Sol Price Center
for Social Innovation

Opportunity Youth in the City of Los Angeles

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Executive summary

The term opportunity youth refers to individuals between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither employed nor enrolled in school. Opportunity youth are disproportionately youth of color, live in low-income neighborhoods and face important barriers to job access such as disconnections and labor market discrimination. Moreover, the low-income neighborhoods in which most opportunity youth live lack access to external opportunities, including jobs, education and other resources that are more readily available in higher-income neighborhoods.

Technology may offer an important opportunity for connecting opportunity youth to employment. The vast majority of youth, including at-risk and homeless youth, use the Internet frequently. However, Internet frequency, use and skills vary dramatically by socioeconomic status, race and gender. Home computer use is linked to a greater likelihood for individuals to engage in job searches online, though access to a home computer varies drastically across groups. This research suggests that technology may represent an important way to access the opportunity youth population, but they need additional connections to online job and training resources.

Opportunity youth in Los Angeles are disproportionately Black and Hispanic youth. These two groups account for almost 80 percent of all opportunity youth in the City of Los Angeles. The share of opportunity youth increased following the housing market crisis, but has continuously decreased since 2012 as the economy has recovered. While opportunity youth reside across Los Angeles, they are mostly concentrated in South Los Angeles, Downtown L.A. and San Fernando Valley.

The job cluster analysis shows that entry-level jobs and low wage jobs are concentrated in the neighborhoods in and around LAX Airport, Downtown, West L.A. and Hollywood. Among these job clusters, the highest proportion of opportunity youth live in Downtown Los Angeles, suggesting that this location could be the first targeted area of intervention. In particular, there are many jobs in the health care industry in Downtown Los Angeles, and these relatively accessible jobs are a good match for opportunity youth, provided that opportunity youth gain adequate support, training and connections to these jobs.

Further analysis is needed to identify additional barriers that hinder opportunity youth from accessing jobs, including inadequate transportation options and skill acquisition needed for jobs that pay living wages.

Introduction

For opportunity youth, not working and not attending school matters for their life opportunities

Opportunity youth (also referred to as disconnected youth) are defined as individuals between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither working nor in school (Belfield et al., 2012). These years can be a critical time in an individual's life, as decisions made at these ages can have a long-term impact on one's future career and life trajectory. Not only do opportunity youth themselves face individual disadvantages from being relatively isolated from society, but a high presence of opportunity youth can also contribute to broader social problems, as these youth are more likely to engage in unhealthy behaviors such as criminal activities (Belfield et al, 2006). Therefore, helping opportunity youth reconnect to society can not only improve their individual well-being, but can also help build a healthier community and save taxpayer money over the long-term.

Opportunity youth are disproportionately youth of color, live in low-income neighborhoods and face barriers to job access

The share of opportunity youth differs across race and ethnicity. Previous studies have found that youth of color, and Black and Hispanic youth in particular, are more likely to be opportunity youth (Ross & Svailenka, 2016; Lewis & Burd-Sharps, 2015). In the US, the share of Black youth not enrolled in school and unemployed (21.6%) is almost double the share of White youth (11.3%). About 16.3 percent of Hispanic youth are similarly disconnected from education and jobs. While studies have shown that blatant racial discrimination has decreased, subtle discrimination still exists in the labor market. For example, Lavergne and Mullainathan (2004) found that randomly assigned resumes with White-sounding names are 50 percent more likely to receive callbacks than resumes with Black-sounding names. A field experiment by Pager et al. (2009) found that for low wage entry level jobs, Black applicants were only half as likely to receive a callback or a job offer compared to an equally qualified White applicant. In addition, Black and Hispanic applicants without criminal records did not have a higher likelihood of receiving a callback or a job offer than White applicants who were just released from prison. These studies suggest that opportunity youth of color face additional barriers when attempting to enter into the labor force due to discrimination.

Studies have also found that place matters. Opportunity youth are more likely to live in neighborhoods with concentrated poverty and within social networks that provide fewer connections to quality jobs. Living in under-resourced neighborhoods may present additional challenges for opportunity youth to break out from their current situation. Many studies have shown that place affects the long-term socioeconomic outcomes of youth, especially if they have lived in that place for a long portion of their life (Chetty & Hendren, 2016; Sharkey, 2014; Granovetter, 1973). Without sufficient resources to provide access to external opportunities, many opportunity youth may be unable to overcome the resource deprivation of their neighborhoods, and therefore have little hope of gaining access to additional education or quality jobs.

Technology and emerging industries offer important opportunities for addressing youth unemployment

While opportunity youth may be facing multiple challenges in their lives, including discrimination, poverty, and a lack of social support, development in technology and emerging new industries may provide them new opportunities to gain access to jobs. For example, over the past decade in the City of Los Angeles, jobs in the health care industry increased from 163,000 (in 2004) to 280,000 (in 2014), while jobs in the manufacturing industry continuously declined over this time. With adequate

training and established workforce connections, some opportunity youth may be able to enter into the growing health care industry. Furthermore, by engaging with new technological innovations, opportunity youth may be less restricted to their locational boundaries, and may be able to access jobs that better match their interests and skills, and that provide quality, higher paying career opportunities.

In the next section, we review studies that examine how youth use technology and how they access information such as jobs. We investigate what barriers youth face when using digital technology to find jobs, and we discuss ways to reach out to opportunity youth using digital devices. We then provide an overview of opportunity youth in the City of Los Angeles, including who they are, where they are located, and where they can find entry level jobs. In the final section, we conclude by suggesting future work needed to understand more about the challenges that opportunity youth face and to identify effective strategies to help them connect to jobs and education.

How Opportunity Youth Access Jobs

Internet job searches have become more common, particularly for higher educated people with home access to the Internet

Research has shown that Internet job searches have become more common and more effective over time, as Internet use has proliferated and Internet job search sites have expanded (Kuhn & Mansour, 2014; Stevenson, 2008). In contrast to previous decades, unemployed individuals conducting online job searches find work about 25% faster than similarly situated individuals who do not job search online (Kuhn & Mansour, 2014). More youth are job searching online than ever before, though higher educated individuals and individuals with home Internet access, particularly a home computer, are far more likely to search for jobs online. Therefore, due to their relatively lower levels of Internet access, particularly at home, Black and Hispanic individuals appear less likely to search online (Kuhn & Mansour, 2014). Common online job search activities for job seekers include contacting friends or relatives (44%), directly contacting employers (36%), looking at job advertisements (30%), and sending out resumes or completing applications (24%) (Kuhn & Mansour, 2014). These findings suggest that, even online, opportunity youth rely on their social networks for jobs, even though social networks within low-income communities likely contain far fewer connections to jobs, and particularly quality jobs, than social networks within higher-income communities (Granovetter, 1973).

Most people have access to and use the Internet, but online use, home access and skills vary significantly across groups

Common conceptions about youth raised in a world with digital technologies, often referred to as "digital natives," include that they are inherently familiar with digital technologies (Thomas, 2011). However, some research has found that technological familiarity and usage varies across socioeconomic lines. Rather than viewing barriers to technological adaptation as merely a binary "digital divide," in which one either has access the Internet or does not, some research has supported a "digital differentiation" thesis, in which greater socioeconomic, cultural and cognitive resources are associated with greater Internet use (DiMaggio et al., 2004; Keegan Eamon, 2004). How, and how much, people use the Internet matters for employment, wages, access to information, and social connectedness, such that differentiated Internet use across social groups can exacerbate existing social inequalities (Hargittai, 2010).

While access to the Internet has vastly improved across groups since its inception, some persistence of unequal home access to Internet still exists, and particularly fast Internet, across race and income. Low-income households, and Hispanic, Native American and Black households have relatively lower access. However, the greatest differences occur across education and income levels, and for households without children. Moreover, many without fast and reliable home Internet access may access the Internet in other locations. However, individuals with faster Internet at home tend to use Internet differently, including greater rates of accessing information online (Warschauer et al., 2010).

The vast majority of youth use the Internet; an estimated 94 percent of teenagers use the Internet, and 89 percent use it at home. Black and low-income youth are more likely to use the Internet at public libraries and other locations than White youth and youth from higher income households, likely because these groups have quality home Internet access (Warschauer et al., 2010). Some research indicates that community technology centers effectively reduce differences in Internet use, quality, and access for low-income youth, but youth are less likely to use these centers than public libraries (Warschauer et al., 2010). With more access points to the Internet, and particularly a laptop, users tend to engage in a wider range of activities online (Hargittai, 2010). This research underscores the importance of places like public libraries as a means of eroding Internet use discrepancies.

How, and how much, youth use the Internet varies across socioeconomic status, race and gender

Higher socioeconomic status is associated with greater Internet use and more varied uses (Hargittai, 2010). While racial disparities in Internet use have declined from earlier rates, Black youth use of home Internet is still lower than among White youth. However, one study (Jackson et al., 2008), focused on middle school students, found evidence that Black females use information technology at relatively high rates and in many different ways, including for education and health information, as well as communication, while Black males use information technology at very low rates and for a narrower set of purposes, including information about religion and jobs. Black and White males disproportionately used the Internet to play video games, which, across genders, was related to lower performance in school. Overall, males tend to use the Internet to play games and seek information, and females tend to use the Internet for communication (Guadagno, Muscanell & Pollio, 2013; Jackson et al., 2008). Another study (Hargittai, 2010) that examined first year college students found lower information-seeking online behavior from women, youth with low socioeconomic status, and Hispanic students. Asian American students were more frequent users of the Internet regardless of their online skill level. Across race and gender, using the Internet at an earlier age was related to better performance in school. Such differences matter, as Internet habits established in youth transfer into adulthood. In particular, a longer use of Internet and greater skills is associated with more Internet use and a wider range of online uses. In sum, these differences imply that digital technologies provide important opportunities for connecting to youth, who are already digitally connected. However, targeting specific populations will likely require different outreach strategies, at young ages, since their use varies in important ways across race and gender.

Beyond access and frequency of use, youth appear to use online resources differently based on their level of online skill, or their competence in using the Internet and digital technologies (Hargittai & Hinnant, 2008; Peter & Valkenburg, 2006; DiMaggio et al., 2004; Keegan Eamon, 2004). Some research has found that support networks are an important part of gaining online skills, which implies that, beyond economic resources, social capital is an important factor in technological skill development. Throughout, Internet access and use remains important for accessing employment and other information, so this differential access to and use of online resources matters for whether

and how youth access opportunities (Kuhn & Mansour, 2014). These differences in use across groups imply that, while opportunity youth are connected to and use the Internet frequently, they likely face barriers to online information-seeking behavior such as job searches and educational platforms. In other words, to gain access to jobs that require online job searches, opportunity youth may benefit from greater connections to online job searching information, platforms and skills.

At-risk youth and homeless youth use the Internet frequently but differently than other youth

High risk youth, including victimized youth or those with high parental conflict, appear to use the Internet differently than non-high risk youth, and may be at higher risk of talking to people online, sending and posting personal information online, and engaging in sexual or aggressive behavior online (Wells & Mitchell, 2008). Their disproportionate likelihood to form strong connections with others online may be attributed to their relatively higher use of chat rooms and blogs, as compared to non-high risk youth. High risk youth also were relatively more likely to use the Internet on their cell phones and at the homes of friends than non-high risk youth (Wells & Mitchell, 2008). Given the likely association between high-risk status and opportunity youth, these studies lend further evidence that opportunity youth use the Internet in different ways than employed youth and students. In particular, opportunity youth appear more likely to rely on mobile devices for Internet use.

Some research has specifically focused on homeless youth and Internet use. Approximately 80 percent of homeless youth use the Internet at least once each week, and about one-quarter use the Internet for at least one hour every day (Rice, Monro, Barman-Adhikari & Young, 2010). Homeless youth use the Internet for health information and to maintain social networks (Rice & Barman-Adhikari, 2013). One study found relatively comparable online activities between homeless youth and undergraduate college students (Guadagno, Muscanell & Pollio, 2013). Both groups overwhelmingly used social networking websites, at rates of 96.7 percent for undergraduates and 75 percent for homeless youth. Their behavior differed slightly, in that homeless youth used social networking websites for communication, whereas undergraduate college students were more focused on online recreation such as gaming. Among homeless youth, women were less likely to engage in social network websites and related communication, which implies that homeless young women may be relatively more socially isolated than homeless young men, at least online.

