

Analysis of Lackawanna Luzerne Transportation Study
Metropolitan Planning Organization
2019-2022 TIP
In Regard to
Low/Moderate Income and Minority Populations

The Lackawanna Luzerne Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization (LLTS MPO) was established as a result of the 1973 Federal Highway Act. The MPO is a body that determines how all federal and state highway/bridge funds are allocated. The Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO encompasses all areas of the two counties.

The LLTS MPO consists of three committees: the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), the Technical Committee, and the Coordinating Committee.

The TAC consists of 22 people who represent a wide variety of interests including environment, business & industry, automotive and trucking, rail freight, disabled and para-transit, among others. It acts as an advisory body to the Technical Committee.

The Technical Committee consists of people who represent PennDOT, both counties, the Cities of Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, and Hazleton, and all modes of transportation. The Technical Committee prepares all plans and documents required by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and PennDOT, and presents them to the Coordinating Committee which reviews the material and takes the appropriate action.

The Coordinating Committee has a similar make-up as the Technical Committee. Members of all the committees as well as additional information is available on the MPO Website: lltsmpo.com, including the Title VI Plan, Public Participation Plan, etc.

Environmental Justice is defined as the involvement and fair treatment of all people regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. In short, government actions should not be distributed to affect these populations in either a beneficial or burdensome way. In the past, low income and racial minorities have been traditionally underserved by the transportation planning process and this planning process aims to remedy that.

Determination of which projects to fund in any given cycle are derived from requests received from the two county's various municipal governments, business and industry and the general population along with input from Lackawanna and Luzerne County Agencies and PENNDOT. These requests are then reviewed and ranked by a committee composed of Lackawanna and Luzerne County and PENNDOT District and Central Office officials based on need and the available funds. The ranked projects are then submitted to the Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) for a recommendation. After the recommendation is received from the TAC the list is submitted to the LLTS Technical and Coordinating Committees for approval and submission to PENNDOT for recommendation and submission to the Federal Highway Administration for concurrence.

Prior to any action by the technical or coordinating committees the document undergoes a public comment period of 35 days. The public comment period for the 2019-

2022 TIP began on June 11, 2018 and ended on July 16, 2018. Legal advertisements were placed in the Scranton Times Tribune and the Wilkes-Barre Citizen's Voice newspapers, the largest circulation newspapers in both counties, on July 3rd. During that time no public comment was received by either the Lackawanna or Luzerne County Planning Commissions or PENNDOT on the documents.

The Transportation Improvement Program and supporting documentation were available for review at the following libraries and other repositories and on the MPO website:

Scranton Public Library, Main Branch-Scranton
Carbondale Public Library, Carbondale
Hazleton Area Public Library, Hazleton
Osterhout Free Library, Kingston
Pittston Memorial Library, Pittston
Hazleton One Center, Hazleton
Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission Office, Scranton
Luzerne County Planning Commission Offices, Wilkes-Barre
PENNDOT District 4-0 office, Dunmore

The following documents were available for public display and comment:

1. Lackawanna-Luzerne County (Scranton/Wilkes-Barre TIP) FFY 2019-2022 State Transportation Improvement Program and TIP Modification Procedures.
2. The Lackawanna Luzerne 2019-2022 Air Quality Conformity Analysis Report.
3. Lackawanna-Luzerne County (Scranton/Wilkes-Barre TIP) FFY 2019-2022 Highway and Bridge Transportation Improvement Program with public narrative.
4. Lackawanna-Luzerne County FFY 2019-2022 (Scranton/Wilkes-Barre TIP) Public Transit Transportation Improvement Program Documents for the County of Lackawanna Transit System (COLTS), Hazleton Public Transit (HPT) and the Luzerne County Transit Authority (LCTA).
5. Lackawanna-Luzerne County Interstate Transportation Improvement Program FFY 2019-2022 (Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Area) with public narrative.

