

Environmental Justice

Why is this important?

Environmental Justice refers to the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws and policies. The environmental justice analysis evaluated every resource to determine if low-income and minority populations were disproportionately affected.

Potential Impacts

- 58 commercial/industrial property acquisitions and associated business relocations.
- Up to 49 business relocations; 27 are economic impacts to Elyria and Swansea.

Benefits of the Preferred Alternative include:

- Faster travel and the availability of more travel options.
- Easier access to jobs and services through expanded public transit options including faster access to local destinations (e.g., DIA, Stapleton, and downtown Denver) as well as regional destinations (e.g., Aurora, Lakewood, Arvada, and Thornton) due to planned connecting rail and bus lines.
- An estimated 1,460 new jobs related to construction and operation of the project would benefit all people, including minority and low-income populations, by providing opportunities for employment.

Proposed Mitigation

Provide acquisition and relocation assistance to impacted properties consistent with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act (Uniform Act) of 1970, as amended.

For low-income and minority households that are relocated, RTD will provide free, comprehensive one-year transit passes to all household members.

An informational meeting will be held for businesses being relocated. The meeting will provide an introduction and overview of the process associated with the Uniform Act, as well as, consolidated information on resources available, including assistance from local, state, and federal agencies in the community. The meeting will not provide details related to individual eligibility.

Environmental Justice - Business Survey Results

The East Corridor FEIS identified up to 49 business associated relocations (several properties are vacant) that are expected to be relocated by the project. These business owners were contacted (contingent on approval received by property owners) to conduct a telephone survey.

Twenty-nine phone surveys were completed, resulting in a response rate of 72.5%. Results of the survey were incorporated into the FEIS and include the following:

- 62% of businesses would relocate; of those, 61% would relocate in the same general area
- Approximately half (52%) of employees are minority
- Over 90% of businesses reported that most of their employees live within the Denver metropolitan area, but not within the same neighborhood as the business.
- 59% of businesses responded that their customers are primarily located in Denver metropolitan area, but not within the same neighborhood as the business.
- The majority of suppliers are located outside of the neighborhood of the business.

Overall, these results indicate that there would not be disproportionate effects to low-income and minority populations since the majority of employees, suppliers, and customers, of those businesses are from outside the project area.