

TRANSIT EQUITY WHITE PAPER

Overview

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TPB Technical Committee
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Purpose of White Paper

In March 2020, transit agencies across the region drastically cut service in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Over the past year, transit agencies have gradually been restoring service.

TPB staff have been requested to identify transit service that should be a priority for restoration:

- ICF Consulting and Foursquare Integrated Transportation Planning contracted to produce a white paper
- White paper purpose is to inform regional decision makers about equity-related factors to consider in:
 - Restoring transit service
 - Planning for long term (post-pandemic) service expansion



Questions

The white paper analysis considers:

- Bus transit stop locations, frequency of service, peak vs. off-peak and span of service
- Compared to the locations of:
 - COG's Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs)
 - historically disadvantaged populations (e.g., people of color, low-income households, non-native English speakers)
 - essential workers

Do the select population groups have good access to transit?

- Compared to general population?
- During peak periods to high-frequency service (at least every fifteen minutes)?



Technical Approach

Density maps compare census blocks with key factors within a ¼ mile of a bus stop in blue, and density outside of a ¼ mile of a bus stop in red. The following density maps have been developed to date:

Demographic

- Total population
- Persons of color population
- Persons with disabilities
- Total low-income household
- Zero/one-car household density
- Household low-wage workers home location

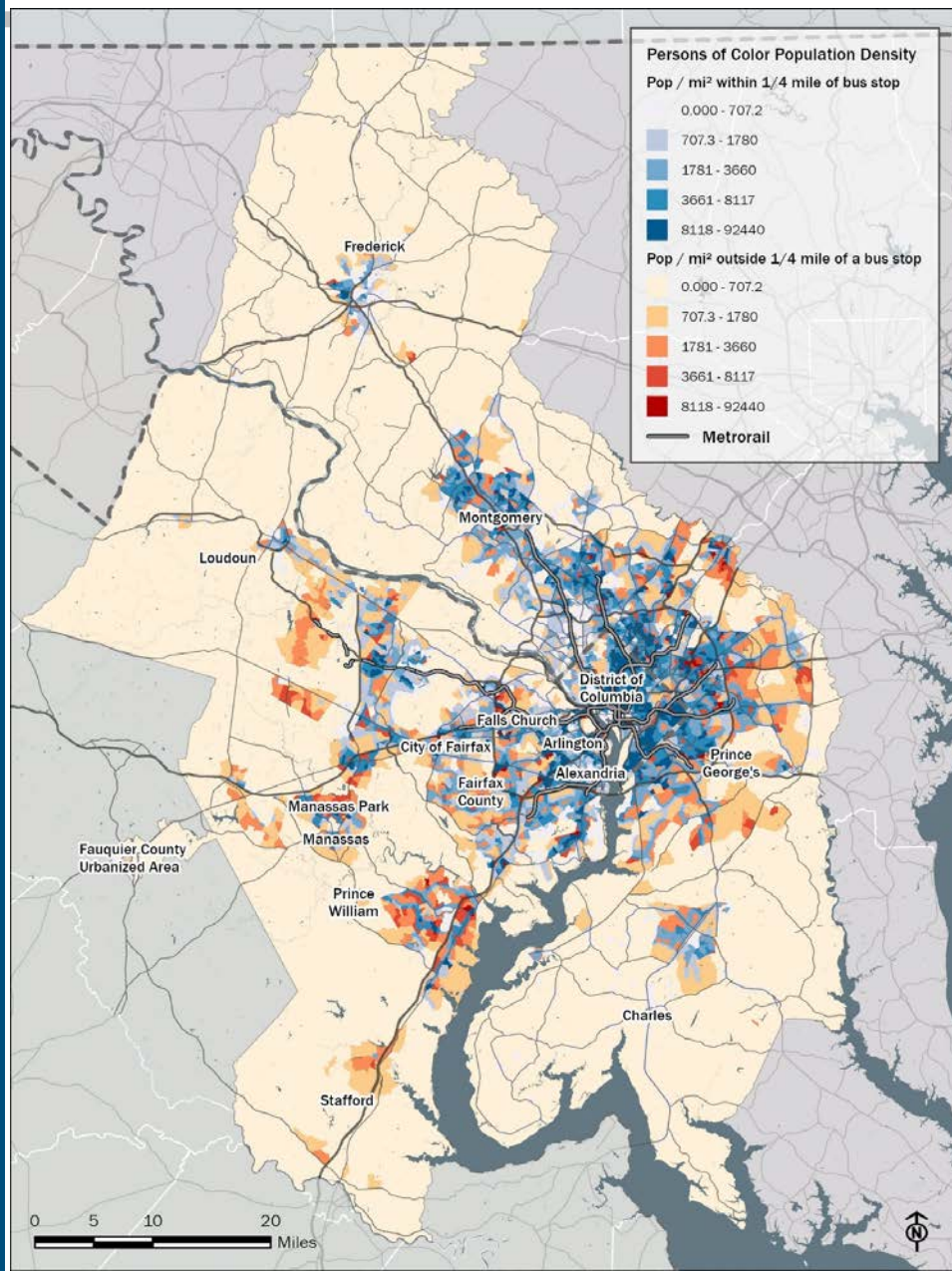
Employment

- Total job density
- Density of essential service jobs
- Density of low-wage jobs

As part of upcoming work, static maps will be replaced by a dynamic map in ArcGIS Online format (AGOL).



Regional Persons of Color Population Density



- Sample static map - regional persons of color population density within (blue) and without (red) a 1/4 mile of bus stops
- Red areas that were covered by pre-pandemic service would be high priority for restoration
- Throughout the sequence of maps/factors, any area that is red in multiple maps and had pre-pandemic transit service would be of higher priority for restoration

Draft Findings – EEA Access to Transit

How does transit access for COG's Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs) work compare to the region's overall population's transit access?

Overall, the draft analysis found that COG EEAs have relatively high access to fixed route bus service when compared to the region:

- 84% of EEA populations are within a ¼ mile of a bus stop compared to 60% of the total population
 - The access percentage ticks up slightly for people of color (85%), low-income (87%), and zero/one car household populations (90%) within the EEAs
- On the employment side, 86% of jobs in the EEA areas are within a ¼ mile of a bus stop
 - This drops to 85% of low-wage jobs, but increases to 88% for essential jobs (work location)

However more analysis is required to understand if this service is adequate (day of week, span, and frequency) and if it is connecting these populations with their destinations in an efficient manner (travel time, transfers)



