



Environmental Justice

AT DVRPC

Fiscal Year 2011

Introduction

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the 1994 President's Executive Order on Environmental Justice #12898 state that no person or group shall be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, any program or activity utilizing federal funds. Each federal agency is required to identify any disproportionately high and adverse health or environmental effects of its programs on minority and low-income populations. In turn, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are charged with evaluating their plans and programs for environmental justice (EJ) sensitivity, including expanding their outreach efforts to low-income, minority, and other disadvantaged populations, as part of the United States Department of Transportation's certification requirements.

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) is the MPO for the nine-county, bistate Philadelphia-Camden-Trenton region. To further DVRPC's goal to respond to federal guidance on EJ, the Commission published "*...and Justice for All: DVRPC's Strategy for Fair Treatment and Meaningful Involvement of All People*" in September 2001. This initial EJ report provided background information and defined EJ; summarized DVRPC's existing EJ-related plans, policies, and public involvement activities; and described a quantitative and qualitative method for evaluating the Long-Range Plan (LRP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and other programs. DVRPC has since published annual updates, which provide a summary of activities conducted by the Commission, and new data and analysis related to EJ.

Since the introduction of the EJ report in 2001, planning activities relating to EJ have grown and evolved, with more applications being explored each year. This technical memo provides an overview of the current EJ method, highlights selected projects or programs that utilized the EJ method in fiscal year (FY) 2011 or have a project component related to EJ planning, and lists EJ-related activities to be completed in FY 2012.

Title VI Compliance

DVRPC's work in EJ assists the Commission in meeting federal requirements related to Title VI compliance. To meet the requirements of Title VI, the Commission must:

- Enhance its analytical capabilities to ensure that the LRP and the TIP comply with Title VI;
- Identify residential, employment, and transportation patterns of low-income and minority populations so that their needs may be identified and addressed, and the benefits and burdens of transportation can be fairly distributed; and
- Evaluate and, where necessary, improve the public involvement process to eliminate barriers and engage minority, disabled, elderly, and low-income populations in regional decision-making.

Since its implementation in 2006, *Equity & Opportunity*, DVRPC's Title VI Compliance Plan, provides a framework for DVRPC's efforts to ensure compliance with Title VI and related statutes regarding nondiscrimination in DVRPC's Work Program, publications, communications, public involvement efforts, and general ways of doing business. The Title VI Compliance Plan also defines the role of the Title VI Compliance Manager, a position within the Commission to manage the overall administration of the Title VI program, plan, and assurances.

Limited English Proficiency

Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," compels federally funded agencies to make services more accessible to eligible persons who are not proficient in the English language. DVRPC has made a conscious effort to reach out to populations with limited English proficiency (LEP). DVRPC translates a number of Commission documents and takes all reasonable steps in providing Commission documents in alternative languages or formats. DVRPC's website may be translated using GoogleTranslate. Online translations were launched in the summer of 2006, and additional languages were added to the DVRPC website in FY 2010, with 17 language translations now available.

DVRPC Environmental Justice Degrees of Disadvantage Method

In 2001, DVRPC developed the initial "*...and Justice for All*" report to identify impacts of disparate funding and services on defined low-income and minority groups, and to introduce the Degrees of Disadvantage (DOD) method. Neither Title VI of the Civil Rights Act nor Executive Order 12898 provides specific guidance to evaluate EJ within a region's transportation planning process. Therefore, MPOs must devise their own methods for ensuring that EJ issues are represented in transportation decision-making. This is a challenging assignment, and serious consideration must be given to the available types of quantifiable data, as well as how the data is to be used and interpreted. It should be noted that while DVRPC employs the DOD method to ascertain population data, the DOD method is one tool that is part of a larger strategy that includes public participation, stakeholder outreach, and other data sources, utilized by DVRPC staff to plan for all residents in the Greater Philadelphia region.

The regional technical analysis developed by DVRPC is a people- and place-based approach that locates the people most in need and determines how the regional transportation system and DVRPC's programs, policies, and investments impact these groups. While minority and low-income populations must be investigated, DVRPC expanded its list to additional population groups that may have specific planning-related issues or challenges. DVRPC currently assesses the following population groups:

- Non-Hispanic minority
- Hispanic
- Carless households
 - This population is often referred to as "transit dependent," i.e., those who must rely on public transit for their daily travel needs and who have limited mobility. It is recognized that not owning a personal automobile may be a lifestyle choice for some, but for others automobile ownership is unattainable due to various constraints, including income or disability.
- Households in poverty
- Persons with physical disabilities
 - DVRPC has decided to identify persons with a physical disability for the disability indicator, but recognizes that each disability type has specific challenges. This analysis of the distribution of persons with physical disabilities relies on data from the U.S. Census, which defines a physical disability as "a condition that substantially limits one or more basic

physical activities, such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting, or carrying.” The Census universe for this category includes only the population five years and older.

- Female head of household with child
 - This factor was chosen to add gender and children into the analysis, as well as to acknowledge the strong correlation between female heads of household with child and poverty status. In addition, this group may exhibit different travel patterns and needs from other population groups.
- Elderly (over 75 years old)
 - In the last two years, several DVRPC programs have worked closely with the elderly community. Mobility barriers and age are linked. Not every elderly individual has mobility challenges, but the likelihood of a challenge increases as an individual ages. Seniors aged 75 years qualify for most, if not all, mobility programs that have an age requirement.
- Limited English Proficiency
 - It is assumed that an inability to speak English well can be a barrier to accessing goods and services, including transportation. In addition, identifying these populations and their locations is important to DVRPC’s outreach efforts, particularly in assessing the need to make the agency’s publications and written materials available in additional languages.

