

Outreach Strategy Playbook:

Expanding Access and Participation
Across Communities

A Report to Share with Internal and External Audiences



June 2025

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ABOUT GEM

The Global Epicenter of Mobility is a signature program led by the Detroit Regional Partnership that is designed to create a smart, secure, and sustainable advanced-mobility industry in Southeast Michigan, made possible by a four-year U.S. E.D.A. Build Back Better Regional Challenge grant award.

GEM's vision is to accelerate economic growth by building on the region's unrivaled mobility assets. It will create a smart, secure, sustainable, and advanced mobility industry, starting with the transition to next-generation electric, autonomous, and fully connected vehicles. While grounded in automotive, GEM's six initiatives stretch well beyond the automotive industry as advanced mobility technology evolves to move people and goods in new and exciting ways. These six initiatives include:

- **GEM Central:** Serves as the coordinating hub ensuring alignment among partners, facilitating communication, and providing research and strategic support
- **Start-Up Support:** Supports startups and entrepreneurs in mobility fostering innovation and filling gaps in the mobility value chain
- **Testing & Proving:** Provides small companies and entrepreneurs with world-class testing facilities enabling the development and validation of mobility technologies
- **Supply Chain Transformation:** Assists small to medium-sized manufacturers transition to modern mobility by embracing electrification and emerging technologies
- **Site Readiness:** Identifies and prepares development-ready sites across the Detroit region, attracting major mobility business investments and facilitating job creation
- **Talent Transformation:** Meeting the region's advanced mobility talent needs through training, career pathway development and support for all communities

For more information about these initiatives visit gemdetroitregion.com.

The Outreach Strategy Playbook: Expanding Access and Participation Across Communities is a resource designed to support the Global Epicenter of Mobility's (GEM) six initiatives, as well as organizations and businesses within the advanced mobility ecosystem, in conducting meaningful and intentional community engagement for all. This resource provides internal teams and external partners with strategies and tools to foster connectivity, build trust, and expand access to opportunities in advanced mobility across Southeast Michigan's 11-county region. It is designed to create pathways for collaboration and participation, aligning with GEM's mission to cultivate a thriving and connected mobility sector that benefits everyone.

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INTRODUCTION AND APPROACH

Introduction

This playbook is designed as a practical guide for GEM's six pillars as well as external organizations and businesses within the advanced mobility ecosystem. It outlines a comprehensive approach to engaging communities that have faced barriers to participation through:

- 1. Defining and understanding target audiences**, such as workforce development groups, innovators, and business enterprises.
- 2. Listening to the community** to identify longstanding challenges, build trust, and foster collaboration.
- 3. Evaluating obstacles** through tools and strategies to navigate challenges across the on-ramp to opportunity journey.
- 4. Implementing community relevant outreach** to ensure messaging and engagement efforts are accessible, authentic, and impactful.

By recognizing long-standing challenges and centering community voices, the playbook provides a framework for meaningful engagement and expanded access. These strategies and tools aim to support GEM's internal partners and external organizations in creating meaningful connections and broadening access to opportunities within Southeast Michigan's advanced mobility ecosystem.

While this may not be a traditional place-based economic development strategy, it reflects many of the same principles. Place-based approaches focus on building economic opportunity by centering the unique assets, needs, and voices of specific communities. This strategy emphasizes local collaboration, access to opportunity, and alignment between industry and community. It helps ensure that economic growth is not only regional but also rooted in the people and places that make up Southeast Michigan.

Approach

This Playbook reflects the vision and leadership of the mobility engagement team at the Global Epicenter of Mobility, and was developed in partnership with Culture Shift Team. A *Discover, Develop, Deliver* approach rooted in community-driven design was used to create this playbook. In the **Discover** phase, community insights were gathered through listening sessions, stakeholder interviews, and data analysis to understand community needs. The **Develop** phase translated these insights into a strategic framework, defining a Trusted Connectors Program and outlining community relevant engagement strategies. Finally, in the **Deliver** phase, this playbook was developed with implementation tools, metrics, and stories to drive inclusive impact in the advanced mobility sector.

 25 Stakeholder Interviews Building a Foundational Understanding	 6 Community Listening Sessions with 83 participants	 2 Community Ideation Sessions with 17 participants
June - September 2024	September - November 2024	December 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gained insights on target audiences<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ 60 local and 15 national organizations supporting communities that have faced barriers to participation◦ 30 reports and data sources• GEM Mobility Engagement Officer invited to present to Detroit CDFI Coalition, NEI Work Table• Notified of key events and conference such as RECES24, Black Tech Saturdays, Great Lakes Women's Business Conference	<p>Gained community insights on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community assets and resilience• Barriers to opportunities and advanced mobility ecosystems• Opportunity to participate in the advanced mobility ecosystem• Potential solutions for accessing opportunities in advanced mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Put into practice the principle "Nothing for us without us"• Validation of Trusted Connector Program for outreach strategy <p>Co-creation of additional ideas regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Knowledge Sharing about Advanced Mobility◦ Navigating to Opportunities in the Advanced Mobility Ecosystem

SECTION 1:

DEFINE AND UNDERSTAND TARGET AUDIENCES

Across the Opportunity Ecosystem



Effectively engaging communities that have faced barriers to participation requires understanding the diverse audiences and their unique needs within the mobility sector. The first step in this playbook identifies three core target groups critical for outreach in the advanced mobility ecosystem: the Workforce Development Audience, the Innovator Audience, and the Business Enterprise Audience. By defining these groups, outreach efforts can be tailored to ensure that the opportunities and benefits of advanced mobility are shared across Southeast Michigan. This foundational step is required for developing effective, community-informed, and broadly accessible engagement strategies.

Communities Navigating Barriers to Opportunity

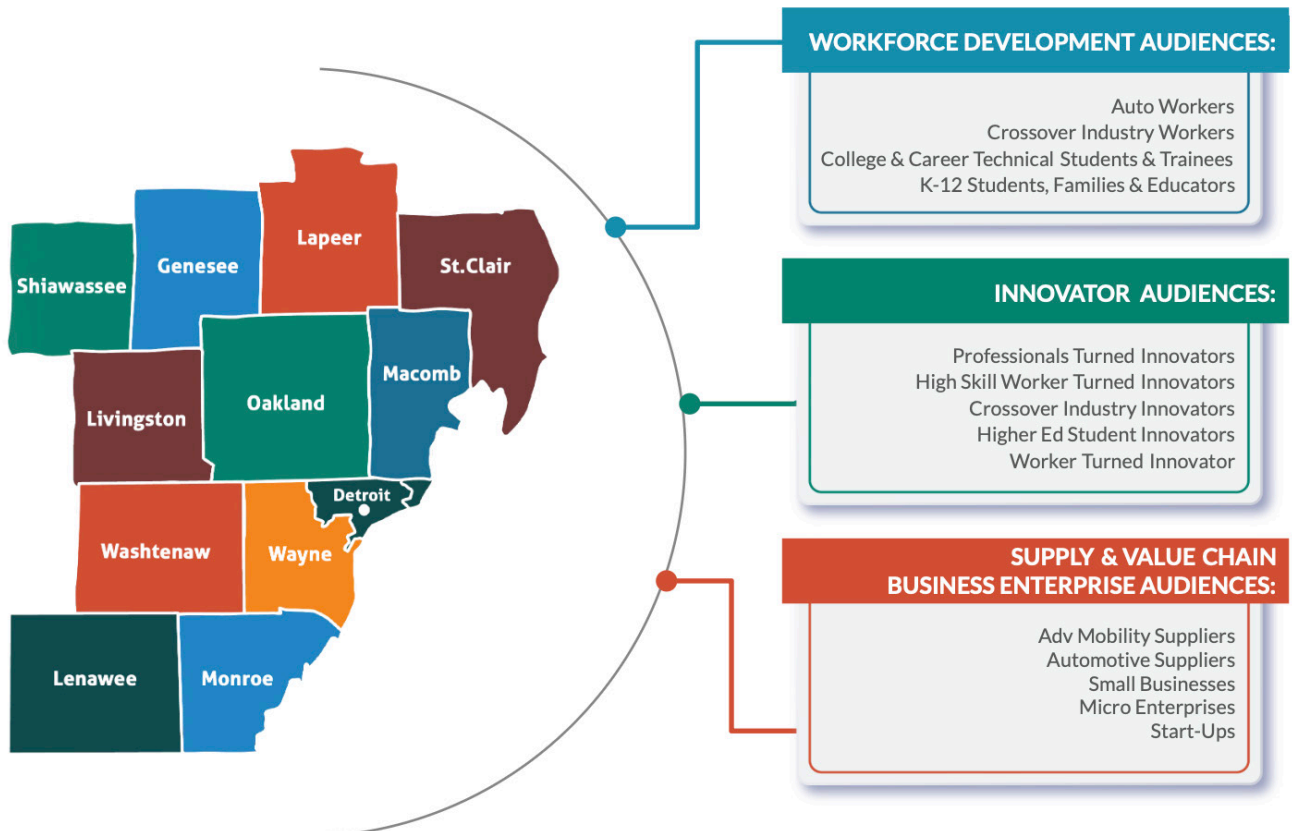
This playbook defines communities facing long-standing barriers to opportunity as those that have experienced persistent challenges in accessing economic and career pathways. This includes, but is not limited to, rural communities, veterans, ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) households, Black and African American residents, Hispanic and Latino communities, LGBTQ+ individuals, women, and people with disabilities. Individuals from these communities are represented across all target audiences. While many have already made important contributions to the advanced mobility ecosystem, focused outreach remains essential to expanding access to opportunity, strengthening regional economic participation, and ensuring that the benefits of advanced mobility are shared across all communities.

