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South Los Angeles Transit Empowerment Zone:

ANALYSIS OF THE PROXIMITY OF SERVICES
THAT BENEFIT SINGLE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS



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Executive Summary

Promise Zone designation is granted to communities with high poverty rates. This designation encourages a multi-service collaboration as well as grant allocation of federal, state, and local governments. These resources combat poverty in the neediest communities throughout the United States.¹ Los Angeles is home to two Promise Zones, one being the South Los Angeles Empowerment Zone (SLATE-Z). Over the past several years there has been extensive cooperation and research conducted in the area to identify areas of need. However, very little is known about a particularly vulnerable segment of the SLATE-Z population, single parent households.

The SLATE-Z Team, the backbone organization guiding research and collaboration, identified single parent households as a population where the core needs are unknown and barriers to economic mobility are plentiful.² Based on the research conducted by the USC Sol Price Practicum Team, prominent barriers to economic mobility are time constraints and transportation constraints. With this in mind, analysis on the location of SLATE-Z services shows that there are an abundance of childcare services near non-profit services; however, non-profit services are not near other non-profit services. In addition, analysis shows that single parent families are concentrated in high density residential areas, but can also be found spread throughout the SLATE-Z area. Services correspond more to the location of highest concentration of poverty and not single parents household locations.

Background

In 2016, the City of Los Angeles received its second Promise Zone designation, the South Los Angeles Empowerment Zone (SLATE-Z). The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development granted SLATE-Z the designation in the third round selection process. SLATE-Z encompasses several neighborhoods throughout South Los Angeles (South LA) including parts of Vernon-Central, South Park, Florence, Exposition Park, Vermont Square, Leimert Park, and small portions of Baldwin Hills/Crenshaw.³

SLATE-Z earned the designation because of the high levels of poverty, low-income households, and low employment rates. According to HUD, 44 percent of employed individuals live at or below the 150 percent of the poverty line.⁴ Barriers to economic

¹ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2018). Promise Zone Overview. Retrieved from: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/promise-zones/promise-zones-overview/>

² Motivation for this spatial analysis is derived from the 2018 Sol Price School of Public Policy SLATE-Z Practicum project.

³ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2016) South Los Angeles Transit Empowerment Zone Fact Sheet.

⁴ Ibid.

opportunity vary, but are affiliated with low educational attainment, incarceration, language barriers, and immigration status.⁵ Many of the residents living within the SLATE-Z boundary are minorities including individuals with Latino (71 percent) and African American (16.9 percent) backgrounds. Immigrants make up about 42.7 percent.⁶

Promise Zone designation allows for an active cooperation among government, private, and non-profit actors. The South Los Angeles Transit Empowerment Zone working group (SLATE-Z Team), aims to lift 10,000 individuals out of poverty and into economic stability by 2026.⁷ The overarching goals of the Slate-Z Team are to focus on collective action towards improving economic activity, public safety, jobs, education, and transit.⁸ The SLATE-Z Team works with community organizations, government agencies, and elected leaders to accomplish these goals. Despite the plethora of services that exist within the SLATE-Z boundaries to combat poverty, little is known about the services that can directly affect single parent households.

Single parent headed households make up about 33.1 percent⁹ of families living within the SLATE-Z boundary. According to the U.S. Census, an estimated 20,291 single parent households, live within the 54 census tracts that make up SLATE-Z.¹⁰ Single mothers make up 23 percent and single fathers makeup 10 percent of all households within SLATE-Z.¹¹ In order for the SLATE-Z Team to achieve its goals, understanding which services assist the single parent households achieve economic mobility is vital.

Studies have shown that single parents face exacerbated barriers to economic mobility. They are exposed to conditions that increase poverty, and are burdened with earning an income and child rearing on their own. According to a focus group of single mothers, barriers of economic mobility are often associated with lack of adequate income and meaningful employment, cost of childcare, inability to grow wealth, transportation, and

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ HUD SLATE-Z Fact Sheet

⁷“SLATE-Z”, Community Partners, February 2019, accessed March 2018. Retrieved from: <https://communitypartners.org/project/slate-z>.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ The data for the demographic analysis of the SLATE-Z general population came from the 2017 five-year American Community Survey (ACS) estimates. Estimates represent the aggregate information for all 54 SLATE-Z census tracts. Retrieved April 2019.

