

**2023-2026
TRANSPORTATION
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
REPORT ON ENVIRONMENTAL
JUSTICE**



July 2022

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

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Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

2022

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Gujarati:

આ દસ્તાવેજ વિનંતી પર વૈકલ્પિક ફોર્મટ્સમાં ઉપલબ્ધ હોય છે. SPC કોઈપણ શુલ્ક લીધા વિના વિનંતી પર અનુવાદ અને અર્થઘટન સેવાઓ પૂરી પાડશે. વધુ માહિતી માટે કૃપા કરી (412) 391-5590 પર SPCને કોલ કરો.

Oriya:

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Punjabi:

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ਵਧੇਰੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲਈ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ SPC ਨੂੰ (412) 391-5590 'ਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰੋ।

Sinhalese:

ඉල්ලීම මත මෙම ලේඛනය විකල්ප ආකෘතිවලින් ලබාගත හැකිය.

SPC විසින් කිසිදු ගාස්තුවක් අය කිරීමකින් තොරව භාෂා පරිවර්තන හා භාෂණ පරිවර්තන සේවාවන් සපයනු ඇත. කාරුණාකර වැඩි දුර විස්තර සඳහා (412) 391-5590 ඔස්සේ SPC අමතන්න.

Marathi:

हा दस्तऐवज विनंतीनुसार पर्यायी स्वरूपांमध्ये उपलब्ध आहे. विनंतीनुसार SPC भाषांतर आणि अर्थविवरण सेवा विनामूल्य प्रदान करेल. अधिक माहितीसाठी कृपया SPC ला (412) 391-5590 येथे कॉल करा.

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Hindi:

यह दस्तावेज़ अनुरोध पर वैकल्पिक फॉर्मेट में उपलब्ध है। एस पी सी (SPC) अनुवाद और व्याख्या सेवाएं अनुरोध पर बिना शुल्क उपलब्ध कराएगी।

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Sindhi:

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:Urdu

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مزید معلومات کیلئے SPC کو (412) 391-5590 پر کال کریں۔

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) hereby gives public notice that it is the policy of the Commission to assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. Title VI and other related statutes require that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which SPC receives federal financial assistance. Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice by SPC under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint with the Commission. Any such complaint must be in writing and filed with SPC's Title VI Coordinator within one hundred eighty (180) days following the date of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Discrimination Complaint Form, please see our website at: www.spcregion.org or call 412-391-5590.

Background

As the federally designated regional Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) works consistently to ensure that *all* Southwestern PA residents are involved and invested in the regional transportation planning process. A large part of this mission involves adhering to the principles of Environmental Justice (EJ). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Environmental Justice defines EJ as:

The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies.

The federal definition of Environmental Justice is shaped by both Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations. Although the nondiscrimination principles of Executive Order 12989 and the Title VI statute intersect, they are two separate mandates and each has unique requirements.



Title VI prohibits discrimination in federal programs on the basis of race, color, and national origin. Subsequent laws¹ include sex, disability (physical and mental), and age in Title VI protections. Executive Order 12898 directs these protections by requiring federal agencies to conduct EJ analyses of their policies, programs, and activities to ensure that no adverse human health and/or environmental impacts would be disproportionately borne by minority and low-income populations. SPC utilizes this federal guidance to determine and define “communities of concern” in the SPC region. A table outlining these populations can be found on the following page.

¹ 1 Title IX of the Education Amendments, 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975

Population	Title VI	EJ	LEP	ADA	Community of Concern
Racial Minority	X	X			X
Ethnic Minority	X	X			X
Household in Poverty		X			X
Limited English-Speaking			X		X
Person with Disability				X	X
Older (65+) person					X
Household without access to vehicle					X
Household without internet connection					X

In the context of transportation, effective and equitable decision-making depends on understanding and properly addressing the unique needs of different socioeconomic groups. U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Order 5610.2(a), Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, identifies three fundamental principles of EJ that guide USDOT actions:

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

Approach

Environmental Justice Directives mandate that EJ programs have both a participatory and a data-driven analysis component. This report summarizes multiple activities and analyses that have been conducted in accordance with EJ Directives in developing the southwestern Pennsylvania Region's 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

As part of the 2023-2026 TIP development process, SPC re-identified low-income, minority, and other potentially disadvantaged populations through updating regional demographic profiles with the most currently available census data. SPC strives to engage these populations through public participation initiatives throughout the planning process, which will be discussed at length.

Furthermore, the updated regional demographic profiles were used as part of the larger TIP project selection and prioritization criteria – projects that fell within an Environmental Justice area (any census block which exceeded the regional average for low-income and/or minority populations), were assessed for any specific benefits and/or burdens that could impact project priority.

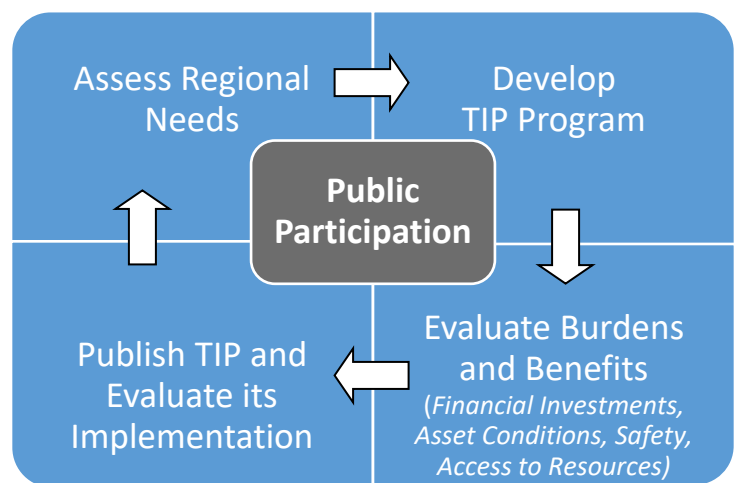
After re-assessing the condition of regional infrastructure and working with planning partners and the public to identify needs, SPC developed the draft TIP. Draft TIP projects were further evaluated for burdens and benefits to low-income, minority, and other potentially disadvantaged populations, which included an analysis of financial investment, access to transportation infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and pavement and bridge conditions. No potential disproportionate and adverse impacts were identified.

Sources

SPC uses the most recent data from the Census and/or the American Community Survey (ACS) to identify and locate low-income, minority, and other communities of concern within the Southwestern Pennsylvania region. The equity analysis (*Demographics and Burdens and Benefits*) component of this report utilizes the 2016 – 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates, the most recent as of spring 2022. Data is used to analyze any changes in the region’s demographic profile, map low-income and minority populations, and study the potential benefits or burdens of projects on the TIP to these populations. An analysis of roadway and bridge asset condition and financial investments relative to low-income and minority populations is also used to mitigate any potentially disproportionately negative effects of the TIP.

The Public Participation Process

SPC ensures that low-income, minority, and potentially disadvantaged populations are correctly identified and subsequently engaged in each step of the transportation planning process. This allows SPC and its planning partners to appropriately weigh the effects of individual projects on the populations they serve. Input from the public and relevant organizations is incorporated at each stage of the TIP development process, from the assessment of regional needs to the production of the final plan report.



To foster community engagement in a region as large as Southwestern Pennsylvania, SPC develops and maintains an outreach program designed to bring information to the community, rather than expecting residents to come to SPC. Public meetings for project-level improvements are held in the locality affected by proposed actions either in person or virtually. Public meetings for regional planning and programming efforts, such as the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are also held in person throughout the region in addition to virtually to accommodate all public needs.

Public Participation Panels

To encourage public participation, SPC has established working groups in each county, called Public Participation Panels (PPP). Panel membership is designed to be reflective of the social and economic character of the county population. Community leaders, representatives of social service agencies, and area residents are represented on each PPP in order to promote broad public awareness of participation opportunities.

To communicate with as many of the region's residents as possible, SPC has cultivated relationships with regional planning partners, local service organizations, cultural groups, and other relevant persons and organizations. These relationships permit SPC to continually expand its outreach and to strive to enable all area residents to actively participate in the transportation planning process.

Public Meetings

Public Participation Panel meetings typically include an interactive workshop in which area residents are encouraged to discuss transportation plans and programs with SPC staff, county representatives, local transit service providers and PennDOT District staff. They also include an informational session on transportation planning and provide an opportunity for the public to submit their formal comments.

SPC's outreach program ensures that meetings are held in diverse neighborhoods and communities, from urban centers to rural areas. All in-person public meetings are held in centralized locations that are ADA accessible and, whenever possible, are served by fixed-route public transportation. Public meetings are also held virtually as requested by local leaders. Information on how to access public transportation options is included in meeting announcements.

SPC's meeting notification database is updated regularly to ensure that all relevant service providers, community groups, and others are involved in the public outreach process. Involving these groups increases interest in public meetings, garners feedback for future meeting location sites, and promotes collaboration and information sharing at other community events. Meeting notices are also published in regional newspapers and minority media.

To make public documents readily available, SPC maintains a document review network that includes regional libraries, ten member county planning offices, and the office of the City of Pittsburgh Department of Mobility and Infrastructure.

Providing Accessible Information

In 2021, SPC adopted an updated Public Participation Plan for the region. This plan provides guidance on SPC's increased use of web-based technology to enhance the public involvement process.

In addition to information distributed via mailers or public meetings, SPC maintains a Get Involved page on its website. The purpose is to create an easy-to-access tool for the public to review

information regarding regional projects and programs. It also provides a forum for open dialogue between the public and SPC staff and planning partners, where parties can submit comments and ideas, ask questions, and provide feedback on the public participation process.

SPC's website, which was updated in the beginning of 2020, is continually expanding to enhance our ability to disseminate information and collect public input efficiently. The public can review documents and utilize direct links to submit input. For non-native English speakers, illustrative graphics and information on obtaining translated documents and interpretation services are available. SPC also uses social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to reach a wider audience.

Reaching Communities of Concern

Environmental Justice Populations are federally defined as being minority and/or low-income; however, other demographic groups may be underserved in the transportation planning process. Older adults, people with disabilities, households with no vehicle or internet access, and non-English speakers also face challenges when attempting to engage with and receive equitable benefits from transportation systems. Because the FHWA Order on Environmental Justice encourages MPOs to identify and address the transportation needs of *any* groups who have been traditionally underserved by the transportation planning process, SPC included mapping for all of the groups denoted above in the TIP equity analysis.

Efforts to engage these populations occur throughout the planning process. SPC asks the chairpersons of each of the ten PPPs to help identify ways in which public information sharing, public meeting attendance, and participant diversity could be enhanced in their counties. Furthermore, SPC continues to work with the Allegheny County Task Force on Disabilities, regional health and human service providers, and community service agencies to inform their clients on opportunities to participate and provide input.

To serve all residents equitably, SPC publishes essential information in all of the region's most spoken languages, including English, Spanish, Italian, Traditional Chinese, and in Indic languages upon request. Materials are available in other languages and formats upon request.

Conducting the Equity Analysis

While the public participation component of Environmental Justice is continuous, the Environmental Justice (equity) analysis of the TIP is conducted prior to the approval of the fiscally-constrained project list in order to ensure that the implementation of the TIP will not have any "disproportionately high and adverse" effects on minority and low-income populations.

FHWA and USDOT EJ Orders state that:

A disproportionately adverse effect is one that (1) is predominately borne by a minority population and/or a low-income population; or (2) will be suffered by the minority population and/or low-income population and is appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect that will be suffered by the non-minority population and/or non-low-income population. Figure 1, found in Appendix A – Report on Environmental Justice Mapping, illustrates the spatial distribution of environmental Justice Census Block Groups in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

The equity analysis conducted by SPC also maps the locations of other traditionally underserved populations that are defined in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and subsequent nondiscrimination laws, as referenced on page 1-2 – older adults, those with disabilities, and those with limited English proficiency. Areas that have high concentrations of households with no access to a vehicle and/or the internet are mapped to determine where non-roadway related improvements, programs and strategies could be of benefit.

