

# Equity Considerations Beyond Concentrated Poverty

Presenting to the Transportation Advisory Board

March 17, 2021

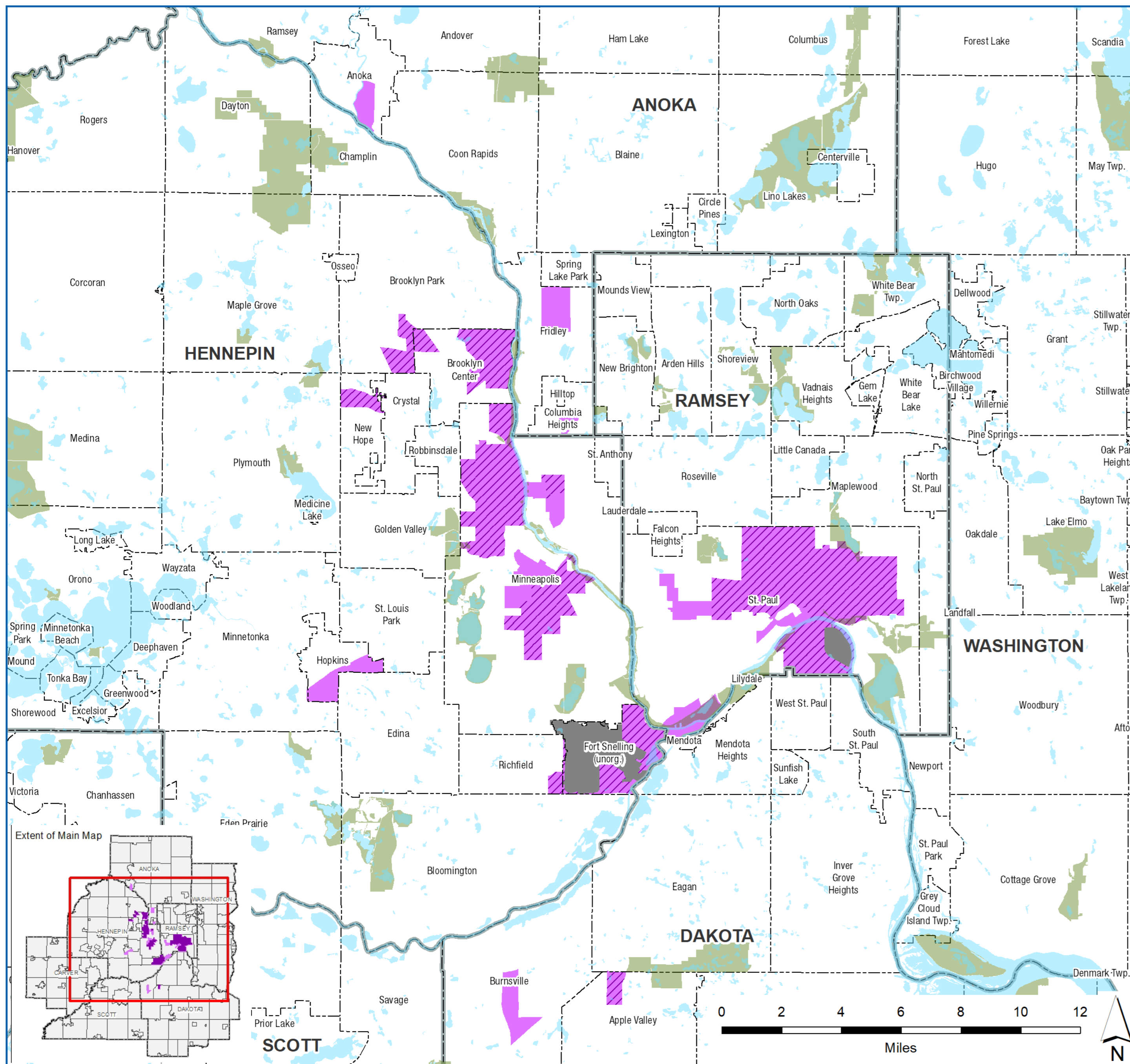


# Areas of Concentrated Poverty (ACPs)

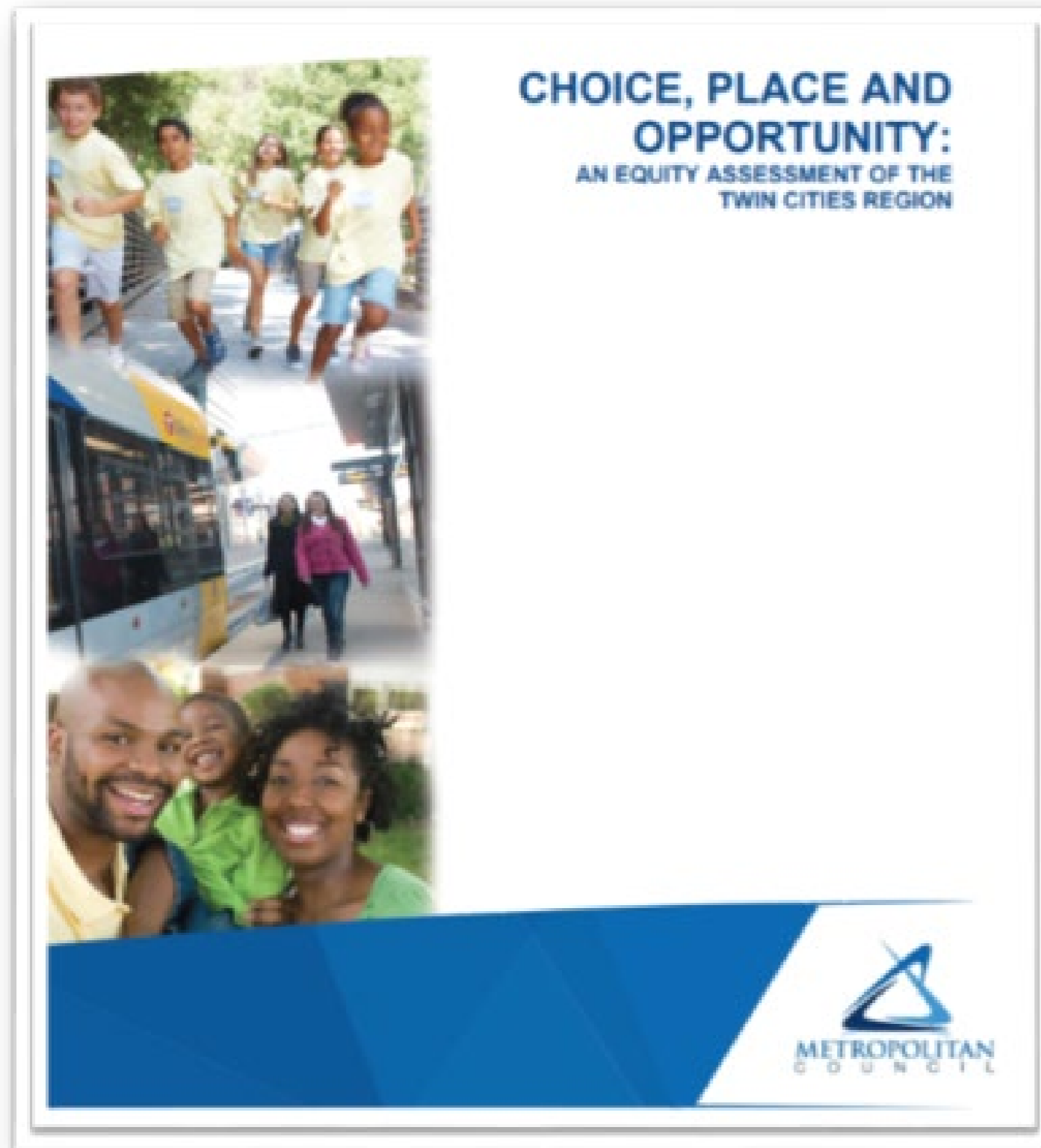
- Census tracts where at least 40% of residents have incomes below 185% of the federal poverty threshold\*
  - \$48,418 for family of four in 2019
- ACP subset: where majority are residents of color
- 2013-2017 set mapped