Homeless youth in Los Angeles use the Internet quite frequently, particularly email, and often in public locations

There are a few studies that have specifically focused on homeless youth in Los Angeles[1], including temporarily housed youth and youth with stable housing that access homeless services, many of whom are likely to also be opportunity youth due to their relatively high rates of unemployment and relatively low rates of school enrollment. The majority of these individuals frequently use the Internet. Approximately three-quarters of the homeless youth surveyed in Los Angeles had accessed the Internet within the past two days. Common locations for accessing the Internet included public libraries (47%), youth service agencies (40%), and wherever they were staying that night (11%). Common uses for the Internet were email, particularly to family and employers (64%), social networking websites such as Facebook (57%), and housing searches (28%). Relative to youth who had stable housing, youth without temporary or stable housing were less likely to engage in online job searches (Rice & Barman-Adhikari, 2013; Rice, Monro, Barman-Adhikari & Young, 2010). Email

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[1] In particular, see the work of Eric Rice at USC.

was a preferred venue for homeless youth to contact employers, as opposed to social media, because it affords more privacy than social media and can help youth keep their housing status secret from employers. Moreover, online job seeking was seen to offer homeless youth the social ties necessary to access jobs beyond their immediate social networks, which primarily consist of other homeless and unemployed individuals without significant job connectedness (Rice & Barman-Adhikari, 2013). This research implies that online platforms and physical locations could offer important opportunities for connecting to this population, and that homeless youth may need greater connectedness to online job searching resources. Across vulnerable populations, public libraries are providing much-needed access to computers and associated online resources.

Summary of Findings from the literature

The literature review lends insight into the challenges that opportunity youth face and the potential options for assisting this population. Most opportunity youth are youth of color and live in low-income neighborhoods. This research suggests that opportunity youth face consequential disconnections from society on multiple levels, not just because they are unemployed and not in school. Rather, their disconnections also result from the under-resourced neighborhoods in which they live, where there are fewer educational and workforce opportunities, and where they are less likely to know someone who can provide connections to resources, including good jobs. Furthermore, when they do attempt to enter the workforce, opportunity youth likely face barriers to employment such as outright discrimination, which research has shown still abounds in the labor market.

Technology appears to offer an important point for connecting to opportunity youth, since youth are strongly engaged in online activity across socioeconomic, racial and gender lines. Even youth without stable housing frequently use the Internet. However, research suggests that youth of color and low-income youth, who are disproportionately represented among opportunity youth, are less likely to engage in online job searches and information-seeking behavior. This difference suggests that opportunity youth are disconnected from jobs and educational opportunities that rely on online searches, which may be necessary for many higher-paying jobs. This finding implies that, in order to access more and better opportunities, opportunity youth need connections to online job searching activities and better online job searching skills. Throughout, places like public libraries play a crucial role in enabling low-income youth to access the Internet on computers, which individuals rely upon to engage in job search and information-seeking behavior. Therefore, public libraries and computing centers may provide a physical location for conducting outreach to opportunity youth and for helping them develop greater online job searching skills.

Opportunity Youth in Los Angeles

Opportunity youth in Los Angeles are disproportionately Black and Hispanic

The City of Los Angeles has a much higher share of Hispanics who are between the ages from 16 to 24 than the national average. Figure I shows that close to 60 percent of youth ages 16 to 24 are Hispanic. One fifth of youth ages 16-24 in the City of Los Angeles are White, slightly over 11 percent are Asian American, 7.4 percent are Black, and other groups comprise 2.5 percent.

[Figure I] % of Age 16-24 by Race & Ethnicity
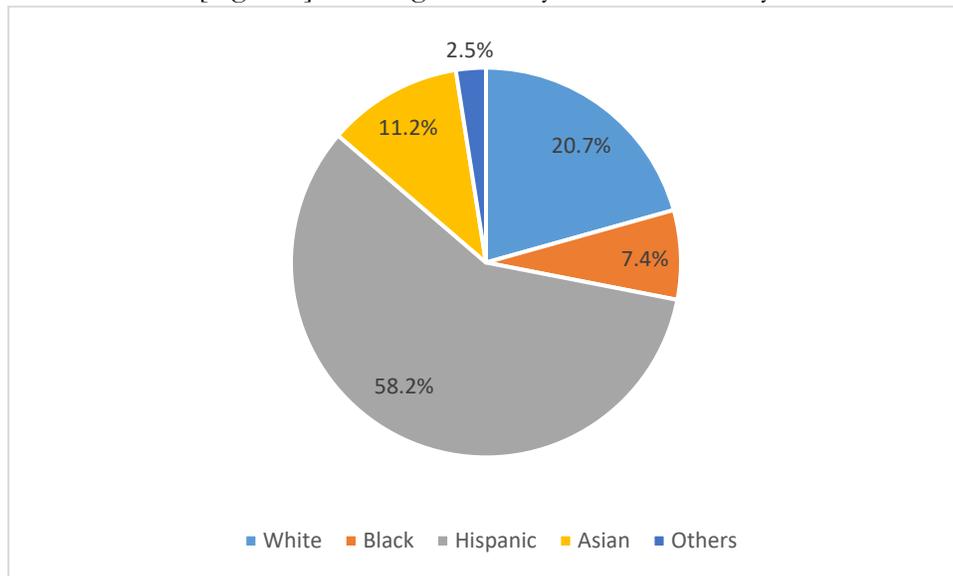
Source: ACS 2006-2015

There are approximately 73,000 opportunity youth in the City of Los Angeles, according to the most recent five-year American Community Survey (2011-15). Opportunity youth account for 13.7 percent of the total youth between ages 16 and 24. Reflecting broader patterns in the literature, in Los Angeles, a greater share of Black and Hispanic youth are "disconnected" from both jobs and education than are White and Asian American youth (Figure II). While the share of the Black population classified as opportunity youth is greater than Hispanics, there are significantly more Hispanic opportunity youth in Los Angeles than Black opportunity youth because Hispanic youth account for a greater share of the total youth population. In fact, approximately 47,000 opportunity youth are Hispanic, accounting for almost 65 percent of all opportunity youth. Black youth account for the second largest share of opportunity youth, or about 14 percent, or 10,000 in total. Together, almost 80 percent of opportunity youth in the City of Los Angeles are Black or Hispanic.

[Figure II] % Opportunity Youth by Race & Ethnicity

% Opportunity Youth

White 8.8%
Black 22.2%
Hispanic 15.4%
Asian 8.6%
Others 10.2%
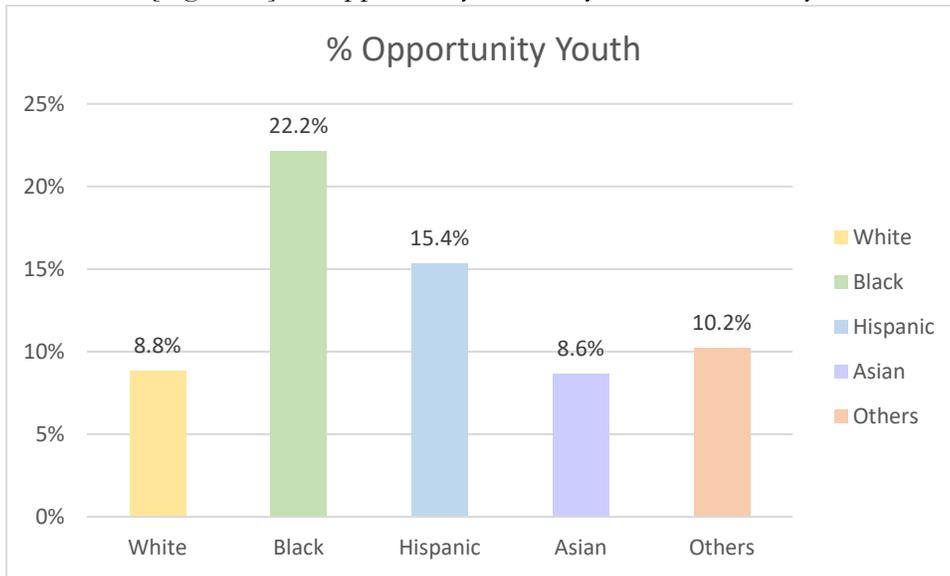
Source: ACS 2006-2015

The percentage of opportunity youth increased after the housing market crisis, but has declined since 2012

Figure III shows that the share of opportunity youth has declined over recent years. Following the 2007 housing market crisis, the share of opportunity youth continuously increased, reaching its peak at 2012. This rise mostly occurred due to a higher overall unemployment rate. As the economy recovered, both the share of unemployed youth and the total share of opportunity youth declined. The population of individuals neither in school nor in the labor force continuously declined since 2006, which also contributed to a drop in the number of opportunity youth. This suggests that the opportunities that youth enjoy strongly reflect broader economic conditions.

Figure III. % Opportunity Youth by Year

opportunity youth: 13.1%, 13.3%, 12.9%, 14.1%, 14.6%, 15.0%, 15.7%, 13.6%, 12.2%, 11.7%
not in school & laborforce: 9.6%, 9.6%, 9.0%, 8.0%, 8.6%, 8.6%, 8.8%, 8.2%, 7.4%, 7.7%
unemployed: 3.4%, 3.7%, 3.9%, 6.1%, 6.0%, 6.4%, 6.9%, 5.4%, 4.8%, 4.0%

2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015

opportunity youth — unemployed — not in school & laborforce

Source: ACS 2006-2015

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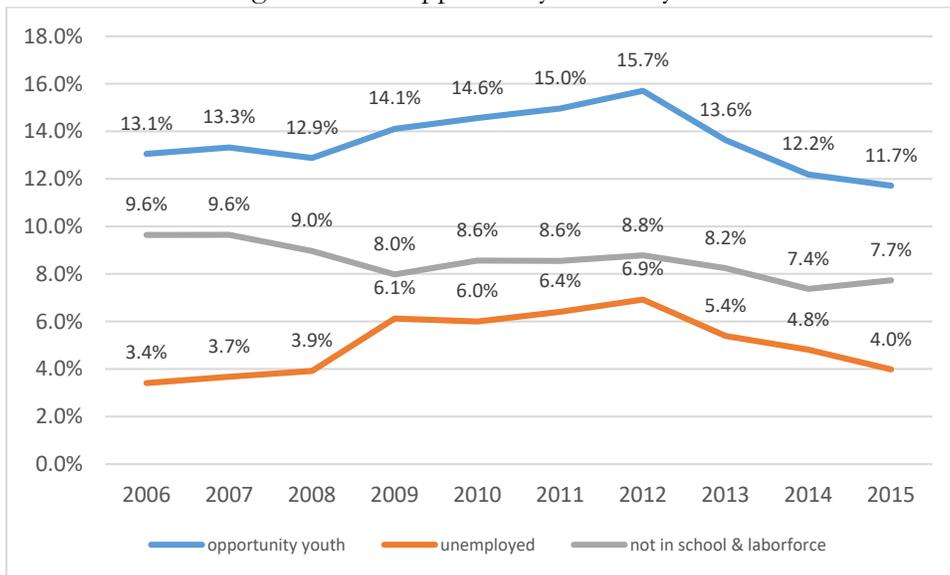
Where Do Opportunity Youth Live in Los Angeles?