In addition, as per Federal requirements, the LLTS MPO contacted the following Native American Tribes that have an interest in projects in the LLTS Area were also contacted:

Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma	Onondaga Nation
Delaware Nation of Interest	Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma
Delaware Tribe	Shawnee Tribe
Eastern Shawnee Area of Interest	Tuscarora Nation
Oneida Indian Nation	

In 2017 the Scranton Area Foundation and the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia inaugurated a transportation equity council for the Scranton metropolitan area. The council was formed to investigate underserved populations including the elderly, disabled and low/mod income groups and develop means to improve service to transportation services to these groups. The Transportation Planning Equity Council meets on a quarterly basis as well as in various sub-committees dealing with such areas as National Models and Best Practices, Mass Transit in NEPA and Alternative Transit Options. The group's mission statement and guiding principles include:

"All Northeast Pennsylvania residents feel part of a thriving region thanks to a comprehensive and equitable transportation system that creates and expands opportunities. Life is better because everyone has access to possibilities."

- *Access to the region's transportation systems is front and center in every community and economic development plan as well as every health and workforce conversation.*
- *An interconnected and collaborative transportation system that has been built on partnerships.*

Both the Lackawanna and Luzerne County Planning Commissions as well as the County of Lackawanna Transit System and the Luzerne County Transportation Authority are on the committee and staff has served as co-chairs of the various sub-committees.

Among the accomplishments to date include working with the Institute for Public Policy at Wilkes University in conducting surveys of transit customers and non-customers on the system, working with Geisinger Hospital on a demonstration project to get clients to their facilities in Danville and Scranton and working with the Federal Reserve on the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia recently published report, "[Getting to Work on Time: Public Transit and Job Access in Northeastern Pennsylvania](#)," in which they "explore the extent to which public transit in Northeastern Pennsylvania connects low- and moderate-income (LMI) residents to opportunity employment, which pays above the median wage and doesn't require a four-year degree."

The Lackawanna and Luzerne County Planning Commissions have plotted all projects contained in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FFY 2019-2022 and determined that the projects are distributed based on need and do not target nor ignore the needs of the targeted populations for study.

Using the 2010 United States Census Bureau data and mapping the targeted populations by Census Tract it can be seen that the portion of the population below the poverty level is centered in the Cities of Hazleton, Scranton and Wilkes-Barre. With a total population of 532,884 in the MPO and the population of the three cities with the highest concentration totaling 142,519 the percentage of EJ is 26.74%. These are the historic areas of development within the corridor following the Lackawanna and Susquehanna Rivers.

Also, the attached mapping shows all areas of the targeted populations are serviced by public transportation via the County of Lackawanna Transit System, the

Luzerne County Transit Authority or Hazleton Public Transit. These system operate on a fixed route schedule six days a week with their own buses supplemented by contractor services on some routes. The two Counties through the Lackawanna County Coordinated Transit System and Luzerne-Wyoming Shared Ride provide on-demand, shared ride service for elderly and low-moderate populations, subsidized by both counties and PENNDOT. The Geisinger Foundation has recently begun a project investigating ride service for their clients in a 25 mile radius of their facility in Danville (Montour County) and Scranton (Lackawanna County) as an outgrowth of the Transit Equity Council formed by the Scranton Area Foundation and the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia. Geisinger has estimated that 100,000 appointments are canceled yearly throughout its system of hospitals, clinics and medical offices and is looking at what impact not having reliable transportation services has on this number and to develop a means to decrease or eliminate these cancellations.

The Highway Projects on the TIP include nearly 5.5% enhancement and signal systems projects (rails-trails, bikeways and pedestrian signals), over 34% roadway maintenance, (safety and new capacity projects) and nearly 60% bridge restoration or replacement projects. Further, of the roadway projects, 16% are safety related while only 19% are capacity adding projects, two of which include a new fly-over ramp from PA 115 to I-81 and a ramp extension at Blackman Street on I-81 which are also a safety projects to eliminate back-ups onto the mainline. The other capacity adding project is the extension of PA 424 in Luzerne County.

In keeping with the PENNDOT's Maintenance First policy, the primary focus of the TIP is maintenance, rehabilitation and safety of the existing system and thus focuses on the most needed sections of the state system. The enhancement projects (rails-trails, bikeways and pedestrian signals) are intended to service the general population by providing non-motorized transportation services in the urban core and the signal system upgrades likewise are located in or very near the targeted populations to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility.

The first map shows the High Minority and Low Income Populations in both counties. There are 15 tracts that meet the minority threshold and 39 that meet the low income and minority population thresholds. There are 109 tracts in the MPO that meet neither.

