This appendix provides a system-level analysis of the potential impacts the objectives, strategies and actions in Chapter 5 may have on the state's environmental justice populations and other communities with specific transportation needs. These populations are racial and ethnic minorities, people with low-incomes, people with limited-English proficiency, people age 17 and younger, people age 65 and older or households without vehicles. These groups will be collectively referred to as "EJ and Title VI populations" for the purposes of this document.

Since this analysis for the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan (SMTP) occurs at the statewide system level, the results are general and qualitative in nature. Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) will complete additional environmental justice analyses for modal plans, other plans and studies and capital investment projects. Those individual project analyses identify specific impacts on communities and neighborhoods. The analysis completed during project planning processes and related project design decisions helps avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse impacts.



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & TITLE VI OVERVIEW

Presidential Executive Order 12898, issued in 1994, directed each federal agency to "make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies and activities on minority and low-income populations." The order builds on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin. The order also provides protection to low-income groups. The three fundamental EJ principles are to:

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

Executive Order 12898 and U.S. Department of Transportation define minority populations as:

- Black a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- American Indian and Alaskan Native a person having origins in any original people of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
- Asian a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia or the Indian subcontinent.
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander a person having origins in any of the original people of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa and other Pacific Islands.

• Hispanic – a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

The executive order and U.S. Department of Transportation also define low-income populations as:

• Low-income – a person whose household income (or in the case of a community or group, whose median household income) is at or below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines.

Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited-English Proficiency, issued in 2000, further clarified Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It stated that individuals who do not speak English well and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English are entitled to language assistance in order to access public services or benefits for which they are eligible. MnDOT is a recipient of federal funds from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and other federal agencies. Accordingly, MnDOT is required to have a Language Assistance Plan. More information can be found in MnDOT's Language Assistance Plan.

While not identified by Title VI, Executive Order 12898 or Executive Order 13166, this analysis also includes people age 65 and older, people age 17 and younger and zero vehicle households because these groups have unique transportation needs. These groups in addition to those listed in the executive orders will collectively be referred to as "EJ and Title VI populations" unless referred to specifically.

¹ Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations.

ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

Minnesota has a complicated history related to environmental racism. Past racist policies and practices shaped the way Minnesota developed, and Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities continue to bear a disproportionate share of the negative impacts of those decisions. Advancing environmental justice means that benefits and burdens resulting from past actions and policy decisions will be fairly and justly split among all people and that BIPOC communities will be involved in future planning and decision-making processes. Environmental justice considerations go beyond considering impacts to BIPOC. Minnesota's history includes prominent examples of the impact of the transportation system on BIPOC communities.

The construction of Interstate 94 (I-94) is an example of environmental racism in Minnesota's transportation system. The final route for the highway bisected the Rondo Neighborhood, a historically Black neighborhood in Saint Paul. Freeway construction displaced many BIPOC resulting in the loss of homes and businesses.² People living near I-94 have since been exposed to increased light, noise and air pollution.

According to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, 91% of BIPOC Minnesotans are exposed to higher levels of air pollution than the state average. This is due in part to a higher portion of BIPOC living near major roads like I-94. The impacts of transportation on BIPOC do not end with air pollution, but extend to other aspects of human, economic, social and environmental health.³ These disproportionate impacts are examples of environmental racism. Environmental justice seeks to right the wrongs created by environmentally racist policies and practices.

The Oxford Dictionary defines environmental racism as "Intentional or unintentional racial discrimination in environmental policy-making, enforcement of regulations and laws, and targeting of communities for the disposal of toxic waste and siting of polluting industries." Advancing environmental justice requires acknowledging past harm from environmentally racist policies and actions.

MnDOT's Rethinking I-94 project is a recent example of how changing the way transportation decisions are made can change the status quo and reimagine the future. MnDOT's plans to reconstruct the freeway between downtown Saint Paul and Minneapolis presents an opportunity to address negative community impacts from the initial construction and the ongoing health impacts. The project started with review of community cultures and history along the corridor to provide historical and cultural background about groups along the freeway. This information helped to acknowledge the history of harm along the corridor and to inform public engagement. MnDOT also hosted meetings and open houses to hear feedback and suggestions from community members.

Rethinking I-94 is advancing environmental justice by acknowledging the harmful impacts of this corridor on local communities and working with them to create a better, more equitable solution. Overall, environmental justice and transportation equity are necessary tools to overcome the legacy of environmental racism in transportation.

² "How to connect and heal St. Paul's Rondo neighborhood," https://reconnectrondo.com/how-to-connect-and-heal-st-pauls-rondo-neighborhood/

³ U.S. Department of Transportation, "Guidance on Environmental Justice and NEPA," Federal Highway Administration, December 16, 2011, https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_topics/ej/guidance_ejustice-nepa.aspx.

⁴ Oxford Reference, "Environmental Racism," https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095753679.

OVERVIEW OF MINNESOTA'S POPULATION

According to the U.S. Census, 2015 – 2019 American Community Survey five-year estimates, 5,563,378 people live in Minnesota. Table E-1 shows the population based on race, ethnicity, age, limited-English proficiency, low-income and households with zero vehicles.

Table E-1: Minnesota's Demographics, US Census, 2015 to 2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

POPULATION GROUP	TOTAL GROUP POPULATION	PERCENT OF POPULATION
Total Population	5,563,378	100.00%
Total Households	2,185,603	100.00%
White alone	4,609,049	82.85%
Black alone	356,515	6.41%
American Indian or Alaskan Native alone	58,011	1.04%
Asian alone	268,181	4.82%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander alone	2,194	0.04%
Some other race alone	104,032	1.87%
Two or more races	165,396	2.97%
Hispanic	299,556	5.38%
Age 65 and older	858,698	15.43%
Age 17 and under	1,295,848	23.29%
Persons below the poverty level	526,065	9.46%
Limited English-Speaking Households	52,622	2.41%
Households with zero vehicles	146,861	6.72%

TRENDS

Age, demographic and health trends, among others, in Minnesota impact EJ and Title VI populations. When viewing these trends, it is important to note how these issues affect each other. EJ and Title VI populations in Minnesota disproportionately bear the burden of environmental harms. Environmental injustice or inequality occurs when an underserved community experiences disproportionately higher risks than the population as a whole. Recognizing what factors are present can help create solutions that are designed to serve all.

Changing demographics combined with systemic inequities result in certain Minnesotans at risk of harm. Age and race are two such demographics. Minnesota's population is aging and becoming more racially diverse. As discussed in the Aging Population Trend, the number of people age 65 and older is expected to grow from 920,000 to more than 1.3 million by 2040. As Minnesota's population ages, the state's transportation system will need to adapt to the changing needs. Providing accessible and affordable ways for older adults to get around is a vital part of ensuring independent, fulfilled lives.

