

Report F

Impacted Communities Analysis



TITLE SIX / ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

A 1994 Presidential Executive Order directed every federal agency to make Environmental Justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing the effects of all programs, policies, and activities on “minority and low-income populations.” The DOT's Environmental Justice initiatives accomplish this goal by involving the potentially affected public in developing transportation projects that fit harmoniously within their communities without sacrificing safety or mobility.

There are four fundamental Environmental Justice principles:

1. To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations.
2. To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.
3. To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.
4. To certify compliance with Title VI and address Environmental Justice, MPOs need to
 - a. Enhance their analytical capabilities to ensure that the Regional Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) comply with Title VI.
 - b. Identify residential, employment, and transportation patterns of low-income and minority populations so that their needs are identified, and the benefits and burdens of transportation investments can be fairly distributed.
 - c. Evaluate and - where necessary - improve their public involvement processes to eliminate participation barriers and engage minority and low-income populations in transportation decision-making.

Minority, Low-Income, Disabled, and Elderly Populations

Road and transit project impacts may have significant effects on minority, low-income, elderly, and disabled populations. Proposed projects in the Regional Transportation Plan were evaluated for their potential cumulative impacts on these population groups. These populations were mapped by greater than or less than the region-wide average by census tracts or block groups, then overlaid with the Regional Transportation projects. Based on this overlay analysis, none of the analyzed populations will receive a disproportionate benefit or negative impact of the proposed transportation projects. Some of these populations may visually appear on the maps to be concentrated in the more rural area of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO); however, that may be attributed to the large geographic size of the rural census tracts or block groups in those areas.

Minority Groups

The MPO area includes minority groups and persons identifying themselves as Black or African American, American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, Hispanic or Latino, or in combinations of the above, in the 2021 Census American Community Survey (ACS). Utah County's minority population of 121,475 is approximately 18.7% of the total and appears to cluster in the Provo / Orem / Vineyard areas. Due to the distribution of this population and the planned projects, the effects of the projects on the minority populations do not appear to be significantly greater than the projected impacts on the area's population in general.

