

Categories of Interest

Disadvantaged communities, including low-income communities, communities of color, people with disabilities, older adults, unhoused individuals, and communities faced with environmental or pollution burden, are often also burdened by lack of appropriate facilities for bicycling and walking. It is important to identify disadvantaged communities and to analyze the infrastructure that is provided in these communities. Disadvantaged communities often have a history disinvestment in infrastructure. The California Air Resources Board cites that historical practices often limited access to public services and public funding for communities based on race or ethnicity.⁹ People living in disadvantaged communities often face difficulty accessing transportation and are more likely to be reliant on walking, bicycling, or public transit.

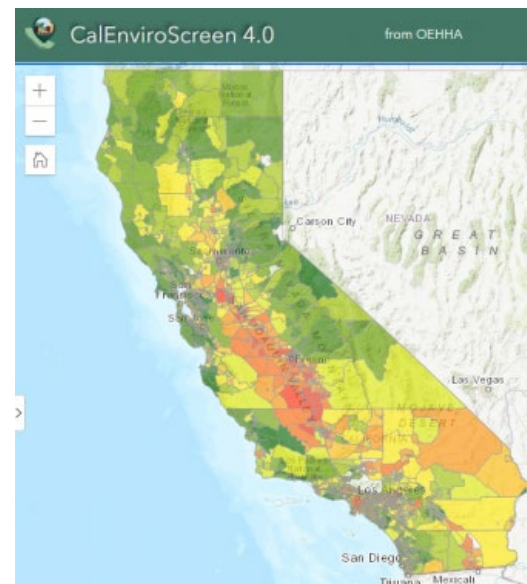
Jurisdictions throughout the United States are working to address these historical inequities in infrastructure and transportation access. This includes the investigation of deficiencies that exist in existing infrastructure and prioritizing new investment in these areas. The federal government has created an initiative to further these goals, titled Justice40. The U.S. Department of Transportation has indicated that this initiative is designed to address the lack of investment in disadvantaged communities. The Department has set a goal to allocate at least 40 percent of the benefits from federal investments to disadvantaged communities.¹⁰

This Categories of Interest chapter discusses disadvantaged communities in Chico and

provides an analysis of transportation infrastructure in these areas.

Community Identification

The presence of disadvantaged communities, those with lower income or increased exposure to environmental or other hazards, can be measured in several ways.



CalEnviroScreen 4.0 tool

The California EnviroScreen 4.0 tool from the State Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment is one such tool. The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)'s October 2021 Proposed SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities map identifies the highest scoring 25 percent of census tracts from CalEnviroScreen 4.0.

⁹ <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/opportunities-address-past-inequity-sustainable-communities>

¹⁰ <https://www.transportation.gov/equity-Justice40>



There is one Chico Census Tract within the CalEnviroScreen 4.0 tool's Top 25 percent. Tract 6007001300 has a population of 3,689 and percentile of 76.8. This tract's Pollution Burden Percentile is notably high, at 87. The highest exposure areas are listed in Table 11.

Table 11: Census Tract 6007001300 Indicators

Environmental Effects/Exposures	Percentile
Cleanup Sites	98
Groundwater Threats	93
Hazardous Waste	63
Solid Waste	89
Diesel Particulate Matter	72
Pesticides	73
Lead from Housing	76

Source: American Community Survey 2019 estimates

The Proposed SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities map also identifies one Tribal Area within the City of Chico – the Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria, which is located less than 4 miles south of Downtown Chico.



Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria seal

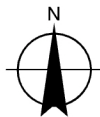
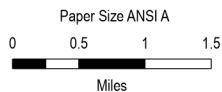
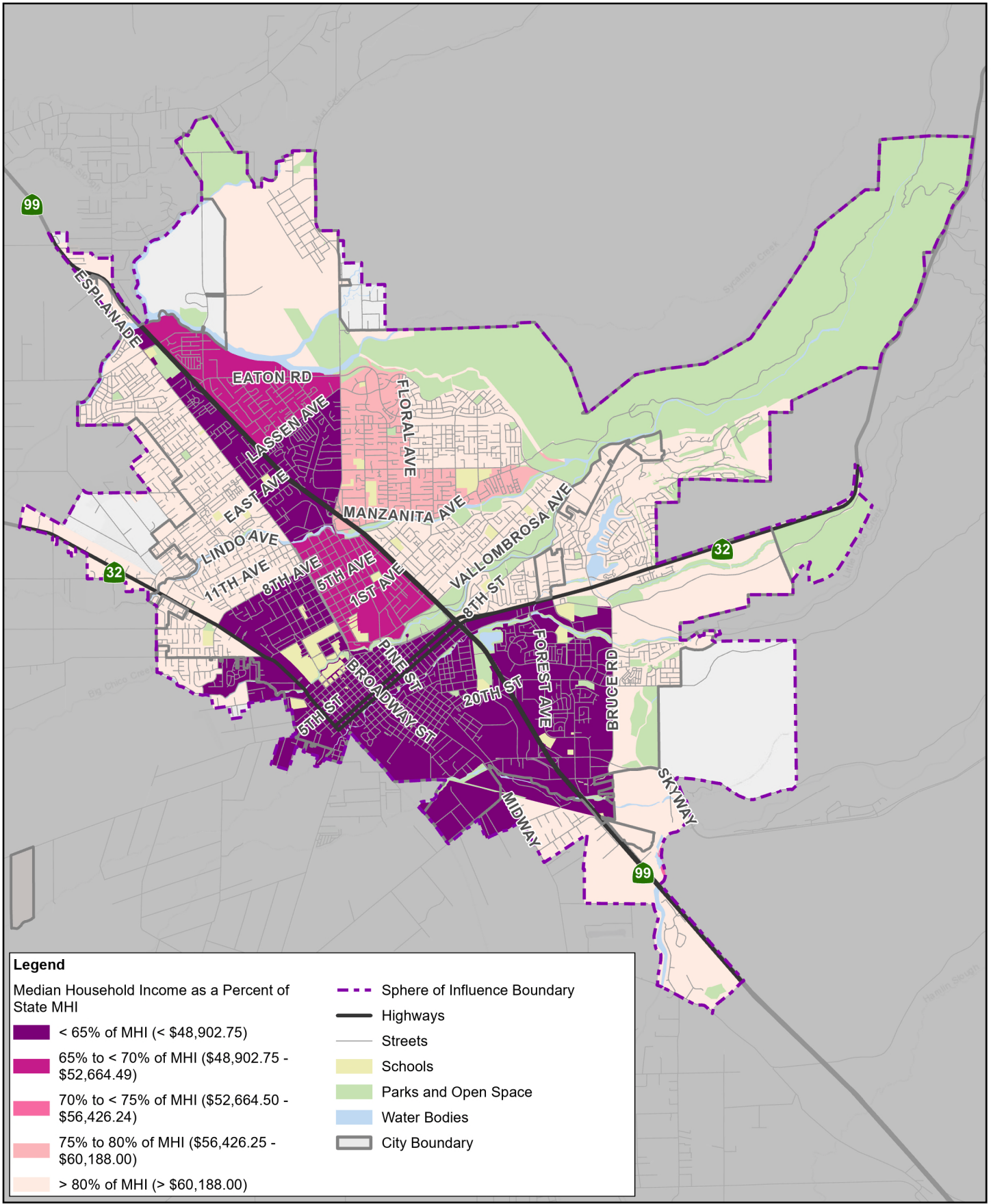
According to 2019 ACS data, there are 3,141 residents in the Mechoopda Tribal Designated Statistical Area (TDSA), 25 percent of which speak a language other than English. The median income of those 15 and older within the TDSA is \$22,223 with 22 percent of residents below 100 percent of the poverty level. Figure 22 provides a map of Cal EnviroScreen 4.0 results by Census tract.

A second metric helpful for evaluating a community's vulnerability is the Healthy Places Index (HPI) from the Public Health Alliance of Southern California, which explores various conditions impacting life expectancy. The HPI combines 25 community characteristics, including healthcare access, housing, education, and more, into a single indexed score. The healthier a community is, the higher the HPI score.

The City of Chico's HPI score is 53.7. For the "above poverty" metric, which measures the percent of people earning more than 200 percent of federal poverty level, Chico is healthier economically than only 20 percent of other California cities. Within the HPI housing category, Chico is within the 40th percentile due to low homeownership (15th percentile for homeownership at only 45 percent) and a low-income homeowner severe housing cost burden (in the 12th percentile). See Figure 23 for an overall HPI index percentile map by Census tract.