To identify how the burdens and benefits of transportation improvements are distributed, an updated demographic profile of the SPC region was utilized, and a series of analyses were completed using GIS. The section which follows summarizes the steps used to complete these analyses.

Demographic Profile

American Community Survey (ACS) 2016-2020 Five-Year Estimates were used to create the demographic profile of the SPC region. All analyses use USDOT definitions of minority and low-income populations, which can be found in Appendix B of this document.

Minority and Low-Income Populations

According to the 2016-2020 ACS, 14.52% of residents in the SPC region identify as minorities² and 11.52% of household incomes are living below the poverty level (low-income).³

Figure 1 highlights block groups wherein the percent of minority residents and/or households below the poverty level exceeds the regional average. These are considered Environmental Justice Block Groups. These block groups include 71.5% of the region's households in poverty and 75.8% of the region's minority population.

Figures 1.1 and 1.2 illustrate a gradient scale of minority populations and low-income households respectively, which provides additional perspective on the levels of need across the region. They

² For the purposes of this report, Total Minority Population is the difference between the Total Population and the Majority Population, where the Majority Population is "white persons of one race only, not Hispanic or Latino"

³ As per USDOT definitions; Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

also depict a dot density analysis, which permits a better understanding of the spread of low-income households and minority populations across the region.

In the SPC region, minority populations are found most frequently in older urban communities, sometimes overlapping with low-income populations. However, there is also a significant distribution of low-income populations across the periphery of the region, specifically in rural communities. Understanding the multifaceted nature of these populations is important in developing a meaningful transportation investment plan.

Other Traditionally Underserved Populations

The FHWA Order on Environmental Justice encourages MPOs to identify and address the transportation needs of any individuals or groups who have been or have the potential to be underserved by the transportation planning process. SPC included mapping for three additional population groups in its equity analysis: older adults, people with disabilities, and persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). These are groups assured fair and equitable consideration in the transportation planning and programming process under Title VI assurances, policies, and program objectives. SPC also identified households without vehicles and households without access to the internet as part of its benefits and burdens analysis.⁴

Older adults are defined by the ACS as persons aged 65 and older. As of the most recent ACS, there are 507,747 older adults in the SPC region, representing 20.1% of the region's total population. As illustrated in Figure 2, older adults were found to be widely distributed throughout the region, with concentrations in both the region's older urban centers and its peripheral rural communities.

The ACS uses six basic disability types in their definition of a person with a disability. These include visual, hearing, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, and independent living disability types. According to the 2020 ACS, 15.1% of the region's adult, non-institutionalized population has a disability. As depicted in Figure 3, this population is spread throughout the region.⁵

The ACS measures populations with limited English proficiency by whether a person who speaks English as their second language can speak it "less than very well". The large majority of persons in the SPC region speak English as their first language. According to the 2020 ACS, about 1.6% of the regional population self-identified as speaking English "less than very well". As illustrated in Figure 4, this population is widely spread throughout the region.

As telecommuting for school and work becomes more widespread, SPC identified homes without access to the internet in our region. According to the 2020 ACS, 147,725 households in the region reported having no internet access. This represents about 13.4% of the region's population. As

⁴ Population definitions are drawn from the ACS; Source: American Community Survey 2017 Subject Definitions

⁵ ACS Disability Data is only available at the census tract level – which is used in this analysis

illustrated in Figure 5, this population is concentrated in the more rural areas around the boundaries of the region.

Finally, according to the ACS, 10.4% of the households in the region have no available vehicle at home. As depicted in Figure 6, this population is also widely spread throughout the region.

Population Change

According to the 2016 – 2020 ACS estimates, the SPC region’s total population has decreased by 43,417 since the 2010 Decennial Census. All of the counties in the region have lost residents, with the exception of Butler County, which gained 3,936 residents. While the majority population has declined by more than 92,000, the minority population has increased by nearly 50,000 residents. Table 1 summarizes estimates of the population change in the region since the 2010 Census.

Table 1 Population Change in SPC Region								
County	2010 Census				2016 - 2020 ACS 5 Year Estimates			
	Total Population	Majority Population	Minority Population	Percent Minority Population	Total Population	Majority Population	Minority Population	Percent Minority Population
Allegheny	1,223,348	986,212	237,136	19.38%	1,218,380	948,585	269,795	22.14%
Armstrong	68,941	67,326	1,615	2.34%	65,356	63,260	2,096	3.21%
Beaver	170,539	154,196	16,343	9.58%	164,781	146,576	18,205	11.05%
Butler	183,862	176,259	7,603	4.14%	187,798	177,231	10,567	5.63%
Fayette	136,606	126,888	9,718	7.11%	130,329	119,122	11,207	8.60%
Greene	38,686	36,409	2,277	5.89%	36,484	33,786	2,698	7.40%
Indiana	88,880	83,864	5,016	5.64%	84,463	78,762	5,701	6.75%
Lawrence	91,108	84,872	6,236	6.84%	86,148	78,773	7,375	8.56%
Washington	207,820	194,171	13,649	6.57%	207,081	190,052	17,029	8.22%
Westmoreland	365,169	346,111	19,058	5.22%	350,722	327,908	22,814	6.50%
SPC Region	2,574,959	2,256,308	318,651	12.37%	2,531,542	2,164,055	367,487	14.52%

Table 2 displays the number of households below the poverty level as of the most recent ACS estimates. Despite a loss of population, the number of households in the region continues to grow. The number of households in poverty also decreases by nearly 10,000. While indicative of a positive trend for the region, SPC’s planning process will continue to monitor population change and conduct public outreach to ensure that all of the region’s populations have equal access to resources.

Table 2 Change in Households Below the Poverty Level in SPC Region			
	2010 Census	2016 - 2020 ACS 5 Year Estimates	Difference
Total Households in Region	1,075,052	1,103,518	28,466
Households in Poverty	136,769	127,102	-9,667
% of Total Households	12.70%	11.52%	-1.18%

Benefits and Burdens

To conduct equitable transportation planning and programming, an assessment of the potential benefits or burdens to different populations is undertaken. Transportation projects can produce benefits by increasing access to resources, improving health and mobility, as well as enhancing safety. However, when applied unfairly they can burden communities who are not afforded the same level of investment. For example, mid 20th century projects that increased mobility in one community often cut other communities off from central business districts. Increased investment in one part of a region could result in other areas being neglected. A benefits and burdens analysis is conducted to make sure that the benefits of SPC's Transportation Improvement Program will be shared equally across the region, and that the burdens created by new projects are not borne by one population over any other.

Current Conditions

A conditions analysis was completed to understand the impact of transportation programming on low-income and minority communities, and to ensure that areas of need were being appropriately targeted. Using GIS, bridge conditions and road conditions (2022 PennDOT data) were compared to low-income and minority population intervals. An overview of public transit stop locations (2022 PAAC data and 2022 SPC in-house data) and an analysis of pedestrian and bicyclist safety relative to low-income and minority populations was also conducted.

In these analyses, Census Block Groups wherein the percent of minorities and/or households below the poverty level exceeds the regional average percentage are classified as EJ Block Groups (see Figure 1).

Table 3 outlines bridge conditions in relation to low-income and minority communities:

Table 3 Southwestern Pennsylvania 2023-2026 TIP Bridge Condition in Relation to Environmental Justice Block Groups					
Asset Condition	Total in Region	Total in EJ Minority Block Groups	% in EJ Minority Block Groups	Total in EJ Low Income Block Groups	% in EJ Low Income Block Groups
State Owned All Bridges	5288	640	12.1%	1620	30.6%
State Owned "Poor" Bridges	585	64	10.9%	210	35.9%
Local Owned All Bridges	1378	263	19.1%	504	36.6%
Local "Poor" Bridges	350	62	17.7%	149	42.6%
Region Total Bridges	6666	903	13.5%	2124	31.9%
Region "Poor" Bridges	935	126	13.5%	359	38.4%

The analysis shows that 13.5% of total regional bridges are located in census blocks with greater than the regional average of minority population, and that 13.5%, the same amount, of the total poor bridges in the region are in these census blocks.

It also shows that 31.9% of all state- and locally-owned bridges are located in census blocks with greater than the regional average of low-income households, and that 38.4% of total structurally deficient or “poor” bridges in the region are in these census blocks.

Table 4 depicts state road conditions in relation to low-income and minority communities:

Table 4 Southwestern Pennsylvania 2023-2026 TIP State Road Condition in Relation to Environmental Justice Block Groups					
Road Condition (IRI Quality Rating)	Total Mileage	Total in EJ Minority Block Groups	% in EJ Minority Block Groups	Total in EJ Low Income Block Groups	% in EJ Low Income Block Groups
Excellent	1895	201	10.6%	666	35.1%
Good	2281	395	17.3%	889	39.0%
Fair	1809	347	19.2%	724	40.0%
Poor	2772	261	9.4%	1136	41.0%
Other	1308	587	44.9%	637	48.7%
Total	10065	1791	17.8%	4052	40.3%

The analysis shows that 17.8% of the region’s state roads are located within census blocks with greater than the regional average of minority population and 9.4% of the regional state poor roadway is located in these census blocks.

Similarly, 40.3% of the region’s state roads are located within census blocks with greater than the regional average of low-income households, and 41% of the regional state poor roadway is located in these census blocks.

Table 5 outlines public transit stops relative to low-income and minority communities:

Table 5 Southwestern Pennsylvania 2023-2026 TIP Public Transit Stops in Relation to Environmental Justice Block Groups		
Classification	Port Authority of Allegheny County (PAAC) Stops	Non PAAC Stops
Total Stops in Region	6866	1631
Stops in EJ Minority Block Groups	4460	599
<i>% in EJ Minority Block Groups</i>	<i>65.0%</i>	<i>36.7%</i>
Stops in EJ Low Income Block Groups	3480	896
<i>% in EJ Low Income Block Groups</i>	<i>50.7%</i>	<i>54.9%</i>
Stops in High Disability Tracts	3688	1077
<i>% in High Disability Tracts</i>	<i>53.7%</i>	<i>66.0%</i>
Stops in Zero Vehicle Tracts	4062	856
<i>% in Zero Vehicle Tracts</i>	<i>59.2%</i>	<i>52.5%</i>

The analysis shows that a significant number of public transit stops are located in census blocks or tracts with greater than the regional average of minority and disabled populations and low-income and zero vehicle households. This is likely highly correlated with the high density of both transit stops and the aforementioned populations located in Allegheny County, and does not mean that transit needs on the periphery of the region are being met to the greatest ability. SPC works continuously with the Port Authority of Allegheny County and other transit providers and public organizations to identify areas of need.

Table 6 uses 2016-2020 PennDOT crash data to detail bicycle and pedestrian crashes relative to low-income and minority communities:

Table 6 Southwestern Pennsylvania 2021-2024 TIP Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes in Relation to Environmental Justice Block Groups				
Crash Classification	Low Income Block Groups	Minority Block Groups	Low Income and Minority Block Groups	Regional Total
Pedestrian Crashes	1372	1599	1014	2664
<i>Percent of Pedestrian Crashes</i>	<i>51.5%</i>	<i>60.0%</i>	<i>38.1%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Bicycle Crashes	281	286	188	530
<i>Percent of Bicycle Crashes</i>	<i>53.0%</i>	<i>53.96%</i>	<i>35.47%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Total Crashes	1653	1885	1202	3194
<i>Percent of Total Crashes</i>	<i>51.8%</i>	<i>59.0%</i>	<i>37.6%</i>	<i>100%</i>

The analysis shows that at least half of all regional bicycle and pedestrian crashes are located in census blocks or tracts with greater than the regional average of minority or low-income populations. While this is likely at least partially correlated with the high density of pedestrians and bicyclists in low-income and minority communities in the city center, it does not mean that the significance of these numbers should be overlooked. SPC continuously works with our planning partners, PennDOT, FHWA and other stakeholders to identify projects that will improve pedestrian and cyclist safety across the region. Environmental Justice is a metric of scoring the SPC TA Set-Aside and SMART programs, which specifically address pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity.

