

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM #1: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

April 11, 2023

Project# 23021.055

To: Kate Wilson, AICP & Kelly Clarke, Lane Council of Governments
David Helton, Oregon Department of Transportation

From: Julie Fischer, Cogito Partners
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Revised Draft TM#1 – Public Involvement Plan

RE: Link Lane Transit Development Plan

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Project Overview

Many residents in rural Lane County lack transit to get to work, school, the grocery store, the doctor’s office, and many other key destinations. Lower housing costs in communities such as Veneta, Cottage Grove, Oakridge, and Junction City are driving an increase in demand for transit in rural Lane County. Transit also has the opportunity to be a key component of our growing tourism economy, connecting visitors and residents to recreation opportunities throughout Lane County.

A collaboration between the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG), this project will evaluate the needs and explore options for transit service for rural communities and connections into the Eugene/Springfield area to meet those needs. LCOG’s transit service, Link Lane, currently provides service between Eugene and Florence and Florence and Yachats (see maps below), but it could expand to meet the growing needs of our rural communities.

In addition to the intent stated above, the Link Lane Transit Development Plan will establish a framework to:

- Provide safe, affordable and reliable travel options that are not dependent upon owning a personal vehicle for all residents of and visitors to Lane County.

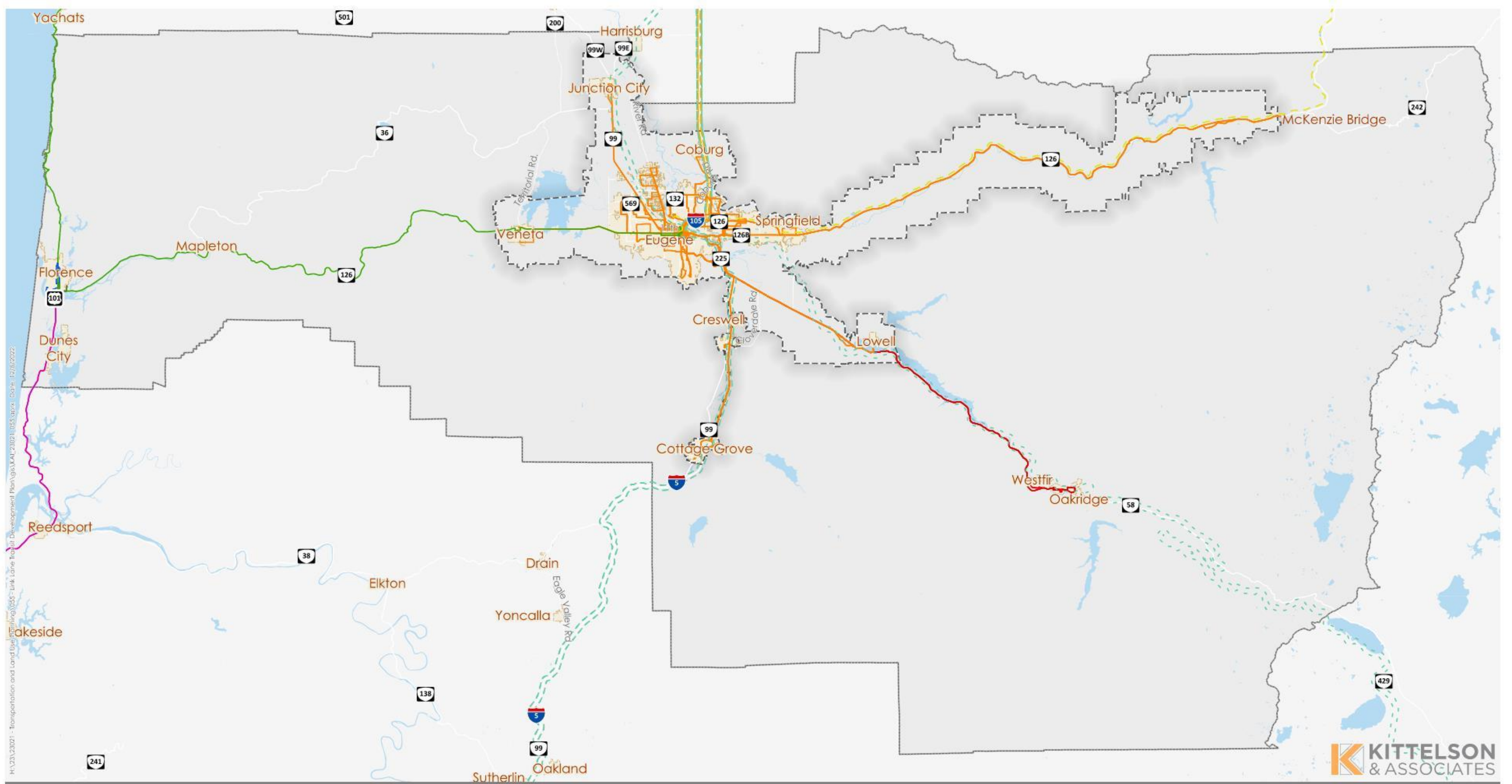
- Define Link Lane’s role as a public transportation service provider in Lane County and identify implementation strategies and funding sources to support and expand Link Lane services.
- Contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through enhanced and expanded public transportation services.

This effort will not examine services within Lane Transit District (shown outlined below) but will look at connections to their services for Lane County’s rural communities.

Public Involvement Process & Goals

The public involvement (PI) team is committed to a process that is:

- **Realistic:** Be clear about the project constraints, objectives, and parameters.
- **Accountable:** Respond to public feedback in a timely manner.
- **Inclusive:** Reach out to stakeholders within all of Lane County, including those who don’t use or have access to computers or face other participation barriers.
- **Meaningful:** Ensure that the public’s input will be taken into account by decision-makers.
- **Transparent:** Make the decision-making process easily understandable and accessible with key project materials available on the project website.
- **Timely:** Provide early, accurate, easily accessible, and widely available project information for the public to provide well-informed input.



H:\23\23021 - Transportation and Land Use Planning\055 - Link Lane Transit Development Plan\Map\23021_055.aprx Date: 12/18/2022

- Diamond Express
- Lane Transit District
- Link Lane
- Rhody Express
- Coos County Area Transit
- - - Airport Shuttle (City2City, The HUT)
- - - Pacific Crest Lines
- - - Private Subsidized (Amtrak, Greyhound, Bolt Bus, POINT)
- City Boundaries
- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



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**Basemap
Lane County, Oregon**

Advisors & Decision-Making

The Project Management Team (PMT) listens and considers the views of, stakeholders, interested parties, and the Public Advisory Committee in making recommendations to the LCOG Board. Other significant elected and appointed bodies with the opportunity for input include the Lane Area Commission on Transportation (Lane ACT). The LCOG Board will review and approve the final Transit Development Plan.

The PMT consists of the LCOG Project Manager, the Consultant Project Manager, ODOT's Agency Project Manager, and LCOG Staff as applicable.

The Public Advisory Committee (PAC) serves as the plan's core team of advisors. The PAC's charge is to provide input on the plan process, key deliverables, and to inform understanding of the feasibility and need for services.

The Project Advisory Committee (PAC) includes representatives from the following jurisdictions and entities:

- City of Cottage Grove
- City of Creswell
- City of Florence
- City of Oakridge
- City of Veneta
- Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, Siuslaw Indians
- Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
- Lane Community College
- Lane County
- Lane Transit District
- Siuslaw Vision and associated partners
- Travel Lane County
- Trillium Community Health Plan
- Peace Health
- ODOT Region Transit Coordinator
- ODOT Regional Active Transportation Liaisons

The PAC meets five times to review and discuss the following items:

- Meeting 1: Fall 2022 Project overview, feedback on vision, goals, objectives, and performance measures, and public involvement/Title VI engagement strategy
- Meeting 2: Winter 2022: Market analysis, including analysis of demographic and travel conditions, market trends for travel, and the supply of transit services in Lane County.
- Meeting 3: Spring 2022: Examples of successful transit programs from other areas, including innovations in passenger access, fare structure and funding, operational characteristics, and partnerships. Presentation of a "tool kit" of potential transit services.
- Meeting 4: Summer 2022: A series of alternatives for providing transit services and criteria for evaluating each alternative.
- Meeting 5: Fall 2022: Proposed Draft Link Lane Transit Development Plan

Public Involvement Activities and Timeline

The Link Lane stakeholder and public involvement process spans a 15-month period from Fall 2022 to Winter 2023, beginning with the development of communication tools, followed by active outreach: virtual and in-person, in English and Spanish.

Throughout - Communication Tools

The project team uses a variety of communication tools to share information about the Link Lane Transit Development Plan and provide updates about project involvement opportunities.

Website

LCOG hosts a project website (<https://link-lane.org/>) with the following information:

- Project overview, schedule, and calendar
- Library of project documents (e.g., project fact sheet, public input summaries, reports, maps, etc.)
- Input opportunities, including recorded versions of the virtual open houses
- Link to the survey
- Sign-up option for the interested parties email list
- Public Advisory Committee roster
- Project contact information
- Input link to submit a public comment, in Spanish and English

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SCHEDULE					
Key Activities	Fall '22	Winter '23	Spring '23	Summer '23	Fall '23
Throughout: Providing Information					
Website					
Interested Parties List					
E-Updates/Social Media					
Key Milestones: Gathering Public Input					
Public Advisory Committee Meetings					
Online meetings		Existing Needs & Goals	Evaluate Service Options		Present Draft Plan for Feedback
Public Survey					
Community Presentations					
Individual and small group conversations					

Interested Parties List

LCOG will develop an interested parties list built from the “opt in” invitation sent by LCOG to existing lists from other current and past planning projects. The website will also have an option for users to sign up for the interested parties email list.

E-Updates

At three key points throughout the process, invitations to the virtual meetings will be sent to the interested parties email list. Once the recorded public meetings are posted on the website, LCOG will send a follow up “join the conversation” email that encourages individuals to watch the meetings, participate in the survey, or utilize the tool kit presentation.

Social Media

LCOG will post on social media sites at key points in the project and work with partner agencies, community groups, and other organizations to share these materials.

Key Milestones – Gathering Public Input

The components of the Transit Development Plan will evolve through public input activities at three key timeframes during the project:

- Public Outreach 1: Share project vision, goals and objectives. Obtain input on community and visitors’ existing travel needs and barriers, transit system needs, and potential transit service and facility improvements
- Public Outreach 2: Share Transit examples from other areas similar to Lane County, including innovative services and programs. Obtain input on potential service options.
- Public Outreach 3: Obtain input on the Draft Link Lane Transit Development Plan

During each of the three public outreach timeframes, activities will include:

- **Live online meetings, in both English and Spanish.** The meetings will include a presentation and a question/answer period with online viewers. The meetings will be recorded and posted to the Project Website for viewing afterwards.
- **A “road show” presentation kit** consisting of an electronic slide show or video presentation to be distributed to organizations so that they can review the material at their meetings and solicit feedback from their members. Materials will be in English and Spanish.
- **Community presentations**, scheduled specifically for the project and open to the public. These presentations will use the “Road show” kit materials and be hosted by organizations with an interest in the outcome of the Plan.
- **An online survey** focused on the content and questions presented at the live online events.
- **Individual outreach** to key stakeholders to share information, solicit input, respond to comments, and answer questions.

