



Participation Plan

Meaningful Participation in Transportation Planning
and Related Activities

Evansville MPO



Henderson • Vanderburgh • Warrick

Participation Plan

Meaningful Participation in Transportation Planning and Related Activities

Evansville MPO Policy Committee Adoption: January 14, 2021

Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization

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This report was funded in part by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation. The views and opinions of the authors expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the U. S. Department of Transportation.

**RESOLUTION ENDORSING AND APPROVING
THE EVANSVILLE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
PARTICIPATION PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization (EMPO) has been designated by the States of Indiana and Kentucky as the official Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Evansville, IN–Henderson, KY urbanized area; and

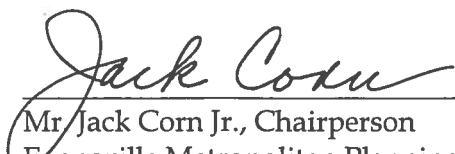
WHEREAS, the EMPO Policy Committee (a committee of officials from Evansville, Henderson, Newburgh, Vanderburgh County, Henderson County, Warrick County, the Indiana Department of Transportation, and the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet) has responsibility for EMPO policy functions; and

WHEREAS, 23 CFR § 450.316 and the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) require that the metropolitan planning process provide for proactive public involvement that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuous involvement of the public in developing plans; and

WHEREAS, the EMPO Staff has developed a Participation Plan that meets federal requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Public Participation Plan has completed the required 45-day public review and comment period which began November 19, 2020 and ended January 4, 2021.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee, at its regular meeting of January 14, 2021 endorses the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization *Participation Plan*, dated January 14, 2021.



Mr. Jack Corn Jr., Chairperson
Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization
Policy Committee

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Evansville MPO Policy Committee Members

Mr. Jack Corn, Jr.	Chairperson, Evansville City Council Appointment
Mr. Rusty Fowler	Vice-Chairperson, Indiana Department of Transportation
Mr. Lloyd Winnecke	Mayor, City of Evansville
Mr. William “Buzzy” Newman	Henderson City Manager, City of Henderson Appointment
Mr. Ron Beane	Councilmember, Evansville City Council
Mr. Ben Shoulders	Commissioner, Vanderburgh County Commission
Ms. Jill Hahn	Councilmember, Vanderburgh County Council
Mr. Dan Saylor	Commissioner, Warrick County Commission
Mr. William Hubiak	County Engineer, Henderson County Appointment
Mr. John Stoll	County Engineer, Vanderburgh County Commission Appointment
Mr. Todd M. Robertson	Transportation and Services Director, City of Evansville Mayoral Appointment
Ms. Christy Powell	Newburgh Town Manager, Town of Newburgh Appointment
Ms. Deneatra Henderson	Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
Mr. Joe McGuinness	Indiana Department of Transportation (NV)
Ms. Mayela Sosa	Indiana Federal Highway Administration (NV)
Ms. Erica Tait	Indiana Federal Highway Administration (NV)
Mr. Shawn Seals	Indiana Department of Environmental Management (NV)
Ms. Marisol Simon	Federal Transit Administration Region V (NV)
Ms. Cecilia Godfrey	Federal Transit Administration Region V (NV)
Mr. Todd Jeter	Kentucky Federal Highway Administration (NV)
Ms. Bernadette Dupont	Kentucky Federal Highway Administration (NV)
Mr. Greg Thomas	Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (NV)
Mr. Mikael Pelfrey	Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (NV)
Ms. Leslie Poff	Kentucky Division of Air Quality (NV)

(NV) = Non Voting

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Evansville MPO Technical Committee Members

Mr. Greg Wathen	Chairperson, Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana
Mr. John Stoll	Vice-Chairperson, Vanderburgh County Engineer

The following organizations are represented on the Technical Committee:

American Medical Response	Assistant Henderson City Manager
ARC of Evansville	Henderson County Engineer
Carver Community Organization	Henderson County Riverport
CSX Transportation	Henderson-Henderson County Chamber of Commerce
David Matthews Associates	Henderson-Henderson County Plan Commission
Easterseals Rehabilitation Center	Henderson Judge Executive
Eastland Mall	Indiana Department of Environmental Management (Indianapolis)
Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana	Indiana Department of Transportation (Indianapolis)
EnviroKinetics, Inc.	Indiana Department of Transportation (Vincennes)
Evansville Bicycle Club	Indiana Southern Railroad
Evansville Board of Public Safety	Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (Frankfort)
Evansville Chamber of Commerce	Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (Madisonville)
Evansville City Engineer	Lochmueller Group
Evansville Department of Metropolitan Development	Metropolitan Evansville Transit System
Evansville Department of Transportation and Services	Port of Indiana-Mount Vernon
Evansville Department of Urban Forestry	Posey County Chamber
Evansville Environmental Protection Agency	Qk4 Inc.
Evansville Parks and Recreation Department	River City Taxi
Evansville Police Department	St. Vincent's Trauma Hospital
Evansville Regional Airport	Shrewsberry & Associates, LLC
Evansville-Vanderburgh Area Plan Commission	SIRS Inc.
Evansville Water and Sewer Department	University of Evansville
Federal Highway Administration (Indiana)	Vanderburgh County Emergency Management Agency
Federal Highway Administration (Kentucky)	Vanderburgh County Engineer
Federal Transit Administration (Region V)	Warrick County Economic Development
Green River Area Development District	Warrick County Plan Commission
Henderson Area Rapid Transit	Warrick County School Corporation
Henderson City Engineer	Westside Improvement Association

Evansville MPO Staff

Mr. Seyed Shokouhzadeh	Executive Director
Ms. Pamela Drach	Deputy Director
Ms. Erin Schriefer	Senior Transportation Planner
Mr. Matt Schriefer, AICP	Senior Transportation Planner
Mr. Amir Varshochi	Transportation Planner
Ms. Laura Lamb	Chief Transportation Engineer
Mr. Xinbo Mi	Transportation Engineer
Ms. Kari Akin	Finance Officer
Mr. Lorenzo Marsh	Transportation Technician

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The Participation Plan contains the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization's official policy to ensure meaningful participation in transportation planning and related activities. The participation activities in this document represent a comprehensive program intended to provide public impact on the transportation planning process and in transportation decision making. This document is guided by federal legislation and is intended to fulfill the obligations set forward in that legislation. Public participation is about giving the public a meaningful opportunity to influence and shape decisions that reflect community values.

The Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization (Evansville MPO) values public participation because the transportation system is significant to virtually everyone and has far-reaching, long-term impacts across local communities.

ABOUT THE PARTICIPATION PLAN



PARTICIPATION PLAN GOALS

- Create and define processes and procedures that will improve and increase the opportunity for involvement in the Evansville MPO's transportation planning activities.
- Facilitate improved access to the transportation planning process by populations that have often lacked formal access, such as low income, elderly, minority, disabled, and limited English (language) proficiency populations.
- Foster participation that will result in transportation plans and decisions that reflect the values of the communities that the Evansville MPO serves.

The Evansville MPO

Federal law requires that all urbanized areas over 50,000 residents establish Metropolitan Planning Organizations to undertake a "3-C" transportation planning process. This Continuous, Cooperative and Comprehensive planning process is required for a region to receive federal highway planning and improvement funding.

Established as the Evansville Urban Transportation Study (EUTS), the Evansville MPO is the designated agency responsible for conducting the 3-C planning process within the Evansville-Henderson urbanized area.

Where We Plan

The Evansville MPO Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) contains approximately 650 square miles in Indiana, including the City of Evansville, Vanderburgh County, Warrick County, and a very small area of eastern Posey County. In Kentucky, the Study Area encompasses approximately 440 square miles which includes the City of Henderson and Henderson County.

Population numbers from the decennial census determines the Evansville-Henderson Urbanized Area. Because the population exceeded 200,000 in the 2000 Census, the Evansville-Henderson Urbanized Area was designated as a Transportation Management Area (TMA). This means that the Evansville MPO is responsible for prioritizing and allocating the Urban Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG-U in Indiana; SHN Kentucky) funds for surface transportation projects on federal-aid system roads within the Urbanized Area. Figure 1.1 illustrates the Evansville MPO Metropolitan Planning Area, including the Urbanized Area.

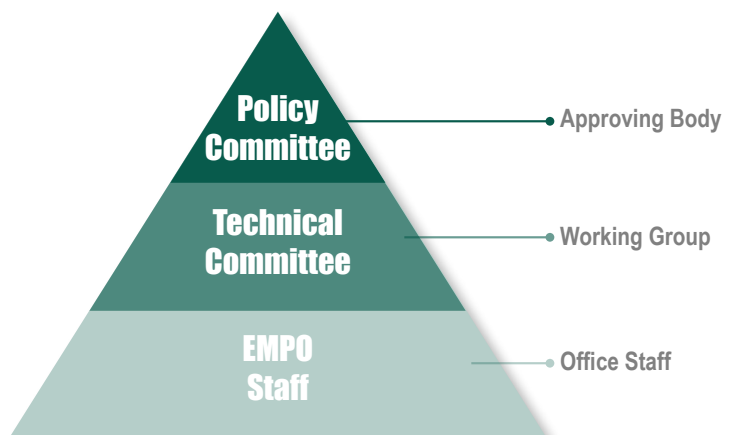
Additionally, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and the Evansville MPO have executed an agreement that provides planning

assistance in the rural counties of Gibson and Posey. The rural transportation planning program is being conducted as part of an INDOT Small Urban and Rural Planning program.