In the following equity analysis, Table 7 outlines the TIP total investment amount and the percent that is directed towards low-income and minority populations. This investment aligns with the needs assessment above based on condition data in the region. SPC and its planning partners consistently monitor condition data when making decisions about where best to apply transportation programming and investment in the region.

Equity Analysis

The equity analysis portion of SPC's Environmental Justice plan assesses the potential benefits and burdens that projects programmed on the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program will have on low-income, minority, and other communities of concern. The primary analysis, illustrated in Figure 8, compares all of the 390 mappable transportation projects on the TIP to locations of minority and low-income populations in the region. This analysis is broken down to focus more on minority and low-income environmental justice communities in Figure 8.1 and Figure 8.2 respectively. These projects are grouped based on their investment categories: bridge preservation and reconstruction projects, roadway preservation and reconstruction projects, safety and efficiency/operations projects, slide correction projects, and new capacity and other (storm water management, study, congestion reduction, etc.) projects.

In addition to location specific improvements, the TIP contains a significant number of non-mappable projects, most notably the purchase of public transportation vehicles and capital maintenance to transit facilities. Also included in the TIP are bridge and roadway repair line items in which projects are defined at a later date. These line items act as contingencies for situations such as emergency repairs due to flooding, landslides or other unforeseen circumstances that may arise. These investments are not included in the EJ analysis because their locations are currently unspecified. Projects such as bus replacements and Interstate highway improvements benefit the region as a whole and are expected to provide improved access and mobility to and within key employment centers including downtown Pittsburgh, as well as communities throughout the region.

As noted in Table 7, approximately 367,487 of the region’s residents are classified as a minority; 75.8% of those persons reside in a Census Block Group that exceeds the regional average percentage (14.52%) of minority population. Similarly, there are 127,102 households in the region that are classified as being below the poverty level; 71.5% of which are within Census Block Groups that exceed the regional average percentage (11.52%) for households below the poverty level.

Table 7 Southwestern Pennsylvania 2023 - 2026 Transportation Improvement Plan Investments in Relation to EJ Communities							
Community Type	Regional Total	*EJ Census Block Group Total	% Represented in EJ Block Groups	**# of Projects	% of Projects	***Total Investment (\$1,467,170,498)	% of Total Investment
Low-Income Households	127,102	90,902	71.5%	204	51.3%	\$855,752,695	58.3%
Minority Populations	367,487	278,546	75.8%	117	29.4%	\$746,580,222	57.6%
* The EJ Census Block totals represent 8.7% of the total households in the region and 9.7% of the total regional population (all races) **398 mappable projects found in the 2021-2024 TIP ***Total Investment is all mappable highway and bridge projects, not total amount invested in the TIP							

The majority of the projects on the 2023-2026 TIP are essential maintenance and reconstruction projects. These and other projects were conscientiously chosen based on impacts to communities, specifically those with concentrated levels of low-income households, minority populations, or other communities of concern. Based on the detailed project selection process and the above analysis, there is anticipated to be no unfair allocation of burdens or benefits to communities of concern via the implementation of the 2023-2026 TIP.

Summary

Throughout the TIP development process, SPC conducted outreach to area residents of all backgrounds and across diverse communities. All members of the public were invited to participate in the planning and development process, through submitting ideas and concerns, providing feedback on the TIP and LRTP, and developing goals for the future of the region and its transportation network. Outreach to traditionally underserved populations, including those populations mapped in this report, was conducted. Vital documents associated with the TIP planning process were made available in the predominant non-English languages of the region. Translations to additional language and alternate format documents were also available upon request. SPC continues to incorporate new guidance and methods of analyses into its Environmental Justice review process.

Environmental Justice is central to the vision of SPC’s Long-Range Transportation Plan, *SmartMoves for a Changing Region*, which is to provide a “world class, safe and well maintained, integrated transportation system that provides **mobility for all**, enables resilient communities, and supports a globally competitive economy.” Through its public participation panels, detailed project selection process, and discretionary funding programs, SPC strives to meet the tenets of Environmental Justice and serve as an inclusive planning organization.

An analysis of the impacts of the projects identified in the 2023-2026 TIP demonstrates that benefits of the programmed TIP projects and total investment of resources are equitable to populations who are traditionally or have the potential to be disadvantaged in the planning process. Furthermore, no population groups were found to be disproportionately or adversely affected by the implementation of the 2023-2026 TIP. The Environmental Justice process is ongoing, and SPC continues to conduct outreach, coordinate with relevant partners and stakeholders including FHWA and PennDOT to expand areas of analysis, and garner public input to have a growing level of public involvement in the transportation planning and development process.

All materials contained in this report are available in electronic format on SPC’s website: www.spcregion.org, as is an extensive library of maps and data.

Appendix A - List of Figures

- Figure 1. Low-Income and Minority Populations by Census Block Group
 - 1.1. Low-Income Population by Census Block Group, gradient map
 - 1.2. Minority Population by Census Block Group, gradient map
- Figure 2. Population Age 65 Years and Older by Census Block Group
- Figure 3. Population with a Disability by Census Tract
- Figure 4. Population Speaking English Less Than Very Well by Census Block Group
- Figure 5. Households with No Internet Access by Census Block Group
- Figure 6. Households with No Available Vehicle by Census Block Group
- Figure 7. All Mappable LRTP Projects with Environmental Justice Areas
- Figure 8. All Mappable 2023 – 2026 TIP Projects with Environmental Justice Areas
 - 8.1 Mappable TIP Projects with Low Income Population by Census Block Group, gradient map
 - 8.2 Mappable TIP Projects with Minority Population by Census Block Group, gradient map

Online Mapping:

Additional layers and mapping for these analyses at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3ygpSzl>

State and Local Bridge Conditions with Low Income and Minority Population

Road Conditions with Low Income and Minority Population

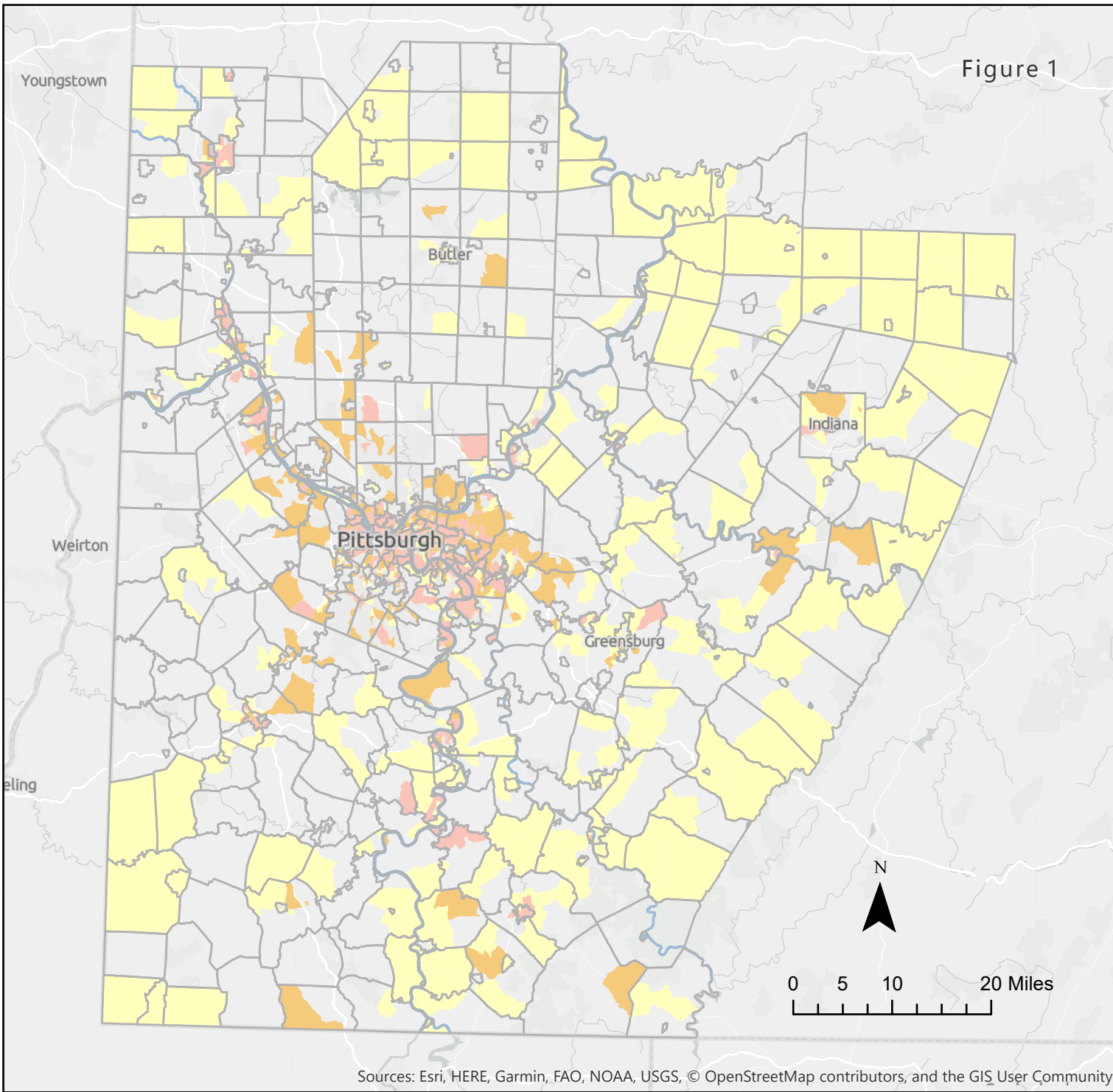
Transit Stops with Low Income and Minority Population

Transit Stops with Population with a Disability and Population with No Available Vehicle by Census Tract

Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes with Low Income and Minority Populations

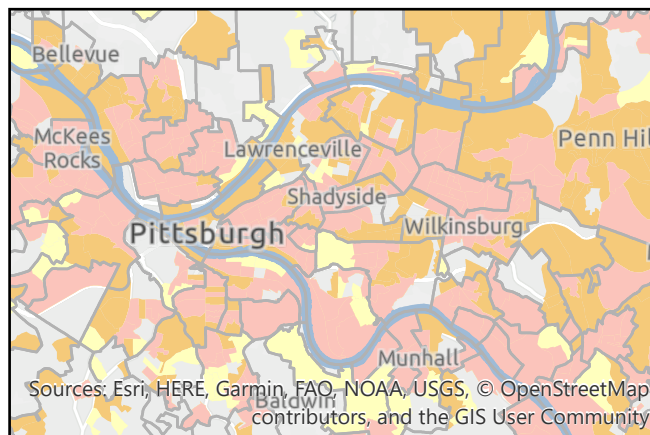
Low-Income Households and Minority Populations Above Regional Threshold

