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16.0 Equity Analysis

To better understand the current conditions, opportunities, and challenges within the study area, an Equity Analysis was conducted to identify census tracts that may be exposed to a disproportionate amount of burdens or barriers than other tracts.

This analysis will be used to inform future scenario plans for the General Plan and inform policy recommendations moving forward. In considering equity in the development of the General Plan, the team will be better equipped to meaningfully address the barriers that degrade the quality of life for overburdened residents by the identification of policies, infrastructure projects, or engagement opportunities that can yield benefits to these areas. Reducing these burdens and barriers can enable them to fully benefit from opportunities ahead and contribute to the future of Santa Fe, while also raising overall prosperity and well-being in the region.¹

The Equity Analysis aims to provide a holistic and spatial review of indicators that can have an impact on the quality of life of people living in the study area. The analysis presents a comprehensive approach to identifying Equity Communities reflecting authoritative guidance and national best practice, but it is not an exhaustive analysis nor is it meant to supersede other analyses within the assessment report. Rather, the findings from this analysis are better used in tandem with other analyses to identify compounding vulnerabilities within census tracts, ultimately providing a better understanding of the cumulative effects of various conditions in tracts across the study area. Using the Equity Analysis findings with other data sets will help prioritize interventions where multiple burdens intersect, support tailored design interventions, and help craft a more targeted approach to policy development that moves from documenting burdens to developing actionable strategies that enable equitable growth for Santa Fe. To identify Equity Communities, this analysis reviews census tracts within the study area based on their incomes and quantifies their level of exposure to burdens or barriers across three data categories.

The first step is to identify census tracts based on the number of low-income households within the tract. Low-income status serves as the foundational criterion for identifying Equity Communities. Low-income households are households based on a standard family of four that make 200 percent or less than the federal poverty level, which is \$60,000 or less based on 2023 federal guidelines². This approach is based on the understanding that low-income status often reflects broader social and economic disadvantages. Individuals and families with limited financial resources typically lack the means to effectively navigate and overcome systemic barriers. As a result, they are more likely to face challenges and hardships that those with greater resources can avoid. For this analysis, a census tract is considered low income if it ranks at or above the 65th percentile of low-income households for census tracts within the study area. This means a low-income census tract has a higher proportion of low-income households compared to 65 percent of census tracts in the study area.

¹ **Growing Together Metro.** (n.d.). *Growing Together*. Retrieved October 15, 2025, from <https://growingtogethertmetro.org/>

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (2023). <https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1c92a9207f3ed5915ca020d58fe77696/detailed-guidelines-2023.pdf>

The second step is to analyze census tracts across household, transportation, and environmental health categories to identify their exposure to burdens or barriers. Each category includes a suite of indicators, summarized in Table 16-1, and further explained in Section 16.2. This process results in thematic mapping outputs, where the data is applied across the study area to identify which tracts are the most exposed to burdens or barriers based on the number of indicators it has at the 90th percentile across the three data categories. Percentiles are used to show how much a census tract is exposed to burdens or barriers compared to other tracts in the study area. This threshold aligns with the former White House [Climate Economic Justice Screening Tool \(CEJST\)](#) that identified disadvantaged communities across the United States through identifying census tracts by their low-income status and their exposure to burdens using percentiles, with the 90th percentile used to indicate significant exposure. The CEJST, and others such as the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) former EJSCREEN, used national averages to compare census tract data against while this analysis compares census tract data to study area averages. Comparing census tracts to the study area helps reflect variations in wages and cost of living, which vary greatly across regions. This approach helps reveal the spectrum of burdens or barriers experienced across the study area, showing that all tracts will have varying exposures to the indicators used in this analysis.

The final step of the analysis determines whether a census tract can be classified as an Equity Community. *If a census tract has one or more indicators at the 90th percentile and is low income, it is identified as an Equity Community for the intent and purpose of this analysis.* Ultimately, the analysis identifies the census tracts with the most acute need and with fewer means to overcome burdens or barriers experienced as adequately as other census tracts.

Table 16-1. Categories of Burden and Associated Indicators

Burden Category	Indicator	Explanation
Household	Rent Burden (households spending greater than 30 percent of income on rent)	High rent burden shows that households have less income available for essential needs and may be more economically vulnerable.
	Percentage of Renting Households	A high share of renters can reflect lower housing stability and less opportunity for building wealth.
	Percentage of Population under Age 18	A high share of young people may signal a need for more educational and social resources.
	Percentage of Population over Age 65	Older adults may live on fixed incomes and need greater access to health care, transportation, and social services. (Anecdotally, Santa Fe is home to many older and wealthier retirees.)

Burden Category	Indicator	Explanation
	Percentage of Female-headed Family Households	Family households led by women often have lower median incomes and fewer resources, which can increase vulnerability.
	Limited English	Limited English proficiency can make accessing services, securing employment, and participating in civic life more difficult.
	Unemployment Rate	High unemployment reflects challenges in accessing job opportunities and economic stagnation.
	Disability Status	People with disabilities may face physical and social barriers that limit access to employment, housing, and transportation.
	Veteran Status	Veterans may experience unique challenges, such as mental health issues, physical disabilities, or difficulty accessing services.
Transportation	Percent of Workers Commuting by Public Transit	Identifies communities that rely on public transit and may have fewer transportation alternatives, underscoring the need for reliable and accessible service.
	Percent of Workers Commuting by Bicycle	May indicate areas with limited transportation options and where residents face higher risks of traffic incidents if bike infrastructure is insufficient.
	Percent of Workers Commuting by Walking	May indicate areas with limited access to transportation options and where residents face higher risks of traffic incidents if pedestrian infrastructure is insufficient.
	Households with No Vehicle	Reflects greater dependence on community, transit, or walking, which can constrain access to jobs, services, and daily needs.

Burden Category	Indicator	Explanation
Environmental Health	Property Vacancy Rate	High vacancy rates can increase safety concerns and signal disinvestment and risk of displacement. They may also signal presence of second homes in wealthier census tracts.
	Traffic Proximity	Higher exposure to traffic-related noise and safety risks often impact low-income and minority communities.
	PM _{2.5} Exposure	Poor air quality can contribute to asthma and other health issues and is historically higher in disadvantaged neighborhoods.
	Hazardous Waste Proximity	Increased exposure to potential toxins and historically harmful land uses has been placed in vulnerable communities.

The findings of this analysis can help the City, its partners, and interested parties guide future investments that address the burdens or barriers experienced by Santa Feans. While citywide or regional policies and infrastructure projects could improve quality of life across the study area, the analysis shows that without a focused strategy to rectify and improve conditions for the Equity Communities identified, many of the potential benefits of projects and policies may not be realized for the people living in these census tracts.

16.1 Key Findings

- The analysis identified 13 census tracts as Equity Communities across the study area. These census tracts are predominantly west of Saint Francis Drive and east of Veterans Memorial Highway. All the census tracts identified as Equity Communities are designated as low income. *Figure 16- highlights these census tracts identified by the analysis.*
- The Equity Communities identified have a higher percentage of Hispanic, Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC) community members compared to the county averages. Of the 13 Equity Communities, only two census tracts – 102.05 and 103.09 – do not have a higher percentage of BIPOC community members compared to county levels. Generally, there is a correlation between ethnicity and income lower than the average, which is due to artificial barriers.
- The identified Equity Communities generally align with the findings of displacement risk in Chapter 7, Housing. The displacement analysis identified areas near Agua Fria due to higher prevalence of demographic and socioeconomic considerations related to vulnerability, such as of non-white population, poverty, cost-burden, renters, and recent increases in home values. Policy to retain existing naturally occurring affordable housing is encouraged in

addition to the inclusion of affordable housing units to rent and own in proposed new development.