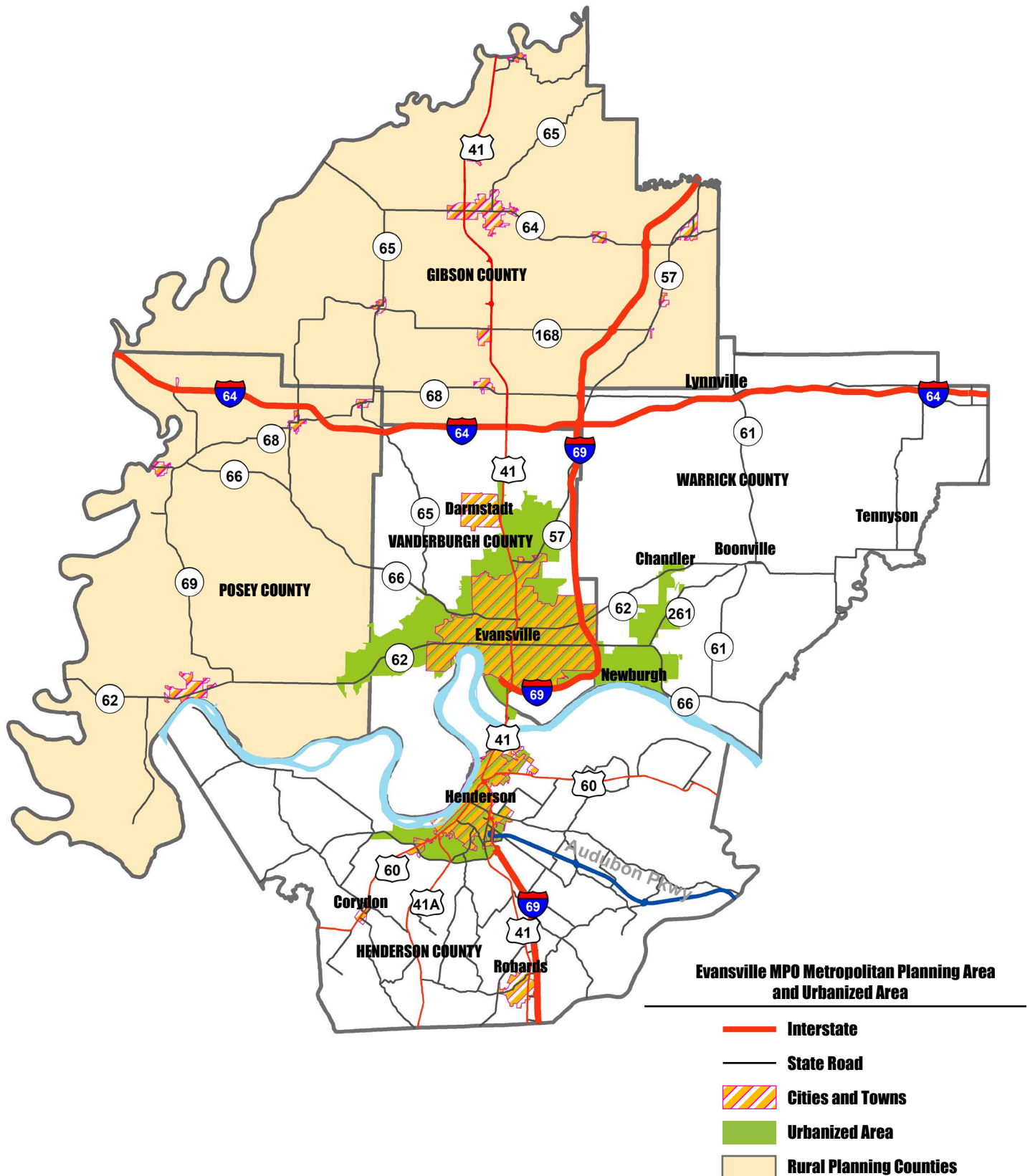
Policy and Technical Committees

A Policy Committee and Technical Committee guide and assist the Evansville MPO in its regional planning activities. The Policy Committee is a chief advisory board that includes elected or appointed officials from local governments within the planning area, local transit agency officials, representatives from the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Indiana Department of Transportation, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, and the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet.

The Technical Committee is the chief working committee, providing relevant expertise and data to the Evansville MPO. The Technical Committee is composed of planners, engineers, community representatives, and professional staff from various departments of Local Public Agencies (LPAs) within the planning area.



**Figure 1.1:
Evansville Metropolitan Planning Area and Urbanized Area Boundary**



In accordance with federal requirements, the MPO planning process involves the development of a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and a Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) jointly require that every urbanized area, as a condition to the receipt of federal transportation funding, have a planning process that results in a Transportation Plan consistent with the planned development for the area and in compliance with federal air quality standards. The transportation plan analyzes the current and future transportation needs and provides long-range plans/solutions for the urbanized area. Any federally-funded transportation project for the region must first be included in the Evansville MPO MTP and/or TIP to receive funding.

MPO Planning Functions, Products and Funding

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan is a minimum 20-year plan that provides local leaders with guidance in making regional transportation investments. The MTP is updated at least every four years. The TIP is a four-year transportation plan for the region, and is updated biannually. It serves as a tool to implement projects from the MTP, as well as informing the public about regional projects. Projects included for funding in the TIP must be consistent with the adopted MTP.

The Evansville MPO staff regularly performs detailed studies to identify problems, and opportunities for improvement, in the transportation system. These activities include, but are not limited to, the Congestion Management Process, corridor and engineering studies, safety studies, and bicycle, pedestrian and transit related studies and planning. The staff routinely reviews and comments on the transportation effects of new developments in the Evansville area. Local officials depend on the Evansville MPO for guidance in developing safe and efficient local transportation systems. The Evansville MPO also monitors the local transportation system through field observations and surveys. Information produced as a result of these activities, such as traffic counts and planning documents, are available to the public through the Evansville MPO office and website (www.evansvillempo.com).

The Evansville MPO is responsible for programming transportation improvements that utilize federal and state funds, including working closely with representatives from the federal government, the states of Indiana and Kentucky, and local jurisdictions to manage and program funding for needed improvements and programs. For example, the Evansville MPO coordinates funding with the FTA that provides for the operation of local transit systems.

Guiding Legislation: FAST Act

On December 4, 2015, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or "FAST Act" was signed into law. Continuing on prior legislation (MAP-21, SAFETEA-LU and previous), the FAST Act requires that the metropolitan transportation planning process comply with the statutory language for public participation in metropolitan planning. The requirements, from the Code of Federal Regulations (23 CFR 450.316), are presented in Appendix A.

Statewide Plan Coordination

The Evansville MPO Participation Plan conforms to the participation guidance for statewide transportation planning processes and procedures, as set forth by the Indiana Department of Transportation (Public Involvement Policies and Procedures Manual, 2012) and the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (Public Involvement Process, 2016). INDOT, KYTC, and the Evansville MPO will coordinate the MPO plans and the Statewide Transportation Plans through the cooperative transportation planning process that the three agencies conduct. The participation of INDOT and KYTC in the Evansville MPO planning process ensures that statewide issues are considered in the MPO planning process. Likewise, the Evansville MPO will notify INDOT or KYTC when public comments or questions may effect a change in the states' projects or plans.

1. A clearly defined purpose and objectives for initiating public dialogue.
2. Identification of the affected public.
3. Identification of tools and techniques for outreach.

4. Effective notification procedures.
5. Education and assistance techniques.
6. Follow-through by the Evansville MPO staff and by decision makers, to demonstrate that input was seriously considered.

02



Outreach Strategies

The Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization maintains an effective participation program by applying the best suited outreach techniques to a given transportation plan, program, or project. Public participation may be seen as a spectrum with several strategies that provide different degrees of public impact. Table 2-1 shows the participation “spectrum” and four distinct strategies which will be utilized for coordinating public participation in planning activities. The level of public impact on the decision-making process increases from left to right. From informing to collaboration, the Evansville MPO will attempt to select appropriate strategies, techniques and procedures to achieve the desired public participation goal for an activity. Participation procedures for particular planning activities and actions are found on pages 14-15.

General Outreach Methods

Evansville MPO planning documents, information regarding past and future meetings such as minutes and agendas, and all activities in general are available to the public through the Evansville MPO website or in the Evansville MPO office. The public may call, visit or email staff at any time to voice concerns, opinions, or ideas. A variety of outreach techniques are used to proactively engage the general population and traditional stakeholders in the metropolitan planning area according to the desired participation goal for a particular activity. Consideration is given to selecting the most appropriate outreach to clearly convey the planning activity to the public. The techniques and resources that the Evansville MPO will utilize in its general outreach activities may include, but are not limited to electronic media, print media, and meetings and other public forums.

Electronic Media

Evansville MPO website; Facebook; newsletter; press releases; meeting minutes, audio and video; email

The Evansville MPO website (www.evansvillempo.com) is used as an informational/educational tool, as well as to advertise opportunities for public participation. The website contains a large amount of information about the Evansville MPO, including the major planning activities that are currently underway. It includes a multi-language translator which allows non-English readers to access most of the current content. Major agency work products are available to view and download, including the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan, traffic

Table 2.1: Participation Spectrum and Strategies

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE
Participation Goal:			
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
Example Techniques to Consider:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact Sheets • Websites • Monthly Project Updates • Evansville MPO Newsletter • Open Houses/Virtual Open Houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Comment • Surveys • Public Meetings/Virtual Public Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops/Virtual Workshops • Charrettes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Advisory Committee • Technical Committee

counts, the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, current Project Update, Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans and more. The website also provides numerous links to related local, state, and federal websites. Upcoming meeting schedules are posted and both minutes and audio/video files of technical and policy committee meetings are posted to the website promptly after meetings are held. Video of policy committee meetings (since October 2015) are also available. The Evansville MPO posts a newsletter twice a year to the website, which is also mailed and/or emailed to committee members and other interested parties.

The website is used as a portal to online surveys when specific input from the public is desired, such as during the update of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. This method has overtaken printed format surveys in number of respondents, as increasing numbers of the public seek information and interaction online. The website also provides a channel for the public to directly submit comments to the Evansville MPO staff.

The website also includes an interactive mapping feature that allows visitors to select maps of various layers like TIP and MTP projects, Environmental Justice (EJ) Population Areas, local transit routes, bicycle routes and more.

The Evansville MPO maintains a Facebook page to provide regular updates to the public. Information regarding public meetings, input opportunities, plan or project updates, or relevant community events is shared. The MPO also shares and/or reposts information from planning partners, such as a public meeting or survey for a city/town within the planning area.

Formal press releases are used to announce upcoming public planning meetings and to provide information on specific issues that are coming before the Policy Committee. Press releases are emailed to local media including newspapers, radio and television stations.