The second map overlays the TIP projects with these populations. The map shows that the projects are well distributed across the MPO with Scranton and Wilkes-Barre showing a higher concentration due to the age of the infrastructure in those cities and the concentration of EJ populations. This map also includes carry over and Line Item TIP projects, however these projects were not included in the analysis. The carry over projects were reviewed in prior TIP submittals and the Line Item placeholders do not have definitive projects associated with the funding.

The Line Item is utilized to add projects to the program within the confines of the Long Range Plan and TIP development, however, they allow leeway for emergencies or other types of projects that were not contemplated during the Long Range Plan process. These projects are reviewed and approved by the MPO after consideration by the Technical and Coordinating Committees and added to the TIP as amendments. These

programs incorporate projects such as local bridges, safety improvements or re-surfacing projects based on the IRI.

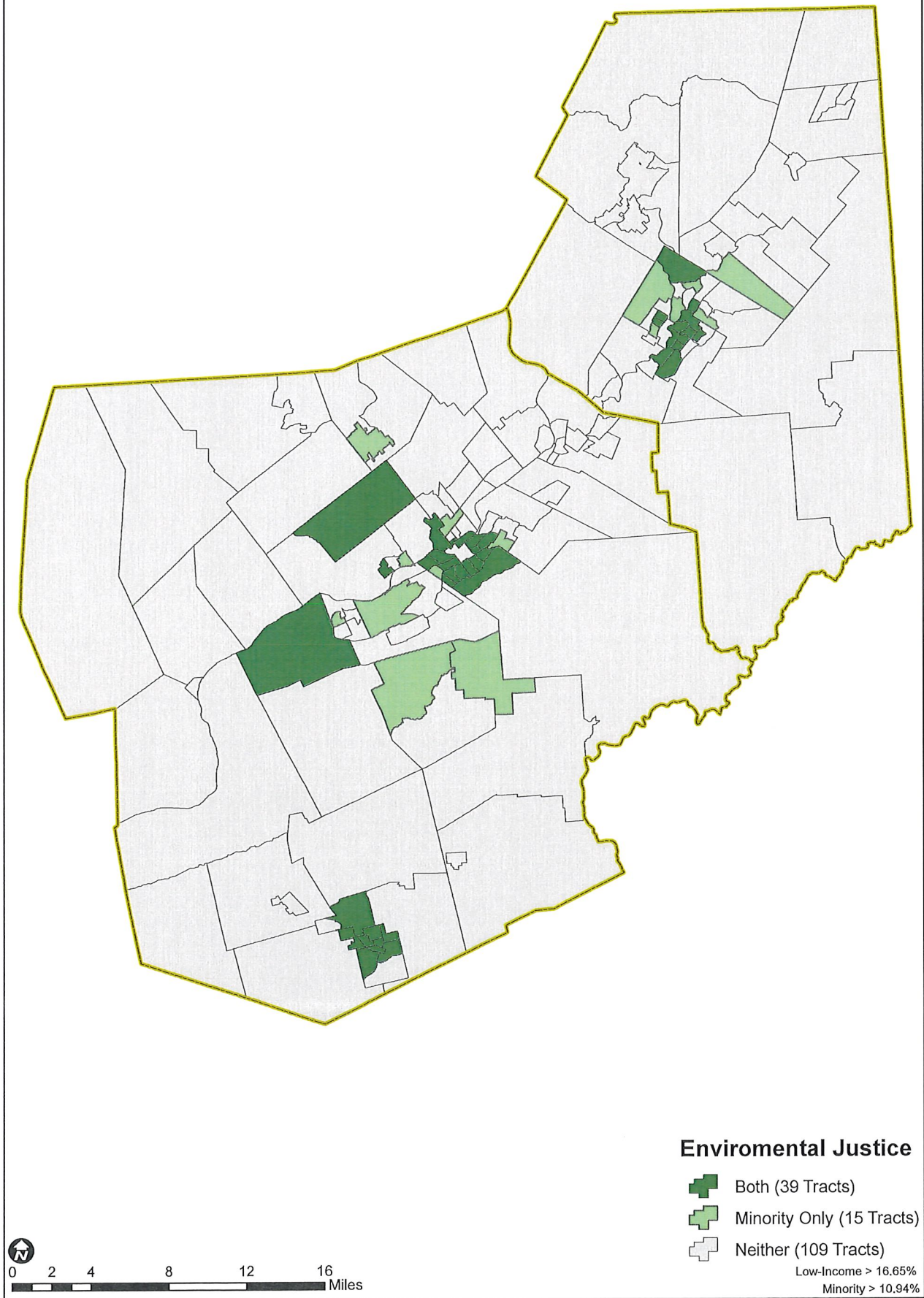
The table shows the twenty-six projects in the MPO area reviewed for their effect on the designated populations. It includes the HPMS number that is the identifying project number for PENNDOT, a description of the project location and a color code showing the benefit or burden to the population and a description of why the color was chosen.

