

# MAKING EQUITY REAL IN MOBILITY PILOTS

## INSTRUCTIONS

Increasingly, equity is becoming mainstream in mobility. Yet this could turn into an empty promise without a clear strategy and understanding of how to put equity into action to achieve that promise. Equity is not just a commitment – it is a practice. These resources and tools are intended to guide government agencies, companies, and other entities in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of equitable mobility projects. In other words, this packet will guide you on how to operationalize equity.

## Resources and Tools Included

This resource includes four different documents that should be read and utilized in the following order:

### 1. Overview: 4 Steps to Making Equity Real

This document is an overview of the four steps needed to operationalize equity within a pilot project based on our report, [“Mobility Equity Framework: How to Make Transportation Work for People.”](#) The following documents provide supplementary information to complete these four steps in an equitable, inclusive, and culturally appropriate way.

### 2. Equity Considerations

Before developing an equitable mobility pilot project, read these “Equity Considerations” and think about whether and how your mobility pilot addresses the questions. These considerations are a starting point to operationalizing equity within a pilot project and answering them will give you a baseline for how your project centers and embeds equity. Going through these considerations will also help you identify areas in your pilot concept that are strong in equity, and areas that need improvement. Keep this list of questions and your responses for reference as you complete the four steps to developing an equitable mobility project.

### 3. Community Engagement Best Practices

This document outlines best practices on for meaningfully engaging and empowering communities at all stages of project development and deployment. It provides examples of community engagement activities and lists various cultural considerations to bear in mind when conducting community engagement.

### 4. Mobility Pilot Project Worksheet

Once you read the previous documents, filling out this worksheet can help kickstart a list of specific activities and tasks to develop and deploy an equitable project. As needed, reference the other documents as you fill it out.

# OVERVIEW: 4 STEPS TO MAKING EQUITY REAL

## PROBLEM

Historically, transportation investments and plans have not met the mobility needs of low-income people of color because decisions have been made behind closed doors without community input. This has resulted in these communities suffering from disproportionate levels of transportation-related pollution and longer and less reliable commutes. A lack of good mobility options limits low-income people's ability to raise themselves out of poverty. Today, low-income people of color often face financial, technological, physical, or cultural, barriers to accessing shared mobility services (i.e. bikeshare, scooter share, Uber, carshare, etc.). Some of these mobility services have also be shown to compete with public transit ridership and utilize unfair labor practices, both of which harm people of color. When mobility projects are not implemented with equity, they reinforce the inequalities baked into our systems and can often deepen those inequalities.

## SOLUTION

Equitable mobility pilot projects should center the voices usually left out of decision-making through a community-driven process.

Equitable mobility pilot projects must also address entrenched injustices by providing the following benefits to low-income communities of color in a way that is meaningful, direct, and assured.

- Increase access to affordable, efficient, safe, reliable mobility options.
- Reduce air pollution.
- Enhance economic opportunities.

## FOUR KEY STEPS TO MAKING EQUITY REAL IN A PILOT PROJECT

### 1. Embed Equity in the Mission, Vision, & Values

Explicitly state a commitment to equity in your pilot project. This goes beyond just equitable access to mobility, but also must aim to address other interconnected injustices that low-income people of color face, such as health disparities, a lack of economic opportunities, and community power and engagement.

### 2. Build in Equity into the Process

Create partnerships with low-income people of color and other marginalized communities in the development and deployment the pilot project.

#### A) Mobility Needs Assessment

First, engage communities in identifying their mobility needs. These needs may vary greatly depending on characteristics of a community, such as geography, demographics, or types of trips.

## WHAT IS EQUITY?

Equity is transforming the behaviors, institutions, and systems that disproportionately harm people of color. Equity means increasing access to power, redistributing and providing additional resources, and eliminating barriers to opportunity, in order to empower low-income communities of color to thrive and reach full potential.

Greenlining's definition of equity is specific to racial equity, given the legacy of institutionalized racism by government. Our emphasis on race is not about excluding other marginalized groups. These equity approaches are intended to also be applicable to creating equitable outcomes for other groups such as the elderly and people with disabilities.

