

# Memo

**To:** VLMPO Committees, Interested Parties, General Public  
**From:** Corey Hull, AICP; Transportation Director & Khafra Mills, Intern  
**CC:**  
**Date:** 9/6/2019  
**Re:** Bicycling and Environmental Justice Areas in Lowndes County

Biking can be a healthy, effective means of commuting to work. However when proper biking infrastructure is not in place, cyclists pose a risk to not only themselves, but both pedestrians and motor vehicles. Riding a bicycle in areas where there is not a safe, designated location for cyclists can increase the risk of a crash.

It was found that the majority of bicycle crashes that occurred between the years 2014-2018 in Lowndes County occurred in regions with 30% or higher levels of poverty. In addition, the majority of the cyclist involved in the crashes were found to live in areas of low-income or poverty; in contrast, areas of higher income had significantly fewer or no cyclist related crashes.

While it is difficult to discern the root cause of these crashes, there is a slight correlation between the poverty rate of the neighborhood where the bicyclist lives and the observed rate of bicycle crashes. Families in low-income areas are less likely to have access to a motor vehicle and may use other modes of transportation like a bicycle. The data showed that many of the crashes occurred in areas of higher-income, farther away from the residence of the victim, further study would be needed show a correlation between distances traveled and crash likelihood.

One option for mitigating the number of cyclist crashes would be to improve or create better accommodations for bicyclists. For example, bike lanes could be added to both sides of the street in areas with heavy traffic. Bike lanes would give cyclists safer options for traversing congested areas and could lower the number of motor-vehicle crashes as well. For more details regarding Bicycle infrastructure see the bicycle infrastructure plans, reports, and Complete Streets Policy located at [www.sgrc.us](http://www.sgrc.us) for a comprehensive breakdown on infrastructure options to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.

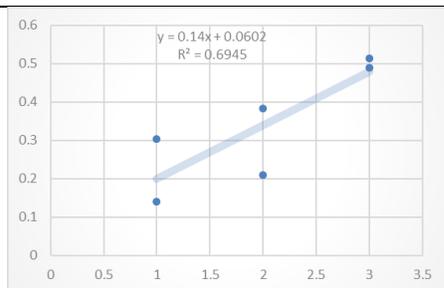


Figure 1 Poverty level and Cyclist Crash Correlation

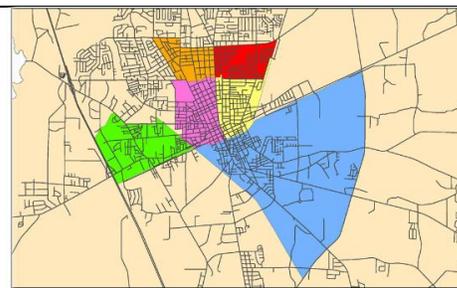


Figure 2 Tracts with Low Income Population

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