Initial Stakeholder Outreach

In advance of the first round of public input activities, the project team will reach out to organizations representing key stakeholder groups to introduce the project and ask how they would like to be involved. This outreach will help to build the interested parties list and lay the foundation for the first round of public input. Potential categories and example organizations could include:

- Rural-based organizations that are networked with local residents
 - Granges (Lowell, Long Tom, Spencer Creek, Crow, Elmira, Dorena, Mohawk)
 - Service organizations such as Rotary, Lions Club, Kiwanis, Yachats Ladies Club
 - Community organizations such as the Upper McKenzie Community Center

- Local Council or Board / Commission meetings in rural Lane County communities
- Siuslaw Vision
- Black, Indigenous, and people of color
 - NAACP, Huerto de la Familia, Lane Integration Network, LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens, Centro Latino Americano, UO Long House and Black Student Union
- Seniors and People experiencing disabilities
 - Lane Independent Living Alliance, Pearl Buck, ARC of Lane County, Lane Council of Government's Disability Services Advisory Council
 - Seniors will be well represented in the "rural-based organizations" above.
- Low-income residents and people without stable housing:
 - County-based: Sponsors, Food for Lane County, Saint Vincent de Paul, Homes for Good, Lane Workforce Partnership, Dev NW
 - Community-based: Veneta Mid Lane Cares, South Lane Wheels and Cottage Grove Community Sharing, Creswell Pantry, The Lowell Good Samaritan Clothing Bank, Yachats Food Pantry, Junction City Local Aid, and Florence Food Share.
- Businesses and visitors
 - Chambers of Commerce: Veneta-Fern Ridge, Cottage Grove, Oakridge, Creswell, Yachats
 - Travel Lane County
- Wildfire affected communities
 - Oakridge, the McKenzie Valley
 - Lane County Wildfire Response
- Youth and families
 - School Districts in rural areas, organizations that serve rural families such as the Family Resource Centers, 90by30 (child abuse prevention), libraries.

Community Presentations

The project team will respond to community requests and provide presentations to **active and networked organizations based in rural communities**, using the materials from the roadshow toolkit. The consultant team will conduct virtual outreach to up to six groups, and LCOG will present the "road show" kit to other interested parties. Potential organizations could include **organizations listed above**. Through initial project outreach, we will identify the groups with capacity, interest, and networks to create successful meetings.

Updates to Elected/Appointed Officials

The project team will support LCOG staff in preparing presentations for an LCOG Board of Directors Workshop and an Adoption Hearing. LCOG staff may update the Board of Directors throughout the project effort at regularly meetings. These meetings will be used to update the Board on the scope, schedule, and progress of the study; to bring forward preliminary recommendations and to present the findings of the draft report.

Equity and Environmental Justice

The Link Lane public involvement plan includes specific steps to provide opportunities for participation by federal Title VI communities. The project will utilize the ODOT Title VI (1964 Civil Rights Act) Plan guidance to identify Title VI populations, formulate public involvement strategies, and report outreach efforts to and participation by Title VI communities. Throughout project life, LCOG will provide information and prepare updates on the project and announce meetings on the project website.

This project will operate in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, ORS Chapter 659A or other applicable law. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states: "No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Environmental Justice (EJ) is a term that comes from the Presidential Executive Order 12898, building upon the anti-discrimination provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. EJ is also expressed as "social justice" and "equity" all of which is grounded in the practice of making sure that both benefits and burdens of transportation investments are shared as equitably as possible among all affected communities. The focus is on inclusive planning approaches that reach out to traditionally underrepresented populations, particularly low-income and minority populations.

This project will consider environmental justice issues, which is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including a racial, ethnic, or a socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies. Meaningful involvement means that: (1) potentially affected community residents have an appropriate opportunity to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that affects their environment and/or health; (2) the public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision; (3) the concerns of all participants involved will be considered in the decision making process; and (4) the decision makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.

Existing Populations and Demographics

The Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in the provision of federally supported benefits and services, including public transportation service. In addition to Title VI populations, this analysis presents information about the study area population's transit reliant populations, including poverty status, age, racial/ethnic composition, and English proficiency, and proportion of people with disabilities. Considerations for each population includes:

- **People Experiencing Poverty** – individuals who live within a set of income thresholds established by the US Census Bureau, which vary by family size and composition. Low-income households tend to rely on public transportation as it is less expensive than owning and operating a vehicle.
- **Youth** – individuals under 18 years old likely have limited access or ability to drive a vehicle.
- **Older Adults** – individuals aged 65 and older may become less comfortable driving as they age or are no longer physically able to drive.
- **Racial/Ethnic Minority** – often live in neighborhoods that have suffered systemic disinvestment and other barriers to transportation.
- **Zero Vehicle Households** – persons residing in households without access to a vehicle typically rely on walking, biking, public transportation, or carpooling to meet their mobility needs.

- **Limited English Proficiency Households** – limited English proficiency (LEP) can be a barrier for interacting with the transportation system, particularly in terms of owning and operating a vehicle. Typically, households with limited English proficiency rely on other modes to meet their mobility needs.
- **People with Disabilities** – people with a disability often have difficulty operating a vehicle and require access to public transportation.

Table 1 breaks down these metrics for Lane County and its communities, in addition to overall population and household information. This analysis provides information regarding populations who are typically more reliant on transit or have been historically underrepresented in planning processes. Values higher than the state average are in **bold and shaded green**. As shown, most cities throughout Lane County have high percentages in most metrics. Overall, Lane County has higher percentages for households below 200% poverty, older adults, people with disabilities, and veterans than the state as a whole.

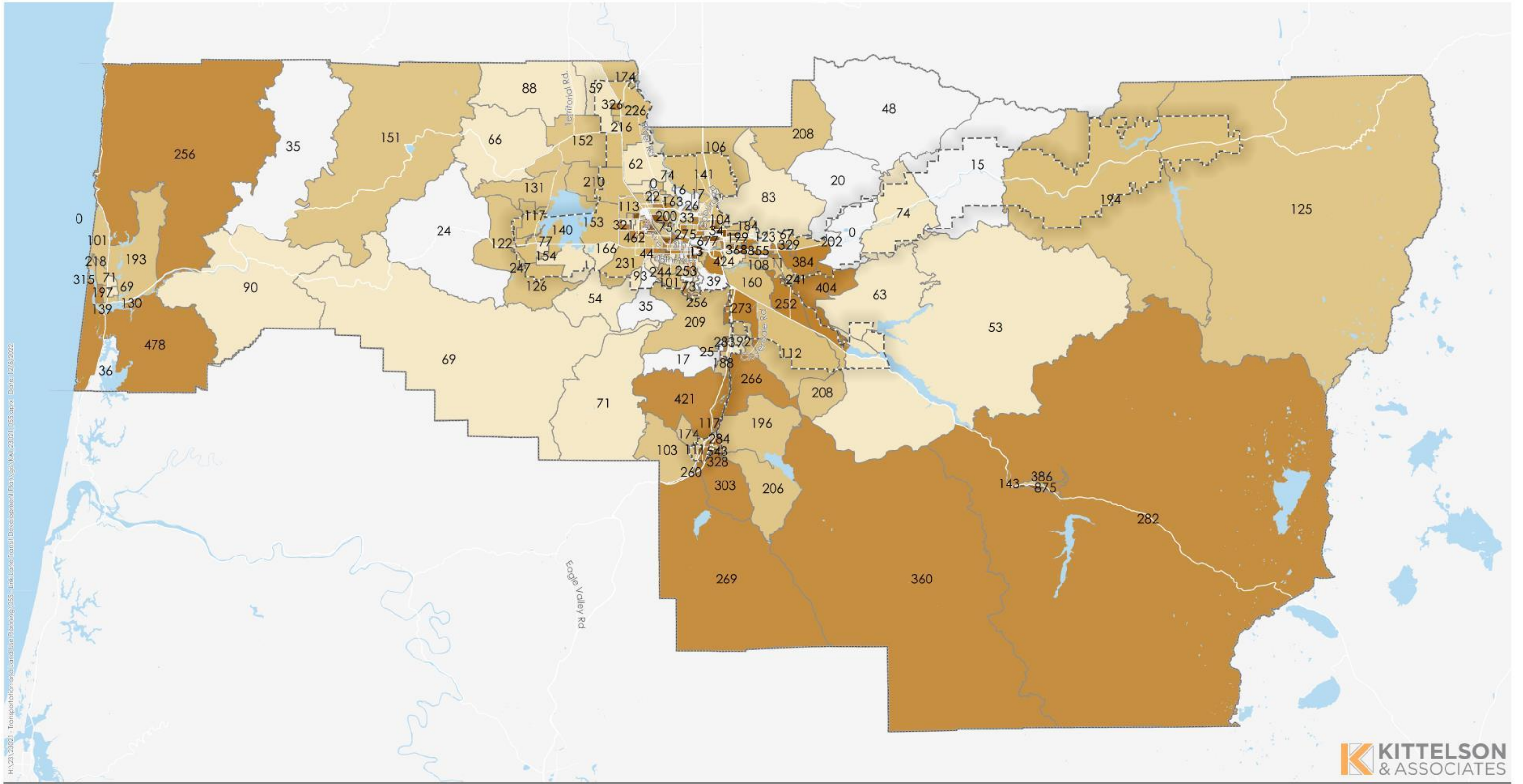
Additionally, PAC members shared that the project should consider nuances of this data. For example, while families may have access to a vehicle, those vehicles may be unreliable or multiple family members may need a vehicle or access to transportation at the same time. The data confirmed what they knew about their communities.

Table 1. Title VI and Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations

Geography	Total Pop	Total Households	Below 100% Poverty	Below 200% Poverty	Youth (Under 18)	Older Adults (65 and older)	Racial/ Ethnic Minority	Zero Vehicle Households	Households with LEP	Persons with Disability	Veteran
Oregon	4,096,744	1,642,579	12.4%	29.3%	20.7%	17.7%	17.3%	7.2%	2.4%	14.3%	8.3%
Lane County	370,192	154,516	17.2%	35.7%	18.2%	19.5%	14.1%	8.0%	1.2%	16.9%	8.8%
Coburg	1,382	442	10.2%	42.3%	24.7%	20.3%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	19.1%	5.2%
Cottage Grove	10,168	4,186	19.0%	40.4%	21.0%	15.2%	12.7%	12.0%	1.2%	21.2%	8.3%
Creswell	5,408	2,023	6.0%	22.7%	24.7%	14.1%	10.7%	1.3%	0.0%	17.3%	10.2%
Dunes City	1,208	575	4.8%	15.9%	11.8%	44.5%	9.3%	3.3%	1.7%	17.7%	13.0%
Eugene	164,905	71,738	20.3%	38.4%	17.0%	17.0%	17.5%	10.7%	1.6%	14.0%	6.9%
Florence	8,999	4,649	12.3%	34.5%	10.3%	44.4%	9.1%	6.4%	0.6%	25.9%	12.9%
Junction City	6,049	2,293	13.3%	28.5%	24.3%	11.0%	9.9%	7.2%	0.0%	18.3%	9.1%
Lowell	1,027	409	5.2%	34.4%	22.2%	22.4%	5.1%	2.2%	0.0%	18.7%	13.8%
Oakridge	3,336	1,414	37.7%	58.0%	15.2%	24.8%	10.6%	1.1%	0.0%	24.0%	12.9%
Springfield	61,948	25,210	18.3%	39.7%	20.7%	14.9%	14.9%	8.9%	1.0%	19.1%	9.2%
Veneta	4,922	2,055	8.2%	40.0%	22.8%	17.3%	20.3%	4.8%	1.9%	19.0%	9.1%
Westfir	315	139	11.4%	28.9%	13.7%	30.2%	2.2%	7.2%	0.0%	23.8%	15.1%

Source: American Community Survey 2016-2020 5-Year Estimates; Tables S1602, S1701, S1810, B25044.

