



JUNE 9, 2026

Using Data to Drive Upward Mobility: Practical Lessons from Communities



Upward Mobility Framework

Agenda



Overview of Upward Mobility Framework



4 Ways to Use the Data Dashboard



Bridges to Prosperity Presentation



Dashboard Demo



History of the Upward Mobility Framework





What would it take to dramatically
increase **mobility from poverty**?



THREE-PART DEFINITION OF UPWARD MOBILITY

PILLARS



PREDICTORS

- ▶ Employment opportunities
 - ▶ Jobs paying living wages
 - ▶ Opportunities for income
 - ▶ Financial security
 - ▶ Wealth-building opportunities
- ▶ Access to preschool
 - ▶ Effective public education
 - ▶ School economic diversity
 - ▶ Preparation for college
 - ▶ Digital access
- ▶ Housing affordability
 - ▶ Housing stability
 - ▶ Economic inclusion
 - ▶ Racial diversity
 - ▶ Social capital
 - ▶ Transportation access
- ▶ Access to health services
 - ▶ Neonatal health
 - ▶ Environmental quality
 - ▶ Safety from trauma
- ▶ Political participation
 - ▶ Descriptive representation
 - ▶ Safety from crime
 - ▶ Just policing

UPWARD MOBILITY FRAMEWORK

The Urban Institute's evidence-based foundation for community efforts to expand prosperity and narrow racial inequities.





The Three-Part Definition





Focus on Racial Equity



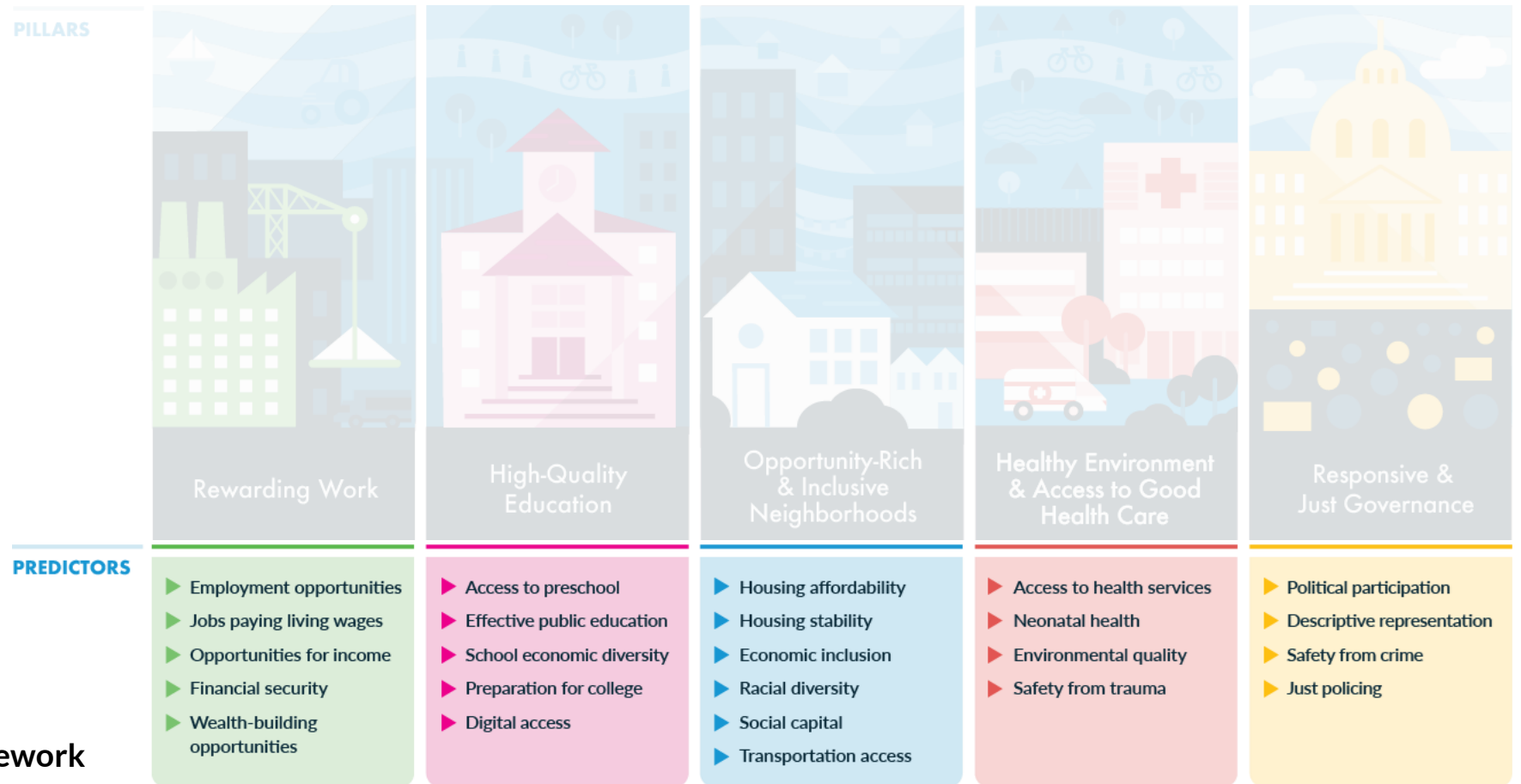


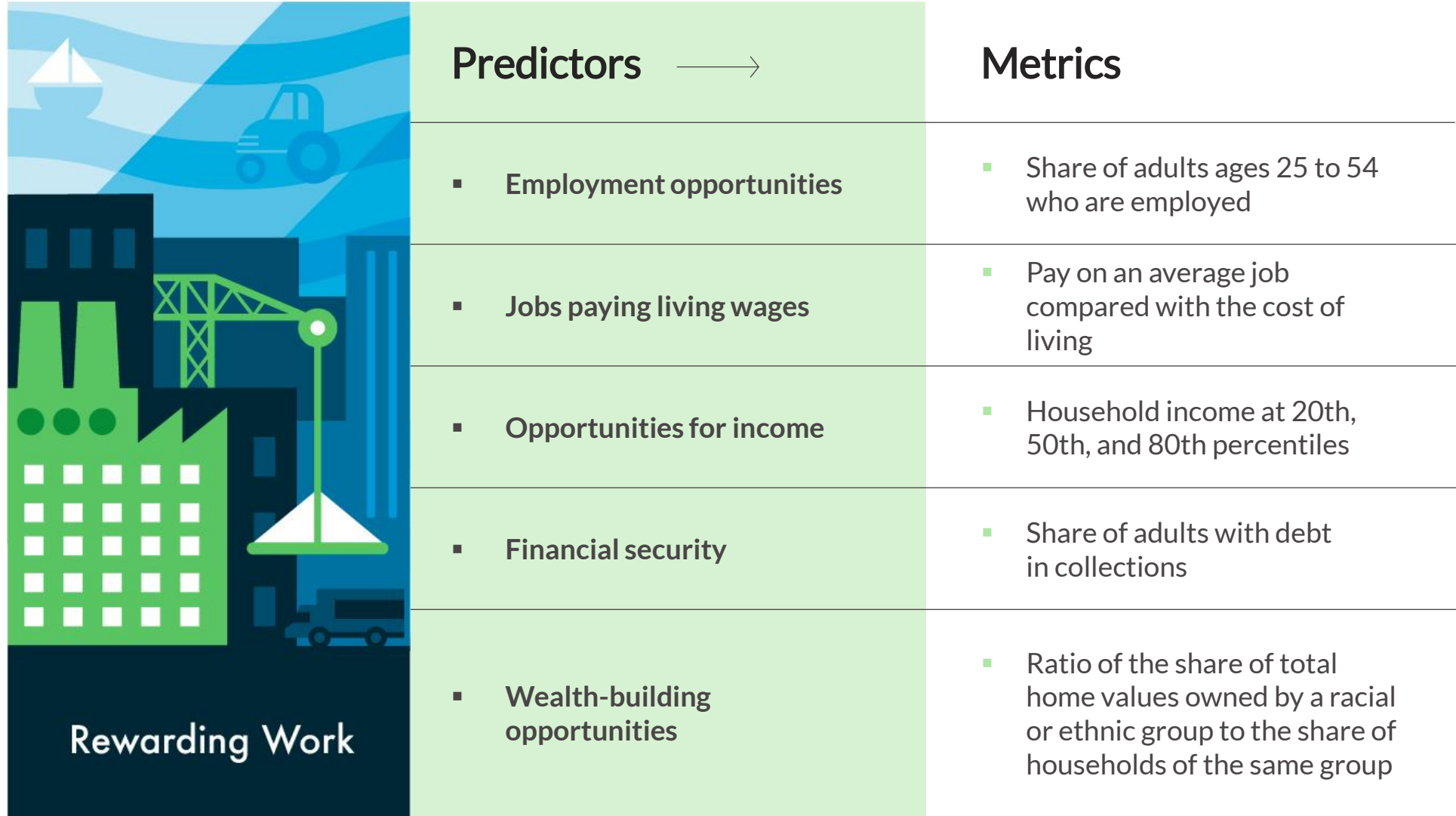
The Pillars





The Predictors





The Upward Mobility Data Dashboard



REWARDING WORK
Financial security
Learn more about this predictor and promising policy interventions > [Share](#)
Share of adults with debt in collections

HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION
Preparation for college
Learn more about this predictor and promising policy interventions > [Share](#)
Share of 19- and 20-year-olds with a high school diploma

RESPONSIVE AND JUST GOVERNANCE
Descriptive representation
Learn more about this predictor and promising policy interventions > [Share](#)
Ratio of the share of local, elected officials of a racial or ethnic group to the share of residents of the same group

WORK
Employment opportunities
Share of adults ages 25 to 54 who are employed

Ratio of the share of total home values owned by a racial or ethnic group to the share of households of the same group

Share of adults with debt in collections

Select between 1 and 6 communities
Search for any county or any city with a population greater than 75,000 in the US.
Type the name of a city or a county

2022

Map Chart

Legend
67.9% 74.5% 79.4% 84.0%

Choose geography [Ⓢ]
Counties Cities

Search for your community
Start typing...

Select year
2020

11

How can you use the dashboard and Mobility Metrics?

Understand

Contextualize

Prioritize

Monitor



How can you use the dashboard and Mobility Metrics?

Understand

Contextualize

Prioritize

Monitor



Understand conditions in your community

Urban Institute | Upward Mobility Initiative Q | MENU

Search for specific communities

Select between 1 and 6 communities

Search for any county or any city with a population greater than 75,000 in the US.

[Don't see your city? Learn how to access data for smaller cities >](#)

Select predictors or pillars

Select predictors or pillars from the menu below to see the data.

Selected predictors: 24 / 24 [Select All](#) | [Clear All](#)

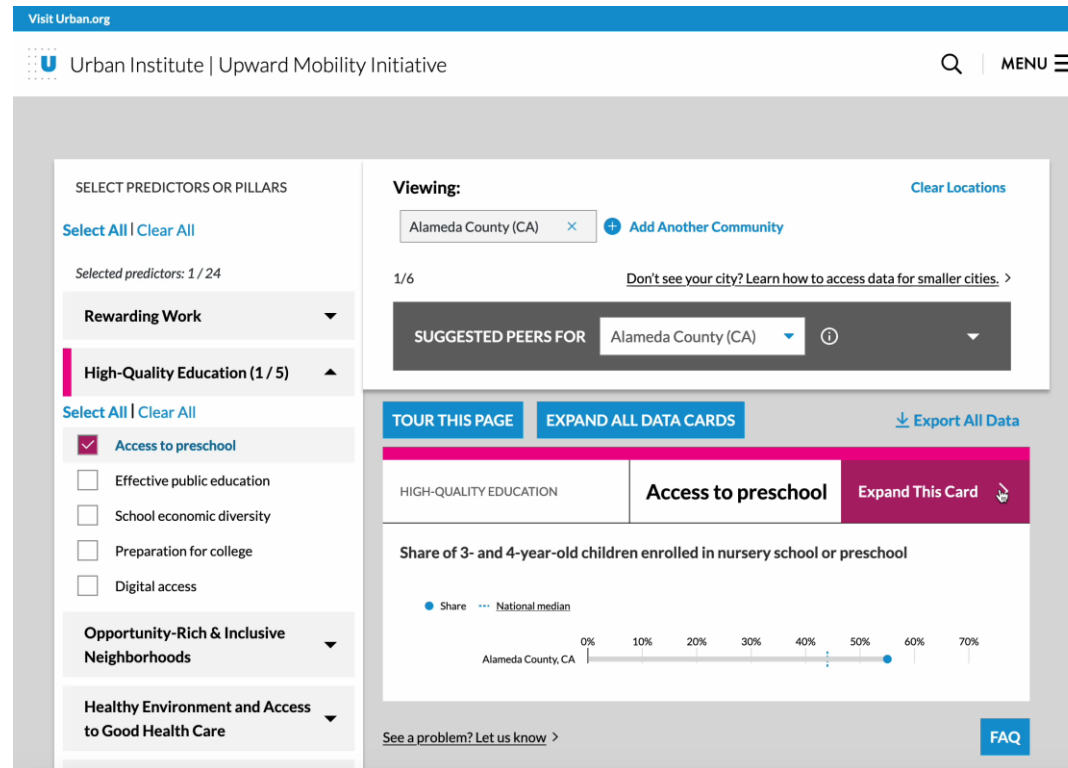
- Rewarding Work (5 / 5) ▼
- High-Quality Education (5 / 5) ▼
- Opportunity-Rich & Inclusive Neighborhoods (6 / 6) ▼
- Healthy Environment and Access to Good Health Care (4 / 4) ▼
- Responsive and Just Governance (4 / 4) ▼

SEARCH

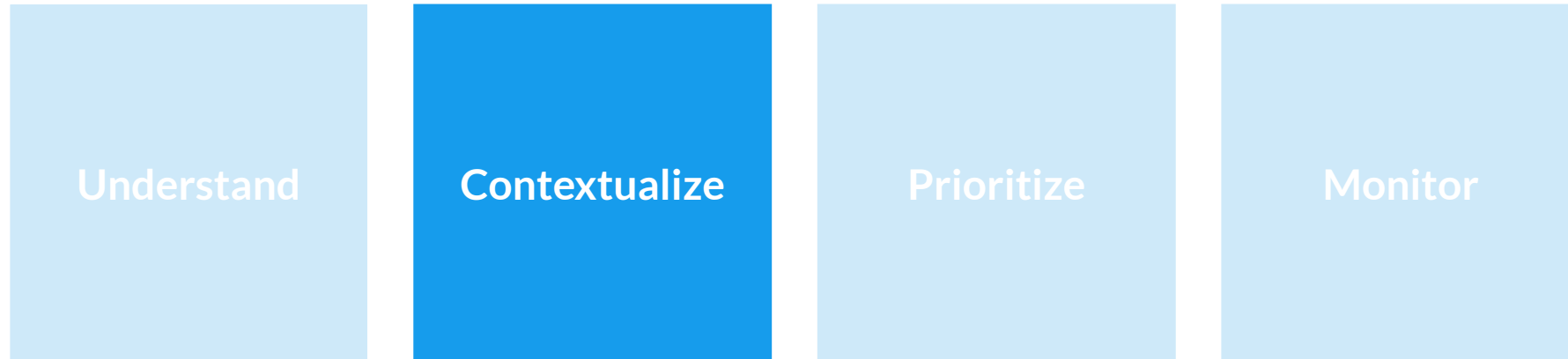


Understand conditions in your community

Do some groups of people in my community encounter greater barriers to achieving upward mobility?

