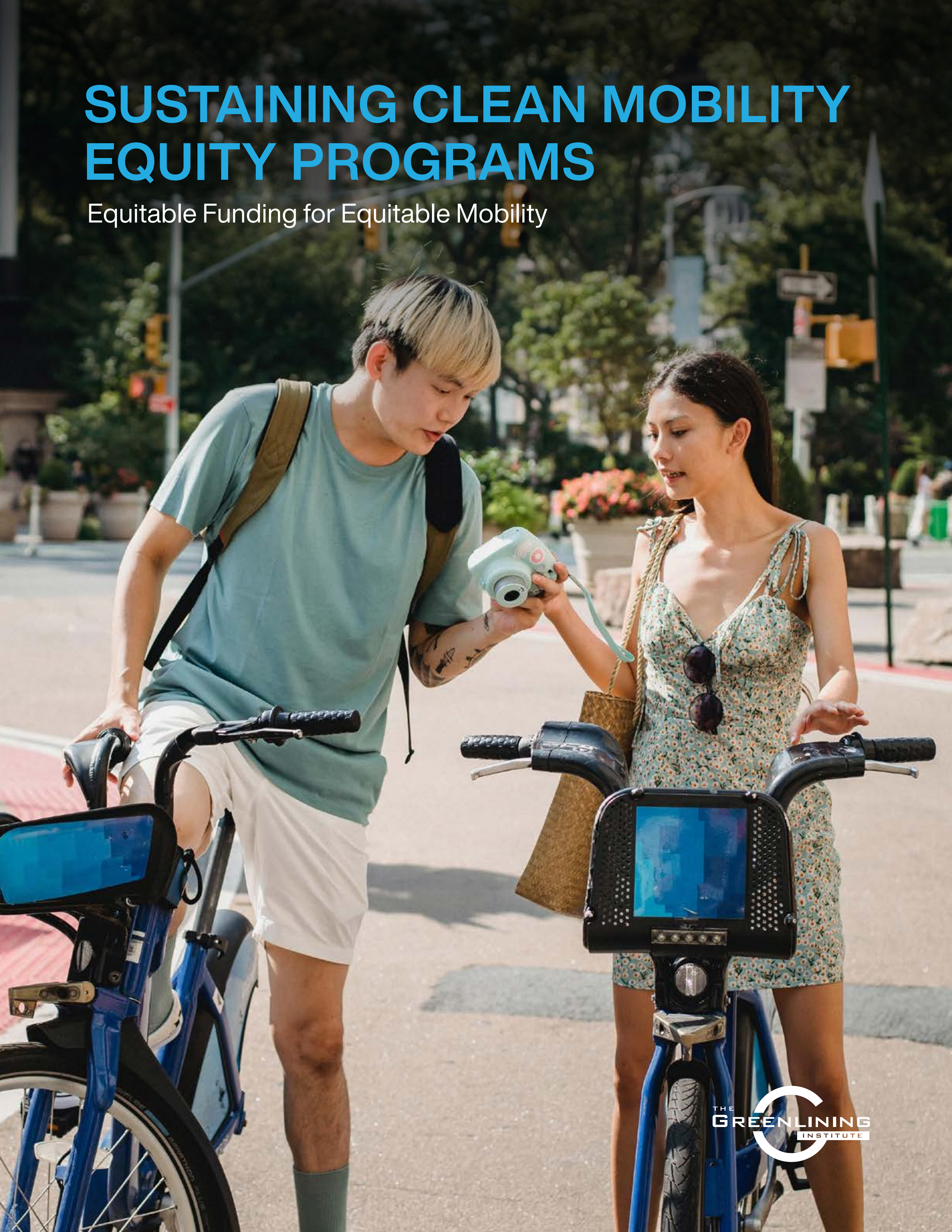
SUSTAINING CLEAN MOBILITY EQUITY PROGRAMS

Equitable Funding for Equitable Mobility



THE GREENLINING INSTITUTE

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The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the individuals who reviewed it. The Greenlining Institute bears sole responsibility for this report's contents.

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Introduction

Establishing long-term financial sustainability for clean mobility equity programs represents one of the largest challenges that these programs face. In Clean Mobility Equity: A Playbook,[1] The Greenlining Institute conducted an equity evaluation of a selection of California's clean mobility equity programs, which include electric vehicle carsharing, shared mobility hubs, community-driven mobility pilots and more. Some are still in the pilot project phase and others operate more as full-fledged programs. In this evaluation, a common theme that emerged was that uncertain financial sustainability and stability limits the ability of these programs and pilots to grow and serve more low-income, disadvantaged communities, and communities of color. While the Low Carbon Transportation Program[2] and other state funding sources provided seed funding for many of the clean mobility equity pilot projects that we evaluated, we need strategies to maintain these services after the initial grant runs out.

Therefore, we used Greenlining's Six Standards for Equitable Investment and the Making Equity Real Framework, to explore several ways that these programs may be able to generate and sustain the funding needed to continue the operation of clean mobility equity programs.

Six Standards for Equitable Investment

Our Greenlined Economy Guidebook[3] introduces six standards for equitable investment that are intended to address the failures of equity in our current models of investment. Without clear standards, we end up reinforcing the structures that caused problems in the first place.