Significant racial disparities exist in Minnesota. The Demographics Trend explains from 2010 to 2019, BIPOC communities grew by 32% and the white, non-Hispanic population grew by 1%. Minnesota Employment and Economic Development's Minnesota Disparities by Race Report highlights racial disparities across a number of socioeconomic factors including employment, business ownership, pandemic response, income and more. The report concludes noting that "the economic challenges and opportunities for BIPOC Minnesotans will be great over the next 15 years and an equitable, multipronged approach will be necessary for attracting, retaining, and training workers of all demographic characteristics."

As discussed in the <u>Health Trend</u>, low-income people and BIPOC who live next to major highways are more likely to be hospitalized for asthma-related reasons. Additionally, heat-related illnesses are more common in areas with large roadways and little vegetation due to the heat island effect and warming temperatures related to climate change.⁶

⁵ Minnesota Employment and Economic Development, "Minnesota Disparities by Race Report," 2020, https://mn.gov/deed/assets/061020_MN_disparities_final_tcm1045-435939.pdf

⁶ Environmental Protection Agency, "Learn About Heat Islands," 2021, https://www.epa.gov/heatislands/learn-about-heat-islands.

AREA TRANSPORTATION PARTNERSHIPS

An Area Transportation Partnership (ATP) is a group of traditional and non-traditional transportation partners including representatives from MnDOT, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Regional Development Commissions, counties, cities, tribal

governments, special interests and the public that have the responsibility of developing a regional transportation improvement program for their area of the state. There are eight ATPs in Minnesota—one for each MnDOT district.

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Figure E-1: Minnesota Area Transportation Partnerships (ATPs)

The ATP process was introduced in the early 1990s to ensure stakeholder participation in the investment of federal transportation funding. The ATP process provides for early and continuous involvement in the development of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), a four-year list of projects that are expected to be completed within that timeframe.

The ATP solicits for projects that are eligible for federal funding. The resulting project lists are reviewed and integrated into the Area Transportation Improvement Program, which is then sent to MnDOT's Office of Transportation System Management to be included in the STIP. The final STIP is forwarded to the Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Administration for approval. No federal projects can be started until this approval is received.

Figure E-1 shows Minnesota's ATP boundaries across the state. Table E-2, Table E-3 and Table E-4 show racial and ethnic population data, low-income population data and total limited English-speaking households data by Minnesota ATP boundary.

Table E-2 shows Minnesota's racial and ethnic populations by ATP. The majority of the state's BIPOC population lives in the Metro ATP. Eight-three percent of the state's Black population, 86% of the state's Asian population and 65% of the state's Hispanic population reside in the Metro ATP. The largest American Indian/Alaskan Native population is also in the Metro ATP and represents 31% of the state's total American Indian/Alaskan Native population.

Outside of the Metro ATP:

- Southeast ATP 6 has the largest Black population.
- Southeast ATP 6 has the largest Asian population.
- Southeast ATP 6 has the largest Hispanic population.

Table E-3 summarizes the total low-income population in each ATP. Low-income includes all persons whose median household income is at or below the guidelines set by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Statewide, over 9% of persons were below the poverty level. Southeast ATP 6 and West Central ATP 4 had the highest percentage of their population below the poverty level with 12% and 11%. Southwest ATP 8 had the lowest outside the Metro ATP with just over 6%.

Table E-2: Minnesota's racial & ethnic populations by ATP, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimate

DEMOGRAPHIC	TOTAL	NORTHEAST ATP 1	NORTHWEST ATP 2	CENTRAL ATP 3	WEST CENTRAL ATP 4
Total Population	5,563,378	354,041	165,297	673,563	249,395
White Alone	4,609,049	325,947	144,091	620,058	229,573
% White alone	82.80%	92.10%	87.20%	92.10%	92.10%
Black alone	356,515	4,930	2,049	17,493	4,052
% Black alone	6.40%	1.40%	1.20%	2.60%	1.60%
American Indian or Alaskan Native alone	58,011	9,124	11,978	7,270	6,660
% American Indian or Alaskan Native alone	1.00%	2.60%	7.20%	1.10%	2.70%
Asian alone	268,181	2,788	1,514	8,080	1,844
% Asian alone	4.80%	0.80%	0.90%	1.20%	0.70%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	2,194	136	67	67	174
% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.04%	0.04%	0.04%	0.01%	0.07%
Some Other Race alone	104,032	1,393	797	6,721	1,774
% Some Other Race alone	1.90%	0.40%	0.50%	1.00%	0.70%
Two or more Races	165,396	9,723	4,801	13,874	5,318
% Two or more Races	3.00%	2.70%	2.90%	2.10%	2.10%
Hispanic	299,556	6,219	5,508	18,362	8,088
% Hispanic	5.40%	1.80%	3.30%	2.70%	3.20%

DEMOGRAPHIC	TOTAL	METRO	SOUTHEAST ATP 6	SOUTH CENTRAL ATP 7	SOUTHWEST ATP 8
Total Population	5,563,378	3,120,462	506,721	284,800	209,099
White Alone	4,609,049	2,384,590	451,701	261,780	191,309
% White alone	82.80%	76.40%	89.10%	91.90%	91.50%
Black alone	356,515	299,788	18,191	5,946	4,066
% Black alone	6.40%	9.60%	3.60%	2.10%	1.90%
American Indian or Alaskan Native alone	58,011	18,261	1,905	764	2,049
% American Indian or Alaskan Native alone	1.00%	0.60%	0.40%	0.30%	1.00%
Asian alone	268,181	230,717	15,425	5,084	2,729
% Asian alone	4.80%	7.40%	3.00%	1.80%	1.30%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	2,194	1078	467	58	147
% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.04%	0.03%	0.09%	0.02%	0.07%
Some Other Race alone	104,032	73,290	8,474	6,042	5,541
% Some Other Race alone	1.90%	2.30%	1.70%	2.10%	2.60%
Two or more Races	165,396	112,738	10,558	5,126	3,258
% Two or more Races	3.00%	3.60%	2.10%	1.80%	1.60%
Hispanic	299,556	196,682	28,706	21,524	14,467
% Hispanic	5.40%	6.30%	5.70%	7.60%	6.90%

How well a person speaks English can affect their ability to participate in the transportation planning process. According to the American Community Survey (ACS), "a limited English-speaking household" is one which all members 14 years and over have at least some difficulties with English." Approximately 2%, or 52,622 of Minnesotan households are considered to be "limited-English household." Table E-4 compares this information by ATP. The majority of limited-English speaking households (76% of those in Minnesota) live in the Metro ATP. Northwest ATP 2 has the fewest number of limited-English speaking households, while Northeast ATP 1 has the lowest percentage of total households in the ATP.