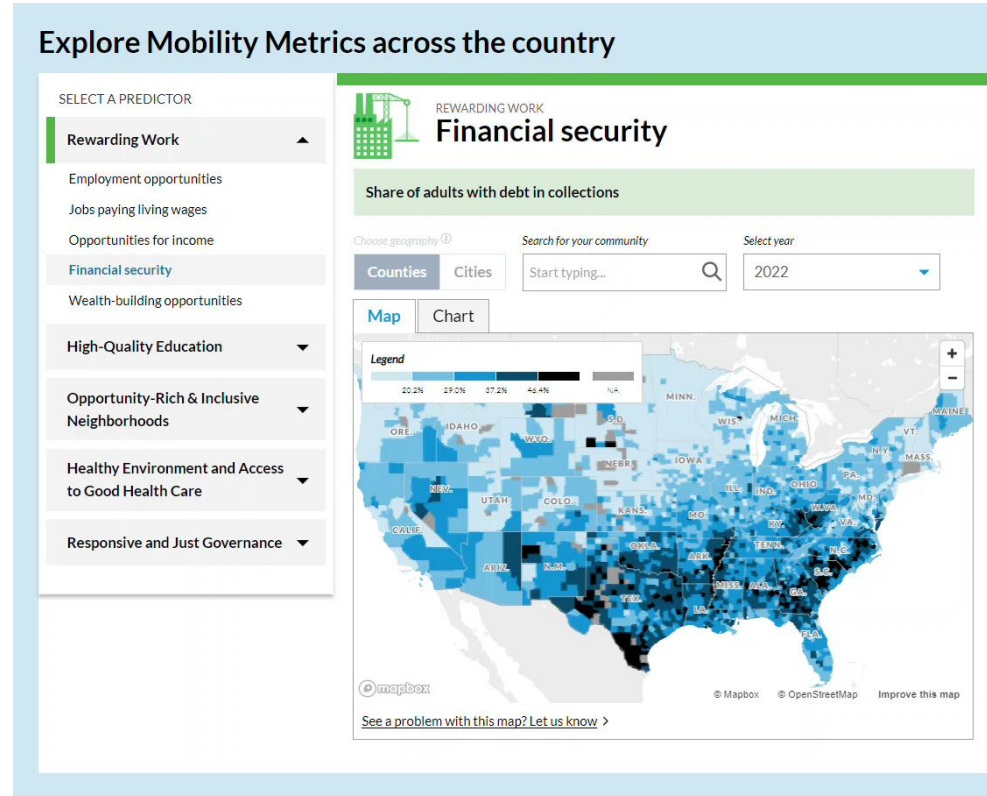


How can you use the dashboard and Mobility Metrics?



Contextualize conditions in your community

How does my community's experience compare to communities across the country?

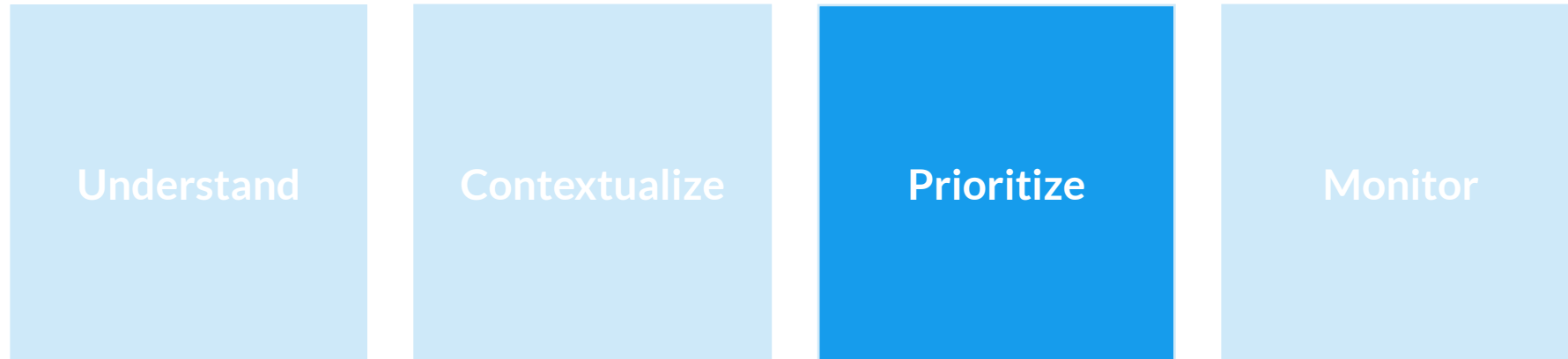


Contextualize conditions in your community

How does my community's experience compare to other similar communities?

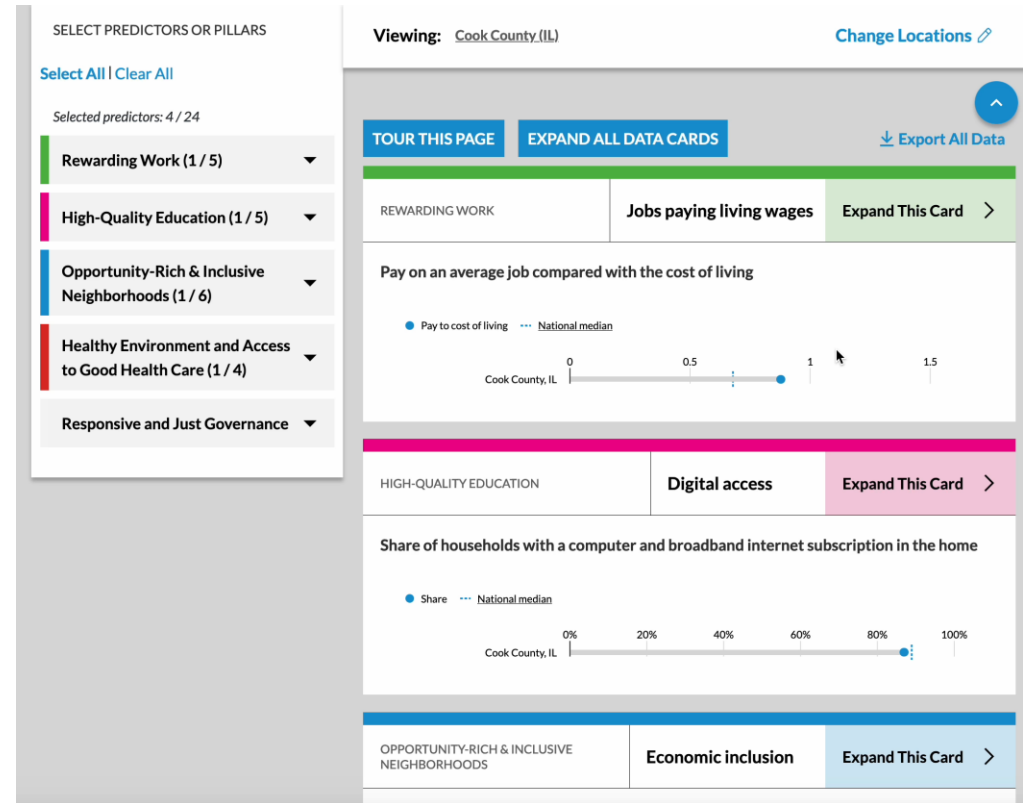
The screenshot shows the Urban Institute Upward Mobility Initiative web application. The header includes the Urban Institute logo and the text "Urban Institute | Upward Mobility Initiative" on the left, and a search icon and "MENU" on the right. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled "SELECT PREDICTORS OR PILLARS" and contains a list of categories: "Rewarding Work", "High-Quality Education", "Opportunity-Rich & Inclusive Neighborhoods", "Healthy Environment and Access to Good Health Care (1 / 4)", and "Responsive and Just Governance". The "Healthy Environment and Access to Good Health Care" category is expanded, showing a sub-list of predictors: "Access to health services", "Neonatal health", "Environmental quality" (which is checked), and "Safety from trauma". The right column is titled "Viewing: No location is currently selected" and contains a button "Add A Community" and a link "Don't see your city? Learn how to access data for smaller cities." Below this, a large white box contains the instruction: "Select a community and at least one pillar or predictor to see the data. Click 'select all' to see data for all predictors." A smaller text box below explains that pillars are overarching categories and selecting a pillar will display data for all predictors under that pillar.

How can you use the dashboard and Mobility Metrics?

