



Plank-Nicholson Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Technical Memorandum: Environmental Justice

To: Capitol Area Transit System (CATS)	Date: 3/10/2020
From: HNTB Corporation	
Cc: Federal Transit Administration	
Project: Plank-Nicholson Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)	

The purpose of this technical memorandum is to document the environmental justice analysis performed for the Plank-Nicholson Bus Rapid Transit project (Project) located in the City of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Project route is approximately nine miles in length (one way) with service termini at Airline Highway next to the LSU Health Baton Rouge North Clinic and the Louisiana State University Campus. The BRT route connects regional medical centers, commercial centers, a state university, the downtown central business district (CBD), and residents along Plank Road, Florida Boulevard, and Nicholson Drive urban arterials.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City-Parish of East Baton Rouge (City), along with the Capital Area Transit System (CATS) and in partnership with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), will be implementing Baton Rouge’s first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route known as the Plank-Nicholson BRT (Project). The Project route is approximately nine miles in length (one way) between North Baton Rouge (Airline Highway) and the Louisiana State University (LSU) campus. The Project is intended to deliver a premium transit service to the City, conveniently and efficiently linking the north and south side of the city with downtown. Plank Road is one of CATS’ highest volume corridors and serves a high percentage of transit-dependent passengers. The route passes through well-organized neighborhoods that are characterized by high concentrations of minority and low-income residents, and recent focus along the Plank and Nicholson corridors has spurred investment in infrastructure and economic development opportunities. The Project will expand local and regional mobility options, improve job access, support transit-oriented development (TOD) and enhance livability along the corridor.

Most station improvements will be within existing right-of-way. However, some station areas may require the acquisition of small portions of right-of-way from adjacent properties. The scope of work proposed for the Project includes the following:

- Construction of up to 44 station locations (22 station pairs), a transfer center, and a layover location at LSU. The proposed standard station design has a typical total footprint of 10 feet by 55 feet.
- High-amenity, modern stations will be constructed and will each include a shelter, level boarding platform, station marker, real-time arrival (RTA) displays, bicycle facilities, benches, trash receptacles, and ADA accommodations.
- A 2.55-acre parcel located along Airline Highway just east of Plank Road has been identified by CATS to serve as the transfer center adjacent to the LSU Urgent Care Clinic. The property will provide transfer connections to several local routes serving North Baton Rouge and provide premium transit amenities, waiting areas, and park-and-ride facilities. The facility is part of CATS plan for North Baton Rouge to improve how people connect to the bus system and to health care services.
- Guideway improvements include transit signal priority (TSP) and narrowed travel lanes to reduce vehicles speeds, thus improving safety in the corridor. Queue jumps may be located at intersections, where appropriate, and will provide preferences to buses at intersections through the addition of travel lane at the intersection approach to signalized intersections.
- Roadway improvements include roadway resurfacing, new curb construction, restriping and utility adjustments in the vicinity of station locations necessary to accommodate station improvements and narrow the four-lane roadway section to four 11-foot lanes (two lanes in each direction).
- Construction of new sidewalks along sections of both sides of Plank Road from the Denham stations south to I-10.
- The Plank-Nicholson BRT will feature a fleet of specifically designed BRT vehicles that will be uniquely stylized and branded. The BRT fleet is planned to utilize all-electric propulsion technology to enhance air quality and passenger experience.

Methodology

Executive Order 12898, Federal Action to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations, dated February 11, 1994 states that, to the extent practicable and permitted by law, neither minority nor low-income populations may receive disproportionately high and adverse impacts because of a proposed project. The methodology used for the environmental justice analysis follows the FTA Circular 4703.1. FTA Circular 4703.1, issued in 2012, defines a minority population as any readily identifiable group or group of minority individuals who live in geographic proximity. Minority includes persons who are American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, and Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander. The FTA Circular 4703.1 defines a low-income individual as an individual whose median household income is at or below the poverty guidelines defined by the Department of Health and Human Services. For an impact to be considered an environmental justice impact, the affected minority and/or low-income populations (collectively EJ populations) must bear a disproportionate share of the Project's negative effects or be disproportionately deprived of project benefits when compared to the general population.

Throughout the Project's timeline, elected officials, key stakeholders, and the public have been providing feedback, shaping the project, building consensus, fostering project champions, and obtaining community support. Table 2 outlines key engagement activities to date for the project.