- While this analysis identifies census tracts with environmental health burdens at the 90th percentile, the city of Santa Fe's water and air meet all requirements set by the EPA and New Mexico Environment Department. Additional information on national and state thresholds can be found in Chapter 12, Natural Resources. Chapter 12 notes that traffic is a consistent emitter, with loud muffler noise identified as the most consistent complaint from residents received by City Council. This may prompt mitigation approaches for the Agua Fria neighborhood that was identified as having the highest proximity to traffic in the city.
- Many of the Equity Community census tracts are adjacent to major roadways with high average daily traffic, contain many mobile home parks and RV communities, experience higher levels of unemployment, are more likely to have disabled persons, and have lower rates of car ownership. These census tracts are considered low income, and the analysis reveals that people living in these tracts are less likely to have the means to overcome the barriers to improve their quality of life.
- These findings suggest where transportation investments can be made, particularly Santa Fe Trails transit, to reduce the transportation cost burden and barrier on Equity Communities. Transportation indicators suggest that despite the burdens and barriers experienced by identified Equity Communities in Santa Fe, significant household income is expended on transportation, likely because public transit is not a viable option for most Equity Community households. Additionally, this mismatch of service and need may help inform future transit service. Chapter 10, Transportation, identifies a nearly 60 percent decline in ridership in the years following 2019. A transit network analysis would better align areas of need with transit service.

16.2 Methodology

The following section describes in further detail the process for identifying Equity Communities across the study area that are overexposed to burdens or barriers that affect residents' quality of life and their resilience to abrupt socioeconomic or environmental change. As discussed above, Equity Communities are defined as low-income census tracts that have a significant concentration of underserved or overburdened populations across a series of household, transportation, and environmental health indicators. This data-driven visual analysis will be used to help identify strategies that can rectify the burdens experienced by people living in the identified census tracts, which will then be incorporated into the General Plan update.

Data used in this analysis are from two sources; the demographic data, which consists of the low income, household indicators, and transportation indicators; and race and ethnicity from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, 2023. The remaining environmental health indicators are from the EPA, EJSCREEN Report, Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (Version 2.3), and 2022 ACS Data. Table 16-2 shows data sources used for each indicator.

Table 16-2. Data Sources for the Equity Analysis

Data Source	Data Indicators
U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, 2023	• Percent Below Poverty • Percent Persons of Color and Hispanic • Veteran Status • Rent Burden (Households spending >30% of income on rent) • Percentage of Renting Households • Percentage of Population under Age 18 • Percentage of Population over Age 65 • Percentage of Female-headed Family Households • Limited English • Unemployment Rate • Disability Status • Percent of Workers Commuting by Public Transit • Percent of Workers Commuting by Bicycle • Percent of Workers Commuting by Walking • Households with No Vehicle
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), EJSCREEN Report, Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (Version 2.3), 2025	• Property Vacancy Rate • Traffic Proximity • Diesel PM_{2.5} Exposure • Hazardous Waste Proximity

16.2.1 Low-income Status as a Foundation

This analysis is based on the assumption that low-income status is indicative of underlying disadvantage. In other words, having a low-income status is a key indicator that people and families would have less means to combat the challenges they experience and may be subject to burdens and barriers they would otherwise avoid if they had the requisite resources. As such, low-income status is used as a foundation to identify Equity Communities, highlighting that residents in these census tracts have fewer resources available to mitigate adverse burdens to which they are exposed.

These income indicators were selected using two approaches. First, following a similar methodology to the former White House [Climate Economic Justice Screening Tool \(CEJST\)](#), low income is defined as households earning less than or equal to 200 percent of the federal poverty level (or two times the federal poverty level). Twice (or 200 percent) the poverty level is used because it captures families that are still economically vulnerable even though they are above the federal poverty level. For example, according to 2023 guidelines, a family of four meets poverty guidelines if their household income is less than \$30,000, yet they are likely to still be economically vulnerable if their income is less than twice this

threshold at \$60,000³. Additionally, the CEJST uses this benchmark (200 percent of federal poverty level) to further identify households experiencing financial hardship as households in the top 65th percentile as especially vulnerable. This means a low-income census tract has a higher proportion of low-income households than 65 percent of census tracts in the study area. This analysis compares tracts to the study area average to help reflect local differences in wages, housing costs, and cost of living, which vary greatly across regions. The analysis measures not only whether residents are low income in a census tract but also the concentration of low-income households.

Figure 16-1 visualizes census tracts with low-income households at or above the 65th percentile compared to the study area. In total, 14 census tracts meet the definition of low income for this analysis. Most of the low-income census tracts are concentrated in the center-west of the study area around the Agua Fria neighborhood, which has also been identified as an area of higher displacement risk in Chapter 7, Housing. Tracts on the northern edge of the study area boundary (102.05 and 9405) and two in the southern edge of the study area (103.08 and 103.09) are identified as low income. Two tracts on either side of Saint Francis Drive (10.01 and 10.02) also meet the analysis' definition of low income. This may be due to the large number of multi-family residences, senior centers, and assisted living facilities.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (2023); <https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1c92a9207f3ed5915ca020d58fe77696/detailed-guidelines-2023.pdf>

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16.2.2 Equity Categories, Indicators, and Scoring

In addition to evaluating the low-income status of census tracts, the analysis uses a series of indicators associated with three categories to understand different burdens and barriers residents are subject to or experience within a census tract. *As discussed previously, equity indicators are grouped into the following three categories: household, transportation, and environmental health.* Each category includes a series of related data indicators that are used across a variety of authoritative national tools and analyses to identify Equity Communities.⁴⁵ These indicators are assessed using percentile thresholds to determine the level of relative disadvantage in each census tract compared to census tracts within the study area. For example, rent-burdened households (households spending over 30 percent of their income on rent) is an indicator associated with the household burden category.

Percentiles are used to show how much a census tract is exposed to burdens or barriers compared to other tracts in the study area. For example, if the number of rent-burdened households exceeds the 90th percentile compared to the study area within a census tract, it would meet the equity threshold for that indicator. The tract being in 90th percentile of rent-burdened households means that the percentage of rent-burdened households in the tract is higher than 90 percent of the census tracts within the study area. This threshold aligns with the former White House CEJST that identified disadvantaged communities across the United States by identifying census tracts by their low-income status and their exposure to burdens using percentiles, with the 90th percentile used to indicate significant exposure. Using the 90th percentile results in the identification of the top 10 percent of census tracts for each burden, meaning these tracts experience these barriers and burdens more acutely than 90 percent of the census tracts in the study area.

Guidance, including the CEJST and the EPA's former EJSCREEN, use the 90th percentile as the standard methodology to compare census tract data to national averages; correspondingly, this analysis identifies census tracts at the 90th percentile compared to the study area averages. The methodology uses the study area as a benchmark to compare census tract-level indicator values to more accurately reflect local conditions. This approach allows census tracts to be compared to one another within the unique context of the study area rather than compare the tracts against state- or national-level averages that may not provide an appropriate reflection of the local context. Table 16-3 provides each indicator per burden category and explains the importance of that indicator.