"Inclusive to all, exclusive to none."

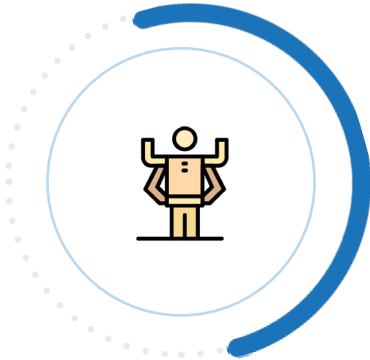
Communities Navigating Barriers to Opportunity

Rural Communities
 Veterans
 ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed)
 Women

Black & African American
 Hispanic
 LGBTQ+
 Disability Community



Descriptions of the Three Key Audiences



Workforce Development Audience

The Workforce Development audience encompasses a broad range of subgroups, all focused on gaining the education, training, and skills needed to thrive in Southeast Michigan’s advanced mobility ecosystem. This audience is essential to meet the ecosystem’s evolving workforce needs and ensure long-term growth, sustainability, and competitiveness.



Innovator Audience

The Innovator audience includes professionals, high-skilled workers, crossover industry innovators, and students who utilize their expertise and creativity to develop forward-thinking solutions in the advanced mobility ecosystem. This audience is crucial to GEM and advanced mobility because their innovation and problem-solving capabilities fuel technological advancements, promote sustainability, and enable transformative solutions that establish the region as a global leader in mobility.

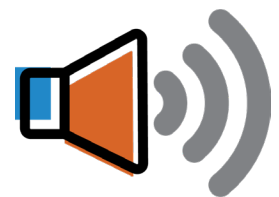


Business Enterprise Audience

The Business Enterprise audience encompasses automotive and advanced mobility suppliers, micro enterprises, small businesses, and start-ups that provide or deliver critical materials, components, and logistical support to the advanced mobility ecosystem. This audience is vital to GEM and advanced mobility because their contributions strengthen the supply chain, enhance innovation, and drive operational efficiency, ensuring the industry’s resilience, growth, and global competitiveness.

SECTION 2:

LISTEN TO THE COMMUNITY



Once identified, effectively engaging communities that have faced barriers to participation requires amplifying their perspectives in planning processes and understanding their strengths, experiences, challenges, and aspirations. The second step in this playbook emphasizes the importance of listening to build trust, identify barriers, and uncover opportunities for meaningful collaboration. By engaging directly with communities, outreach efforts are more likely to reflect local priorities and perspectives, helping to broaden participation in the advanced mobility ecosystem. This section overviews key themes and brings in community voices from Culture Shift Team's discovery process.

What We Heard: Universal Themes

Six universal themes emerged across workforce development, innovator, and business enterprise audiences. These themes reflect shared challenges, priorities, and opportunities that influence broad-based participation in the advanced mobility ecosystem. These insights emphasize addressing persistent challenges, building trust through partnerships, enhancing representation, and fostering workforce development and economic resilience. Together, these themes provide the context for which an effective outreach strategy must navigate to foster access to the advanced mobility ecosystem.

1. Identifying Challenges That Limit Access

"Economic inclusion faces significant barriers due to systemic issues like historical disinvestment, limitations of public transit, and communication deserts."

Stakeholders highlighted long-standing challenges—including disinvestment, communication gaps, limited public transit, and digital access—that hinder participation in advanced mobility initiatives. While GEM cannot resolve these barriers alone, stakeholders emphasized the importance of recognizing their impact and collaborating with partners experienced in navigating these challenges.

2. Communicate Advanced Mobility Concepts and Opportunities Effectively, Consistent Communication Channels

"People still think mobility is like what we saw in the Jetsons. We have to do a better job at making sure it's marketed towards their position and place in that world."

Many stakeholders expressed a lack of a clear understanding of advanced mobility and its implications for their careers, businesses and communities. This awareness gap hinders participation in emerging opportunities with GEM and within the larger advanced mobility ecosystem. Clear, accessible messaging is essential to demystify advanced mobility, connect it to real-world opportunities, and make it relatable to all audiences.

3. Leverage Trusted Partnerships and Networks and Include Community Partners in Planning

"Going to where people naturally gather demonstrates respect and helps reach a wider audience."

Collaboration with local organizations and trusted networks is key to ensuring that outreach efforts resonate with a broad range of community members. Engaging these groups can amplify key messaging and foster trust. Community organizations are also in a better position to advise on opportunities they may not have yet identified.

Building trust is a long-term investment that requires sustained, transparent engagement with communities, active listening and consistent presence. Engaging with community partners strengthens the advanced mobility ecosystem and fosters community trust. Residents are more likely to support and engage with mobility initiatives when they feel their voices are valued.



4.

"See it to be it" - Visibility Inspires Participation

"Promoting advancement for minority workers requires addressing systemic biases... Women need to see examples of authentic leadership to feel supported."

Visible examples are essential for fostering meaningful participation in the advanced mobility ecosystem. Communities that have faced barriers to opportunity may struggle to envision themselves in leadership or technical roles when examples of success are limited or absent. When individuals see people with shared experiences contributing and thriving in these spaces, it helps build trust, inspire engagement, and reinforce the belief that they, too, have a place in the industry. By intentionally highlighting relatable success stories and visible career pathways, outreach efforts can expand awareness, build momentum, and ensure that opportunities in advanced mobility feel real and reachable for everyone.

5.

Expand and Strengthen Local Talent Pathways and Build Skills for the Future

"Communities value training that leads to real, sustainable career opportunities."

Jobs are a critical pathway to economic opportunity, and all interviewed stakeholder groups emphasized the importance of training that leads to real, sustainable careers. Communities value programs that offer clear pathways to employment and long-term growth. For businesses in the advanced mobility ecosystem, retaining and developing local talent is essential. As new technologies and electric vehicles transform job requirements, the need for targeted skills training has become increasingly urgent. Aligning training opportunities with the evolving needs of local employers can strengthen regional economic outcomes and ensure that more individuals can participate meaningfully in the industry's growth.

6.

Focus on Economic Resilience

"It's important to realize people have fought for what they have. There is something here that people value and they fought for and when you come in and ignore that people get upset. Listening is important, respecting what people did over the decades where there has been so much divestment."

Economic resilience is a key concern for all stakeholders. Understanding how communities, businesses, and homeowners have survived economic challenges is essential for sustainable outreach. The transition to advanced mobility often raises fears about job loss and shifting opportunities, particularly among communities who have experienced divestment or historic high rates of poverty.

The six themes discussed offer a foundational understanding of the shared experiences, challenges, and opportunities identified across the target audiences and communities with limited access to economic opportunity or participation. Building on these themes, the following sections delve deeper into key insights from the discovery process. These insights offer a nuanced perspective, presenting the data in ways that highlight actionable opportunities and unique community narratives.

This approach offers a deeper understanding of how GEM and other organizations or businesses in the advanced mobility ecosystem can align their outreach efforts with the specific needs and aspirations of these communities, ensuring a strategy that is responsive and focused on expanding access to opportunity for everyone.

Start with Community Successes, Strengths, and Assets



Success Stories

Uplift Trailblazers

Success stories are powerful tools for creating connections and inspiring action. By showcasing individuals, businesses, and organizations from communities that face barriers to participation who have thrived in the advanced mobility ecosystem, GEM demonstrates what is possible.



Community Strengths

Focus on resilience

Communities have demonstrated resilience by collaborating to overcome systemic challenges and ensure economic survival. Local leaders, small businesses, and community-based organizations have pooled resources, fostered innovation, and advocated for equitable access to opportunities.



Assets

Formal and Informal Networks (Trusted Connectors)

The community's focus on resilience gave rise to both formal and informal networks that prioritize economic opportunity, connecting individuals, organizations, and businesses with shared goals. From neighborhood alliances to regional partnerships, these networks have become vital conduits for resource sharing, mentorship, and collective problem-solving, strengthening the foundation for long-term community success.

Recognizing Distinct Needs and Preferences Across Communities

It is important to recognize the meaningful differences among communities that have faced barriers to opportunity. Each group experiences unique challenges, priorities, and local contexts that influence how they engage with the advanced mobility ecosystem. Understanding and responding to these distinctions ensures that outreach efforts are respectful, relevant, and effective - supporting an approach that meets a wide range of community needs and strengthens participation across the region.

Black & African American Community



Early Education: Engage K-12 institutions to prepare youth for mobility opportunities.

Storytelling: Highlight relatable success stories to build trust and interest.

Faith-Based and Grassroots Leaders: Leverage trusted community figures for outreach.

Disability Community



Mobility Terminology: The term "mobility" feel co-opted from this community and carries a different message.

"By Us, For Us" Philosophy: Co-design products and initiatives with disabled individuals.

Technical Accessibility: Outreach materials must support screen readers, captions, and alt text.

Hispanic Community



Language and Cultural Relevance: Address language barriers and use culturally resonant messaging.

Leverage Partnerships: Collaborate with trusted organizations (e.g., SER Metro) and Hispanic chambers.

Financial Literacy Training: Provide targeted programs to enhance business acumen and funding access.

LGBTQ+ Community



Focus on Safety: Address discrimination fears in public spaces and ensure safe transit.

Intersection of Multiple Backgrounds: Highlight overlapping challenges.

Visibility within the Ecosystem: Showcase successful LGBTQ+-owned businesses as models.