The following maps show where different populations reside throughout the County. As shown, much of the rural west and southeast areas of the county have high amounts of populations in poverty, elderly populations, people with disabilities, and veterans. Rural areas near Creswell and Cottage Grove have high portions of households without vehicles. Much of the Eugene-Springfield area has high youth populations, minority populations, and households with Limited English Proficiency.



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Number of People Below 100% Poverty

- Less than 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- Greater than 500

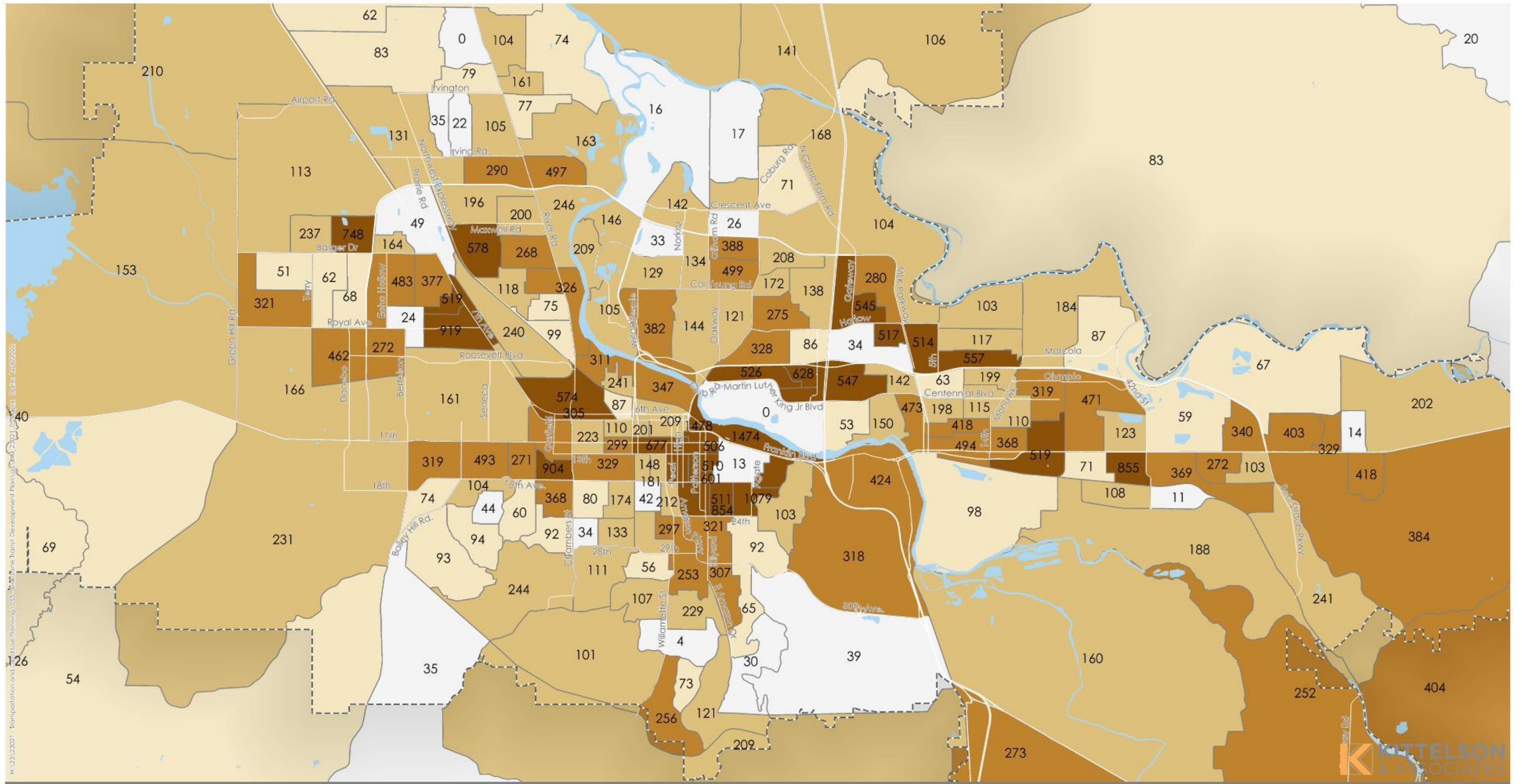
- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



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Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table C1700

**Below 100% Poverty
Lane County, Oregon**



Number of People Below 100% Poverty

- Less than 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- Greater than 500

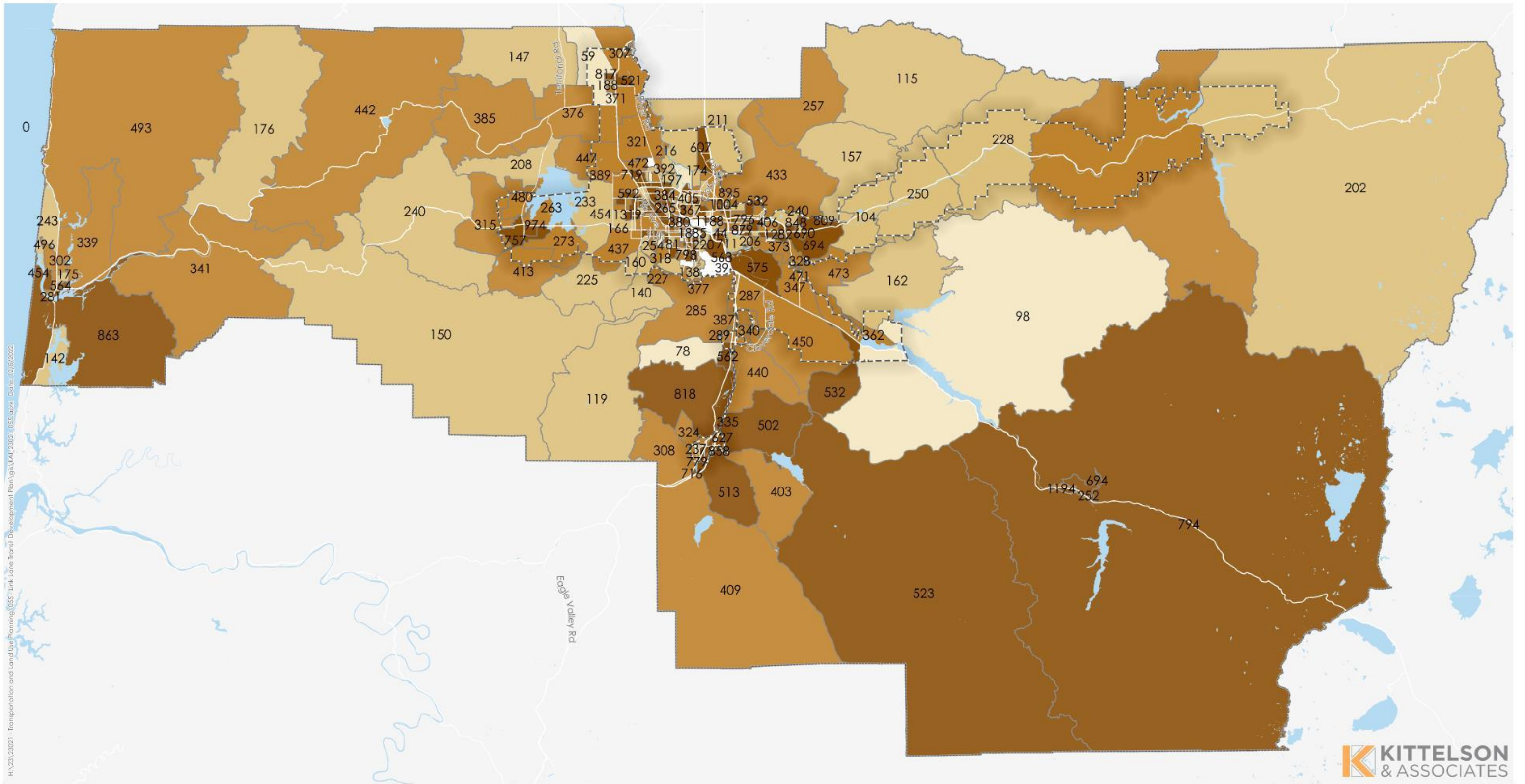
- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table C1700

**Below 100% Poverty
Lane County, Oregon**





Number of People Below 200% Poverty

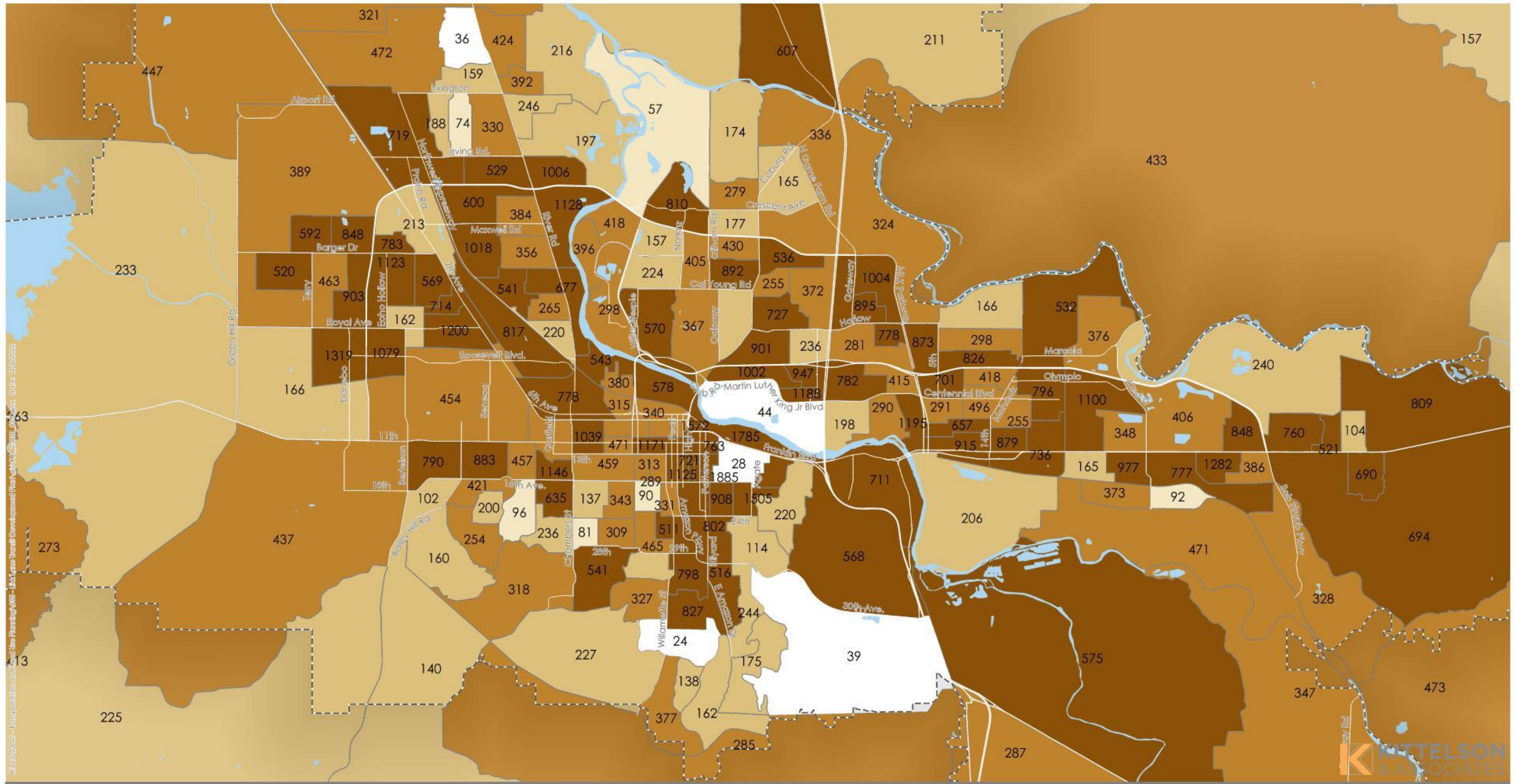
- Less than 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- Greater than 500

- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table C17002

**Below 200% Poverty
Lane County, Oregon**



Number of People Below 200% Poverty

- Less than 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- Greater than 500

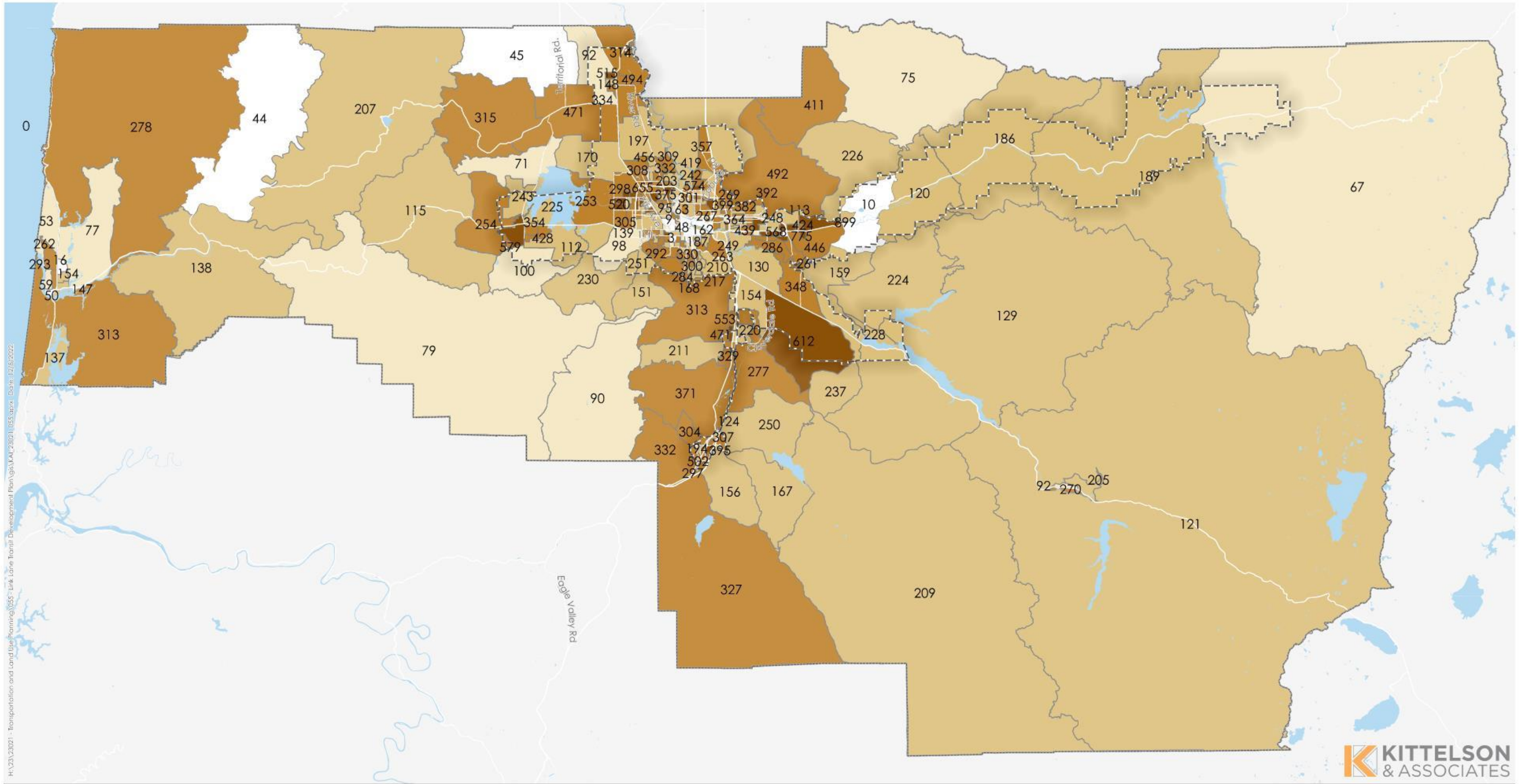
- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table C17002

**Below 200% Poverty
Lane County, Oregon**





Number of Youth (Under 18)

- Less than 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- Greater than 500

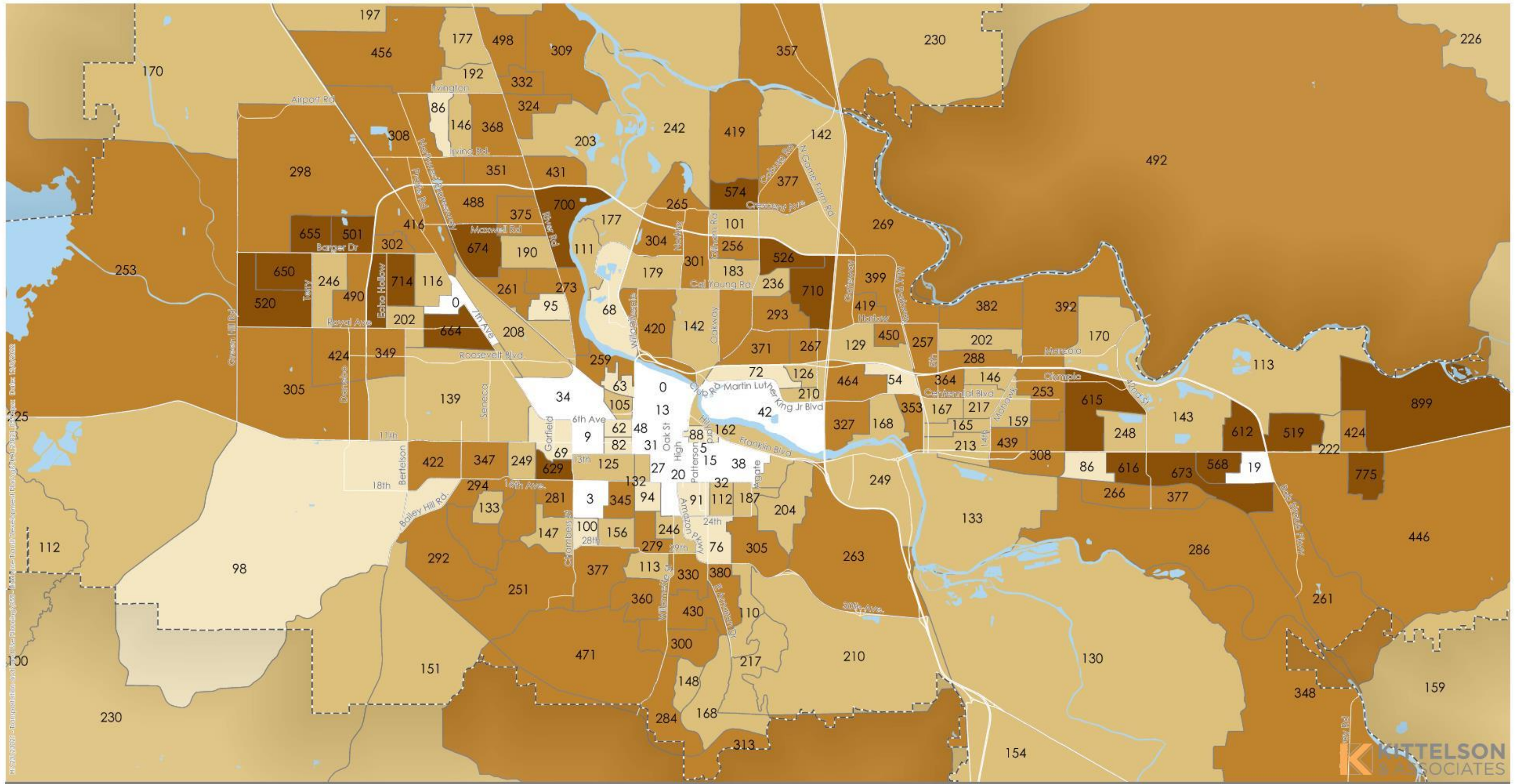
- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



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Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table B01001

**Youth Population
Lane County, Oregon**



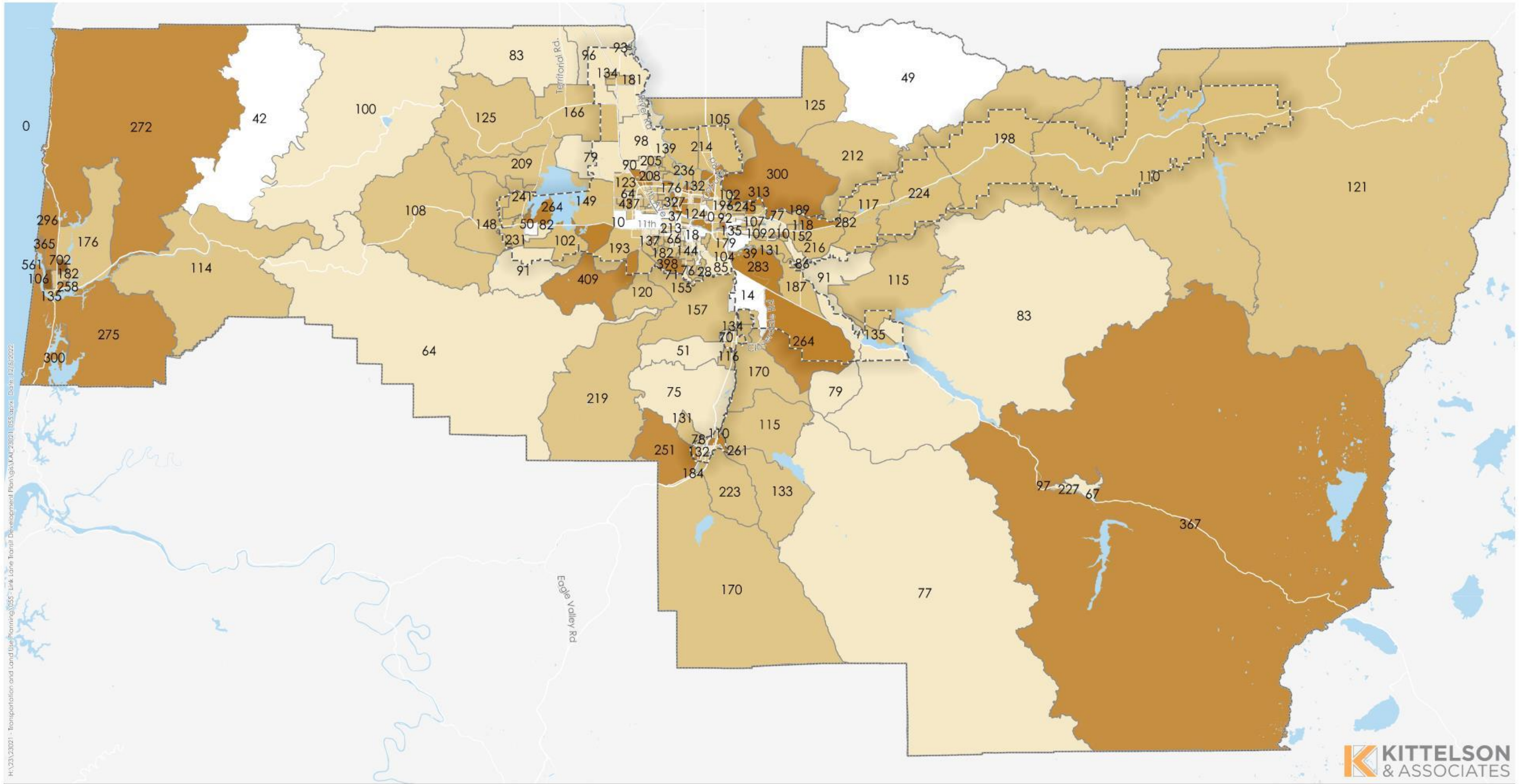
Number of Youth (Under 18)