Using U.S. Census data, these groups are identified and located at the census tract level. Data is gathered at the regional level, combining populations from each of the nine counties, for either individuals or households, depending on the indicator. From there, the total number of persons in each demographic group is divided by the appropriate universe (either population or households) for the nine-county region, providing a regional average for that population group. Any census tract that meets or exceeds the regional average level, or threshold for that population group, is considered an EJ-sensitive tract for that group.

DOD Methodology Data Update

The current DOD method utilizes 2000 U.S. Census data. Utilizing newly released American Community Survey five-year estimates information, DVRPC will update the population and household groups in its DOD method in FY 2012. Maps, DVRPC’s online mapping application, and other associated documents will also be updated.

Degrees of Disadvantage

The number of sensitive groups in each census tract is referred to as its DOD. Each census tract can contain a concentration greater than the regional average for each individual population group previously discussed, and any census tract can contain zero to eight categories that have been recognized as regionally sensitive. Figure 1 illustrates DOD by the number of census tracts that contain zero DOD, one to two DOD, three to four DOD, five to six DOD, and seven to eight DOD. Of the region’s 1,378 census tracts, 76 percent have at least one DOD, which is not surprising given the multiple demographic categories. Over a quarter of the census tracts contain five to eight DOD. These areas are recognized as potentially highly disadvantaged; thus, extra care should be taken when projects or programs occur there.

Table 1 displays the DOD and the number of census tracts in each category. Tracts with one to two DOD (36 percent) represent the largest percentage, followed by zero DOD (24 percent), and then five to six DOD (19 percent). Ninety-three tracts have seven to eight DOD (seven percent), and these are mostly found in the core cities of Philadelphia, Camden, Chester, and Trenton, as well as older boroughs, such as Oxford, Coatesville, and Pottstown.

Figure 1: Degrees of Disadvantage

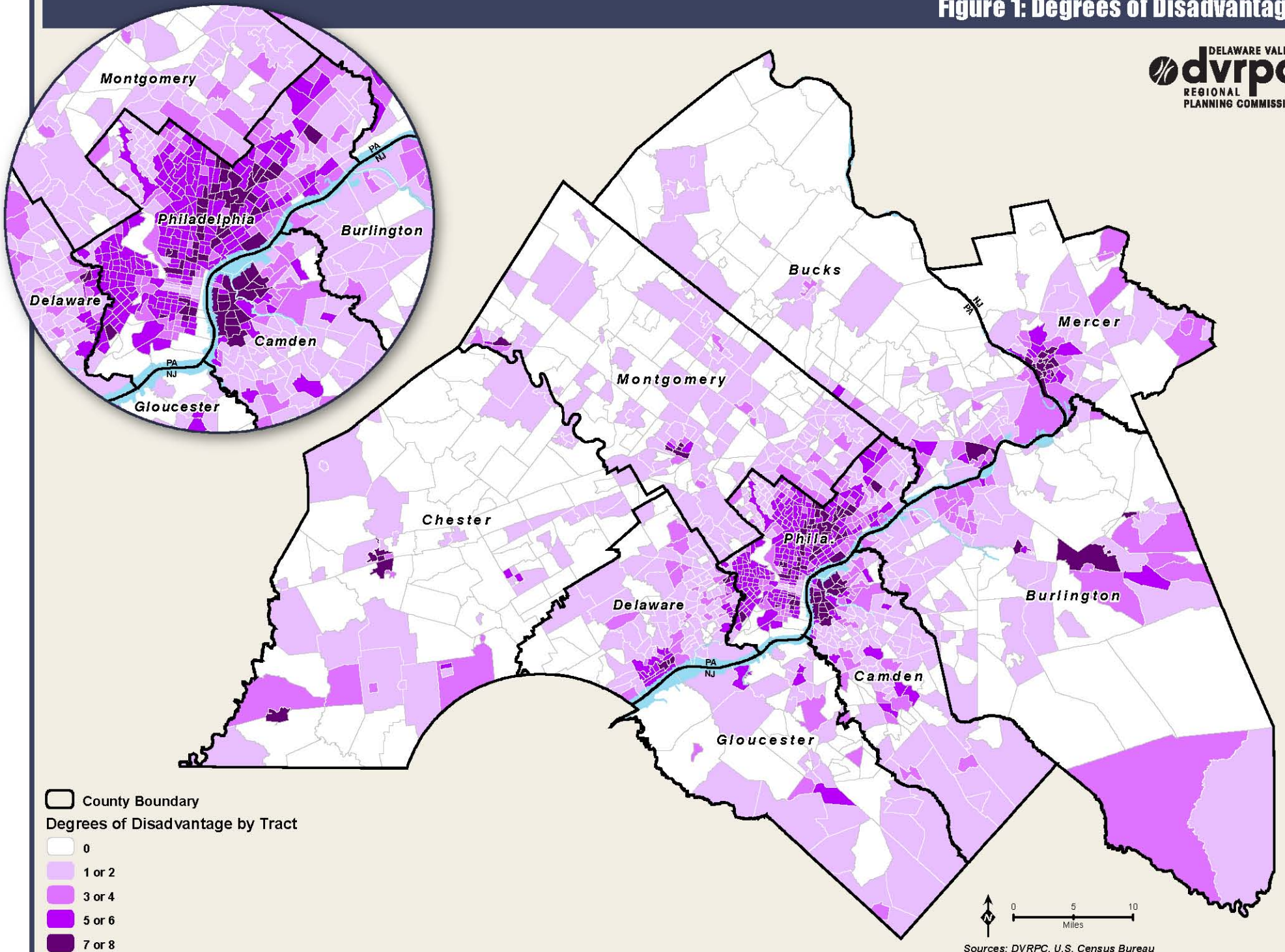


Table 1: Degrees of Disadvantage (DOD) and Number of Census Tracts

Number of DOD	Number of Census Tracts	Percentage of Census Tracts
0	328	24
1-2	501	36
3-4	195	14
5-6	261	19
7-8	93	7