Veterans



Military Skill Translation: Leverage veterans' technical expertise in mobility roles.

Combat Certification Fraud: Ensure authenticity in veteran-owned business certifications.

Support for Late Careers: Provide mentorship and tailored programs for veterans entering the workforce later.

Rural Community



Limited Transportation Infrastructure: Heavily reliant on personal vehicles, no reliable public transit.

WiFi, Digital & Technology Gaps: Unreliable broadband limiting access and ability to gain new skills.

Isolation from Ecosystem Resources: Limited access to resources, limited inclusion to smaller communities, need for consistent communication and outreach.

Understanding Target Audience: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



Access to Livable Wages and Housing Supports Economic Mobility

Creating broad access to the advanced mobility sector requires addressing foundational barriers like livable wages and affordable housing. These are critical for ensuring economic independence and sustainability for all.



Participant Voices:

"Safe, affordable housing and a good-paying job. People want to live somewhere safe that they can afford."

"Housing is a huge issue. You can bring the jobs and make a living wage, but if you want to raise up, you need people who live in [the community]."

"Where are the jobs that will pay me...You can't live off of minimum wage jobs, can't raise a family on it."

Trusted Intermediaries are Critical for Workforce Readiness

Community organizations and grassroots leaders play a pivotal role in preparing individuals for jobs in the advanced mobility sector by connecting them to resources and building trust in under-resourced regions.



Participant Voices:

"The people we connect them with are more important than the barrier. They don't recognize they are not ready, but as we can serve as a counselor, therapist, and coach, it's the intermediaries that create the support system."

"Grassroots organizations that have access to the people and have a level of trust. We want to benefit from this."

Retaining Young Talent is Essential for Industry Longevity

The industry must balance innovation with attractive career pathways to retain younger generations, especially as the perception of traditional automotive jobs as "old-fashioned" persists.



Participant Voice:

"Young people don't want to work in the industry because it is seen as old and one-dimensional. Growing to be more diverse is the key."

Employee Resource Groups Create Supportive Spaces for Engagement and Growth

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) serve as support networks for employees with varied experiences and backgrounds, helping to create workplace environments that encourage connection, innovation, and psychological safety.



Participant Voices:

"People need to have the psychological safety to challenge the status quo, and ERGs can create those spaces."

"ERGs provide a sense of belonging and a community of advocates and allies to destroy past barriers."

Understanding Target Audience: INNOVATORS



Opportunities to Engage in Advanced Mobility: What is the opportunity? Is it for me? Now?

This theme highlights the need for clarity about advanced mobility opportunities, their relevance to individuals or businesses, and their immediate applicability.



Participant Voices:

"Most people are disconnected from opportunities. There is no organic on-ramp; they don't know where to look or even that these jobs exist."

"We have to connect advanced mobility to the mission of these businesses when we give out information."

Economic Opportunities: Access to Capital, Business & Financial Education, Access to Resources

Entrepreneurs face barriers such as lack of access to funding, financial literacy gaps, and difficulties navigating available resources, all of which limit participation in advanced mobility.



Participant Voices:

"If I could wave a magic wand, I would remove the barrier of accessing capital and funding."

"There are opportunities, but resources are out there and all these companies are aware of it. But they keep it to themselves, leaving historically excluded communities behind."

Entrepreneurs Need Simplified and Accessible Information about Advanced Mobility to Participate

Simplified, digestible, and localized information about advanced mobility is critical for enabling entrepreneurs to engage meaningfully.



Participant Voices:

"Give me some brief bullet points that make it really digestible for business owners—five important things and how this can benefit you."

"Workshops, webinars, or structured training sessions that explain what advanced mobility is and its future opportunities would help."

Empower the Next Generation of Entrepreneurs

Developing pathways and support systems for aspiring entrepreneurs helps create a sustainable and broadly accessible ecosystem. Programs for mentorship, skill-building, and funding are essential for fostering innovation.



Participant Voices:

"We need boot camps that take ideas and move them through an intentional process to get entrepreneurs up to speed."

"There are a lot of companies competing for the best startups, but we don't have enough people coming into the funnel at the top."

Understanding Target Audience: BUSINESS ENTERPRISE



Acknowledge Cultural Differences Across the Region

Recognizing the distinct cultural and economic landscapes across Southeast Michigan, outreach must be tailored to reflect varying community values, needs, and capacities.



Participant Voices:

"Shiawassee and Detroit require very different approaches; understanding local needs is essential."

"Depending on where you intend to locate, you may see a lot of different cultures. You need to understand those elements as you set up your business."

Build Trust Through Community Engagement

Trust is built through consistent, transparent, and meaningful engagement with local communities, ensuring that businesses are seen as invested partners rather than external entities.



Participant Voices:

"Trust-building is critical because people feel extracted from, not invested in, without genuine engagement."

"Businesses need to involve communities early to ensure alignment with local needs and values."

Prepare Suppliers to Take Advantage of Future Opportunities

Equipping suppliers, particularly small enterprises, with tools, knowledge, and access to networks is essential for them to thrive in an evolving advanced mobility ecosystem.



Participant Voices:

"Small suppliers need funding and mentorship to scale and meet the demands of advanced mobility."

"We need financial resources to invest in new technologies and expand our operations."

Create Opportunities to Connect Business Owners with Key Stakeholders

Networking platforms, mentorship programs, and events that connect business owners to stakeholders are pivotal for fostering collaboration and creating pathways for growth.



Participant Voices:

"Ongoing networking events with buyers and technical teams help establish trust and visibility."

"Matchmaking and direct engagement with buyers make it easier for us to get opportunities."

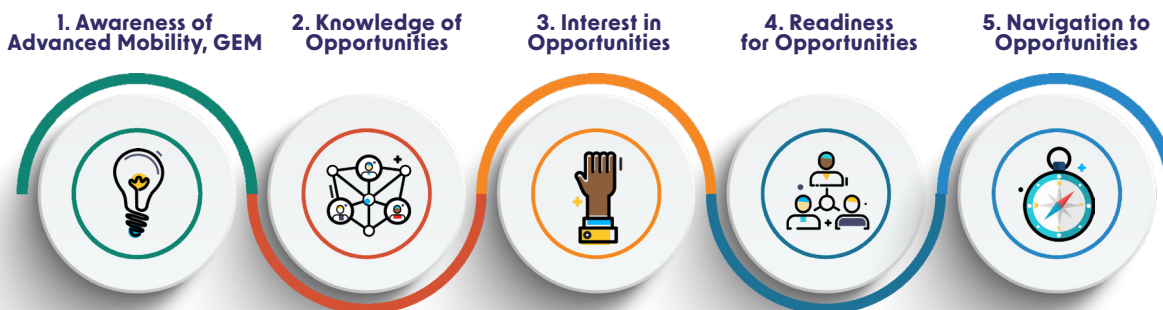
SECTION 3:

EVALUATE ON-RAMP TO OPPORTUNITY:
Identify and Understand Obstacles



Effectively engaging communities that have faced barriers to opportunity requires understanding and addressing the obstacles they experience when accessing opportunities in the advanced mobility ecosystem. The third step in this playbook focuses on evaluating the "On-Ramp to Opportunity," a journey with distinct stages that individuals and businesses must navigate as they enter the advanced mobility ecosystem. This section also introduces tools that GEM and external organizations can use during outreach to navigate obstacles, foster trust, and support meaningful participation across all stages of the on-ramp journey.

Stages of the On-Ramp to Opportunity



The "Stages to the On-Ramp to Opportunity Journey" outlines a pathway to inclusively bring individuals and businesses into the advanced mobility ecosystem and GEM. This model identified five critical stages that key audiences must navigate to gain access.



Stage One: Awareness of Advanced Mobility and GEM - *"What is advanced mobility?"*

This stage focuses on increasing individual and community awareness of advanced mobility and GEM. A key element of this stage is introducing the concept of advanced mobility in clear, relatable ways, ensuring that individuals and communities can see how it connects to their lives.



Stage Two: Knowledge of Opportunities - *"What is the opportunity?"*

This stage focuses on ensuring that individuals and communities understand the opportunities available and how they can begin to explore them. Knowledge is cultivated by providing clear and concise information about the pathways and benefits available in advanced mobility. Resources like videos, workshops, and easily navigable platforms help break down complex concepts into actionable opportunities.



Stage Three: Interest in Opportunities - *"Is this for me?"*

This stage involves fostering genuine interest by demonstrating the relevance, benefits, and potential of advanced mobility opportunities in ways that resonate personally or professionally. Interest is fostered by highlighting tangible benefits, relatable success stories, and community-centric examples demonstrating the real-world value of participation.



Stage Four: Readiness of Opportunities - *"Is this for me? Now?"*

This stage focuses on preparing individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources to confidently pursue opportunities in advanced mobility. Training programs, mentorship, and accessible pathways into careers or entrepreneurial ventures play a central role. Addressing barriers like affordability, childcare, and transportation ensures that everyone can participate.



Stage Five: Navigation to Opportunity - *"Who is my Trusted Connector?"*

This stage focuses on connecting individuals and community members to GEM. Local access points - through trusted connectors and networks - facilitate connections with GEM, its pillar, and ecosystem.

The following section introduces three tools designed to help stakeholders navigate obstacles, build trust, and facilitate meaningful participation at every stage of the on-ramp journey.



Understanding and Evaluating Obstacles

This tool helps GEM Pillars and external audiences identify and categorize challenges that different audiences face as they engage with the advanced mobility ecosystem. By organizing obstacles into Speedbumps, Detours, and Barriers, the tool supports the creation of tailored strategies to address specific challenges, helping to ensure outreach efforts are responsive, relevant, and accessible to all communities.

