Environmental Justice Demographic Profile Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council

Clark County Skamania County Klickitat County City of Vancouver **City of Camas** City of Washougal **City of Battle Ground City of Ridgefield City of La Center** Town of Yacolt **City of Stevenson** City of North Bonneville **City of White Salmon City of Bingen City of Goldendale** C-TRAN Washington DOT Port of Vancouver Port of Camas-Washougal Port of Ridgefield Port of Skamania County Port of Klickitat Metro Oregon DOT 14th Legislative District 17th Legislative District 18th Legislative District 20th Legislative District 49th Legislative District



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Environmental Justice Demographic Profile: Clark County

Introduction

Since the mid-1990s, a renewed emphasis on environmental justice has become an integral part of the transportation planning process for urban regions in the United States. The concept of "environmental justice" is derived from Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964¹ and other civil rights statutes, and was first put forth as a national policy goal by presidential Executive Order 12898, issued in 1994, which directs "each federal agency to make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations."²

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) responded to the directive with its DOT Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations in 1997³. The order laid out the following environmental justice principles to be integrated into federal transportation programs, policies, and activities:

- To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority and low-income populations.
- To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.

¹ "Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race,

color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

² Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-

Income Populations, February 1994.

³ DOT Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, April 1997.

 To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

The DOT has issued an updated internal Order in May 2012. DOT Order 5610(a) continues to be a key component of the Department's strategy to promote the principles of environmental justice in all Departmental programs, policies, and activities.

With this guidance, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) renewed their commitments to ensure that environmental justice is carried out in the programs and strategies they fund including the activities of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs).⁴ The FHWA has specifically directed MPOs to:

- Enhance their analytical capabilities to ensure that their long-range transportation plan and their transportation improvement program comply with Title VI.
- Identify residential, employment, and transportation patterns of lowincome and minority populations so that their needs can be identified and addressed, and the benefits and burdens of transportation investments can be fairly distributed.
- Evaluate and where necessary improve their public involvement processes to eliminate participation barriers and engage minority and low-income populations in transportation decision-making.

The Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization, as well as the state designated regional transportation planning organization, for Clark County, Washington. Under these mandates, the RTC is responsible for developing and regularly updating the region's long-range transportation plan, as well as distributing federal transportation funds to local projects through its transportation improvement program. This document contains a baseline profile of key demographic data describing the Clark County region and identifies population groups and communities to be considered in environmental justice analyses and activities.

Definitions

Executive Order 12898, and the DOT, FHWA, and FTA orders on environmental justice address persons belonging to any of the following groups:

⁴ FHWA Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, December 1998; and FHWA and FTA Memorandum Implementing Title VI Requirements in Metropolitan and Statewide Planning, October 1999

Minority Populations

- Black a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- American Indian and Alaskan Native a person having origins in any of the original people of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
- Asian a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent.
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- Hispanic a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

Low-Income Population

Low-Income - a person whose household income (or in the case of a community or group, whose median household income) is at or below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) poverty guidelines. States and localities may, however, adopt a higher threshold for low-income as long as the higher threshold is not selectively implemented and is inclusive of all persons at or below the HHS poverty guidelines.

Other Title VI Protected Populations

- Special Needs While the various orders on environmental justice require consideration of only minority and low-income populations as defined above, discussions of other populations protected by Title VI and related nondiscrimination statutes - such as the elderly, disabled, etc. - are encouraged in addressing environmental justice and Title VI in federally sponsored transportation programs, policies, and activities and are therefore included in this profile.
- Limited English Proficiency Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Service for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, clarified the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with regards to accessibility of federal programs and services to persons who are not proficient in the English language. This executive order stated that individuals who do not speak, read, write, or understand English well are entitled to language assistance under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with respect to a particular type of service, benefit, or encounter. LEP populations are included in this profile.