⁴ PolicyLink & USC Equity Research Institute. (n.d.). *National Equity Atlas: Research dashboards*. National Equity Atlas. <https://nationalequityatlas.org/research#dashboards>.

⁵ Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. (2023, May 1). *CalEnviroScreen 4.0*. California Environmental Protection Agency. <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen>.

Table 16-3. Categories of Burden and Associated Indicators

Burden Category	Indicator	Explanation
Household	Rent Burden (households spending greater than 30 percent of income on rent)	High rent burden shows that households have less income available for essential needs and may be more economically vulnerable.
	Percentage of Renting Households	A high share of renters can reflect lower housing stability and less opportunity for building wealth.
	Percentage of Population under Age 18	A high share of young people may signal a need for more educational and social resources.
	Percentage of Population over Age 65	Older adults may live on fixed incomes and need greater access to health care, transportation, and social services. Anecdotally, Santa Fe is home to many older and wealthier retirees.
	Percentage of Female-headed Family Households	Family households led by women often have lower median incomes and fewer resources, which can increase vulnerability.
	Limited English	Limited English proficiency can make accessing services, securing employment, and participating in civic life more difficult.
	Unemployment Rate	High unemployment reflects challenges in accessing job opportunities and economic stagnation.
	Disability Status	People with disabilities may face physical and social barriers that limit access to employment, housing, and transportation.
	Veteran Status	Veterans may experience unique challenges, such as mental health issues, physical disabilities, or difficulty accessing services.

Burden Category	Indicator	Explanation
Transportation	Percent of Workers Commuting by Public Transit	Identifies communities that rely on public transit and may have fewer transportation alternatives, underscoring the need for reliable and accessible service
	Percent of Workers Commuting by Bicycle	May indicate areas with limited transportation options and where residents face higher risks of traffic incidents if bike infrastructure is insufficient.
	Percent of Workers Commuting by Walking	May indicate areas with limited access to transportation options and where residents face higher risks of traffic incidents if pedestrian infrastructure is insufficient.
	Households with No Vehicle	Reflects greater dependence on community, transit, or walking, which can constrain access to jobs, services, and daily needs.
Environmental Health	Property Vacancy Rate	High vacancy rates can increase safety concerns and signal disinvestment and risk of displacement. They may also signal presence of second homes in wealthier census tracts.
	Traffic Proximity	Higher exposure to traffic-related noise and safety risks often impact low-income and minority communities.
	PM _{2.5} Exposure	Exposure to particulate matter can contribute to asthma and other health issues and is historically higher in disadvantaged neighborhoods.
	Hazardous Waste Proximity	Increased exposure to potential toxins and historically harmful land uses has been placed in vulnerable communities.

The methodology analyzes census tracts within the study area for each of the three burden categories to illustrate how census tracts score by category. Total scores are then assigned to the census tracts based on the number of indicators that exceed the 90th percentile across all three categories. *Ultimately, census tracts that are considered low income and have one or more indicators at the 90th percentile across all three categories are classified as an Equity Community.* The more indicators a census tract

has at the 90th percentile, the more burdened that tract is. It is important to note that the analysis does illustrate census tracts with or more indicators at the 90th percentile independent of its low-income status. The more indicators a tract has at the 90th percentile, the higher the level of need and urgency to address these conditions. The goal of this approach is to emphasize a central tenet of equity: directing resources to disadvantaged communities based on need.

While the result of the analysis identifies census tracts that experience the most cumulative burdens and barriers across all categories, the individual category scores and maps also provide further insight into the types of challenges people in these areas may experience across the household, transportation, and environmental health indicators themselves – whether the tracts are low income or not. For example, the household indicators map and accompanying data table reveal which specific indicators reach the threshold, such as which tracts have a high proportion of older residents or tracts that have a high proportion of rent-burdened residents.

It is important to note that some data imperfections may impact the findings, as some census tracts did not have a full record of data across the indicators. Additionally, the scale of the analysis (census tracts) may overgeneralize findings for some of the larger census tracts in the study area, where people living near the edge of the census tracts may not have the same experience as people living at the center of the tract, or where tracts are sparsely populated. Additionally, while the indicators used in this analysis reflect those used by authoritative tools and reflect national best practices, the results highlight some discrepancies between assumed vulnerabilities associated with these indicators and the unique culture of Santa Fe that buck national trends. For example, in the Santa Fe context, tracts with a higher proportion of adults 65 or older may be indicative of many retirees who choose to live in these areas rather than indicate a population of vulnerable older adults. Similarly, census tracts with high vacancy rates may be more indicative of the presence of second homes rather than numerous neglected or vacant properties.

To further contextualize the results, the methodology overlays both a low-income status and a race and ethnicity overlay per census tract to highlight the intersections of wealth and identity with the conditions evaluated throughout the analysis. These census tracts may not show extreme vulnerability across the household, environmental health, and transportation indicators alone, but they represent communities who may experience systemic or intergenerational disadvantages based on their race and ethnicity. Historical discriminatory policies that result in socioeconomic injustices are well documented, especially when combined with Indigenous heritage or regional exclusion. Moreover, there is a correlation between ethnicity and income in the United States, generally.

Finally, the analysis relies on census tract-level datasets. Sources for the analysis include 2023 U.S. Census, ACS 5-Year Estimates for socio-demographic indicators, including race and ethnicity, income, household indicators, and transportation indicators. The EPA's Environmental Justice Analysis Multisite was used to identify the Environmental Indicators and is based on their Version 2.3 data tool. Some of the indicators used in the analysis did not return a value for every census tract. These "null" values were flagged and not counted for or against a tract being identified as an Equity Community. As additional data becomes available, the analysis can be conducted again to further refine the findings.

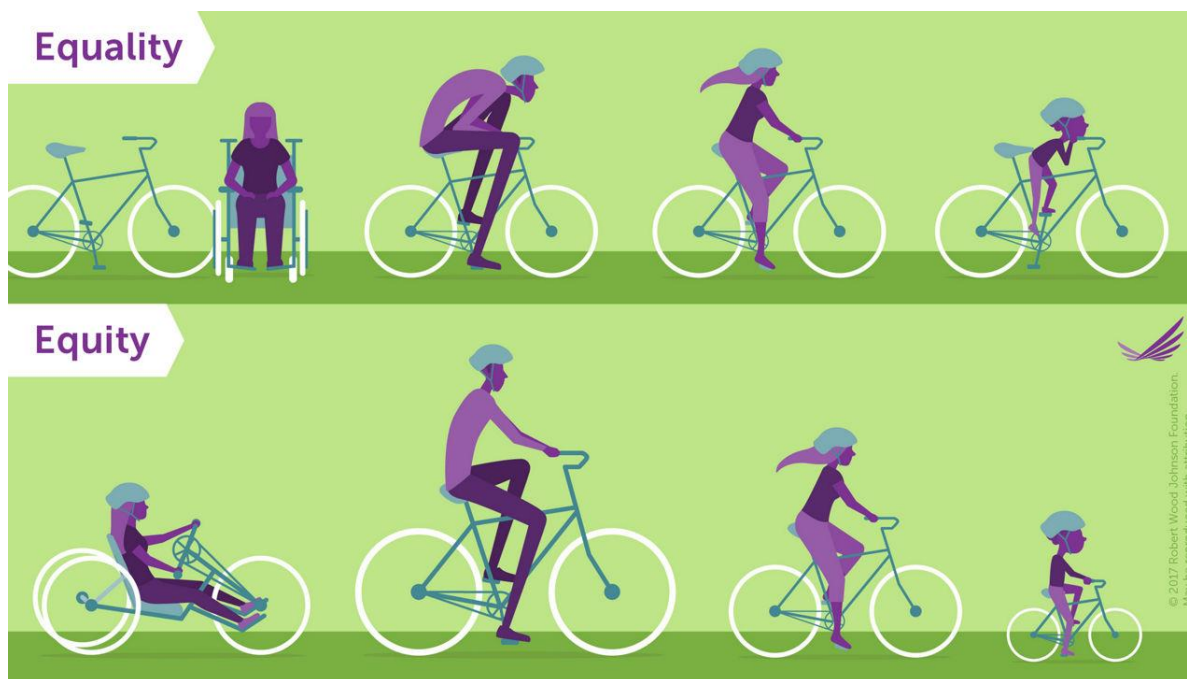
Equality is not the same thing as Equity

