Environmental Justice Existing Conditions Assessment

City of Santee Safety and Environmental Justice Element

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Section 1 Introduction

Government Code (GOV) Section 65040.12[e] defines "Environmental Justice" as the fair treatment of people of all races, incomes, and ethnicity with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. In practice, pursuing environmental justice involves improving the quality of life for people by reducing exposure to environmental hazards and burdens and improving access to goods and services that promote health and well-being.

In 2016, the State of California passed Senate Bill (SB) 1000—the Planning for Healthy Communities Act—requiring cities and counties to address environmental justice in their general plans. The purpose of the Environmental Justice Element is to develop objectives and policies to minimize pollution and its effects on communities and to ensure residents have the opportunity to provide input in decisions that affect their quality of life. Per California law (GOV Section 65040.12[e]), environmental justice includes, but is not limited to:

- The availability of a healthy environment for all people
- The deterrence, reduction, and elimination of pollution burdens for populations and communities experiencing the adverse effects of that pollution, so that the effects of the pollution are not disproportionately borne by those populations and communities
- Governmental entities engaging and providing technical assistance to populations and communities most impacted by pollution to promote their meaningful participation in all phases of the environmental and land use decision-making process
- The meaningful consideration of recommendations from populations and communities most impacted by pollution into environmental and land use decisions

In June 2020, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) released updated guidelines (OPR Guidelines) for the preparation of Environmental Justice Elements in compliance with SB 1000. OPR Guidelines recommend that local agencies document existing conditions with respect to Environmental Justice Element topic areas to understand the drivers of inequality. Therefore, the City of Santee (City) has prepared this Existing Conditions Assessment to identify areas with greater pollution exposure and reduced access to public goods and services that improve quality of life for residents. The findings of the Existing Conditions Assessment were used to inform Environmental Justice Element policies in the City's General Plan. The Existing Conditions Assessment is organized by the following Environmental Justice Element topics:

- Pollution exposure, including access to clean air and water;
- Access to public facilities and services;
- Access to healthy food;
- Access to physical activity and recreational opportunities;

- Access to safe and sanitary homes; and
- Unique or compounded health risks, including exposure to climate hazards.

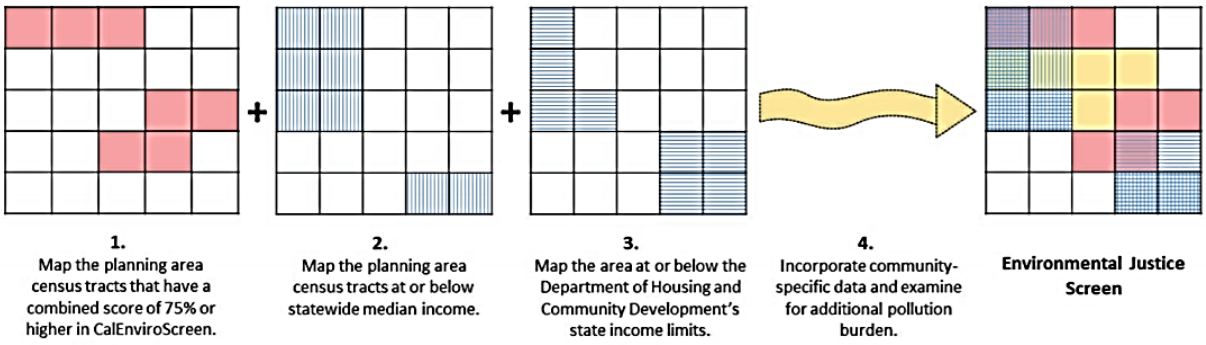
The City utilized indicators to assess existing conditions with respect to each Environmental Justice Element topic area based on public, open-source datasets. Many of the indicators rely on U.S. Census data or other data aggregated at the census tract level. Although census data is the primary and standard source of high-resolution geographic information about the United States population, some indicators have large margins of error, attributable to specific methodological decisions made by the Census Bureau. Furthermore, census tracts do not directly align with City boundaries. Therefore, values assigned at the census tract level may be influenced by conditions outside the City's jurisdiction. In the case of Santee, several census tracts in the southern portion of the City overlap with the City of El Cajon. As a result, scores associated with those census tracts are influenced by conditions in the City of El Cajon. Therefore, the planning team supplemented census data with local data and knowledge where feasible and determined appropriate by the City.

Specifically, the City developed a community survey (Community Survey) to identify what environmental justice topic areas were of greatest concern to residents. The Community Survey was made available in English and Spanish, and 121 responses were received from English-speaking residents. Key findings of the Community Survey (City of Santee 2021) are discussed throughout the Existing Conditions Assessment, and survey results are provided in Appendix B of the Safety and Environmental Justice Element.

Section 2 Disadvantaged Communities

The first step in assessing conditions in support of the Environmental Justice Element was to identify disadvantaged communities. "Disadvantaged communities" are defined as low-income areas that are disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation (GOV Section 65302[h][4][A]). SB 1000 defines "disadvantaged communities" as those disproportionally burdened by multiple sources of pollution and with population characteristics that make them more sensitive to pollution. As a result, they are more likely to suffer from a lower quality of life and worsened health outcomes compared to areas that are more affluent. To identify disadvantaged communities within a city or county, OPR Guidelines recommend utilizing the following screening method (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1. Disadvantaged Communities Screening Method



Source: OPR 2020, as adapted by Harris & Associates.

2.1 Disadvantaged Communities Screening Method 1: CalEnviroScreen

CalEnviroScreen is a computer mapping tool published by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) that identifies communities that are most affected by pollution and are especially vulnerable to its adverse effects (OPR 2020). CalEnviroScreen uses several factors, called "indicators" to determine whether a community is disadvantaged and disproportionately affected by pollution. These indicators fall into two main categories labeled "pollution burden" and "population characteristics." Pollution burden indicators include exposure indicators that measure different types of pollution to which residents may be exposed and the proximity of environmental hazards to a community. Population characteristics represent characteristics of the community that can make them more susceptible to environmental hazards (such as poverty, low educational attainment, and linguistic isolation). These main categories can be separated into four distinct sub-categories: 1) Exposure, 2) Environmental Effect, 3) Sensitive Population, and 4) Socioeconomic Factor. A summary of the CalEnviroScreen indicators and how they relate to environmental justice is outlined in **Table 1**.

Table 1. CalEnviroScreen Categories and Indicators

Category	Rationale	Sub-Category	Indicator
Pollution Burden	Exposure to hazardous substances can cause and/or worsen certain health conditions.	Exposure	Ozone concentrations in air
			PM $_{2.5}$ concentrations in air
			Diesel particulate matter emissions
			Drinking water contaminants
			Use of high-hazard, high-volatility pesticides
			Toxic releases from facilities
			Traffic Density
		Environmental Effect	Toxic cleanup sites
			Groundwater threats from leaking underground storage
			Hazardous waste facilities and generators
			Impaired water bodies
			Solid waste sites and facilities
Population Characteristics	People with lower income levels, educational attainment and fluency in English tend to live in areas that are more affected by air pollution and other environmental toxins. In addition, certain health conditions may be caused or worsened by toxins in the environment.	Sensitive Population	Asthma emergency department visits
			Cardiovascular disease (emergency department visits for heart attacks)
			Low birth-weight infants
		Socioeconomic Factor	Educational attainment
			Housing burdened low-income households
			Linguistic Isolation
			Poverty
			Unemployment

Source: CalEPA 2017.

CalEnviroScreen uses a weighted scoring system to derive average pollution burden and population scores for each census tract[1], and arrives at the final CalEnviroScreen score by multiplying the pollution burden and population characteristics components together.[2] CalEnviroScreen converts indicator scores to percentiles that can be compared with other areas throughout the state. In general, the higher the score or percentile, the more impacted a community is compared to other areas of the state. For example, a 75th percentile score means that the census tract is higher (more burdened) than 75 percent of other census tracts in California. Census tracts in the highest quartile of scores (75 to 100) are considered to be disadvantaged communities under SB 1000.

Census tracts in the City range in percentile scores between 34 and 88. Only the northern tip of one census tract (0162.02) intersecting the City exceeds the 75th percentile and, therefore, is considered to be disadvantaged, as shown in **Figure 2**.

[1] Although some census tracts follow City boundaries, others overlap City boundaries. As a result, CalEnviroScreen Scores at the census tract level may be affected by conditions outside the jurisdiction's authority (e.g., City of El Cajon).
[2] The CalEnviroScreen website can be found at https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen.

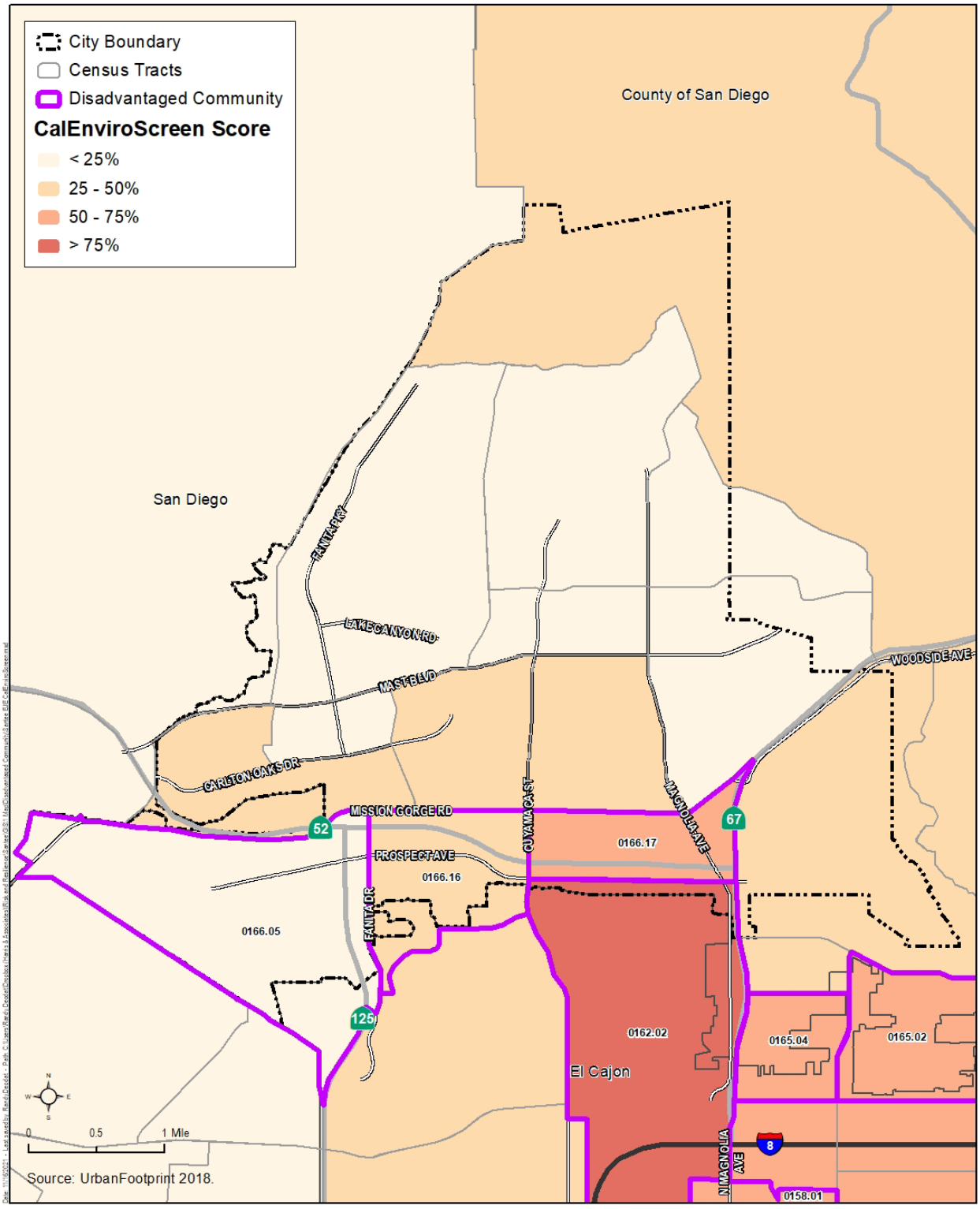


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Figure 2.
Disadvantaged Communities Screening Method 1: CalEnviroScreen

2.2 Disadvantaged Communities Screening Method 2: Statewide Median Income

In addition to utilizing CalEnviroScreen, OPR Guidelines recommend mapping low-income areas to identify other areas of the City that may be underserved, but do not qualify as disadvantaged communities in CalEnviroScreen. The average statewide median household income (in 2018 dollars) between 2015 and 2019 was $95,100. **Figure 3** identifies census tracts that meet the second criteria for the OPR disadvantaged communities guidelines - that the median household income is below the statewide household median income and that at least one of the CalEnviroScreen exposure indicators is in the highest 25 percent of all California tracts for that specific indicator. Only the northern tip of one census tract (0162.02) intersecting the City is below the statewide median income threshold and is considered disadvantaged, as shown in **Figure 3**.

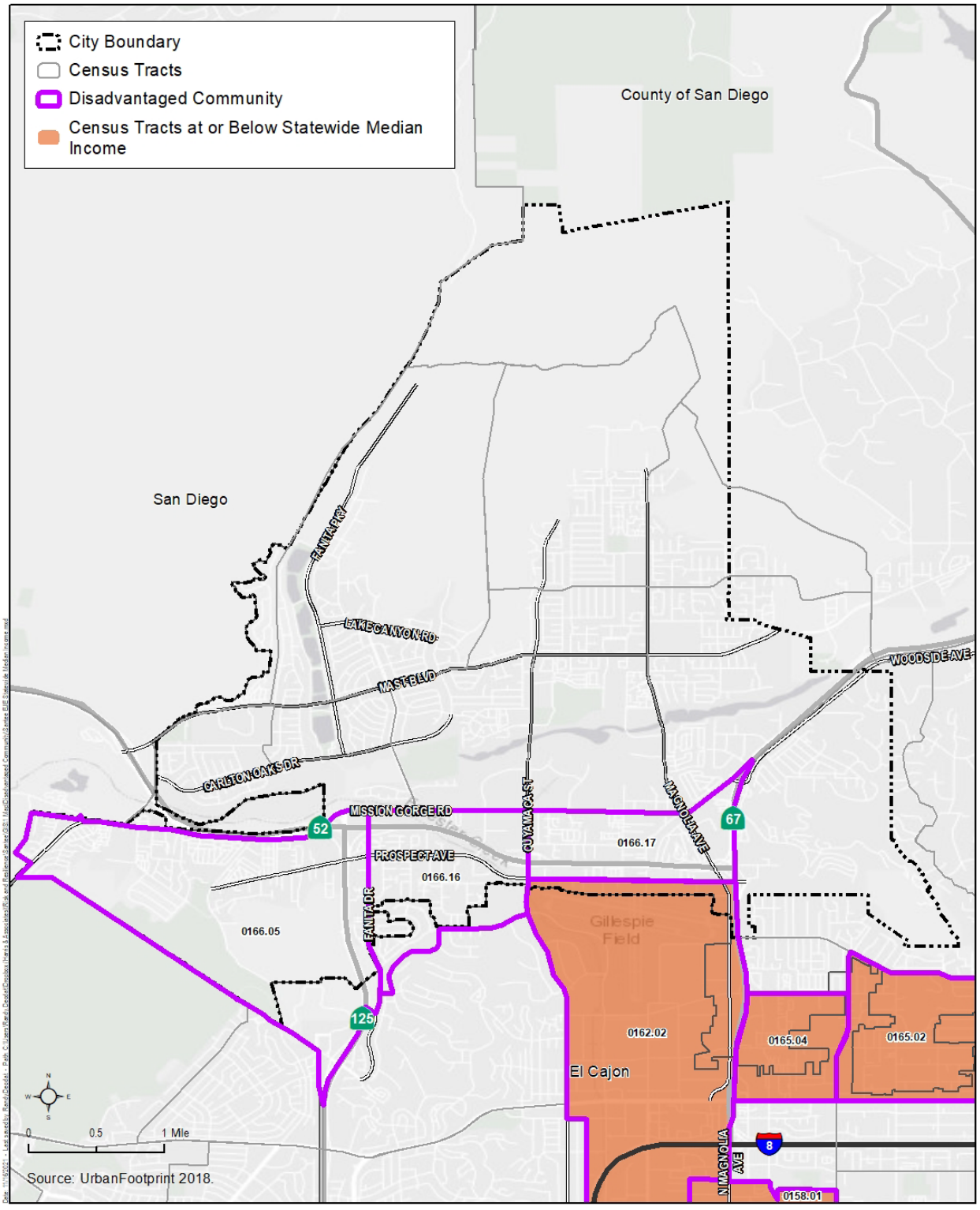

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Figure 3.
Disadvantaged Communities Screening Method 2:
Statewide Median Income

2.3 Disadvantaged Communities Screening Method 3: HCD State Income Limit

OPR Guidelines also recommend screening for areas that are below the California Department of Housing and Community Development's (HCD) state income limits. Income limits reflect updated median income and household income levels for extremely low-, very low-, low-, and moderate-income households for California's 58 counties. The 2021 State Income Limits are on the department's website at https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/income-limits/state-and-federal-income-limits/docs/income-limits-2021.pdf. HCD's 2021 state income limits (**Table 2**) went into effect on April 30, 2020. **Table 2** shows that the median income for a four-person household ("baseline") in County of San Diego (County) is $95,100. Income limits are adjusted for family size based on the "baseline" four-person household. Median income thresholds were used to identify census tracts below the state income limit in **Figure 4**.

