



TRANSPORTATION EQUITY PRIORITY AREAS

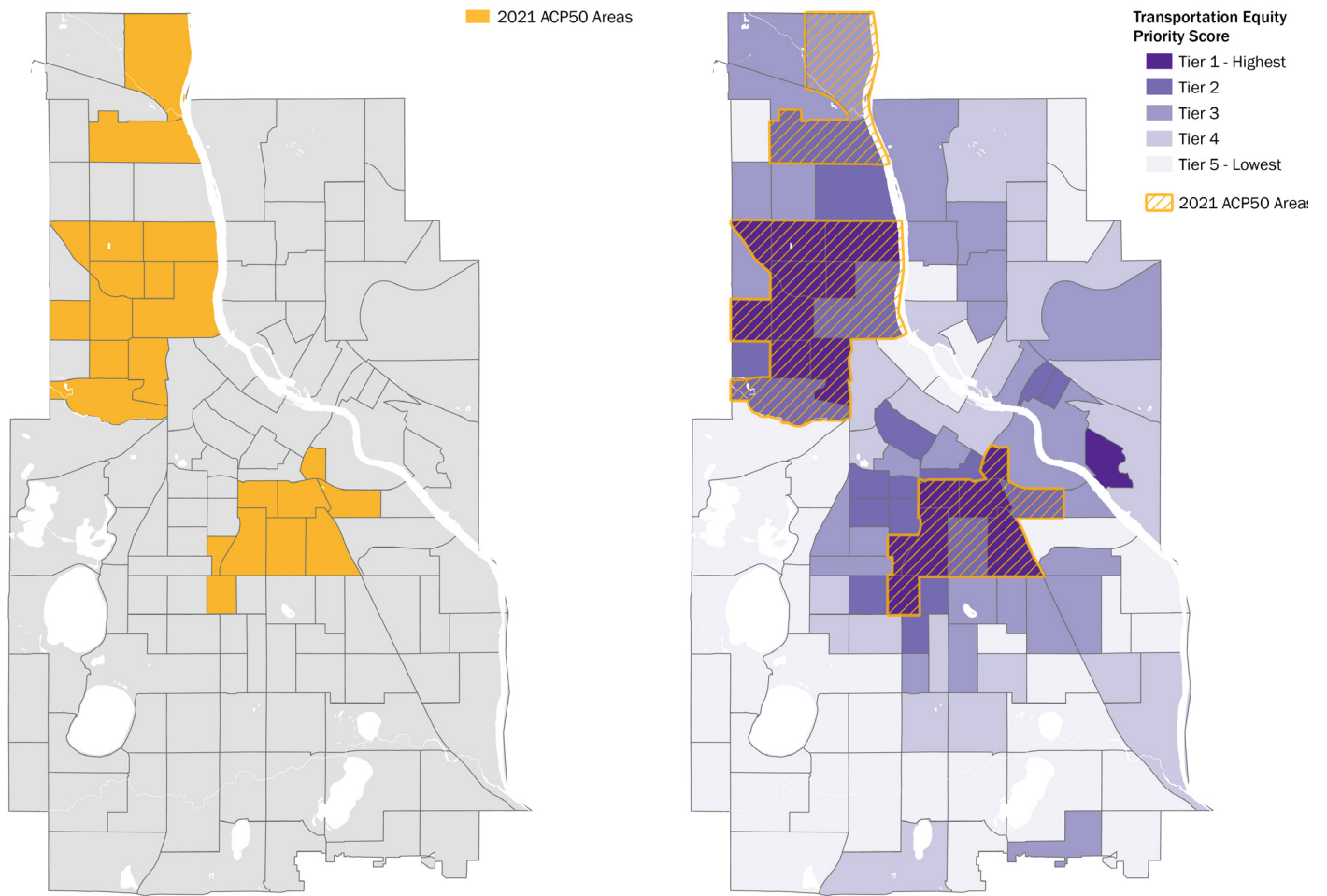
City of Minneapolis

DEFINING GEOGRAPHIC-BASED EQUITY AREAS

The Transportation Action Plan called out the need to re-evaluate how we identify geographic areas to prioritize from an equity-lens in transportation planning and programming ([Progress Action 1.5](#)). The current practice uses areas of concentrated poverty with majority people of color (ACP50), or sometimes areas of concentrated poverty (ACP), for such focus. As a part of creating the REF, Public Works staff have developed a replacement for the ACP50 designation: Transportation Equity Priority (TEP) areas. TEP will replace ACP50 and ACP as the standard way to consider geography-based transportation-related equity in Minneapolis once the Racial Equity Framework is adopted. This work is in alignment with the Metropolitan Council's move away from ACP50 designation.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Metropolitan Council [Rethinking Areas of Concentrated Poverty](#) Matt Schroeder, Krysten Ryba-Tures & Amy Plambeck, October 8, 2020.

Comparing ACP50 areas with Transportation Equity Priority (TEP) areas



2021 ACP50 areas*

TEP score with ACP50 overlay

* The Metropolitan Council last updated its ACP50 map in 2019. The map shown here was created by applying ACP50's methodology and demographic thresholds to 2021 Census data.

Moving away from ACP50: The concept of ACP50s creates a link between race and poverty that is not founded in data and reinforces stereotypical associations between BIPOC and poverty. Designating ACP50 areas fails to sufficiently examine related historical systems and structural harms, including policies like redlining and the racist transportation planning practices resulting in the intentional routing of freeways through historic communities of color. Furthermore, ACP50 areas create a 'benefits cliff' throughout the city whereby residents who live just outside these areas (or in areas with similar racial and/or economic characteristics) are not able to access the benefits of infrastructure investments that may be prioritized within ACP50 areas. It designs an in-or-out binary that fails to recognize the complex patterns of neighborhood development and the reality that various forms of inequities are experienced by communities that may fall just outside the boundaries of an ACP50 designation.