The Difference between Equality and Equity

In Resolution No. 2023.44, the City of Santa Fe defines Equity as, “...recognizing that not everyone starts from the same place due to relative advantages and barriers and, with that knowledge, eliminating disparities in policy, practice, and allocation of resources so that race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, income, and zip code do not predict one’s success, while also improving positive outcomes for all.”

Equity focuses on crafting solutions or providing services that match the demonstrated need, seeking consistent outcomes where unique needs are met with proportional investment. Equity differs from Equality in that Equality provides the same investment, regardless of need. This leads to inconsistent outcomes where blanket applications of one tool or resource are applied despite its applicability or appropriateness. As a result, only certain needs are met while others are left behind or unable to access the resources. Equity rectifies the shortcomings of Equality by understanding the unique needs of people or groups and crafting solutions tailored to those needs.

The Differences between Equality and Equity. Source: the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



16.3 Analysis Findings

The following sections detail the analysis findings. An analysis was conducted for each of the data categories (household, transportation, and environmental health) to provide an understanding of what types of burdens are experienced across the study area. An overall analysis then identifies the total number of indicators a census tract has at the 90th percentile across all the data categories and highlights them on a map. The map overlays each tract's low-income status to identify which tracts are considered an Equity Community.

16.3.1 Household Indicators

The household category of indicators is intended to highlight census tracts that include residents within a household who are vulnerable and may be at greater risk of experiencing the negative effects of socioeconomic inequalities or environmental and safety hazards. These indicators are typically used in evaluating demographics and identifying vulnerable residents who are least able to withstand changes in socioeconomic conditions or environmental or health change or disasters. Table 16-4 further defines the household burden indicators used for the analysis, and Table 16-5 summarizes the census tract performance across household burden indicators.

Figure 16-2 highlights census tracts within the study area that have one or more household burden indicators at the 90th percentile. Therefore, the highlighted census tracts are those that are overexposed/overburdened by the household indicators used in this analysis.

In general, the census tracts that have one or more household burden indicators at the 90th percentile are also designated as low-income census tracts. These census tracts are generally located around Agua Fria and adjacent to the airport on the western edge of the city of Santa Fe. Two notable exceptions are a census tract in downtown Santa Fe and another in Tierra Contenta. In downtown Santa Fe, the census tracts meet the indicator thresholds because of high rates of renters, rent burdened households, and residents with disabilities. In Tierra Contenta, census tract 10.02 meets the threshold for renter population, who may reside in many of the affordable and market rate multifamily properties in the tract. The census tracts adjacent to the airport (13.04, 13.05, and 13.06) exhibits a high share of renters, people with limited English proficiency, and family households headed by single women, though the high percentage of female-led households may reflect local trends rather than vulnerability as in other American cities. Tract 103.09 at the southern edge of the study area is highlighted due to a high percentage of renters and veterans living within the tract. Tracts in the northern part of the study area have a high percentage of residents above the age of 65, but are largely not low-income areas.

Table 16-4. Household Category Equity Indicators

Indicator	Explanation
Rent Burden (households spending greater than 30 percent of income on rent)	High rent burden shows that households have less income available for essential needs and may be more economically vulnerable.
Percentage of Renting Households	A high share of renters can reflect lower housing stability and less opportunity for building wealth.

Indicator	Explanation
Percentage of Population under Age 18	A high share of young people may signal a need for more educational and social resources.
Percentage of Population over Age 65	Older adults may live on fixed incomes and need greater access to health care, transportation, and social services. Anecdotally, Santa Fe is home to many older and wealthier retirees.
Percentage of Female-headed Family Households	Family households led by women often have lower median incomes and fewer resources, which can increase vulnerability.
Limited English	Limited English proficiency can make accessing services, securing employment, and participating in civic life more difficult.
Unemployment Rate	High unemployment reflects challenges in accessing job opportunities and economic stagnation.
Disability Status	People with disabilities may face physical and social barriers that limit access to employment, housing, and transportation.
Veteran Status	Veterans may experience unique challenges, such as mental health issues, physical disabilities, or difficulty accessing services.

Table 16-5. Summary of Census Tract Performance across Household Indicators

Census Tract	Renter	Rent Burden	Age above 65	Age under 18	Female-led Households	Limited English Proficiency	Unemployment	Disabled Population	Veteran Status	Total 90th % Household Indicators
1.02	21%	65%	52%	6%	7%	2%	2%	14%	4.1%	1
1.03	24%	76%	57%	4%	4%	0%	5%	15%	4.4%	2
2.01	39%	34%	38%	15%	8%	1%	2%	7%	5.2%	0
2.02	22%	43%	39%	11%	13%	2%	9%	12%	6.0%	0
3	54%	34%	36%	9%	14%	3%	8%	11%	5.1%	0
4	76%	68%	81%	3%	5%	3%	0%	36%	9.2%	3
5	39%	40%	47%	9%	2%	0%	7%	11%	6.7%	0
6	44%	65%	42%	8%	3%	1%	5%	10%	4.5%	0
7	51%	30%	23%	4%	3%	2%	5%	19%	6.6%	0
8	36%	49%	25%	16%	22%	2%	1%	16%	7.3%	0
9	30%	51%	38%	11%	15%	1%	3%	21%	8.5%	0
10.01	55%	51%	43%	8%	2%	1%	3%	20%	6.5%	0
10.02	79%	54%	20%	17%	23%	10%	5%	17%	3.1%	1
11.02	55%	41%	25%	11%	13%	3%	3%	11%	8.2%	0
11.03	49%	45%	25%	14%	9%	2%	4%	12%	10.4%	1
11.05	39%	31%	31%	9%	6%	2%	13%	12%	2.3%	1
11.06	40%	75%	37%	12%	11%	3%	2%	27%	5.5%	2
11.07	31%	62%	26%	13%	3%	0%	5%	21%	9.5%	0
12.02	60%	51%	12%	23%	21%	5%	10%	20%	3.0%	1