¹⁰ SLATE-Z census tracts are divided, so full US Census tract data does not accurately represent the SLATE-Z boundary. The boundary will be used in maps as a layer.

¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Calculations made using U.S. Census Date. Retrieved April 2019.

time constraints.¹² Service providers within the SLATE-Z boundary are cognisant of the core needs of single parent families. These needs include financial services, workforce development, and childcare resources.¹³ In addition, services that are able to provide extended hours or share in co-location, limits the amount of time families are spending traveling or looking for accommodating resources.

Problem Statement

Despite the abundance of services within SLATE-Z boundaries serving individuals experiencing poverty, single parent households continue to experience high numbers of poverty. The barriers that exist for economic mobility are exacerbated due to inadequate income, limited access to jobs, educational opportunities, and time constraints. Mapping the services can demonstrate how single parent households interact with the resources in proximity to them. An analysis can also determine if the proximity of resources are adequately located in areas with greater population of single parent households and poverty throughout SLATE-Z.

Data Sources

For this report, the demographic profile for the SLATE-Z is used to provide a better sense of SLATE-Z family household characteristics. The first map shows the overlay of SLATE-Z boundary and Census tract boundary. An additional layer of services is used to provide visualization of their location relative to SLATE-Z area. The second map is a thematic map that shows the total percentage of poverty within each Census tract that makes up SLATE-Z. The third map shows the thematic map with the additional layer of services that are most effective for economic mobility. The fourth map is a thematic map that shows the population of single parent households with children within SLATE-Z. The fifth map shows the thematic map with an additional layer of services that are most effective for economic mobility. The sixth map shows an overlay of the number of single parent households juxtaposed with the percentage of poverty. Maps 3,5, and 6 are used for comparison. In order to build these maps, data was retrieved from the following sources:

- **Simply Analytics Database** - Thematic map data and share files pulled from the database. Data pulled included: Number of Single Parent Households; Total Percent of Poverty.
- **Slate-Z Team** - Provided shapefile of the SLATE-Z boundaries and information on the 54 corresponding Census tracts.

¹² Focus group data gathered from USC Sol Price School of Public Policy SLATE-Z Practicum project. Fernandez, P., Meza, B., Southivilay, S., Waldman, K. (2019). Single Parent Focus Group.

¹³ Service provider data gathered from USC Sol Price School of Public Policy SLATE-Z Practicum project. Fernandez, P., Meza, B., Southivilay, S., Waldman, K. (2019). Service Provider Semi-Structured Interviews.

- **Yelp and Google** - Service addresses. Conducted an internet search of all the SLATE-Z partners to see if they fell into four categories: worksource resources, financial/business resources, family/community resources, and childcare facilities.

Methodology

The methodology used for each map is similar in that I used SLATE-Z shapefile to construct a layer for the boundary, and overlaid that layer on top of a U.S. Census tract layer. U.S. Census tract was not spliced to fit the SLATE-Z boundary, therefore it was imperative that I include full Census tract data for analysis.

Map 1

To create the service map for overall landscape of SLATE-Z serves, I created a basemap that included the SLATE-Z boundary. I then geocoded each layer of service: childcare, worksource resources, financial/business resources, family/community resources, and education. Additionally, I added a buffer of 1,000 feet to each of the services to see their proximity to one another.¹⁴ The services maintained their color designation throughout Map 1, Map 3, and Map 5 so there would be consistency in services and allow for ease in comparison.

Map 2-5

Using Simply Analytics shapefiles, I was able to download Census data for *Percent of Total Population Living in Poverty* and *Number of Single Parent Households* within Los Angeles. I first created the thematic maps, uploading each Simply Analytics shapefiles and identified the Census tracts that are within the SLATE-Z boundary. I then exported the selected Census tracts and created my thematic map from there. I then geocoded each layer of service: worksource resources, financial/business resources, family/community resources, and education. I excluded childcare facilities because I felt that it was necessary to see where non-profit services were located. Childcare services were for the most part privately owned, and varied in cost and quality. In addition, they are typically used depending on affordability and choice of the parent.