## B) Mobility Equity Analysis

Once a community's mobility needs are known, a mobility equity analysis assesses how a pilot project approach performs across a variety of equity indicators, including affordability, accessibility, health benefits, jobs opportunities, fair labor practices, and more. The community must be involved in selecting the relevant equity indicators to evaluate the approach of the pilot project. For a detailed list of example metrics under each indicator, refer to the full [Mobility Equity Framework](#).

<b>Goal #1</b> Increase Access to Mobility	<b>Goal #2</b> Reduce Air Pollution	<b>Goal #3</b> Enhance Economic Opportunity
1. Affordability	6. Clean Air and Positive Health Benefits	9. Connectivity to Places of Employment, Education, Services, & Recreation
2. Accessibility	7. Reduction in Greenhouse Gases	10. Fair Labor Practices
3. Efficiency	8. Reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled	11. Transportation-Related Employment Opportunities
4. Reliability		12. Inclusive Local Business & Economic Activity
5. Safety		

## C) Community Decision-Making

Beyond assessing the mobility needs of the community and conducting an equity analysis, an equitable process must also center communities with less political power or voice in decision-making. This could take many different forms, and examples include:

- Form partnerships between community-based organizations, companies, cities, agencies, and stakeholders.
- Train city, agency, and/or mobility company staff in community engagement and partnership.
- Provide technical assistance and leadership development to community groups.
- Implement some degree of community-decision making (e.g. voting, advisory committees, etc.)

### 3. Implementation: Ensure Equity Outcomes

The implementation of the pilot project must lead to equity outcomes, including but not limited to:

- The project significantly addresses priority needs that are identified by low-income communities of color.
- The project provides direct, meaningful, measurable, and assured benefits and avoids substantial burdens to low-income communities of color.
- The project must aim to be financially, technologically, physically, and culturally accessible to all regardless of race, gender, income, ability or zip code.

### 4. Measure & Analyze for Equity

To keep improving outcomes, regularly evaluate the equity successes and the equity problems of pilots.

- Involve communities in the evaluation process, equity metric selection, data collection and review.
- Adapt programs to address challenges and lessons learned.

# EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS FOR MOBILITY PILOT PROJECTS

Before developing an equitable mobility pilot project, we recommend reading the following questions and thinking about whether and how your project addresses the questions. Think of the questions as a starting point to operationalizing equity. Answering the questions will give you a baseline for how your pilot project centers and embeds equity. Going through these considerations will also help you identify areas in your pilot concept that are strong in equity and areas that need improvement. Keep this list of questions and your responses for reference as you complete the four steps to developing an equitable mobility project.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN DEVELOPING EQUITABLE GOALS, VISION AND VALUES

### *Identifying Vulnerable Populations*

- Which vulnerable populations may be impacted by or could benefit from your program or policy?
- How have you identified these populations?

### *Targeted Funding*

- Does your program or policy have dedicated set-asides for vulnerable communities?

### *Accessibility*

- Are the benefits of the proposed program or policy broadly accessible to households throughout the community — particularly communities of color, low-income populations, Tribal and indigenous communities and immigrant communities?

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN DEVELOPING AN EQUITABLE PROCESS

### *Engagement*

- Have you designed a process to collaborate with vulnerable populations that engages and empowers them in a meaningful, authentic and culturally appropriate manner?
- Which best practices for community engagement are you implementing?
- Are you sharing as much decision-making power as feasible?
- How ready is your agency/organization to conduct community engagement?
- Are you in relationship building mode or power shift mode?

### *Assured Benefits*

- What mechanisms will you use to assure particular benefit to vulnerable populations? (e.g. provide technical assistance or capacity building; provide jobs, provide extra financial resources or investments)

***Disproportionate Impacts***

- Does the program or policy generate burdens (including displacement and increased costs), either directly or indirectly to vulnerable populations?
- If yes, how will you address and mitigate them?

***Capacity Building***

- How will your program or policy provide for local capacity building? (e.g. through funding, expanded knowledge base or other resources?)

