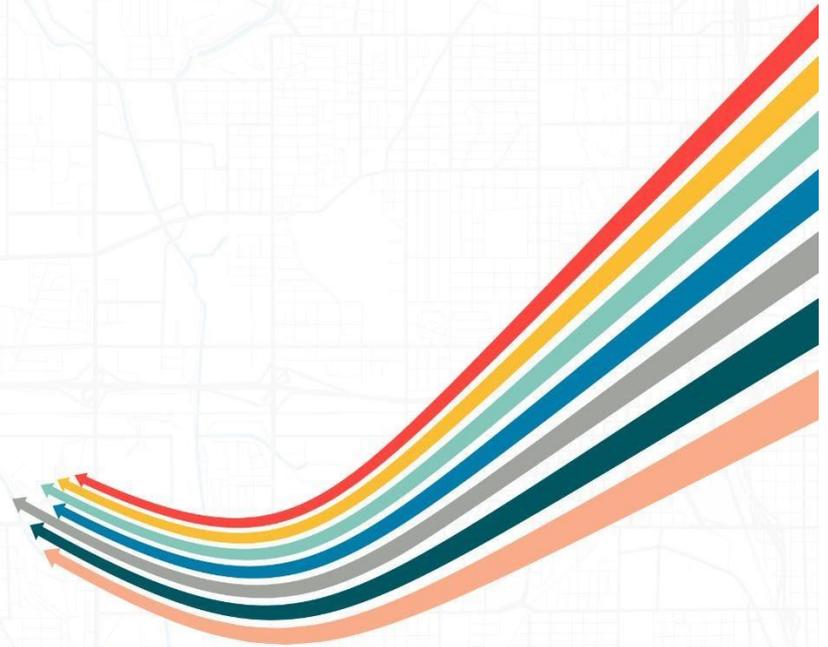


2022-2025

CIVIL RIGHTS POLICY



Title VI Guidelines and Complaint Procedure
Americans with Disability Act
Limited English Proficiency Guidelines
Environmental Justice Guidelines and Area Analysis

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

Agency Overview

The Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) is the designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for transportation planning in the Omaha-Council Bluffs area. Additionally, MAPA is the administrator of Regional Planning Affiliation 18 (RPA-18) and leads the transportation planning process in Harrison, Mills, rural Pottawattamie, and Shelby Counties in Iowa. MAPA receives federal funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other state and federal agencies related to metropolitan planning and regional planning.

MAPA's transportation planning process implements the three C's of transportation planning—Continuing, Cooperative, and Comprehensive planning—to involve residents in the planning process in an ongoing and inclusive manner. Due to the nature of the federal funding that MAPA receives, many different laws and federal regulations apply to MAPA's activities. Specific accommodation policies stating how regulations are implemented are discussed throughout the plan and MAPA's Title VI Policy Statement is also detailed in the sidebar to the right.

Additionally, MAPA has outlined the complaint process for both Title VI and ADA in this document. If a person feels he/she has been discriminated against by MAPA staff or as a part of MAPA program, the guidance in Chapter 3 is a recourse to those individuals.

What is an MPO?

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are organizations designated by the federal government to be responsible for transportation planning and project selection in a particular region. MPOs provide a forum for cooperative decision making for

MAPA's Civil Rights Policy

MAPA assures that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, disability/handicap or sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P.L. 100.259) be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. MAPA further assures every effort will be made to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its programs and activities, whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not.

In the event that MAPA distributes Federal aid funds to another entity, MAPA will include Title VI language in all written agreements and will monitor for compliance.

MAPA's Title VI Coordinator is responsible for initiating and monitoring Title VI activities, preparing reports and other responsibilities as required by 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 200 and 49 Code of Federal Regulation 21.

the metropolitan planning area. The governor designates an MPO in every urbanized area with a population more than 50,000. MAPA has been designated as the MPO for the Omaha-Council Bluffs region by the governors of both Nebraska and Iowa. The Iowa Department of Transportation has also established Regional Planning Affiliations (or RPAs) to lead a similar process in non-metropolitan areas. MAPA’s role as RPA-18 administrator mirrors many MPO responsibilities for communities in those four counties.

All agencies that receive federal funds, including MAPA, must ensure that their activities meet the requirements of several interrelated laws and executive orders. A list of these required considerations is included below:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (1964) | The Civil Rights Restoration Act |
| Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) | Executive Order 12250 |
| The Rehabilitation Act | Executive Order 12898 |
| The Federal-Aid Highway Act | Executive Order 13166 |
| The Age Discrimination Act | Executive Order 13985 |

TITLE VI – CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

“No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

Under the ADA all reasonable accommodations must be made for persons with disabilities to participate in all public activities and the planning process.

Updates & Amendments to MAPA’s Title VI

Title VI plans are updated every three years by MPOs to stay current with all relevant Federal, State, and local legislation.

All of MAPA’s documents follow a specific procedure for stakeholder and public participation; the requirements for MAPA’s Title VI plan are outlined in Figure 1.1 below.



FIGURE 1.1 – OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN REQUIREMENTS FOR TITLE VI PLANNING

MAPA Civil Rights Policy & Procedure

MAPA staff present the Civil Rights Policy to the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee before the MAPA Board of Directors releases the document to the public for comment. The new plan is posted online and at MAPA's office for public review and comment for at least 30 days. These comments will then be included in the appendices of the plan and staff will work to implement suggestions. After the public comment period the plan will again go to the Technical Transportation Committee (TTAC), and the MAPA Board for final approval and adoption. A summary of the comments received about the development of this plan are included in Appendix B.

MAPA Equity Assessment

In June 2020, the MAPA Board of Directors adopted an Equity Resolution in order to increase equitable outcomes in our region through MAPA's work. This resolution reaffirms the agency's commitment to an equitable and just region, and ensures that the issues of disparities, justice and racism are at the forefront as we work to do more with greater intensity and focus to realize the goal of expanding true opportunity to all residents.

The equity assessment is a direct outcome of the resolution, and scores MAPA's work in each of the eight action items included in the resolution. Per the equity resolution, an equity assessment will be completed annually at the end of each fiscal year. The first assessment was presented to the MAPA Board of Directors at the July 2021 Board Meeting.



MAPA's 2021 Equity Assessment can be viewed online at https://mapacog.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/EquityAssessment_4page.pdf

Chapter 2 - Transportation Planning Process

Introduction

MAPA undertakes many regional planning initiatives related to land use, economic development, transportation, and other public facilities such as recreation, sanitary sewer, and water supply each year. Planning for complex needs like transportation systems, beneficial recreations, and high-quality natural environment simply cannot be done well without working together. This emphasis on regionalism is critical to the success of MAPA, its member entities, and to ensure that all residents have the opportunity to participate fully in the planning process. As a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and RPA administrator, MAPA works with federal, state, and local agencies and citizens to coordinate transportation planning at the regional level for the Omaha Metropolitan Area and surrounding counties in Iowa. MAPA receives federal funds to develop regional transportation plans and programs and to coordinate technical and policy studies on transportation and other programs.

The MAPA Transportation Management Area (TMA), which is the same as the MPO boundary, is comprised of Douglas, Sarpy, eastern Pottawattamie County, and part of Cass County. The TMA is the region in which MAPA is responsible for short- and long-range transportation planning and for allocating Federal Funding to transportation projects. RPA-18 undertakes similar responsibilities in Harrison, Mills, Shelby, and the non-urban portion of Pottawattamie County. These boundaries are illustrated in Figure 2.1 (next page). The sidebar includes a summary of important planning products and stakeholder groups through which MAPA and RPA-18 develop plans and studies. A more detailed discussion of MAPA's committee structure is included in the next section of this chapter.

Important Transportation Planning Documents

2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Transportation Improvement Program

Unified Planning Work Program

Traffic Reports

Public Participation Plan

Civil Rights Plan

Coordinated Transit Plan

RPA-18 Long Range Transportation Plan

RPA-13/18 Passenger Transportation Plan

Stakeholder Groups

Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC)

Project Selection Committee (ProSeCom)

Transportation Alternatives Committee (TAP-C)

Coordinated Transit Committee (CTC)

RPA-18 Policy & Technical Committees

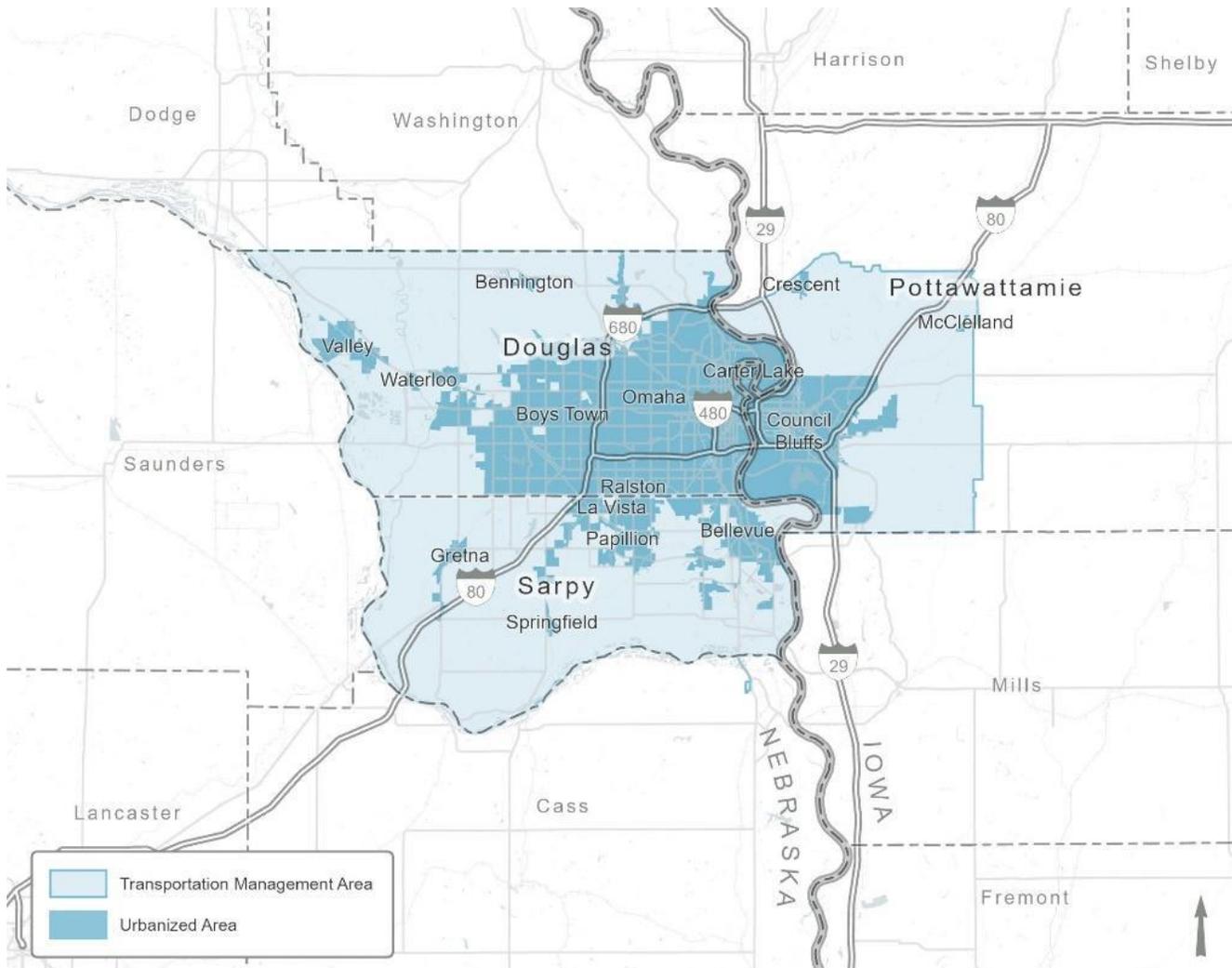
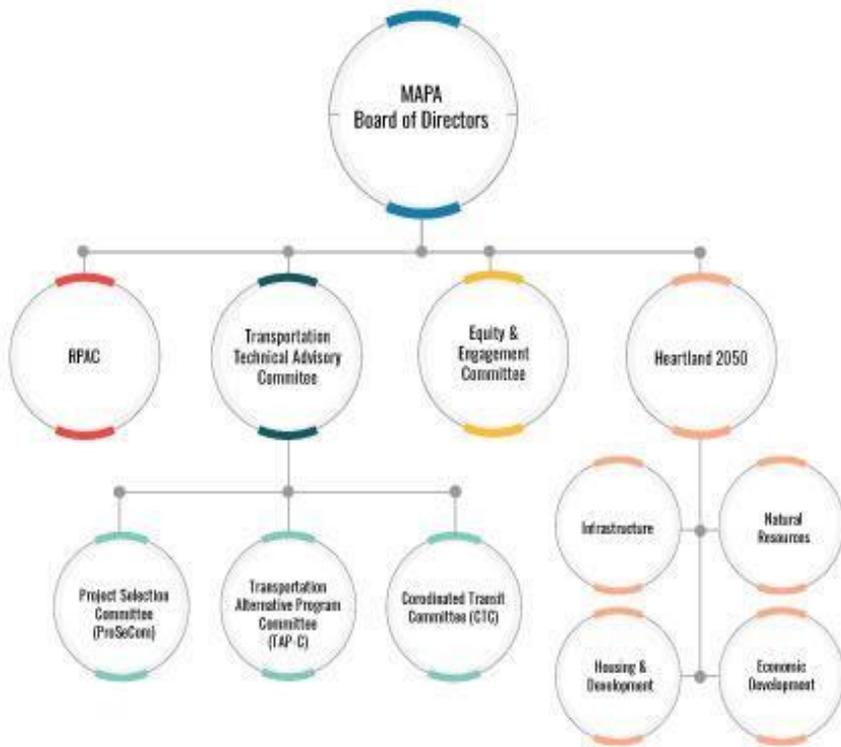


Figure 2.1 – MAPA TMA Region

MAPA’s Committee Structures

MAPA’s Transportation Planning Process is guided by a committee structure of local elected officials, local governmental staff, non-profits, advocacy groups, and community members. An organizational chart of MAPA’s MPO committee structure is included in Figure 2.2 on the next page. The MAPA Board of Directors serves as the Policy Board for the MAPA MPO, and constitutes final approval of all plans, policies, and regular business of the agency. Decisions by the MAPA Board are informed by recommendations from the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC). RPA-18’s Policy & Technical Committees meet jointly, with representatives of County Boards of Supervisors, County Engineers, City Administrators, City Public Works Officials, Southwest Iowa Transit Authority, Golden Hills RC&D and Iowa DOT helping advise on regional decision-making.

The TTAC is comprised of public works officials and planners from member communities, state DOT representatives, and local transit officials. This group provides key input into the development of MAPA’s plans, project selection, and the development of transportation-related policies for the Omaha-Council Bluffs region.



MAPA has three standing project selection committees to make recommendations to TTAC about the region’s federal funding. The project selection sub-committees include the Project Selection Committee (composed of TTAC members), the Coordinated Transit Committee (includes human service and para-transit agencies) and the Transportation Alternatives Program Committee (TAP-C) (involves engineers, bike/pedestrian advocates, and planners) and they make recommendations to the TTAC.

Figure 2.2 – MAPA Committee Structure

MAPA’s Planning Process

MAPA strives to ensure that all its activities reflect the ideal *Comprehensive, Cooperative, and Continuing* planning process. These “Three C’s” provide a framework for understanding the importance of early and continuous engagement of the public throughout the planning process. Each of these characteristics is defined in the list below:

- *Comprehensive* – Consideration of all possible factors and relevant information.
- *Cooperative* – Involving input from as many aspects of the communities affected as possible.
- *Continuing* – To sustain an ongoing development and review decisions to ensure continued relevance.

The MAPA Public Participation Plan identifies specific strategies and processes for each major planning document that MAPA develops. However, the general process for plan development is quite similar and is described in Figure 2.3 (next page). This approach emphasizes the need for early and continuous engagement from stakeholders and the public. Providing ample time for feedback in the planning process ensures open and full participation is possible for all residents of the MAPA region.

