TEEM

Towards Equitable Electric Mobility

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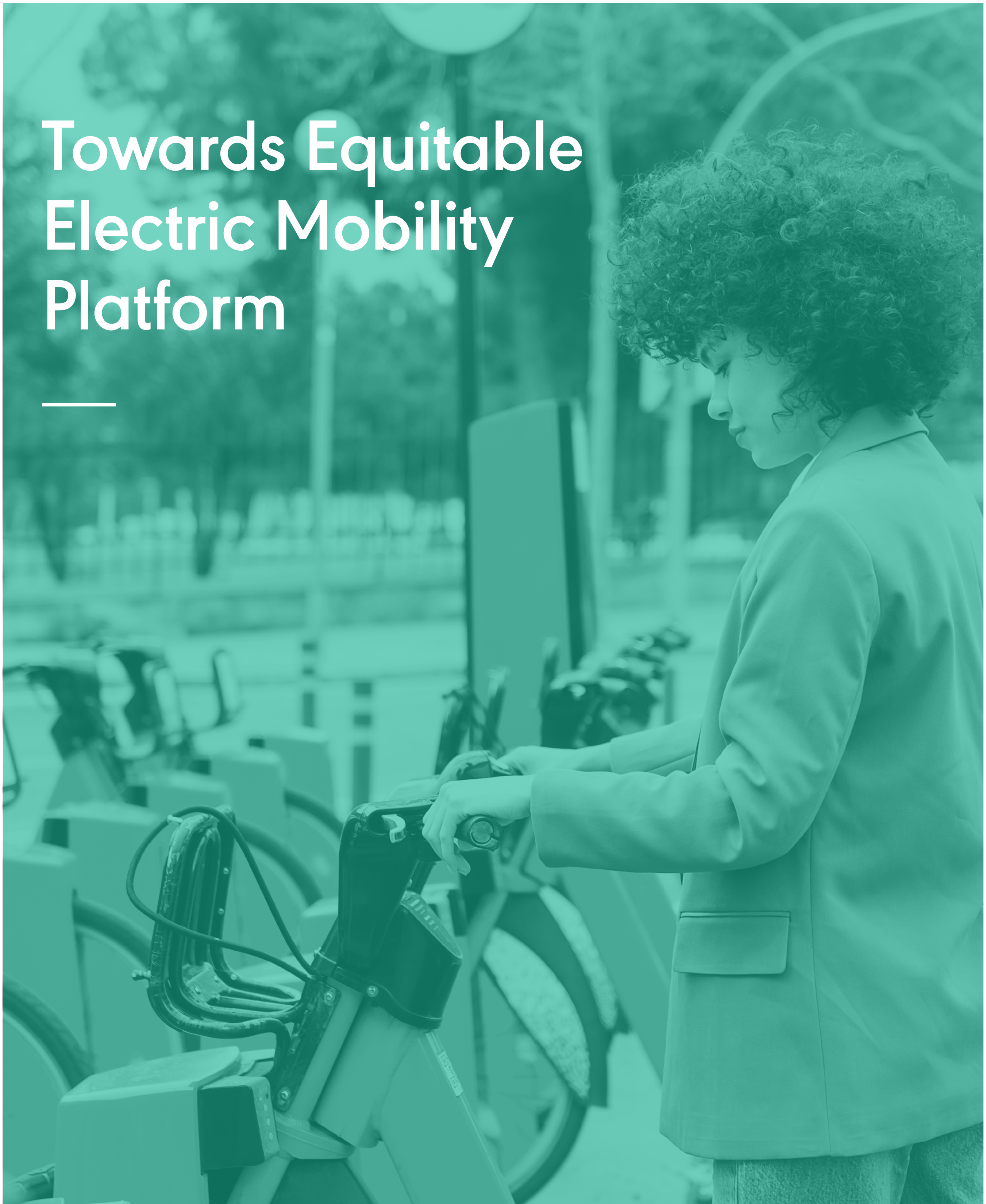


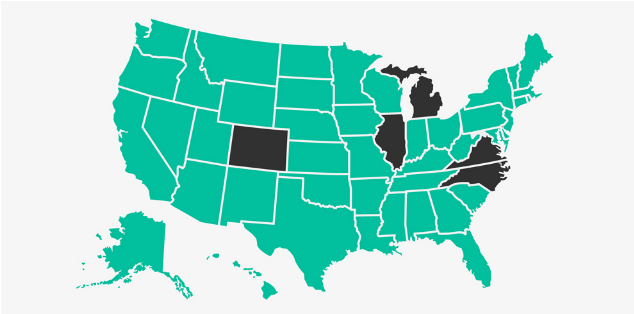
FORTH

THE GREENLINING INSTITUTE

Members of the TEEM National Cohort

THE TOWARDS EQUITABLE ELECTRIC MOBILITY (TEEM) COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE IS A COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVE BETWEEN FORTH AND THE GREENLINING INSTITUTE AIMED AT ADVANCING RACIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE THROUGH EQUITABLE ELECTRIC MOBILITY.

