

# Play 3

## ENRICH THE COMMUNITY

As you embark on implementing mobility hubs, ask yourself: Who does the mobility hub serve and how can this investment help communities meet their potential? Does it serve people that don't live in the area, but pass through the neighborhood? Does it serve people that might live there in the future, or people living there now that are at risk of displacement?

Your mobility hub investments should seamlessly integrate with and enrich the surrounding community. Hubs should be developed and implemented with thoughtful consideration of racial equity. **Community-centered hub planning and design take time, but the outcomes are lasting and impactful.**

This play provides key tools that should be applied to your projects to ensure mobility hubs are designed for and by the communities they serve and centered around the needs of people that have been historically underserved and marginalized in transportation planning and decision-making.

## ACKNOWLEDGING THE NEED FOR CHANGE

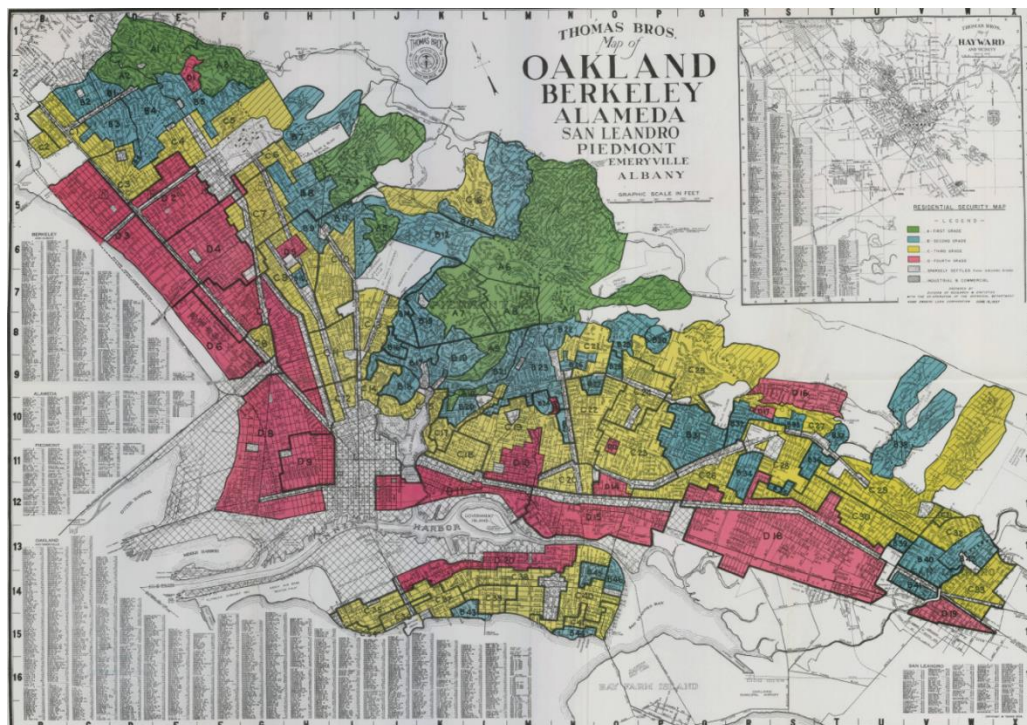
Race is a leading predictor of disparity in transportation and housing. Our region's history of redlining, highway and transit corridor alignments, and many other policies has destabilized and displaced once vibrant and well-connected communities. Redlining, highway and transit corridor alignments, and many other policies were designed to deliberately stunt the potential of Black, Brown, Asian, and immigrant communities throughout the Bay Area.

The effect of restricted community investment, community destruction, and other discriminatory practices is inextricably linked to how people of color navigate the transportation system and use mobility hubs today. In Oakland, Highway 17 (now I-880) was constructed through the heart of the Black community, razing many homes, disrupting the community's social fabric, and destroying economic vitality by cutting areas off from downtown Oakland.