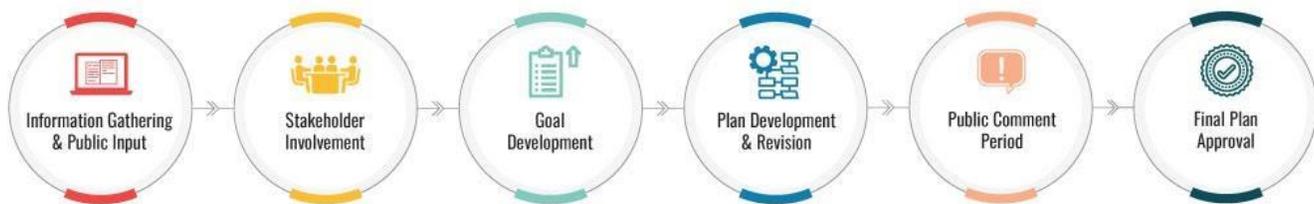
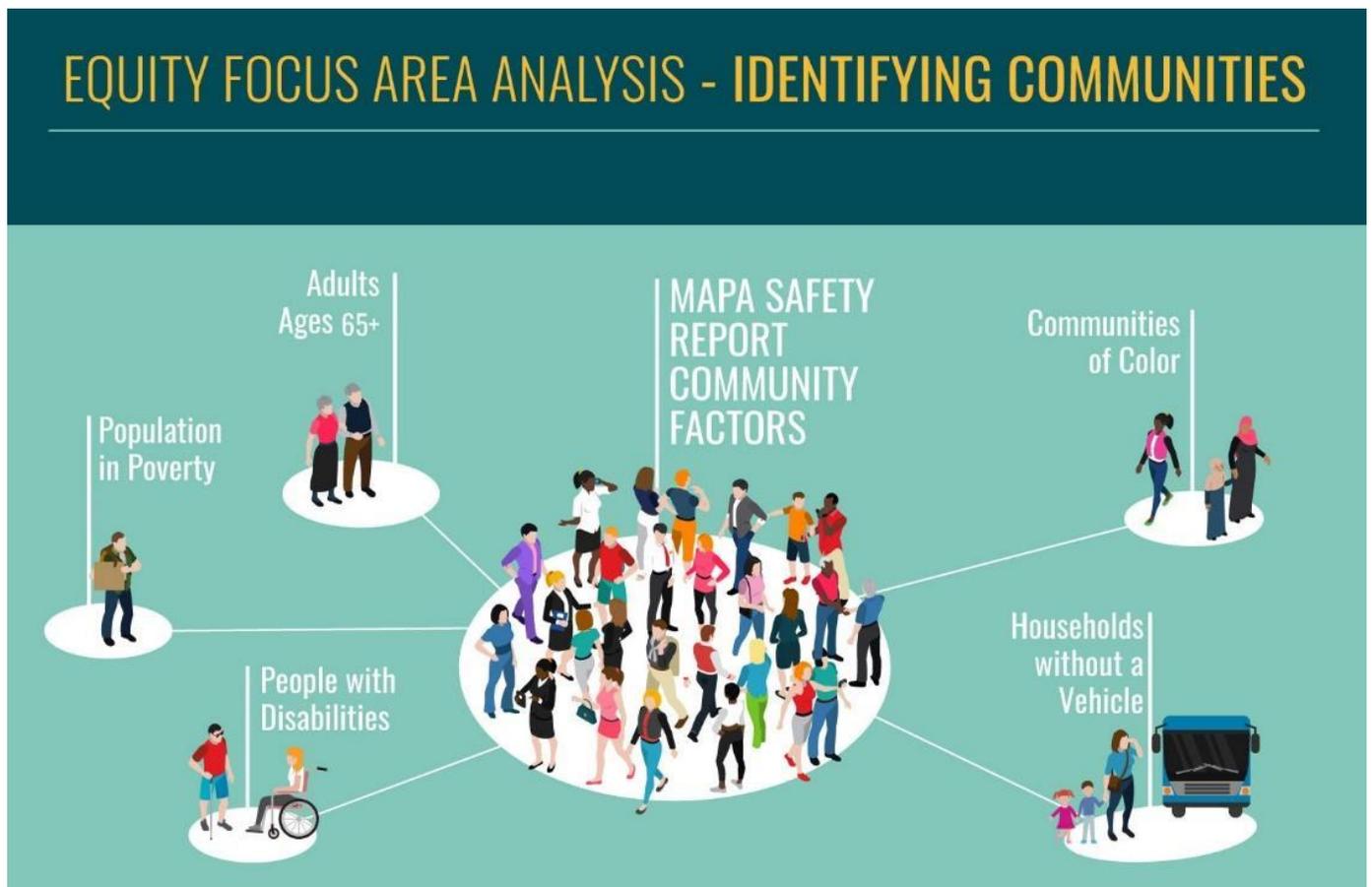


Figure 2.3 – Overview of the MAPA Planning Process

MAPA Demographic Profile

There are many different segments of the population that require additional consideration as a part of the transportation planning process. A summary of each of the groups listed below is detailed in the demographic profile for both the MPO and RPA-18 region:

- Adults Ages 65+
- People with Disabilities
- Population in Poverty
- Households without a Vehicle
- Communities of Color



MAPA TMA | Adults Ages 65+

Total Population	Adults Ages 65+	Percent
817,126	104,074	12.7%

Table 2.1 – Population Over 65 Years of Age in the MAPA TMA

Table 2.1 provides a summary of the population 65 years of age and older in the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metro area. Of the over 104,000 people over the age of 65 in the MAPA region, many are concentrated outside of the urban core. This distribution poses a unique challenge to the transportation network for the area since many of the elderly are no longer able to drive or have restrictions on their driving– such as being unable or unwilling to drive at night. Figure 2.4 (below) shows the geographic distribution of the population ages 65 and over.

Metro Transit provides limited fixed route transit service and demand response service to many of the Omaha neighborhoods. Several areas which have large pockets of people ages 65+ have limited or no transit service available. Council Bluffs, Ralston, La Vista, Papillion, and Bellevue all have locally operated transit services for elderly and disabled populations as well. MAPA’s Coordinated Transit Committee works with local stakeholders and non-profit transit providers to expand the mobility of elderly and disabled populations with limited mobility.

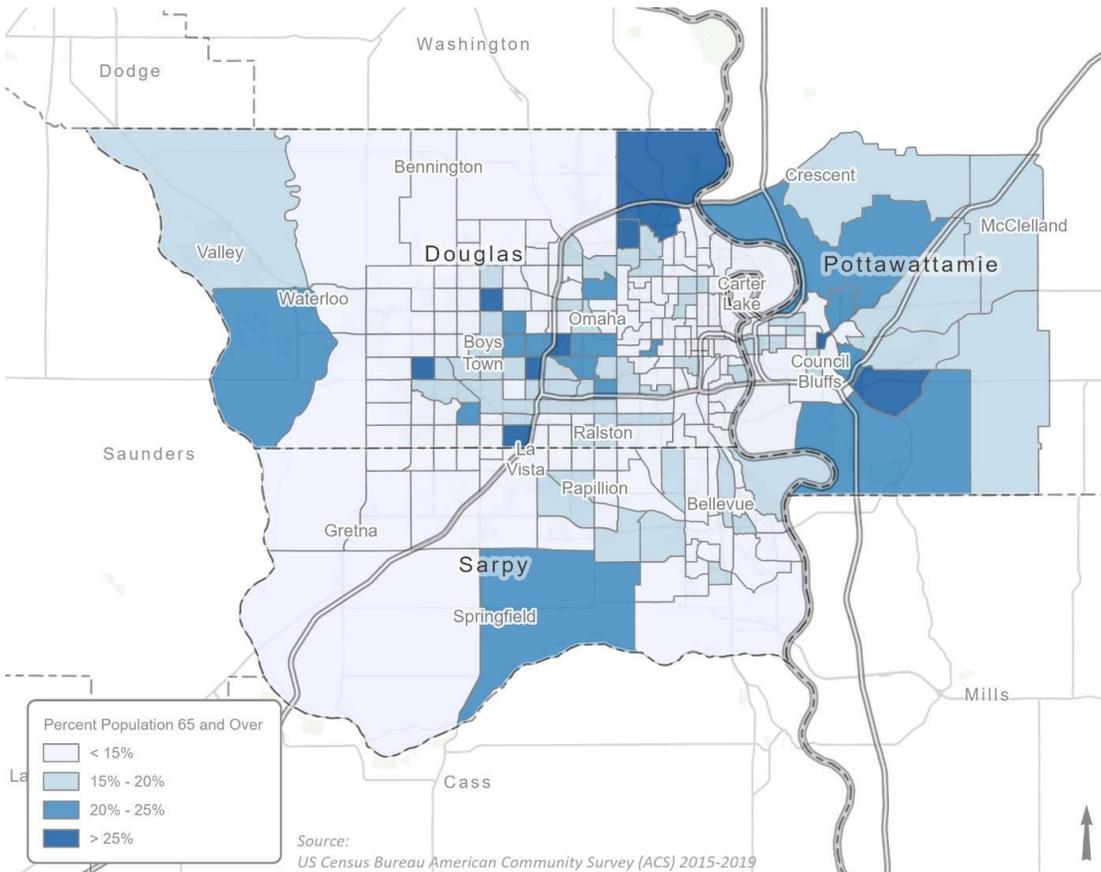


Figure 2.4 – Distribution of Adults Ages 65+ within the MAPA TMA

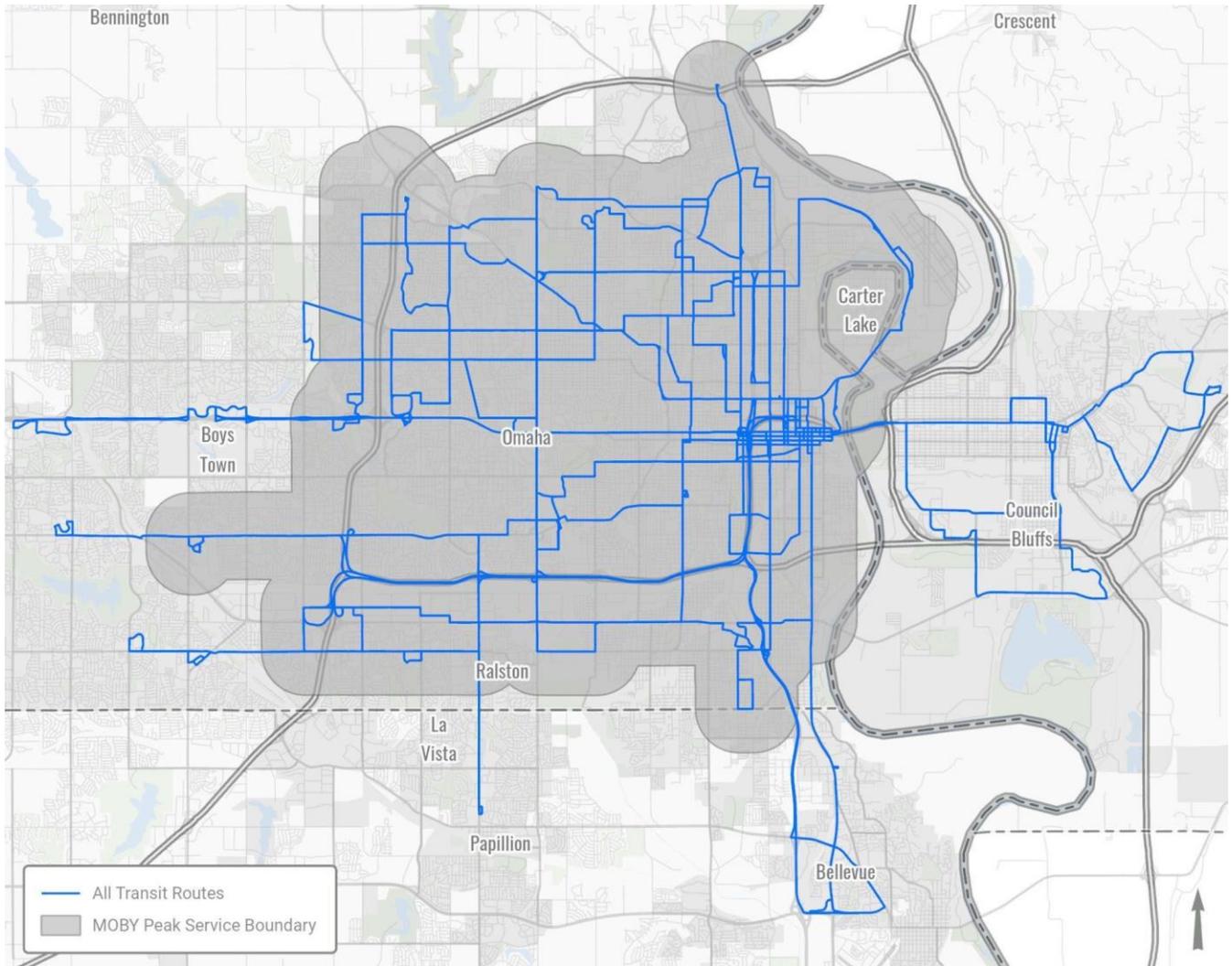


Figure 2.5 – Omaha METRO Transit Service Map

MAPA TMA | People with Disabilities

Total Civilian Non-Institutionalized Population	People with Disabilities	Percent
804,523	86,538	10.8%

Table 2.2 – People with Disabilities within the MAPA TMA

Table 2.2 provides a summary of people with disabilities within the MAPA TMA. Based on American Community Survey data, there are approximately 86,500 people who are considered disabled, most of whom reside in the North Eastern section of Omaha city and the urban portion of Pottawattamie County. There are growing populations of people with disabilities in Valley and Waterloo, likely connected to the increasingly large percentage of those over 65 in these areas. Figure 2.6 below shows the geographic distribution of the population living with a disability.

Northeastern Omaha is well served by Metro Transit’s fixed route service presently and is within the ¼ mile buffer of fixed route service in which Metro’s MOBY demand response paratransit service operates. Additionally, MAPA’s Coordinated Transit Committee continues to work with local stakeholders and non-profit transit providers to expand the mobility of elderly and disabled populations with paratransit services. There is currently considerable unmet rural and suburban demand for paratransit services within the region based on MAPA’s stakeholder coordination with providers.