TEEM includes over 30 grassroots and environmental organizations across five states: Colorado, Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina, and Virginia. Launched in 2020, TEEM cultivates peer learning and advocacy at the intersections of mobility equity, community building, and transportation electrification.



Highlighted TEEM States: Colorado, Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina and Virgina

Historically, communities of color were targeted for highway and transportation infrastructure that cuts through their neighborhoods, exacerbating health disparities, and fueling cycles of disinvestment that shut them out from economic prosperity. As federal and state investments in electric mobility increase, this funding must advance transportation and climate solutions that address these injustices and deliver meaningful benefits to underserved communities.

Centering equity in electric mobility investments will yield better, faster, and more durable transportation electrification solutions for everyone.

With the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), we have an unprecedented opportunity to remedy past and present inequities by providing equitable investments in transportation electrification. These two bills will invest approximately $700 billion, including up to $100 billion to electrify transportation.

The TEEM Platform synthesizes three years of collective learnings and recommendations for federal and state programs to integrate equity and sustainability into transportation systems across the country. We offer principles and implementation recommendations for federal and state Departments of Transportation, transit agencies, auto industry partners, and other key decision-makers.

To learn more about TEEM and how to incorporate equity into your transportation policy or program planning, please email Isa Gaillard, Senior Program Manager for Capacity Building at the Greenlining Institute and Alexa Diaz, Senior Policy Manager at Forth.

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PRINCIPLES FOR EQUITABLE ELECTRIC MOBILITY

1. EQUITY AND JUSTICE

The federal government and many states have committed that 40% of climate investments should flow to communities that are underserved and overburdened by pollution due to historic and present-day injustices. Transportation investments should be prioritized similarly, with a focus on ensuring that a minimum of 40% of the benefits associated with these investments reach underserved communities and benefit them in ways that are both measurable and enduring.

In addition to assuring an equitable distribution of benefits and burdens, the process for making these investments must also be equitable. It is essential for agencies to invest in outreach, public education, community engagement, and shared decision-making to ensure that communities understand the investments and their potential impact and have the support of a broad set of stakeholders before they break ground.

Implementation Recommendation

Federal and state agencies should focus transportation investments on programs that increase mobility options and reduce pollution in underserved communities. These investments may include electric transit and school bus projects, e-bike voucher programs, electric car rebate programs, and the electrification of trucks in environmental justice communities. Agencies should conduct evaluations to ensure that underserved communities receive a minimum of 40% of the benefits associated with these programs, such as improved air quality, jobs, and transit services. Agencies should utilize outreach and engagement methods that are specific to the community they're serving, including multilingual public workshops, vehicle test drives, and other methods such as those outlined in the Neighborhoods First Engagement Model to build trust, empower residents, and ensure their priorities are incorporated throughout.

Examples

- The California Climate Investments Program uses a dual definition to target investments: ensuring 35% of investments go directly to "Priority Population" census tracts and a "Benefits" checklist that administrators must complete, demonstrating how programs benefit underserved communities.
- The Oregon Department of Transportation's Community Charging Rebates (CCR) program provides up to $7 million to support the installation of Level 2 charging stations at strategic locations, particularly public parking sites and multi-family housing. CCR centers equity by reserving 70% of funds for projects in underserved and rural communities while also providing education, outreach and technical assistance to increase awareness and reduce barriers to access.

2. EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS

President Biden announced new efforts aimed at accelerating the U.S. towards carbon neutrality by 2050, including reducing emissions by 52% by 2030. Transportation investments must explicitly cut carbon emissions by electrifying all modes of transportation, increasing access to practical alternatives to driving alone, and improving proximity to resources and necessities.

Implementation Recommendation

As states introduce regulations that advance climate and air quality strategies, agencies must prioritize innovative multimodal projects that reduce vehicle miles traveled and support the transition to transportation electrification. Programs such as electric carsharing, ridesharing, and bikesharing can increase mobility options in underserved communities while also improving public health and reducing local greenhouse gas emissions. Increasing mobility options should be prioritized at or near affordable housing, local senior centers, and other locations that communities frequent and include options that meet ADA requirements.

