

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** CMAQ, CRP, TAP-L Project Selection Committee

**From:** CMAP Staff

**Date:** August 21, 2024

**Subject:** Justice 40 Disadvantaged Communities Scoring

**Action Requested:** Approval

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### Overview

The Justice 40 initiative established a goal of placing 40 percent of overall benefits of federal investments from covered programs in climate and clean energy infrastructure toward disadvantaged communities. In response to Justice 40, the CMAQ, CRP, TAP-L project selection committee added an additional 10 points to incorporate disadvantaged communities as a scoring factor within the equity category for the 2024-2028 program cycle. To score the disadvantaged community's criteria, staff used the US DOT disadvantaged communities' tool to identify the level of community disadvantage where a project was located based on the number of burden categories it met.

The US DOT disadvantage tool has since been replaced with a new tool, the Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) tool, a transportation focused tool to supplement the US EPA's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. The ETC is an interactive map using 2020 census tract data that allows users to explore community burdens experienced as a result of underinvestment in transportation. The tool has five burden categories: transportation insecurity, climate and disaster risk burden, environmental burden, health vulnerability, and social vulnerability.

To better link project benefits to addressing community burdens, staff is recommending having project applicants use the ETC tool to answer prompts which identify vulnerable populations, describe the ways in which project benefits will address community burdens, and other impacts that the project will have on an area. A high, medium, or low score will be assigned to each project for how directly the applicant answers each prompt.

### Scoring Criteria

#### [Disadvantaged communities score \(10 points\)](#)

Each question response will be rated as high, medium, or low based on the criteria below. Projects that most directly support each criterion, addressing each question within a given section, will be rated higher.

Rating	Criterion
High	A project will receive a high rating if it reduces a clearly demonstrated burden and/or provides a clearly demonstrated benefit for one or more of the specific population groups identified.
Medium	A project will receive a medium rating if the burden and/or benefit have only been partially demonstrated.
Low	A project will receive a low rating if the burden and/or benefit have not been clearly demonstrated.

**1. Addressing population groups, benefits and disparities (4 points)**

Within the [DOT ETC tool](#), use the Social Vulnerability information to identify the disadvantaged population groups who are located within, or adjacent, to the project areas census tract, e.g., people with low-income, older adults, people with disabilities, youth, and people with Limited English Proficiency. Specifically, identify any groups that exceed the 65<sup>th</sup> percentile according to the DOT ETC tool.

- a. Identify the disadvantaged population groups who live in the location to be served by the project.
- b. Describe how the project will provide benefits to these groups.

Rating	Score
Low	1
Medium	2
High	4

**2. Addressing locational burdens (6 points)**

Using the DOT ETC tool, identify the burdens related to the transportation system or the services in the location that would be served by the project, including those related to climate & disaster, environmental, health vulnerability, and transportation insecurity. Specifically, identify any burdens that exceed the 65<sup>th</sup> percentile.

- a. Identify the categories of disadvantage in the location of the project.
- b. Describe how the project will address these burdens.

To recognize cumulative burdens of communities, scoring for this prompt will be tied to the number of disadvantaged categories a community is addressing. Applicants will need to demonstrate how the project will address each category of burden to receive points. Scoring will follow the table below:

Burdens Addressed	High	Medium	Low
1	3	2	1
2	4	3	2
3	5	3	2
4+	6	4	3