Census Tract	Renter	Rent Burden	Age above 65	Age under 18	Female-led Households	Limited English Proficiency	Unemployment	Disabled Population	Veteran Status	Total 90th % Household Indicators
12.03	25%	29%	14%	23%	11%	10%	11%	9%	8.9%	0
12.05	35%	46%	6%	34%	25%	5%	4%	9%	5.8%	2
12.06	32%	43%	11%	31%	22%	5%	3%	9%	3.4%	1
12.07	20%	56%	13%	26%	14%	8%	6%	13%	4.3%	1
13.01	38%	53%	19%	15%	4%	3%	5%	15%	7.8%	0
13.02	48%	43%	6%	25%	25%	15%	2%	11%	3.5%	2
13.04	26%	57%	22%	15%	10%	10%	25%	34%	3.7%	2
13.05	25%	82%	11%	18%	8%	4%	4%	7%	5.7%	1
13.06	46%	60%	6%	29%	34%	0%	3%	10%	3.1%	2
102.04	5%	60%	54%	12%	1%	0%	3%	14%	10.2%	2
102.05	22%	0%	52%	4%	3%	0%	2%	14%	3.1%	1
103.04	13%	65%	35%	14%	7%	3%	2%	14%	9.2%	0
103.08	20%	44%	24%	19%	12%	5%	7%	15%	7.2%	0
103.09	43%	84%	29%	8%	2%	0%	7%	16%	10.9%	2
103.15	28%	40%	39%	9%	12%	0%	1%	18%	9.5%	1
103.16	21%	46%	38%	15%	8%	0%	8%	14%	9.4%	0
103.17	20%	26%	31%	14%	1%	0%	0%	5%	3.7%	0
103.18	9%	0%	22%	23%	12%	0%	3%	13%	9.3%	0
104	14%	17%	43%	10%	5%	1%	6%	14%	8.3%	0
105	16%	46%	50%	9%	2%	4%	5%	11%	5.6%	0

Census Tract	Renter	Rent Burden	Age above 65	Age under 18	Female-led Households	Limited English Proficiency	Unemployment	Disabled Population	Veteran Status	Total 90th % Household Indicators
106.01	8%	21%	29%	19%	9%	0%	6%	18%	10.8%	1
106.02	6%	34%	46%	7%	3%	0%	3%	10%	9.0%	0
106.03	18%	61%	25%	23%	0%	0%	2%	11%	3.0%	0
107.01	6%	48%	44%	11%	4%	0%	5%	9%	7.8%	0
107.02	21%	70%	33%	15%	8%	0%	2%	13%	2.3%	0
108	18%	66%	31%	10%	6%	1%	7%	13%	5.6%	0
109	18%	40%	30%	13%	11%	8%	8%	9%	6.4%	0
9404	17%	46%	29%	18%	9%	7%	13%	14%	4.1%	1
9405	13%	35%	30%	16%	10%	8%	10%	17%	6.6%	0
9800	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1.7%	0
9802	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.0%	1
90th Percentile										
Bold Tract Name indicates it is Low-Income										
"—" values indicate missing data										

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



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16.3.2 Transportation Indicators

The transportation category of indicators is intended to highlight census tracts with residents who have limited means of transportation. Typically, residents with limited transportation options are less able to access employment, education, recreation, and other essential services, which significantly impacts their quality of life and ability to support themselves and their families.

The following indicators provide insight into whether residents in census tracts can sufficiently and effectively travel within the study area to access key destinations. Table 16-6 further defines the transportation indicators used for the analysis, and Table 16-7 summarizes census tract performance across transportation indicators.

Figure 16-3 highlights census tracts within the study area that have one or more transportation equity indicators at the 90th percentile. Therefore, the highlighted census tracts are those that are overexposed/overburdened by the transportation burden indicators used in this analysis.

Census tracts in and around the downtown center of the study area are flagged because of a higher-than-average number of households without vehicles available, commuters walking, biking, or taking transit to work. While some of these tracts are flagged as low-income, note that census tracts flagged for transportation equity are not all low income. Some tracts near downtown Santa Fe such as 2.01 and 1.03 have indicators that meet the threshold for workers commuting to work by public transit or bike. However, this may be a lifestyle preference as these tracts are not considered low-income and would likely have the means to access opportunity throughout the study area. In contrast, tracts 10.02 and 10.01 along Saint Francis Drive have a higher-than-average number of households without vehicles available and they are low income, which may be more indicative of transportation need.

Some of the “0.0%” results in Table 16-7 may be indicative of data gaps rather than there being an absence of people who bike. The analysis suggests further investigation into the availability of data to provide a more complete picture of transportation burdens across the study area.

Table 16-6. Transportation Category Equity Indicators

Indicator	Explanation
Percent of Workers Commuting by Public Transit	Identifies communities that rely on public transit and may have fewer transportation alternatives, underscoring the need for reliable and accessible service.
Percent of Workers Commuting by Bicycle	May indicate areas with limited transportation options and where residents face higher risks of traffic incidents if bike infrastructure is insufficient.
Percent of Workers Commuting by Walking	May indicate areas with limited access to transportation options and where residents face higher risks of traffic incidents if pedestrian infrastructure is insufficient.
Households with No Vehicle	Reflects greater dependence on community, transit, or walking, which can constrain access to jobs, services, and daily needs.

Table 16-7. Summary of Census Tract Performance across Transportation Indicators

Census Tract	No Vehicle Available	Public Transit Commute	Commute by Bike	Commute by Walking	Total 90th % Transportation Indicators
1.02	0%	3%	0%	0%	0
1.03	1%	0%	5%	0%	1
2.01	1%	9%	0%	0%	1
2.02	2%	2%	0%	2%	0
3	8%	0%	1%	10%	1
4	17%	0%	0%	19%	2
5	1%	0%	0%	20%	1
6	4%	1%	3%	9%	0
7	6%	0%	2%	5%	0
8	8%	0%	2%	1%	0
9	2%	0%	1%	3%	0
10.01	11%	0%	2%	6%	1
10.02	12%	4%	3%	5%	1
11.02	3%	1%	0%	3%	0
11.03	10%	4%	1%	1%	0
11.05	2%	3%	2%	0%	0
11.06	15%	0%	0%	0%	1
11.07	5%	0%	1%	4%	0
12.02	10%	2%	1%	2%	0
12.03	1%	1%	0%	1%	0

Census Tract	No Vehicle Available	Public Transit Commute	Commute by Bike	Commute by Walking	Total 90th % Transportation Indicators
12.05	0%	0%	0%	0%	0
12.06	5%	5%	0%	0%	1
12.07	5%	0%	0%	0%	0
13.01	4%	4%	0%	1%	0
13.02	2%	1%	0%	2%	0
13.04	1%	0%	0%	1%	0
13.05	2%	0%	0%	1%	0
13.06	1%	2%	0%	4%	0
102.04	5%	0%	1%	1%	0
102.05	0%	0%	0%	1%	0
103.04	7%	0%	1%	1%	0
103.08	3%	0%	0%	5%	0
103.09	1%	0%	0%	7%	0
103.15	3%	0%	0%	1%	0
103.16	2%	0%	0%	0%	0
103.17	1%	0%	1%	0%	0
103.18	2%	0%	1%	0%	0
104	3%	1%	1%	6%	0
105	1%	0%	0%	2%	0
106.01	1%	0%	1%	2%	0
106.02	2%	1%	0%	2%	0
106.03	0%	0%	0%	2%	0

Census Tract	No Vehicle Available	Public Transit Commute	Commute by Bike	Commute by Walking	Total 90th % Transportation Indicators
107.01	0%	1%	0%	1%	0
107.02	1%	0%	0%	4%	0
108	1%	0%	0%	2%	0
109	3%	1%	0%	1%	0
9404	3%	0%	0%	1%	0
9405	5%	0%	0%	1%	0
9800	0%	0%	0%	0%	0
9802	0%	0%	0%	0%	0
90th Percentile					
Bold Tract Name indicates it is Low Income					
"—" values indicate missing data					

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The map displays the city of Santa Fe and its surrounding areas, including White Rock, Los Alamos, Los Cerillos, and Madrid. It highlights transportation indicators at the 90th percentile and above, with a legend indicating the study area, Santa Fe city limits, low income areas, and transportation indicators (0, 1, 2). A scale bar and north arrow are also present.