Table 1 - Key Project Engagement Activities

Meeting Date	Topic
December 4, 2018	BRT Advisory Committee
December 4, 2018	Elected Official Briefing
December 4, 2018	Downtown Stakeholders Briefing
December 4, 2018	Plank Road Stakeholders Briefing
December 5, 2018	LSU Facilities Briefing
December 5, 2018	Old South/Nicholson Drive Stakeholders Briefing
January 28, 2019	Public Meeting – Old South Neighborhood
January 29, 2019	Public Meeting – Downtown Neighborhoods
January 29, 2019	Public Meeting – Plank Road Neighborhoods

This environmental justice analysis utilized the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2017 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimate data at the block group level obtained from the U.S Census Bureau. Block group data was used to identify potential EJ populations. Due to the size of block groups, Census block data from the 2010 Decennial Census was used to identify the approximate locations of the environmental justice populations. 2010 Decennial Census Block data was obtained from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) National Historical Geographic Information System (<http://www.nhgis.org>) and American Fact Finder (<https://factfinder.census.gov>).

The analysis study area utilized a quarter-mile buffer around the proposed BRT route alignment. The quarter mile distance is considered a standard unit in transit analysis because it is the distance most people are willing to walk to access transit service. The blocks and block groups were selected using this quarter mile buffer. The populations were adjusted by the proportion of the block group or block contained within the study area. For example, if only 90% of the block group is contained in the study area then 90% of the population within that block group was included. During this process, some small areas of block groups were selected and resulted in populations less than one. These areas were changed to zero after a visual check to ensure the block group within in the study area did not contain a population area. The corridor was divided into two segments to present the data. The segments are referred to in this report as:

- Plank Road – Airline Highway and Winchester Avenue to North 22nd Street and Fuqua Street
- Downtown/Nicholson Drive – North 22nd Street and Fuqua Street to Nicholson Drive and South Stadium Road

Minority Populations

Based on the 2017 ACS, the City of Baton Rouge has a population of 227,549 with 139,622 or 61.4% identifying as a minority. East Baton Rouge Parish has a population of 446,167 with 233,308 or 52.3% identifying as minority. Based on the 2017 ACS data, the study area population is 13,874 with 11,849 or 85.4% identifying as minority. Nearly three-fourths of the study area minority populations live in the Plank Road section of the corridor. Overall, the corridor minority population percentage is greater than both the City of Baton Rouge and East Baton Rouge Parish. Of the block groups within the study area, 88% have a minority population greater than the City of Baton Rouge and 91% have a minority population greater than East Baton Rouge Parish. **Tables 2 through 4** show the detailed breakdown of minority populations in the study area by Census block groups. **Exhibit 1** shows the minority populations based on

block groups. **Exhibit 2** shows the minority populations by Census blocks which provides a more detailed look at their location.

Table 2: Corridor Minority Population

Population Category by Race	Plank Road	Downtown/ Nicholson Drive	Corridor Summary	Community of Comparison (COC)	
				Baton Rouge City, LA	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
Total Population	9,075	4,799	13,874	227,549	446,167
	100%	100%	100.0%	100%	100%
White (alone)	231	1,793	2,024	87,927	212,859
	2.5%	37.4%	14.6%	38.6%	47.7%
Black/African American (alone)	8,737	2,563	11,299	124,715	204,078
	96.3%	53.4%	81.4%	54.8%	45.7%
American Indian & Alaskan Native (alone)	45	2	48	635	944
	0.5%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%
Asian (alone)	3	303	306	8,239	15,146
	0.0%	6.3%	2.2%	3.6%	3.4%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander (alone)	0	0	0	76	123
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race (alone)	4	40	44	2,944	5,832
	0.0%	0.8%	0.3%	1.3%	1.3%
Two or More Races	54	98	152	3,013	7,185
	0.6%	2.0%	1.1%	1.3%	1.6%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	10	228	238	7,842	1,500
	0.1%	4.8%	1.7%	3.4%	0.3%
Total Minority Population	8,844	3,006	11,849	139,622	233,308
	97.5%	62.6%	85.4%	61.4%	52.3%

Table 3a: Plank Road Minority Populations

Population Category by Race	Census Tract and Block Group ID Numbers					Community of Comparison (COC)	
	Tract 4	Tract 4	Tract 5	Tract 5	Tract 33	Baton Rouge City, LA	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Block Group 4		
Total Population	246	452	1212	612	178	227,549	446,167
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
White (alone)	5	11	35	1	0	87,927	212,859
	1.9%	2.3%	2.8%	0.1%	0.0%	38.6%	47.7%
Black/African American (alone)	240	398	1176	611	178	124,715	204,078
	97.3%	88.0%	97.1%	99.9%	100.0%	54.8%	45.7%
American Indian & Alaskan Native (alone)	2	44	0	0	0	635	944
	0.8%	9.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%
Asian (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	8,239	15,146
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	3.4%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	76	123
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race (alone)	0	0	1	0	0	2,944	5,832
	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.3%
Two or More Races	0	0	0	0	0	3,013	7,185
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.6%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	0	0	3	0	0	7,842	1,500
	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	0.3%
Total Minority Population	241	442	1177	611	178	139,622	233,308
	98.1%	97.7%	97.2%	99.9%	100.0%	61.4%	52.3%

Table 3b: Plank Road Minority Populations (Cont.)