Map 6

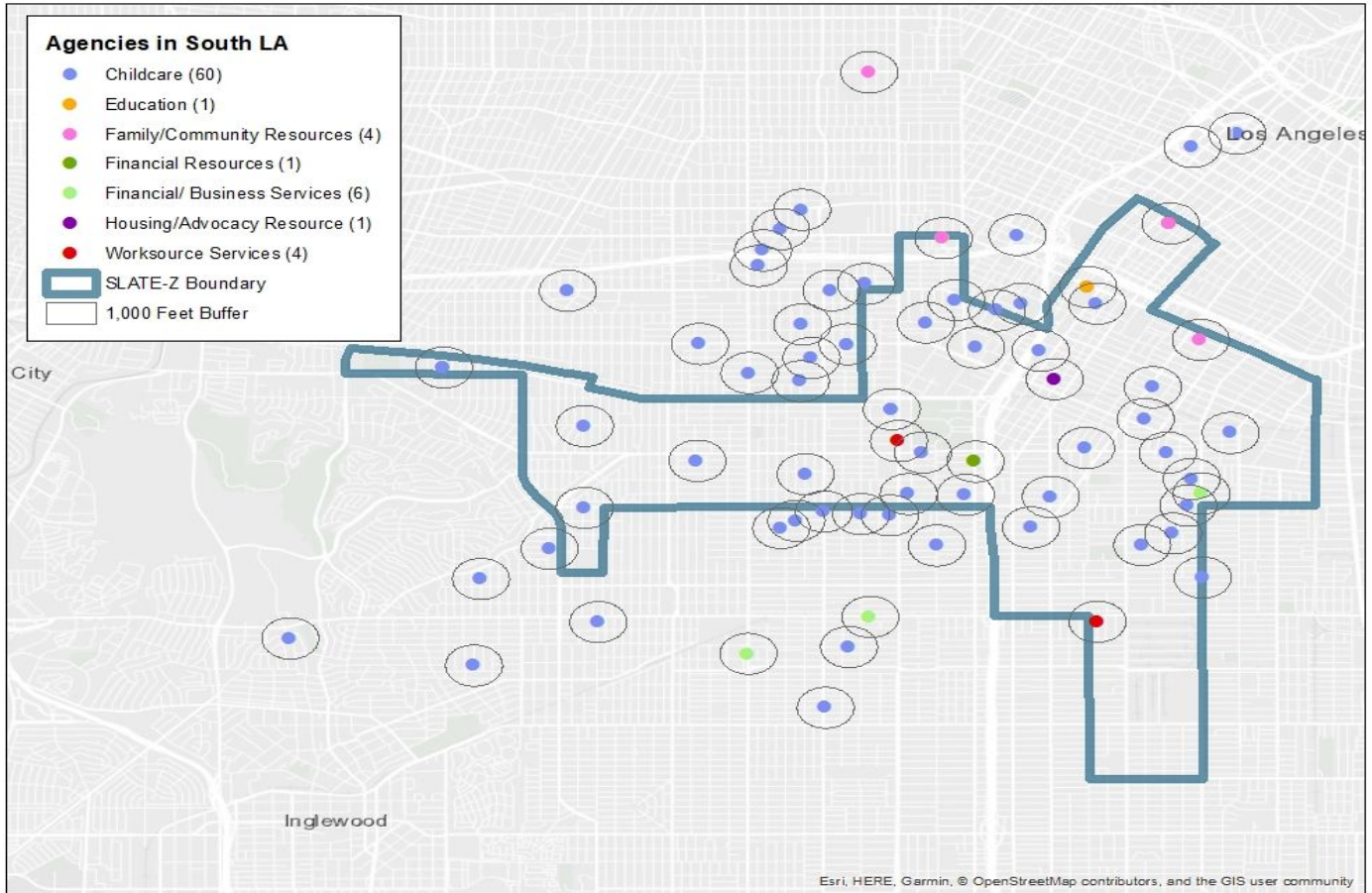
Using the data from the previous maps, I created an overlay of data for poverty and number of single parent households within SLATE-Z. This map shows the relationship between poverty and single parent households.

Findings

¹⁴1,000 feet is one fifth of a mile which is less than 5 minute walking distance.

Below are the maps constructed based on the methodology mentioned in the section above.

