

APPENDIX 6

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE



W A M P O

Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization



What Is Environmental Justice?

Environmental Justice (EJ) is a federal policy that requires agencies receiving federal funds to set up processes that take into account impacts of plans, projects, and activities on minority and low-income populations. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) set guidelines for MPOs to follow in regards to EJ. There are **three core EJ principles**: minimize disproportionately adverse effects on minorities and low-income populations, provide equal opportunities to participate in the decision making process, and prevent the denial or delay of benefits.

This Appendix is broken out into the three important roles that WAMPO plays in following through with EJ requirements:

- Where are EJ populations located?
- What opportunities were there to get involved?
- What are the impacts of the projects?

Where Are EJ Populations Located?

EJ populations are composed of people that are identified as a minority, or households that are identified as low-income. WAMPO identifies the locations of EJ population concentrations in the region by **census tract**. Any census tract with a minority population of 50% or more is identified as a minority census tract. Low-income census tracts are identified by the **median** household income; any census tract with a median household income of \$29,855 or less is identified as low-income.

The WAMPO Title VI & Environmental Justice Policy further explains the methods used to determine if a census tract is identified as minority, low-income, or both. The policy also outlines how WAMPO implements and follows Title VI requirements, which prohibits intentional discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

The concentration of low-income and minority populations in the WAMPO region is similar to the patterns of many U.S. cities. Low-income and minority populations are primarily

Three core EJ principles

1. To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority and low-income populations.
2. To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision making process.
3. To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority populations and low-income populations.

What is a census tract?

A geographic unit of a county for which the Census Bureau collects data such as income, population, age, and race.

What is a median?

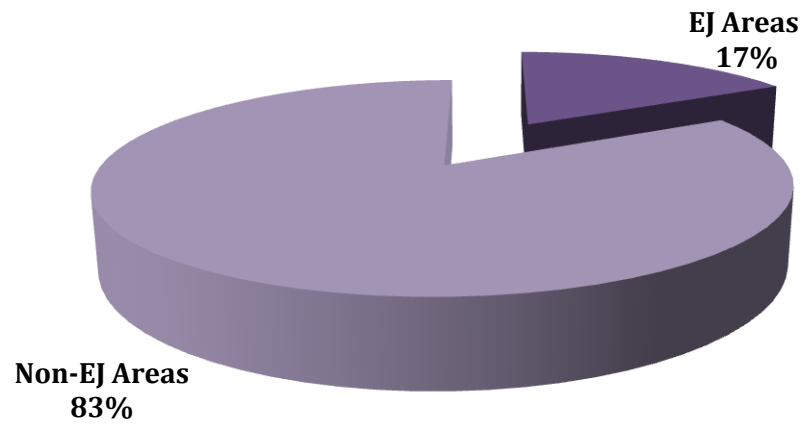
The middle value in a list of numbers.



APPENDIX 6: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

concentrated in and around the City of Wichita core. Approximately 17% of the region's population lives in an EJ area (census tract) as shown in **Exhibit A6.1**. The location of EJ areas is shown in **Exhibit A6.2**.

Exhibit A6.1: Percent of Population Living in EJ Areas



APPENDIX 6: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE



WAMPO
Adopted date:
July 13, 2010

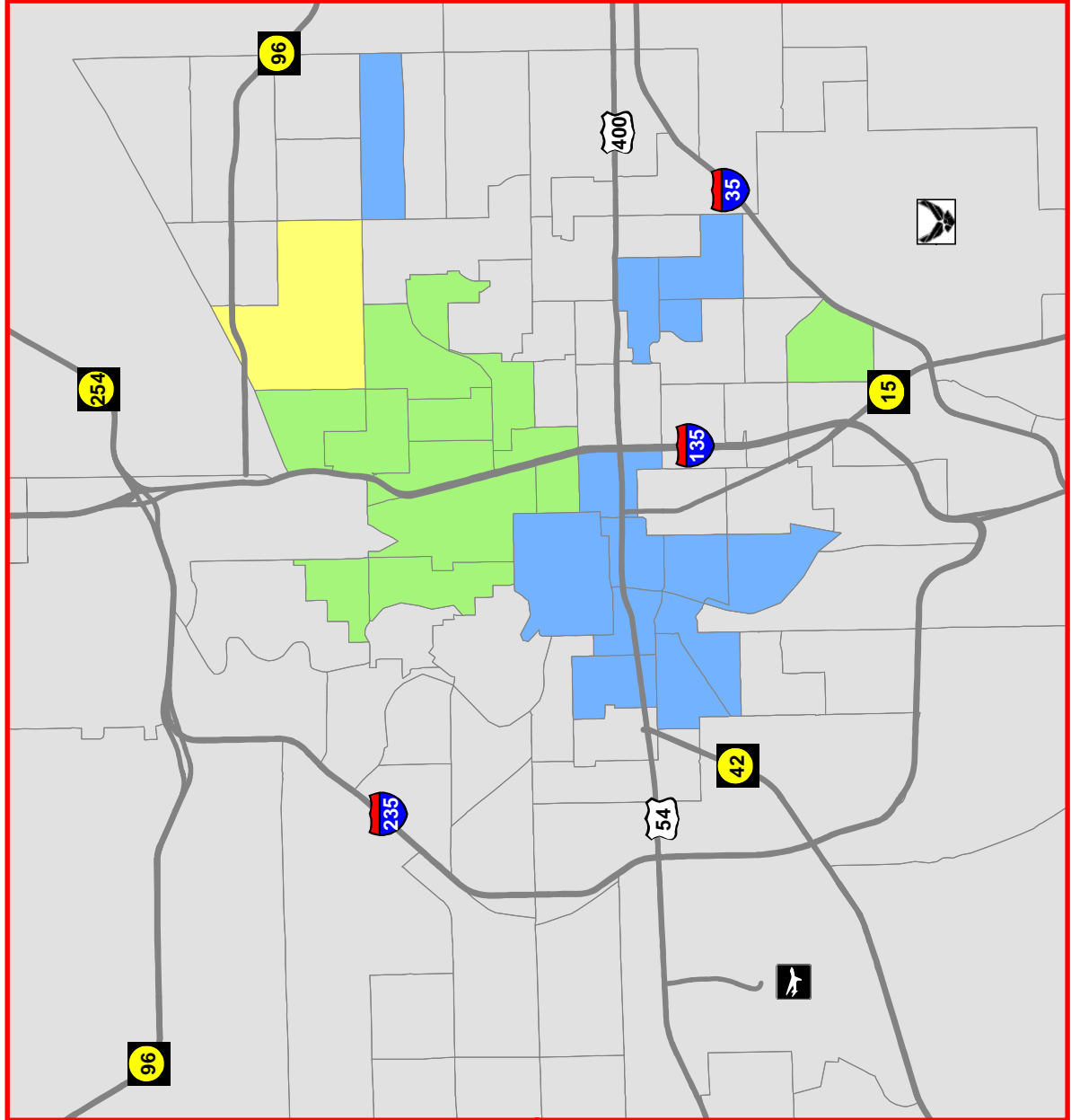
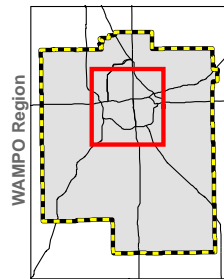
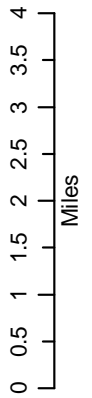


