
Equity Assessment:

FY 2007-2010 Transportation Improvement Program

An assessment of the distribution of project funding in the Capitol Region prepared in accordance with CRCOG's policy on Environmental Justice.

Approved by the Environmental Justice Advisory Board July 17, 2006

Approved by the CRCOG Policy Board July 26, 2006

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This equity assessment is prepared in accordance with CRCOG's Environmental Justice Policy. The assessment of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)¹ is just one of several different assessments that CRCOG conducts to determine whether minority and low-income communities are receiving a fair share of funding and/or benefits from our transportation programs. ***The basic conclusion of this assessment is that there does not appear to be any bias in the distribution of transportation funds and projects in the TIP.***

The assessment technique we use for the TIP is less sophisticated than ones we use for assessment of longer-term planning documents such as the Regional Transportation Plan and major investment studies. However, this simplified methodology reflects the short-term nature of the TIP. Because it is a 4-year programming document, the list of projects varies significantly from year to year. Changes occur because new projects are added, old projects are deleted, projects enter new phases (design, ROW, construction), and project schedules are modified. This variability means that any single TIP assessment might not yield a good picture of how benefits will be distributed over the longer term. It ignores many major projects that are planned but not yet programmed. It also ignores projects that are already completed - even if they were completed just one or two years earlier.

Given the TIP's variability, the geographic distribution of projects also varies significantly from year to year. Thus, the basic TIP assessment only provides a single 'snap shot' in time of how investments are distributed between target and non-target areas. Since we are more concerned about the distribution of investments over the longer term, we also monitor trends in the TIP over a multi-year period. This monitoring allows us to determine trends in how the balance of funding shifts over time between target and non-target areas.

There is a risk that some might see the TIP assessment process as guaranteeing a minimum funding level for target areas. This is not the intention. Our goal in measuring investments is not to guarantee proportional funding for target areas, nor to create a sense of entitlement to that funding. Rather, our goal is to assure an equitable process that does not result in a distribution of benefits that is discriminatory.

Definitions

For this equity assessment, we identified neighborhoods where there are large concentrations of low-income or minority populations. These are referred to as 'target areas' for purposes of the analysis. The criteria for defining the target areas were approved by CRCOG's Environmental Justice Advisory Board. The target areas are defined below and mapped in Figure 1 at the end of the report.

Primary target area:

The primary target area is composed of neighborhoods where at least 50 percent of the population is a member of a minority group.

¹ The Transportation Improvement Program or TIP is the list of projects expected to be funded on the next four years. It is one of several important transportation planning documents such as the long range Regional Transportation Plan, corridor studies, and major investment studies.

Secondary target area:

The secondary target area is composed of neighborhoods where at least 20 percent of the population is classified as low-income.

Combined target area:

For purposes of the TIP assessment the primary and secondary target areas are combined into a single target area.

Funding share guideline: 26.5 percent

Approximately 26.5 percent of the region's population lives inside the target area. This proportion serves as a general benchmark or guideline for the equity assessment. If 26.5 percent of the region's population lives in the target area, then we expect that about 26.5 percent of the region's transportation funds are spent in the target area. While this might not be the case for any single TIP, we expect that over the long term the distribution of funds should be roughly proportionate to the distribution of the population.

Assessment Method

Highway Projects. The first step in the assessment is to map the projects in the TIP using the regional GIS or geographic information system. The results of the mapping process are presented in Figure 2 at the end of this report.

Once the projects are mapped, the GIS system can be used to determine which projects are located within the target area (and what proportion of a project is within a target area) and which projects are outside a target area. Since we know how much each project costs, we can then calculate the total funds to be invested in the target area and the total outside the target area. The results are presented below.

Transit Projects. For most transit projects, a slightly different method is used. The method still uses the regional GIS system to assess the distribution of funds, but is based on the known *service areas* of the different transit systems. For example, about 39 percent of the CT Transit services are within the target area, so we attribute 39 percent of the CT Transit costs to the target area.² We do a similar estimate for other service providers such as the Greater Hartford Transit District, and apply the respective percentages to the various projects listed in the TIP. Doing this for all projects, we estimate the percentage of all transit projects and services that fall within the target areas is 41.1 percent.

