

Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods FY23

Equitable Development Fact Sheet

131 Projects

72 Planning

51 Capital

8 Regional Partnerships

**41 States
& D.C.**

\$3.3 Billion

\$109M Planning

\$2.9B Capital

\$285M Regional Partnerships

The Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program recognizes that while transportation projects can create significant value for a community, additional support systems and strategies must be in place to ensure equitable distribution of benefits.

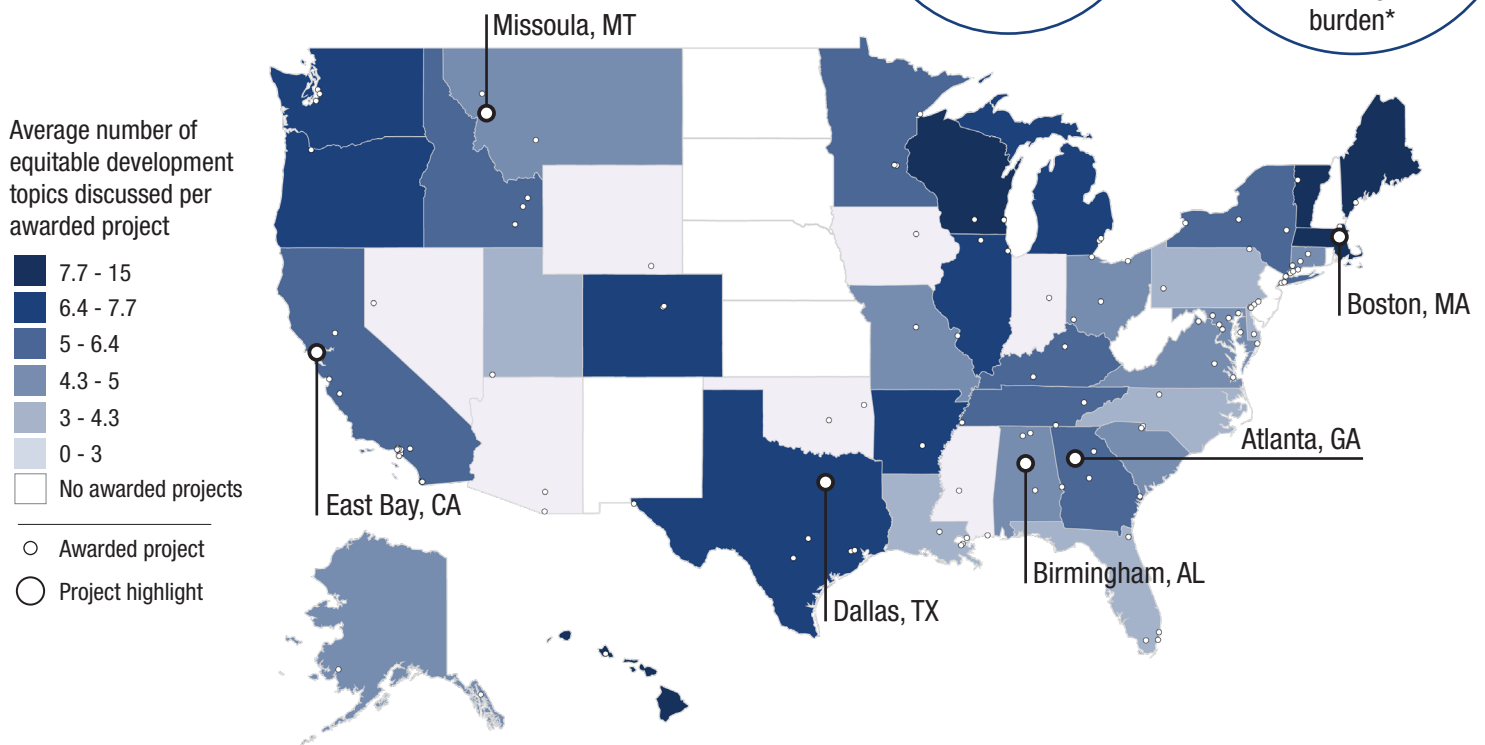
Transportation projects must be implemented in partnership with communities, not simply delivered to them, and measures to mitigate or avoid displacement are necessary to ensure that transportation investments ultimately benefit those most in need.

Innovative land use, housing, and community engagement strategies help to support equitable community development. This snapshot report provides insights into the strategies being put into action by communities awarded RCN funding.



Department of Transportation visit to Tulsa, OK

Project Map with Equitable Development Topics and Project Highlights



99%

Funding awarded to disadvantaged communities

85%

Capital and Regional Partnership projects in areas above the 50th national percentile for housing cost burden*

All photos are from application materials, unless otherwise noted. Data is based primarily on a review of project narratives received.

*Note: Based on CEJST data. Housing cost burden is defined as the share of households that are both earning less than 80 percent of the Housing and Urban Development's Area Median Family Income and are spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs.