Source: DVRPC, 2003

The region's four core cities of Philadelphia, Chester, Camden, and Trenton contain 293, or 83 percent, of the 354 highly disadvantaged (five to eight DOD) census tracts in the nine-county region. There are 1.72 million people who live in these four cities, or 32 percent of the region's 5.39 million residents. Over 65 percent of all the tracts in these four communities contain five to eight DOD, much higher than the regional average of 25 percent. Philadelphia has 240 highly disadvantaged tracts, which constitute 68 percent of the region's total of highly disadvantaged tracts and 63 percent of all Philadelphia census tracts; Chester has 13 highly disadvantaged tracts, which constitute three percent of the region's highly disadvantaged tracts and 92 percent of all Chester census tracts; Camden has 20 highly disadvantaged tracts, which constitute six percent of the region's highly disadvantaged tracts and 95 percent of all Camden tracts; and Trenton has 20 highly disadvantaged tracts, which constitute six percent of the region's highly disadvantaged tracts and 83 percent of all Trenton tracts.

EJ is concerned with the impacts of disparate funding and disparate services on defined minority and low-income groups. Many programs employ the EJ technical method as the first step of a demographic analysis, identifying the potentially disadvantaged population groups first, and then using this knowledge as a planning tool for further recommendations. DVRPC's Public Affairs office may also utilize the EJ analysis to assist in reaching out to specific groups during a planning process.

Environmental Justice at Work in DVRPC Plans and Programs

The following section provides a brief overview of selected DVRPC programs, plans, and studies that have incorporated the EJ method or have an EJ-related component in FY 2011.

Online Environmental Justice Analysis Tool

In May 2011, DVRPC launched an online interactive tool to make DOD data available as a resource to the entire nine-county DVRPC region. The online map viewer allows users to view and identify EJ-sensitive areas within the DVRPC region, and provides information on DVRPC's DOD method. Users can search by population group, municipality, or census tract. The data currently used is from the 2000 U.S. Census, but will be updated in FY 2012 to utilize recently released American Community Survey data. The EJ analysis tool can be found on DVRPC's website, along with other information related to the Commission's EJ, Title VI, and public participation activities, at <http://www.dvrpc.org/GetInvolved/TitleVI/>.

The Transportation Improvement Program: FY 2012 - 2015 TIP for New Jersey

The TIP, required by federal law, is the regionally agreed upon list of priority transportation projects. The TIP document must list all projects that intend to use federal funds, along with all non-federally funded

projects that are regionally significant. Also included are all other state-funded capital projects. The projects are multimodal; that is, they include bicycle, pedestrian, ITS, and freight-related projects, as well as the more traditional highway and public transit projects.

The location of transportation investments can greatly influence the level of mobility and accessibility within and throughout the region. DVRPC's EJ method is used to analyze the equitable distribution of the TIP for both highway and transit programs. Not all TIP projects can be mapped due to the scale and nature of the improvement. The TIP update usually occurs annually for New Jersey and every other year for Pennsylvania.

In FY 2011, the FY 2012- 2015 TIP for New Jersey was approved by the DVRPC Board. TIP projects are mapped to identify low-disadvantage census tracts (with 1 to 4 DOD) and high-disadvantage census tracts (with 5 to 8 DODs), with and without a TIP project. While a TIP project may not occur in an EJ-sensitive area, disadvantaged populations can still be impacted by the proposed investment, especially if the project focuses on a highway or transit corridor that is used by a particular disadvantaged population.

For the FY 2012-2015 New Jersey Transit TIP, 23 tracts (35 percent) of the 66 tracts with 5 to 8 DOD contain a TIP project, while 36 (16 percent) of the 233 census tracts with 1 to 4 DOD contain a TIP project. For the FY 2012- 2015 New Jersey Highway TIP, 12 (18 percent) of the 66 tracts with 5 to 8 DOD contain a TIP project, while 24 (10 percent) of the 233 census tracts with 1 to 4 DOD contain a TIP project. Included in the New Jersey analysis is a transit extension project: Transit Rail Initiatives. This project is mapped and funding has been allocated. There are currently three alternatives for the final location, and all three alternatives have been included in the analysis. Once the final design is selected, the remaining alternatives will be removed from the analysis, consequently lowering the number of census tracts.