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16.3.3 Environmental Health Indicators

The environmental health category of indicators is intended to highlight census tracts in which residents are exposed to environmental pollutants or noxious uses that impact their health and quality of life. The following indicators provide insight as to the extent to which residents in census tracts are exposed to conditions that, at a minimum, degrade quality of life and, at worst, lead to long-term health issues, such as asthma. Table 16-8 further defines the environmental health indicators used for the analysis, and Table 16-9 summarizes census tract performance across environmental health indicators.

Figure 16-4 highlights census tracts within the study area that have one or more environmental burden indicators at the 90th percentile. Therefore, the highlighted census tracts are those that are overexposed to the environmental burden indicators used in this analysis. These indicators are significant because they reflect environmental health risks and exposures that can negatively affect residents' well-being and quality of life. The index includes vacancy rate, traffic proximity, pollution exposure (diesel PM_{2.5} concentration), and proximity to hazardous waste sites (such as auto shops, industrial lands, and disposal sites).

Twelve census tracts have one or more environmental health indicators at the 90th percentile. Most are near major roadways, including Saint Francis Drive and Hyde Park Road. These census tracts are concentrated around downtown, where Saint Francis Drive and Hyde Park Road converge, suggesting tracts that are located next to busier roads with higher daily traffic volumes. Nearby autobody shops and warehouses along Saint Francis Drive may also contribute to the tracts' proximity to hazardous waste. Tracts, such as 104, that have a high vacancy percentage may indicate the presence of second homes within the tract, as it is not a low-income tract.

Table 16-8. Environmental Health Category Indicators

Indicator	Explanation
Property Vacancy Rate	High vacancy rates can increase safety concerns and signal disinvestment and risk of displacement. They may also signal presence of second homes in wealthier census tracts.
Traffic Proximity	Higher exposure to traffic-related noise and safety risks often impact low-income and minority communities.
PM _{2.5} Exposure	Poor air quality can contribute to asthma and other health issues and is historically higher in disadvantaged neighborhoods.
Hazardous Waste Proximity	Increased exposure to potential toxins and historically harmful land uses has been placed in vulnerable communities.

Table 16-9. Summary of Census Tract Performance across Environmental Health Indicators

Census Tract	Total Property Vacancy Rate	Traffic Proximity and Volume (daily traffic count/distance)	Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	Hazardous Waste Proximity	Total 90th % Environmental Indicators
1.02	0.9%	363,009	5	1	0
1.03	16.5%	378,553	5.06	1.6	0
2.01	7.3%	257,243	5.11	0.9	0
2.02	0.0%	481,830	5.2	1.5	0
3	16.6%	755,979	5.13	3.2	2
4	6.9%	933,966	5.11	1.9	1
5	15.3%	523,636	5.07	1.2	0
6	4.8%	891,107	5.13	2.5	2
7	5.5%	808,360	5.16	2	0
8	0.0%	625,716	5.21	1.5	0
9	1.0%	560,622	5.22	1.5	0
10.01	20.5%	609,012	5.14	2.3	1
10.02	1.2%	516,782	5.19	1.6	0
11.02	7.7%	555,314	5.14	1	0
11.03	5.9%	585,288	5.21	1.3	0
11.05	2.9%	618,192	5.19	1.1	0
11.06	8.6%	512,371	5.27	2.2	0
11.07	1.9%	626,260	5.24	1.6	1
12.02	0.0%	475,552	5.29	1.8	0

Census Tract	Total Property Vacancy Rate	Traffic Proximity and Volume (daily traffic count/distance)	Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	Hazardous Waste Proximity	Total 90th % Environmental Indicators
12.03	5.8%	353,530	5.33	1	1
12.05	0.0%	399,414	5.29	0.8	0
12.06	0.0%	534,126	5.29	1.3	0
12.07	0.0%	419,612	5.31	1.1	1
13.01	8.8%	270,000	5.28	0.6	0
13.02	3.4%	524,081	5.28	1.1	0
13.04	0.0%	280,771	5.28	0.6	0
13.05	9.5%	277,372	5.28	0.6	0
13.06	0.0%	331,754	5.28	0.8	0
102.04	0.0%	147,931	5.2	0.5	0
102.05	0.0%	65,028	4.91	0.2	0
103.04	9.3%	192,211	5.3	0.6	0
103.08	0.0%	149,049	5.36	0.6	1
103.09	12.3%	29,827	5.1	0	0
103.15	8.0%	538,724	5.24	1.3	0
103.16	3.6%	604,200	5.21	1	0
103.17	22.2%	387,231	5.27	1.1	1
103.18	0.0%	475,912	5.28	1.8	0
104	27.8%	360,559	4.98	0.8	1
105	0.0%	252,837	4.87	0.7	0
106.01	13.2%	272,584	5.25	0.7	0

Census Tract	Total Property Vacancy Rate	Traffic Proximity and Volume (daily traffic count/distance)	Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	Hazardous Waste Proximity	Total 90th % Environmental Indicators
106.02	0.0%	47,381	5.17	0.1	0
106.03	0.0%	65,117	5.25	0.2	0
107.01	1.2%	39,489	5.02	0	0
107.02	0.0%	285,844	5.1	0.5	0
108	20.6%	133,093	4.71	0.2	1
109	0.0%	136,824	5.3	0.5	0
9404	2.5%	78,663	5.05	0.3	0
9405	4.0%	-	4.89	0	0
9800	0.0%	103,919	5.31	0.9	1
9802	0.0%	42,341	4.56	0.1	0
90th Percentile					
Bold Tract Name indicates it is Low Income					
"0%" values indicate zero					

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), EJSCREEN Report, Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (Version 2.3), 2025



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16.3.4 Analysis Results and Overall Equity Communities

Figure 16- shows the results of the analysis, identifying how all census tracts within the study area scored based on the analysis. The map symbolizes census tracts based on the number of indicators it has at the 90th percentile across all categories, with darker shaded tracts having more indicators that exceed the threshold. Low-income status is overlaid on the tracts using a diagonal hatch, helping to identify which tracts meet the definition of an Equity Community. Figure 16-6 shows only the tracts that meet the criteria of an Equity Community (one or more indicators at the 90th percentile and low-income).