Objectives

RTC set out to meet two primary objectives in preparing this environmental justice demographic profile:

- Compile key demographic data on minority and low-income populations in the Clark County region, as well as other populations of interest, for environmental justice consideration in conducting regional transportation planning and program activities and public outreach.
- Identify the locations of communities within the region with significant minority and low-income populations in order to facilitate and enhance environmental justice analyses and activities.

Census Data and GIS

RTC relied upon data products from the 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates to provide the most up-to-date demographic data for Clark County, WA. Geographic information systems (GIS) applications were also utilized to map graphic representations of the data. While data from the 2010 U.S. Census and American Community Survey is more than two years old, it continues to be the most comprehensive, reliable, and geographically detailed source of demographic information currently available.

Regional Profile Data Tables

Drawing from the 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates from the U.S. Census, RTC compiled data tables of key demographic statistics on the region's minority and low-income populations and other populations and characteristics of interest for environmental justice consideration. The data tables report statistics for Clark County, Washington, the MPO boundary.

- Table 1 Clark County Population by Race and Hispanic/Latino Origin: 2015
- Table 2 Clark County Poverty Statistics: 2015
- Table 3 Clark County Poverty Rates by Race and Hispanic/Latino Origin: 2015
- Table 4 Clark County Median Household Income by Race and Hispanic/Latino Origin of Householder: 2015
- Table 5 Clark County Population Age 65 and Over: 2015
- Table 6 Clark County Persons with a Disability: 2015
- Table 7 Clark County Households with No Vehicle: 2015

Table 8 - Clark County Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English: 2015

Observations

Tables 1 and 2 provide essential statistics on the region's minority and low-income populations. Minorities, or non-White persons including White persons of Hispanic/Latino origin, comprised 19.7 percent of the region's total population in 2010. Blacks/African Americans constitute 2.0 percent of the region's total population, American Indians/Alaskan Natives 0.7 percent, Asians/Pacific Islanders 5 percent, and Hispanics/Latinos 8.4 percent.

In 2015, the region-wide poverty rate was 11.2 percent. Table 2 also reports statistics for the percentage of the region's population below 150 percent and 200 percent of the federal poverty level in 2015. These statistics indicate that there are substantial numbers of families and individuals in the region whose incomes are above the federal poverty level, but within a range that may still be considered lower income, particularly when taking into account the cost of living in Vancouver/Portland metropolitan region. Federal poverty thresholds are not adjusted for regional, state, and local variations in the cost of living, which is presumably higher in the Vancouver/Portland metropolitan region relative to other areas of the United States on average because of higher local housing costs.

Tables 3 and 4 illustrate the relationship between minority and low-income populations. Poverty rates are higher, and median household incomes lower, for minority populations compared to the White population or total population overall.

Tables 5 and 6 present demographic statistics, including poverty rates, for the region's elderly and disabled populations. The disabled population is shown to have significantly higher rates of poverty than the total population overall, whereas poverty rates for the elderly population are lower.

Table 7 shows that nearly 5% of households within Clark County do not have a vehicle available.

Finally, Table 8 presents statistics on persons with limited English proficiency and common languages other than English spoken in Clark County. This information is intended to support the development of the public outreach and involvement component of the RTC's environmental justice program.

Data Notes

Race – The federal race classification categories "Asian alone" and "Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone" were combined in the regional profile data tables, where possible, as "Asian/Pacific Islander alone." In the 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, the "Some other race" category included all responses to the race question other than "White," "Black or African American," "American Indian and Alaskan Native," "Asian," or "Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander." Write-in responses such as multiracial, mixed, or interracial (where the multiple races were not identified), or a Hispanic/Latino group such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban, were included in the "Some other race" category. 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, the "Two or more races" category included responses to the race question involving two or more combinations of "White," "Black or African American," "American Indian and Alaskan Native," "Asian," "Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander," and "Some other race," including write-in responses.

