



Appendix J

Priority Projects and Disadvantaged Community Designations

GSATS SS4A Priority Projects + Disadvantaged Community Designations

This document is designed to assist with grant applications and funding justifications/priorities. There are multiple federal-level data driven tools to identify disadvantaged communities (DACs) on a Census tract level. Many federal grant opportunities ask for a proposed project's location within a DAC and asks the applicant to refer to these data sources. The sources provided in this document compare Census tracts across the U.S. – they are not state-level DAC designations.

GSATS SS4A Safety Action Plan recommends ten priority intersections and 11 priority corridors. These projects have been cross referenced with the following DAC data: Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer, Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP), and Historically Disadvantaged Communities (HDC). Projects that are designated in a DAC may be more competitive in grant applications and have stronger funding justifications.

Justice40 Initiative

The Biden Administration made it a goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal climate, clean energy, affordable and sustainable housing, and other investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. Former President Biden made this historic commitment when he signed Executive Order 14008 on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad. To continue delivering on his environmental justice vision, President Biden signed Executive Order 14096 on Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All in April 2023. Through the President's Investing in America Agenda — including the Inflation Reduction Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and the American Rescue Plan — Federal agencies are making historic investments to advance environmental justice and benefit disadvantaged communities.

In January 2025, new leadership and appointees stepped in at the White House. At the time of the development of this document, it is unknown if Justice40 will continue. However, the Justice40 initiative uses CEJST that was launched will before Biden took office. This tool (and others) can be used to determine if a project is located in a disadvantaged community and also be useful for analysis needed to address Title VI and Civil Rights compliance. Website: [Equity and Justice40 Analysis Tools | US Department of Transportation](#)

Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool

CEJST is an interactive mapping tool to identify disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. The CEJST features a user-friendly, searchable map that identifies disadvantaged communities across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories, to the extent data are available for the U.S. territories. Land within the boundaries of Federally Recognized Tribes, including Alaska Native Villages, are highlighted as disadvantaged on the map. By helping Federal agencies identify disadvantaged communities, the CEJST seeks to fulfill the promise of the Justice40 Initiative.

CEJST evaluates Census tracts based on indicators of burdens in eight categories: climate change, energy, health, housing, legacy pollution, transportation, water/wastewater, and workforce development. A tract is designated 'disadvantaged' if it meets at least one burden AND the associated socioeconomic threshold. The socioeconomic threshold is low income - people in households where income is less than or equal to twice the federal poverty level, not including students enrolled in higher ed. Another understanding of the same calculation is the percent of a census tract's population in households where household income is at or below 200% of the Federal poverty level. Website: [Explore the map - Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool](#)

Equity Analysis

Reducing inequities across our transportation systems and the communities they affect is an important goal for USDOT and is reflected in numerous grant programs. This can include identifying communities or neighborhoods that are most impacted by climate change, pollution, and environmental hazards and addressing gaps in transportation infrastructure and public services by working toward the goal that at least 40 percent of the benefits from many of our grants, programs, and initiatives flow to disadvantaged communities.

Equitable Transportation Community Explorer

USDOT's ETC Explorer tool helps to understand how a community or project area is experiencing disadvantage related to lack of transportation investments or opportunities. Through understanding how a community or project area is experiencing transportation-related disadvantage, grant applicants can address how the benefits of a project will reverse or mitigate the burdens of disadvantage and demonstrate how the project will address challenges and accrued benefits. The ETC Explorer tool provides users deeper insight into the transportation disadvantage component of CEJST and the ETC Explorer's transportation insecurity component, which will help ensure the benefits of DOT's investments are addressing the transportation-related causes of disadvantage. Website: [ETC Explorer | US Department of Transportation](#)

Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Analysis

Areas of Persistent Poverty & Historically Disadvantaged Communities

APP & HDC lists U.S. Census tracts that qualify as APP & DACs according to Section 6702 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. A project is in an APP if the county had greater than or equal to 20 percent of the population living in poverty across three datasets; or the Census tract has a poverty rate of at least 20 percent as measured by the 2014-2018 American Community Survey; or the project is located in any territory or possession of the United States.