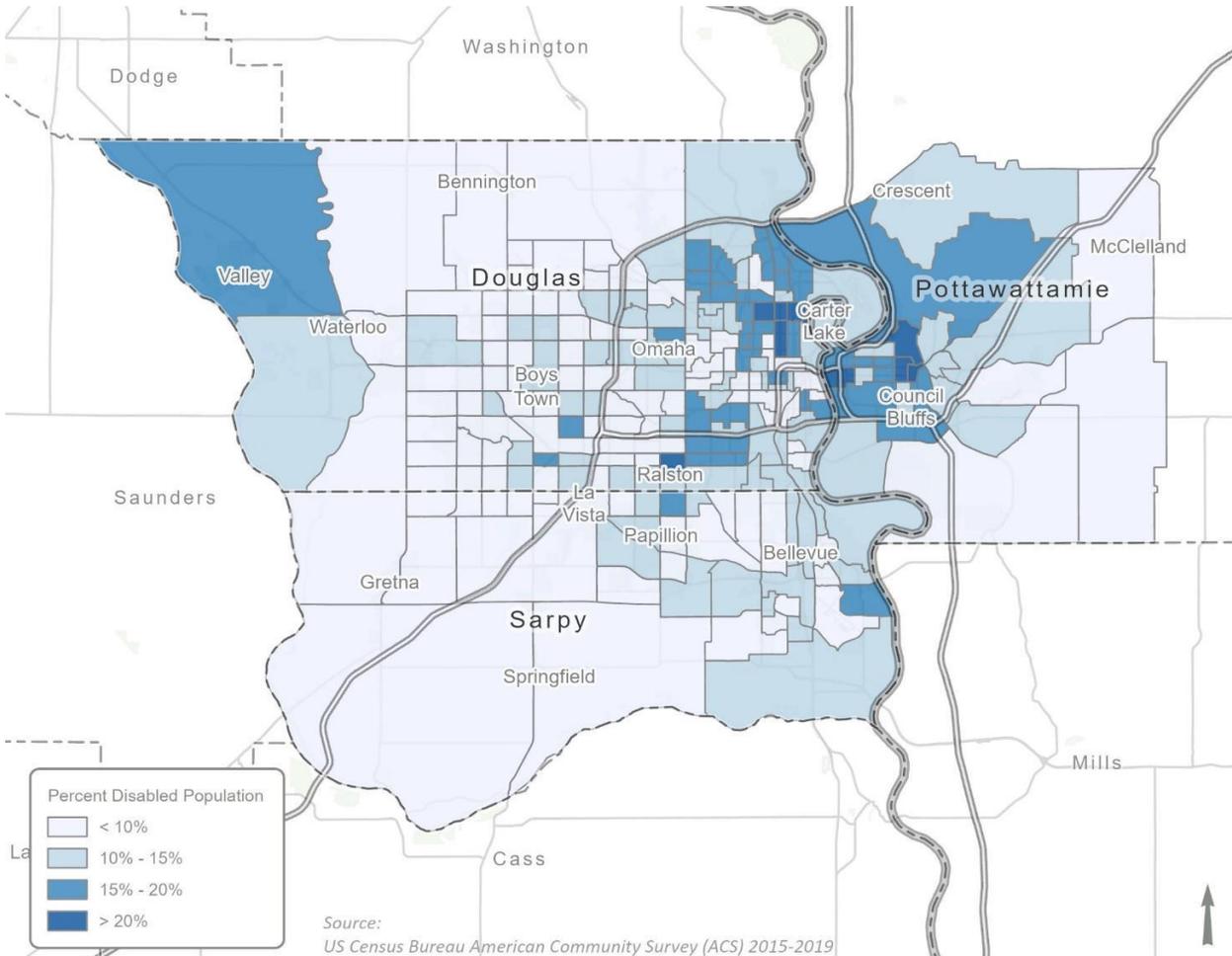


Figure 2.6 – Distribution of People with Disabilities within the MAPA TMA

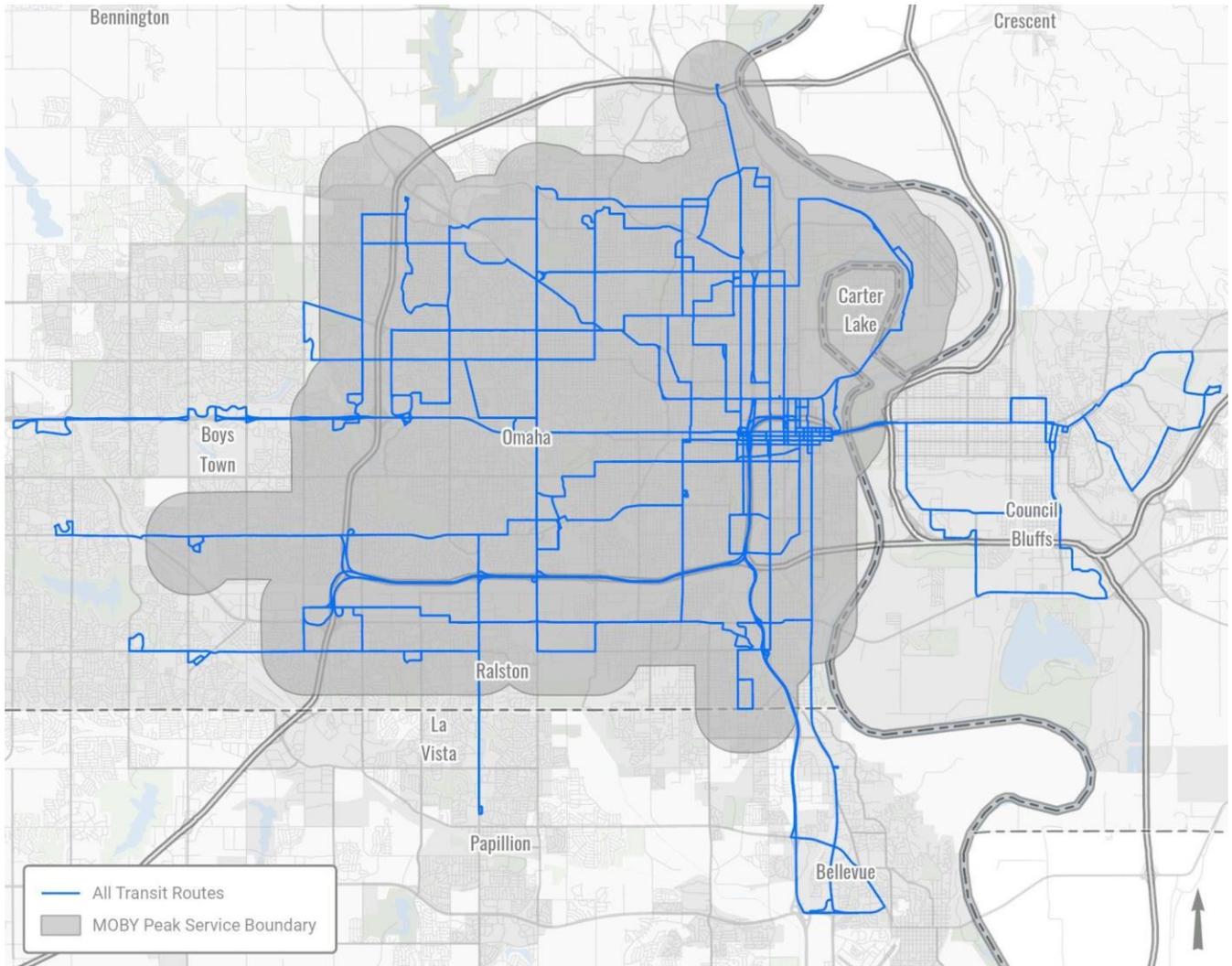


Figure 2.10 – MAPA TMA Households without a Vehicle

MAPA TMA | Population in Poverty

Population for whom poverty status is determined	Population in Poverty	Percent
800,022	85,282	10.7%

Table 2.3 – TMA Population in Poverty

Table 2.3 to the right shows the population living in poverty in the MAPA region. There are approximately 85,300 people living at or below the poverty line. The highest concentrations of these low-income individuals are found within Northeastern Omaha. The geographic distribution of residents in poverty within the MAPA region and Metro Transit’s fixed-route transit service is illustrated in Figure 2.8 below.

For populations in poverty in Omaha, access to job centers is a critical need. The area of Northeast Omaha that has the highest concentration of poverty is very well-served by transit at present. Additionally, smaller pockets of concentrated poverty in South Omaha are also well-served by the existing transit service provided by Metro. As a means of comparison, the HUD Jobs Proximity Indicator is shown on the following page in Figure 2.9.

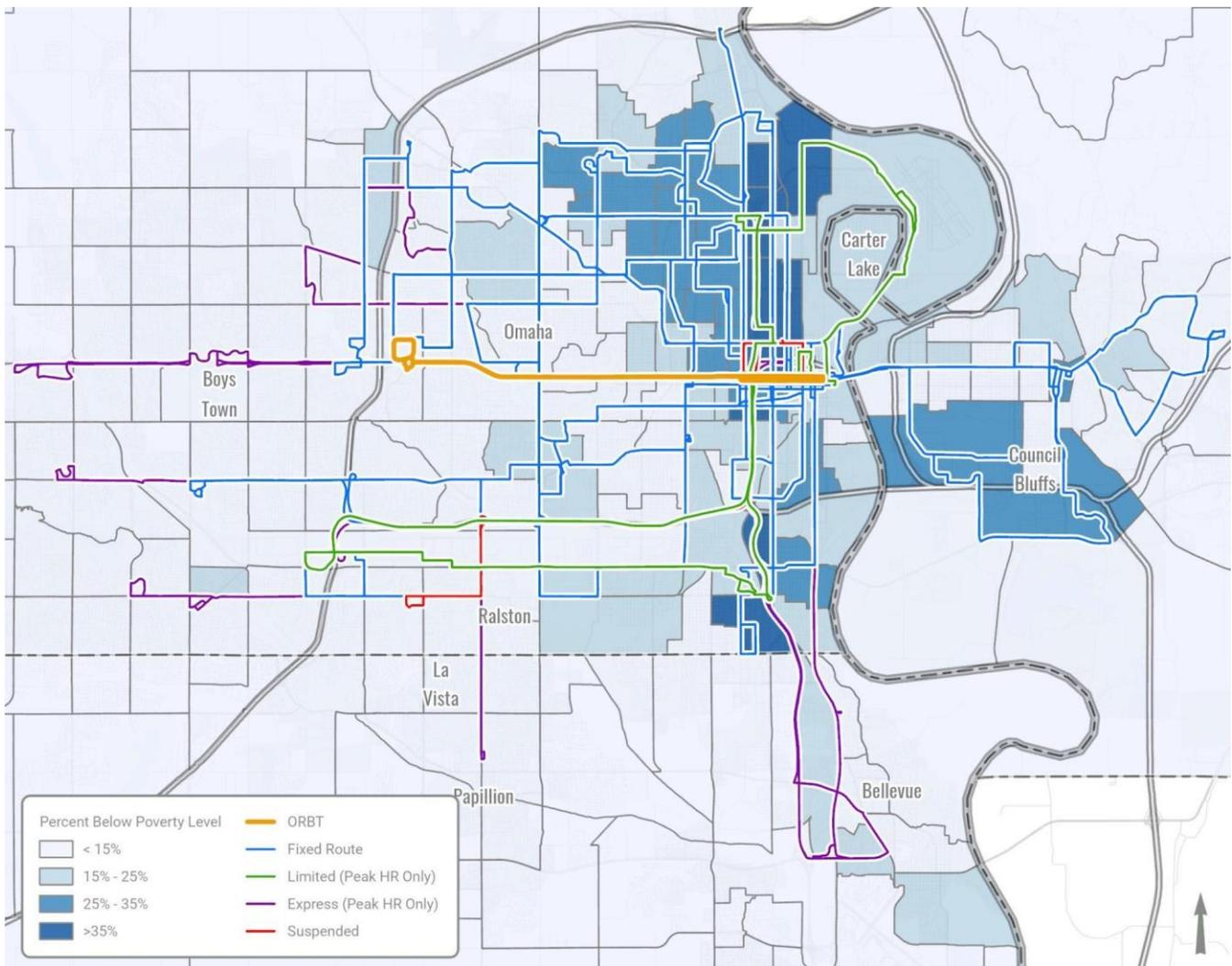


Figure 2.8 – TMA Population in Poverty and Transit Service

MAPA Civil Rights Policy & Procedure

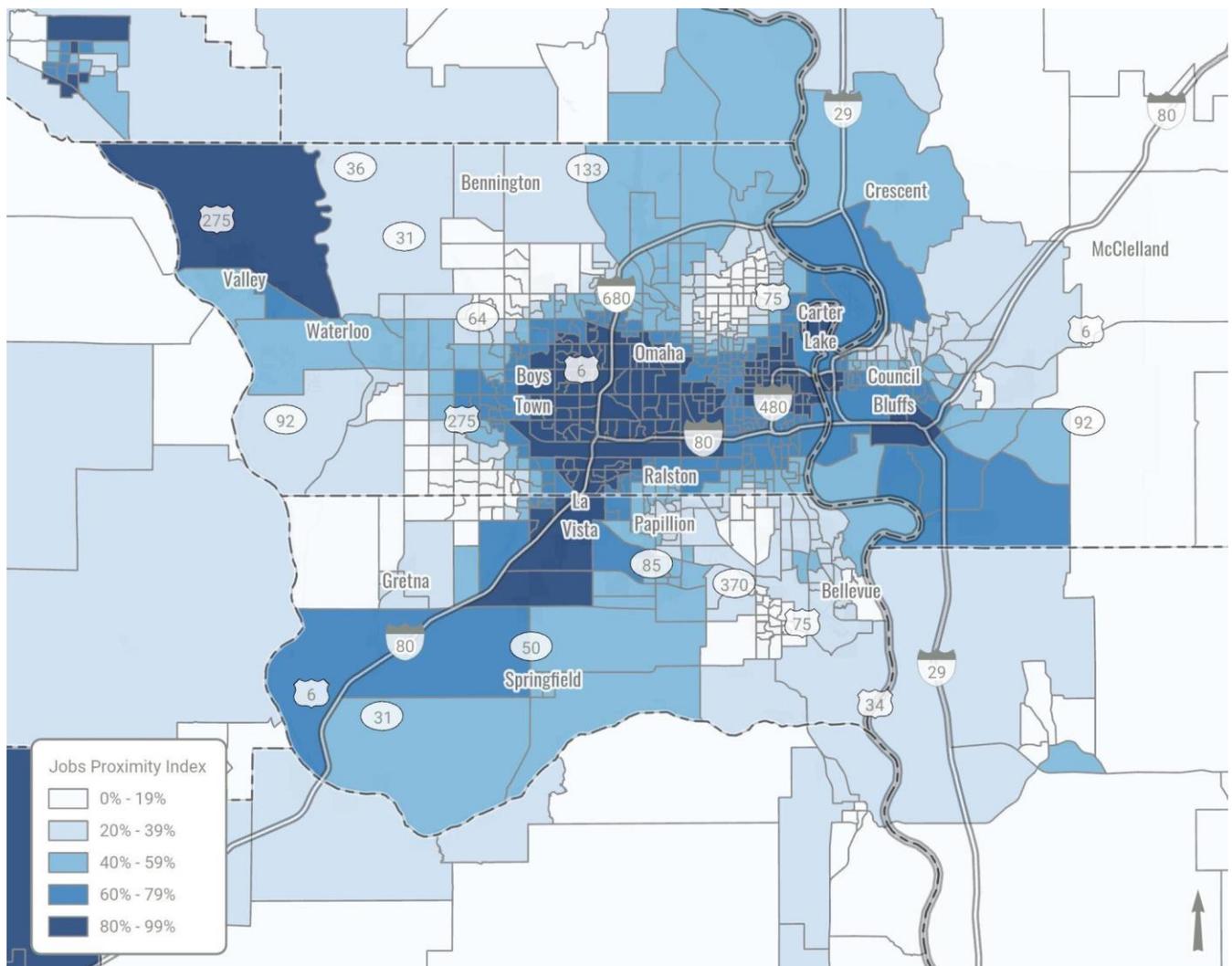


Figure 2.9 – HUD Jobs Proximity Index

MAPA TMA | Households without a Vehicle

Total Occupied Housing Units	Households without a Vehicle	Percent
313,956	19,695	6.3%

Table 2.4 – MAPA TMA Households without a Vehicle

Table 2.4 shows the number of households in the Omaha area that do not own a vehicle, nearly 19,700 households do not have access to this primary mode of transportation. Figure 2.10 illustrates the distribution within the TMA.

Transit already plays an important role in connecting Omaha regional residents to employers. An average of 2,624 workers in the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metro Area rely on the services of Metro Transit to get to work each day. These people earn \$71.1 million in annual wages and support an average of \$206.9 million in business sales and \$117 million in regional value added. The role of transit in providing workforce access is currently most important in service sector industries such as hospitality, retail, education, and health. However, other employees in other key sectors such as professional and business services, financial, insurance, and real estate use the region’s transit system to get to work.

As with people in poverty, the highest concentrations of households without vehicles are found in eastern Omaha within the city’s urban core, and are likely a direct correlation. The absence of an automobile in a household can create serious mobility limitations. However, the regional transit connections beyond the City of Omaha limit these households access to many growing employment centers in more suburban locations throughout the metro.

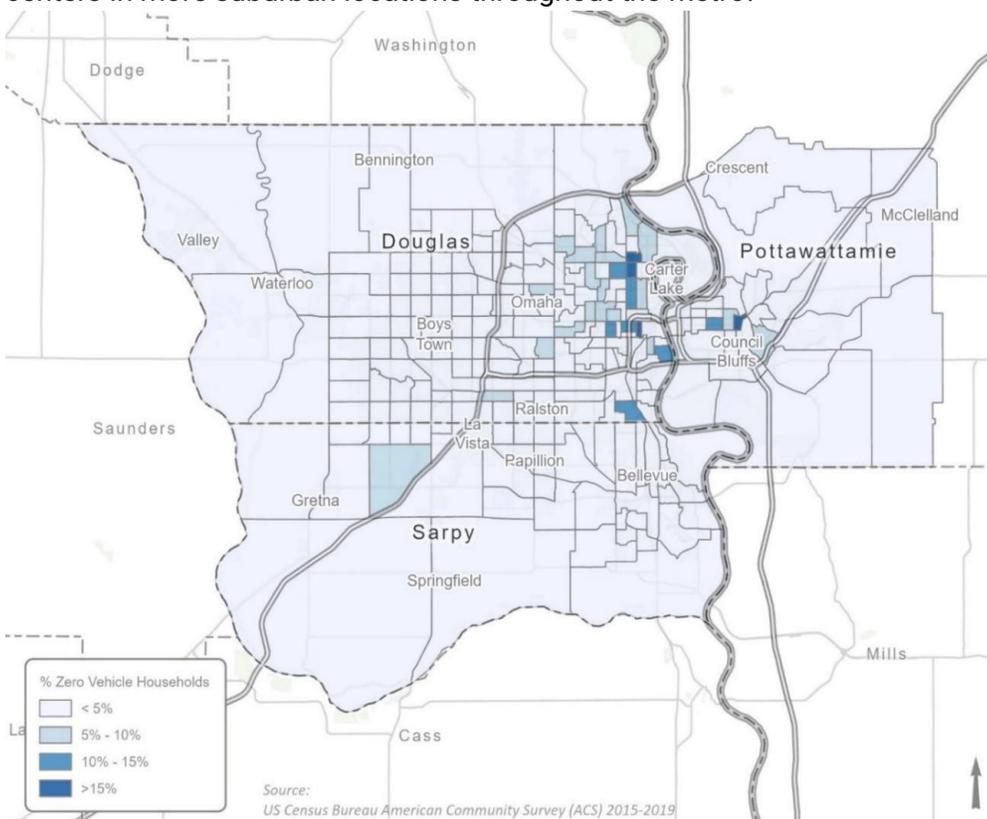


Figure 2.10 – MAPA TMA Households Without a Vehicle

MAPA Civil Rights Policy & Procedure

MAPA TMA | Communities of Color

Total Population	Communities of Color	Percent
817,126	145,750	17.8%

Table 2.5 – Race and Ethnicity in the MAPA TMA

Table 2.5 shows the number of people of color (non-white population) in the MAPA TMA and provides a summary of racial and ethnic compositions. The highest concentrations of minority populations are found in the urban core of the City of Omaha. In general, the Black population in the region is concentrated north of Dodge Street and east of 50th Street, while the Hispanic/Latino populations are concentrated south of Dodge and east of 42nd Street. The geographic distribution by race and ethnicity is shown in Figure 2.11.