Adopting Transportation Equity Priority (TEP): In an effort to move away from the challenges associated with the ACP50 designation, the TEP score considers a broader range of demographic, socioeconomic, and other factors. These factors are weighted to reflect the relative importance of each factor in contributing to transportation equity. The resulting TEP scores for Census tracts across the City are grouped into five tiers, with the highest scoring census tracts designated TEP tier 1, the next-highest scoring as TEP tier 2, and so on through the lowest scoring census tracts which are designated TEP tier 5. The sections below describe how the TEP score is calculated from two subscores (Base Equity and Equity+) and the factors that contribute to each.

Two subscore methodology: The Transportation Equity Priority score results from adding two component subscores. The first score is a Base Equity score that could be used more broadly citywide for other efforts not specific to transportation. It consists of four factors relating to race and income, which are given point values and then given a weight and added together. The second score, called Equity+, consists of data that plays a critical and more nuanced role in transportation equity. Equity+ includes data on transportation, the environment, and potential users/population density. While this subscore can also be used citywide, its focus on equity data related to transportation make it a good candidate for efforts that specifically focus on transportation.

The TEP score is the sum of the two subscores and is used to prioritize areas as described above. It is a tool to identify geographic based equity priority areas that can be used to help shape investments, infrastructure, operations, maintenance or other transportation work and decisions citywide. While the Equity+ score components play a crucial role in adding nuance and depth to the way in which

transportation projects, plans and programs consider equity, the weighting of the TEP score is designed so that the final score is more responsive to Base Equity factors. This results in a final TEP score that takes transportation data into consideration while still prioritizing race and income.

Base Equity subscore and components: The Base Equity subscore is comprised of data related to both race and income. At the core, both categories of data are critical in establishing equity priority areas in Minneapolis. The impacts of poverty are disproportionately felt by residents of color in Minneapolis. Although 20% of all residents live below 100% of the federal poverty threshold, that number jumps to 41% for Black residents and 34% for people of color (compared to 12% for white people).⁶¹ Although 26% of residents live in a high poverty neighborhood (where at least 40% of residents live below the federal poverty threshold) this number rises to 48% for Black people and 38% for people of color (compared to 17% for white people).⁶² The Base Equity score includes data on race as well as three different income levels, accounting for those living on the very low and very high end of the income spectrum.