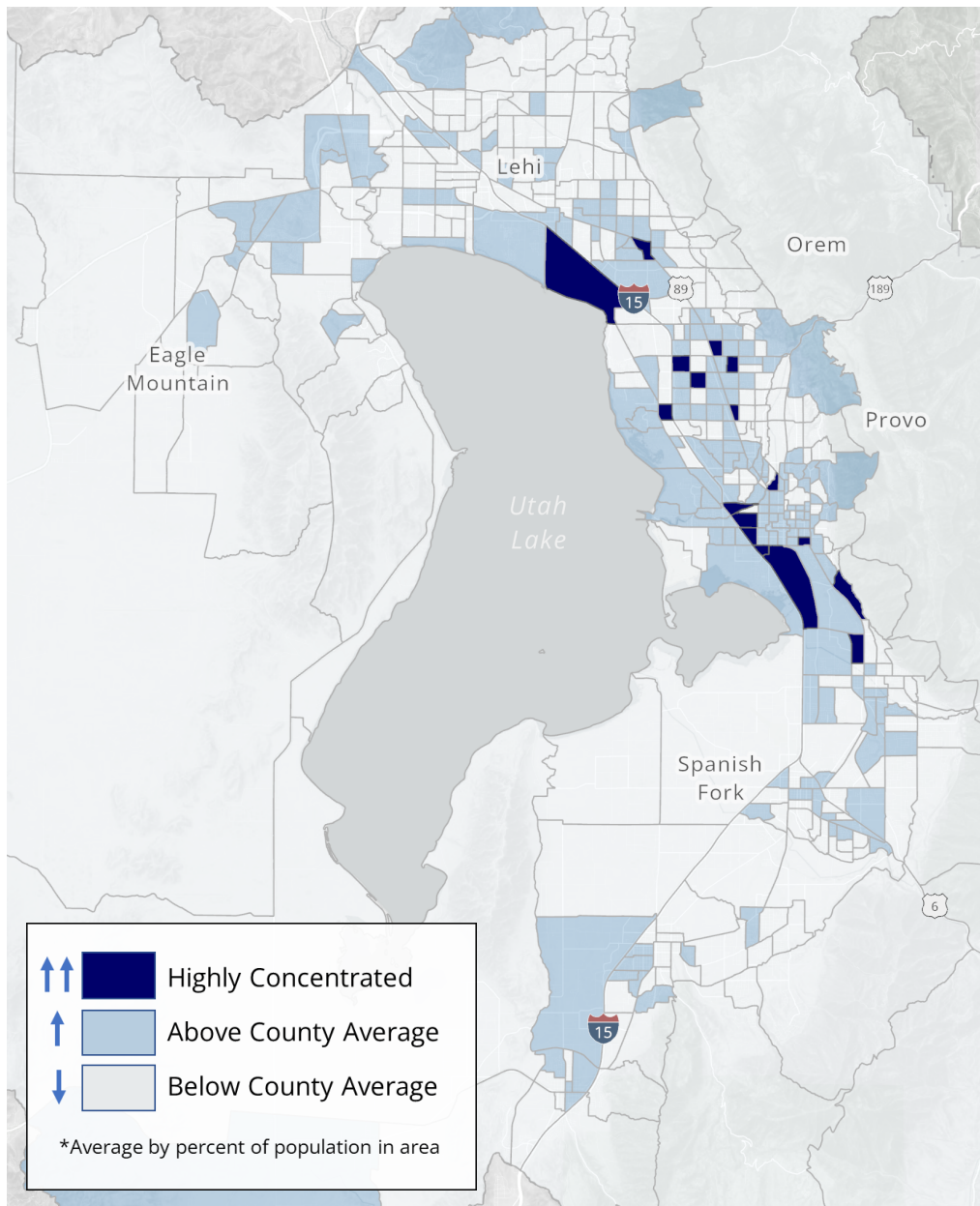


Figure F1: Utah County Minority Groups Map

Low-Income Groups

Low-income residents were identified as being below the poverty threshold as measured by the United State Census Bureau. The 2021 ACS indicates that 9.3% of all individuals (or 58842) are at or below the poverty thresholds. The low-income population in Utah County appears to cluster in the Provo / BYU area. Due to the distribution of this population and the planned projects, the effects of the projects on the low-income populations do not appear to be significantly greater than the projected impacts on the area's population in general.