1. **Emphasize Anti-Racist Solutions**

   Undoing racist policies like redlining[4] and highway construction[5] that segregate communities of color requires anti-racist strategies to target and prioritize resources to communities of color—while dismantling the structures that reinforce these inequities in the internal planning, power and decision-making structures across all sectors of the transportation system.

2. **Prioritize Multi-Sector Approaches**

   We must prioritize mobility approaches that provide co-benefits by addressing multiple issues and sectors at once, such as wealth-building, climate adaptation, anti-displacement and more, along with outreach, engagement and capacity building that enables communities to help design their own clean transportation future.

3. **Deliver Intentional Benefits**

   Benefits cannot trickle down to communities; they need to go directly to the people most in need in the most impactful ways, while not increasing or creating new burdens.

4. **Build Community Capacity**

   To ensure under-resourced communities are able to apply for, develop, implement and sustain clean mobility equity programs, programs must require and build in technical assistance, capacity building, and long-term training and skills development.

5. **Be Community-Driven At Every Stage**

   Community-centered investment means lifting up community-led ideas and sharing decision-making power throughout every phase of a program or policy's goal-setting, needs assessments, outreach, implementation and evaluation.

6. **Establish Paths Toward Wealth-Building**

   In addition to just providing cost savings, clean mobility programs and policies must increase job access and create jobs, workforce development and training opportunities. They must contract with local businesses and grow community-owned assets and infrastructure.

Making Equity Real Framework

Greenlining's Making Equity Real Framework can be overlaid with Six Standards for Equitable Investment to ensure that they are applied in a comprehensive manner every step of the way.

1. **Mission, Vision and Values**
   - How will equity be described as a core component in the context of the overall mission/goal?
   - Will equity be a core component?
2. **Process**
   - How will equity be embedded into how the effort will be developed?
   - How will equity be embedded into how the program was implemented?
   - How will decisions be made or influenced by communities that have less political power or voice?
3. **Outcomes**
   - How will implementation lead to equity outcomes?
   - What explicit equity outcomes will be described?
4. **Measurement and Analysis**
   - How will equity progress measured?
   - How will we know that equity goals and community benefits will be achieved?

Following this sequence adds critical layers of accountability. In previous evaluations of equity policies and programs, we found that while it was relatively commonplace to state equity as a mission or goal, often programs failed to develop a clear strategy for embedding equity from start to finish throughout their development, implementation and evaluation. Understanding how equity is accounted for across a program's mission, process, outcomes, measurement and analysis allows for a comprehensive identification of what works, what gaps exist and how to address them. Clean Mobility Equity: A Playbook[6] highlights specific examples.

This report outlines a variety of concepts that still need much more exploration, development and experimentation. As that unfolds, Greenlining's Six Standards for Equitable Investment and the Making Equity Real Framework should be applied across the development and implementation of the Four Components of Sustaining Clean Mobility Equity Programs that are laid out below.

Four Components of Sustaining Clean Mobility Equity Programs

The analysis outlined above helped identify four central components of a funding sustainability strategy that we will describe in more detail below:

