

Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

Project Name: *Equity in Burlington's Transportation Transformation*

- **Year Complete:** 2021
- **Local Government:** Burlington, VT
- **Local Foundation:** Anonymous Local Foundation

Project Purpose

To build equity into the process of transforming Burlington's transportation system to meet the City's net zero emissions by 2030 goals and by extension, into the system itself.

Key Lessons Learned

The project has demonstrated that diverse communities are ready to be engaged, that their input is worthy of compensation (as consultants are compensated), and that existing transportation systems are unsustainable not only in terms of emissions but also in terms of equity.

The project was able to leverage a heightened national awareness of the inequities built into all public systems to help establish structures that better ensure diverse disenfranchised communities are engaged in transportation planning efforts, which inherently advances sustainability goals. The team learned that:

- Funders who prioritize equity don't always consider transportation.
 - The project has helped highlight the role that transportation plays in the opportunities gap and provided an opportunity to educate funders and service providers.
- Transportation equity goals often go hand in hand with sustainable transportation goals.
 - Individual vehicle travel is highly inequitable and continued investment in it leaves opportunities out of reach to significant swaths of the population.
- The key to authentically engaging diverse communities in transportation planning work is relationship-building, among a diverse array of players.
 - It is critical to engage representatives of diverse communities but also planners, policy makers, and citizens who are accustomed to being at the table and weighing in.

The project also made clear the investments of time and resources required for meaningful engagement of diverse populations, and the lack of willingness on the part of some organizations to make those kinds of investment.

Additional Information and Resources

View a recording of the 2021 Transportation Equity Day presentation [here](#). For more information about the project and ongoing work, visit the Transportation Equity Coalition webpage [here](#).