Statewide Projects. The Capitol Region TIP also contains numerous projects that are statewide and largely fall outside our region. These projects represent a total of about \$136.8 million in the FY2007-2010 TIP, which is about 18.4 percent of the total. There is no way to assess the

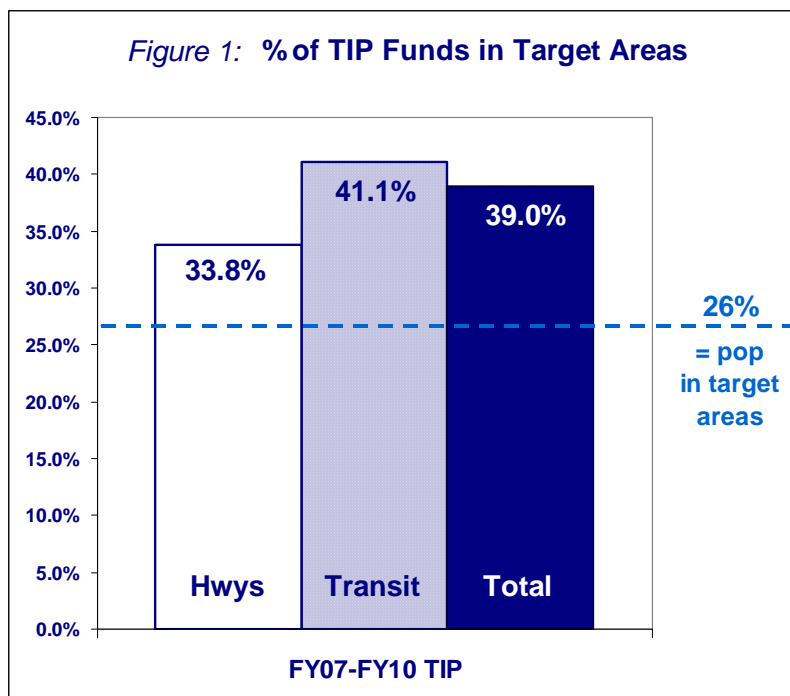
² Local routes: Local routes comprise 81 percent of all CT Transit route miles. About 50 percent of these local routes are within the target area. Commuter routes: Commuter routes comprise the other 19 percent of the CT Transit route miles. Since the commuter routes *primarily* serve areas outside the target area, we assumed that zero percent (0%) of the commuter routes are inside the target area. Total Share inside Target Area: To calculate the total share of the CT Transit system serving the target area, we multiplied the local route share of route miles (81%) times the share of local routes with the target area (50%). The estimated share of CT Transit services within the target area is 39 percent.

distribution of these projects since their locations are often unknown and our target areas are defined only for our region. Therefore, these projects are excluded from the analysis.

Conclusion for this TIP: *No bias in distribution of funds*

Based on the results of the equity assessment, there does not appear to be any bias in distribution of transportation funds and projects in the TIP. As detailed in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 1, about 39% of transportation funds are being invested in the target areas, whereas only 26.5% of the region's population live in the target areas. We are investing a higher proportion of our transportation funds in the target areas than would be expected based on the size of the population in those areas.

A higher proportion of transit funds (41%) are being spent in the target area than highway funds (33%). This is expected since much of the transit service is concentrated in the target areas. But, even the proportion of highway spending in the target area exceeds the 26 percent guideline.



Conclusion about Longer Term Trend

This is only the second TIP we have analyzed, so it is too early to determine long-term trends. However, between the FY2005 TIP and the FY 2007 TIP there was a small increase in the percentage of funds invested in the target areas. The share of funds increased from 34.7% to 39.0%.

