

2027 SPC TIP: Demographic Profile

2020 Census Data and American Community Survey (ACS) 2020-2024 Five-Year Estimates were used to create the demographic profile of the SPC region. All analyses use USDOT definitions of minority and low-income populations.

Minority and Low-Income Populations

According to the 2020 Census and the 2020-2024 ACS, 17.23% of residents in the SPC region identify as minorities¹ and 12.06% of household incomes are living below the poverty level (low income).²

The [minority population map](#) highlights block groups wherein the percentage of minority residents exceed the regional average. The [low-income households map](#) highlights block groups wherein the percentage of low-income households below the poverty level exceeds the national average. These block groups include 66.7% of the region's minority population and 71.1% of the region's households in poverty. The [combined minority and low-income block group map](#) illustrates a gradient scale of minority populations and low-income households respectively, which provides additional perspective on the levels of need across the region.

In the SPC region, minority populations are found most frequently in older urban communities, sometimes overlapping with low-income populations. However, there is also a significant distribution of low-income populations across the periphery of the region, specifically in rural communities. Understanding the multifaceted nature of these populations is important in developing a meaningful transportation investment plan.

Other Traditionally Underserved Populations

SPC has included mapping for three additional population groups in its equity analysis: older adults, people with disabilities, and persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). These are groups assured fair and equitable consideration in the transportation planning and programming process under Title VI assurances, policies, and program objectives. SPC also identified households without vehicles and households without access to the internet as part of its benefits and burdens analysis.³

Older adults are defined by the Census as persons aged 65 and older. As of the 2020 Census, there are 535,629 older adults in the SPC region, representing 20.8% of the region's total population. As shown in the [older adult population map](#), older adults were found to be widely distributed throughout the region, with concentrations in both the region's older urban centers and its peripheral rural communities.

¹ For the purposes of this report, Total Minority Population is the difference between the Total Population and the Majority Population, where the Majority Population is "white persons of one race only, not Hispanic or Latino" Source: 2020 Census Data

² As per USDOT definitions; Source: 2020-2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

³ Population definitions are drawn from the ACS; Source: American Community Survey 2023 Subject Definitions

The Census uses six basic disability types in their definition of a person with a disability. These include visual, hearing, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, and independent living disability types. According to the 2020 Census, 14.9% of the region’s adult, non-institutionalized population has a disability. As depicted in the [disabled population map](#), this population is spread throughout the region.⁴

The Census measures populations with limited English proficiency by whether a person who speaks English as their second language can speak it “less than very well”. The large majority of persons in the SPC region speak English as their first language. According to the 2020 Census, about 1.8% of the regional population self-identified as speaking English “less than very well”. As illustrated in the [limited English-speaking population map](#), this population is widely spread throughout the region.

As telecommuting for school and work becomes more widespread, SPC identified homes without access to the internet in our region. According to the 2020 Census, 93,697 households in the region reported having no internet access. This represents about 8.5% of the households in the region. As illustrated in the [households without internet access map](#), this population is concentrated in the rural area, around the boundaries of the region.

Finally, according to the 2020 Census, 104,222 households in the region reported having no available vehicle at home. This represents about 9.4% of the households in the region. As depicted in the [no vehicle households map](#), this population is also widely spread throughout the region.

Population Change

According to the 2020-2024 ACS estimates, the SPC region’s total population has decreased by 18,383 since the 2020 Decennial Census. County populations have risen as much as 3,491 in Butler County, while Allegheny County has decreased by 12,401. Both the majority and minority populations have decreased since the 2020 Census, with the majority population decreasing by approximately 5,000 residents and the minority population decreasing by more than 13,000 residents. Table 1 summarizes estimates of the population change in the region since the 2020 Census.