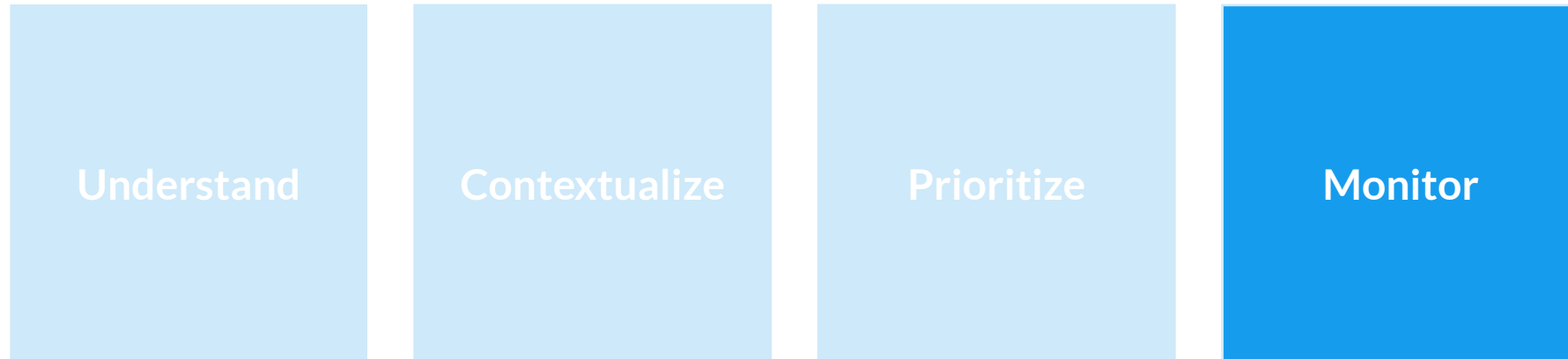


Prioritize areas requiring attention

Where is my community doing well?
Where could we be doing better?



How can you use the dashboard and Mobility Metrics?



Monitor progress

Have my community's efforts to boost upward mobility resulted in meaningful progress over time?

SELECT PREDICTORS OR PILLARS

Select All | Clear All

Selected predictors: 1 / 24

- Rewarding Work
- High-Quality Education
- Opportunity-Rich & Inclusive Neighborhoods
- Healthy Environment and Access to Good Health Care (1 / 4)

Select All | Clear All

- Access to health services
- Neonatal health
- Environmental quality
- Safety from trauma

Responsive and Just Governance

Viewing: Kings County (NY) Queens County (NY) Change Locations

TOUR THIS PAGE | EXPAND ALL DATA CARDS Export All Data

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT AND ACCESS TO GOOD HEALTH CARE

Access to health services

[Learn more about this predictor and promising policy interventions](#) [Share](#)

Number of people per primary care physician

This metric represents the number of people served for each primary care physician in a community. It assumes the population is equally distributed across physicians and does not account for actual physician patient load. Primary care physicians include practicing nonfederal physicians (MDs and DOs) under age 75 specializing in general practice medicine, family medicine, internal medicine, and pediatrics.

[Learn more about the Mobility Metrics and how they were selected.](#)

Select year: 2021

In 2021, there was one primary care physician for every 1,580 residents in Kings County, NY. A lower number of residents indicates greater access to primary care physicians.

Visualization
Table

[Download](#)

Sources and Notes

US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, [Area Health Resources File \(AHRF\)](#), 2021 (using 2021-2022, 2022-2023 files) (using American Medical Association Physician Masterfile). (Time period: 2021)

The metric excludes nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and other primary care providers who are not physicians. A value of 0 means the community has no primary care physicians. The confidence interval for this metric is not available because the underlying data lack the variation needed to calculate it. City data are not available for this metric.



Presentation - Bridges to Prosperity Northern IL





BRIDGES
TO PROSPERITY
NORTHERN IL

**Using Data to Drive
Upward Mobility: Practical
Lessons from Communities**

About Us

Bridges to Prosperity Northern Illinois is a nonprofit consulting organization that helps communities, organizations, and local governments develop data-driven strategies to increase economic mobility and reduce poverty.

We equip individuals, organizations and communities with proven tools, training, and strategies to reduce poverty, strengthen systems, and improve outcomes.

We uniquely combine participant driven cohort programs, cross sector systems change, and organizational consulting, creating measurable results for both individuals and the communities that serve them.



BRIDGES
TO PROSPERITY
NORTHERN IL

About Us

Mary Cacioppi, Founder/CEO

Mary has over 24 years of experience in community development, economic development, and poverty reduction. She is also a national poverty reduction consultant.

Mary is the author of ***Economic Development That Benefits Everyone: Poverty Reduction IS a Key Strategy***, which explores the connection between economic development, workforce stability, and community prosperity. She also provides a national workshop on this topic.

- Emerge Solutions, Board Member
- National League of Cities Economic Mobility Peer Network
- Boone/Winnebago County Community Action Agency, Board
- VP Region 1 Planning Council's Data Advisory Committee
- Economic Development Certifications from IEDC, & CDI
- Poverty Reduction Certifications from Aha! Process



About Us

Ron Clewer, CEO, PlatFORM Group

Ron Clewer is an affordable housing and community development executive with more than 20 years of leadership experience advancing neighborhood revitalization, housing preservation, and economic development initiatives.

As Principal of Tipping Point Consultancy, he provides strategic leadership to several Rockford-area nonprofit organizations, including PlatFORM Group, ZION Development Corporation, and Northwest Christian Community Development Corporation.

Previously, he served as President of Community Revitalization and Public Housing Partnerships for Gorman & Company and as CEO of the Rockford Housing Authority, where he led large-scale housing redevelopment, innovative public-private partnerships, and community investment initiatives that expanded housing opportunities and strengthened neighborhoods.





From Insight to Action

Aligning Understanding & Action



Individuals



Organizations



Communities



**Building Pathways to
Stability and Self-Sufficiency**

**From Insight to Action:
Workshops That Equip Organizations
and Communities for Lasting Impact**

**Poverty Reduction
Strategy Development**

Poverty Reduction Strategy Development



Creating lasting change requires more than isolated programs, it requires a shared community strategy.

Bridges to Prosperity Northern Illinois helps communities develop comprehensive poverty reduction plans that align leaders, organizations, and resources around one goal: expanding upward mobility for residents.

Winnebago County Upward Mobility Action Plan



Community Need for a Collaborative Approach

- Benchmarking of Communities That Created Mobility Action Plans (MAPs)
- Convening Partner Organizations to Present Upward Mobility Framework
- Meetings with Local Elected Officials
- Determined Working Group Leaders
- Reviewed Supporting Data for Project Launch

Bridges Out of Poverty: Indicators of Distress

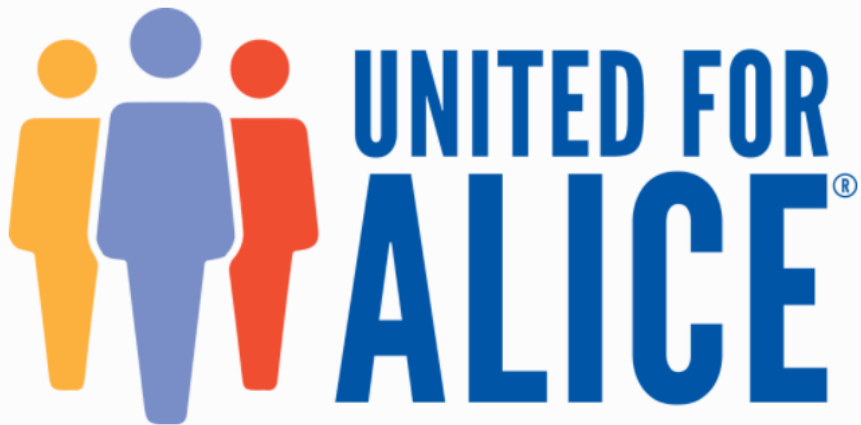
Is Our Community at Risk?

- Population loss
- Middle-class flight
- Young-adult children leave the community and don't come back
- Lost manufacturing
- Tax delinquencies/foreclosures
- More temporary and part-time jobs
- Rising food insecurity
- Low-income housing costs above 30% of income
- Growing number of payday lending, cash advance, pawn shops, buy here/pay here
- Free and reduced lunch rates rising
- Number and value of business loans are declining
- Investment in infrastructure is declining
- Fiscal difficulties for city or county
- Deteriorating Main Street

[Economic Development That Benefits Everyone: Poverty Reduction Is a Key Strategy - Book - aha! Process](#)

United Way ALICE Report

ALICE Households in Winnebago County: 26%



[Home](#) | [UnitedForALICE](#)

To better understand the growing financial struggles many households face across the state of Illinois, **United Way of Illinois** launched a statewide research initiative. The ALICE Project—ASSET LIMITED, INCOME CONSTRAINED, EMPLOYED—is a grassroots movement and research initiative that brings together United Ways, foundations, academic institutions, corporations, and other state organizations to present data that can help inform strategies for positive community change.

