

FACT SHEET

BRING ACC II BENEFITS TO NEW JERSEY COMMUNITIES

On July 17, 2023, New Jersey started the process of adopting the Advanced Clean Cars II (ACC II) regulations, which would reduce smog-causing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions statewide by requiring automakers to sell increasingly higher percentages of new electric vehicles (EVs) in New Jersey in each successive model year (MY).¹

New Jersey stands to greatly benefit from adopting ACC II. According to a report by sustainability consultants ERM, the cumulative net benefits of ACC II for public health, the environment, and the economy in New Jersey would be as much as \$97 billion from 2027 to 2050.² This estimate accounts for the health value of reduced air pollution in the state, resulting in fewer hospital visits and premature deaths, as well as net cost savings for EV vehicle owners. It also accounts for lowered electricity rates for all customers as the electricity market expands thanks to increased EV charging.

To help automakers in ACC II-compliant states reach their EV requirements, the regulations provide a handful of ways—known as “flexibilities”—for automakers to sell fewer EVs than nominally required and make up the gap. Among these flexibilities are “environmental justice vehicle values,” which aim to enhance equity outcomes from the deployment of EVs. One pathway by which automakers can earn environmental justice vehicle values is by providing new EVs at a minimum 25 percent discount for exclusive service in community-based clean mobility programs.

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A line of electric vehicles using super charging stations at a Walmart in East Brunswick, New Jersey on March 6, 2022.

Environmental justice vehicle values ensure that the communities most burdened by transportation emissions receive maximal benefits from these programs. However, these programs are only one piece in what must be a larger effort to equitably reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Fortunately, New Jersey is well positioned to ensure that automakers maximize the benefits of ACC II for environmental justice communities, thanks to proactive stakeholder engagement led by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) on implementation of environmental justice vehicle values. In addition, the GoTrenton! program—a clean mobility initiative in development in the state capital—is likely eligible for these ACC II vehicle values. GoTrenton! can serve as a model program and can be replicated statewide.

ACC II ELIGIBILITY IN NEW JERSEY

For automakers to obtain environmental justice vehicle values under the ACC II rule, a community-based clean mobility program is one that:

1. Provides access to clean mobility solutions other than vehicle ownership including EV car sharing, ride sharing, van pools, ride hailing, or on-demand first-mile/last-mile services.
2. Serves a community in which at least 75 percent of the census tracts in the project area (where community residents live and services operate) are:
 - a. a disadvantaged community;
 - b. a low-income community; or
 - c. a tribal community (regardless of federal recognition).
3. Is implemented by:
 - a. a community-based organization;
 - b. a Native American tribal government (regardless of federal recognition); or
 - c. a public agency or nonprofit organization that has received a letter of support from community members who will be impacted by the project.³

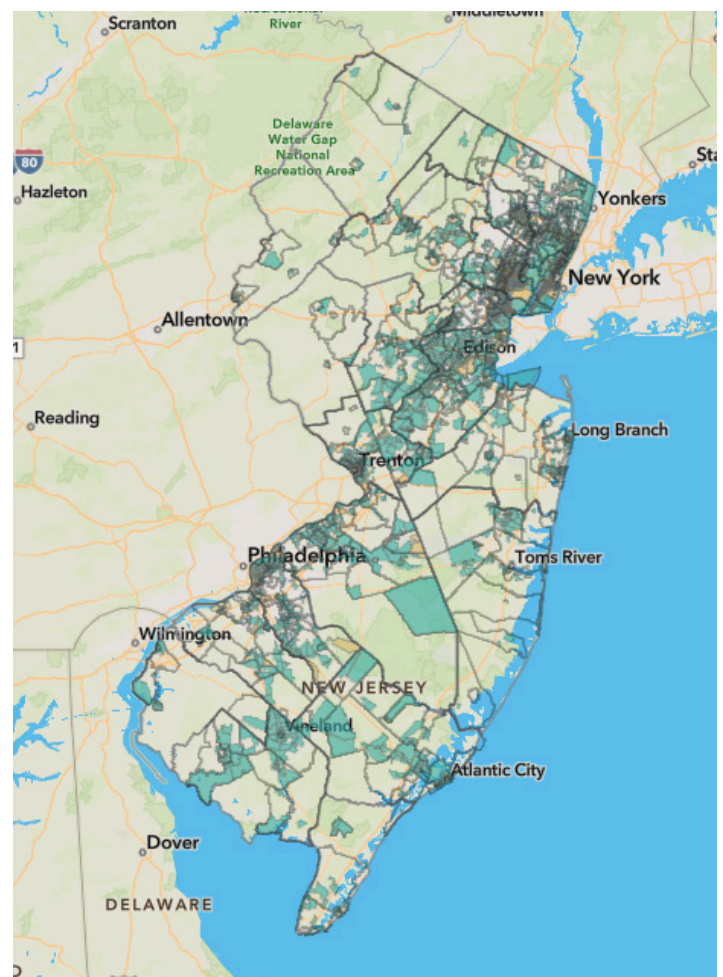
While New Jersey has not yet defined “disadvantaged communities” and “low-income communities” specifically for ACC II purposes, it has established clear definitions for Overburdened Communities, which can be used as a temporary proxy to determine which programs might qualify as community-based clean mobility programs. According to NJDEP, Overburdened Communities are block groups with certain characteristics:⁴

