



LUC Regional Planning Commission

RTPO

Environmental Justice Program

JUNE 2021

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The contents of this Plan reflect the views of the Logan-Union-Champaign Regional Planning Commission, which is responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official view and policies of the Ohio Department of Transportation or the U.S. Department of Transportation. This Plan does not constitute a standard, specification or regulation.

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Section 1 - Document Summary

Purpose of this Document

In 1994 Executive Order 12898 Environmental Justice (EJ) included identifying and addressing the effects of all programs or activities of Federal-aid recipients, sub-recipients, and contractors, whether or not such programs and activities are federally assisted.

Executive Order 12898 was created to bring Federal attention to the environmental and human health conditions in low-income and minority communities with the goal of achieving EJ. The goal of Environmental Justice is to ensure that any adverse human health or environmental effects of any government activities do not disproportionately affect minority or low-income populations. EJ does not intend to provide preferential treatment to these populations, but rather fair treatment to all populations. Specific to transportation, Executive Order 12898 has been issued in order to ensure that all federally funded transportation-related programs, policies, and activities that have the potential to cause adverse affects, specifically consider the effects on minority and low-income populations. EJ is a public policy objective that has the potential to improve the quality of life for those whose interests have traditionally been overlooked.

According to the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), there are three core principles of Environmental Justice:

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

As the designated Rural Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for Logan and Champaign County, LUC is must address Environmental Justice in all planning activities, including the Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, and Public Participation Plan.

Addressing Environmental Justice Concerns includes:

- Identifying low-income and minority populations so that their needs can be identified and addressed and that the benefits as well as the burdens of transportation investments can be fairly distributed throughout the planning area.
- Enhancing existing analyses processes to ensure that the Long Range Plan and TIP comply with Title VI requirements.
- Evaluating the existing public involvement processes and improve if necessary to include minority and low-income populations in the decision making process

Section 2 - Demographics & Data

Logan and Champaign counties are located in west central Ohio, approximately 40 miles west of Columbus and 30 miles north of Dayton. Centrally located in both Ohio and the United States, Logan and Champaign counties are within 300 miles of numerous major cities, including Cincinnati, Toledo, Cleveland, Detroit, Indianapolis, Louisville, Lexington, Charleston, and Pittsburgh.

The 2010 census showed 85,955 people living in the 888 square miles across the two counties. Within the two counties, there are 51 units of government, including the 2 counties, 29 townships and 20 municipalities. Logan County and the City of Bellefontaine are home to the highest populations in the area.