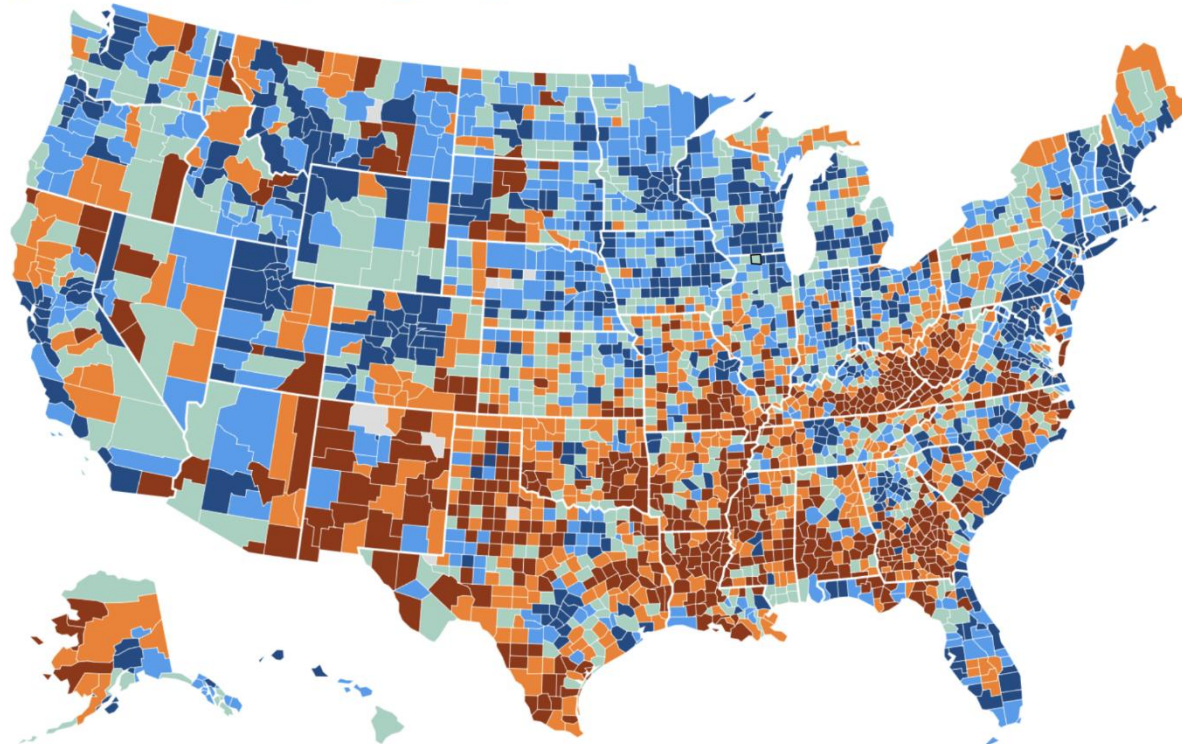
Assess Your Community's Commitment to Poverty Reduction - Tamarack Institute

1. Does your community have a poverty reduction strategy?
2. Does your community have a neighborhood-based community development plan that addresses poverty?
3. Does your city council or local leadership support a citizen-led coalition for poverty reduction?
4. Has your city adopted a living wage policy?
5. Does your community offer affordable and accessible transportation?
6. Do citizens in your community have affordable access to municipal services, regardless of income?
7. Is your community implementing or developing a plan to create affordable housing?
8. Is your local public health agency/authority addressing poverty as a health issue?
9. Are business leaders in your community actively working to end poverty?
10. On a scale of 1 to 5, how committed is your community to ending local poverty?

Distressed Communities Index

Mapping County-Level Economic Distress with EIG's Distressed Communities Index

■ Prosperous ■ Comfortable ■ Mid-tier ■ At risk ■ Distressed



DCI Components

Poverty Rate

No High School Diploma

Adults Not Working

Housing Vacancy Rate

Median Income Ratio

Change in Employment

Changes in Establishments

Economic Innovation Group

[Home - Economic Innovation Group](#)

Announced Commitment by Mayor and County Board Chairman and Participation by City & County Staff in Planning Process

Educated Community on Upward Mobility Framework and Our Planning Process

Highlighted MAPs Created & Implemented by Other Communities

Introduced Working Group Leaders

Encouraged Participation in Working Groups



Rewarding Work



High-Quality
Education



Opportunity-Rich
and Inclusive
Neighborhoods



Healthy
Environment and
Access to Good
Health Care



Responsive and Just
Governance

Project Launch Event

Deb Alfredson, Winnebago County Housing Authority

Janna Bailey, Region 1 Planning Council

Jas Bilich, Winnebago County

Mary Cacioppi, Bridges to Prosperity Northern IL

Jedadiah Cantrell, OSF HealthCare

Owen Carter, City of Rockford

Ron Clewer, Gorman & Company

Heidi Dettman, Rockford Public Schools

Marlana Dokken, Winnebago County

Justin Francis, Rockford Housing Authority

Chris Greenwood, City of Rockford

Michael Jarvis, Winnebago County Health Department

Shelton Kay, Rockford Regional Health Council

Emily Klonicki, Alignment Rockford

Patricia Mubirigi, Rosecrance

Laura Ortiz, St. Vincent DePaul Society

Anqunette Parham, City of Rockford Community Action

James Patterson, Community Foundation of Northern IL

Spitty Tata, Community Volunteer

Anna Wandtke, Rock Valley College

Mobility Coalition



Working Groups

The goals of the Working Groups were:

- **Compare** our community's metrics to peer communities to assess the extent of the local mobility challenges
- **Highlight** interconnections among predictors
- **Reveal** persistent racial inequities and structural barriers that perpetuate them
- **Prioritize** mobility predictors where the community's focused attention and action can have the greatest impact

Working Groups



Opportunity Rich & Inclusive Neighborhoods

		Winnebago County		City of Rockford	
Housing affordability	Ratio of affordable housing units to households with low, very low and extremely low income levels	Low	161.4	Low	162.8
		Very Low	158.3	Very Low	158.0
		Extremely Low	144.6	Extremely Low	148.8
Housing stability	Number and share of public-school children who are ever homeless during school year	Number	2,887	Number	2,646
		Share	6.5%	Share	9.4%
Economic inclusion	Share of people experiencing poverty who live in high-poverty neighborhoods	19.7%		26.7%	
Racial diversity	Index of people's exposure to neighborhoods of different races and ethnicities	Black, Non-Hispanic	70.8%	Black, Non-Hispanic	67.6%
		Hispanic	77.9%	Hispanic	73.8%
		Other Races/Ethnicities	90.4%	Other Races/Ethnicities	89.8%
		White, Non-Hispanic	25.8%	White, Non-Hispanic	38.7%
Social capital	Number of membership associations per 10,000 people	9.6		1.5	
	Ratio of Facebooks friends with higher socioeconomic status to Facebook friends with lower socioeconomic status	0.7		0.6	
Transportation access	Transit trips index	47.4		Data only available for County.	
	Transportation cost index	44.7		Data only available for County.	