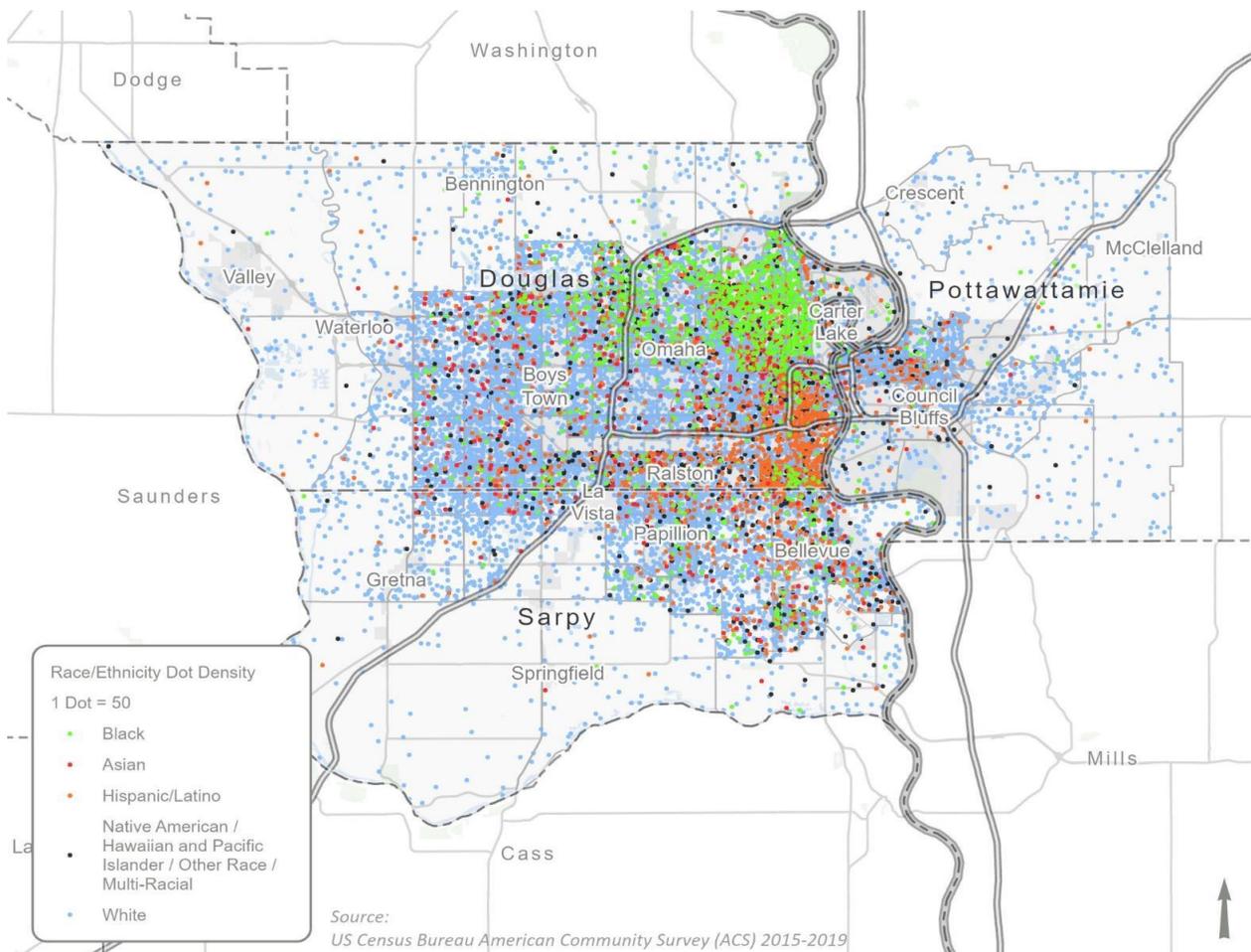


Figure 2.11 – MAPA Race and Ethnicity in the MAPA Region

RPA-18 | Adults Ages 65+

Total Population	Adults Ages 65+	Percent
58,845	11,356	19.3%

Table 2.9 – Adults Ages 65+ within RPA-18

Table 2.9 provides a summary of the population 65 years of age and older in the RPA-18 area. Of the 11,356 people over the age of 65 in the RPA-18 region, many are concentrated in Harrison and Shelby Counties. This distribution poses a unique challenge to the transportation network for the area since many of the elderly are no longer able to drive or have restrictions on their driving, such as being unable or unwilling to drive at night. Figure 2.12 (below) shows the geographic distribution of the population over 65 years of age.

Southwest Iowa Transit Service provides limited fixed route and demand response transit service many of the RPA-18 cities. Several areas which have large pockets of people over 65 have limited transit service available which is provided by SWITA. SWITA’s TAG works with local stakeholders and non-profit transit providers to expand the mobility of elderly and disabled populations with limited mobility.

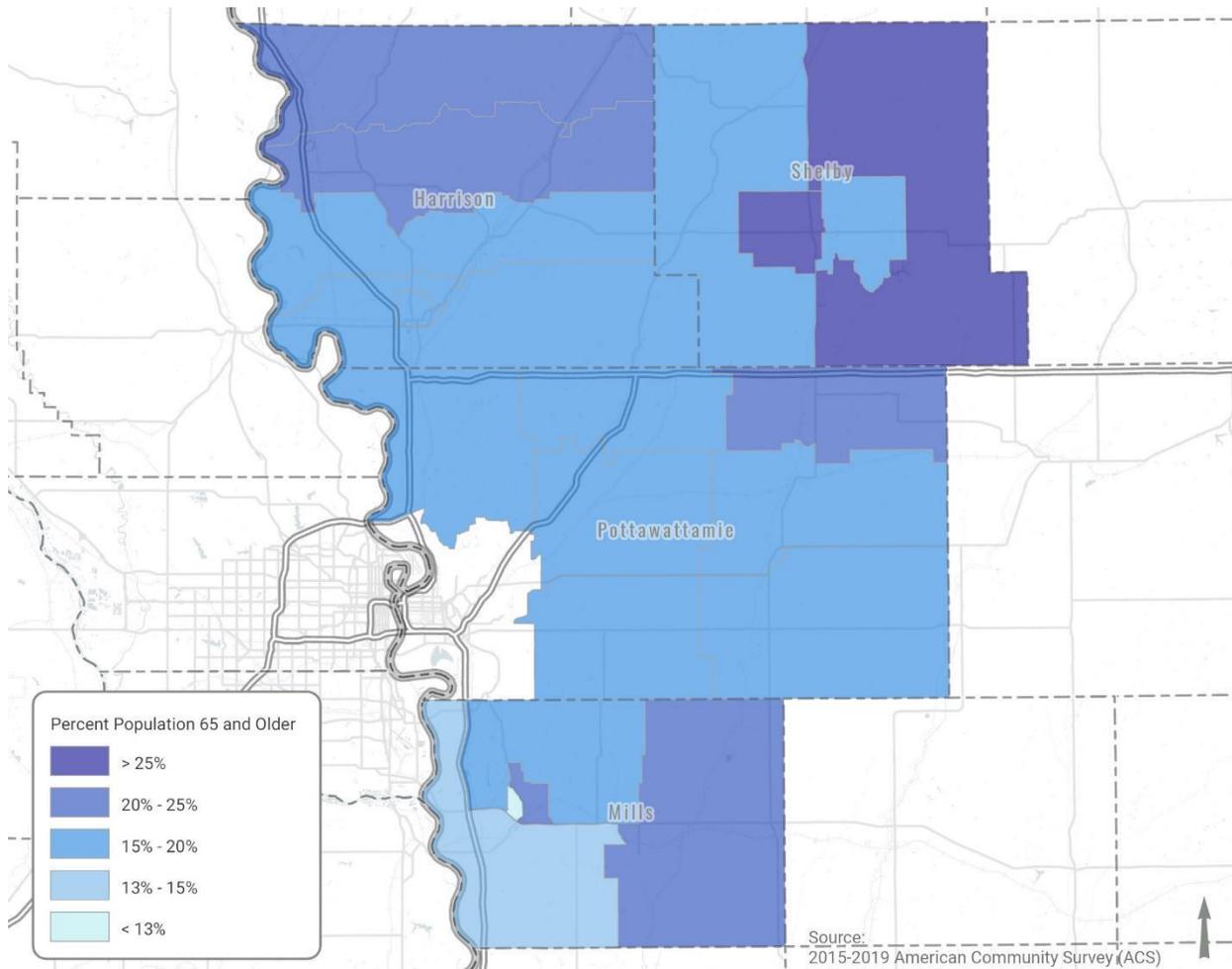


Figure 2.12 – Adults Ages 65+ within RPA-18 Region

RPA-18 | People with Disabilities

Total Civilian Non-Institutionalized Population	People with Disabilities	Percent
57,950	7,237	12.4%

Table 2.10 – People with Disabilities within the RPA-18 Region

Table 2.10 provides a summary of the disabled population in the RPA-18 Area. Based on American Community Survey data, there are approximately 7,200 people who are considered disabled, most of these people are concentrated in the Mills County. Figure 2.13 below shows the geographic distribution of the population with a disability.

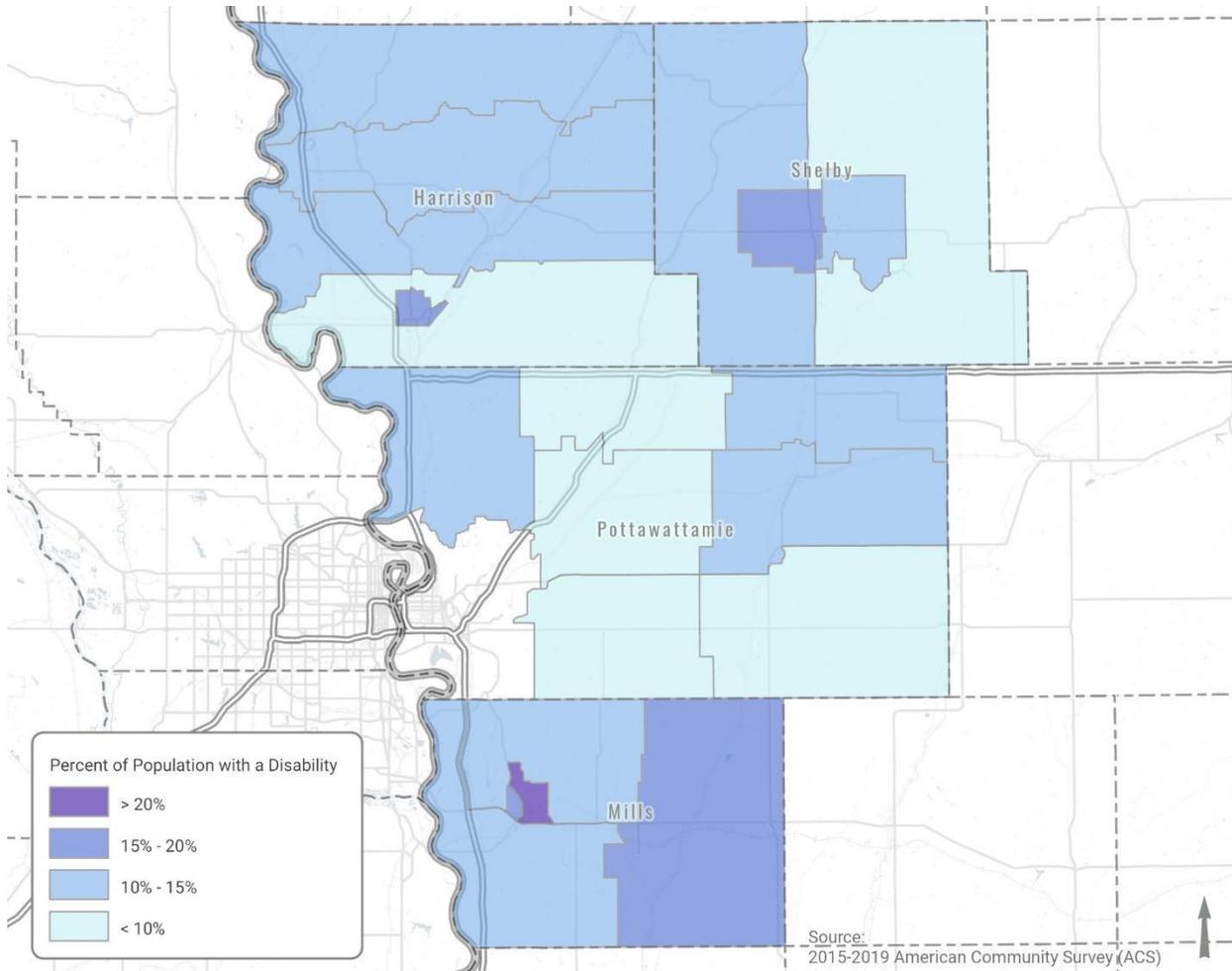


Figure 2.13 – Distribution of People with Disabilities in the RPA-18 Region

RPA-18 | Population in Poverty

Population for whom poverty status is determined	Population in Poverty	Percent
57,950	4,517	7.8%

Table 2.7 – Population of persons living in poverty in the RPA-18 Region

Table 2.7 to the right shows the population living in poverty in the RPA. There are approximately 19,080 people living at or below the poverty line. The highest concentrations of these low-income individuals are found within Harrison and Mills Counties. The geographic distribution of people in poverty within the MAPA region is illustrated in Figure 2.14 below.