Table E-5 compares languages spoken at home. After English, Spanish is the most common language spoken at home, followed by Afro-Asiatic languages and Hmong. Afro-Asiatic languages include Somali, Amharic, along with others. While only a little under 2% of the state's population five years and older speaks an Afro-Asiatic language, about 1%, or over 38,000 people, speak English less than "very well." This is the highest percentage aside from Spanish speakers among those who spoke a language other than English at home.

Table E-3: Minnesota's low-income population by ATP, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

АТР	TOTAL POPULATION	POPULATION BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	% POPULATION BELOW POVERTY LEVEL
1 Northeast	571,530	51,687	9.0%
2 Northwest	796,228	58,807	7.4%
3 Central	1,518,738	155,703	10.3%
4 West Central	167,982	18,448	11.0%
Metro	251,273	26,733	10.6%
6 Southeast	932,310	111,749	12.0%
7 South Central	712,232	73,150	10.3%
8 Southwest	489,794	29,788	6.1%
Total	5,440,087	526,065	9.7%

Table E-4: Minnesota's limited English-speaking households by ATP, 2015-

2019 American Censues Survey 5-year Estimates

ATP	TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	LIMITED ENGLISH-SPEAKING HOUSEHOLDS	% LIMITED ENGLISH-SPEAKING HOUSEHOLDS
1 Northeast	150,788	589	0.4%
2 Northwest	65,740	435	0.7%
3 Central	256,810	2,452	1.0%
4 West Central	103,481	847	0.8%
Metro	1,207,665	39,869	3.3%
6 Southeast	200,918	4,568	2.3%
7 South Central	114,553	2,332	2.0%
8 Southwest	85,648	1,530	1.8%
Total	2,185,603	52,622	2.4%

Table E-5: Languages spoken at home in Minnesota, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimate

LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME	TOTAL POPULATION	% TOTAL POPULATION	POPULATION AGE 5-YEARS AND OLDER THAT SPEAKS ENGLISH LESS THAN "VERY WELL"	% POPULATION AGE 5-YEARS AND OLDER THAT SPEAKS ENGLISH LESS THAN "VERY WELL"
Speak only English	4,589,965	88.10%	NA	NA
Spanish or Spanish Creole	205,634	3.90%	82,116	1.60%
Amharic, Somali, or other Afro-Asiatic languages	83,546	1.60%	38,908	0.70%
Yoruba, Twi, Igbo, or other languages of Western Africa	12,244	0.20%	3,956	0.10%
Swahili or other languages of Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa	10,799	0.20%	3,538	0.10%
Hmong	64,057	1.20%	27,801	0.50%
German	19,060	0.40%	2,593	<0.0%
Chinese	23773	0.50%	10,509	0.30%
Vietnamese	22,940	0.40%	13,046	0.30%
Other Asian languages	16,866	0.30%	12,179	0.20%
French (incl. Patois, Cajun)	15,479	0.30%	3,800	0.10%
Russian	14,474	0.30%	6,304	0.10%
Arabic	15,014	0.30%	5,310	0.10%
Other languages	4,834	0.10%	1,337	<0.0%

Table E-6: Minnesotans age 17 and under and age 65 and older by ATP, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimate

ATP	TOTAL POPULATION	POPULATION 17 AND UNDER	% POPULATION 17 AND UNDER	POPULATION 65 AND OLDER	% POPULATION 65 AND OLDER
1 Northeast	354,041	69,079	19.5%	72,156	20.4%
2 Northwest	165,297	39,380	23.8%	31,096	18.8%
3 Central	673,563	166,066	24.7%	105,071	15.6%
4 West Central	249,395	57,189	22.9%	49,011	19.7%
Metro	3,120,462	733,023	23.5%	423,926	13.6%
6 Southeast	506,721	117,219	23.1%	86,455	17.1%
7 South Central	284,800	64,078	22.5%	50,223	17.6%
8 Southwest	209,099	49,814	23.8%	40,760	19.5%
Total	5,706,494	1,295,848	22.7%	858,698	16.3%

Table E-6 shows the population of each ATP that is age 17 and under or age 65 and older. People age 17 and under make up 23% of Minnesota's population, while people age 65 and older make up over 15%. Populations of people age 65 and older are estimated to increase significantly over the next 30 years. By 2035, there are projected to be more than 1.2 million people age 65 and older in Minnesota.

Northeast ATP 1 had the largest percentage (20.4%) of persons age 65 and older. The Metro ATP had the smallest percentage (13.6%) of those 65 and older. Central ATP 3 had the highest percentage (24.7%) of those 17 and under, while Northeast ATP 1 had the smallest (19.5%).

Households with zero vehicles have a greater reliance on transit, bicycling, walking and car- or ride-sharing services. Table E-7 shows the estimated number of households by ATP that had zero vehicles. The ACS estimated that just over 6% of Minnesota households, under 150,000 households, do not have a vehicle. More than 60% of these zero-vehicle households are in the Metro ATP, which accounts for over 7% of all Metro ATP households. In Greater Minnesota, Northeast ATP 1 had the highest percentage (7.2%) of households without a vehicle, while Central ATP 3 had the smallest percentages (4.9%).

Table E-7: Minnesota households with zero vehicles by ATP, 2015-2019 American Censues Survey 5-year Estimates

АТР	TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO VEHICLE	% HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO VEHICLE
1 Northeast	150,788	10,859	7.2%
2 Northwest	65,740	4,297	6.5%
3 Central	256,810	12,456	4.9%
4 West Central	103,481	5,936	5.7%
Metro	1,207,665	89,825	7.4%
6 Southeast	200,918	12,456	6.2%
7 South Central	114,553	6,349	5.5%
8 Southwest	85,648	4,683	5.5%
Total	2,185,603	146,861	6.7%

SMTP PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

As described in Chapter 4 and Appendix G – Engagement Summary, MnDOT used an inclusive and comprehensive engagement effort to ensure that Minnesota residents had opportunities to participate in the development of the SMTP. The public engagement process offered an opportunity for people from diverse backgrounds to provide feedback on the issues facing Minnesota's transportation system.

The engagement process for the plan update was unlike any that MnDOT had done before. MnDOT recognized the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the plan process. However, the goal to engage Minnesotans meaningfully in this project remained. MnDOT committed to a flexible, phased approach to respond to the changing context. MnDOT created opportunities to hear directly from people what transportation issues they face.

Staff made efforts to listen closely to the voices of people who are underserved by transportation decision making, including Black, Indigenous and People of Color, people with low-income, people with limited English proficiency and youth (under 18). Materials and communications were tailored to reach EJ and Title VI populations. MnDOT prioritized partnerships with community-based organizations and promotions of input opportunities for EJ and Title VI populations, and provided input opportunities in Spanish, Hmong and Somali.

