



Environmental Justice and New Directions in Public Outreach in the Greater Philadelphia Region

Jane Meconi, AICP, Public Involvement Manager, DVRPC

Meghan Weir, Transportation Planner, DVRPC

DVRPC Environmental Justice (EJ) & Public Participation

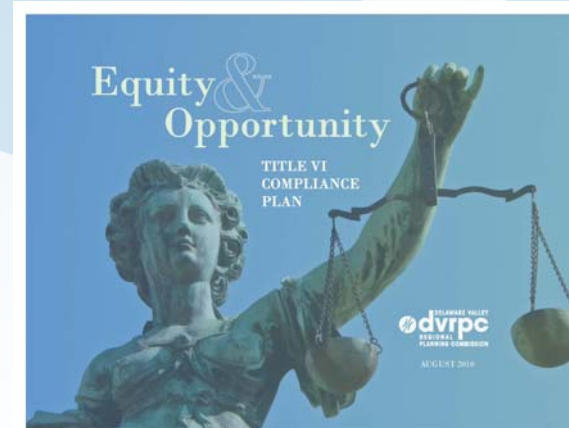
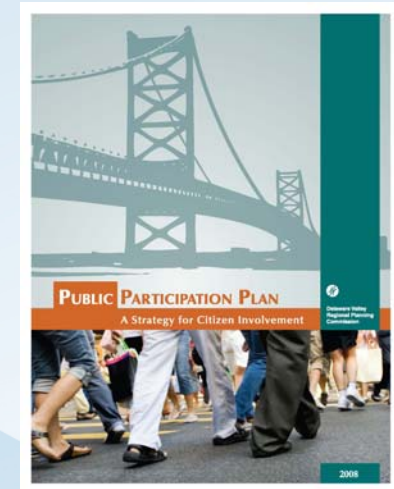
As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Greater Philadelphia region, DVRPC follows federal mandates regarding Title VI, EJ, and Public Participation.

- Implement Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by assuring that all residents of Greater Philadelphia are represented fairly and not discriminated against in the transportation planning and capital investment process.
- Assure that EJ, as outlined by the 1994 President's Executive Order, is integrated into DVRPC's planning and outreach practices.
- Public Participation mandates as per SAFETEA-LU include:
 - Adequate public notice of activities and comment periods; convenient and accessible public meetings;
 - Timely notice and reasonable access to information, including via internet;
 - Employment of visualization techniques;
 - Solicitation and consideration of the needs of the traditionally underserved.

Perspective

DVRPC believes that EJ should be inherent to all work completed by the Commission and should be incorporated into all of DVRPC's programs, plans, and public participation activities.

An affirmative and proactive approach and implementation strategy can yield a more inclusionary and participatory regional planning process.



What is Environmental Justice (EJ)?

Environmental Justice (EJ) is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, educational level, or income in the planning and decision-making process

EJ promotes:

- The protection of human health
- Empowerment via public participation
- Information dissemination to affected communities

EJ ensures that no population shoulder a disproportionate burden of negative human health and environmental impacts

Environmental Justice and MPOs

EJ requires MPOs to:

- Examine the allocation of benefits and burdens, currently and in the planned future;
- Ensure that minority and low-income communities are treated equitably in the provision of transportation services and projects, and
- Provide ample opportunity for full participation for minority and low-income communities to advise the MPO during its planning and decision-making process.

How?

- Regional demographics
- DVRPC policies, plans and programs
- Public participation and outreach

DVRPC's Approach

Quantitative:

- Regional Thresholds for Defined Groups (2000 Census Information by Census Tract/MCD)
- Eight Degrees of Disadvantage
- GIS Overlays and Interpretation

Qualitative:

- Public participation and outreach
- Study Advisory Committee and Stakeholder Outreach
- Field Work

Actions:

- Incorporate planning recommendations that would positively impact the EJ communities identified;
- Mitigate potential adverse impacts
- Inform public outreach strategy to fit the needs of residents

DVRPC Degrees of Disadvantage Methodology

Map Concentrations of Following Groups Based on Regional Thresholds (in 2000)

