

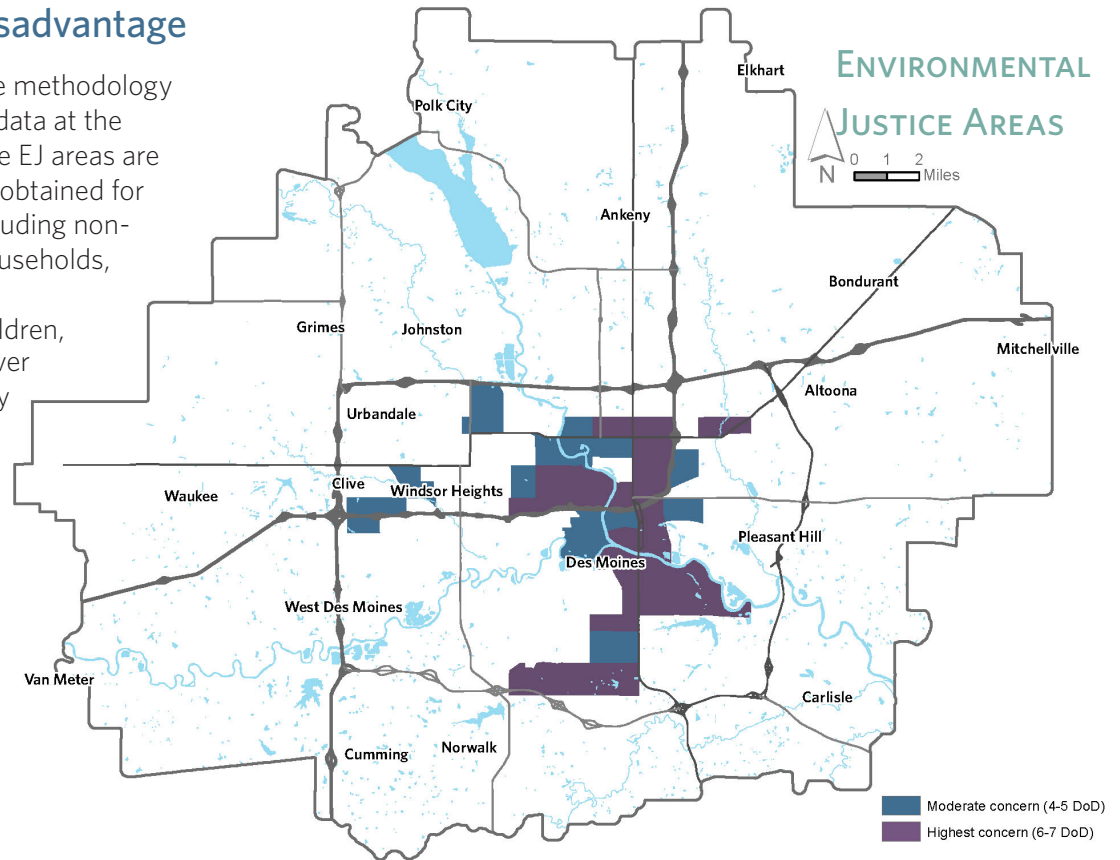
April 2021

## Environmental Justice and the MPO

The US Department of Transportation defines environmental justice as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, income, national origin, or educational level with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. 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, households in poverty, single heads of households with children, households with person(s) over 65, limited English proficiency (LEP), and persons with a disability. A Degree of Disadvantage is identified for a population group if the census tract exceeds the 70th percentile for each identified demographic group. Census tracts are considered EJ if they exceed this threshold in at least four of the seven population groups - then classified in two categories: moderate and highest concern.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

CENSUS TRACTS EXCEEDING 70TH PERCENTILE BY POPULATION GROUP

POPULATION GROUP	NO. OF CENSUS TRACTS	% THRESHOLD
Non-White Population	34	18.8%
Carless Households		6.4%
Households in Poverty		14.4%
Single Head of Household with Children		19.9%
Households with Person(s) Over 65		25.9%
Limited English Proficiency		3.3%
Persons with Disabilities		12.4%