It's important to acknowledge past failures and learn from them as you move forward. By changing the processes by which your projects are planned, designed, funded, and implemented, you can also change outcomes. Given that transportation infrastructure investments typically serve the needs of 9-to-5 commuters, able-bodied people, and white urban or

suburban dwellers, mobility hubs and the very idea of mobility "choice" should center around the needs of the community and consider the intersections of mobility, race, affordability, housing insecurity, ableism, and gender.

So how might you advance mobility hubs equitably and center them around the mobility and community needs of Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC)?



Redlining has had profound implications for how people of color in the Bay Area can access and experience mobility. Exclusion by land use and transportation system design continues to leave BIPOC residents in neighborhoods that are underserved by appropriate mobility options and infrastructure to safely and comfortably get around.

## MOBILITY HUBS FOR WHOM?

The way a mobility hub looks, the way the mobility services, connections, and public spaces are designed, and the vernacular through which a hub presents itself can have many meanings in historically marginalized communities, particularly BIPOC communities. If a hub is tailored to commuters or a narrow portion of the population, we continue the legacy of exclusionary mobility systems in the Bay Area. Based on emerging best practices, some questions to ask when engaging with community members about their mobility needs and mobility hub preferences can include:

- **Do I feel safe and accepted?** Mobility hubs should be designed with and for community residents, and co-managed with marginalized groups.
- **Can I maneuver throughout the hub?** Mobility hubs should be built and retrofitted to maximize the movement, comfort, and cultural institutions of marginalized groups, including people with disabilities. Pathways should be fully accessible and public spaces should be designed to identify with the surrounding community.
- **Can I be connected?** Mobility hubs should provide connections to and across mobility options that meet the unique travel needs of marginalized groups. Providing access to car share, micromobility, or other shared mobility options at hubs does not mean viability. Technological, financial, and cultural barriers will persist until they are explicitly addressed. This will require supporting hubs with education about how to navigate new mobility options, subsidies, incentives, and other financial barrier reduction strategies.
- **Can I understand the hub?** Mobility hubs should be culturally appropriate and multilingual spaces that are easy to use. Hubs should be designed for everyone from the able-bodied teenager to the older immigrant that speaks a language other than English.
- **Is the hub serving my community?** Mobility hubs should build in features and resources that enrich the community, including new job opportunities and local BIPOC-owned retail.



Míocar, a community-based EV car share service in the San Joaquin Valley, was designed in partnership with low-income community members, leaders and groups that identified shared mobility need in Kern and Tulare Counties. This equitable and community-controlled service and process can be a model for Opportunity Hub type mobility hubs and other hub areas flagged as equity hubs.



## EQUITY FRAMEWORKS & TACTICS

[MTC's Equity Platform](#) is built around the common vision of a just and inclusive Bay Area where everyone can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. The Equity Platform aims to provide community support to those who need it most by understanding constituents' needs, building meaningful partnerships, and setting standards by which to evaluate equity.

What does this mean for you? It means that your work should focus on outcomes that benefit historically underserved and marginalized groups to reverse the disparities that exist in the community today. At the start of any mobility hub project, it's important to acknowledge and understand the past and current actions that have harmed communities. Investments that may have been advantageous for some groups may have inadvertently harmed others. One way to prevent this from happening is by changing who is doing the thinking, the deciding, and the evaluation – in other words, involving the community in the planning, designing, and implementation process.

Fortunately, many BIPOC-led organizations have created tools to help guide you through centering mobility hub implementation on MTC's Communities of Concern. The Greenlining Institute's [Equity and Mobility Pilot Toolkit](#) and the [Government Alliance on Race and Equity \(GARE\) Racial Equity Toolkit](#) are great resources to help you get started.



Greenlining Institute's Equity and Mobility Pilot Toolkit includes a Mobility Equity Framework.

