

ADVANCING OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL IN TRANSPORTATION, GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION, AND SMART GROWTH



2016

Prepared by MZ Strategies, LLC for the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities



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Best Practices

Advancing Opportunity for all in Transportation, Greenhouse Gas Reduction, & Smart Growth

These Best Practice recommendations can be used by funders to prioritize opportunity-supportive transportation and smart growth strategies while meeting universal goals of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions caused by transportation and land use.

Foundation Operations and Leadership



- ✓ **Communication for Equitable Outcomes**

- ✓ **Foster Collaboration**

- ✓ **Build Leadership and Capacity**

Program and Grantmaking



- ✓ **Utilize Equitable Processes**

- ✓ **Build Transportation and Planning Capacity**

- ✓ **Fund Partnerships**

- ✓ **Deepen Public Engagement**

Measuring for Equitable Outcomes



- ✓ **Tie Goals to Outcomes**

- ✓ **Measure Social Equity**

- ✓ **Utilize Equity Atlases and Mapping Tools**

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

This Compendium of Best Practices is the result of extensive data gathering, outreach, and analysis led by the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities (TFN) to support philanthropic practices that build more opportunity for all into transportation, smart growth, and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction policies. This Compendium -- designed for funders -- distills a myriad of solutions and offers ten best practices with examples of their successful implementation. Each is chosen for its effectiveness, as well as practicability of replication and implementation. They are not intended to be a comprehensive set of all current applications, but rather a sample of tools for funders to ensure that low-income households and communities of color benefit from efforts in their communities to address climate change, expand mobility, and create more inclusive development policies and investments.

A. THE EQUALITY RATIONALE

Why does social inequality matter in transportation, smart growth, and greenhouse gas reduction? Increasingly, economists, business leaders, and elected officials are warning of threats to society from rising inequality of income and economic opportunity. The Nobel Prize winning economist, Joseph Stiglitz writes: “we are paying a high price for our inequality – an economic system that is less stable and less efficient, with less growth, and a democracy that has been put into peril.”¹ This theme is echoed in countless scholarly and policy works, from Thomas Piketty’s *Capital* to the myriad reports coming out from the Harvard/University of California: Equality of Opportunity Project and USC’s Program for Environmental and Regional Equity.² Concentrated areas of racial and ethnic poverty are increasing in a growing number of cities, exacerbating the need for better affordable housing, education, workforce development and transportation solutions that can improve the access to opportunity currently lacking.

At the same time, researchers, planners, and advocates are recognizing those places pursuing opportunity for all as part of larger economic and community development strategies are experiencing stronger economic growth.³ Those working to address climate change also recognize that social inequality is both part of the problem and the solution. Built upon the work of Manual Pastor and Angela Glover Blackwell, TFN believes that more inclusive approaches are not only the superior economic model, but also the superior GHG mitigation model.⁴ Focusing on transportation solutions that benefit the most vulnerable in society is essential to achieving urban and regional sustainability and GHG reductions. Improving transit services so that it reaches more people and essential destinations, and increasing accessibility to bicycling and pedestrian options for low-income neighborhoods and

¹ Joseph Stiglitz, *The Price of Inequality* (New York: Norton, 2013), p.xli

² <http://www.equality-of-opportunity.org/files/Geography%20Executive%20Summary%20and%20Memo%20January%202014.pdf>

³ MAPC’s report, *State of Equity in Metro Boston*, stresses the need to “incorporate equity at the heart of [Metro Future] work,”³ citing, among other evidence, a collection of research in a PolicyLink, Center for American Progress report: “Prosperity 2050: Is Equity the Superior Growth Model?”³

⁴ PolicyLink and Center for American Progress, *Prosperity 2050: Is Equity the Superior Growth Model?* (http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/04/pdf/prosperity_2050.pdf).