Hispanic/Latino – 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates considered Hispanic/Latino origin as an ethnic characteristic, separate from race. A person who identified their origin as Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino may be of any race,

	Race				
	White / Non-Hispanic	Non-White / Non-Hispanic			
Hispanic/Latino	White / Hispanic	Non-White / Hispanic			

including White.

Total Minority – The term "total minority" represents the union between - not the sum of – minority race populations and the Hispanic/Latino population, and includes White persons of Hispanic/Latino origin

Poverty Status – There are two slightly different versions of the federal poverty measure: poverty thresholds and poverty guidelines. The poverty thresholds are the original version of the federal poverty measure, first developed by the Social Security Administration (SSA), and updated each year by the Census Bureau. The poverty guidelines are a simplified version of the poverty thresholds, issued each year in the Federal Register by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)⁵. The 2015 poverty data reported in the regional profile tables and utilized in the GIS map profile of the region's low-income population were derived using the Census Bureau's poverty thresholds.

Disability Status – In the 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, disability was defined as:

- The existence of the following long-lasting conditions:
 - Sensory disability blindness, deafness, or a severe vision or hearing impairment
 - Physical disability a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting, or carrying; or

⁵ See "The 2012 HHS Poverty Guidelines" at <u>http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/12poverty.shtml</u>

- The existence of a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting 6 months or more that made it difficult to perform the following activities:
 - Mental disability learning, remembering, or concentrating
 - Self-care disability dressing, bathing, or getting around inside the home
 - Go outside home disability going outside the home alone to shop or visit a doctor's office
 - Employment disability working at a job or business

Individuals were classified as having a disability if they belonged to the civilian noninstitutionalized population and they were: 5 years and over and had a sensory, physical, mental, or self-care disability; they were 16 years and over and had a go outside home disability, and/or; they were 16 to 64 years old and had an employment disability.

Limited English Proficiency – In the 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, the English proficiency question was asked of a sample of the population who reported that they spoke a language other than, or in addition to, English at home. Respondents were asked to rate their ability to speak English in one of the following categories: "Very well," "Well," "Not well," or "Not at all." The RTC classified persons as being limited English proficient if they responded with any answer other than "Very well". Persons who spoke only English at home were assumed to be English proficient. Language proficiency was tabulated for the population age 5 and over.

Map Profiles

In addition to compiling the regional profile data tables described above, the RTC utilized its geographic information systems (GIS) applications to map the distributions of minority and low income populations across the region to identify geographic areas and communities with substantial minority and low-income populations.

- Map 1 Minority Population, Clark County: 2010
- Map 2 Black/African American Population, Clark County: 2010
- Map 3 American Indian/Alaskan Native Population, Clark County: 2010
- Map 4 Asian/Pacific Islander Population, Clark County: 2010
- Map 5 Hispanic/Latino Population, Clark County: 2010
- Map 6 Low-Income Population, C: 2006-2010

Census Data and Regional Thresholds

RTC again drew from the 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates data to develop its environmental justice GIS map profiles. The minority population profile maps and poverty map utilized census blockgroup-level data on race/ethnicity and income.

RTC established a set of regional population thresholds to determine whether a census block or census tract had a regionally significant minority or low-income population concentration. For example, in Map 1 – Minority Population, Clark County: 2015, census blocks with a minority population share equal to or greater than the regional threshold – 19.8 percent of total population - are shaded in yellow/pink, whereas census blocks with a minority population share less than the regional threshold are shaded in blue/purple.

Population Group	Regional Threshold
Total Minority	19.8% of total population
Black/African American	6% of total population
American Indian / Alaskan Native	6% of total population
Asian/Pacific Islander	6% of total population
Hispanic/Latino	6% of total population
Low-Income	11.2% of total population

Regional Minority and Low-Income Population Thresholds

The total minority and low-income regional thresholds were calculated based on the percentage of the region's total population comprised by, respectively, minorities and persons below the federal poverty level (see Tables 1 and 2.)