The increase in target area share is significant, but does not represent a trend. The increase is due largely to an increase on the highway category, which can vary significantly as individual projects move in and out of the TIP. For example, in the FY2007 TIP the Albany Avenue project was added. This is a large project (over \$15 million) located in a target area. It is a large enough project to help shift the proportion of funds spent in the target area.

In contrast to the highway funds, the share of transit funds is likely to remain more stable. The service area of the bus system is established and changes very little for year to year. Even with the addition of the New Britain Busway project in the FY07 TIP, the percentage spent in the target area changed only slightly. This is due to the fact that about 42 percent of the busway falls within the target area, which is very close to the percentage for the overall transit service area of 39 percent.

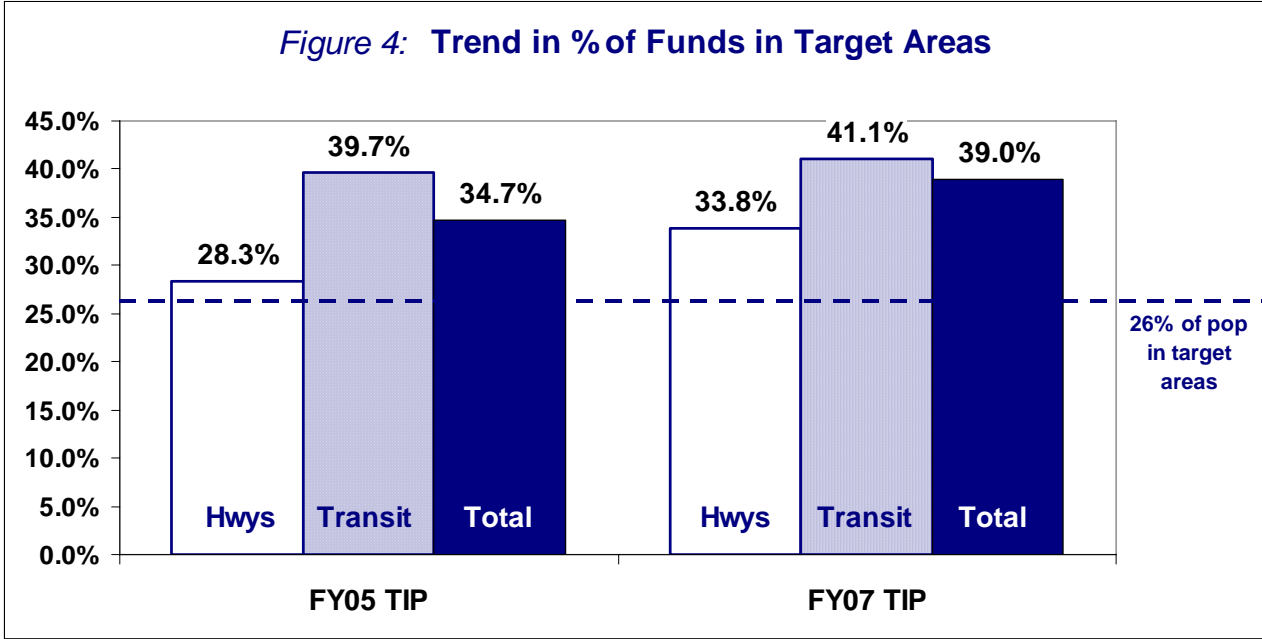


Table 1

Equity Assessment for FY2007-2010 TIP

A. Highway Projects

Funds Committed	% of Funds	% of Pop.	
\$60,120,067	33.8%	26.5%	Inside Target Area
\$117,709,167	66.2%		Outside Target Area
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\$177,829,234	100.0%		

B. Transit Projects

Funds Committed	% of Funds	% of Pop.	
\$176,389,233	41.1%	26.5%	Inside Target Area
\$252,701,777	58.9%		Outside Target Area
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\$429,091,010	100.0%		

C. Highway & Transit Projects

Funds Committed	% of Funds	% of Pop.	
\$236,509,299	39.0%	26.5%	Inside Target Area
\$370,410,945	61.0%		Outside Target Area
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\$606,920,244	100.0%		