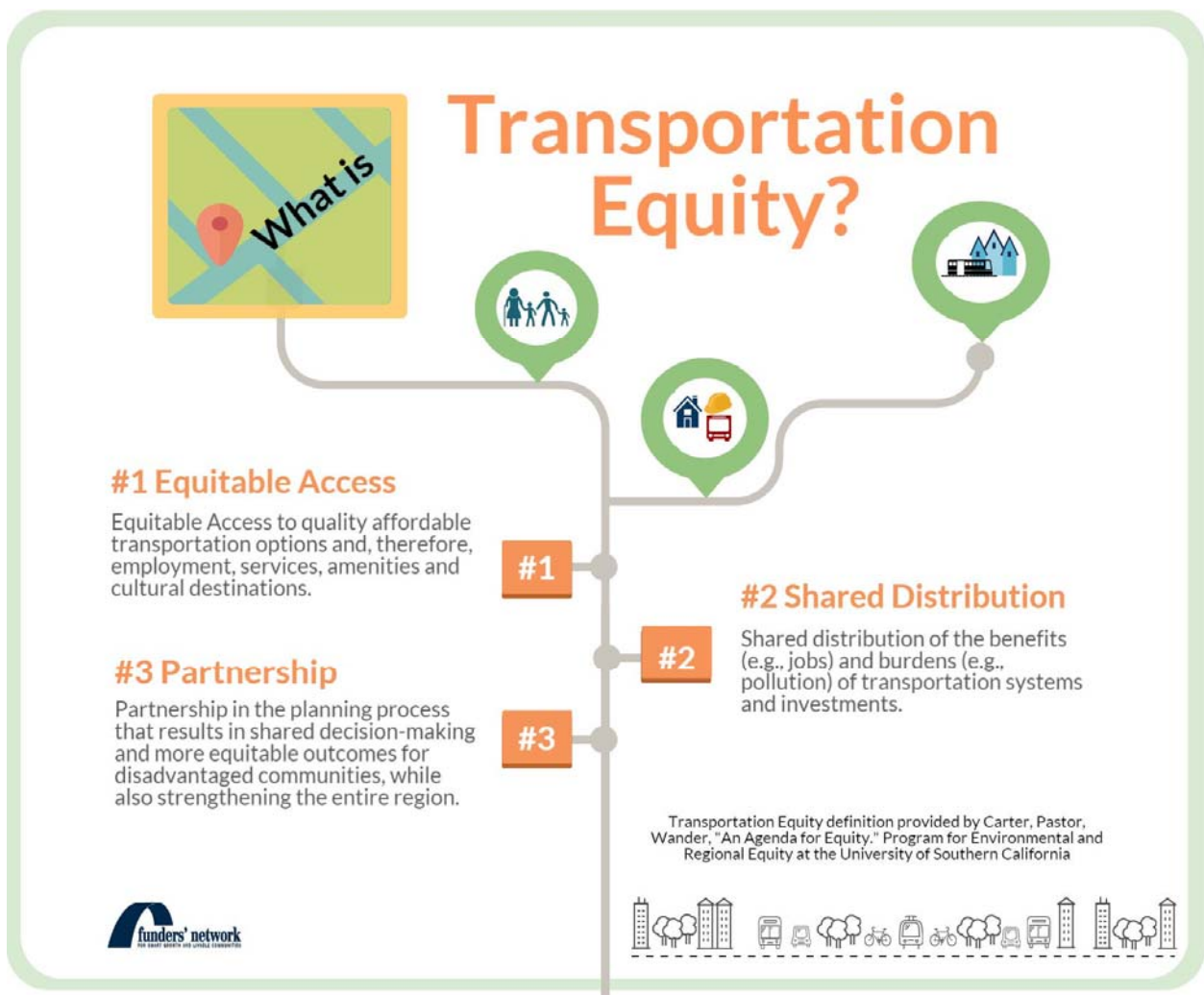
communities of color, helps reduce dependence on cars which lowers GHG emissions, while improving resident health and access to opportunity.