A third metric that is helpful for better understanding a community is the percent of students in grades K through 12 who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals (FRPM). Student eligibility at Chico schools is mapped in Figure 24, including six schools where more than 75 percent of students qualify for FRPM.



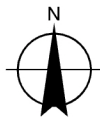
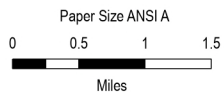
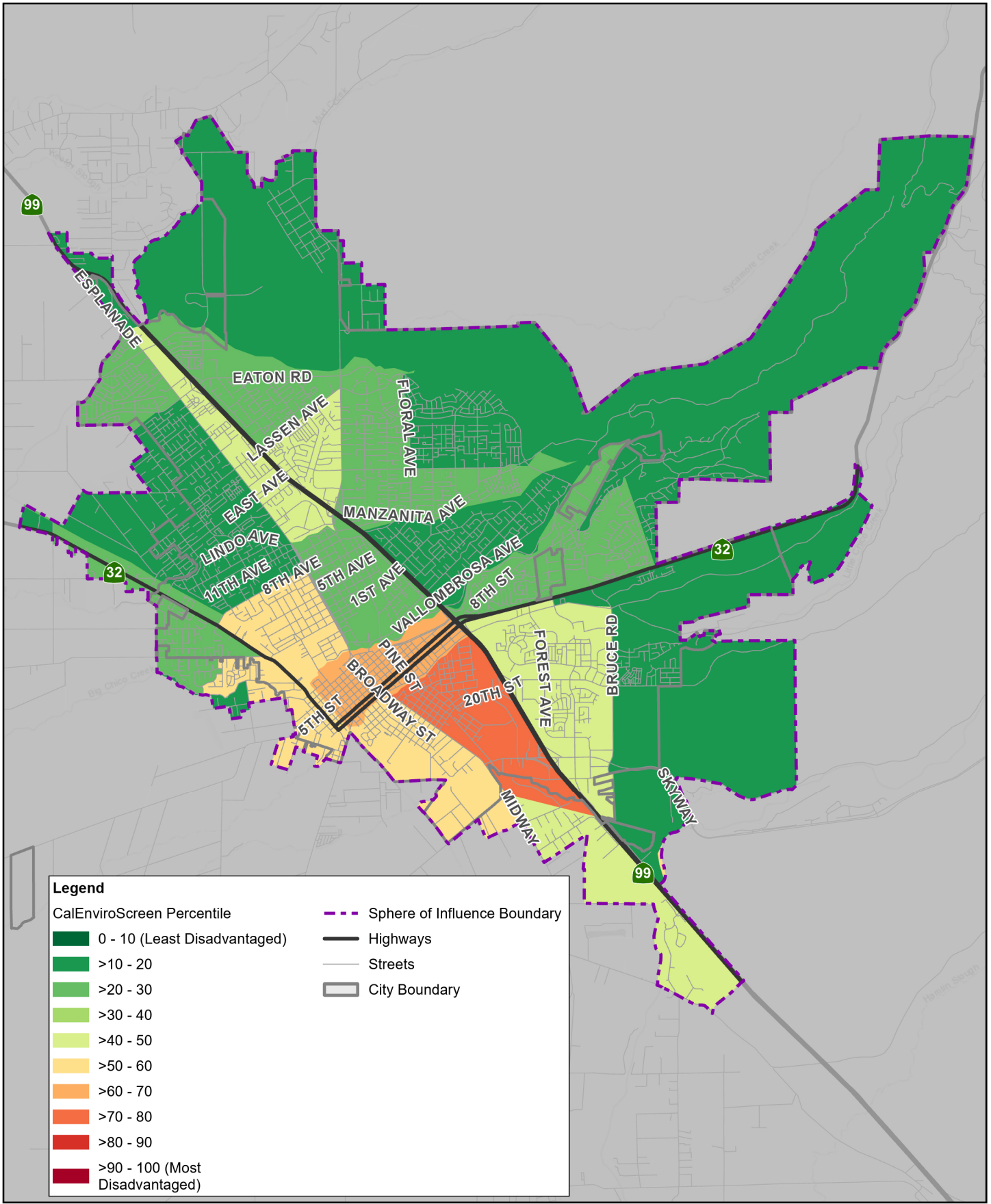


CITY OF CHICO
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Project No. 1257135
Revision No. C
Date Dec 2023