- Less than 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- Greater than 500

- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table B01001



Number of Older Adults (65 and Older)

- Less than 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- Greater than 500

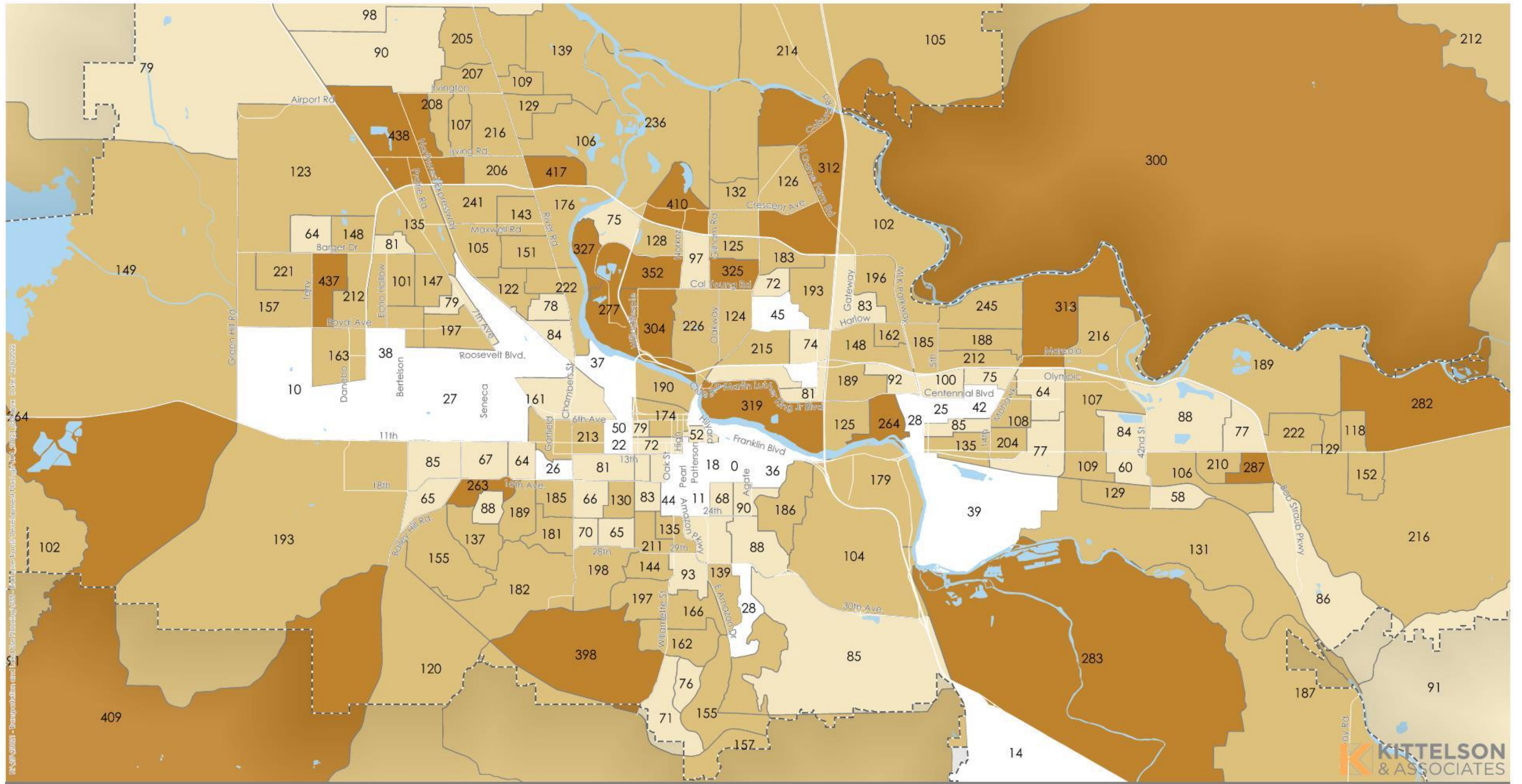
- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



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Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table B01001

**Elderly Population
Lane County, Oregon**



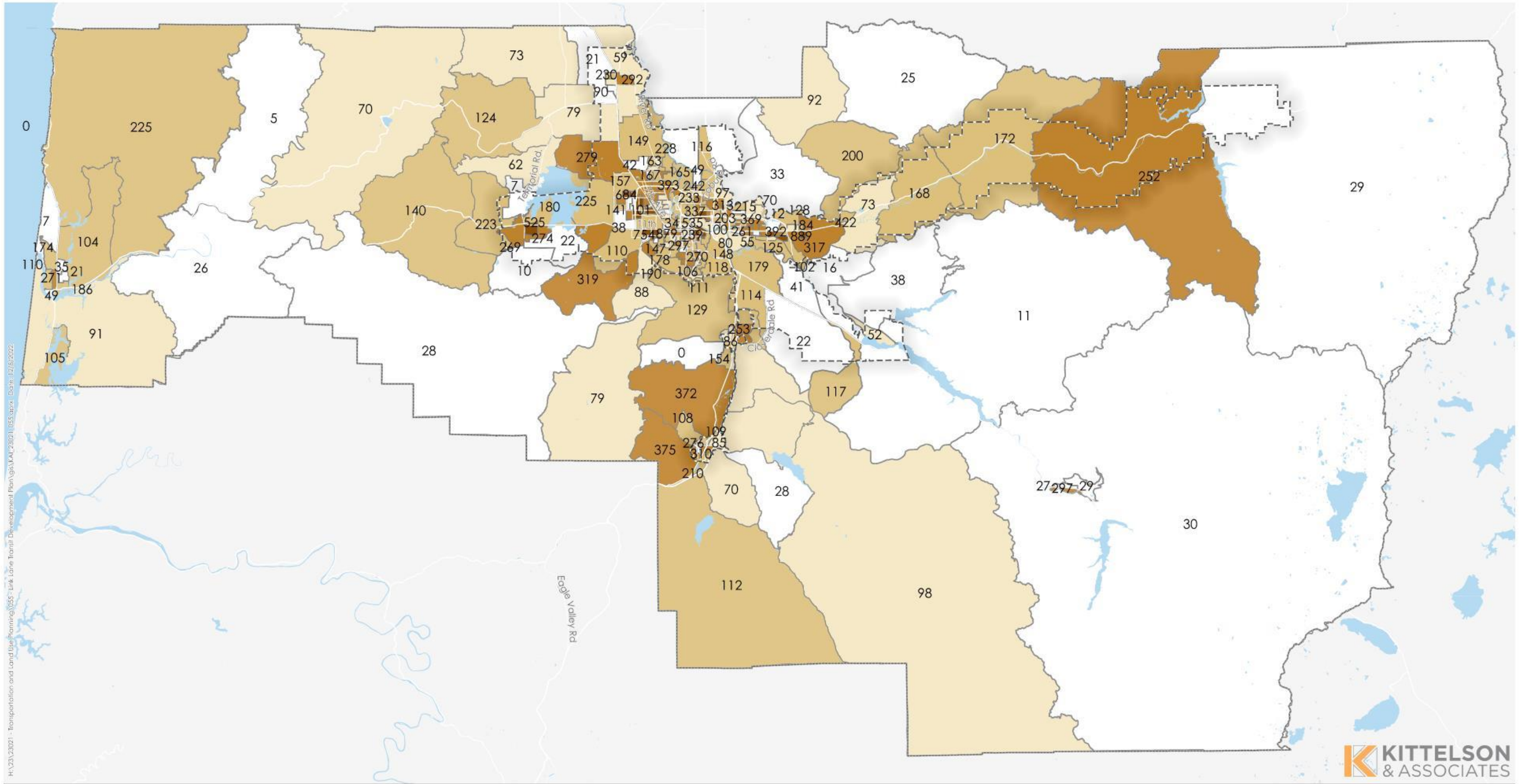
Number of Older Adults (65 and Older)

- Less than 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- Greater than 500

- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table B01001



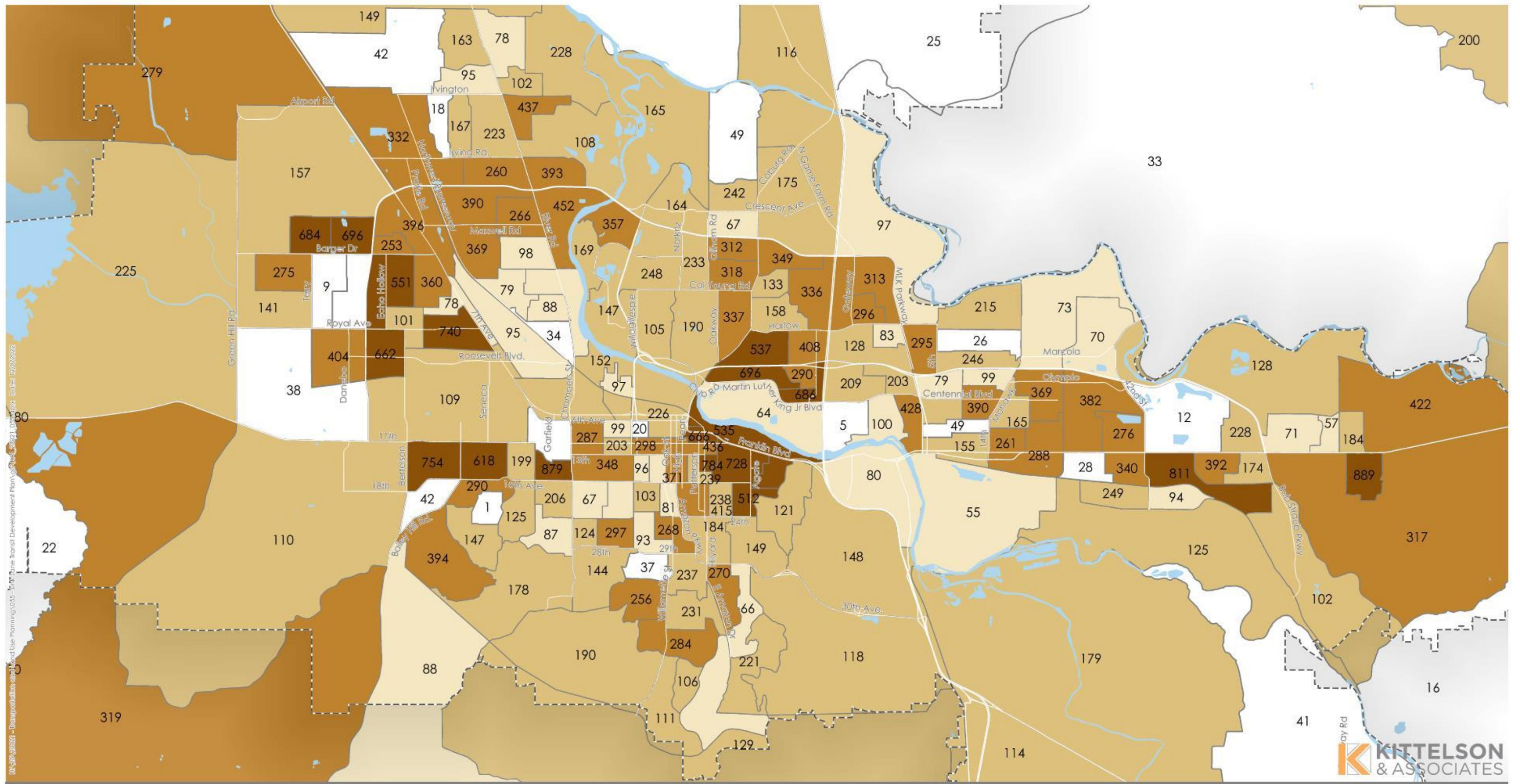
Number of People who are a Racial/Ethnic Minority