Source: Greenlining Institute

## Greenlining Institute's Equity and Mobility Pilot Toolkit

Within the Greenlining Institute's Equity and Mobility Pilot Toolkit is a [Mobility Equity Framework](#), which states that in order to achieve mobility equity in transportation planning, social equity and community power must be prioritized. The Framework identifies three steps you might consider:

1. **Identify the mobility needs of a specific low-income community of color.** This includes activities such as brainstorming with the community, educating the community on mobility equity, and working with the community to identify its specific mobility needs.
2. **Conduct the mobility equity analysis to prioritize transportation modes that meet the identified needs, while maximizing benefits and minimizing burdens.** Activities that occur during this step include receiving project proposals from community residents or organizations, prioritizing projects, and conducting an equity analysis of the projects.

3. **Place decision-making power in the hands of the local community.** An example of this is creating community-led decision-making boards and letting the community vote for their preferred projects.

The framework also identifies 12 mobility equity indicators to help you weigh the costs and benefits of your project. These indicators are grouped into three categories that include increasing access to mobility, reducing air pollution, and enhancing economic opportunity.

### GARE Racial Equity Toolkit

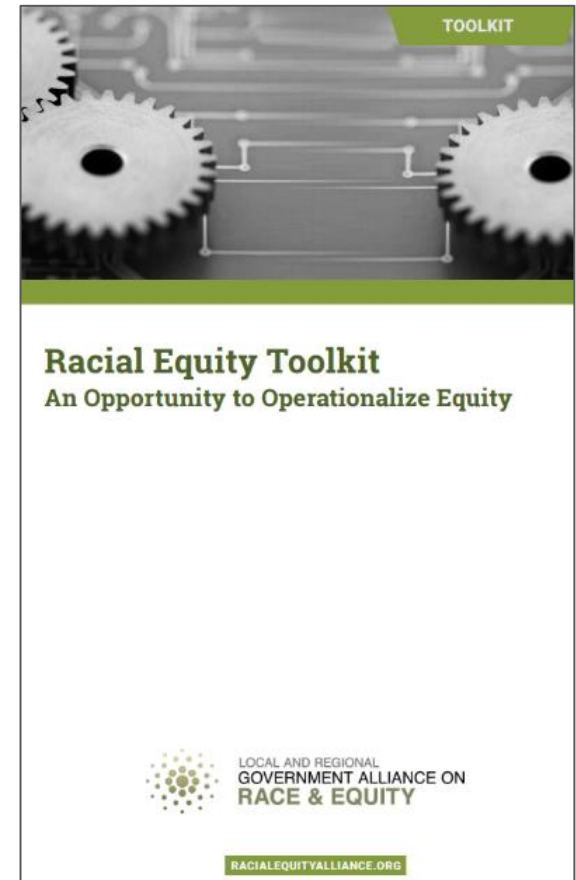
Racial equity tools seek to eliminate racial inequities, help identify clear goals and measurable outcomes, engage the community, identify who will benefit or be burdened by decisions, examine unintended consequences and potential mitigation efforts, and develop mechanisms for implementation and evaluation.

Similar to the Greenlining Equity and Mobility Pilot Toolkit, the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) Racial Equity Toolkit lays out six questions for you

and your implementing partners to consider:

1. *Proposal:* What is the project under consideration? What are the desired results and outcomes?
2. *Data:* What does the data tell you?
3. *Community engagement:* How have communities been engaged, and are there opportunities to expand engagement?
4. *Analysis and strategies:* Who will benefit or be burdened by your proposal? What are the strategies for advancing racial equity or mitigating unintended consequences?
5. *Implementation:* What is your plan for implementation?
6. *Accountability and communication:* How will you ensure accountability, communicate, and evaluate results?

These toolkits are one of many important steps to operationalizing equity in decision-making, design, implementation, and on through hub operations.



The Government Alliance on Race and Equity produced a Racial Equity Toolkit with questions to ask before implementation and during evaluation.