Four Components of Sustaining Clean Mobility Equity Programs

I. Secure Reliable, Equitable Funding

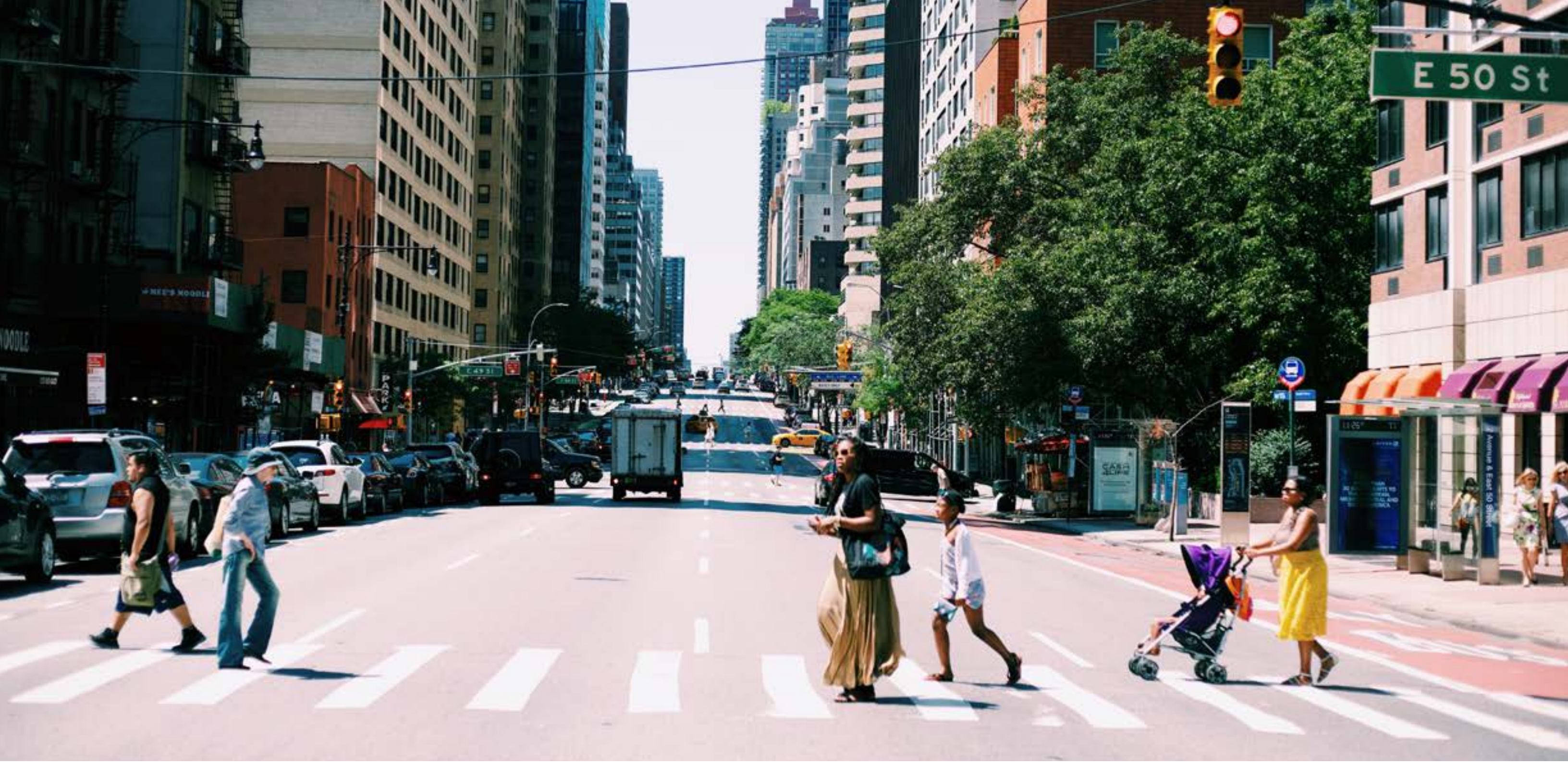
II. Cultivate Community Partnerships

III. Improve Cash Flow

IV. Augment Revenue Sources

Together, these four components aim to support the long-term sustainability both of the overarching clean mobility equity programs and of the specific mobility services and projects that they fund. However, bolstering each of these components will require policy and structural fixes from the top down and from the bottom up. This means that government agencies will have to alter structures to be more accessible and equitable in order to meet community-identified needs. To develop these kinds of programs and projects, government staff must proactively go to communities rather than expecting communities to come to them. At the same time, communities must be given sufficient capacity and resources to be able to participate in and lead these efforts from the get go. Too often, community engagement, capacity building and planning are only resourced within the context of a specific project. To foster long-term sustainability of both programs and communities, we first need to prioritize the development of community vision, priorities and partnerships.

While many of these examples are California-focused, the recommendations included can also apply to other states and the federal government as they develop their own clean mobility equity programs.



I. Secure Reliable, Equitable Funding

Replicating and scaling up the existing clean mobility equity programs and pilots will require dedicated funding streams and resources. Yet in general, funding mechanisms overlook equity considerations and are not sufficient to meet the scale of clean transportation investments that we need in order to address climate change. In fact, many of the funding mechanisms that largely pay for clean mobility and transportation investments are deeply flawed. For example, the gas tax is regressive, falling most heavily on lower-income people with older cars with lower gas mileage, and is not sustainable in the long run given the inevitable transition to zero-emission vehicles. Cap-and-trade, the carbon pricing mechanism used in California to reduce emissions and generate funding, is not meeting the needs of frontline communities in terms of reducing emissions. The program has been a significant source of funding, even though it was not designed with the intent of being a stable funding source and experience has shown that its unpredictable revenue fluctuations cannot reliably fund a clean transportation future. Most local and regional sales tax measures are regressive toward low-income people, drop dramatically during recessions, and do nothing to reduce pollution or vehicle miles traveled.

Clearly, additional, more equitable, funding mechanisms are necessary. Rather than provide recommendations on reforming existing funding mechanisms, the following section explores additional and complementary funding mechanisms that are more equitable and flexible, reduce pollution and vehicle trips, and can be sustained in the long term. The multitude of challenges we face today require funding mechanisms that respond to multiple issues. As we identify additional funding mechanisms that adhere to a wider variety of criteria, we must build equity into both the source of the funds and how they are distributed. By securing more innovative and equitable funding mechanisms, we can support the development, implementation, and long-term success of clean mobility equity programs and pilot projects.

Top Performing Funding Mechanisms

We conducted a comparative equity analysis of 23 different innovative funding mechanisms and ranked them on a scale from most to least equitable based on their potential to abide by this set of equity indicators:

1. **Emphasize Anti-Racist Solutions**
2. **Prioritize Multi-Sector Approaches**
3. **Deliver Intentional Benefits**
4. **Build Community Capacity**
5. **Be Community-Driven at Every Stage**
6. **Establish Paths Toward Wealth Building**
7. **Progressive (as opposed to regressive)**
8. **Fair Impact Across Geographies**
9. **Reduce Pollution**
10. **Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled**
11. **Sustainable in the Long Term**
12. **Increase Health**

We did not quantify these measures for the purposes of this white paper, and additional analysis and modeling will be required to more comprehensively compare these funding mechanisms. Of the 23 funding mechanisms we analyzed, the four below showed the most potential to perform highly on the equity indicators, but only when specifically designed with equity in mind. All of these funding mechanisms will still require significant equity interventions to ensure that low-income, disadvantaged, and communities of color reap the benefits and are not disproportionately harmed.