Population Category by Race	Census Tract and Block Group ID Numbers					Community of Comparison (COC)	
	Tract 34	Tract 6.01	Tract 34	Tract 51	Tract 9	Baton Rouge City, LA	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
	Block Group 5	Block Group 2	Block Group 1	Block Group 3	Block Group 2		
Total Population	1090	438	76	377	263	227,549	446,167
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
White (alone)	0	14	3	23	15	87,927	212,859
	0.0%	3.3%	3.4%	6.1%	5.6%	38.6%	47.7%
Black/African American (alone)	1090	424	66	329	242	124,715	204,078
	100.0%	96.7%	87.9%	87.2%	91.8%	54.8%	45.7%
American Indian & Alaskan Native (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	635	944
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%
Asian (alone)	0	0	3	0	0	8,239	15,146
	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	3.4%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	76	123
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race (alone)	0	0	3	0	0	2,944	5,832
	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.3%
Two or More Races	0	0	0	25	7	3,013	7,185
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	2.6%	1.3%	1.6%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	0	0	3	0	0	7,842	1,500
	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	0.3%
Total Minority Population	1090	424	73	354	249	139,622	233,308
	100.0%	96.7%	96.6%	93.9%	94.4%	61.4%	52.3%

Table 3c: Plank Road Minority Populations (Cont.)

Population Category by Race	Census Tract and Block Group ID Numbers					Community of Comparison (COC)	
	Tract 9	Tract 9	Tract 1	Tract 3	Tract 5	Baton Rouge City, LA	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
	Block Group 4	Block Group 3	Block Group 1	Block Group 1	Block Group 3		
Total Population	119	692	474	520	574	227,549	446,167
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
White (alone)	4	62	22	31	0	87,927	212,859
	3.1%	9.0%	4.6%	6.0%	0.0%	38.6%	47.7%
Black/African American (alone)	115	630	448	483	574	124,715	204,078
	96.9%	91.0%	94.7%	92.9%	100.0%	54.8%	45.7%
American Indian & Alaskan Native (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	635	944
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%
Asian (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	8,239	15,146
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	3.4%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	76	123
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	2,944	5,832
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.3%
Two or More Races	0	0	3	5	0	3,013	7,185
	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	1.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.6%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	0	3	0	0	0	7,842	1,500
	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	3.4%	0.3%
Total Minority Population	115	630	452	488	574	139,622	233,308
	96.9%	91.0%	95.4%	94.0%	100.0%	61.4%	52.3%

Table 3d: Plank Road Minority Populations (Cont.)

Population Category by Race	Census Tract and Block Group ID Numbers						Community of Comparison (COC)	
	Tract 34	Tract 9	Tract 2	Tract 2	Tract 4	Tract 6.02	Baton Rouge City, LA	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
	Block Group 4	Block Group 1	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Block Group 3	Block Group 3		
Total Population	22	154	373	936	267	0	227,549	446,167
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	100%
White (alone)	0	0	6	0	1	0	87,927	212,859
	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	0.4%		38.6%	47.7%
Black/African American (alone)	22	154	354	936	266	0	124,715	204,078
	100.0%	100.0%	94.9%	100.0%	99.6%		54.8%	45.7%
American Indian & Alaskan Native (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	0	635	944
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		0.3%	0.2%
Asian (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	0	8,239	15,146
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		3.6%	3.4%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	0	76	123
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,944	5,832
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		1.3%	1.3%
Two or More Races	0	0	13	0	0	0	3,013	7,185
	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	0.0%	0.0%		1.3%	1.6%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	0	0	0	0	0	0	7,842	1,500
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		3.4%	0.3%
Total Minority Population	22	154	367	936	266	0	139,622	233,308
	100.0%	100.0%	98.4%	100.0%	99.6%		61.4%	52.3%

Table 4a: Downtown/Nicholson Drive Minority Populations

Population Category by Race	Census Tract and Block Group ID Numbers					Community of Comparison (COC)	
	Tract 51	Tract 53	Tract 53	Tract 16	Tract 16		
	Block Group 2	Block Group 2	Block Group 1	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Baton Rouge City, LA	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
Total Population	379	274	102	225	112	227,549	446,167
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
White (alone)	304	85	8	30	39	87,927	212,859
	80.1%	31.0%	7.9%	13.4%	34.6%	38.6%	47.7%
Black/African American (alone)	63	188	92	181	70	124,715	204,078
	16.5%	68.5%	90.2%	80.3%	62.0%	54.8%	45.7%
American Indian & Alaskan Native (alone)	2	0	0	0	0	635	944
	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%
Asian (alone)	3	1	2	0	0	8,239	15,146
	0.9%	0.5%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	3.4%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	76	123
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	2,944	5,832
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.3%
Two or More Races	7	0	0	14	4	3,013	7,185
	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	6.3%	3.4%	1.3%	1.6%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	16	0	0	0	1	7,842	1,500
	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	3.4%	0.3%
Total Minority Population	75	189	94	195	73	139,622	233,308
	19.9%	69.0%	92.1%	86.6%	65.4%	61.4%	52.3%

Table 4b: Downtown/Nicholson Drive Minority Populations (Cont.)