This tool categorizes obstacles as:



Speedbump: Obstacles that may slow someone's progress across the stages of the on-ramp journey, but do not impede forward progress.



Detour: A point in the journey that requires additional resources or support. It can also be an obstacle with known resources available.



Barrier: An obstacle that prevents further progress.

By distinguishing between these categories, stakeholders can prioritize resources and interventions effectively. The tool is particularly useful during the planning and evaluation phases of outreach and engagement to ensure all target audiences can navigate the On-Ramp to Opportunity successfully.



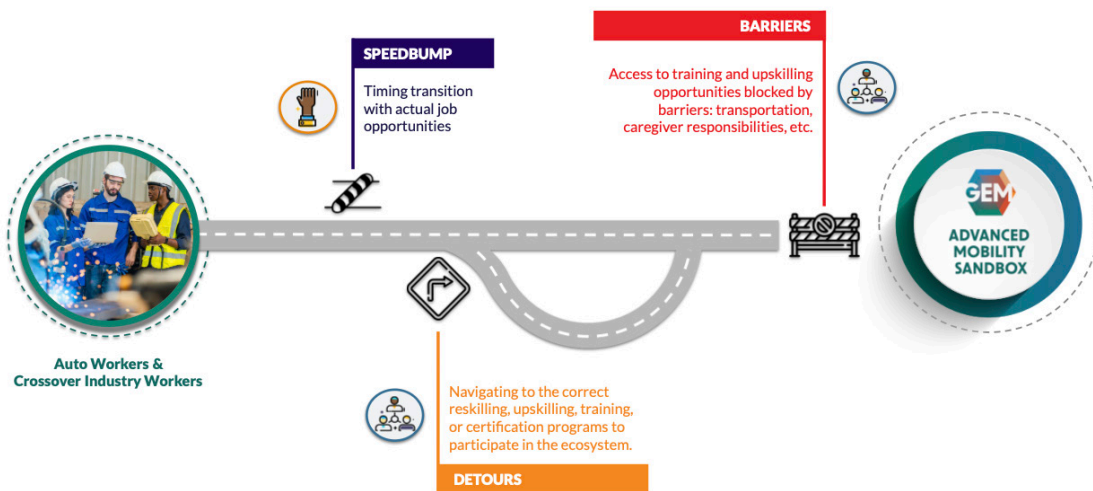
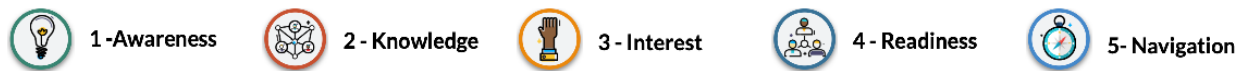
HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

Step One: Determine which group (e.g., workforce, innovators, small businesses) you are evaluating.

Step Two: Refer to the tool to understand the types of obstacles specific to the target audience and where they occur across the On-Ramp Journey.

Step Three: Consider how the identified obstacles may intersect with or impact the planned outreach.

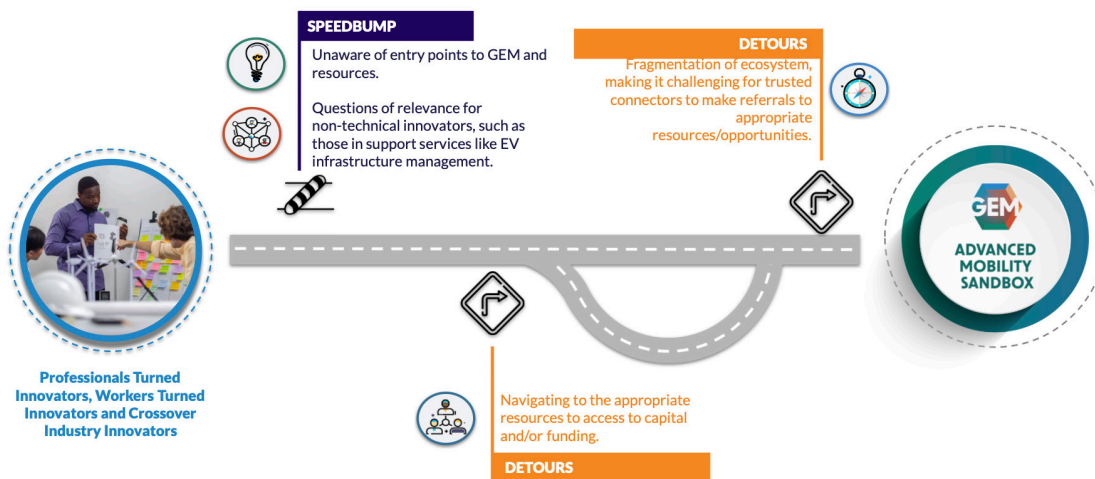
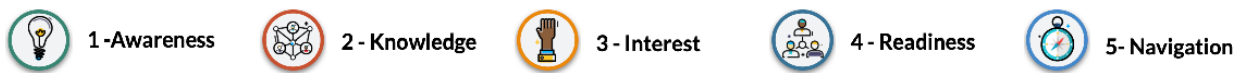
Step Four: Collect feedback from stakeholders and participants to refine the approach and update the tool as needed.



The illustration highlights obstacles **Auto Workers and Crossover Industry Workers** may face when entering the advanced mobility ecosystem.

- **Interest Stage - Speedbump:** Workers may struggle to align their transition with available opportunities, leading to missed chances to apply their skills effectively.
- **Readiness Stage - Detour:** Identifying the right upskilling or training program can be challenging, delaying entry into the industry and discouraging workers from making the transition.
- **Readiness Stage - Barrier:** Factors like cost, location, and availability can make necessary training inaccessible, preventing workers from entering the advanced mobility ecosystem.

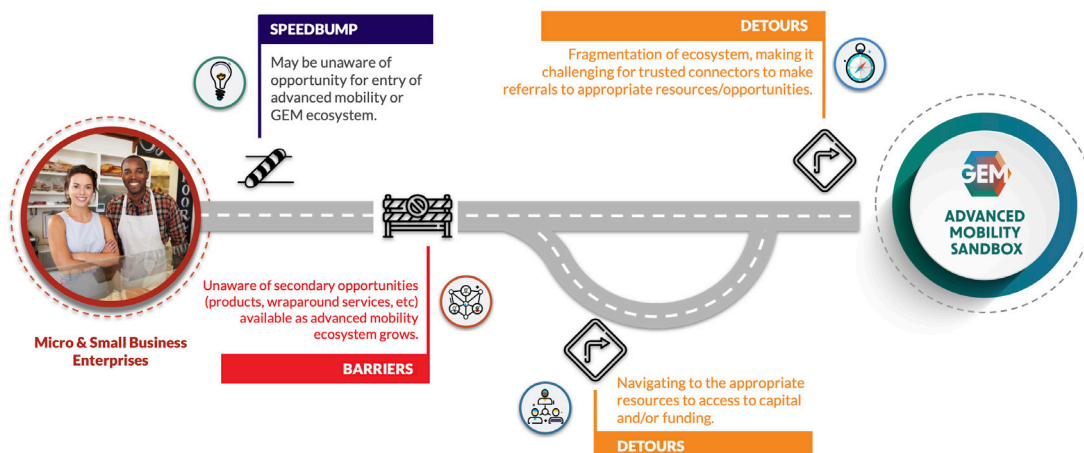
Overcoming these obstacles requires evaluating the accessibility of training programs and addressing barriers. Clear pathway guidance and early alignment between training providers and industry needs can help workers identify the right opportunity and coordinate the transition at the right time, reducing missed opportunities.



The illustration highlights obstacles **Professionals-Turned-Innovators, Workers-Turned-Innovators, and Crossover Industry Innovators** may face when entering the advanced mobility ecosystem.

- **Awareness Stage - Speedbump:** Limited awareness of GEM and its resources can prevent individuals from pivoting into the ecosystem.
- **Knowledge Stage - Speedbump:** Non-technical innovators may struggle to identify potential opportunities for them in the ecosystem due to a lack of specific knowledge about wraparound or adjacent services.
- **Readiness & Navigation Stage - Detour:** Navigating funding and capital resources can be challenging, and a fragmented ecosystem may limit access to trusted connectors who can provide critical support.

Overcoming these obstacles requires increasing awareness of GEM and its offerings through targeted outreach and educational initiatives through trusted connectors. Providing clear, accessible information on wraparound services can help non-technical innovators identify viable entry points. Additionally, fostering stronger connections between innovators and funding resources—such as mentorship networks and streamlined access to capital—can help bridge gaps in support.



The illustration highlights obstacles **Micro & Small Business Enterprises** may face when entering the advanced mobility ecosystem.

- **Awareness Stage - Speedbump:** A lack of familiarity with GEM and its resources may slow down entry into the ecosystem.
- **Knowledge Stage - Barrier:** Limited knowledge of secondary opportunities, such as products and wraparound services, can prevent non-technical business owners from progressing.
- **Readiness & Navigation Stage - Detour:** Securing funding and capital resources can be a challenge, especially when a fragmented ecosystem restricts access to trusted connectors.

To overcome these obstacles, GEM can enhance outreach efforts by actively engaging small businesses through targeted marketing, workshops, and partnerships with local business organizations. Providing clear and accessible information about secondary opportunities—such as wraparound or adjacent services—can help non-technical business owners navigate and leverage available resources. Increasing knowledge and capacity of trusted connectors may empower them to mentor or provide guidance for small business owners interested in entering the ecosystem.