Opportunity youth are largely concentrated in South L.A., Downtown L.A. and the San Fernando Valley

Using the 5-year American Community Survey (ACS), we identified where opportunity youth live within the City of Los Angeles at the census tract level.[2]

Map 1 shows that the greatest density of opportunity youth exists in South L.A. (south of I-10 and east of I-405).[3] More than 70 percent of the census tracts (24 census tracts total) that contain over 200 opportunity youth are located in this area. Five of the six census tracts that contain over 214 opportunity youth are located south of Manchester Boulevard/ Firestone Boulevard in the Watts, Green Meadows, and Broadway-Manchester neighborhoods of South L.A. In all three of these neighborhoods, approximately 98% of the population is either Hispanic or Black, and the median household income (2008 dollars) ranges between $25,161 and $31,347.[4] The census tract with the largest number of opportunity youth (493) contains the Los Angeles County Central Jail in Downtown L.A. The census tract with the next highest number (366) is in the Green Meadows neighborhood. Other areas with a large number of opportunity youth are in Central L.A. clustered along the US-101 from Downtown to Hollywood, scattered neighborhoods throughout Central L.A. (Westlake, Pico-Union, Arlington Heights, Mid-City), Del Rey on the Westside, and in the San Fernando Valley.

Similar trends are shown in Map 2, which shows the share of opportunity youth for each census tract. South L.A. contains a disproportionate percentage of opportunity youth relative to the total population within that age group. In fourteen census tracts, opportunity youth account for at least 35 percent of total youth ages 18-24. Six of these tracts are located within South L.A. The only two census tracts with over 60 percent opportunity youth (relative to the total population ages 16 to 24) are in Downtown L.A. and Hollywood. Areas that also have a high percentage of opportunity youth exist in neighborhoods throughout Central L.A., Boyle Heights on the Eastside, and the San Fernando Valley.

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[2] Identifying opportunity youth for those between age 16-19 was straightforward, as ACS has a single table which has the number of students either unemployed or out of the labor force for both those who are in school and out of school. However, for individuals ages 20-24, we had to make some assumptions as school enrollment and education status as the data was available in separate tables. This is problematic because those in school and those not enrolled in school have different likelihoods of participating in the labor force. Using individual level data from IPUMS, we find that labor force participation rate is about 80 percent for those not in school but is about 60 percent for those in school. The unemployment rate did not significantly differ between the two groups. We also find that labor force participation rate significantly differs by race and ethnic groups. For example, almost 90 percent of 20-24 year old Whites who are not in school were in the labor force, while slightly more than 60 percent of 20-24 year old Blacks were in the labor force. In order to capture the differences in the labor force participation rate by race and ethnicity, we weight the labor participation rate for each race and ethnic groups (non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks, non-Hispanic Asian, Hispanics and others) to obtain the weighted average labor participation rate for those who are not in school in every census tract. We use this to calculate the number of students who are out of the labor force and also out of school. Among those who are in the labor force, we multiply the unemployment rate to obtain the number of 20-24 year-olds who are unemployed and out of school. We add the two numbers to obtain the number of opportunity youth between the ages of 20 and 24. We divided the total number of opportunity youth by the total population ages 16-24.
[3] Neighborhood definitions used are those defined by the Los Angeles Times Neighborhood Map of Los Angeles County
[4] Los Angeles Times Neighborhood Map of Los Angeles County

Opportunity Youth Location and Entry Level Jobs in Los Angeles

Downtown Los Angeles has high share of opportunity youth and high share of potential jobs

In order to understand where potential jobs for opportunity youth are located, we conducted a job cluster analysis[5] for entry-level jobs to identify physical concentrations of entry-level jobs. We define entry-level jobs as jobs for workers ages 29-years-old and younger and jobs paying $1,250 or less per month, which are available from the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) data set. Map 3 shows where the jobs for workers ages 29 and younger are clustered. Many jobs are located in census tracts that are near or around Downtown, West L.A. and Hollywood and the Airport. In addition, we also included a map of 20 companies[6] which has been recommended by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) as high potential firms that can provide entry level jobs for opportunity youth.[7]

Table I shows how many opportunity youth are located in each cluster. We also calculated the share of opportunity youth in each cluster relative to the total number of opportunity youth in the City of L.A. There are 13,046 opportunity youth in the four clusters, accounting for 17.88% of all opportunity youth within Los Angeles. The overwhelming majority (72.96%) of these youth live within the Downtown job cluster.[8]

[Table I] Opportunity Youth in Job Clusters for Workers Age 29 or Younger

Job Cluster	# of Opportunity Youth	Opportunity Youth in each Cluster/Total Opportunity Youth in L.A.
Job Cluster 1 (LAX area)	341	0.47%
Job Cluster 2 (Downtown area)	9,521[1]	13.05%
Job Cluster 3 (West L.A. area)	2,618	3.59%
Job Cluster 4 (Hollywood area)	566	0.78%
TOTAL	13,046	17.88%

Source: American Community Survey 2011-15

Map 4 displays the locations of job clusters for jobs paying $1,250 or less per month. Again, the job clusters are located in the Downtown, West L.A. and Hollywood and LAX Airport areas, but the size of the job clusters are different from job clusters in Map 3. For example, the Downtown and

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[5] A cluster analysis was conducted using geographical information systems to analyze the spatial correlations that exist between census tracts and availability of entry-level jobs. The cluster analysis relies on a statistical analysis referred to as Getis-Ord or G*i Statistic to determine where statistically significant clusters of jobs were located. This statistic provides a localized understanding of density by identifying specific census tracts where job clusters are located. The job category information was collected from the U.S. Census Bureau.

[6] The companies are Taco Bell, Domino's Pizza, Mc Donald, Starbucks, Pizza Hut, Carl's Jr, Target, Vons, Wal-Mart, Kroger Co., Goodwill, 88 Cents Only Stores. Verizon, AT&T, Time Warner Cable, FedEx Corp., United Parcel Service, Waste management, Microsoft, and Kaiser Permanente.

[7] We have also created separate maps for each firms which can be available upon request.

[8] Note that the Downtown job cluster includes the Los Angeles County Jail and Skid Row (as defined by LAHSA), which, together, include 768 of the 9,521 total opportunity youth.

Airport job clusters are smaller for the entry level jobs, and the Hollywood job clusters are larger. West L.A. job clusters are similar in size.

As is evident in Table II, a much smaller number of opportunity youth (8,594) live within these job clusters, most likely due to the smaller total area of these job clusters. Of note, there is a higher number of opportunity youth living in the Hollywood job cluster (2,294) than in the job cluster in Hollywood associated with jobs for young adults (Table I). This cluster most likely exists due to the number of low-paying jobs associated with the entertainment industry.

[Table II] Opportunity Youth in Job Clusters for Those Earning $1,250 or Less per Month

Job Cluster	# of Opportunity Youth	Opportunity Youth in each Cluster/Total Opportunity Youth in L.A.
Job Cluster 5 (LAX area)	75	0.10%
Job Cluster 6 (Downtown area)	3,383	4.64%
Job Cluster 7 (West L.A. area)	2,842	3.89%
Job Cluster 8 (Hollywood area)	2,294	3.14%
TOTAL	8,594	11.78%

Source: American Community Survey 2011-15

Map 5 presents the location of entry level jobs suggested by Boston Consulting Group. Again, we find greatest concentration of firms in the Downtown area. However, not many firms exist in South Los Angeles, where the share and the number of opportunity youth are the highest. Thus, it is important to provide adequate modes of transportation to link opportunity youth to jobs.

In addition to entry-level jobs, we also examined where job clusters exist for the five largest industries by job count in the City of Los Angeles. Among 20 industries in the LODES data set[9], the five largest industries in the City of Los Angeles are (1) Health Care and Social Assistance, (2) Accommodations and Food Services, (3) Retail Trade, (4) Educational Services, and (5) Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services. These industries represent nearly half of all total jobs in the City of Los Angeles. Table III shows what percentage of total jobs each of the five industries represent across the 2004-2014 decade, to show changes in industry concentrations in Los Angeles.

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[9] The 20 industries included in the data are: Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction, Utilities, Construction, Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, Transportation and Warehousing, Information, Finance and Insurance, Real Estate and Rental and Leasing, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, Management of Companies and Enterprises, Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services, Educational Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services, Other Services [except Public Administration], and Public Administration.

[Table III] Share of Jobs by Year and Industry

Industry	2004	2009	2014
Health Care and Social Assistance	10.82%	11.19%	16.03%
Accommodation and Food Services	7.75%	7.94%	8.86%
Retail Trade	9.27%	8.70%	8.69%
Educational Services	7.77%	10.99%	8.14%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	7.58%	8.06%	8.06%

Source: LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

Among the top five industries, Health Care and Social Assistance industry has shown the fastest growth rate over the past decade, and this industry currently accounts for the largest share of jobs in the City of Los Angeles. Due to its growth, pay and entry-level access, the Health Care and Social Assistance industry may offer the important pathways for opportunity youth, provided they obtain the necessary skills to work in these jobs. Map 6 shows where the health care and social service job clusters are located. Again, the Downtown area has many potential jobs for opportunity youth in this industry. We also find new job clusters in the area North of Vermont (Los Feliz) and Reseda. We also conducted job cluster analysis for four other industries in Table III and visualized the clusters in Maps 7-10.[10]

Modes of Transportation and Commute Time

Youth are more likely to use public transportation to work

Transportation (or lack of transportation) can provide an additional barrier that prevents youth from accessing employment. While further analysis is needed to understand how transportation affects opportunity youth in the City of Los Angeles, we provide initial analysis by examining modes of transportation to work and commute times. These data were obtained from ACS 2011-15.

Table IV shows that those between ages 16 to 24 are more likely to use public transportation when they commute. This group is also more likely to walk or use alternative modes of transportations (including taxi, motorcycles and bicycles).

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[10] Additionally, we conducted job cluster analysis for top five industries with highest growth rate between 2004 and 2013. The top two industries in Table III remain in the fast growing five industries. The three other industries include information, public administration and utilities. The job cluster maps for these three industries are presented in Maps 11-13.

[Table IV] Modes of Transportation by Different Age Groups				
	Age 16-24	Age 25-44	Age 45-54	Age 54-64
Drive alone	58.20%	69.10%	69.40%	69.60%
Carpooled	10.50%	9.20%	9.60%	8.80%
Public transportation	15.80%	10.40%	9.30%	9.30%
Walked	8.50%	3.10%	2.80%	2.80%
Other means - Taxi, Motor Cycle, Bicycle	4.30%	3.00%	2.30%	1.90%
Worked home	0.50%	5.10%	6.50%	4.30%

Source: American Community Survey 2011-15

Maps 14 to 16 present the percentage of workers between 16 and 24 that use the three transportation modes — (1) public transportation (2) walk and (3) taxi, motor cycle or bicycle — by neighborhoods. In comparison to Maps 1 and 2, which showed where opportunity youth live, Map 14 shows that neighborhoods with high shares of opportunity youth also have high shares of youth that use public transit to get to work. This implies that youth living in these neighborhoods may benefit from more local opportunities, but also that within areas where opportunity youth live, public transportation is particularly important for employment access.

Finally, Map 17 presents the average commute time to work for all workers above 16. Since the data is not available by different age groups, we are unable to identify average commute times to work specifically for workers between ages 16 and 24. However, the map does show that those living in South Los Angeles, Downtown Los Angeles, Koreatown and some neighborhoods in the Northern part of the city have longer commute times, on average. Whether and how transportation affects access to jobs, especially for the youth, requires further investigation.

Future Work

This research has first reviewed the barriers, including technology, that opportunity youth may face when accessing jobs. We then studied opportunity youth in the City of Los Angeles, including who they are and where they live. Finally, we investigated where the entry-level jobs are concentrated and estimated how many opportunity youth reside in each job cluster, in an attempt to understand the spatial proximity of opportunity youth to accessible jobs.

This work has launched important questions for future research. Further analysis is needed to identify additional barriers that discourage opportunity youth from getting access to jobs, including a lack of transportation and institutional support. An in-depth study is also needed to understand the training and support necessary to ensure that opportunity youth have sufficient skills to access high quality jobs.

Moving forward, we suggest conducting analyses to understand how these job clusters relate to transportation access and availability to gain a more nuanced understanding of how accessible these job clusters are for opportunity youth in terms of spatial proximity. We also propose additional work to situate firms within job clusters that provide living wage jobs and career pathways to understand better how to link young adults to opportunity for career success.