Road Charging

Just as public transit riders pay user fees, road charging (aka road pricing or road user fees) charges drivers for their use of the roads based on miles traveled, as opposed to a tax based on their gas consumption. This mechanism has the potential to reduce pollution and vehicle miles traveled and to incentivize people to share their rides or reduce vehicle use all together by substituting alternative modes like walking, biking and public transit. Yet as low-income residents are increasingly displaced from the cities into suburbs, unanticipated consequences may arise if low-income residents bear a disproportionate burden because they live farther from jobs, education, and opportunities or are less able to work remotely. Similar to the gas tax, road charging would likely disproportionately impact rural and suburban residents over urban residents, a disparity which must be addressed before such measures move forward.

California has conducted road charging studies and a pilot program.[7] One of the most reliable tracking mechanisms uses a plug-in device to track the miles traveled by a vehicle, with built-in privacy and security measures. Overall, this pilot received positive feedback from the 5,000 volunteers: 87% of participants reported that participating in the pilot was easy, 73% felt it was a more equitable source for revenue generation than a gas tax, and 86% were satisfied with the plug-in method used to report the mileage. The state is now beginning a new pilot[8] to test how road charging will work with usage-based insurance, ridesharing, electric vehicle charging stations/pay-at-the-pump systems, and self-driving, automated vehicles.

Recommendations to Advance Equity

i. Partner with stakeholders to identify an equitable fee structure and exemptions based on income,[9] geography and other factors. Examples might include a 50% discount for low-income people and rural residents and a fee exemption for very low-income people.

ii. Rather than simply using a statewide road charging program to replace California's gas tax revenue, which is primarily spent[10] on highway and road improvements, we must reform how the revenue is distributed. Partner with stakeholders to identify how to:

a. Prioritize the revenue distribution for walking, biking, public transit, shared mobility or other clean mobility programs as opposed to additional highway improvements.

b. Prioritize the revenue distribution on a needs basis, for example where communities have identified transportation gaps or disproportionate air pollution, to satisfy unmet needs in formerly redlined communities, etc.

iii. To the extent that reforming the outdated gas tax distribution formulas creates barriers[11] to deliver on bold, transformative outcomes, states should instead create entirely new policies and programs to distribute road charging revenue in a way that advances equity, sustainability and climate goals.

Congestion Pricing

Congestion pricing (also known as cordon pricing) charges drivers a fee to enter the downtown core during rush hour. These fees are intended to reduce vehicle trips and to incentivize people to carpool, take public transit, bike or walk when possible. Congestion pricing can help get cars off the roads and reduce pollution by making it more costly to take solo trips that could have otherwise been done by public transit or other means. This approach also improves driving conditions for people who have to drive, such as construction workers who need to transport tools and equipment. Yet if congestion pricing fees are flat regardless of income, this would disproportionately burden low-income drivers. With the right equity protections, this strategy can serve as a reliable stream of revenue to improve the quality of our sidewalks, bike lanes, shared mobility and public transit systems and ensure that these more sustainable alternatives are the most efficient, attractive and cheapest way to get around. Rather than simply aiming to stop driving, congestion pricing aims to make the transportation system work better by making more road space available for those who need it while improving other mobility options for those who are able to take them.

San Francisco's[12] congestion pricing proposal would designate exemptions and discounts for low- or moderate income drivers, people with disabilities, and residents who live within the congestion pricing zone. Various fee structures are still under consideration. One option under review is a one-way $14 fee on moderate- to high-income drivers driving into the zone, with a 50% discount for low-income drivers and a 100% discount for very low-income drivers. The revenue from the program would be targeted at improving street safety and the quality of public transit, with a specific emphasis on low-income communities and communities of color. State legislation will be required to allow California cities to institute any congestion pricing policies.

Recommendations to Advance Equity

i. As outlined in San Francisco's[13] congestion pricing study, identify the appropriate fee structure, revenue distribution model, and enforcement policies through an equity-centered approach[14] that has been co-created with the community,[15] including low-income residents, small businesses and other relevant stakeholders.

ii. Ensure that any congestion pricing strategy includes ride-hailing services like Uber and Lyft, given their harmful impact on traffic,[16] pollution[17] and labor practices.[18] Ride-hailing companies must be required to absorb this cost of doing business themselves as opposed to passing off the fees to drivers.

Low and Zero Emission Zones

Low and Zero Emission Zones either limit or completely restrict polluting vehicles from driving into a designated area with the goal of cleaning the air and improving quality of life. The implementation of LZEZs ranges widely[19] from restricting polluting trucks and buses to limiting polluting passenger vehicles and scooters, or only allowing clean vehicles to enter the designated area. Some models ban polluting vehicles altogether, and others simply charge them fees to enter the area. Similarly to congestion pricing, there are equity implications if low-income people who drive older, more polluting vehicles pay disproportionately higher fees as higher-income people transition more quickly to zero-emission vehicles. To ensure that low-income people and people of color do not bear the most burdens and instead reap the most benefits, equity and community-identified needs must be front and center in designing the fee structure and revenue distribution model. If specifically applied to the delivery and e-commerce industry, protections may be needed so as not to unfairly impact small businesses. In the short-term, this may hasten the pace of the electrification of the transportation sector. Yet in the long run, congestion pricing may prove to be a more sustainable way to generate revenue than LZEZs, while disincentivizing vehicle trips regardless of how much a vehicle pollutes.

