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Webinar: Understanding Connections Between Mobility, Transportation, And Quality Of Life In Refugee Communities In Tucson, Arizona

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University of Arizona

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Understanding connections between mobility, transportation, and quality of life among refugee communities in Tucson, Arizona

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- The Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, University of Arizona
- Lutheran Social Services
- Iskashitaa Refugee Network
- International Rescue Committee
- SunTran
- Our survey and interview participants



the roadmap

- ❑ the global refugee crisis
- ❑ research methodology
- ❑ key findings
 - ❑ transportation and mobility
 - ❑ social capital/resiliency
 - ❑ gender and mobility
- ❑ key recommendations



the roots of this study

Beyond Fear: Tucson refugees tell their stories (Funded by Confluentcenter for Creative Inquiry);
Dismantling Fear: Tucson refugees tell their stories (Funded by Confluentcenter for Creative Inquiry);
Saving a piece of me: Homeland memories among Tucson refugees (Funded by SBSRI).



Geopolitics

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/fgeo20>

Making and Unmaking Refugees: Geopolitics of Social Ordering and Struggle within the Global Refugee Regime

Orhon Myadar & Kara E. Dempsey

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Place, Displacement and Belonging: The Story of Abdi

Orhon Myadar

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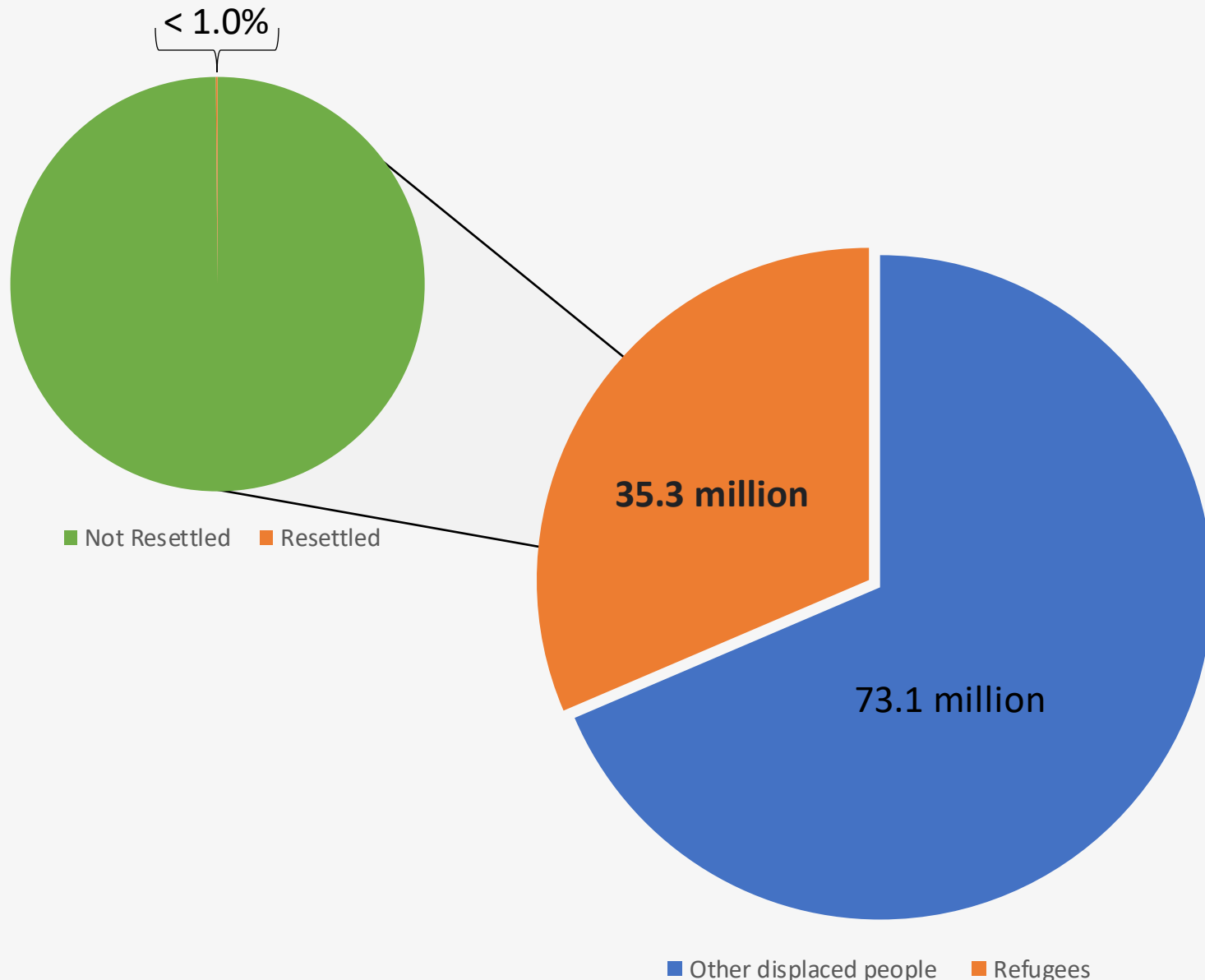


MAKING AND UNMAKING REFUGEES
GEOPOLITICS OF SOCIAL ORDERING AND STRUGGLE WITHIN THE GLOBAL REFUGEE REGIME

Edited by
Kara E. Dempsey and Orhon Myadar



global forced displacement



At the end of 2022, 108.4 million people were forcibly displaced people (40% are children below 18 years of age). About **35.3 million** of them are considered **refugees** under UNHCR's mandate. **Less than one percent** gets resettled annually.

the global refugee regime



History of UNHCR

Archives and Records



The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was created in 1950, during the aftermath of the Second World War, to help millions of Europeans who had fled or lost their homes. We had three years to complete our work and then disband.

Today, over 70 years later, our organization is still hard at work, protecting and assisting refugees around the world.

With your support, we can continue.

[Make a donation](#)

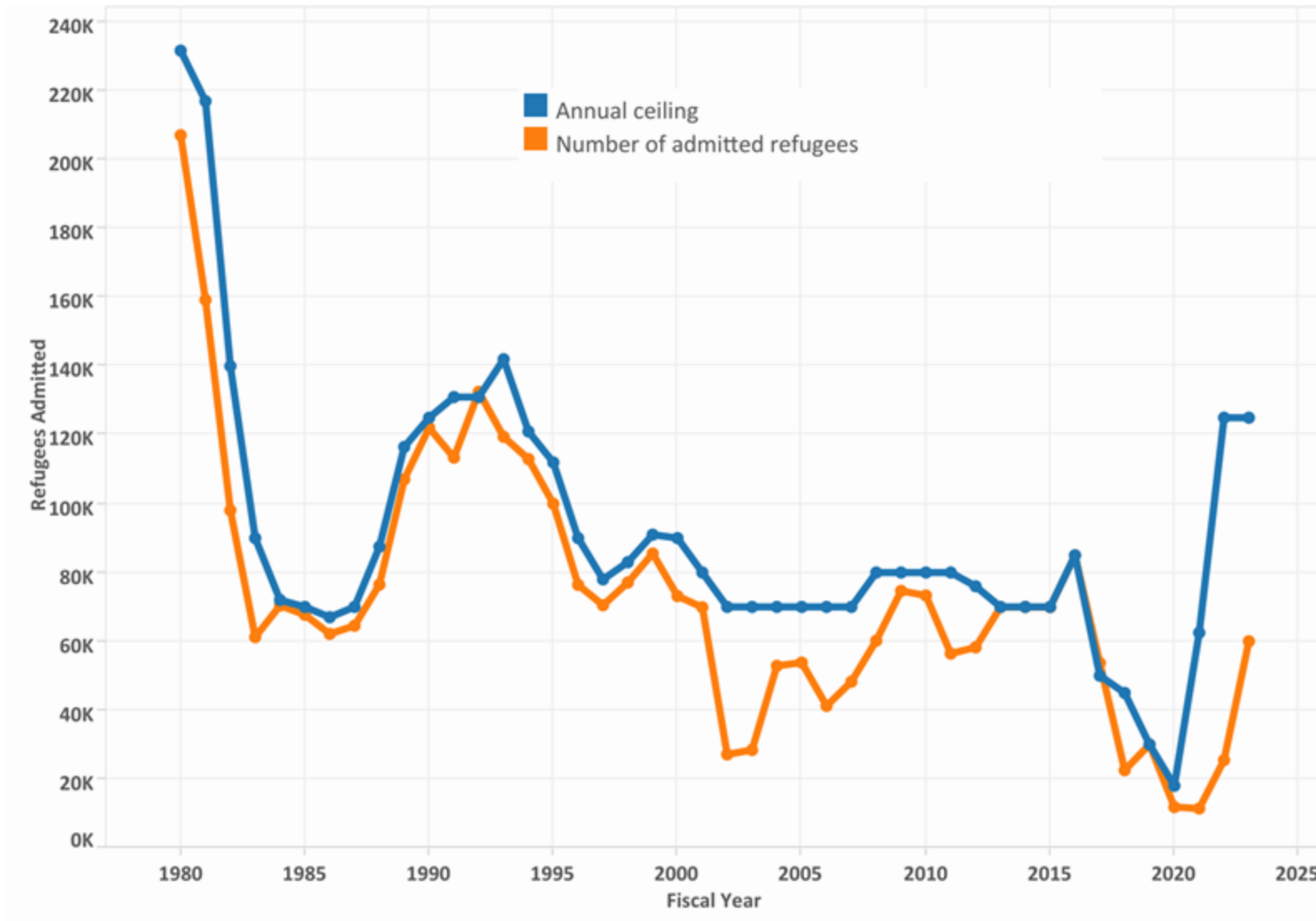
- 1950: UNHCR
- 1951: Refugee Convention
- 1967: Protocol to the Refugee Convention