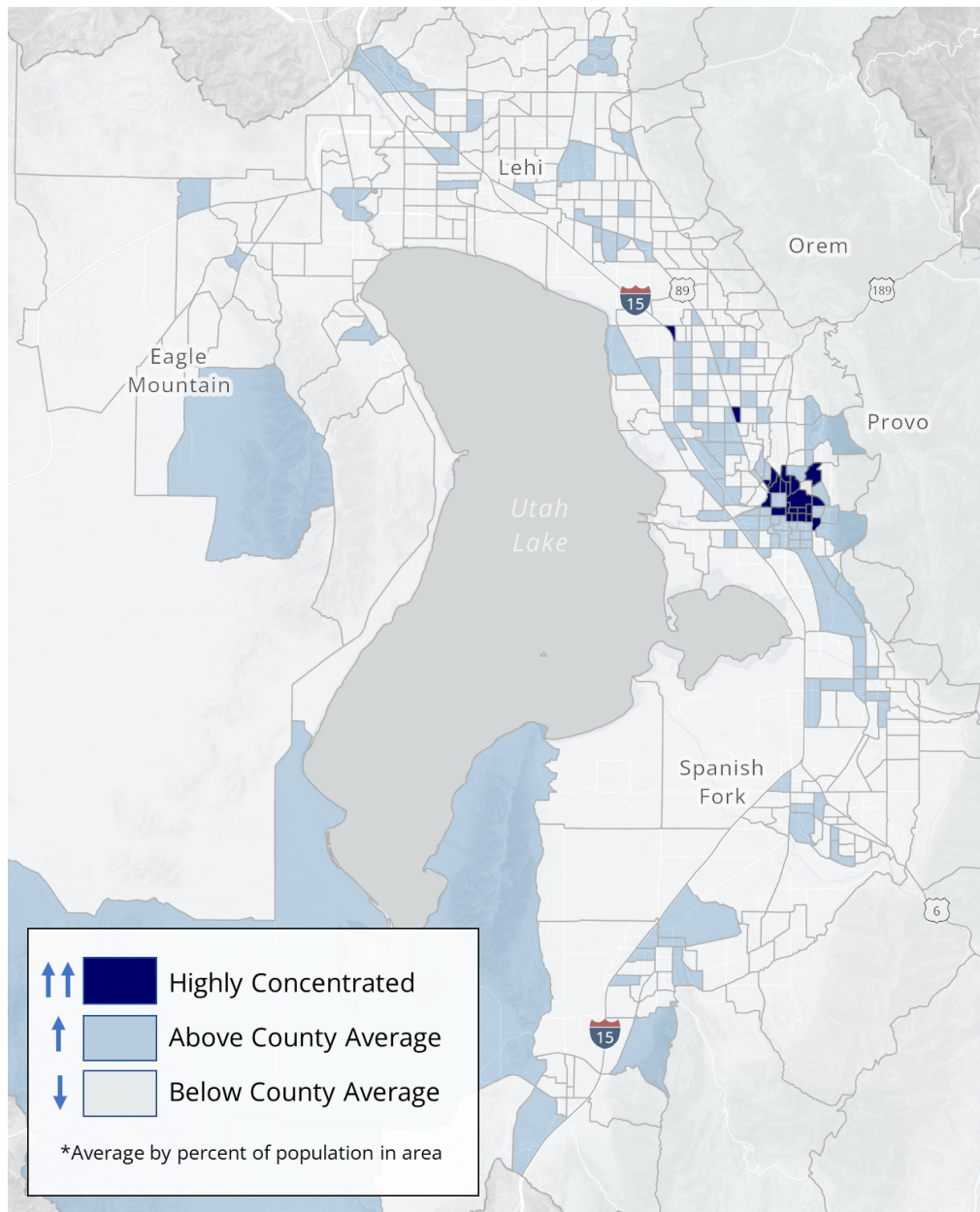


Figure F2: Utah County Households with Low Income Map

People with Disabilities

People with disabilities are described in the 2021 ACS as non-institutionalized persons with mobility limitations, age five years and older. Based on 2021 ACS information, 53,333 people, or 8.2% of the total population, were considered disabled with various kinds of limitations. The disabled population appears to be concentrated in Provo and Springville. The Regional Transportation Plan projects impacts, and benefits do not appear to be significantly greater upon the disabled population than that on the area's population in general.

