

### What is the Opportunity Project?

The Opportunity Project is a platform for using Federal and local data and digital tools to expand access to opportunity for all Americans. Launched by the Obama Administration in 2016, The Opportunity Project empowers families, communities, local leaders, and the media to find the information and resources that they need to thrive. By curating Federal and local open data sets and facilitating collaboration among communities, technologists, and government, the Opportunity Project aims to accomplish three goals:

1. Help people use information about neighborhood-level resources like housing, quality schools, jobs, transit options, safe streets, and parks to overcome challenges and better advocate for their wellbeing.
2. Make government data sets readily accessible, user friendly, and useful through tools that transform the data to help people solve challenges in their everyday lives.
3. Facilitate development collaborations among the tech sector, government, and communities.

### What has been accomplished so far?

Since taking office, President Obama has focused on expanding access to opportunity for all Americans and leveraging 21st century technology and innovation to solve the country's greatest challenges. Over the past seven years, the President has created a legacy of using data to improve the quality of life in communities nationwide. For example, last year, the Administration announced a [new requirement](#) for local governments to use data in creating plans to reduce concentrated poverty and racial segregation.

In early 2016, the Administration released a new, user-friendly package of Federal and local datasets on access to opportunity at the neighborhood level. The Administration invited cities, private sector companies, and non-profit organizations to build user-friendly digital tools from the newly-curated datasets to help individuals and communities solve problems like finding affordable housing near jobs and good schools, or advocating for local resources like supermarkets. Participants included developers from Zillow, Redfin, Great Schools, and Policy Link, experts and local data stewards from New York, New Orleans, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and other communities. The first 12 tools served users such as:

- A Section 8 **voucher holder** searching for housing
- **Neighborhood leaders** making the case for new resources in their community
- **Local officials** understanding trends in their community
- **Advocacy organizations** and **media** keeping government accountable

On March 7<sup>th</sup> at a [White House event](#), several organizations demoed how their newly launched tools used the Opportunity Project data to solve problems, and the Administration launched <http://opportunity.census.gov/> to provide access to the tools, and for software developers and community partners to access the data, build new tools, and connects with others through a community of practice. More than thirty additional non-profits, community organizations, coding boot camps, academic institutions, and local governments also committed to use the Opportunity Project data and build new tools. [\[White House Fact Sheet\]](#).

Learn more: U.S. Chief Data Scientist Dj Patil's post on [Medium](#). A talk on the Opportunity Project at 2016 [SXSW](#) Interactive.

**Opportunity Project 2.0**

The Administration is collaborating to expand use of the original tools, build new tools, add data, work more collaboratively, and institutionalize this approach in government, while working to engage users and local community members early and often.

**The Administration is seeking to spread the word about the Opportunity Project** to those interested in collaboratively developing user-centered digital tools with Opportunity Project data. Tools can focus on any issue, but potential end users that could benefit from the data include **LGBT youth experiencing homelessness, formerly incarcerated people** reentering communities, **domestic violence survivors, rural communities** facing opioid abuse and disinvestment, **unemployed Americans** seeking skills and opportunities, and other user-defined challenges.

**What can my organization do?**

Think creatively about how to get involved. Here are some suggestions.

TECH COMPANIES STARTUPS CIVIC TECH TEAMS	COMMUNITIES, LOCAL, AND STATE GOVERNMENTS	UNIVERSITIES CODING SCHOOLS	ADVOCATES	FEDERAL AGENCIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visualize data</li> <li>• Identify digital solutions</li> <li>• Build a tool</li> <li>• Add new feature or new data to existing platform</li> <li>• Add data to the Opportunity Project inventory</li> <li>• Join a community of practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define challenges</li> <li>• Engage local residents</li> <li>• Share your local expertise</li> <li>• Test and help improve tools</li> <li>• Add local or state data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convene stakeholders</li> <li>• Incorporate Opportunity data into your curricula</li> <li>• Test the impact of tools</li> <li>• Engage students across disciplines to design and build</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define a problem statement</li> <li>• Contribute expertise to inform design of tools</li> <li>• Connect with users to provide feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify agency priorities in need of a tech solution</li> <li>• Contribute agency open data</li> <li>• Answer data questions</li> <li>• Gain insight to improve your data</li> </ul>