The regional thresholds for the Black/African American, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic/Latino population groups were set across the board at 6 percent. The RTC determined that the 6 percent threshold level allowed for effective identification of and differentiation between the residential patterns of each minority population group across the region. The use of a consistent threshold level across minority groups further facilitates comparison of the relative size of each population.

Data Notes

The poverty data in Map 6, as with all ACS data, represents an estimate of the characteristic of the population obtained from a statistical sample of the population and, being a sample, includes a range of statistical uncertainty relative to sample size.

Map 1 illustrates the distribution of the minority population (non-White persons including White persons of Hispanic/Latino origin) across the Clark County region, and identifies geographic areas and communities with a regionally significant minority population. Census blocks with a minority population share equal to or greater than the regional threshold – 19.8 percent of total population - are shaded in yellow/pink, whereas census blocks with a minority population share less than the regional threshold are shaded in blue/purple. Minority populations can be seen to be concentrated in the Vancouver urban area, particularly along Fourth Plain, Mill Plain, with pockets in Fruit Valley, St. Johns, and 192nd Avenue in east Vancouver.

Maps 2 to 5 illustrate the population distributions of the region's various minority groups. Census blocks with a minority group population share equal to or greater than 6 percent of total population are shaded in yellow/pink. Each minority group is seen to have a uniquely different residential pattern of settlement across the region. The Black/African American population, constituting 2.0 percent of the region's total population, has a scatter presence along the Mill Plain corridor. The American Indian/Alaskan Native population, constitute less than 1 percent of the region's total population, show little geographic concentration. The Asian/Pacific Islander population, at 4.9 percent of total population, is heavily concentrated in east Vancouver in the area of 192nd Avenue. The Hispanic/Latino population, with geographic concentrations in Fruit Valley and along the Fourth Plain and Mill Plain corridors.

Map 6 illustrates the distribution of the region's low-income population, and identifies poverty impacted geographic areas and communities within Clark County. Census tracts with poverty rates equal to or higher than the regional threshold – 11.2 percent of persons below the federal poverty level - are shaded in yellow/pink, whereas census tracts with poverty rates lower than the regional threshold are shaded in blue/purple. Concentrations of poverty can be seen within Vancouver urban core, Fruit Valley, along the Fourth Plain corridor and around 78th St. interchange area.

Supplemental Data Sources

The U.S. Census Bureau's decennial census is an excellent source of demographic data. The census provides quality data at very detailed geography; however, much can change in the 10 years between each census release. The U.S. Census Bureau's annual American Community Survey (ACS) is designed as an ongoing rolling survey program to generate comparable data to that of the discontinued federal decennial census long form. However, due to small sample sizes, many years of data are often needed to impute estimates of socioeconomic data at detailed levels of geography or highly disaggregate cross-tabulations.

RTC will consult supplemental demographic data sources when evaluating Environmental Justice populations in conjunction with studies or planning activities that are not county-wide. The Washington State Office of Financial Management develops population estimates by age sex, race and Hispanic/Latino origin for counties in Washington. Additionally, the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) produces school enrollment data that can be used to track changes in minority populations at sub-county level and changes in low-income households. The school data excludes demographic changes in household without school aged children, but this weakness is outweighed by the timeliness and geographic specificity of the dataset.

Total Population	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian/Pacific Islander	Other race or two or more races	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Total Minority (non-White including White/Hispanic
444,506	376,619	8,576	3,140	22,119	34,052	37,438	87,776
100.0%	84.73%	1.93%	0.71%	4.98%	7.66%	8.42%	19.75%

Table 1 - Clark County Population by Race and Hispanic/Latino Origin, 2015Source: 2011- 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates – Tables B02001 and B03002

Table 2 - Clark County Poverty Statistics: 2015

Source: 2011- 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates – Tables S1702 and S1703