Direct emails are routinely used for meeting notices and for meeting-related communications with committee members and other interested parties. Neighborhood organizations are often included in these emails and pass information along to their residents and members.

Print Media

Newspaper legal notices; announcements/flyers; public opinion surveys and questionnaires; comment forms; direct mailings

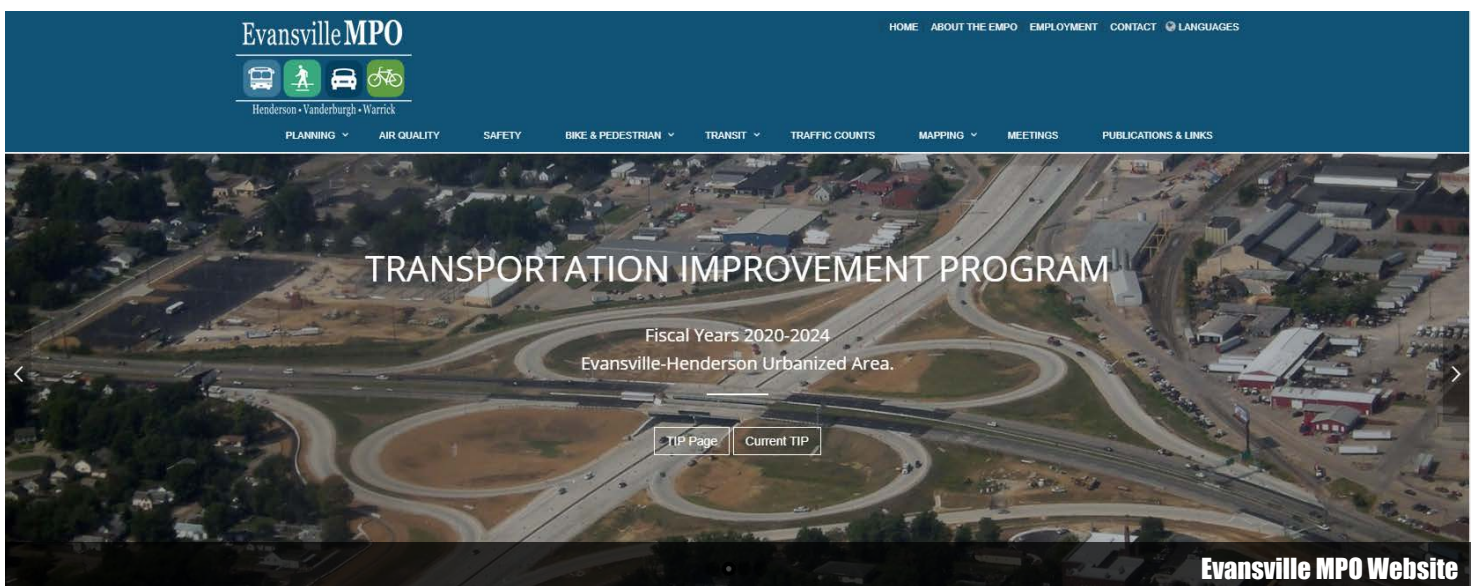
The Evansville MPO uses legal notices to announce pending major actions and, in certain required cases, public hearings. Major actions may include a

scheduled or proposed Metropolitan Transportation Plan and/or Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) update. Legal notices are also used occasionally to advertise other activities. Other notification forms may be used in addition to legal notices for the same purposes that legal notices are used for, as well as for the announcement of Evansville MPO public meetings or other special activities. Staff attempt to minimize the use of technical and legal terminology wherever possible.

Flyers and other announcement methods are used to promote meetings and activities that are not regularly scheduled, such as open houses. They are posted at public sites such as libraries and municipal offices and on all buses and bus terminals, helping make EJ populations aware of these activities.

Direct mailings are used for meeting notices and for meeting-related communications with committee members and other interested parties; however, electronic mailings are preferred whenever possible. Letters may also be used to announce special meetings, such as public meetings on projects that will have a major impact on the region.

In coordination with online surveys, print format surveys may be distributed at meetings, left for later collection in public places such as libraries, or actively distributed and collected (often as a targeted outreach effort), or mailed. Likewise, comment forms are sometimes used when specific input from the public is desired, particularly concerning plan development or adoption. Comment forms are made available at public meetings and at the Evansville MPO office.



Meetings and other Public Forums

Open houses; workshops; public meetings and hearings, Citizen Advisory Committees, Steering Committees, Technical Committee, Policy Committee

The Evansville MPO holds a variety of meetings to accomplish different public outreach objectives. Open houses and/or workshops are held to solicit input from the public during plan development and draft public comment stages. The Evansville MPO is committed to holding public meetings at convenient times and locations that are accessible to all community members, often in EJ population areas. The use of virtual options will be utilized more frequently as a means to expand the reach of public meetings. Tools include, but are not limited to virtual open houses, online workshops and web-based conferencing.

The Evansville MPO seeks to employ visualization tools that will assist staff in providing clear explanation of technical concepts and transportation issues. Visualization tools may include aerial photographs, diagrams, before and after maps and/or drawings.

Targeted, small-group meetings are held periodically for early plan coordination or preliminary study coordination with specific stakeholders, such as neighborhood organizations, economic development specialists, industry representatives, environmental agency officials, or municipal and county planners.

When federally required, the Evansville MPO will host public hearings on public transit or highway issues. These will be legally advertised meetings in which a formal, structured procedure is used to take public comment. The proceedings are recorded and transcribed for the record. Voluntary meetings may be held when a formal record of public comment is desired.

The Evansville MPO utilizes a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) in the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and for other special planning activities. Planning project Steering Committees are formed to help guide plan development.

The Evansville MPO Technical Committee and Policy Committee meetings are open to the public and notifications of meeting times and agendas are provided to local media outlets each month. Meeting minutes and audio (via the Evansville MPO website) of technical and policy committee meetings are posted as soon as possible after

meetings are held. Policy committee meetings are web broadcasted live through the AccessEVC website. A link can also be found on the Evansville MPO Meetings webpage (www.evansvillempo.com/Meetings.html). Video of policy committee meetings (since October 2015) are available on the Meeting webpage.

Civic and Community Outreach

Evansville MPO staff attend numerous governmental and community meetings as members or interested participants of transportation-related committees and boards. Participating on committees and attending meetings allows the Evansville MPO to follow the status of ongoing transportation issues, as well as be aware of future transportation issues and projects that government officials, civic organizations and the community are interested in.

Environmental Justice Population Areas

Much of the regional population can be informed of the Evansville MPO planning activities through general outreach methods. However, there are potentially disadvantaged segments of the population that may benefit from additional outreach activities. The potentially disadvantaged in the general population are considered to include those individuals, such as the elderly and the disabled, minority and low-income populations, and those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), who may have in the past been neglected in outreach activities or excluded during the planning process. Federal regulations emphasize the necessity of identifying the potentially disadvantaged and developing techniques and procedures to increase the involvement of these community members in MPO planning activities.

The Evansville MPO has included the following population groups in targeted outreach efforts for the potentially disadvantaged: The elderly; minorities; low-income households; the disabled; carless households; and those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The Evansville MPO has identified census tract-level targeted outreach areas based on the cumulative presence of the factors as an indicator of potential disadvantage. The number of factors occurring at a rate higher than the regional average for that factor illustrates the relative potential disadvantage for a census tract. Figure 2.1 demonstrates potential disadvantage by aggregating each of the identified factors. Appendix B describes the complete Evansville MPO process for prioritizing targeted outreach efforts, and

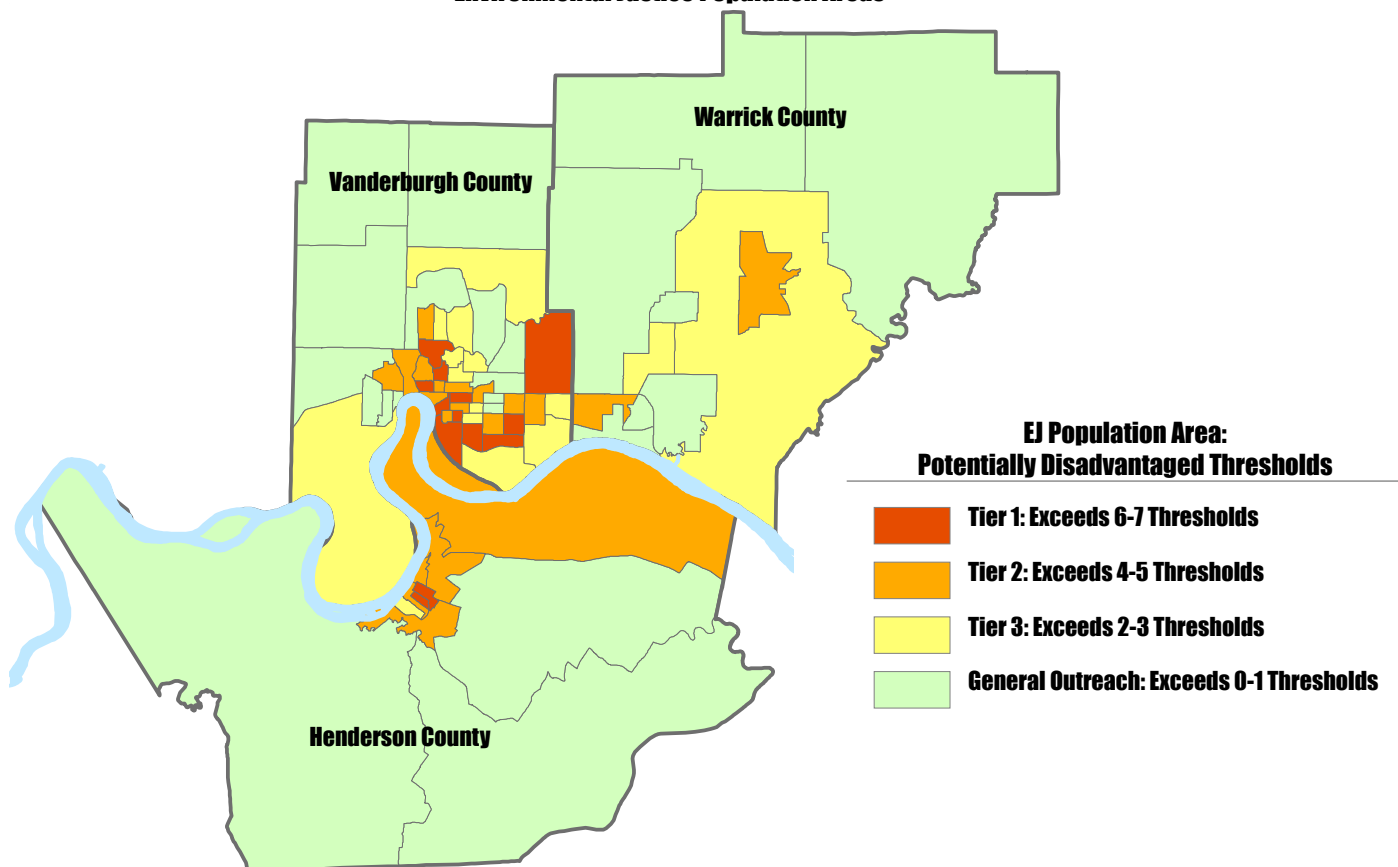
includes maps illustrating the individual factors. These areas will be targeted for outreach during Metropolitan Transportation Plan development and approval stages, and as appropriate for other planning activities.