**How does the process work?**

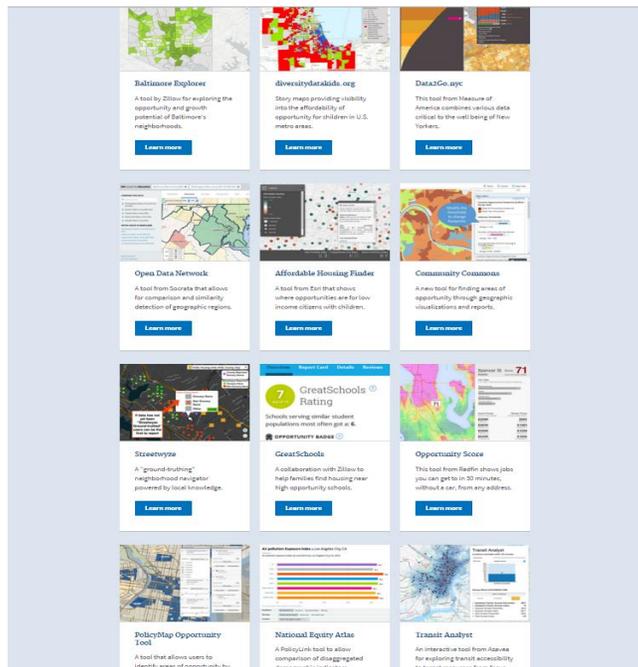
The Administration created the Opportunity Project to provide curated data sets and encourage interested stakeholders to connect and create meaningful tools that meet families’ and communities’ needs. Cohorts of developers, communities, local governments, and advocates building with Opportunity Project data could follow a multi-step process to develop their tools:

- 1) Identify a problem to focus on, through opportunity.census.gov, or by working directly with users and subject matter experts.
- 2) Team up with technologists, issue advocates, community members, and local officials and data stewards focusing on the same problem.
- 3) As a cohort, go through a development sprint, using communication platforms like Slack and GitHub, and collaboratively build tools that respond to users’ needs. We encourage all resulting software and tools to be open source and free for use by the public.
- 4) Carry out at least two demos and user feedback sessions to share concepts throughout the sprint.
- 5) Teams may have the opportunity to announce tools with the Administration this summer.

Screenshots of opportunity.census.gov and new tools built from Opportunity Project data

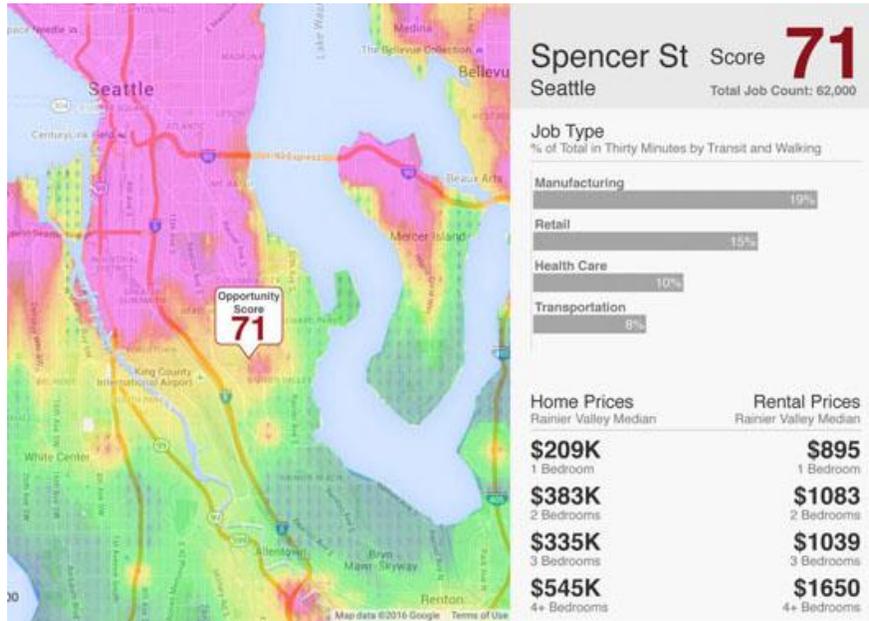


OPPORTUNITY.CENSUS.GOV is a new platform providing easy access to the curated Opportunity Project datasets on neighborhood-level opportunity; links to a set of tools built with that data, representing a range of applications; information on how stakeholders can replicate the process; and scenarios describing needs of end users to inform design of future tools.