The Long-Range Plan

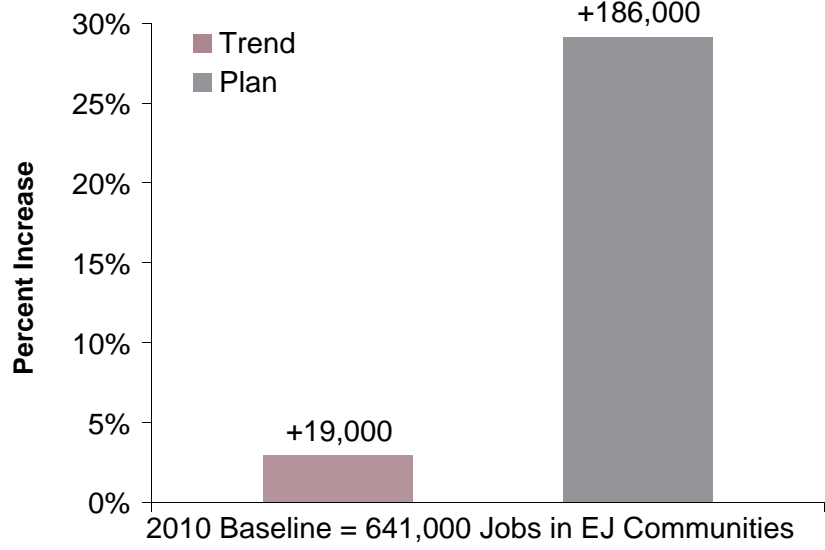
DVRPC's *Connections: A Regional Plan for a Sustainable Future* is the region's federally mandated long-range plan. The long-range plan provides a vision of the region's future and serves as the blueprint for future transportation facilities and services. The plan puts a strong emphasis on creating livable communities for everyone in the Greater Philadelphia region, managing growth and protecting resources, building an energy-efficient economy, and creating a modern multimodal transportation system.

Connections focuses on strengthening the linkages between land use, the environment, economic development, and the transportation system. Additionally, *Connections* addresses new focus areas, such as climate change and energy needs. *Implementing Connections: The Benefits for Greater Philadelphia*, released in FY 2011, is a follow up document to the plan. This report documents the benefits of implementing the plan through a Plan scenario compared to a "business as usual" Trend scenario. Both of these scenarios are set in the horizon year (2035) of the *Connections* plan, and they are compared to each other and baseline conditions in 2010.

The Plan scenario envisions dense, mixed-use development within and around more than 100 centers around the region. Focusing development around regional centers can help the region achieve the goal of preserving an additional 500,000 acres of land by 2035 by not developing them in the first place. *Connections* works to create a modern, multimodal transportation system, while investigating strategies to develop a regional funding source to help pay for it. The compact development pattern creates smaller residential and office units, while promoting alternative transportation, all of which will help to decrease energy use and move the region toward its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent from 2005 to 2035.

Implementing Connections: The Benefits for Greater Philadelphia considered an EJ indicator based on the change in the number of jobs forecast for EJ communities. To perform this analysis, the number of jobs forecast for each EJ census tract for all the scenarios was subtracted from its base year 2005 estimate, as shown in Figure 2. Many of the region’s centers have seen significant disinvestment over the past 50 years, leaving behind a disadvantaged population living within them. By reinvesting in centers, more jobs will locate near EJ communities. This will help improve the tax base and enhance the municipal fiscal health of these local governments. The Plan scenario increases the number of jobs in EJ communities by nearly 30 percent, about 10 times more than the Trend scenario.

Figure 2: Change in Jobs Located in Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities: 2010



Source: DVRPC 2010

The number of jobs added to EJ communities is one of more than 70 indicators used to analyze the benefits of implementing the *Connections* plan for Greater Philadelphia. Overall, implementing the plan will reduce the number of acres we develop over the next 25 years, better utilize and maintain existing infrastructure, increase the variety and types of housing available to the region’s residents, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase transit access and provide more options in how we get around the region, and increase funding for transportation infrastructure. These benefits will improve the quality of life throughout Greater Philadelphia in both EJ communities and non-EJ communities.

Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI)

The Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) is a grant program of DVRPC that supports local development and redevelopment efforts in qualifying municipalities of the Delaware Valley. Begun in 2002 to reverse the trends of disinvestment and decline in many of the region's core cities and developed communities, TCDI provides a mechanism for municipalities to undertake locally-directed actions to improve their communities, which in turn implements their local and county comprehensive plans and supports the goals and vision of the long-range land use and transportation plan, *Connections 2035*. To identify potential communities for a TCDI grant, census tracts that represent at least three DOD are eligible for a TCDI grant; and, in all cases, areas that are appropriate for future growth are targeted.

The TCDI program targets transportation investments in a sustainable way. Federal transportation funds are used to provide planning grants to local governments and select non-profit organizations to create

plans that link transportation improvements with land use strategies, enhance established communities, and build upon existing public and private assets. The adoption of TCDI set into motion the ideology of coordinating regional transportation planning with local land use planning and decision-making.

TCDI strives to create more vital and livable neighborhoods in the region's core cities and disadvantaged communities by:

- Supporting local planning projects that will lead to more residential, employment, or retail opportunities;
- Improving the overall character and quality of life within these communities to retain and attract businesses and residents;
- Enhancing and utilizing the existing transportation network infrastructure capacity in these areas to reduce the demands on the region's transportation network; and
- Reducing congestion and improving the efficiency of the region's transportation network.

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan

Under federal transportation regulations, the previous area-wide Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), and the New Freedom Initiative (NFI) programs, are now components of the revised Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP). The CHSTP identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes; provides strategies for meeting those local needs; and ranks transportation services for funding and implementation. Within this new plan, three programs must be coordinated to address transportation barriers: the JARC (Section 5316) program was established to address the unique transportation challenges faced by welfare recipients and low-income persons seeking to obtain and maintain employment; NFI (Section 5317), which is a formula grant program that aims to provide additional tools to overcome existing barriers facing Americans with disabilities seeking integration into the work force and full participation in society; and the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) program that provides formula funding to States for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities when the existing transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. DVRPC facilitates the selection process for JARC and NFI, and has been asked to participate in 5310 application evaluation.

