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Neighborhood Mobility Audits

The Polk [FL] TPO has conducted a series of Neighborhood Mobility Audits for communities in traditionally underserved areas. Most of the 15 completed audits were conducted within the TPO's Environmental Justice Planning Areas.

These mobility audits evaluate resident access to jobs and essential services within these communities and the larger county. Since low-income households are 2-3 times more likely to use public transportation or other alternative modes of transportation, the focus of the mobility audits is on non-motorized (bicycle and pedestrian) and transit access.

Each audit includes an assessment of the following: location of residential uses; location of essential services; work trip distance and direction; transportation mode selection; bicycle and pedestrian crash locations; location and intensity of transit service; sidewalk network and gaps; bicycle network and gaps; and linear barriers (roadways, railways, and canals).

The existing conditions information is augmented through the application of five indices which assess parameters of the neighborhood environment that enhance or limit mobility. The indices (created as part of the Neighborhood Mobility Audit Methodology) include:

- Walking Access,
- Biking Access,
- Transit Connectivity,
- Gaps, and
- Barriers.

Each index results in a score for the neighborhood. The individual index scores can then be used to tailor the transportation infrastructure investments to each community. An overall Mobility Index score (a cumulative score of the individual scores calculated for each of the five noted indices) is additionally derived to convey the overall mobility level of the subject neighborhood and provide a method to compare mobility levels as well as to prioritize improvements across neighborhoods within Polk County. A key part of each audit is a list of recommended safety, transit access, bicycle and sidewalk improvements for each neighborhood. These are improvements recommended to improve resident mobility.

At the conclusion of each audit, TPO staff conducted public outreach efforts in each neighborhood with a combination of in-person interviews (greeting and talking to residents at a neighborhood store and asking how they got there, etc.) and written questionnaires.

LINK: <https://www.polktpo.com/what-we-do/our-planning-documents/neighborhood-mobility-audits>