Figure 1



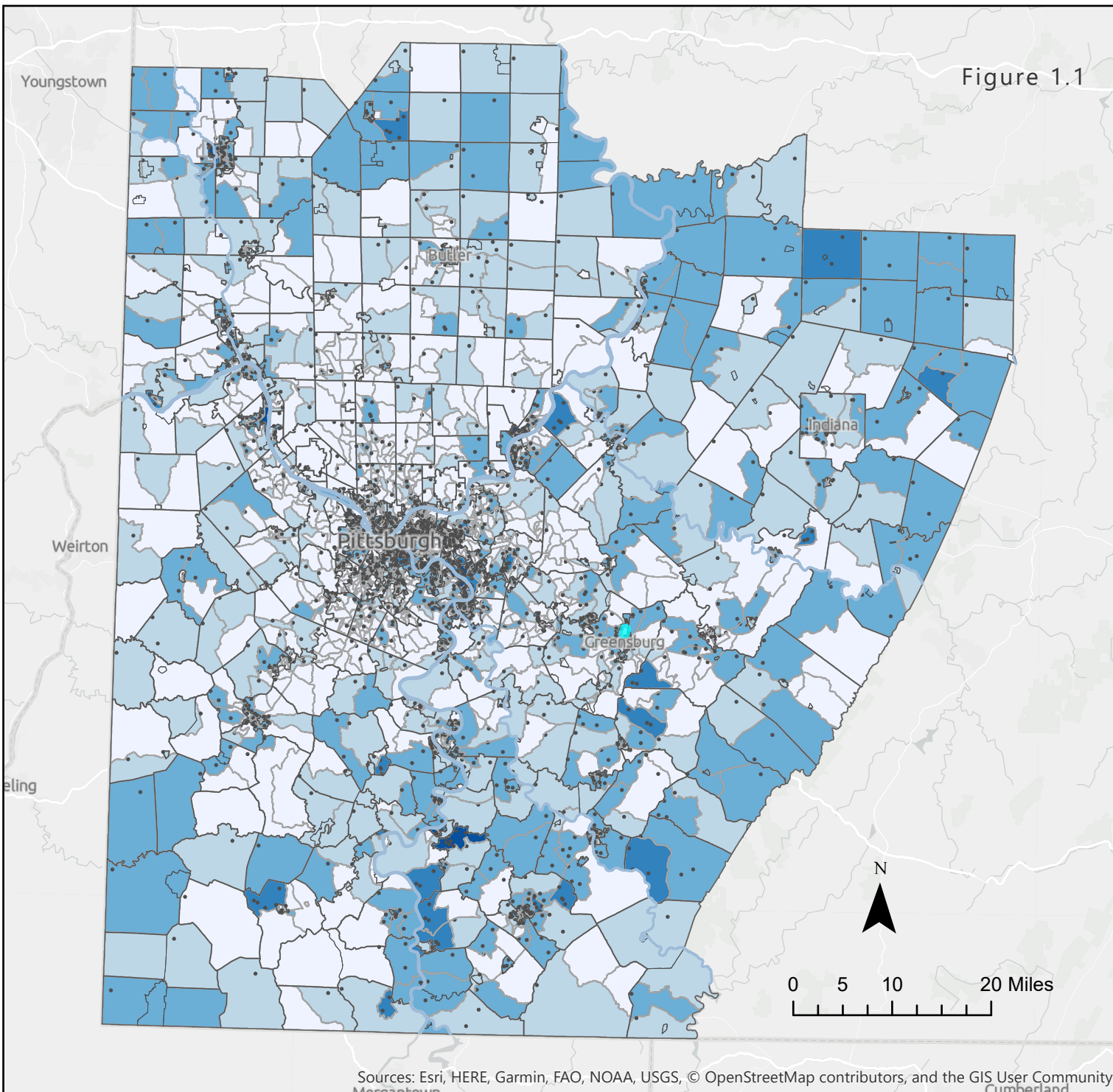
- Low-Income Communities**
 Where the percentage of households below the poverty level exceeds the regional average of 11.52%
- Minority Communities**
 Where the percentage minority population exceeds the regional average of 14.52%
- Both Low-Income and Minority Communities**

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates by Census Block Group



Low-Income Households

Figure 1.1

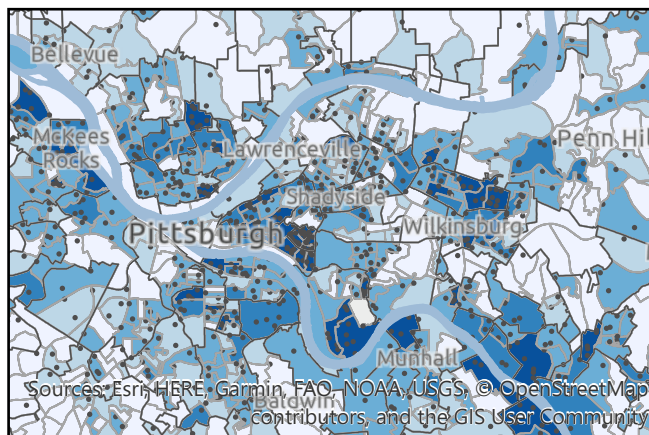


Low-Income Population

The percentage of households below the poverty level in each census block group, with a regional average of 11.52%

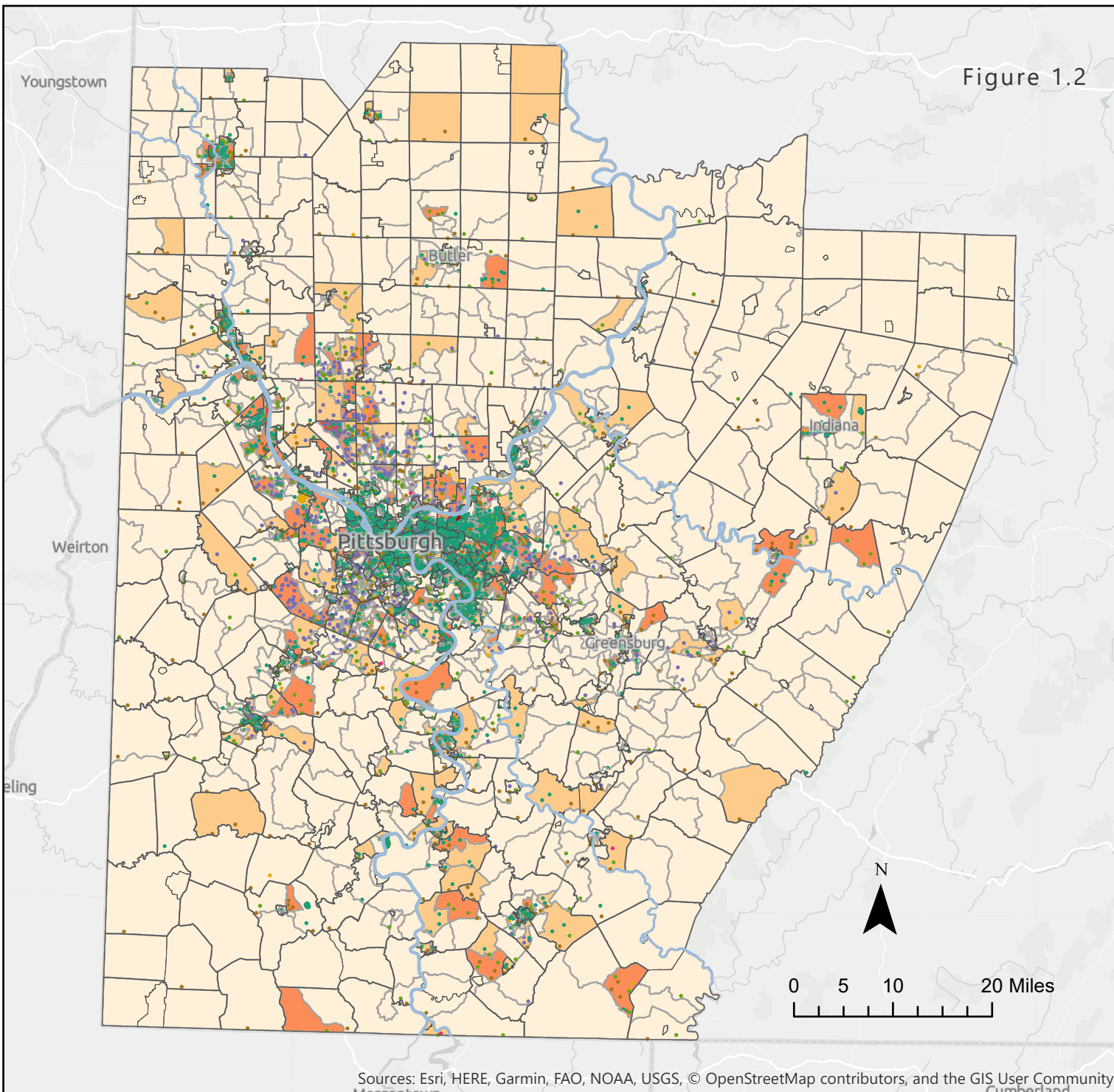
● 1 dot = 50 households below the poverty level

- ≤6.25%
- ≤11.52%
- ≤25.58%
- ≤42.49%
- ≤86.15%



Minority Population

Figure 1.2

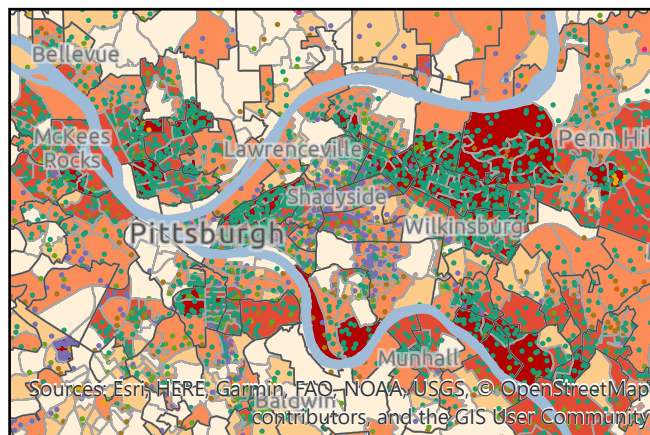


Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Minority Population

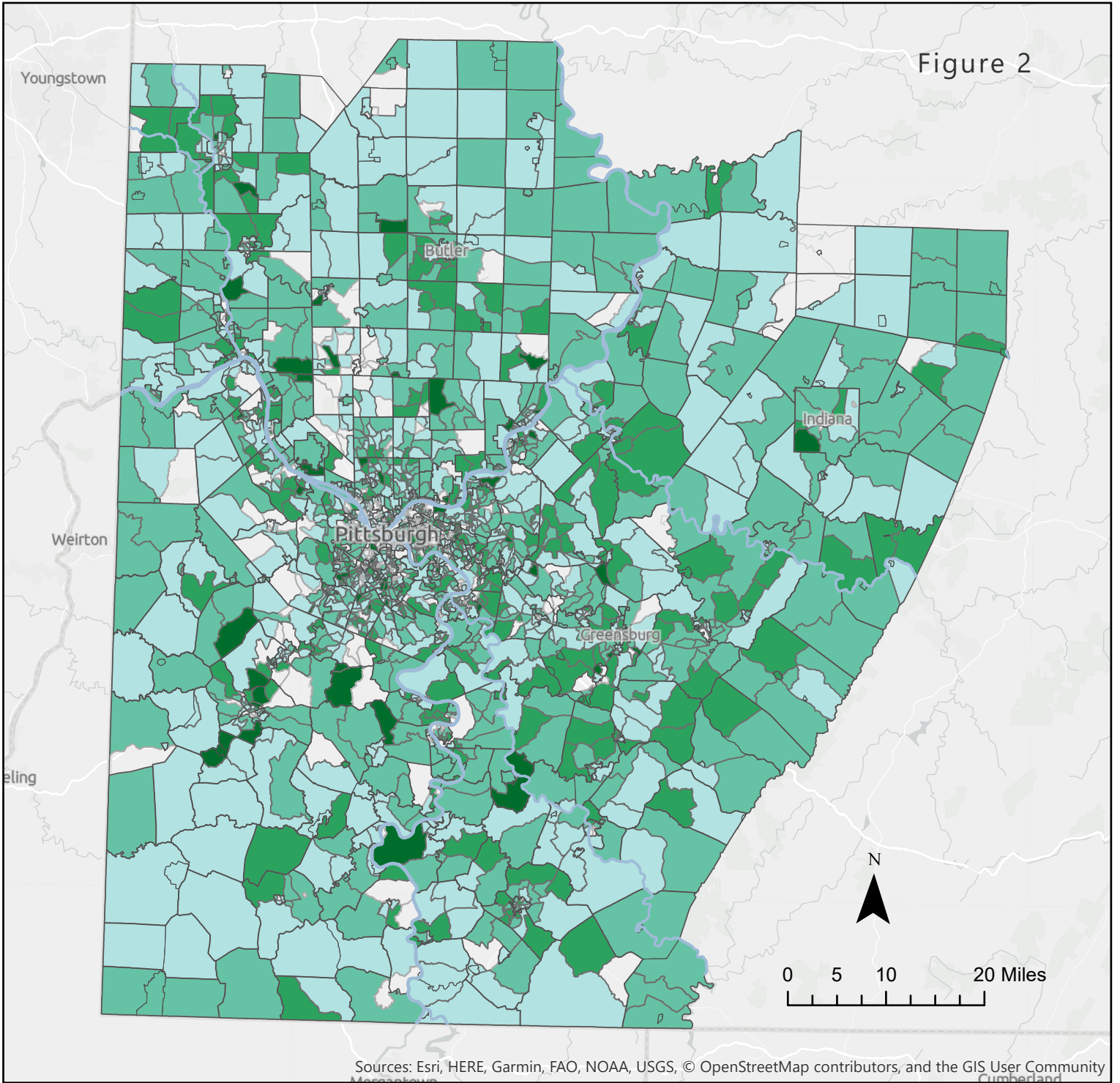
The percentage of people who identify as a minority in each census block group, with a regional average of 14.52%