The LLTS attempts in project selection to not unduly burden or benefit a specific population. Since the majority of projects are maintenance or rehabilitation projects in the two counties, the selection of projects is based on a number of quantifiable criteria such as International Roughness Index (IRI), Structurally Deficient Bridge Index (SD Bridges), Accident Statistics or Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts, among others.

It is envisioned that all of the projects on the current TIP, as were those chosen in prior updates, will be beneficial to the region as a whole and at a minimum have a neutral effect on those who have been traditionally underserved by the planning process if not a positive effect in their daily lives.

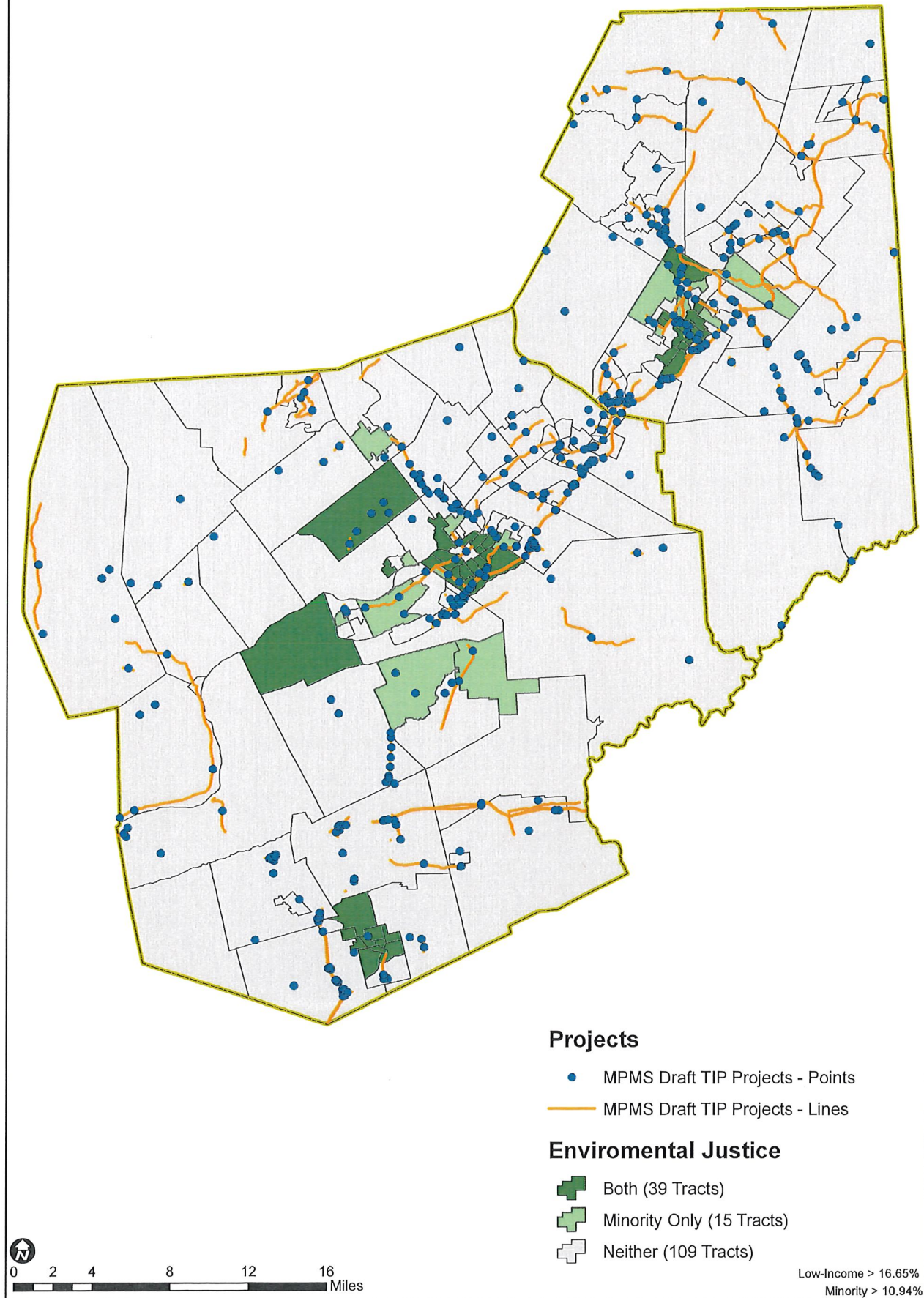
TIP Projects with High Minority & Low-Income Population