Population for	Income				
whom poverty status is determined	Below 100% poverty level	Below 150% poverty level	Below 200% poverty level		
440,404	49,325	88,401	127,733		
100.0%	11.2%	20.1%	29.0%		

Table 3 - Clark County Poverty Statistics by Race and Hispanic/Latino Origin, 2015Source: 2011- 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates – Table S1703

	Poverty Rate											
Population		Race						<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>Race and</u> <u>Ethnicity</u>			
po sta	whom overty atus is ermined	All persons	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian and Alaskan Native alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone	Some other race alone	Two or more races	White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	Hispanic or Latino	Total Minority (non-White including White/Hispanic
44	40,404	11.2%	10.2%	22.4%	20.9%	9.2%	10.1%	27.9%	15.0%	9.7%	22.7%	19.7%

Table 4 - Clark County Median Household Income by Race and Hispanic/Latino Origin, 2015Source: 2011- 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates - Tables 19003

Race of Household (selected categories)							Ethnicity of householder		
All Households	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian and Alaskan Native alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone	Some other race alone	Two or more races	White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	Hispanic or Latino
\$60,756	\$61,954	\$42,788	\$50,500	\$70,577	\$51,466	\$39,786	\$55,363	\$62,593	\$41,362

Table 5 - Clark County Population Age 65 and Over, 2015

Source: 2011- 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates - Table S0103

Age 65 and over						
Total Population	Population Ag	ge 65 and over	For whom poverty status is determined*			
	Number	Percent	Income in the past 12 months below poverty level	Poverty Rate		
444,506	58,415	13%	3,972	6.80%		

Table 6 - Clark County Persons with a Disability, 2015

Source: 2011- 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates – Table C18130

	With a disability (or disabilities)					
Total Civilian non- institutionalized population		Population for whom poverty status is determined				
	Persons with a disability	Total with a disability	Income below poverty level	Poverty rate		
442,053	56,329	56,171	10,757	19.15%		

Table 7 - Clark County Households with No Vehicle, 2015

Source: 2011- 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates – Table B08201

Total Households	Households with no vehicles	Percent with no vehicles
162,441	8,064	4.96%

Table 8 - Clark County, Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English, Persons Age 5 and Over,2015

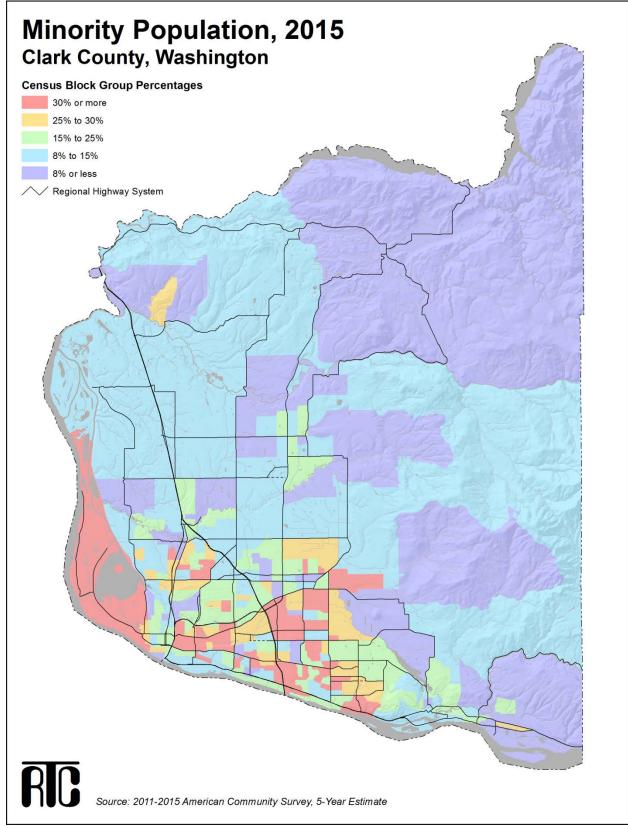
Source: 2011- 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates - Table B16001