METROPOLITAN  
COUNCIL



# 2014 Fair Housing and Equity Assessment



- Required by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grantees
- Specific analyses of residential segregation patterns and regional opportunity, fair housing issues
- Informed by community organizations, advocates, and regional stakeholders

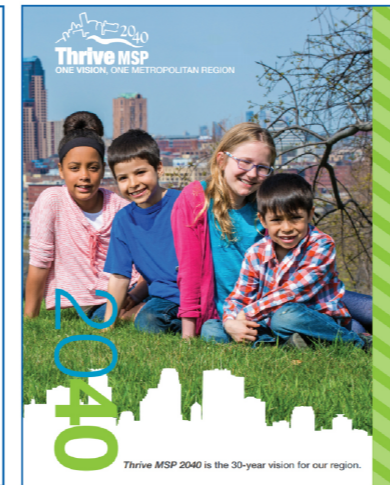
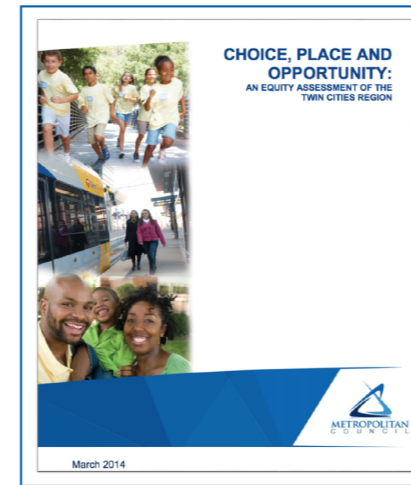
[Link to report](#)

# Research today supports policy tomorrow



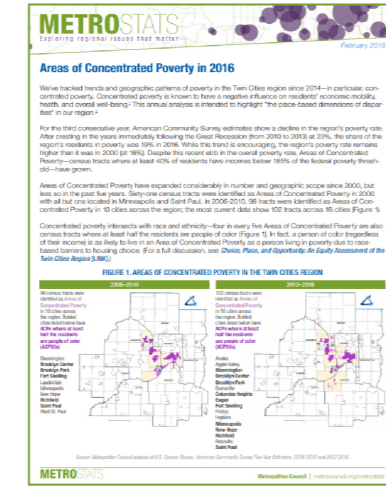
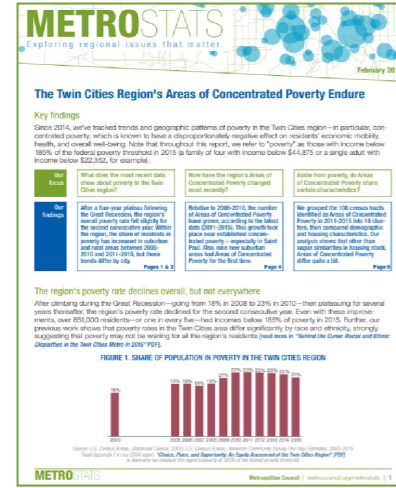
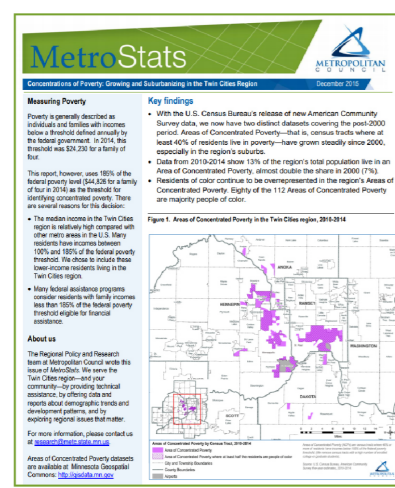
2011–2015

Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant program require a Fair Housing and Equity Assessment (FHEA), a study of segregation by race & income and its drivers.



2014

The Council adopts its FHEA, *Choice, Place, and Opportunity*, in 2014. The findings influence two regional policy documents, *Thrive MSP 2040* and the 2040 Housing Policy Plan.



2015–2018

Council researchers publish an annual report and dataset on concentrated poverty.

2020–

Planning for the next regional development is currently underway.

2024

The Council adopts the next regional development guide and systems and policy plans.

2019–2020

Council researchers initiate Rethinking Areas of Concentrated Poverty project.



Are the prevailing narratives and research tools that center concentrated poverty effective in advancing regional equity?



METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

# ACPs & Regional Solicitation

- ACPs/ACP50s used since 2014 as equity criterion along with environmental justice
- Iterative changes respond to feedback: used to assign bonus points in 2020



**2014**

Points based on location, regardless of impact on people

**2020**

Points based on engagement and explication of how projects affect lives

**2022**

TBD (a later discussion)

# Rethinking Areas of Concentrated Poverty

- Engagement of Council stakeholders
  - Staff
  - Equity Advisory Committee
  - Council Members
- External stakeholders
- Listen, Reflection, Response

## Rethinking Areas of Concentrated Poverty

Place is an important dimension of equity, but how we frame this discussion matters.

Matt Schroeder, Krysten Ryba-Tures & Amy Plambeck  
Community Development Research Team | July 13, 2020

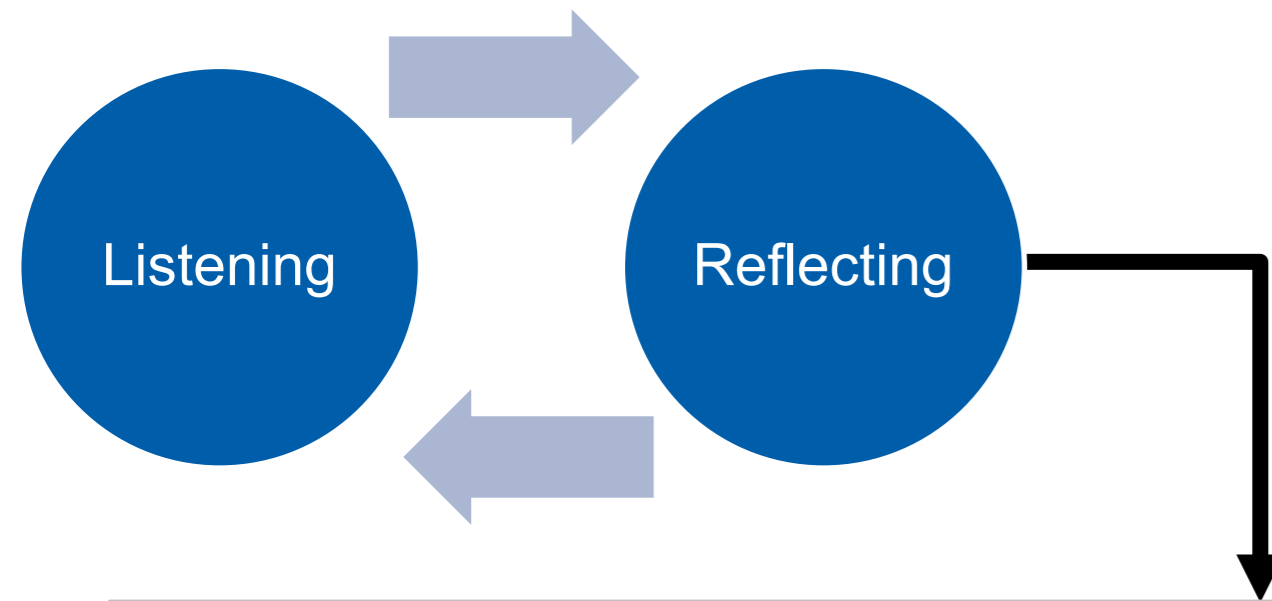


[Read the digital report](#)

# Rethinking Areas of Concentrated Poverty

1. A shared understanding and tools are important to moving the regional conversation on equity forward. Council researchers have an important role to play.
2. That shared understanding needs to include much more than concentrated poverty. Calling attention to the full spectrum of inequality, root causes, and more characteristics of tracts would be helpful.
3. Many stakeholders, including local government staff, struggle with the tension between wanting to remedy past disinvestment/wealth disruption and unintentionally fueling gentrification/displacement

# Response: *Equity Considerations* dataset



## Rethinking Areas of Concentrated Poverty

Place is an important dimension of equity, but how we frame this discussion matters.

Matt Schroeder, Krysten Ryba-Tures & Amy Plambeck  
Community Development Research Team | July 13, 2020



[Read the digital report](#)

Resource Categories Activity Stream

**m MINNESOTA**  
GEOSPATIAL COMMONS

### Equity Considerations for Place-Based Advocacy and Decisions in the Twin Cities Region

This dataset provides equity-relevant characteristics for each census tract in the Twin Cities region. Formerly known as the Areas of Concentrated Poverty dataset, it has been expanded to provide a more nuanced portrait of neighborhoods, with data on: multiple income levels and racial/ethnic groups; historical data on discriminatory practices; and housing and transportation patterns. Our intention is to call attention to broader patterns of economic segregation and their root causes, and to show that census tracts are much more multifaceted than a narrow focus on poverty rates would imply.

For more background on this file, please see our StoryMap "Rethinking Areas of Concentrated Poverty," available online: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/e61c8e0e54e24485b956601fdc80b63e>

DATA	Esri ArcGIS Server Map Service - ...	Download
DATA	Esri ArcGIS Server Map Service - ...	Download
XLS	MS Excel File	Download
DATA	Esri ArcGIS Server Map Service - ...	Download
DATA	ESRI File Geodatabase	Download
DATA	Shapefile	Download
HTML	Full Metadata Record	View

aca acp affluence affordable burden commute covenants housing poverty  
race redlining rent value