Table 1 Population Change in SPC Region								
County	2020 Census				2020 - 2024 ACS 5 Year Estimates			
	Total Population	Majorioty Population	Minority Population	Percent Minority Population	Total Population	Majority Population	Minority Population	Percent Minority Population
Allegheny	1,250,578	938,252	312,326	24.97%	1,238,177	934,734	303,443	24.51%
Armstrong	65,558	62,320	3,238	4.94%	64,622	61,357	3,265	5.05%
Beaver	168,215	143,881	24,334	14.47%	166,324	143,523	22,801	13.71%
Butler	193,763	178,081	15,682	8.09%	197,254	181,959	15,295	7.75%
Fayette	128,804	115,322	13,482	10.47%	125,997	112,234	13,763	10.92%
Greene	35,954	32,898	3,056	8.50%	34,835	31,738	3,097	8.89%
Indiana	83,246	75,718	7,528	9.04%	83,042	76,118	6,924	8.34%
Lawrence	86,070	75,811	10,259	11.92%	85,024	75,451	9,573	11.26%
Washington	209,349	186,900	22,449	10.72%	210,042	188,331	21,711	10.34%
Westmoreland	354,663	323,114	31,549	8.90%	352,500	322,149	30,351	8.61%
SPC Region	2,576,200	2,132,297	443,903	17.23%	2,557,817	2,127,594	430,223	16.82%

⁴ ACS Disability Data is only available at the census tract level – which is used in this analysis

Table 2 displays the number of households below the poverty level as of the most recent ACS estimates. Despite a loss of population, the number of households in the region continues to grow, with an increase in total households of 14,570. The number of households in poverty has also increased by over 3,600. SPC’s planning process will continue to monitor population change and conduct public outreach to ensure that all the region’s populations have equal access to resources.

Table 2			
Change in Households Below the Poverty Level in SPC Region			
	2015 - 2019 ACS 5 Year Estimates	2020 - 2024 ACS 5 Year Estimates	Difference
Total Households in Region	1,093,946	1,108,516	14,570
Households in Poverty	130,018	133,652	3,634
% of Total Households	11.89%	12.06%	0.17%

Benefits and Burdens

To conduct equitable transportation planning and programming, an assessment of the potential benefits or burdens to different populations is undertaken. Transportation projects can produce benefits by increasing access to resources, improving health and mobility, as well as enhancing safety. However, when applied unfairly they can burden communities who are not afforded the same level of investment. For example, mid-century projects that increased mobility in one community often cut other communities off from central business districts. Increased investment in one part of a region could result in other areas being neglected. A benefits and burdens analysis is conducted to make sure that the benefits of SPC’s Transportation Improvement Program will be shared equally across the region, and that the burdens created by new projects are not borne by one population over any other.

Current Conditions

A conditions analysis was completed to understand the impact of transportation programming on low income and minority communities, and to ensure that areas of need were being appropriately targeted. Using GIS, bridge conditions and road conditions (2026 PennDOT data) were compared to low income and minority population intervals. An overview of public transit stop locations (2026 PRT data and SPC in-house data) and an analysis of pedestrian and bicyclist safety related to low income and minority populations was also conducted.

In these analyses, Census Block Groups wherein the percentage of minorities and/or households below the poverty level exceeds the regional average percentage are classified as block groups.

Table 3 outlines bridge conditions in relation to low income and minority communities:

Table 3 Southwestern Pennsylvania 2027 Transportation Improvement Program Bridge Condition in Relation to Block Groups					
Asset Condition	Total in Region	Total in Minority Block Groups	% in Minority Block Groups	Total in Low Income Block Groups	% in Low Income Block Groups
State Owned All Bridges	5298	384	7.2%	1531	28.9%
State Owned "Poor" Bridges	494	38	7.7%	142	28.7%
Local Owned All Bridges	4723	415	8.8%	1362	28.8%
Local "Poor" Bridges	356	57	16.0%	131	36.8%
Region Total Bridges	10021	799	8.0%	2893	28.9%
Region "Poor" Bridges	850	95	11.2%	273	32.1%

The analysis shows that 8% of total regional bridges are located in census blocks with greater than the regional average of minority population, and that 11.2% of the total poor bridges in the region are in these census blocks. It also shows that 28.9% of all state- and locally-owned bridges are located in census blocks with greater than the regional average of low-income households, and that 32.1% of total structurally deficient or "poor" bridges in the region are in these census blocks. A [map of state and local bridge conditions](#) is included for reference.