Speal	ks English I	Total, All	Languages		
Spanish or Spanish Creole	Russian	Vietnamese	Other Languages ¹	Speak English less than "very well"	Speak English "very well" ²
9,137	4,853	1,908	8,508	24,406	391,442
2.20%	1.17%	0.46%	2.05%	5.87%	94.13%

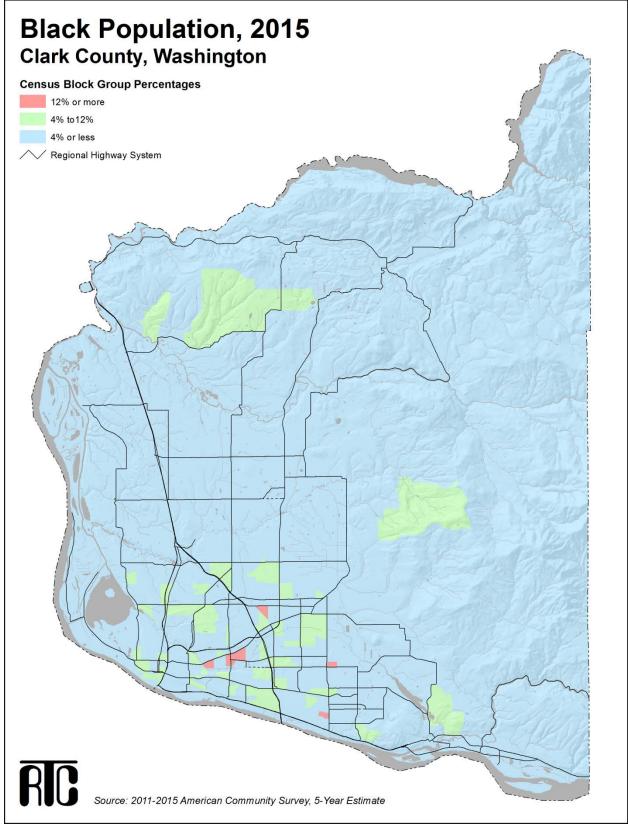
¹ Other languages excluding English only

² "Speak English 'very well'" includes "Speak only English"