In 1954, UNHCR won the Nobel Peace Prize for its groundbreaking work in Europe. But it was not long before we faced our next major emergency.

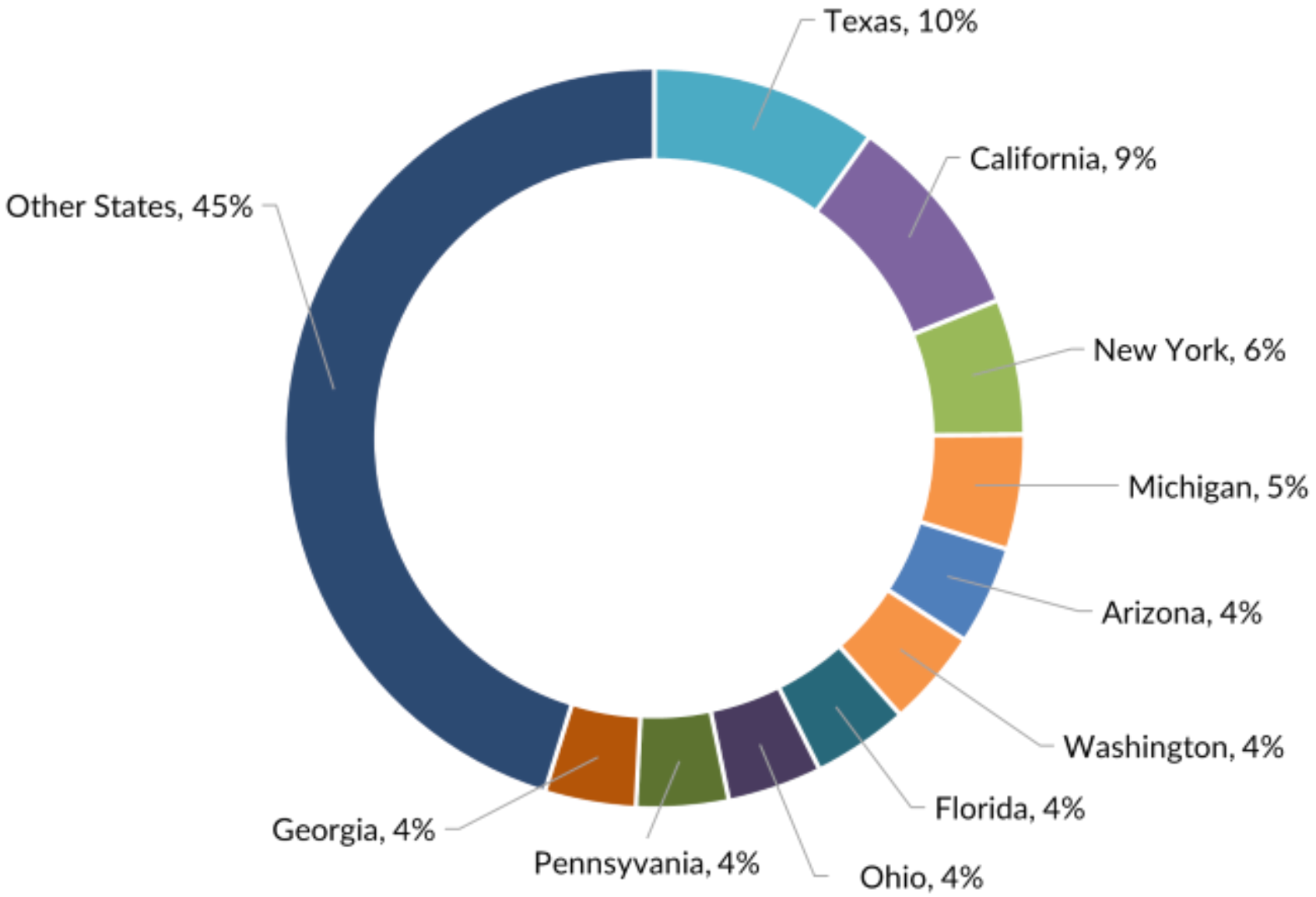
refugee

who is outside his/her country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of persecution because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution.

Annual Refugee Resettlement Ceiling and Number of Refugees Admitted to the United States, FY 1980-2023



Refugee Arrivals by Initial U.S. State of Residence, FY 2010-20



Source: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org>

tucson, az



Tucson is one of the two main cities where refugees are resettled in Arizona. As of 2020, at least seventeen organizations provide services to resettled refugees, including technical skills and vocational training.

Gov. Ducey calls for a halt in refugee arrivals to Arizona

Sebastian Laguna

November 25, 2015

On Nov. 16, Gov. Doug Ducey issued a statement declaring that Arizona will not be accepting any new refugees coming into the state.

“I am calling for an immediate halt in the placement of any new refugees in Arizona,” Ducey said. “I also call on Congress and the President to immediately amend federal law to provide states greater oversight and authority in the administration of the placement of refugees.”

In the statement, Ducey referred to his power under 8 USC, Section 1552 (a), which calls for consultation with federal authorities with regard to the placement of refugees.

The main impetus behind the recent action address toward incoming refugees stems from the coordinated attacks that occurred in Paris on Nov. 13, which left at least 130 people dead.

Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, including the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), 8 U.S.C. 1101 *et seq.*, and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, and to protect the American people from terrorist attacks by foreign nationals admitted to the United States, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Purpose. The visa-issuance process plays a crucial role in detecting individuals with terrorist ties and stopping them from entering the United States. Perhaps in no instance was that more apparent than the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, when State Department policy prevented consular officers from properly scrutinizing the visa applications of several of the 19 foreign nationals who went on to murder nearly 3,000 Americans. And while the visa-issuance process was reviewed and amended after the September 11 attacks to better detect would-be terrorists from receiving visas, these measures did not stop attacks by foreign nationals who were admitted to the United States.