Organizations, programs, resources or services that contribute to each metric



Opportunity Rich & Inclusive Neighborhoods



Housing Affordability

Housing Stability

Economic Inclusion

Transportation

Racial Diversity

Social Capital

High Quality Education



Access to Preschool

Effective Public Education

School Economic Diversity

Preparation for College

Digital Access

Rewarding Work



Employment Opportunities

Jobs Paying Living Wages

Opportunities for income

Financial Security

Wealth Building Opportunities

Healthy Environment & Access to Good Healthcare



Access to Healthcare

Neonatal Health

Safety from Trauma

Environmental Quality

Just Governance



Safety from Crime

Political Participation

Descriptive Representation

Just Policing

Stakeholder Engagement

Affordable housing, to address rising costs and housing instability

Financial literacy programs, to support long-term economic independence

Accessible childcare and early childhood education, as foundational elements for family stability and future opportunity

Comprehensive mental and physical healthcare remains out of reach for many community members

Community Engagement

Affordable childcare, which many described as a barrier to stable employment and education

Affordable housing, cited as a foundational need for personal and family stability

Budgeting support and credit building/repair services, necessary for long-term **financial health**; as well as broader financial stability initiatives, including emergency assistance and savings support

Education around **self-sufficiency**, including life skills training and personal development of resources

Reconvening of Working Groups

The Working Group's analysis culminated in the development of a Prioritized Metric Review. These reviews outlined:

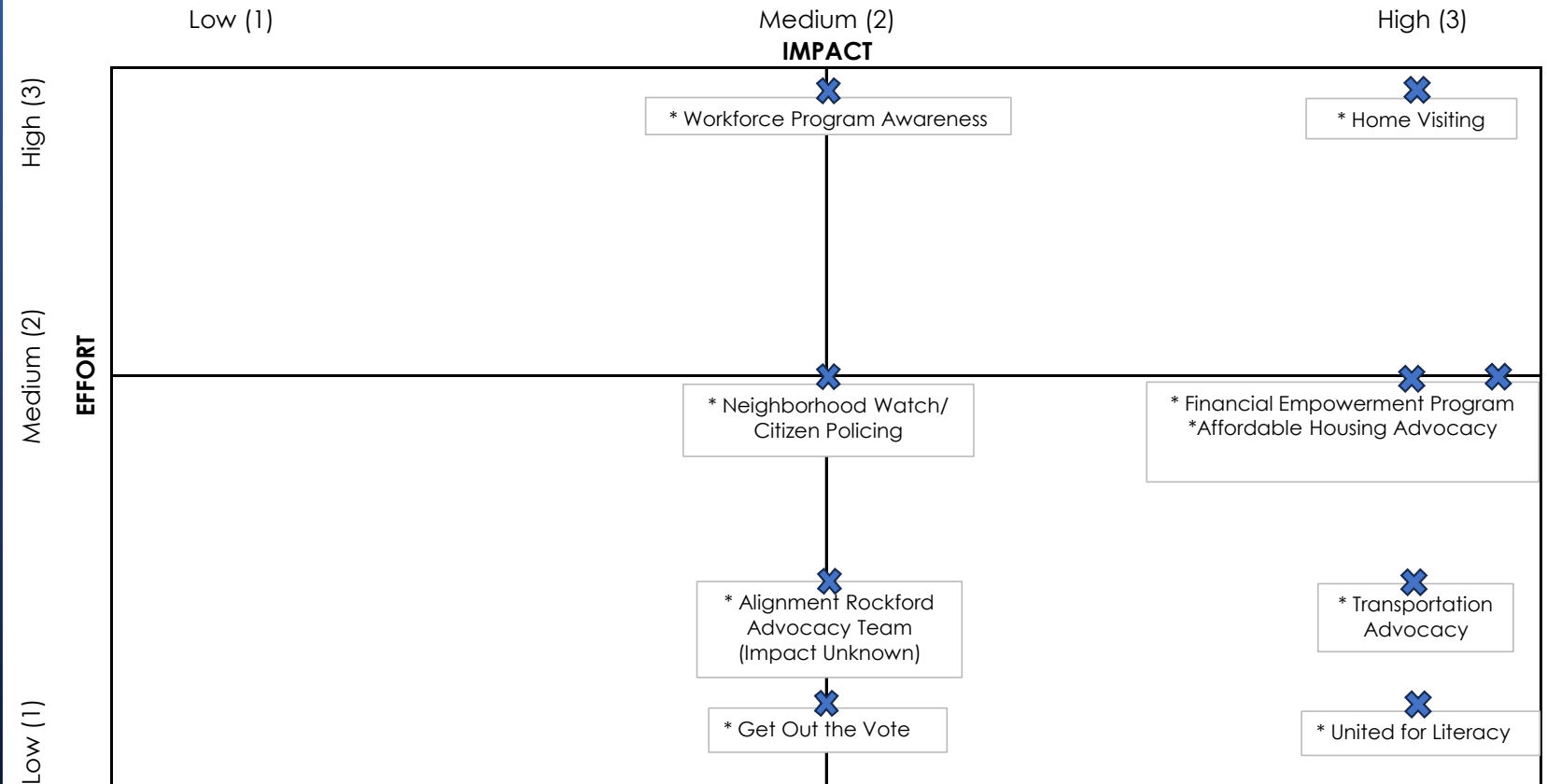
- The potential level of impact each proposed intervention could have
- The organization(s) best positioned to lead or manage the proposed work
- Additional context, rationale, and feedback gathered during the decision-making process

Strategic Priorities

Upward Mobility Project Prioritization

Please rank in Priority order on a scale of 1-9, with 1 being the highest priority and 9 being lowest.

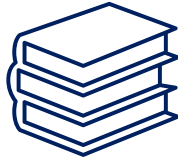
Priority	Pillar	Intervention	IMPACT	EFFORT
	High Quality Education	Alignment Rockford Policy/Advocacy Team	Unknown	1
	High Quality Education	United for Literacy	3	1
	Rewarding Work	Workforce Program Awareness	2	3
	Rewarding Work	Financial Empowerment Program	3	2
	Healthcare	Home Visiting	3	3
	Governance	Get Out the Vote/Vote 815	2	1
	Governance	Neighborhood Watch & Citizen Policing	2	2
	Housing/Transportation	Affordable Housing Advocacy	3	2
	Housing/Transportation	Transportation Advocacy	3	1.5



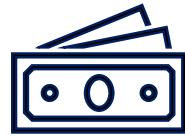
Strategic Priorities



Housing Affordability



Effective Public Education



Financial Security

These initiatives were chosen not only for their alignment with community-identified priorities, but also for their potential to create long-lasting change when implemented in partnership with local organizations, policymakers, and residents.