A transportation service gap analysis is required in order to assist CHSTP stakeholders to develop ameliorative strategies. By using the DVRPC EJ method, which locates persons with the most need and with proximity to the regional transportation system, a larger analysis of the needs for these specific populations can be conducted. A quality-of-life analysis is conducted that includes the proximity of the region's transportation network, including arterial highways, transit systems, access to employment centers through job access services, fixed-route service, and paratransit service. Locations of employment, health, and childcare services are also identified. The resulting DOD and quality-of-life factors are combined to reflect the positive and negative influences of these three special grant programs and the services they provide. Based on the CHSTP analysis, services applied for under these grant programs can target areas where various populations are located that have little or no transportation services that meet their specific needs.

The Pennsylvania side of the region opted to go with a biannual JARC selection process in FY 2011, mirroring New Jersey's process schedule, as a means to remove year-to-year uncertainty from the JARC funding process. Twenty-eight JARC projects were recommended for approval for FY 2012 and FY 2013 funding in Pennsylvania, with a single project recommended to PennDOT for funding through the Small Urban Program.

In New Jersey, JARC and NFI funding decisions are made biannually, with a commitment of two years of funding to selected projects. The last New Jersey funding round occurred in FY 2011 and assigned about \$650,000 FTA funds for JARC and about \$450,000 FTA funds for NFI for each of FYs 2012 and 2013. Four JARC projects and three NFI projects were recommended for approval in New Jersey for each of the two years. NJ Transit will distribute funding based on availability and amount of match provided by the applicant. In previous years, local funding match was provided by the Transportation Innovation Fund (TIF) and the New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJ DHS).

In an effort to address FTA's requirement for each county to identify local, county-specific CHSTP priorities in Pennsylvania counties, DVRPC initiated a county stakeholder outreach process in FY 2011. As part of a targeted outreach process, each Pennsylvania county met with a selected group of stakeholders that have expertise in the various needs of CHSTP communities. DVRPC assisted with meeting facilitation and output summary review in order to ensure that each county produces a county-specific CHSTP document. These documents, brief summaries of stakeholder-identified county priorities, will provide a stepping off point for future, larger outreach processes. The product of this initial outreach process will help identify and affirm both short- and long-term priorities, and will serve as guidance to county and regional transportation providers.

DVRPC completed work in FY 2011 to streamline and summarize the regional CHSTP document. This summary document serves as an interim, user-friendly manual for CHSTP in the region, in place of the May 2007 document. DVRPC's local and federal partners approved this action, anticipating that reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU will bring some significant changes and reorganization to CHSTP. The update to the regional plan, consequently, will take place after SAFETEA-LU is reauthorized.

Congestion Management Process (CMP)

The Congestion Management Process (CMP) is a multifaceted approach to minimize road congestion and advance toward regional goals. DVRPC's CMP defines congested corridors, divided into subcorridors, with "appropriate" and "secondary" congestion management strategies for each subcorridor. Census tracts containing higher EJ concentrations were considered when developing corridors and defining strategies for congested subcorridors. Virtually all EJ-significant tracts, defined in this process as census tracts with five to eight DOD, are targeted for appropriate multimodal transportation investments.

Over 100 congestion management strategies are contained in the CMP Report (Publication 09028). Several strategies were further explained in terms of EJ sensitivity and then correlated to a specific disadvantaged group or groups. For example, one strategy states that outreach should be conducted at unconventional locations and hours to reach segments of the population that ordinarily cannot attend meetings at traditional hours or locations.

In FY 2011, the CMP was updated. This work includes guidance from the CMP Advisory Committee, which included representatives from the Regional Citizens Committee. The analysis continues to use EJ analysis in the same way. An executive summary was published as *Overview of the 2011 CMP* (Publication 11042A). The CMP includes outreach steps to engage diverse audiences. In addition to the colorful and accessible *Overview*, DVRPC uses an introductory newsletter about CMP for the whole region and prepares two corridor-specific newsletters each year (one in each state) oriented to participants in nonprofit organizations, interested citizens, and municipal officials. These newsletters briefly and clearly explain what people can do to address congestion in their community. DVRPC's CMP website resources (<http://www.dvrpc.org/CongestionManagement/>) include the *Overview* and the full report, as well as online mapping features.

Central Jersey Transportation Forum

The diverse Central Jersey Transportation Forum has been meeting since 1999 to address concerns of municipalities along the US 1 corridor in central New Jersey. The key issues are east-west access, improving coordination of transportation and land use in this high-growth, congested area, and transit. This is a major employment corridor (including regional shopping malls and medical facilities). It is also an area with a limited and relatively expensive housing base. A subject of interest to the forum is improving the ratio of housing to jobs and shortening commutes by making it possible for more people to live near their jobs.

