to produce this plan, we (City staff and the consultant team) came to more fully appreciate how interconnected transportation is to many other pressing community needs, such as access to affordable housing, public safety, and healthcare. Even as we implement a focused plan,

our hope is that this process and the issues it raises will catalyze greater change, coordination, and collaboration on topics beyond emerging mobility within San José, and between the City, other public agencies, and the city's communities.



Source: Sheila Fitzgerald

EMERGING MOBILITY

WHAT IS EMERGING MOBILITY?

Emerging mobility, also called new mobility and technology-enabled mobility, includes numerous types of transportation services and technologies. Examples that may be familiar include micromobility (e.g., electric scooter share and bike share rental services), ride-hailing (e.g., Uber and Lyft), and courier services (e.g., Instacart or DoorDash). Emerging mobility can connect people to places, goods, and information using new services, products, and technologies.

WHY EMERGING MOBILITY?

Emerging mobility technologies and services offer many potential benefits. They could provide a convenient means of getting around at a lower cost, emit fewer emissions than traditional transportation options, and fill public transit service gaps. However, some emerging mobility services, such as automated vehicles, could increase drive-alone trips and consequently pollution, and potentially compete with public transit.

Without intervention, these typically privately owned and operated services could be priced and located so they exclude many potential users, such as unbanked or underbanked¹ populations; limited English speakers; Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC), including Latino/a/x, Asian, and Pacific Islander communities; people with moderate and low incomes; and seniors and people who are mobility-impaired. Public agencies are trying to figure out what levers they can exercise to foster the positive and reduce the potential negative

impacts of these services. Working with community members to understand, address, and design programs that address their needs may help ensure services are useful and more widely utilized.

TRENDS

Emerging mobility is expected to continue to change. The following trends are anticipated over the next five to eight years.

- **Electrification and Mobility.** To meet its climate goals, California is accelerating its transition to zero emission vehicles. Electricity makes more sense for smaller vehicles, from pick-up trucks to scooters, as it will drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollution, particularly as California's electricity gets increasingly cleaner. However, the shift to electrification poses several equity issues that must be proactively and thoughtfully addressed.
- **Public Space.** The public right-of-way (roads) is shifting away from private vehicle storage toward people-oriented spaces. Cities are repurposing metered parking spaces for parklets, outdoor seating, plazas, shared micromobility parking corrals, and electric vehicle charging equipment.
- **Rise of E-commerce.** Shortened guaranteed delivery windows and the expansion of demand-responsive delivery services have greatly expanded consumer choice and convenience. Now, consumers who can afford these services can purchase just about anything, including hot meals, groceries, and everyday items, and have it delivered to their door within

¹ People who do not use mainstream financial services, and may primarily conduct financial transactions using cash are unbanked. People who have a bank account but may rely on alternative financial services such as money orders, check-cashing services, and payday loans rather than on traditional loans and credit cards to manage their finances and fund purchases are underbanked.

hours. The downside of hyper-convenience is increased curbside congestion and vehicle miles traveled on neighborhood streets.

- **Integrating Emerging Mobility with Transit.** Transit agencies have traditionally focused on providing rail and rubber tire services. But the economics and the rapid growth of new technologies and modes of transportation are prompting many transit agencies to consider offering new mobility services to extend the reach of public transit.
- **Plan-Book-Pay.** Mobility as a Service (MaaS) is a concept that makes shared mobility and public transit available at the click of a button. MaaS enables people to plan, book, and pay for their transportation in a centralized, often app-based, platform. It makes it easier for individuals to travel without needing a personal vehicle. Achieving MaaS is an incremental process that requires coordination between multiple agencies and private providers.
- **Automation and Mobility.** Continued research and testing of automated vehicles suggest their deployment may be inevitable; the key question is how long it will take. Many cities are piloting self-driving shuttles to support first- and last-mile connections and neighborhood circulation, on-demand goods delivery, and the collection of traffic-related data on vehicle movements. Widespread adoption of automated vehicles - whether by purchasing and owning a vehicle or renting a vehicle from a private or public fleet - will occur gradually. It will likely start in low-density areas that have limited pedestrian and cycling activity, a supportive regulatory environment, and agreeable weather.
- **Contactless Mobility.** When cities across the country implemented shelter-in-place orders in response to the

COVID-19 global pandemic, people largely avoided non-essential trips. That resulted in significant travel behavior changes. Mobility options that allowed for contactless payment and rides, such as shared scooters, bikes, and mopeds, proved to be an attractive option, particularly for essential workers who needed commute options that allowed them to maintain physical distance from others.