Population Category by Race	Census Tract and Block Group ID Numbers					Community of Comparison (COC)	
	Tract 52	Tract 24	Tract 52	Tract 24	Tract 28.01		
	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Block Group 2	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Baton Rouge City, LA	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
Total Population	163	606	635	378	711	227,549	446,167
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
White (alone)	10	117	266	122	455	87,927	212,859
	6.0%	19.3%	41.9%	32.3%	64.0%	38.6%	47.7%
Black/African American (alone)	153	446	357	213	135	124,715	204,078
	94.0%	73.6%	56.2%	56.4%	19.0%	54.8%	45.7%
American Indian & Alaskan Native (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	635	944
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%
Asian (alone)	0	17	0	24	82	8,239	15,146
	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	6.3%	11.5%	3.6%	3.4%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander (alone)	0	0	0	0	0	76	123
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race (alone)	0	0	0	19	14	2,944	5,832
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	1.9%	1.3%	1.3%
Two or More Races	0	26	12	0	26	3,013	7,185
	0.0%	4.3%	1.9%	0.0%	3.6%	1.3%	1.6%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	1	42	7	69	75	7,842	1,500
	0.8%	6.9%	1.1%	18.3%	10.6%	3.4%	0.3%
Total Minority Population	153	489	369	256	256	139,622	233,308
	94.0%	80.7%	58.1%	67.7%	36.0%	61.4%	52.3%

Table 4c: Downtown/Nicholson Drive Minority Populations (Cont.)

Population Category by Race	Census Tract and Block Group ID Numbers			Community of Comparison (COC)	
	Tract 53	Tract 28.01	Tract 28.02		
	Block Group 3	Block Group 1	Block Group 1	Baton Rouge City, LA	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
Total Population	872	343	0	227,549	446,167
	100%	100%		100%	100%
White (alone)	177	181	0	87,927	212,859
	20.3%	52.7%		38.6%	47.7%
Black/African American (alone)	621	46	0	124,715	204,078
	71.2%	13.3%		54.8%	45.7%
American Indian & Alaskan Native (alone)	0	0	0	635	944
	0.0%	0.0%		0.3%	0.2%
Asian (alone)	70	105	0	8,239	15,146
	8.0%	30.5%		3.6%	3.4%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander (alone)	0	0	0	76	123
	0.0%	0.0%		0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race (alone)	0	7	0	2,944	5,832
	0.0%	2.1%		1.3%	1.3%
Two or More Races	4	4	0	3,013	7,185
	0.5%	1.3%		1.3%	1.6%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	4	12	0	7,842	1,500
	0.4%	3.6%		3.4%	0.3%
Total Minority Population	695	162	0	139,622	233,308
	79.7%	47.3%		61.4%	52.3%

Exhibit 1: 2017 Minority Populations (Block Groups)