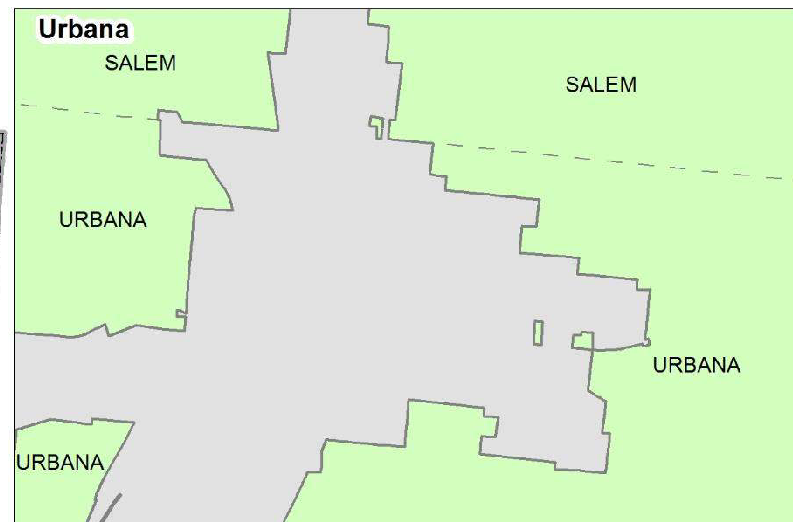
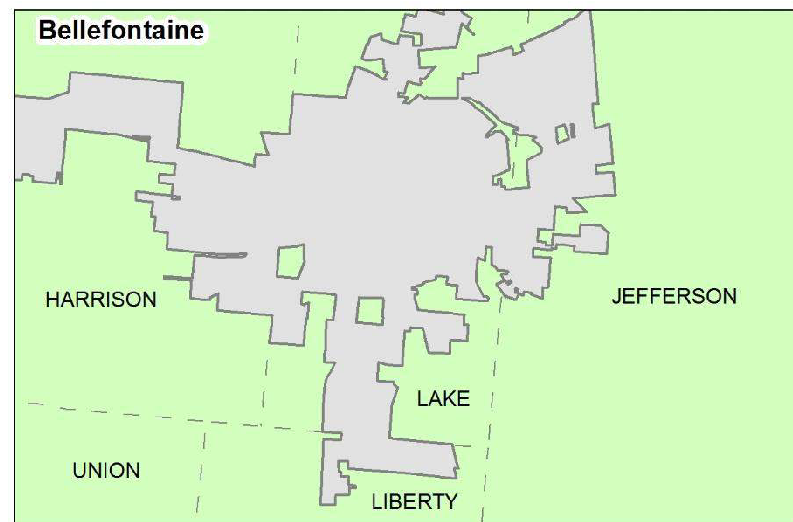
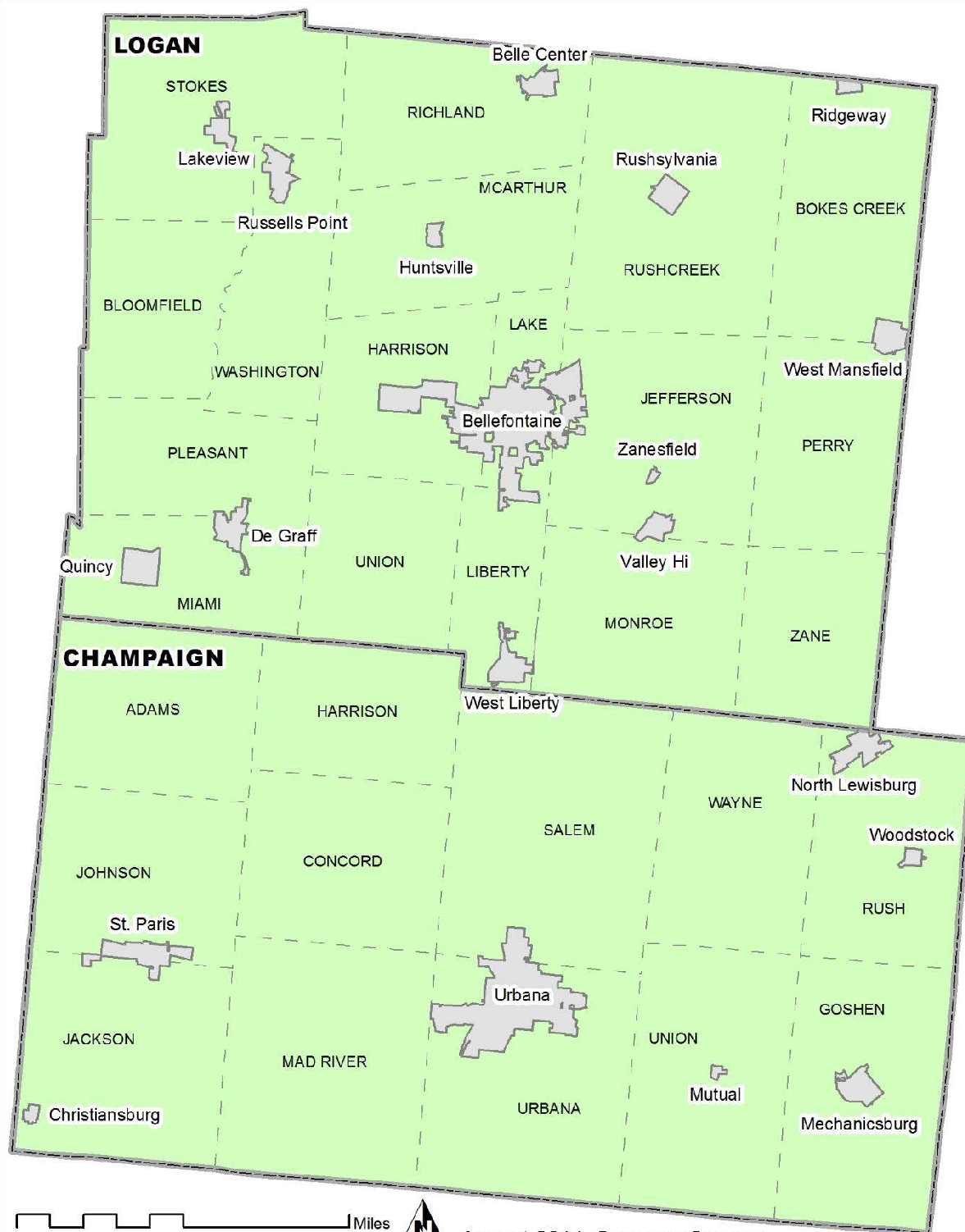
The primary method of travel in the area is motor vehicle. However, both counties are served by a municipal airport, demand response transit service, and an ever-growing network of pedestrian transportation methods, including trails and sidewalks. The area is served by a network of roadways and rail lines to support the efficient movement of freight through the community.