- **Impacts on Local Jobs.** Historically, the development of new technologies has transformed the workforce and created new and different types of jobs. There is currently much debate on whether automation and electrification will lead to a large-scale loss of jobs and displacement of workers or whether it will modify existing jobs or create new jobs. It's likely that as automation expands and intensifies, jobs resulting from these changes will require different skills than those possessed by displaced workers.
- **Congested Curbs.** Curb space is at a premium in most city centers, especially during times of peak demand. Changes in the way people use and access the curb create new conflicts and a constant level of demand that is difficult to predict and plan for. Because new mobility modes are typically on-demand, most of the entering and exiting of the vehicle occurs on the street, impacting curbside access and congestion.
- **Urban Aerial Mobility.** There is an increasing amount of interest, investment, and hype around Urban Aerial Mobility—automated, self-driving helicopter-like vehicles that can deliver goods and offer humans another way to avoid roadway traffic. Urban Aerial Mobility, along with e-cargo bikes and small electric vehicles, could transform last mile delivery logistics for smaller and lighter packages

by replacing trips currently made by traditional delivery vehicles. They could also exacerbate existing inequalities if the flight path these vehicles take is over lower-income or communities of color.

- **Revenue.** To the extent that new mobility options facilitate people's ability to travel without a car and new services require space for docking, revenue from on- and off-street parking, ticketing, and vehicle registration fees are likely to decline. While the main purpose of these charges is to cover related program costs—or, in the case of ticketing, to encourage compliance—this shift provides an opportunity to rethink strategies and better align them to the City's goals.



Source: Nelson\Nygaard

PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This project sought to create a racial equity-focused action plan to guide 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.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH

We conducted historical research on mobility, development, housing, land use, and labor policies 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. This analysis helped guide our community engagement efforts and the development of our goals.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We solicited guidance from local community leaders, community-based organizations, human service providers, and others representing and serving BIPOC and other marginalized communities—people who have traditionally been left out of planning processes. 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 and in service of our communities and then truth-tested ideas with those communities.

Equity Task Force. The Equity Task Force (ETF) was created with nine community leaders associated with organizations representing the City’s diverse communities, 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.

Public Advisory Committee. 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.

Technical Advisory Committee. 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. They shared insights on technology needs, partnership models, and tactics that could help realize selected program and pilot concepts.

Communitywide Engagement. Throughout the course of this project, 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. They included:

- Hosting digital 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
- Hosting a community resource fair
- Updating the project website and the Department's website
- Conducting an online survey

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CASE STUDIES 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, gentrification, and other issues identified by the community. We complemented the trends analysis with a review of academic literature and case studies research to help identify impacts of electrification, and automated passenger and delivery vehicles on job loss and opportunities.

LEADING WITH RACE

Our philosophy and approach were rooted in racial equity. Our definition of racial equity was consistent with the City's adopted definition:



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 processes 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."

With the acknowledgement that the systems that create inequity affect multiple identities, our focus on racial equity targeted 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. Leading with racial equity provides the opportunity to proactively integrate racial justice in our decision-making, and ultimately our policies, practices, and institutional culture.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The project team took the following steps to develop recommendations:

1. **ETF initiated.** As with all the major project milestones, the project team began the process of developing recommendations with the Equity Task Force (ETF). The project team provided analysis, examples, and technical support for the ETF and facilitated a series of structured discussions to help the ETF generate the recommendations.
2. **PAC and TAC weighed in.** The team then asked the PAC and TAC to respond to the ETF's preliminary recommendations, by highlighting potential barriers—such as cost, feasibility, and anticipated political challenges—as well as opportunities in the form of innovative partnerships and funding mechanisms for community members and implementors to consider.
3. **ETF reviewed.** We looped back to the ETF to discuss the input from the PAC and TAC and to prioritize the recommendations.
4. **Community members prioritized.** Finally, we shared the refined recommendations with the broader community via a variety of means, including focus groups, a community resource fair, and tabling at existing community events. Community members' input helped to prioritize the recommendations.