# Why we're no longer publishing ACP50s

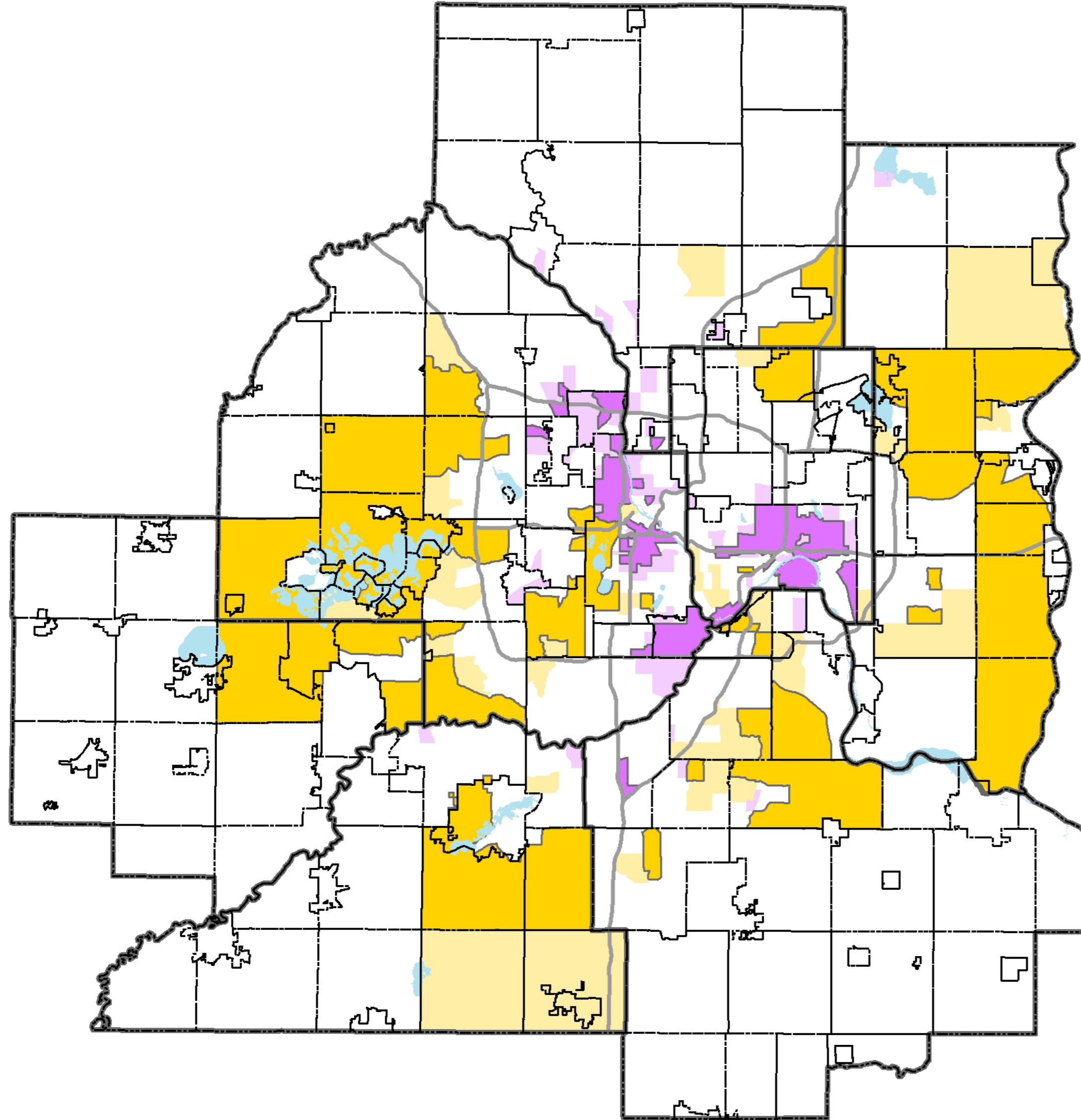
## A good starting point...

- Snapshot measure of residential segregation (HUD)
- Intended to highlight the disproportionate exposure of BIPOC residents to high-poverty areas

## But...

- Rightful objections from the start by advocates and organizers
- Implies that BIPOC people living together is necessarily problematic
- Stigmatizes communities and their residents
- "Spatial shorthand" can substitute for real engagement

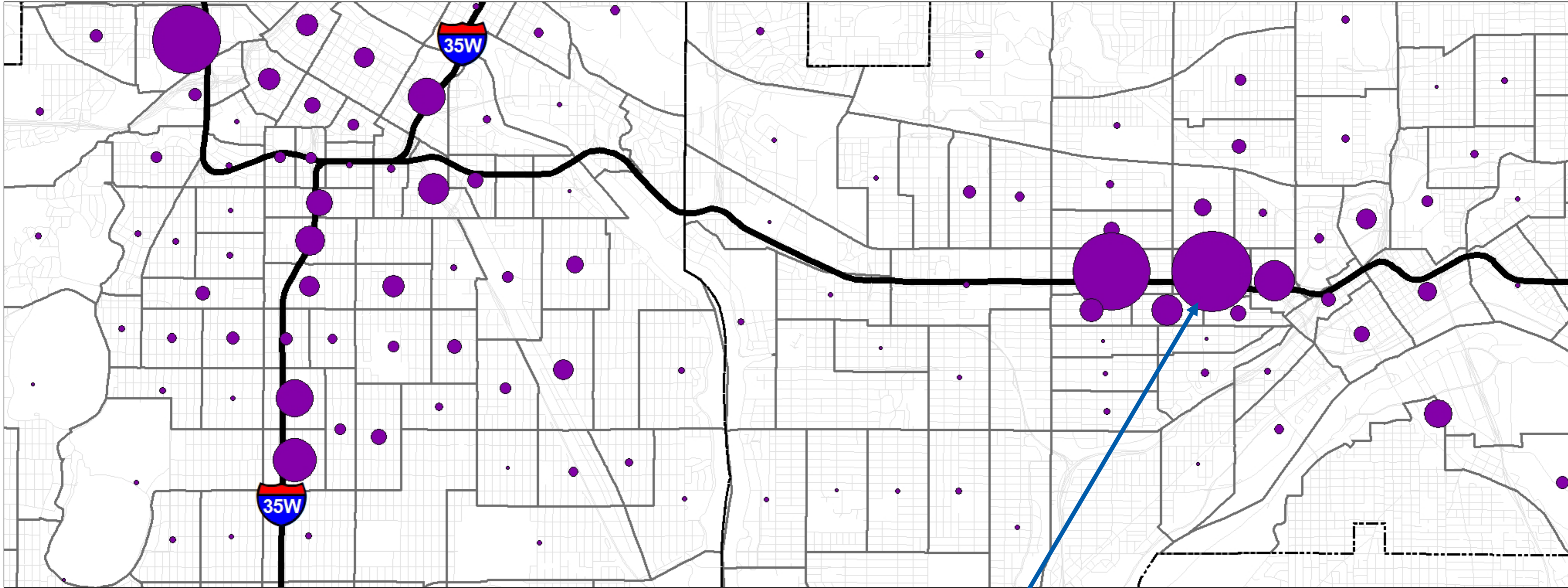
# New measures: concentrated affluence



- Same systems that create concentrated poverty also produce concentrated affluence
- Shifts focus from concentrated poverty to these patterns across places
- Recommend consistently pairing these fields