Safety and Security Program

Safety matters to everyone, so DVRPC pursues an active, wide-ranging approach to improve it. Safety is incorporated in a great many of DVRPC's Work Program efforts, from safe routes to school, to use of technology for operations and incident management, to corridor studies. The broad Transportation Safety and Security Program helps coordinate these efforts and also includes many specific tasks, such as:

- The *Safety Action Plan* established seven key emphasis areas, including sustaining safe senior mobility and ensuring pedestrian safety, both of which directly matter to EJ populations;
- The Regional Safety Task Force, a wide-ranging group that meets quarterly, has held a meeting focused on each emphasis area over the last two years. Work is underway on the update of the Safety Action Plan. Based on preliminary analysis and discussion, the key emphasis areas will remain the same. The Regional Safety Task Force meetings are open for public participation;
- Road Safety Audits are focused analyses to make high-crash road sections safer for all users; and
- DVRPC enhances transportation security planning and communication efforts throughout the Delaware Valley to prepare the transportation system to deal with natural and man-made emergencies. The approach is based on *Fitting the Pieces Together: Improving Transportation Security Planning in the Delaware Valley*. Recommendations include that DVRPC could provide expertise in sheltering in place and would consider EJ populations in such planning.

Air Quality

The Air Quality Partnership (AQP) is dedicated to providing information regarding the health effects of ground level ozone and fine particle pollution, while encouraging individuals to take action to reduce polluting activities, throughout DVRPC's service area. The partnership primarily delivers these messages through paid advertising and outreach in major regional newspapers, radio ads, and targeted (weather and traffic) television sponsorships. The AQP also sponsors and participates in numerous community events to disseminate educational materials and provide information to the general public.

In an effort to ensure that air quality information and health advisories are accessible to minority populations and communities in the region, the partnership purchases advertisements and event sponsorships that are targeted to or traditionally attended by largely minority audiences. Below is a list of targeted advertisements and sponsorships supported by the AQP in FY 2011:

- Series of ads in *Al Dia*: *Al Dia* is the leading Spanish language newspaper in the region. The AQP ran a series of air quality advertisements in *Al Dia* for 12 weeks in the months of June, July, and August;
- *Al Dia* produced a Spanish language anti-idling commercial, which the AQP posted on its website through the summer of 2011. It is planned to make this video available to the Clean Air Council for further distribution;
- Spanish-language materials: The AQP distributes a Spanish translation of the *Air Quality in the Delaware Valley* educational brochure at public events; and

- Sponsorships of diverse radio programming: The AQP sponsored programming on various radio stations to reach minority and older residents in the region.

Advertisements and sponsorships provide basic air quality information and direct audiences to the AQP website and free telephone information line, where they can receive air quality forecasts, health information, and tips to reduce air pollution.

Darby Borough Grade Crossing Study

During FY 2011, DVRPC staff began a two-year integrated transportation and land use planning study in Darby Borough, Delaware County that has an EJ and public involvement element. Darby Borough is a historic community that possesses two highway-railroad grade crossings in close proximity to many homes, shops, and two neighborhood schools. The grade crossings are focal points of significant pedestrian, transit, auto, and freight train activity. To support DVRPC's EJ and public involvement goals, the Darby Borough study has produced an environmental assessment of the community, and a number of public involvement activities are planned for Phase II of the study in FY 2012, such as the dissemination of grade crossing safety literature, an inventory of local sidewalks, and public outreach events.

Fern Rock Transportation Center Study

DVRPC was asked by Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) to study the transit services accessible from Fern Rock Transportation Center, located in North Philadelphia, as well as the ways that passengers access and move between these services. Drawing on a better understanding of how the facility is being used and might be used in the future, DVRPC was then tasked with developing a conceptual station Master Plan that reflects a near- and long-term strategy for making improvements to Fern Rock Transportation Center in a coordinated way. A summary of EJ-sensitive populations was prepared. The DOD represent racial minorities, poverty, poverty indicators, and transit-dependent populations. The station study area contained concentrations of households in poverty and female head of household with child, which is widely considered a poverty indicator, that both exceed the regional threshold by approximately two times. Carless household concentrations in the station area are more than two times the regional threshold. Low-income communities with carless households are more likely to be transit dependent, and improved transit access will have a significant impact on job access, employment opportunities, and daily mobility.

U.S. 30 (Lancaster Avenue) Corridor Study: Creating Linkages and Connecting Communities

DVRPC studied US 30 (Lancaster Avenue) between 52nd Street in West Philadelphia and Old Eagle School Road in Wayne, Pennsylvania. Transportation, land use, and environmental issues are addressed through recommendations made to enhance the existing assets of the 11-mile corridor by addressing transportation and livability issues and concerns. A summary of the presence of EJ-sensitive populations within each corridor municipality and the entire study area was prepared. Large concentrations of potentially disadvantaged populations were found in the Philadelphia portion of the study area, as well as a high incidence of elderly population throughout the corridor. Improvement projects recommended in the study area should be evaluated based on the extent to which they impact these sensitive populations. The study found that each of Philadelphia's 17 census tracts contains at least two DOD, and 12 of these tracts are characterized by five or more DOD. The only disadvantaged groups not present in larger number are Hispanic and Limited English Proficient households. For planning purposes, these population characteristics reinforce the need for affordable, safe, and convenient transportation options in Philadelphia and throughout the corridor. For instance, people with physical disabilities often rely on alternative modes of transportation for all mobility needs, and accessible streets and sidewalks are especially important to their mobility. Mobility concerns are also paramount for elderly populations. Twenty-three of the study

area's 38 census tracts exceeded the regional threshold for population age 75 and over. As the rate of driving decreases with age, mobility for elderly residents is dramatically impacted by the quality and connectivity of the pedestrian network, frequency of transit service, and the accessibility of local services and employment. As part of the final report, an implementation plan will be created which that identifies priority recommendations in both the short- and long-term.