The Santa Monica Zero Emissions Delivery Zone[20] aims to provide guidance to other cities on adopting zero emissions delivery zones and to secure reduced air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and traffic while increasing safety. This is the first project of its kind in the U.S, and will encourage the testing of electric bikes or scooters for food and e-commerce delivery, electric carsharing, electric medium and heavy duty vehicles, and more. This is currently a voluntary program, and legislation would be required for a local California jurisdiction to institute a mandatory LZEZ.

Recommendations to Advance Equity

i. Identify the appropriate emission reduction plans, target vehicles, and enforcement policies, fee structure, and revenue distribution model through an equity-centered approach[21] that has been co-created with the community,[22] including low-income residents, small businesses and other relevant stakeholders.

Statewide Tax on Transportation Network Companies

TNCs such as Uber and Lyft (also known as ride-hailing) have worsened traffic in cities around the world, are responsible for up to 14%[23] of all vehicle miles traveled in some cities, and compete[24] with public transit for ridership. Equally concerning, TNC trips generate 70% more pollution[25] than simply driving your own car, due to the additional miles of aimless driving waiting for the next ride. These distressing data rest atop of a broken business model that relies on exploitation of its drivers, which disproportionately harms[26] low-income people and people of color. TNC trips make up an increasing proportion of total vehicle trips—in San Francisco 15% on average and up to 26%[27] during peak periods. Across the board, TNC trips are only shared 15% of the time.[28] All of this indicates that a tax would hold great potential to disincentivize solo trips, reduce pollution and VMT, while raising revenue to improve the quality and attractiveness of walking, biking and public transit. While the California Public Utilities Commission technically collects fees[29] on TNCs to cover the associated regulatory costs of the industry, information about how much revenue is generated and how it is spent is not shared with the public. Some California cities have instituted local taxes[30] on TNCs, however, a statewide tax could provide much needed additional revenue that sets a standard for how to distribute the funds equitably and transparently.

Massachusetts had already instituted a statewide 20 cent per ride tax, and now a new bill[31] that is awaiting final approval by the governor would increase the base fee to 40 cents for carpool rides and $1.20 for individual rides. The bill specifies that the revenue would fund public transit improvements and a low-income fare program that would provide free or discounted fares—while prohibiting arrests for fare evasion.

Recommendations to Advance Equity

i. Conduct additional research and a community and stakeholder engaged process to identify an equitable tax structure and distribution of revenue that prioritizes walking, biking, public transit
and shared mobility improvements on a needs basis.

ii. Require that TNCs absorb the tax as a cost of doing business as opposed to passing off the fees to drivers.

iii. Require the tax to apply to driverless, automated TNCs.

iv. In addition to simply taxing TNC use, require that TNCs address accessibility issues for people without smartphones or bank accounts,[32] people with disabilities,[33] and explicit or implicit discimination against women and passengers of color.[34]

II. Cultivate Community Partnerships

Strong community partnerships are a key ingredient to sustaining clean mobility equity programs and pilots. These partnerships require a healthy and diverse ecosystem of support which may include public agencies, nonprofits, community-based organizations, residents, technical experts, mobility companies, researchers and other stakeholders. In a multi-stakeholder partnership, a diverse cohort of participants can together contribute a diverse and valuable variety of skill sets, resources and networks. This can ensure that community-identified needs are met, which can create higher demand for the program and contribute to the program's success. Key partnerships help to both obtain initial funding and to sustain clean mobility equity projects long past the pilot phase.

Currently not everyone comes into these partnerships with equal power and influence. For example, government often holds disproportionate power and decision-making authority despite the fact that for long-term success, partnerships must be grounded in community-identified needs, priorities and vision.

Míocar[35] is a part of the The Ecosystem of Shared Mobility pilot[36] located in the San Joaquin Valley that primarily serves low-income, Latino farmworkers. This pilot received a state grant and is supported by a multi-stakeholder partnership made up of regional government agencies, university researchers, community-based organizations and technical assistance providers, among others. Rather than establishing a public-private partnership with a mobility company, Míocar has remained community-owned by setting up a regional nonprofit to ensure that the assets of the project stay local and publicly owned, that pricing is affordable, and that the program remains eligible for future grants and government support as it grows. The bylaws governing this unique approach ensure that members of the community who are users of the service comprise a majority of the board membership, in addition to local nonprofits and other vested stakeholders.

Recommendations to Cultivate Community Partnerships

i. Government agencies should provide resources and dedicated staff time to initiate and sustain multi-stakeholder partnerships that bring together community-based organizations, residents, academics, local and regional government agencies, and other relevant partners. Upfront guidance must be provided to understand the realistic staffing and capacity needs to participate in these partnerships.

ii. Dedicate sufficient funding and resources for technical assistance,[37] capacity building and long-term skills building to allow under-resourced communities to actively participate through the development, implementation and evaluation of programs. For example, the capacity-building program, Partners Advancing Climate Equity,[38] builds the capacity and skills of frontline community leaders.

iii. Ensure that policies, programs, regulatory frameworks and access to funds support the development and implementation of nonprofit, community-owned clean mobility equity models,[39] such as Míocar[40] and Green Raiteros.[41] Government-funded mobility equity services should not be required to operate as public-private partnerships—especially as many private mobility companies have hesitated to invest in low-income or rural areas considered "less profitable."