Numerous foreign-born individuals have been convicted or implicated in terrorism-related crimes since September 11, 2001, including foreign nationals who entered the United States after receiving visitor, student, or employment visas, or who entered through the United States refugee resettlement program. Deteriorating conditions in certain countries due to war, strife, disaster, and civil unrest increase the likelihood that terrorists will use any means possible to enter the United States. The United States must be vigilant during the visa-issuance process to ensure that those approved for admission do not intend to harm Americans and that they have no ties to terrorism.

In order to protect Americans, the United States must ensure that those admitted to this country do not bear hostile attitudes toward it and its founding principles. The United States cannot, and should not, admit those who do not support the Constitution, or those who would place violent ideologies over American law. In addition, the United States should not admit those who engage in acts of bigotry or hatred (including “honor” killings, other forms of violence against women, or the persecution of those who practice religions different from their own) or those who would oppress Americans of any race, gender, or sexual orientation.

Sec. 2. Policy. It is the policy of the United States to protect its citizens from foreign nationals who intend to commit terrorist attacks in the United States; and to prevent the admission of foreign nationals who intend to exploit United States immigration laws for malevolent purposes.

Sec. 3. Suspension of Issuance of Visas and Other Immigration Benefits to Nationals of Countries of Particular Concern. (a) The Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Director of National Intelligence, shall immediately conduct a review to determine the information needed from any country to adjudicate any visa, admission, or other benefit under the INA (adjudications) in order to determine that the individual seeking the benefit is who the individual claims to be and is not a security or public-safety threat.

(b) The Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary

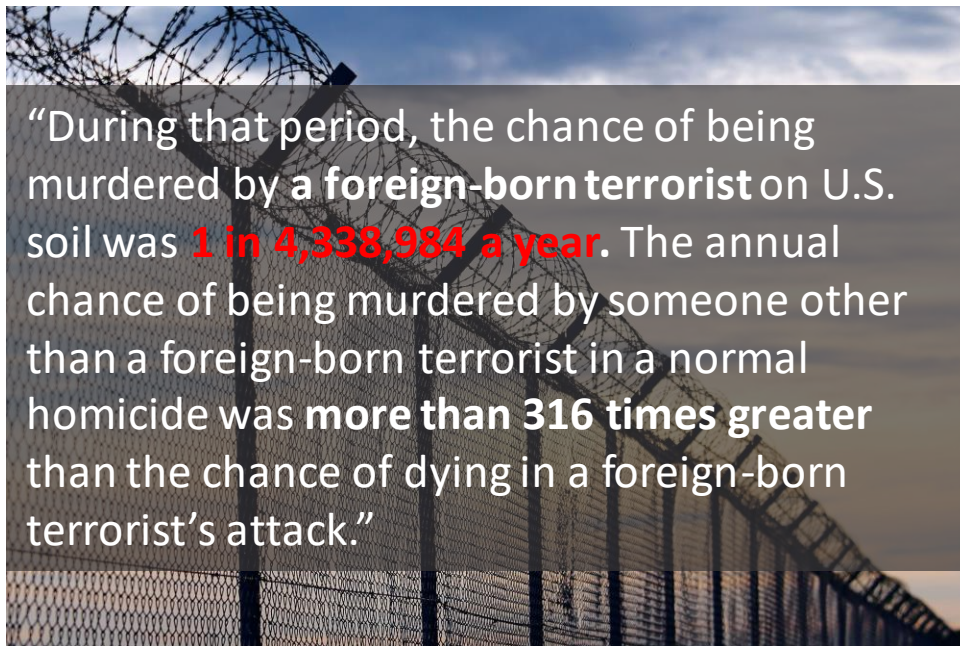


temporarily banned all refugees and suspended travelers from seven Muslim-majority countries (Libya, Sudan, Yemen, Somalia, Syria, Iraq and Iran).

- San Bernardino attacks (Saudi Arabia, Pakistan: *US citizen, K-1*)
- New York and New Jersey explosions (Afghanistan, *Asylum*)
- Orlando Pulse nightclub shooting (*US citizen*)
- Boston Marathon bombings (Chechnya, *Asylum*)
- World Trade Center, September 11, 2001 (15 Saudi Arabia, 2 UAE, 1 Egypt, 1 Lebanon).

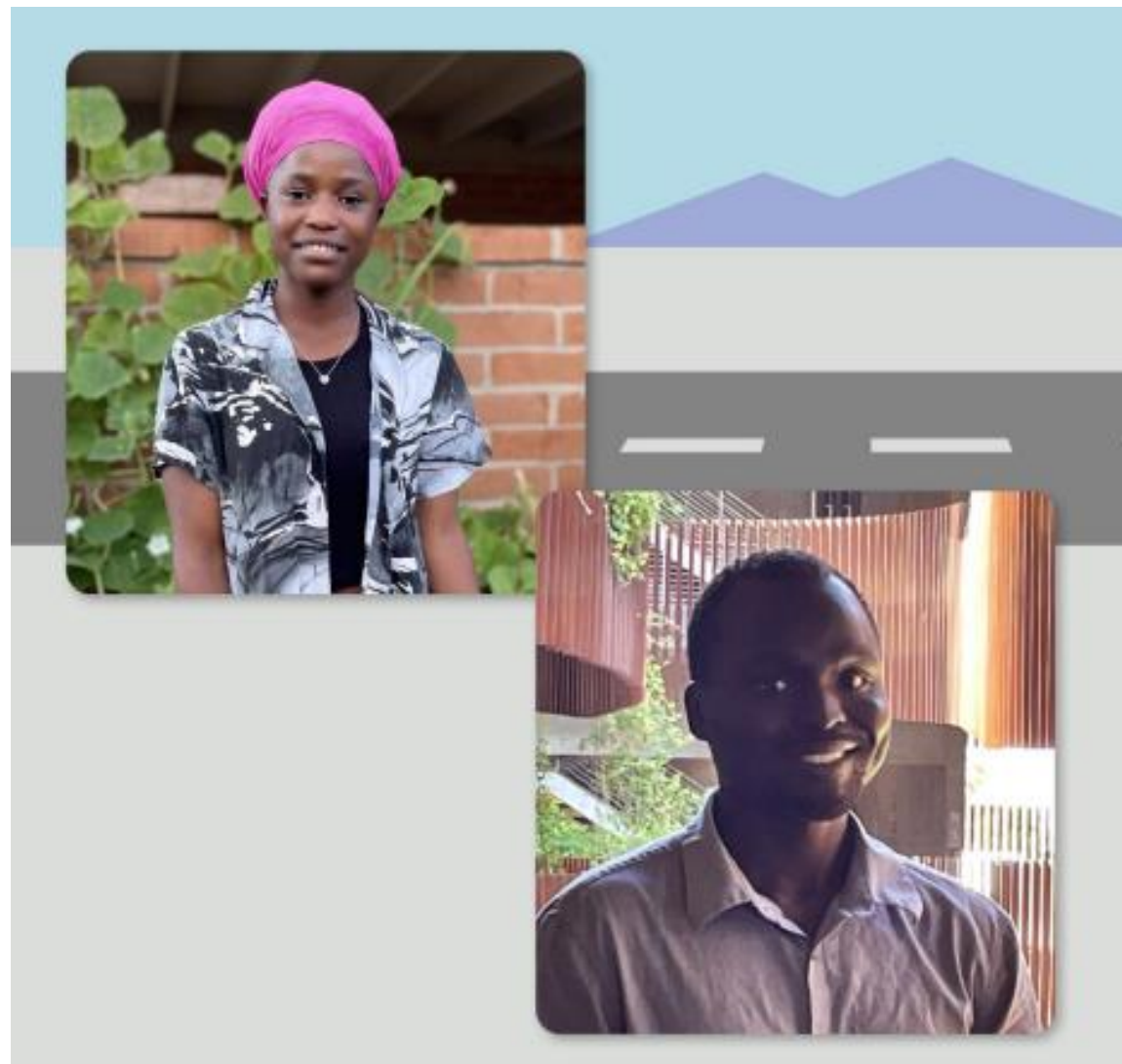


The chance of a person perishing in a terrorist attack committed by a foreigner on U.S. soil over the 48-year period studied here is **1 in 4.3 million** per year.