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Attachments

Map 1: Total Opportunity Youth (Age 16 – 24)

Map 2: Percentage of Opportunity Youth Among Those Aged 16 – 24

Map 3: Job Clusters for Workers Age 29 or Younger

Map 4: Job Clusters for Jobs Earning $1,250 or Less per Month

Map 5: Entry Level Jobs of 20 Companies Suggested by BCG

Map 6: Job Clusters for Health Care and Social Assistance Industry

Map 7: Job Clusters for Accommodation and Food Services Industry

Map 8: Job Clusters Retail Trade Industry

Map 9: Job Clusters for Educational Services Industry

Map 10: Job Clusters for Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services Industry

Map 11: Job Clusters for Public Administration Industry

Map 12: Job Clusters for Utilities Industry

Map 13: Job Clusters for Information Industry

Map 14: % of Workers between 16 and 24 Using Public Transportation to Work

Map 15: % of Workers between 16 and 24 Walking to Work

Map 16: % of Workers between 16 and 24 Using Taxi, Motor Cycle of Bicycle to Work

Map 17: Average Commute Time to Work_All Workers above Age 16

Map 1

Total Opportunity Youth (Age 16 - 24)

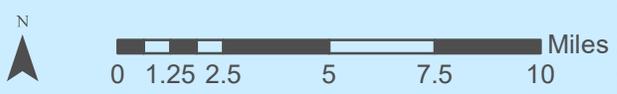|	
	0.0 - 43
	44 - 85
	86 - 140
	150 - 220
	230 - 490

Metro Rail Expo
Metro Rail Gold
Metro Rail Green
Metro Rail Red
Metro Rail Purple
Metro Rail Blue
Metro Bus Rapid Transit
LA_City_boundary

0 1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10   Miles

Map 2

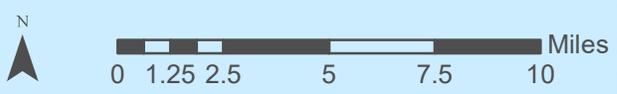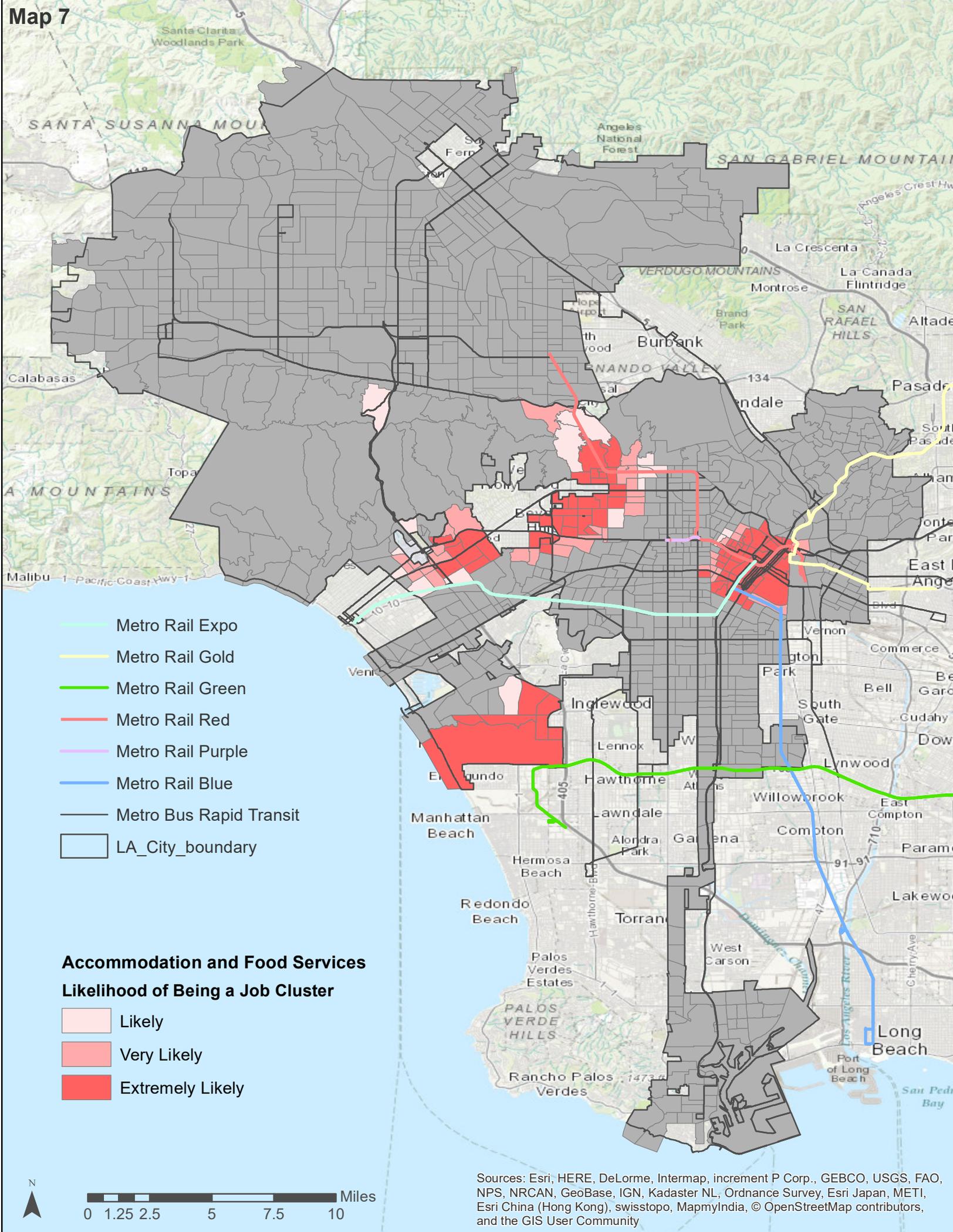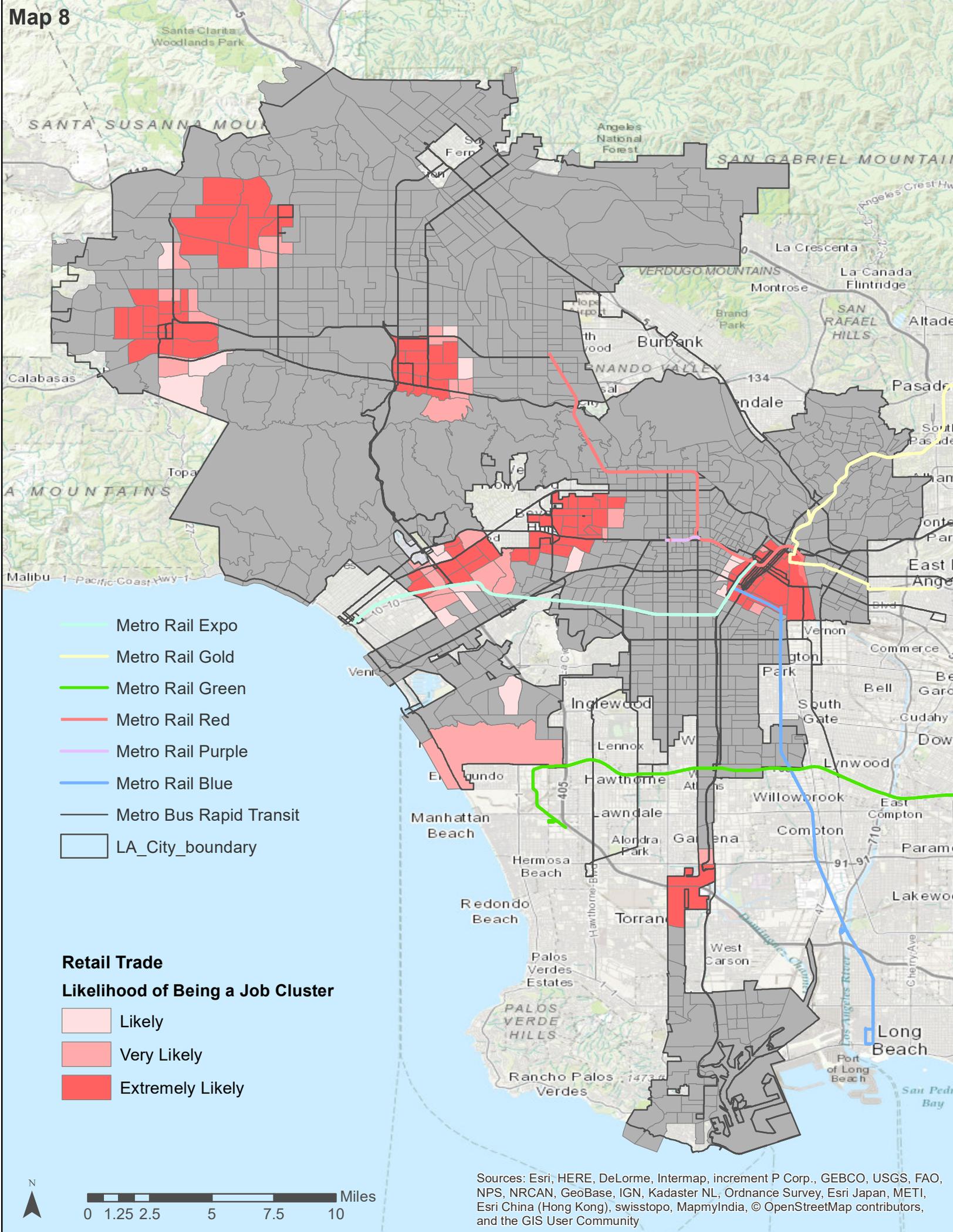Metro Rail Expo
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Percentage of Total Opportunity Youth
Among Those Aged 16 - 24

0% - 7.06%
7.07% - 13.22%
13.23% - 19.96%
19.96% - 29.98%
29.99 - 64.29%
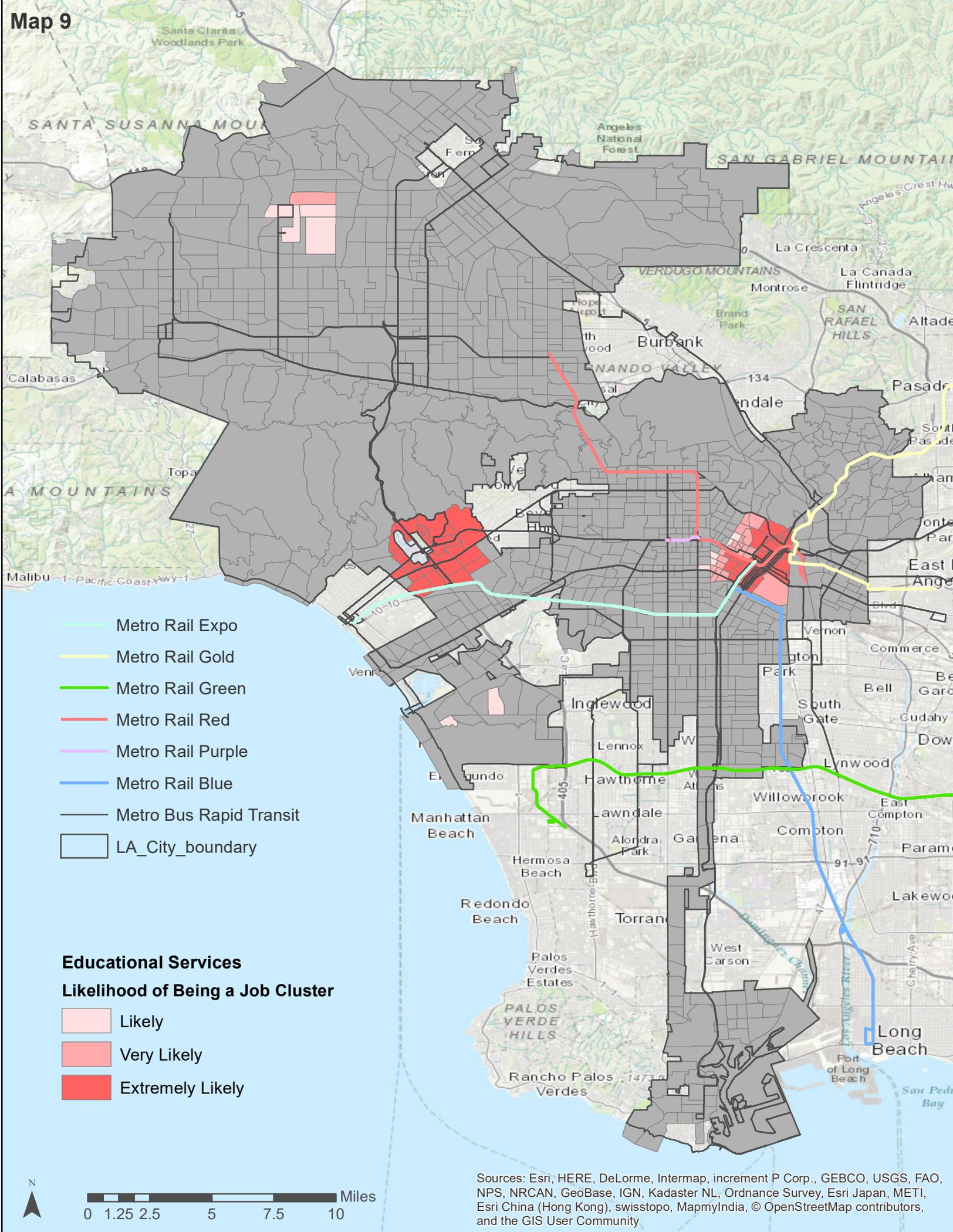
N