Exhibit A6.2
Environmental Justice Areas by Census Tract



- Legend**
- Census Tracts
 - Environmental Justice Census Tracts**
 - Minority
 - Low-Income
 - Minority & Low-Income





APPENDIX 6: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Other Characteristics of EJ Areas

The majority of the EJ census tracts include 20% or more households that do not have access to a vehicle, as shown in **Exhibit A6.3**. Households without vehicles need alternative options for getting around. Examples include convenient, safe, and accessible bicycle and pedestrian facilities and transit system. Later in this Appendix there is a discussion on how the projects in the MTP 2035 have the potential to improve accessibility and affordability of the transportation system for low-income and minority populations.



Wichita Transit Center

Emerging Trends

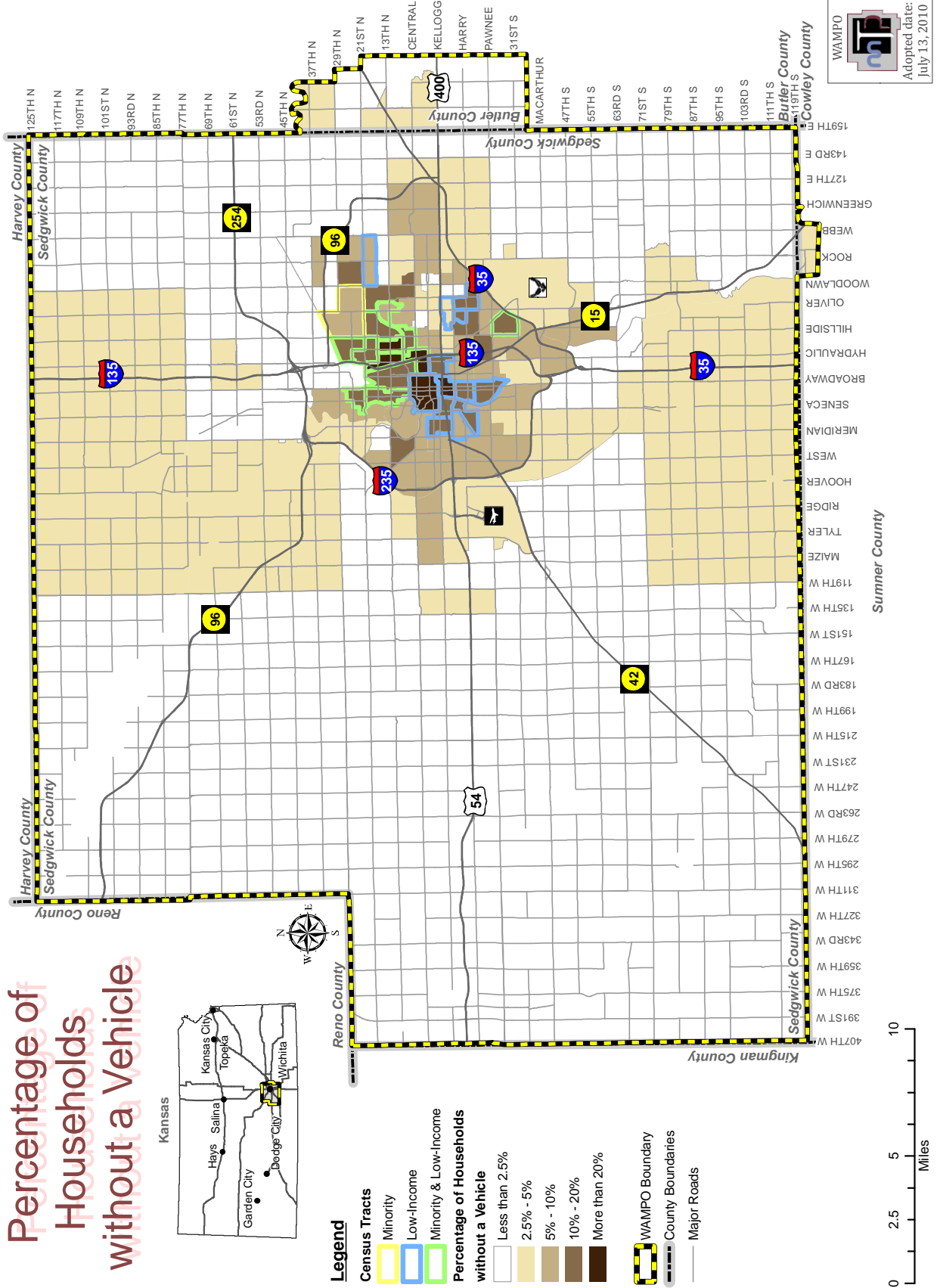
Chapter 4: People, Jobs, and Land Use highlighted some changes that occurred in the total percentage of the minority population from 1990-2000. This change increased the number of census tracts that had a larger than 50% share of minority population, as can be seen in **Exhibit A6.4**. If a similar trend continued from 2000 to 2010, the number of EJ census tracts could increase, as well as the percentage of people that live in EJ areas. After 2010 Census data is available, WAMPO will reevaluate to verify if an amendment is required for the EJ analysis.