- Less than 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- Greater than 500

- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table B02001



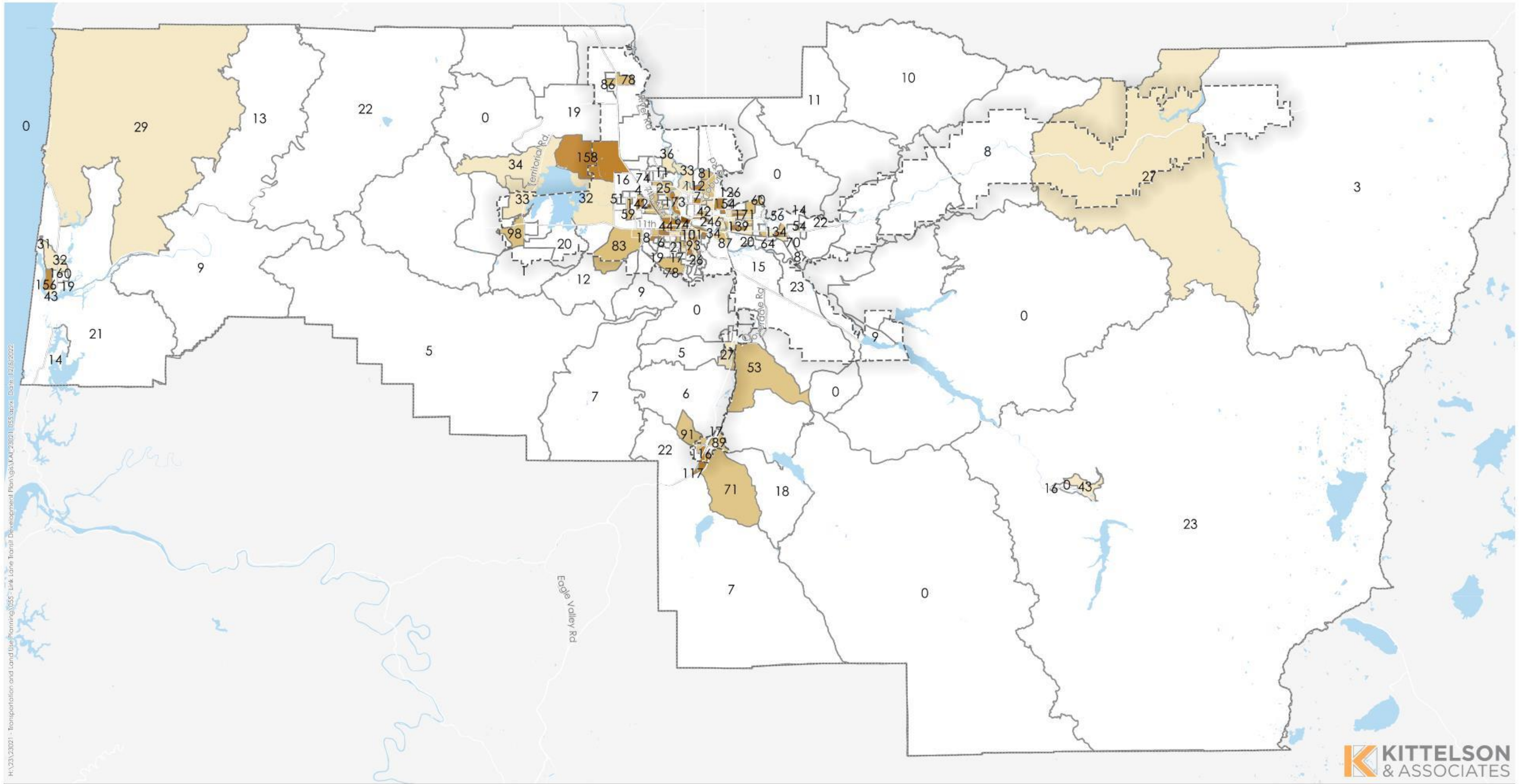
Number of People who are a Racial/Ethnic Minority

- Less than 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- Greater than 500

- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table B02001



Number of Households without Vehicles

- Less than 25
- 26 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- Greater than 250

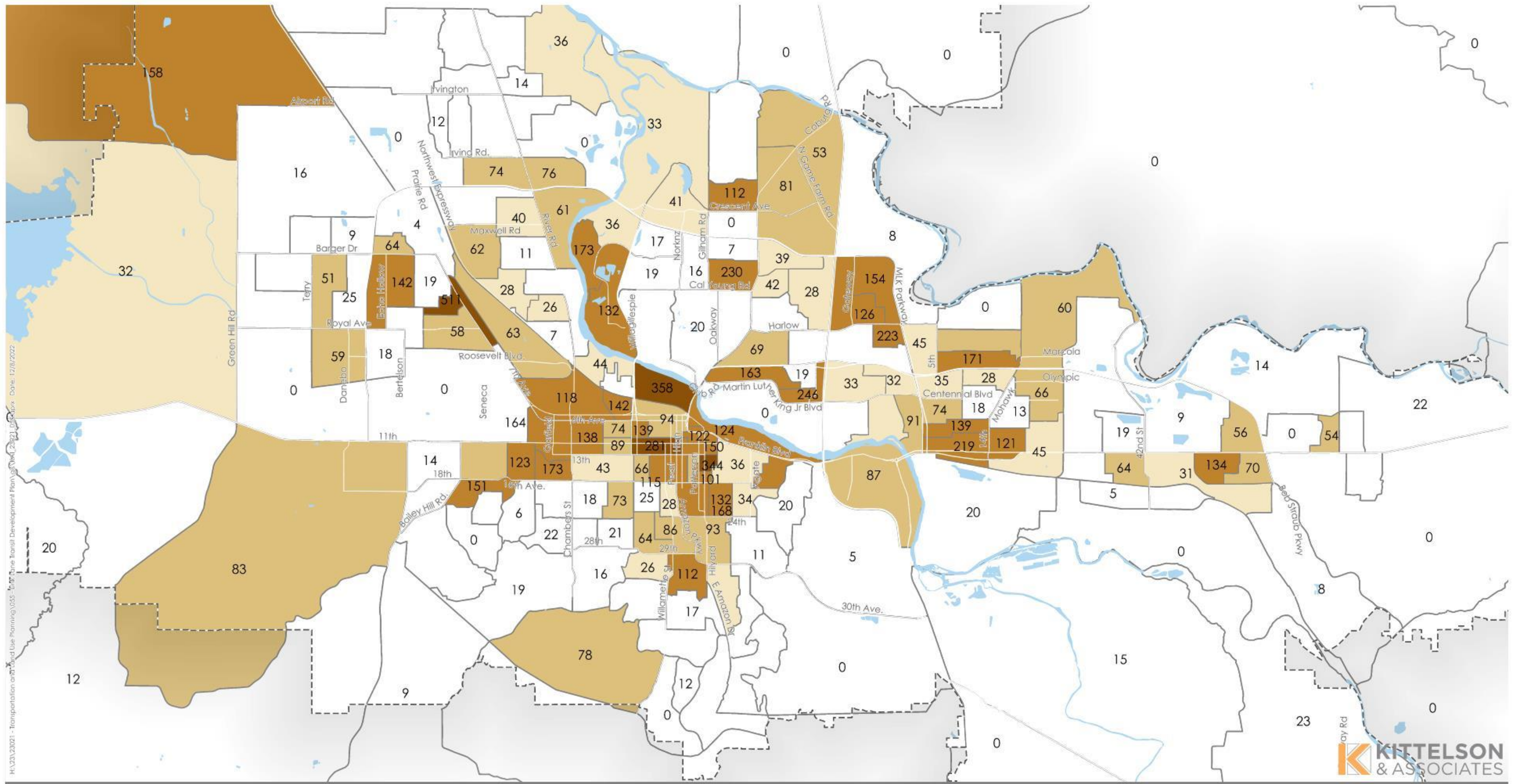
- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



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Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table B25044