The top priority recommendations are presented below:

- **Tailored Strategies:** Create targeted emerging mobility options and programs, such as ones tailored to seniors and working families with kids.
- **Easy to Pay:** Create affordable, easy-to-use options for services that are available and used by low-income communities, undocumented people, non-English speakers, seniors, and persons with disabilities. Options may include pay stations or kiosks, partnerships with local businesses, and card-based systems that allow cash filling and can be used across mobility providers.
- **Collaborate with Community:** Identify funding and engage with community organizations to conduct racial equity analyses. Engage with CBOs prior to major program, policy, and project decisions like deployment requirements. Work in partnership with community groups to identify evaluation criteria to assess alignment between emerging mobility program and pilots and community needs. Establish minimum service levels by geography for all services. Evaluate the performance of emerging mobility providers in meeting community needs at the midpoint and end of a project or pilot in partnership with CBOs. Make evaluation reports publicly available to community members.
- **Public Education and Promotion:** Create funded, City-led public education and promotion programs, in partnership with paid community members, to educate and spread awareness about emerging mobility services. Provide vouchers and discounts to CBOs to give to community members to help familiarize people with emerging mobility services and programs. Engage with local neighborhoods, school districts, and universities to educate students on how to safely use emerging mobility services (particularly shared bikes and scooters). Tailor services to specific age groups.

- **Community-Driven Solutions:** Create a community-designed program to better integrate transit and emerging mobility, ensuring emerging mobility complements other transportation options. Create community programs connecting services to transit, including a community rideshare program managed by CBOs.
- **Workforce Development:** Establish workforce development programs to connect low-income residents and youth to emerging mobility-related job opportunities. Establish local hire requirements targeting underserved communities.



Source: City of Las Vegas

KEY LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

Through the course of this project, from scoping through finalization, we learned many lessons and created recommendations from them. Below are some of the key takeaways from this process, noted as considerations and recommendations for future equity-centered work.

LESSONS LEARNED	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE-EQUITY WORK
Scoping and Setting Expectations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expectations from community members and City partners around the project outcomes were not initially aligned. ETF members felt the issues their communities were struggling with were much larger than transportation. The grant was written without community involvement, which made it difficult to make substantive changes that reflected community input. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate considerations beyond the primary topic of the plan. For example, this plan addresses issues beyond emerging mobility such as housing, personal and community safety, transit, land use, and economic opportunities. Be transparent about the expectations and constraints at the onset and conclusion of every project. Identify ways to work with community leaders and organizations, whether through an advisory group or informal collaboration, to gather input during project conceptualization. Encourage grant administrators to require City agencies to partner directly with CBOs on grant applications.
Data Analysis	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative data is not always comprehensive or intuitive. Many datasets generalize people’s experiences and ignore the nuances between communities. Data may misconstrue the reality experienced by community members on the ground. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge conventional forms of analysis and integrate people’s stories shared through interviews, focus groups, online surveys, and virtual meetings as part of existing conditions analysis. Gather community insights at the outset of a project in partnership with or delegated to community-based organizations who have established relationships with their community and a deep understanding of their experiences.
Equity Task Force Engagement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all task force members knew each other and as a result they did not feel comfortable being vulnerable with each other at the project outset. Not all task force members were familiar with the plan subject matter. Expectations and accountability were outlined on a high-level, but this was not enough. Task force members’ preferences for materials review and meeting facilitation varied. Task force members said it was difficult to absorb and respond to the volume of information at the pace and complexity it was presented after a full day of work. Task force members wanted to know where and how their feedback was integrated into stakeholder conversations and project deliverables. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize relationship-building from the outset and integrate throughout the process. Dedicate time for capacity building. Clarify expectations and establish project team accountability measures. Tailor facilitation and content to different learning styles. Identify ways to break material down into digestible chunks using accessible language. Use breakout groups to review and discuss the material wherever possible. Formalize a feedback loop between the task force, City, and project team. Encourage regular self-assessment.
Communitywide Engagement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community leaders are in the best position to gauge how project content will be received. People engage in the community in different ways. Task force members were not representative of the full spectrum of diverse community members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lean on community leaders to vet content and ensure it is digestible and culturally sensitive. Use a variety of engagement methods for different forms of feedback. Extend outreach and engagement beyond ETF network.