APPENDIX 6: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE



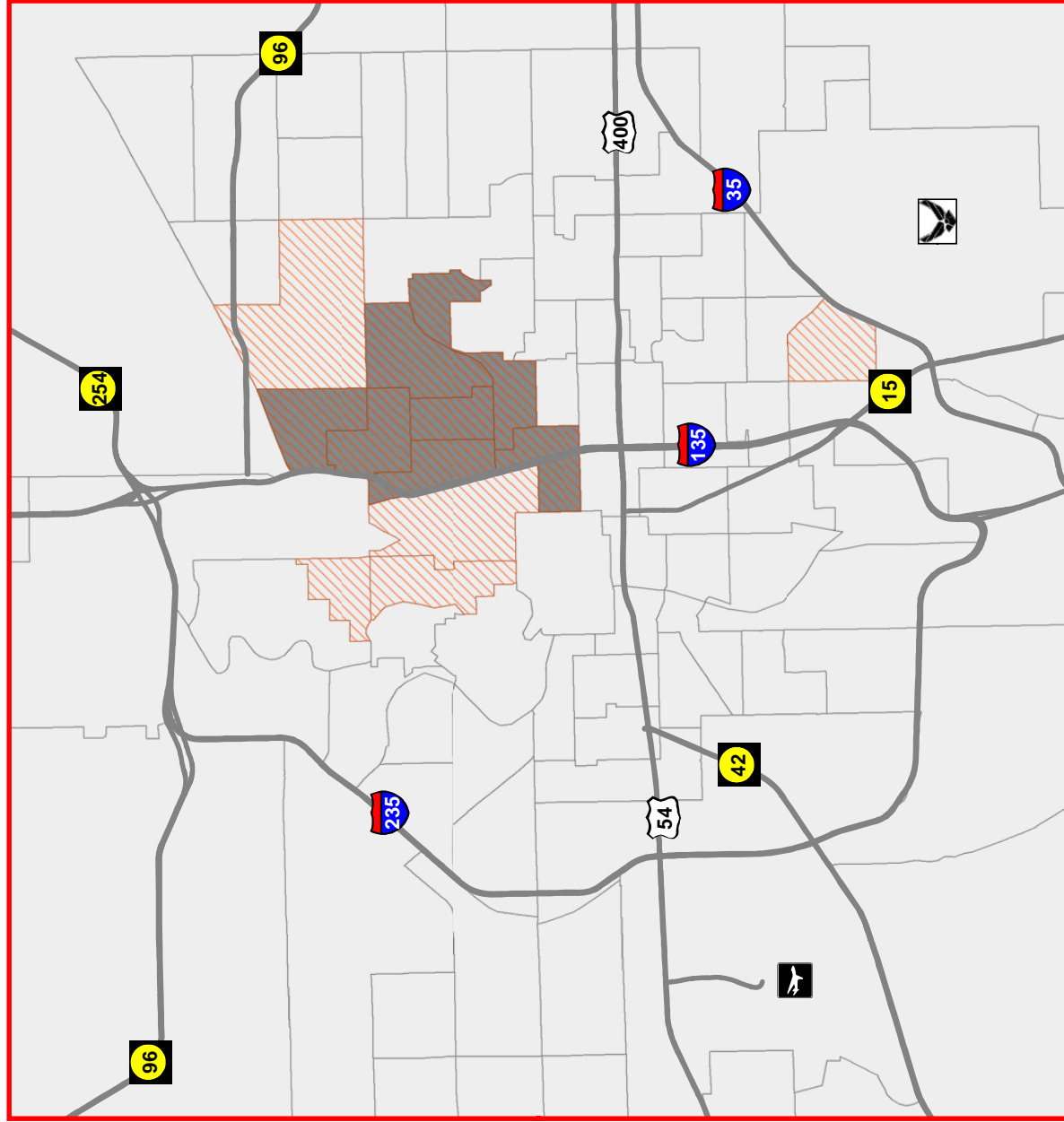
Exhibit A6.3

Percentage of Households without a Vehicle





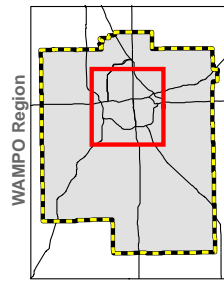
APPENDIX 6: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE



WAMPO

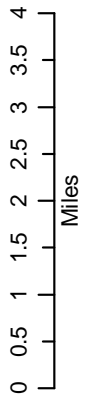
 Adopted date:
 July 13, 2010

Exhibit A6.4 Growth in Minority Census Tracts 1990-2000



Legend

- 1990 Minority Census Tracts
- 2000 Minority Census Tracts
- Census Tracts





What Were the Opportunities to Get Involved?

