



MEMORANDUM

TO: TPB Technical Committee
FROM: Wendy Klancher and Sergio Ritacco, TPB Transportation Planners
SUBJECT: Modified Methodology for Equity Emphasis Areas for the TPB's Enhanced Title VI/Environmental Justice Analysis
DATE: February 24, 2017

SUMMARY

This memorandum describes the modifications made to the Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs) since the January 18 TPB meeting, and is being provided in preparation for the TPB endorsement of the methodology and map at the March 15 TPB meeting.

A map of the modified Equity Emphasis Areas is attached; Equity Emphasis Areas are small geographic locations with high concentrations of low-income and/or minority populations in the region. The Equity Emphasis Area map will be primarily used as an analytical tool in the Title VI and Environmental Justice (EJ) analysis of the Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP). In addition, other COG and TPB planning activities will utilize the map, and the data and GIS layers will be made available to local jurisdictions to use in considering equity in initiatives such as housing, health, and green space.

The TPB was briefed on the proposed EEAs map and methodology at its December 21, 2016 and January 18, 2017 meetings. At the January 18 meeting, representatives from Prince George's County requested that staff re-examine the methodology used based on a concern that the map was excluding areas with high concentrations of a single minority group. This memorandum details the modifications that staff made to address this valid concern.

COG's Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee was briefed on the modified methodology at its February 17 meeting. In addition, TPB staff sponsored a webinar on the modified Equity Emphasis Areas for TPB members, the Technical Committee and the Planning Directors on February 22 to provide an opportunity for input on the modified methodology. The TPB's Access for All Advisory Committee was also briefed at its February 23 meeting. The comments received during this consultation process have been supportive of the modified methodology.

Following the TPB's endorsement of the methodology and map, TPB staff can begin Phase 2, in which the CLRP will be analyzed for disproportionately high and adverse impacts on low-income and minority populations over the horizon of the plan.

BACKGROUND

Per federal requirements, the CLRP must be evaluated for disproportionately high and adverse impacts on low-income and minority populations that may result from the planned transportation

improvements as a whole. The legal basis for this requirement comes from Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice (EJ).

Based on a national scan of best practices for conducting these analyses, TPB staff developed an enhanced approach to the TPB's Title VI/EJ analysis. The enhanced approach is twofold, and represents the two phases for this work: (1) identifying small geographic areas with high concentrations of low-income and/or minority populations; "Equity Emphasis Areas" and (2) examining the CLRP for changes in accessibility to (rather than to jobs alone) between the small areas and the rest of the region between 2016 and 2040.

MODIFICATION TO THE METHODOLOGY FOR THE MAP

After reviewing the approaches of some peer organizations and testing alternative changes to the scoring system, staff made a modification to the methodology to address the concern that the prior approach left out areas with high concentrations of a single minority population.

The same data and population groups are being used in the modified methodology: the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010-2014 American Community Survey on low-income, African-American, Asian, and Hispanic or Latino populations in the region.

With the modified methodology, the earlier threshold for concentration of the low-income population (greater than 1.5 times the regional average) in the original methodology is preserved; as is the earlier approach of using a high concentration of two or more minority population groups as a criterion to identify the Census tract as an EEA. A secondary income threshold was added so that areas with a single minority concentration are now identified as EEAs. Figure 1 shows the modified EEAs and Figure 2 shows the changes in the EEAs between the original and the modified methodology.

The total index score under the modified methodology must be greater than or equal to 4.00, rather than 3.00. The Index Score was calculated based on each groups' Ratio of Concentration (or times the regional average) for every tract in the region.

A Census tract is identified as EEA if one of two criteria are met:

- Criteria 1 remains the same as the original methodology, and identifies tracts as EEA's if the concentration of low-income population is greater than or equal to 1.5 times the regional average (Table 1).
- Criteria 2 identifies tracts with high concentrations of two or more minority populations, AND tracts with high concentrations of one minority population that also meet a secondary low-income threshold which is at or above the regional average for low-income. (Table 2).

The modified methodology means that a net 29 additional tracts (for a regional total of 360 tracts or nearly 30 percent) are identified as Equity Emphasis Areas; the original methodology identified 331 tracts as EEAs. The high concentration of low-income population by itself (Criteria 1) accounts for 79 percent of the tracts that make up the EEAs in this modified methodology. Criteria 2 accounts for the remaining 21 percent.

Table 1: Scoring for Criteria 1 - Low-Income Population Concentration

RATIO OF CONCENTRATION (or times the regional average)	INDEX SCORE
	Low-Income*
Between 1.5 and 3.0	4.5 to 9.0
Greater than 3.0	9.0
Index Score	4.5 to 9.0
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equity Emphasis Area (Total Index \geq 4.00) <input type="checkbox"/> Not an Equity Emphasis Area (Total Index $<$ 4.00)	

Table 2: Scoring for Criteria 2 - Minority Population Concentration and Secondary Low-Income Thresholds

RATIO OF CONCENTRATION (or times the regional average)	INDEX SCORE			
	Low-Income*	African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino
Less than 1.0	0	0	0	0
Between 1.0 and 1.49	1.0 to 1.49	0	0	0
Between 1.5 and 3.0	See Criteria 1 (4.5 to 9.0)	1.5 to 3.0	1.5 to 3.0	1.5 to 3.0
Greater than 3.0	See Criteria 1 (9.0)	3.0	3.0	3.0
Total Index Score	Index scores are totaled (ranging from 0 to 10.49)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equity Emphasis Area (EEA) (Total Index \geq 4.00) <input type="checkbox"/> Not an Equity Emphasis Area (EEA) (Total Index $<$ 4.00)				

*Household income 1.5 times or below the federal poverty level.