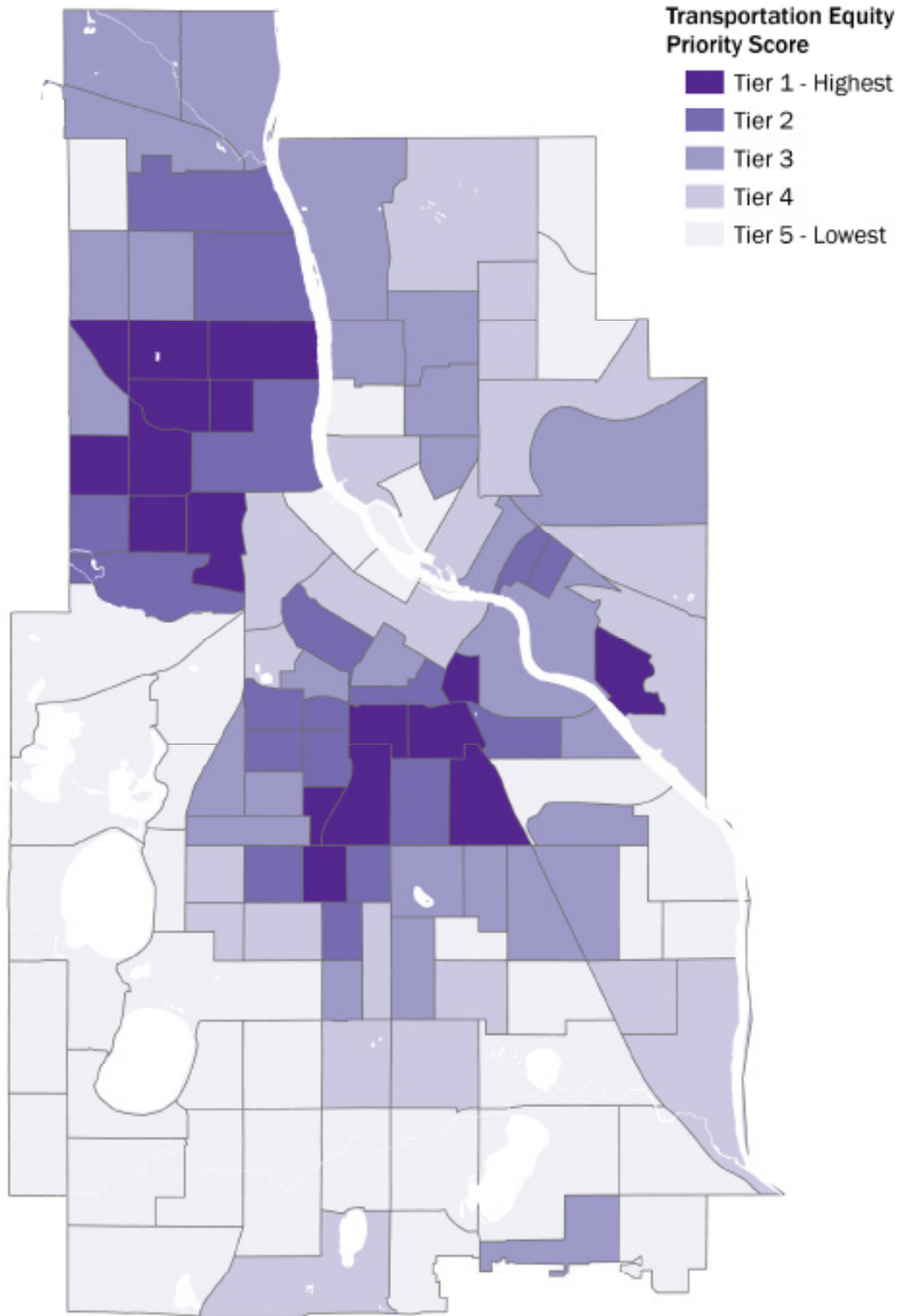
Equity+ score and components: The Equity+ score comprises three broad categories of data, all of which impact outcomes for residents citywide. This includes transportation, environmental and other demographic data. Not all people have the same access to transportation and people of color spend longer on their commutes than white residents which has been cited in studies as a predictor of economic inequity.⁶³ To design, build, operate and maintain an equitable transportation system, it is imperative that we focus on underserved communities that are in need of expanded, improved, safer and more affordable mobility options. The Equity+ score emphasizes transportation by including two datasets (access to a vehicle and average commute time) that create an explicit link to our work and add nuance to the way we map equity citywide. In addition, the Equity+ score considers environmental data as a reflection of the environmental justice considerations that are tied to transportation investments as well as population density. It highlights the link between transportation planning, programming and design with transportation outcomes, environmental justice, and people citywide.