Building and Centering Trust with Communities Across On-Ramp Stages



HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

Step One: Identify which stage of the On-Ramp to Opportunity Journey (e.g., Awareness, Knowledge, Interest, Readiness, or Navigation) aligns with your current outreach efforts.

Step Two: Determine how to apply the recommended action steps for that stage, such as using culturally relevant messaging, engaging trusted community leaders, or offering accessible resources.

Step Three: Use the provided reflective questions to assess your approach and ensure alignment with trust-building best practices.

Step Four: Gather feedback from the community to refine your strategies and continuously improve trust-building measures.

Stage One Awareness of Advanced Mobility Industry & GEM

Localized Language: Use plain language and community relevant examples to explain advanced mobility. Include visuals and bite-sized information.

Localized Engagement: Collaborate with trusted community organizations and hold events in familiar spaces like community centers, schools, and churches.



Which audiences have we had success in connecting with? What best practices in trust building can be applied to future audiences?

What community- relevant messages do we need to use to ensure our outreach resonates?

What trusted community organizations or leaders can we collaborate with to amplify awareness efforts?

How do we ensure our events and outreach occur in spaces where community members feel comfortable and welcome?

Stage Two Knowledge of Opportunities

Sustained Engagement Over Time: Provide regular updates via newsletters, social media, and local organizations to keep communities informed and involved.

Centralized Resource Platforms: Create accessible digital hubs with clear pathways for learning about GEM opportunities. Translate materials into multiple languages.



How can we maintain consistent and transparent communication to sustain engagement over time?

Is our information accessible in multiple languages and formats to accommodate different learning styles and needs?

How can we ensure that local organizations are equipped to share accurate and up-to-date information about GEM opportunities?

Stage Three Interest in Opportunities

Community-Centric Examples: Focus on how advanced mobility directly impacts local needs, such as career, jobs, or other economic opportunities.

See It To Be It: Share narratives or success stories of individuals from similar backgrounds who have found pathways into the advanced mobility ecosystem.

Collaborate With Schools and Nonprofits: Partner with educational institutions and local nonprofits to create exposure opportunities in STEM.



How do we demonstrate the personal and professional relevance of advanced mobility to community members?

Are we using relatable success stories and pathways to inspire trust and interest in GEM initiatives?

What partnerships with schools and nonprofits can we leverage to provide exposure to STEM programs and internships?

How do we address concerns or skepticism about the accessibility and benefits of advanced mobility careers?

Stage Four Readiness for Opportunities

Accessible Development: Offer affordable, accessible upskilling and reskilling programs tailored to community needs.

Anticipate Barriers: Anticipate systemic barriers like transportation, childcare, and mental health support to ensure individuals can participate in training.

Clarify Expectations: Communicate transparently about immediate versus future outcomes from participation in upskilling opportunities.

Acknowledge Representation: Include instructors, mentors, and leaders from communities to foster relatability.



What are potential barriers (i.e. transportation, childcare, language barriers) that may impact participation?

Do these opportunities improve, worsen, or make no change to existing challenges?

How are we incorporating role models, mentors, and instructors to ensure relatability?

Stage Five Navigation to Opportunities

Mentorship: Provide mentorship programs connecting individuals with experienced professionals to guide them through the ecosystem.

Local Access Points: Create satellite offices or drop-in centers in the community to ensure physical accessibility.



How are community member voices and experiences included, considered, represented, and/or consulted in the communication of opportunities?

How do we ensure individuals understand how to connect to GEM resources and opportunities effectively?

What feedback mechanisms are in place to continuously improve the navigation experience for community members?



GEM Intentionality Scale

The GEM Intentionality Scale is designed to foster reflection and accountability during decision-making and outreach efforts. This tool helps stakeholders assess how intentionally their strategies promote access for all, responsiveness, and community relevance by categorizing actions on a scale from "Unknown" to "Thoroughly Intentional." By using this scale, users can evaluate the degree to which thoughtful practices have shaped their decisions and identify opportunities to strengthen outcomes moving forward.

This tool describes the following stages of intentionality:

Stage 1 - Unknown: Considerations related to access for all or community relevance are unclear or undefined, making their impact on decision-making difficult to assess.

Stage 2 - Not at All Intentional: No attention is paid to who is included or left out. Engagement is limited to the usual participants, and outreach is not tailored to reach communities that may face greater barriers to access. Project goals are unclear, and processes for defining who benefits or how decisions are made are missing. Efforts feel repetitive and unproductive. Team morale suffers, and community members may express frustration or feel disconnected. Any outcomes or measures used tend to highlight activity over real impact.

Stage 3 - Slightly Intentional: There is an attempt to encourage broader participation, but it doesn't extend to shaping content or decision-making with community input. Efforts may appear welcoming but don't result in meaningful experiences for those outside the typical circles. The project lacks depth in understanding who is showing up and whether their needs are being met. Team members may feel that their efforts lack authenticity or impact. As a result, relationships remain surface-level and trust may not develop.

Stage 4 - Moderately Intentional: Projects reflect some planning to connect with people beyond the usual networks, including presence at community events or hiring staff who better reflect the local population. Still, structural or logistical barriers often prevent these efforts from achieving their full effect. While the commitment is visible, outcomes may still fall short due to limitations in access, communication, or decision-making processes. Team members show up, but systems may not yet fully support shared success.

Stage 5 - Thoroughly Intentional: The project is shaped by asking questions like: Who isn't here? How can we meet people where they are? Are we using formats and tools that make it easy for all to engage? Those often left out are invited to the table early, and extra steps are taken to remove common barriers to participation. This level of intentionality involves careful planning, creative approaches, and consistent follow-through. Events reflect a broader range of voices and experiences, and participants feel seen, heard, and valued. While the work may stretch teams outside their comfort zone, it leads to greater satisfaction and stronger results.

This tool is most effective during the Readiness of Opportunities and Navigation to Opportunity stages. At these points, stakeholders can assess whether considerations around access, relevance, and community engagement have been thoughtfully integrated into program design, challenge resolution, and the use of trusted networks to connect individuals to opportunities. This tool supports intentional engagement and continuous improvement, helping stakeholders create outcomes that are both meaningful and widely accessible.



HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

Step One: Reflect on the specific project, program, or outreach initiative you are evaluating.

Step Two: Use the scale to rate the level of intentionality in your decision-making process, considering factors such as access for all and community relevance.

Step Three: Identify areas where access, relevance, or community engagement were limited, and outline steps to strengthen intentionality in future efforts.

Step Four: Revisit and reapply the tool periodically to track progress and ensure continued alignment with goals related to access, and community impact.



INTENTIONALITY SCALE

A tool* for assessing how deliberately a project ensures broad and meaningful participation in community-based or other outreach efforts.

<p>0</p> <p>UNKNOWN:</p> <p>It's unclear who was engaged or how community perspectives shaped the process.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>NOT AT ALL INTENTIONAL:</p> <p>Engagement is narrow and limited to usual participants, with no adjustments for broader reach.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>SLIGHTLY INTENTIONAL:</p> <p>Some outreach occurs, but engagement remains minimal and doesn't reflect broader community voices.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>MODERATELY INTENTIONAL:</p> <p>Engagement reaches beyond usual networks, but barriers still limit broader participation and input.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>THOROUGHLY INTENTIONAL:</p> <p>Engagement is broad, early, and responsive, with clear efforts to reduce barriers to participation.</p>
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*This GEM tool was developed in partnership with Tidal Equality.

Link to Other Tools, Resources, and Reports

This section introduced three tools to support stakeholders in navigating obstacles, building trust, and fostering meaningful participation throughout the On-Ramp to Opportunity journey. While not exhaustive, these tools - Understanding and Evaluating Obstacles, Building and Centering Trust with Communities Across Stages, and the GEM Intentionality Scale - offer valuable guidance to support more effective, accessible, and community-responsive outreach efforts.

Additional resources and reports are linked below:

- [1. Tech Equity In Action: Transforming the Innovation Economy for Inclusive Economic Growth](#)
- [2. Driving Diversity: Unlocking the Power of Diverse Workforces for the Future of the Transportation Industry](#)
- [3. NEI's 2023 Annual Report: Embracing Small Businesses' Role in Revitalization](#)
- [4. Network Analysis of a Mobility Ecosystem in Detroit, MI](#)
- [5. Highlighting the Perception Trends and Opportunities of a Changing Industry](#)

The following case study highlights a successful example of engaging communities that have faced barriers to opportunity through intentional outreach. Conducted in partnership with the Global Epicenter of Mobility (GEM) Coalition and Tidal Equality, this case study demonstrates how NextEnergy incorporated a values-driven approach to ensure its mobility initiatives were responsive, accessible, and aligned with community priorities.

For more information, or for additional examples of successful outreach, please reach out to (jeannine.gant@detroitregionalpartnership.com)

NextEnergy: Empowering Communities Through Inclusive Innovation

Context

NextEnergy, a Detroit-based nonprofit, is committed to accelerating sustainable mobility and green energy solutions. As a partner of the Office of Future Mobility and Electrification (OFME) in the GEM coalition, they aim to integrate intentional, community relevant practices into their work. Despite a mission-driven focus on broadening access and impact, they identified a need to strengthen engagement with communities that have faced barriers to opportunity and ensure that advancements in mobility are designed to benefit a wide range of populations.