Table 2. HCD 2021 State Income Limits by Household Size

Number of Persons in Household:		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
San Diego County Area Median Income: $95,100	Extremely Low	25450	29100	32750	36350	39300	42200	45100	48000
	Very Low Income	42450	48500	54550	60600	65450	70300	75150	80000
	Low Income	67900	77600	87300	97000	104800	112550	120300	128050
	Median Income	66550	76100	85600	**95100**	102700	110300	117900	125550
	Moderate Income	79850	91300	102700	114100	123250	132350	141500	150600

Source: HCD 2021

Figure 4 identifies four census tracts (0162.02, 0166.17, 0166.16, 0166.05) intersecting the City with an average median household income below HCD's state income limits for the specified region and with at least one of the CalEnviroScreen exposure indicators in the highest 25 percent of all California tracts for that specific indicator.

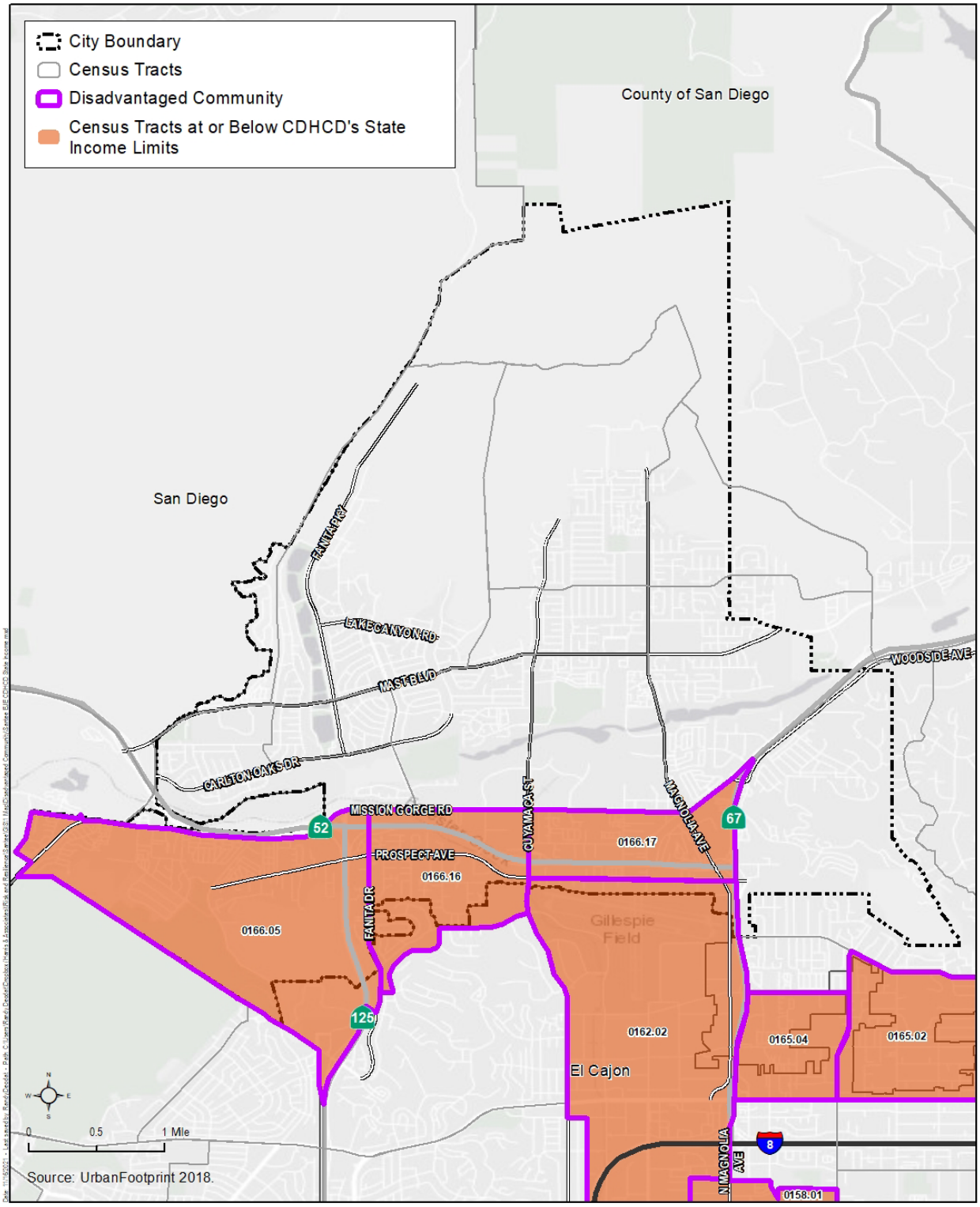

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Figure 4.
Disadvantaged Communities Screening Method 3:
HCD State Income Limits

2.4 Disadvantaged Communities Screening Results

The City overlaid each individual screening criteria layer (Disadvantaged Communities Screening Methods 1-3) to identify all census tracts within the City considered to be disadvantaged. **Figure 5** shows the results of the disadvantaged communities screening method. As shown in **Figure 5**, disadvantaged communities are located in the southernmost portions of the City, west of State Route (SR-) 67, south of Mission Gorge Road, and bound by the City boundary to the west and south. The Existing Conditions Assessment assesses to what extent designated disadvantaged communities are more exposed to environmental burdens or lacks access to public goods and services. When there are designated disadvantaged communities in a local jurisdiction, the State requires the Environmental Justice Element to identify objectives and policies to reduce unique or compounded health risks, promote civic engagement in public decision-making processes, and prioritize improvements and programs in disadvantaged communities.

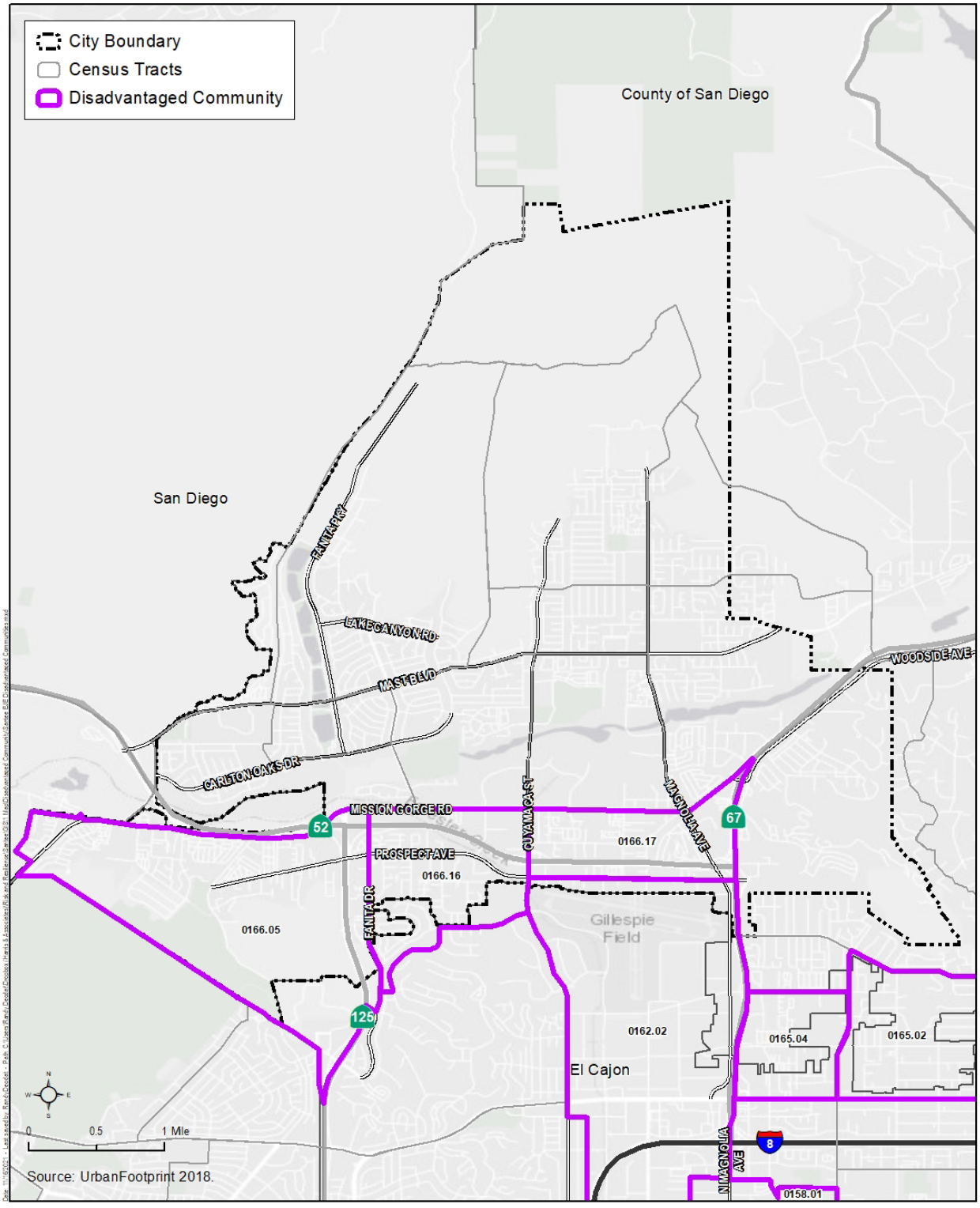

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Figure 5.
City of Santee Disadvantaged Communities

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Section 3 Pollution Exposure

The following section documents the conditions and factors that contribute to local pollution and identifies areas within the City that experience greater exposure to air and water pollution.

3.1 Air Quality

The City of Santee is located in the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB), and falls under the regulatory authority of the San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) designate air basins or portions of air basins and counties as being in "attainment" or "nonattainment" for criteria pollutants. Areas that do not meet the standards are classified as nonattainment areas. The USEPA classifies the SDAB as nonattainment for 8-Hour Ozone (SDAPCD). Additionally, CARB classifies the SDAB as in nonattainment with the California Ambient Air Quality Standards for 8-Hour Ozone, 1-Hour Ozone, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$.

Although air quality is generally regarded as a regional issue, there are also local contributors to air pollution in and near the City. Proximity to high-volume roadways, hazardous waste sites, and heavy industrial land use types and other high-emission sources can result in adverse health impacts. Disadvantaged communities are often disproportionately subjected to adverse air quality due to proximity to polluting activities and are more likely to have underlying medical conditions that may be worsened by pollution.

Poor air quality can result in negative health outcomes ranging from higher rates of asthma to cardiovascular disease and even premature death (CARB 2020). To assess residents' potential exposure to polluting activities, the City identified residential parcels near major roads & highways and industrial activities, identified as indicators in **Table 3**.

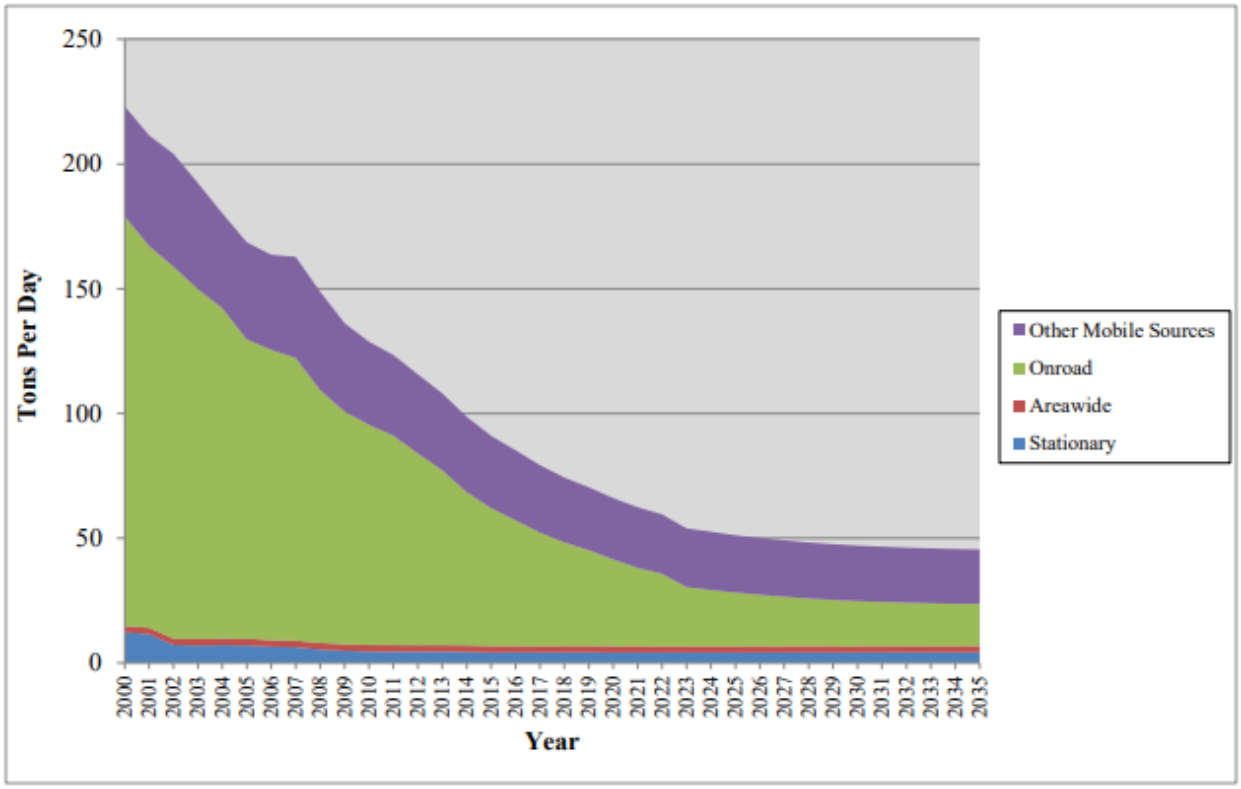
Table 3. Indicators to Identify Areas with Greater Exposure to Air Pollution

Indicator	Description
Proximity of residential zones to major roads	Residential parcels near high-traffic corridor or major roadway
Proximity of residential zones to industrial activities	Residential parcels near industrial parcels
Asthma Prevalence	Asthma ER Visits/10,000 people by Census Tract

Mobile Sources

The primary contributor of air pollution (approximately 67 percent) in the SDAB is mobile source emissions from cars and trucks traveling on local freeways and roadways (SDAPCD 2016). As shown in **Figure 6**, nitrogen oxides (NO_x) from on-road vehicles, including motor vehicles operating on roads, highway ramps, and during idling that use gasoline, diesel, and other fuels – account for approximately 50 percent of oxides and nitrogen emissions. In comparison, NO_x emissions from stationary sources – which includes factories, boilers, cement plants, and power plants – account for approximately 6 percent of SDAB's emissions.