1. At least 35 percent of the households are low income; or
2. At least 40 percent of the residents identify as minority or as members of a state-recognized tribal community; or
3. At least 40 percent of the households have limited English proficiency.⁵

NJDEP has developed an interactive map of Overburdened Communities in New Jersey that can help define which areas may qualify for community-based clean mobility programs under ACC II.⁶ Figure 1 shows clear concentrations of Overburdened Communities (shaded in green) throughout New Jersey, many along major interstate and intrastate highway systems.

To better address equity and leverage the ACC II environmental justice vehicle values, stakeholders such as mobility program developers, automakers, and NJDEP should prioritize the Overburdened Communities identified on the map in their efforts to help establish more community-based clean mobility programs.

Figure 1: Map of Overburdened Communities



Source: New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

CASE STUDY: GOTRENTON!

GoTrenton! is a clean mobility program which soft launched in September 2023, and it is likely to qualify under ACC II's parameters.⁷ Operated by Isles, Inc., and funded by the NJDEP, GoTrenton! will use an entirely electric light-duty vehicle fleet to provide a car sharing service in which a resident can reserve a car for a certain period of time; a ride-sharing service in which multiple residents can share a ride enabled by a local driver; and a shuttle service (workforce van) that will help connect residents to good jobs and essential health, social, and economic services.

In addition, the program will install public charging stations across Trenton that are available at affordable rates. By expanding clean mobility options, the program will help reduce air pollution in a place where residents frequently experience unhealthy air quality.

GoTrenton! is maximizing benefits for the community by:

1. developing a comprehensive feedback process to evaluate the mobility habits of low-income Trenton residents, which will inform their implementation strategy,
2. offering its shuttle service for just \$2 per ride,
3. providing multiple mobility options, and
4. addressing not only mobility but also access to jobs, medical services, and so on.

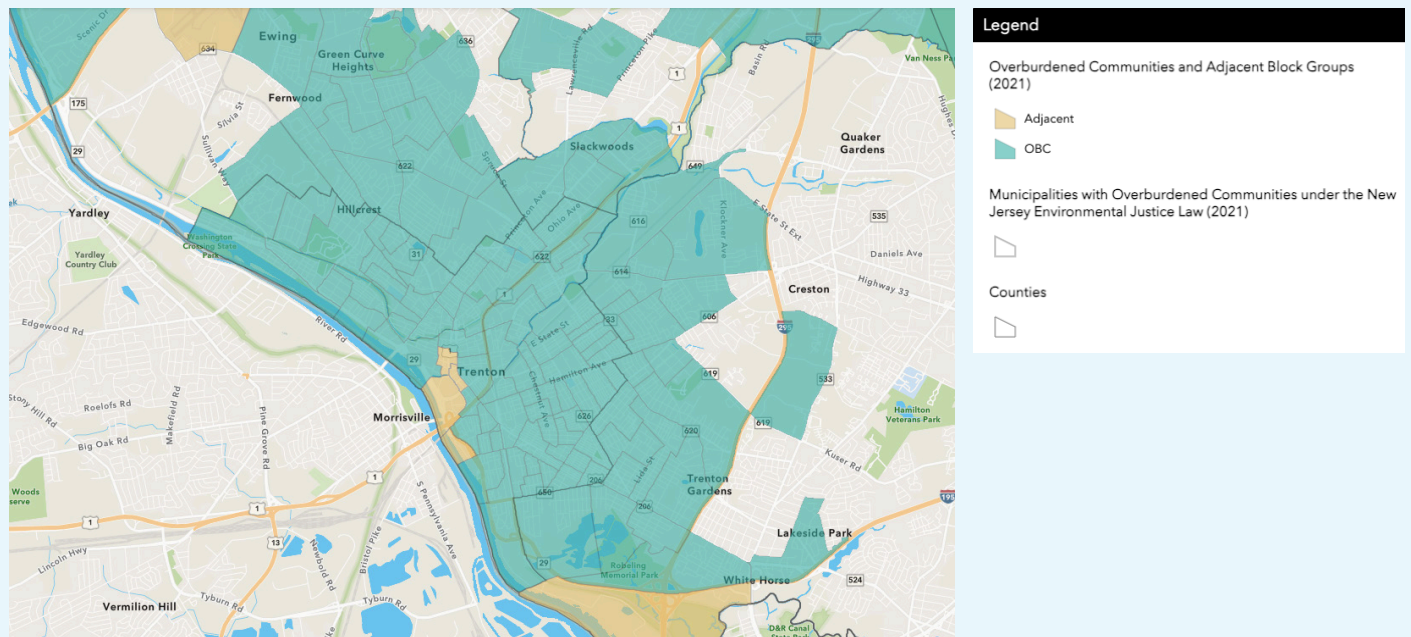
To learn more about best practices from other community-based clean mobility programs please see "Making EVs Accessible to All Through ACC II."