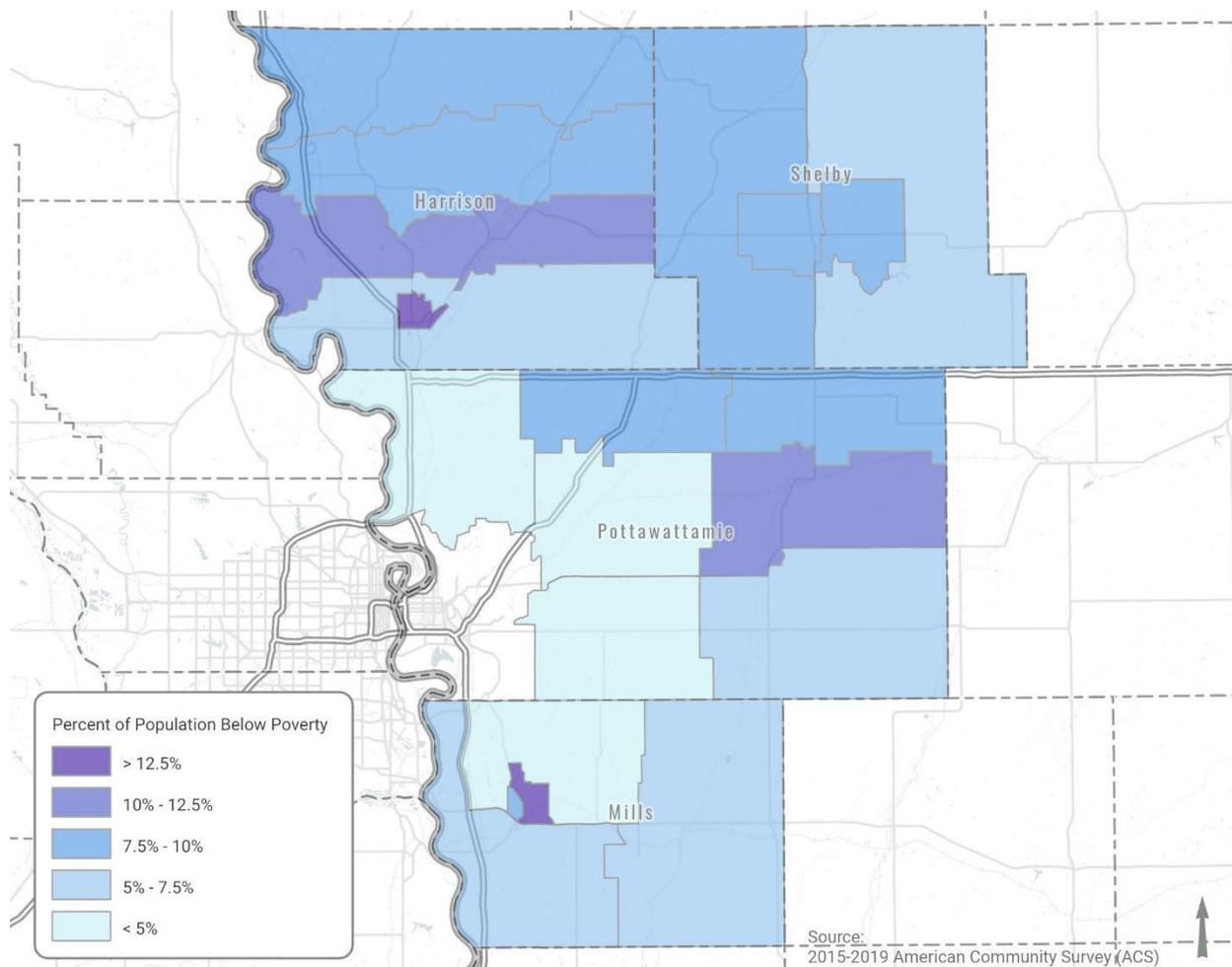


Figure 2.13 – Distribution of People with Disabilities in the RPA-18 Region

RPA-18 | Households Without a Vehicle

Total Occupied Housing Units	Households without a Vehicle	Percent
32,767	896	3.8%

Table 2.8 – RPA-18 Households without a Vehicle

Table 2.8 shows the number of households in the RPA area that do not own a vehicle, approximately 3.8%. Much like the poverty statistics discussed previously, the highest concentrations of Zero Vehicle Households are found in Shelby and Mills Counties. The absence of an automobile in a household can create serious limitations on the mobility of residents. Fortunately, within the RPA region few households are without vehicles outside of the urban centers of Harlan, Missouri Valley, and Glenwood. Figure 2.15 illustrates the distribution of households without vehicles throughout the RPA region.

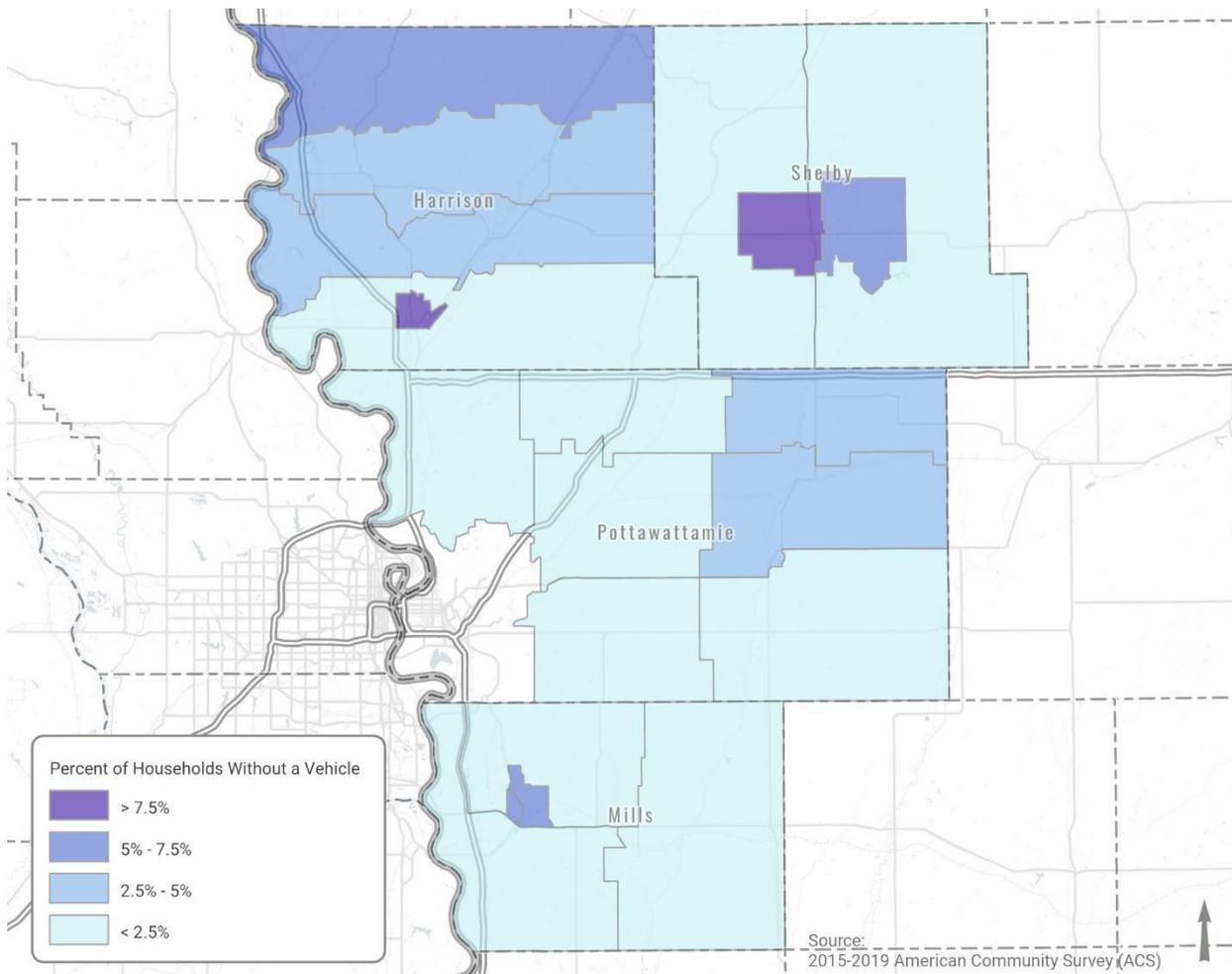


Table 2.15 – Households without a Vehicle within the RPA-18 Region

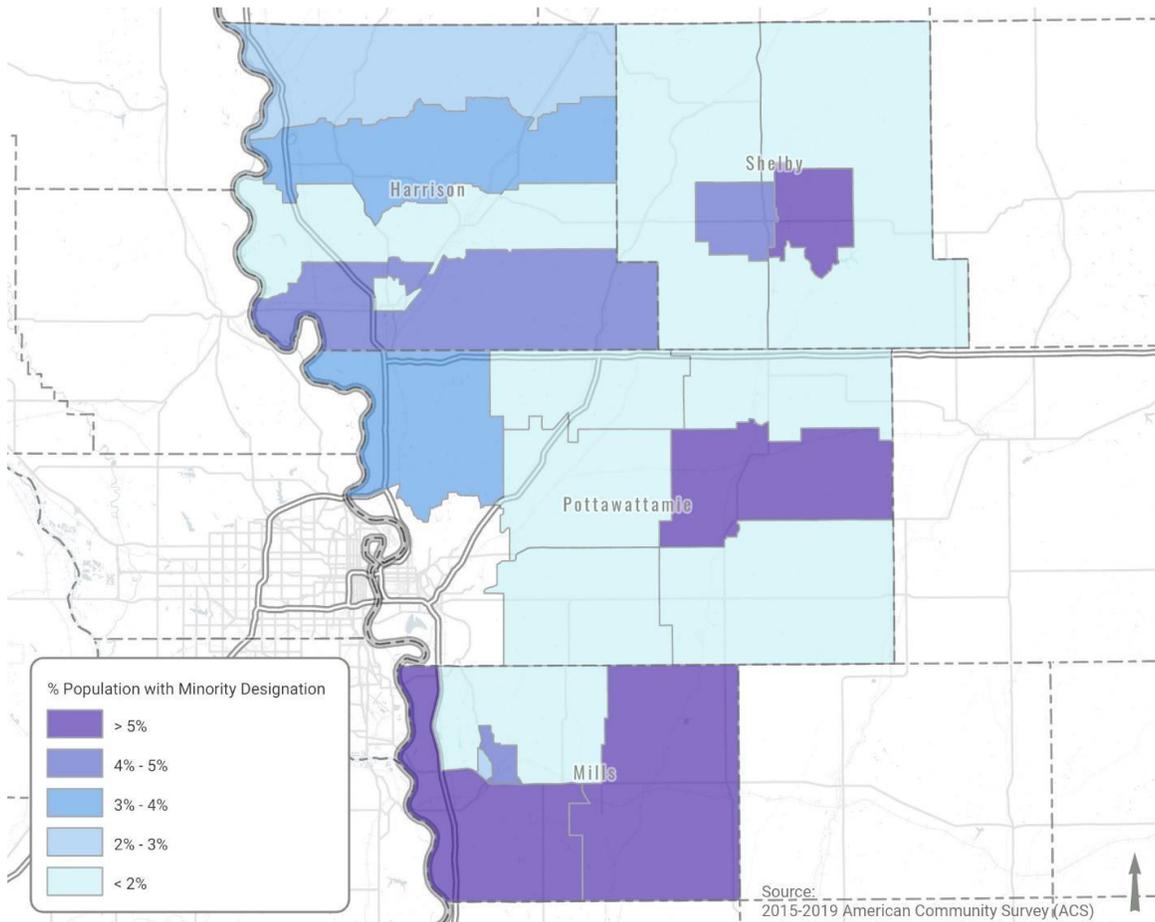
RPA-18 | Communities of Color

Total Population	Communities of Color	Percent
58,845	1,630	2.8%

Table 2.6 – Race and Ethnicity within the RPA-18 Region

Table 2.6 shows the number of people of color in the in the RPA race or ethnicity.

Map 2.16 shows the distribution of communities of color within the RPA. Overall, the RPA counties have lower concentrations of ethnic and racial minorities than the more urban areas. Nowhere in the RPA do minority populations make up more than 10% of the population within a particular census tract. The areas with highest concentrations of black and Latinx populations are in Harrison and Pottawattamie Counties.



Map 2.16 – Percent of population with Minority Designation within the RPA-18 Region

Environmental Justice Analysis

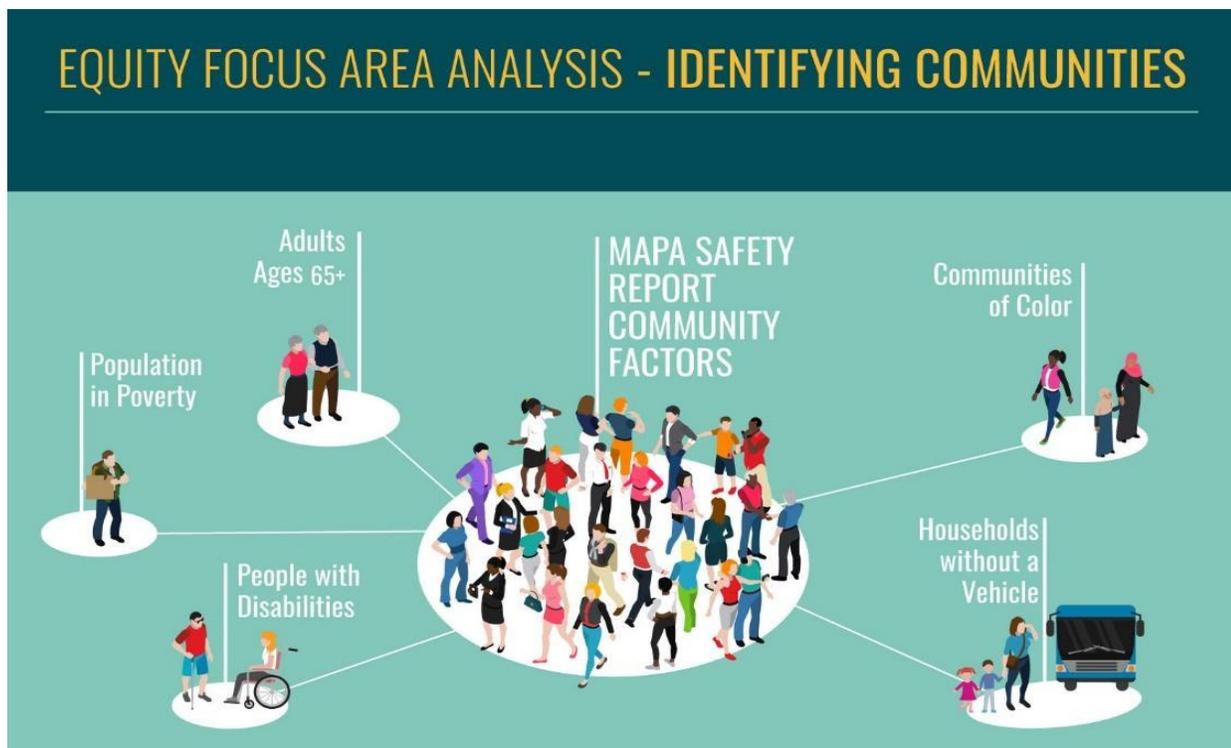
Evaluation of Programmed Projects

Currently MAPA performs Environmental Justice (EJ) analysis on all projects in its Transportation Improvement Program and Long Range Transportation Plan. This analysis looks at several factors including how much money has been spent in EJ areas, the categories of the projects, where projects are located, the potential negative impacts of projects located in and around EJ areas, as well as the potential benefits to these communities from projects in and around them. The categories MAPA uses to sort projects are:

- Air quality, sidewalk and trail, multimodal improvements
- Transit capital, transit maintenance
- Resurfacing, maintenance, road improvement, bridge, and maybe intersection
- Safety and intersection improvements
- Road widening, new road
- ITS, ITS/signalization
- Planning

Each of these planning categories have benefits and burdens to the communities they are located in. Recognizing the individual issues within each community and the impacts of projects requires local knowledge and context which MAPA will provide through ongoing monitoring.

MAPA also looks at the Equity Focus Areas to determine project selection and conduct further program wide analysis of funding impacts in conjunction with the benefits and burdens of project types and safety impacts.



To identify environmental justice areas MAPA uses census data to determine where there are disproportionately large populations of minority, low-income, and zero vehicle households. These areas are deemed environmentally sensitive and form the basis for additional analyses of burdens and benefits.

In past years, MAPA has attempted to identify the amount of funding that was programmed in the TIP which makes a direct impact to EJ areas. This analysis was conducted by mapping the location of TIP projects and then measuring their proximity to EJ areas. For projects that fall completely within an EJ area, all of the funding would be noted as benefiting EJ populations. Projects that fall partially within an EJ area are counted based on the proportion of the project that impacts the EJ area directly. This process has worked well in measuring and ensuring that funding is distributed equitably throughout the region. Going forward MAPA is looking at ways to measure the overall impacts of projects on the region and EJ communities.

Project Selection Criteria

In addition to analyzing the Environmental Justice impacts of projects within the TIP, the impacts of projects on EJ populations are also considered at the time of selection. The safety impacts on equity focus areas are a major selection criterion for all MAPA programs. MAPA has developed project selection criteria for each of the three federal funding programs which it administers. These programs are listed below:

- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Heartland 2050 Mini-Grant Program
- Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (5310)

Each of these programs takes the project's impacts on Environmental Justice population and equity into account, and provides additional points for projects demonstrating a benefit to EJ populations. As such, projects with clear benefits to EJ populations would score higher than similar projects without such benefits.

The Demographic Profile in this Chapter illustrates that Environmental Justice populations are generally those who face other mobility issues as well— including lack of access to a vehicle. In this way, MAPA's project selection criteria help demonstrate the agency's commitment to understanding the needs of the EJ population and ensuring that those needs are considered when funding is allocated to projects.