iv. Require multi-stakeholder partnerships to develop a Collaborative Stakeholder Structure[42] that brings together public agencies, nonprofits, residents, and other relevant stakeholders to co-create a Partnership Agreement that lays out a transparent decision-making process and the organizational and financial relationships of all parties involved.

v. Fund sustained community engagement costs throughout the lifecycle of a program to ensure that community-identified needs are met continually, rather just in the beginning.

vi. When conducting community engagement, prioritize processes that center community power and decision-making[43] to co-create strategies, rather than simply informing the community of the program.

vii. Government agencies and other stakeholders involved in the mobility programs should hire staff who are a part of the community they are working with to build trust and ensure cultural competency.

viii. Government agencies should hire a qualified equity expert to conduct an internal equity assessment to understand their preparedness to participate in equitable community-centered work and to offer recommendations on addressing gaps.

ix. Evaluate how multi-stakeholder partnerships uphold procedural equity both internally and externally, to understand how the collaborative governance process is going, how are residents being engaged, and how to course-correct challenges in real time.

III. Improve the Cash Flow

The way that money flows from government sources to clean mobility equity programs and projects can create barriers and delays which can greatly inhibit their success.

How Funding is Awarded

Competitive, merit-based grant programs are commonly used by government agencies to award clean mobility equity funding to communities. Applying for grants requires an enormous amount of resources and staff time. Yet many times these grants disproportionately go to the communities that have more resources, capacity, and ability to hire grant writers and other technical experts to develop the most competitive applications. In an effort to address this barrier and foster more equitable participation, the Clean Mobility Options[44] project instituted a first-come first-served approach to award funds that required applicants to submit their application at the exact time that the funding window opens and compete for the earliest timestamp. Though well-intentioned, this process resulted in new equity obstacles for applicants who had slower internet connections or who faced other barriers to submitting their applications exactly on time.

Recommendations for Clean Mobility Equity Programs and Pilots

i. Programs should be merit-based to incentivize the adoption and application of more equitable practices and strategies.

ii. Applications should be scored and evaluated based on how well they meet project goals and community-identified needs.

iii. Provide more early-stage capacity building and technical assistance to under-resourced communities to submit more comprehensive grant applications.

How Funds are Reimbursed and Processed

Once funding has been awarded to a community, the way that it is distributed and processed can create barriers. In some cases, advance payment of grant funds can be distributed to the grantee, but not to the subgrantees. This means that subgrantees must spend the funds up front and then get reimbursed. And reimbursement timelines can be very long—sometimes over 90 days. While a government agency may be able to wait for reimbursement, this causes barriers for community-based organizations and under-resourced cities and can dissuade them from applying for funds altogether. On the grantee side, the complex process of reporting and processing disbursement requests can also cause delays. All of these challenges are further compounded by the common issue of tight timelines, deadlines within which the allocated funds must be spent, and other strict protocols to meet grant requirements, all of which can delay the implementation of the project.

Recommendations for Clean Mobility Equity Programs and Pilots

i. While a reimbursement model may work for the purchasing of physical assets (e.g. electric cars or bikes), reimbursement models should not be applied to programs that rely on significant upfront planning, staff time, outreach and community engagement. This could be a financial burden to under-resourced communities.

ii. A 30 day turnaround for reimbursement should be the standard so as to not drag out project timelines.

iii. Implement advance payment processes involving community-based organizations, under-resourced cities and other subgrantees, with care. Ensure that grantees have the capacity and resources to properly administer advance payment, due to the often stringent requirements on grantees to prove that they will be careful stewards of the funds.

Financing, Financing Capacity, Lines of Credit, and Procurement

Waiting for government funds to come through for projects often requires communities to seek loans, lines of credit or other financing if they do not have the capital available to procure the needed goods and services. For example, while waiting to be reimbursed, CalVans took out a loan with interest to purchase hybrid vans for the Agricultural Worker Vanpool Pilot Project.45 Unfortunately, low-income residents and communities are often the targets of predatory loan practices.46 This financing process can be a burden and without care may leave under-resourced communities in worse off financial situations.

Recommendations for Clean Mobility Equity Programs and Pilots:

i. To the extent possible, program administrators should aim to allow for advance payment both for grantees and subgrantees.

ii. If advance payment is not possible, the program administrator should partner with entities who will provide affordable loan financing, consumer protection mechanisms and financial education to awardees. For example, the California Air Resources Board has partnered with Beneficial State Foundation to provide grants and affordable loans through the The Clean Vehicle Assistance Program.[47]

IV. Augment Revenue Sources

Beyond initial grants and seed funding from government sources to develop clean equity mobility projects, these programs need additional long-term revenue sources to operate and sustain themselves past the pilot phase. This is particularly relevant for shared mobility projects such as electric carsharing, bikesharing, schootersharing, microtransit, vanpooling and similar models. Yet in identifying and implementing the appropriate revenue sources, all involved must address key equity considerations within the context of low-income, disadvantaged communities and communities of color.

Partnering with mobility companies, government, philanthropic or corporate sponsors can help to subsidize costs and provide overall benefits to the mobility program. In fact, non-governmental funding sources may allow more flexibility to allocate funds towards activities that some government agencies are not able to fund, such as compensating participation for community engagement. Yet at the same time, private investment may come with strings attached, as corporate sponsors seek a return on their investment, whether that's in the form of profit or simply good public relations. Therefore, it is important to limit the influence and power of mobility companies, sponsors and advertisers to ensure that user fees are kept affordable, to uphold community values and labor standards, and to direct the intended benefits to the communities rather than to mobility companies. To better meet equity goals, many clean mobility programs or projects may prefer not to rely on private investment and instead operate on a public or nonprofit model—which would greatly change the revenue amount required to operate it.