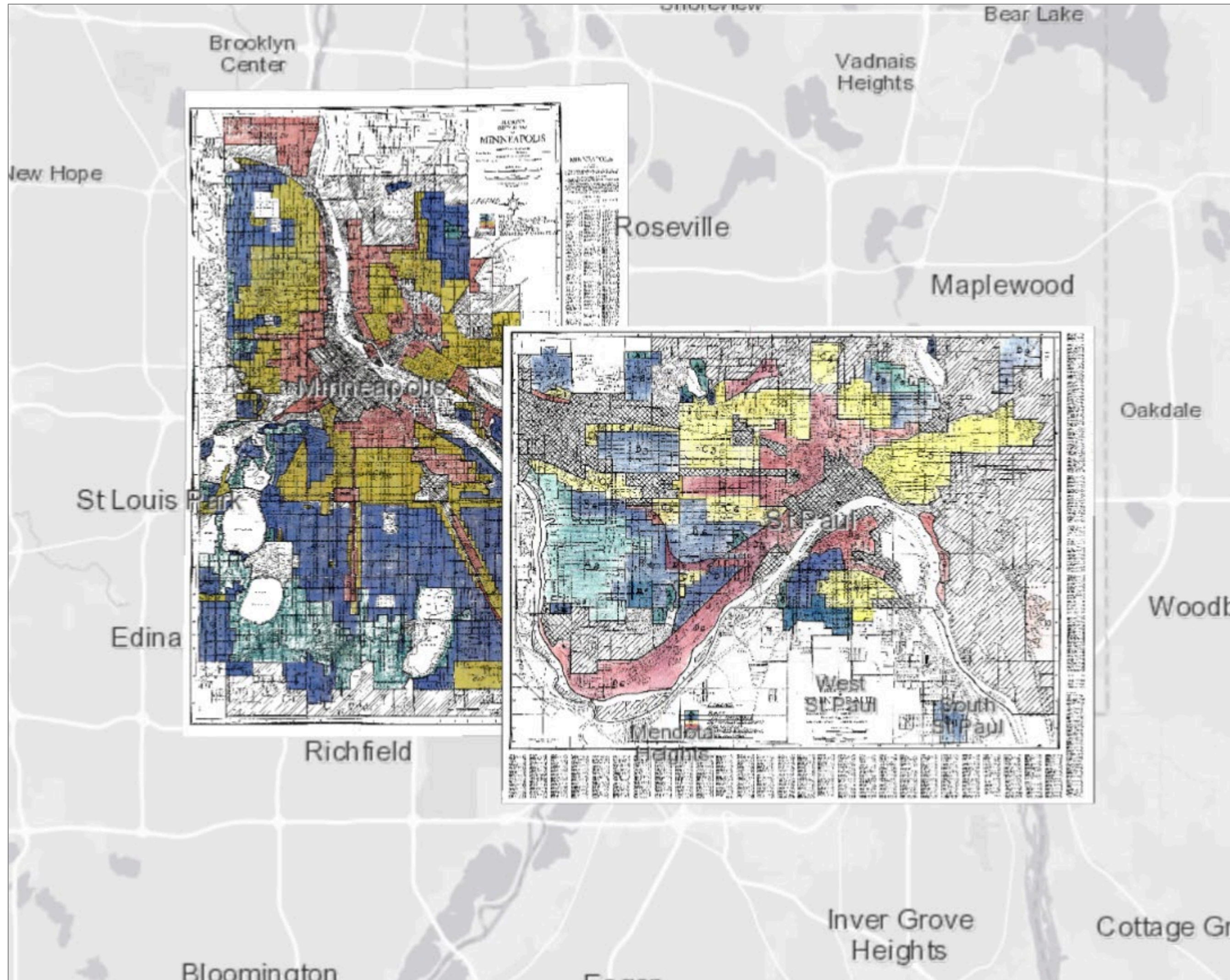
Areas of Concentrated Affluence	<i>current</i>	<i>past</i>
Areas of Concentrated Poverty	<i>current</i>	<i>past</i>