# 30

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

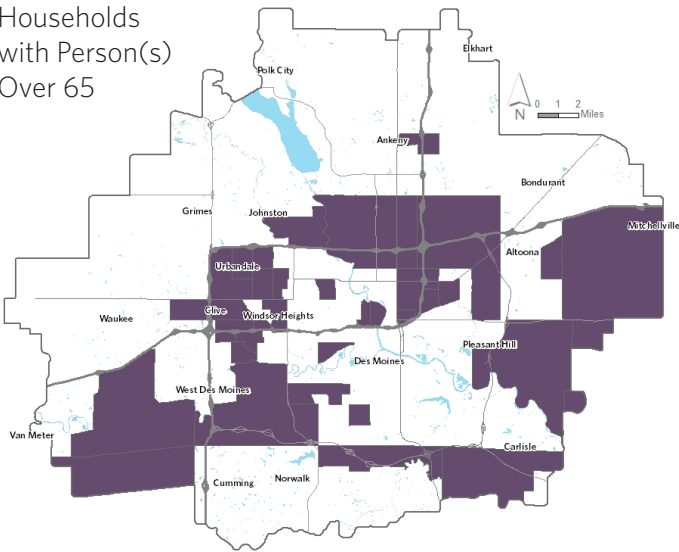
Interactive map of EJ areas and the seven degrees is available at: [dmampo.org/maps](http://dmampo.org/maps)



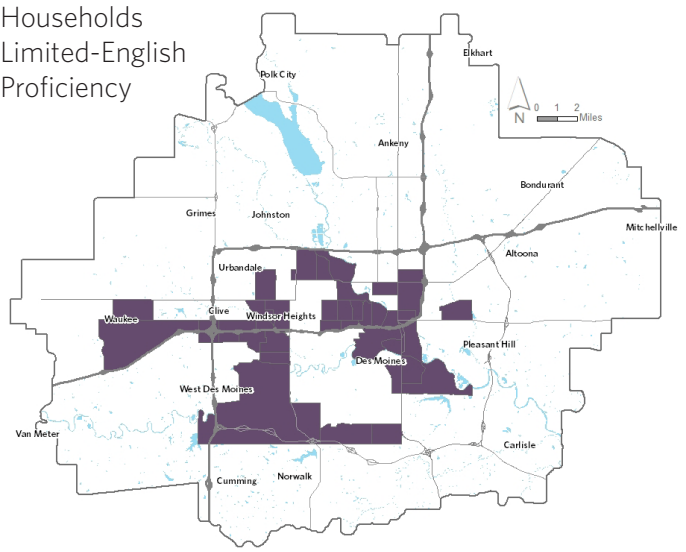
# IDENTIFYING EJ AREAS

With this information the MPO aims to enhance data-driven regional transportation and related decisions to increase equity, improve the mobility for all citizens, understand positive and negative consequences of decisions, and further involve identified disadvantaged populations in decision-making region wide.