Chapter 3 – Title VI General Requirements

Overview

The MAPA Executive Director is responsible for the overall implementation of the agency's Title VI program. The Title VI Coordinators are responsible for initiating and monitoring Title VI and ADA activities, collecting information and documentation from staff regarding Title VI compliance, preparing reports and other responsibilities as required.

MAPA has designated two members of the MAPA staff– one in the Communications & Outreach Department and one in the Transportation & Data Department– to fulfill the duties of the Title VI Coordinators. As a part of these responsibilities, both staff members will work closely with the Executive Director and Director of Finance and Operations to ensure all are aware of the Title VI requirements and that the requirements are incorporated into the planning efforts, as described more fully in this plan.

Both Title VI Coordinators will coordinate closely with the Executive Director and Director of Finance and Operations in the response to complaints, development of reports and any subsequent updates to MAPA's Title VI Plans and Policies.

Responsibilities of the Title VI Coordinators

The responsibilities of the Title VI Coordinators constitute the overarching framework of MAPA's Title VI Program. These responsibilities apply both to the day-to-day management of administrative affairs related to Title VI and the implementation of programs specific to outreach and training programs. These responsibilities are illustrated in Figure 3.1(next page) as well.

- A. *Program Administration*. Administer the Title VI program and coordinate implementation of the plan between MAPA departments. Ensure compliance with the assurances, policy, and program objectives. This includes performing Title VI program reviews to assess administrative procedures, staffing, and resources and provide recommendations as required to the Executive Director.
- B. *Complaints*. Review written Title VI complaints that may be received by MAPA following the adopted procedural guidelines. Ensure every effort is made to resolve complaints informally at the local or regional level.
- C. *Data Collection*. Review the statistical data gathering process performed by Transportation Department staff periodically to ensure sufficiency of data for meeting the requirements of Title VI program administration.
- D. *Environmental Review Requirements*. Ensure that available census data are included as a part of all NEPA documentation for projects receiving Federal Highway Administration or other Federal assistance.
- E. *Training Programs*. Conduct or facilitate training programs on Title VI issues and regulations for MAPA employees and facilitate Title VI training for appropriate staff, contractors and sub-recipients. A summary of training conducted will be reported in the annual update.
- F. *Title VI Plan Update*. Review and update the MAPA Title VI Plan as needed or required. Present updated plan to the Executive Director for approval and to submit the amended Plan to Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) and Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT).
- G. *Annual Accomplishment Report*. Prepare an annual report of Title VI accomplishments and changes to the program in the preceding Federal fiscal year and identify goals and objectives for the upcoming year as required by July 31 of each year.

- H. *Public Dissemination*. Work with MAPA departmental staff to develop and disseminate Title VI program information to MAPA employees and sub-recipients, including contractors, subcontractors, consultants, and sub-consultants and beneficiaries, as well as the general public. Public dissemination may include postings of official statements, inclusion of Title VI language in contracts or other agreements, website postings, and annual publication of MAPA's Title VI Policy Statement in newspaper(s) having a general circulation, and informational brochures. Ensure public service announcements or notices are posted for proposed projects, hearings, meetings, or formation of public advisory boards, in newspapers or other media reaching the affected community. Ensure the full utilization of available minority publications or media and, where appropriate, provide written or verbal information in languages other than English.
- I. *Elimination of Discrimination*. Recommend procedures to identify and eliminate discrimination that may be discovered in any MAPA processes.
- J. *Maintain Legislative and Procedural Information*. Federal laws, rules and regulations, NDOT and IDOT guidelines, the current MAPA Title VI Plan, Annual Accomplishment Reports, and other resource information pertaining to the implementation and administration of the MAPA's Title VI program will be maintained and updated by the Coordinators. Information will be made available to other Local Public Agencies or the public as requested or required.

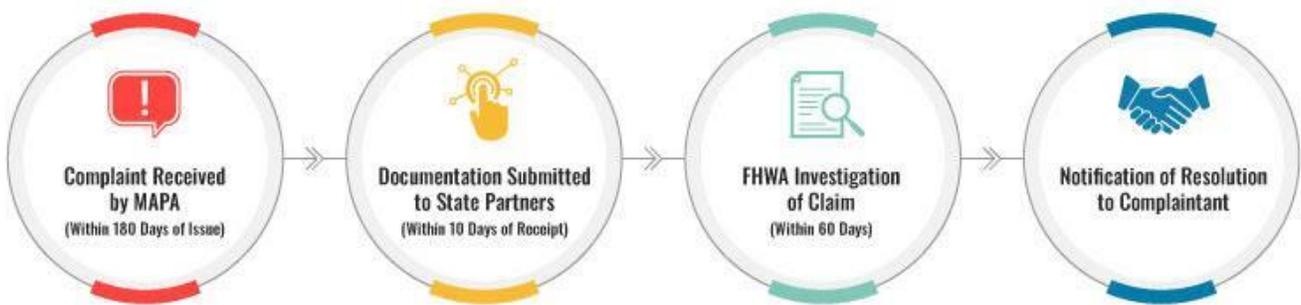


Title VI Complaint Procedure

MAPA has instituted a complaint procedure for any person who believes that he or she, on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, or disability has been excluded from or denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination by MAPA or its sub recipients, consultants, and/or contractors. This complaint procedure applies to matters related to Title VI, ADA, or Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

These procedures do not deny the right of the complainant to file formal complaints with other state or federal agencies, or to seek private counsel for complaints alleging discrimination. These procedures are part of an administrative process that does not provide for remedies that include punitive damages or compensatory remuneration for the complainant. MAPA is committed to finding a satisfactory resolution for all complaints that it receives. The option of informal internal mediation meeting(s) between the affected parties and the Title VI coordinators may be used for resolution, at any stage of the process.

The Title VI Coordinators will make every effort to pursue a timely resolution to the complaint. Initial interviews with the complainant and the respondent, if applicable, will request information regarding requested relief and settlement opportunities. A brief description of MAPA's Title VI complaint procedure is illustrated in Figure 3.2 and copy of MAPA's Title VI complaint form is provided as Appendix A.



MAPA's Title VI Complaint Steps, Contact Information for Partners, and Milestones:

1. Any person who believes that he or she, individually, as a member of any specific class, or in connection with any disadvantaged business enterprise, has been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the American with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 503 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, as amended, may file a complaint with MAPA. A complaint may also be filed by a representative on behalf of such a person. All complaints will be referred to the MAPA's Title VI Coordinators for review and action.

Contact Information for MAPA's Title VI Coordinators are included below:

Metropolitan Area Planning Agency
Title VI Coordinator
2222 Cumming Street
Omaha, NE 68102
(402) 444-6866 x216
civilrights@mapacog.org

2. In order to have the complaint consideration under this procedure, the complainant must file the complaint no later than **180 days** after:
 - a. The date of alleged act of discrimination; or
 - b. Where there has been a continuing course of conduct, the date on which that conduct was discontinued.In either case, the MAPA may extend the time for filing or waive the time limit in the interest of justice, specifying in writing the reason for so doing.
3. Complaints shall be in writing and shall be signed by the complainant and/or the complainant's representative. Complaints shall set forth as fully as possible the facts and circumstances surrounding the claimed discrimination. In the event that a person makes a verbal complaint of discrimination to an officer or employee of MAPA, the person shall be interviewed by the Title VI Coordinators. If necessary, the Title VI Coordinators will assist the person in reducing the complaint to writing and submit the written version of the complaint to the person for signature. The complaint shall then be handled according to MAPA's investigative procedures.
4. Within **10 days**, the Title VI Coordinators will acknowledge receipt of the allegation, inform the complainant of procedures to be followed, and advise the complainant of other avenues of redress available, such as NDOT, IDOT, and FHWA Division Offices.
5. MAPA will advise NDOT and/or IDOT within **10 days** of receipt of the allegations. Generally, the following information will be included in every notification to State DOT:
 - a) Name, address, and phone number of the complainant.
 - b) Name(s) and address(es) of alleged discriminating official(s).
 - c) Basis of complaint (i.e., race, color, national origin or sex)
 - d) Date of alleged discriminatory act(s).
 - e) Date of complaint received by MAPA.
 - f) A statement of the complaint.
 - g) Other agencies (state, local or Federal) where the complaint has been filed.
 - h) An explanation of the actions MAPA has taken or proposed to resolve the issue raised in the complaint.
6. The State DOT will forward the complaint to FHWA. The FHWA Office of Civil Rights will determine the appropriate individual and/or organization to conduct the investigation.

MAPA Civil Rights Policy & Procedure

7. Within **60 days**, the FHWA Office of Civil Rights (or its designee) will conduct an investigation of the allegation and based on the information obtained, will render a recommendation for action in a report of findings to the Executive Director of MAPA. The complaint should be resolved by informal means whenever possible. Such informal attempts and their results will be summarized in the report of findings.
8. The FHWA Office of Civil Rights (or its designee) will notify the complainant in writing of the final decision reached, including the proposed disposition of the matter. The notification will advise the complainant of his/her appeal rights with NDOT, IDOT, and/or USDOT, if they are dissatisfied with the final decision. The Title VI Coordinators will also provide the State DOT with a copy of this decision and summary of findings upon completion of the investigation.
9. Any complaints received against MAPA should be forwarded immediately to IDOT or NDOT for investigation. MAPA will not investigate any complaint in which it has been named in the complaint.
10. Title VI comments for each state and FHWA Division Office are as follows:

Nebraska Department of Transportation
Human Resources, Title VI Program
1500 Highway 2, P.O. Box 94759
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759
(402) 479-4870

Iowa Department of Transportation
Office of Employee Services
Civil Rights Coordinator
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010
(515)-239-1921

Federal Highway Administration
Nebraska Division Office
100 Centennial Mall North
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 437-5765

Federal Highway Administration
Iowa Division Office
105 6th Street
Ames, IA 50010
(515) 233-7300

FTA Region 7 Office
901 Locust Street, Suite 404
Kansas City, Missouri 64106.
Telephone: (816) 329-3920
Fax: (816) 329-3921

Title VI Notification for Sub-Recipients

In order for the goals of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act to be fully realized, the general public and MAPA's partners must be fully aware of protections afforded by the law. MAPA and sub-recipients provide information to the public regarding Title VI obligations through the following actions:

1. Posting the agency's policy statement regarding Title VI on the website along with the compliant procedure and Title VI and LEP brochures to the MAPA website.
2. MAPA utilizes Title VI brochures developed by NDOT and IDOT to communicate the specific protections and obligations of MAPA.
3. MAPA inserts the preferred, or abbreviated, "Notice to the Public" in all significant publications that are distributed to the public. The preferred notice is also posted in MAPA's office lobby. Both notifications are included in the box to the right.

Sub-Recipient Monitoring and Pass through Procedures

MAPA allocates significant amounts of federal-aid to sub-recipients for various transportation planning activities. Each of these “pass-through” agreements are subject to the federal and state Civil Rights requirements described in this plan– including the sub-allocation of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding.

There are multiple classes of federal funding that MAPA passes-through to sub-recipients. The first are annual allocations of Metropolitan Planning funding from FHWA and FTA. These funds are distributed by the processes identified in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and are governed by agreements which require compliance with the civil rights requirements identified in this plan.

In order to ensure that all applicable requirements are met, MAPA has developed the following procedure to monitor sub-recipient compliance and issue remedial actions to non-complaint sub-recipients:

- A. *Title VI Review of Sub-recipients of Federal-Aid Highway and Federal Transit Administration Funds.* The Coordinators will assist State DOTs to conduct Title VI compliance reviews periodically. MAPA staff will review select recipients of Federal-aid highway or other Federal funds, to ensure adherence to Title VI requirements. MAPA will confirm periodically that operational guidelines provided to consultants, contractors, and sub-recipients (including Title VI language, provisions, and related requirements) are effective and appropriate. Additionally, Title VI assurances and provisional language will be included in all federally-funded consultant contracts.
- B. *Post-Grant Reviews.* MAPA, in cooperation with state and federal partners, will conduct Post-Grant reviews of select projects to ensure compliance with the requirements noted above.
- C. *Remedial Action.* When irregularities occur in the administration of Federal-aid highway programs at MAPA or a sub-recipient, corrective action will be taken to resolve identified Title VI issues. MAPA will seek the cooperation of the consultant, contractor or sub-recipient in correcting deficiencies found during the periodic reviews described. MAPA will provide technical assistance and guidance, upon request, to support voluntary compliance by the sub-recipient. When conducting Title VI compliance reviews, MAPA will document any recommended remedial action agreed upon by MAPA and the sub-recipient, and provide a copy of the letter to state and federal partners within a period not to exceed **45 days**.
 - Sub-recipients found to be in non-compliance will be given a reasonable time up to **90 days** after receipt of the remedial action letter to correct deficiencies voluntarily. When a sub-recipient fails or refuses to comply voluntarily with requirements within the allotted time frame, MAPA will submit copies of the case file and a recommendation that the sub-recipient be found in noncompliance to State DOTs and FHWA.
 - A follow-up review will be conducted within **180 days** of the initial review to ascertain if the sub-recipient has corrected deficiencies by earlier reviews. If the sub-recipient refuses to comply, MAPA and State DOTs may initiate sanctions as per 49 CFR 21 with FHWA’s concurrence.

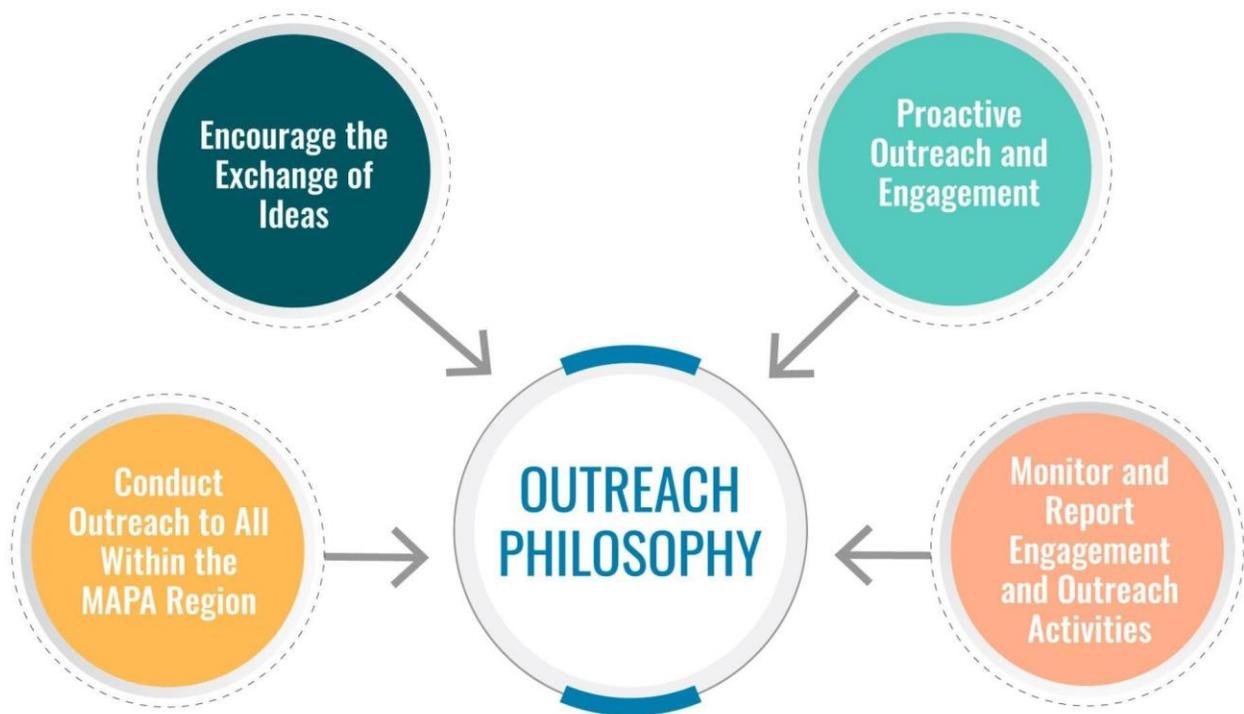
Program Report

To date, MAPA has not received any complaints through its Title VI Complaint Process. Any future complaints and their resolution will be noted in this section as a part of future updates to this Title VI plan– including any applicable legal actions taken against MAPA.

Public Participation Outreach for Historically Disadvantaged Populations

Public participation is an important part of government decisions affecting many aspects of our lives. MAPA believes that having people participate in its work can help to accomplish positive improvements within the community and give people input in the planning process.