Miles
0 1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10

Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO,
NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI,
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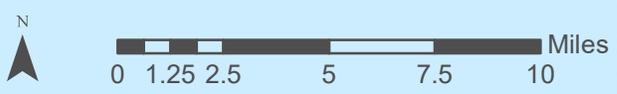and the GIS User Community

Map 3

Metro Rail Expo
Metro Rail Gold
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Metro Rail Red
Metro Rail Purple
Metro Rail Blue
Metro Bus Rapid Transit
LA_City_boundary

Jobs for Workers age 29 or Younger
Likelihood of Being a Cluster

Likely

Very Likely
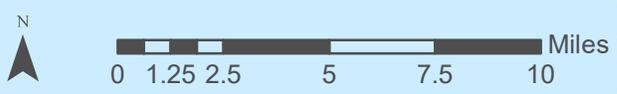
Extremely Likely

N

Miles
0   1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10

Map 4

Legend
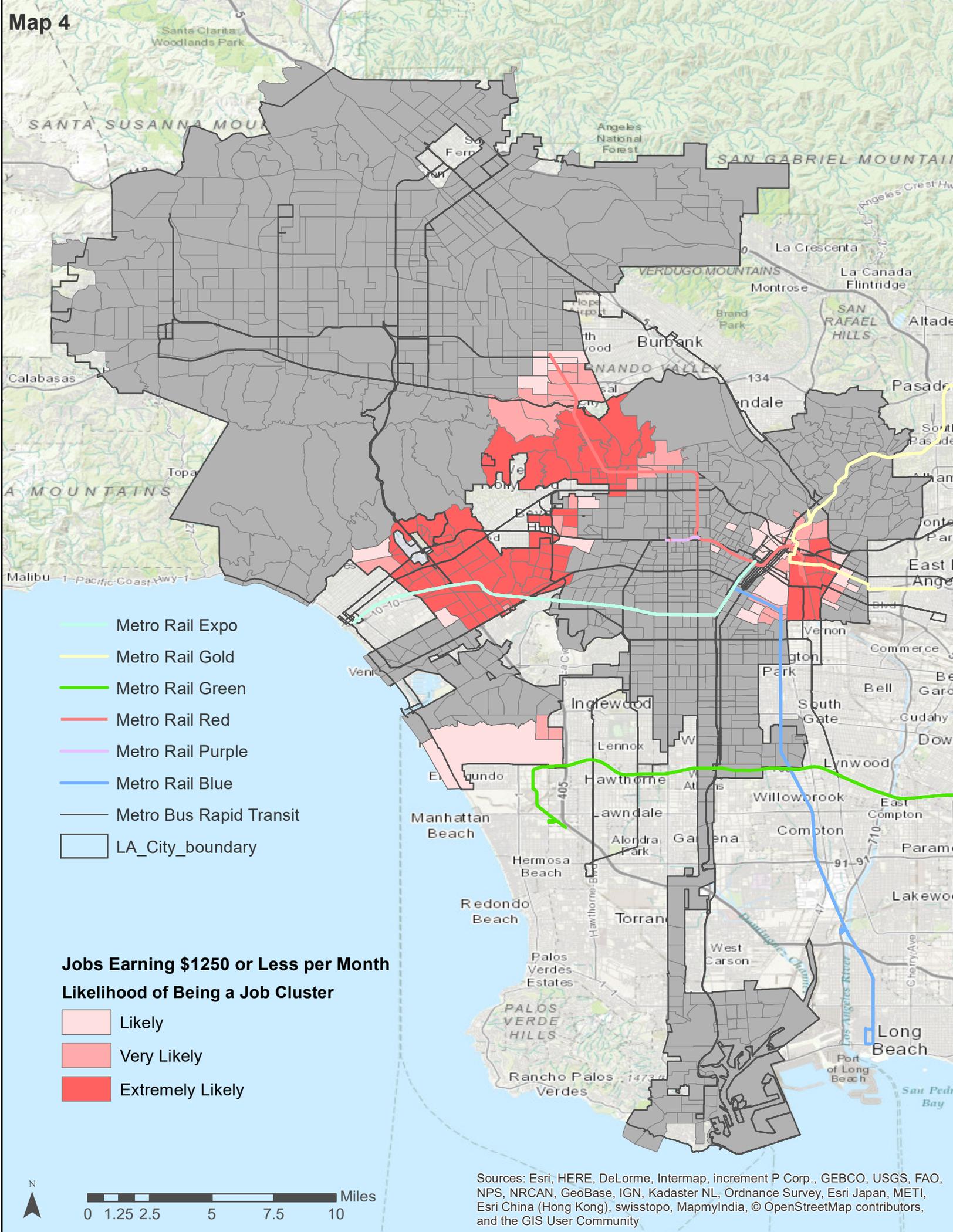
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- Metro Rail Gold
- Metro Rail Green
- Metro Rail Red
- Metro Rail Purple
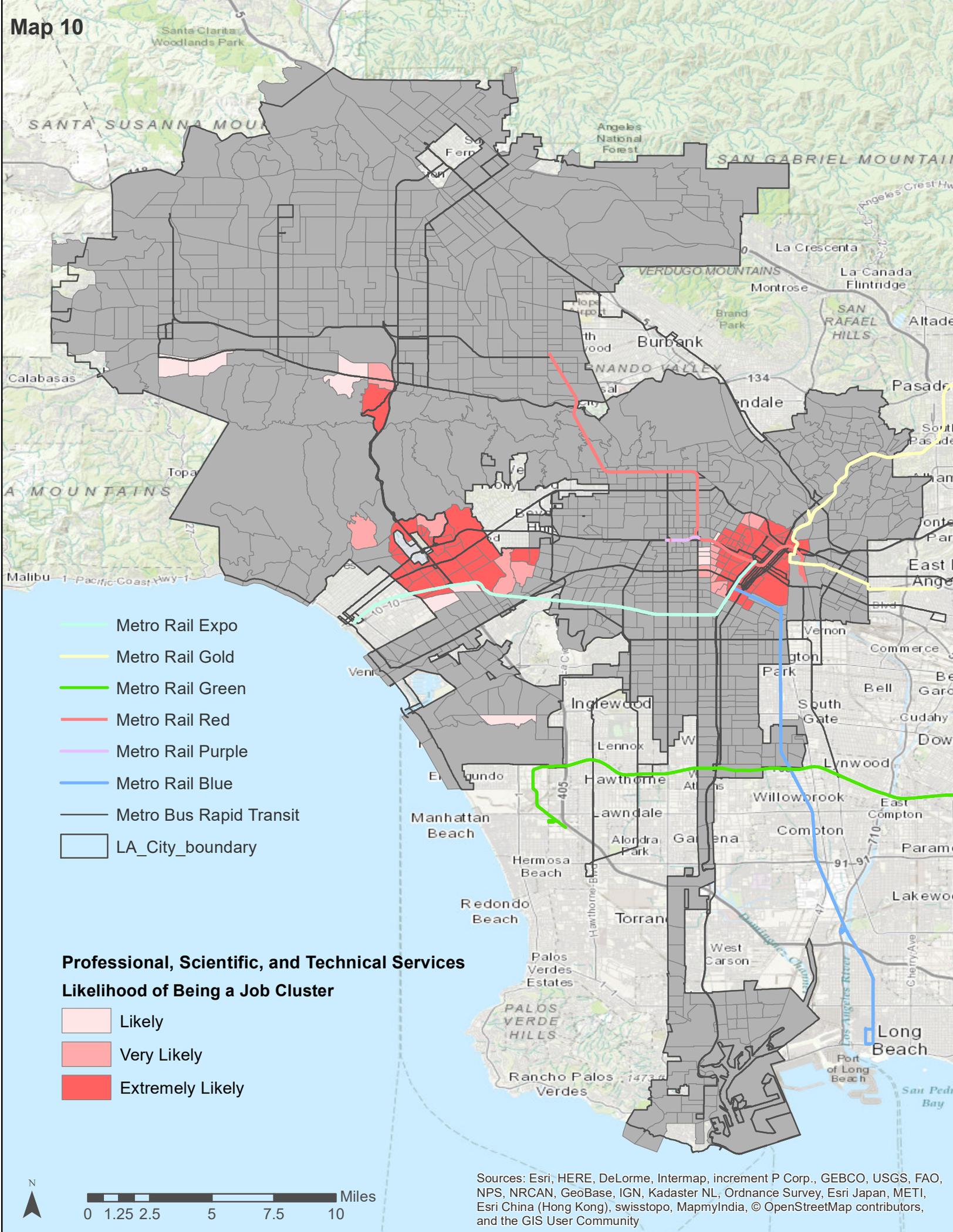- Metro Rail Blue
- Metro Bus Rapid Transit
- LA_City_boundary

Jobs Earning $1250 or Less per Month
Likelihood of Being a Job Cluster
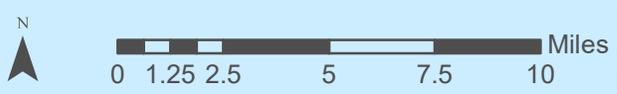
- Likely
- Very Likely
- Extremely Likely