Several SMTP materials were translated depending on time and resources available and intended audience. The Mode Lib survey was translated into Spanish. The VideoAsk survey was available in Spanish, Hmong, Somali and English. The Let's Talk Transportation comics were translated into Spanish, Hmong and Somali. Comics and the Phase 2 survey could have been translated into several languages using the build in translation at MinnesotaGO.org. The survey responses received, and the responses received from the broader

general public engagement, shaped the objectives, strategies and actions included in the SMTP by identifying which challenges and opportunities participants believed MnDOT should consider in its planning process.

MnDOT used targeted Facebook ads to increase participation among EJ and Title VI populations and balance the participation numbers to better reflect the demographic breakdown of Minnesota's population. Organic and targeted advertisements via zip code targeting were used to reach EJ and Title VI populations within diverse or lower income areas. Further, statewide distribution of sidewalk stickers and large posters targeted locations to reach EJ and Title VI populations.

During the online engagement opportunities, participants were asked to provide optional demographic information to help MnDOT in its outreach efforts. This data is included to provide further context in understanding the responses, as well as highlight which communities may require more engagement in the future. Demographic data was primarily received via the online self-paced trivia and feedback tool and MnDOT-hosted online trivia and discussion events. MnDOT hosted various internal conversations with staff, committees and other groups, but did not track demographics. Community partner-hosted events also did not always ask the same demographic data questions. However, these partner-hosted events focused on individuals who are underserved in transportation decision-making.

- Latino Chamber of Commerce
- African Career, Education, and Resource (ACER)
- Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership (CAPLP)
- Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research (HACER)
- Sisters of Synergy
- Vietnamese Social Services (VSS)

For the Let's Talk Transportation Trivia discussion events, MnDOT partnered with community-based organizations to be responsive to attendee needs. NewPublica, a consultant for the SMTP, and advisory committee members assisted with coordinating translation for select events. In total, five events were offered in different languages: two in Spanish in partnership with HACER and one each in Karen, Karenni and Vietnamese in partnership with VSS.

Approximately 60% of Let's Talk Transportation participants provided at least one piece of demographic information. Of those who provided demographic data, most were white and skewed older. The audience was relatively gender balanced, providing nearly equal responses from men and women. Responses were primarily collected via the online self-paced tool and MnDOT hosted trivia events. This takeaway is solely based on the limited demographic information shared by the people who participated online.

Restrictions on in-person meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult for many people to participate in planning. When there was a short opportunity for in-person engagement in fall 2021, staff focused on attending community events and locations where people who are underserved by transportation might attend, including:

- Mankato State
- Mercado Central (Minneapolis)
- Metro Bus Transit Center (St. Cloud)
- Midtown Global Market (Minneapolis)
- Southwest Minnesota State University (Marshall)

Spanish-speaking staff participated in events at Mercado Central and Midtown Global Market. Opportunities for outdoor in-person engagement were extremely limited with the arrival of winter and the Omicron variant.

For the policy panel, the market research survey included a representative sample of 653 respondents from around Minnesota. To increase representation within harder-to-reach groups, MnDOT provided community-based organizations unique survey links and asked them to invite individuals from their communities. This contributed an additional 12 respondents to the overall base for a total of 665 participants.

SMTP OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, ACTIONS & WORK PLAN

The SMTP builds on the foundation provided by the Minnesota GO Vision. The plan identifies objectives, performance measures, strategies, actions and work plan activities to meet the vision and address the challenges and opportunities facing Minnesota over the next 20 years.

The plan identifies six objectives:

- Transportation Safety
- System Stewardship
- Climate Action
- Critical Connections
- Healthy Equitable Communities
- Open Decision Making

Each objective includes performance measures, strategies and actions to achieve the objective. These serve as policy direction for transportation in Minnesota. The policy direction is the foundation for MnDOT modal and system plans and transportation partners throughout Minnesota. How each objective advances environmental justice is summarized in the following sections.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

Safety remains a top priority for MnDOT and its transportation partners. The Transportation Safety objective seeks to safeguard transportation users as well as the communities the system travels through. The objective also looks to apply proven strategies to reduce fatalities and serious injuries for all modes. And finally, to foster a culture of transportation safety in Minnesota. See Chapter 5 for the Transportation Safety performance measures, strategies and actions.

HOW THIS OBJECTIVE ADVANCES ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Safety is a priority for everyone. It includes traveler safety and community safety and applies to everyone who uses the transportation system. It focuses on providing an integrated approach to safety. Traveler safety addresses all forms of transportation such as driving, walking, rolling, bicycling or riding transit. Differences in physical safety help to illustrate disparities for people traveling in Minnesota.

Adults age 65 and older are at a higher risk of injury and death during crashes compared to younger drivers. As highlighted in the Aging Population Trend,

older adults account for about 20% of licensed drivers, but only 10% of drivers involved in crashes are 65 and older. Older adults also are more likely to have a disability than younger people, especially related to walking and hearing, which can pose higher risks when using the transportation system.

Transportation is just one factor that can influence community safety. Community safety is a person's ability to live in a safe environment. Proximity to large numbers of vehicles and exposure to hazardous materials during transport are two ways that Minnesota's transportation network cause harm. For example, pedestrian fatalities for white

Minnesotans are one per 100,000 people and nine per 100,000 people for BIPOC Minnesotans. This objective advances environmental justice by acknowledging these patterns and working to develop creative strategies to mitigate potential negative impacts.

This objective includes strategies and actions encouraging MnDOT and transportation partners to engage with community stakeholders during the planning process and to develop rigorous communication infrastructure so all communities can use Minnesota's transportation system safely.

SYSTEM STEWARDSHIP

The transportation system is made up of many assets. Some assets are seen every day, such as bridges, sidewalks, pavement markings, transit buses, crossing signals, docks and airport runways. Other assets may not be as visible, such as stormwater management or transportation data. For the transportation system to be effective, MnDOT and its transportation partners must operate and maintain these different assets, but also plan so the system can adapt to changing needs and risks.

The System Stewardship objective seeks to strategically build, maintain, operate and adapt the transportation system based on data, performance and community needs. The objective also seeks to ensure that there is an effective and efficient use of resources. See Chapter 5 for the System Stewardship performance measures, strategies and actions.

HOW THIS OBJECTIVE ADVANCES ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Transportation is a vital part of everyone's day-today lives. It is crucial that the transportation system is operated and maintained in a way that meets public expectations and needs, despite limited resources. A key part of system stewardship is considering and planning how the transportation system may need to change and how those decisions may impact Minnesotans' quality of life. This objective promotes sustainability, equity and accessibility when it comes to maintaining the existing transportation system. This will ensure that historical harms are not repeated, and that the existing system can better serve all Minnesotans.