Examples

- Regulatory proceedings such as the Advanced Clean Cars rule and the Advanced Clean Trucks rule are adopted in multiple states and are examples of how states can mandate the transition to transportation electrification. When combined with federal programs for electric vehicles (EVs) and charging infrastructure, states can increase EV adoption while promoting a cleaner, healthier, and more affordable transportation sector.
- Additional programs that support community access to electric transportation such as Clean Cars 4 All help low-and moderate-income households replace older polluting vehicles with EVs and other clean mobility options.

3. AFFORDABLE ACCESS FOR ALL

Every person should be able to get where they need to go, efficiently and affordably. Yet the lowest income and rural households bear the highest transportation costs and many still struggle to get to work and school. Our nation's transportation investments must provide reliable alternatives to driving and improve the affordability of sustainable mobility options.

Implementation Recommendation

Agencies should prioritize programs that increase clean mobility options that are affordable and accessible. Neighborhoods across the country need different kinds of transportation options and agencies must meet diverse community needs by providing for multiple kinds of affordable transportation infrastructure. Transportation infrastructure and programming must reduce costs to ownership, such as incentives for EVs, charging and electric bikes, and also provide options that don't require individual ownership of vehicles, such as electric ridesharing, electric transit and publicly accessible charging stations.

Examples

- EV incentive programs that reduce the upfront cost of EVs such as those in Colorado, California, Illinois, and Oregon can aid the shift to electric transportation for underserved communities.
- Other programs, such as Colorado's E-Bike Rebate program, offer underserved communities a more affordable option.
- EV charging installation programs, such as Seattle City Light Multifamily Electric Vehicle Charging Rebate, covers 100% of project costs at affordable housing properties to increase access to charging for low-income residents.

4. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Underserved communities, youth, elderly, and other vulnerable populations are disproportionately harmed by our transportation system. Transportation investments need to substantively and rapidly decrease harm from car crashes and air pollution. As we transition to a pedestrian friendly low-carbon transportation system, investments in the supply chain must direct benefits to impacted communities and workers, and avoid causing or exacerbating harm. Lastly, we must also develop transportation systems that effectively get people to safety during climate disasters.

Implementation Recommendation

Federal and state agencies should promote projects that advance safety and address the transportation-related pollution that underserved communities face. This may include developing safe routes to school programs, investing in electric transit projects, adding shelters and shade structures at transportation hubs, and investing in electric projects that benefit underserved communities.

Examples

In the Illinois Williamsfield School District, the Bus2Grid Initiative is incorporating bidirectional electric school buses and chargers into their fleet to provide clean transportation options and energy benefits. Underserved children, including those in rural communities are disproportionately impacted by harmful air pollution from diesel school buses which have been linked to health issues. Combining electric school buses with the benefits of bidirectional electric school buses can support community access to energy when grid issues occur.

5. WEALTH BUILDING

Our nation has a moral and fiscal responsibility to lead a just transition that delivers economic and environmental benefits. Key to this is ensuring our transition provides wealth-building opportunities that don't exploit underserved communities. Government contracts, investments and jobs should be allocated through a transparent, accountable, and equitable process. These investments should create and retain good-paying, family-sustaining jobs with strong labor protections. They should also mitigate racial, urban-rural divide and economic inequities whenever possible.

Implementation Recommendation

Federal investments should produce economic co-benefits and include high road jobs requirements. States, agencies and transportation companies should develop transition support funds and services to ensure that transportation workers get training, avoid layoffs, and can make the shift to EV-related and other clean energy jobs. Accessible low and no-cost transportation options should be planned and developed near major commercial areas extending out to unincorporated areas to help families save money on commutes and gain access to higher-paying jobs.

Examples

- Colorado's Just Transition Community and Worker Supports legislation allocates funds to community economic development and worker assistance programs throughout coal communities.
- Chicago's Connected Communities Ordinance creates jobs, improves the safety of streets, and increases housing affordability near transit.
- A historic train station in Detroit has partnered with ChargerHelp, a tech company that provides EV charging station repairs to launch a free skills training initiative that will equip residents to become future EV technicians. The 6-8 week program is designed to accommodate the schedules of working adults, and once certified, participants can expect to make $67,000 per year or more.

TEEM PLATFORM CO-AUTHORS AND INAUGURAL SIGNATORIES

Active Transportation Alliance
BlueGreen Alliance
Bronzeville Community Development Partnership
Center for Neighborhood Technology CleanAire NC
Clean Fuels Michigan
Colorado Center on Law and Policy
Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition
Community Collaboration on Climate Change
Eastside Community Network
Ecology Center
Elevate
Forth
Generation180
Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities
Michigan Clean Cities
NAACP Virginia State Conference
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