

A New Green for a Green Future: Transit Inequity in Englewood

Problem identification - Transit Inequity & Poverty

There is no single bigger indicator in the alleviation of poverty than access to high-quality, affordable public transportation.

“Commuting time has become the single strongest factor in the odds of escaping poverty.” (Harvard, 2015)

Thus, an equitable public transportation system in Chicago will reduce commute time, create economic opportunity, and present low barriers to entry for local residents. Englewood is a neighborhood that desperately needs transit access as economic justice.

- Jobs reachable by transit in 45 minutes in Englewood is **less than 76,300—less than 1 sixth** of those in Hyde Park and **less than 1 third** of those in West Woodlawn (CMAP, 2019)
- **41%** of Englewood Residents do not have a car, compared to the Chicago average of **26%** and the Chicagoland average of **12.6%** (CMAP, 2019)
- **23.5% unemployment rate** among Englewood residents (CMAP, 2019)
- Only **7% of businesses** in Englewood are **Black-owned** v.s. a **near-90%-Black population** (Resident Association of Greater Englewood, 2020; CMAP, 2019)
- **47.65%** of Englewood residents had household incomes of less than \$25,000 (CMAP, 2019)

Solution Impact - Green Line Englewood Branch Revitalization

A holistic approach to revitalizing the Englewood Branch of the CTA Green Line includes several components:

- **Reopening the Racine station**, followed by other stations abandoned in the 1990s
- **Developing mixed-use, mixed-income, transit-oriented** projects around CTA Green Line stations in Englewood
- **Increasing frequency** gradually along both branches of the Green Line to every fifteen minutes during rush hour, meaning service from Garfield to Harlem/Lake will be every 7.5 minutes—equivalent to the Red Line

There is a plethora of expected economic benefits. A reopened 63rd & Racine Green line station can bring up to **\$90 million in economic investments** and **additional access to 290k more jobs** by eliminating the 1-mile gap between stations (Teamwork Englewood, 2022). The new Cermak-McCormick Place and Morgan stations led to **2.5 billion dollars** in new private land development while promoting **10%+ annual population growth** (American Public Transportation Association, 2018; Kasal, 2018).

Importantly, the city’s Connected Communities Ordinance will expand the scope of Transit-Oriented Development possibilities around new stations.

Feasibility and Cost

Our proposal has tremendous neighborhood support. **93% of Englewood residents support** new stations in the neighborhood, but the city has been slow to meet their needs (Blumberg & Reed, 2023). New stations and TOD are also very affordable relative to economic benefits. Each new station will likely cost \$50 million considering the cost of the new Damen Station. Ashland/63rd currently has a TIF district implemented in 2006 and will expire in 2030—we seek to expand it by another 30 years to encourage additional development around stations and extend it to cover the entirety of the Englewood Branch. The extended and expanded TIF will generate over a million in revenue per year and can cover frequency improvements. The re-development of stations is well-qualified for hundreds of millions in TIFIA funds that explicitly fund projects focusing on transit-oriented development.

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