- Minority (Non-Hispanic) Population (25%)
- Car Less Households (16%)
- Low-Income Persons by Household (11%)
- Physically Disabled (8%)
- Female Head of Household with Child (7%)
- Elderly, 75 and Older (7%)
- Hispanic Population (5%)
- Limited English Proficiency (2%)

Combine Factors to Determine

- Highly Disadvantaged Census Tracts (5 to 8 factors)
- Less Disadvantaged Census Tracts (1 to 4 factors)
- No Degrees of Disadvantage (0 factors)

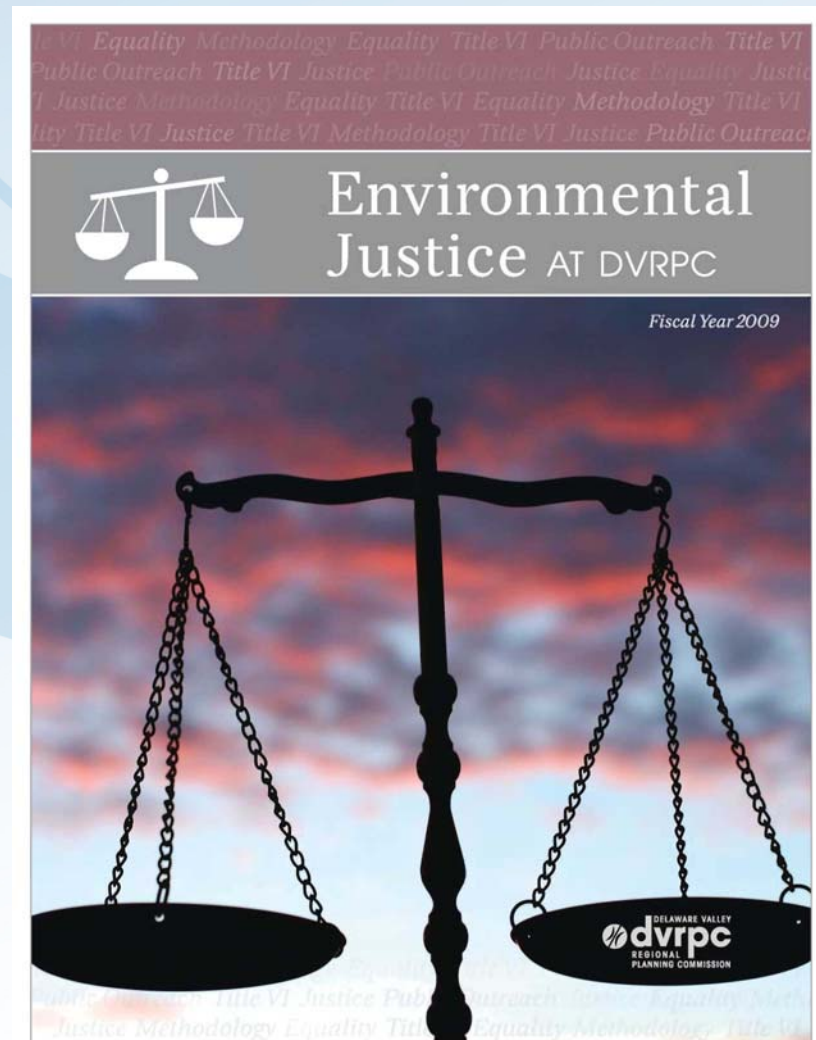
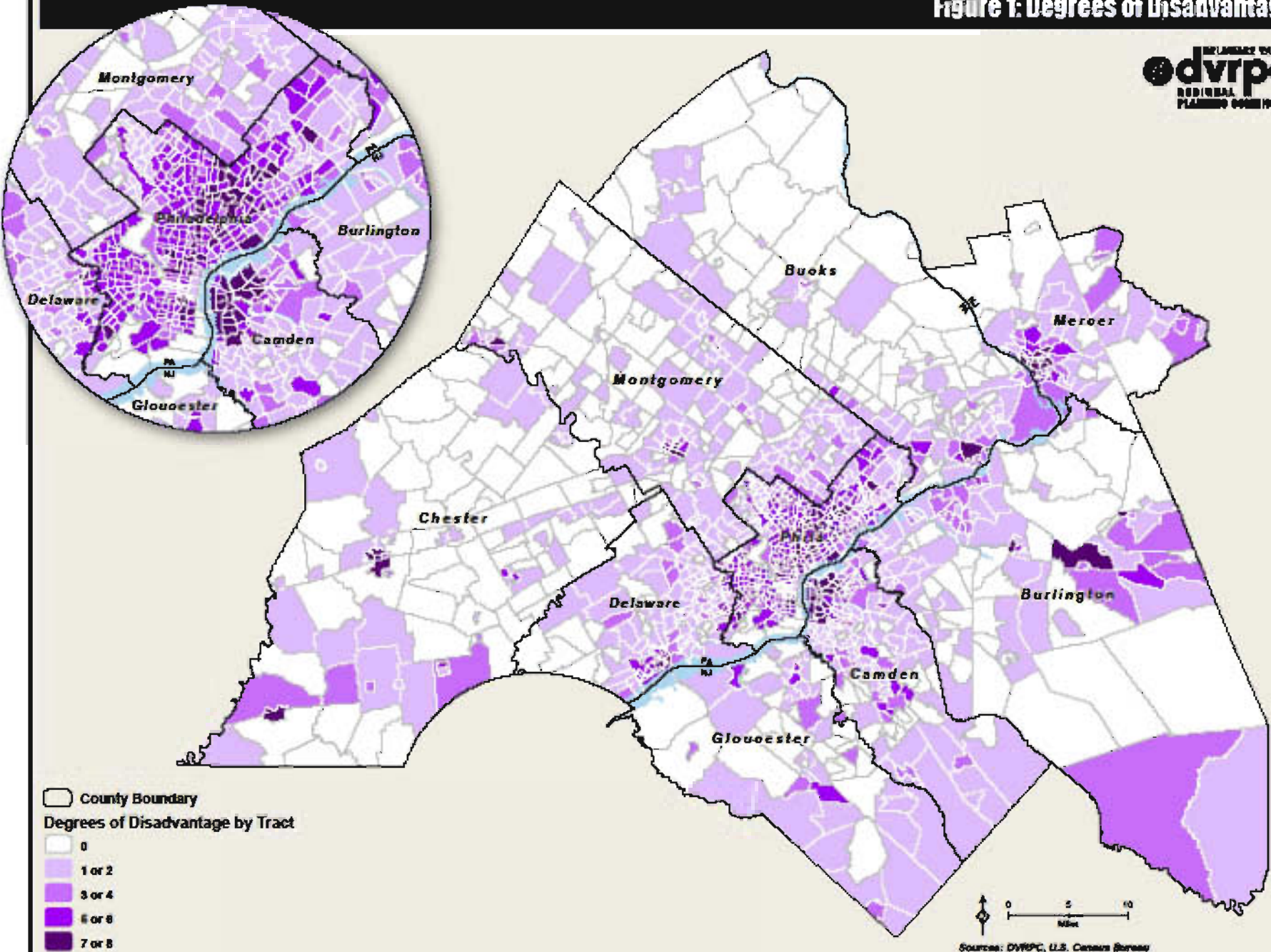