In general, MAPA’s outreach philosophy seeks to maximize opportunities for the public to be involved in its planning initiatives. The specific elements of the agency’s outreach philosophy are displayed in Figure 3.3 (next page) and described in more detail in the list that follows.



Many of these elements of MAPA’s Outreach Philosophy are designed to encourage and increase inclusion of historically-disadvantaged populations within the MAPA region. Specific strategies from MAPA’s Public Participation Plan to improve outreach efforts and increase the engagement of these communities are summarized below.

Since 2014 MAPA has worked to expand its outreach efforts and make the planning process more open and accessible for all. Since the last update to this plan, MAPA has conducted the following specific outreach to historically disadvantaged populations:

- Heartland 2050 Equity & Engagement Committee: MAPA has continued to facilitate the Equity and Engagement Committee developed as part of the Heartland 2050 Regional Visioning process. The committee meets bi-monthly and includes representatives from advocacy organizations, economic development corporations, social service organizations, and public agencies.

- Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH): MAPA led public outreach efforts for the three entitlement communities in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region as part of the HUD AFFH regulations. The outreach focused on populations with housing and transportation needs, and identified strategies to improve opportunities for residents in these areas.
- Regional Equitable Growth Profile: MAPA recently completed an update to the Regional Equitable Growth Profile. This document highlights disparities present in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region in areas of income, educational attainment, and social mobility and has specific recommendations for policies and programs to address these needs.
- 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP): MAPA targeted public meetings in North and South Omaha, with an emphasis on reaching the Black and Hispanic/Latino populations of our region. Additionally, stakeholder meetings were held with organizations representing individuals with disabilities, social service organizations, and public agencies which provide housing and transportation services to members of the community. These efforts were intended to broaden participation among these groups in the regional transportation planning process.
- Sarpy County Transit Study: Through this plan outreach was conducted to employers and advocacy organizations related to the transportation needs of workers in Sarpy County. Specifically, connections between major employers in Sarpy County and areas of high-unemployment (such as North and South Omaha) were investigated and several coordination meetings were held to develop strategies to address those needs– including the development of transit service between these areas.
- Coordinated Transit Plan: MAPA’s Coordinated Transit Committee has expanded to include additional representatives from advocacy organizations and public housing representatives. The latest plan update resulted in additional strategies about raising awareness in the community about the mobility needs of individuals with disabilities, low-income populations and the elderly. This work has led to new partnerships and increased interest in pursuing new projects.
- Heartland Connections Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan: During the development of the pedestrian element of the plan, representatives of the Omaha Association of the Blind and the Mayor’s Commission for Citizen’s with Disabilities (MCCD) regarding barriers and needs related to pedestrian infrastructure in the Omaha-Council Bluffs metropolitan area.
- Transportation Improvement Programs: Continued to evaluate the Environmental Justice analysis and communicate the benefits and burdens of the transportation system in the Omaha metro.
- Transit Return on Investment Study: Through this study MAPA worked with the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce to examine the long term benefits of transit investment on the regional economy. Stakeholders from diverse communities were interviewed and mobility and access to transit for historically marginalized communities were main aspects of the analysis and findings.

The main goals of MAPA’s planning process concerning historically disadvantaged populations are:

- Ensure full and fair participation by all communities affected potentially in the transportation decision-making process.
- Avoid, minimize or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects, including social and economic effects, of programs, policies and activities on minority populations and low-income populations

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- Prevent the denial of, reduction of, or significant delay in the receipt of transportation benefits by minority and low-income populations.
- MAPA targets low-income and limited-English proficient populations with specific outreach in community centers, schools, faith-based institutions and businesses that are located in census tracts that have a high concentration of minority and/or low-income populations.
- As a supplement to general public announcements in newspapers and online posts, MAPA contacts persons/agencies representing low-income and minority populations via telephone and/or email.
- MAPA asks these contacts to present and inform their communities of ways to be involved in the planning process.

MAPA Boards and Committees

MAPA technical and advisory committees are appointed by the cities and counties who are members of MAPA.

These technical bodies have subcommittees which are made up of members from the larger committees and are appointed by the board chair. MAPA also facilitates a number of roundtables and working groups that are open to any interested parties.

The table to the right includes members from the MAPA Board, the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC), its subcommittees the Project Selection Committee (ProSeCom), Transportation Alternatives Program Committee (TAP-C), and the Coordinated transit

MAPA Committee Members Responses	Number
Total	106
Board of Directors	7
Council of Officials	11
Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC)	25
Regional Planning Affiliation (RPA-18)	5
Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC)	23
Coordinated Transit Committee (CTC)	9
Heartland 2050 Equity & Engagement Committee	17
Heartland 2050 Housing & Development Committee	14
Heartland 2050 Infrastructure Committee	22
Heartland 2050 Natural Resources Committee	10
Skipped	15

Committee (CTC), Regional Planning Advisory Committee, and the Heartland 2050 Committees as well as the Region 18 Planning Affiliation Technical and Policy committees.

Many members sit on multiple committees and several of the committees, CTC and TAP-C, have active nonmember community participation. The survey was sent to 549 committee members and 106 responded, this is reflected in the total, not all committee members opted to respond to all questions. Survey results are tabulated on the following page.

MAPA Committee Members	Number
Male	62
Female	37
Other/Undefined/Declined	7
Person with a Disability	7
White	85
Black	8
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1
Asian	1
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1
Hispanic/Latino	5
Other/Undefined/Declined	12
TOTAL	106

Chapter 4 – Americans with Disabilities Act General Requirements

Overview & Notice

MAPA, in accordance with the requirements of Title II of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in admission of its programs, services, or activities, in access to them, in treatment of individuals with disabilities, or in any aspect of their operations.

Employment: MAPA does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its hiring or employment practices and complies with all regulations promulgated by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under Title I of the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Effective Communication: MAPA will, upon request, provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities so they can participate equally in MAPA's programs, services, and activities, including qualified sign language interpreters, documents in Braille, and other ways of making information and communication accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision impairments.

Modifications to Policies and Procedures: MAPA will make all reasonable modifications to policies and programs to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy all of its programs, services, and activities.

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to

MAPA Committee Members	Number
Male	62
Female	37
Other/Undefined/Declined	7

Person with a Disability	7
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White	85
Black	8
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1
Asian	1
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1
Hispanic/Latino	5
Other/Undefined/Declined	12

TOTAL	106
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MAPA Committee Members Total Income	Number
Total	105
\$0-\$50,000	4
\$50,001-\$100,000	27
\$100,001+	65
Prefer not to Answer	9

participate in a program, service, or activity of MAPA should contact the office of the Title VI Coordinators, as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event.

The ADA does not require MAPA to take any action that would fundamentally alter the nature of its program or services, or impose an undue financial or administrative burden.

Complaints that a program, service, or activity of MAPA is not accessible to persons with disabilities should be directed to the Title VI Coordinators.

MAPA will not place a surcharge on a particular individual with a disability or any group of individuals with disabilities to cover the cost of providing auxiliary aids/services or reasonable modifications of policy, such as retrieving items from locations that are open to the public but are not accessible to persons who use wheelchairs.

Authorities

The federal authorities under which the provisions of this plan have been created are listed below:

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, provides that "No otherwise qualified disabled individual in the United States, as defined in section 7(6), shall, solely by reason of his disability, be excluded for the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

29 USC 794 (October 29, 1992 to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) substitutes "a disability" for "handicaps" and "disability" for "handicap".

49 CFR Part 27.13 (Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Programs and Activities Receiving or Benefiting from Federal Financial Assistance) states, "This part applies to each recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Department of Transportation and to each program or activity that receives or benefits from such assistance".

49 CFR Part 28.102 (Enforcement of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Programs or Activities Conducted by the Department of Transportation) states, "This part applies to all programs or activities conducted by the Department of Transportation except for programs and activities conducted outside the United States that do not involve individuals with disabilities in the United States."

28 CFR Part 35 (Judicial Administration) states that: "The purpose of this part is to effectuate Subtitle A of Title II of the ADA which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities by public entities.

49 CFR part 27 (Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Programs and Activities Receiving or Benefiting from Federal Financial Assistance) states, "The purpose of this part is to carry out the intent of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794) as amended, to the end that no otherwise qualified disabled individual in the United States shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

49 CFR Part 28-140 (Employment) states that, "(a) No qualified individual with disabilities shall, on the basis of disability, be subjected to discrimination in employment under any program or activity conducted by the Department," and "(b) The definitions, requirements, and procedures of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 791), as established by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 29 CFR part 1613, shall apply to employment in federally conducted programs or activities.

29 CFR Part 1613 (Equal Employment Opportunity in the Federal Government) states that: "It is the policy of the Government of the United States. . . to provide equal opportunity in employment for all persons to prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin and to promote the full realization of equal employment opportunity through a continuing affirmative program in each agency."

42 USC Part 12101-12213 (The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) states that: "No covered entity shall discriminate against a qualified individual with a disability because of the disability of such individual in regard to job application procedures, the hiring, advancement, or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment."

Grievance Procedure

This Grievance Procedure is established to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). It may be used by anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability in the provision of services, activities, programs, or benefits by MAPA. MAPA's Personnel Policies and Procedures govern employment-related complaints of disability discrimination.

The complaint should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination such as name, address, phone number of complainant and location, date, and description of problem. Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or a tape recording of the complaint will be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.

The complaint should be submitted by the grievant and/or his/her designee as soon as possible but no later than 60 calendar days after the alleged violation to:

MAPA ADA Coordinator
c/o: MAPA Title VI Coordinators
2222 Cuming Street
Omaha, NE 68102
(402) 444-6866 x216
civilrights@mapacog.org

Within 15 working days after receipt of the complaint, the ADA Coordinator and the Executive Director or his designee will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and the possible resolutions. Within 15 working days of the meeting, the ADA Coordinator will respond in writing, and where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, such as large print, Braille, or audio tape. The response will explain the position of MAPA and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint.

If the response by the ADA Coordinator and the Executive Director or his designee does not resolve the issue satisfactorily, the complainant or his/her designee may appeal the decision within 15 working days after receipt of the response to the MAPA Board of Directors.

Within 15 working days after receipt of the appeal, the MAPA Board of Directors will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within 15 working days after the meeting, the MAPA Board of Directors will respond in writing, and where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, with a final resolution of the complaint.

All written complaints received by the ADA Coordinator, the MAPA Executive Director or his designee, appeals to the MAPA Board of Directors, and responses from these individuals and the Board offices will be retained by MAPA for at least three (3) years.

ADA Coordinator Responsibilities

MAPA's Title VI Coordinators are designated as ADA Coordinator and reports to the MAPA Executive Director.

1. Serve as the principal coordinator for MAPA's ADA programs, policies, and procedures relating to compliance;
2. Publicize the name and contact information of the designated ADA Coordinator responsible to oversee compliance;
3. Draft and ensure dissemination of policies to employees regarding the provision of equal opportunity for persons with disabilities;
4. Establish a complaint grievance procedure to respond to complaints of noncompliance from employees as well as the general public;
5. Maintain current knowledge and information regarding state and federal laws and regulations concerning the rights of individuals with disabilities and ways of providing reasonable accommodation as well as relating to employment policies and practices of employees with disabilities.
6. Provide ADA program and facility interpretation and advice on compliance to all sectors of MAPA;
7. Serve as a point of contact for all matters related to ADA (including facility accessibility), and serve as the conduit for information for compliance reporting for other MAPA staff;
8. Coordinate with and assist Program Managers on complaints alleging discrimination and non-compliance under the ADA and other applicable federal and state laws regarding discrimination on the basis of disability;
9. Ensure prompt and equitable resolution of complaints and inquiries from MAPA employees as well as the general public regarding discrimination on the basis of disability; and
10. Maintain a record of all disability and accommodation issues and the resolution of each.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Self-Assessment

MAPA will conduct an initial self-evaluation routinely and if areas of non-compliance are identified, a Transition Plan will be created, and all needed modifications will be addressed.

As a part of the development of this Title VI Plan, MAPA conducted a self-assessment of its facilities and activities to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The results of that self-assessment are included in this section and have been organized into the two following categories:

- **Facilities** – A review of the accessibility of MAPA’s administrative offices
- **Programming** – A review of MAPA’s public participation activities, grant funding, and other activities

MAPA has renewed and approved its policy statement for ADA activities as a part of the development of this plan.

Facilities

MAPA’s administrative offices are located in Metro Transit’s main office and bus garage. Metro Transit is the transit authority for the City of Omaha and is also a designated recipient of Federal Transportation funding. As a part of its Triennial Review with the Federal Transit Administration, Metro Transit certified the ADA compliance of all of Metro’s facilities– including the office building where MAPA is located.

MAPA holds many of its public and stakeholder meetings at its offices– including the meetings for the MAPA Board of Directors, Citizens Advisory Council and Transportation Technical Advisory Committee. Additionally, public access to MAPA staff and records would be accessible to residents with disabilities and mobility issues at this location as well. If MAPA or Metro undertakes renovation, it will complete modifications within the requirements of the regulations. MAPA has not built any new facilities in the past three years.

Programming

There are many activities in which MAPA is involved that are impacted by the ADA and its goals. These activities are categorized in the sections below. Generally, MAPA’s Coordinated Transit planning activities and its Public Participation policies have the greatest direct impact on interaction with persons with disabilities, but the needs of disabled populations are considered in all planning processes.

Coordinated Transit Activities

The Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) became the Designated Recipient of FTA Section 5310 program funds in 2013. The activities of this program are guided by the Coordinated Transit Plan that was updated in 2017.

The Coordinated Transit Plan was derived from the efforts of local stakeholders and the public. It is meant to provide information to the general public, local jurisdictions, and agencies to develop eligible transportation projects to meet the transportation needs of the elderly, those with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged.

The Program Management Plan (PMP) provides the formal guidance on the eligibility requirements for Section 5310 projects and the process by which funds are awarded. Section 5310 funding may be used

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for “Traditional” capital projects and “Other/New Freedom” projects. Activities that impact the mobility of the elderly and people with disabilities directly are eligible in both categories of funding.

Additionally, MAPA will seek written certification of compliance pertaining to ADA directives from approved applicants during the FTA Certification and Assurances process. MAPA, in turn, will make all documents related to ADA reporting part of the permanent file of the project. This documentation will include information regarding the ADA accessibility of vehicles purchased through the 5310 program and executed, contracted assurances for sub-recipients.

ADA requirements pertaining to MAPA’s Section 5310 program activities are monitored using a Program Checklist that is included as a part of the PMP.

Public Participation

Public participation is a critical component of the transportation planning process. MAPA’s Public Participation Plan (PPP) provides the overarching framework for the agency’s outreach efforts and compliance with relevant federal guidance. In general, MAPA’s outreach philosophy seeks to maximize opportunities for the public to be involved in its planning initiatives.

An extensive checklist was developed to document the accessibility of all locations used for public meetings and MAPA events. This check-list includes physical characteristics of the meeting facilities (walkways, ramps, sidewalks, etc.) in addition to transportation services available to members of the public with disabilities or limited mobility (e.g. the availability of transit service).

Additionally, all meeting announcements will include a sentence informing the general public that auxiliary aids and services (sign language interpreters, oral interpreting services, audio listening device system, etc.) are available when requested in advance.

These measures are described in more detail in MAPA’s PPP and ensure that MAPA’s public meetings are open and accessible to all residents of the region– including those with disabilities.