The chance of an American being murdered in a terrorist attack caused by a refugee is **1 in 3.64 billion**

why study refugees?



research methodology

- 🌵 a broad survey
- 🌵 a focus group
- 🌵 semi-structured interviews



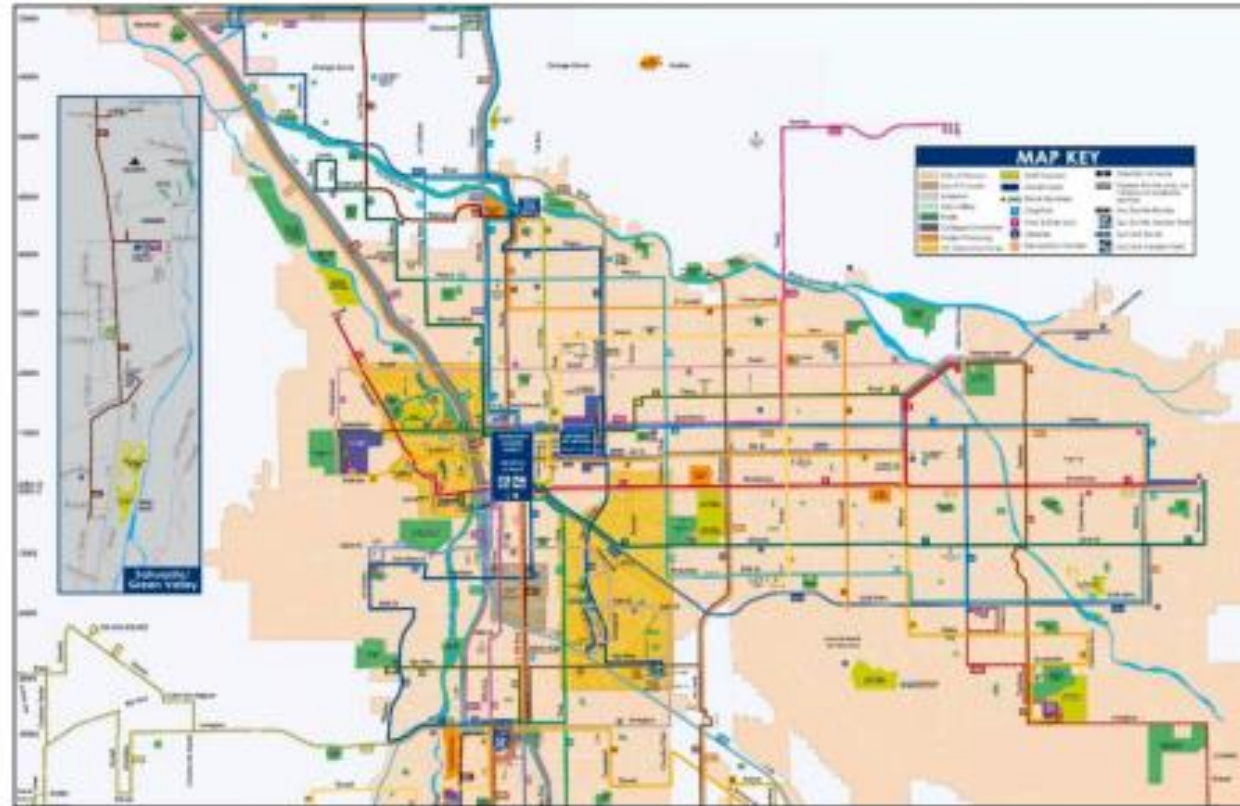
the power of story

“Our collective listening to one another affirms the value and uniqueness of each voice”

bell hooks, 1991: 177.