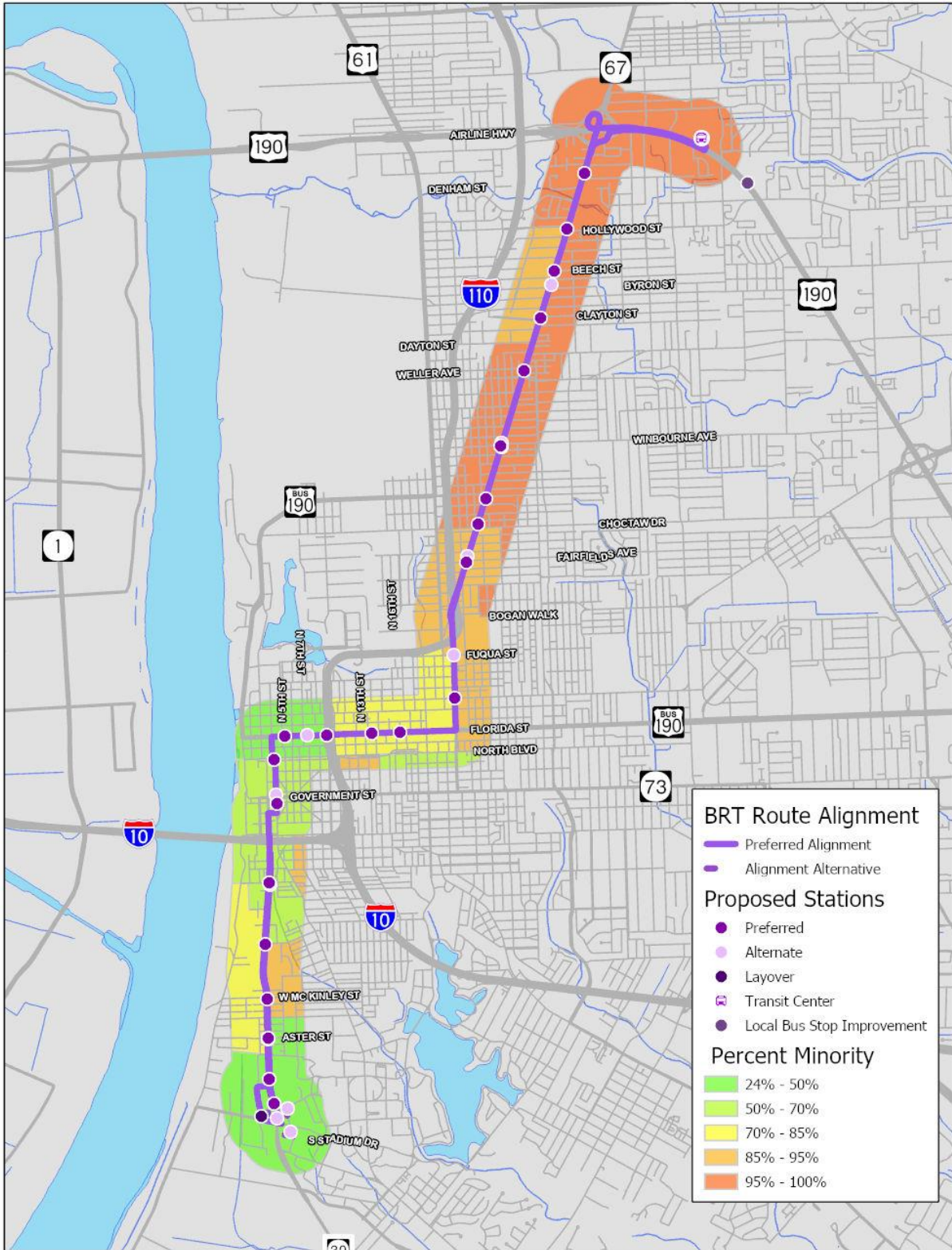
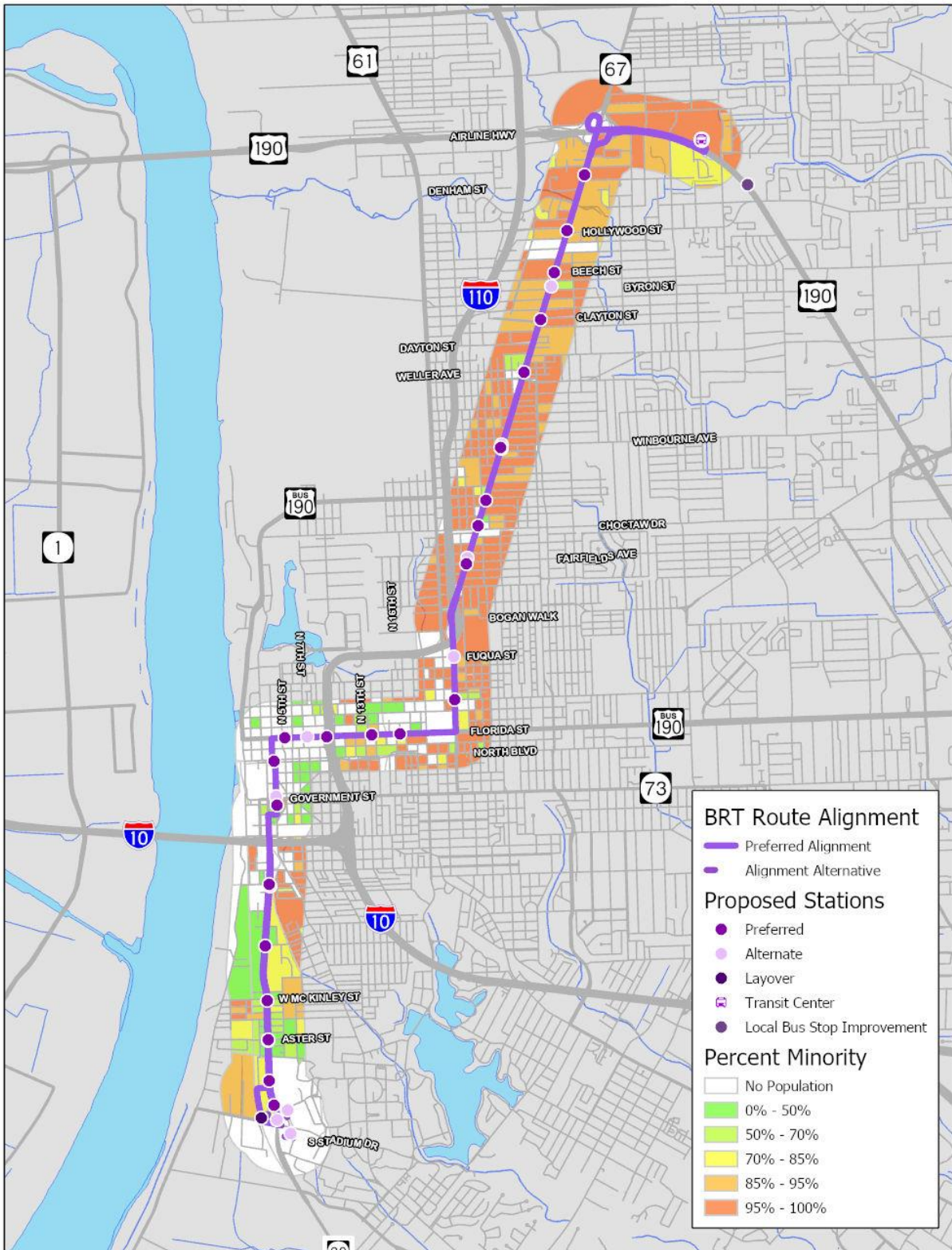