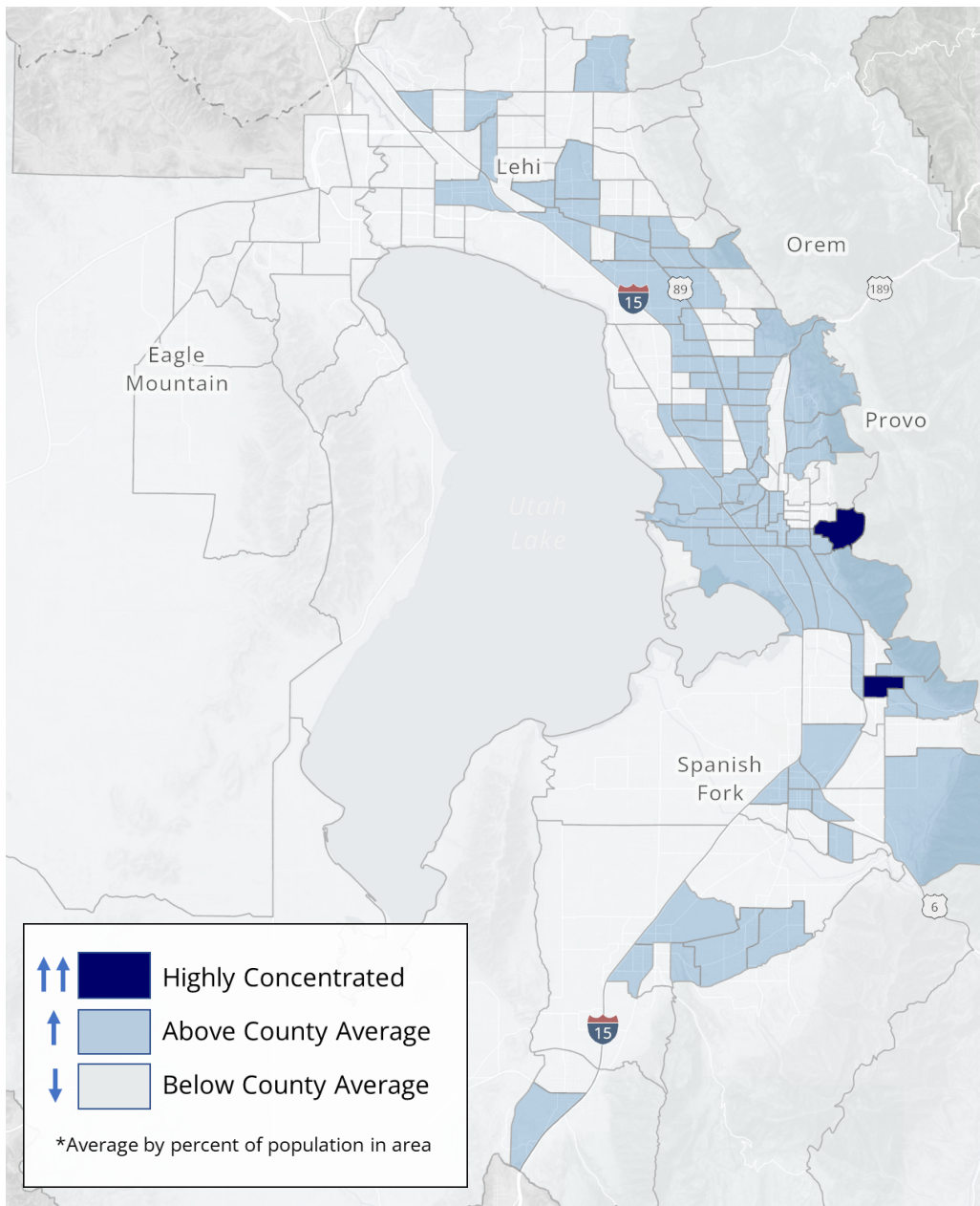


Figure F3: Utah County People with Disabilities Map

Persons Over 65

Persons described as elderly in the 2021 ACS data are 65 years and older represent 7.6% of the population or 49,396 persons in Utah County. The elderly population seems to be distributed throughout the county with more clusters in the northern end of the county. Due to the distribution of this population and the planned projects, the effects of the projects on the elderly populations does not appear to be significantly greater than the projected impacts on the population in general.