research site: tucson, az

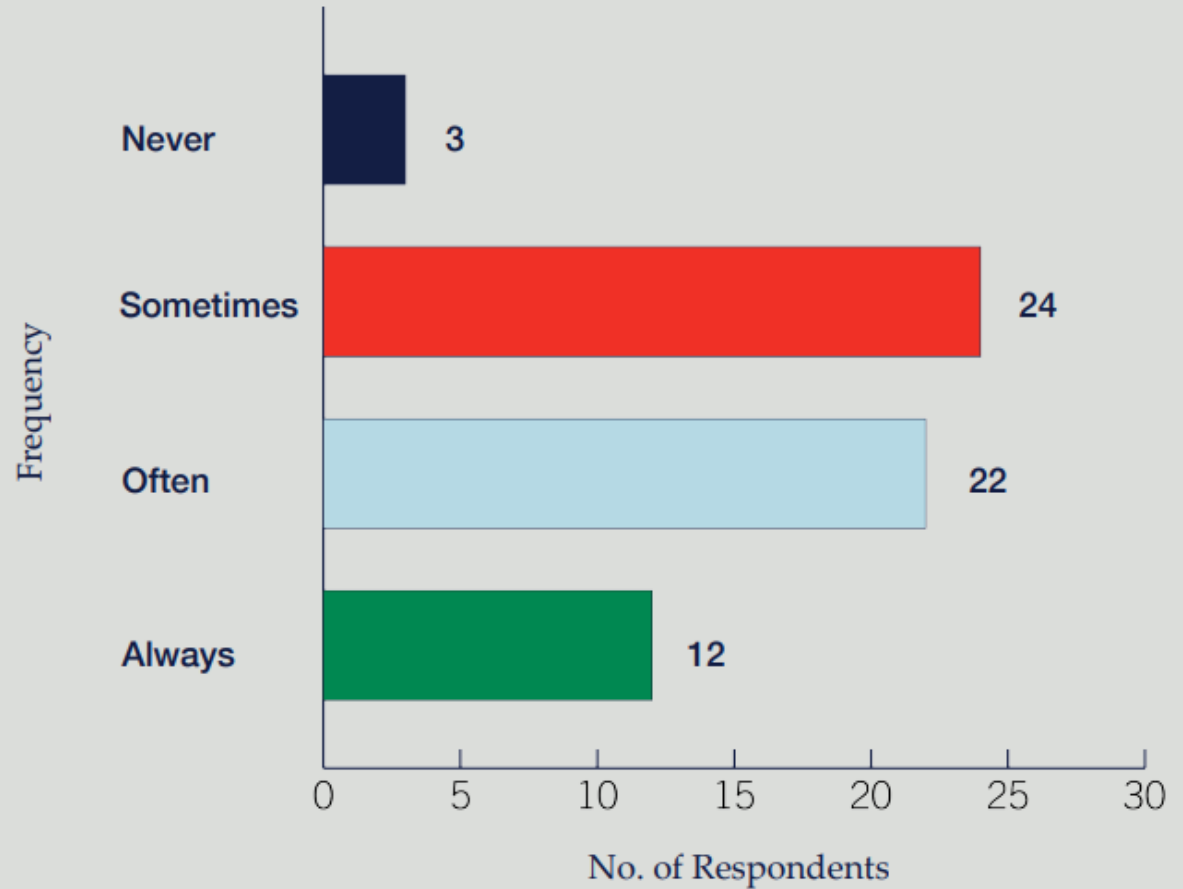


<https://movetucson.org/>

key findings



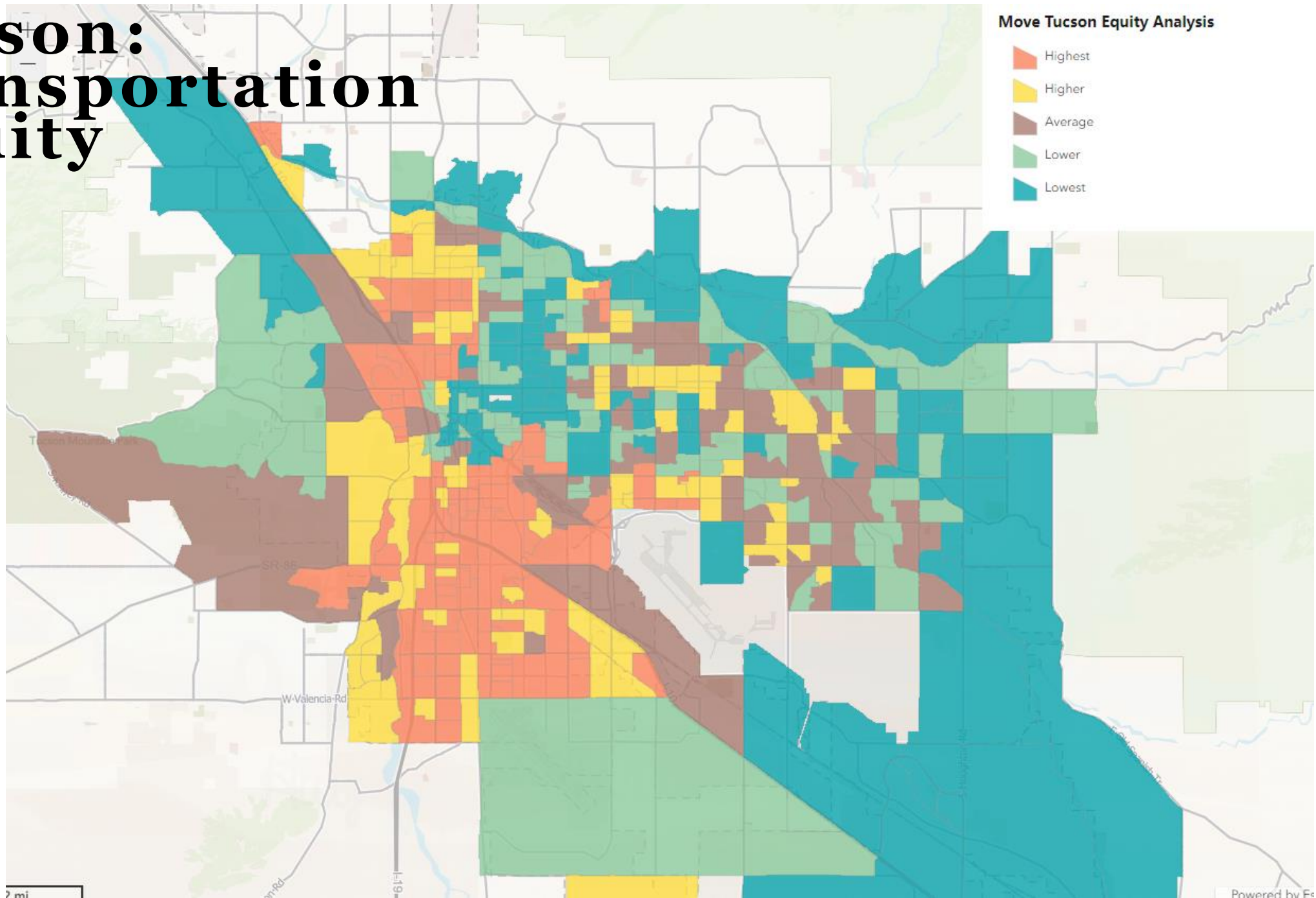
Survey Respondent's Reported Impacts to Well-Being Attributed to Mobility-Related Challenges

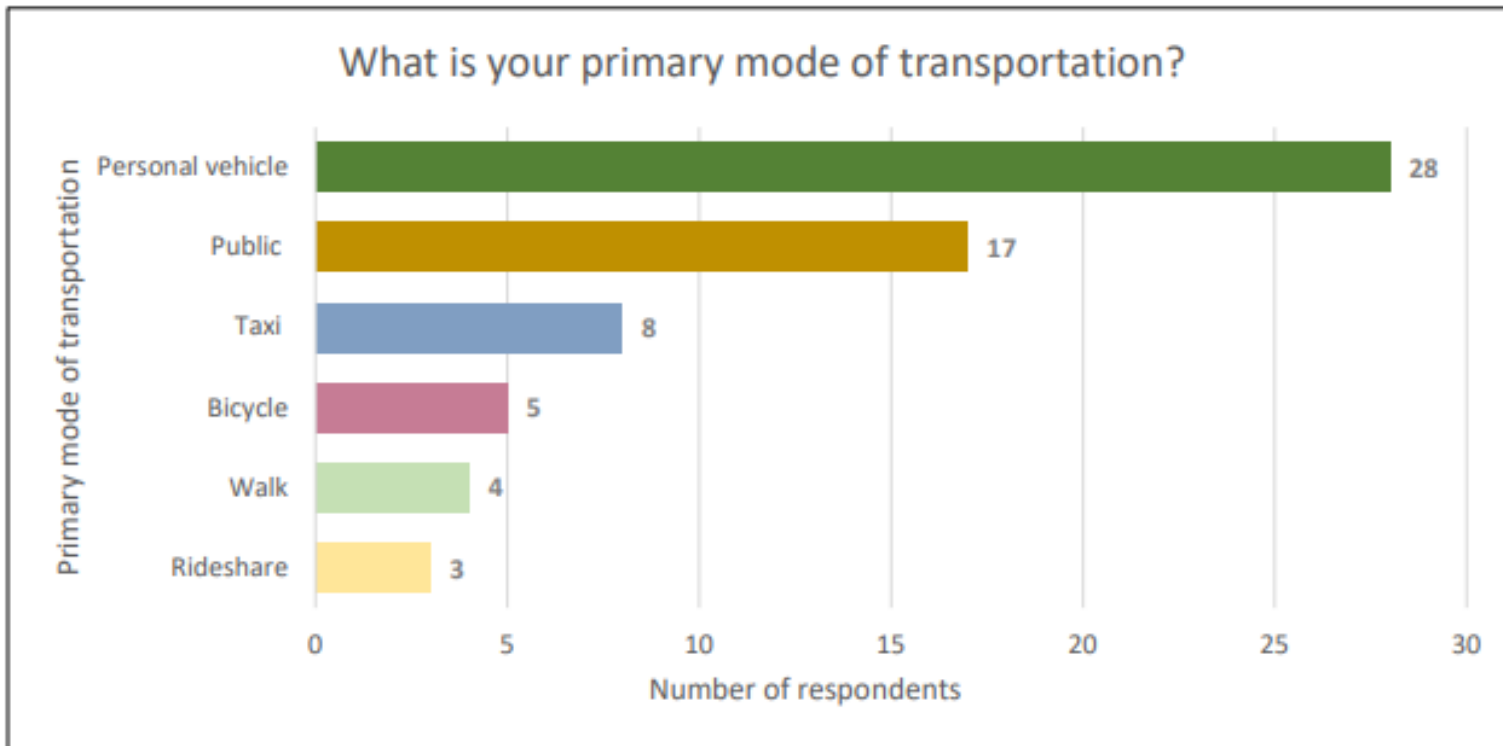
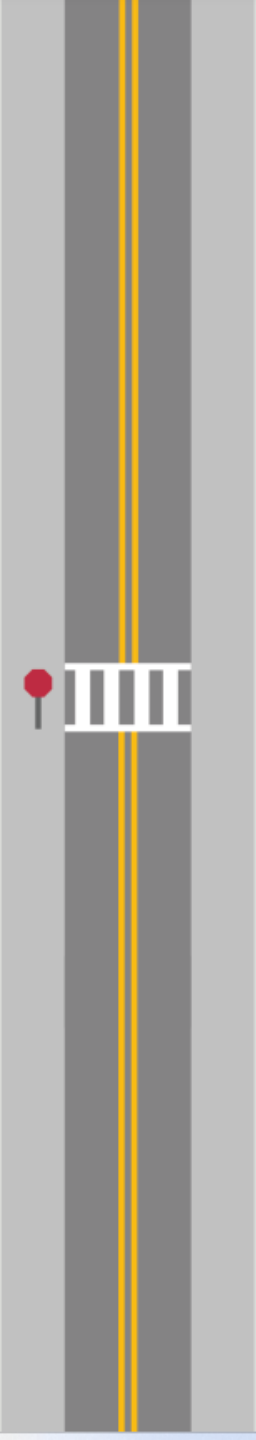