NJ Route 73 Transportation/Land Use Corridor Study

The study area includes nine census tracts within four municipalities in Burlington County, New Jersey: Evesham Township, Maple Shade Township, Moorestown Township, and Mount Laurel Township. The study utilized the DOD method, and the specific DOD that are present for each census tract in the study were tabulated. The following were identified:

- None of the study area tracts meet the regional threshold populations for carless households, households in poverty, and female heads of household with children;
- Four tracts meet the regional threshold population for persons with physical disabilities; and
- Four tracts meet the regional threshold population for elderly people.

The study identifies a variety of existing transportation facilities in the study area, including bicycle, pedestrian, and transit service. Short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations will be developed and outlined in a final report.

I-95/I-476 Interchange Feasibility Study

A DVRPC consultant is conducting a study to document existing deficiencies and identify short- to medium-term operational improvements to the I-95/I-476 Interchange and its immediate vicinity. Frequent congestion and higher-than-average crash rates are caused by the complexity of the interchange's ramp configuration. Potential recommendations under consideration include adding additional lanes to ramps through minor widening, reconfiguring lane drops and mergers, peak-period shoulder use, either closing or relocating the Chestnut Street on-ramp, and improved signing, markings, and lighting. An EJ screening was conducted. On May 25, 2011, a public meeting was held in Chester, Pennsylvania with local community groups to review the study's findings and potential improvements.

Camden County Transit Expansion Framework Study

The proposed Glassboro-Camden Line is an 18-mile transit route linking Camden and Gloucester counties to the existing Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO) high speed line running between Philadelphia and Camden County, as well as to New Jersey Transit's RiverLINE, which connects Camden and Trenton. DVRPC has conducted a planning study to comprehensively document the existing conditions along the proposed transit line and evaluate the potential for economic development for the Camden County communities through which the train line will pass. The framework study contains a series of station area profiles for five potential station areas in Camden City and Gloucester City. As part of this analysis, DVRPC utilized its EJ methodology to assess the DOD for populations within a half-mile radius of the proposed stop locations. This analysis has helped to identify potentially transit-dependent populations that may benefit from the development of the Glassboro-Camden Line.

Camden City Parking Needs Assessment

DVRPC conducted an analysis of current and future parking demands for selected areas of Camden, New Jersey, to accommodate the city's parking needs as it moves forward with new development. Following an analysis of existing parking facilities, traffic circulation patterns and crashes, future development plans, zoning and policy requirements, and interviews with key stakeholders, recommendations were generated.

The recommended actions, if implemented, will increase and upgrade the parking supply to meet demand sustainably, increase parking revenue and compliance with parking regulations, increase pedestrian and cyclist safety and reduce crashes, and encourage the development of parking policy that supports smart growth.

Eating Here: the Greater Philadelphia Food System Plan

This multiphase project began in FY 2009 with a large surveying and assessment effort to identify prominent stakeholders and regional competitive advantages, culminating in the Greater Philadelphia Food System Study, and was guided by a newly formed committee of nontraditional stakeholders. In FY 2011, DVRPC continued to convene the Food System Stakeholder Committee to explore different areas and issues within Greater Philadelphia's food system. Food access, hunger and nutrition, and the effects of poverty continue to be prevalent issues within Greater Philadelphia's food system. In February 2010, DVRPC also announced nearly \$500,000 in grants, made possible with funding from the William Penn Foundation, to seven local organizations already working to achieve the recommendations laid out in the plan.

Chester Riverfront and Community Rail Access Study

This study examined connecting SEPTA's Wilmington-Newark regional rail line with existing and planned development along the Chester City Riverfront. As part of the site analysis, a DOD analysis was conducted. Three alternatives were considered for connecting the regional rail service and the Chester City Riverfront: retain, replace, or relocate the Highland Avenue Station. Construction costs ranged from \$17 to \$27 million, depending on the strategy. It was determined that the current Highland Avenue Station would necessitate closure in three to five years based on structural safety concerns. Based on the factors outlined, it is suggested that Townsend/Engle or a new station at Highland Avenue appear to be the best choices, with the possibility of keeping Flower Street as another option. The details of land acquisition, design, and construction still need to be worked out between land owners, Chester City, and SEPTA. The report informs the policy conversation and narrows possible locations for further engineering study.

Shifting Gears: Regional Bicycle Outreach and Priority Setting

This report described Shifting Gears, a three-step process that included inventories of regional bicycle facilities, outreach to stakeholders, and an online survey. Included were descriptions of each of the various components of the program, a set of proposed priority locations based on the inventories and outreach sessions, and survey findings.

Aging and Smart Growth

Staff worked with the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) on an application for the Environmental Protection Agency's Commitment Award for Building Healthy Communities for Active Aging, which PCA subsequently won. Staff also worked with PCA on a National Institutes of Health grant to examine data on aging and the built environment.

Levittown Parkway Road Safety Audit

DVRPC conducts Road Safety Audits, which contain focused analysis to make high-crash road sections safer for all users, and are conducted in close coordination with municipalities, counties, and state agencies. Nine census tracts surrounding the Levittown Parkway study area in Bristol Township and Falls Township of Bucks County were evaluated utilizing the DOD method.