People depend on transportation for their quality of life and having a disability can make it harder to move around. Though people with disabilities are not typically included in EJ analyses, disability often amplifies other inequities resulting from one's race, ethnicity, national origin, poverty status and more. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, one in nine Minnesotans has a disability. This equals 608,774 people (or 11%) of the total state population. Disability rates vary widely by race from 22% for Dakota populations to as low as 2% for Chinese populations in Minnesota.8 According to Minnesota

⁷ U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2018 American Community Survey 1-year estimates, S1810; generated by MnDOT using data.census.gov (accessed February 19, 2021).

⁸ Minnesota State Demographic Center, Minnesotans with Disabilities: Demographic and Economic Characteristics," March 2017, https://mn.gov/admin/assets/minnesotans-with-disabilities-popnotes-march2017 tcm36-283045 tcm36-283045.pdf.

Compass, almost one in five Minnesotans with a disability lives in poverty, which is nearly double the statewide poverty rate.9

Disabilities can complicate everyday tasks, such as reading a transit schedule, reading directions, driving a car, climbing steps or crossing a street. Different or added transportation services can help people with a disability stay in good health and take part in the community. For example, a 2017 study found that accessible transportation options reduce social isolation and increase community integration for people with a disability.¹⁰

Agencies are working toward Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance. This improves aspects of transportation, like transit service and sidewalk infrastructure, so that people of all abilities can use them safely and comfortably. New mobility service options, like ride hailing and e-bikes or e-scooters, are also creating more mobility choices

for people with disabilities. However, more work is needed to ensure fair services. Some barriers that prevent people from using these services include the type of payment needed, physical disability limitations and reliance on smart phones.

System stewardship means ensuring a sustainable transportation system that focuses on equity, environment and economy. Developing transportation facilities with the community in mind can create transportation projects that reflect the goals of the people who live, work and travel in the area. A community-based approach to transportation is based on active and early partnerships with communities and considers the impacts that extend far beyond the right-of-way. This objective advances environmental justice by taking the necessary steps to create a transportation system that is well-maintained and modified to be inclusive, accessible and resilient so it can better serve all Minnesotans.

CLIMATE ACTION

Minnesota's environment is changing. Land development, technological changes, population shifts and the ways that people travel all have an impact on Minnesota's natural resources and the well-being of the environment. Understanding how Minnesota's transportation system contributes to these changes can help plan in ways that limit the negative impacts of the transportation system on the environment.

The goal of the objective is to advance a sustainable and resilient transportation system, while supporting transportation options and technology to reduce emissions. The objective also looks to adapt Minnesota's transportation system to a changing climate. See Chapter 5 for the Climate Action performance measures, strategies and actions.

HOW THIS OBJECTIVE ADVANCES ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

For decades, climate change and environmental hazards have impacted BIPOC at a disproportionately high rate compared to white Minnesotans. By adapting existing systems to be climate resilient, promoting sustainability and working to limit pollution, MnDOT and transportation partners can help to reduce environmental hazards related to the Minnesota transportation system from harming EJ and Title VI populations.

Developing climate action plans and working with smaller-scale organizations to develop mitigation and adaptation strategies for assets

⁹ Minnesota Compass, "By Disability Status," https://www.mncompass.org/topics/demographics/disability#:~:text=Almost%20 1%20in%205%20Minnesotans,double%20the%20statewide%20poverty%20rate, (accessed May 16, 2022)

¹⁰ N.N. Sze and Keith M. Christensen, "Access to Urban Transportation System for Individuals with Disabilities," Science Direct (International Association of Traffic and Safety Sciences, May 20, 2017), https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/ S0386111217300444#!.

will be important going forward. Ensuring the transportation system can effectively change as environmental conditions change is key to maintaining the usability of the transportation system. Prioritizing EJ and Title VI populations when implementing specific strategies improves equity statewide. Recognizing that each community may face different circumstances due to climate change can improve the efficacy of solutions.

The connection between transportation and land use illustrates the importance of providing transportation options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Land use, transportation and related infrastructure can promote or detract from health for people and the environment. Low density development can result in people traveling longer distances to meet their daily needs, and longer distances result in more emissions. Given Minnesota's land use patterns, it is unsurprising that the transportation sector generates the greatest share of greenhouse gas emissions in the state. However, supporting different land use patterns and providing more lower emission transportation options improve air quality and reduce the system's impact on the environment and climate.

People would also benefit from changes to transportation and land use. Individuals in zero-vehicle households or those without reliable transportation alternatives experience barriers accessing essential goods and services. Working to develop policies that promote walkable and bikeable communities, transit, complete streets, etc. can expand transportation options and advance environmental justice.

According to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, 91% of BIPOC Minnesotans are exposed to higher levels of air pollution than the state average. Further, there is a disparity between the pollution that people cause and the pollution they are exposed to. Air pollution is disproportionately cause by white people but disproportionately inhaled by BIPOC.¹¹

Building infrastructure for sustainable energy and fuel sources (e.g., renewables, biofuels, etc.) and using new, sustainable technologies are two ways to reduce pollution. These actions will not only reduce harm to BIPOC communities but will also reduce Minnesota's reliance on unsustainable energy and fuel sources. This objective addresses solutions to serve people and the planet with a commitment to environmental justice and equity.

CRITICAL CONNECTIONS

Every day people and goods are moving. The movement occurs using a variety of connections—such as sidewalks, trails, roads, transit, air, rail and water. Since transportation agencies have limited resources, attention needs to be focused on connections that are identified as critical to the movement of people and goods.

The goal of the Critical Connections objective is to maintain and improve multimodal transportation connections essential for Minnesotans' prosperity and quality of life. The objective also focuses on strategically considering new connections to help meet performance targets and maximize social, economic and environmental benefits. See Chapter 5 for the Critical Connections performance measures, strategies and actions.

¹¹ Tessum, Christopher W., Joshua S. Apte, Andrew L. Goodkind, Nicholas Z. Muller, Kimberley A. Mullins, David A. Paolella, Stephen Polasky et al. "Inequity in consumption of goods and services adds to racial—ethnic disparities in air pollution exposure." Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 116, no. 13 (2019): 6001-6006.

HOW THIS OBJECTIVE ADVANCES ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Creating and maintaining transportation connections is important for improving quality of life for all. Transportation connects people to jobs, school, health care, family, shopping, places of worship, recreation and entertainment. Minnesotans' transportation needs vary by trip purpose and destination. As a result, each person will identify different connections as critical based on their individual needs. Disparities exist in mode use and travel behavior. These disparities can be influenced by income levels, race, ethnicity, age, disability or other characteristics.

Households experiencing poverty spend more on transportation expenses and are disproportionately Black and Hispanic households. Additionally, households experiencing poverty drive single occupant vehicles the least and use less costly transportation modes, such as walking, rolling, bicycling, carpooling and transit. This decreases the

radius of travel for these populations compared to higher income households. Additionally, both older adults and immigrant populations will continue to grow as a total proportion of Minnesota's population. Growing immigrant populations require information in languages other than English to increase their use of transit. Additional resources and outreach will be needed to ensure these populations can access and are well served by transit.

