

Appendix

C

MT P2040

LINK - CONNECT - MOVE

Environmental
Justice and
Community
Impacts



Environmental Justice

This appendix examines community impacts and environmental justice considerations associated with the 2040 MTP.

Environmental Justice

Executive Order (EO) 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations (1994) is a product of the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The EO directs federal agencies to identify and address the disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their actions on minority and low-income populations, to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law. Metropolitan planning organizations, like Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS), are required by the U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT) to identify and

address disproportionately high and adverse public health and environmental effects of transportation policies, programs, and activities on low-income and minority populations.

The US DOT Order on Environmental Justice [1] defines low-income as a person whose median household income is at or below the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. It also defines minority as a person who is:

- (1) Black: a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa;
- (2) Hispanic or Latino: a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race;
- (3) Asian American: a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the

Indian subcontinent;

(4) American Indian and Alaskan Native: a person having origins in any of the original people of North America, South America (including Central America), and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition; or

(5) Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander: people having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

The purpose of this appendix is to conduct an evaluation of the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The analysis contains two parts: (1) analysis of the transportation needs of low-income and minority populations and (2) determination of whether the benefits and burdens of the existing and proposed transportation system investments (contained in the 2040

MTP) are distributed equitably among target (low- income and minority) and non-target population within Anchorage. Information about outreach to environmental justice populations can be found in Chapter 2.

Transportation Needs of Low-Income and Minority Populations

From a review of U.S. Census data and other, locally gathered survey information, it appears that low-income and minority populations are disproportionately dependent on the public transportation system. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey[2] , approximately 2.5% of the minority workers 16 years and older in the Municipality of Anchorage ride the bus to work compared to only 1.1% of the non- minority worker 16 years or older population. Moreover, the majority of persons using transit to travel to

work are considered low-income (61.2% of the workers 16 years and older making less than \$25,000 per year) compared to 25.3% of all workers (2013-2017 ACS).

Benefits and Burdens of MTP projects to EJ Populations

The MTP's recommendations will benefit the area's population in many ways including mobility, safety, time savings and economic development. Since each project's benefits and burdens are unique, it is difficult to assess the impact to low-income and minority populations at a regional scale. This analysis does not replace the individual project analysis that will be completed for each project during its development.

Benefits from non-motorized improvements include reduced emissions, less land used for parking, improvements in

community health, and improved pedestrian safety. Some negative impacts that may result from the non-motorized improvements include reduction in motor vehicle capacity and additional conflicts at intersections.

Benefits from transit improvements include increased mobility for individuals who do not drive, increases in person capacity without increasing a road's footprint, reduction in VMT, provides more transportation choices, more competitive travel time to the private vehicle, and reduced vehicle emissions. The investment in transit and non-motorized improvements will particularly benefit low income populations that do not have access to personal vehicles and the disabled who may be unable to operate personal vehicles. Low-income populations may benefit from the replacement of the transit fleet as the transit service spends the most time in these neighborhoods. Due to the nature of the proposed

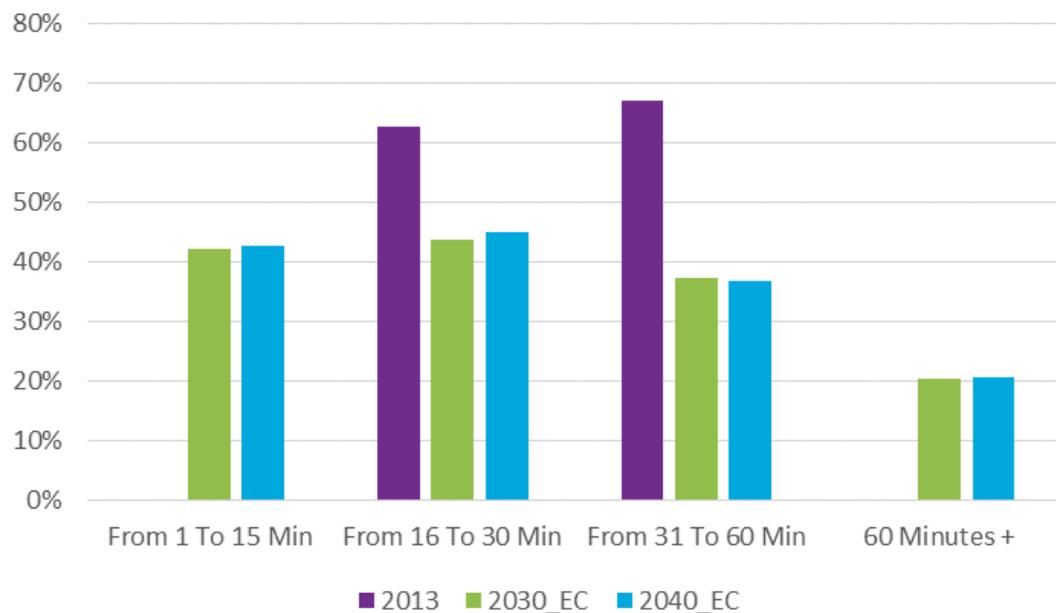
improvements, there will be little negative impacts associated with transit improvements except short-term construction related impacts.