The location of transportation projects is also a significant environmental justice consideration. A major reason for conducting thorough public outreach for transportation planning is to attempt to provide disadvantaged residents the opportunity to publicly voice their support and concerns about transportation plans and projects by offering full and fair participation in the transportation decision making process. The outreach focus areas also identify locations to review for MTP/TIP impacts, project, and funding distribution relative to Environmental Justice and Title VI populations.

In addition to the general outreach techniques and resources previously described, the Evansville MPO will utilize the following additional resources in its targeted outreach activities:

- Outreach to Neighborhood Organizations in priority focus areas
 - Timely notices by email or postal mail
 - Communication with neighborhood representatives
- Flyers or other displays in high-volume locations, including social activity centers
 - Buses, bus terminals, libraries, city/town halls
 - Festivals or other periodic events
- Outreach to specific organizations that aid those who are:
 - Disabled
 - Low-income
 - Elderly
 - Minorities
 - Limited English Proficiency

**Figure 2.1:
Environmental Justice Population Areas**



Outreach to Selected Agencies and Organizations

The Evansville MPO will notify selected organizations and agencies that are, or may be, uniquely impacted by transportation decisions in the metropolitan planning area of opportunities to be involved with planning activities, particularly with plan development, and where projects are being proposed. Agencies that are involved with public safety and security, such as fire departments, are identified for outreach activities. Other organizations that represent interests that are impacted by transportation decisions, such as natural resources conservation agencies, and neighborhood and local community organizations, are also identified.

Outreach Strategies During State of Emergency Situations

When necessary to comply with national, state, and/or local executive orders that may impact the ability to hold meetings, hearings or other public involvement activities, the Evansville MPO may need to substitute electronic options for in-person procedures. Communication options may include the use of tools and technologies such as webinars, virtual meetings/hearings, online surveys, telephone conferencing, social media and interactive components of the Evansville MPO website. Notices will follow the regular schedule and channels noted in Table 3.1 in Chapter 3 as available.

Use of Public Input

To connect public input to the decision-making process, the Evansville MPO staff provides the Policy Committee with timely and appropriate information received from public outreach activities. The staff will consider public input and integrate it into the decision-making process in the most appropriate way. For processes that require a public comment period, the staff creates a memo listing comments received, which is provided to the Policy Committee prior to their taking action. Evansville MPO staff also promptly notifies both INDOT and KYTC of comments received that may fall under their purview.

Participation Tracking

To improve upon the participation process and the use of public input, the Evansville MPO staff tracks public involvement activities. Part of this tracking involves the consideration of follow-up and feedback to the public. To facilitate participation tracking, the staff utilizes the project tracking form shown in Figure 2.2. The act of tracking public participation helps create more effective public outreach efforts, as well as serving as a means for the Evansville MPO to evaluate the effectiveness of various participation and outreach efforts.

Updating and Evaluation of the Participation Plan

The Evansville MPO Participation Plan will be periodically reviewed and updated as needed (minimum of every four years). Evaluation of the Participation Plan will occur as a first step when the plan is being updated. Achievement of the three major objectives of the Participation Plan will serve as a big-picture answer to how well the Plan has worked. Additionally, the Evansville MPO staff will seek to identify specific areas for improving public involvement, based on:

- Participation tracking performance
- Participant's assessments and suggestions
- Agency judgment and expectations
- GIS analysis of outreach activities, particularly within targeted outreach areas
- Feedback from comment forms made available at MPO public meetings and on the MPO website. The comment forms will include questions about the efficacy of MPO participation efforts (see Appendix C).

Title VI, Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

It is the policy of the Evansville MPO to assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, Executive Order 13166 on Limited English Proficiency, and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities.

Title VI requires that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise

Figure 2.2: Participation Tracking Form

Evansville MPO Public Participation Tracking Form			
1. Event:			
a. Date:			
b. Conducted by:			
c. Attendees (# and type):			
2. Summary of public comments/concerns/interests that need to be addressed:			
3. Information learned:			
4. Who gets information?			
a. When?			
b. How?			
5. Follow-up with the public:			
a. Immediate follow-up activities:			
<u>Who will?</u>	<u>With whom?</u>	<u>For what?</u>	<u>When?</u>
(name/address/phone)			
b. Feedback to the public (what did we do with their input?)			
<u>Who will?</u>	<u>With whom?</u>	<u>For what?</u>	<u>When?</u>
(name/address/phone)			
6. Process advice:			
a. What worked well in this public participation activity?			
b. What would I change next time?			
c. How can this information be shared with others working at/with EMPO?			

subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the Evansville MPO receives federal financial assistance. Executive Order 12898 addresses Environmental Justice considerations to safeguard against disproportionate adverse impacts resulting from the development, implementation and enforcement of federal programs, regulations, policies and activities on minority and low-income populations. Executive Order 13166 ensures that, consistent with Title VI, persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access to federally conducted and funded programs and activities.

The Evansville MPO website has a publicly accessible GIS map showing the Environmental Justice (EJ) population areas. This map layer shows EJ population areas and allows users to see where projects are in relation to them.

Evansville MPO Title VI Complaint Procedure

Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint with the Evansville MPO. The entire Title VI complaint procedure can be found in the Evansville MPO's Title VI Report, available online (www.evansvillempo.com/TitleVI.html). The Title VI Complaint form is available in Appendix D. Any such complaint must be in writing and filed with the Evansville MPO's Title VI Coordinator within one hundred eighty (180) days following the date of the alleged discriminatory occurrence.



MTP 2045 CAC Small Group

The Evansville MPO is responsible for the development and maintenance of a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, and a Participation Plan for the metropolitan planning area, all of which require public

participation. The Evansville MPO also completes other various activities that need some level of public participation. While the public involvement procedures are generally applicable, circumstances may dictate that one or more requirements are substituted or altered when necessary.

PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES

03



RTAC Meeting

Participation Procedures

The following are public participation procedures followed by the Evansville MPO to help coordinate, develop and adopt plans for the metropolitan planning area. Table 3.1 details the procedures used for various plans and documents prepared by the Evansville MPO.

Consultation and Coordination

The Evansville MPO will consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation and/or coordinate the planning process with such planning activities.

Citizen Advisory Committee

The Evansville MPO will utilize a Citizen Advisory Committee in the collaborative development of various aspects of a plan.

Public Engagement Meetings (Development)

The Evansville MPO will hold workshops or other public involvement meetings from the early stages of plan development to solicit input from the public on various aspects of a plan.

Legal Public Notice

A public notice will be published in various regional, local and minority newspapers announcing the public comment period.

Public Comment Period

The public comment period generally ends one week prior to the tentative plan adoption. If comments received during the designated comment period affect a significant change to the content of a plan, a second public comment period will be held.

Public Information Access

In addition to the published public notice for the public comment period, meetings will be publicized by way of press releases, on the Evansville MPO's Facebook page, announcements on the Evansville MPO website, local event/meeting information sections of local newspapers, on buses and at bus terminals, and announcement letters.

Public Meetings (Draft Document)

An open house, or other form of meeting to solicit comments on draft plan, will be held during the public comment period. If the final plan differs significantly from the version made available for public comment, the Evansville MPO will provide additional opportunity for public comment.

Public Comment Summary Memo

Presented to Policy and Technical Committees prior to plan adoption. Public comments received will be included in an appendix of a plan.

Policy and Technical Committee Meetings

Both the Policy and Technical Committee meetings are open to the public. Draft plans and final documents are reviewed and adopted at the Policy Committee meeting.

Plans and Activities Requiring Public Participation

The following plans and activities carried out by the Evansville MPO require public participation. Table 3.1 shows the public involvement procedures identified for these plans and activities.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan is a long range, twenty-year (or more) transportation investment and multimodal policy document. It provides the framework for how federal transportation funding is spent to improve roadway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian modes of travel. Draft and adopted documents will be available on the Evansville MPO website, at the Evansville MPO office and at select public locations in the metropolitan planning area.

Transportation Improvement Program

The TIP serves as a tool to implement projects from the long-range plan (MTP), as well as a document to keep the public informed about regional projects. It identifies and prioritizes projects that are consistent with the area's transportation plan. The TIP must include a four-year program of projects, and it must be updated at least every four years. Draft and adopted documents will be available on the Evansville MPO website, at the Evansville MPO office and at select public locations in the metropolitan planning area.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan/ Transportation Improvement Program Amendment

The MTP and/or TIP may occasionally need to be amended to remain current with the latest planning status and unforeseen needs that may arise. Both planning documents may be amended at any time.