⁶¹ National Equity Atlas, [Poverty in Minneapolis, MN](#).

⁶² National Low Income Housing Coalition [Population Living in High-Poverty Neighborhoods Almost Doubles since 2000](#) August 15, 2015.

⁶³ The New York Times [Transportation emerges as crucial to escaping poverty](#), Mikayla Bouchard, May 7, 2015.

Transportation Equity Priority Areas map

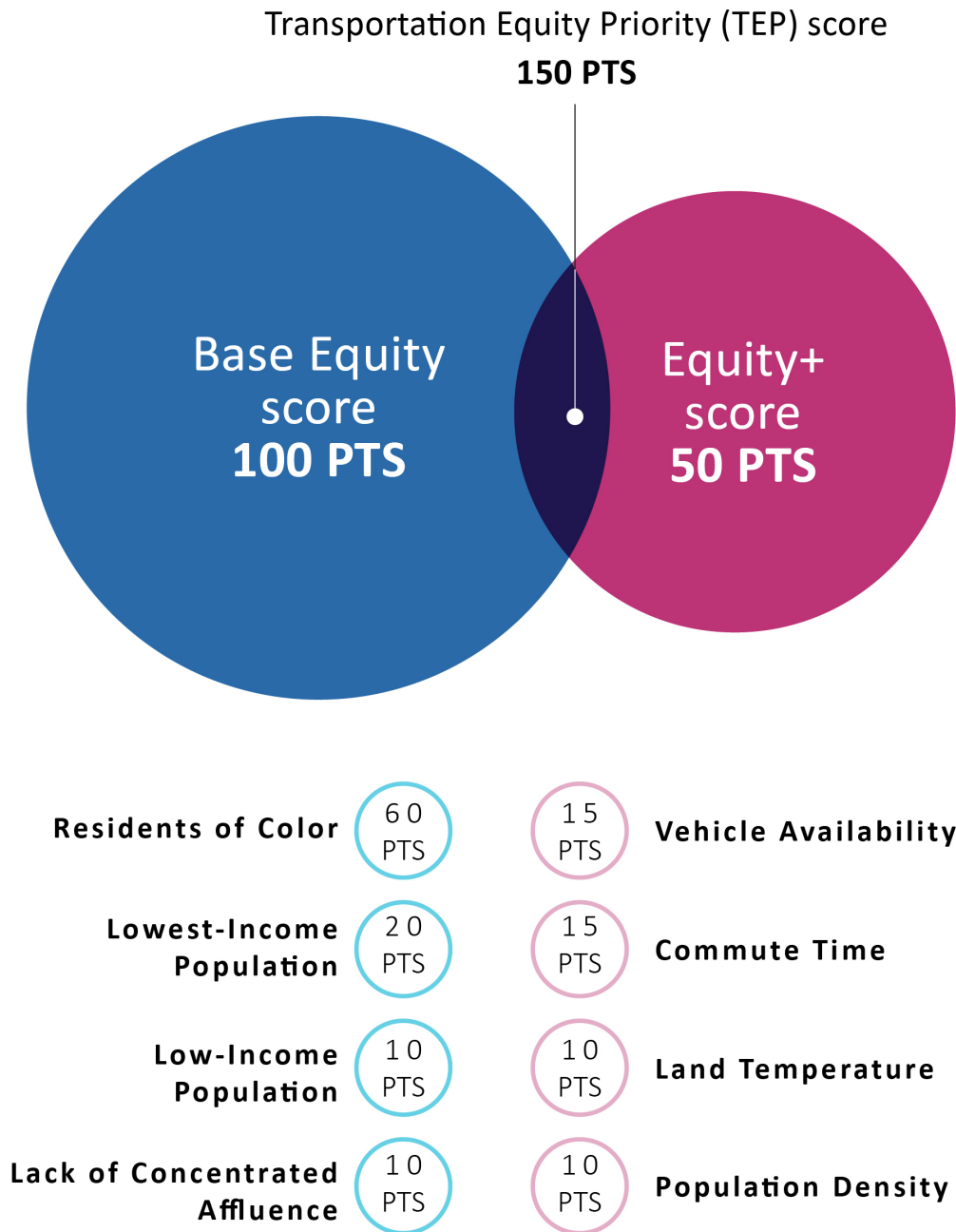


Transportation Equity Priority score table

Transportation Equity Priority (TEP) Score	Points
Base Equity Score	100
Residents of color	60
Lowest-income population	20
Lower-income population	10
Lack of concentrated affluence	10
Equity+ Score	50
Vehicle availability	15
Commute time	15
Land temperature	10
Population density	10

A citywide map of each dataset can be found in Appendix D.

Transportation Equity Priority score diagram



BASE EQUITY: 100 POINTS

These criteria prioritize racial and economic equity.

RESIDENTS OF COLOR [60 POINTS]

What is measured: Percentage of residents that identify as a person of color (defined as all people who identify on the Census as either Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Some Other Race, or Two or More Races)

Data source: Census tract level data estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimate for 2017-2021

Why this measure is important: In 2020, City Council declared racism a public health emergency. Prior to 2020, City Council identified the need to focus on racial equity through the [Neighborhood Park and Street Infrastructure ordinance](#). Outcomes and disparities based on race continue to persist and highlighting race is critical to a racial equity framework for transportation.

Residents of Color (<i>% of residents identifying as a race other than "White alone"</i>)	Points
0 to <25 %	0
25 to <50 %	20
50 to <75 %	40
75 to 100 %	60

LOWEST-INCOME POPULATION [20 POINTS]

What is measured: Percentage of residents with household income 0-100% of federal poverty level (For reference in 2022 this is under \$27,750 for a family of four with two children)

Data source: Census tract level data estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimate for 2017-2021