WAMPO provided all individuals the opportunity to get involved in the MTP 2035 planning process. Throughout the development of the MTP 2035, WAMPO gave multiple presentations and held a number of open houses. Many of these presentations, open houses, and other outreach efforts were located in EJ census tracts. A map of the location of all these activities is in **Appendix 2: Public Involvement**. The following highlights additional EJ outreach efforts:

- Distributed hardcopy surveys to Neighborhood City Halls.
- Posted notices of surveys on the City of Wichita Library webpage.
- Gave presentations at all City of Wichita District Advisory Boards as well as a Career Development group.
- Spent a day at the Transit Center talking with transit riders and distributing surveys.
- Organized an EJ Stakeholder Committee to discuss the impact of the plan on protected populations.



Mobile Meeting at Wichita Transit Center

The EJ Stakeholder Committee consisted of City of Wichita neighborhood and career development educators and a housing authority representative, a representative from Social Rehabilitation Service, and a representative from Interfaith Ministries.

A complete discussion of public outreach efforts and a summary of input can be found in **Appendix 2**.

What Are the Impacts of the Projects?

Transportation projects may have positive and negative impacts. A project may improve access to a certain area, allowing people to easily travel to and from work. A project could improve the safety of an intersection, reducing the number of wrecks, injuries, and fatalities. But a transportation project could also decrease air quality, increase noise, not provide equal access, or cause the relocation of homes.



APPENDIX 6: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Analyzing the negative effects of individual transportation projects, such as noise and air quality, is beyond the scope of the MTP 2035 EJ analysis. Projects using federal funding may require more in depth analysis before being approved for construction. The EJ analysis of the MTP 2035 projects is separated into two parts: reviewing the distribution of projects by project types and determining the distribution of transportation benefits based on the four identified goals (affordable, accessible, efficient, and safe).

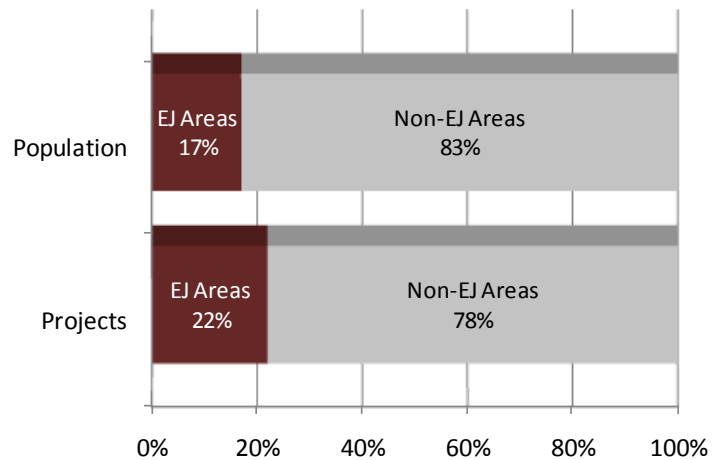


Harry Street

Distribution of Projects

Over the next 25 years, a total of 217 transportation projects were selected to be included in the Eligible for Funding List (**Appendix 4: Project List**). Only the construction projects (209) were used to analyze the distribution of projects. A total of 46 (22%) of the projects are located in EJ areas. This percentage is slightly higher than the percentage of the region’s population that lives in EJ areas (17%), as shown in **Exhibit A6.5**. This appears to be a relatively equitable distribution in terms of the number of projects.

Exhibit A6.5: Distribution of Projects and Populations Between EJ and Non-EJ Areas



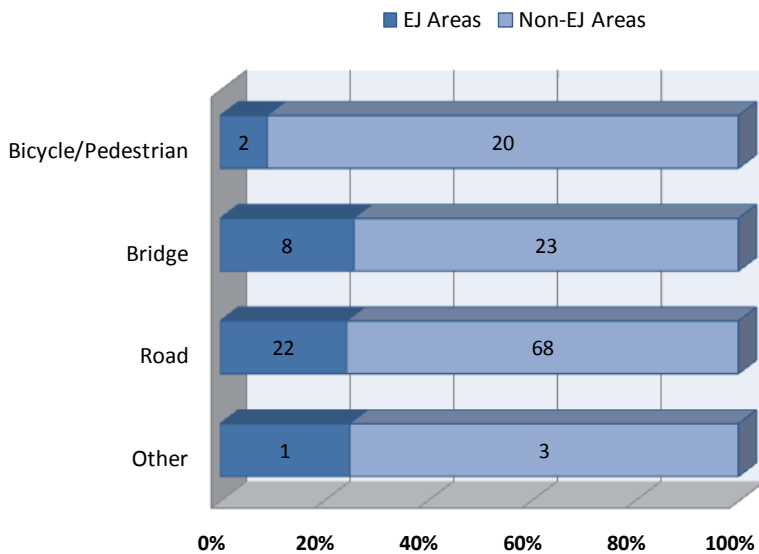
Due to the emerging trends discussed earlier in this Appendix, changes in the distribution of EJ populations are anticipated to take place during the life of the plan. However, the locations of future EJ populations are difficult to predict. Hence, the project analysis is broken into two time frames: 2010-2019 and 2020-2035.