Administrative Modification

In addition to an amendment, the MTP and TIP may also be revised by way of an Administrative Modification. Administrative Modifications address minor revisions to planning documents. No public involvement is required for an Administrative Modification. They are processed by Evansville MPO staff and presented to the Technical and Policy Committees as informational items. No resolution or action is required of the committees. Staff will notify planning partners and appropriate parties of the modification.

Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

The purpose of the Coordinated Plan is to aid in creating a collaborative network of transportation services that improve mobility for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income individuals. Draft and adopted documents will be available on the Evansville MPO website, at the Evansville MPO office and at select public locations in the metropolitan planning area.

Participation Plan

The Participation Plan lays out the strategies, techniques, and methods used to provide public participation in the transportation planning and programming process. Draft and Adopted documents will be available on the Evansville MPO website and at the Evansville MPO office.

Other Significant Activities/Products

The Evansville MPO will consider and undertake appropriate outreach procedures on a case by case basis for other significant activities/products including but not limited to Corridor/Safety, Bicycle and Pedestrian planning efforts, Transit planning, Certification Review and other Studies.

Table 3.1: Participation Procedures

	Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)		Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)		Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan		Participation Plan	
	Plan Update	Plan Amendment	Plan Update	Plan Amendment	Plan Update	Plan Amendment	Plan Update	Plan Amendment
	(every 4-5 years)	(amended as necessary)	(every 2 years)	(amended as necessary)	(every 4 years)	(amended as necessary)	(every 4 years)	(revised as necessary)
Consultation and Coordination	○		○					
Citizen Advisory Committee	○							
Public Engagement Meetings (Development)	○				○			
Legal Public Notice	○		○		○		○	○
Public Comment Period	30 days	15 days*	30 days	15 days*	30 days	-	45 days	45 days
Public Information Access	○	○	○	○	○		○	○
Public Meetings (Draft Documents)	○		○		○			
Public Comment Summary Memo	○	○	○		○		○	○
Policy and Technical Committee Meetings	○	○	○	○	○		○	○

*Whenever possible, the full comment period will be observed. Certain circumstances may preclude the provision of the established comment period.

In regard to public involvement and participation, federal regulations mandate that the metropolitan planning process comply with the Code of Federal Regulations 23 CFR 450.316, as cited below:

- a. The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing individuals, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, public ports, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation (including intercity bus operators, employer-based commuting programs, such as carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, parking cash-out program, shuttle program, or telework program), representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.
1. The MPO shall develop the participation plan in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for
 - i. Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
 - ii. Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
 - iii. Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;
 - iv. Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;
 - v. Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
 - vi. Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;

A

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

-
- vii. Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;
 - viii. Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts;
 - ix. Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and
 - x. Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.
- 2. When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93, subpart A), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.
 - 3. A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.
- b. In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. In addition, the MPO shall develop the metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs with due consideration of other related planning activities within the metropolitan area, and the process shall provide for the design and delivery of transportation services within the area that are provided by:
 - 1. Recipients of assistance under title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53;
 - 2. Governmental agencies and non-profit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive Federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency transportation services; and
 - 3. Recipients of assistance under 23 U.S.C. 201-204.
 - c. When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.
 - d. When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.
 - e. MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under §450.314.

B

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE POPULATION AREAS

The public involvement process includes public outreach for every plan or project developed through the Evansville MPO. In addition to regional outreach through public notices, further outreach is conducted in Environmental Justice (EJ) Population Areas. The areas are prioritized based on the percentage of the population that is considered underserved or disadvantaged. The Evansville MPO includes the following seven population categories to determine areas of underserved or disadvantaged populations: individuals below poverty; individuals age 65 and older; minority population; Hispanic population; individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP; speaks English “less than very well”); individuals with a disability; and households with no vehicles.

Demographic Analysis and Selection of EJ Population Areas

Based on availability of data and grouping similar neighborhoods and areas, the Evansville MPO determined that Census Tracts were the best scale to identify the location of EJ Population Areas. The 2014-2018 American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau is the most current source for finding data on the underserved and disadvantaged populations. The Evansville MPO gathered data from the 2014-2018 ACS estimates for the following categories of underserved and disadvantaged populations:

- individuals below poverty;
- individuals age 65 and older;
- minority population;
- Hispanic population;
- individuals with Limited English Proficiency (speak English “less than very well”);
- individuals with a disability; and
- households with no vehicles.

The Evansville MPO first found the percentages of underserved and disadvantaged populations for each of the three counties (Vanderburgh, Warrick, and Henderson) in the planning area and a combined regional percentage. This regional percentage for each category is considered the Potentially Disadvantaged Threshold. Table B-1 shows the Potentially Disadvantaged Threshold for each of the seven categories of underserved and disadvantaged populations.

The Evansville MPO also gathered underserved and disadvantaged population data for all 71 Census Tracts within the three counties in the planning area. For each of the seven categories of underserved or disadvantaged populations, the Evansville MPO identified the tracts that exceeded the Potentially Disadvantaged Threshold for that category. Each tract that had two or more categories that exceeded the Threshold was identified as an Environmental Justice (EJ) Population Area. If a tract had one or fewer categories that exceeded the Threshold, it was identified as a General Outreach Area. Each EJ Population Area was then placed into one of three EJ Tiers depending on the number of categories that exceeded the Potentially Disadvantaged Threshold. Below are the EJ Tiers based on the number of categories that exceeded the threshold.

- Tier 1 EJ Area – exceeds 6-7 Potentially Disadvantaged Thresholds
- Tier 2 EJ Area – exceeds 4-5 Thresholds
- Tier 3 EJ Area – exceeds 2-3 Thresholds
- General Outreach Area – exceeds 0-1 Thresholds

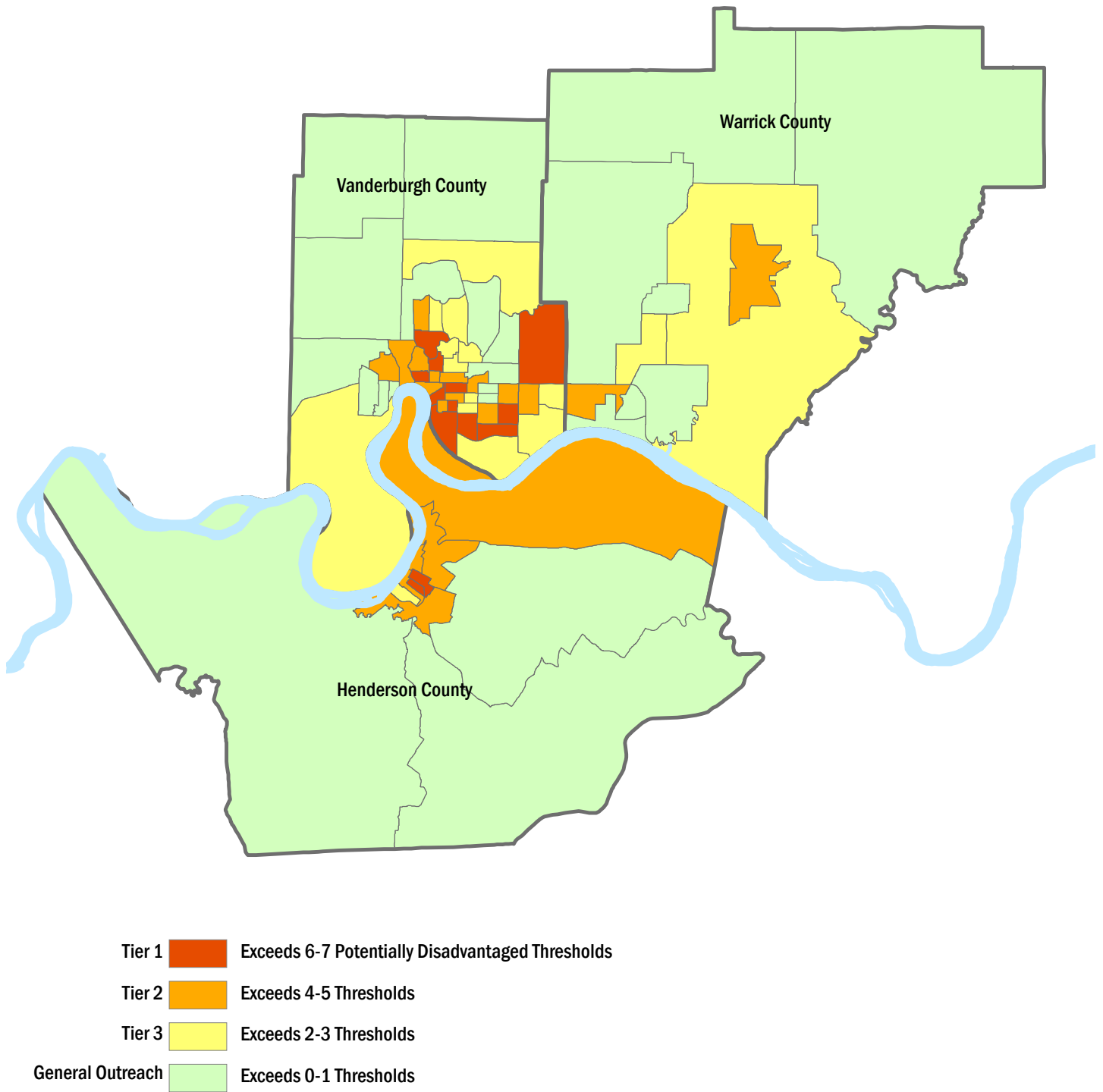
Figure B-1 shows the EJ Population Areas for the Evansville MPO study area. Figures B-2 through B-8 show the individual maps for each underserved or disadvantaged population category.