**Vehicle Ownership
Lane County, Oregon**



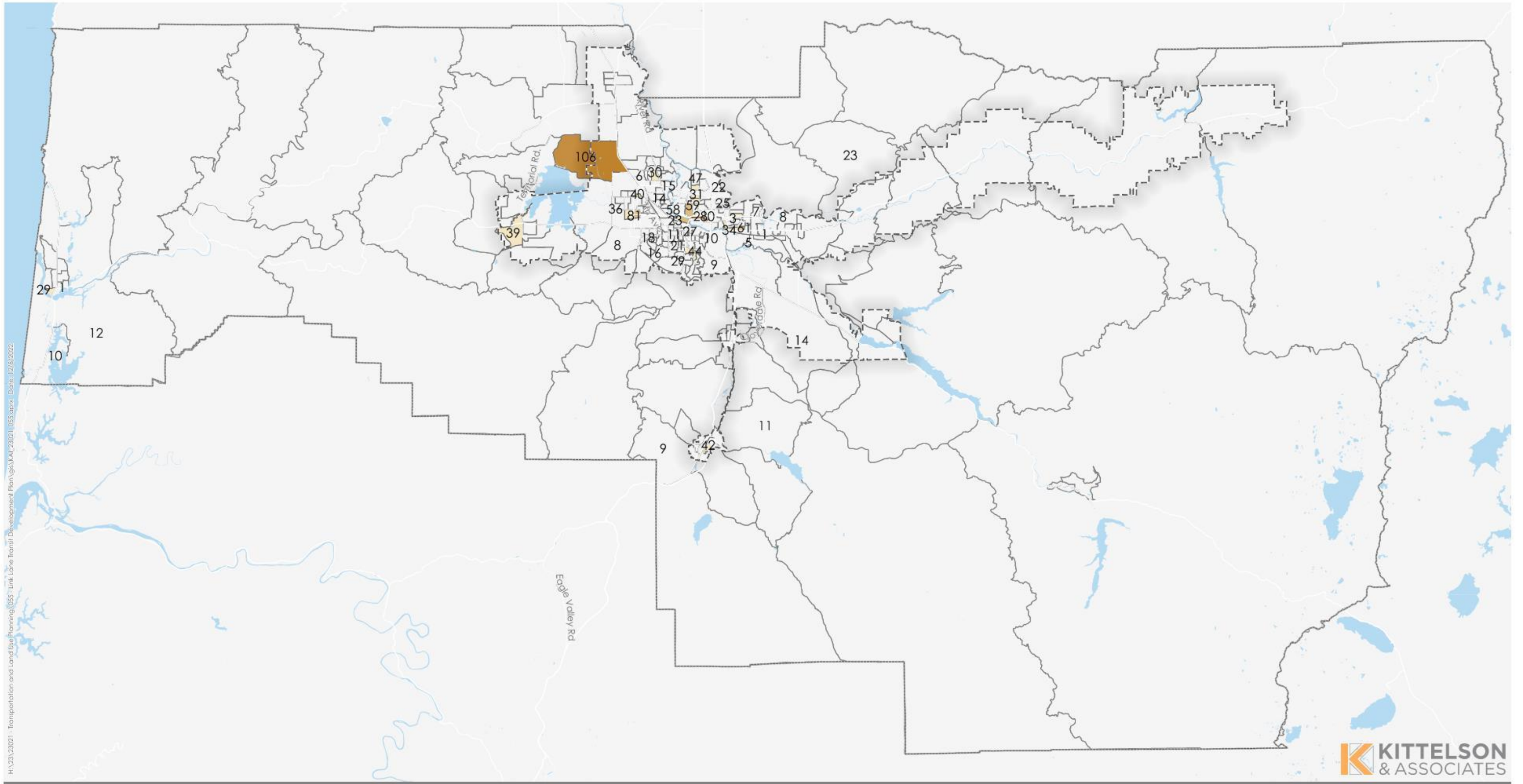
Number of Households without Vehicles

- Less than 25
- 26 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- Greater than 250

- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary

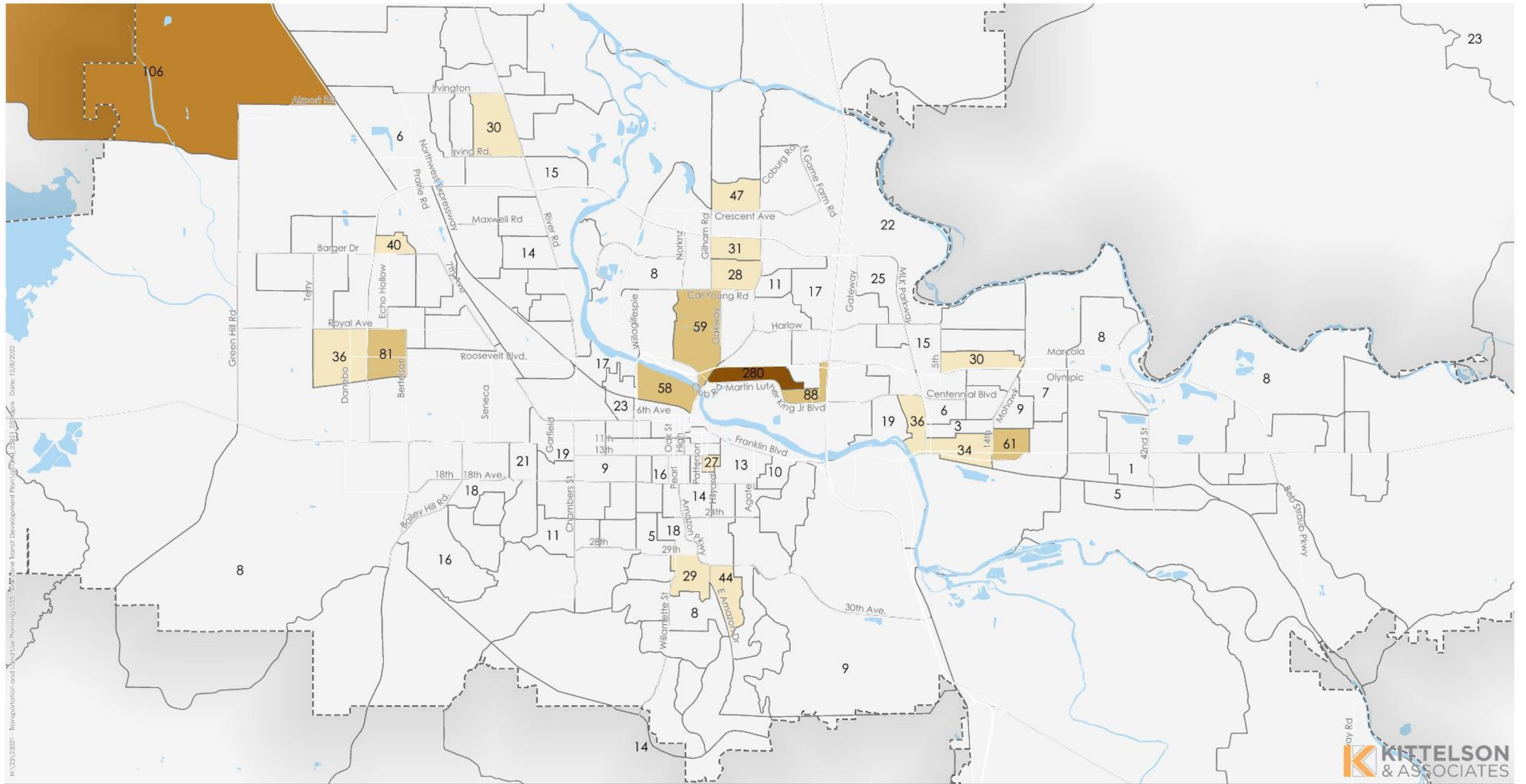


Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table B25044



Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table C16002

**Households with Limited English Proficiency
Lane County, Oregon**



Number of Households with Limited English Proficiency

- Less than 25
- 26 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- Greater than 250

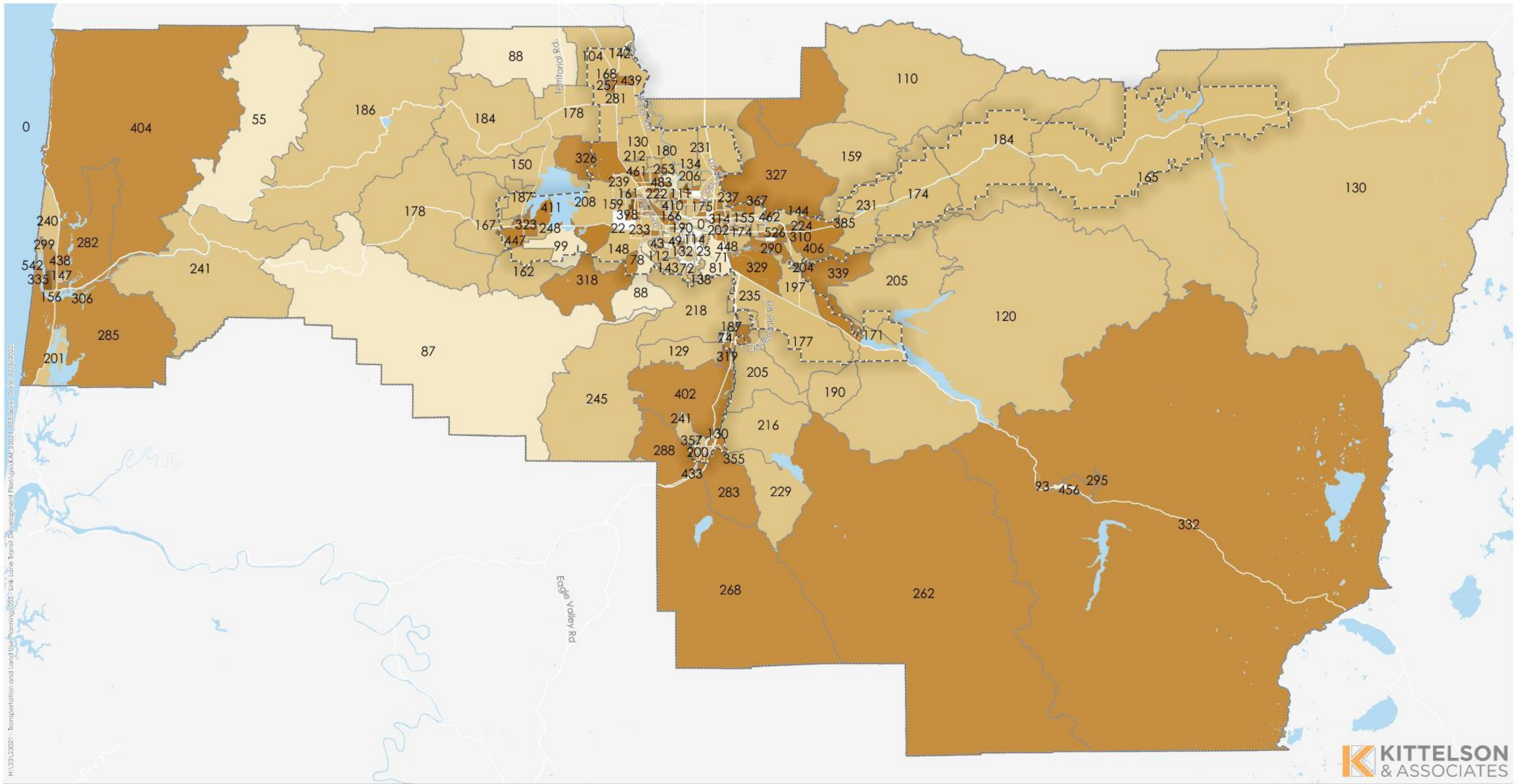
- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table C16002

**Households with Limited English Proficiency
Lane County, Oregon**





Number of People with a Disability

- Less than 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- Greater than 500

