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Introduction

The Greater Mankato Transit System (GMTS) service area includes people of color and people with low-incomes, which are the two population groups protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Within all US Census Block Groups one quarter of a mile or less from fixed-route local bus service, minority populations make up approximately 12.5 percent of the total population. Populations living below 150 percent of the federal poverty threshold comprise approximately 28.4 percent of the population within the GMTS service area.

The text that follows presents a planning-level Title VI impact analysis for each plan scenario. Changes associated with each scenario are compared to the service area’s minority and low-income populations. Once service plans are finalized for each element of the New Service Expansion Plan, GMTS should conduct a detailed Title VI service equity analysis, using the major service change, disparate impact, and disproportionate burden policies as stated in their current Title VI program, to evaluate if these service changes result in adverse impacts to minority and/or low-income populations under Title VI. Changes that result in a finding of disparate impacts to minority populations cannot take place unless no less discriminatory alternatives are available. The following analysis should serve as a reference and broad check of the proposed service changes across the service area in the context of the presence of minority and low-income populations.

Cost Neutral Plan

The Cost Neutral Plan focuses on eliminating route deviations and unproductive segments of routes, transferring segments of routes to create more efficient connections, and realigning routes to service new corridors. Route adjustments were distributed throughout the service area, with new and eliminated segments found throughout Mankato and North Mankato.

Title VI – Initial Impact Considerations (Routes 4/ 5)

NORTH MANKATO

North Mankato has a high percentage of low-income and minority populations. Route 5 was re-routed significantly in this area, and the Route 4 was combined with Route 5. These changes resulted in two minor segments with discontinued service, along Lee Boulevard and Belgrade Avenue, which are less than 0.25-miles in length.

MANKATO

Along Basset Drive in Mankato, which has a higher than average percentage of minority population, service is discontinued between Star Street and Sioux Road, but the new service on Madison Avenue is approximately 0.15 miles away.

An alignment shift is suggested in Downtown Mankato, where there is a high percentage of low-income residents. A decrease in service is suggested along S Riverfront Drive, south of Warren Street, and on Broad Street and E Main Street.

Figure 1 compares the cost neutral scenario service changes against the percentage of the minority population by census block group and Figure 2 compares the cost constrained scenario service changes against the percentage of low-income populations by census block group.
Figure 1 | Cost Constrained Scenario: Minority Population Analysis
Figure 2 | Cost Constrained Scenario: Low-Income Population

Cost Constrained Scenario: Low-Income Population Analysis

- **Existing Routes**
- **New Service**
- **Discontinued Service**

Percent of Population Living Below 150% of the Poverty Line

- <10%
- 10% - 20%
- 20% - 30%
- 30% - 40%
- 40% - 50%
- >50%

Miles: 0 0.5 1 2
New Service Expansion Plan

The New Service Expansion Plan recommendations are focused on improving transit accessibility throughout the region. Examples of this type of recommendation include:

- Level of service improvements
- Route extensions to provide better connections to new and existing activity centers
- Creating new routes to connect to new areas throughout the region.

The new flex zone service provides additional coverage over areas with a higher than average percentage of both minority and low-income populations. This includes areas such as Sibley Park, Germania Park, and areas south of Minnesota State University, Mankato (MSU-Mankato). Areas along Thompson Ravine and Hoffman Road also receiving flex service during the weekdays.

Finally, the new fixed-route expansion service out to Eagle Lake, along Madison Avenue will provide additional access target populations.

**Figure 3** compares the expansion scenario service changes against the percentage of the minority population by census block group and **Figure 4** compares the expansion scenario service changes against the percentage of low-income populations by census block group.
Figure 3 | Expansion Scenario: Minority Populations
Figure 4 | Expansion Scenario: Low-Income Population Analysis

Expansion Scenario: Low-Income Population Analysis

- Cost Constrained Scenario Service Plan
- New Service

Percent of Population Living Below 150% of the Poverty Line:

- < 10%
- 10.1% - 20%
- 20.1% - 28.4%
- 28.5% - 40%
- 40.1% - 50%
- > 50%

Miles

0 0.5 1 2 Miles
Illustrative Plan

The Illustrative Plan includes recommendations for GMTS that incorporate new services and increased levels of service throughout the GMTS service area that are not yet funded. Examples of recommendations within this scenario include:

- Increased peak and all-day frequencies on existing routes
- Enhanced weekend service
- Extended weekday hours of service and new routes.

Three new circulator routes are proposed in this scenario, two of which provide additional access to areas such as Sibley Park and East Mankato along Hoffman Road, which have higher than average percentages of minority populations. All three circulators provide increased access to census block groups with higher than average low-income populations, like areas along 3rd Avenue, S Riverfront Drive, and Hoffman Road.

Increasing service to 10:00 PM and adding serving on Sundays is spread throughout the service area, covering Mankato, North Mankato and Eagle Lake with these enhanced services.

Figure 5 compares the Illustrative Scenario service changes against the percentage of the low-income population by census block and Figure 6 compares the Illustrative Scenario service changes against the percentage of minority populations by census block.
Illustrative Scenario: Minority Population Analysis

- Expansion Scenario Service Plan
- Routes with Increased Frequency or Span
- Discontinued Service
- New Service

Percent of Population Non-White/Hispanic:
- <4%
- 4.1% - 8%
- 8.1% - 12.5%
- 12.6% - 16%
- 16.1% - 20%
- >20%
Figure 6 | Illustrative Scenario: Low-Income Population

Illustrative Scenario: Low-Income Population Analysis