**Table B-1:
Potentially Disadvantaged Threshold by County**

County Averages by Census Tracts	Vanderburgh	Warrick	Henderson	Regional Average
Individuals below poverty	17.3%	7.6%	18.6%	15.4%
Individuals age 65 and older	16.1%	16.7%	16.8%	16.3%
Minority population	14.6%	6.3%	12.0%	12.4%
Hispanic population	2.6%	1.8%	2.5%	2.4%
Individuals with Limited English Proficiency (speak English “less than very well”)	1.4%	1.0%	0.9%	1.2%
Individuals with a disability	15.5%	12.0%	21.2%	15.6%
Households with no vehicles	8.2%	3.3%	8.7%	7.3%

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey (ACS)

**Figure B-1:
EJ Population Areas**



**Figure B-2:
Individuals below poverty**

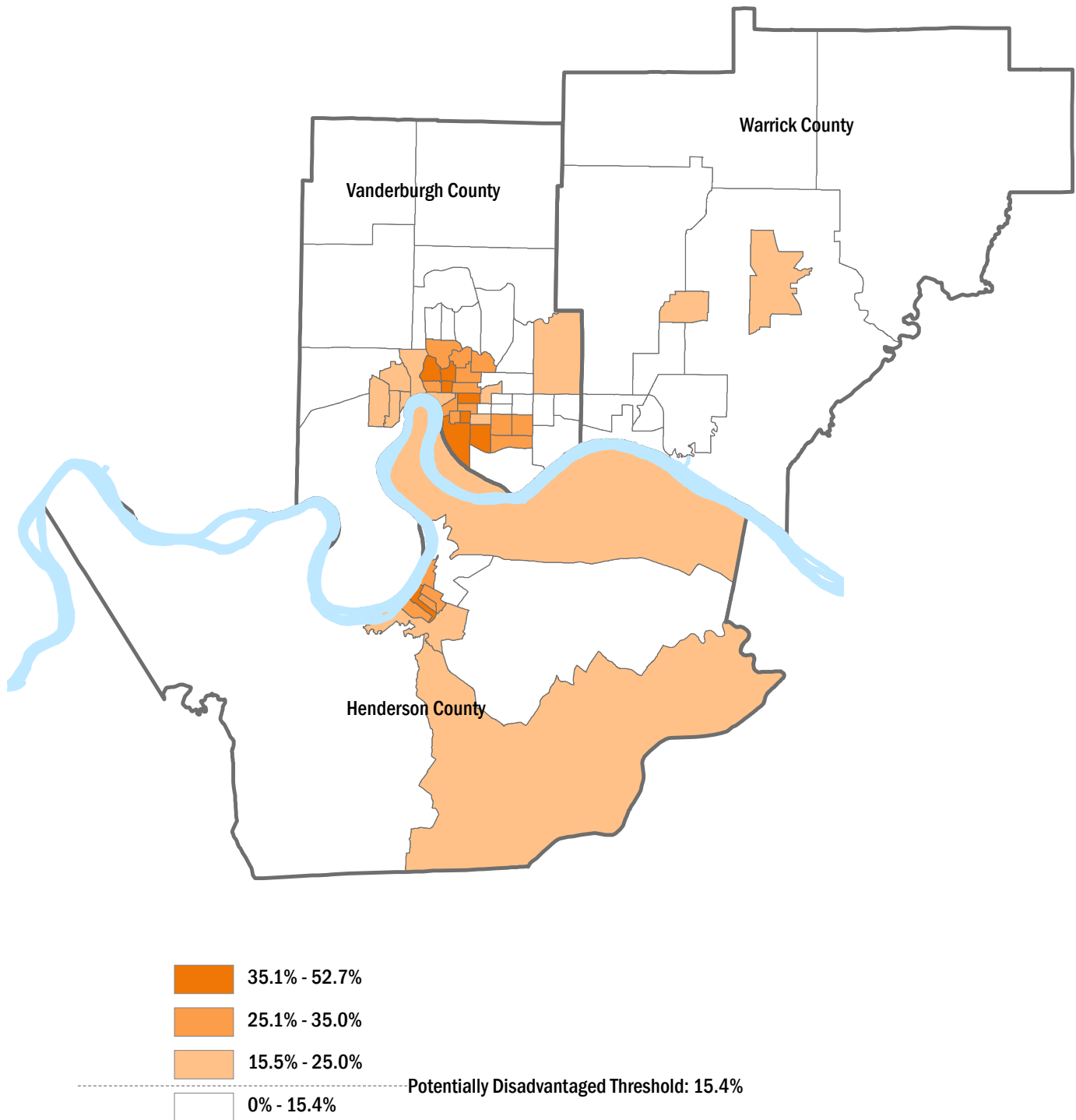


Figure B-3:
Individuals age 65 years and older

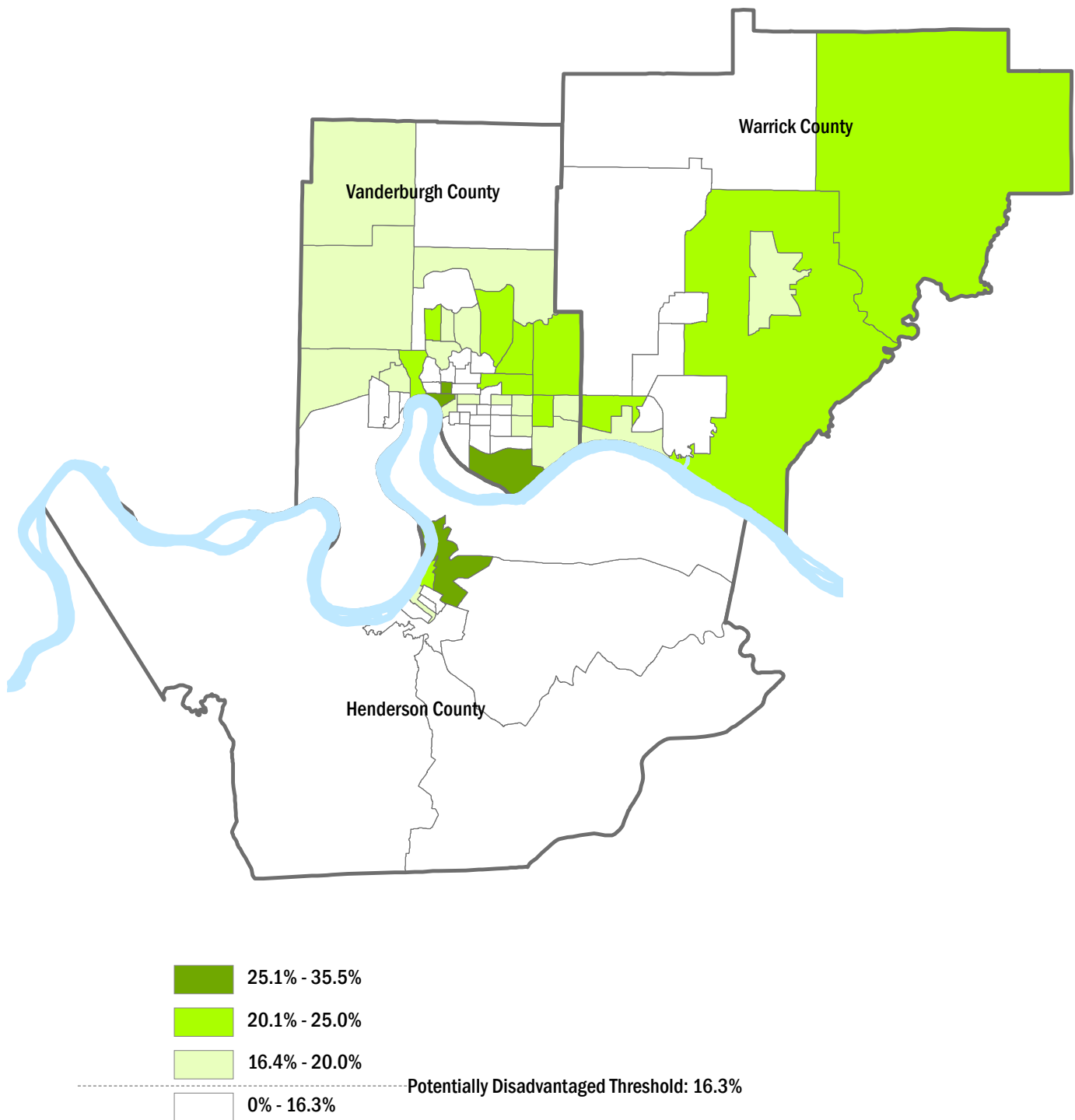
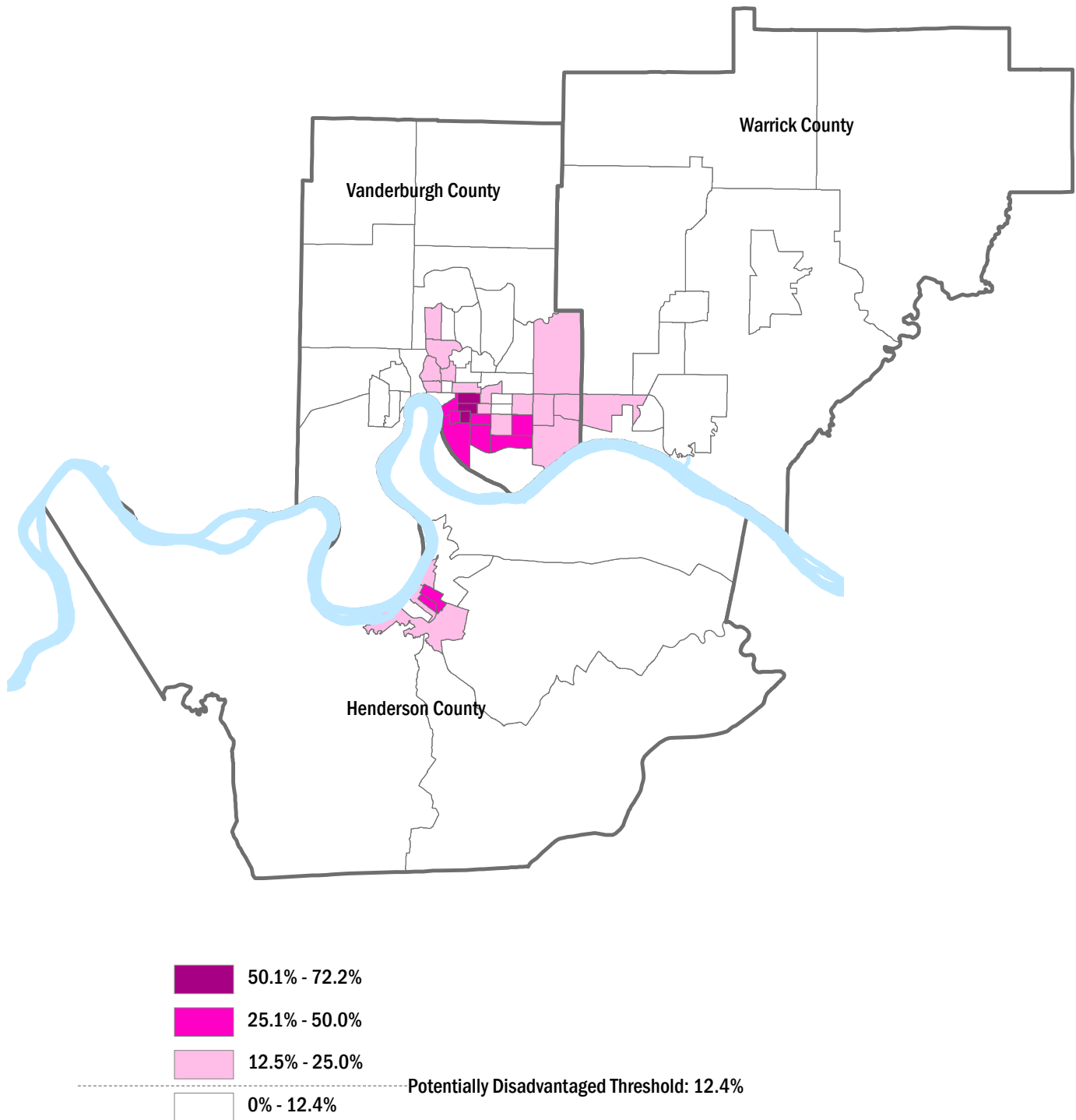