Figure 6. SDAB NOx Emission Trends



Source: SDAPCD 2016

The City boundary intersects several freeways including SR-52, SR-67, and SR-125. As shown in **Figure 7**, there are many residential land uses in close proximity to these freeways in the City's disadvantaged communities. Approximately 40 percent of Community Survey respondents indicated that air pollution from traffic and roadways made it difficult to have good health and living conditions (City of Santee 2021).

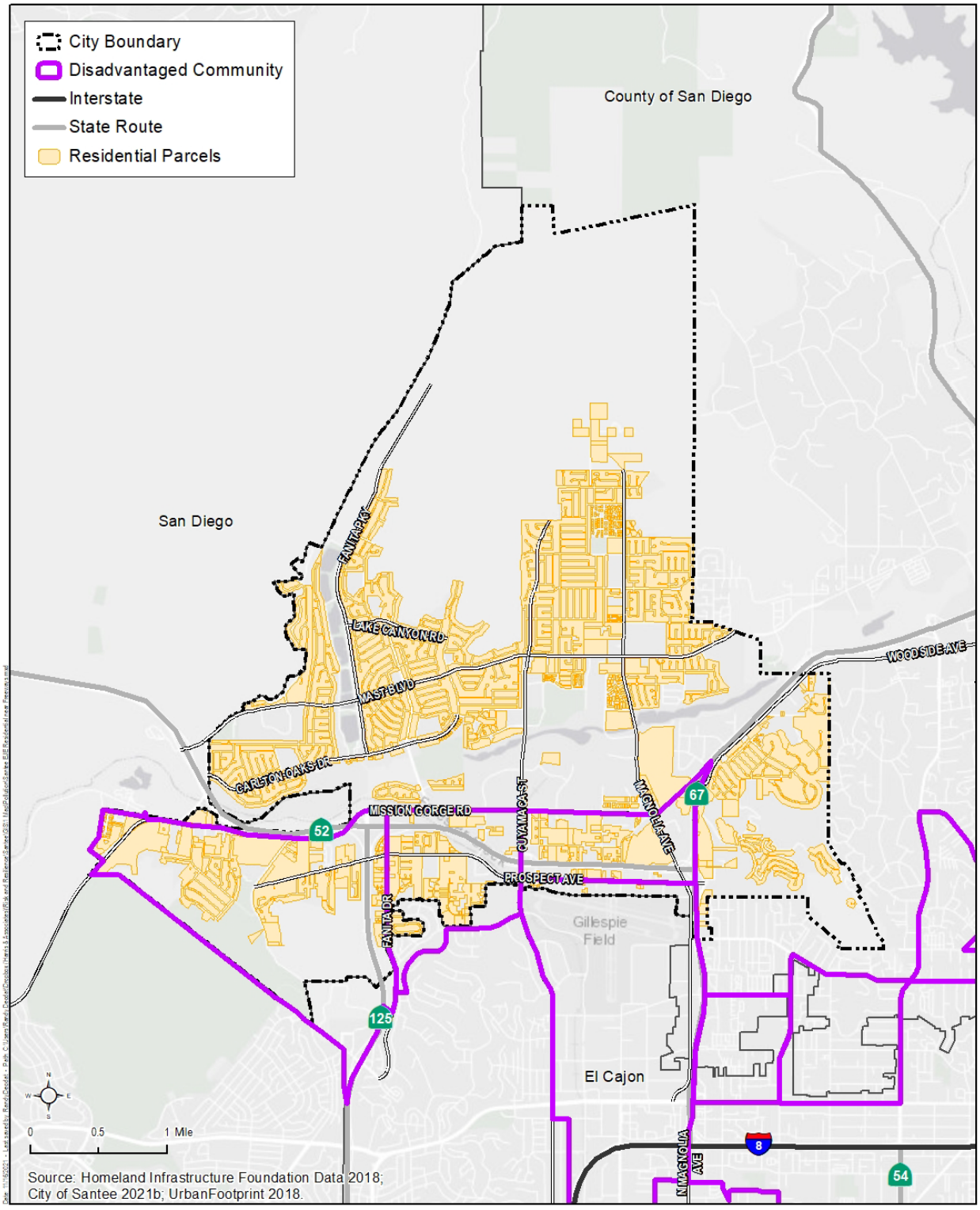


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Figure 7.
Residential Relative to Freeways

Stationary Sources

While stationary sources of pollution make up a much smaller percentage of total emission sources in the SDAB, the City has several sources of point source air pollution, including the Sycamore Landfill to the northwest of the City, the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar airport to the west of the City, and Gillespie Field to the South. Though these facilities are not regulated or owned by the City, the City acknowledges the potential health risk to those living in close proximity to these facilities.

Of these facilities, the Gillespie Field Airport is located closest to the City's disadvantaged communities, less than one mile south of the City's boundary, on County property located in El Cajon. Residents have expressed concern of increased emissions, air traffic, noise, and low-level flights over homes. The City acknowledges that living near industrial facilities and other industrial-based land uses exposes residents to greater levels of air quality contaminants, and increases the likelihood of associated health impacts. **Figure 8** identifies residential land uses near industrial land use types. As shown in **Figure 8**, there are some residential areas (including mobile home and multi-family land uses) in the southern portion of the City along Prospect Avenue that are located in close proximity to industrial land uses. Nearly 17 percent of Community Survey respondents indicated that air pollution from industrial activity limited their ability to have good health and living conditions (City of Santee 2021).

Greater levels of exposure to air contaminants from industrial activity can result in negative health impacts, such as asthma. **Figure 9** shows the distribution of asthma prevalence throughout the City (defined as the number of asthma emergency room visits per 10,000 people). The map indicates that the southern portion of the City, near Gillespie Field and other industrial land uses, has the highest asthma prevalence. The City averages approximately 35 asthma emergency department visits per 10,000 people, compared to 41 countywide (CEC 2018).

While asthma is commonly associated with poor air quality, other potential contributors to high asthma rates include substandard housing conditions (such as excessive moisture and dampness, poor heating and ventilation systems, deteriorated carpeting, second-hand smoke, etc.), as discussed in Section 7.1.

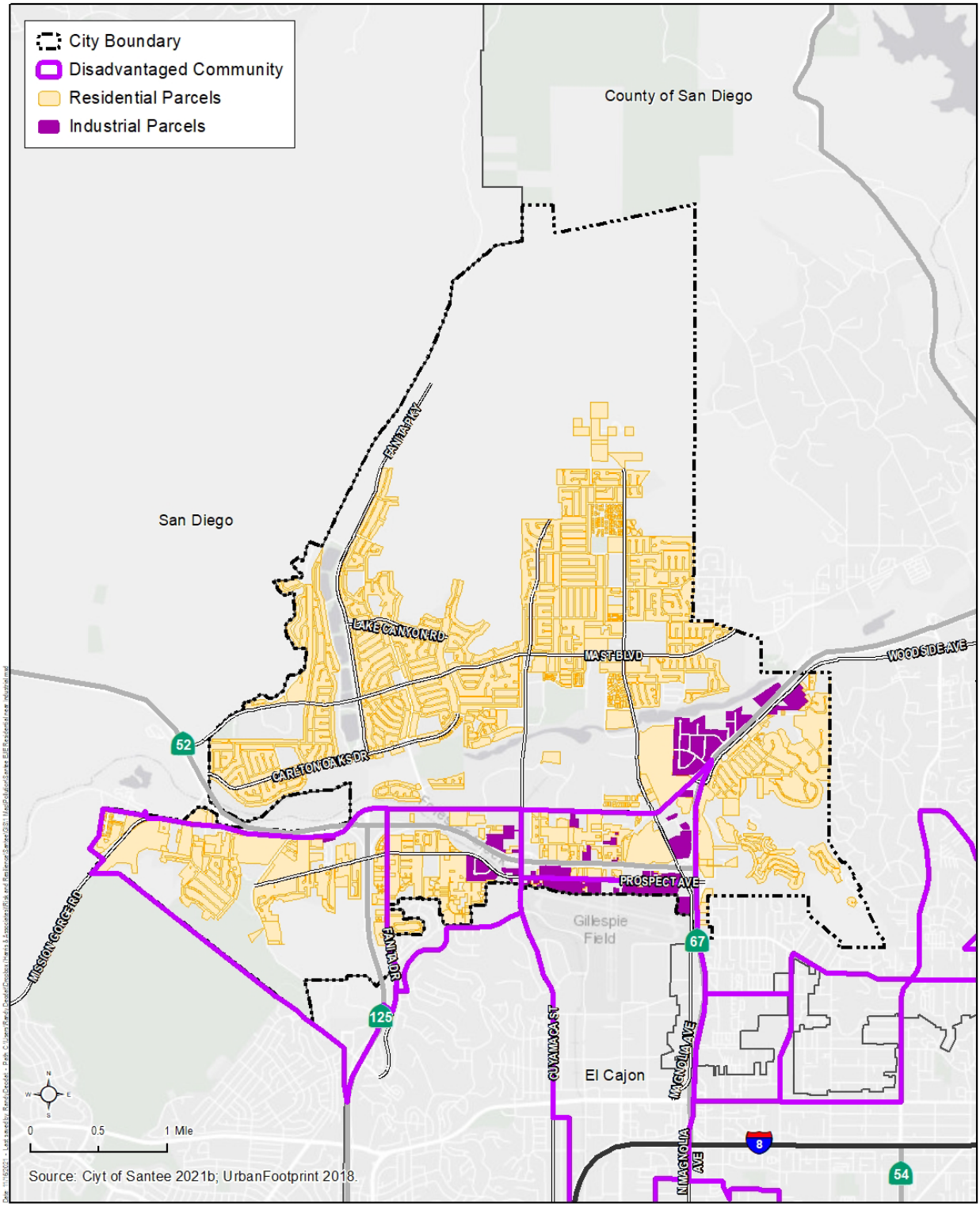

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Figure 8.
Residential Relative to Industrial

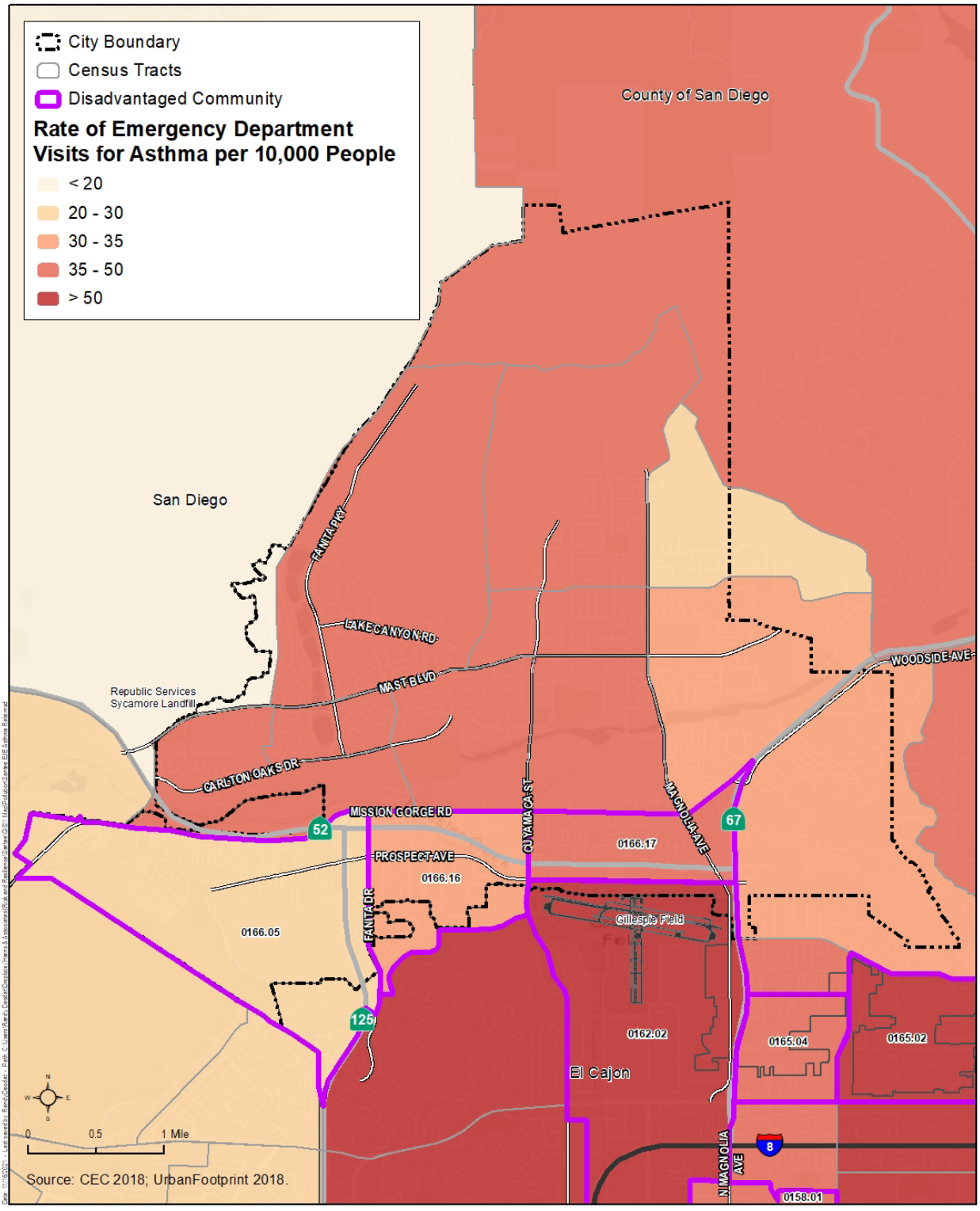

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Figure 9.
Asthma Prevalence

3.2 Water Quality, Accessibility, and Affordability

Assembly Bill (AB) 685 (2012) added Section 106.3 to the California Water Code, which declares that "every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes." More recently, SB 200 (2019) directed the State to "bring true environmental justice" to its residents, and to "begin to address the continuing disproportionate environmental burdens in the state by creating a fund, known as the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund, to provide safe drinking water in every California community, for every Californian" (CA Water Boards 2020).

The City of Santee receives its water from Padre Dam Municipal Water District (PDMWD), which imports 100 percent of its drinking water supply from the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA). The water PDMWD imports through the SDCWA comes from the State Water Project and the Colorado River Aqueduct. PDMWD services residents of Santee, El Cajon, Blossom Valley Crest, Harbison Canyon, Alpine, and Lakeside.

As recommended by OPR Guidelines, the City employed OEHHA indicators to assess water quality, accessibility, and affordability.

Water Quality

As shown in **Table 4**, the PDMWD scored 0 out of 4 (with zero being the best) for water quality and each sub-component and indicator, which indicates acceptable levels of water contaminant concentrations and a high level of compliance with regulatory standards. More information on the methodology for each indicator can be found in the 2020 Achieving the Human Right to Water in California: Assessment of the State's Community Water Systems (CalEPA 2020).

Table 4. OEHHA Right to Water, Water Quality Indicator Scores

Sub-Component	Indicator	Description	Score	Score Explanation
Exposure	High Potential Exposure	Identifies how many contaminants (out of 19) had at least one year with an average annual concentration above MCL.	0	The water system had 0 contaminants with high potential exposure
	Presence of Acute Contaminants	Identifies if any of the contaminants for which there was high potential exposure are acute contaminants as defined by regulatory standards.	0	The water system had 0 acute contaminants with high potential exposure.
	Duration of High Potential Exposure	Identifies for how long high potential exposure occurred for each of the 19 contaminants.	0	The water system had 0 years of high potential exposure.
	Data Availability	Identifies whether data exists for 14 contaminants that should have data following monitoring requirements	0	The water system had all 14 contaminants with the minimum required data in the time period.