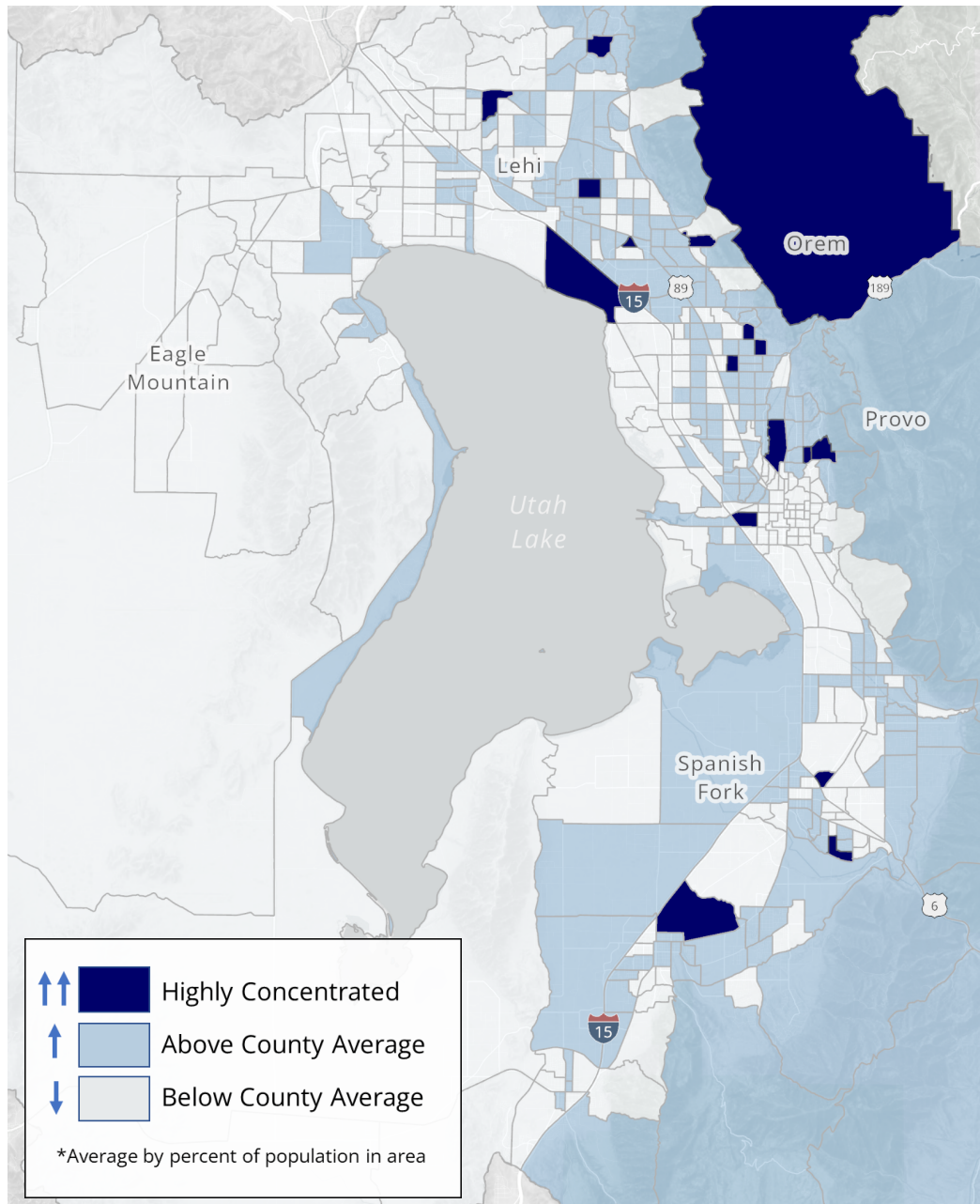


Figure F4: Utah County People over 65 years Map

Equity Focus Areas

In connection with the Wasatch Front Regional Council, equity focus areas are census block groups that have a larger distribution of impacted communities as dictated by the following criteria:

- *Greater than 25 percent Low-Income* — low-income populations are highlighted, as a lack of access to reliable and efficient transportation can be a major barrier to economic mobility.
- *Greater than 40 percent Persons of Color*— racial-ethnic minority populations comprise this criterion, as many land use and transportation investments in the U.S. have had disproportionate adverse impacts upon communities of color. WFRC pursues equity by considering transportation investments in these communities.
- *Greater than 10 percent Zero-Car Households* — zero-car households are included in this criterion as these are populations, which include those with disabilities, depend more on transit, paratransit, walking, and bicycling to reach employment and other destinations.