Why this measure is important: Negative outcomes severely impact residents earning household incomes below the federal poverty level. Though poverty rates alone are not a proxy for various place-based inequities, a wide range of data exists that demonstrates how poverty harms residents’ life chances. When examining the use and impact of poverty data, it is evident that a more nuanced approach to gauging poverty is required as opposed to the broad and often blunt-brush stroke of evaluating areas of concentrated poverty alone.

Lowest-Income Population (<i>% of residents with household income below poverty level</i>)	Points
0 to <10 %	0
10 to <20 %	7
20 to <30 %	14
≥30 %	20

LOWER-INCOME POPULATION [10 POINTS]

What is measured: Percentage of residents with household income 100-200% of federal poverty level (For reference in 2022 this range is \$27,750-\$55,500 for a family of four with two children)

Data source: Census tract level data estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimate for 2017-2021

Why this measure is important: Negative outcomes related to low income do not exist only for people whose household income falls below the federal poverty level. Though poverty rates alone are not a proxy for various place-based inequities, a wide range of data exists that demonstrates how poverty harms residents’ social and economic opportunities. When examining the use and impact of poverty data, it is evident that a more nuanced approach to gauging poverty is required rather than narrowly focusing on evaluating areas of concentrated poverty alone.

Lower-Income Population (<i>% of residents with household income 100-200% of poverty level</i>)	Points
0 to <10 %	0
10 to <20 %	3
20 to <30 %	7
≥30 %	10

LACK OF CONCENTRATED AFFLUENCE [10 POINTS]

What is measured: Percent of residents in households earning less than \$125,000/year

Data source: Census tract level data estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimate for 2017-2021

Why this measure is important: Affluence impacts people’s opportunities and upward economic mobility. Areas of concentrated affluence contribute to citywide inequity because high earning households are often able to experience and access more and/or better benefits compared to other communities.