- BLACK ≤8.2%
- AMINDIAN_ALASKIN ≤14.5%
- ASIAN ≤38.8%
- HAW_PACISLAND ≤67.0%
- HISPANIC_LATINO ≤100%
- OTHER
- TWO_OTHER



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Figure 2

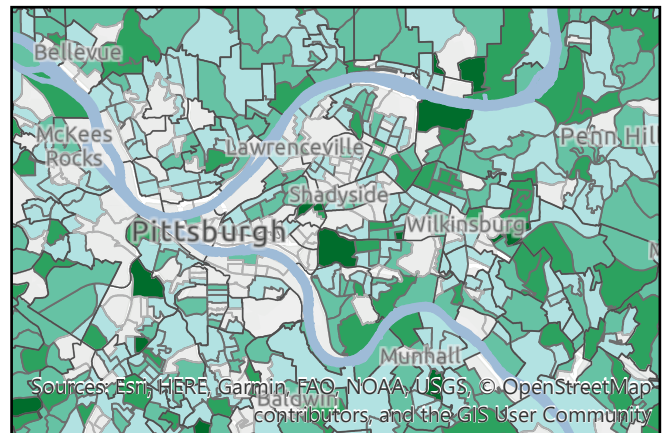


Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Population Age 65 and Older

The percentage of people who are age 65 and older in each census block group, with a regional average of 20.1%

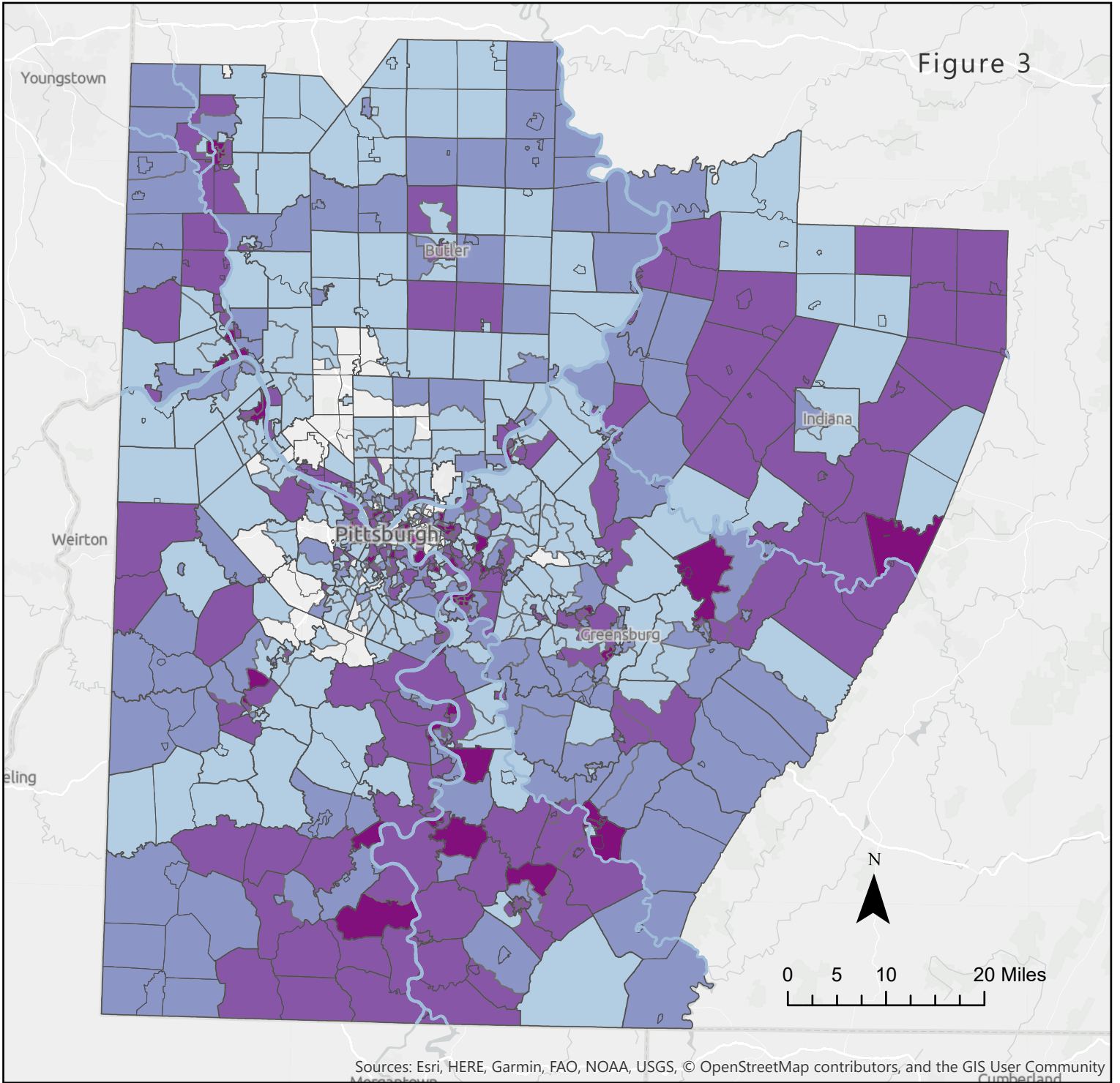
- ≤11.7%
- ≤20.1%
- ≤28.1%
- ≤40.5%
- ≤75.7%



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Population with Disabilities

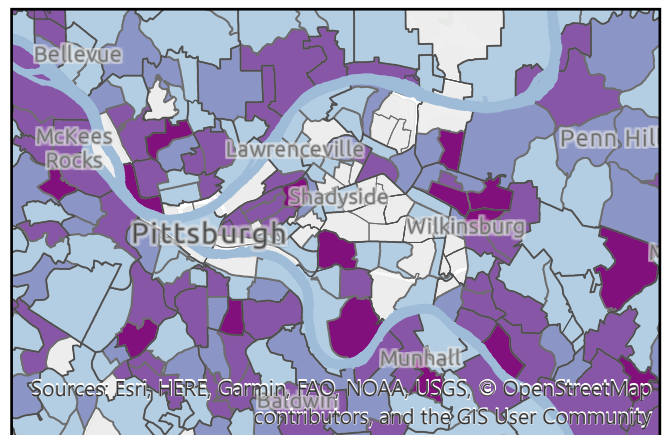
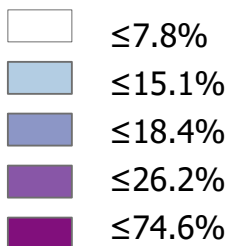
Figure 3



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Population with Disabilities

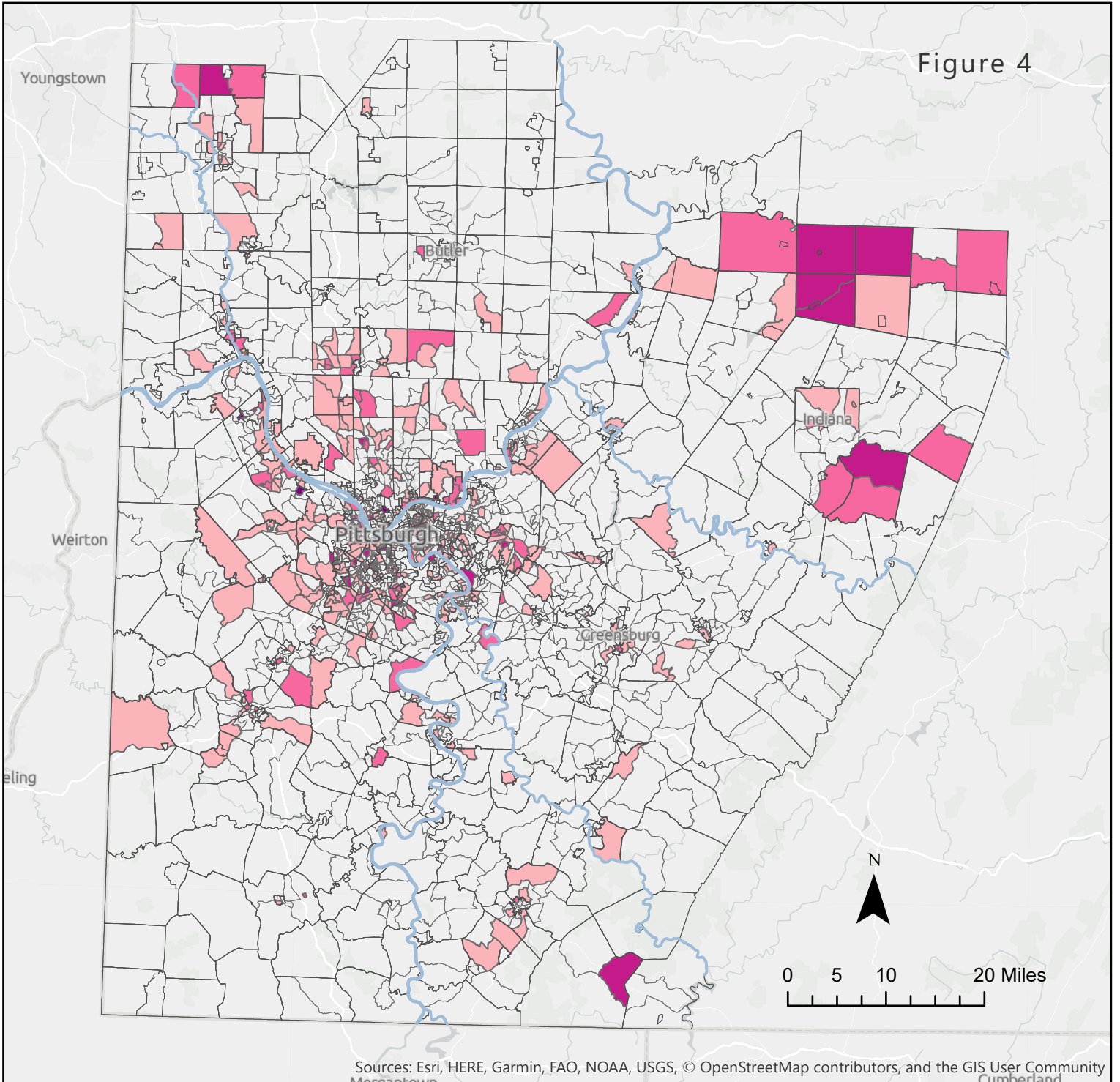
The percentage of people with disabilities in each census tract, with a regional average of 15.1%