GoTrenton! will likely qualify as a community-based clean mobility program under ACC II because it meets the key criteria: It will provide access to clean mobility solutions other than vehicle ownership; it will serve an Overburdened Community as defined by NJDEP (see Figure 2); and its operator, Isles, Inc., is a community-based organization.

However, GoTrenton! may encounter challenges based on the model of the shuttles it intends to use, which are special customized vehicles. Without the same economies of scale that the general market provides, it may not be financially viable for automakers to provide these shuttles at the required minimum 25 percent discount. If this turns out to be the case, GoTrenton! could instead procure existing vehicle models that best fit its needs for the shuttle service.

Ultimately GoTrenton! is poised to not only help automakers earn environmental justice vehicle values but also empower communities in Trenton with EV mobility. GoTrenton! should be a model for additional programs to serve other Overburdened Communities in New Jersey.

Figure 2: Overburdened Communities in Trenton



Source: New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

RECOMMENDATIONS

Below are a set of recommendations for how NJDEP, potential program developers, and automakers can best coordinate on the creation and operation of community-based clean mobility programs.

NJDEP:

- Clearly define “disadvantaged community,” “low-income community,” and “tribal community” in the context of ACC II.
- Reach out to community-based organizations, Native American tribal governments, other public agencies, and nonprofit organizations to encourage them to create community-based clean mobility programs.
- Create grants that fund community-based clean mobility programs and encourage the aforementioned entities to apply.
- Reach out to automakers to encourage them to provide EVs to community-based clean mobility programs and earn environmental justice vehicle values.

Community-based organizations, Native American tribal governments, public agencies, and nonprofit organizations that are interested in creating community-based clean mobility programs:

- Reach out to NJDEP to affirm that at least 75 percent of the census tracts in the project area are a disadvantaged community, a low-income community, or a tribal community (as NJDEP defines it in the context of ACC II).
- Engage with communities early and thoughtfully to understand their mobility needs, and design solutions that can effectively meet those needs.
- Ensure that program rates (for vehicle rental, use of shuttle services, etc.) are affordable for all.
- Provide convenient and reliable mobility options that are competitive with private cars in terms of utility, by diversifying the services offered and building on existing services,
- Pursue multi-sector approaches that address issues beyond just mobility (such as housing, employment, and medical needs) to create co-benefits and build community capacity and wealth.

Automakers:

- Reach out to community-based clean mobility programs to develop plans to sell EVs to these programs.
- Price EVs as low as economically feasible.



An electric vehicle at an EVgo charging station in the parking lot of Quaker Bridge Mall in Lawrence Township, NJ.

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ENDNOTES

- 1 EVs include battery electric, plug-in hybrid, and fuel cell electric vehicles.
- 2 ERM, “New Jersey Advanced Clean Cars II Program,” April 2023, <https://www.erm.com/contentassets/0ea3b193115448cd9dd5c7e3622373a0/new-jersey-advanced-clean-cars-ii-program.pdf>.
- 3 California Air Resources Board, “Final Regulation Order: Section 1962.4, Title 13, California Code of Regulations,” <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/barcu/regact/2022/accii/2acciifro1962.4.pdf>.
- 4 According to the U.S. Census Bureau, block groups are “clusters of blocks within the same census tract that have the same first digit of their 4-digit census block number from the same decennial census.” U.S. Census Bureau, “Census Block Groups (2010) in New Jersey, Edition 20140523 (Govt_census_group_2010),” 2010, https://www.state.nj.us/dep/gis/digidownload/metadata/statewide/Govt_census_group_2010.html.
- 5 New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (hereinafter NJDEP), “What Are Overburdened Communities (OBC)?” accessed July 18, 2023, <https://dep.nj.gov/ej/communities/>.
- 6 NJDEP, “Environmental Justice Mapping, Assessment and Protection Tool (EJMAP),” accessed July 18, 2023, <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/548632a2351b41b8a0443cfc3a9f4ef6>.
- 7 Isles, “Climate Action and GoTrenton!,” accessed July 21, 2023, <https://isles.org/our-approach/live-green-and-healthy/climate-action-ev; GOTrenton!>, accessed October 27, 2023, <https://www.gotrenton.org>.