Lackawanna-Luzerne Metropolitan Planning Organization



TIP Projects with High Minority & Low-Income Population

Lackawanna-Luzerne Metropolitan Planning Organization



TIP Projects with High Minority & Low-Income Population

		EJ Benefit Expected		No EJ Benefit Expected	
#	MPMS	PROJECT	EJ STATUS		
1	8999	SR 2005 (Blackman Street) over Bowman Spring Run	Bridge preservation will have positive EJ impact in Wilkes Barre City.		
2	57671	SR 1012 (Chase Road) over Harvey's Creek Bridge	Bridge Rehab/Replacement has positive EJ impact in Jackson Twp.		
3	61813	SR 6 (Casey Highway) to State Route 6006	No significant effect to EJ population.		
4	67366	SR 309 (N Cross Valley Expy) over SR 2022 and Railroad	Bridge preservation will have positive EJ impact in Wilkes Barre City.		
5	67417	SR 309 over Wilkes Barre Boulevard	Bridge preservation will have positive EJ impact in Wilkes Barre City.		
6	68754	SR 11 (McDade Expy) over SR 6011 (Oak Street Exit)	Bridge preservation will have positive EJ impact in Scranton City.		
7	68966	SR 1012 (Chase Road) over Bridge Harvey's Creek	Bridge Rehab/Replacement has positive EJ impact in Jackson Twp.		
8	74761	Nanticoke Streetscape	No significant effect to EJ population.		
9	79594	SR 309 (N Cross Valley Expy) over SR 2022 (Main Street)	Bridge rehab will have positive EJ impact in Wilkes Barre City.		
10	85008	Blackman St SB Ramp Exit 165	Lengthening of off ramp will have positive impact in Wilkes Barre Twp.		
11	92435	I-81 NB/SB Preservation Pavement Replacement	No significant effect to EJ population.		
12	93038	Union St @ 309 Park-Ride	No significant effect to EJ population.		
13	93945	Luzerne SR 2002 (San Souci Parkway) Paving	No significant effect to EJ population.		
14	96721	SR 1012 (Chase Road) over Tributary Harvey's Creek	Bridge Rehab/Replacement has positive EJ impact in Jackson Twp.		
15	100508	SR 1005 (Huntsville Road) over Becker's Creek	Bridge Rehab/Replacement has positive EJ impact in Jackson Twp.		
16	101927	SR 437 (Woodland Road) over Railroad	Bridge preservation will have positive EJ impact in Fairview Twp.		
17	102116	SR 2005 (Blackman Street) Reconstruction	Reconstruction will have a positive EJ impact in Wilkes Barre City, and Wilkes Barre and Hanover Twps.		
18	102866	SR 3013 Main Street Signal Corridor	Signal and safety improvements along corridor will have a positive EJ impact in Scranton.		
19	105050	Nanticoke Streetscaping	No significant effect to EJ population.		
20	106046	Interstate 81 Bridge Prog	No significant effect to EJ population.		
21	106131	SR 3014 Dalton Street Railroad Lights/Gates	No significant effect to EJ population.		
22	109304	I-81 NB/SB Mill/Fill Lackawanna	No significant effect to EJ population.		
23	92435	I-81 NB/SB Preservation/Pavement Replacment	No significant effect to EJ population.		
24	110327	SR 309 (Memorial/Tunkhannock Hwy) Signal Corridor	Safety improvements along corridor have a positive EJ impact in Kingston Twp and Dallas.		
25	110338	I 81 AND I 84 Pavement Failure Interim	No significant effect to EJ population.		
26	81910	I-81 NB Grinding Luz	No significant effect to EJ population.		