Table 4 depicts state road conditions in relation to low income and minority communities:

Table 4 Southwestern Pennsylvania 2027 Transportation Improvement Program State Road Condition in Relation to Block Groups					
Road Condition (IRI Quality Rating)	Total Mileage	Total in EJ Minority Block Groups	% in EJ Minority Block Groups	Total in EJ Low Income Block Groups	% in EJ Low Income Block Groups
Excellent	1908	132	6.9%	710	37.2%
Good	2338	264	11.3%	973	41.6%
Fair	1939	256	13.2%	842	43.4%
Poor	2576	193	7.5%	1009	39.2%
Other	1338	547	40.9%	679	50.7%
Total	10099	1392	13.8%	4213	41.7%

The analysis shows that 13.8% of the region's state roads are located within census blocks with greater than the regional average of minority population and 7.5% of the regional state poor roadway is located in these census blocks. Similarly, 41.7% of the region's state roads are located within census blocks with greater than the regional average of low-income households, and 39.2% of the regional state poor roadway is located in these census blocks. A [map of road conditions](#) is included for reference.

Table 5 outlines public transit stops relative to low income and minority communities:

Table 5 Southwestern Pennsylvania 2027 Transportation Improvement Program Public Transit Stops in Relation to Block Groups		
Classification	Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT) Stops	Non PRT Stops
Total Stops in Region	5854	1570
Stops in EJ Minority Block Groups	4052	543
<i>% in EJ Minority Block Groups</i>	<i>69.2%</i>	<i>34.6%</i>
Stops in EJ Low Income Block Groups	3126	914
<i>% in EJ Low Income Block Groups</i>	<i>53.4%</i>	<i>58.2%</i>
Stops in High Disability Tracts	3134	1053
<i>% in High Disability Tracts</i>	<i>53.5%</i>	<i>67.1%</i>
Stops in Zero Vehicle Tracts	3549	845
<i>% in Zero Vehicle Tracts</i>	<i>60.6%</i>	<i>53.8%</i>

The analysis shows that a significant number of public transit stops are located in census blocks or tracts with greater than the regional average of minority and disabled populations and low- income and zero vehicle households. This is likely highly correlated with the high density of both transit stops and the aforementioned populations located in Allegheny County and does not mean that transit needs on the periphery of the region are being met to the greatest ability. SPC works continuously with the Pittsburgh Regional Transit and other transit providers and public organizations to identify areas of need. A [map of transit stops](#) in the region is included for reference.

Table 6 uses 2021-2025 PennDOT crash data to detail bicycle and pedestrian crashes relative to low income and minority communities:

Table 6 Southwestern Pennsylvania 2027 Transportation Improvement Program Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes in Relation to Block Groups				
Crash Classification	Low Income Block Groups	Minority Block Groups	Low Income and Minority Block Groups	Regional Total
Pedestrian Crashes	1063	1115	795	1935
<i>Percent of Pedestrian Crashes</i>	<i>54.9%</i>	<i>57.6%</i>	<i>41.1%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Bicycle Crashes	314	307	221	560
<i>Percent of Bicycle Crashes</i>	<i>56.1%</i>	<i>54.82%</i>	<i>39.46%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Total Crashes	1377	1422	1016	2495
<i>Percent of Total Crashes</i>	<i>55.2%</i>	<i>57.0%</i>	<i>40.7%</i>	<i>100%</i>

The analysis shows that at least half of all regional bicycle and pedestrian crashes are located in census blocks or tracts with greater than the regional average of minority or low income populations. While this is likely at least partially correlated with the high density of pedestrians and bicyclists in low income and minority communities in the city center, it does not mean that the significance of these numbers should be

overlooked. SPC continuously works with our planning partners, PennDOT, FHWA and other stakeholders to identify projects that will improve pedestrian and cyclist safety across the region. A [map of bicycle and pedestrian crashes](#) in the region is included for reference.