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Population Speaking English "Less Than Very Well"

Figure 4

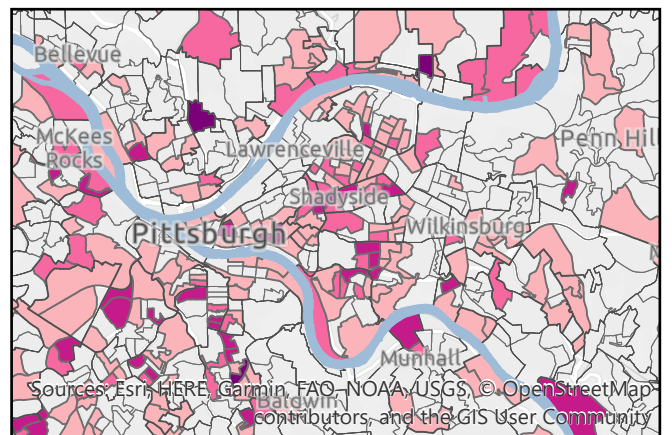


Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Population with Limited English Proficiency

The percentage of the population speaking English "less than very well" in each census tract, with a regional average of 1.6%

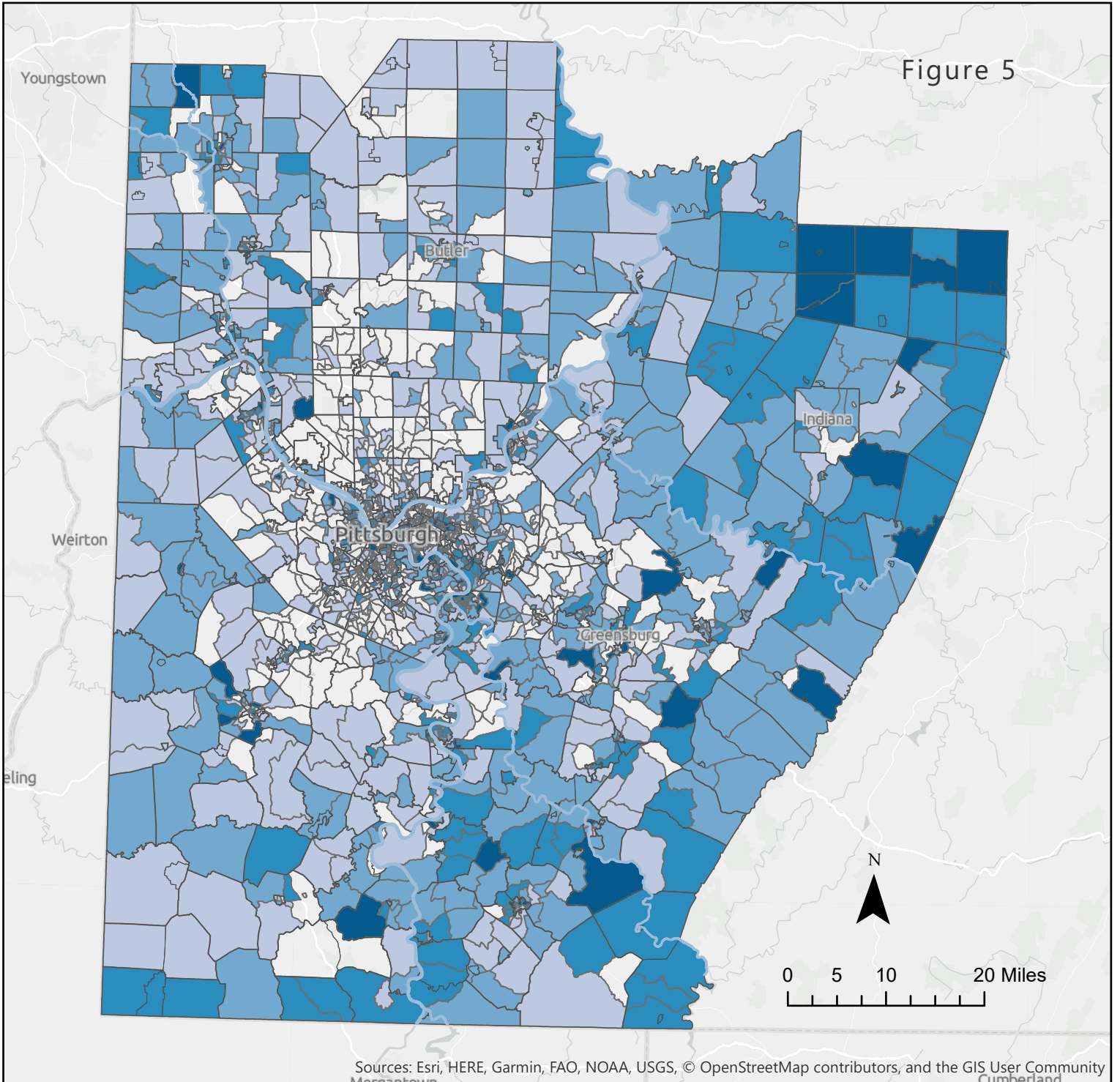
- ≤1.6%
- ≤5.0%
- ≤11.0%
- ≤21.6%
- ≤40.4%



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Households with No Internet Access

Figure 5

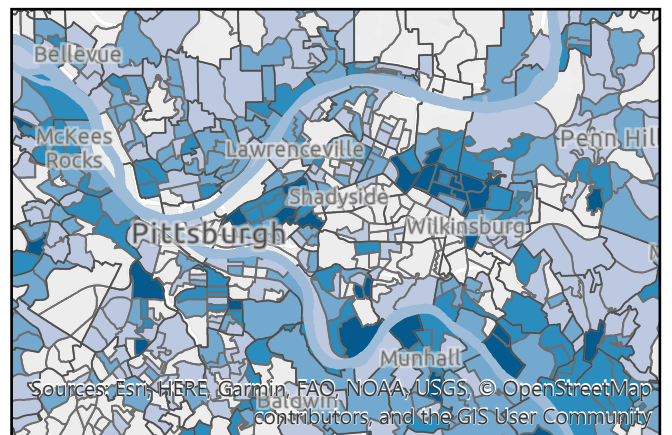


Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Households without Internet Access

The percent of households with no Internet at home in each census tract, with a regional average of 13.4%

- ≤6.9%
- ≤13.4%
- ≤22.5%
- ≤34.3%
- ≤100%

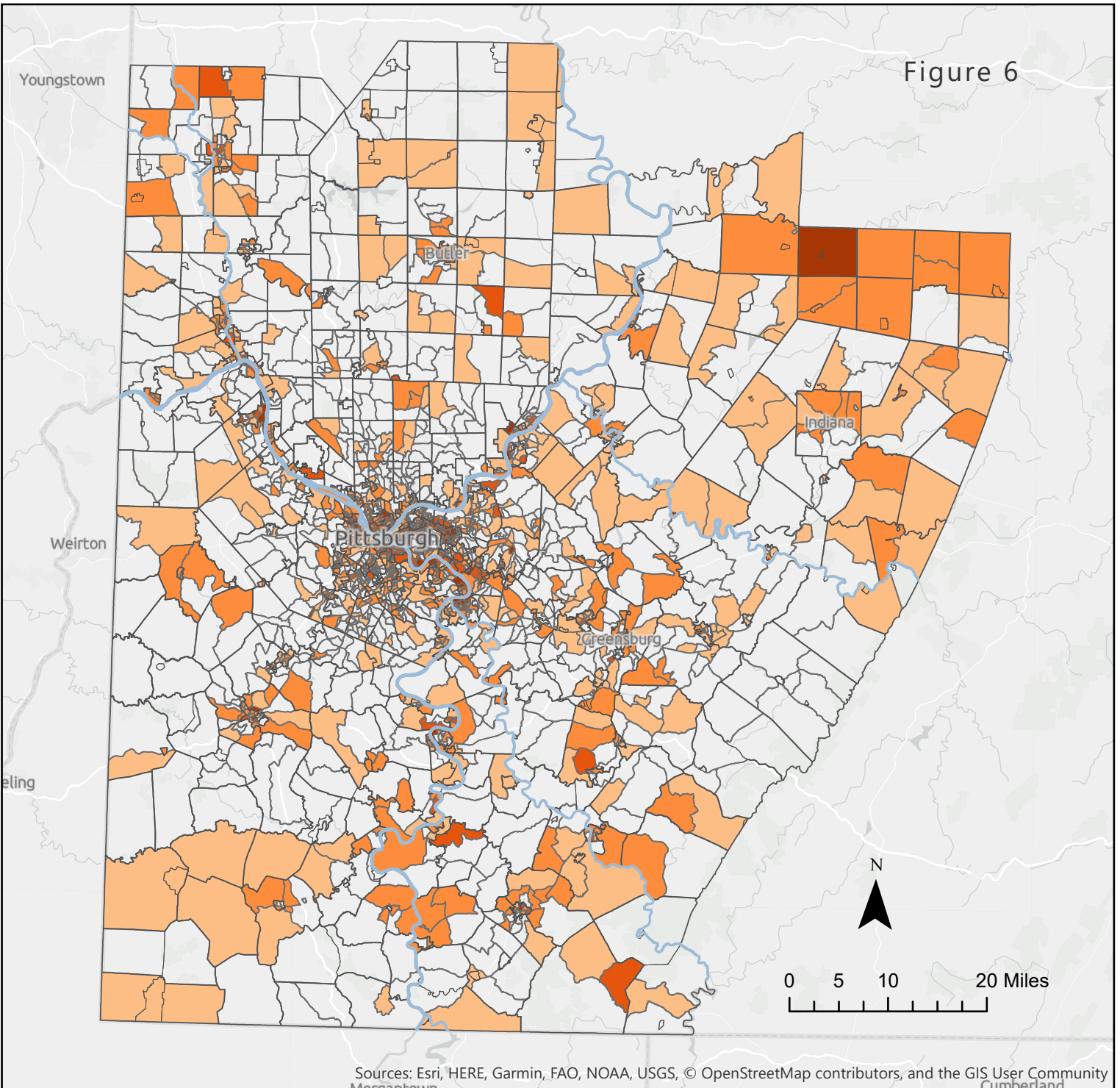


Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



Households with No Available Vehicle

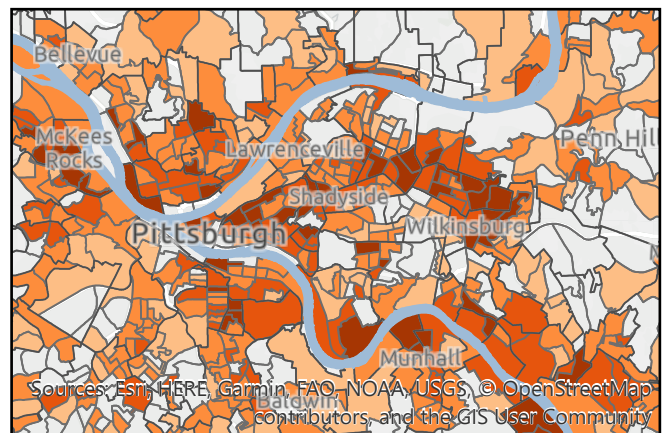
Figure 6



Households with No Available Vehicle

The percent of households with no available vehicle at home in each census tract, with a regional average of 10.4%