Figure 1: Degrees of Disadvantage



Degrees of Disadvantage in Chester

DOD Category	Regional %	Chester %
Non-Hispanic Minority	25%	77%
Carless Households	16%	33%
Poverty	11%	26%
Physically Disabled	8%	9%
Female HH w/Child	7%	19%
Elderly Over 75 Years	7%	6%
Hispanic	5%	5%
Limited English	2%	1%

EJ Analysis

Identify study area census tracts

- Regional map utilized for Long-Range Plan and TIP

Determine underserved populations

- The EJ DOD methodology is an integral tool that can be used to understand study area demographics. Along with windshield surveys and stakeholder outreach, other qualitative and quantitative methods may be used to identify EJ issues in a study area.

Define potential remediation strategies

- Promote recommendations that would positively impact the EJ communities identified.
- Ensure that recommendations made in the project or study do not adversely impact EJ communities and/or ensure that the benefits and burdens of a specific recommendation are equitably distributed.
- Be aware that a neutral policy or practice may have a disparate impact on protected groups.

EJ & Smart Growth in DVRPC Plans and Programs

Connections– The Regional Plan for a Sustainable Future contains goals and recommendations that positively impact EJ communities, such as:

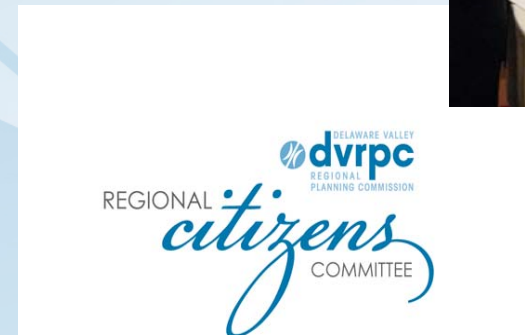
- Food systems planning
- Investing in the region's centers and older suburbs
- Promoting affordable and accessible housing
- Economic and workforce development
- Maintaining the region's transportation infrastructure for all users

The work undertaken by DVRPC inherently includes opportunities for EJ considerations and to promote an open public participation process:

- Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan
- Air Quality Partnership
- Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI)