Table 4. OEHHA Right to Water, Water Quality Indicator Scores

Sub-Component	Indicator	Description	Score	Score Explanation
Non-Compliance	Non-compliance with primary drinking water standards	Counts how many contaminants received an MCL violation at least once from 2011-2019 for 18 out of 19 contaminants.	0	The water system had 0 contaminants with MCL violations.
	Maximum Duration of Non-Compliance Score	Sums the total number of years for which a system had at least 1 MCL violation in a given year (from 2011-2019), for each contaminant.	0	The water system had 0 years of non-compliance

Source: CalEPA 2020.
Notes: MCL = Maximum Contaminant Levels

As indicated in **Table 4**, PDMWD's potable water supply meets state and federal drinking water standards. In 2019, the PDMWD's Water Quality Report found that drinking water met or surpassed every public health requirement set by the SWRCB and the USEPA, with the exception of one incident at the Twin Oaks Treatment Plant[3] (PDMWD 2019).

Only 12 percent of Community Survey respondents indicated they were concerned with water quality from industrial activity, though some noted that they were concerned with water quality in general (not just from industrial activity) (City of Santee 2021).

Separate from the potable water drinking system, stormwater runoff water quality can also be affected by illicit discharges, or the release of any non-rain water to the storm drain system. The City of Santee maintains a list of illegal discharges reported through a resident hotline, the City website, and by City employees.

Illicit discharges often involve the following pollutant sources:

- Cooking grease, oil, or residue
- Dust, dirt, drain clog or construction issue
- Over-irrigation or line breaks
- Metal fragments/shavings, or rust
- Any fluid or leak from a vehicle or machinery
- Trash, recycling, or organic matter disposed of illegally
- Pool water or chemicals
- Transport of sewage, fecal coliform, or bacteria
- Pressure or car washing

Figure 10 identifies areas with higher concentrations of illicit discharges. Water, sediment, and oil were the most common pollutants reported between 2018 and 2021

[3] The San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) experienced a treatment process failure at its regional treatment plant (Twin Oaks).

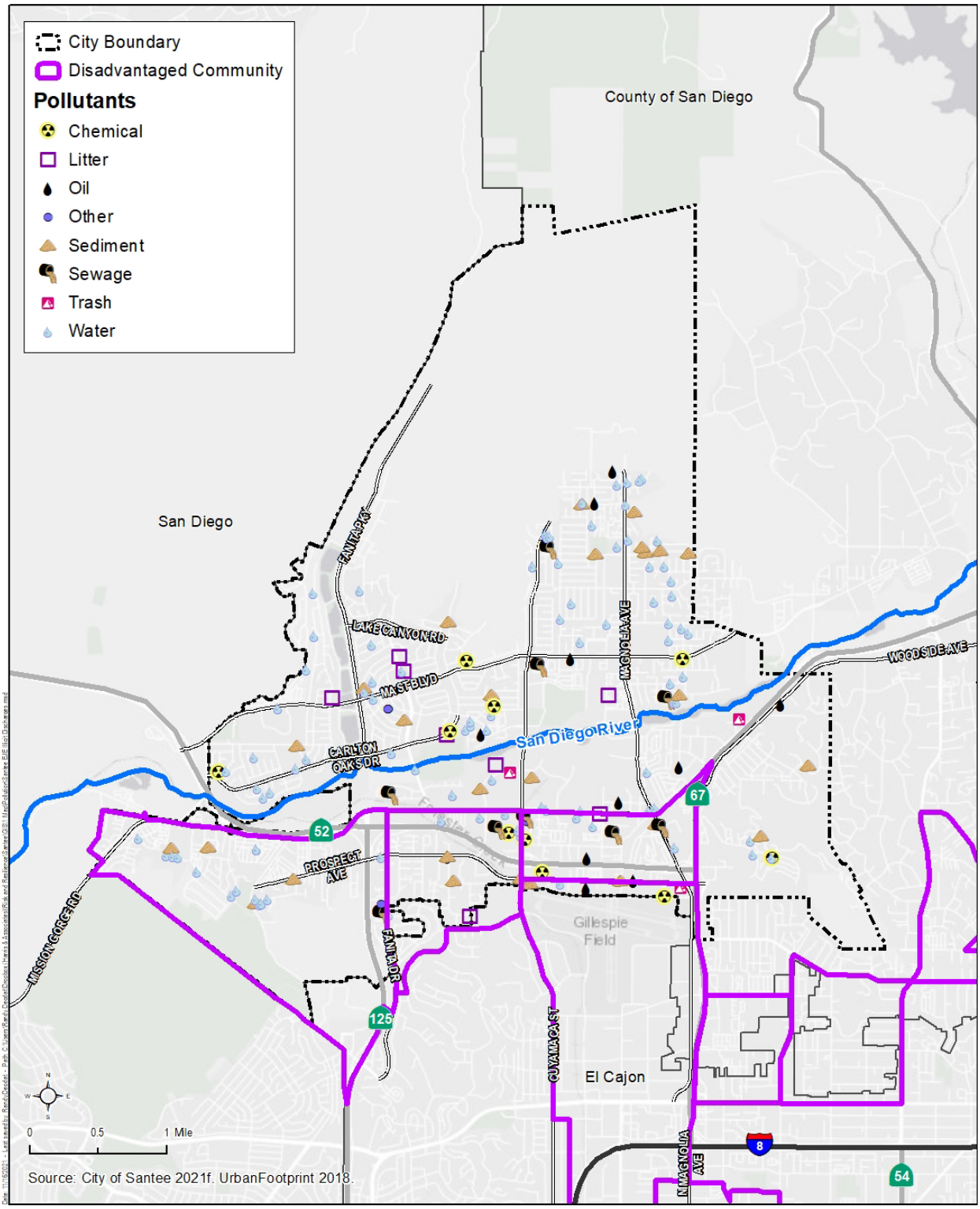

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Figure 10.
Storm Water Illicit Discharges

Accessibility

In addition to water quality, the OEHHA Right to Water Framework assesses water accessibility, defined by Padre Dam's ability to provide sufficient and continuous amounts of water to meet everyday household needs (CalEPA 2020). As shown in **Table 5**, the Padre Dam's water system scored 0 out of 4 for water accessibility, indicating good accessibility.

Table 5. OEHHA Right to Water, Water Accessibility Indicator Scores

Sub-Component	Indicator	Description	Score	Score Explanation
Physical Vulnerability	Physical Vulnerability to Water Outages	Examines the system's main water source and how many permanent and back up sources a system could use in the case of emergency	0	The system has 4 or more sources of surface, groundwater, or combined groundwater-surface water.

Source: CalEPA 2020.

Affordability

Another important aspect of environmental justice is ensuring residents (customers) can afford to pay for water to meet their household needs, taking into consideration other household living expenses, as well as the direct and indirect costs associated with obtaining access to the water (CalEPA 2020). The PDMWD scored 3 out of 4 for water affordability based on the indicators listed in **Table 6** below.

Table 6. OEHHA Right to Water, Water Affordability Indicator Scores

Indicator	Description	Score	Score Explanation
Affordability Ratio for Median Household Income (MHI)	Measures the annual system-wide average water bill for 6 hundred cubic feet relative to the annual MHI of the water system	2	The average water bill ranges from 0.75% to 1% of the MHI.
Affordability Ratio for County Poverty Threshold (CPT)	Measures the annual system-wide average water bill for 6 hundred cubic feet relative to the County poverty threshold for the water system's County.	4	The average water bill is >=2.5% of CPT
Affordability Ratio for Deep Poverty Threshold (DPT)	Measures the annual system-wide average water bill for 6 hundred cubic feet relative to the County deep poverty threshold for the water system's County	4	The average water bill is >=2.5% of DPT

Source: CalEPA 2020.

Low-income populations spend a greater percentage of their income on utility bills, and many may struggle to afford their water bill. According to the OEHHA Right to Water Tool, PDMWD does not perform as well with respect to water affordability as it did for water quality and accessibility. Nevertheless, PDMWD meets the federal water affordability target. The USEPA defines water affordability as a rate below four percent of Median Household Income (MHI) – two percent for water and two percent for wastewater. As shown in the Affordability Ratio for Median Household Income, the average water bill ranges from 0.75 percent to less than 1 percent of the Median Household Income.

Key Findings: Pollution Exposure

The City assessed disadvantaged communities exposure to air and water pollution. Disadvantaged communities experience greater exposure to air pollutants due to their proximity to high-traffic corridors and industrial activity.

While drinking water quality is not an issue for the City, Santee's disadvantaged communities experience greater instances of chemical, sediment, and sewage pollutants from illicit storm water discharges due to their proximity to the San Diego River; however, these discharges do not impact the community's potable water quality. Though not analyzed explicitly in this section due to lack of data availability, the pollution source that residents (46 percent of Community Survey respondents) are most concerned about is the prevalence of trash and debris throughout the City (City of Santee 2021), with many specifically pointing to homeless encampments along the river as a source of the pollution.

Section 4 Access to Public Facilities and Services

Access to public facilities and community-serving amenities is important for quality of life, as well as disaster preparedness and recovery capacity. Therefore, an important component of environmental justice is equitable access and connections to public facilities and community services including schools, daycare, public transit, and health care.

The City assessed the access of disadvantaged communities to public facilities and services in Santee, including schools, and daycare centers[4] as indicated in **Table 7**. Several indicators rely on a buffer analysis, which is used to determine proximity or distance of one feature from another. Buffer analyses are used to identify areas (on a map) within the City that can experience greater environmental exposure or lack physical access to services based on proximity to, or distance from, residential areas. They also provide a metric (approximate percent of residential zoned areas within or outside of a given radius) for the City to gauge progress with respect to a given Environmental Justice Element topic area over time.

Table 7. Indicators to Assess Existing Conditions: Public Facility Access

Indicator	Description
Walkable Access to Schools	Percent of residential parcels further than ½ mile from nearest school
Walkable Access to Daycare Centers	Percent of residential parcels further than ½ mile from nearest day care center
Walkable Access to Transit	Percent of residential parcels further than ½ mile from nearest bus stop
Transit Affordability	Transportation cost as a percentage of income for renters
Transit Quality	Vehicle miles traveled per capita
Distribution of Health Care Facilities	Distribution of medical offices and urgent cares throughout the City
Health Insurance	Percent of population without health insurance

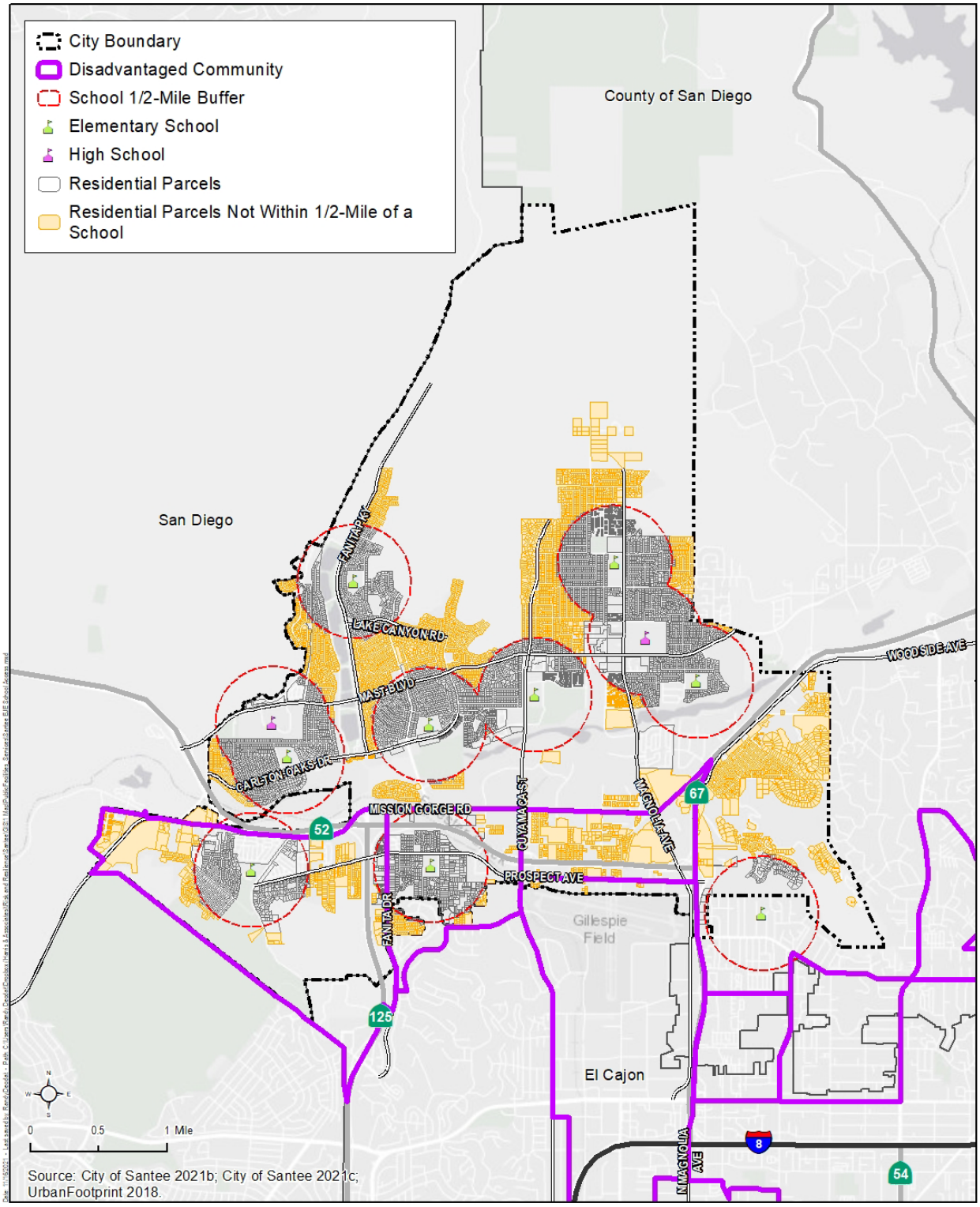
Schools & Daycares

Approximately 33 and 64 percent of residential parcels are within walking distance of schools and day care centers, respectively (**Figure 11** and **Figure 12**). Day care centers refer to child care centers that provide before or after school care, day care, or head start programs. Residential areas in the southeast portion of the City have the least walkable access to schools, as many households are bound by SR-52 and SR-67. Though the southeast portion of the City has the least walkable access to schools, it is not considered to be disadvantaged. Daycare centers are in walkable distance from most residential areas, though the southwest and southeast portions of the City have relatively less access to child care.

While proximity to schools and daycare centers is an important indicator in assessing access, it does not represent the multitude of barriers that prevent low-income families from accessing quality education and daycare services for their children or supplementary resources available to help low-

[4] The assessment only included commercial daycare centers and did not include informal daycare centers in residences.

income families to access such services. For example, one key factor in determining access to daycare is affordability. ProjectSAFE is a year round before and after school program operating at eight schools in the Santee School District from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The out-of-school time program supports the school district through quality child-centered programs that provide a safe environment and a variety of opportunities for children (SSD 2021). Child Development Associates, Inc. (CDA) is a community based, non-profit agency that provides child care reimbursement for parents who cannot afford child care (CDA 2021). The County also offers subsidized child care to qualifying families through their Centralized Eligibility List (SDCCEL 2021).