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Land Use and Housing

Appropriate land use and housing strategies can be used to mitigate or avoid displacement, reduce housing costs, and incentivize new housing supply. Projects awarded under the FY23 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) program identified various such strategies, providing confidence that transportation investments would not generate unnecessary displacement or housing stress. These strategies include:

- Zoning or land use adjustments,
- Inclusionary zoning,
- Mixed-use, infill, multifamily, and transit-oriented development,
- Missing middle housing, and
- Reduced parking requirements,
- Community land trusts.



Housing along the Atlanta Beltline. Source: Adobe Stock

Of all awarded projects...

99%

Mention **at least one** affordable housing or housing supply strategy

80%

Mention **at least two** affordable housing or housing supply strategies

31% Mention **transit-oriented development**

15% Mention **community land trusts**

26% Mention **inclusionary zoning**

10% Mention **by-right development of missing middle housing**

A significant body of research highlights how disadvantaged communities tend to have less access to and lower quality park systems.*

95%

Mention plans to improve access to or expand **green space**

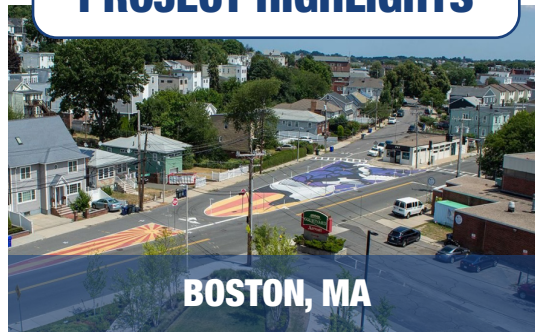
PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



EAST BAY, CA

East Bay Greenway Multimodal Project

- ▶ Land use policies include inclusionary zoning and reduced parking requirements.
- ▶ California recently passed bills to encourage missing middle housing, especially accessory dwelling units (ADUs).
- ▶ Zoning encourages dense, mixed use development in BART station areas.



BOSTON, MA

Greening Chelsea Creek Waterfront

- ▶ Expands green space and improves access to existing parks. Chelsea's Waterfront Upland Zoning District promotes parks and open space.
- ▶ Draft "PLAN: East Boston" proposes form-based zoning, reduced parking requirements, and infill development.
- ▶ In 2022, the East Boston Neighborhood Trust and the Massachusetts Mixed-Income Neighborhood Trust were formed.



EAST MISSOULA, MT

Highway 200 Reconnecting East Missoula

- ▶ Recent zoning code eliminates parking requirements for commercial space and allows mixed-use development by right.
- ▶ About 94 percent of land allows duplexes and ADUs by right in East Missoula.
- ▶ Missoula County's recent Housing Action Plan, "Breaking Ground," aims to ensure that a certain amount of new development is affordable.

All photos are from application materials, unless otherwise noted. Data is based primarily on a review of project narratives received.

**See: Dajun Dai, "Racial/ethnic and socioeconomic disparities in urban green space accessibility: Where to intervene?," Landscape and Urban Planning: 2011 (102), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2011.05.002>; and Alessandro Rigolon, Matthew Browning, and Viniene Jennings, "Inequities in quality urban park systems: An environmental justice investigation of cities in the United States," Landscape and Urban Planning: 2018 (178), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2018.05.026>.*



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Community Engagement

In stark contrast to historical investment decisions that often did not involve the input or buy-in of the impacted communities, **the RCN program is committed to funding and implementing projects that are not only supported by the community, but often led by them.** Projects awarded under the FY23 RCN program identified several community engagement topics that provide evidence of strong community participation.



Community meeting in Vermont. Source: City of South Burlington, VT.

Of all awarded projects...

91%

Mention **at least one** community engagement topic

18%

Mention **at least two** community engagement topics

61%

Mention a **Community Advisory Board**, a representative, community-based organization that oversees a project.

50%

Mention a **Community Participation Plan**, a plan that facilitates meaningful engagement in planning, design, operations, and related land use decisions.

47%

Provide strong evidence of being **community led**, meaning they were initially proposed, encouraged, or substantially informed by the community.

15%

Mention a **community organization as an applicant or co-applicant**, a non-profit organization composed of community members and based in the project area.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



ATLANTA, GA

Atlanta Stitch Phase 1 Implementation

- ▶ Will establish advisory groups comprised of community volunteers.
- ▶ A 2021 RAISE Planning Grant is funding a community engagement plan.
- ▶ The Atlanta Downtown Improvement District, a nonprofit organization, is a co-applicant.



BIRMINGHAM, AL

Reconnecting 4th Ave North

- ▶ Strongly supported by the community and has been a priority in all local plans for the last two decades.
- ▶ A Community Advisory Group will be created.
- ▶ Will follow a Community Participation Plan.
- ▶ Collaboration between the City of Birmingham and two community-based non-profits: REV and Urban Impact.



DALLAS, TX

Bridging Highway Divides for DFW Communities

- ▶ Several community advisory boards exist in the project area.
- ▶ Will incorporate and execute a community participation plan.
- ▶ The project is the result of years of public engagement and has been recommended in area plans for decades.