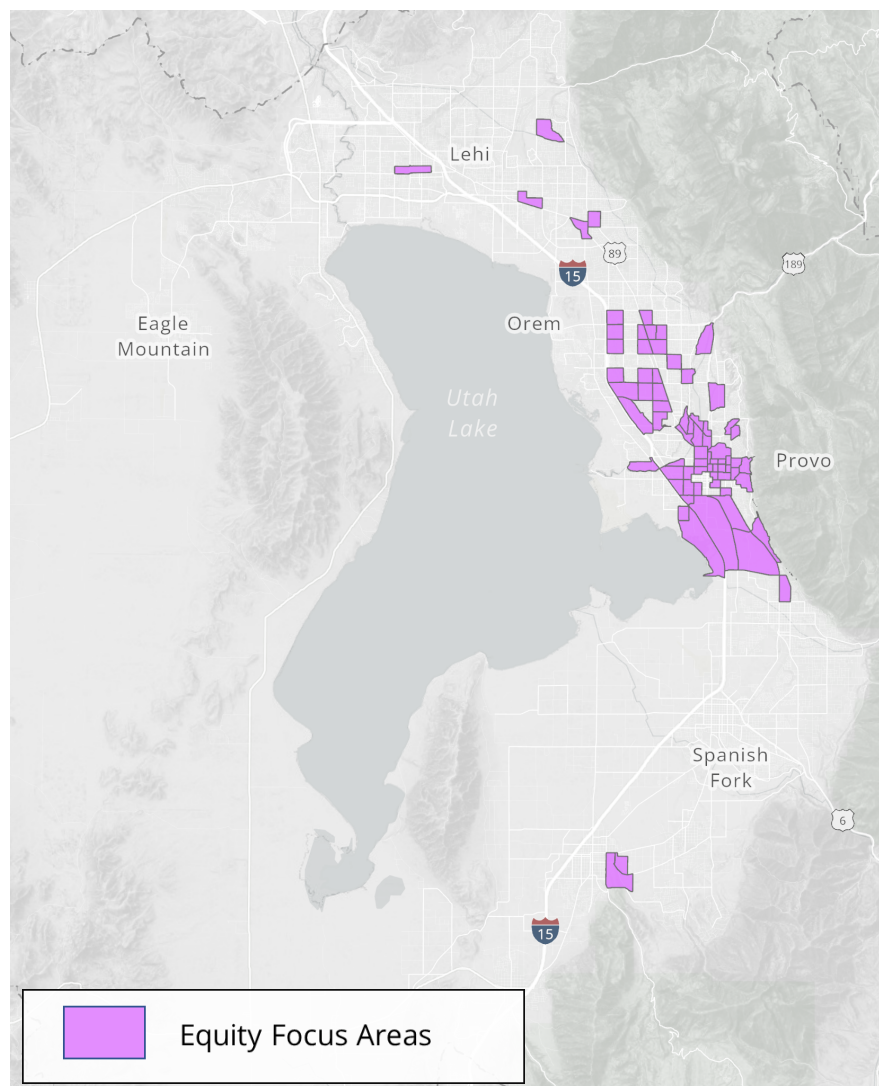


Figure F5: Equity Focus Areas Map

Moving Forward

As MAG moves forward in the following RTP cycle, the MPO looks to be an active participant in promoting equity through the transportation planning process through performance measures related to access to opportunities for equity groups and being an active participant of the Wasatch Choice Community Advisory Committee. Beginning in 2022, this committee works as a medium for MPO's and regional agencies along the Wasatch Front to inform impacted communities of the current transportation planning and regional processes, and to collaborate with said groups to improve and include in the process. Other approaches that MAG will work with impacted communities are listed below.



Figure F6: Wasatch Choice Community Advisory Committee, 2022

Mitigation Approach

The following strategies will help ensure populations of minority, low-income, people with disabilities, and persons over 65 in the metropolitan planning area from being negatively impacted by the Regional Transportation Plan.

- Provided these population groups the opportunity to participate in the Regional Transportation Planning process through the annual transportation planning open house and public comment period for the Regional Transportation Plan.
- Many cities have general plans that outline neighborhoods as well as neighborhood councils, which can help design transportation facilities that provide access without creating social barriers.
- Any Transportation Project that will create a barrier within a currently functioning neighborhood should be redesigned or relocated.
- Design for convenient access to shopping, medical services, and employment should be provided with special consideration of the elderly and disabled. For

example, wide street crossings need sufficient signalization and time allotted for slower moving citizens to cross.

