

From: James Paulson

To: Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Members

Date: October 14, 2020 | EMAC Meeting #4

RE: Demographic and Travel Characteristics of Employees in Project Area

Outreach to my Community

I feel that “my” community is Workforce. I am the Board Chair for Worksystems Inc. and feel my experience in this role has given me a deep understanding of the needs of people in need of employment support across the region.

At the last meeting we reviewed a number of options around ways to toll the section of freeway. During the meeting I asked a few questions and had an opportunity to follow up with Josh, as a deeper dive. My concern had to do with flow of workforce in and out of the area, with an emphasis on low income and disabled members of the community. I have reached out to “my” community to find out more, and I would like to share my findings with this group.

- Employment flows: I was only able to find a study done in 2013. I believe the flows are still relatively the same and work as a description for the purposes of this discussion. See slide from study.
- People with Disabilities: My focus as mentioned, is on work specifically. Again, the only data I was able to find seems dated given the current state of unemployment. So, I would say the data shows the differences between people with disabilities and those without.

2013 Data	General Population	People with Disabilities	Difference
Employed for wages	56.3%	31.8%	-24.5%
Self Employed	10.2%	7.9%	-2.3%
Retired	15.0%	26.9%	11.9%
Unable to work	0.5%	14.9%	14.4%

A 2015 Kessler study found that 26% of respondents said transportation was the biggest challenge to finding employment.

Recommendation

All of this is only interesting if not acted on or used in decision making. We have the opportunity to find and use data to help facilitate very complex and impactful decisions. I would like to see data which has a focus on the effects to the community, both positive and negative impacts. At some point there will be Cost/Benefit type decisions and these need to have a basis on community good/bad impact. Creating a tolling system with a net effect of “Bad” for the community would equal failure in my opinion. I would like to see metrics which represent the community impact, so they can be tracked as the project moves from planning to implementation and on into the future.