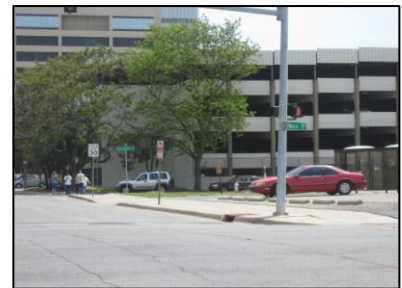
2010-2019

The projects within the 2010-2019 timeframe that are located in the EJ areas represent a typical mix of projects. As shown in **Exhibit A6.6**, most of the project types are equally distributed between the EJ and Non-EJ areas. In fact, three of the four project types have a larger percentage of projects located in EJ areas than the share of EJ population. **Exhibit A6.7** includes the types of project and their location in relation to the EJ areas.

Exhibit A6.6: 2010-2019 Distribution of Projects by Type



Recently Completed Project on Oliver



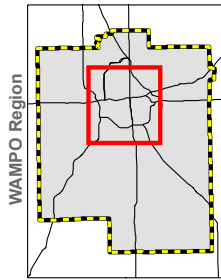
Sidewalk

There are few standalone bicycle and pedestrian projects in EJ areas during the 2010-2019 timeframe. However, many of the road projects proposed for EJ areas include sidewalks. These projects provide access for pedestrians and connections to existing regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities. More discussion on the benefits of the transportation projects is included later in this Appendix.



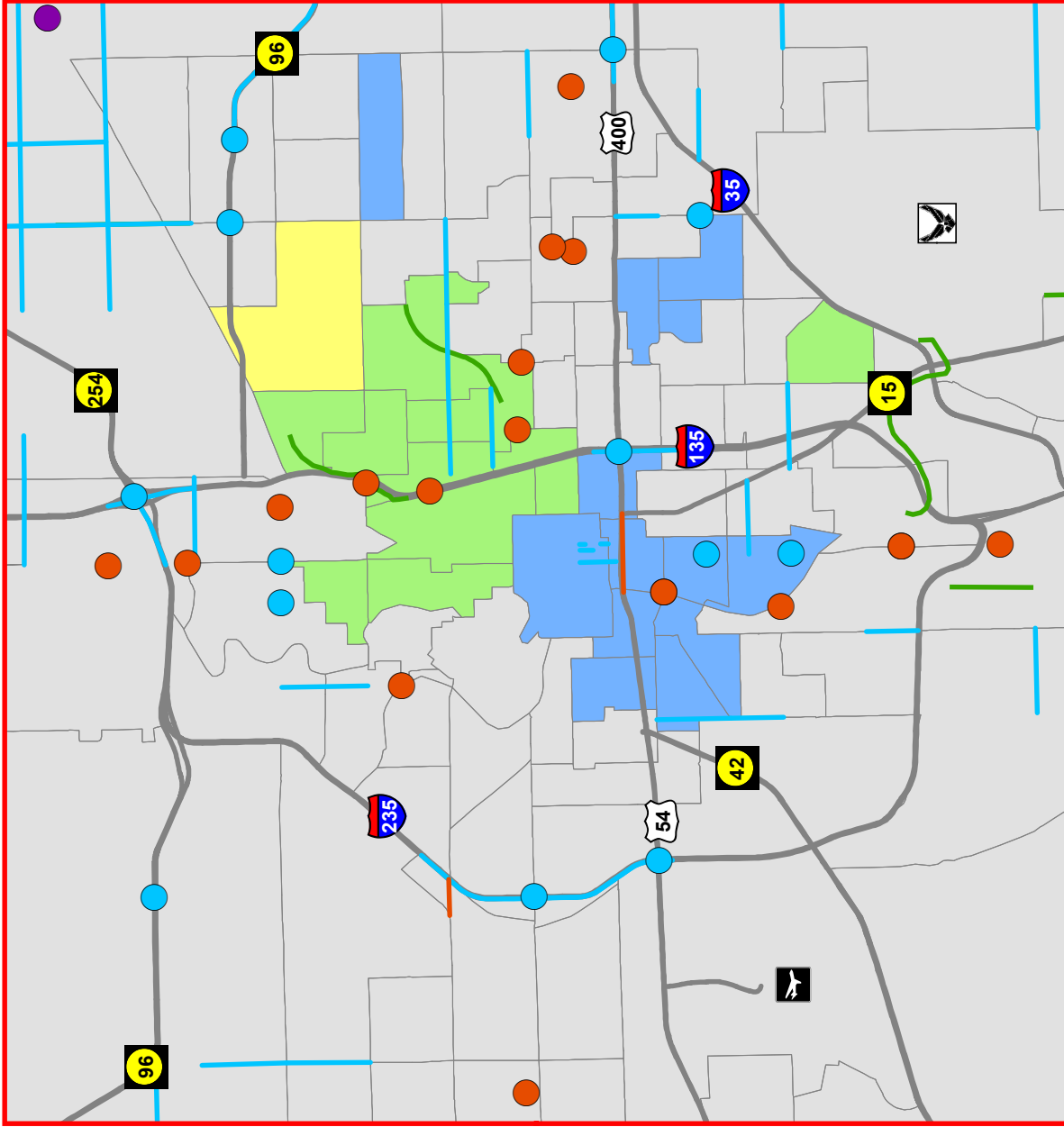
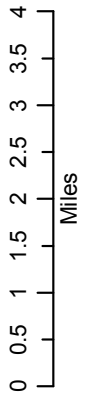
APPENDIX 6: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Exhibit A6.7 Environmental Justice Areas 2010-2019 Projects