tucson: transportation equity

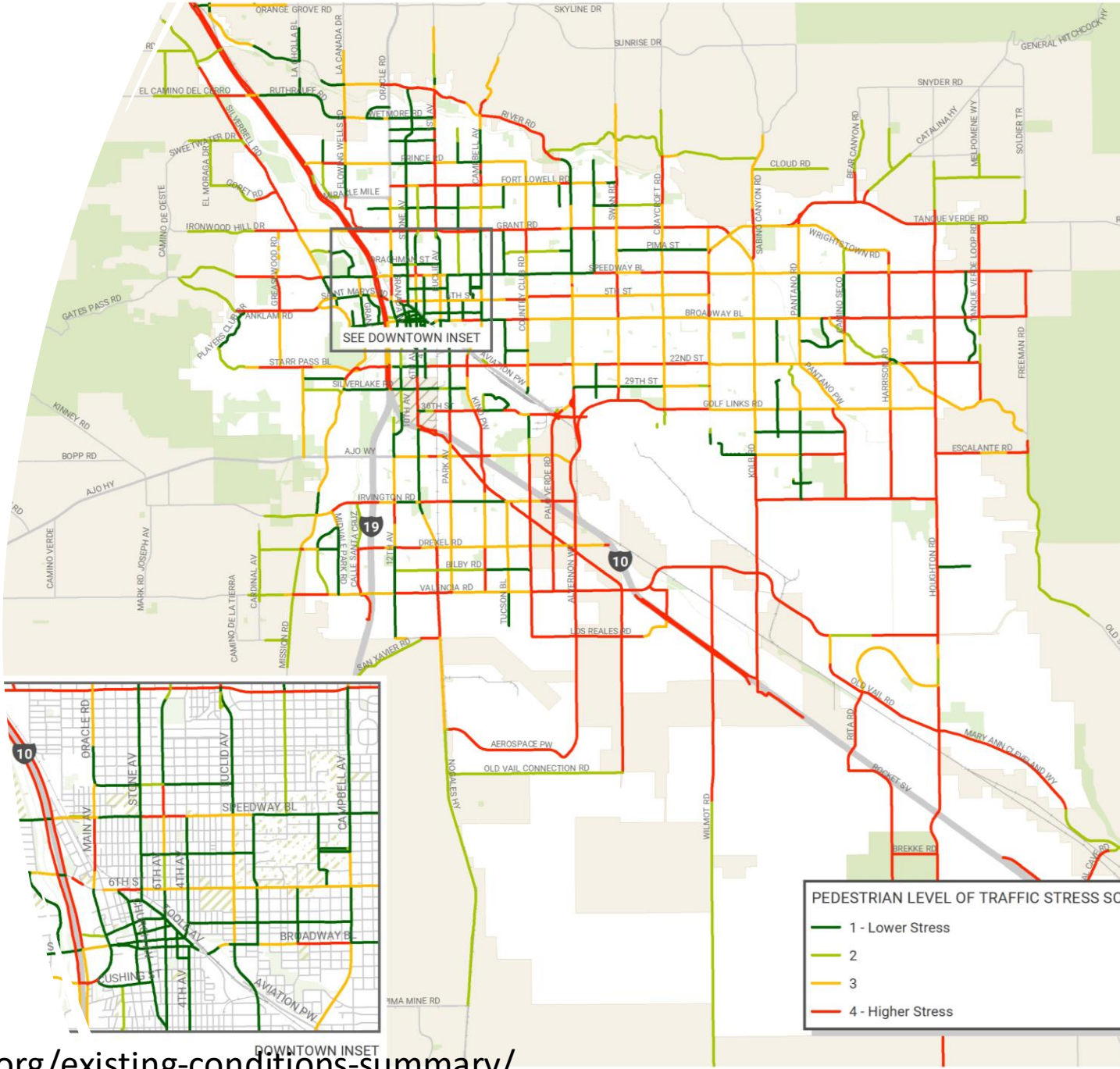
Move Tucson Equity Analysis

- Highest
- Higher
- Average
- Lower
- Lowest



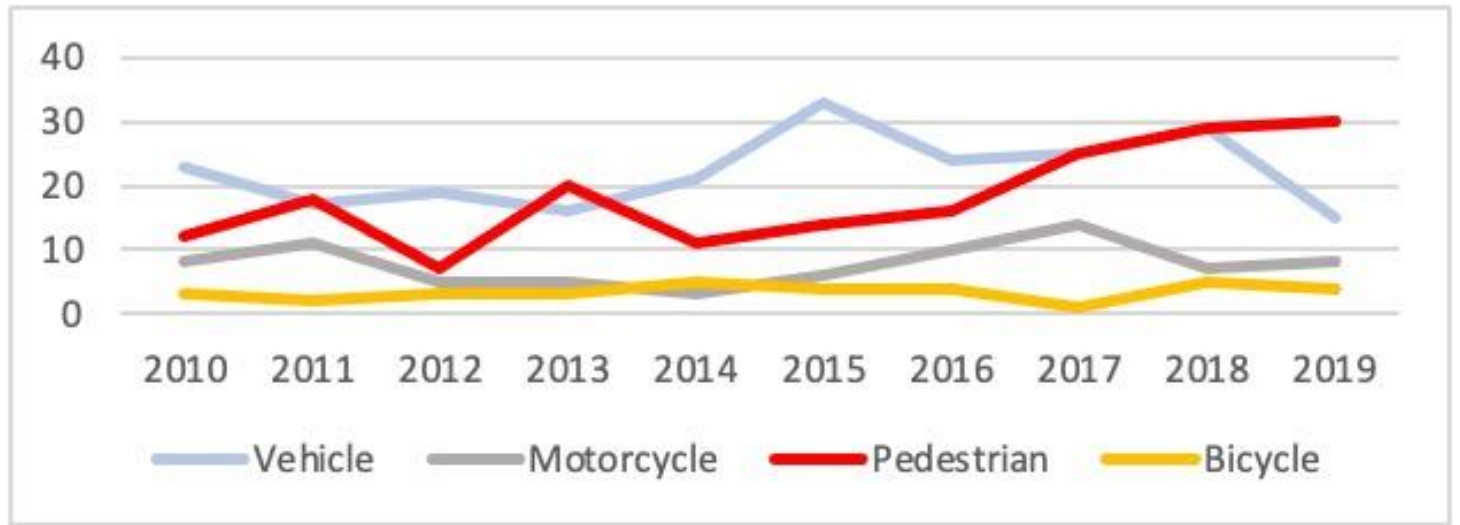


walking in tucson

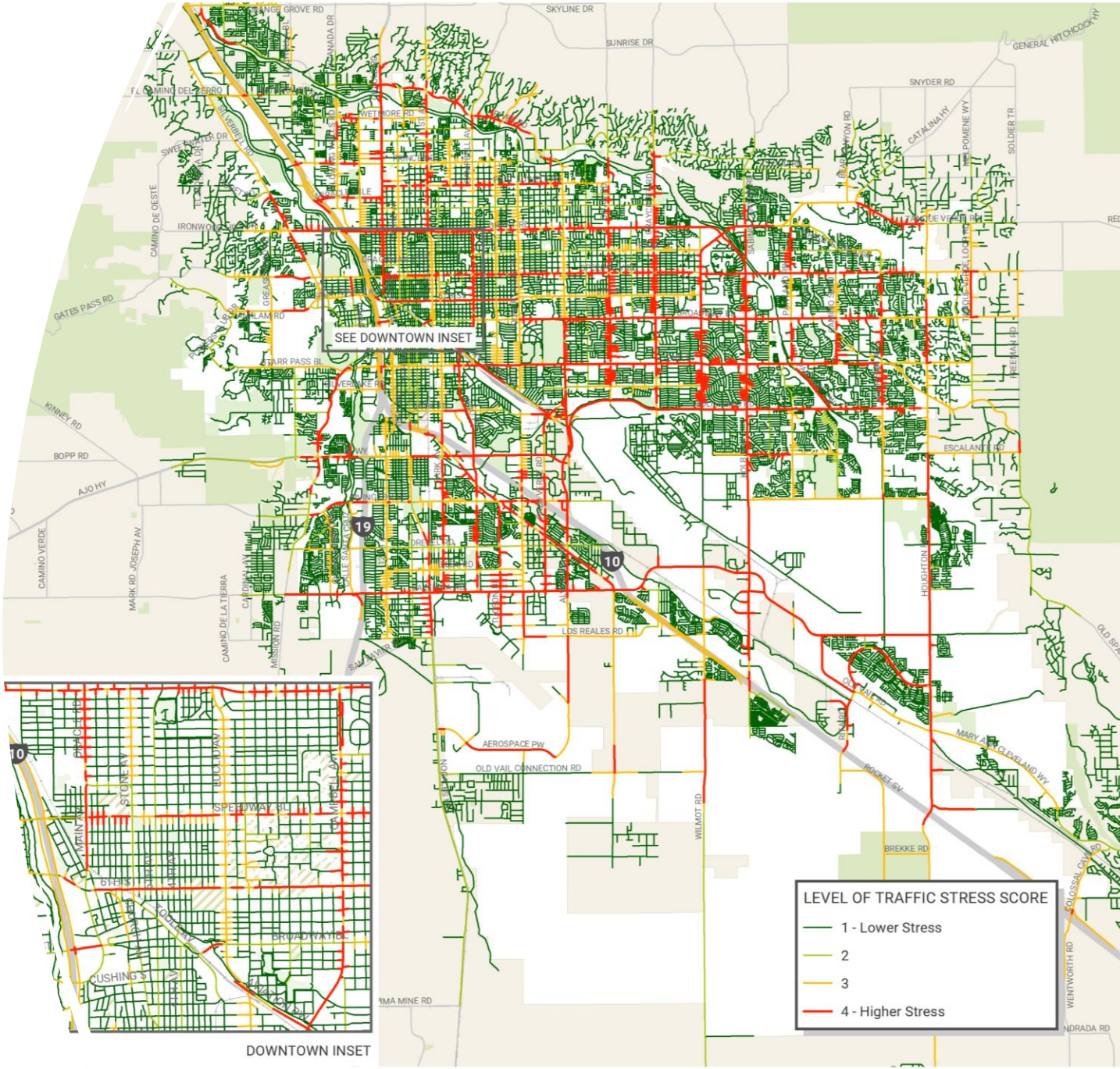


<https://movetucson.org/existing-conditions-summary/>

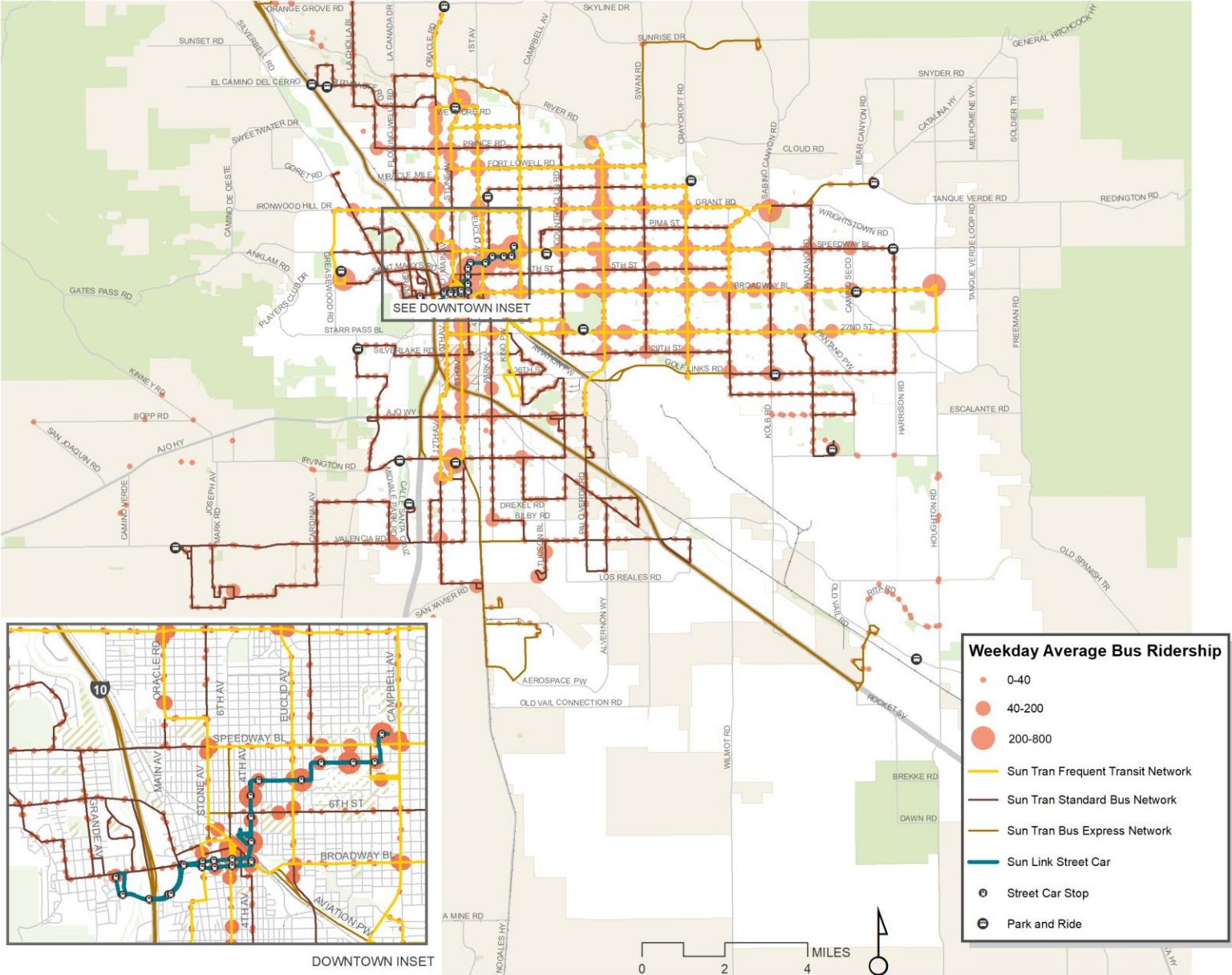
arizona traffic fatality



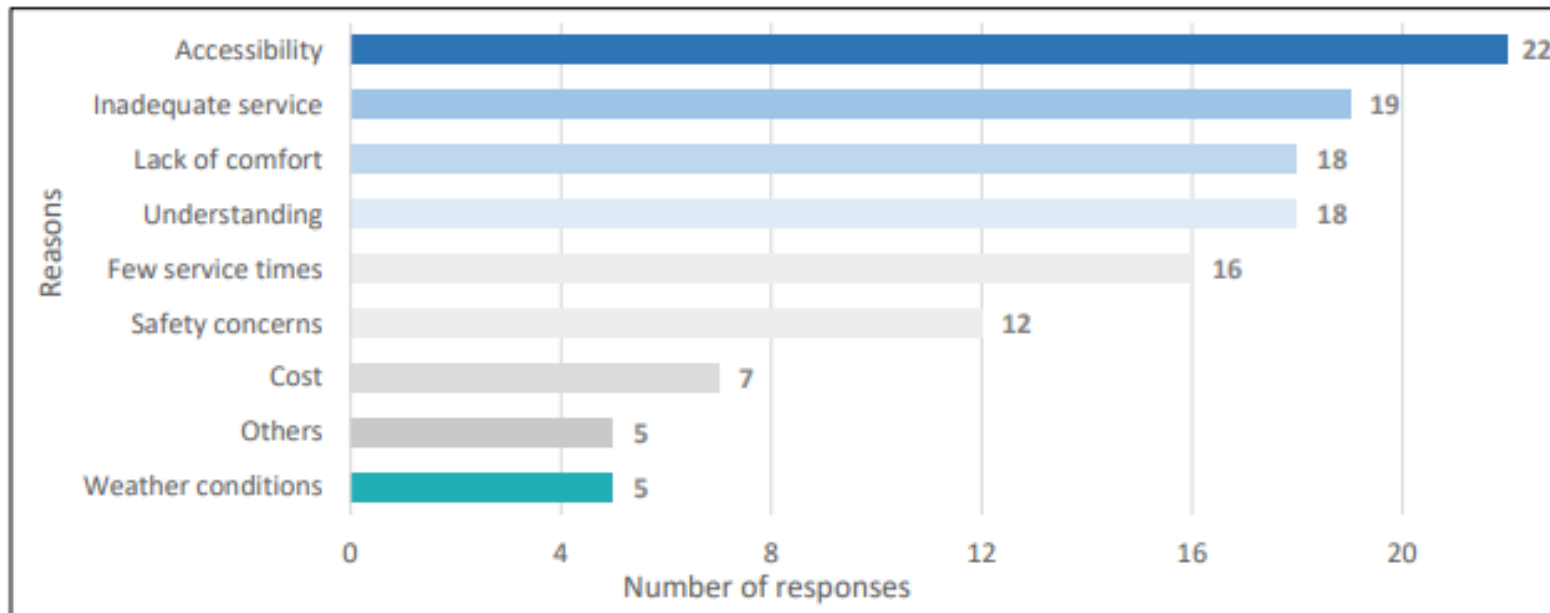
biking in tucson




using public transportation



Reasons for not using public transportation



- 
- Sometimes people are not patient, and many people are not understanding. People are disrespectful on the bus. The language barriers are big ...” MZ (Ethiopia)
 - “The first time I used the bus, I realized that I was wasting my time. That was time that I could be using for crochet. I wasted time in refugee camp, and I didn’t want to waste any more time.” JN (Rwanda)
 - Some people don’t have money to take the bus. A lot of people just walk. When you go [on the bus] everyday it adds up. AM (Somalia)

social capital

- “A lot of people rely on the church to rely on these things because it’s really hard when you don’t know the language. A lot of times they're not able to get help from people to help so they get help from the church.” SD (DRC)
- “Even during the hard times with only my dad working or only him having a car, he would still go around helping others. My family would make food for the new refugees or have people come over to the house to help new refugees. What [my parents] have given, they give the same back.” MZ (Ethiopia)
- “I help people everyone whenever I can and take people where they have to go” NR (Bhutan).
- “To get places during the pandemic, people pick up those without cars. I’m giving rides to people that I don’t know.” BJ (Liberia)



gender and mobility

Mobility-related challenges are gendered and experienced differently by men and women. Female refugees report that mobility barriers impact social, mental, and physical well-being more than male survey takers. Male refugees report that challenges to mobility impact their economic well-being more than female participants. In a household with two adult partners, it is more common for men to learn to drive first and, in many cases, remain the sole driver of the family. However, there was also a generational dimension we observed in terms of gender disparity. Younger women tended to be more willing to take on driving earlier than their mothers.