***Relationship Building***

- Does the program or policy help foster the building of effective, long-term relationships and trust between diverse communities and government?
- Does the program or policy align with and support existing community priorities, creating an opportunity to leverage resources and build collaborative partnerships?

**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN CENTERING EQUITY IN IMPLEMENTATION**

***Shared and Multiple Benefits***

- How may the program or policy increase racial equity?
- How may the program or policy decrease inequality in income or wealth?
- Can the benefits of the program or policy be targeted in progressive ways to reduce historical or current disparities?
- How may the program or policy ensure safety and improve health outcomes for vulnerable populations?
- Are you including health, economic, or other objectives in the program or policy?

***Economic Opportunity and Staff Diversity***

- Does the proposed program or policy support vulnerable communities through workforce development, contracting opportunities or the increased diversity of staff?

**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN MEASURING AND ANALYZING FOR EQUITY**

***Accountability***

- How will you evaluate the equity impact of your program or policies? Who is involved in the equity metric selection, data collection, and review?
- Does the proposed action have appropriate accountability mechanisms to ensure that vulnerable communities will equitably benefit and not be disproportionately harmed?

***Communication***

- How will you communicate progress to stakeholders?

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

Often, marginalized communities are only “informed” about a project, rather than truly engaged and empowered in all stages. Community engagement should not be an “add-on” or “check box” to projects—it should help drive their direction. Robust engagement can bring about better decisions through increased input from different perspectives, increased buy-in and acceptance of decisions and support for their implementation. In addition, relationships with communities should not be ad hoc but must be built over time to develop trust and true partnership.

## ROBUST COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The following table, adapted from the Transformative Climate Communities program and SB 1 Sustainable Communities Grant program, provides examples of community engagement activities at different stages of the proposed project. In addition to the activities below, we strongly recommend reading the SB 1000 Toolkit developed by the California Environmental Justice Alliance, which offers robust, detailed and comprehensive strategies for effective community engagement.

### EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

Category	Activities
<i>Activities to Inform Community Stakeholders and to Solicit Stakeholder Input</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public workshops/meetings</li> <li>• Door-to-door canvassing</li> <li>• House meetings</li> <li>• Established website and/or social media</li> <li>• Distributed flyers or other printed materials</li> <li>• Outreach to existing community groups</li> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Involve local health departments, which can help reach community-based organizations and frontline community members</li> </ul>
<i>Activities to Engage Community Stakeholders in Development of Proposal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design a charrette planning session</li> <li>• Community-based participatory research</li> <li>• Participatory budgeting</li> <li>• Convene advisory body or shared decision-making body</li> <li>• Establish website and/or social media</li> <li>• Community benefits agreements</li> </ul>
<i>Activities to Ensure Community Engagement During Implementation of Proposal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public workshops/meetings</li> <li>• Door-to-door canvassing</li> <li>• House meetings</li> <li>• Established website and/or social media</li> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Subcontract with existing community-based organizations that organize frontline communities to conduct outreach</li> <li>• Allocate staff positions focused on community engagement</li> <li>• Advisory body or shared decision-making body</li> </ul>

## INCLUDE CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Cultural differences may be present between and among community members. A productive process requires understanding different interaction norms, priorities, levels of comfort with professional terminology, and expectations for project completion. Designing a community engagement process that is sensitive to the following cultural considerations may help encourage broader, more equitable, and more informed participation. To ensure equitable community engagement practices, consider the following factors. These examples are adapted from the California Strategic Growth Council and Transformative Climate Communities Program Final Guidelines.

### EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Cultural Consideration Factors	How to Address Cultural Consideration Factors in Community Engagement
<i>LITERACY LEVEL</i>	<p>It may be more difficult to reach out to Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals, immigrant communities, or people with lower educational attainment. Awardees should design materials and events for community engagement to accommodate different literacy levels and provide background information when referring to complex concepts. Avoid the use of acronyms where possible.</p>
<i>SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS</i>	<p>Groups with lower socioeconomic status are often disproportionately affected by environmental hazards while facing greater barriers to participation in engagement efforts to remediate them. Address these barriers by considering factors such as location and timing of activities, accessibility by public transportation, availability of childcare, and availability of food.</p>
<i>LANGUAGE</i>	<p>All communication should be done in the major languages spoken in the community. This includes written background materials, live interpretation at key public events and captioned videos. Interpreters should be available at meetings when non-English speaking members of the community will likely be present.</p>
<i>LOCAL HISTORY</i>	<p>Certain communities may have participated in previous engagement efforts that did not result in change. Over time, having not been included or participating and/or not feeling utilized may affect future participation. It helps to understand the local context prior to beginning engagement. Engaging with local community-based organizations that understand local history may help advance community participation in engagement activities.</p> <p>We strongly recommend ongoing information sharing to ensure transparency, help maintain community relationships and build trust in the process.</p>
<i>COMPETING INTERESTS AND LIMITED TIME</i>	<p>Community members have many competing interests and limited time. Allowing different levels and types of involvement in the process can help foster participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Go to places where people already gather to allow community members to give input without a large time commitment at a time that is convenient for them. Meeting stakeholders in locations they are familiar and comfortable with can also help to bridge cultural and trust gaps. These can include: a community health center, a street fair, a cultural event, a public event at a local religious or community center, or a community event at a local school or library</li><li>• Other, more time-intensive activities, such as focus groups, charrettes, and workshops, can be made available for stakeholders who are interested in providing more in-depth input.</li></ul>

# MAKING EQUITY REAL IN MOBILITY PILOT PROJECTS WORKSHEET

<b>PROJECT TITLE:</b>			
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION:</b>			
<b>EQUITY MISSION, VISION, VALUES</b> Describe equity in the context of the overall goal of pilot project. What equity problem will this project fix or address?			
	<b>Activities/Tasks</b> Use this space to list the tasks that you will undertake to achieve equitable impacts. (Hint: look to the examples listed on the 4 Step Overview)	<b>Intended Equitable Impacts</b> What will be felt, experienced, and/or realized because of your efforts?	<b>Reflection</b> How must I show up with different stakeholders for this to be successful? What is uncomfortable for me? What must I still learn how to do? How will I work on this?
<b>Mobility Needs Assessment &amp; Equity Analysis</b> How will you address the needs of marginalized communities? ( <i>hint: look to Step #2 in the Fact Sheet</i> )			
<b>Community Decision-Making</b> What is your plan to engage and to increase the voice of marginalized communities in decision-making and/or influence in your work?			
<b>Equitable Outcomes</b> How will you address design bias, and ensure that resources (program, staff, budget/investments) are equitably distributed because of your project? How will historic and future harm be corrected and avoided, and benefits equitably and inclusively distributed?			
<b>Measure and Analyze for Equity</b> What mechanisms will ensure that policies, programs, projects, and funding decisions will benefit and not overly burden marginalized communities? How will relationships and power shift?			



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND TOOLS

## MOBILITY

- [Mobility Equity Framework](#)  
This framework is a step-by-step guide to prioritizing equity and community engagement in transportation planning and decision-making. It provides a tool to assess and compare mobility options based on their impacts on low-income communities of color.

## ELECTRIC VEHICLES

- [Electric Vehicles for All: An Equity Toolkit](#)  
This resource is used regularly by advocates to ensure that electric vehicle programs and policies reach low-income communities of color.
- [Electric Carsharing in Underserved Communities: Considerations for Program Success](#)  
This report has helped shape pilot programs to provide electric vehicle carsharing services to low-income communities.
- [Delivering Opportunity: How Electric Buses and Trucks Can Create Jobs and Improve Public Health in California](#)  
This report, produced in collaboration with the Union of Concerned Scientists, examines the many benefits of electrifying trucks and buses.

## SELF-DRIVING VEHICLES

- [Autonomous Vehicle Heaven or Hell? Creating a Transportation Revolution that Benefits All](#)  
This report analyzes a wide range of mobility, health, and economic implications electric, shared, and autonomous vehicles on marginalized groups like people of color, the poor, the elderly, and those with disabilities. It provides a wide range of equity-focused policy recommendation to maximize the benefits and minimize the harms of this oncoming transportation revolution.