Legend

- Bridge
 - Road
 - Rail
 - Travel Demand/Systems Management
 - Bridge
 - Road
 - Bicycle/Pedestrian
 - Other
- ### Environmental Justice Census Tracts
- Minority
 - Low-Income
 - Minority & Low-Income
 - Census Tracts



WAMPO
Adopted date:
July 13, 2010

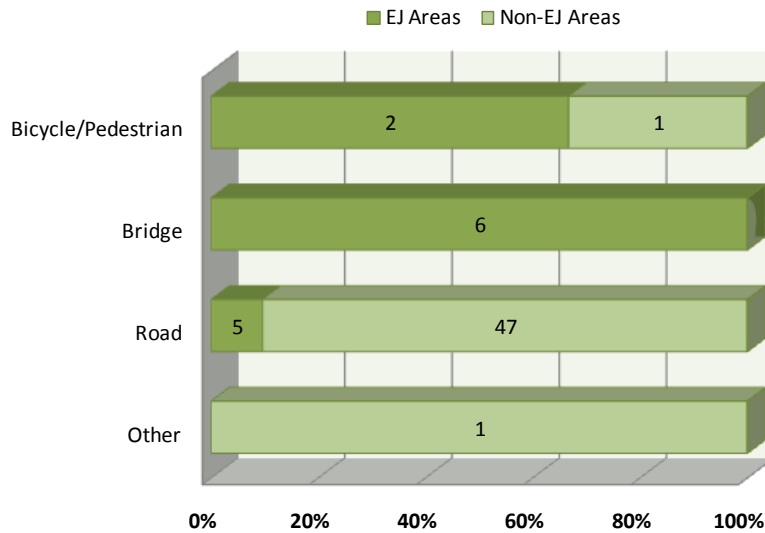


2020-2035

The distribution of project types between EJ and Non-EJ areas for 2020-2035 is more varied (**Exhibit A6.8**). The overall percentage of projects in EJ areas (21%) is still above the percentage of population that lives in the EJ areas (17%). The number of projects that are located in EJ areas could increase over time since it is anticipated there will be more EJ areas in the future.

As shown in **Exhibit A6.8**, all of the bridge projects are located in the EJ areas. Two of the three bicycle and pedestrian projects are located in EJ areas. **Exhibit A6.9** shows the locations of these projects in relation to the EJ areas.

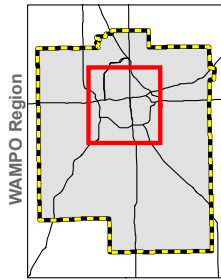
Exhibit A6.8: 2020-2035 Distribution of Projects by Type





APPENDIX 6: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Exhibit A6.9 Environmental Justice Areas 2020-2035 Projects

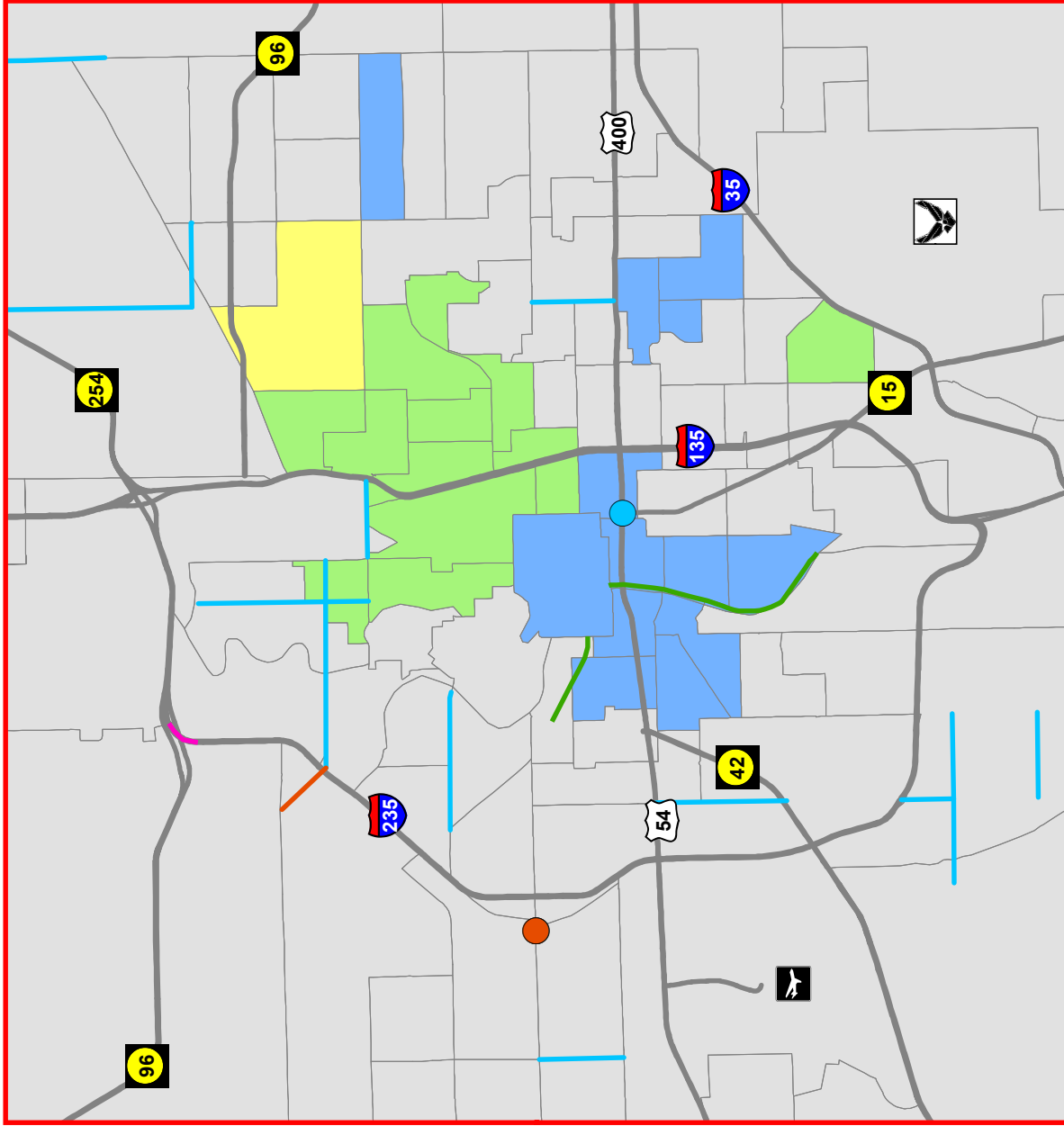
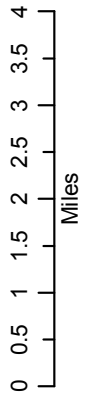