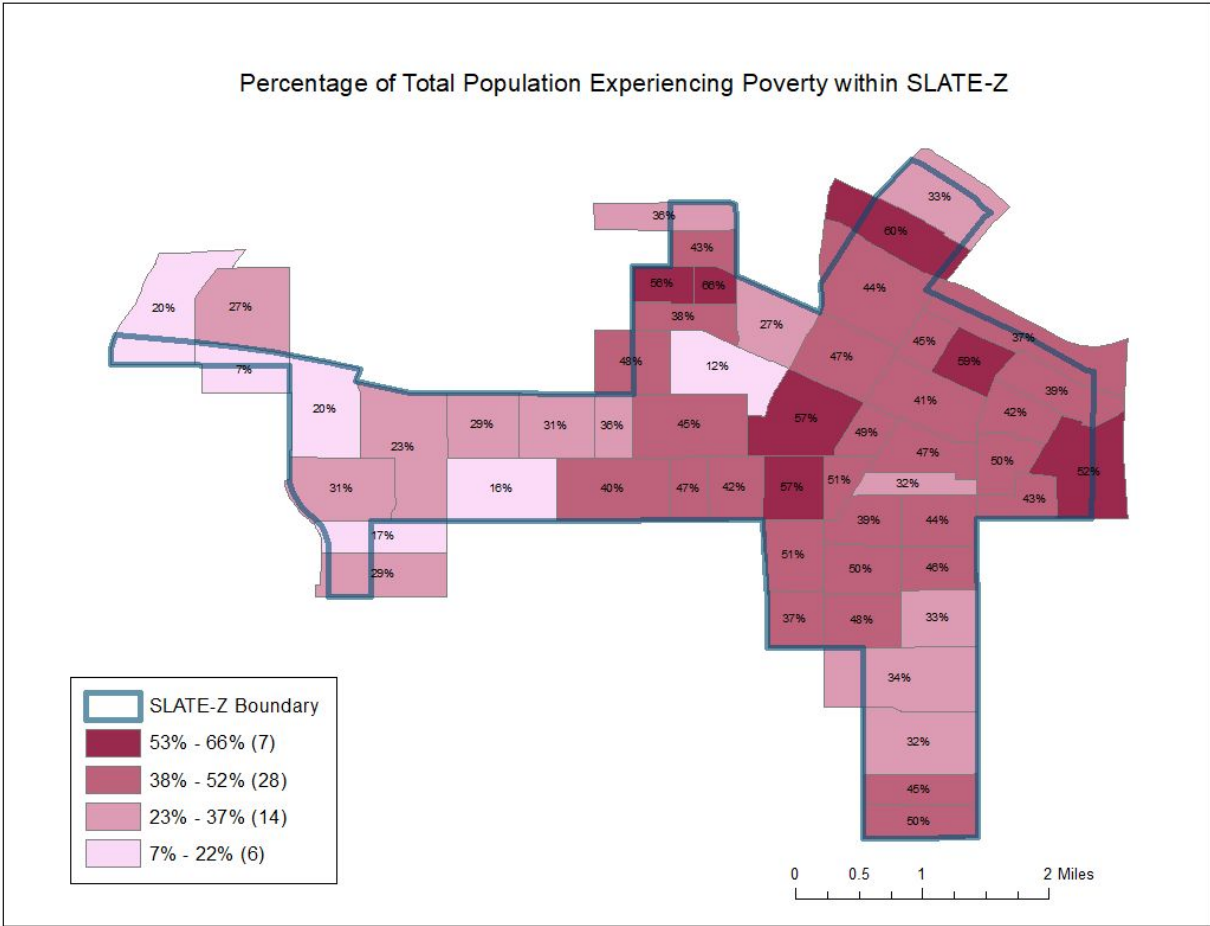
Map 1: Public and Private Services throughout SLATE-Z



Source: Fernandez, P. (2019).

Map 1 shows that a majority of services, particularly the private childcare facilities, are within 1,000 feet of each other and other financial, worksource, and family source services. However, it appears that the financial, worksource, and family source services are not near one another. Childcare facilities are included in this map because childcare is mentioned as a barrier to economic mobility. With childcare resources, it may be easier for parents to access other resources that can aid their chances of economic mobility.