City of Santee
Environmental Justice Element

Figure 11.
Walkable Access to Schools

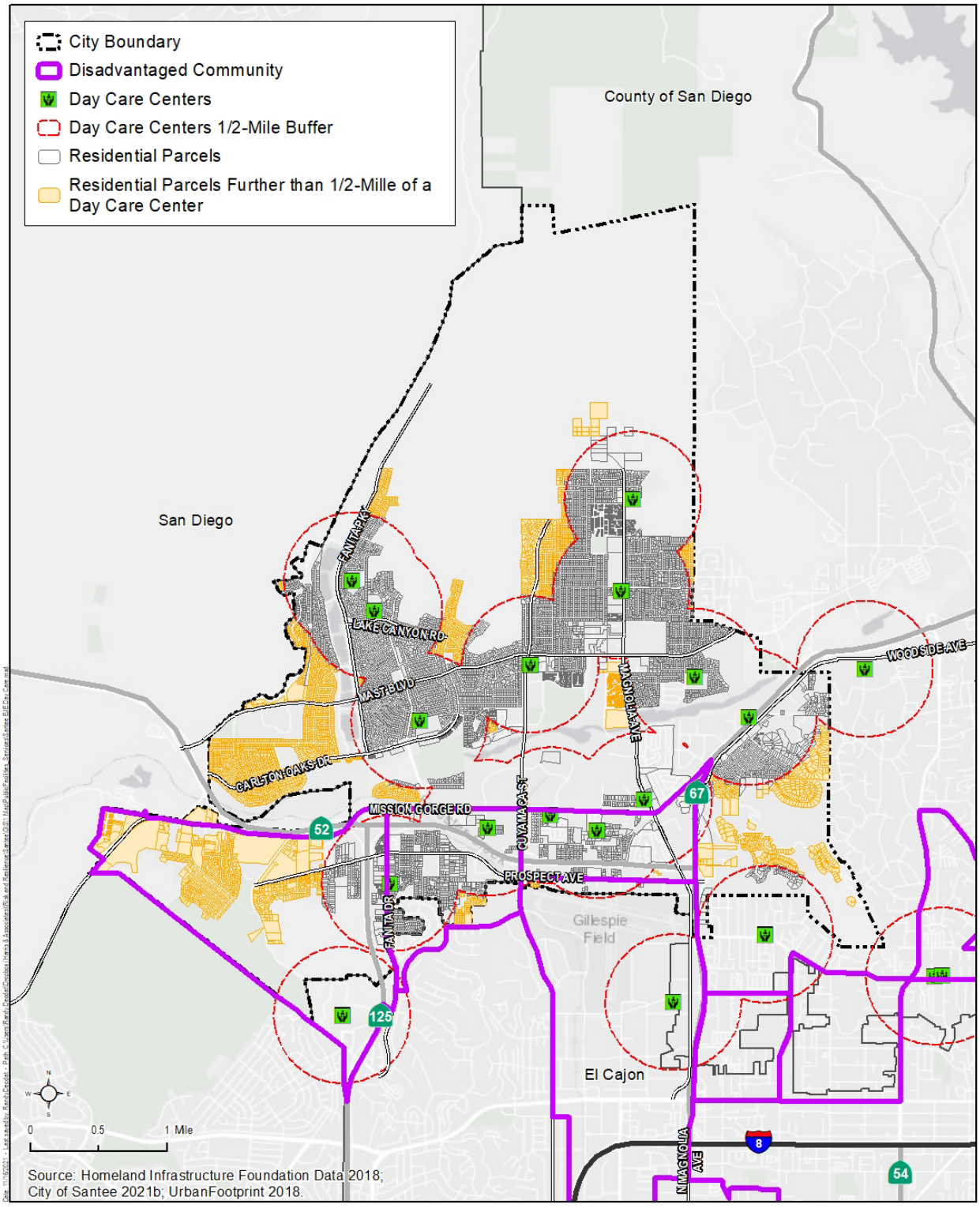


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Figure 12.
Walkable Access to Daycare

Public Transit

Studies have shown that a private automobile can cost 13 percent of household income (ITDP 2019). Therefore, access to public transit is another important factor of environmental justice. Assessing baseline conditions related to public transit routes and stops/stations can help identify areas that could benefit from improved transit. Local transit services, including the trolley and fixed route bus service, is provided by the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS). The project area is also served directly by one trolley transit line provided by MTS: the Green Line.

To assess resident's access to public transportation, the City identified residential parcels outside of a 0.5-mile radius of City bus stops. Approximately 18 percent of residential parcels are located further than 0.5 mile from the nearest transit stop. As shown on **Figure 13**, residential parcels in the southwest (non-disadvantaged communities) and southeast area (designated disadvantaged communities) of the City are outside the 0.5-mile buffer. Specifically, the area southwest of Prospect Avenue and Fanita Drive is a disadvantaged community that lacks walkable access to transit. Approximately 22 percent of Community Survey respondents indicated that public transit was not within walking or biking distance from their home (City of Santee 2021).

In addition to physical proximity, transit quality affects resident's ability to access transit services. Service via the Green Line is provided on 15-minute headways during the weekday commute and varies from 15- to 20-minute headways on the weekend mid-day hours. Though the Green Line offers an opportunity for residents to access employment opportunities in downtown San Diego by transit, it takes an hour to get from the Santee Green Line to the Santa Fe Depot station downtown (compared to 25 minutes by car). Approximately 31 percent of Community Survey respondents indicated that they do not use public transit because it takes too long (City of Santee 2021). Less than one percent of Santee residents utilize mass transit for their commute compared to 5.1 percent nationally (Best Places 2021) and 2.6 percent county-wide (USD 2018).

Affordability is an important factor in making public transit accessible to all residents. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD's) Transportation Cost Index estimates transportation costs as a percent of income for renters.[5] Values range from 0 to 100. The higher the transportation cost index value, the lower the cost of transportation in that census tract. The City has an average transportation cost index value of 68.83, same as the County, indicating generally low costs of transit based on resident incomes. The MTS transit fares are shown below in **Table 8**.

[5] Renters are defined here as a three-person single-parent family with income at 50% of the median income for renters for the region.

Table 8. MTS Transit Fares

Type	Regular	Discounted*
MTS Trolley (One-Way)	$2.50	$1.25
MTS Bus (One-Way)	$2.50	$1.25
Regional 30-day Pass	$72	$23
1-Day Pass	$6	$3

Source: MTS 2021

***Senior/Disabled/Medicare

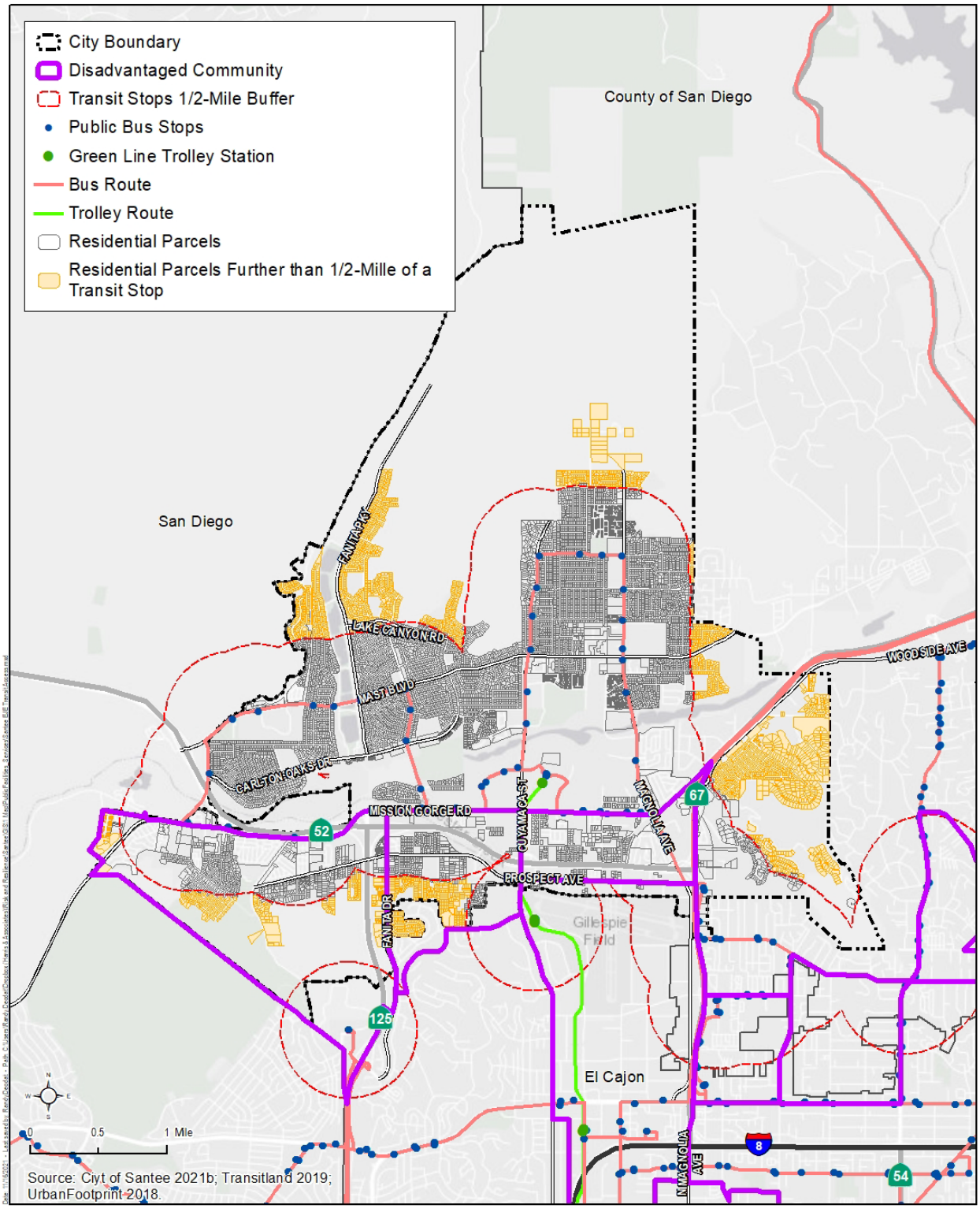

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Figure 13.
Walkable Access to Transit

Health Care

Populations at higher risk to environmental stressors include those who are uninsured or underinsured or lack access to health care. Approximately 10 percent of City residents are uninsured (PHASC 2017). These groups are also the ones more likely to have greater exposure to environmental stress, resulting in more significant physical and mental health impacts that would require health care. **Figure 14** maps health care facilities, including urgent care facilities and medical clinics, in the City relative to percent of uninsured adults. Urgent care facilities are defined by any location that is capable of providing emergency medical care and must provide emergency medical treatment beyond what can normally be provided by an EMS unit, must be able to perform surgery, or must be able to provide recuperative care beyond what is normally provided by a doctor's office. Medical offices refer to offices providing consultation, diagnosis, therapeutic, preventative, or corrective personal treatment services by doctors and small practitioners of medical and healing arts for humans licensed for such practice by the State. There is a greater percent of uninsured adults in the south and southwestern portion of the City, indicating that disadvantaged communities have less access to healthcare services. Only 17 percent of Community Survey respondents indicated that they lacked affordable and nearby health care services (City of Santee 2021).

The County's Live Well San Diego initiative developed community indicators to measure the collective impact of their programs on health, safety, and quality of life. While there is no data on life expectancy for Santee residents, the data portal reported that 97 percent of the population is "sufficiently healthy to live independently," up three percent since 2012 and higher than the 95 percent countywide.

Key Findings: Access to Public Facilities and Services

Many residences in disadvantaged communities are not within walking distance to their nearest school. However, residences in disadvantaged communities are generally within walking distance of daycare centers and transit, which can provide residents with opportunities to access other community services without using their personal vehicle. Despite low transit fares and well-distributed bus stops, most residents still rely on their personal vehicle. Nevertheless, 21 percent of Community Survey respondents indicated that heavy traffic restricted access to key destinations.[6]

Residents in disadvantaged communities are less likely to have health insurance, which may result in higher rates of avoidable emergency room visits. There are several medical facilities serving the area in and around Santee's disadvantaged communities.

[6] While the Community Survey did not ask about traffic, 21% of respondents mentioned it in the open-ended questions.

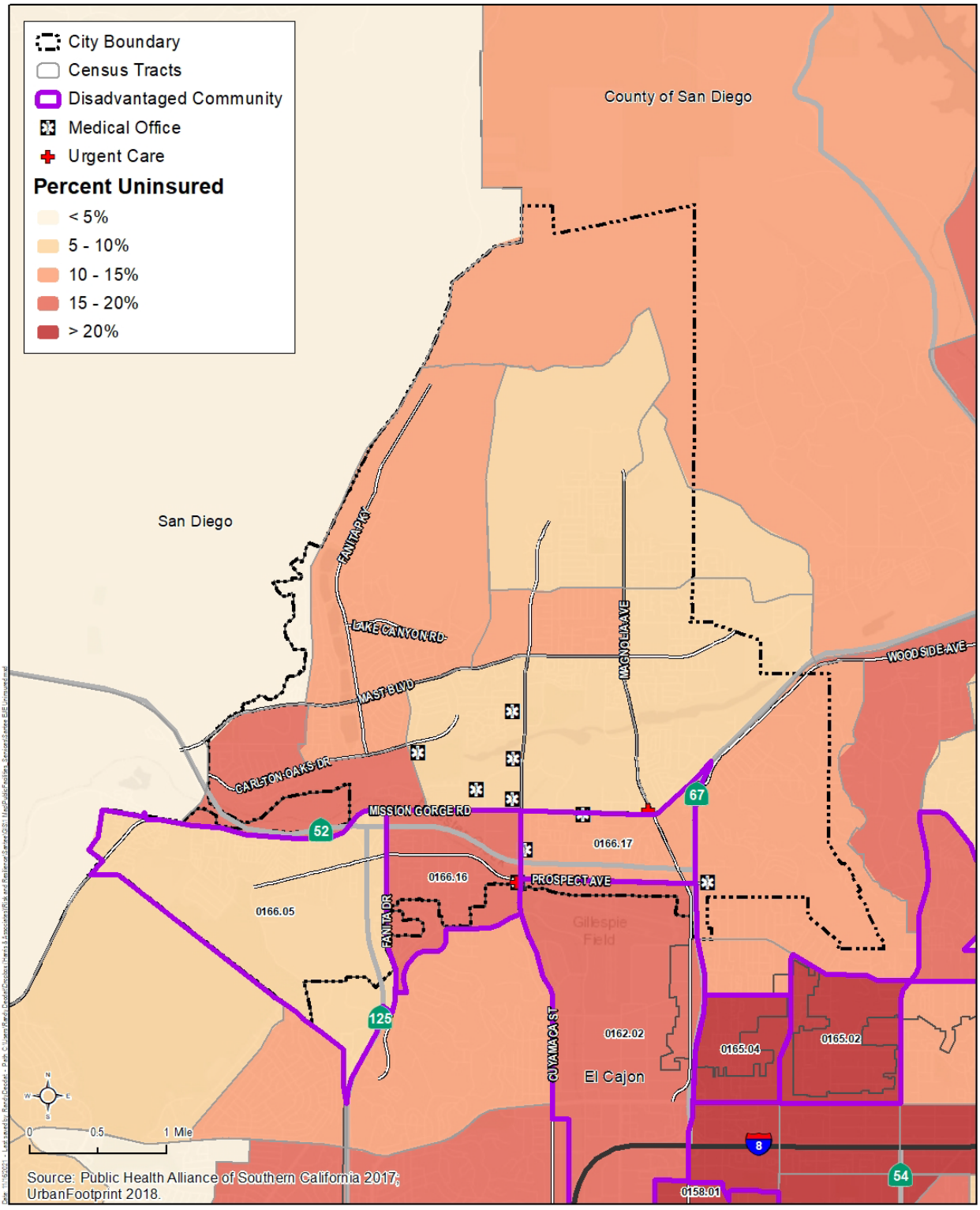

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Figure 14.
Population without Health Insurance

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Section 5 Access to Healthy Food

While many people associate environmental justice with reducing pollution problems, access to healthy food is similarly essential to improving health outcomes (Kavi et al. 2019). Disadvantaged communities are more likely to have limited access to healthy and affordable foods (PolicyLink 2013). Access to healthy food has become a greater priority given that the percentage of obese adults and children has been increasing, particularly in low-income communities.

Many Californians also experience "food insecurity," defined as a household's inability to provide enough food for every person to live an active, healthy life. Although individuals make food choices, those choices are made within the context of what is consistently accessible, affordable, or available. Approximately 11 percent of people in the County experience food insecurity, a decrease in approximately 4 percent since 2015 (UWPHI 2021). However, the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has caused a public health and economic crisis that has resulted in a significant increase in the number of people experiencing food insecurity in 2020 (Feeding America 2020).

