Why it’s crucial to incorporate equity into transportation electrification plans

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Why should you incorporate equity into your TE plan?

Transportation is electrifying across the US and Canada, and early transportation electrification (TE) efforts focused on offering incentives to get more people driving EVs. These incentives often benefited only upper-income customers.

How E Source can help you prioritize equity in your TE plan

Fill out this short form to start a conversation about your TE plan and how E Source can help.

Adding EV charging infrastructure and selling EVs to those who can afford and have the space to charge them is a good place to start. But if we want to fully electrify transportation systems, our plans should involve:

- Electrifying school buses and public transit
- Adding chargers for multifamily housing
- Electrifying ride- and car-sharing

If utilities shift their TE plans to include community-focused electrification, they can have a positive impact on low- and moderate-income (LMI) customers and customers who live in historically disadvantaged communities.

Because of discriminatory policies like redlining, LMI customers; Black, Indigenous, and people of color; and other disadvantaged communities have been pushed near freeways and industrial areas. In these areas, the communities experience the negative impacts of our traditional transportation systems at a disproportionately high level, including:

- Emissions from ICE vehicles
- Traffic and congestion
- Hotter temperatures

Learn more about incorporating equity into your TE plan

Members of the E Source Distributed Energy Resource Strategy Service or Mobility Service can learn more about how to define and measure equity, engage stakeholders, design and implement programs, and evaluate and iterate programs in the full report How to incorporate equity into your transportation electrification plan.

To help historically disadvantaged customers benefit from TE, utilities should address the inequities of current transportation systems in their TE plans.

What does an equity-focused TE plan look like?

For a TE plan to be equitable, customers need widespread access to the benefits of electric transportation, such as:

- Less pollution
- Less noise
- Better health outcomes
- More vehicle options
- More mobility

Utilities can reduce everyone's exposure to the negative impacts of the traditional transportation system by understanding how communities are unequally affected. They can also minimize any new negative impacts from TE at the same time.

But a utility will need to do more than add EVs and charging stations to drive widespread and equitable TE—especially in disadvantaged communities.

How can you apply the E Source energy equity framework to your TE plan?

The E Source white paper The energy equity framework that benefits customers, utilities, and underserved communities explains how to serve all customers by planning, executing, and improving on programs (**figure 1**).

Figure 1: The E Source energy equity framework

While utilities may be in different stages, they can use this framework to better understand energy equity opportunities, effective program implementation, and continuous improvement.

The framework is a cyclical process and none of the steps on their own are enough to make your TE

plan equitable. And while most TE plans include an equity component, no TE plan is perfect when it comes to incorporating equitable practices at each step.

As your utility works to create equitable TE plans, maximize the benefits, and lessen the negative impacts, you should:

- Define and measure equity
- Engage stakeholders
- Design and implement programs
- Evaluate and iterate programs

In our report How to incorporate equity into your transportation electrification plan, we dive into the steps above and more to help utilities effectively put equity first in their TE plans.

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