Legend

- Bridge
- Road
- Rail
- Travel Demand/Systems Management
- Bridge
- Road
- Bicycle/Pedestrian
- Other

Environmental Justice Census Tracts

- Minority
- Low-Income
- Minority & Low-Income
- Census Tracts





Existing and Planned Bus Routes

Transit projects were not included in the previous discussion because the future location of the transit routes is uncertain. For this reason, the distribution of transit projects cannot be assigned to EJ areas or Non-EJ areas. In order to analyze the benefits of the transit system, the overall **service coverage** for the proposed system was mapped in relation to the EJ areas, as shown in **Exhibit A6.10**. This system map represents a potential concept for the future transit grid network and may change with implementation.

The MTP 2035 includes recommended improvements to the transit system such as expanded hours, more frequent buses, and changes to the routes. These changes are anticipated to occur within the 2010-2019 timeframe. The service coverage of the proposed transit system is anticipated to serve the EJ areas well.

Distribution of Transportation Benefits

Projects in the MTP 2035 were chosen based on their ability to improve safety, efficiency, accessibility, and/or affordability of the transportation system. The following analysis further identifies the distribution of the benefits based on these four goals.

Affordable

On average, the cost of owning and maintaining a personal vehicle is much higher than using alternative forms of transportation. Improving the convenience, safety, and accessibility of walking, biking, or taking the bus provides affordable transportation options. There are many projects listed in the Eligible for Funding List within EJ areas that may improve the affordability of transportation for low-income and minority populations. These projects include transit, bicycle and pedestrian, as well as road and bridge projects with pedestrian facilities included. The benefit of providing affordable transportation options is possibly greater in the EJ areas due to the fact that many low-income and minority populations do not have access to a vehicle.

What is service coverage?

Service coverage refers to the area that a transit system serves. This is normally based on walking distance. An acceptable walking distance is typically ¼ mile.