Exhibit 2: 2010 Minority Populations (Blocks)



Low-Income Populations

Based on the 2017 ACS, 25.1% of the City of Baton Rouge’s population and 18.7% of East Baton Rouge Parish’s population was below the poverty level. Based on 2017 ACS data, the study area contains a total population of 13,874 and a low-income (poverty level) population of 5,216, which represents 37.6% of the total population. Of the 5,216, nearly two-thirds live in the Plank Road segment of the corridor. Of the 32 Block Groups, 69% have a poverty percentage higher than the 25.1% poverty rate of the City of Baton Rouge and 88% have a poverty percentage higher than the 18.7% poverty rate of East Baton Rouge Parish. Poverty rates throughout the corridor range from 8% to 66%. The block group with the highest low-income population percentage is located east of downtown along Florida Boulevard between North 22nd Street and Interstate 110 (I-110). Other areas with a large proportion of low-income populations are along Plank Road between Ozark Street and Choctaw Drive, and between Clayton Street and Prescott Road. **Tables 5** through **7** show the detailed breakdown of low-income populations in the study area by block group. **Exhibit 3** shows the low-income populations in the study area.

Table 5: Corridor Poverty Populations

Population Category	Plank Road	Downtown/ Nicholson Drive	Corridor Summary	Community of Comparison (COC)	
				Baton Rouge City, LA	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
Total Population	9,075	4,799	13,874	227,549	446,167
Persons Below Poverty Level	3,363	1,853	5,216	57,143	83,483
Percent of Persons Below Poverty Level	37.1%	38.6%	37.6%	25.1%	18.7%

Table 6a: Plank Road Poverty Populations

Population Category	Census Tract and Block Group ID Numbers										Community of Comparison (COC)	
	Tract 4	Tract 4	Tract 5	Tract 5	Tract 33	Tract 34	Tract 6.01	Tract 34	Tract 51	Tract 9	Baton Rouge City, LA	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Block Group 4	Block Group 5	Block Group 2	Block Group 1	Block Group 3	Block Group 2		
Total Population	246	452	1212	612	178	1090	438	76	377	263	227,549	446,167
Persons Below Poverty Level	90	101	526	319	54	460	86	12	130	52	57,143	83,483
Percent of Persons Below Poverty Level	36.4%	22.3%	43.4%	52.1%	30.1%	42.2%	19.6%	16.2%	34.4%	19.9%	25.1%	18.7%

Table 6b: Plank Road Poverty Populations (Cont.)

Population Category	Census Tract and Block Group ID Numbers											Community of Comparison (COC)	
	Tract 9	Tract 9	Tract 1	Tract 3	Tract 5	Tract 34	Tract 9	Tract 2	Tract 2	Tract 4	Tract 6.02	Baton Rouge City, LA	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
	Block Group 4	Block Group 3	Block Group 1	Block Group 1	Block Group 3	Block Group 4	Block Group 1	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Block Group 3	Block Group 3		
Total Population	119	692	474	520	574	22	154	373	936	267	0	227,549	446,167
Persons Below Poverty Level	21	180	192	201	227	6	35	102	413	158	0	57,143	83,483
Percent of Persons Below Poverty Level	17.5%	26.0%	40.5%	38.7%	39.6%	26.7%	22.4%	27.3%	44.2%	59.0%	0.0%	25.1%	18.7%