Draft Findings – Regional Access

How does transit access for traditionally underserved groups compare to the region's overall population's transit access?

Traditionally underserved groups have more access to transit when compared to the region as a whole:

- 65% of people of color and 74% of low-income households are within a ¼ mile of bus stops
 - Compared to 60% of the total population in the COG region
- 78% of zero or one car households are within a ¼ mile of a bus stop
- For low-wage workers, 61% are within a ¼ mile of a bus stop



Draft Findings – Hi-Frequency Access

How does transit access to peak, high-frequency service (15 minutes or better) compare for traditionally underserved groups?

Traditionally underserved groups also have more access to peak, high-frequency transit when compared to the region as a whole:

- 33% of people of color and 44% of low-income households have access to 15-minute or better service in the AM peak period
 - Compared to 30% for the COG region
- 49% of zero or one car households have access to 15-minute or better service in the peak
- For low-wage workers, 31% have access to 15-minute or better service in the peak

However, the low percentage of access to frequent service, even in the peak periods, remains a concern, particularly for quality of life and jobs access

Draft Findings – Job Access

How does transit access to jobs for low-wage work compare to the region's overall population's transit access to jobs?

Compared to the analysis of population and demographics, the analysis of access to jobs shows slightly higher access to bus service:

- Overall, 74% of all jobs are within a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of a bus stop, reflecting the fact that a significant amount of transit service is directed towards job centers and jobs access
- For low-wage jobs the percentage drops to 71%, indicating that workers in this category have less slightly less access to their employment location
- When looking at essential jobs (work location) the figure rises to 75%



Draft Findings – Job Access, cont.

How does transit access to jobs for low-wage work compare to the region's overall population's transit access to jobs? continued

- Overall however, less than half of the region's jobs are accessible via peak-period, high-frequency (15-minute or better) service:
 - 47% of jobs are within a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile in the AM peak period (48% in PM)
 - For low-wage jobs this drops to 42% in the AM peak (43% in PM)
 - Access to essential jobs (work location) in the AM peak period remains on par with overall access to jobs (47%)
- Saturday service covers 52% of the region's jobs but only 47% of the region's low-wage jobs



Schedule / Next Steps

Consultants are completing an interim white paper report focused on pandemic transit service and equity

- Draft white paper focused on pandemic service restoration is in review
- Additional analysis in progress
- Development of dynamic map feature

A final white paper that will complete additional pandemic analysis and will also analyze pre-pandemic transit service and equity is to be delivered by the end of June



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