Source: GARE

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES

What should community engagement for hub pilots and projects look like? Start by listening and learning, acknowledging, and taking community voices to heart. MTC's [2018 Public Participation Plan](#) highlights five guiding principles for community engagement: (1) public participation is a dynamic activity and requires teamwork; (2) input from diverse perspectives enhances the process; (3) relationship building with local stakeholders is important; (4) make the engagement process relevant, remove barriers to participation, communicate clearly, and use compelling visuals; and (5) ensure an open and transparent process that empowers low-income communities and communities of color to participate.

As a mobility hub implementer, you should **build community trust in your project and process**. This requires shifting away from merely informing the public to establishing meaningful partnerships with the community – particularly the most vulnerable populations in our region. It also means maintaining your relationship with the community and honoring the partnerships you've developed even after the project has been completed. Ensuring that two-way communication remains in place after the traditional community

engagement period ends shows the community that their feedback is valued.

If you are piloting or developing a mobility hub, your work should incorporate the following elements:

- A community advisory group to provide feedback and support decision-making
- Listening sessions with community members
- In-person and virtual engagement
- A survey tailored to the hub's most vulnerable communities
- A feedback loop to ensure that input was thoughtfully integrated and adequately addressed
- Compensating community-based organizations for their time and efforts

Greenlining's Equity and Mobility Pilot Toolkit documents best practices for meaningful community engagement at all stages of project development. The Toolkit provides a list of potential engagement activities (e.g., focus groups, drafting community benefits agreements, and conducting a community needs assessment) and identifies cultural considerations to

keep in mind when conducting community engagement. Five cultural considerations to factor in while conducting community engagement include:

1. *Literacy Level*: Are your materials designed to accommodate different literacy levels, minimizing the use of acronyms where possible?
2. *Socioeconomic Status*: Have you considered factors such as location and timing of activities, transit access, childcare availability, and the availability of food at your engagement activities?
3. *Language*: Are all project materials translated and live events conducted in the major languages spoken in the community?
4. *Local History*: Have you engaged with local community-based organizations who understand the local history?
5. *Competing Interests and Limited Time*: Are you hosting events at places where people already gather and at a time when it's convenient for them?

## HUBS AND COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Every mobility hub project and ideally every pilot should be driven by a community needs assessment. At minimum, the needs assessment should include site visits, data collection (e.g., Census demographic data), and a survey (using standardized transportation needs assessment questions). We recommend convening an advisory group consisting of residents and community leaders to provide feedback on the survey and to ensure that critical insights are included and reporting is context sensitive.

When conducting a community needs assessment, you should think about those at the margins as the center of the work. Listen to their experiences and needs. If you lead with Black and Brown communities, you will:

**Decenter mobility and uplift the community:** Listening to the community's needs might yield less mobility-related investment, but more Black-, Brown-, and Asian-owned businesses supporting initiatives that increase access to their businesses – which ultimately can reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions.

**Rethink access:** Access can mean more useful mobility options. In COVID times, providing access might mean offering mobile services in hub areas that make it easy to deliver food, make health visits, and provide other services without needing to physically travel.

### PARTNERSHIPS ENABLE MOBILITY HUB PILOT AT AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

TransForm, a Bay Area nonprofit transportation organization, is leading a partnership with MTC and other local partners to pilot three mobility hubs at affordable housing developments in Oakland, Richmond, and San Jose. A community needs assessment was conducted at the start of the project, which yielded valuable input from residents and community members regarding transportation gaps. The team identified lessons learned from the community needs assessment, some of which include:

- Build trust with residents and partner organizations
- Dedicate considerable time toward a collaborative survey development process
- Present a draft survey to residents to ensure that materials are meaningful, engaging, and easy to use
- Conduct in-person survey outreach to allow members of the outreach team (which consisted of residents) to answer questions and address concerns about the survey or project
- Hire and train residents for survey outreach and data entry as workforce development opportunity

These lessons learned, as well as many others, are discussed in further detail in TransForm's [Car Sharing and Mobility Hubs in Affordable Housing Pilot Project report](#).