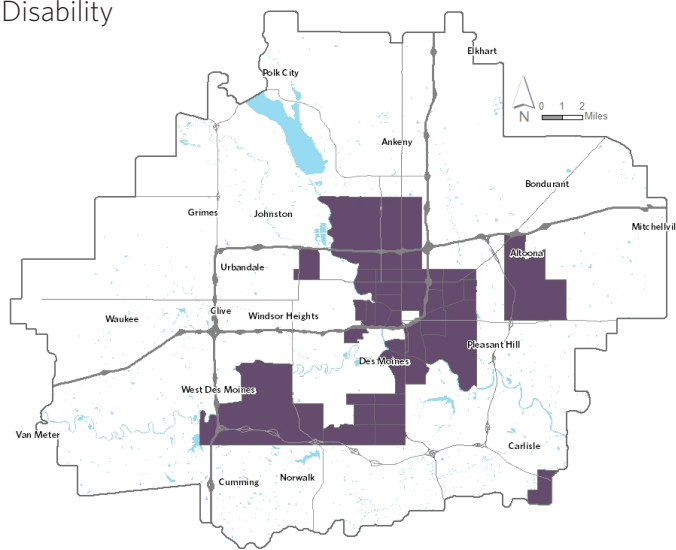
Households with Person(s) Over 65



Households Limited-English Proficiency



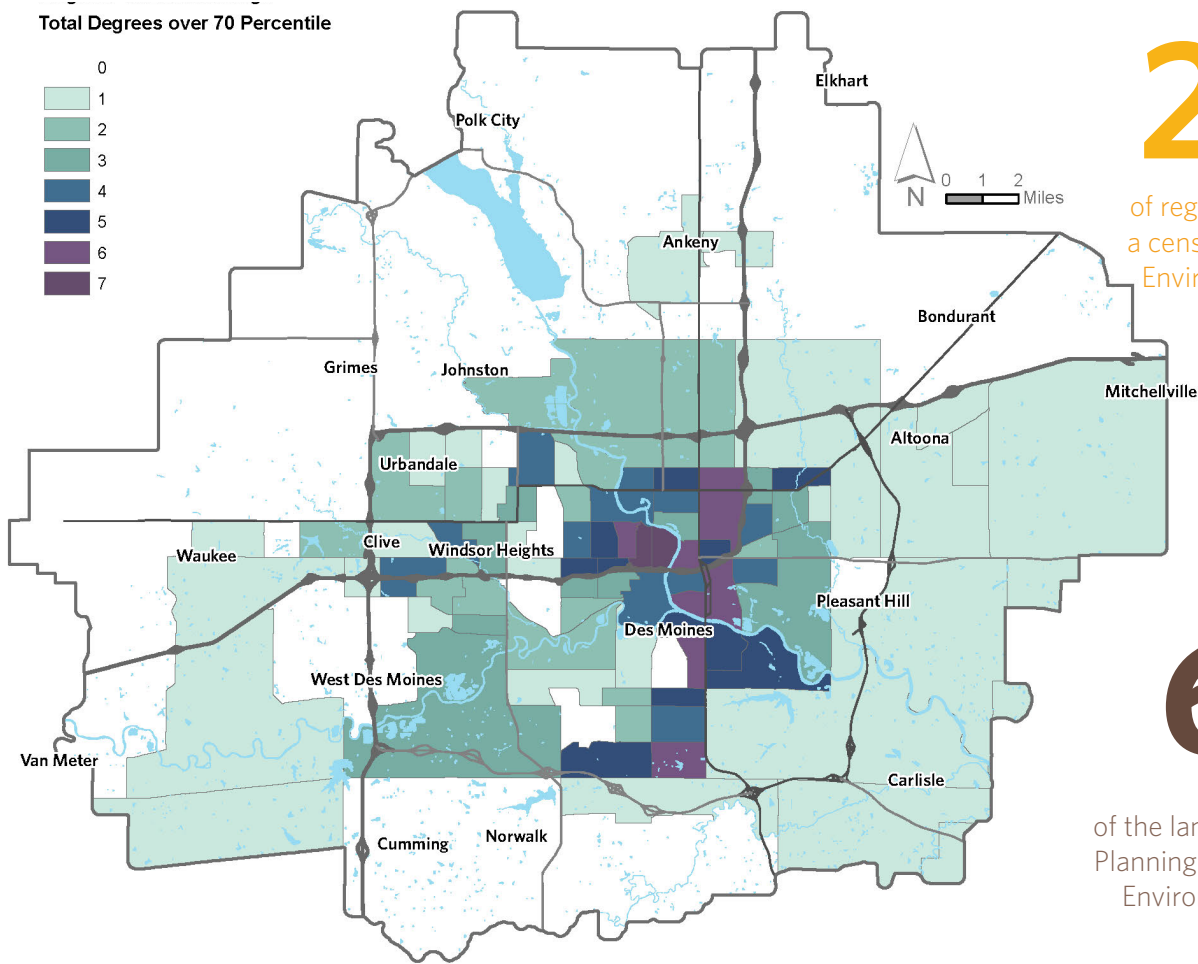
Disability



# IDENTIFYING EJ AREAS

## Regional Degrees of Disadvantage

The map below shows the overlaying of each degree of disadvantage throughout the MPO planning area at the census tract level. The darker the shade of purple in this map represents a higher degree of disadvantaged populations. While concentration is highest in the central urban areas, outerlying communities also have disadvantage populations, especially so near clusters of multi-family housing units.



**23%**  
of regional population lives in a census tract identified as an Environmental Justice Area

**6%**  
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