Lack of Concentrated Affluence (<i>% of residents with household income under \$125,000</i>)	Points
<70 %	0
70 to <80 %	3
80 to <90 %	7
90 to 100 %	10

EQUITY+: 50 POINTS

These criteria prioritize data sets focused on transportation access and mobility, population, and the environment, all of which are inextricably linked to equity.

VEHICLE AVAILABILITY [15 POINTS]

What is measured: Percentage of households in each census tract without access to a car

Data source: Census tract level data estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimate for 2017-2021

Why this measure is important: Walking, rolling, biking and transit are essential modes used by people that connect them to opportunities such as jobs, education, social services and retail. This is especially true for people who cannot drive for economic, personal, or other reasons. This criterion prioritizes the needs of users that may have limited access to a car, such as limited income populations, aging populations, residents new to the United States, and students. As the streets in areas with higher levels of these communities are reconstructed, the City has the opportunity to provide more multimodal options for users who may be in more need of them.

Vehicle Availability (<i>% of households without vehicle access</i>)	Points
0 to <15 %	0
15 to <30 %	5
30 to <45 %	10
≥45 %	15

COMMUTE TIME [15 POINTS]

What is measured: Percentage of workers with a 45 minute or longer commute (~twice the average citywide commute time)

Data source: Census tract level data estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimate for 2017-2021

Why this measure is important: Racism in all its forms causes persistent discrimination and disparate outcomes in many areas of life, including commute time. The average commute times for white workers is 22 minutes versus 24 minutes for workers who identify as people of color, and 27 minutes for workers who identify as Black.⁶⁴ On a yearly basis, the average Black resident spends 43 extra hours commuting than the average white resident. Commute time is shown to be a predictor of upward economic mobility, with longer commutes predicting less economic mobility in an area. In the wake of the COVID 19 pandemic and a global health crisis, disparities in commute time may have been exacerbated by the disproportionate access to work from home.

⁶⁴ Minneapolis [Transportation Action Plan](#), 2020, Foreword, page 11.

Commute Time (<i>% of workers with 45 minute or more commute</i>)	Points
0 to <4 %	0
4 to <8 %	5
8 to <12 %	10
≥12 %	15

LAND TEMPERATURE [10 POINTS]

What is measured: Census tract temperature relative to the citywide mean temperature of 95.9 degrees Fahrenheit at the time the satellite image was taken

Data source: Metropolitan Council Land Surface Temperature for Climate Vulnerability Analysis (updated 2016 from Satellite data)– 30 x 30-meter resolution

Why this measure is important: As climate change progresses, extreme heat events are becoming more common. High temperatures can be dangerous and sometimes deadly - especially for the elderly, people with diabetes or asthma, unhoused people, or people without air conditioning. In addition, temperature can influence preference and safety for various active transportation modes. Land temperature also serves as a proxy for many environmental justice concerns related to air quality and other health issues.

Land Temperature <i>(difference in land temperature from city average)</i>	Points
below avg.	0
+ 0 to <1 °F	3
+ 1 to <4 °F	7
+ ≥4 °F	10

POPULATION DENSITY [10 POINTS]

What is measured: People per square mile of land

Data source: Census tract level data estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimate for 2017-2021

Why this measure is important: Areas with high residential density serve as origin points for a large number of trips to activity centers citywide. Residential density is a dataset that helps to capture potential users that may not currently exist in other data. Additionally, historic land use and zoning practices have resulted in high density areas which are often populated by a higher percentage of BIPOC and/or low-income residents as opposed to lower density areas in the city which trend towards predominantly white and affluent residents. In addition to identifying user groups and activity centers, population density is a helpful way to understand and identify historic patterns of inequities citywide.

Population Density <i>(number of residents per square mile)</i>	Points
0 to <5,000	0
5,000 to <10,000	3
10,000 to <20,000	7
≥20,000	10