Given philanthropy's long-standing commitment to fairness, social inclusion, and racial justice, these themes should also inform the investment of foundation portfolios, including those focused on the reduction of GHGs. The climate crisis requires substantial shifts in how our communities are designed and how people navigate the built landscape. Climate change, transportation, and land use policies too often happen without consideration for who benefits and who is burdened. For example, large transit fare increases may expand revenues for transit service improvement and system expansion, but such increases place disproportionate financial burdens on those who most depend on the system and are least able to pay, such as those living in poverty, youth, and the elderly.

One framework for meeting the needs of socially disadvantaged groups while achieving climate, transportation, and smart growth goals is John A. Powell's public policy framework known as 'Targeted Universalism' that encourages policymakers and other stakeholders to design interventions that meet broad social needs while prioritizing social justice.⁵ Policies written in the spirit of Targeted Universalism likely benefit all social groups, but especially respond to the needs of the socially disadvantaged. Targeted Universalism rejects the adage that 'a rising tide lifts all boats', especially when it comes to government-backed interventions and initiatives designed to alleviate poverty and improve quality of life. This approach emphasizes policies that are "inclusive of the needs of both the dominant and marginal groups" while giving "particular attention to the situation of the marginal groups" (803).⁶ By adopting a Targeted Universalism perspective, the goals, concerns, and metrics by which policies and programs are designed and evaluated primarily revolve around more equitable outcomes and supporting the needs of socially marginalized groups.

⁵ Powell, J. A. (2008). Post-Racialism or Targeted Universalism. *Denver University Law Review*, 86, 785-806. <http://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/facpubs/1633>

⁶ Ibid.



Focusing on transportation solutions that benefit the most vulnerable in society is essential to achieving urban and regional sustainability. Climate solutions that are achieved on the backs of the most underserved populations are not likely to be sustainable. Foundations can play an important role to ensure climate adaptation and mitigation strategies meet the needs of vulnerable populations and that their engagement and leadership are fully utilized in creating sustainable solutions.

B. UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

In order to effectively build prosperous and inclusive communities, funders must build their Best Practices toolbox. The following infographic details essential guiding principles for prioritizing opportunity for all, and the values underlying those principles:

Principles & Values

Prioritizing Opportunity for All in Transportation, Greenhouse Gas Reduction, & Smart Growth



Three Principles



#1 Focus on People and Place

#2 Reduce Local and Regional Disparities

#3 Expand Leadership Opportunities

Four Values Underlying these Principles



1. Fairness: Look at who benefits from decisions being made.
2. Democracy: Include all people in decision-making about use of public resources.
3. Opportunity: Increase prosperity and opportunity for all.
4. Access: Consider if grants increase or limit access for people, especially those most disadvantaged by systems, structures, and decision-making.

PART II: BEST PRACTICES

Applying state-of-the-art tools when applying best practices improves the capacity of local organizations to more effectively influence climate, transportation and development outcomes. In some instances, this may mean providing the support to develop locally-applicable tools and engage community organizing groups in their development and deployment. Measuring progress, or benchmarking, is an important element of developing equitable processes.

The best practices in this section were selected as exemplary, innovative approaches for assisting regional funders' efforts in building opportunity for all community members in transportation, smart growth, and GHG reduction strategies. The tools are divided into those related to (1) Foundation Operations and Leadership; (2) Program and Grantmaking; and, (3) Measuring Equitable Outcomes.

Best Practices
Advancing Opportunity for all in
Transportation, Greenhouse Gas Reduction, & Smart Growth

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- Foundation Operations and Leadership**
 - ✓ Communication for Equitable Outcomes
 - ✓ Foster Collaboration
 - ✓ Build Leadership and Capacity
- Program and Grantmaking**
 - ✓ Utilize Equitable Processes
 - ✓ Build Transportation and Planning Capacity
 - ✓ Fund Partnerships
 - ✓ Deepen Public Engagement
- Measuring for Equitable Outcomes**
 - ✓ Tie Goals to Outcomes
 - ✓ Measure Social Equity
 - ✓ Utilize Equity Atlases and Mapping Tools