Critical connections encourage MnDOT and transportation partners to support and develop multimodal connections that provide equitable access and improve transportation connections within and between cities. Equitable access means recognizing that each person uses the transportation system differently and providing the services, resources and opportunities they need to reach their destinations. This focus is essential in ensuring the transportation system does not pose unintentional harm or barriers, but instead enhances quality of life for people and communities.

HEALTHY EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES

Transportation connects people to destinations and opportunities. As transportation decisions are made, it is important that those decisions consider the impact on the users of the transportation system and the surrounding context.

The goals of this objective are to foster healthy and vibrant places that reduce disparities and promote healthy outcomes for people, the environment and our economy. See Chapter 5 for the Healthy Equitable Communities performance measures, strategies and actions.

HOW THIS OBJECTIVE ADVANCES ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Prioritizing solutions that lead to healthy outcomes for people and the environment is central to creating healthy equitable communities. Minnesota has health disparities stemming from inequitable access to goods, services and social networks, as well as disparities in healthcare. These disparities are based on the location of these goods and services, and on people's ability to access the transportation system that can bring them to the goods and services. Cost and geography are large barriers, amplified by historical disinvestment and discrimination that has left many neighborhoods without goods and services within a short distance.

The transportation system impacts the health of individuals and the communities they live in. For example, accessing health services can be particularly challenging and helps illustrate the importance of transportation in health. In rural areas, people often travel considerable distances to reach a medical center or clinic, while appointments with specialists often require long trips to regional destinations. 12 In both urban and rural areas, people are less likely to use health services if they do not have regular access to their own car or a care provider who can provide rides. 13 This can be particularly challenging for people with lower incomes who may already struggle to access the healthcare system due to lack of insurance or the high cost of health services.

Minnesota currently ranks seventh worst in the nation for the share of residents with access to healthy foods. 14 The transportation system and land use policies have led to the creation of food deserts—areas with limited access to affordable, culturally appropriate and nutritious food—in both rural and urban areas. Some small towns no longer have their own grocery store, making it hard for people without their own car to get food. In urban areas, despite the availability of transit, a trip to the grocery store can take several hours start to finish. Transportation and land use policies that are more attuned to community needs can help farmers, food retailers and consumers connect more efficiently.¹⁵ Increasing easy access to healthy food options can also help to address health outcomes like heart disease and obesity helping to demonstrate the link between transportation and health by the way of access to goods and services.

Improved speed and connection can improve the quality of life for all. It also can increase the ease and spread of communicable diseases, such as the seasonal flu and COVID-19. Further, heat-related illnesses are higher in areas affected by the urban heat island effect. Chronic illnesses related to the heart and lungs can also be exacerbated by higher temperatures and thus pose higher risks for older adults who are more likely to have chronic illnesses. Areas with higher concentrations of BIPOC and low-income households are also more likely to experience these health effects due to past transportation decisions.

The Healthy Equitable Communities objective recognizes there is no one-size-fits-all solution. MnDOT and its transportation partners must understand that transportation decisions influence the surrounding context. Decision makers must consider this community context and history when making transportation decisions. This will result in projects that are safer, sustainable and reflective of the specific place in which they occur.

¹² "Healthcare Access in Rural Communities Introduction - Rural Health Information Hub," accessed April 3, 2020, https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/healthcare-access.

¹³ Samina T. Syed, Ben S. Gerber, and Lisa K. Sharp, "Traveling Towards Disease: Transportation Barriers to Health Care Access," Journal of Community Health 38, no. 5 (October 2013): 976–93, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10900-013-9681-1.

¹⁴ "Food Access: Access to Healthy and Affordable Food" (Minnesota Department of Health, May 1, 2019), https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/communities/titlev/foodaccess.pdf.

¹⁵ "Transportation and Food: The Importance of Access," Food Security, August 6, 2012, http://foodsecurity.org/policy_trans03_brief/.

OPEN DECISION MAKING

Open decision making relies on accountability, transparency and communication. The Open Decision Making objective seeks to make equitable transportation decisions through inclusive and collaborative processes that are supported by data and analysis. See Chapter 5 for the Open Decision Making performance measures, strategies and actions.

HOW THIS OBJECTIVE ADVANCES ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The Open Decision Making objective advances environmental justice by ensuring the full and fair participation of EJ and Title VI populations. Working with communities to address historic harms and build community trust is crucial. A key part of that trust is ensuring that everyone, regardless of income, age, race, ethnicity or ability has the opportunity to have their input heard and incorporated throughout the transportation decision-making process. Public engagement must include a wide range of interests – from those who use the system to those who are impacted by it.

Environmental justice populations are more burdened by the transportation system than the general public. Many EJ and Title VI populations may be hesitant to provide comments on transportation plans and projects due to past harmful transportation decisions where government broke community trust. Opportunities to provide comments also may not be well known. Seeking the input of those burdened and harmed by the transportation system is essential for creating solutions that benefit all.

Effective public engagement uses a variety of tools to reach different communities. This objective and its related strategies and work plan activities encourages and supports MnDOT and transportation partners to use a range of public outreach techniques with the goal of inclusive, relational and accessible processes for everyone. For example, hiring community-based organizations to lead engagement efforts that emphasize co-creation can foster stronger relationships between MnDOT, its partners and the communities served.

FOUR FACTOR ANALYSIS

Title VI and its regulations require MnDOT to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to the department's information and services. What constitutes reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access is contingent on a four-factor analysis established by the U.S. Department of Justice. The four-factor analysis is an individualized assessment that should be applied to all districts, offices, programs, and activities to determine what reasonable steps must be taken to ensure meaningful access for individuals with limited-English proficiency (LEP).

FACTOR 1: DEMOGRAPHY

The number or proportion of LEP individuals in the service area who may be served or likely to be encountered by the SMTP.

MnDOT has reviewed the 2015-2019 ACS five-year estimates and identified Spanish, Hmong, and Amharic, Somali or other Afro-Asiatic languages as the top three LEP groups in Minnesota (see Table E-8). The third category includes several languages. As of 2018, the Minnesota State Demographer's Office reported Somali-born Minnesotans were the second-largest group of foreign-born immigrants living in Minnesota. Therefore, programs providing statewide information to the public should consider Spanish, Hmong and Somali as the primary languages for any language assistance services.

Although these are the primary languages in Minnesota for necessary language assistance services, languages needing assistance vary throughout the state. It's important that when doing public engagement it is understood what language assistance services are in highest demand.

FACTOR 2: FREQUENCY

The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with SMTP.

MnDOT staff reviewed the frequency of interactions with LEP individuals. The SMTP engagement occurred throughout the state. For each engagement effort, staff reviewed data for those areas to see if there would be potential interactions with LEP individuals. At times engagement efforts were directly coordinated with community-based organizations that primarily spoke a language other than English. In these instances, documents were translated and an interpreter was present.