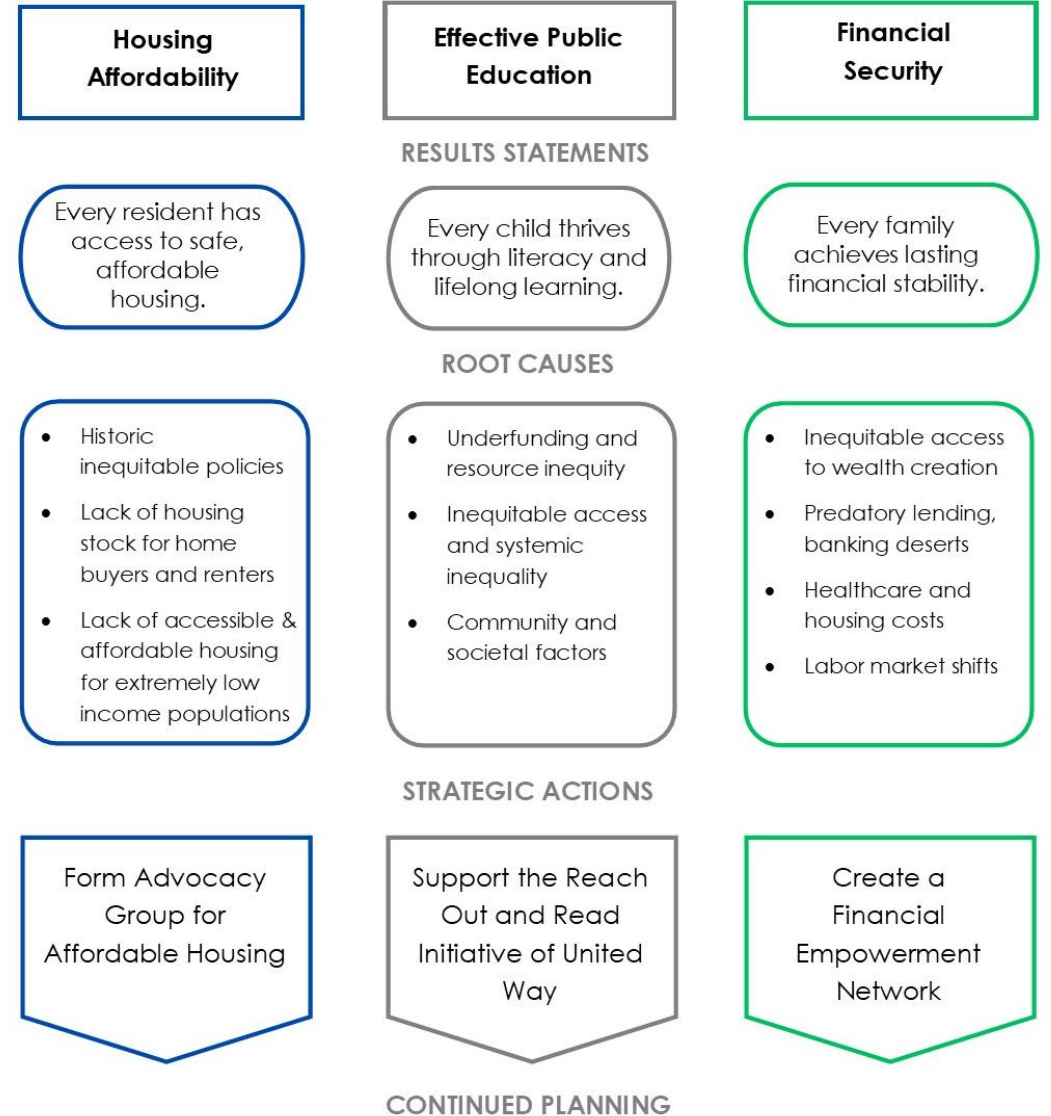
Community Vision Statement

We envision a stronger, more equitable Winnebago County where every resident has access to safe, affordable housing, every child is empowered through literacy and lifelong learning, and every family has the tools to build lasting financial stability. By investing in inclusive policies, community partnerships, and education-driven solutions, we aim to break down systemic barriers, uplift our neighborhoods, and create a future where opportunity, dignity, and economic resilience are shared by all.

Theory of Change & Logic Model

Building an Equitable Winnebago County

Winnebago County faces interconnected challenges including housing insecurity, low literacy rates among children and economic inequality. Systemic barriers limit essential resources, particularly in underserved communities.



Plan Release Event



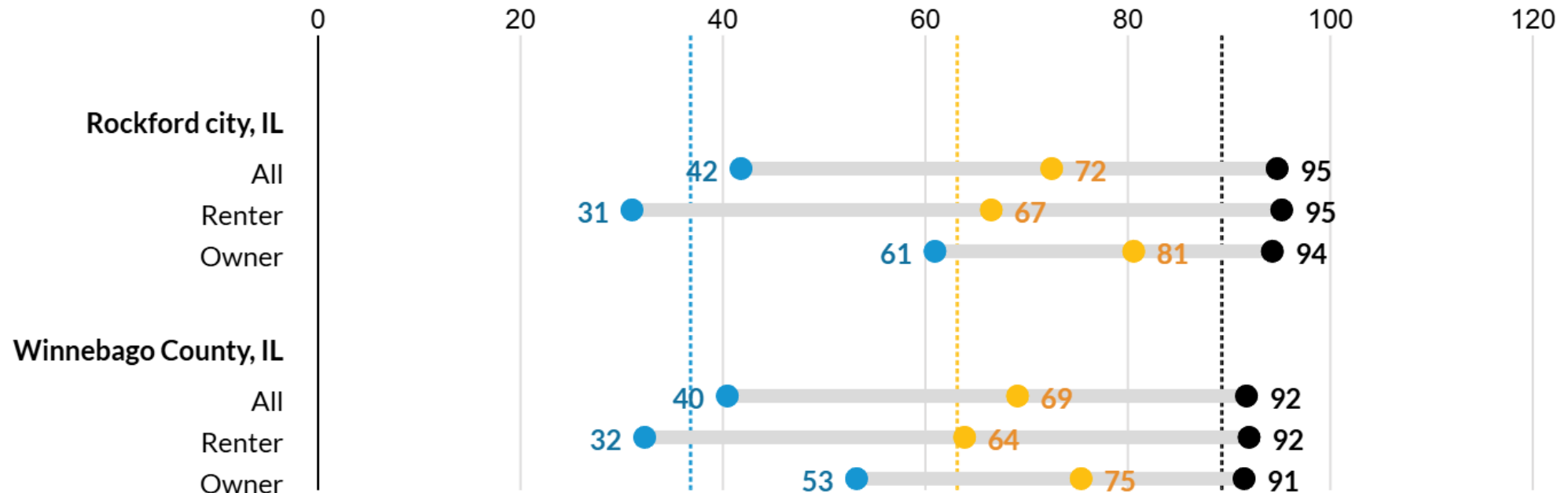
Strategic Priority: Housing Affordability

Pillar: Opportunity Rich & Inclusive Neighborhoods

Results Statement: Every Winnebago County resident has access to safe, and affordable housing.

The predictor of Housing Affordability is the number of affordable and available housing units per 100 households with low, very low and extremely low incomes. It includes owners and renters. Values below 100 suggest the housing stock does not meet the need.

● Extremely low-income ● Very low-income ● Low-income --- National median





Strategic Action: Form an Advocacy Group that will create a community dashboard with progress metrics that can be shared and promoted.

Metrics to be Monitored:

Housing production over time
Housing by affordability status
Housing demolition

Housing costs (rent/sale)
Housing preservation
Mobility trends

Community Partners:

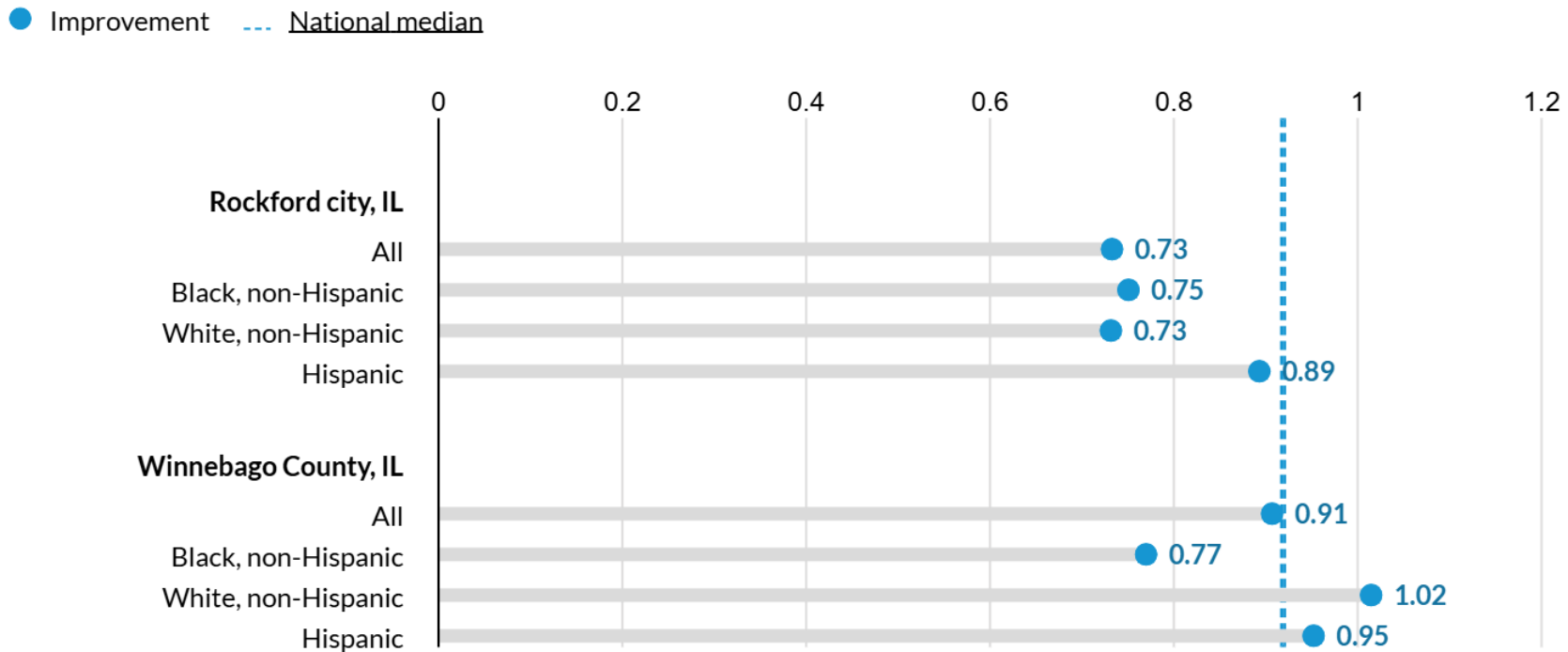
PlatFORM Group, Region 1 Planning Council, Transform Rockford, Rockford and Winnebago County Housing Authorities, YIMBY Rockford, the City of Rockford, Habitat for Humanity, Northern IL Land Bank

Strategic Priority: Effective Public Education

Pillar: High Quality Education

Results Statement: Every child in Winnebago County thrives through literacy and lifelong learning.