## **MTC AND ABAG'S COMMUNITY-BASED TRANSPORTATION PLANNING (CBTP) PROGRAM**

MTC and ABAG's Community-Based Transportation Planning (CBTP) program supports the needs of communities that have historically experienced barriers to participation in the transportation planning process and currently face limited mobility options. Through the CBTP program, MTC and ABAG partner with County Transportation Agencies to conduct community-driven planning efforts in communities of color or low-income communities, providing a venue for residents and community-based organizations to shape planning recommendations in order to improve access and mobility for their neighborhoods. Each CBTP includes a report on baseline conditions, a needs assessment, recommendations, implementation guidelines, a framework for monitoring and evaluation, and a summary of outreach and engagement efforts. Established in 2002, the program has allocated over \$4 million in planning funds toward planning efforts in over 30 communities and has recently funded the facilitation of two participatory budgeting pilots.

Participatory budgeting is a form of public engagement where community residents directly decide how to spend part of a public budget. CBTP planning funds have been used to fund participatory budgeting work in San Francisco's Bayview and Hunters Point neighborhoods and in Vallejo. Residents of both communities were engaged multiple times during the planning process, weighing in on their mobility needs, ranking potential solutions, and ultimately choosing which projects received funding. Throughout the process, best practices like providing engagement materials in multiple languages, varying the time and day of meetings, holding meetings in transit-accessible places, and working with community-based organizations to contact hard-to-reach populations were implemented. Ultimately, residents of these two communities prioritized \$1 million in funding reserved for implementation of projects coming out of the participatory budgeting process.

The participatory budgeting model can be applied across planning contexts as a way to democratically determine which types of investments are needed most. When planning for mobility hubs, participatory budgeting could be deployed to determine which amenities or mobility options have the most community support, helping to ensure that mobility hubs have the right components to meet residents' need while also engendering a greater sense of ownership over the site.



## HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN

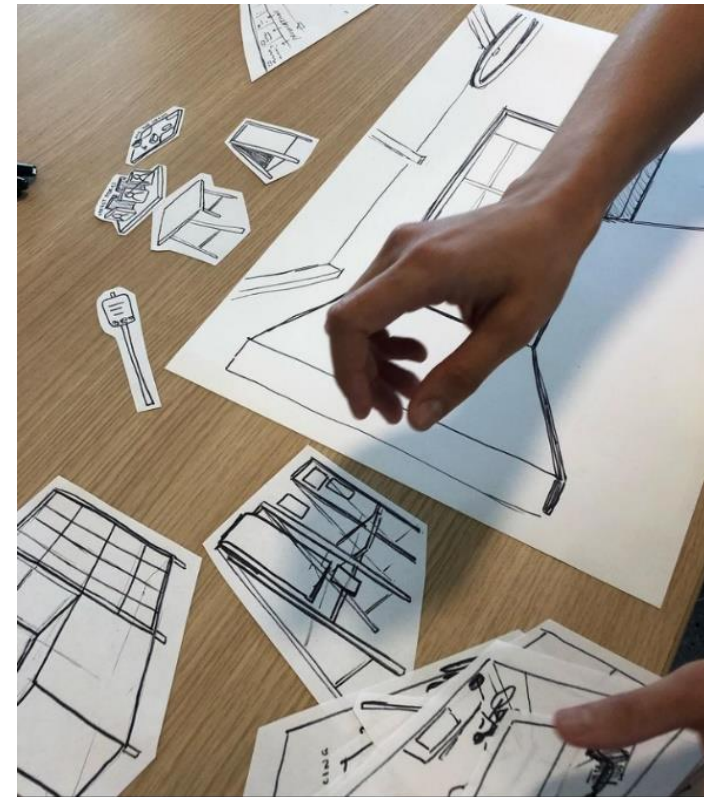
Similar to community needs assessments, human-centered design (HCD) is based on the idea that mobility hub products, services, and systems should be designed to address the needs of potential users, travelers, and communities. HCD is an inclusive method of problem-solving that involves the intended users in the design process. Mobility hub planning and design should emphasize the door-to-door transportation experience – on public transit, when accessing shared mobility services, and when accessing mobility and amenities at a mobility hub.