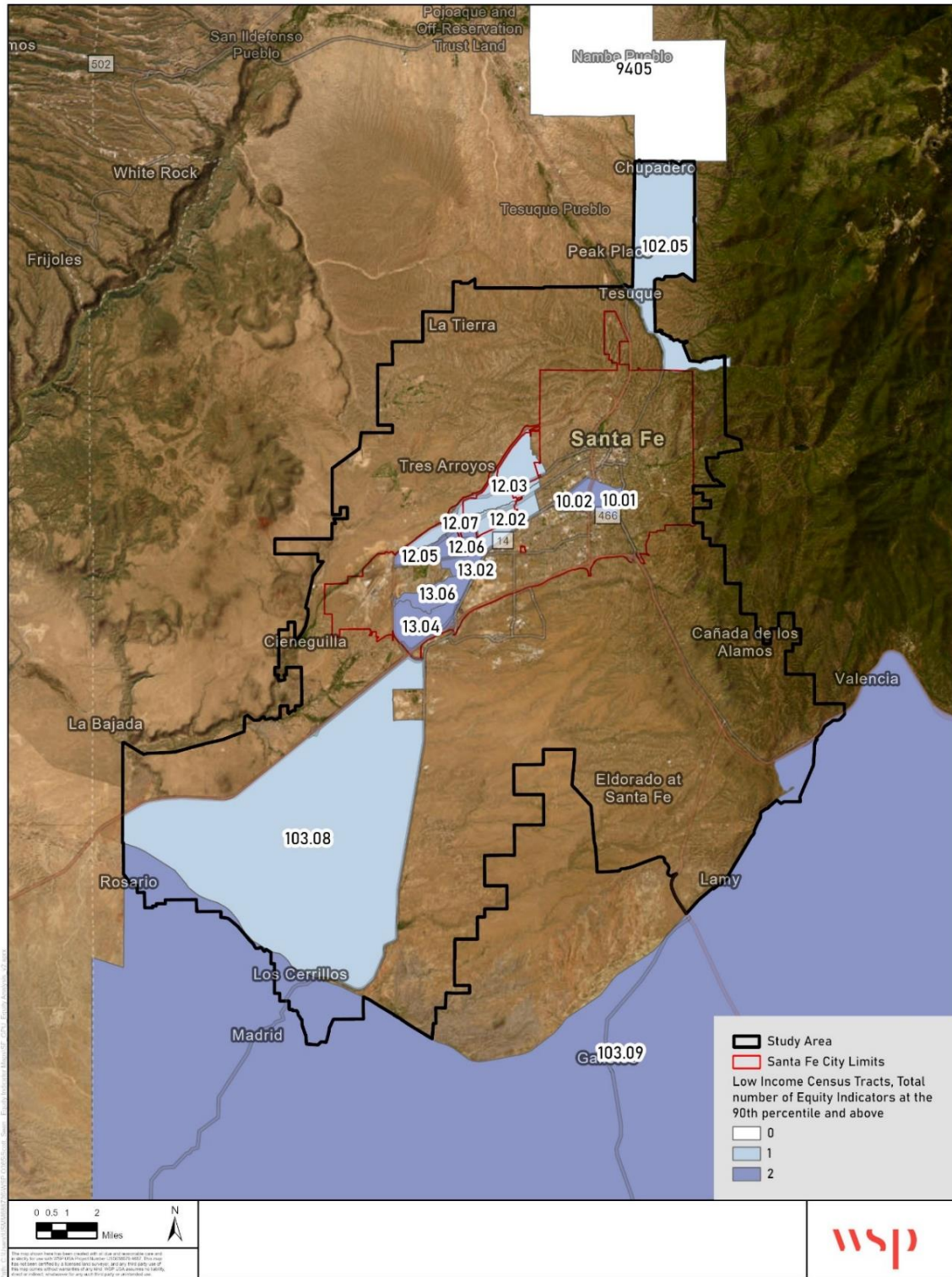
The overall and final identification of Equity Communities generally aligns with the results of the three indicator categories but further shows the extent to which census tracts in the study area are overexposed and overburdened to the household, transportation, and environmental burden indicators. When compared to the preceding maps that result in individual indicator findings, some tracts are screened out when adding the low-income check, revealing that most of the Equity Communities are west of Saint Francis Drive/US-285 and adjacent to one another. *In total, 13 census tracts meet the criteria of an Equity Community.*

Census tracts that border Agua Fria Street and Cerrillos Road are most consistently flagged across the three equity categories, such as census tracts 12.02, 12.03, 12.05–12.07, and 13.02. Census tracts toward the west of the study area, such as those mentioned in the preceding sentence, are flagged by the methodology, while census tracts adjacent to downtown are not. Tracts 10.01 and 10.02 are close to the cluster of tracts while tracts 102.05 and 9405 to the northern edge of the study area are also flagged. However, Tract 9405 is the only low-income tract to not have any indicator at the 90th percentile. Census tracts flagged by the methodology are typically adjacent to other flagged census tracts. Census tract 103.09 is the exception, it borders the southern edge of the study area overall is furthest from the cluster of communities in the southwest of the city. The overall results shows that most low-income census tracts in the southwest of the study area are overexposed to the indicators used in this analysis. Table 16-10 provides equity indicator scores, tallying up the total number of indicators per census tract that were flagged at the 90th percentile and specifies which census tracts are designated as low-income.



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Figure 16-6. Equity Community Census Tracts



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 16-10. Overall Equity Indicator Scores

Census Tract	Overall Equity Indicator Score	Low Income
4	6	
1.03	3	
3	3	
11.06	3	
6	2	
10.01	2	Yes
10.02	2	Yes
12.05	2	Yes
12.06	2	Yes
12.07	2	Yes
13.02	2	Yes
13.04	2	Yes
13.06	2	Yes
102.04	2	
103.09	2	Yes
1.02	1	
2.01	1	
5	1	
11.03	1	
11.05	1	
11.07	1	
12.02	1	Yes
12.03	1	Yes
13.05	1	
102.05	1	Yes
103.08	1	Yes
103.15	1	
103.17	1	
104	1	
106.01	1	
108	1	
9404	1	

Census Tract	Overall Equity Indicator Score	Low Income
9800	1	
9802	1	
2.02	0	
7	0	
8	0	
9	0	
11.02	0	
13.01	0	
103.04	0	
103.16	0	
103.18	0	
105	0	
106.02	0	
106.03	0	
107.01	0	
107.02	0	
109	0	
9405	0	Yes

16.3.5 Race and Ethnicity Integration

In many communities across the United States, ethnicity, race, and income are intimately linked and often track with whether a community is or is not overburdened. BIPOC disparities reflect a long history in the United States of racial discrimination. For example, Indigenous peoples faced forced relocation and the annexing of their lands; Hispanic immigrants face discrimination based on national origin and language, limited access to jobs and housing, and risk of deportation; and Black Americans have a legacy of chattel slavery, segregation, and Jim Crow policies that denied their full rights as citizens, among many other instances of federal and state policy creating systemic inequality.⁶