The predictor of Effective Public Education is the average annual improvement in English Language Arts. A value of 1 indicates a community's students are learning at an average rate, below 1 is slower than average, and above 1 is faster than average.





Strategic Action: Partner with United Way to support its Reach Out and Read initiative.

Reach Out and Read is an evidence-based national pediatric literacy program through which medical providers, as part of routine primary care for young children, are trained to offer parents anticipatory guidance about the importance of reading aloud.

Community Partners:

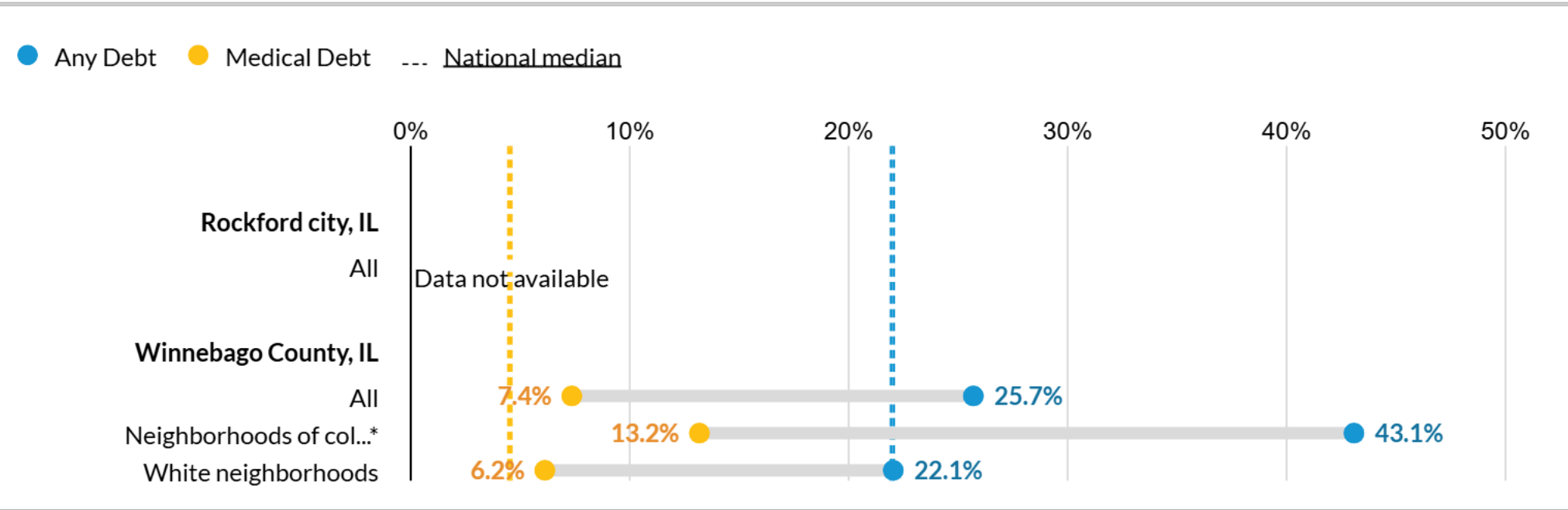
United Way of Rock River Valley, Mobility Coalition members

Strategic Priority: Financial Security

Pillar: Rewarding Work

Results Statement: Every family in Winnebago County achieves lasting financial stability.

The predictor is the share of adults with debt in collections.



*Neighborhoods of color



Strategic Action: Creation of a Financial Empowerment network. This effort aims to bring together resources and counselors to support residents with financial literacy, budgeting, debt management, and overall financial well-being.

Community Partners:

Family Credit Management, Region 1 Planning Council, local banks, additional community stakeholders

Sustainability Strategy

Bridges to Prosperity Northern Illinois serves as the lead entity responsible for tracking and evaluating project progress. Our role includes compiling and presenting comprehensive reports to the Mobility Coalition, which will cover:

- The current status of each project
- Milestones achieved and activities undertaken to date
- New and existing partnerships developed to support implementation
- Key performance indicators and measurable outcomes

Project Teams



Housing Affordability
Formation of an
Advocacy Group for
Affordable Housing

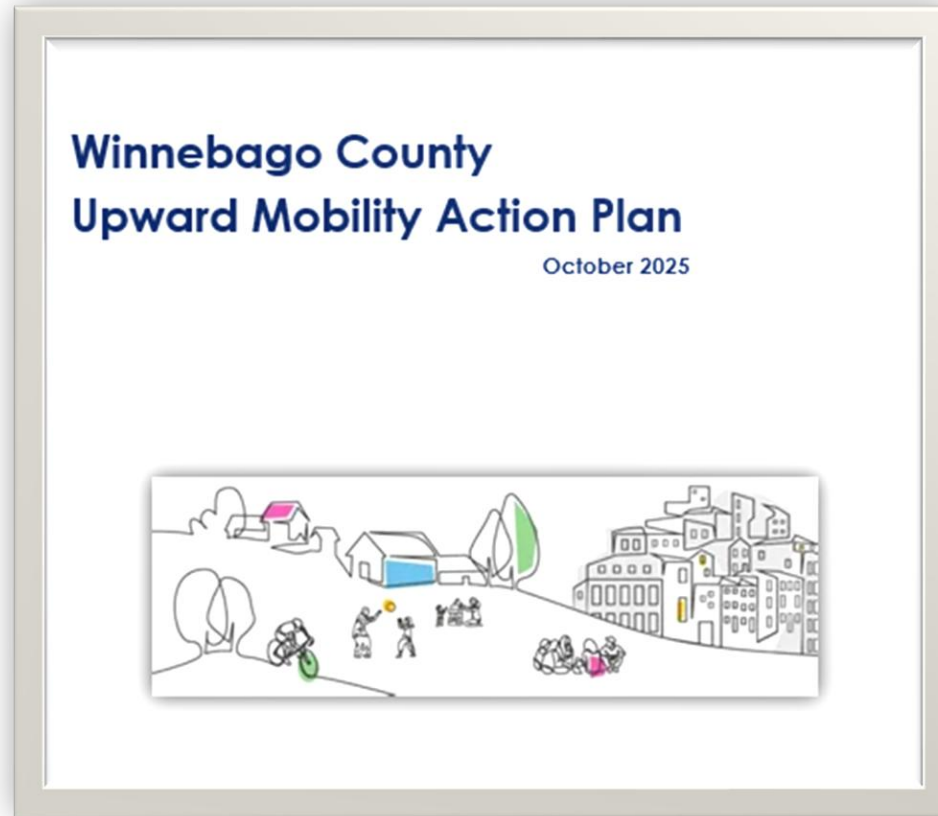


Effective
Public Education
Supporting the
Reach Out and Read
Initiative of United Way



Financial Security
Creation of a Financial
Empowerment Network

Project Plan



www.BridgesNorthernIL.com

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

THAT BENEFITS EVERYONE

Poverty Reduction Is a Key Strategy



MARY CACIOPPI

A blueprint for economic development, nonprofit, government,
and policy leaders to create opportunity for all



[Economic Development That
Benefits Everyone: Poverty
Reduction Is a Key Strategy:
Mary Cacioppi: 9781948244664:
Amazon.com: Books](#)



Bridges to Prosperity Northern Illinois builds community-wide, collaborative approaches to alleviate poverty for individuals and communities.

www.BridgesNorthernIL.com

Join our Facebook Group, Bridges to Prosperity Northern Illinois to keep updated with our projects and upcoming events

Thank you!

Contact us

Email upwardmobility@urban.org to reach a member of the team