The City assessed disadvantaged communities' access to healthy food in Santee using the indicators listed below (**Table 9**).

Table 9. Healthy Food Indicators

Sub-Topic	Indicator	Description
Food Access	Food Distribution Sites	Number and location of summer meal sites and food banks
	Modified Retail Food Environment Index	Number of healthy food retailers/ (No. of healthy + No. of less healthy food retailers) *100
Food Insecurity	SNAP Enrollment	Percent of population receiving SNAP/CalFresh benefits
	SNAP Vendors	Location of SNAP/CalFresh Certified Vendors
	Free or Reduced Lunch Program Enrollment	Percent of students in Santee School District that qualify for free and reduced lunches
Community Health	Obesity Rate	Percent of adults and children that are considered obese
	Fast Food/Supermarket Distribution	Location of fast food/convenience stores/ supermarkets

Notes: SNAP = Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program

Food Access

In addition to financial access, physical access to supermarkets, grocery stores, and other retail food establishments is critical to food security. Food deserts are geographic locations where low-income neighborhoods lack physical access to supermarkets. Approximately 3 percent of the population in the County have limited access to healthy foods, defined by percentage of the population that is low income and does not live close to a grocery store (UWPHI 2021).

Figure 15 scores census tracts access to healthy food using the Modified Food Environment Index, which provides an indication (score 0-100) of the number of healthy food retailers relative to the number of less healthy food retailers (CDPH 2020). An index score of zero (lower score) generally corresponds with the concept of a food desert or less access to healthy food. The County's mean Food Environment Index score is 18.5, compared to the City's score of 15.9. The southeastern portion of the City to the east of SR-67 (not considered disadvantaged) has the least access to healthy food. Disadvantaged communities; however, still have less access to healthy food than other areas of the City, as shown in **Figure 15**.

For families that do not have adequate access to healthy foods or are otherwise food insecure, there are several food banks serving Santee residents. In addition to food bank programs, the Summer Meal Program, a federal meal program, provides children from low-income areas access to free nutritious meals during school vacation and off-track periods. There are four summer meal service sites located in the City of Santee. Food banks[7] and summer meal sites are mapped in **Figure 15** in relation to Modified Food Environment Index scores. The southwest portion of the City has less access to healthy food and is not currently served by a food bank or Summer Meal Program site.

According to the Community Survey, only 12 percent of respondents indicated they lacked grocery stores or markets that provided fresh produce, and 9 percent indicated that affordable produce or food assistance was not accessible to them. Overall, about 9 percent of respondents indicated that lack of access to healthy food was a key issue for the City to address (City of Santee 2021).

[7] Food banks include food distribution centers and food pantries.

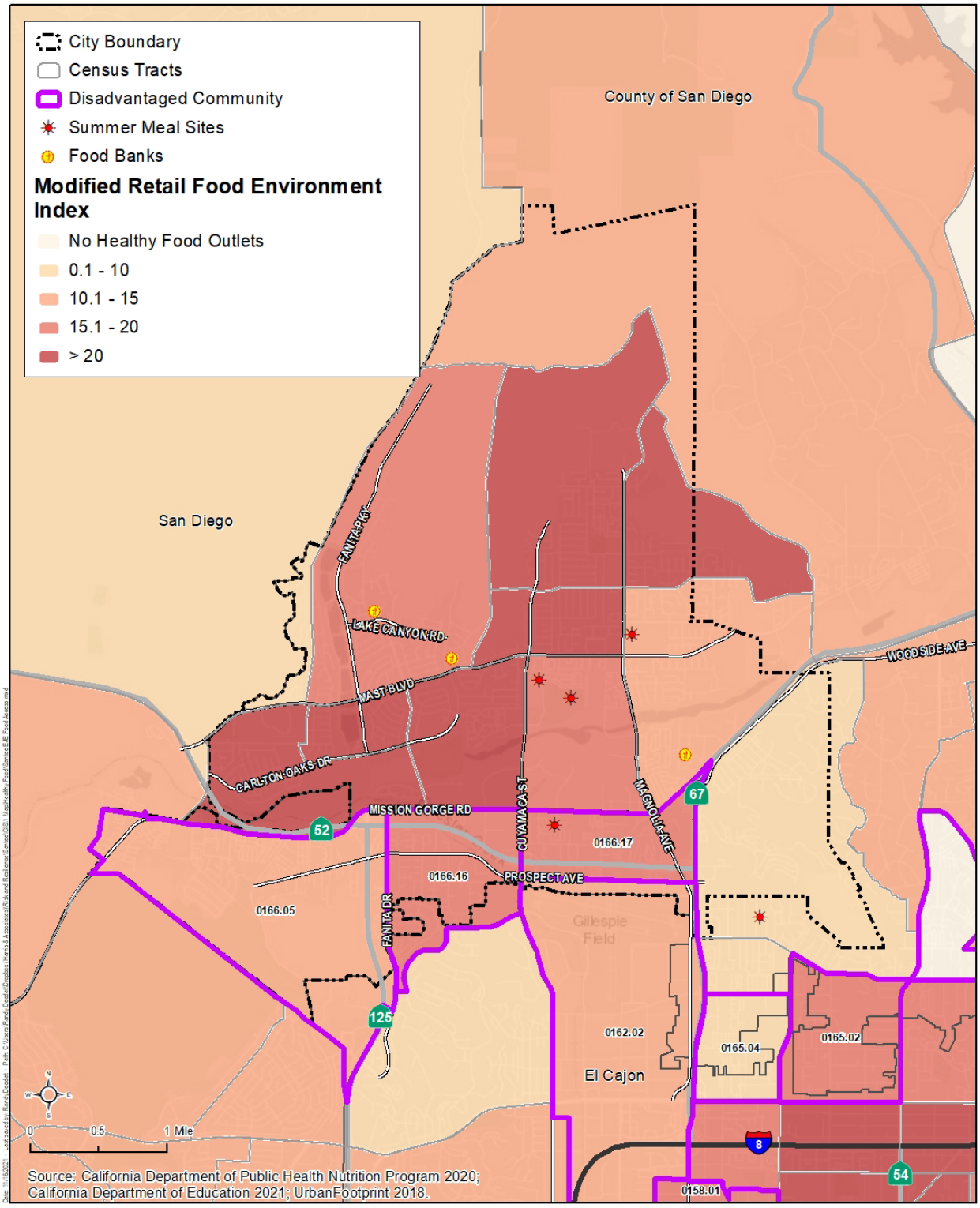

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Figure 15.
Food Access

Food Insecurity

Food insecurity describes a household's inability to provide enough food for each person to live a healthy life. Food insecurity is one way to measure and assess the risk of hunger. Numerous programs are available to Santee households to help support nutritious diets and mitigate food insecurity. The Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, known as CalFresh in California, provides money to needy families to purchase food. Accessing CalFresh benefits increases the purchasing power of low-income families, enabling them to acquire more healthy and nutritious food. Approximately 6 percent of Santee households receive CalFresh benefits to supplement their food expenditures, compared to 7 percent in the County and 9 percent in California (ACS 2019).

Another program that helps families to access healthy food is the Free and Reduced-Price lunch program. The program provides both breakfast and lunch five days a week. Approximately 38 percent of Santee School District students were eligible for free and reduced-price meals in 2019-2020 (CDE 2020).

In October 2020, Feeding America released a report that provided an analysis of how food insecurity may increase in 2020 due to COVID 19 pandemic. The report identified that pre-pandemic, the United States had the lowest food insecurity rates in more than 20 years, but that the current crisis has reversed improvements made over the past decade (Feeding America 2020).

Community Health

Obesity increases the risk for many chronic diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, and many cancers. While all people may be affected by obesity, low-resource and food insecure communities are particularly vulnerable. According to the State of Childhood Obesity in San Diego 2019 Supplemental Report, approximately 36 percent of children in Santee are considered obese or overweight, slightly higher than the county average of 34 percent (SDCOI 2019). The report provides an update to the 2016 State of Childhood Obesity Report, relying on data collected through the FITNESSGRAM® test. To learn about additional indicators measured and tracked through the County's Childhood Obesity Initiative and State of Childhood Obesity Report, please visit the initiative's website here: www.sdcoi.org

Easy access (close proximity) to fast food restaurants, especially absent adequate access to grocery stores that provide fresh produce, can contribute to higher obesity rates. Low-income and racial-ethnic minorities are more likely than white residents to live near unhealthy food retailers, which has been associated with poor diet (Cooksey-Stowers et al. 2017). Increasing the number of full-service grocery stores relative to fast food restaurants in neighborhoods can help to combat these health conditions. **Figure 16** maps the location of food retailers by type, including fast food restaurants[8], small markets, and grocery stores[9], using data layers developed by the California Department of Public Health Nutrition Education & Obesity Prevention Branch (CHDPH 2020).

Key Findings: Access to Healthy Food

The data presented in the Modified Retail Environment Index suggests that disadvantaged communities have slightly less access to healthy food outlets compared to other areas in the City and the County. Less access to healthy food and higher prevalence of fast food establishments in disadvantaged communities may contribute to higher obesity rates. While the City does have several food banks and summer meal program sites, the southwest portion of the City that is considered disadvantaged is not served by these food distribution sites. Overall, Community Survey respondents felt that they had sufficient access to healthy food.

[8] Includes fast food, pizza, and sandwiches.
[9] Grocery stores include supermarket chains and large grocery stores.

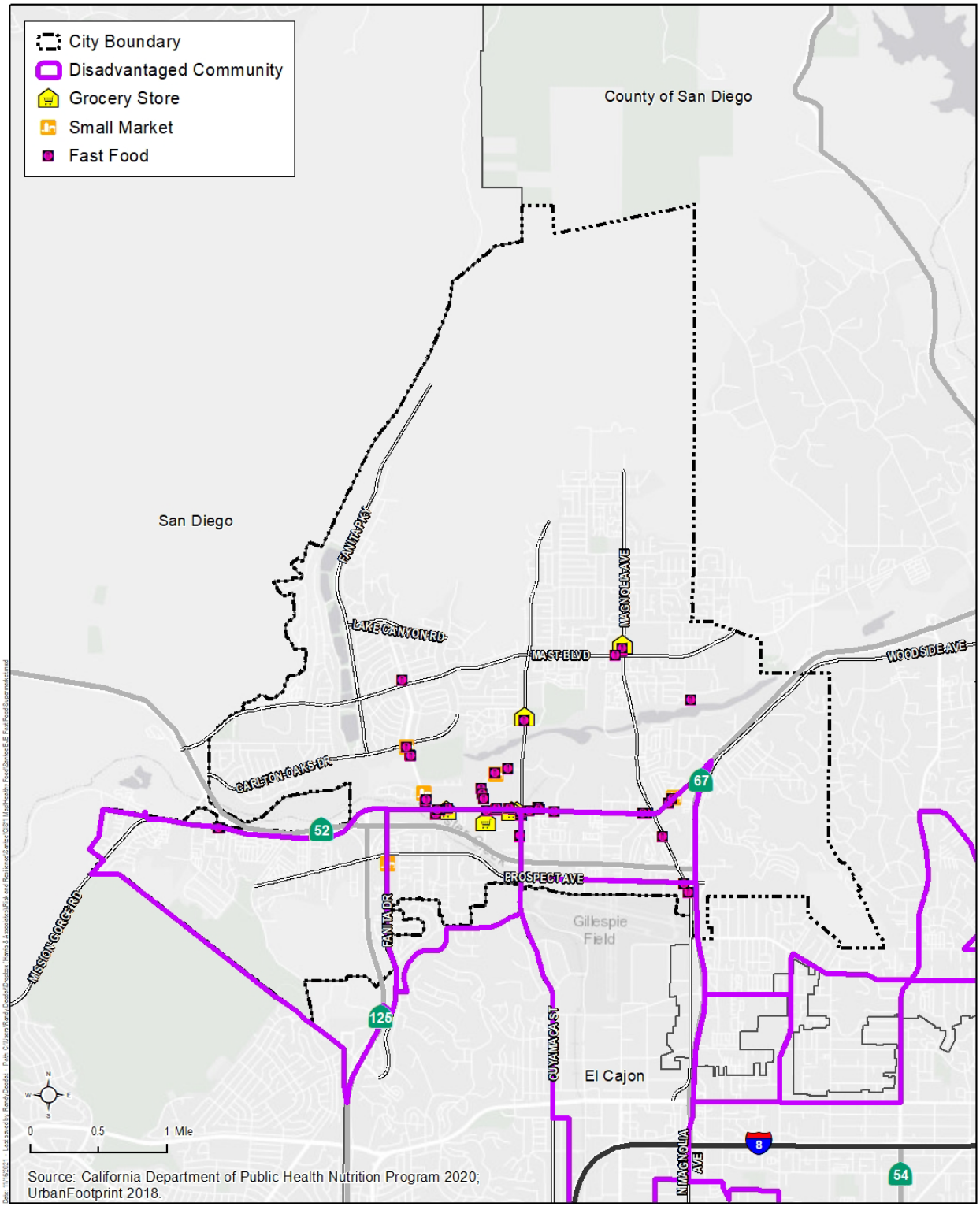

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Figure 16.
Select Food Retailers Distribution

Section 6 Access to Physical Activity and Recreational Opportunity

Increasing physical activity is one of the most important contributors to improved health. It helps people manage weight; reduces risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, and some cancers; and improves mental health and well-being. Cities can work to ensure all residents are able to engage in physical activity and recreation by providing adequate and equitable access to parks and recreational centers, as well as investing in infrastructure that supports active transportation. The City assessed residents' access to physical activity using the indicators listed in **Table 10**.

Table 10. Physical Activity and Recreational Opportunity Indicators

Indicator	Description
Walkable Access to Outdoor Recreation	Provides a measurement of level of service for any location within the City based on "walkable access" referring to ½ mile proximity (10-minute walk) to outdoor recreation facility (including parks).
Parkland to Resident Ratio	Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents
Walkable Access to Indoor Recreation	Provides a measurement of level of service for any location within the City based on "walkable access" referring to ½ mile proximity (10 minute walk) to indoor recreation facility
Walkability/Bikeability	The Walkability Index dataset characterizes every Census 2010 block group in the U.S. based on its relative walkability. Also maps the location of bike paths throughout the City.
Bicycle and Pedestrian Collisions	Number of pedestrian and bike collisions per capita
	Top intersections in Santee with highest number of bicycle-involved and pedestrian-involved collisions, and number of collisions by severity

Note: PRMP = Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Parks and Recreation

Just as low-income communities are more likely to live in close proximity to polluting land uses, they are similarly less likely to have equitable access to parks and recreation centers. Recognizing the role planners have in helping communities increase access to healthier living environments, the City has developed and maintained a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Last updated in 2017, the plan assesses the City's parks and recreation systems, and plans for future growth of the community.

The Plan provides a level of service analysis of the City's park system. The level of service analysis measures access to recreation by walking, using 15-minute walk time catchment radii around each park. The City supplemented this level of service analysis with one that identifies households that are further than 1/2-mile from a park *or* school (**Figure 17**). Schools are included in the analysis because the City, as of 1986, has a joint-use agreement in place with the Santee School District, wherein the District agreed to make available year-round a minimum of five school sites throughout the City for the operation of the City of Santee (City of Santee 1986). Walker Preserve Trail, a 1.3-mile-long linear park, is also included in **Figure 17**. The trail is along the San Diego River from Magnolia Avenue east to the City limits, connecting to Lakeside Baseball Park and the Lakeside Riverpark Conservancy trail system. Amenities include a picnic shelter, shaded picnic areas, park benches, picnic tables, drinking water fountains, bike racks, and a bike repair station.

