

Fact Sheet: Transportation Justice

Fostering a Transportation System that Works for Everyone

Access to transportation is a key measure of social mobility.

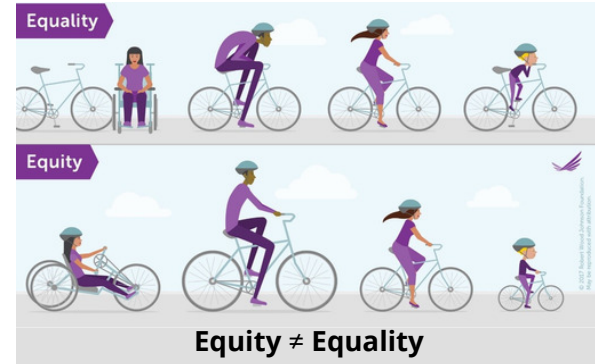
Transportation justice ensures access to reliable, affordable, sustainable, and efficient options to communities of color, low-income residents, and people with disabilities. These traditionally marginalized communities have historically suffered from an underinvestment of transportation infrastructure and resources. Transportation justice works to rectify the mistakes of the past by bringing the needs of these groups to the forefront.

These inequities must be recognized and corrected in our Commonwealth's transportation policies going forward.

Openly listening and responding to the needs of marginalized communities statewide are both the first steps in ensuring that we are moving toward a transportation system -- and society -- that treats people equitably and works for all.



Source: New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Center



Access to transportation affects all types of communities, disparately.

In **suburban** communities, public transit doesn't operate during times that meet community needs. Regional Transit Authorities serve suburban cities and towns, but many of them do not run service seven days a week. For example, the Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA) runs buses Monday through Saturday, but not Sundays or holidays.

In **urban** areas, a variety of transit options are available, however, access to these options are not equitably accessible. For example, Hyde Park, a Boston neighborhood, is served by buses and the commuter rail. Despite the appearance of transit-rich service, according to GoBoston 2030, residents of Hyde Park have higher than average commutes. The four neighborhoods with the longest commutes, as well as the highest shares of low-income residents, are Mattapan, Dorchester, East Boston, and Hyde Park, respectively.

In **rural** areas, there are very few transportation options that don't involve access to your own automobile. For those who need public transit, they must often rely on demand-response services, similar to paratransit, which requires a lead time of at least 24 hours.

Why Transportation Justice Matters

- Historic underinvestment in low-income neighborhoods and neighborhoods of color has led to negative impacts on people's lives.
- Transportation policy harms communities if it is not grounded in their needs, aspirations, and civic fabric.
- People in unserved and underserved communities experience real and lasting harm from poor access to transportation. It is imperative that we advocate for greater access for populations who need it most.



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Transportation policies disproportionately affect people of color.

- Children of color are more likely to live in communities with poor air quality, and are more likely to suffer from asthma compared to their white peers.
- Pedestrians and cyclists in low-income communities and communities of color are disproportionately injured and killed in crashes.
- Black people are less likely to own an automobile compared to other races and ethnicities.
- A 2012 Northeastern University study showed that in Greater Boston, bus riders who are black spend 66 hours more per year (80+ minutes more per week) waiting, riding, and transferring buses than white bus riders.
- Historical planning of major highways often cut through low-income and minority neighborhoods. The failed 1970s I-95 expansion cut through Boston's inner city neighborhoods of Jamaica Plain and Roxbury, severing those communities from one another until creation of the Southwest Corridor in the 90s.

Transportation Justice Initiatives Lead by T4MA

We commit to advancing equitable transportation options, including public transportation and walking/biking which can help reverse racial and economic disparities in Massachusetts through our work on:

Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs)

RTAs provide essential local bus service throughout the state. T4MA commits to advocate for increased funding for RTAs to prevent service cuts and fare hikes, especially for those people who rely on them the most.

Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI)

The transportation sector is now the leading emitter of greenhouse gases in Massachusetts. TCI is a coordinated collaboration among several states to reduce carbon emissions from the transportation sector. T4MA is working to ensure that TCI policies are just and equitable.

Innovative Transportation Technology

As transportation evolves, we work to ensure that underserved communities benefit from autonomous vehicles, ride sharing, and other new mobility options.

Active Transportation -- Walking & Cycling

T4MA supports Complete Streets Policies to support increased physical activity and reduce crashes, and a statewide Complete Streets program that funds all types of communities.

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T4MA is committed to working on reducing the effects of traffic congestion, especially in the Greater Boston Area, and ensuring that tolling policies get everyone moving more efficiently.

Members who are working on transportation justice and equity:

Alternatives for Community and Environment

Boston Cyclists Union

Conservation Law Foundation

Fairmount/Indigo Transit Coalition

Massachusetts Public Health Association

Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Neighbor to Neighbor

Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership

For more information on transportation justice and equity, contact Angela Johnson at ajohnson@t4ma.org.