74% of workers in Logan County work near home, being employed within the county. In Champaign County, less than 50% of employed persons work within the county. A majority of workers in Champaign County travel outside of the county for employment, with a large portion of them working in Clark, Union, Logan and Montgomery counties. The highest percentage of commuters travel alone in a personal vehicle, with an average travel time of 24.4 minutes.

The RTPPO Region map, shown on the following page, displays Champaign and Logan counties in addition to the townships and municipalities that reside within them.



RTPO Region



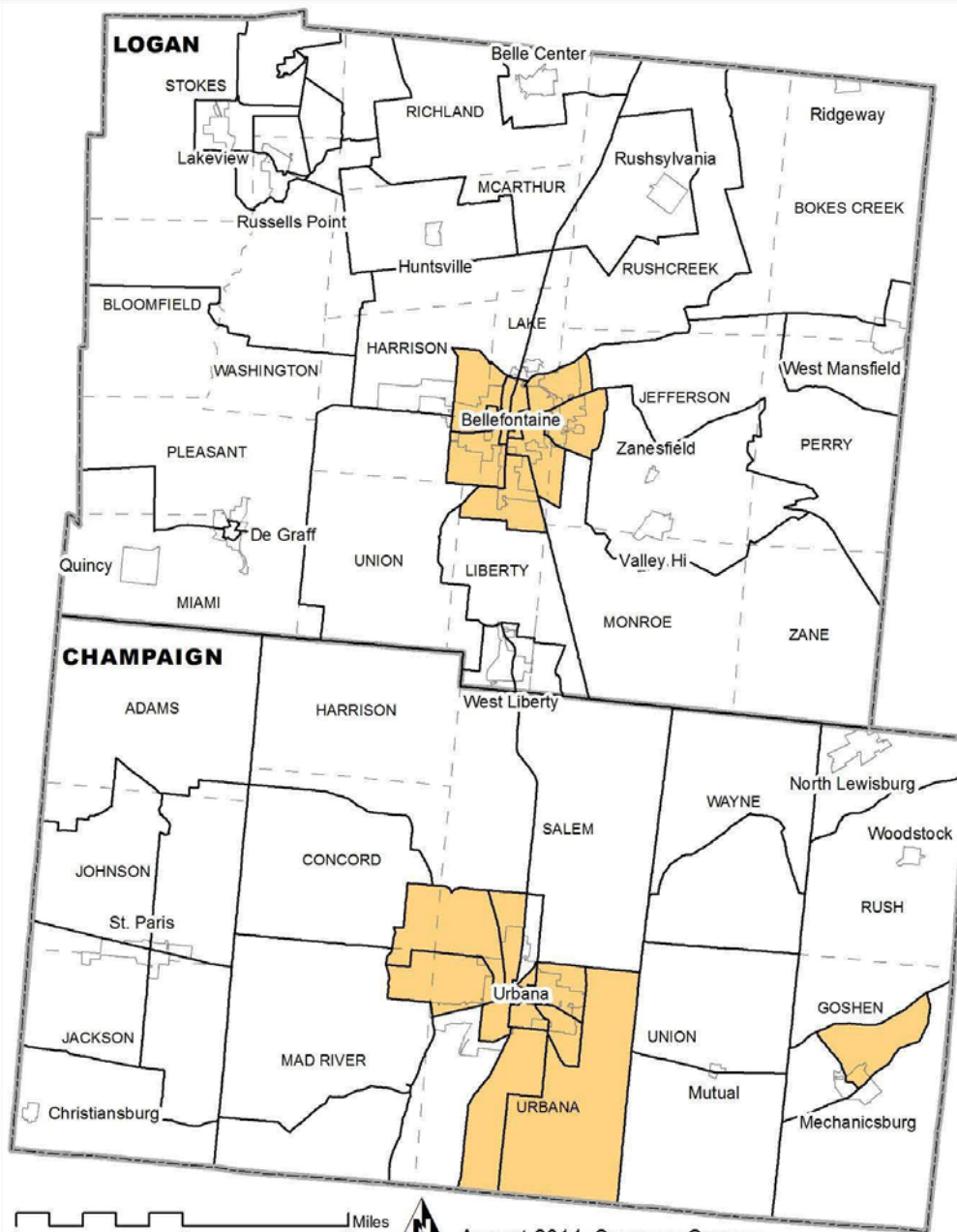
- County Boundaries
- Municipalities
- Townships