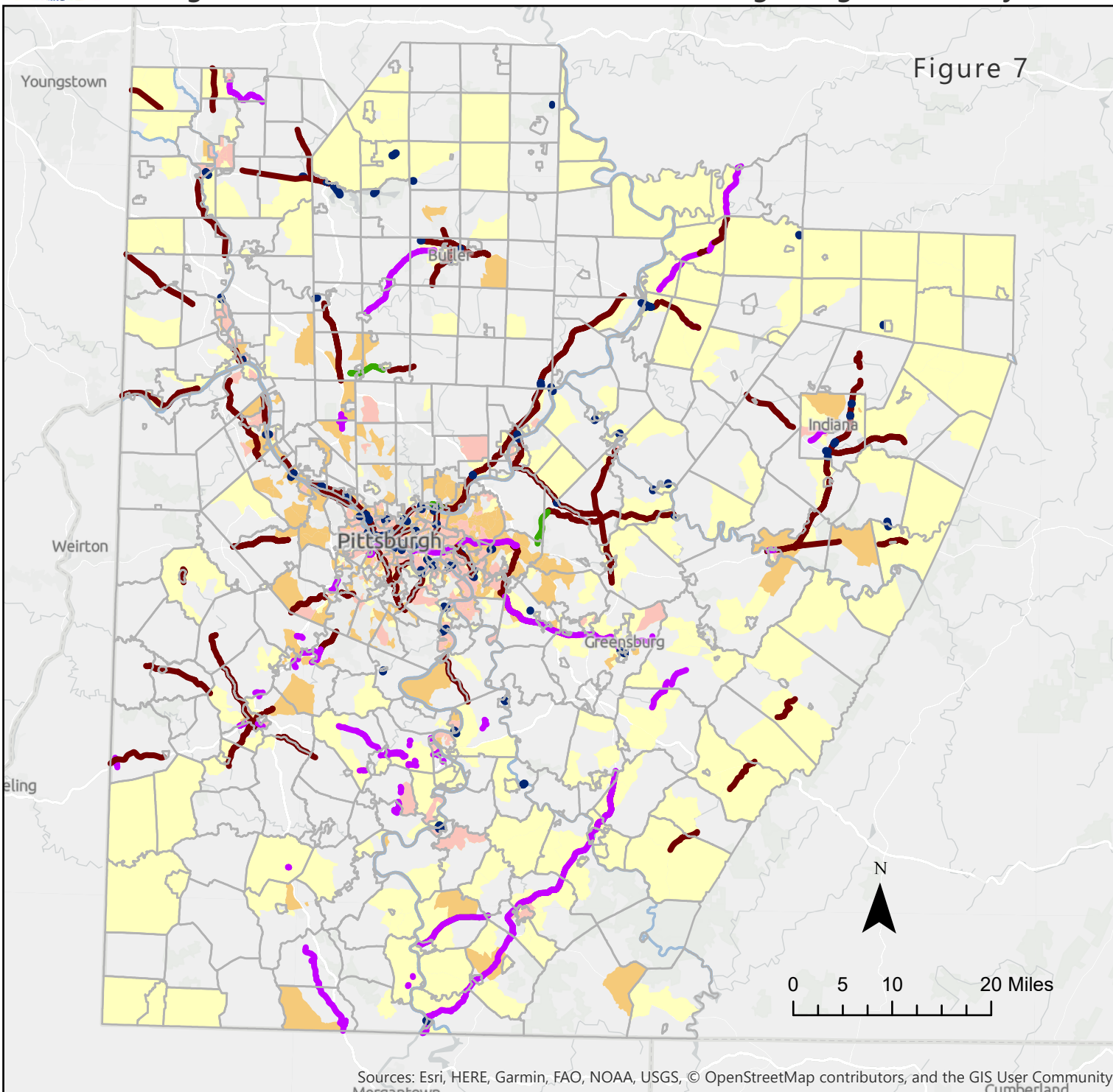
- ≤5.4%
- ≤10.4%
- ≤26.5%
- ≤44.8%
- ≤100%





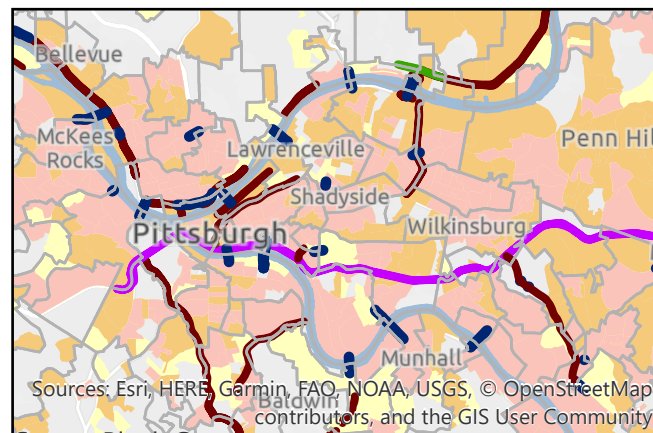
Low-Income Households and Minority Populations Above Regional Threshold with 2019 - 2045 Long Range Plan Projects

Figure 7



- Low-Income Communities**
Where the percentage of households below the poverty level exceeds the regional average of 11.52%
- Minority Communities**
Where the percentage minority population exceeds the regional average of 14.52%
- Low-Income and Minority Communities**

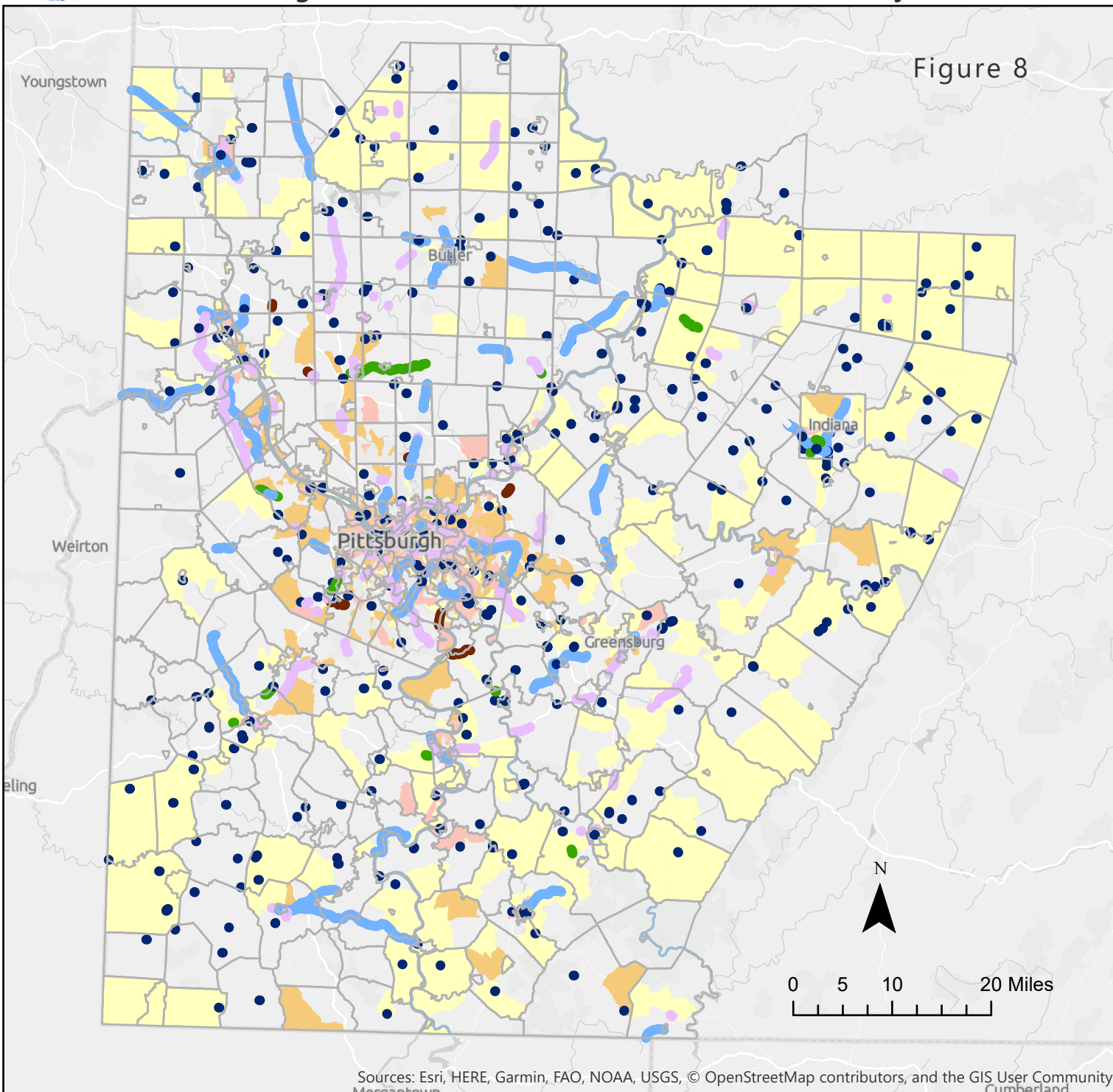
- Operations and Safety
- Road Projects
- Bridge Projects
- New Capacity





Low-Income Households and Minority Populations Above Regional Threshold with 2023-2026 TIP Projects

Figure 8



Low-Income Communities

Where the percentage of households below the poverty level exceeds the regional average of 11.52%

Minority Communities

Where the percentage minority population exceeds the regional average of 14.52%

Low-Income and Minority Communities

Operations and Safety

Road Projects

Bridge Projects

New Capacity and Other

Slide Correction

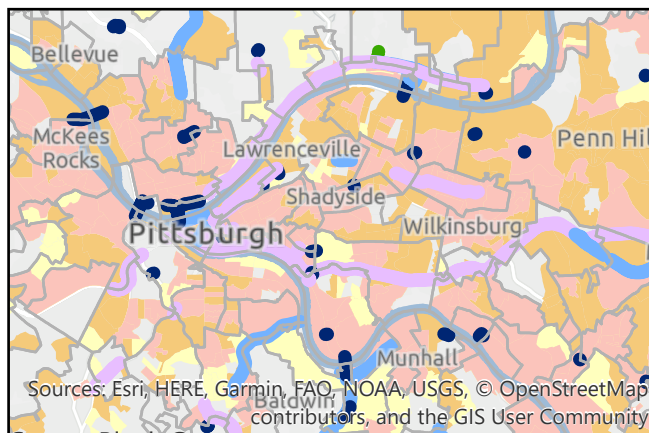
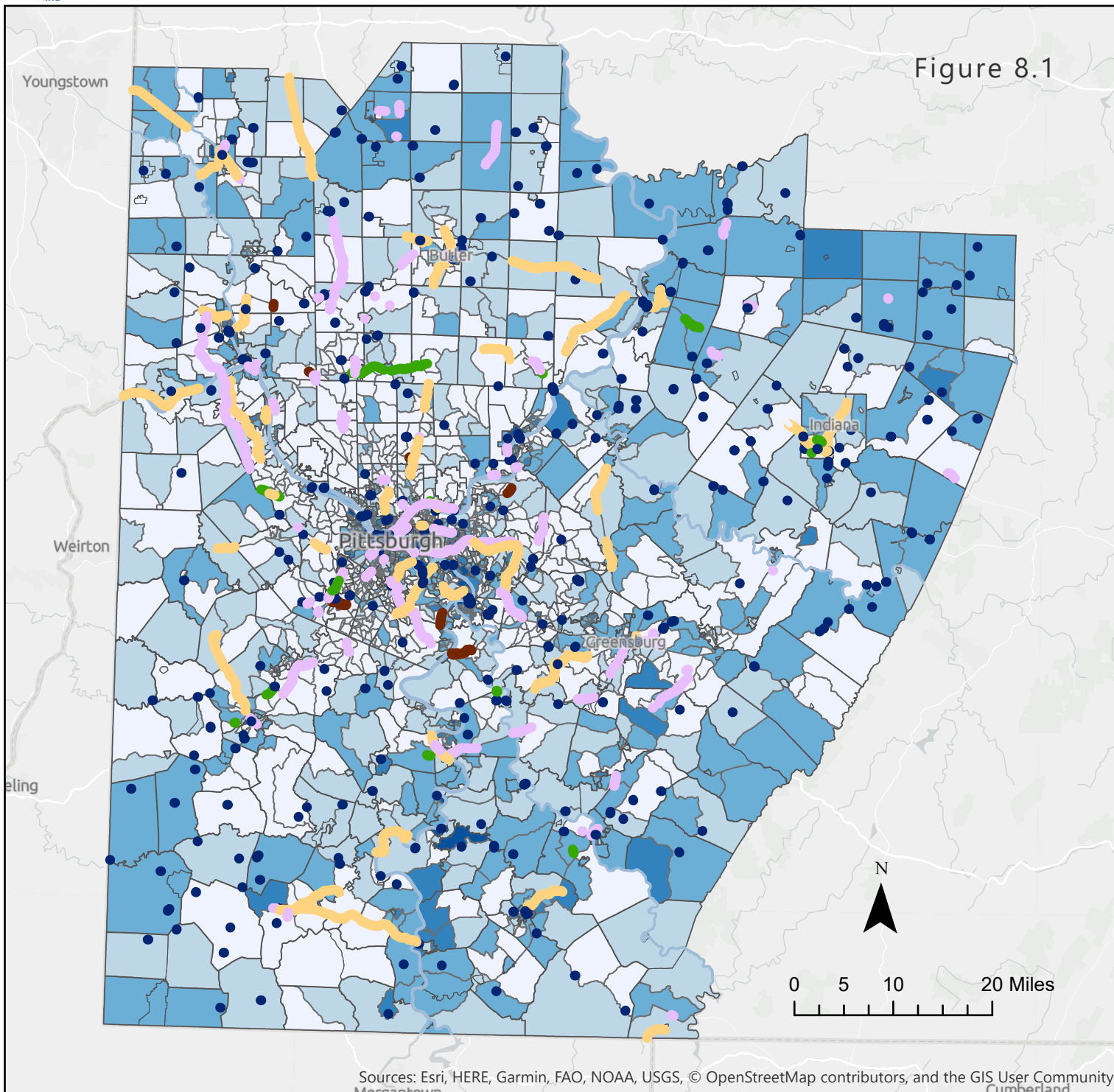