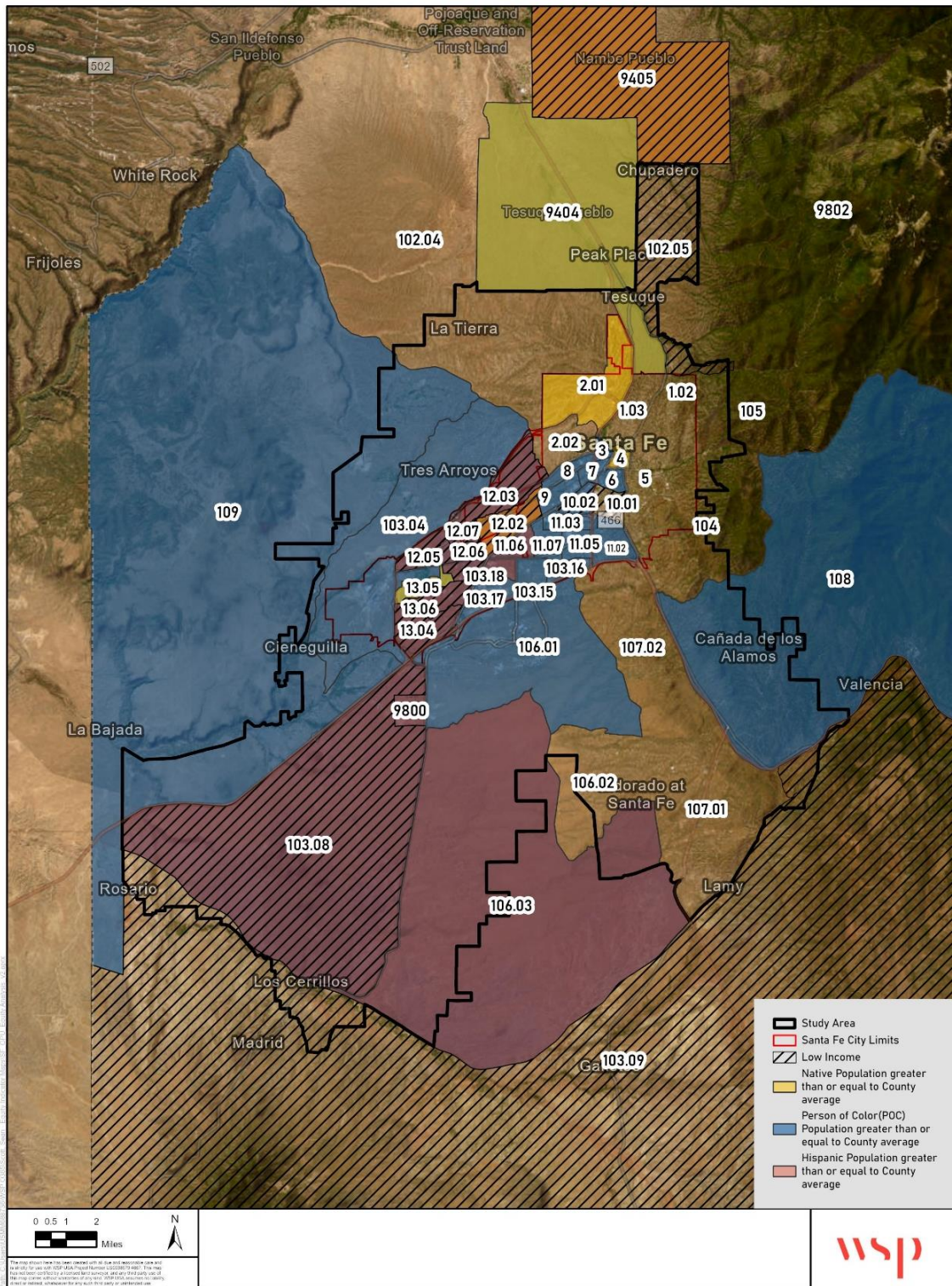
As a result, communities across the country that have a higher percentage of BIPOC and Hispanic community members are more likely than not to either be low income, disadvantaged, or classified as an environmental justice community.⁷ However, this trend is not a result of BIPOC and Hispanic community members being inherently disadvantaged because of their identity, but rather the result of decades and centuries long discriminative policies. As such, the methodology for this analysis does not directly incorporate race and ethnicity into the three burden categories to avoid the assumption that being of a certain racial or ethnic identity directly correlates to being disadvantaged. However, to ensure the framework is inclusive of systemic and structural disparities, an additional layer of analysis was conducted to examine the racial and ethnic composition of each census tract and identify whether the tract is also low income. This step of the analysis is designed to identify whether communities of color are disproportionately represented in high-vulnerability areas and to support future planning efforts that prioritize racial equity alongside socioeconomic and environmental factors.

Figure 16-7 shows census tracts with native population or persons of color greater than the county average. The study area and the city of Santa Fe population is predominantly non-white, with most census tracts averaging more BIPOC residents than the county average. The same figure also shows that not all census tracts where the BIPOC population is above the county average are low income. Almost all the census tracts west of Saint Francis Drive are majority BIPOC, with an almost even split between low-income and middle-class or wealthy census tracts. Most of the census tracts east of Saint Francis Drive are neither low-income nor majority BIPOC. Per the results of the Equity Analysis, the Equity Communities identified are almost all census tracts that include BIPOC or Indigenous population greater than the county average except for tracts 102.05 and 103.09.

⁶ <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/systematic-inequality-economic-opportunity/#:~:text=The%20U.S.%20economy%20was%20built,benefits%2C%20and%20perpetuated%20employment%20discrimination.>

⁷ Natalie Popovich, Anjali Jain Figueroa, Deborah Ann Sunter, Monisha Shah, Identifying disadvantaged communities in the United States: An energy-oriented mapping tool that aggregates environmental and socioeconomic burdens, Energy Research & Social Science, Volume 109, 2024, 103391, ISSN 2214-6296, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2023.103391>. (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2214629623004516>)

Figure 16-7. BIPOC and Hispanic Residents across the Study Area



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

16.4 Integrating the Equity Analysis with Other Chapter Analyses

As a proposed next step to further inform planning recommendations, identified Equity Communities should be overlaid with key spatial datasets to allow practitioners and the public to understand not only who is most impacted, but where, what, and how those impacts intersect with the built, creative, economic, social, and natural environment. Additional spatial analysis could include overlaying the Equity Analysis findings with the following subjects:

- **Environmental Hazards:** For example, flood zones, industrial emissions, and contaminated lands.
- **Transportation Infrastructure:** For example, transit routes and sidewalk and bike network gaps.
- **Industrial and Utility Land Use:** For example, proximity to heavy industrial zones or energy infrastructure.
- **Tribal Lands:** For example, integration of culturally significant sites and consultation with tribal representatives for Indigenous equity inclusion.
- **Community Assets:** For example, schools, parks, libraries, health clinics, and cultural centers to evaluate investment gaps.

Combining these analyses can highlight the ways in which certain areas of the city are underinvested or less resilient to socioeconomic and environmental stressors, indicating that the plan should put forth strategies that address these disparities so residents across Santa Fe are able to participate in a more inclusive and equitable future.

16.5 Conclusion

This multi-layered analysis demonstrates that equity considerations are not only based on demographics and vulnerability, but also contextualized within broader systems of access, infrastructure, and opportunity. The findings of the Equity Analysis will inform conscientious and thoughtful policy recommendations, transportation infrastructure recommendations, and land use suggestions. The core question the findings ask us as we move forward is, “how do we consider Equity Communities to benefit from recommendations, or at minimum, how do we not continue to overburden them?” The preceding findings underscore one of the most critical elements of equity planning: carrying forward the findings to demonstrate where investment is needed and why, ultimately informing how we make decisions about the future. The Equity Analysis provides an opportunity to advance the goals and vision of Santa Fe Forward in an equitable manner, supporting targeted investments and strategies to reduce barriers, mitigate burdens and improve quality of life for all Santa Fe residents.