Figure B-4:
Minority population



**Figure B-5:
Hispanic population**

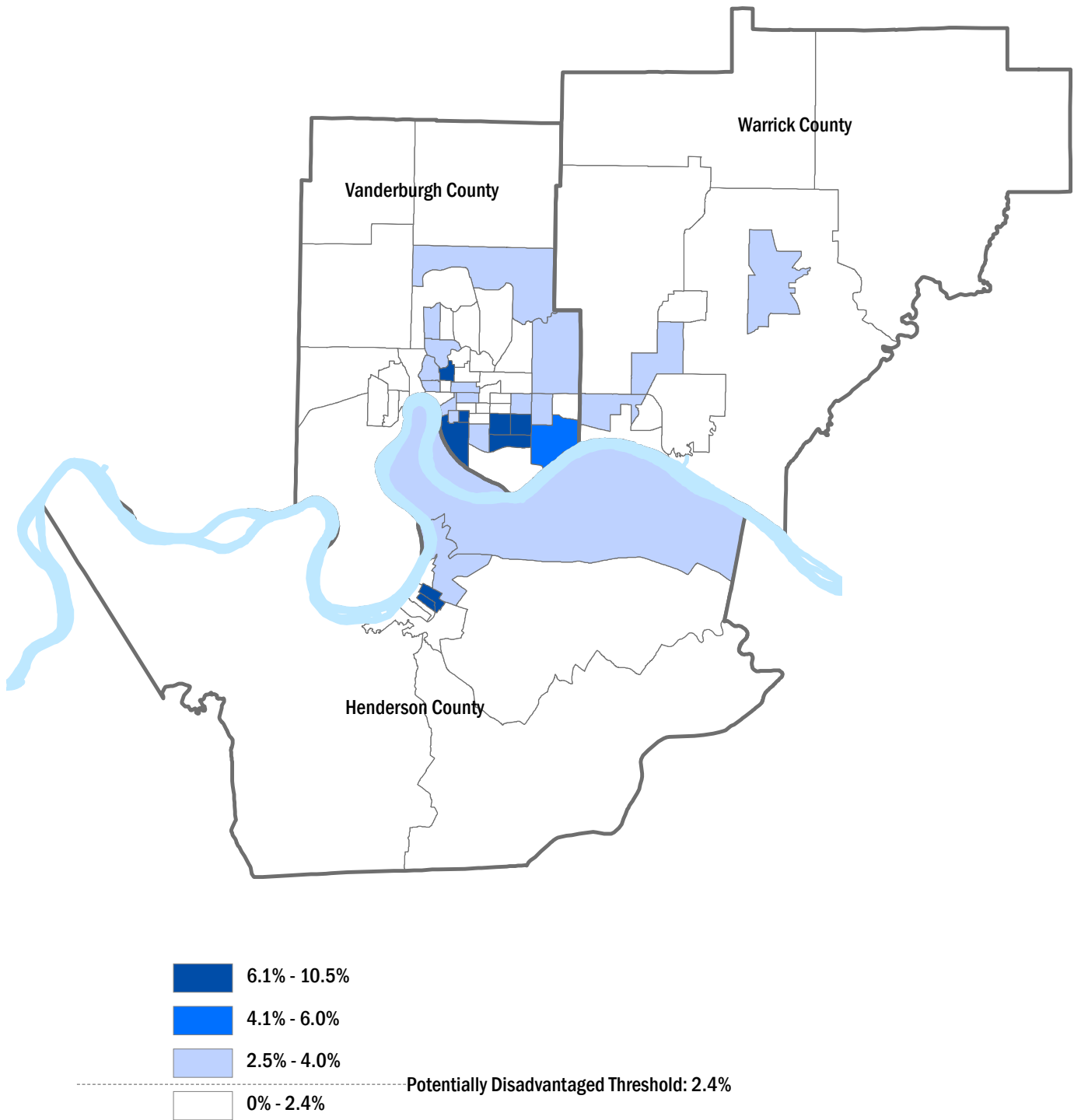
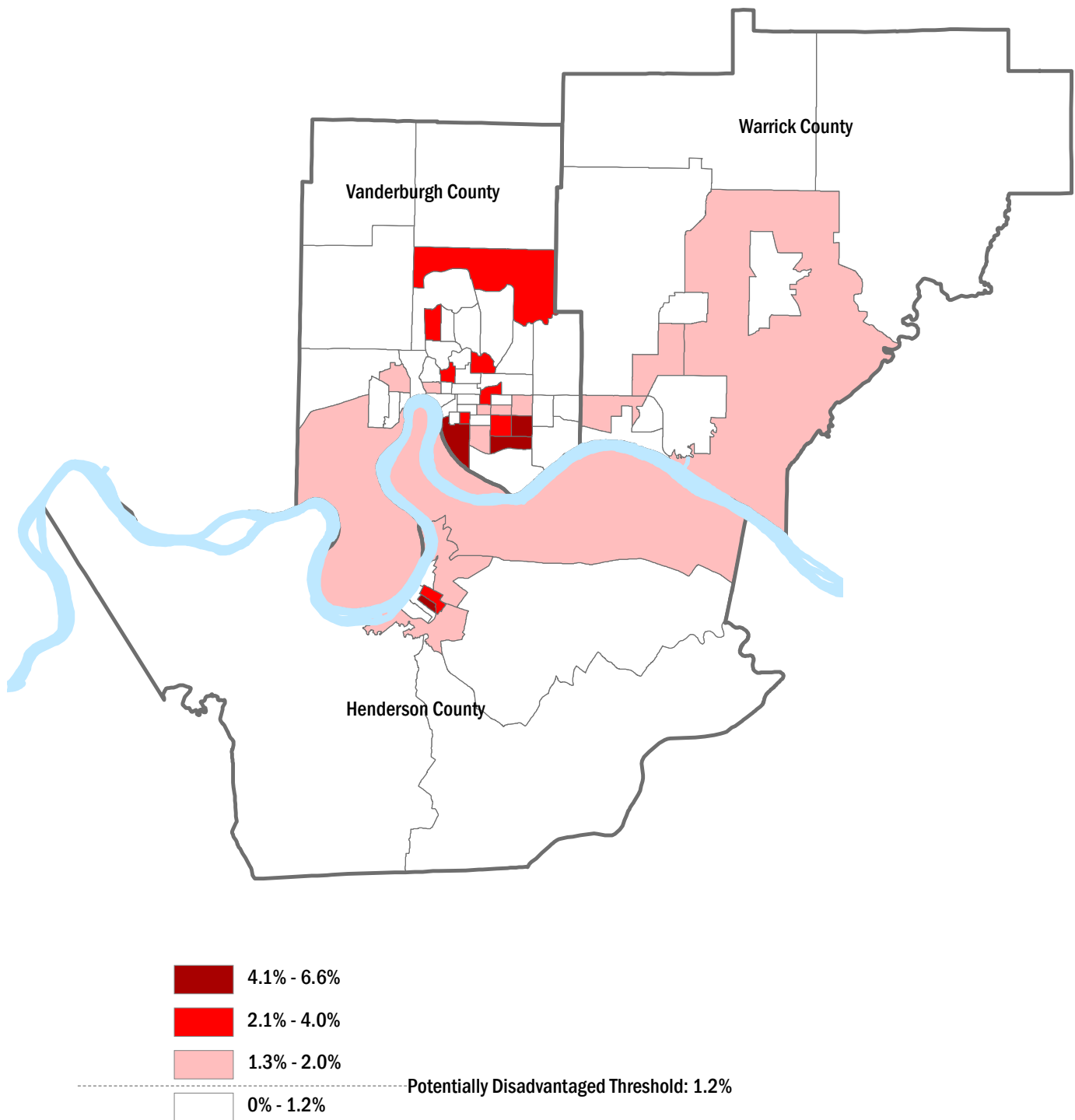


Figure B-6:
Individuals with limited English proficiency (speak English “less than very well”)



