

4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

This section presents a Tier 1/Program level assessment of potential environmental justice impacts associated with the Parkway. Additional information on environmental justice is provided in the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement/Program Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) Community Impact Assessment (Mara Feeney & Associates and North Fork Associates, 2007), which is available at the locations identified in the Executive Summary, including the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency website.

4.3.1 REGULATORY SETTING

4.3.1.1 Federal Regulations

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that recipients of federal aid, including highway funding, ensure nondiscrimination. Other laws, including National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 and other U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) statutes and regulations, also prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, income, national origin, and other factors.

Executive Order 12898, “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations,” signed by President Clinton in 1994 requires that “each Federal agency shall 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.” In 1997, USDOT issued its Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations in response to the requirements of Executive Order 12898. The USDOT Order encourages public involvement in transportation decisions and integration of environmental justice principles into transportation planning. In 1998, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued guidance entitled “FHWA Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations” to facilitate compliance with Executive Order 12898 and related mandates.

4.3.1.2 Other Plans and Policies

Local jurisdictions may also adopt goals and policies that address environmental justice issues related to transportation systems. For example, Sacramento Area Council of Government’s Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2027 contains the following goal that may pertain to environmental justice:

6. *Equity.* Pursue a transportation system that addresses the needs of all people in all parts of the region and assure that impacts of transportation projects do not adversely affect particular communities disproportionately.

4.3.2 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The existing population residing in the project study area lives predominately in three census block groups: Sutter County Census Tract 511, Block Group 4; Placer County Census Tract 213.01, Block Group 2; and Placer County Census Tract 213.03, Block Group 1. Table 4.3-1 presents information on race and poverty status for the population in these block groups from the 2000 census. As these data indicate, the population residing in these block groups is neither predominantly minority nor predominantly low income.

Limited field reconnaissance conducted for the Placer Parkway project identified one residential area east of Pleasant Grove Road that could be predominantly minority or low income; however, this area did not lie within any of the project corridor alignment alternatives.

**Table 4.3-1
Race, Ethnicity, and Poverty in Study Area Census Block Groups**

Location	Percentage White	Percentage Non-White or Other	Percentage Hispanic	Percentage Below Poverty
Sutter County				
CT 511 Block Group 4	82.8%	17.2%	11.5%	18.9%
Placer County				
CT 213.01 Block Group 2	90.5%	9.5%	9.4%	8.6%
CT 213.03 Block Group 1	89.7%	10.3%	7.0%	0.4%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000				

4.3.3 IMPACT ANALYSIS

4.3.3.1 Methodology for Impact Evaluation

At the Tier 1 level of analysis, environmental justice impacts are determined on the basis of probable race or ethnicity and income level of any communities, households, or businesses that potentially would be directly impacted by the project, based on available census data and limited field reconnaissance. Pertinent definitions used in this analysis were those contained in the 1998 FHWA guidance:

Low-Income: a household income at or below the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines.

Minority: includes Black, Hispanic, Asian American, or American Indian or Alaskan Native.

Low-Income Population: any readily identifiable group of low-income persons who live in geographic proximity and, if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons (such as migrant workers or Native Americans) who would be similarly affected by a proposed FHWA program, policy, or activity.

Minority Population: any readily identifiable groups of low-income persons who live in geographic proximity and, if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons (such as migrant workers or Native Americans) who would be similarly affected by a proposed FHWA program, policy, or activity.

Adverse Effects: the totality of significant individual or cumulative human health or environmental effects, including interrelated social and economic effects, which may include, but are not limited to: bodily impairment, infirmity, illness, or death; air, noise, and water pollution and soil contamination; destruction or disruption of man-made or natural resources; destruction or diminution of aesthetic values; destruction or disruption of community cohesion or a community's economic vitality; destruction or disruption of the availability of public and private facilities and services; vibration; adverse employment effects; displacement of persons, businesses, farms, or nonprofit organizations; increased traffic congestion, isolation, exclusion, or separation of minority or low-income individuals within a given community or from the broader community; and the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits of FHWA programs, policies, or activities.

Disproportionately High and Adverse Effect on Minority and Low-Income Populations: an adverse effect that: (1) is predominantly borne by a minority population and/or a low-income population; or (2) will be suffered by the minority population and/or low-income population and is appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect that will be suffered by the nonminority population and/or nonlow-income population.

The approach to the analysis was to review demographic data, with limited field reconnaissance, to identify potential minority or low-income populations in the study area and, if any were found, to evaluate whether the proposed action would have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on such populations.

4.3.3.2 Evaluation Criteria

The project would be considered to cause environmental justice impacts if it were to cause disproportionately high and adverse impacts on an existing minority or low-income population.

4.3.3.3 Direct Impacts

Based on the census data presented in Table 4.3-1 and limited field reconnaissance described in Section 4.3-2, it was determined that the population potentially affected by the corridor alignment alternatives is neither predominantly minority nor predominantly low income. None of the project alternatives would cause disproportionate or adverse impacts to a minority or low-income population; therefore, the project would not cause environmental justice impacts.

4.3.3.4 Secondary and Indirect Impacts

Route adoption would not cause any secondary or indirect impacts on any minority or low-income population. When the project is ultimately constructed, it could result in secondary or indirect impacts (such as construction nuisance impacts or permanent increases in adverse visual impacts) on a collection of residences east of Pleasant Grove Road that might be considered a concentration of minority or low-income residents (further field research would be required to make this determination). Project-related impacts, however, would be borne by all residents of the study area living near the proposed future transportation facility and therefore would not disproportionately impact that subset of area residents. Thus, there would be no secondary or indirect environmental justice impacts.

4.3.3.5 Cumulative Impacts

Because the project would not cause any environmental justice impacts, it would not contribute to cumulative environmental justice impacts in the study region.

4.3.4 AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

Because no environmental justice impacts are identified, no mitigation strategies have been recommended for Tier 1 or Tier 2.

4.3.5 TIER 1 AND TIER 2 STUDIES

- Analyses begun in Tier 1 which will be undertaken in greater detail in Tier 2
 - The analysis will identify individual households and businesses that would be displaced by the Parkway. Any unique characteristics of those households and businesses, such as race and income level and any special relocation needs, will also be identified.