Action Taken

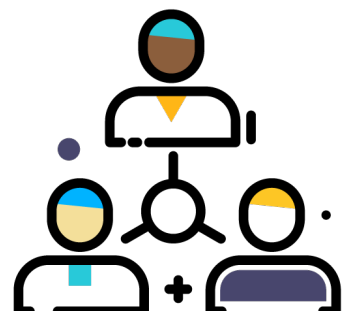
- **Participated in an Equity Sequence® workshop** facilitated by Tidal Equality to critically assess their outreach and engagement practices.
- **Conducted needs assessments** and identified that previous decision-making processes were primarily shaped by senior leaders and established industry stakeholders, resulting in limited input from a broader range of community perspectives.
- **Expanded engagement strategies** by committing to outreach beyond traditional partners—intentionally including small enterprises, startups, and community members who have had less access to these initiatives.
- **Developed partnerships with local organizations** to build trust and improve awareness of NextEnergy's initiatives within communities that have faced barriers to opportunity.
- **Introduced new data collection practices** to better understand who is using test sites and to assess the reach and effectiveness of community-facing outreach efforts.
- **Updated funding criteria** to increase support for small enterprises and communities with limited access to resources, helping ensure that access to clean energy and mobility solutions is more broadly available.

Outcomes

NextEnergy applied the Equity Sequence® to identify challenges that were limiting participation from communities that have faced barriers to opportunity in their initiatives. In response, they expanded stakeholder participation, established community partnerships, and implemented data tracking to better understand who was engaging at test sites. They also refined funding criteria to broaden access for groups that have had fewer opportunities. These actions support a more responsive and community relevant approach to advancing sustainable mobility and clean energy solutions.

SECTION 4:

PRACTICE PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY RELEVANT OUTREACH



GEM pillars have taken deliberate steps to connect with community partners as part of service outreach and program delivery. Further widening the on-ramp to opportunity in an emerging ecosystem requires creating sustainable outreach practices that build lasting trust and connection. This section outlines principles for engaging with communities in a meaningful and authentic way—one that prioritizes relationships, shared economic opportunity, and collaboration to support lasting community growth and renewal. By embracing these principles, GEM and external organizations can expand their reach and build brand trust and awareness in ways that resonate with communities that have faced barriers to opportunity.

Community relevant outreach begins with understanding and valuing the unique experiences, needs, and aspirations of the communities GEM serves. It's about adapting messaging to be accessible and meeting people where they are—both physically and conceptually. Through collaboration with trusted connectors, trusted messengers, and community networks, GEM can intentionally leverage existing relationships to amplify its mission, creating a sustainable communications infrastructure.

This section provides a guide with actionable practices to implement these principles, ensuring outreach efforts are not only effective but also community-responsive and designed for lasting impact.



1. Community Outreach is a Tool for Brand Awareness, Trust and Growth

Community outreach and engagement are not just an initiative or tactic—it's both the cornerstone of building trust and creating lasting connections as well as providing infrastructure for communication. By demonstrating a genuine commitment to broad engagement and community responsiveness, GEM can establish itself as a reliable and respected partner across the region. Through community relevant outreach, GEM positions itself not only as an advanced mobility leader but also as an advocate for economic growth that benefits all communities.

To achieve this requires thinking beyond traditional outreach methods to adopt a community-powered transformation mindset. By nurturing relationships, prioritizing shared goals, and empowering networks, GEM can establish itself as a trusted partner driving transformative change in advanced mobility in partnership with the region's vibrant communities.

Outreach rooted in community-building strengthens brand trust by showing a genuine commitment to collective well-being. This approach places communities at the center of the ecosystem, ensuring they are active participants—not passive beneficiaries. The goal is to ensure that communities know about opportunities and how to pursue them if interested.



2. Adapt or Develop Messaging That Is Accessible

Creating clear and relatable messaging is essential for connecting with a wide range of community audiences. This means simplifying complex concepts, avoiding jargon, and ensuring that communication reflects local values, language preferences, and everyday experiences. Key strategies include understanding the community's context and needs, using plain language, offering translations where appropriate, incorporating visual aids like infographics and videos, and testing messages with small focus groups to ensure they are relevant and easy to understand.

Messaging that Meets People Where They Are

To create effective messaging, GEM must prioritize meeting communities where they are - in terms of location, context, and communication preferences. This means:

- **Local Relevance:** Going out to communities in places where they are comfortable and participating in events in trusted, community-centric spaces like local churches, recreation centers, or schools.
- **Leverage Trusted Networks:** Providing messaging on trusted platforms frequented by target audiences and with messengers the community recognizes and trusts
 - Highlighting success stories inspiring to and relevant to the community.
 - Using storytelling to illustrate how GEM's work aligns with the community's priorities, such as job creation, innovation, and sustainable mobility solutions.
 - Providing flexible engagement options, including virtual and in-person interactions, to ensure broad participation.
- **Conceptual Relevance:** Take time to understand the context surrounding the community's response and reaction to advanced mobility. Understand how advanced mobility impacts peoples' lives, careers, and business opportunities. Determine the starting point for communications and take time to understand any fears, resistance or competing priorities that might impact how the message is received.

Key Concept: Trusted Connector

A Trusted Connector is defined as an individual or organization deeply rooted in their community, serving as a liaison to connect communities with limited access to resources to relevant opportunities, services, and support networks.

Intentionally building a network with Trusted Connectors who represent target audiences is central and foundational to GEM's recommended outreach strategy.



The following section provides Audience Profiles for the three target audiences - **Workforce Development**, **Innovators**, and **Business Enterprises**. These profiles highlight key messaging and recommendations for outreach that meet people where they are.

Workforce Development Audience Overview:

The Workforce Development target audience includes a wide set of subgroups to encompass audiences GEM should focus on as it relates to preparing an informed and skilled workforce for the advanced mobility ecosystem across the 11-country region of Southeast Michigan. This audience includes auto workers, crossover industry workers, college students and career technical trainees, as well as K-12 students, families and educators. Each of the subgroups in these audiences have specific needs as it relates to advanced mobility, but a common factor for each is the need for increased exposure and education about advanced mobility, and opportunities for training and upskilling.

Auto Workers & Crossover Industry Workers

Key Messages	Platforms	Examples of Trusted Connectors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive Southeast Michigan's mobility transformation – upgrade your skills for the next era of automotive technology. • Southeast Michigan's auto legacy meets the future – equip yourself with the latest skills in electric and autonomous vehicle production. • From assembly lines to advanced mobility – become part of Southeast Michigan's evolving workforce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union and Association Newsletters: Website and email newsletters from the UAW and other relevant organizations. • Local news and radio: Radio programs that reach working-class communities with news and opportunities. • LinkedIn and Facebook Groups: Platforms for professional updates and engagement within specialized auto workers. Create a database of professional and auto workers groups, advocacy groups and other groups with influence who can help GEM share information. Share information about upskilling opportunities. • Email Campaign: Direct communication through email, targeting workers with information about upskilling programs and training opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UAW representative • Faith leaders • SEMCA Michigan Works!* representative • Detroit at Work representative <p>*Indicates a current GEM partner</p>

College Students & Career Technical Trainees

Key Messages	Platforms	Examples of Trusted Connectors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be part of the Detroit metropolitan area and surrounding 11-county region mobility evolution – where technology meets transformation. • Turn your skills into impact with hands-on experience in a city that's driving the future of transportation. • Your career in Southeast Michigan's mobility sector starts here – gain the skills, build the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LinkedIn: For professional networking and information about job opportunities, training programs, and industry news. • Instagram and Youtube: Share training program highlights, success stories, and promotional videos • Podcasts and webinars: Career-focused podcasts and webinars that discuss workforces readiness, technical skills, and industry trends. • Career Development Platforms, Campus outreach: Collaborate with technical colleges, universities, and training centers to promote the onramp. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) • Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) • Society of Women Engineers (SWE) • College/program advisors • Mentors



K-12 Students, Families, & Educators

Key Messages

- For Students: Your future is on the move – join Southeast Michigan's next generation of innovators in shaping the world of mobility.
- For Families: Help your children drive into a high-tech future filled with exciting career opportunities.
- For Educators: Empower your students to lead the next wave of Southeast Michigan's automotive and mobility transformation.

Platforms

Students:

- **Social media channels:** TikTok, Instagram and YouTube for engaging visual content.
- **School Communication Channels:** Share content via school newsletters, websites, and direct communication platforms like ClassDojo or Remind.

Family and Educators:

- Facebook groups for parent groups and educators communities. Create a database of parent and educators groups, advocacy groups and other groups with influence who can help GEM share information.
- **STEAM and educational events:** Websites and platforms promoting science fairs, educational workshops and conferences.
- **Community TV and Radio Stations:** Local TV and radio stations that broadcast community news and educational content.

Examples of Trusted Connectors

- Community Based Organizations that provide after school or school-based programs
- LifeBuilders Detroit
- Developing K.I.D.S
- Detroit Area Pre-College Engineering (DAPCEP)
- The Technology and Aerospace Program Foundation (TAPK12)
- Michigan Council of Women in Technology (MCWT)
- University pipeline programs and summer camps
- University of Michigan Summer Engineering Exploration Camp (SEE)
- University of Michigan Engineering OnRamp
- Wayne State University College of Engineering Summer Academy

Innovator Audience Overview:

The Innovator target audience includes subgroups that GEM should focus on as it relates to preparing the shift towards a quickly evolving industry of the advanced mobility ecosystem across the 11-country region of Southeast Michigan. This audience includes professionals, workers, high-skilled workers who become innovators, crossover industry innovators, and higher education students. Each of the subgroups in this audience includes professionals who may be seeking to pivot or expand into next-generation mobility by using their current skillsets to innovate in advanced mobility. Innovators are looking for opportunities for knowledge-building and meaningful connections with other innovators.