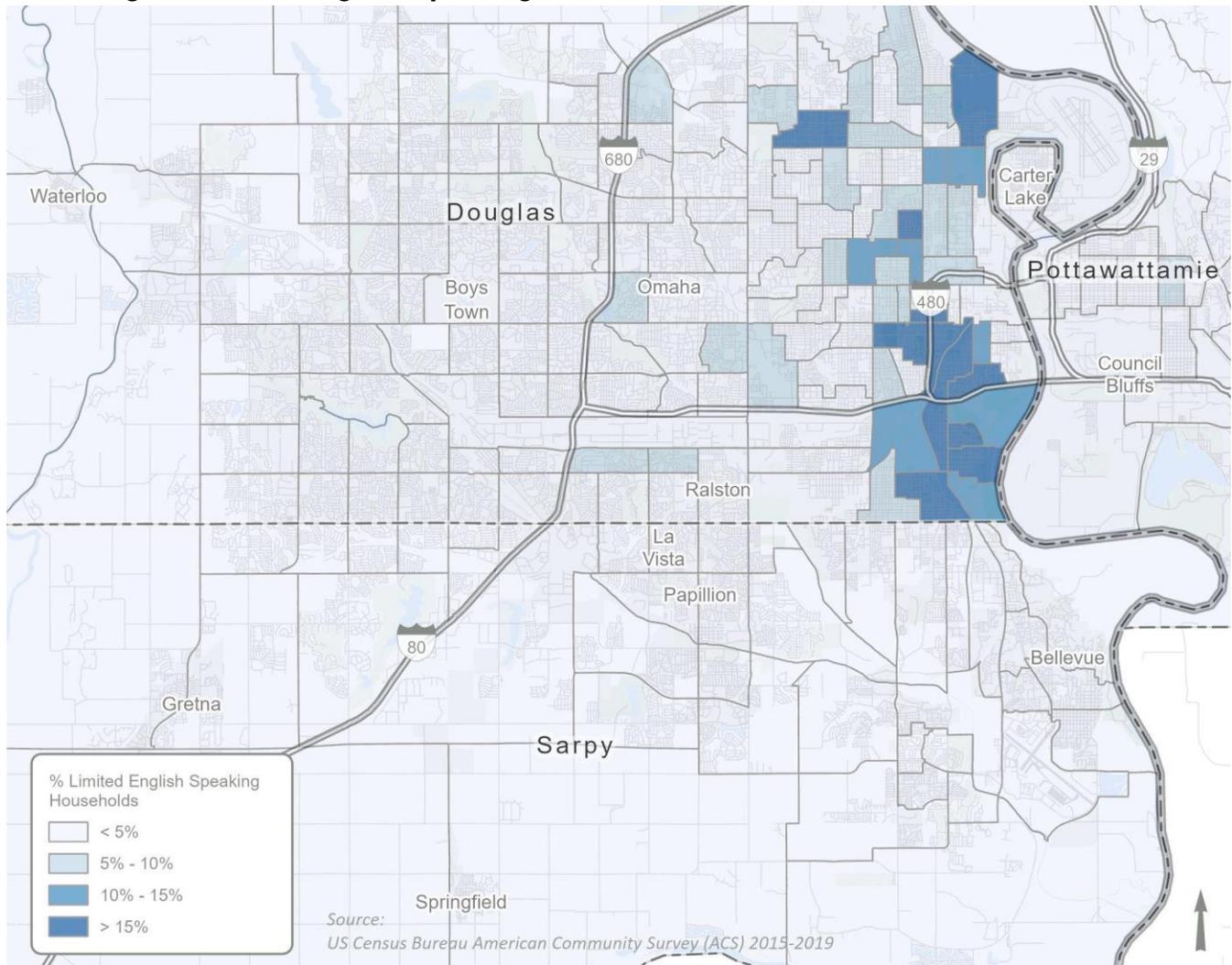
Chapter 5 – Limited English Proficiency

While most individuals in the United States read, write, speak and understand English, there are many individuals whose primary language is not English. Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English are considered by federal law to be Limited English Proficient, or “LEP.” This language barrier may prevent individuals from accessing services and benefits and they may be entitled to language assistance with respect to a particular type or service, benefit, or encounter.

Within the MAPA region, much of the LEP population is concentrated in low-income and high-minority areas of the region. Figure 5.1 below illustrates areas in which a disproportionately high number of LEP speakers are concentrated in a particular census tract. These population centers are concentrated largely in the core of the region, with areas in Douglas, Sarpy and Pottawattamie Counties.

An analysis conducted by PolicyLink as a part of MAPA’s Heartland 2050 regional planning effort noted that communities of color have been and will continue to drive population growth within the MAPA region. As such it is critical that these communities are able to participate fully in the planning and decision-making about transportation investments within the MAPA region. The analysis and accommodation strategies detailed in this chapter reflect MAPA’s commitment to ensuring that these communities have full access to the transportation planning process and services.

Percentage of Limited English-Speaking Households



Four – Factor Analysis

In accordance with Executive Order 13166, MAPA conducted the four-factor analysis recommended by the U.S. Department of Transportation to determine the level and extent of language assistance measures. The steps within this analysis are described briefly in the list below.

- *Number or Proportion of LEP Persons “Served or Encountered” in the MAPA Region.* In this section, MAPA analyzes regional demographic data to determine which language groups have significant populations of LEP speakers within the MAPA region. This analysis provides key information about the language groups for which MAPA’s strategies should be oriented.
- *Frequency of Contact with MAPA’s Programs and Services.* MAPA describes the historical contact it has had with different language groups, including any requests for translation in this section.
- *Nature and Importance of MAPA’s Activities or Programs.* As MAPA is responsible for decisions about transportation investments, it’s critical that LEP populations have access to important planning processes. This section details MAPA’s approach to LEP accommodation for various transportation planning products and outreach activities.

- *Availability of Resources and Accommodation Costs.* In this section, MAPA provides an estimate of costs associated with LEP accommodation activities.

These steps provide a detailed description of the relationship between the LEP populations in the Omaha-Council Bluffs Region and MAPA’s activities. The data and information included as a part of this analysis provides MAPA with a good framework for increasing access to the transportation planning process and accommodating the needs of LEP persons within the MAPA region.

Factor 1 – Number and Proportion of LEP Persons in the MAPA Region

To quantify the needs of LEP persons within the Omaha-Council Bluffs region, MAPA staff conducted a demographic analysis of American Community Survey (ACS) data to assess the number and proportion of LEP residents. A summary of this analysis is included in Table 5.1 (below).

	Total	Percentage
RPA Population (5 years and older)	135,312	—
Spoke only English at Home	119,596	88.8%
Language Other than English Spoken at Home	6,242	11.2%
Persons Who Speak English Less than “Very Well”	4,876	3.6%

	Total	Percentage
TMA Population (5 years and older)	882,608	—
Spoke only English at Home	778,003	88.1%
Language Other than English Spoken at Home	104,605	11.9%
Persons Who Speak English Less than “Very Well”	24,986	2.8%

Generally, the vast majority of residents in the MAPA region live in English-only households (88.1%). However, of the households that speak a language other than English at home, nearly a third speak English less than “very well.” Thus, while most people who are likely to be impacted by MAPA’s planning activities or services speak English, those who speak a different language at home are much more likely to have difficulty understanding oral or written information provided by MAPA in English. As such, this need is an important consideration of accommodation strategies discussed later in this chapter.

While the LEP needs of the region as a whole are substantial, the great variation of language groups within the MAPA region makes accommodation more difficult since resources must be spread out

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across numerous language groups. Table 5.2 on the next page details the total number of speakers by language group and the number of speakers within that group that have identified as LEP. The calculated percentage in this table is the proportion LEP persons in a language group based on the total population of the Transportation Management Area aged 5 years or above (882,608).

Language Group	Total Language Speakers	Speak English Less than "Very Well"	Speak English Less than "Very Well"	"Less than Very Well" Percentage	Percentage of Population Over 5
Spanish	61,303	36,317	24,986	40.8%	6.95%
Other and unspecified languages	11,321	4,517	6,804	60.1%	1.28%
Other Asian and Pacific	8,123	4,120	4,003	49.3%	0.92%
Other Indo-European	6,683	4,992	1,691	25.3%	0.76%
Vietnamese	3,311	1,515	1,796	54.2%	0.38%
French, Haitian or Cajun	3,167	2,589	578	18.3%	0.36%
Arabic	2,934	1,577	1,357	46.3%	0.33%
Russian, Polish or Other	2,340	1,801	539	23.0%	0.27%
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	1,614	917	697	43.2%	0.18%
German or Other West	1,309	1,157	152	11.6%	0.15%
Korean	1,290	994	296	22.9%	0.15%
Tagalog (incl. Filipino)	1,210	1,162	48	4.0%	0.14%

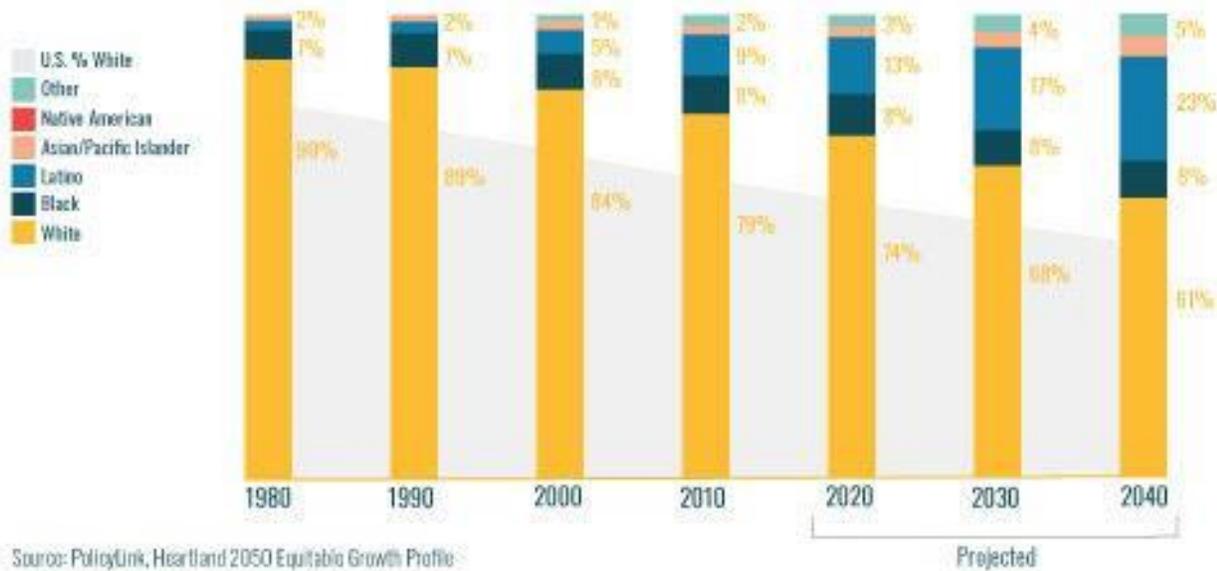
As a part of this analysis, MAPA noted that Spanish language speakers comprise around 69% of persons who speak English less than "very well." The next three highest single language categories, when combined, comprise around 11% of the total population of persons who "speak a language other than English at home" in the MAPA region. Based on this analysis, MAPA determined that the Spanish language speakers comprise the most significant portion of LEP persons within the MAPA region and that this group would require special attention as a part of the agency's accommodation efforts.

Factor 2 – Frequency of Contact with MAPA’s Programs and Services

To date, MAPA has not received a request for translation nor had any LEP person attend any MAPA public meeting. However, MAPA’s Public Participation Plan notes continued efforts to improve outreach and develop contacts in LEP areas.

Through Heartland 2050’s Equity and Engagement Committee, MAPA engaged with many organizations and individuals from traditionally-underrepresented communities. The Equity and Engagement Committee focused on identifying key strategies that would ensure that all residents of the Omaha-Council Bluffs region have “full and equal access to access opportunities that enable them to achieve their full potential.” Through efforts such as these and with targeted outreach during the transportation planning process, MAPA’s contact with LEP populations is likely to grow.

Racial/Ethnic Composition 1980 to 2040



Additionally, demographic shifts within the Omaha-Council Bluffs region are going to increase the frequency with which MAPA makes contact with minority communities. Figure 5.2 (left) illustrates a projection of the MAPA region’s racial and ethnic composition by the Year 2040. These shifts reflect continued growth in the population of minority communities– particularly in the case of the largely Hispanic Latino population. As such, it is critical that members of these racial and ethnic communities are involved in the planning processes about the future in which they will comprise a much greater portion of the population.

Factor 3 – Nature and Importance of MAPA’s Activities or Programs

MAPA’s main function is to support cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning, as outlined in the federal transportation legislation. In this capacity, MAPA develops three main documents:

- Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

As the agency responsible for coordinating the regional transportation planning process, MAPA must ensure that all segments of the population, including LEP persons, have the opportunity to be involved in the planning process.

The primary purpose of the transportation network of the region is to facilitate the movement of people and products. The health and vitality of the region depends on how well the transportation network functions. All people, including the LEP population, in the region rely on the network to get to work, hospitals, school, and other essential daily trips. It is important that all constituents have meaningful access to the planning process and an opportunity to express their needs. Without such an opportunity the system could fail to meet their needs and hinder their quality of life.

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) sets forth a regional policy and planning framework to guide decision-making regarding the growth and development of the MAPA TMA. The TIP is a program or schedule of short-range transportation improvements and activities intended to be implemented through a combination of state, federal and local funding. The UPWP outlines tasks to be performed in the upcoming year and includes planning activities that range from transportation, community development, and land use planning initiatives.

MAPA is committed to ensuring that the agency’s planning projects and activities are accessible to all citizens within the MAPA TMA; therefore, throughout planning processes, staff takes all appropriate and reasonable measures to reach the LEP community.

Factor 4 – Availability of Resources and Accommodation Costs

In the past, MAPA has budgeted between \$5,000 and \$10,000 annually for report and document production. MAPA has identified Spanish language translation as an important consideration for accommodating the predominantly Spanish-speaking LEP population in the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro area. Document translation cost estimates in the Table 5.3 below are based on recent translation services secured through MAPA’s Heartland 2050 effort.

	Number of Words	Cost (\$0.30/word)
Transportation Improvement Program	10,430	\$3,129
Long Range Transportation Plan (2050)	48,640	\$14,592
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	11,420	\$3,426
Public Participation Plan	15,265	\$5,580
	85,755	\$26,727

Based on this analysis, full Spanish language document translation services would require a significant increase in financial resources currently committed to these activities. The cost of translation services precludes MAPA from full translation services for hard copies of all key documents, though there are digital translation services provided on the MAPA website. Additionally, accommodating additional language groups would be cost prohibitive based on the limited frequency with which MAPA has interacted historically with different communities.

Appendices

Appendix A: Title VI Complaint Form

Title VI Non-Discrimination Complaint Form

This form may be used to file a complaint with the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) pursuant to discrimination laws, rules and regulations, including, but not limited to, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency" and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

If you need assistance completing this form, please contact us by phone at 402-444-6866, or fax 402-342-0949 and ask for a Title VI Coordinator.

Feel free to add additional pages if necessary. You are not required to use this form; a signed letter that provides the same information is sufficient to file your complaint.

Complaints of discrimination must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discrimination.

This form **MUST** be completed by the complainant or the complainant's designated representative.

Complainant's Personal Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: (home/work) _____ (cell) _____

Name of the person completing this form, if different from above:

Your relationship to the complainant indicated above:

Alleged Discrimination – Details of Complaint

I. Identify the agency, department or program that discriminated:

Agency and/or department name:

Name of any individual, if known:

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (Work) _____ (Fax) _____

Date(s) of the alleged act:

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Date alleged discrimination began:

Last or most recent date of alleged discrimination:

II. What is the basis for this complaint?

If your complaint is in regard to discrimination in the delivery of services or discrimination that involved the treatment of you or others by the agency or department indicated above, please indicate below the basis on which you believe these discriminatory actions were taken.

Example: If you believe that you are discriminated against because you are African American, you would mark the box labeled "Race/Color" and write "African American" in the space provided.

Example: If you believe the discrimination occurred because you are female, you would mark the box labeled "Gender" and write "female" in the space provided.

Check all that apply:

Race/Color _____

Religion

National Origin _____

Age

Gender _____

Disability

III. Explain what happened:

Please explain as clearly as possible what happened. Provide the name(s) of witnesses, fellow employees, supervisors, and others involved in the alleged discrimination. Please include all information that you feel is relevant to the investigation. (Attach additional sheets if necessary and provide a copy of any written materials pertaining to your complaint.)

IV. How can this/these issue(s) be resolved to your satisfaction?

V. What is the most convenient time and place for use to contact you about this complaint?

VI. If we are not able to reach you directly, please give us the name and phone number of a person who can reach you and/or provide information about your complaint:

Name: _____

Telephone Number: () _____

VII. If you have an attorney representing you concerning the matter raised in this complaint, please provide the following:

Name of Attorney: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: () _____

Your Signature

Date

Note: The laws enforced by this agency prohibit retaliation or intimidation against anyone because the individual has either taken action or participated in action to secure rights protected by these laws. If you experience retaliation or intimidation separate from the discrimination alleged in this complaint or if you have questions regarding the completion of this form, please contact:

Title VI Coordinator
Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency
2222 Cuming Street
Omaha, NE 68102
Phone: (402) 444-6866 Ext. 3220; Fax: (402) 342-0949

Appendix B: Summary of Comments

No comments were received during the 30-day public comment periods for the MAPA Board or the RPA-18 Board.