People Mover recently revamped their transit system to increase transit frequency on multiple routes. In doing so, they reduced the overall transit service area. The revised system allowed People Mover to put high-frequency routes in high-density, low-income areas. According to Anchorage Talks Transit: Choices, Outreach, and Future Alternatives, "It is important to note the degree to which poverty is not concentrated in any one part of the municipality. Apart from the more affluent communities in southern Anchorage, all parts of the municipality are home to people who have an incentive to use transit for reasons of income" [3]. Given the existing transit network, Figure C-1 shows the effects of the revamped system on low-income

households. For each of the route frequency categories, the figure depicts the percentage of households within a ½ mile buffer of each route frequency that are low-income. In 2013, the MTP baseline year, there were no 15 minute routes in People Mover's system. According to Figure C-1, when modeled in

2030 and 2040, the service change will result over 40 percent of the households that are within a half mile of a 15 minute route are low-income households.

Figure C-1 Percent of Low-Income Households within 1/2 Miles of Transit by Frequency of Service (Headway)



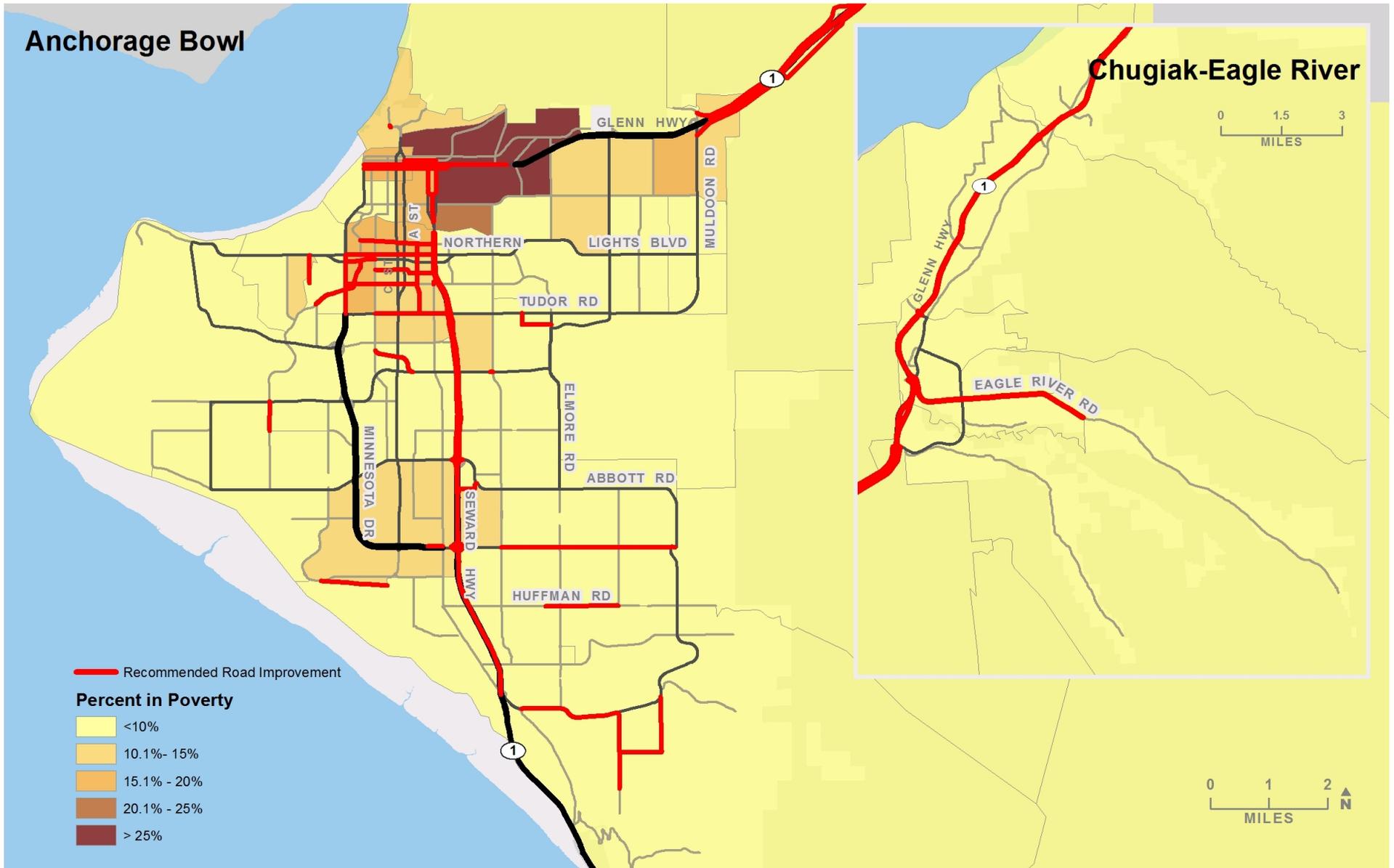
Transit riders have a higher tendency to be members of an environmental justice population. This means that improvements to the transit system tend to benefit low income or minority populations, and also provide greater mobility benefits to the elderly, or people with disabilities. Transit improvements in the plan include projects to improve bus stops and transit facilities that will improve comfort and safety for riders; transit fleet replacements for programs such as AnchorRIDES paratransit service that will provide enhanced mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities, and signal improvements at key intersections along frequent routes to improve travel times and reliability for transit riders. These improvements will provide benefits to key demographic groups dependent on public transit for their mobility needs.