Pedestrian Friendly Street



APPENDIX 6: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

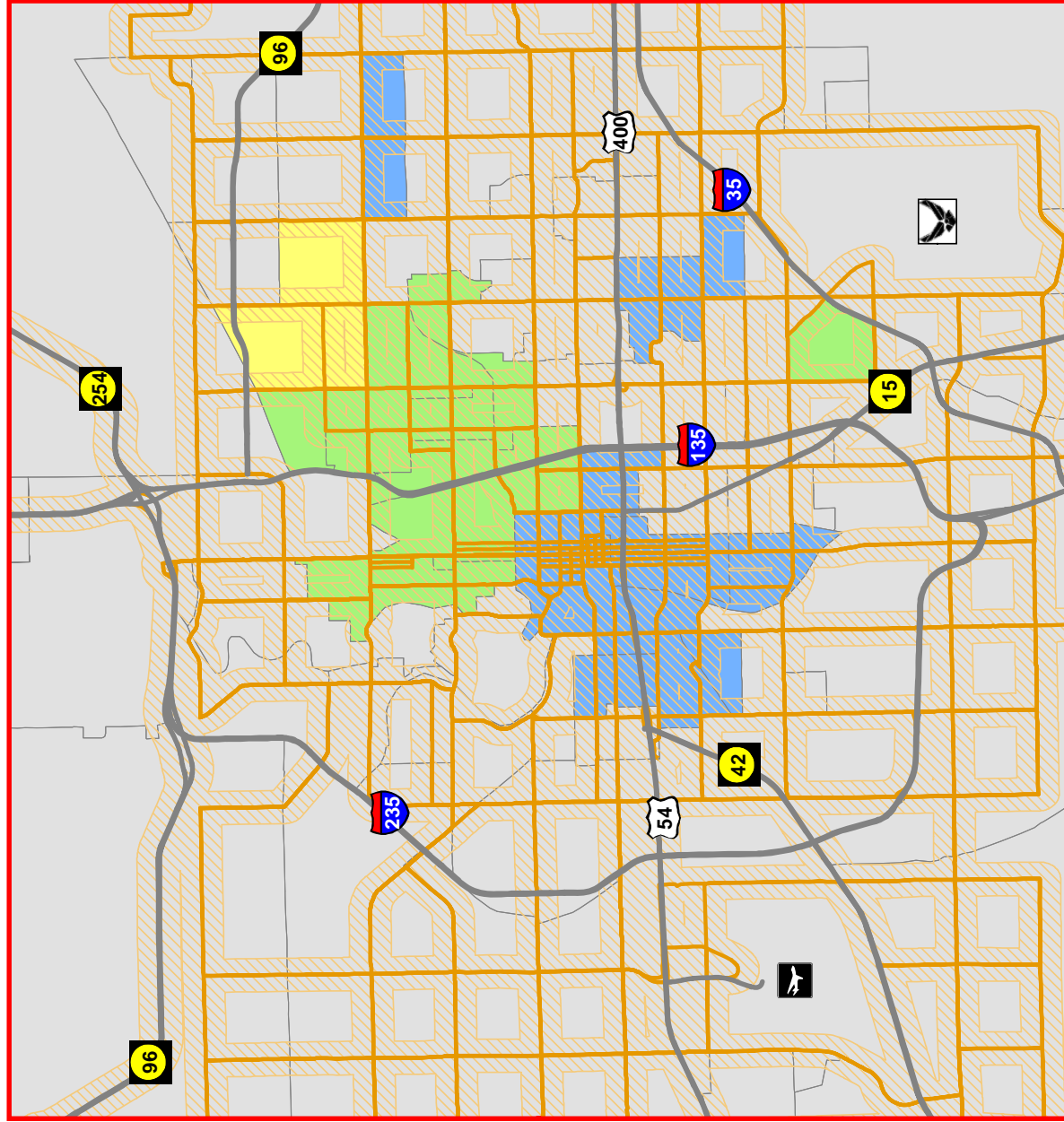
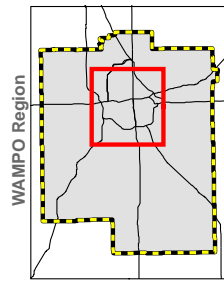
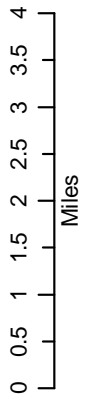


Exhibit A6.10 Transit Routes and EJ Areas



- Legend**
- WAMPO Transit Routes
 - ▨ 1/4-Mile Transit Routes Buffer
 - Census Tracts
 - Environmental Justice Census Tracts**
 - Minority
 - Low-Income
 - Minority & Low-Income





Accessible

A goal of the MTP 2035 is to achieve optimal intermodal accessibility, mobility, and connectivity throughout the region. There are many projects in the Eligible for Funding List that improve access and increase multimodal options in EJ areas. These project types include transit, bicycle and pedestrian, road, and bridge.

The proposed improvements to the transit system address some of the top reasons people do not ride the bus (identified in the WAMPO survey) by expanding hours of services and changing the route system. The proposed changes to the transit system improves access for low-income and minority populations by providing coverage to almost all of the EJ areas. As is shown in **Exhibit A6.10**, there are fewer gaps in transit coverage for EJ areas than the rest of the region.

Accessibility could be improved by the proposed bicycle and pedestrian, road, and bridge projects. Two important bicycle and pedestrian projects that are identified as missing links by the Regional Pathway System Plan are anticipated in the first 10 years and are located in EJ areas. These projects provide connections to already existing north and south pathways. Many of the road projects that include sidewalks also provide access and connections to existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

As discussed above, there is an equitable distribution of the access benefits for the proposed transportation system.

Efficient

A goal of the MTP 2035 is to optimize investments in time, energy, and financial resources. Examples of the efficiency benefits of the proposed projects include:

- Improved traffic flow and reduced idling and emissions through signal timing upgrades.
- Reduced congestion and improved travel times through road, bridge, and transit improvements.
- Improved air quality and reduced energy use through enhanced transit services and new opportunities for biking and walking.
- Reduced user costs for transportation by providing more multimodal options.



Sidewalk in Front of Hispanic Market



APPENDIX 6: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

As discussed throughout this section, the benefits of the proposed transportation improvements are equally distributed, providing the desired efficiency for the entire region including EJ areas.

Safe

A goal of the MTP 2035 is to achieve a transportation system that enhances safety and public welfare. There are many projects on the Eligible for Funding List that can improve safety. Some of these projects include intersection or interchange improvements to minimize left turn conflicts and reduce crashes. In the 2010-2019 timeframe there are eight interchange and intersection improvements in the EJ areas in addition to 14 general road projects that can improve safety.

The EJ areas have a fair share of the projects focused on improving safety.

Summary

The projects in the Eligible for Funding List have the potential to improve the safety, efficiency, accessibility, and affordability of the transportation system throughout the region and within the EJ areas. The analysis of transportation improvements indicates that areas where minority and low-income populations are concentrated will receive a proportionate share of projects and benefits. It is important to note that this analysis does not substitute for the individual project level analyses that may be required for each project during their planning, development, and design phases.

Individual project analyses will be needed to determine if there are any disproportionate and adverse effects on EJ populations. The Transportation Improvement Program includes a separate EJ analysis for projects that are close to being implemented and will be using federal funds.



Emergency Call Box