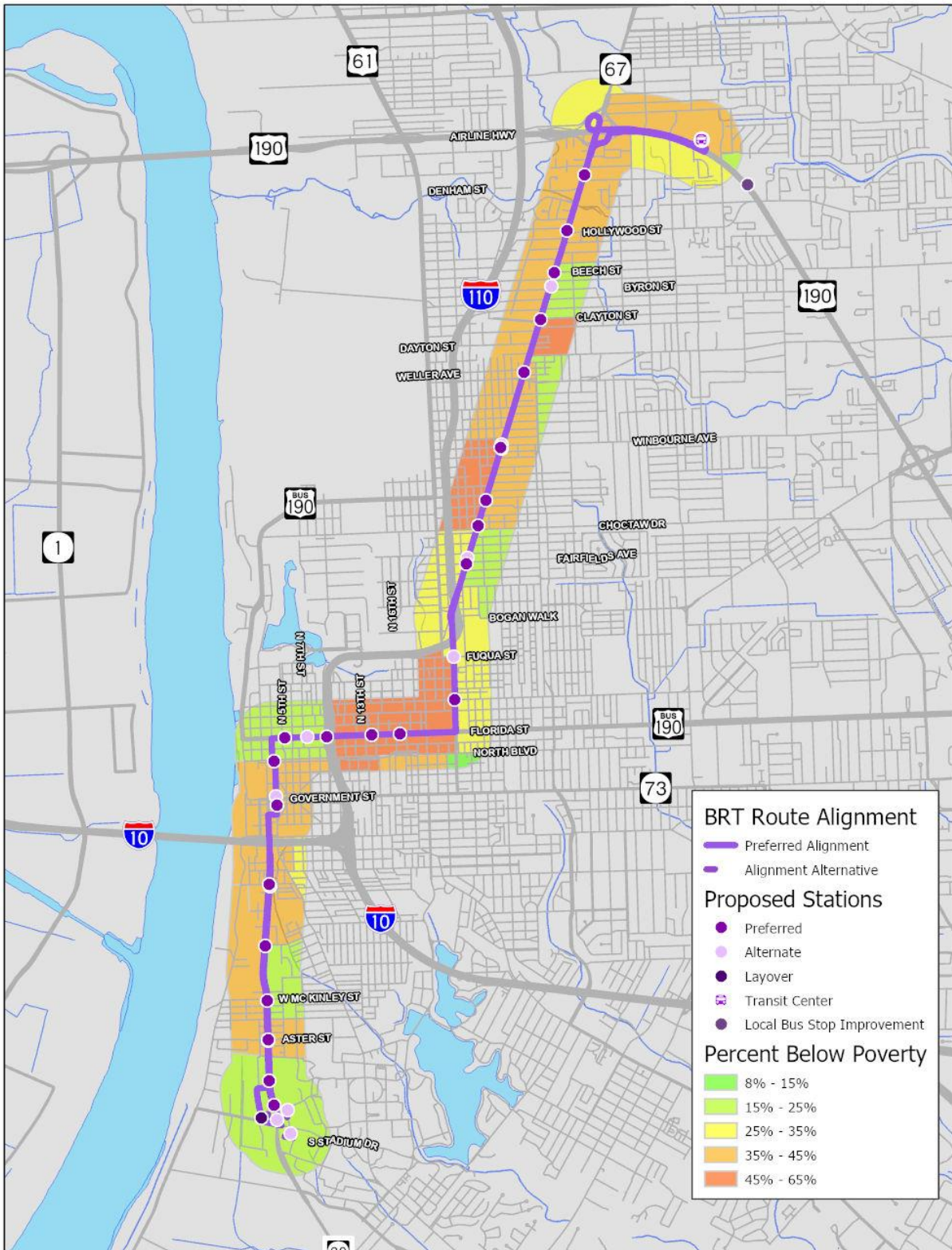
Table 7a: Downtown/Nicholson Drive Poverty Populations

Population Category	Census Tract and Block Group ID Numbers							Community of Comparison (COC)	
	Tract 51	Tract 53	Tract 53	Tract 16	Tract 16	Tract 52	Tract 24		
	Block Group 2	Block Group 2	Block Group 1	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Baton Rouge City, LA	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
Total Population	379	274	102	225	112	163	606	227,549	446,167
Persons Below Poverty Level	84	109	52	78	9	48	112	57,143	83,483
Percent of Persons Below Poverty Level	22.1%	39.9%	51.0%	34.5%	8.4%	29.6%	18.5%	25.1%	18.7%

Table 7b: Downtown/Nicholson Drive Poverty Populations (Cont.)

