



Sustainable
Prosperity



**WE
ARE
CNT**

**Lowering the Cost of Living
through Urban Efficiencies**

What if American cities could implement one set of strategies to increase sustainability and decrease inequality?

Could a combination of transportation, water, and energy efficiencies make communities more resilient while lowering the costs of living?

Our experience says yes.

A new focus on building Sustainable Prosperity can help cities create jobs and put residents on track towards a lower-poverty, higher-wage future.

The poverty rate in many cities is at crisis levels.

Households hit hard by the economic downturn are still struggling. Reductions in federal benefits have exacerbated the problem, and cities are taking it upon themselves to find solutions.



Inequality is affecting whole regions as suburban poverty increases and jobs sprawl to areas without affordable housing or convenient transportation.

Traditional job creation programs have pitted community against community and region against region as employers locate in the area with the greatest tax benefits, often resulting in job reshuffling rather than job creation.

This continuing cycle of inequality is a drag on growth, inhibiting the economic potential of regions.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

The revitalization of cities has not benefitted all residents equally.

The new century brought a resurgence of cities, and in some places an expansion of livable neighborhoods where families can walk, bicycle, and take transit to jobs and schools. But, in many regions this is still a tale of two cities: one where residents work in high-paying, transit-accessible jobs in downtown hubs, and another where residents face stagnating wages and long commutes to far-flung areas.

Over the past several decades, CNT has learned a lot about what makes great places work. Transportation choices, mixed-use buildings, green spaces, strong schools, and a culture of entrepreneurship are all critical.



Sustainable Prosperity is built on the unique assets of a given city and region to address each place's individual challenges.

The Center for Neighborhood Technology is applying its 35 years of insight into how communities work to help create **Sustainable Prosperity**. CNT has found that state-of-the-art sustainability practices can transform traditional economic development strategies. Using place-based assets and resources more efficiently can catalyze increased employment at better wages and create jobs for those who need them the most.

As an anti-poverty strategy, jobs must be part of a suite of programs and policies that support workers, their families, and their communities. For example, transit routes that provide direct links between homes and job centers are essential. Transit accessibility reduces car ownership and other household expenses, letting incomes stretch further.

Elements of an anti-poverty program may be common from place-to-place, but solutions must be grounded in the political, social, and economic reality of a location if they are to create real opportunities. The Sustainable Prosperity framework enables the development of strategies that work for local people, businesses, and institutions.

CASE STUDY

MEMPHIS

FOUR ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS

JOBS

- 2,600 jobs can be created through increased efficiency and access, combined with strategies to attract investment based on Memphis's core assets, including its role as a major transportation and logistics hub. At least another 500 jobs will be created as an indirect result of these job creation strategies.
- An additional 2,600 jobs can be captured for Memphis residents by channeling regional growth into the city through improved land use planning, incentives, education, and pursuing Cargo-Oriented Development.

EXPENSES

- \$1,500 savings per household can be generated by reducing household expenses for essentials, including water, energy, and transportation with efficiency improvements.
- For businesses and moderate- and high-income families, resource efficiency programs can create expense reductions, while a shared savings model can channel a portion of the financial benefits toward the poverty reduction goal, creating a Prosperity Fund that can grow to at least \$2 million per year in 10 years.

ACCESS

- Transportation links for low-income households can provide access to jobs and significantly lower household expenses. Wage increases can then be used for household essentials or savings.

OPPORTUNITIES

- A comprehensive anti-poverty strategy must fully prepare individuals and families to be able to take advantage of new job opportunities. It must also work with employers and in communities to ensure that poor residents are on a level playing field with the support services they need to succeed.
- Memphis's poverty problem was not created overnight and addressing it will require an inter-generational commitment to overcoming barriers to prosperity. This includes supporting and expanding Memphis's existing social safety net and the network of programs that help families. Memphis can also expand the efficiency and efficacy of programs through integrated service delivery and electronic benefits records, so that a household that connects with any one part of the Center for Prosperity and Empowerment network receives the benefits of all applicable programs.



CASE STUDY

MEMPHIS

SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY STRATEGIES

The strategies recommended for Memphis are based on the city's assets and needs. In total they have the potential to create 5,680 jobs at an estimated average hourly wage of over \$15 and generate \$218 million annually in anti-poverty benefits, which is 109% of the amount needed to meet Memphis's target of reducing the poverty rate 10 percentage points.