**Figure B-7:
Individuals with a disability**

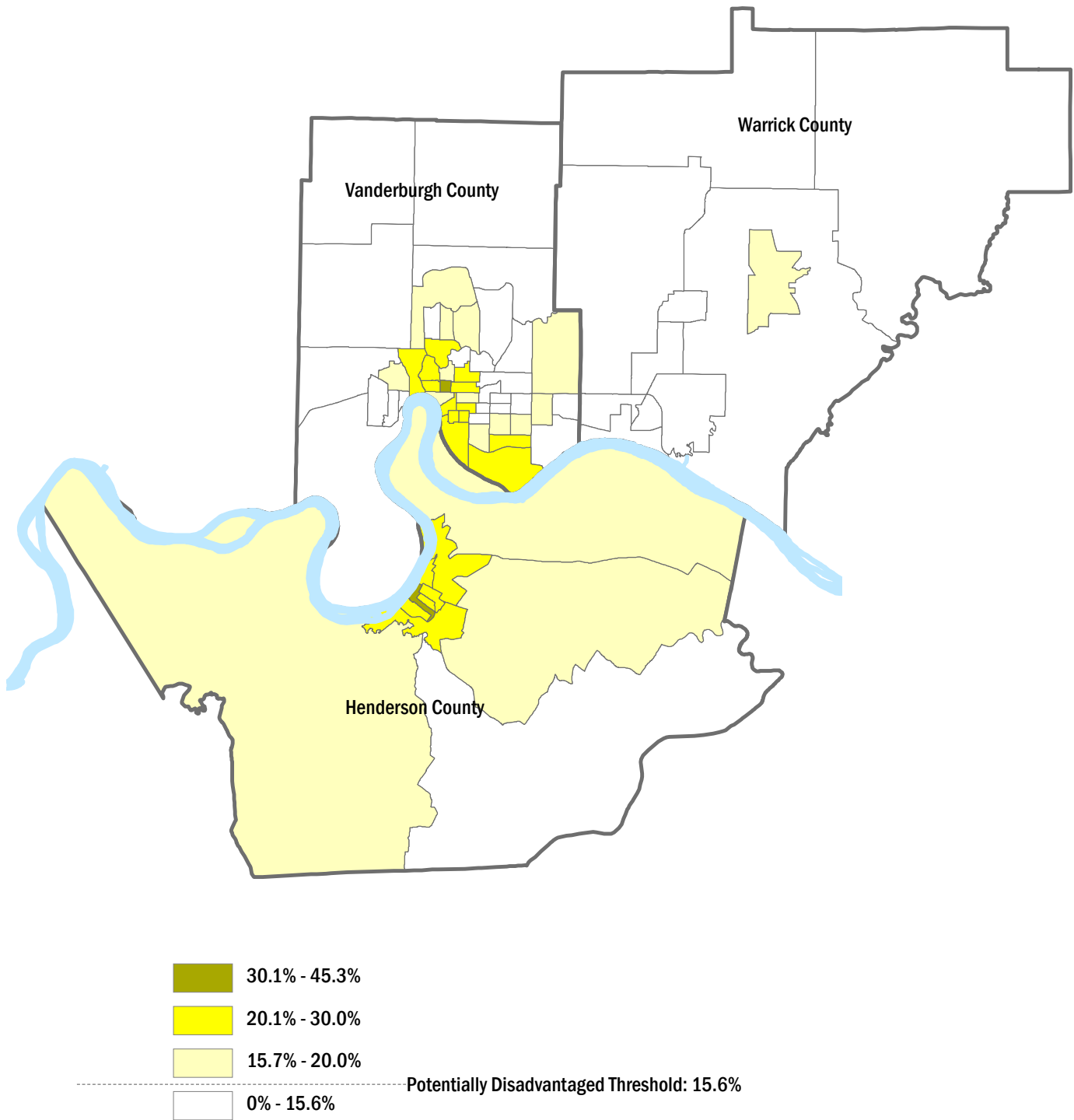
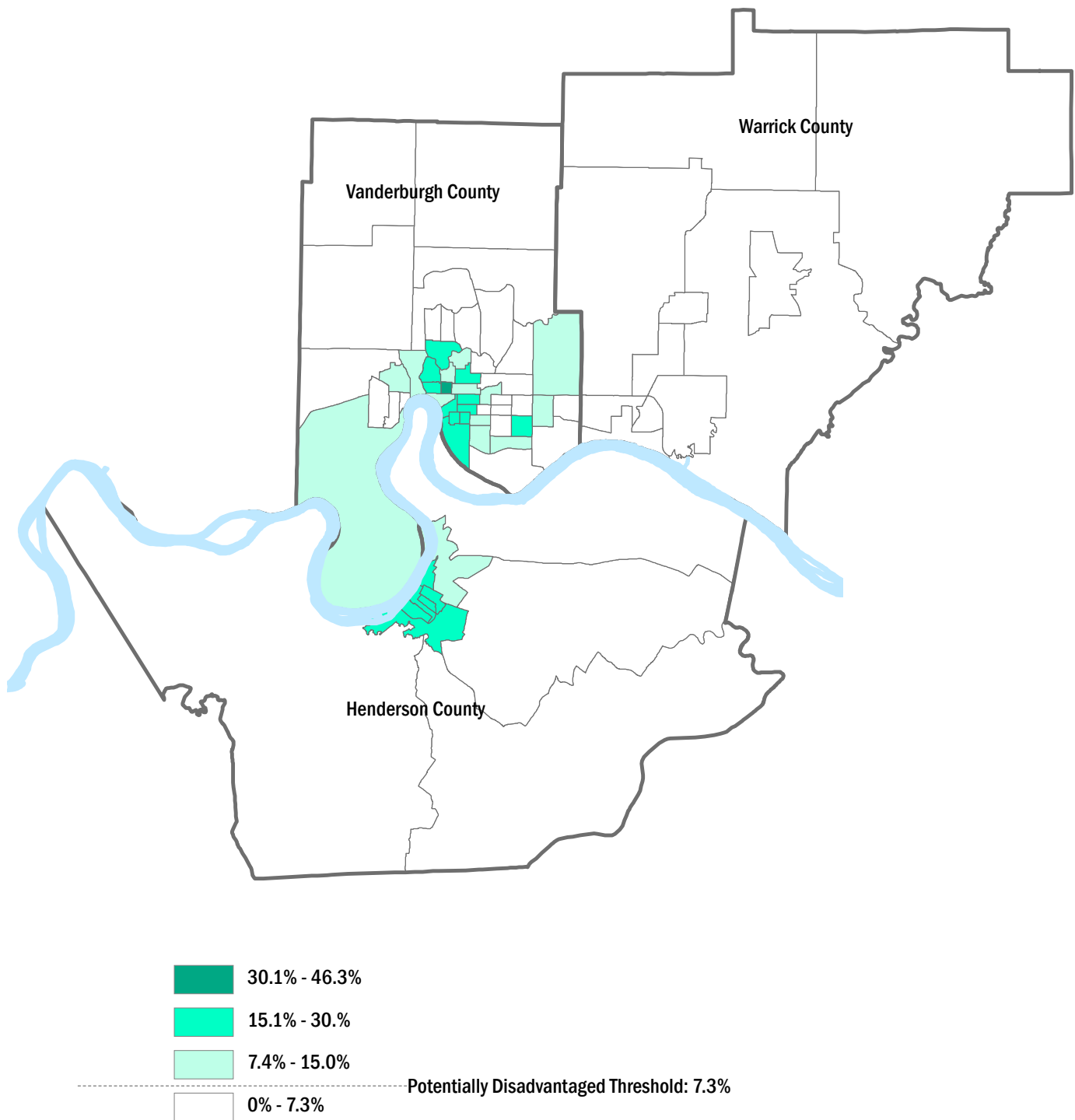


Figure B-8:
Households with no vehicles



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C

EVANSVILLE MPO COMMENT FORM

**Figure C-1:
EMPO Comment Form**

**Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) &
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
Comment Form**



Name (please print):

Address/e-mail:

Do you have any comments on the Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2045 or the Transportation Improvement Program 2022-2026?

Comment:

Do you have any comments on planned transportation projects in the EMPO planning area?

Comment:

Please comment with any suggestion you may have to improve public participation in the local transportation planning process.

Comment:

What is your preferred method to learn about opportunities to participate in local transportation planning efforts?

Comment:

Do you have additional comments?

Comment:

Comments may be sent by: postal mail to: Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization, Room 316 – Civic Center Complex, 1 NW M L King Jr. Blvd., Evansville, IN 47708; telephone to: 436-7833; faxed to: 812-436-7834; or email to: comments@evansvillempo.com. For more information, visit www.evansvillempo.com

D

TITLE VI COMPLAINT FORM

**Figure D-1:
Title VI Complaint Form**

**Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization
Title VI Complaint Form**

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act requires that "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Note: The following information is necessary to assist us in processing your complaint. Should you require any assistance in completing this form, please let us know.

1. Complainants' Name _____
Street Address _____
City, State and Zip Code _____
Telephone Number _____
2. Person discriminated against (if someone other than the complainant)
Name _____
Address _____
City, State and Zip Code _____
3. Which of the following best describes the reason you believe the discrimination took place?
Was it because of your: (check reason)
Race/Color _____ Age _____
National Origin _____ Disability _____
4. When and where did the alleged discrimination take place? Include name of agency, department or program you believe discriminated against you. Explain what happened and whom you believe was responsible. Use the back of this form if additional space is required.

5. List the names and contact information of persons who may have knowledge of the alleged discrimination

Name and Contact Information: _____

Name and Contact Information: _____

6. Have you filed this complaint with any other federal, state, or local agency; or
With any federal, state or local court?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, check all that apply:

_____ Federal Agency _____ Federal Court _____ State Agency

_____ State Court _____ Local Agency _____ Local Court

7. Please provide information of a contact person at the agency/court where the complaint was filed.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State and Zip Code _____

Telephone Number _____

Please sign below. You may attach any written materials or other information that you think is relevant to your complaint.

Complainant's Signature

Date

Hand Deliver or Mail this Title VI Complaint Form to:

Matt Schriefer, Transit Planner
Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization
1 NW MLK, Jr. Blvd., Room 316
Evansville, IN 47708

Or e-mail to:

mschriefer@evansvillempo.com or comments@evansvillempo.com

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Participation Plan

Meaningful Participation in Transportation Planning
and Related Activities

Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization
1 NW Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room 316 - Civic Center Complex
Evansville IN, 47708