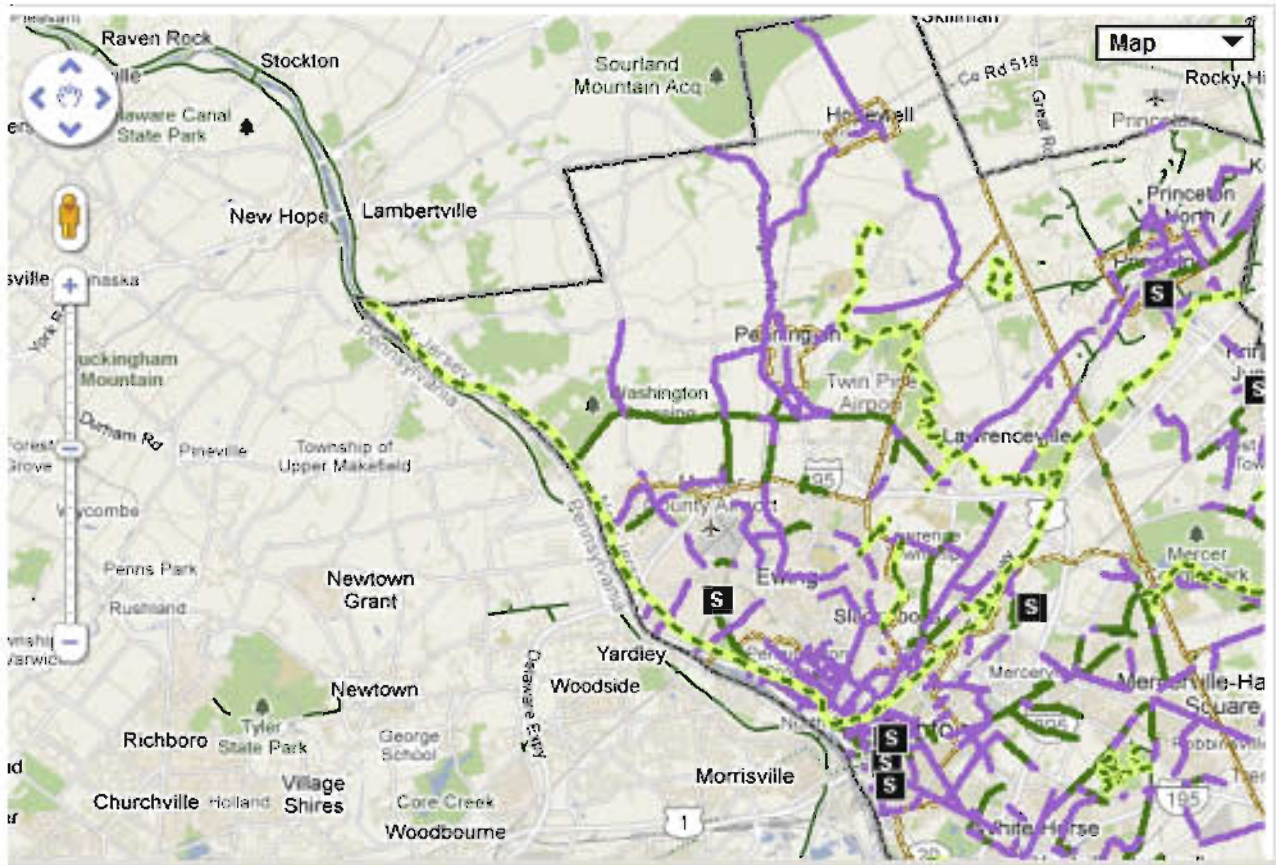
Public Participation Philosophy

- Public Participation consists of three related, and often overlapping, processes: information dissemination, consultation, and participation.
- Participation and involvement should be early, often, and ongoing
- At DVRPC, we believe that planning must be done with the public, and we are committed to understanding and planning for the diverse needs of all residents of the Greater Philadelphia region.





Home About This Site Legend How To Use Disclaimer



Show/Hide Tools

Layers

- Bikeable Mercer County Trails
- Rail Stations in Mercer County
- Places (click to identify)

Bikeability Scores

Major Roads

- Excellent
- Fair
- Unfavorable
- Unbikeable

Minor Roads

- Favorable
- Unfavorable

NOTE: We are still collecting additional information on existing bikeable trails. New trails will be added periodically; please check back for updated trails mapping.



Have an account? [Sign in](#)



Get short, timely messages from DVRPC.

Twitter is a rich source of instantly updated information. It's easy to stay updated on an incredibly wide variety of topics. [Join today](#) and follow [@DVRPC](#).

[Sign Up >](#)

Get updates via SMS by texting **follow DVRPC** to 40404 in the United States
Codes for other countries



Name DVRPC
Location Philadelphia, PA
Web <http://www.dvrpc.org>
Bio The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission is dedicated to making the Greater Philadelphia region even greater.

181 following 294 followers 25 listed

[gridphilly](#) 1/12 PlanPhilly to host "Waterfront Connections"-- a presentation on the revitalization of the Delaware River. 5-7pm
<http://bit.ly/gl73os>
 about 23 hours ago via web
 Retweeted by DVRPC

Join us at our Regional Transportation Committee (RTC) meeting.
 Tues. 1/11, 10am-2pm:
<http://www.dvrpc.org/ASP/committee/agenda.aspx?p=2788>
 about 23 hours ago via web

MITs discuss the application of Long-Range Plan goals on a small

Tweets 178

Favorites

Following

Regional Student Forum

of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

ABOUT DVRPC ABOUT THE REGIONAL STUDENT FORUM CONTACT US EVENT CALENDAR

Spring Internship STILL available at DVPRC

POSTED BY DVRPC REGIONAL STUDENT FORUM ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2010 | 0 COMMENTS

- [Data Analyst](#)
- [Transportation Planning and Programming \(TIP\)](#)
- [GIS Intern](#)
- [Energy & Climate Change Initiatives](#)
- [Marketing](#)



Blog Archive

- ▶ 2011 (3)
- ▼ 2010 (52)
 - ▼ 12/26 - 01/02 (5)
 - [Spring Internship STILL available at DVPRC](#)
 - [JOB OPPORTUNITY: Weavers Way Co-Op](#)
 - [Green Job Training from the URBAN TREE CONNECTION ...](#)

CATEGORIES: INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES LINKS TO THIS POST



JOB OPPORTUNITY: Weavers Way Co-Op

POSTED BY DVRPC REGIONAL STUDENT FORUM ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2010 | 0 COMMENTS

SA Farm Education Coordinator, Weavers Way Farms
Position: Henry Got Crops! CSA Farm Education Coordinator

Ongoing Initiatives and New Directions

Evaluate and update the Degrees of Disadvantage Methodology

- Update census data
- Expand Online Interactive Mapping Tool

Environmental Justice Work Group

Accessibility and Mobility Report

Explore the relationship between land use planning, transportation, public health, and EJ



Thank you!

More EJ and public outreach links here:
<http://www.dvrpc.org/Links/Public.htm>

Jane Meconi
215-238-2871
jmeconi@dvrpc.org

Meghan Weir
215-238-2832
mweir@dvrpc.org