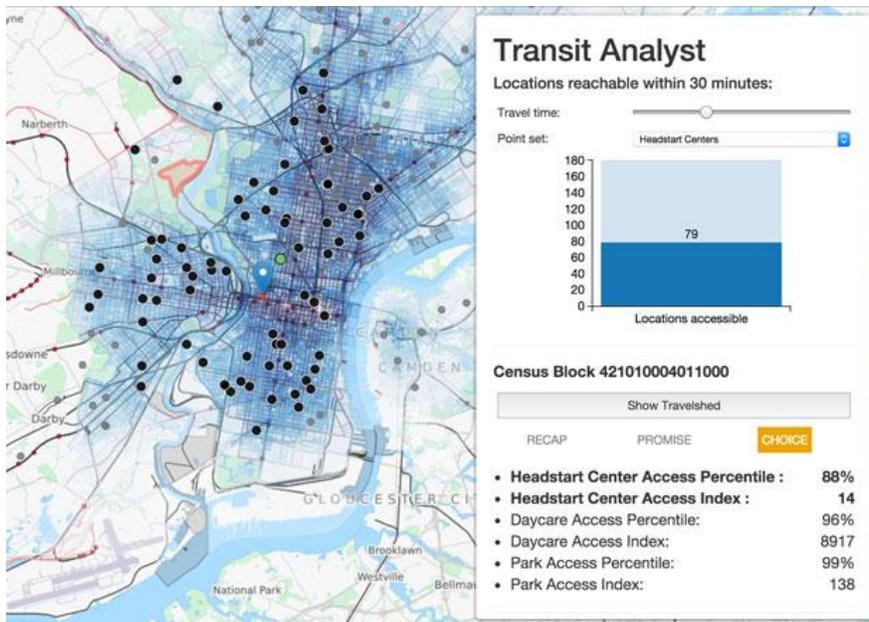


Twelve Opportunity Project tools as they appear on Opportunity.Census.Gov.

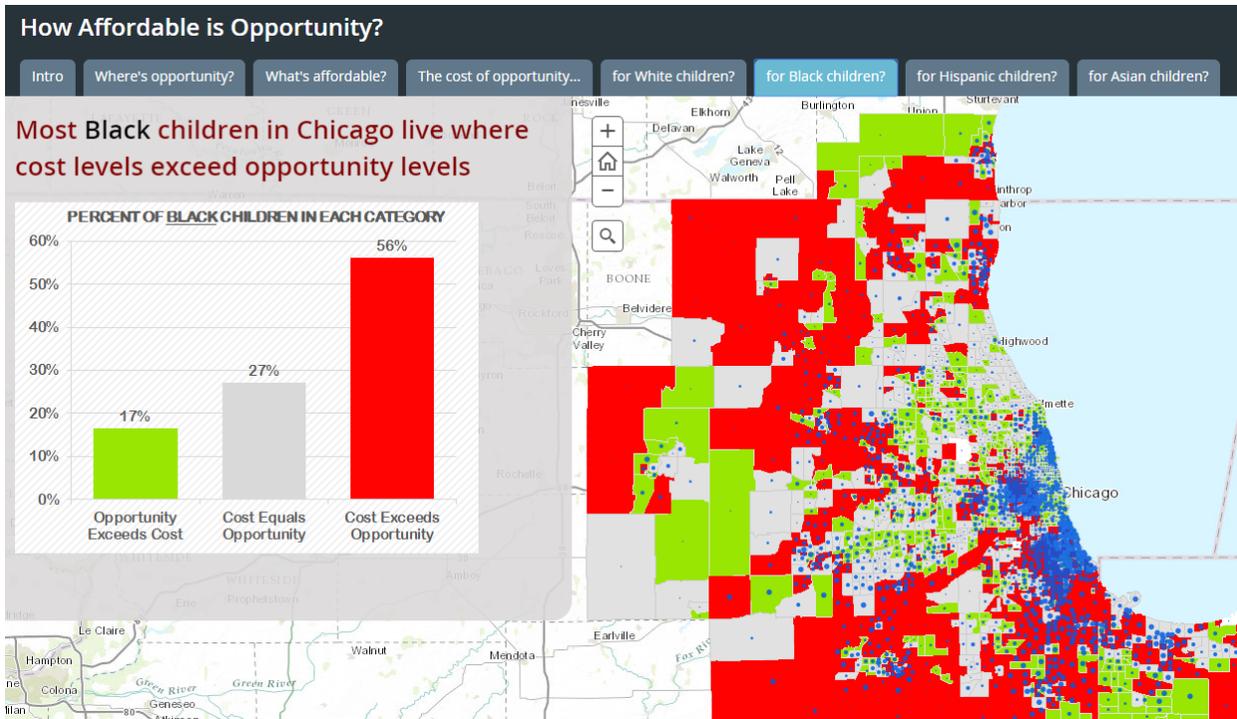
Below is a subset of the existing tools created through the Opportunity Project, providing a range of possible use cases and features:



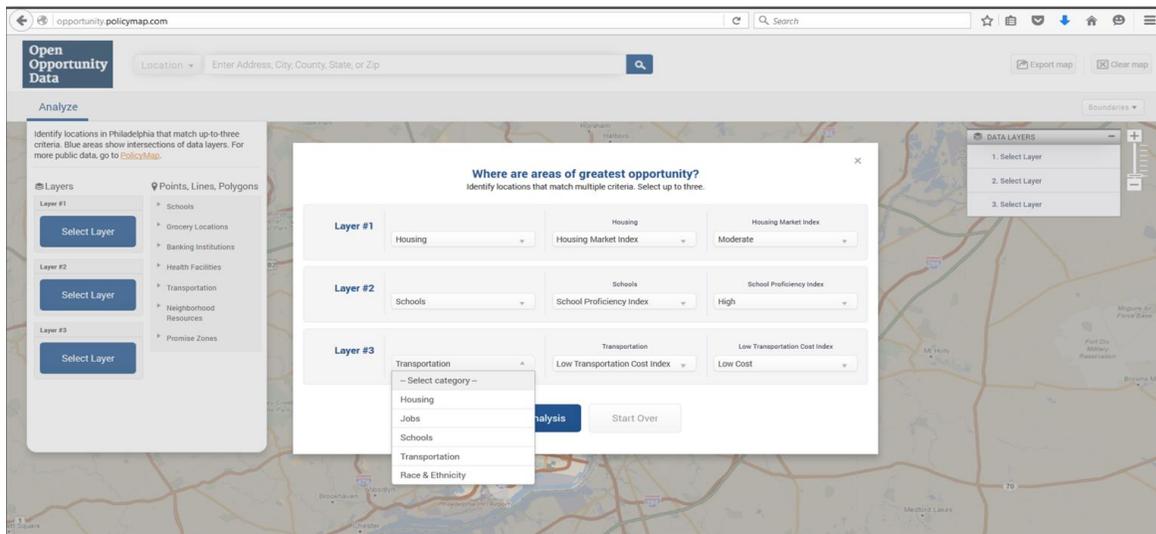
**Redfin** created “Opportunity Score,” a tool that shows users jobs they can get to from any home or apartment, without a car, in 30 minutes or less.



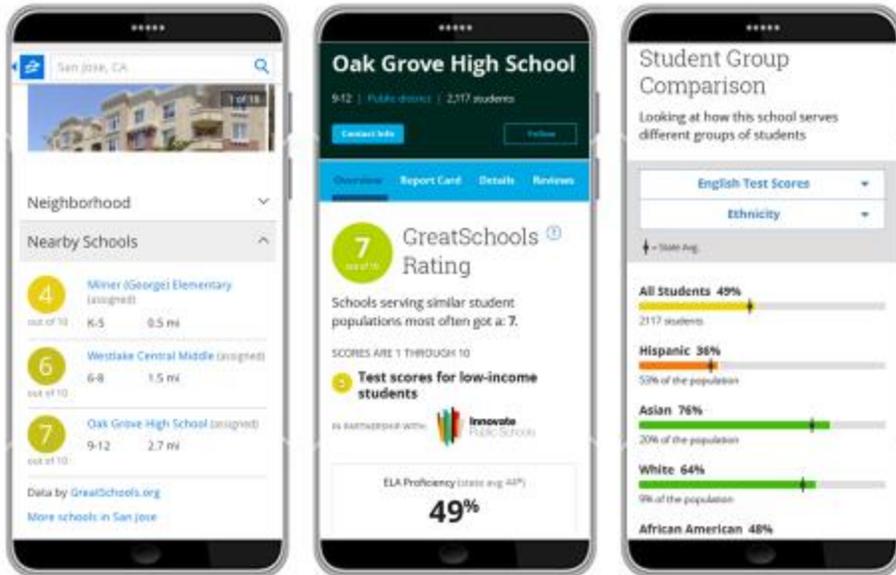
**Azavea** created “transitanalyst.com,” a new tool that shows transit accessibility to community assets such as day care, health care centers, Head Start locations, healthy grocery stores, playgrounds, and recreation centers.



**diversitydatakids.org** created the “How Affordable is Opportunity? Tool” that reveals racial and ethnic inequities in the “cost” of neighborhood opportunity for children, through narrative story maps and interactive mapping and data tools for use by policymakers, advocacy organizations, and the media.



**PolicyMap** created a new tool to help individuals and families looking to rent or buy a home in Philadelphia find neighborhoods with the characteristics and amenities most important to them.



**GreatSchools** created the “Opportunity Badge” that identifies high-performing schools given the cost of living in the neighborhood and shows how schools provide access to opportunity, broken down by race and ethnicity, to help all parents make the best decisions possible for their children.