N

Miles
0 1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10

Map 5
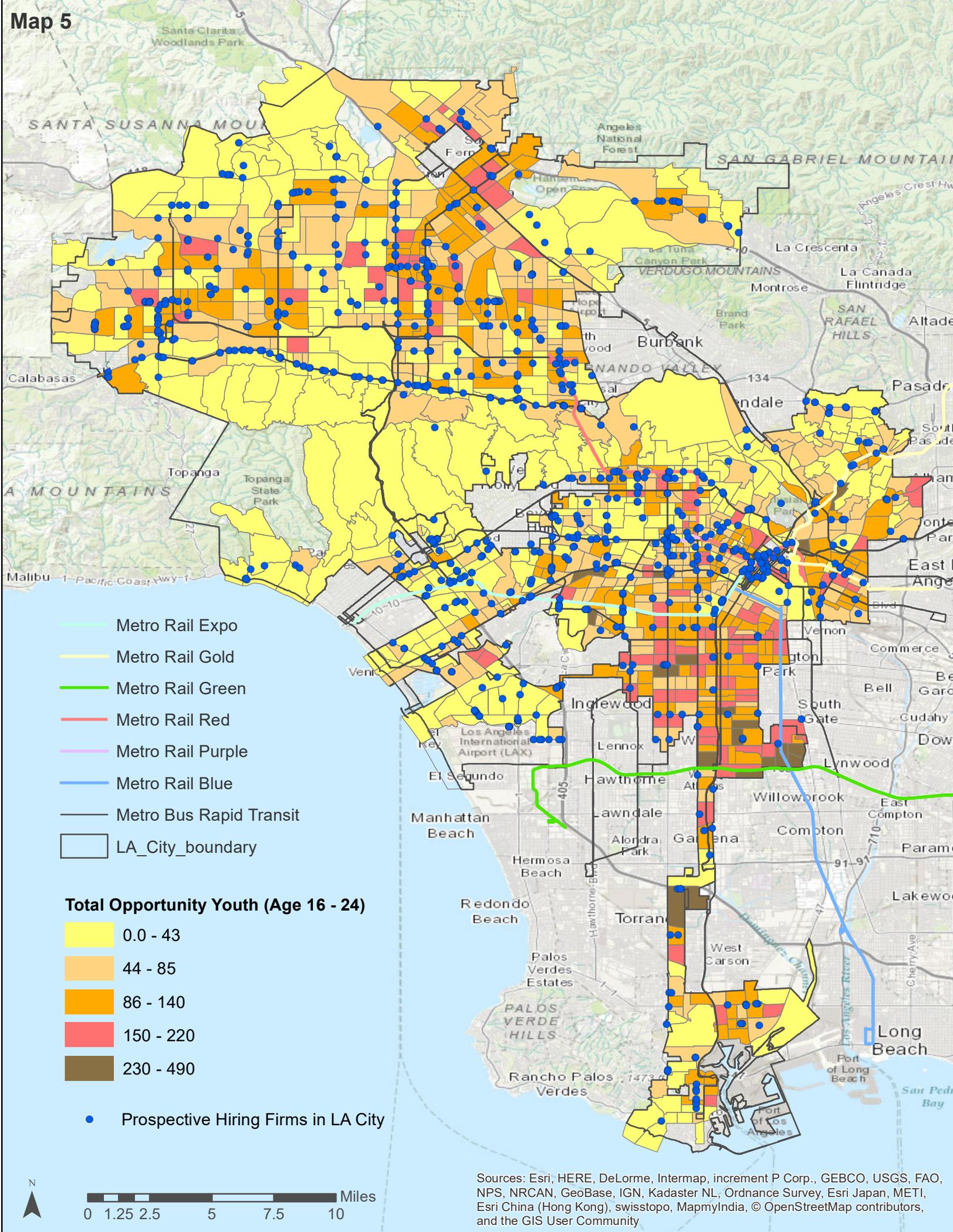
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Metro Rail Red
Metro Rail Purple
Metro Rail Blue
Metro Bus Rapid Transit
LA_City_boundary

Total Opportunity Youth (Age 16 - 24)

- 0.0 - 43
- 44 - 85
- 86 - 140
- 150 - 220
- 230 - 490

● Prospective Hiring Firms in LA City

Miles
0 1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10

Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community
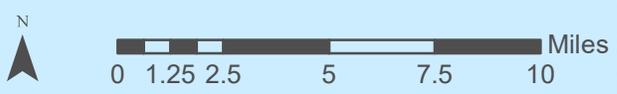
Map 6

Health Care and Social Assistance
Likelihood of Being a Job Cluster

- Likely
- Very Likely
- Extremely Likely

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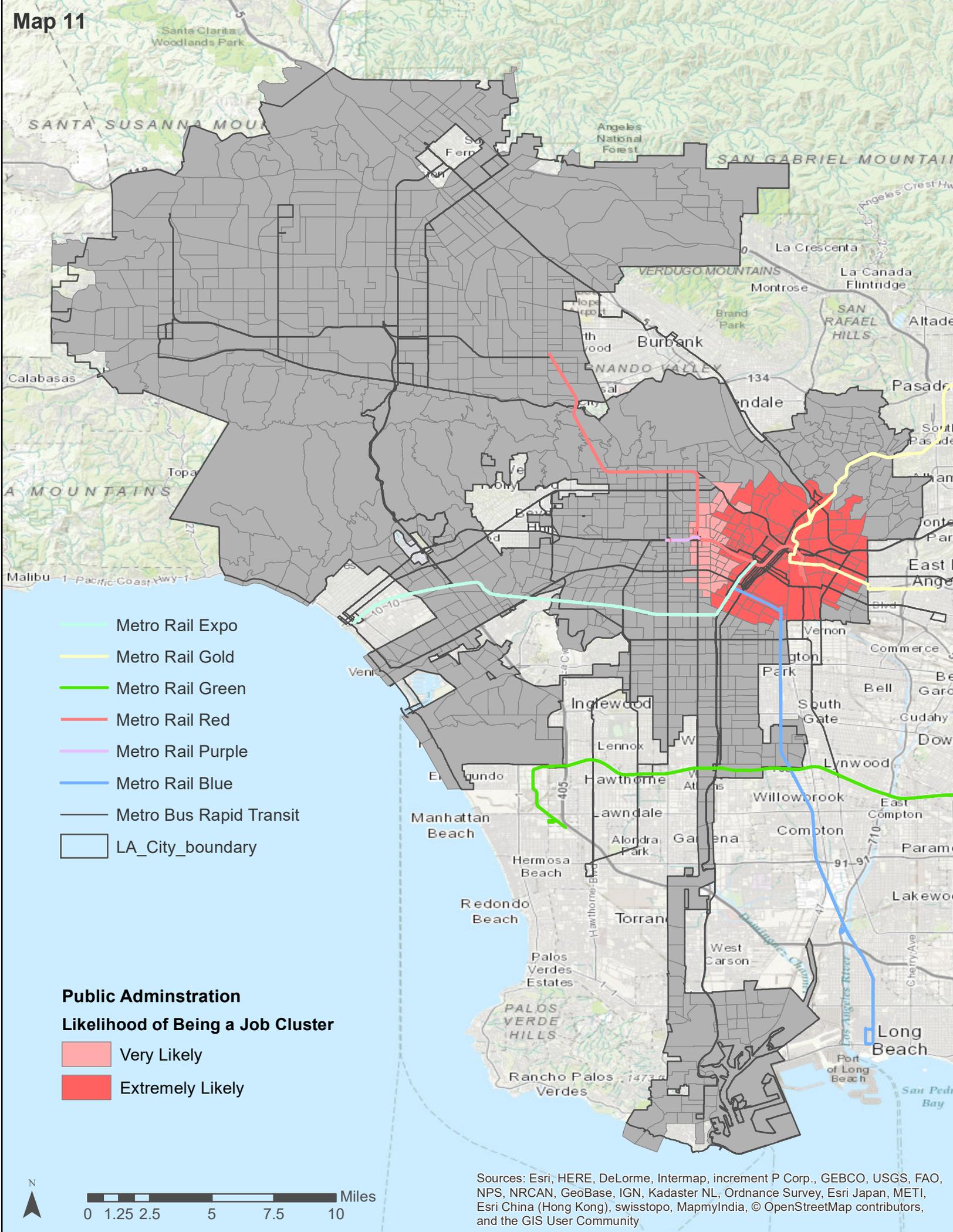- Metro Rail Expo
- Metro Rail Gold
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- Metro Rail Red
- Metro Rail Purple
- Metro Rail Blue
- Metro Bus Rapid Transit
- LA_City_boundary

Miles
0   1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10

Map 7

Metro Rail Expo
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Metro Rail Blue
Metro Bus Rapid Transit
LA_City_boundary

Accommodation and Food Services

Likelihood of Being a Job Cluster
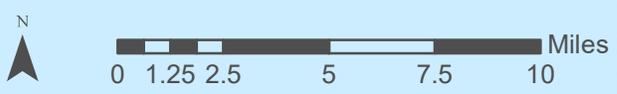
Likely

Very Likely

Extremely Likely

Miles
0 1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10

Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO,
NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI,
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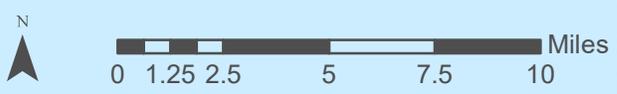and the GIS User Community

Map 8

Metro Rail Expo
Metro Rail Gold
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Metro Rail Red
Metro Rail Purple
Metro Rail Blue
Metro Bus Rapid Transit
LA_City_boundary

Retail Trade
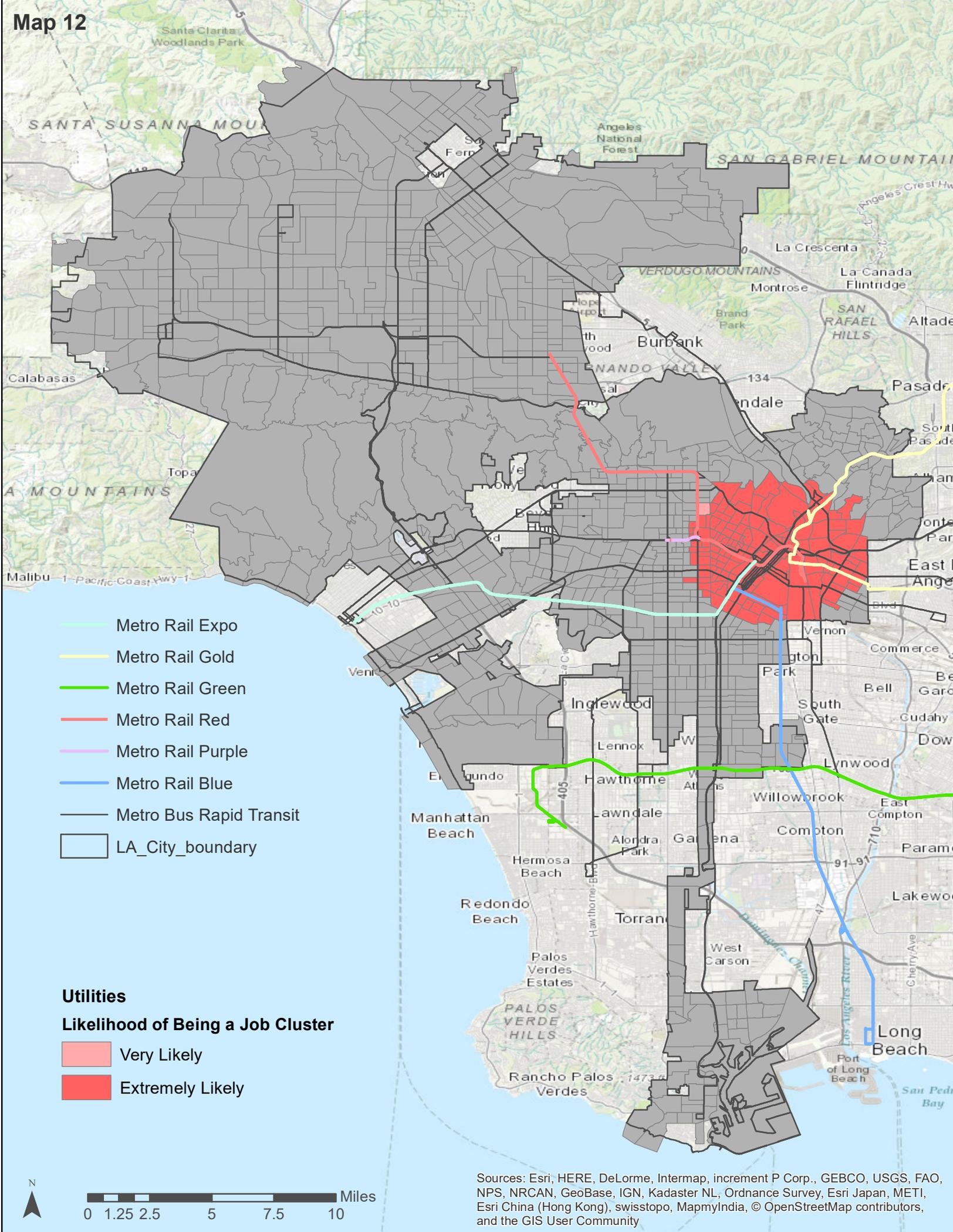
Likelihood of Being a Job Cluster