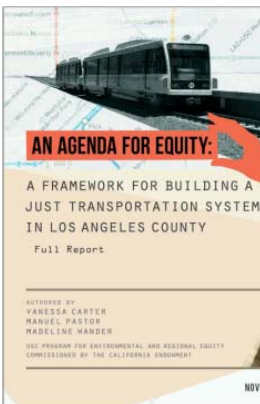
Photo Sources: The Funders' Network, MZ Strategies LLC

A. BEST PRACTICES FOR FOUNDATION OPERATIONS AND LEADERSHIP

1. Communicate Expectations for More Equitable Outcomes

Build and communicate the necessity and benefit of prioritizing opportunity for all in public policies and practices. Funders can leverage their role as regional or local leaders to elevate, communicate and add credibility to prioritizing social justice outcomes. This is especially true with government agencies where philanthropy can support efforts to work with agency staff to internally elevate equitable outcomes, and efforts to advocate for reforms from outside of government. By setting and communicating measurable expectations for grantees, funders set an example for grantees to follow.

Example: An Agenda for Equity: A Framework for Building a Just Transportation System in Los Angeles County



The Agenda for Equity Framework builds a justification for bringing together disparate equity and transportation integration efforts. It is designed to bring equity and transportation efforts to the field for practical application, as well as to provide support around why equity matters. The document, created by Vanessa Carter, Manuel Pastor, and Madeline Wander was commissioned by the California Endowment for the USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity.

(https://dornsife.usc.edu/assets/sites/242/docs/Executive_Summary_Agenda_for_Equity_PERE.pdf)

2. Foster Collaboration

Use philanthropy's power to convene diverse groups to strengthen relationships, build trust, and foster collaboration among key players in the region. Philanthropy can help connect social equity and climate advocates with key actors including elected officials, other funders, and public sector practitioners.

Enable on-going, facilitated, and in-depth gatherings to build working relationships and coordinate opportunities to address impacts on disadvantaged communities. Support education and learning opportunities, including peer-to-peer information sharing and knowledge transfer between those working within your community and also informed by peer regions. These efforts can lay the foundation for a broader opportunity agenda. Lastly, build collaboration through continuous engagement with constituencies across the region to communicate the importance of co-benefits between other important public policy issues with transportation, climate and smart growth. To increase effectiveness and impact, encourage groups to leverage their individual networks and tailor messages that amplify a common, shared message. Convenings are an opportunity to spotlight local venues, local companies, and local organizations that illustrate best practices and underlying foundation values.

Example: Central Corridor Funders' Collaborative



The Central Corridor Funders' Collaborative in Saint Paul, Minnesota supports ten active working groups comprised of people from all sectors working to support a corridor of opportunity for all. Those groups are: Business Resources Collaborative; Central Corridor Anchor Partnership; Joint Committee on Equal Opportunity & Disadvantaged Business Enterprises; Big Picture Project; Corridors 2 Careers; Transit-Oriented Development Investment Framework; Bike and Pedestrian Connections; Green Line Parks and Commons Initiative; Cultural Corridor; and Communication & Coordination. The Collaborative has built local capacity across these areas, and also is an important cross-sector convener.

(<http://www.funderscollaborative.org/>)

3. Build Leadership and Capacity

Provide institutional leadership by integrating a focus on access to opportunity into foundation culture, policies, and practice. Provide consistent capacity building to cultivate technical knowledge and advocacy skills for community activists who represent people of color and low-income groups so they can engage effectively. Be explicit in communications from and within the foundation of the importance of broadening opportunity for all to the organization's work and the ways funders institutionalize values in operations. Codify the learning and professional development opportunities for staff and board to continue building their knowledge, awareness, and skills on social justice, inclusion, and diversity.