Because the SMTP is a statewide plan, the Commissioner's Letter in the document will be translated into Spanish, Hmong and Somali. Additionally, the document has been made available online at MinnesotaGO.org. The Minnesota GO website can be translated using Google Translate and requests for translation services can be made by one of the following language assistance services listed in the MnDOT Language Assistance Plan.

¹⁶ Enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - National Origin Discrimination Against Persons with Limited English Proficiency, effective August 11, 2000, https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/crt/legacy/2010/12/14/eolep.pdf.

¹⁷ Immigration and Language: Key Findings, accessed January 21, 2002, https://mn.gov/admin/demography/data-by-topic/immigration-language/

Table E-8: Minnesota language spoken at home by ability to speak english for the population 5 years and over, 2015 to 2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimate

LANGUAGE GROUPS SPEAKING ENGLISH LESS THAN "VERY WELL"	TOTAL POPULATION	% POPULATION
Minnesota total population	5,290,011	100.00%
Speak only English	4,640,645	87.72%
Spanish	75,212	1.42%
Amharic, Somali, or other Afro-Asiatic languages	34,611	0.65%
Hmong	29,004	0.55%
Vietnamese	13,208	0.25%
Other languages of Asia	10,238	0.19%
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	8,591	0.16%
Thai, Lao, or other Tai-Kadai languages	5,615	0.11%
Russian	5,088	0.10%
Arabic	4,984	0.09%
French (incl. Cajun)	4,919	0.09%
Swahili or other languages of Central, Eastern and Southern Africa	4,626	0.09%
Yoruba, Twi, Igbo, or other languages of Western Africa	4,578	0.09%
Khmer	2,892	0.05%
Hindi	2,652	0.05%
Tagalog (incl. Filipino)	2,478	0.05%
German	2,229	0.04%
Nepali, Marathi, or other Indic languages	2,201	0.04%
Tamil	2,109	0.04%
Japanese	1,578	0.03%
Korean	1,532	0.03%
Other Indo-European languages	1,501	0.03%
Persian (incl. Farsi, Dari)	1,346	0.03%
Serbo-Croatian	1,304	0.02%
Telugu	1,077	0.02%
Ukrainian or other Slavic languages	1,058	0.02%
Other and unspecified languages	993	0.02%
Portuguese	978	0.02%
llocano, Samoan, Hawaiian, or other Austronesian languages	961	0.02%
Urdu	960	0.02%
Other Native languages of North America	925	0.02%

FACTOR 3: IMPORTANCE

The nature and importance of the program, activity or service provided by the SMTP to people's lives.

The more important the activity, information, service or program or the greater the possible consequences of the contact to the LEP individuals, the greater the need for language assistance services. The SMTP project staff determined whether denial or delay of access to services or information had serious implications for the LEP individual. Generally, programs providing information and services related to accessing benefits, opportunities, or rights are considered high importance.

VITAL DOCUMENTS

Vital documents are paper or electronic written material containing information that is:

- Critical for accessing programs, services, benefits, or activities;
- Directly and substantially related to public safety; or
- Required by law.

Whether a document (or the information it solicits) is "vital" may depend upon the importance of the program, information, encounter or service involved, and the consequence to the LEP person if the information in question is neither accurate nor timely. Sometimes a large document may include both vital and non-vital information. For these documents, vital information may include providing notice in the necessary non-English languages explaining where an LEP individual can obtain an interpretation or translation of the document.

Although the SMTP is required by law to be completed and contains information for policy direction related to transportation safety, MnDOT has opted to take the following approach:

1. The document will be made available online at MinnesotaGO.org. The Minnesota GO website can be translated using Google Translate.

- 2. The Commissioner's Letter will be translated into Spanish, Hmong and Somali and included following the English version at the beginning of the document.
- 3. The following LEP notice will be placed on the inside cover of the SMTP in English, Spanish, Hmong and Somali.

To request this document in another language, please send an e-mail with the document attached to languageservices.dot@state.mn.us.

Para pedir este documento en otro idioma, envíe un correo electrónico y adjunte el documento a languageservices.dot@state. mn.us.

Yog xav kom muab daim ntawv no sau ua lwm hom lwm, thov sau ntawv nrog daim ntawv tuaj rau ntawm languageservices.dot@state.mn.us.

Si aad u codsato dukumeentigan oo ku qoran luqad kale, fadlan e-mail u soo dir oo ku soo lifaaq dukumiintiga languageservices.dot@state. mn.us.

MnDOT took this approach to language assistance for the SMTP because of (1) the significant time and resources required to translate a document of this size, and (2) the nominal impact on the lives of the LEP public caused by this information not being readily available in non-English languages. However, MnDOT is committed to providing meaningful access to LEP individuals and will promptly respond to any requests for specific SMTP information in non-English languages.

Within the SMTP document development process, the vital documents were the notices of public engagement.

LEP Notice

To request this document in another language, please send an e-mail with the document attached to languageservices.dot@state.mn.us.

Para pedir este documento en otro idioma, envíe un correo electrónico y adjunte el documento a languageservices.dot@state.mn.us.

Yog xav kom muab daim ntawv no sau ua lwm hom lwm, thov sau ntawv nrog daim ntawv tuaj rau ntawm languageservices.dot@state.mn.us.

Si aad u codsato dukumeentigan oo ku qoran luqad kale, fadlan e-mail u soo dir oo ku soo lifaaq dukumiintiga languageservices.dot@state.mn.us.

FACTOR 4: RESOURCES

MnDOT's available resources and the costs of providing language assistance services may impact the steps taken to provide meaningful access to LEP individuals. Generally, MnDOT should have sufficient resources to provide meaningful access through reasonable language assistance measures. However, language assistance measures may cease to be reasonable where the costs imposed substantially exceed the benefits.

The four-factor analysis necessarily implicates a spectrum of language assistance measures. For instance, written translations can range from translation of an entire document to translation of a short description of the document, and interpretation services may range from using telephone-based interpretation services to providing in-person interpretation at a public event. Language assistance measures should be based on what is necessary and reasonable after considering the fourfactor analysis.

For the SMTP, staff ensured any resource limitations were documented and explained before using this factor as a reason to limit language assistance. MnDOT staff proactively identified how to provide language assistance services efficiently and costeffectively while ensuring meaningful access to LEP individuals. An example of this was through SMTP Phase 2 public engagement. MnDOT coordinated with the consultant to provide VideoAsk, an online platform, with questions in Hmong, Spanish and Somali in addition to English. Another example was during Phase 2 engagement Let's Talk Transportation Trivia discussion events, where MnDOT provided a Spanish interpreter at the meeting with a community-based organization that had a strong Spanish speaking population.