LUC completed a socio-economic profile for Logan and Champaign counties as part of its initial Transportation Plan. Several sources of information were utilized for this profile. The US 2010 Census was used for all residence-related variables, as well as journey-to-work statistics. For employment and population variables, LUC used a combination of sources including the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the American Community Survey, and the Ohio Development Services Agency.

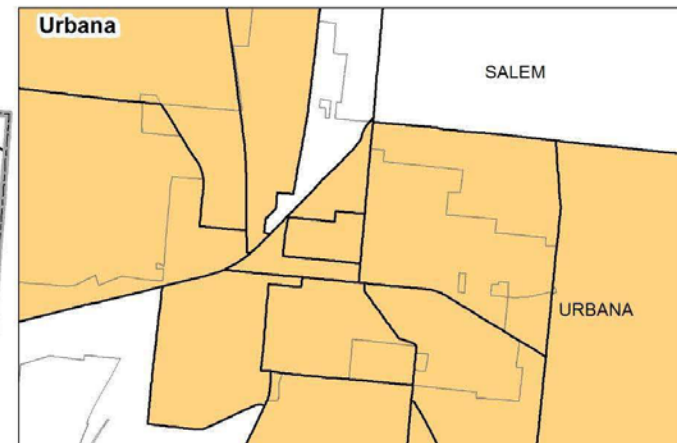
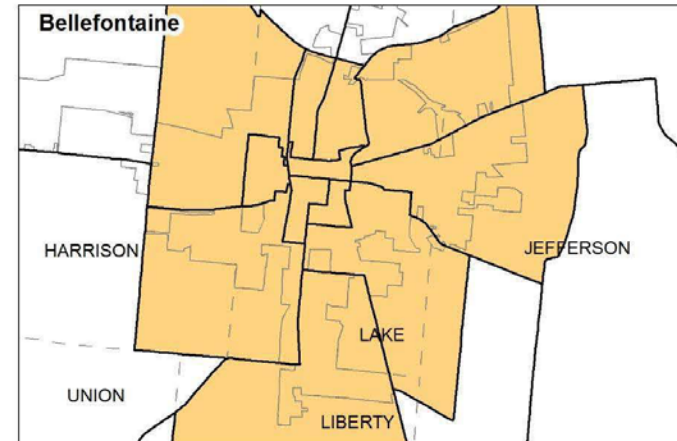
Upon evaluation of socioeconomic elements in the two counties, it was found that multiple factors were more frequent in the cities of Bellefontaine and Urbana. The average minority population is 5.3% in Champaign County and 4.7% in Logan County; however, those percentages are lower in the regions outside of the two cities while block groups in the Bellefontaine and Urbana areas have a minority population above or equal to these county percentages.

Other statistics for which the areas of Bellefontaine and Urbana differ from the county averages are population in poverty, average household size, median household income, Hispanic population, and households with no vehicle.

The maps that follow display the census data in map form and exhibit the socio-demographic profile of the two county region. The variables shown for this document are minority population and population in poverty.