Example: The Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute



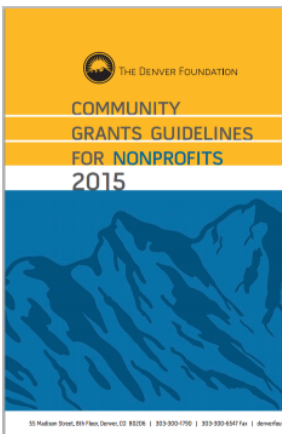
The Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute, initiated by Urban Habitat in San Francisco and replicated in Sacramento, Seattle and the Twin Cities (<http://www.urbanhabitat.org/leadership/bcli>) provides advocates with not just a voice, but a vote at the table. The Institute recruits people from low-income communities and communities of color who have a proven track record of leadership as social justice advocates. Recruits are distinguished by a passion to change systems by learning the “inside game.” BCLI is deeply invested in each cohort through its six-month BCLI fellowship, which teaches advocates how to understand complex and intersecting policy arenas, navigate the culture and language of commissions, and build effective relationships in and outside the commission.

B. BEST PRACTICES FOR PROGRAM AND GRANTMAKING

1. Utilize Equitable Processes

Integrate questions about broadening opportunity into grant applications and grant reports, and build them into evaluation and other foundation processes. A significant intervention that funders can make is to signal the importance of broadening opportunity in the application process, use the data collected in the discussions with potential grantees, and integrate emphasis on broadening opportunity for all into internal decision-making on grants. Philanthropy can further reinforce the importance of this work by requiring grantees to report on progress promoting fair and equitable opportunities for all people in their transportation, climate and smart growth projects, revisiting for example the kinds of questions initially addressed in the application form.

Example: Denver Foundation's Community Grants Guidelines for Nonprofits



The Denver Foundation's Community Grants Guidelines for Nonprofits 2014 require all nonprofit applicants to respond to four additional questions on resident engagement and inclusiveness as a part of their proposal narrative. These include inquiries on strategies used to ensure that the voices, experiences, and perspectives of the communities served, especially communities of color, are included in the planning, design, and implementation of programming, engagement strategies, methods used to address racial and economic disparities, and assistance needed to become more inclusive, better engage constituents, and/or become more effective at addressing racial and economic disparities.

(http://www.denverfoundation.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/TDF_Guidelines_2015.pdf)

2. Build Transportation and Community Planning Capacity

Fund consistent, structured capacity building to cultivate knowledge on transportation issues and processes for community activists, people of color, and low-income groups so that they can engage effectively. Transportation is an issue that touches upon many social equity goals including improved public health and safety, reduced cost of living, and better access to jobs, education, and recreation. Transportation is a major contributor to climate change. Transportation investments result from a defined long-range planning process and federal requirements for public engagement. For these reasons, it provides a focused opportunity for impact. Philanthropic support allows people of color and residents of disadvantaged communities to get involved in the transportation debate and related smart growth or climate decision-making.

Example: Transit-Oriented District University



Transit-oriented development – the practice of locating housing and jobs near high quality transit can yield many of these benefits if it includes affordable housing and community jobs. Many transit agencies and long-range transportation plans advocate TOD. Enterprise Community Partners funded Move LA to create the Transit-Oriented District University to train transit advocates on how the real estate market works. Move LA trains the trainers, i.e., the community organizers who need to know about development and real estate markets, that are impacting their communities. Trainers lead weekend and half-day universities on real estate development issues in transit corridor communities. The program has worked best when locally-based groups participate in the training, and can subsequently provide training on real estate development issues for neighborhood residents. (<http://www.enterprisecommunity.com/where-we-work/southern-california/priorities-and-impact/tod-training>)

3. Fund Partnerships

Fund partnerships between community organizations and “technical translators” -- individuals who can understand and translate technical data, legislation, and regulations into accessible information that advocates can communicate and adapt to leverage data into policy changes. Transportation, climate change, and real estate markets are complex topics. Survey environmental justice and social equity groups to better understand what kind of technical support and assistance is most needed to more actively and effectively participate in advocacy, policy debates, and place-based practice. Ideally, this technical capacity is built within these organizations but it can also be an opportunity to get groups to partner together to bridge technical and grassroots capacity.