Likely

Very Likely

Extremely Likely

N

Miles
0   1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10

Map 9

Legend

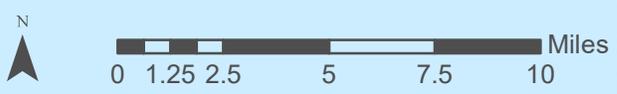— Metro Rail Expo
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— Metro Rail Purple
— Metro Rail Blue
— Metro Bus Rapid Transit
☐ LA_City_boundary

Educational Services

Likelihood of Being a Job Cluster

▢ Likely
▢ Very Likely
▢ Extremely Likely

N

Miles
0 1.25 2.5 5 7.5 10

Map 10

Metro Rail Expo
Metro Rail Gold
Metro Rail Green
Metro Rail Red
Metro Rail Purple
Metro Rail Blue
Metro Bus Rapid Transit
LA_City_boundary

Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
Likelihood of Being a Job Cluster

Likely
Very Likely
Extremely Likely

Miles
0   1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10

Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Map 11

Legend

- Metro Rail Expo
- Metro Rail Gold
- Metro Rail Green
- Metro Rail Red
- Metro Rail Purple
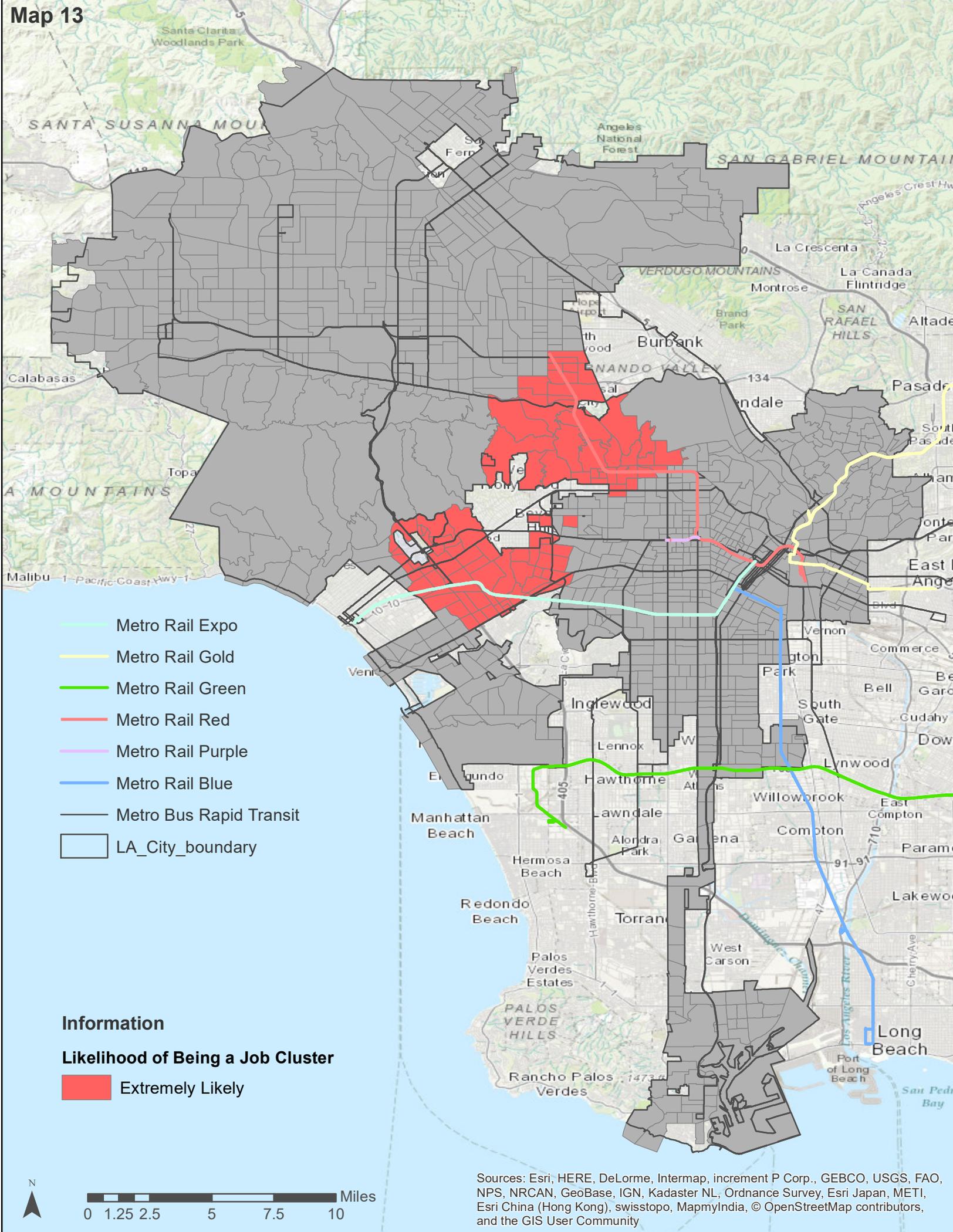- Metro Rail Blue
- Metro Bus Rapid Transit
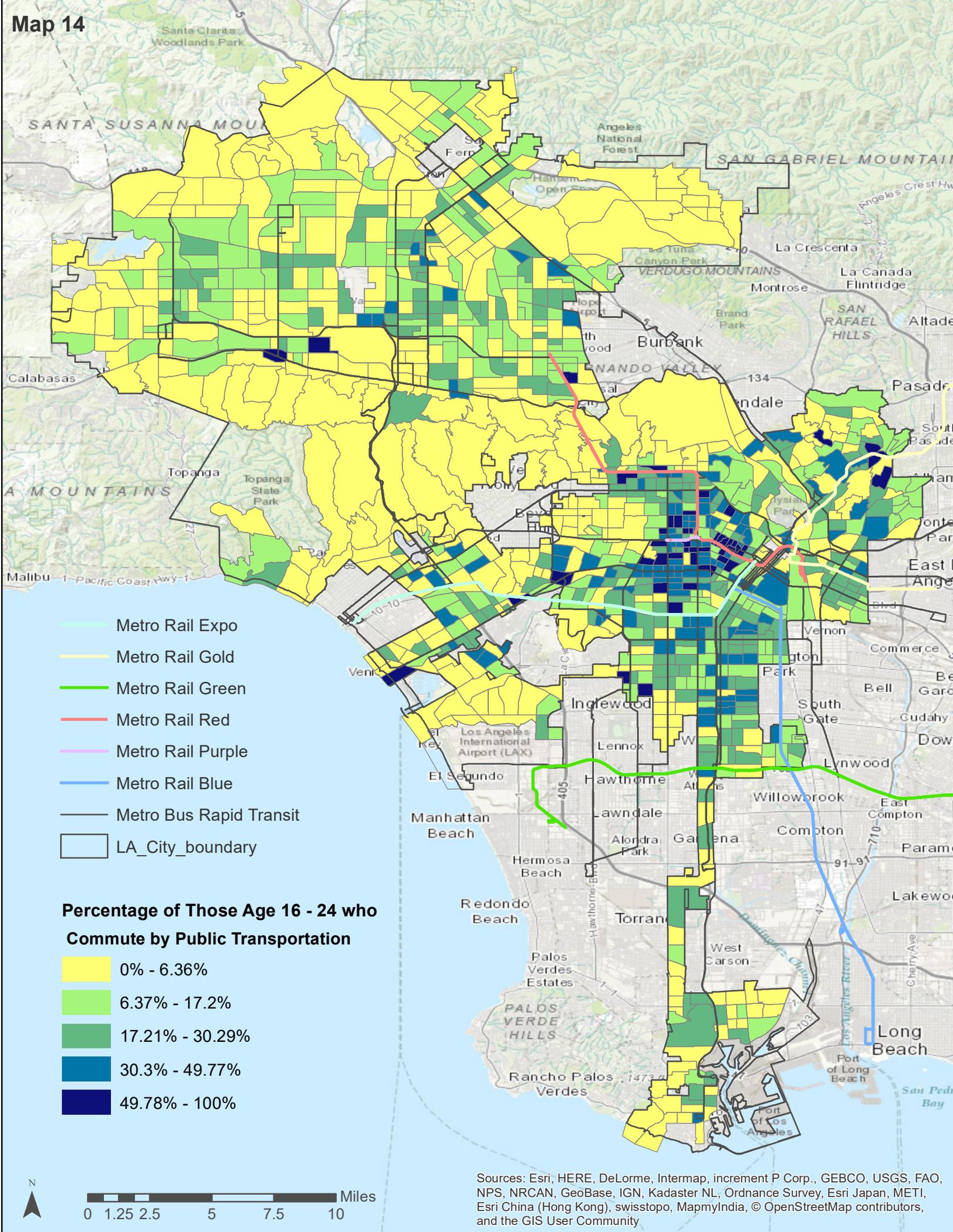- LA_City_boundary

Public Adminstration

Likelihood of Being a Job Cluster

- Very Likely
- Extremely Likely

Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community
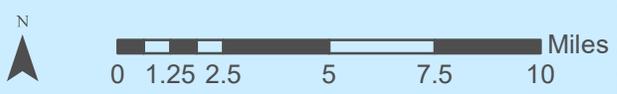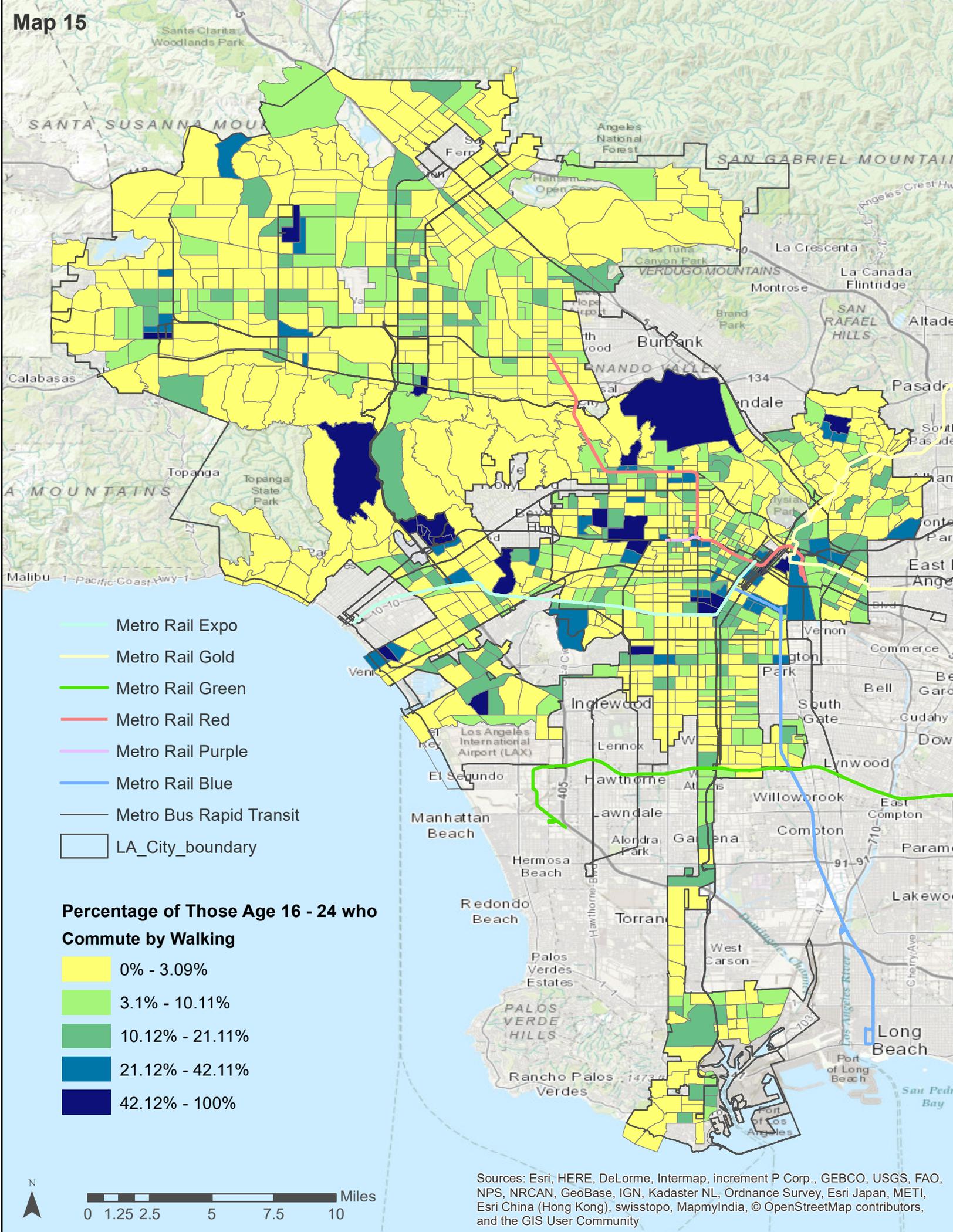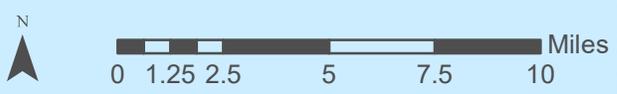
Miles
0 1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10