Figure B-2 and Figure B-3 shows the recommended MTP road projects overlaid on maps showing low-income and minority

areas. Most of the recommended MTP road projects are to meet the transportation needs in growing parts of the region or to keep the existing system in a state of good repair. The roadway projects that have the potential for the greatest impacts on low-income and minority population are Midtown Congestion Relief – 36th Avenue Interchange, Midtown Congestion Relief – Northern Lights Boulevard/Benson, Midtown Congestion Relief – Chester Creek, Seward Highway/Glenn Highway Connection – 20th Avenue (Chester Creek) to 13th Avenue, Seward Highway/Glenn Highway Connection – Airport Heights Interchanges. These projects have the potential to bisect the Fairview and Mountain View communities, both of which have high percentages of low income and minority residents. These projects may include some benefits to these neighborhoods. The Seward Highway-Glenn Highway area tends to be congested in peak periods. Adjacent communities also report that drivers are

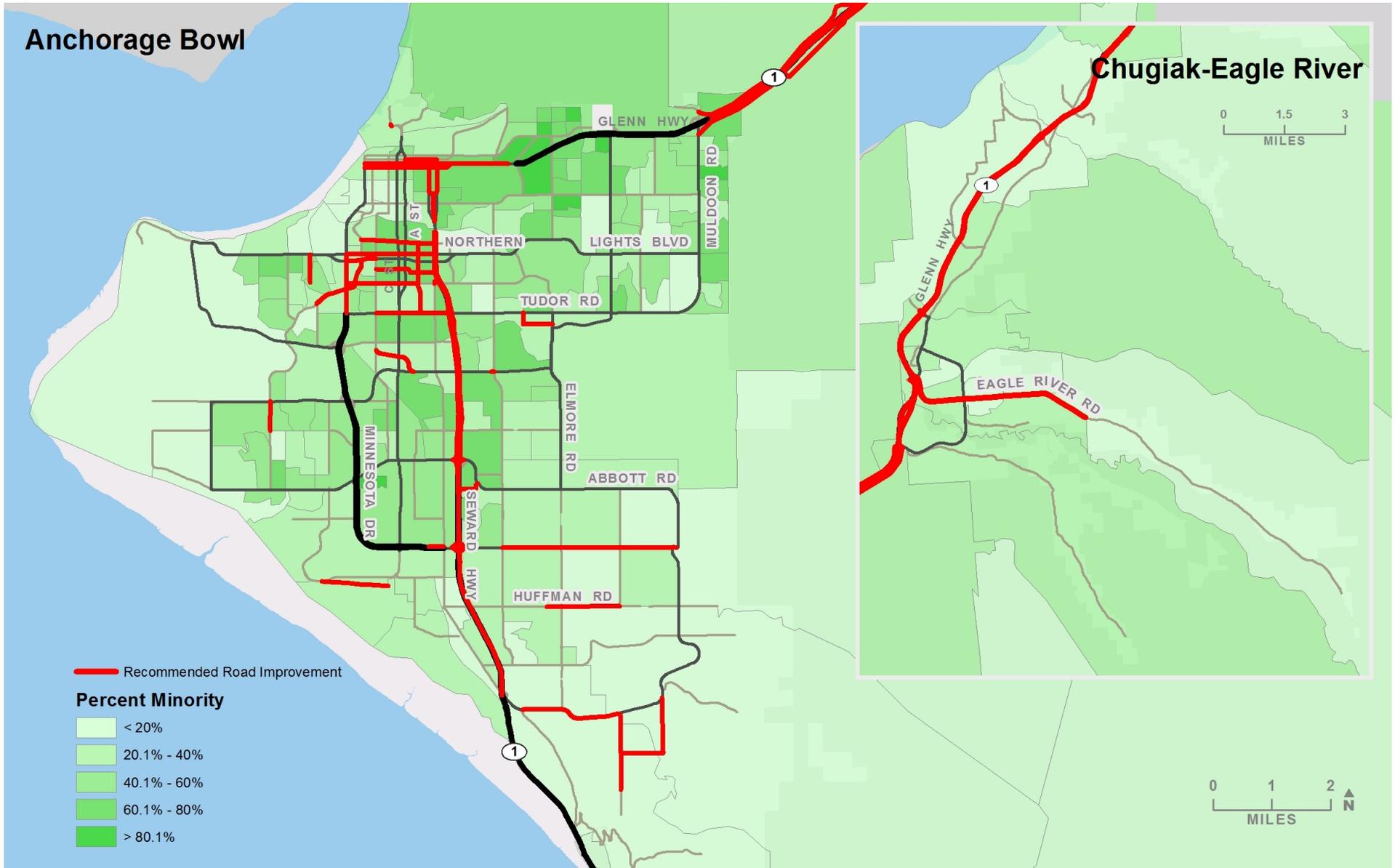
cutting through their neighborhoods trying to avoid that congestion. Reducing congestion may also lead to improved air quality, improve travel times for local residents, and an improved ability to walk or bike in the area. Previous studies and plans along this corridor have identified several strategies to mitigate the community impacts of road improvements in this area. Strategies include: depressing the highway to reduce visual blight and noise impacts, covering the highway at strategic locations to provide opportunities to develop parks or open space, extensive use of bridges to improve pedestrian access and neighborhood connectivity. Another strategy is to convert some of the heavily traveled streets (such as Ingra and Gambell streets) as pedestrian-friendly main streets.

Figure C-2 Recommended MTP Road Projects and Concentrations of Low-Income Individuals



Source: American Community Survey, 2013-2017

Figure C-3 Recommended MTP Road Projects and Concentrations of Minority Individuals



Source: American Community Survey, 2013-2017