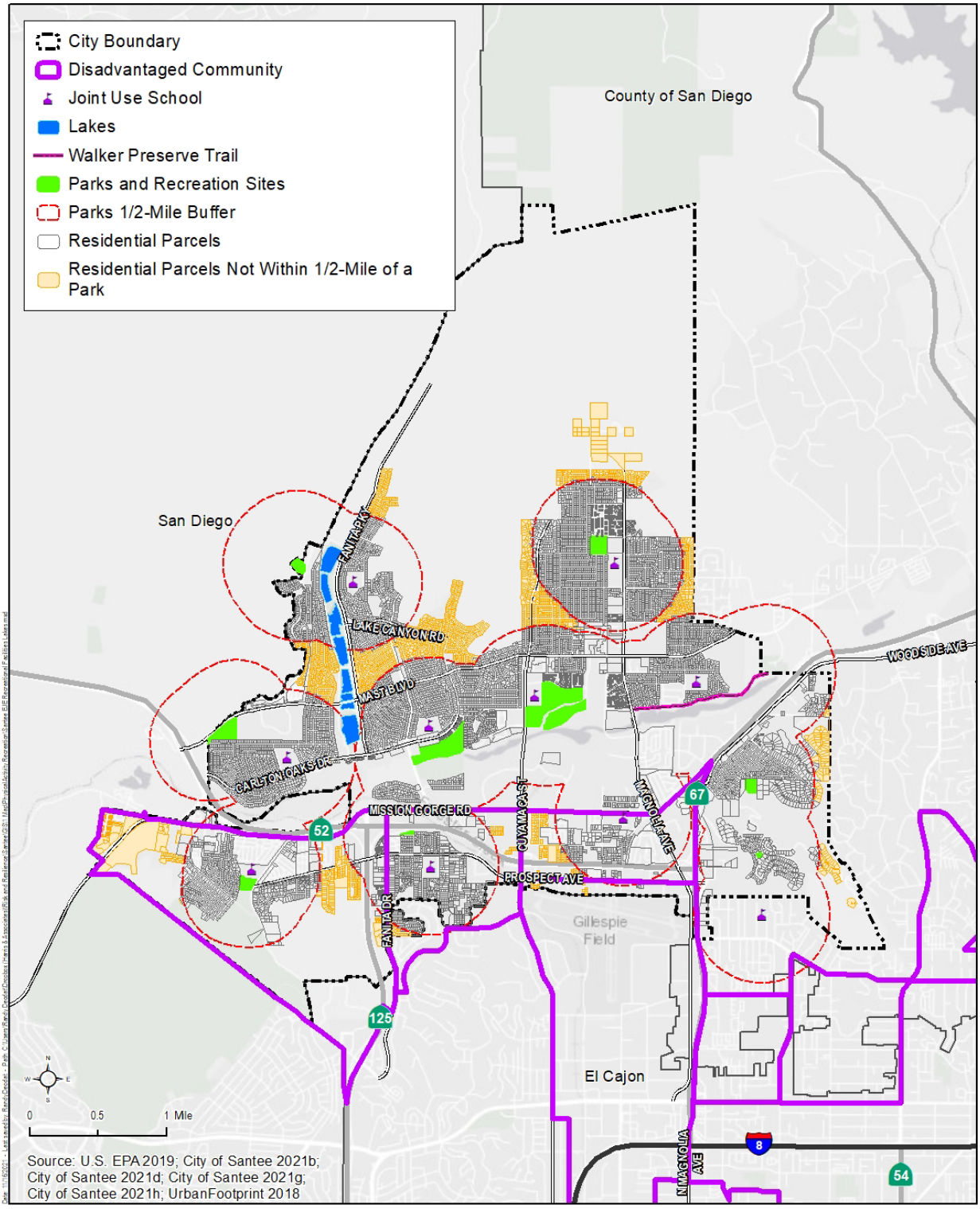

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Figure 17.
Walkable Access to Park

In general, these level of service analyses suggest that Santee parks are equitably distributed throughout the City; however, the disadvantaged area bound by Magnolia Avenue, Prospect Avenue, Cuyamaca Street, and Mission Gorge Road is not served by a City park. Only 15 percent of Community Survey respondents indicated they lacked parks or recreation centers within walking or biking distance of their home, and only 9 percent indicated that organized activities and sports at neighborhood parks and recreation centers were not available or affordable (City of Santee 2021).

The 2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update provides a list of key findings and recommendations, including additional need for community and neighborhood parks (City of Santee 2017).

6.1 Active Transportation

Active transportation incorporates physical activity into one's daily routine, such as walking or biking to work, school, or nearby open space or community centers to pursue recreation. According to the National Household Travel Survey (2017), nearly half of the trips people make are under three miles away, and over a fifth are within one mile (FHWA 2017). To help facilitate making these short distance trips by means other than driving, transportation systems can be designed to increase and encourage "active transportation" options (i.e., walking and biking). Providing equitable infrastructure investments to support active transportation can help reduce some of the disparate health outcomes seen across California. Active transportation options also allow for less time spent in vehicles and can help to reduce vehicle miles traveled, resulting in less greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.

Walkability is a measure of how friendly an area is to walking. Walkability depends upon characteristics of the built environment that influence the likelihood of walking being used as a mode of travel, such as the presence and width of sidewalks, path connection uses, and traffic conditions, including separation from vehicles. Approximately 26 percent of Community Survey respondents indicated there was a lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle lanes for people to safely move around the City (City of Santee 2021). **Figure 18** identifies existing sidewalks, trails, existing bike paths by class type, and proposed bike paths by class type throughout the City. Bike path class types include the following:

- **Class I:** Shared-use paths with exclusive right of way for bicyclists and pedestrians, away from the roadway and with minimized cross flows by motor traffic.
- **Class II:** Bike lanes established along streets, defined by pavement striping and signage to delineate a portion of a roadway for bicycle travel.
- **Class III:** Bike routes that designate a preferred route for bicyclists on streets shared with motor traffic not served by dedicated bikeways.
- **Class IV:** Protected bike lane for the exclusive use of bicycles, physically separated from motor traffic with a vertical feature like posts, parking, or inflexible barriers.

Furthermore, as shown in **Figure 18**, disadvantaged communities have less sidewalks, trails, and bike paths than other residential areas in the City.

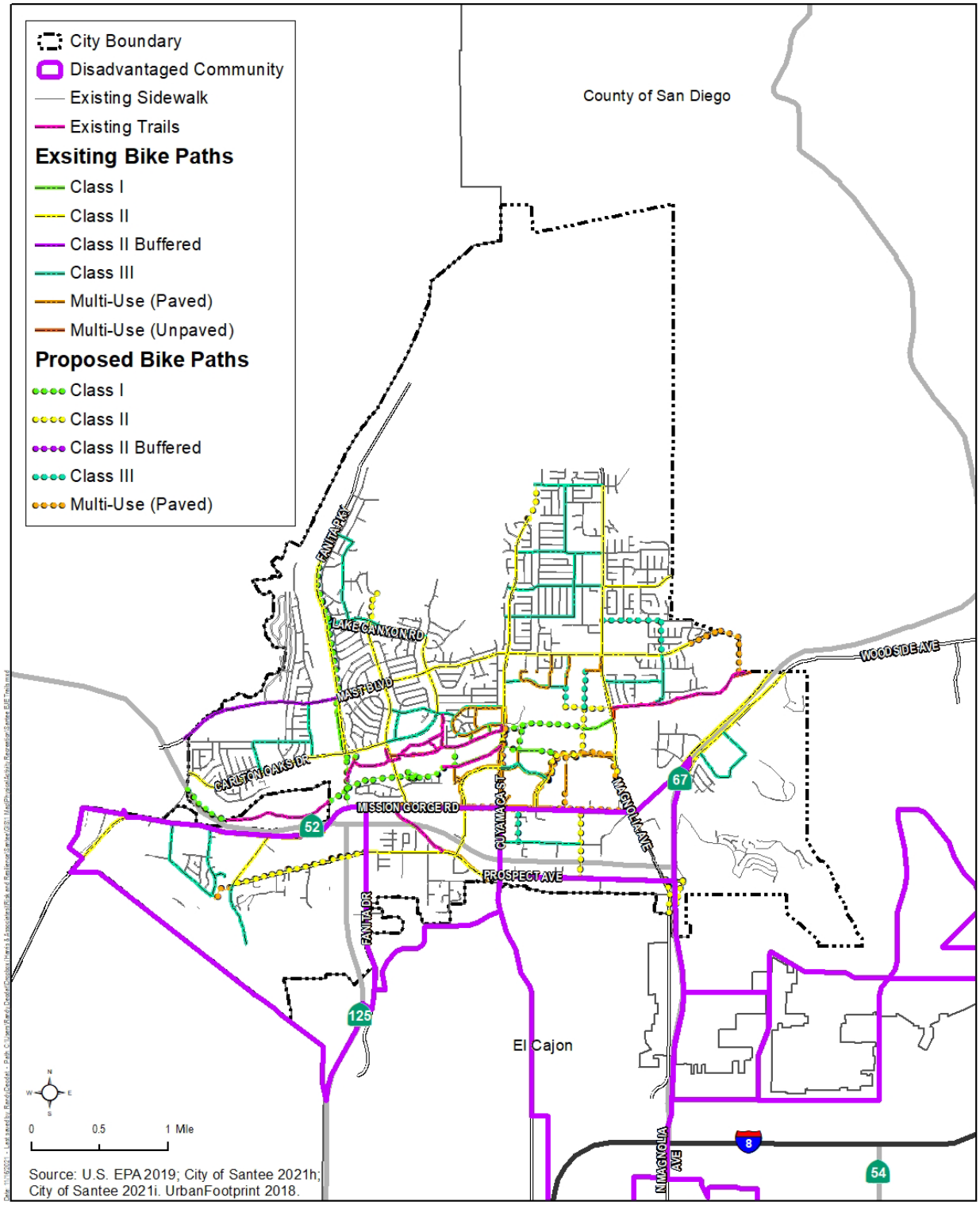

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Figure 18.
Pedestrian and Bike Paths

The City of Santee recognizes the value of providing opportunities for local residents and visitors to bicycle for work and recreation, as well as to use off-road trails for hiking, equestrian use, and jogging. Such opportunities help to reduce auto trips, improve the environment, and promote healthy lifestyles.

The City's bikeway network is shown in **Figure 18**. As shown in **Figure 18**, bikeways are well-distributed throughout the City, with an exception of the southeast portion of the City, which only has access to one bikeway along Woodside Avenue. Adding proposed bike lanes along Mission Gorge Road will increase opportunities for residents living in the southeast portion to access more destinations via bike. Furthermore, the City trail network connects to off-site trail networks in other jurisdictions. For example, the trails on the west side of the City connect to the City of San Diego Mission Trails Regional Park.

Residents' decision to walk or bike instead of drive is also dependent on their perception of the safety of such activities. **Figure 19** maps the location of bicycle and pedestrian collisions from 2010 to 2020. As expected, these figures indicate a greater number of collisions occur along major intersections, including:

- Carlton Hills Boulevard & Willowgrove Avenue
- Cuyamaca Street & Mission Gorge Road
- Magnolia Avenue & Woodside Avenue
- Mission Gorge Road & Railroad Avenue

Table 11 compares Santee's bicycle and pedestrian per capita (per 1,000) collision data between 2010-2015 and 2015-2020. The City has significantly reduced the number of both pedestrian and bicycle collisions in the last five years.

Table 11. Bicycle and Pedestrian Collisions per 1,000 people/yr

Collision Type	Total	2010-2014*	2015-2020**
Pedestrian	27	0.16	0.09
Bicycle	24	0.20	0.08

Source: UC Berkeley 2020
*Using 2015 ACS Estimate for Population = 56,255
** Using 2019 ACS Estimate for Population = 58,081

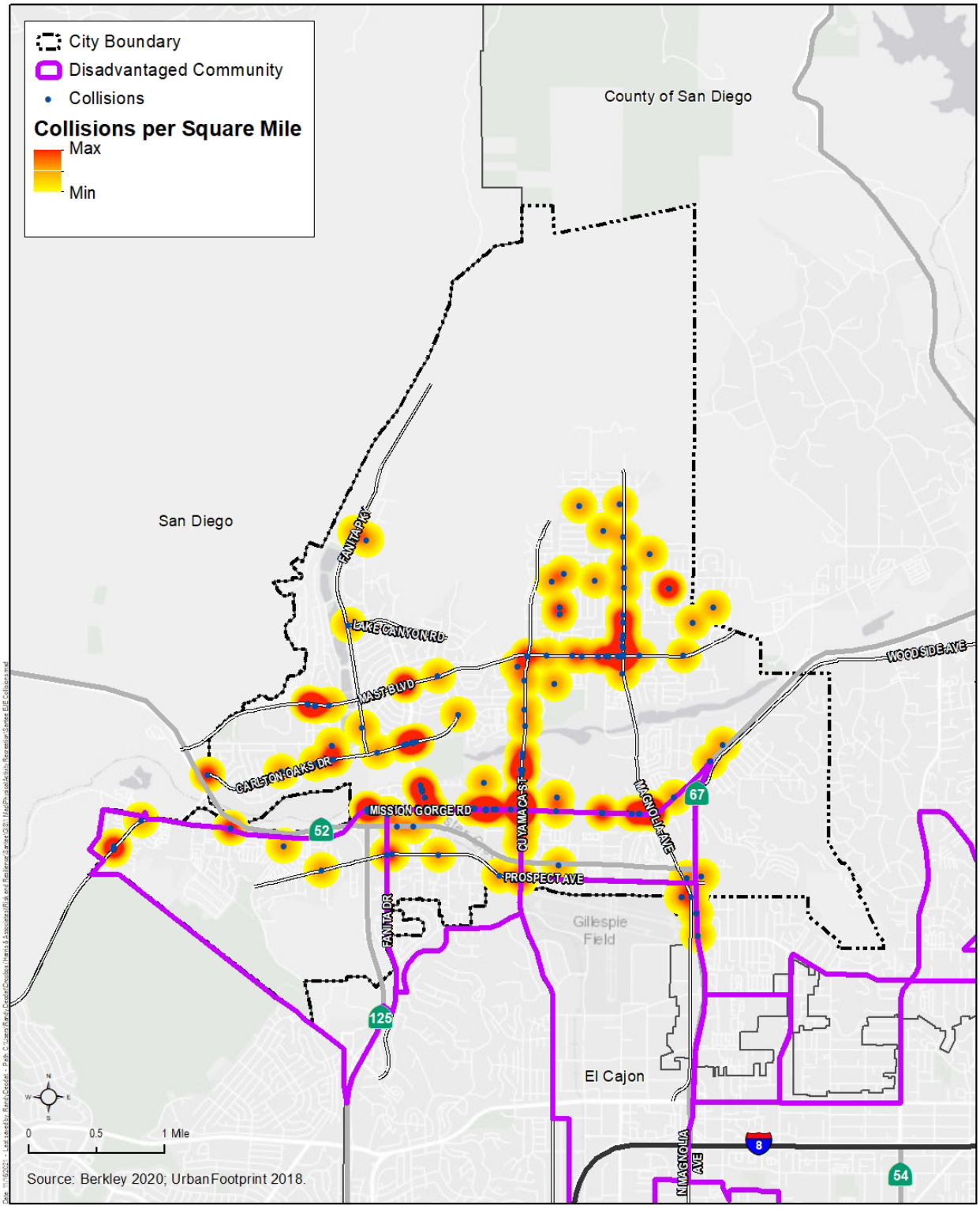

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Figure 19.
Bicycle and Pedestrian Collisions

The City's Mobility Element of the General Plan, adopted in 2017, provides guidance to decisions that expand and improve the transportation system and accommodate the diverse transportation needs of City residents. The first goal of the Mobility Element is to "Ensure that the existing and future transportation system is accessible, safe, reliable, efficient, integrated, convenient, well-connected and multimodal," and "accommodate(s) active transportation," including pedestrians and bicyclists (City of Santee 2017). The City intends to meet this goal by designing complete streets and developing a "connected system of multi-modal corridors that encourage walking, biking, and riding transit" (City of Santee 2017). The City of Santee has completed the first Active Transportation Plan (Active Santee Plan) that provides a framework for the development of a complete system that accommodates bicyclists and pedestrians.