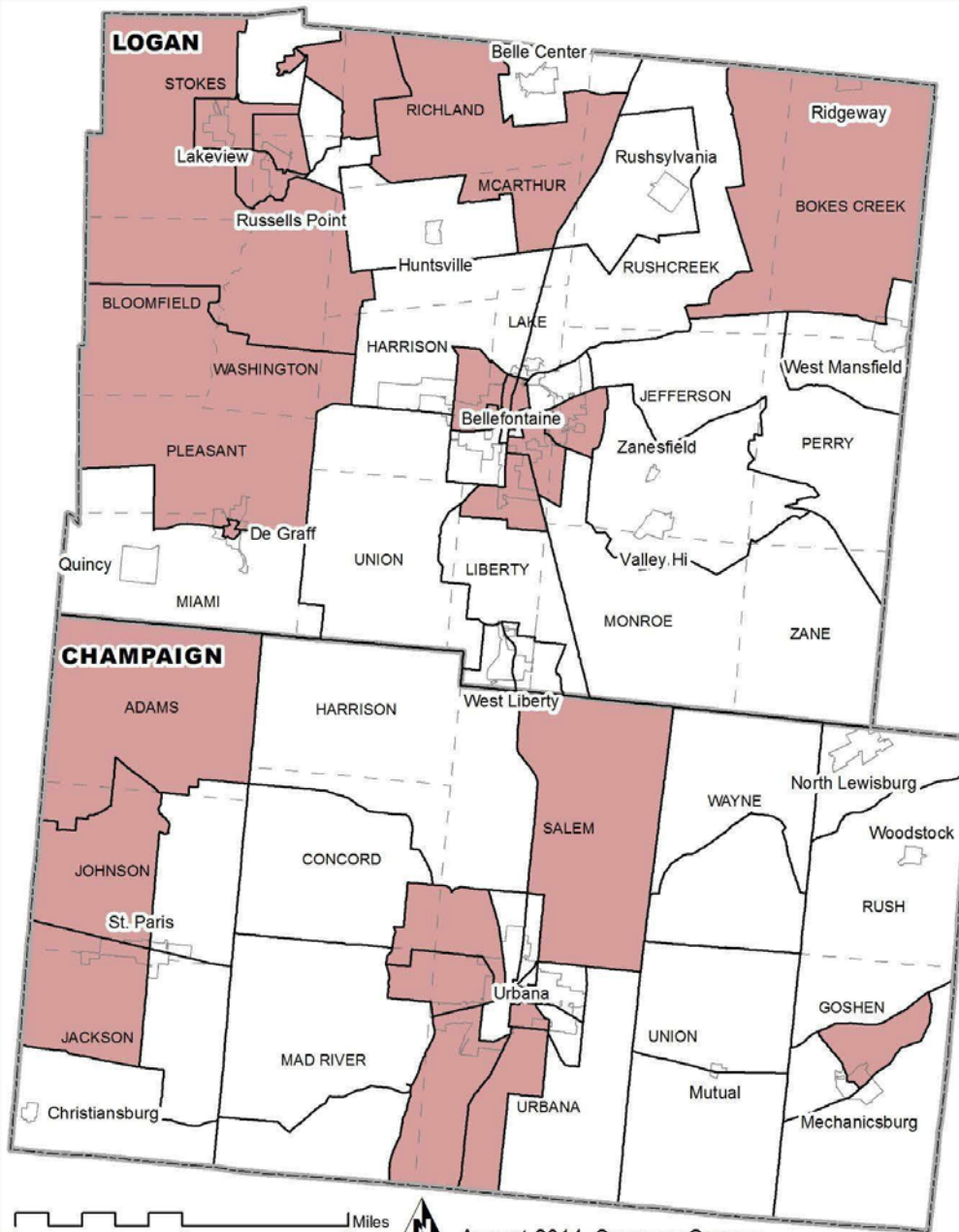


Minority Population

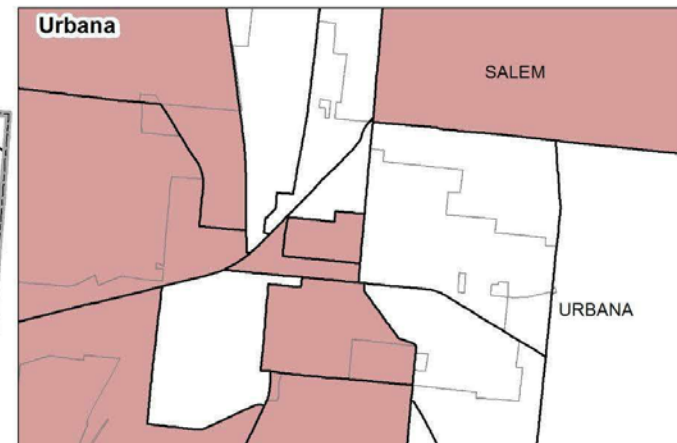
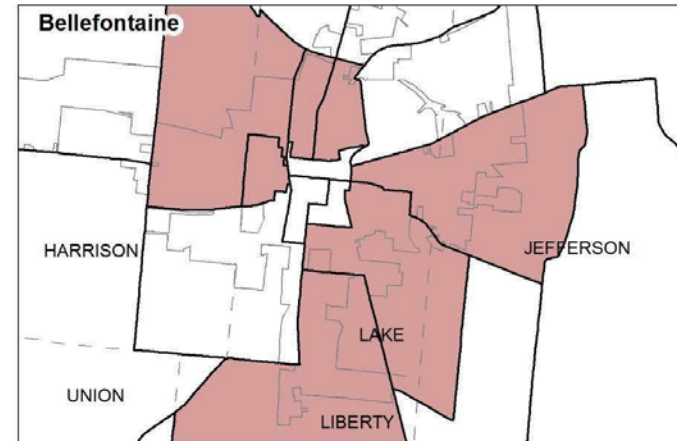