**EQUITY ANALYSIS:
2019 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD
INCOME (MHI) BY CENSUS TRACT**

FIGURE 21

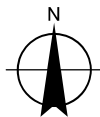
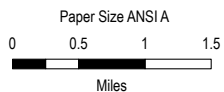
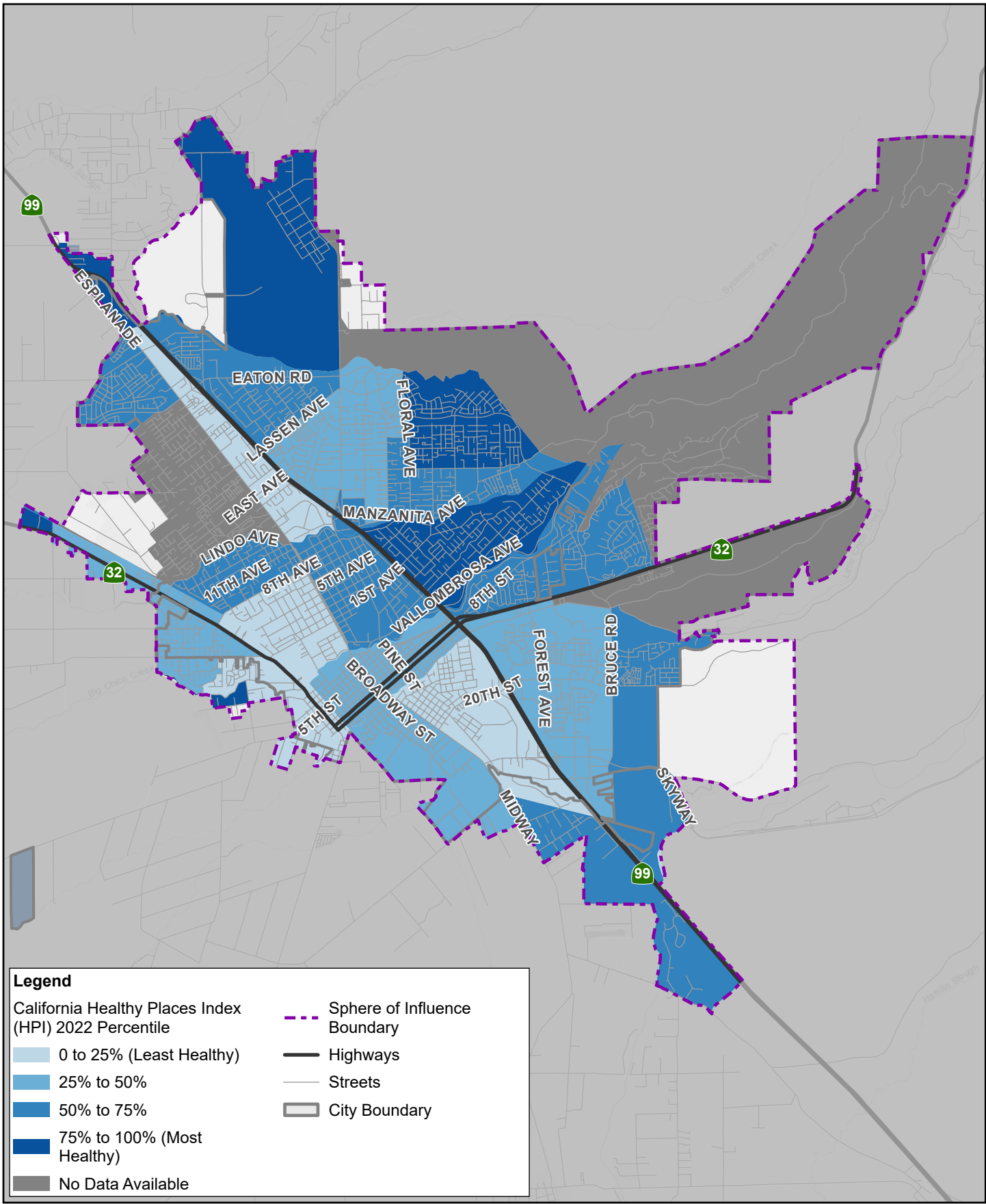


CITY OF CHICO
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Project No. 12575135
Revision No. C
Date Dec 2023