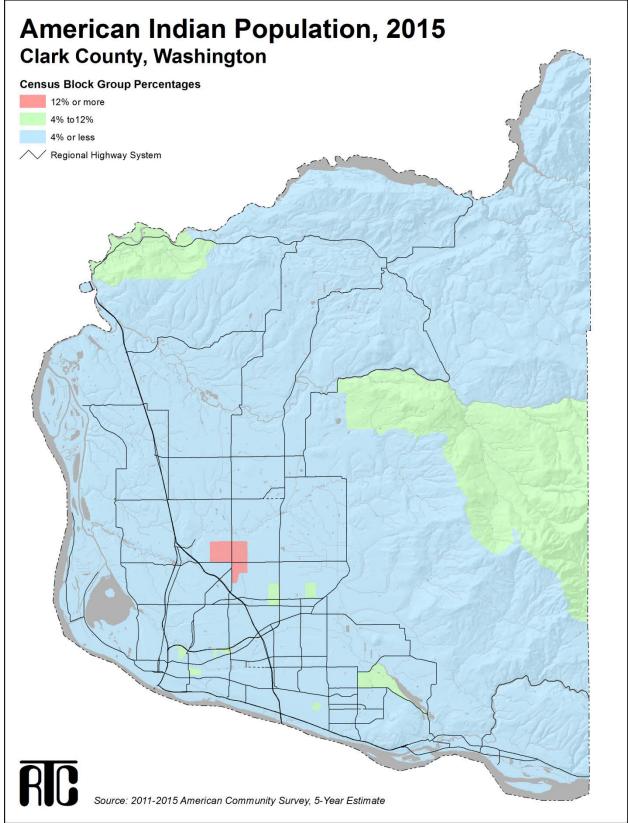
Map 1: Minority Population, 2015



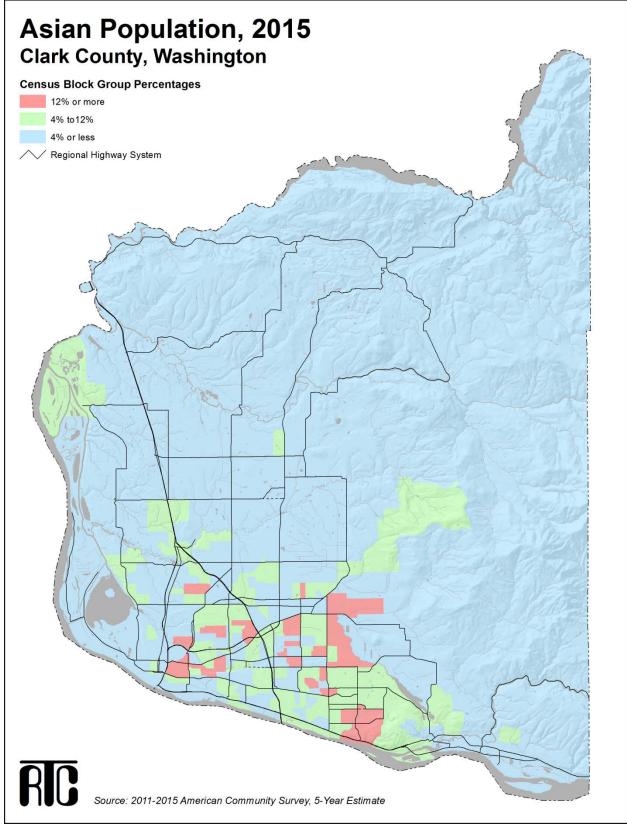
Map 2: Black Population, 2015



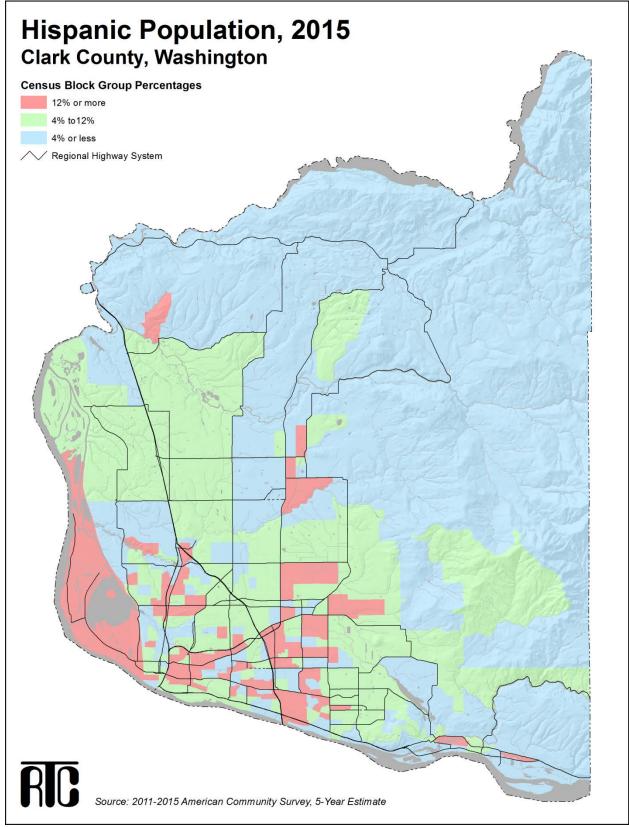
Map 3: American Indian Population, 2015



Map 4: Asian Population, 2015



Map 5: Hispanic Population, 2015



Map 6: Low-Income Population, 2015