COMPLIANCE WITH LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN

The SMTP update process was conducted in accordance with MnDOT's Language Assistance Plan.

NEXT STEPS

The SMTP applies to all types of transportation and all transportation partners. While the plan identifies work plan activities for MnDOT, it does not identify project- or program-specific activities for MnDOT or any transportation partners. Instead, the SMTP provides the policy direction for MnDOT and transportation partners.

Given the current disparities that exist, there is a risk of disproportionate impacts on EJ and Title VI populations. MnDOT and transportation partners must ensure that the actions taken to implement the plan's objectives, strategies and actions – the individual program and project decisions – do not result in disproportionately high and adverse impacts on EJ and Title VI populations.

For MnDOT, the objectives, strategies and actions identified in this plan provide the policy direction for the modal and system plans. These plans identify specific policies, project-level and program recommendations and performance measures for their respective transportation system. The SMTP includes several strategies to avoid, reduce or minimize negative impacts in its policies and programs such as:

SYSTEM STEWARSHIP

- 5. Provide training and resources for a diverse and inclusive transportation workforce.
 - 5.1 Examine current hiring practices and policies to reduce biases.
 - 5.2 Identify opportunities to attract, retain, develop and promote Black, Indigenous and People of Color, people with disabilities, women and people from other underserved communities.
 - 5.3 Set and meet equity goals in awarding contracts and build community capacity to fulfill contracting goals.
 - 5.4 Analyze and reduce barriers to contracting such as project size, performance bonding, insurance requirements and capital access.
 - 5.5 Provide consistent equity messaging and training opportunities in the transportation sector.

- 6. Promote transportation trades and technical careers.
 - 6.1. Promote careers in transportation including job fairs, partnering with schools and other activities.
 - 6.2. Support organizations to create a diverse pipeline of qualified applicants for construction and transportation operations.
 - 6.3. Work with partners to develop training and apprenticeship programs in transportationrelated occupations with high demand.
 - 6.4. Create new partnerships to expand recruitment efforts that address transportation needs and the pool of bus, commercial and volunteer drivers.

HEALTHY EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES

- 2. Eliminate burdens and reduce structural inequities for people and communities disproportionately impacted by transportation.
 - 2.1 Work with community partners to identify and remove barriers to participating in transportation planning and decision making.
 - 2.2 Identify disparities in mobility and access and develop plans to reverse or eliminate these impacts through multimodal transportation solutions.
 - 2.3 Implement equity reviews for transportation or land use policies, planning, programs and projects.
 - 2.4 Develop and support community resources to reduce inequities in transportation.
 - 2.5 Accelerate technology solutions for accessible and reliable transportation.
 - 2.6 Pursue strategies to mitigate past effects of transportation construction.
- 3. Reduce combined housing and transportation costs for cost-burdened households.
 - 3.1 Improve first- and last-mile connections in neighborhoods and job centers.
 - 3.2 Support the construction of complete streets and a connected network to accommodate walking, rolling, bicycling and transit.
 - 3.3 Educate people on the impacts transportation decisions have on housing costs.
 - 3.4 Expand and enhance public transportation to improve access across the state.
 - 3.5 Promote infill development and land use practices that support walkable and bikeable communities.

- 4. Develop and support a diverse workforce in Minnesota.
 - 4.1 Promote job retention and creation in the core of communities to support community vitality.
 - 4.2 Ensure the transportation system supports job access for second and third shift workers.
 - 4.3 Collaborate with multisector partners to identify, understand and address gaps in workforce skills for current and future demand.
 - 4.4 Connect people to education, training and workforce development centers.
- 5. Leverage transportation solutions to improve public health.
 - 5.1 Integrate health and equity considerations in transportation planning, programming and project delivery using a Health in All Policies approach.
 - 5.2 Support opportunities for physical activity through walking, rolling and bicycling.
 - 5.3 Implement programs and investments that improve air quality and reduce noise especially for people experiencing the greatest impacts.
 - 5.4 Ensure convenient multimodal access to open space, parks and recreation areas.
 - 5.5 Increase equitable access to healthy, culturally appropriate and sustainable food through transportation options.
 - 5.6 Align transportation assets and services with community needs during public health emergencies.

OPEN DECISION MAKING

- 1. Ensure people have opportunities to play an active and direct role in transportation decision making.
 - 1.1 Start transportation processes by working with communities to identify strategies that support people's vision, priorities and needs.
 - 1.2 Determine community demographics for plans, programs and projects and tailor public engagement approach to increase broad community participation and input.
 - 1.3 Create public engagement plans that clearly articulate decision points, who will be involved at each step of the process and who has authority over each decision.
 - 1.4 Include those impacted by transportation decisions as members of decision-making teams.
 - 1.5 Actively engage in community-centered conversations and use community wisdom to inform decision making.
 - 1.6 Create and implement processes and systems to monitor and evaluate effectiveness in achieving shared outcomes.
- 2. Build and strengthen lasting relationships to ensure that people are engaged in transportation projects and activities especially with underserved communities.
 - 2.1 Commit to regular two-way communication with partners, stakeholders and the public to continuously gather feedback.
 - 2.2 Hire and involve community-based organizations to conduct and lead engagement activities with underserved populations.

- 2.3 Identify and connect with Tribal Governments, local elected officials and community leaders through project scoping and delivery.
- 2.4 Collaborate with partners to include transportation-related questions in their surveys and other data collection efforts with underserved communities.
- 2.5 Coordinate with partners to ensure people's priorities and needs are considered including for those without reliable transportation choices.
- 2.6 Provide education opportunities and programs for community members and transportation partners to understand each other on how to participate in transportation decision making together.
- 3. Provide consistent, transparent, fair, just and equitable communication.
 - 3.1 Partner with the public and stakeholders to identify, develop and implement communication and engagement approaches.
 - 3.2 Use culturally appropriate communication and engagement methods and techniques.
 - 3.3 Set plain language and accessibility standards for agency and contractor deliverables and provide training for staff.
 - 3.4 Provide training for different communication methods including storytelling.
 - 3.5 Increase staff ability and provide resources to improve engagement for people with disabilities and limited English proficiency.
 - 3.6 Provide the public with clear information about overarching policy and project goals to help frame community engagement.

- 4. Understand and learn from personal and community experiences on how the transportation system can negatively and positively affect communities.
 - 4.1 Co-create and share narratives about transportation in collaboration with communities that have been harmed by decisions related to the transportation system and built environment.
 - 4.2 Use the wisdom from community narratives to inform plans, manuals, training content, etc.
 - 4.3 Provide training and resources to build staff capacity to understand cumulative historical impacts of transportation decision making.

See Chapter 5 for a complete list of strategies and actions.

MnDOT reviews and will continue to review the modal and system plan recommendations to ensure they do not result in disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects Environmental Justice and Title VI populations.