A HDC is defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)'s Interim Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative and the 2023 Addendum to this Guidance. Specifically, a project is located in a HDC if the project is located in certain qualifying census tracts that are identified as "disadvantaged" in this Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool; or the project is located on Tribal land. Website: [Grant Project Location Verification](#)

Summary

Priority Intersections

Table 1 identifies which Safety Action Plan priority intersections are located in DACs. The following projects are designated a DAC in all four data sets:

- I-1: Conway - US 501 at Four Mile Road
- I-5: Myrtle Beach – US 17 and S-263 (38th Ave N)
- I-9: Myrtle Beach – US 17 and 21st Ave N

Priority Corridors

Table 2 identifies which Safety Action Plan priority corridors are located in DACs. The following projects are designated a DAC in all four data sets:

- C-1: Conway - US 501 (Church St) from 16th Ave (US 501 Bus) to Mill Pond Road (0.41 miles)
- C-4: Unincorporated Horry County - SC 90 from S-1173 (Bombing Range Rd) to S- 638 (Star Bluff Rd) – (0.92 miles)
- C-7: Unincorporated Horry County - SC 707 (Socastee Blvd) from Manor Cir to Weeks Dr - (0.76 miles)
- C-8: Conway - US 501 (Church St) from S-165 (Cultra Rd) to S-1344 (Medlan Pkwy) - (0.90 miles)
- C-9: Unincorporated Horry County - US 544 from (S-1121) Singleton Ridge Rd to Buccaneers Cove - (0.75 miles)

Table 1: Priority Intersections and Disadvantaged Community Designations

Priority Intersection ID	Location	CEJST DAC & Burden Threshold	ETC	APP	HDC
I-1	Conway - US 501 at Four Mile Road	Yes, climate change, health, and transportation	Yes	No	Yes
I-2	Unincorporated Horry County - US 17 and S-71 Woodland Drive	No	No	No	No
I-3	North Myrtle Beach – US 17 and Robert Edge Pkwy	No	No	No	No
I-4	Unincorporated Horry County – SC 9 and SC 57	Yes, grandfathered	No	Yes	Yes
I-5	Myrtle Beach – US 17 and S-263 (38 th Ave N)	Yes, health	Yes	Yes	Yes
I-6	Surfside Beach - US 17 Bus and S-517 (Melody Lane)	No	No	No	No
I-7	Unincorporated Georgetown County - SC 707 and S-878 (Old Kings Hwy)	No	No	No	No
I-8	Unincorporated Georgetown County – US 17 and US 17 Bus	Yes, climate change and health	No	No	Yes
I-9	Myrtle Beach – US 17 and 21 st Ave N	Yes, health and workforce development	Yes	Yes	Yes
I-10	North Myrtle Beach – SC 31 and Robert Edge Pkwy Interchange	No	No	Yes	No

See next page for Table 2.

Table 2: Priority Corridors and Disadvantaged Community Designations

Priority Corridor ID	Location	CEJST DAC	ETC	APP	HDC
C-1	Conway - US 501 (Church St) from 16 th Ave (US 501 Bus) to Mill Pond Road (0.41 miles)	Yes, health and water/wastewater on west side; and water/wastewater on east side	Yes	Yes	Yes
C-2	North Myrtle Beach - US 17 from Robert Edge Pkwy (SC 31) /Main St to 9th Ave S - (0.77 miles)	No	No	No	No
C-3	Unincorporated Brunswick County - NC 211 from Palmetto Creek Way to Fisher King Dr - (0.80 miles)	Yes, grandfathered	No	Yes	Yes
C-4	Unincorporated Horry County - SC 90 from S-1173 (Bombing Range Rd) to S- 638 (Star Bluff Rd) – (0.92 miles)	Yes, grandfathered	Yes	Yes	Yes
C-5	Unincorporated Horry County - US 17 Bus from Murdock Rd to S-71 (Woodland Dr) – (0.31 miles)	No	No	No	No
C-6	Unincorporated Georgetown County - US 17 from Southgate Ct to S-867 (Old Plantation Dr) – (0.61 miles)	No	No	No	No
C-7	Unincorporated Horry County - SC 707 (Socastee Blvd) from Manor Cir to Weeks Dr - (0.76 miles)	Yes, climate change	Yes	Yes, partially	Yes
C-8	Conway - US 501 (Church St) from S-165 (Cultra Rd) to S-1344 (Medlan Pkwy) - (0.90 miles)	Yes, health and water/wastewater on west side; and water/wastewater on east side	Yes	Yes	Yes
C-9	Unincorporated Horry County - US 544 from (S-1121) Singleton Ridge Rd to Buccaneers Cove - (0.75 miles)	Yes, health, housing, and workforce development on west side; and climate change on east side	Yes	Yes	Yes
C-10	Conway - US 701 from Boundary Street to Columbia Dr (0.78 miles)	Yes, climate change on east side; and water/wastewater on west side	Yes	No	Yes
C-11	North Myrtle Beach - SC 65 N. Ocean Blvd from Shorehaven Dr to SC 9 (0.36 miles)	No	No	No	Yes