However, we must acknowledge that some programs may never be self-sustaining but still provide significant benefits to the community. Rather than requiring equity programs to be financially sustainable, clean mobility equity programs that prove to meet community-identified needs should be subsidized in perpetuity by government agencies. This approach can help keep clean mobility equity programs affordable and accessible to high-need populations, and is no different from how the government subsidizes public transit. We should both expand public transit funding and innovate on the model by broadening the types of clean mobility options that are publicly funded.

Below, we provide equity recommendations for some common revenue sources, as outlined by the Clean Mobility Options Voucher Plot Program's Financial Sustainability Strategies and Funding Sources Guide.[48] These equity recommendations are not intended to be one-size-fits-all solutions for each community and must be tailored appropriately. The recommendations within each revenue source are organized by the relevant Six Standards of Equitable Investment. However, not every revenue source will be able to achieve all of the Six Standards. Therefore, mobility programs should stack a variety of revenue sources in order to adhere to a wider array of equity standards, expand and diversify their revenue streams and meet community-identified needs.

> Clean mobility equity programs that prove to meet community-identified needs should be subsidized in perpetuity by government agencies.

Types of Revenue Sources

User Fees collect fees from users to support program costs. In some cases, like the BlueLA[49] electric vehicle car share project, user fees may have an income-based tiered pricing structure.[50] User fees may take the form of pay-as-you-go, subscription or bundled pricing. Because there are so many different variations of user fees with various implications, it is critical to involve communities in the design and decision-making at every step of the way.

Recommendations to Advance Equity

Prioritize Multi-Sector Approaches	▪ Assess eligibility for free/reduced user fees based on income or a users' participation in a food assistance, electricity subsidy or other similar programs. ▪ Bundle pricing with public transit systems via monthly passes or fare cards[51] that can be used for discounted trips across operators. ▪ Reduce access barriers to paying user fees by 1) creating alternatives[52] for people without smartphones or bank accounts or 2) helping people to obtain a bank account or smartphone.
Deliver Intentional Benefits	▪ Demonstrate a direct tie between fees and how they are used to support the service and advance equity outcomes.
Be Community Driven at Every Stage	▪ Community should be centered in the decision-making around the development of a tiered pricing structure whose format meets the community needs: pay as you go, subscription, bundle, etc.
Creating Paths Towards Wealth Building	▪ Ensure that user fees are lower than previous transportation costs.

Advertising via mobility programs can collect revenue by selling advertising space on vehicles, bikesharing docks, micromobility devices, charging stations, on public transit, on their digital platforms or by other means. Yet advertising must have clear ground rules and standards to prevent unintended harm and instead advance positive community benefits. When done correctly, advertising can be an opportunity to uplift local businesses, strengthen existing community assets, and reflect community values.

Recommendations to Advance Equity

Emphasize Anti-Racist Solutions	▪ Prohibit advertisements of products, services or businesses that have a history of racist practices, exploitation or other negative impacts on people of color.
Prioritize Multi-Sector Approaches	▪ Promote advertising related to social services, health services, financial services, census information and other wrap around services.
Deliver Intentional Benefits	▪ Ban the advertisement[53] of harmful products or services, like cigarettes, alcohol or firearms.
Build Community Capacity	▪ Prioritize advertisements of products and services that build community capacity and strengthen community assets, such as workforce training and development organizations, community colleges, local credit unions, etc.
Be Community Driven at Every Stage	▪ Develop rules for advertising that reflect community values, needs and priorities by working directly with residents and community-based organizations.
Creating Paths Towards Wealth Building	▪ Promote the advertising[54] of local/women/minority-owned businesses, of businesses that have fair labor practices, and businesses that have policies around local hiring and contracting with local, women, veteran or minority-owned businesses.

Sponsorships are similar to advertising, but generally involve outside partners who operate on a more exclusive, longer-term basis. Sponsors are often larger corporations. For example, Citibank paid $41 million to be the lead sponsor for New York City's Citi Bike Share55 program. While sponsors can contribute significant resources, giving private entities a financial stake in how mobility programs run and operate generally leads to cost-effectiveness being prioritized over the largest benefit to communities. Sponsorships should only occur when there is sufficient oversight and accountability to ensure that sponsoring private entities maintain equitable practices, as outlined below.

Recommendations to Advance Equity

Emphasize Anti-Racist Solutions	▪ Implement inclusive, race-conscious approaches to outreach and engagement such as translation, interpretation, and other culturally appropriate solutions that challenge the centering of dominant White culture[56] and standards as the norm. ▪ Prioritize the distribution of investments to populations who have been harmed most by systemic racism.
Prioritize Multi-Sector Approaches	▪ Prioritize or incentivize sponsorships that commit to addressing multi-sector issues (e.g. a sponsored mobility program partnering with a low-income housing site[57] or a workforce development program.)
Build Community Capacity	▪ In addition to sponsoring the mobility program, develop a community benefits agreement[58] in which the sponsor funds community capacity in a way that responds to community needs and values (e.g. funding youth programs, community gardens, long-term training and skills development.)
Be Community Driven at Every Stage	▪ Develop rules and guidelines[59] for sponsorships that reflect community values, needs and priorities by working directly with residents and community-based organizations.
Creating Paths Toward Wealth Building	▪ Establish requirements or incentives to only form sponsorship agreements with companies that have fair labor practices and hire and contract with local/women/minority-owned businesses. ▪ Specify in the sponsorship agreement that in the event of a program being discontinued, the mobility assets (e.g. electric cars, bikes, etc.) and supporting infrastructure are repurposed or transferred[60] to a different party to provide community mobility services.