# Transportation infrastructure and equity



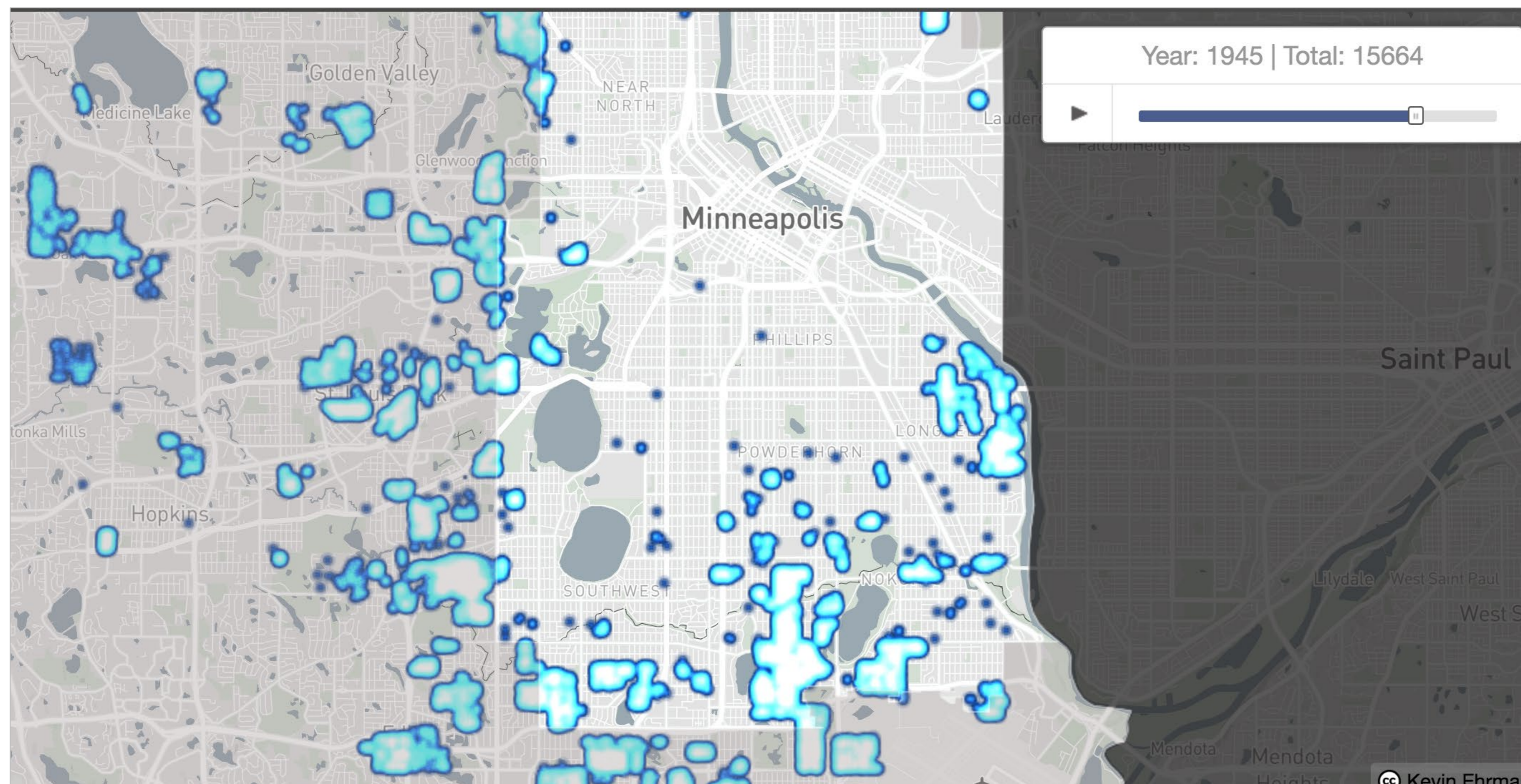
1,382 BIPOC residents  
1940 Census

# Make historic data accessible, relevant



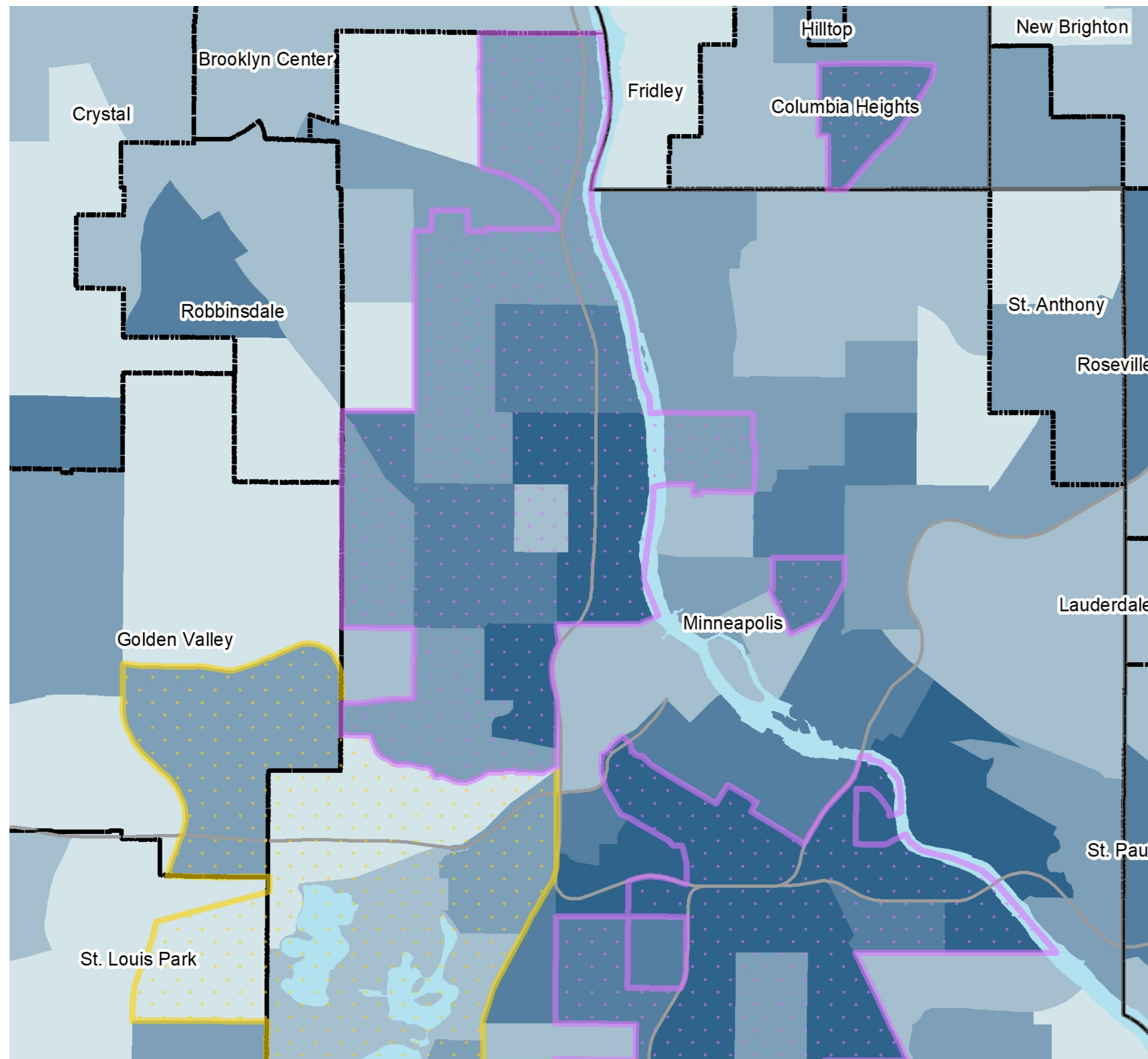
- Share of census tract by Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) "grades"
- Minneapolis and Saint Paul only

# Make historic data accessible, relevant



- Number of racially restrictive covenants by census tract
- Hennepin County now, more areas later
- Provided by Mapping Prejudice Project