Map 12

Legend

Metro Rail Expo
Metro Rail Gold
Metro Rail Green
Metro Rail Red
Metro Rail Purple
Metro Rail Blue
Metro Bus Rapid Transit
LA_City_boundary

Utilities

Likelihood of Being a Job Cluster

Very Likely

Extremely Likely

N

Miles
0 1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10

Map 13

Legend

- Metro Rail Expo
- Metro Rail Gold
- Metro Rail Green
- Metro Rail Red
- Metro Rail Purple
- Metro Rail Blue
- Metro Bus Rapid Transit
- LA_City_boundary

Information

Likelihood of Being a Job Cluster

- Extremely Likely

Miles
0 1.25 2.5 5 7.5 10

Map 14

Legend

- Metro Rail Expo
- Metro Rail Gold
- Metro Rail Green
- Metro Rail Red
- Metro Rail Purple
- Metro Rail Blue
- Metro Bus Rapid Transit
- LA_City_boundary

Percentage of Those Age 16 - 24 who
Commute by Public Transportation

- 0% - 6.36%
- 6.37% - 17.2%
- 17.21% - 30.29%
- 30.3% - 49.77%
- 49.78% - 100%

Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community
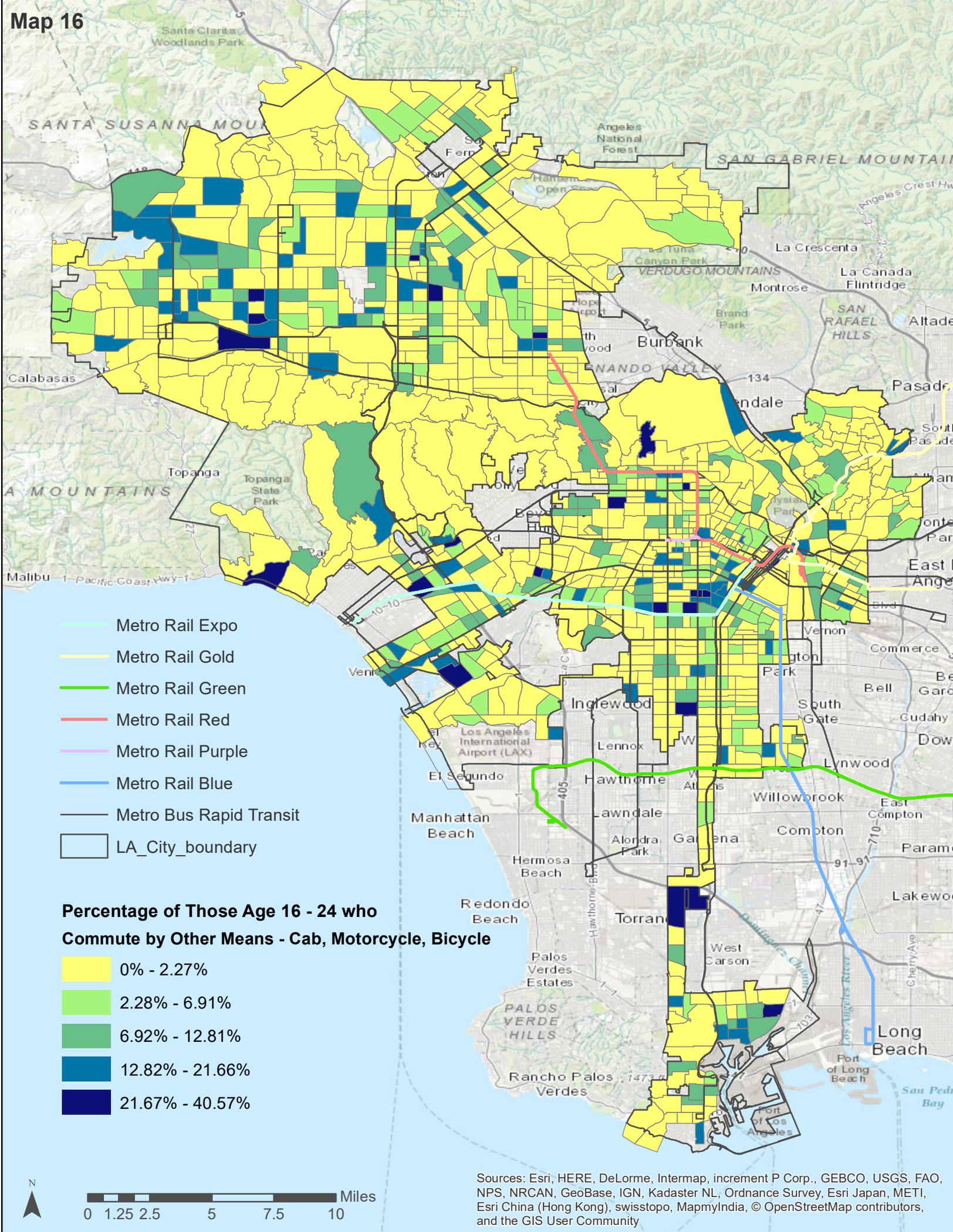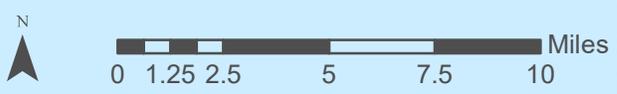
N

0 1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10   Miles

Map 15

Metro Rail Expo
Metro Rail Gold
Metro Rail Green
Metro Rail Red
Metro Rail Purple
Metro Rail Blue
Metro Bus Rapid Transit
LA_City_boundary

**Percentage of Those Age 16 - 24 who
Commute by Walking**

0% - 3.09%
3.1% - 10.11%
10.12% - 21.11%
21.12% - 42.11%
42.12% - 100%

Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO,
NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI,
Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors,
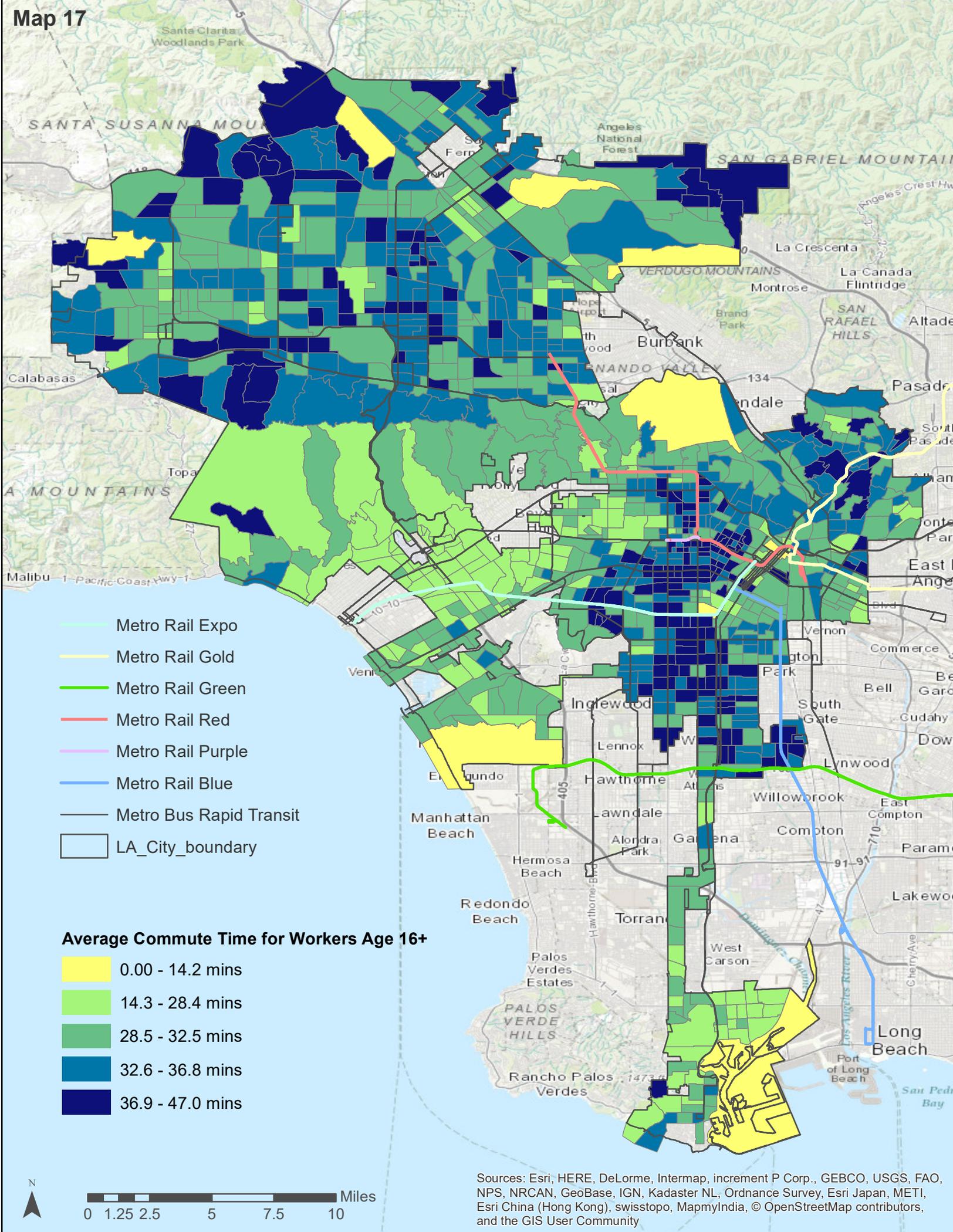and the GIS User Community

N

Miles
0   1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10

Map 16

Metro Rail Expo
Metro Rail Gold
Metro Rail Green
Metro Rail Red
Metro Rail Purple
Metro Rail Blue
Metro Bus Rapid Transit
LA_City_boundary

Percentage of Those Age 16 - 24 who
Commute by Other Means - Cab, Motorcycle, Bicycle

0% - 2.27%

2.28% - 6.91%

6.92% - 12.81%

12.82% - 21.66%

21.67% - 40.57%

N
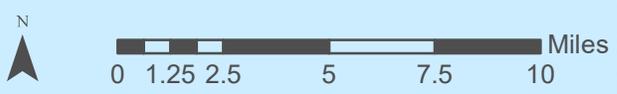
Miles
0 1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10

Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO,
NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI,
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Map 17

Legend:
- Metro Rail Expo
- Metro Rail Gold
- Metro Rail Green
- Metro Rail Red
- Metro Rail Purple
- Metro Rail Blue
- Metro Bus Rapid Transit
- LA_City_boundary

Average Commute Time for Workers Age 16+
- 0.00 - 14.2 mins
- 14.3 - 28.4 mins
- 28.5 - 32.5 mins
- 32.6 - 36.8 mins
- 36.9 - 47.0 mins

Miles
0   1.25 2.5   5   7.5   10

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