The power of story: Understanding gendered dimensions of mobility among Tucson refugees

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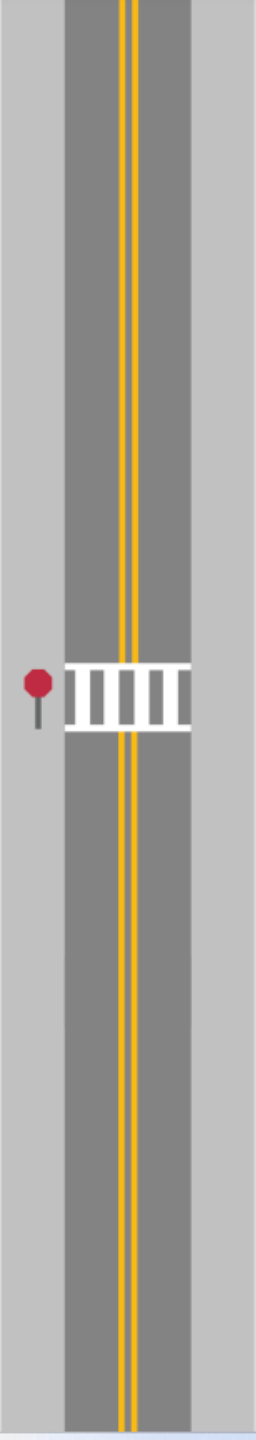
Abstract

The paper focuses on the power of a single story to bring the human contexts and circumstances that shape refugees' post-resettlement lives to the forefront. Through an ethnographic example, the article brings attention to the lived experience of refugees and dismantles gendered tropes that are rooted in Western and white feminist theoretical frameworks. We do so through the prism of mobility-related challenges that refugees experience after resettlement. By focusing on the narrow topic of mobility, we hope to illuminate the uniqueness of each individual's journey in navigating one's post-resettlement life in the United States.

KEYWORDS

displacement, essentialism, orientalism, passion of experience, refugee resettlement





“Of course, he was the one to take the... lead [in driving] and he did not do it in a way that was like “only I have to do it, you guys can’t do it” but in a way that, “I will do it first so that way I can provide a way for you guys to go next.” And he really did a good job of doing that because through him, I was able to learn how to drive. Through him and his courage, my mom was able to learn how to drive and my brother and I was able to teach my sister...”

“I’m sure felt responsible first to learn how to drive even though he’s never driven before in his life. I’m sure there were moments that he kind of made mistakes and he kind of shook a little bit and was nervous but at the end of the day. To him what mattered was that we were able to have that transportation in the house and that if we needed something we can go and come back and get it without having to call people. “