# Policy-relevant data: Vehicle availability



## Share of households that do not have a vehicle

30.0% and up

20.0% to 29.9%

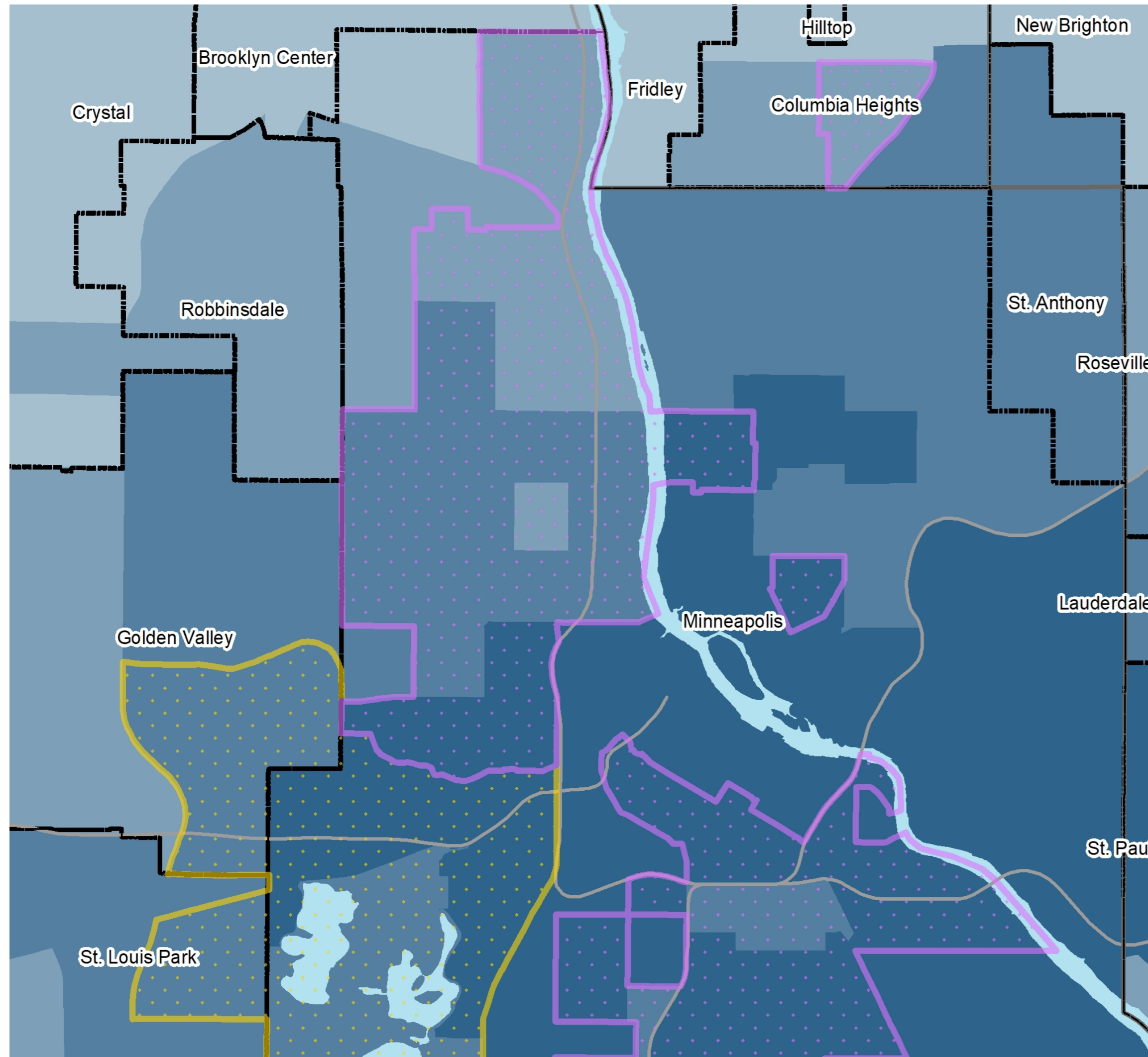
10.0% to 19.9%

5.0% to 9.9%

Under 5.0%

Community needs vary;  
ACPs/ACAs are not always  
a good proxy

# Policy-relevant data: Short commutes



## Share of commuters whose job is less than five miles from home

50.0% and up

40.0% to 49.9%

30.0% to 39.9%

19.9 to 29.9%

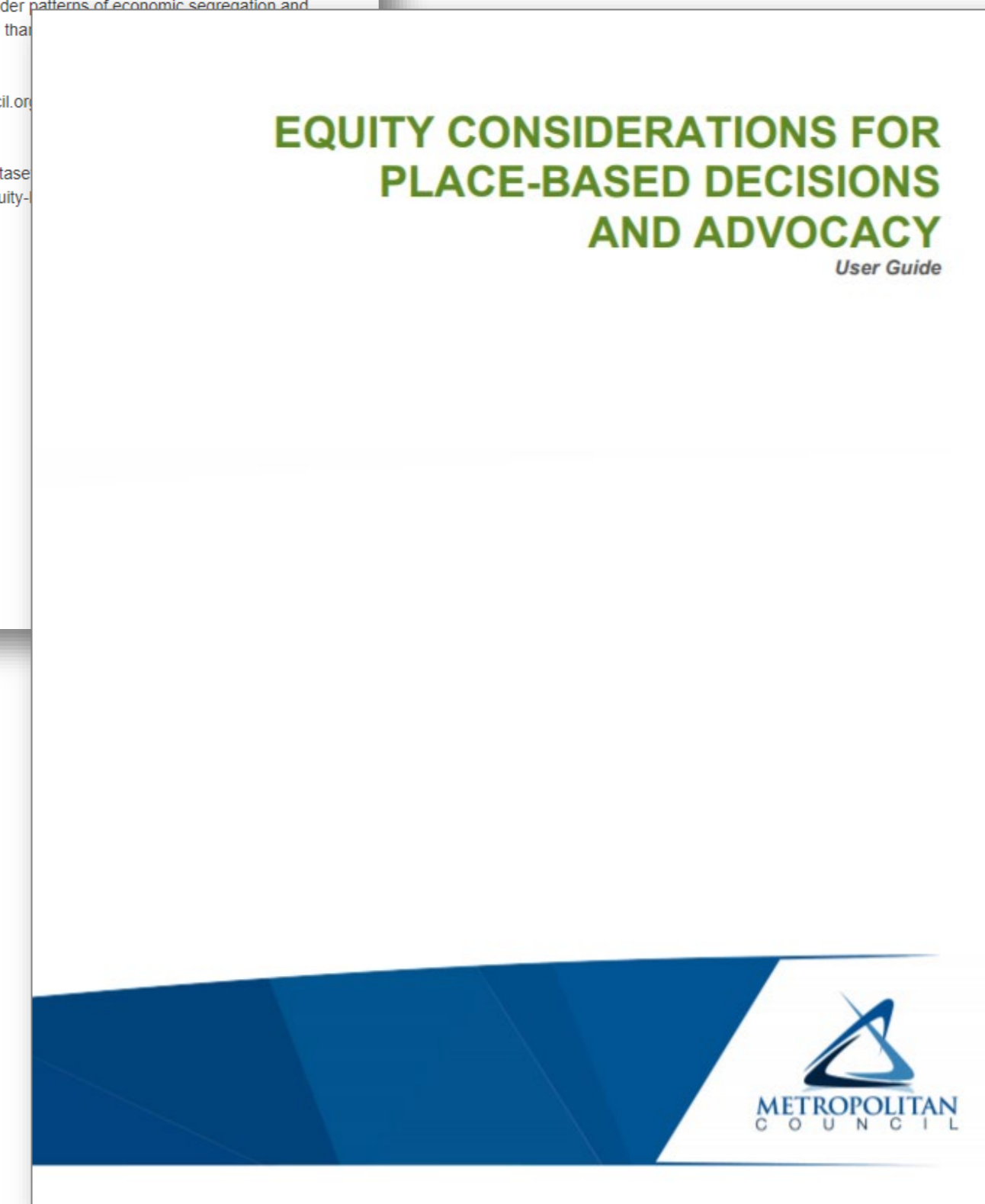
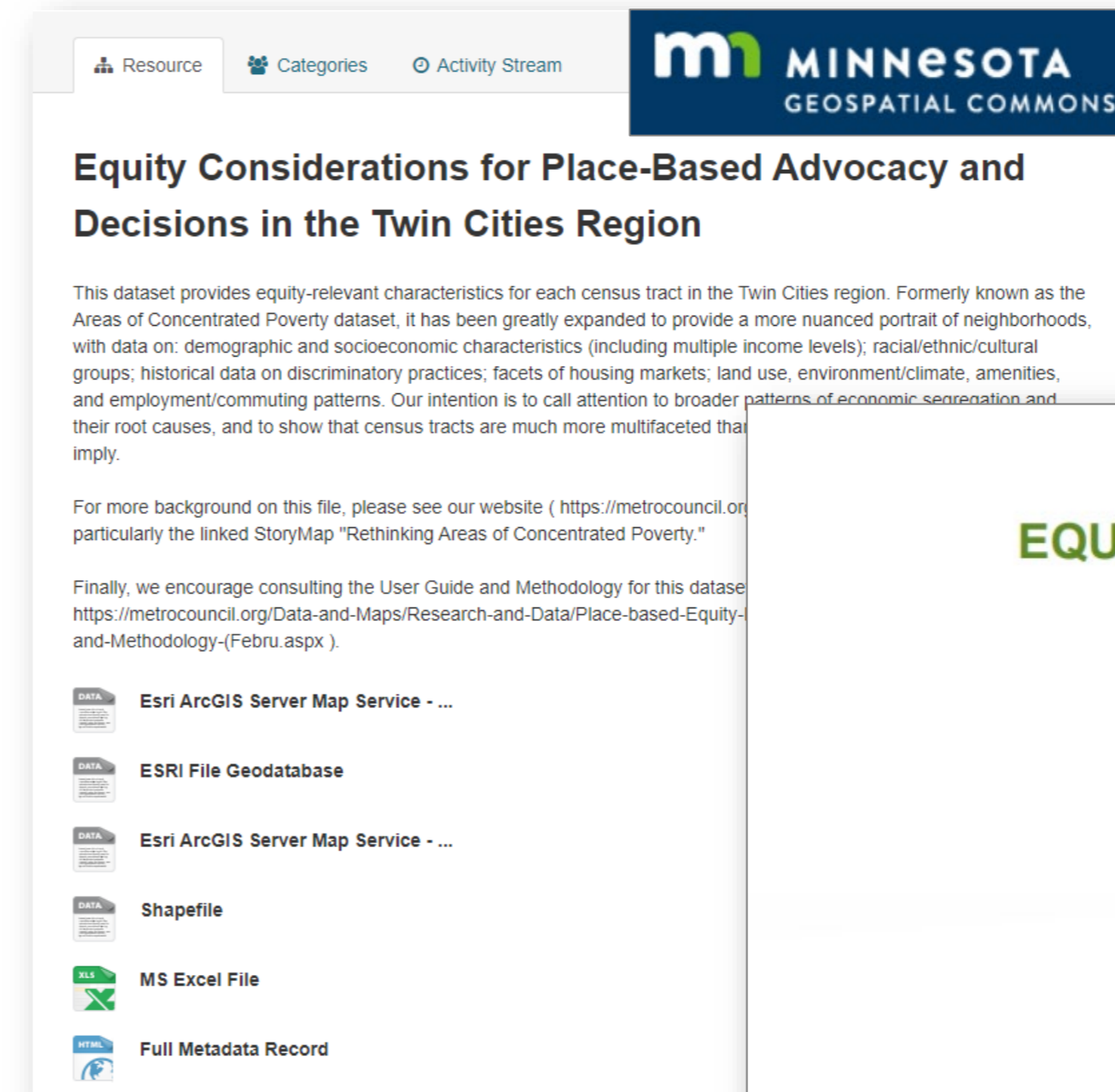
Under 20.0%

- Community needs vary; ACPs/ACAs are not a good proxy

# Equity Considerations expansion now available

Over 300 fields of data for the region's census tracts

- Geographies
- Expanded demographics
- Migration
- Disability status
- Socioeconomic characteristics
- Housing stock, costs/affordability
- Land use
- Environment and climate
- Amenities
- Employment
- Transportation and commuting



[Link to website/resources](#)



# Powerful pairing: data & engagement

- **Alone, this (or any) dataset is incomplete and inadequate for advancing regional equity.**

“...without pairing our data with community engagement, without pursuing qualitative methods, without tapping into and bringing forward the wisdom of community members themselves—there would be limits to our shared understanding and therefore to the ideas and policies and decisions that could improve the lives of people through place-based strategies.”

# Contact information

Matt Schroeder | Principal Researcher  
[matt.schroeder@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:matt.schroeder@metc.state.mn.us)

Krysten Ryba-Tures | Senior Researcher  
[krysten.ryba-tures@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:krysten.ryba-tures@metc.state.mn.us)