Population Category	Census Tract and Block Group ID Numbers						Community of Comparison (COC)	
	Tract 52	Tract 24	Tract 28.01	Tract 53	Tract 28.01	Tract 28.02		
	Block Group 2	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Block Group 3	Block Group 1	Block Group 1	Baton Rouge City, LA	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
Total Population	635	378	711	872	343	0	227,549	446,167
Persons Below Poverty Level	264	167	274	575	81	0	57,143	83,483
Percent of Persons Below Poverty Level	41.5%	44.2%	38.5%	65.9%	23.6%	0.0%	25.1%	18.7%

Exhibit 3: 2017 Poverty Populations (Block Groups)



Environmental Justice Population Locations

Minority populations exist along the entire project corridor and range from 24% to 100% of the population. Nearly 88% of approximately 32 block groups have a minority population exceeding the citywide percentage of 61.4% and nearly 91% have a population exceeding the parish-wide percentage of 52.3%. Within ¼-mile of the project, the percentage of minority populations that exist in various block group locations along the corridor are as follows:

- 95% or more – Nearly all populations along the corridor from the northern terminus along Airport Boulevard to the south along Plank Road from Airport Boulevard to Choctaw Drive and a small population to the east of Plank Road from Choctaw Drive to Bogan Walk Street.
- 85% to 95% – Along Plank Road to the west from Hollywood Street to Dayton Street and along Plank Road and North 22nd street from Choctaw Drive to Florida Street. A few additional scattered populations exist along the southern Portion of the corridor.
- 70% to 85% – Along Florida Street from Plank Road to I-110 and along Nicholson Drive to the west from McClung Street to West Chimes Street.
- 50% to 70% – A few scattered populations exist along the middle portion of the corridor from Plank Road and Florida Street to the south along Nicholson Drive and Van Buren Street.
- 24% to 50% - Along Florida Street from I-110 to the Mississippi River continuing south along North 4th Street to North Boulevard. Additional populations are located along Nicholson Drive to the east from Aster Street to Engineering Lane and to the west from West Chimes Street to Alex Box Stadium.

Nearly 69% of approximately 32 block groups have a poverty rate exceeding the 25.1% citywide mean and nearly 88% have a poverty rate exceeding the 18.7% parish-wide mean. Within ¼-mile of the project, areas containing 50% or more low-income populations exist in the following locations along the corridor:

- Along Florida Street from South 22nd Street to I-110.
- Along Plank Road to the west from Ozark Street to Choctaw Drive.
- Along Plank Road to the east from Clayton Street to Prescott Road.

Environmental Justice Impacts

The Project will cause limited physical impacts to the surrounding area. The project is planned to be constructed primarily within existing rights-of-way. No new construction is planned outside of new station shelters and related amenities. The Project will not require any building displacements and require only minor amounts of additional right-of-way. Project noise will have no impact on the surrounding properties.

Temporary impacts related to construction activities may include dust, noise and vibration from construction equipment, temporary equipment staging areas, traffic delays, and other temporary effects. These impacts will be mitigated through construction best practices and will cease when construction is complete.

For an impact to be considered an environmental justice impact, the affected minority or low-income population must bear a disproportionate share of the Project's negative effects or be disproportionately deprived of project benefits when compared to the general population.

Minority and low-income populations will not face a disproportionate share of the impacts, these impacts will be shared by the entire population along the corridor. Additionally, Project benefits will be equally accessible for all populations along the corridor.

CATS is prepared to conduct a Title VI equity analysis during the preliminary or final design phase of the project which will begin shortly after the environmental review phase is complete or at least one year before the BRT starts revenue service. Among other matters, the BRT will be analyzed to determine how it will serve customers along Route 41 (today's Plank Road route). CATS does not plan to reduce service on any routes besides Route 41.

The proposed BRT project would require no building displacements or other direct impacts on minority or low-income populations. The BRT station areas become opportunities for additional housing for minority and low-income populations through transit-oriented development that has the potential to occur around station areas.

The implementation of the Project would provide benefits to minority and low-income populations as well as the community. The project will provide an improved mobility option that will result in faster travel times, better access to jobs, grocery and wellness resources, and entertainment areas. A wide range of users, including low-income, minority and limited mobility populations, can benefit from improved mobility with the Project. Each station along the corridor will have the same amenities resulting in the Project's benefits being equally distributed across the corridor. The project will also improve accessibility through improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities to station amenities. New jobs associated with the construction of the Project and the ongoing operations and maintenance of the service would be created.

Text for CE

A review of the 2017 U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimate block group data indicated that 88% of the block groups within ¼ mile of the project corridor contain minority populations of 61.4% or more. The ACS data also showed that throughout the block groups within the Project corridor, 69% contain low-income populations of 25.1% or more, and some adjacent areas contain low-income populations of 50% or more. The proposed project would not result in the displacement of any minority or low-income persons or businesses, and there would be no substantial or long-term impacts to any other resources within the project corridor. Therefore, there will be no disproportionately high or adverse impacts to minority or low-income populations, when compared to the general population. The project would benefit minority and low-income populations by providing additional and improved transit service and amenities for connections to housing, wellness, community facilities, and employment centers. CATS is prepared to conduct a Title VI equity analysis at least a year before the BRT starts revenue service.

References

Steven Manson, Jonathan Schroeder, David Van Riper, and Steven Ruggles. IPUMS National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 14.0 [Database]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS. 2019. <http://doi.org/10.18128/D050.V14.0>