key recommendations



The model was developed by Sarah Clark (GRA).

- **1. Integrated networks**
- Continuing to support connections between refugee-status and non-refugee status segments of the community.
- **2. informal peer meetings**
- Providing dedicated time and space for resettled refugee-status individuals to meet and socialize with one another in an informal setting.
- **3. peer-peer mutual aid**
- Connecting newly resettled refugees with “mutual aid” networks established by previously resettled refugee-status people via volunteer-created resource and contact books and social events.

key outputs

- ❑ Interviews with 40 people (35 refugees and five non-refugee members)
- ❑ Survey of 81 people
- ❑ Journal article: Clark, Sarah, and Orhon Myadar. "The power of story: Understanding gendered dimensions of mobility among Tucson refugees." *Geography Compass* 17, no. 3 (2023): e12678.
- ❑ Journal article: *Smith, Chandler, Orhon Myadar, Nicole Iroz-Elardo, Maia Ingram, and Arlie Adkins. "Making of home: Transportation mobility and well-being among Tucson refugees." Journal of Transport Geography 103 (2022): 103409.*
- ❑ Public Presentation: *Refugee Mobility and Wellbeing Understanding connections between mobility, transportation, and quality of life in refugee communities in Tucson, Arizona* by Chandler Smith at the University of Arizona. 05/15/2021
- ❑ Public Presentation: *Making a home: Transportation Mobility and Well-Being Among Tucson Refugees* by Orhon Myadar at the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy. 4/08/2022
- ❑ Public Presentation: *Belong: Geographies of Displacement, Refuge and Longing* by Orhon Myadar at Oxford University. 3/8/2023
- ❑ Booklet: *Making a home: Transportation Mobility and Well-Being Among Tucson Refugees*. 2022
- ❑ Booklet exhibition: *Making a home: Transportation Mobility and Well-Being Among Tucson Refugees* by Nicholas Daniels. Lionel Romach Gallery. BFA I+D Capstone Thesis show. May 3-16, 2022
- ❑ Policy Brief: *Policy Lessons for Refugee Resettlement Programs* by Sarah Clark. 2023

thank you for your time!



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