ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

August 2016

Environmental Justice and the MPO

The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) works to ensure the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all residents in the region. This means that no group, including a racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of negative health or environmental consequences of any project. To ensure fair treatment, the MPO studies seven Degrees of Disadvantage to identify *environmental justice (EJ)* areas, or those areas with large populations of traditionally under served individuals. EJ areas in the region can be seen in the map below.

Seven Degrees of Disadvantage

The Degrees of Disadvantage methodology looks at U.S. Census Bureau data at the tract level to determine where EJ areas are located in the region. Data is obtained for seven population groups, including non-white population, car-less households, persons in poverty, single heads of households with children, persons over 65, limited English proficiency (LEP), and persons with a disability. A Degree of Disadvantage is identified for a population goup if the census tract exceeds the regional average for the population group. Census tracts considered EJ are disadvantaged for at least six of the seven population groups.

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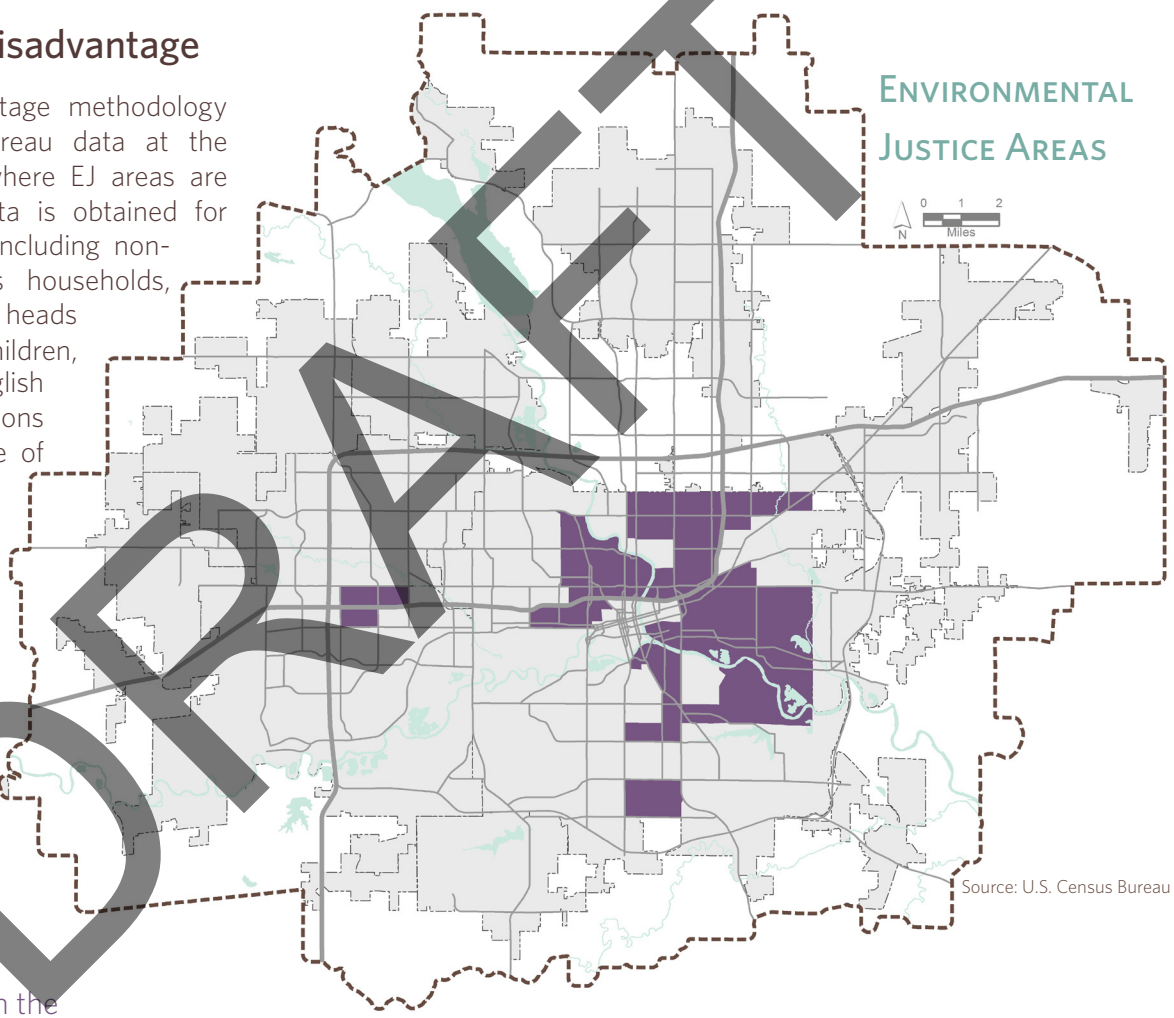