ENERGY AND WATER ONE-STOP PROGRAM

A one-stop-shop approach to efficiency that treats the entire building as a single system and implements energy efficiency retrofits, water efficiency and renewable energy.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PORTFOLIO STANDARD

A policy to reduce stormwater runoff volume by 5% through green infrastructure (GI) treatments to absorb rain water where it falls.

JOB ACCESS AND PLACEMENT

Public/private partnerships to enhance transportation services, connect workers to jobs, and provide targeted job training.

REGIONAL GROWTH CAPTURE

Capturing a greater share of regional growth through land use strategies, supportive policies for small-scale entrepreneurship, and creating space for new small and mid-size businesses to set up shop in Memphis.

ZERO WASTE

Creating jobs and reducing costs with a goal of sending no waste to landfills or incinerators and instead managing waste through reuse, recycling, source reduction, and composting.

CHILDCARE

A program to train, finance and support entrepreneurs to become childcare providers at home and on-site at workplaces.

HOUSEHOLD EXPENSE REDUCTION

Curriculum to help families reduce expenses in four actionable areas that represent 40% of a typical household budget: energy, transportation, communications, and food.

PROSPERITY FUND

A fund to enable voluntary contributions of savings created by programs for businesses and moderate- and high-income households, to be used for micro-lending or small grants to low-income households for entrepreneurship and asset development.

PREPARING FOR OPPORTUNITY

Creating a network of programs to prepare individuals for work, including education, training, transportation access, health, safety, food, clothing, shelter, justice reform, childcare, employer engagement, anti-discrimination policies, flexible work incentives, and internet access.

FINANCING PROSPERITY

Developing new mechanisms for funding and investing in prosperity programs, including public/private partnerships, social impact bonds, and review of current financial incentives.

Memphis is building on CNT's work by establishing a new Center for Prosperity and Empowerment to implement its prosperity initiatives.

CNT'S SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY PROGRAM

RESEARCH



CNT's Sustainable Prosperity program focuses on creating tools, analysis, and data sets that can be used to launch and support an integration of sustainability, economic development, and anti-poverty efforts in any community. We combine this with in-depth engagements in key regions that are ripe for demonstrating the potential impact of such strategies.

DATA-DRIVEN SOLUTIONS

Setting quantitative targets and analyzing potential solutions for their ability to meet those goals in terms of income, jobs, expense reduction, and community benefits enables thoughtful prioritization of opportunities and ongoing measurement of progress.

Through our work with climate action planning, transit system benefit analysis, the Housing and Transportation (H+T[®]) Affordability Index, energy efficiency program design, and the creation of successful urban ventures, such as IGO CarSharing, we understand how to quantify the benefits of resource efficiency, job creation, and household cost of living reductions. We also understand the dynamics of place and how geospatial analysis can uncover the potential for innovative land use and economic development opportunities in the modern economy.

CNT brings its long history of quantitative and qualitative analysis to the issues of poverty, sustainability, and economic development for the Sustainable Prosperity program.