**How can hub pilots, customer experience, management, and construction be informed by HCD process?** HCD in a mobility hub context can take on many forms, but the focus is on ensuring all elements are user-centric. Hubs could feature designs from local artists, vendors with locally grown produce, or other services that are tailored to the neighborhood. It can mean installing real-time arrival kiosks in well-lit areas of the hub or improving security measures when operations are less frequent. HCD should employ a robust equitable community engagement strategy to make sure that community needs are heard and uplifted. A recent example of a HCD process applied to mobility hub planning is [Seattle's effort to electrify shared mobility hubs](#). Likewise, many mobility product companies engage

human-centered design experts or have established in-house design thinking studios to build new service, product, and infrastructure concepts. The most notable example of this is [D-Ford](#), a design partnership between Ford and the global design thinking pioneer, IDEO.

HCD also means that the construction of mobility hubs does not negatively impact Communities of Concern. Construction can often impact local economies by blocking access to businesses, reducing visibility of storefronts, or by deterring people from visiting areas in proximity to the construction site. LA Metro established a Business Interruption Fund to provide financial assistance to small businesses affected by project construction. The goal of this fund is to help small businesses thrive throughout construction and post-construction. Over \$10 million is allocated in Metro's budget each year for the Business Interruption Fund.

When considering end-to-end mobility experience, the design thinking process should start in the very early stages of



D-Lab's livable street prototyping exercise is an example of applying human centered design principles to place design.

Source: D-Ford

engagement and understanding the problems being solved. Your mobility hub implementation team should consider contracting trained human-centered designers – especially designers of color and designers living with disabilities. This will ensure diverse needs and perspectives are baked into the design process from the beginning.

## ANTI-DISPLACEMENT

New transportation improvements, if not carefully planned and implemented, have the potential to displace the residents they are intended to serve. Shiny new infrastructure can make a neighborhood more desirable, bringing newcomers to the neighborhood, raising housing costs, and displacing existing residents and businesses.

What anti-displacement tactics should be built into the planning process, hub design, and ongoing programming?

As you begin thinking through how to address the displacement potential of your hub project, you have access to vital resources and tactics that can be built into pilots and long-term hub area development plans. These resources include the affordability, stability, and anti-displacement policy tools developed through the [CASA Compact](#), as well as anti-displacement strategies, such as the [All-In Cities Policy Toolkit](#) developed by PolicyLink. Several successful strategies include:

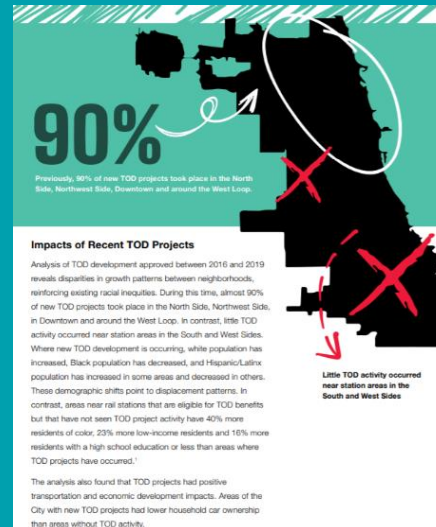
- **Zoning near transit.** Updating zoning to enable an inclusive mix of homes at mobility hubs.
- **Inclusionary zoning.** Requiring or incentivizing developers to set aside a certain percentage of units in a project as below market rate. Inclusionary zoning is often tied to density bonuses, allowing developers to increase the size of their development beyond existing zoning policies.
- **Unlock public land at hubs for affordable housing.** Reducing barriers to development on public land and repurposing public land to create affordable housing.
- **Just cause eviction ordinances.** Ordinances designed to prevent arbitrary, retaliatory, or discriminatory evictions by establishing specific reasons for eviction such as failing to pay rent. Just cause ordinances can slow the process of gentrification so that all residents can benefit from reinvestment and growth.