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

25 of the 113 census tracts in the planning area are defined as Environmental Justice Areas based on the seven Degrees of Disadvantage

Interactive map of EJ areas and the seven degrees is available at: dmampo.org/maps

Census Tracts Exceeding Regional Agerage by Population Group

POPULATION GROUP	REGIONAL AVERAGE (%)	NUMBER OF TRACTS
Non-White Population	13.2	43
Carless Households	5.5	44
Persons in Poverty	9.6	43
Single Head of Household with Children	9.2	46
Persons Over 65 years of age	10.6	55
Limited English Proficiency	5.0	45
Persons with Disabilities	9.9	55

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

IDENTIFYING EJ AREAS

Regional Performance Measures

The region's long-range transportation plan, *Mobilizing Tomorrow*, laid out several performance measures comparing EJ areas to Non-EJ areas. Targets were set to ensure that fair conditions are being met when looking at future conditions of the region's transportation network. The MPO continually updates data for regional performance measures. Since the approval of *Mobilizing Tomorrow* in November 2014, the MPO has produced performance reports for measures that include EJ information. The table below is a summary of the EJ measures from those reports.

MEASURE	EJ AREAS		NON-EJ AREAS		2050 TARGET
	Mobilizing Tomorrow	Current	Mobilizing Tomorrow	Current	
Pavement Condition[1]					
Average Pavement Condition Index	47.7	42.4	56.6	52.5	EJ = Non-EJ
Pavement Condition Index [% Poor or Worse]	38.4	56	15.6	32	EJ = Non-EJ
Bridge Condition[2]					
Average Rating	87.2	86.7	80.8	81.0	-
Deficient Bridges [%]	8	6.6	12	9.1	-
Crash[3]					
Number of Fatalities [5-Year Average]	7	8	22.8	24.2	-
Fatalities per 100 Million VMT	0.76	1.15	0.49	0.63	EJ = Non-EJ
Number of Serious Injuries [5-Year Average]	59	50.6	150.6	125.4	-
Serious Injuries per 100 Millions VMT	6.40	7.29	3.21	3.25	EJ = Non-EJ
Non-Congested Roads [% of Roadway Miles][4]	95%	88%*	98%	91.3%*	> 90

Certain measures included in the chart do not have 2050 targets. These measures help give a clearer understanding of the current system without setting a goal for the future.
Sources: [1] Iowa Pavement Management Program, Institute of Transportation at Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa (2012 & 2015). [2] National Bridge Inventory (2012 & 2015). [3] Iowa DOT Crash Data (2012 & 2015). [4] Des Moines Area MPO, 2050 Travel Demand Model & INRIX (2015).
** Non-Congested Roadways estimated using methodology from Des Moines Area MPO Congestion Management Process, January 2016*

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17% of regional population lives in a census tract identified as an Environmental Justice Area

5% of the land area within the MPO Planning Area is identified as an Environmental Justice Area

FEDERAL MANDATES

"No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

"Each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations."

- Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, 1994