Minority Population by Census Block Groups

- Below County Percentage
- Above or Equal to County Percentage



Population In Poverty



Population in Poverty by Census Block Groups

- Below County Percentage
- Above or Equal to County Percentage

August 2014. Sources: Census

Section 3 - Environmental Justice Analysis of System Investments

This section is the process in which LUC will evaluate the plans and projects which are considered to be part of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP is a twenty-year planning document which established to goals and priorities for transportation system over that twenty-year period. The analysis is completed within the development of the LRTP.

The process determines the benefits and impacts of transportation systems and are required in conducting an Environmental Justice (EJ) analysis. Four steps have been identified by FHWA and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is conducting an Environmental Justice analysis, they are:

- Demographic data
- Public Engagement in Planning Process
- Consider the proposed projects and their likely benefits and adverse impacts
- Select alternatives

Section 4 - Project Benefits and Adverse Impacts

The Department of Transportation issued an EJ order which defines adverse effects of a project or program. In summary adverse impacts are the significant individual or cumulative health, environmental, social, and economics impacts of a project or set of projects.

Project benefits are the anticipated results of a project which improve performance measures or quality of service. The benefits of project will vary depending upon the project. Projects are identified within the planning process by failure to meet specific requirement or performance measures. The improved performance measure should be the primary benefit.

Other potential benefits include:

- Decreased travel time
- Increased access to employment or businesses
- Increased access to transit
- Improved pedestrian or bicycle facilities
- Improved air quality
- Safety

Project impacts are the individual and cumulative effects of completing a project. They may include:

- Increased traffic
- Increase in noise
- Displacement or relocations
- Neighborhood intrusion
- Water quality impacts
- Air quality impacts
- Reduction in green space
- Decreased access to transit
- Decreased access to employment or businesses

Considering project benefits and impacts is complicated and not easy to show graphically. Where possible the benefit or impact should be shown graphically. The process used to evaluate project impacts is:

- List all project benefits
- List all project impacts
- Provide discussions of the how benefits and impacts may affect low income, minority and LEP populations.
- Include discussion in meeting materials where possible

Disproportionately High and Adverse Effect

A disproportionately high effect is one that:

- Is predominately borne by a minority population and /or a low income population, or
- Will be suffered by the minority and/or low income population and is appreciable more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effects suffered by non-minority and/or non-low income population.

To determine if either one or both of these conditions apply a map showing the locations of protected populations along with the anticipated projects derived from the LRTP. This along with a written analysis of the benefits and burdens should be presented to LUC's Board. A separate analysis should be completed on the financially constraint project lists. If a disproportionately high or adverse effect is found in either analysis additional study or substitution of another project(s) should be completed.

Section 5 -Public Outreach on Implementation of the EJ Strategy

Public engagement and participation in decision-making is a fundamental principle of EJ, and is critical to achieving outcomes that reflect the needs of all affected stakeholders to the greatest extent feasible. Active participation of all affected communities will help ensure that transportation plans and projects avoid, minimize, or mitigate these impacts on Low-income and Minority populations. For this reason, LUC is committed to developing and utilizing public engagement to encourage EJ populations to participate during the planning and implementation of LUC's programs, policies, and activities.

LUC is committed to engaging low-income and minority populations in the transportation decision-making process, from the earliest stages of planning through project implementation. As LUC implements an outreach strategy, we are committed to building relationships with stakeholders, including State and local partners who help fund our transportation systems and those who serve underrepresented populations. LUC encourages coordination with community leaders to develop locally appropriate outreach plans, recognizing that community leaders are ideally positioned to champion the public engagement process and disseminate information to their constituents.

LUC is exploring traditional and nontraditional strategies for engaging low-income and minority populations, including regional workshops with State and local officials and online announcements. LUC will also ensure that communities with LEP populations have access to information to the fullest extent feasible and that their participation in providing input into decision-making is encouraged.

Furthermore, LUC is committed to coordinating to the removal of procedural or regulatory barriers in all efforts to achieve EJ. This includes programs and collaborations across all relevant Federal, State and Local agencies.