## Chicago's ETOD Policy Plan

In September 2020, the City of Chicago released its first ever Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (eTOD) Policy Plan. This plan was created to combat the lack of walkable housing and retail near CTA and Metra stations in Black communities and to mitigate displacement pressure felt by residents living in areas near CTA stations that have been experiencing rapid growth. The plan defines eTOD as development that “enables all people regardless of income, race, ethnicity, age, gender, immigration status or ability to experience the benefits of dense, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development near transit hubs.”

Recommendations are grouped into three strategic priorities: (1) Building the city's capacity to support eTOD; (2) making eTOD required, easier, and more equitable; and (3) embedding eTOD principles into Chicago's planning process.

The plan was informed by a workgroup consisting of over 75 individuals across government agencies, developers, civic stakeholders, architects, artists, and community advocates.



Source: City of Chicago

## PATHWAYS TO COMMUNITY WEALTH

Mobility hubs are places that co-locate much more than transportation services and infrastructure. Your hub could anchor strategies, services, and resources that build wealth and realize community potential, particularly where hubs are situated in Communities of Concern.

Community wealth building is a hyper local community development model, often anchored on a major public investment, that seeks to build jobs, expand access to public services, and ensure local economic stability. One transformative project, such as a mobility hub, will not lead to community wealth but it is one step toward transforming the local economy so that everyone benefits.

Mobility hub implementers can build many pathways to achieving community wealth into their work, as described in Figure 8. Learn about real-life examples of community wealth building in this [interactive map](#) by the Democracy Collective.

**Figure 7** Examples of Pathways to Community Wealth

Pathway	How does it lead to community wealth?
<b>Community Land Trusts</b>	Community land trusts are nonprofits designed to ensure long-term housing affordability by acquiring land and maintaining permanent ownership of it. Community land trusts provide low- or moderate-income (LMI) individuals with the opportunity to build equity through homeownership, and they prevent gentrification from occurring.
<b>Individual Wealth Building</b>	Individual wealth building aims to increase the savings of LMI individuals through Individual Development Accounts (IDAs). IDAs match deposits of program participants, encouraging them to save. One stipulation is that participants must complete financial education classes and use their savings for specific purposes, such as a home purchase or renovation project.
<b>Investment in Cultural Capital</b>	Cultural capital is a community’s social assets that bond the community together. Investments in cultural capital sustain the values, traditions, or customs that help leverage other types of capital. Examples of investments include supporting venues to showcase cultural achievements or establishing programs that preserve or pass on cultural knowledge and skills.
<b>Local Food Systems</b>	Communities are organizing “food hubs,” which the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines as a “centrally located facility with a business management structure facilitating the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and/or marketing of locally/regionally produced food products.” Food hubs increase access to fresh food for consumers who live in food deserts.
<b>Reclaiming the Commons</b>	In this instance, the “Commons” refers to parks and public spaces. Returning local control of parks and open space to the community ensures that these resources will not be exploited by outsiders and that all community members can benefit from its existence.

## Go Hub: A Model for Community Mobility Hubs

The Go Hub is a physical space for community- and power-building, providing access to the necessary hardware (mobility devices and infrastructure) and software (engagement, trainings) to increase mobility.

Led by equity-centered community organization, Equiticity, the Community Mobility Hub is not just a transportation hub. It is a place where North Lawndale neighborhood residents in the City of Chicago can access low-cost equipment rentals and participate in sales and training focused on maintaining physical health. The Community Mobility Hub will also focus on creating spaces for socializing through gatherings such as bike rides, walking tours, and skills training. It is a holistic approach that supports mobility and unemployment, as well as the social and recreational needs of the community.



Conceptual diagrams illustrating a potential new family of information products, engineered through the Regional Transit Mapping and Wayfinding Program.

Source: Metropolitan Transportation Commission