Professionals-Turned-Innovators, Workers-Turned-Innovators, Crossover Industry Innovators

Key Messages	Platforms	Examples of Trusted Connectors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From engineer to innovator – Southeast Michigan is the launchpad for your next breakthrough. • Lead Southeast Michigan's legacy in innovation with resources to bring your ideas to life. • Transform the future of mobility – join Southeast Michigan's elite network of innovators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LinkedIn: Share long-form articles, success stories, and thought leadership content from engineers turned innovators. • Podcasts and Webinars: Appear on tech-focused podcasts and host webinars that explore the engineer-to-innovator journey. • Networking Events: Use mobility industry events to connect directly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) • Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) • Society of Women Engineers (SWE) • TechTown* • Tech startup leaders • Industry mentors or leaders <p>*Indicates a current GEM partner</p>

Automotive & Aerospace Engineers & Professionals: High-Skilled Workers Turned Innovators

Key Messages	Platforms	Examples of Trusted Connectors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive Southeast Michigan's mobility transformation – upgrade your skills for the next era of automotive technology. • Southeast Michigan's auto legacy meets the future – equip yourself with the latest skills in electric and autonomous vehicle production. • From assembly lines to advanced mobility – become part of Southeast Michigan's evolving workforce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LinkedIn: Professional updates, industry news, and peer-to-peer networking opportunities. • Industry Forums and Associations: Partner with SAE International or AIAA to promote content directly to engineers. • YouTube: Share industry news, thought videos, and interactive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) • Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) • Society of Women Engineers (SWE) • Industry mentors or colleagues • Industry leaders

Higher Education Student Engineers & Early-Career Professionals

Key Messages	Platforms	Examples of Trusted Connectors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kickstart your career in the heart of mobility innovation – where your ideas drive the future. • Build the skills today that will define tomorrow's mobility solutions. • Join Southeast Michigan's legacy of innovation with hands-on experience in emerging mobility technologies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LinkedIn: For professional networking, career opportunities, and sharing success stories of students and young professionals. • Instagram & TikTok: Create short, engaging videos highlighting the onramp. • University and Career Portals: Partner with colleges and engineering departments to share content via career services websites and newsletters. • YouTube: Insights featuring young professionals in mobility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) • Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) • Society of Women Engineers (SWE) • Affinity or employee resource group leaders • Mentors or college advisors



Business Enterprise Audience Overview:

The Supply & Value Chain Business Enterprise target audience includes subgroups that GEM should focus on as it relates to preparing the shift towards a quickly evolving industry of the advanced mobility ecosystem across the 11-country region of Southeast Michigan. This audience includes automotive and advanced mobility suppliers, micro enterprises, small businesses, and start-ups. For a number of the subgroups in this audience, there is current exposure and knowledge of the shift towards advanced mobility through the thriving automotive industry across Southeast Michigan. As for micro enterprises, small businesses and start-ups there is a need for points for entry, funding and knowledge building.

Automotive and Advanced Mobility Suppliers

Key Messages	Platforms	Examples of Trusted Connectors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Southeast Michigan's future! Collaborate, diversify, and thrive in the evolving mobility sector. • Adapt to the future of mobility! Southeast Michigan's automotive suppliers are driving the new era of advanced mobility. • Improve your skills and capabilities by connecting with Southeast Michigan's automakers, technology companies, and mobility innovators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Portals and Databases: Leveraging centralized registration portals ensures opportunities are accessible to diverse suppliers, with follow-ups to maintain engagement and evaluate capabilities. • LinkedIn: Use targeted campaigns to reach decision-makers in automotive supply chain roles. • Industry Events: Supplier forums, trade fairs, and targeted events provide platforms to showcase opportunities and connect suppliers directly with buyers and technical teams. • Webinars: Host discussions on trends in electrification, sustainability, and supply chain resilience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplier Diversity Professionals • Michigan Minority Supplier Development Council (MMSDC) leaders and members • Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) leaders and members • National • United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce • National Advanced Mobility Consortium

Micro & Small Business Enterprises

Key Messages	Platforms	Examples of Trusted Connectors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get the tools and resources to grow your business as Southeast Michigan leads the way in advanced mobility. • Play a big role in Southeast Michigan's mobility future by plugging into the advanced mobility ecosystem. • Join Southeast Michigan's mobility ecosystem and unlock new opportunities for your business. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Business Publications: Crain's Detroit Business, Detroit Free Press. • LinkedIn: Share success stories, partnership opportunities, and industry updates. • Facebook: engaging with local small business communities • Community Outreach Channels: Collaborate with chambers of commerce and Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC). • Community events: Trade events and conferences are key venues where suppliers meet potential clients and gain insights into industry demands and opportunities. • Email Campaigns: Direct outreach through small business newsletters or economic development groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small business owners and advocates (NEI Worktable members) • Economic development leaders • Detroit Economic Growth Corporation District Business Liaisons • Industry association leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) leaders and members

Start-Ups

Key Messages

- Turn your ideas into impact! Connect with Southeast Michigan's leaders in advanced mobility.
- Find support and scale in Southeast Michigan's advanced mobility ecosystem.
- Accelerate your journey - Connect with Southeast Michigan's mobility industry leaders and scale up your business.

Platforms

- **LinkedIn:** Professional networking and thought leadership in tech and mobility.
- **YouTube:** Short documentaries and founder stories showcasing startup journeys in the mobility space.
- **Industry Podcasts & Webinars:** Appear on or host discussions on tech growth, disruption, and Detroit's role as a global mobility epicenter.

Examples of Trusted Connectors

- Professional organization leaders
- National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE)
- Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE)
- Society of Women Engineers (SWE)
- Small business owners and advocates (NEI Worktable members)
- Detroit Economic Growth Corporation District Business Liaisons

Defining the Opportunity and Concepts

To build understanding and excitement around advanced mobility, GEM must clearly define key opportunities and concepts. This includes:

- Using plain language to demystify complex topics like electrification and mobility ecosystems. Start with building understanding of what is meant by advanced mobility. Show what advanced mobility is and how innovations will benefit daily life—e.g., safer streets, better transportation access, and economic growth.
- Highlight pathways to participation for individuals, small businesses, innovators and community-based organizations.

3.

Leverage And Collaborate With Trusted Connectors and Networks

Definition: *A Trusted Connector is defined as an individual or organization deeply rooted in their community, serving as a liaison to connect communities with limited access to resources to relevant opportunities, services, and support networks.*

Trusted connectors and networks are invaluable assets in building relationships with communities that have faced barriers to opportunity. By working with established local leaders and organizations, GEM can tap into their credibility and influence to foster trust. Strategies include:

- Partnering with community-based organizations like Global Detroit's Trusted Connector Network to ensure outreach efforts are grounded in local knowledge.
- Equipping trusted connectors with toolkits that simplify the messaging and minimize their workload, such as ready-to-use templates for emails, social media posts, and presentations.
- Hosting connector training sessions to align on key messaging and goals.

Toolkits Designed to Minimize Lift

To encourage participation and collaboration, GEM will provide practical toolkits designed to reduce the effort required by partners and communities. These toolkits will include:

- Pre-designed marketing materials, including flyers, digital ads, and social media posts.
- Step-by-step guides for hosting community meetings or workshops.
- Resources tailored to specific community needs, such as mobility education or grant application support.



4.

Meaningful Engagement with Communities Facing Barriers to Opportunity

Authentic engagement requires collaborating with communities to design experiences that reflect their needs, priorities, and aspirations, particularly among those who have had limited access to opportunity. GEM can:

- Invite community members to participate in designing GEM-related programs and events.
- Offer opportunities for local residents and businesses to showcase their contributions to the GEM ecosystem.
- Celebrate successes through storytelling, featuring voices from the community to highlight the impact of GEM's initiatives.

Research-Supported Strategy

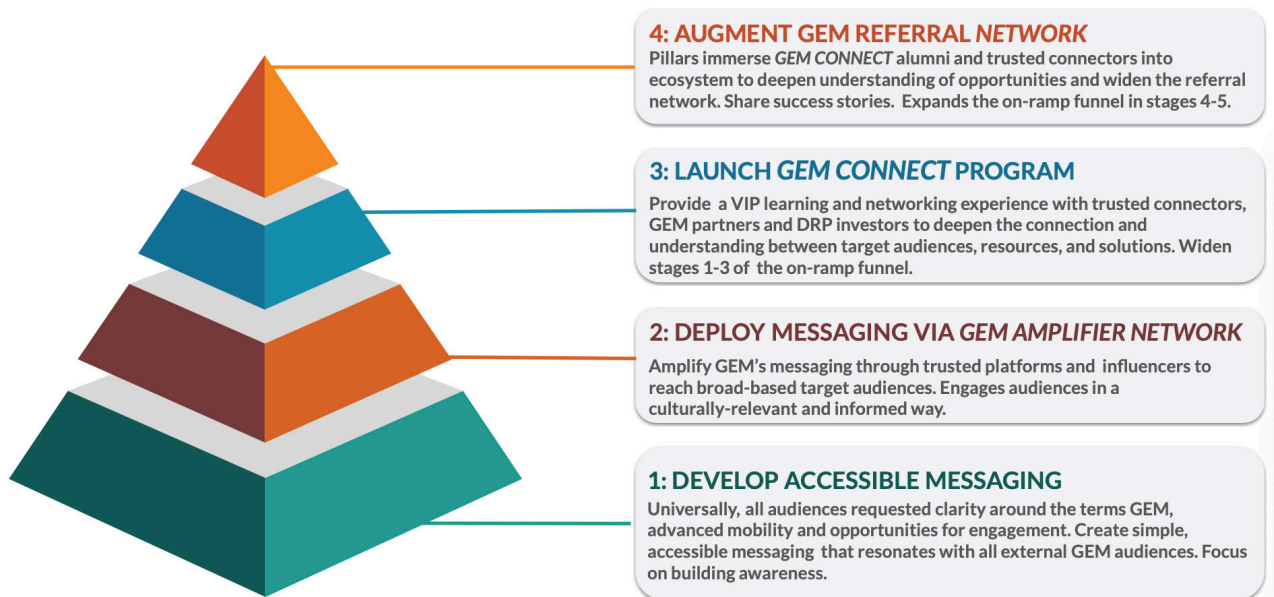
GEM's outreach strategy is grounded in research to ensure meaningful engagement. Drawing from insights such as:

- **Levels of Engagement (University of Michigan Research):** Employing varying levels of community involvement, from consultation and collaboration to empowerment, to meet communities where they are.
- **Trusted Connector Network (Global Detroit):** Leveraging this proven model to identify and empower local leaders to act as ambassadors for GEM, building long-term trust and collaboration.