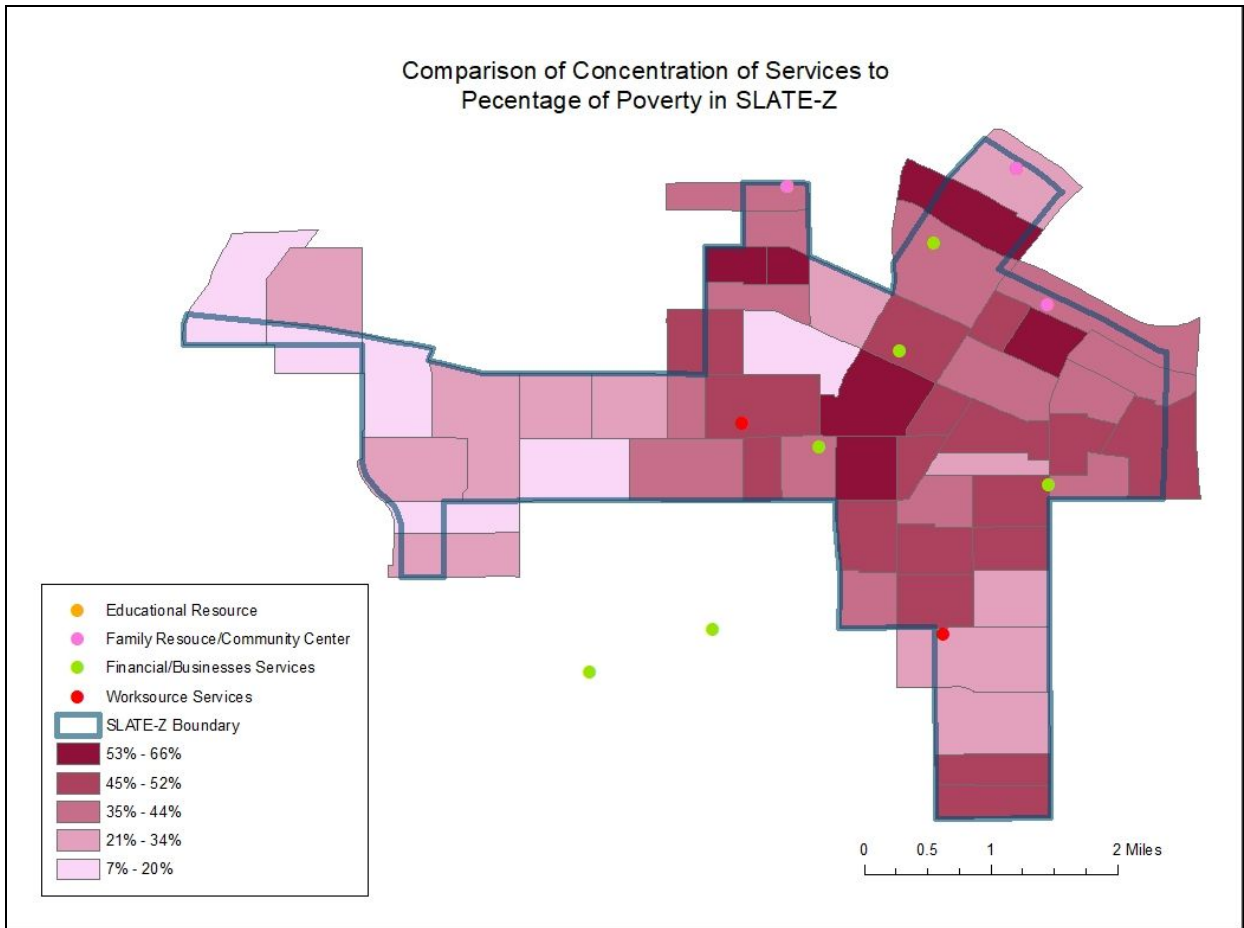
Map 2



Source: Created using Simply Analytics data. Simply Analytics (2019). *Percent of Total Population Living in Poverty* Data 2018. Retrieved April 4, 2019, from Simply Analytics database.

Map 2 provides a tangible visual of the distribution of poverty throughout SLATE-Z. This allows for a better understanding of how wealth is distributed throughout and within the boundary, and what areas require the most need.