Improvement projects recommended in these areas should be evaluated concerning the extent to which they may impact sensitive populations. The most notable EJ-sensitive demographic groups in this study area are the physically disabled and elderly populations, meeting the regional threshold in six and three of nine census tracts, respectively. The 2000 U.S. Census definition of disabled highlights mobility challenges. The physically disabled population often relies on alternative modes of transportation for all mobility needs. The same often applies to the elderly, defined in this analysis as populations over 75 years of age, because rates of driving decrease with an increase in age. The mobility of the physically disabled and elderly populations is dramatically impacted by the quality of the pedestrian network, the connectivity of navigable sidewalks, and the availability and accessibility of services and employment.

NJ 47 Corridor Study

For this corridor, located in Gloucester County, New Jersey, nine census tracts from the three municipalities were evaluated utilizing the DOD method, representing 35,048 residents. Only census tracts through which NJ 47 passes were considered. Carless households and poverty DODs were not present in greater-than-average percentages in the corridor.

The most notable demographics identified in the analysis were disabled persons and elderly persons, found in five tracts and three tracts, respectively, and found together in three tracts. The definition of disabled raises potential mobility concerns, as this population often relies on alternative modes of transportation. The same applies to the elderly population. As a typically nondriving population, the mobility of these groups is largely dependent on the quality of the transit network, the pedestrian network, the extent and condition of sidewalks, and the availability of services and employment opportunities accessible by foot or bike, or by walking aid (e.g., wheelchair, walker, personal scooter, etc.). Although every special-needs group identified in the study corridor deserves attention and consideration when implementing transportation improvements, these two groups have the greatest concentration in the study area, making their needs more immediate.

In addition to the EJ implications for the identified sensitive groups of the study corridor are the implications for those who seek to bike, walk, or take transit. As noted in the report, nonmotorized travel is not ideally accommodated along the NJ 47 study corridor, and thus it is much more difficult to get around by bus, bike, or on foot. Since NJ 47 provides the most direct connection between the study area municipalities, it is the most appropriate corridor for sidewalks, bicycle accommodations, and transit amenities. These transportation investments benefit many of the sensitive groups identified, as well as those seeking alternatives to automobile travel. The associated health and environmental benefits of walking and biking should not be discounted.

Future Direction

The following projects and programs are included in the FY 2012 DVRPC Work Program:

Environmental Justice Work Group

The EJ Work Group provides DVRPC, planners, EJ advocates, and regional stakeholders the opportunity to discuss regional EJ planning issues and engage in collaboration with other EJ organizations in the region. A main focus of the group is to participate in the development of an access and mobility report, which will be published in FY 2012.

Routes 130 and 206 Traffic Study

DVRPC will conduct an analysis of traffic operations along US 130 and US 206 in northern Burlington County, specifically, Bordentown Borough and Township. Improved safety, congestion, and multimodal mobility will be points of emphasis. To better understand travel demands, DVRPC will coordinate with transit service providers and TMA's. An EJ screening and evaluation will be conducted for the study area to ensure consideration of specific needs of disadvantaged groups, and to inform preparation for public meetings, which will be held to define local priorities. The final report will provide short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations to improve safety, congestion, and multimodal mobility in the study area.

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Planning

DVRPC will maintain its role as a regional coordinator of the Federal Transit Administration's JARC and NFI programs, components of the CHSTP process. DVRPC facilitates coordination with funding agencies, the designated recipients (SEPTA in Pennsylvania, and NJ Transit in New Jersey) and member governments regarding project development and plan updates, and provides technical support through the selection process for JARC and NFI, as well as local review of Section 5310 applications (for elderly individuals and those with disabilities) in New Jersey. Continuing coordination of the competitive CHSTP grant selection rounds are scheduled for JARC in Pennsylvania (biannual funding round schedule) and both JARC and NFI in New Jersey (biannual funding round schedule) in FY 2013.

Other Activities

DVRPC will continue to implement EJ activities as part of its annual Work Program, fulfilling federal certification requirements, as well as attaining regional goals. The EJ program at DVRPC is constantly evolving. New programs or projects identify innovative ways to employ EJ, while existing programs include new requirements that call for expanded analysis. Finally, DVRPC internally strives to make the EJ program more effective over time, reaching into additional areas and strengthening current programs. DVRPC will:

- Keep abreast of legal developments related to Title VI and other nondiscrimination statutes;
- Assess DVRPC studies and processes to identify the regional benefits and challenges of different socioeconomic groups;
- Continue outreach to limited-English-proficient populations and strengthen efforts to include all residents of the Delaware Valley in the regional planning process;
- Participate and collaborate in regional and national programs that will allow DVRPC to exchange fresh ideas with others;
- Continue EJ education and training for DVRPC staff to heighten the awareness of EJ in the planning process and to continually incorporate EJ into DVRPC's day-to-day activities;
- Maintain and update, as necessary, the Title VI Compliance Plan, the Title VI and Environmental Justice Quick Reference Guide, and the Planner's Methodology. All documents are available at www.dvrpc.org/GetInvolved; and
- Maintain DVRPC's EJ, Public Participation, and Title VI resources page, located at www.dvrpc.org/Links/Public.htm.

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission is dedicated to uniting the region's elected officials, planning professionals, and the public with a common vision of making a great region even greater. Shaping the way we live, work, and play, DVRPC builds consensus on improving transportation, promoting smart growth, protecting the environment, and enhancing the economy. We serve a diverse region of nine counties: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia in Pennsylvania; and Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer in New Jersey. DVRPC is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Greater Philadelphia Region – leading the way to a better future.

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DVRPC fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. DVRPC's website (www.dvrpc.org) may be translated into multiple languages. Publications and other public documents can be made available in alternative languages and formats, if requested. For more information, please call (215) 238-2871.



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