Trusted Connector Strategy

The Trusted Connector Strategy aims to create a dynamic network of community-embedded advocates who build trust, increase access to resources, and amplify advanced mobility opportunities for communities that have faced barriers to participation. GEM will empower these individuals through training, professional development, and targeted tools to effectively bridge their communities to opportunities within the advanced mobility ecosystem.

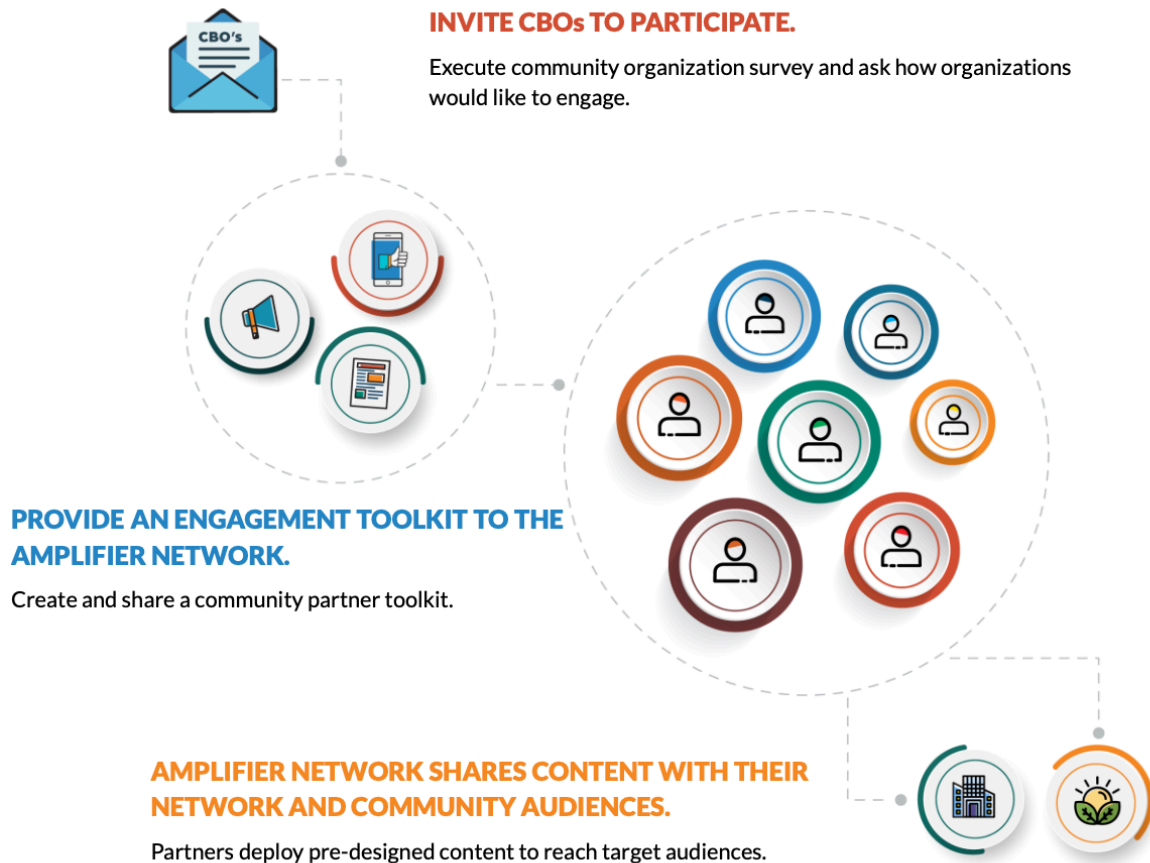
The Trusted Connector Strategy has four main components:



By leveraging deep-rooted community relationships and equipping advocates with the resources they need, the program fosters expanded pathways to participation, helping ensure that all voices have the opportunity to contribute to the region's economic growth. The following section provides a brief recommendation for actions GEM can take towards implementing a Trusted Connector strategy.

Component Two: Deploy Messaging Across *GEM Amplifier Network*

Invite community-based organizations (CBOs) to join a structured, sustainable communication network designed to inform rural communities and those with limited access to economic opportunities, using current survey tools.



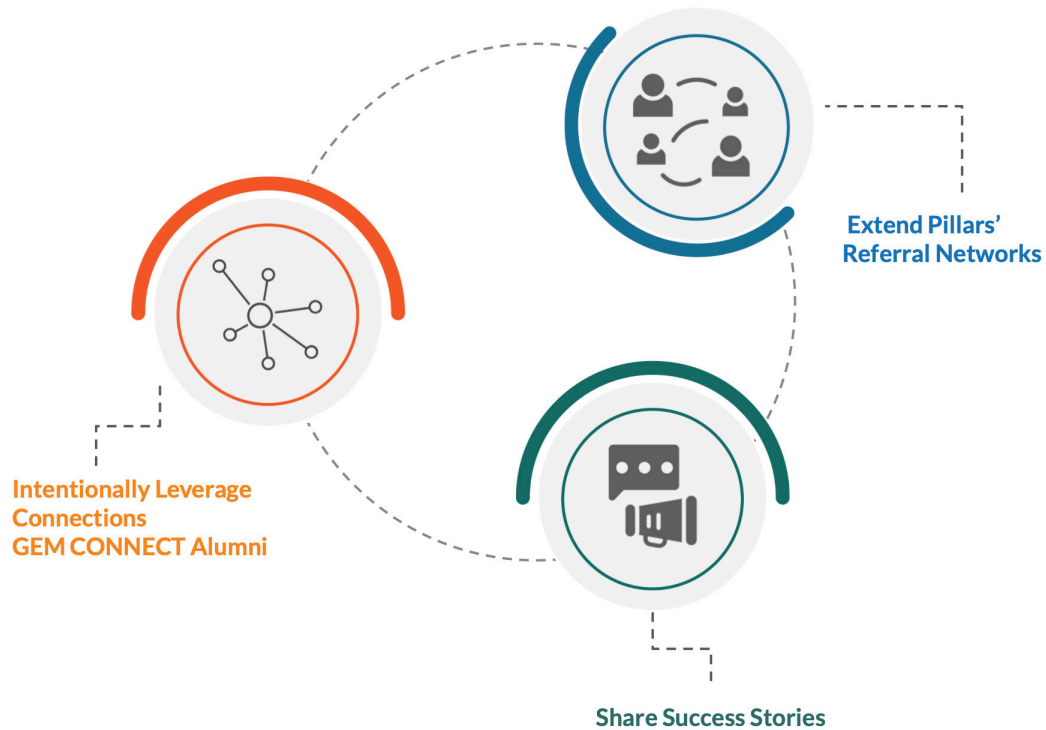
Component Three: Launch *GEM CONNECT* Program

Create a branded full day or multi-day program to invite & educate community and organizational leaders about GEM and opportunities in advanced mobility.



Component Four: Augment *GEM Referral Network*

Alumni of the Trusted Connector program are equipped to offer clear, actionable pathways and direct referrals to GEM programs and resources through participating in immersive experiences with GEM Pillars.



Opportunities for GEM to Plug Into the Community Network

GEM can deepen its engagement by becoming an active participant in existing community networks. This includes:

- Sponsoring or co-hosting community events that align with GEM's mission, such as job fairs or sustainability expos.
- Providing speakers or panelists for community forums to share expertise on mobility innovation.
- Offering grants or resources to support local initiatives that align with GEM's goals.

SECTION 5:

RESOURCES

The content in this playbook was developed through robust research and Culture Shift Team's discovery process with community stakeholders. This process included interviews, listening sessions, and community ideation Sessions with the goal of elevating the perspectives and insights of communities that have faced barriers to opportunity. This playbook also provides a set of practical tools designed to support effective and community-informed outreach, equipping stakeholders with actionable strategies for engagement.

For more information, please contact **Jeannine Gant** (jeannine.gant@detroitregionalpartnership.com) regarding:

- Summaries and specific findings from the discovery sessions
- Outreach tools and testimonials provided in this playbook
- Additional resources to guide community relevant outreach strategies





Outreach Strategy Playbook:

Expanding Access and Participation
Across Communities