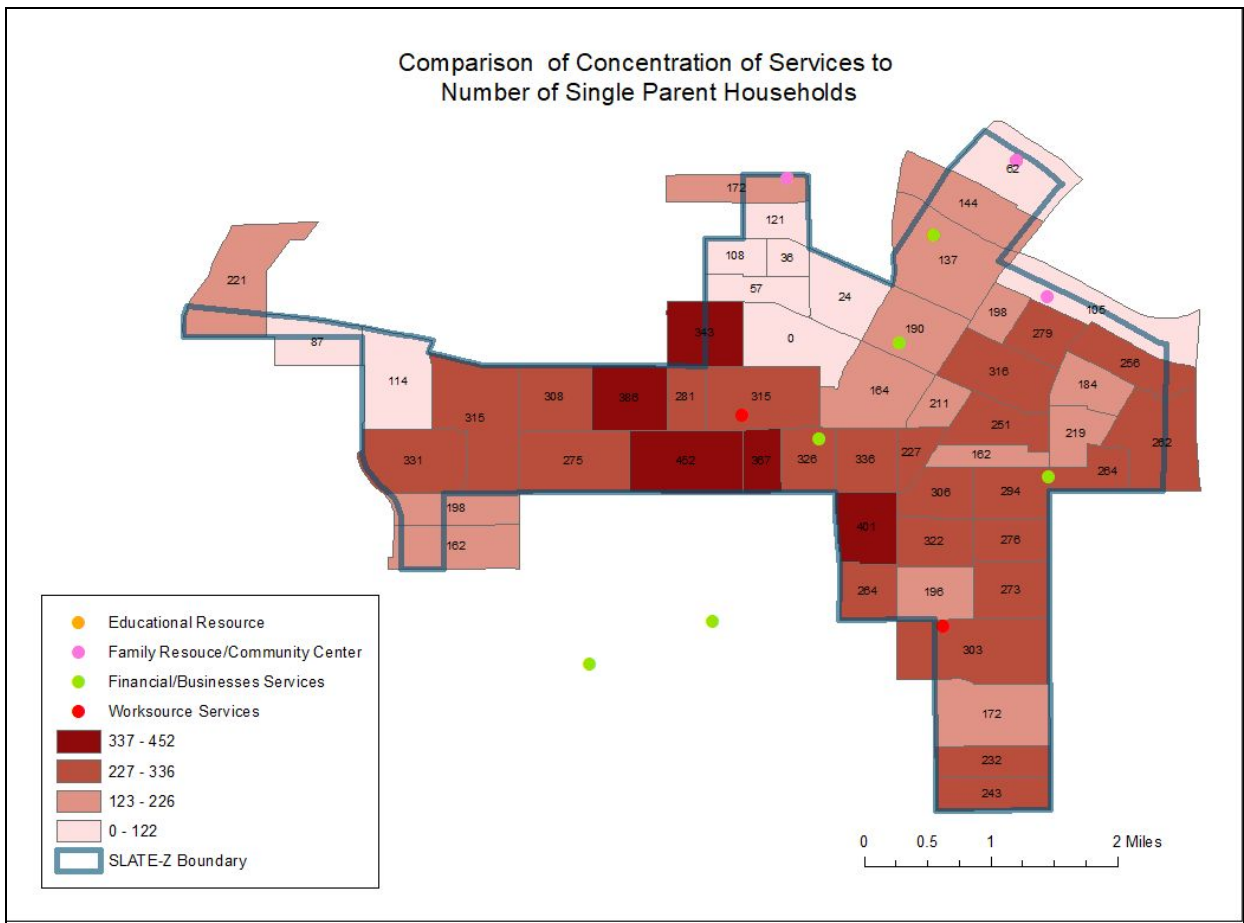
Map 3



Source: Simply Analytics (2019). *Percent of Total Population Living in Poverty* Data 2018. Retrieved April 4, 2019, from Simply Analytics database.

Map 3 shows the distribution of services that exist within and immediately near the SLATE-Z boundary. The services are located in areas of higher poverty (38.77%-51.66%). This shows that resources are located where they are needed the most.