TIP and LRTP Analysis

The analysis portion of SPC’s demographics analysis assesses the potential benefits and burdens that projects programmed on the 2027 Transportation Improvement Program will have on low-income, minority, and other communities of concern. The [primary analysis mapping](#) compares all of the 462 mappable transportation projects on the TIP to locations of [minority](#) and [low-income](#) populations in the region. These projects are grouped based on their investment categories: bridge preservation and reconstruction projects, roadway preservation and reconstruction projects, safety and efficiency/operations projects, slide correction projects, and new capacity and other (storm water management, study, congestion reduction, etc.) projects. Other mapping shows a comparison of the low-income, minority, and other communities of concern to projects on SPC’s Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), located [here](#).

In addition to location specific improvements, the TIP contains a significant number of non-mappable projects, most notably the purchase of public transportation vehicles and capital maintenance to transit facilities. Also included in the TIP are bridge and roadway repair line items in which projects are defined at a later date. These line items act as contingencies for situations such as emergency repairs due to flooding, landslides or other unforeseen circumstances that may arise. These investments are not included in the analysis because their locations are currently unspecified. Projects such as bus replacements and interstate highway improvements benefit the region as a whole and are expected to provide improved access and mobility to and within key employment centers including downtown Pittsburgh, as well as communities throughout the region.

As noted in Table 7, approximately 443,903 of the region’s residents are classified as a minority; 64.7% of those persons reside in a Census Block Group that exceeds the regional average percentage (17.23%) of minority population. Similarly, there are 133,652 households in the region that are classified as being below the poverty level; 71.1% of which are within Census Block Groups that exceed the regional average percentage (12.06%) for households below the poverty level.

Table 7 Southwestern Pennsylvania 2027 Transportation Improvement Program Investments in Relation to Block Group Communities							
Community Type	Regional Total	*Census Block Group Total	% Represented in Block Groups	**# of Projects	% of Projects	***Total Investment (\$1,787,352,166)	% of Total Investment
Low-Income Households	133,652	95,008	71.1%	246	53.2%	\$1,200,675,337	67.2%
Minority Populations	443,903	287,010	64.7%	151	32.7%	\$905,444,432	50.7%
* The Census Block totals represent 12% of the total households in the region and 11.1% of the total regional population (all races) **462 mappable projects found in the 2025 TIP ***Total Investment is all mappable highway and bridge projects, not total amount invested in the TIP							

The majority of the projects on the 2027 Transportation Improvement Program are essential maintenance and reconstruction projects. These and other projects were conscientiously chosen based on impacts to communities, specifically those with concentrated levels of low-income households, minority populations, or other communities of concern. Based on the detailed project selection process and the above analysis, there is anticipated to be no unfair allocation of burdens or benefits to communities of concern via the implementation of the 2027 Transportation Improvement Program.

Summary

Throughout the TIP development process, SPC conducted outreach to area residents of all backgrounds and across diverse communities. Members of the public were invited to participate in the planning and development process, through submitting ideas and concerns, providing feedback on the existing TIP and LRTP, and developing values for the future of the region and its transportation network. Outreach to traditionally underserved populations, including those populations mapped in this report, was conducted. Vital documents associated with the TIP planning process were made available in the predominant non-English languages of the region. Translations to additional language and alternate format documents were also available upon request.

An analysis of the impacts of the projects identified in the 2027 Transportation Improvement Plan demonstrates that benefits of the programmed TIP projects and total investment of resources are equitable to populations who are traditionally or have the potential to be disadvantaged in the planning process. Furthermore, no population groups were found to be disproportionately or adversely affected by the implementation of the 2027 Transportation Improvement Program.

The demographics analysis is an ongoing process, and SPC continues to conduct outreach, coordinate with relevant partners and stakeholders including FHWA and PennDOT to expand areas of analysis, and garner public input to have a growing level of public involvement in the transportation planning and development process.

All materials contained in this report are available in electronic format on SPC's website: www.spcregion.org, as well as an extensive library of maps and data, located on a story map [at the following link](#).