CNT'S SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY PROGRAM

NATIONAL NETWORK + POLICY ADVOCACY



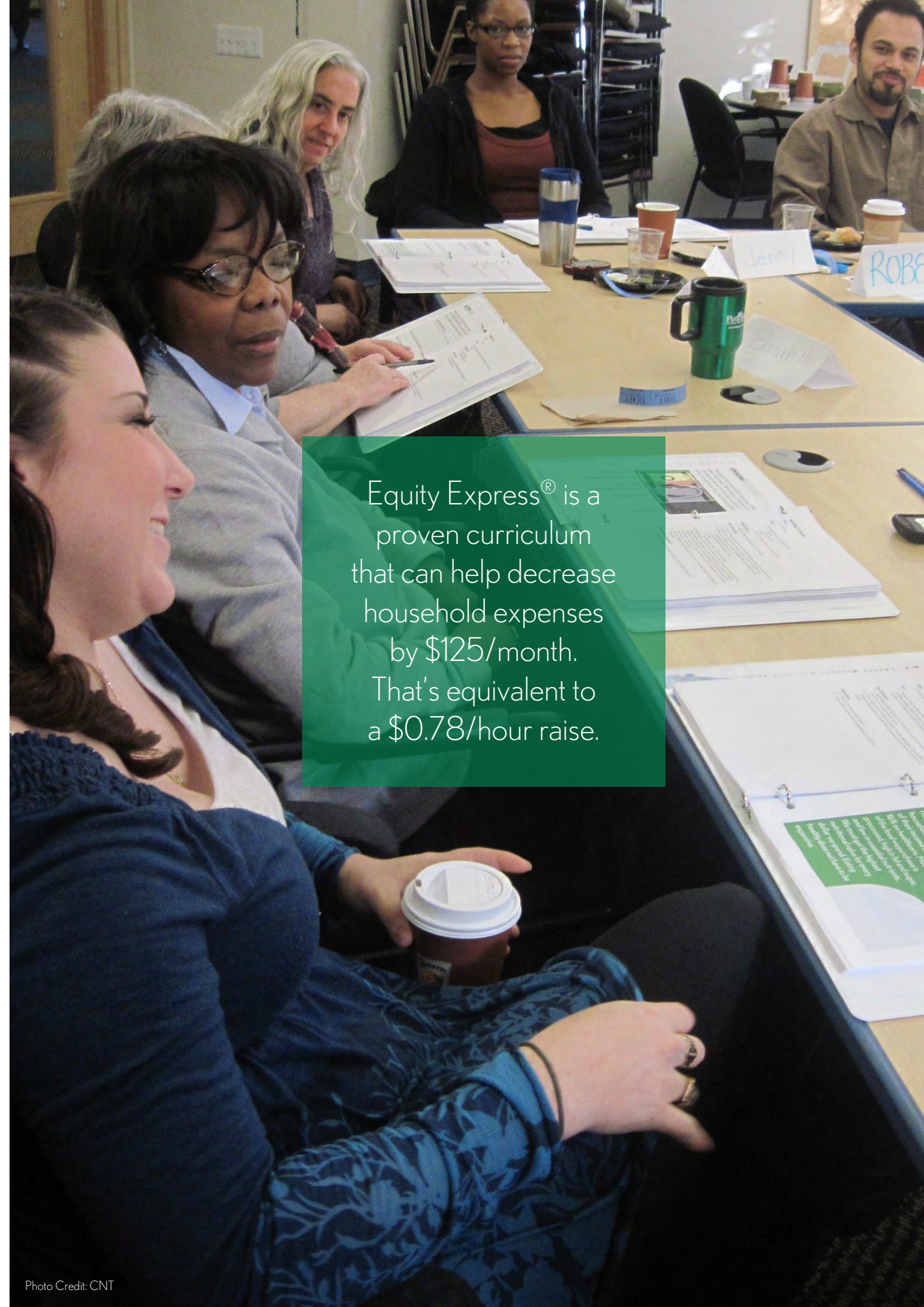
The Sustainable Prosperity program is convening a national network of stakeholders to accelerate learning and advocating for policy changes necessary for innovation in poverty reduction, resource efficiency, and integrated economic development and sustainability.

STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENTS



CNT is expanding its Sustainable Prosperity agenda to work with cities and regions around the country. We aim to help cities align sustainability and economic development efforts to help address the realities of the 21st century economy for households, while creating greener, more efficient communities. Our strategic process includes:

- Helping communities identify opportunities in the areas of resource efficiency, jobs access, job creation, household expense reduction, and opportunity building through deep stakeholder engagement and community analyses that are hyper-local as well as quantitative and qualitative
- Measuring the potential impact of change in relation to locally chosen targets and creating dashboard tools to enable ongoing tracking and management
- Developing real-world plans for implementation, including both financial and operational strategies
- Conducting Equity Express[®] Green Financial Education programs, which help families stretch current earnings and begin to save through smarter, more sustainable decisions on energy, transportation, communications, and food



Equity Express[®] is a proven curriculum that can help decrease household expenses by \$125/month. That's equivalent to a \$0.78/hour raise.

Partnerships for Sustainable Prosperity

CNT seeks partners who share our commitment to integrating sustainability and economic development efforts to help financially at-risk households create greener, more efficient, and more prosperous urban communities. Through research, data-driven decision-making, and smart public policy, we can create jobs, cut household expenses, and generate a sustainable, prosperous future for all.

Let's work together.

worktogether@cnt.org

ABOUT CNT

CNT is a nonprofit innovations hub for urban sustainability. CNT's research, strategies, and solutions are implemented across America and around the world to create more equitable and resilient communities. Our 35-plus years of work in transportation and community development, water, energy, and climate have inspired a generation of new approaches and earned the highest of honors.

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