- Uneven burdens for transportation negative impacts or benefits should be avoided through considering the spatial distribution of disadvantaged groups in relation to transportation facilities.
- A balanced system providing equal benefits and impacts throughout the area with all modes is included in the Regional Transportation Plan through GIS analysis. This balance should be carried forward through the implementation of the plan.

Paratransit Service: Paratransit is a service offered to persons with disabilities in the Utah Valley area to comply with the Complementary Paratransit Service provision of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The United Way of Utah County provides the service through a contract relationship and, under the direction of UTA, is primarily responsible for mobility compliance with the ADA for the Wasatch Front. Paratransit offers transportation to persons who are prevented from using the fixed UTA routes available to the general public. Persons who are mentally, physically, or temporarily disabled may be eligible for the service. Eligible riders may ride to and from any location within one-quarter mile of a fixed UTA bus route in the Utah Valley UTA service area. An application for determining who may be eligible can be obtained from the United Way Transportation Services of Utah County. Once a person has applied and been approved to ride the Paratransit system, they can schedule trips by calling United Way or UTA Customer Service.

The future of paratransit service in Utah Valley involves changes to keep up with the increasing demand. The future Paratransit system will need to implement the following:

Replacement of older vehicles in the paratransit service fleet will help keep the system efficient. The new engine technology and the implementation of advanced scheduling software should allow the service to comply with ADA needs and requirements while improving efficiencies. All UTA regular service buses are wheelchair-lift equipped.

Scheduling will need to be upgraded with software solutions integrated with GPS technology will help keep up with future demand by improving operational efficiency. All schedules are done by hand and then entered into a computer. This is a time-consuming process, and it doesn't generate efficient mapping for the driver. As demand for scheduling grows, this process will need to be changed. By purchasing computer-scheduling software with real-time, GPS location enabled, and GIS maps-based software, the efficiency could increase dramatically, and the process would be simplified.

Smaller, wheelchair-lift-equipped vans for paratransit service can be used when demand is low or on trips far away from the central service area.

Smaller vans have a shorter life expectancy than larger vans, but lower costs should make the smaller vans more viable.

In partnership with UTA and United Way, the MPO initiated a new service in 2017 called Utah Valley Rides. Initially, a volunteer-driven service with two vans that serve the Provo and Orem area with hopes of expansion as drivers, money, and vehicles become available. This system supports efforts to more fully coordinate the specialized transportation needs of seniors, disabled individuals, and eligible low-income populations. Further efforts include the maintenance of a Coordinated Mobility Plan as part of the Statewide Coordinated Plan prepared in partnership with UTA and other local partners to meet the requirements under SAFETEA-LU to access FTA Section 5310, JARC, and New Freedom funds. Additionally, the MPO, in partnership with UTA, will continue to competitively select projects and facilitate the inclusion of those chosen projects for funding to be listed in the Transportation Improvement Plan and Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan.

A recent emphasis has been put on local areas to learn to coordinate the method in which they provide transportation to individuals who need special assistance from Human Service Providers. Currently, each provider has methods of transporting their clients as required. However, they are done without coordination and often are duplicative or inefficient. Therefore, The Federal government has initiated coordinating and sharing services, hopefully decreasing the resources required to provide that service. UTA and MAG are working with state legislators to fund a one-call system where all the various providers can pool resources. All the respective clients can call this one number. They could select the most efficient ride, and credits would be given to all participating agencies to ensure fairness in the distribution of costs and services.

Utah County has formed its own Regional Coordinating Council, progressing toward a goal of trying to integrate a coordinated approach to providing service. The goal is to create a partnership with providers to share services. This partnership will eliminate duplication of services and create efficiencies that will enable more services.

Outreach: MAG staff compiled a contact list of organizations and agencies that work closely with minority, low-income, disabled, and elderly populations. This contact list will be utilized to invite these populations to participate in the public comment period for the Regional Transportation Plan. This list will also be used to invite these population groups to our annual transportation planning open house. MAG also provides a communication portal through its website (mountainland.org - under the Contact Us section) to allow these population groups to address any Environmental Justice and Title VI concerns or issues.