Example: The San Francisco 6 Wins for Social Equity Network



The 6 Wins for Social Equity Network is a group of strategic allies from social justice, faith, public health, and environmental organizations across the Bay Area. In 2010 they worked to ensure that low-income communities of color benefitted from the new Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy that directed how transportation and climate funding would be spent over the next 30 years. The 6 Wins Network launched the first-ever community-built, equity-driven, alternative regional plan. Public health advocates became important allies to broaden the platform. The 6 Wins Network continues working to address gentrification pressures excluding marginalized communities from high-opportunity neighborhoods and destabilizing community networks. (<http://www.publicadvocates.org/6-wins-network>)

4. Deepen Community Engagement

Reach out to a diverse cross-section of community members on transportation and climate issues to build equitable solutions while building a strong foundation for future engagement. Traditional community meetings tend to bring the same voices to the discussion again and again. Foundations can fund innovative, fun, and unconventional methods to deepen community involvement and include traditionally under-represented voices. In-person and online efforts include gathering community input through the use of handheld technologies like mobile phones and handheld computers, as well as community celebrations and other engaging ways to bring the conversation to the people.

Example: Go Boston 2030 Visioning Lab



Go Boston 2030 Visioning Lab is an initiative to envision Boston's transportation future. Over 80 community and agency partners came together to include the voices of community members not typically involved in community planning. Supported by the Barr Foundation, the Interactive Institute for Social Change used unconventional methods to reach community members both online and in-person. Its Question Campaign asked Bostonians "What's your question about getting around Boston in the Future?" Outreach included "The Question Truck," a bus visiting neighborhoods, workplaces, community events and meetings. The truck created a festive theme with music and free hot chocolate, and invited people to donate questions by writing directly on the bus, iPads, or notecards. Nearly 5,000 questions were collected from over 600 participants, building the foundation of Boston's Vision Framework. (<http://goboston2030.org/public-visioning/>) (Photo Credit: Allana Taranto for Go Boston 2030)

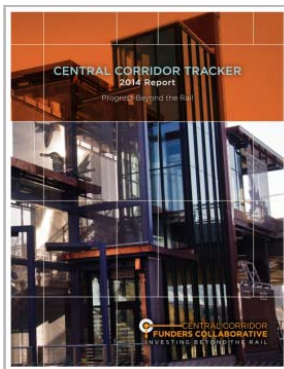
C. BEST PRACTICES FOR MEASURING MORE EQUITABLE OUTCOMES

Transit is often a focus point for climate, transportation, and smart growth advocacy work because it touches upon all three issues. It also is particularly important to the lives of low-income people, many of whom do not own a car. A critical first step in developing transit equity campaigns is understanding who is currently being served by existing transit service and evaluating how service can be improved. This effort inherently involves data which requires defining what will be measured and how. The definitions and metrics that are chosen influence how the issue of transit equity is understood and the responses and initiatives developed in response.

1. Tie Goals to Outcomes

Develop a limited and clear set of goals and objectives for an expanded transportation and smart growth strategy that increases access and expands mobility for all. Identify evaluation metrics that directly tie goals to specific outcomes for funders as well as grantees. Use a manageable number of goals and objectives supported by easily understood metrics that can be tracked over time. Create processes to develop and prioritize goals, while building a compelling strategy to evaluate whether actions yield desired outcomes.

Example: Central Corridor Tracker



Established in 2011, the Central Corridor Tracker measures annual progress toward making a newly-opened transit corridor a place of opportunity for new and existing residents, many of whom are low-income and represent a range of ethnicities and racial groups. The Tracker details progress toward collective goals, and focuses on specific indicators of change in four broad categories:

- Ensuring access to affordable housing
- Building a strong local economy
- Creating vibrant transit-oriented places
- Promoting effective coordination and collaboration

<http://www.funderscollaborative.org/tracker>

2. Measure Social Equity Outcomes

Develop indicators, measures, and metrics using data that is easily accessible, regularly updated, and reliable. Use measurement frameworks to calculate outcomes in terms of social equity. Evaluate both system and neighborhood impacts when possible. Many transit equity and regional opportunity metrics draw on data made available through local Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), city, regional, and local governments, and research bureaus. National datasets, such as those available through the U.S. Census, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development are other good places to find useful transit, demographic, housing, and other data for both households and neighborhoods.