A calculation of travel time was computed using the AMATS Travel Demand Model for trips made by low-income households as compared to the average overall. The results are presented in Table C-1. As can be seen in the table, trips made by low-income households have lower trip times for all trips and for home-based work trips compared to trips made by all households. While part of this is due to the proximity of low-income areas to employment, it also reflects that the transportation system and land use mix provides for reduced travel times for low

income households.

Table C-2 shows the average cost per trip computed using the AMATS Travel Demand Model for low-income households and all households and reports the change of the preferred plan as compared to the 2040 E+C model run. While costs for both income levels are greater as compared to the 2040 E+C model run, the increase in costs would be higher for households overall (1.7%) as compared to low income households (1.3%).

Conclusion

On the basis of the analysis described above, AMATS has determined that the recommendations contained in the 2040 MTP do not have a disproportional impact on areas of high concentration of low-income and minority populations. Furthermore, the 2040 MTP duly considers the transportation needs of low-income and minority populations and provides many recommendations that will substantially benefit these populations.

Table C-1 Average Trip Time by Income in 2040

All Trips	
Low-Income	7.1 minutes
All Income Levels	9.1 minutes
Home-Based Work Trips	
Low-Income	13.6 minutes
All Income Levels	15.1 minutes

Table C-2 Average Cost Per Trip by Income Level in 2040

Average cost by Income	Average Cost Per Trip	Change from 2040 E+C
Low-Income Households	\$0.76	1.3%
All Households	\$1.20	1.7%

Notes

[1] FHWA. Final DOT Environmental Justice Order. http://fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/ej_at_dot/orders/order_56102s

[2] American Factfinder. 2013-2017. https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_09_5YR_S0804&productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_09_5YR_S0804&prodType=table

[3] People Mover. Anchorage Talks Transit; Choices, Outreach and Future Alternatives. <http://www.muni.org/departments/transit/PeopleMover/Pages/TransitTalks.aspx>

This page intentionally left blank.