Key Findings: Access to Physical Activity and Recreation

Disadvantaged communities in the southwest portion of the City have less sidewalks and bike paths compared to other areas of the City, limiting the ability to utilize active transportation modes. Though transportation collisions occur near the intersection of Magnolia Ave. and Mast Blvd., there are a significant number of reported collisions on Mission Gorge Rd., which is a heavily trafficked road to the north of designated disadvantaged communities. Nearly 46 percent of Community Survey respondents indicated that limited access to and deterioration of city infrastructure and facilities that support physical activity; including sidewalks, bicycle lanes, parks, and recreation centers, is the most important issue for the City to address to ensure all residents have access to healthy living conditions (City of Santee 2021).

Section 7 Access to Safe, Sanitary, and Affordable Homes

Housing location, quality, affordability, and stability have health implications. Often, individuals who experience unique or compounding health risks face multiple, interrelated barriers to accessing safe, stable, and affordable housing (Taylor 2018). The City assessed residents' access to safe and sanitary homes in Santee using the indicators of housing stock age and cost-burdened households (**Table 12**).

Table 12. Safe, Sanitary and Affordable Housing Indicators

Indicator	Description
Age of residential housing stock	Age of residential housing stock
Substandard Housing	Percent of "substandard housing"
Overcrowded Houses	Percent of overcrowding of owner/renter households
Cost Burdened Households	Percent of households who spend more than 30% of income on rent

Notes: MHI = median household income, SCAG = Southern California Association of Governments

7.1 Housing Quality and Safety

The quality of available housing stock has direct health implications. Older housing that has not been maintained or updated can lead to unsafe conditions due to pest infestation, water intrusion, mold, poor insulation, and exposure to toxins, such as lead and second- and third-hand smoke. Water intrusion, poor insulation, and mold can exacerbate respiratory illnesses such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Exposure to lead, a known neurotoxin, can have lifelong health consequences for young children. **Figure 20** maps residential housing stock by age, which can be used as a proxy for housing stock quality.

As shown in **Figure 20**, the majority of older residential buildings are located in the southcentral portion of the City between SR-125 and SR-67. In general, areas with older housing stock are also in areas with higher asthma rates. Excessive moisture and dampness, poor heating and ventilation systems, and deteriorated carpeting, all of which are associated with older, substandard housing, may contribute to asthma prevalence in the City (Krieger 2010). Only 7 percent of Community Survey respondents indicated concern about unsafe or unhealthy conditions in homes (such as lead based paint, mold, poor ventilation, poor insulation, or other needed repairs) (City of Santee 2021).

The American Community Survey includes surveys about three factors of what may be considered substandard housing: availability of telephone service, plumbing facilities, and kitchen facilities. In Santee, 227 housing units (1.2 percent) lack telephone service, 112 units (0.6 percent) lack plumbing facilities, and 295 units (1.5 percent) lack complete kitchen facilities (ACS 2019). Approximately 20 percent of Community Survey respondents also indicated that air conditioning is not available or affordable (City of Santee 2021).

The Community Survey also asked residents about their perception of safety in their homes. Many survey respondents indicated safety concerns from vagrant populations living near their neighborhood. While only a few indicated concerns about their home being in a fire or flood zone, nearly 17 percent of respondents indicated that flood, fire, or renter's insurance was not affordable (City of Santee 2021). Community Survey respondents also expressed concern about heavily trafficked neighborhoods, with many cars speeding through residential areas.

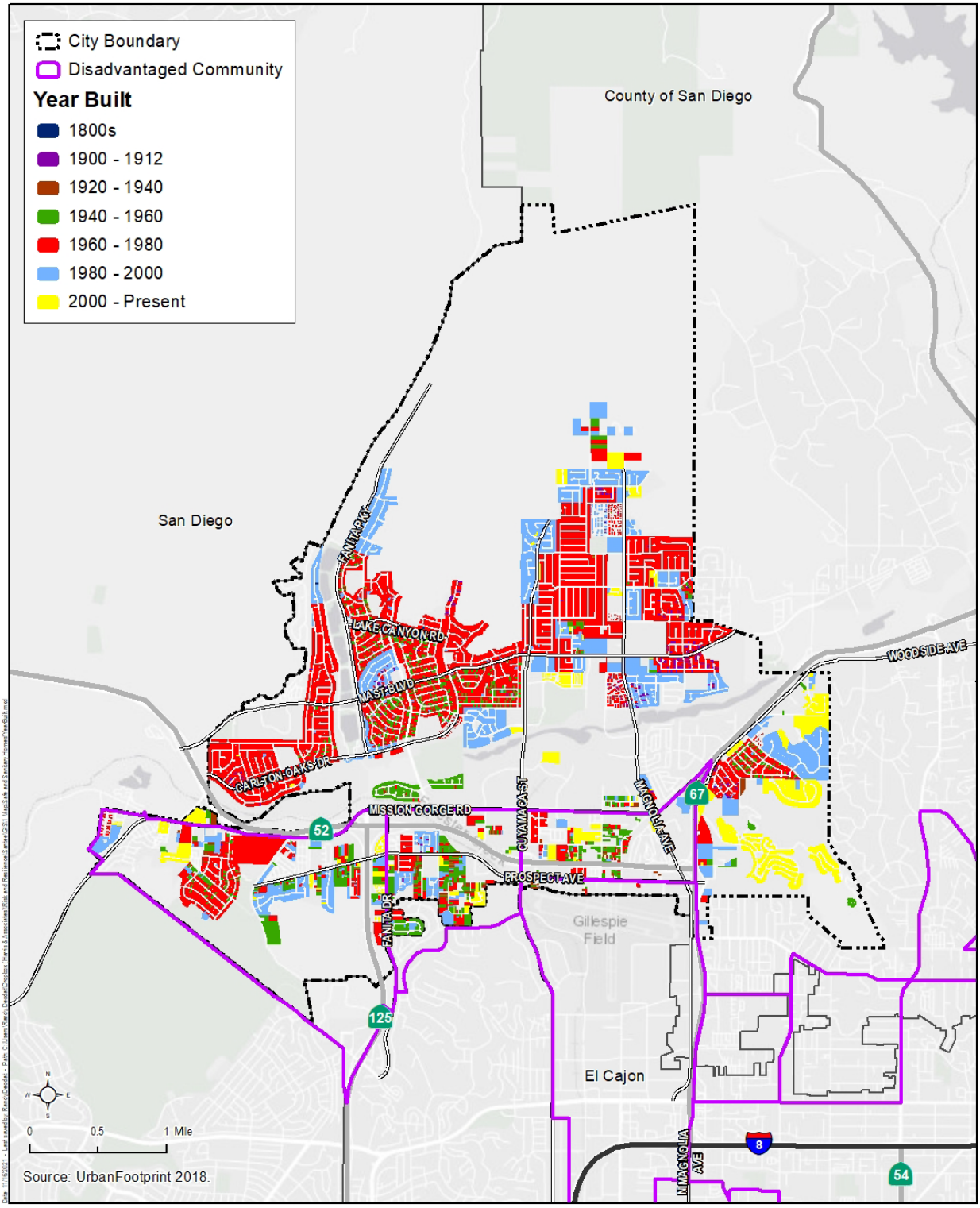

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Figure 20.
Residential Housing Stock by Year Built

7.2 Housing Affordability

Jurisdictions can take actions to preserve existing quality, affordable housing stock in addition to pursuing a path to create additional affordable housing. Access to affordable housing helps alleviate undue stress suffered from unstable living conditions. Many families in disadvantaged communities often have relatively low and fixed incomes; thus, affordable housing allows them to put their remaining income toward other goods and services, health care needs, and other necessities. Lower housing costs allow for less financial burden and can allow for more time to pursue other healthy behaviors, such as exercise or cooking healthy meals.

When housing prices rise, household occupancy rates often increase, which can result in overcrowded and unsafe living conditions and increase the risk of spreading infectious diseases. The median value of owner-occupied housing in Santee is $445,500 and the median household income home cost in Santee is $527,600, and the median household income is $87,098. In comparison, the County's median value of owner-occupied housing is $563,700, and the median household income is $78,980 (ACS 2019). **Table 13** compares the average household size between 2020 and 2017 in the City of Santee, relative to the County (ACS 2019).

Table 13. Average Household Size

Jurisdiction	2010	2017
City of Santee	2.72	2.86
County of San Diego	2.75	2.87

Approximately 1.6 percent of owner-occupied households are overcrowded and 6.5 percent of renter-occupied households in the City are overcrowded, defined as a household with more than one person per room (ACS 2019). This suggests that renters are disproportionately affected by overcrowding.

HUD defines moderate cost-burdened households as those "spending more than 30 percent of their income for housing" and severe cost-burdened households as those "spending more than 50 percent of their income on housing" (HUD 2017). Though housing cost burden is measured as a percentage of gross income spent on housing, lower-income households spending the same percent of income on housing as a higher-income household will likely experience more "burden." Of Santee's 5,413 *renter* households, 49 percent are moderate cost-burdened, compared to 51 percent county-wide. Additionally, 24 percent are severely cost-burdened compared to 26 percent for low-income renters county-wide (ACS 2019; County of San Diego 2021). However, most Santee residents own their home; only 28 percent of households in Santee are renter-occupied (ACS 2015). Only 31 percent of home-owners are considered cost burdened. Nearly 32 percent of Community Survey respondents indicated that housing affordability was an important issue for the City to address in order to ensure all residents have access to good living conditions (City of Santee 2021). More information on housing affordability can be found in the City's Housing Element.

Key Findings: Access to Safe, Sanitary, and Affordable Homes

Though housing costs are less expensive than in other areas in the County and State, 49 percent of renters and 32 percent of home-owners are cost-burdened (ACS 2019). Disadvantaged communities are more likely to live in older (and likely lower-quality) homes and spend a greater percentage of their income on housing compared to other areas on the City. High housing costs impact renters in disadvantaged communities more severely, as they often include low-income residents. Community Survey respondents were much more concerned with housing affordability than the safety and quality of homes – 32 percent of respondents thought affordable housing is the most important issue for the City to address, as opposed to the two percent who thought safe and sanitary housing was the most pressing issue.

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Section 8 Unique or Compounded Health Risks

8.1 Climate Change

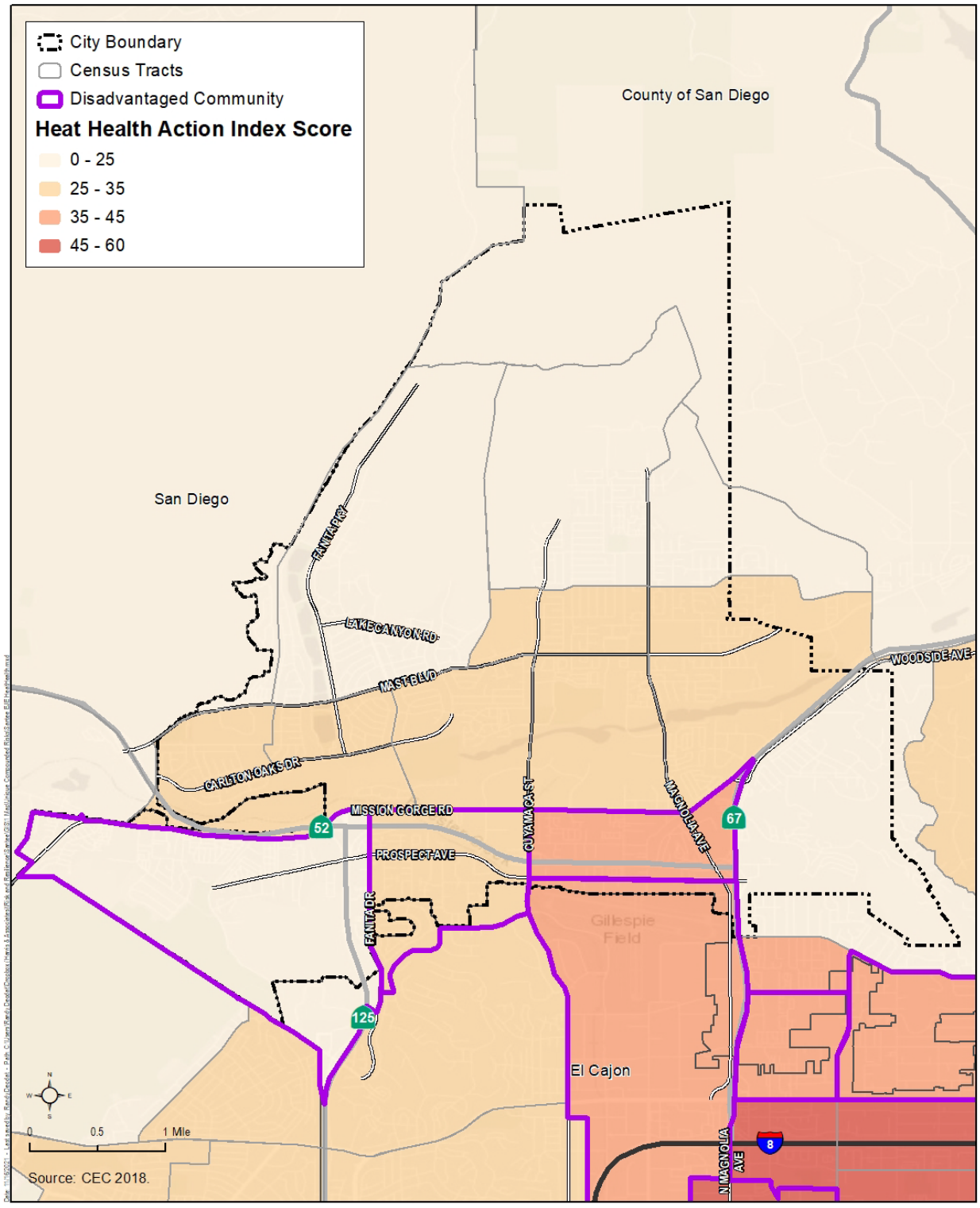
Climate change will likely increase the severity of existing hazards and their associated risks to people in Santee. Climate change may even cause displacement from increased frequency or severity of hazards like flooding, drought, wildfire, extreme heat, and other impacts. In 2018, the City approved the County's Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJLHMP), which provides an analysis of potential natural and human-caused hazards. The City's General Plan Public Safety Element builds from the 2018 MJLHMP to addresses the potential loss of life, injury, property damage, economic loss, and social dislocation due to hazard events, including those created or exacerbated by climate change.

Climate change is anticipated to present a significant threat to public health for decades to come. It is also known that climate change can disproportionately impact some groups more than others. Disadvantaged communities that suffer disproportionate environmental burdens are also likely to be more vulnerable to climate impacts. Extreme heat is unique in the significant and elevated threat it poses to public health. According to the Center for Climate Change and Health, extreme heat causes more deaths than any other type of natural disaster (Public Health Institute 2016). People living in low-income, disadvantaged communities often experience compounded risk due to poor housing conditions, lack of air conditioning, and unwillingness to use air conditioning due to high energy costs or open doors and windows due to safety concerns. Approximately 21 percent of Community Survey respondents cited heat as the reason they did not walk or bike as a mode of transportation (City of Santee 2021).

To assess heat vulnerability with respect to disadvantaged communities, the City utilized the Heat Health Action Index (HHAI). The HHAI score (ranging from 0 to 100) is a statistically weighted result of the indicators that include sensitive populations (i.e., children, elderly, outdoor workers), tree canopy, urban heat island, and ozone exceedance indicators, among others, and is intended to represent total heat and health vulnerability. Higher scores indicate higher heat vulnerability. **Figure 21** shows HHAI scores for Santee by census tract. The average HHAI score for the City of Santee is 33 compared to 34 for the County.

Key Findings: Unique or Compounded Health Risks

Disadvantaged communities experience unique or compounded health risks due to climate change. The area with the greatest vulnerability to extreme heat, which poses a significant public health threat, is the southern portion of the City. However, overall the City, including disadvantaged communities, is not particularly vulnerable to extreme heat.



City of Santee
Environmental Justice Element

Figure 21.
Heat Health Action Index

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