For more information on the modified methodology, regional and jurisdictional maps and tables of the modified “Equity Emphasis Areas”, and a link to the online interactive map, please see: http://old.mwcog.org/clrp/performance/EJ/EJ_CoC.asp.

NEXT STEPS

The TPB will be asked to endorse the modified methodology and map at its March 15 meeting. After approval, staff will proceed with Phase 2 of the work analyzing the 2016 CLRP amendment. Phase 2 will examine multiple accessibility and mobility measures including accessibility to all jobs, retail jobs, educational institutions and hospitals by automobile and transit travel forecast for 2040. These measures will be compared for EEAs versus the rest of the region between 2016 and 2040 based on

the 2016 CLRP performance as a whole. TPB staff anticipate briefing the Technical Committee on draft findings from Phase 2 in April or May.

The regionally agreed upon map will also be used in other TPB work activities. These Equity Emphasis Areas will inform the sampling strategy for the regional Household Travel Survey to ensure that low-income and minority populations are fully represented in the survey. The Transportation and Land-Use Connections (TLC) grant program will encourage applications from local governments for projects related to the Equity Emphasis Areas. These EEAs can be used in long-range planning work, including scenario analysis. Beyond transportation planning, the regionally agreed upon map could also be used by local jurisdictions to assist with their community planning initiatives in areas such as housing, health care, education and parks or green space.

Attachments:

Figure 1: Modified Equity Emphasis Areas in the National Capital Region

Figure 2: Proposed Changes to the Equity Emphasis Areas in the National Capital Region

Figure 1: Modified Equity Emphasis Areas in the National Capital Region

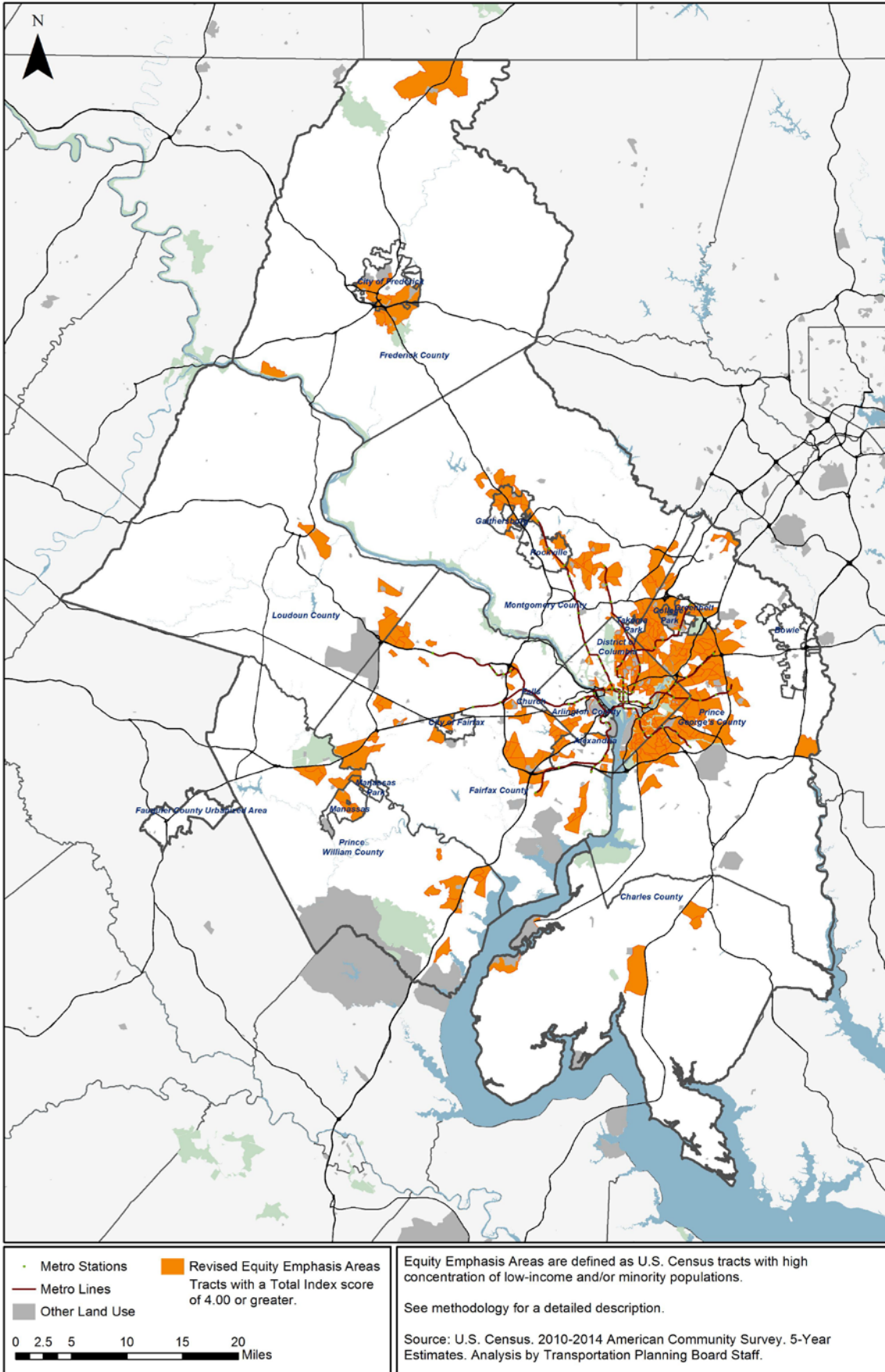


Figure 2: Changes to the Equity Emphasis Areas Between the Original and Modified Methodology