Figure 1

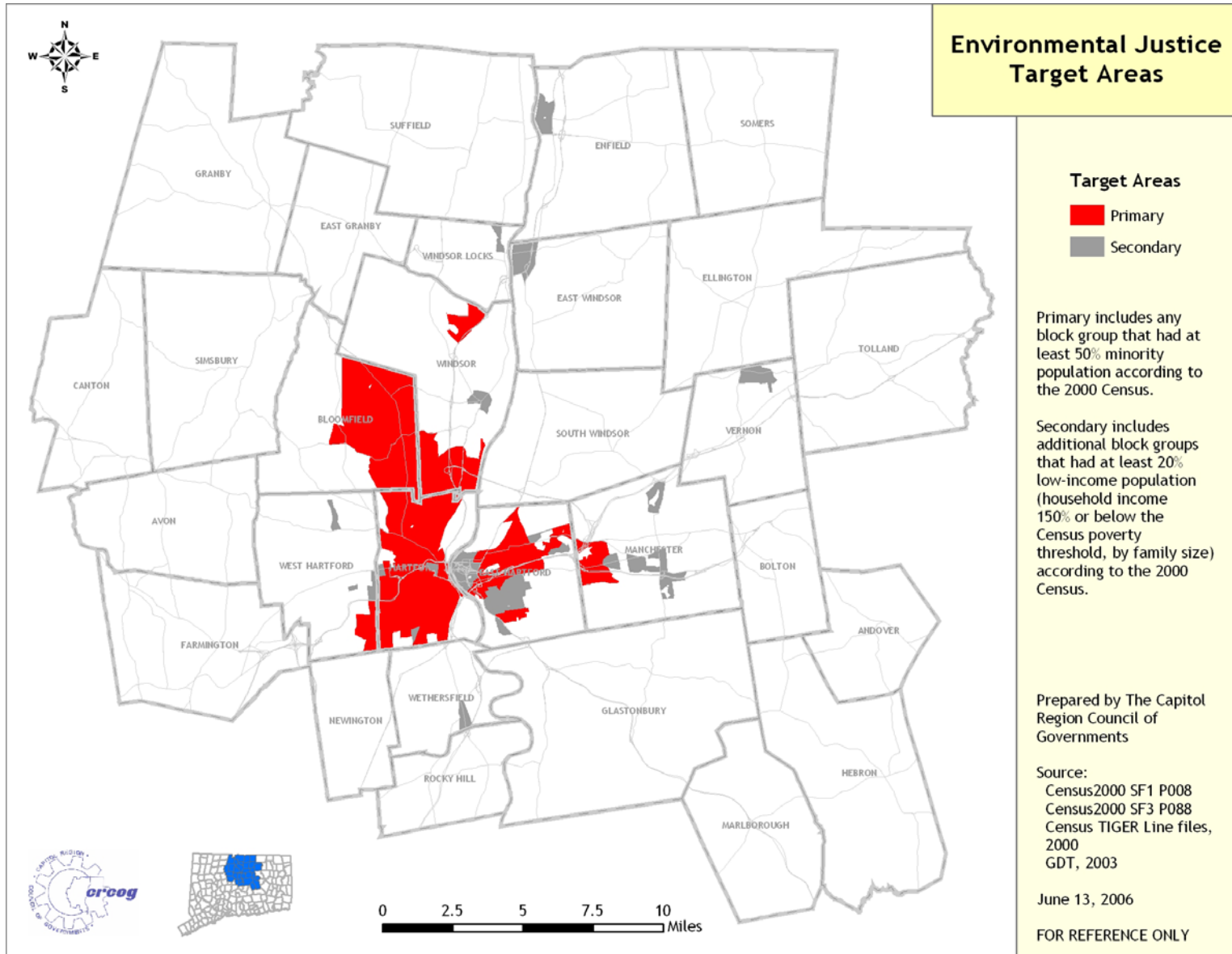


Figure 2