Figure 8.1

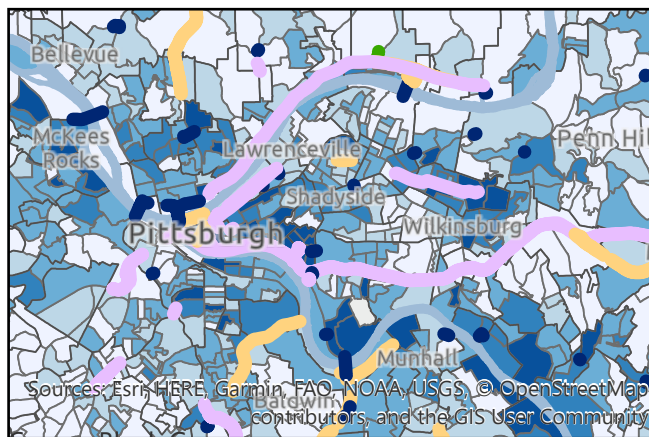


Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Low-Income Population

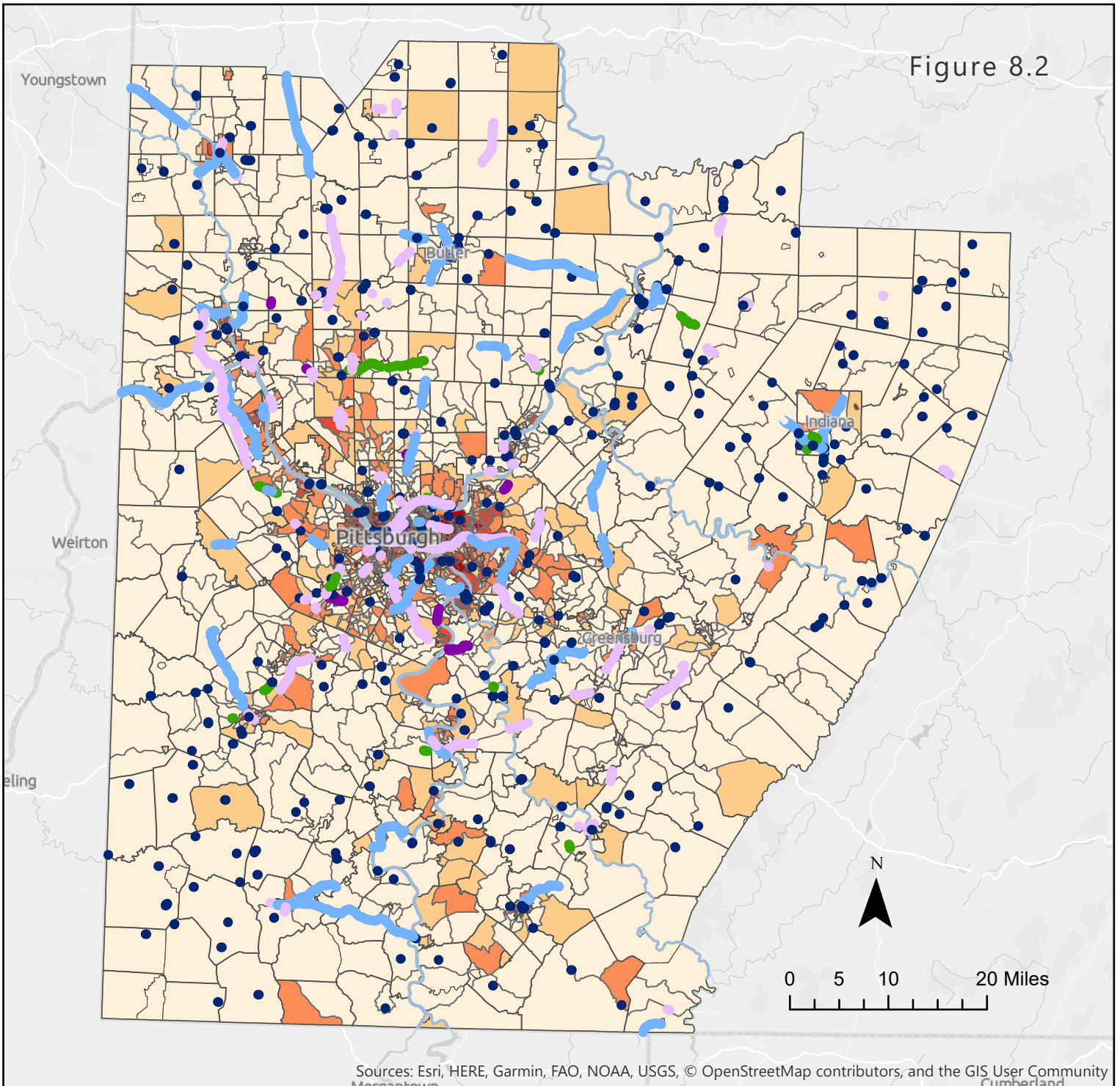
The percentage of households below the poverty level in each census block group, with a regional average of 11.52%

- | | |
|---|--|
|  ≤6.25% |  Operations and Safety |
|  ≤11.52% |  Road Projects |
|  ≤25.58% |  Bridge Projects |
|  ≤42.49% |  New Capacity and Other |
|  ≤86.15% |  Slide Correction |



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Figure 8.2

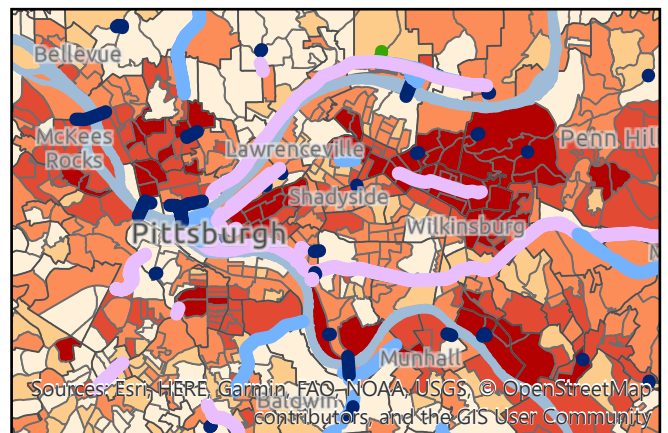


Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Minority Population

The percentage of people who identify as a minority in each census block group, with a regional average of 14.52%

- | | | | |
|--|--------|--|------------------------|
| | ≤8.2% | | Operations and Safety |
| | ≤14.5% | | Road Projects |
| | ≤38.8% | | Bridge Projects |
| | ≤67.0% | | New Capacity and Other |
| | ≤100% | | Slide Correction |



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Appendix B – USDOT Environmental Justice Definitions

Adverse effect - FHWA and USDOT EJ Orders state that "adverse effects" means the totality of significant individual or cumulative human health or environmental effects, including interrelated social and economic effects, which may include, but are not limited to: bodily impairment, infirmity, illness, or death; air, noise, and water pollution and soil contamination; destruction or disruption of human-made or natural resources; destruction or diminution of aesthetic values; destruction or disruption of community cohesion or a community's economic vitality; destruction or disruption of the availability of public and private facilities and services; vibration; adverse employment effects; displacement of persons, businesses, farms, or nonprofit organizations; increased traffic congestion, isolation, exclusion, or separation of minority or low-income individuals within a given community or from the broader community; and, the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits of FHWA/DOT programs, policies, or activities.

Disproportionately high and adverse - The FHWA and USDOT EJ Orders state that "disproportionately high and adverse" refers to an adverse effect that (1) is predominately borne by a minority population and/or a low-income population; or (2) will be suffered by the minority population and/or low-income population and is appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect that will be suffered by the non-minority population and/or non-low-income population.

Low-income – The FHWA and USDOT EJ Orders define a "low-income" individual as a person whose median household income is at or below the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) poverty guidelines.

Minority – FHWA and USDOT EJ Orders define a "minority" individual as a person who is: (1) Black: a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa; (2) Hispanic or Latino: a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race; (3) Asian American: a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent; (4) American Indian and Alaskan Native: a person having origins in any of the original people of North America, South America (including Central America), and who maintains cultural identification through Tribal affiliation or community recognition; or (5) Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander: a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

Populations – For the terms "minority" and "low-income," the FHWA and USDOT EJ Orders define a "population" as any readily identifiable group of minority and/or low-income persons who live in geographic proximity, and, if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons of those groups (such as migrant workers, homeless persons, or Native Americans) who will be similarly affected by a proposed FHWA/DOT program, policy, or activity.

Underserved population – (also "traditionally underserved population") refers to a broad category that includes minority and low-income populations but may also include many other demographic categories that face challenges engaging with the transportation process and reaping equitable benefits, such as children, the elderly, and the disabled.

Title VI populations – Although the nondiscrimination principles of Executive Order 12898 and the Title VI statute intersect, they are two separate mandates and each has unique requirements. Title VI statutes protect persons from discrimination solely on the basis of race, color, and national origin. The FHWA Title VI Program includes other nondiscrimination statutes and authorities under its umbrella to ensure that FHWA policies, programs, and activities do not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, income, sex, age, disability, or limited English proficiency.

Title VI Notice to the Public

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) hereby gives public notice that it is the policy of the Commission to assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. Title VI and other related statutes require that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which SPC receives federal financial assistance. Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice by SPC under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint with the Commission. Any such complaint must be in writing and filed with SPC's Title VI Coordinator within one hundred eighty (180) days following the date of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Discrimination Complaint Form, please see our website at: www.spcregion.org or call 412-391-5590.