Example: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning - MetroPulse

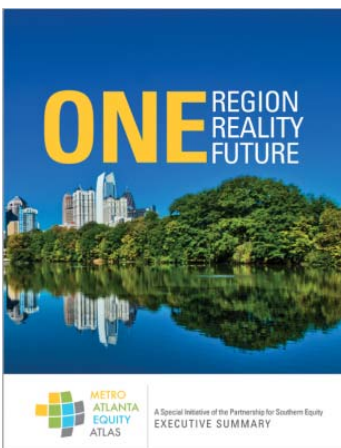


The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and the Chicago Community Trust partner in the collection and distribution of public data to monitor progress on the region's most important issues. MetroPulse focuses on select indicators for monitoring the implementation of the regional GO TO 2040 plan and progress on the Chicago Community Trust's community goals. It includes narrative analyses and visuals on indicators of significance to a broad community of users, as well as "snapshot" data reports on each municipality in the region and the City of Chicago's 77 community areas. To close the gap on user data needs, the site provides categorized links to data from trusted sources selected by CMAP and the Chicago Community Trust. (<http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/data/metropulse>)

3. Utilize Equity Atlases and Mapping Tools

Use web-based, interactive maps and narrative to provide visual understanding of transit access, service, and equity. One powerful example of this is the Equity Atlas. These provide visual and written depictions of community assets including transportation, housing, and health care. Equity Atlases can reveal transit disparities and display a region's geography of opportunity. They can be used to promote regional equity and inform transportation planning, policy, and investment. Equity Atlases assist funders and other investors in determining where to most effectively target public and private investments, and can help communities decide where to locate new housing, transit, parks, services, and infrastructure.

Example: The Metro Atlanta Equity Atlas



The Metro Atlanta Equity Atlas (MAEA) illuminates how social equity, regional prosperity and growth can be unlocked when communities have equitable access to a range of highly interconnected resources. MAEA "well-being" categories that comprise a healthy region include demographics, economic development, education, environment, health, housing, public safety, and transportation.

MAEA is the region's newest online data tool, designed to connect local stakeholders to timely, accurate data. By examining eight key areas of community well-being, the MAEA offers fascinating insight into the state of the Metro Atlanta region – particularly as it relates to issues of access and opportunity. (<http://atlantaequityatlas.com/>)

Part III: CONCLUSION

Funders are in a strategic position to effect positive change and advance opportunity for underserved groups in transportation, GHG reduction, and smart growth. Creating an equitable region requires ongoing assessment of the obstacles and disparities facing underserved communities, and creating policies and practices to stimulate positive change. The rationale for putting opportunity and fair access at the

center of philanthropy's transportation, climate, and smart growth strategies is not simply that social justice demands greater attention, but rather that integrating this work leads to better outcomes. Many communities are seeing the unintended displacement of low-income residents from TOD and walkable neighborhoods which are central smart growth and climate strategies. Funders are stepping forward to engage and equip communities of color and low-income advocates to be part of the TOD debate and broader discussions on GHG reduction, transportation policy, and development practices. Social justice is inextricably linked to success in tackling all three. Working toward more opportunity for all involves prioritizing policies, infrastructure, and investments that ensure all people and communities can thrive.

While we all have a stake in equitable transportation, responding to climate change and creating thriving communities, philanthropy has a special role to play given its long-standing concern for the most disadvantaged in society. Using their many powerful resources including grant making, program related investments, and the power to convene, foundations are in a unique position to ensure that residents of disadvantaged communities have the resources, tools, and capacity to engage in the planning and development decisions that impact neighborhood health, environmental quality, and access to opportunity. The Best Practices detailed in this Compendium are offered as an important step.

Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities
1500 San Remo Avenue, Suite 249 Coral Gables, FL 33146
(305) 667-6350
info@fundersnetwork.org