Subsidies from entities can help lower user fees and benefit the overall efficiency of the mobility program. They are often provided in the form of tax-deductible contributions from employers to support work-related carpool or vanpool programs, through Medicare and Medicaid to transport patients to medical appointments, or in other similar forms. Often these types of programs are underutilized, which is why they must be coupled with strong community outreach and education. Additionally, if a mobility program shows promise to meet community-identified needs, then permanent subsidies and co-funding from various government sources should be considered.

Recommendations to Advance Equity

Emphasize Anti-Racist Solutions	▪ Prioritize subsidized services in communities and demographics who have been harmed most by systemic racism. ▪ In the event of contracting with a third party to provide the subsidized service, require race-conscious approaches to outreach, engagement and the operation of the service itself. This can include hiring employees who speak the languages of the community and other culturally appropriate solutions that challenge the centering of dominant White culture[61] and standards as the norm.
Build Community Capacity	▪ Public transit agencies and other local governments can partner with a mobility service to develop mobility hubs, to conduct outreach and engagement, and to subsidize user fees for low-income people and help fill their public transit gaps.
Creating Paths Towards Wealth Building	▪ Ensure that the employer's contribution amount is sufficient to guarantee that the user fees paid by employees are more affordable than the employee's transportation costs were before the service was offered. To maximize participation, employer contributions should reduce cost on the spot rather than taking a reimbursement approach.

Grants generally come from state or federal sources, yet may also be awarded through philanthropic or corporate foundations. While grants are especially helpful as seed funding, applying for grants requires significant capacity and resources, and ideally should be coupled with additional revenue sources to be sustainable in the long term.

A more comprehensive list of equity recommendations and examples of clean mobility equity grants can be referenced in Greenlining's Clean Mobility Equity: A Playbook.[62]

Recommendations to Advance Equity

Emphasize Anti-Racist Solutions	▪ Develop clean mobility grant programs that are specifically designed to overcome the obstacles that priority communities face when adopting clean mobility technologies, and target 100% of funding[63] toward communities who have been harmed most by systemic racism.
Prioritize Multi-Sector Approaches	▪ Develop clean mobility grant programs that provide co-benefits by addressing multiple issues[64] and sectors at once, such as wealth-building, climate adaptation, anti-displacement and more, along with outreach, engagement and capacity-building.
Deliver Intentional Benefits	▪ Benefits from grant programs cannot trickle down to communities; they need to go directly to the people most in need in the most impactful ways, while not increasing or creating new burdens.
Build Community Capacity	▪ To ensure under-resourced communities are able to apply for, develop and implement clean mobility equity grants, grant programs must require and build in[65] technical assistance, capacity building, and long-term training and skills development.
Be Community-Driven at Every Stage	▪ Involve stakeholders in the design and development of grant programs as early as possible to vet the details and ensure that programs meet the needs of all applicants and communities, particularly those with the most barriers.
Creating Paths Towards Wealth Building	▪ Grant programs must not only lead to improved connectivity to jobs and reduce transportation costs, they must also create jobs along with workforce development and training opportunities, contract with local businesses, and grow community-owned assets and infrastructure.

Conclusion

These clean mobility equity projects and programs are in high demand with no shortage of community-driven clean projects in the pipeline. To meet that demand and ensure the long-term success of these mobility projects and programs, we must secure sufficient funding, build strong community partnerships, increase the efficient flow of cash to communities, and develop financial sustainability plans for these projects. This will allow us to replicate and scale up the mobility projects and programs so that they can aid the transition to a clean transportation future that centers equity at every step of the way.

About

The Greenlining Institute

The Greenlining Institute works toward a future when communities of color can build wealth, live in healthy places filled with economic opportunity, and are ready to meet the challenges posed by climate change. To achieve this vision, Greenlining is committed to building a just economy that is inclusive, cooperative, sustainable, participatory, fair, and healthy. Our multifaceted advocacy efforts address the root causes of racial, economic, and environmental inequities in order to meaningfully transform the material conditions of communities of color in California and across the nation. We act as an incubator of new policy ideas, a bridge builder between people, communities and government, and an advocate to build momentum for transformative change.

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Hana works on the development and implementation of policies leading to clean transportation and mobility investments that will benefit low-income communities of color. She was the lead author of the Mobility Equity Framework, a tool that can be used to maximize equity outcomes and community engagement in transportation planning and decision-making. Hana was also the lead author of Autonomous Vehicle Heaven or Hell? Creating a Transportation Revolution that Benefits All, a report outlining policy recommendations to ensure mobility, health and economic benefits to marginalized communities. She serves on a number of advisory committees for cities, agencies, universities and nonprofits for projects relating to shared mobility and autonomous vehicles. Hana holds a B.A. in sustainability from San Diego State University.

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Endnotes

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