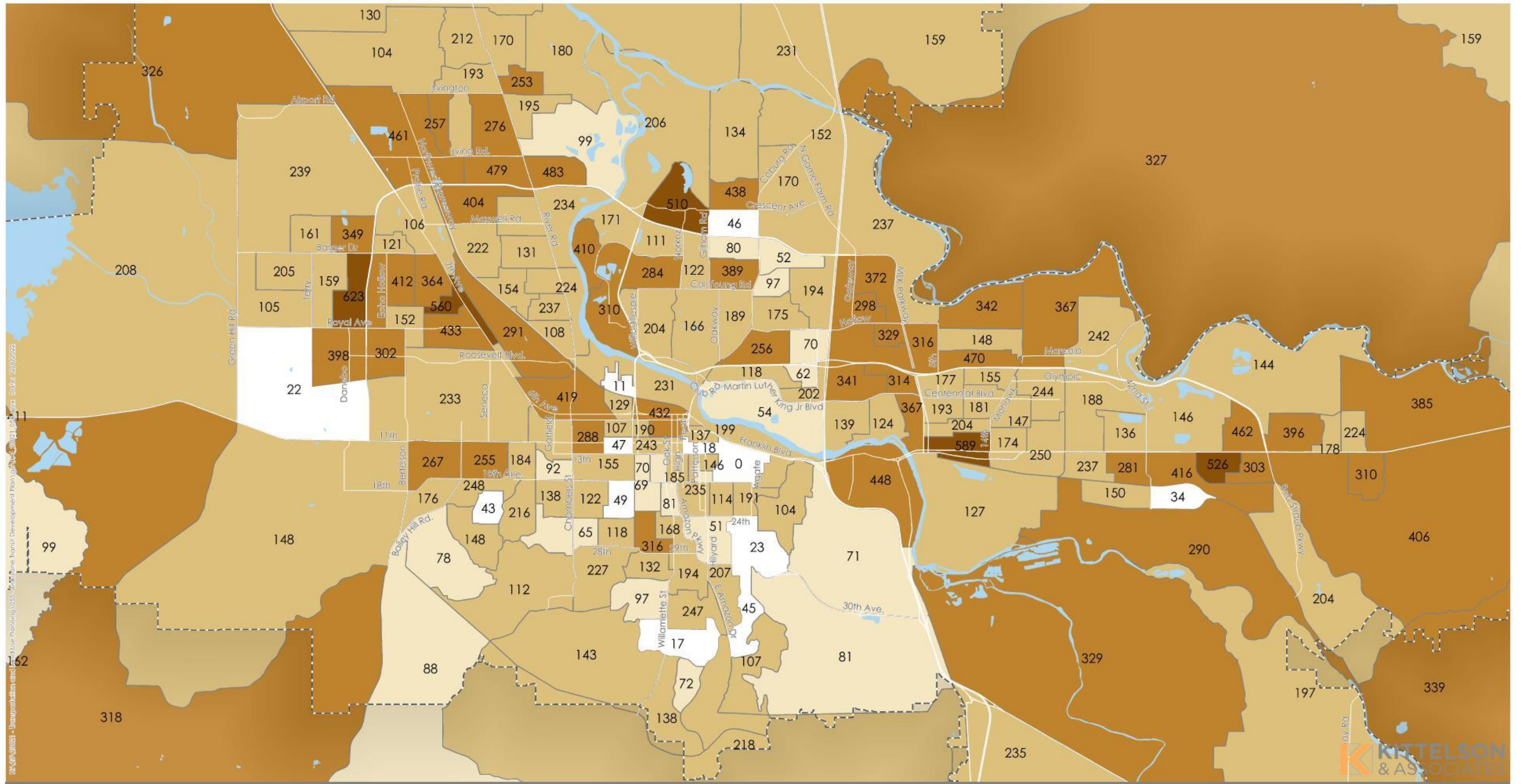
Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table C21007

- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



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**Persons with Disabilities
Lane County, Oregon**



Number of People with a Disability

- Less than 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- Greater than 500

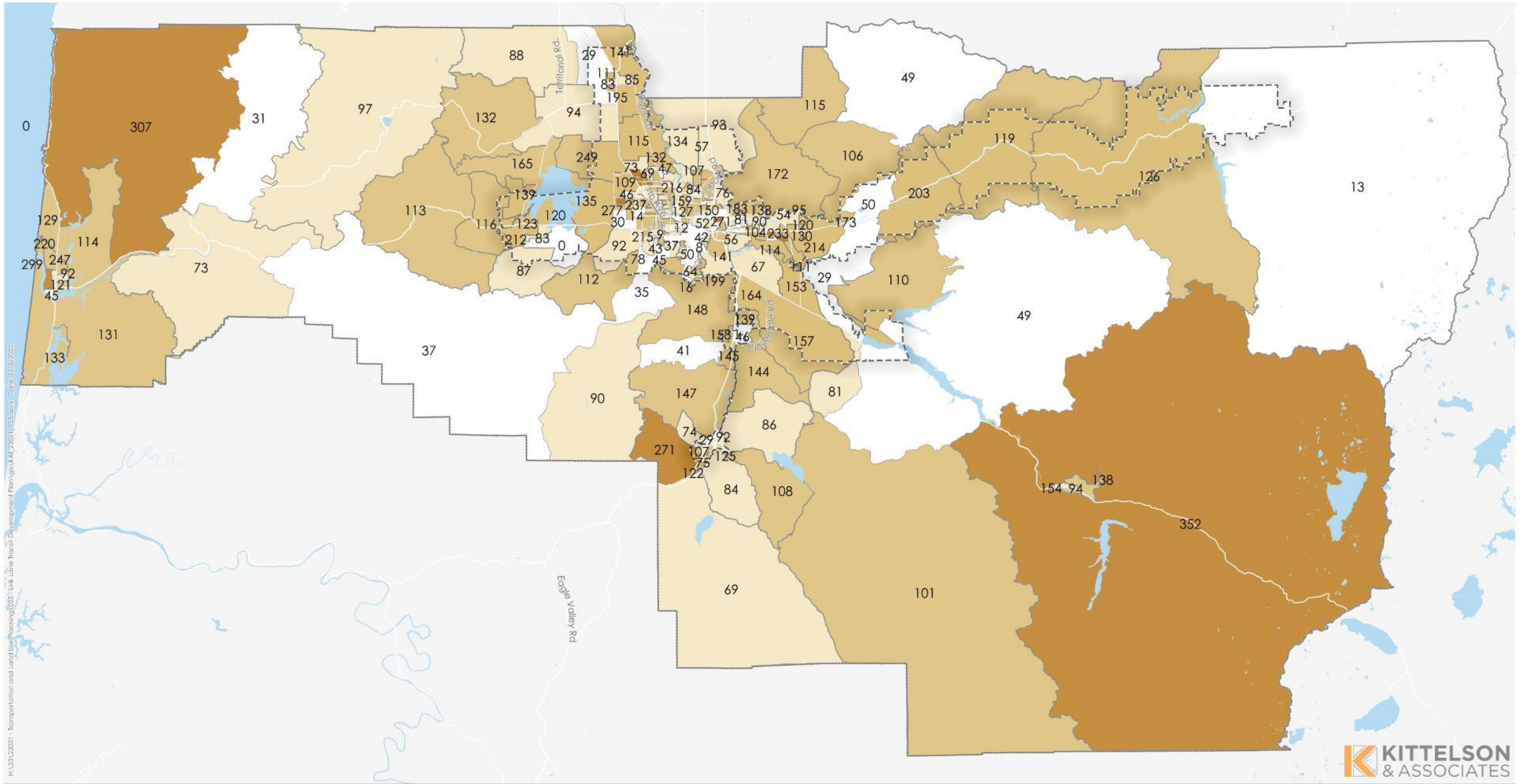
Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table C21007

- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



**Persons with Disabilities
Lane County, Oregon**





Number of Veterans

- Less than 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- Greater than 500

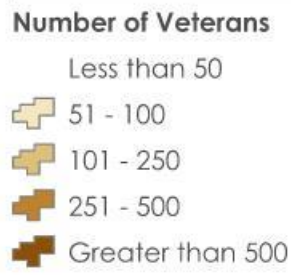
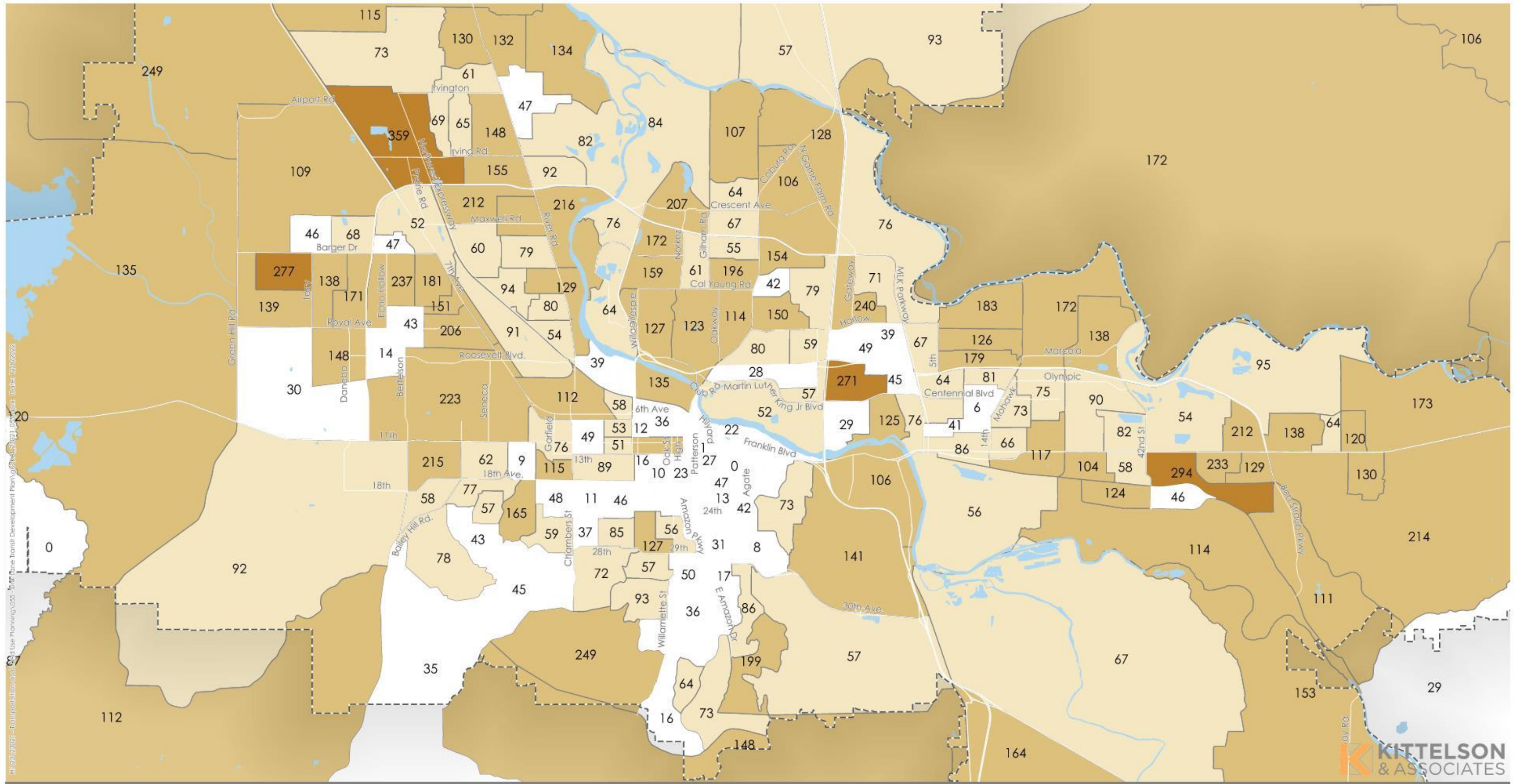
- Lane County Boundary
- Lane Transit District Boundary



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Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table C21007

**Veterans
Lane County, Oregon**



Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Average Table C21007

Public Involvement Documentation

Public Involvement Summaries

The consultant team will produce draft and final summaries of public involvement results supplemented by LCOG summaries from other events, including attendance, stakeholders represented, public comments received, staff responses, and recruitment and outreach conducted. The final documentation will be a comprehensive review of the public involvement conducted and highlight Title VI and Environmental Justice outreach and participation.

Comment Tracking

LCOG will maintain a contact log of comments received, respond in a timely manner, and keep an accurate record of all correspondence with community stakeholders.