**EQUITY ANALYSIS:
CALENVIROSCREEN
4.0 RESULTS BY CENSUS TRACT**

FIGURE 22

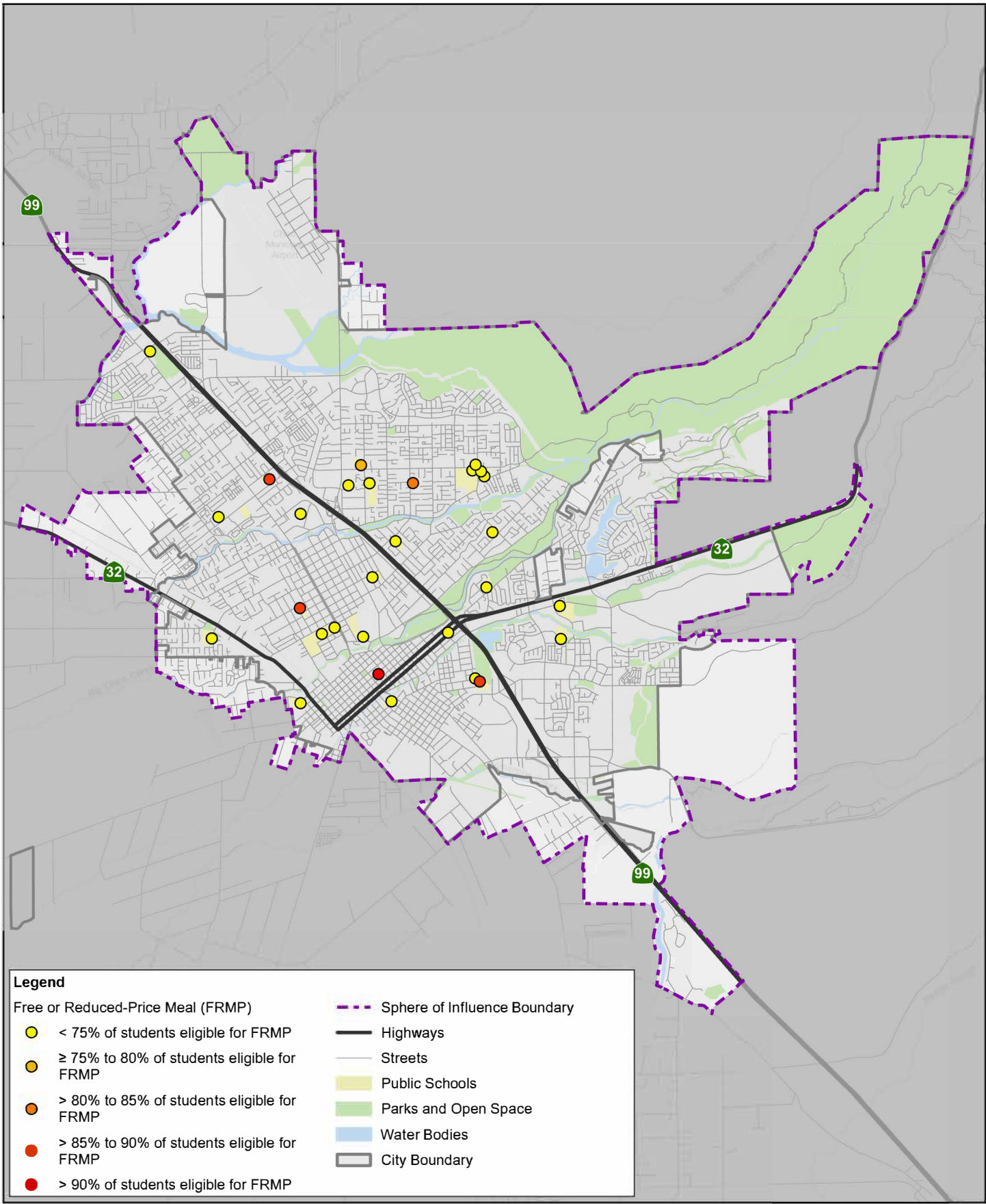


CITY OF CHICO
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Project No. 12575135
Revision No. B
Date Dec 2023

**EQUITY ANALYSIS:
CALIFORNIA HEALTHY
PLACES INDEX BY CENSUS TRACT**

FIGURE 23



CITY OF CHICO
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Project No. 12575135
Revision No. C
Date Dec 2023

**EQUITY ANALYSIS:
FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE MEAL
ELIGIBILITY (2019-2020)**

FIGURE 24