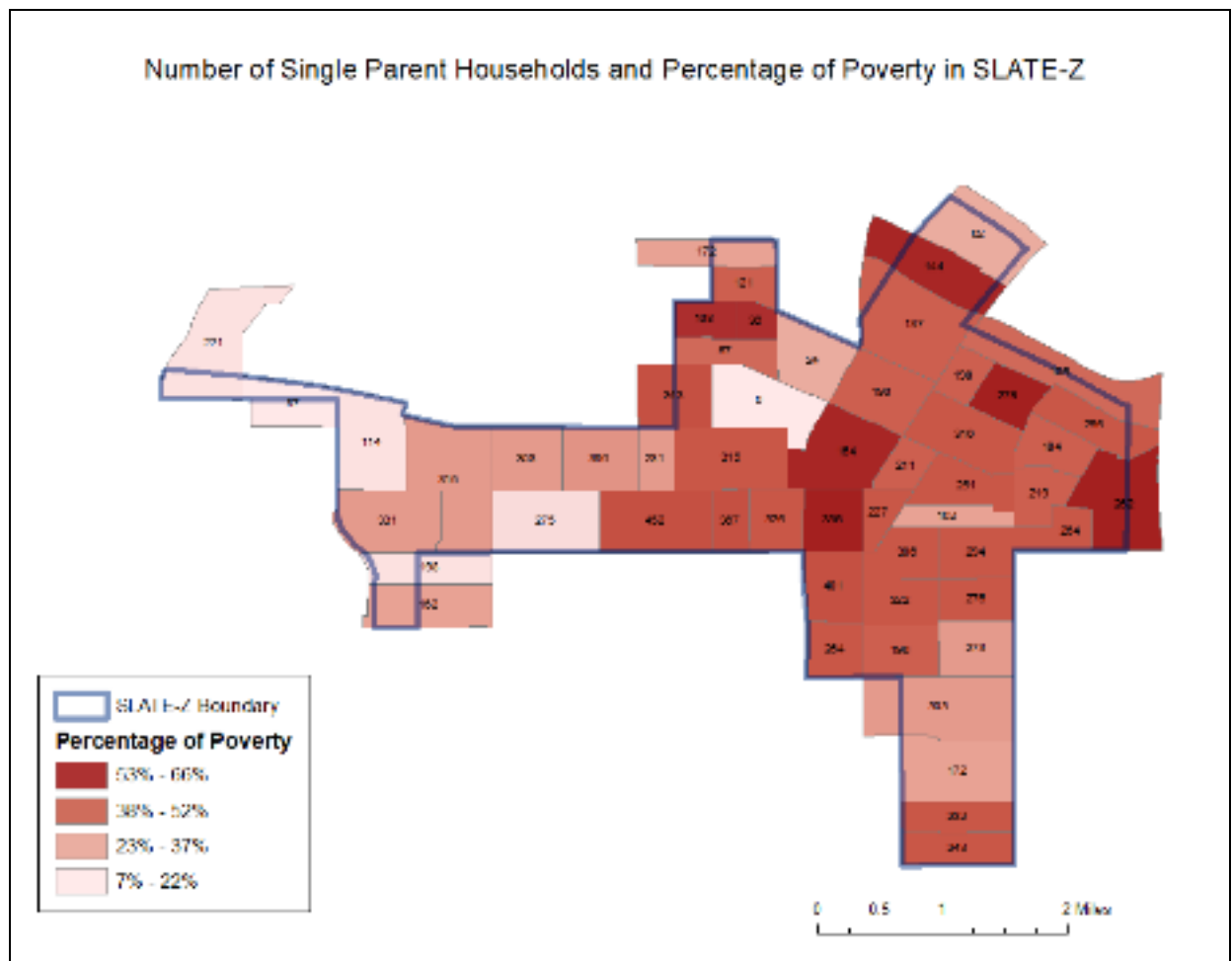
Map 4



Source: Simply Analytics (2019). Number of Single Parents in Los Angeles Data 2018. Retrieved April 4, 2019, from Simply Analytics database.

Map 5 provides visual comparison between the location of services and the high concentrations of single parent households. The Census tracts with the highest number of single parent households is near the center of the SLATE-Z area. There are hardly any services within this area. This may be due to residential zoning. There is a higher concentration of services where there are less single parent households.

Map 6



Source: Simply Analytics (2019). Number of Single Parents and Percent Poverty in Los Angeles Data 2018. Retrieved April 4, 2019, from Simply Analytics database.

Map 6 provides visual comparison between the number of single parent households and poverty within SLATE-Z. This demonstrates the relationship between these population characteristics that exist within the boundary. The percentage of poverty ranges from 38%-52%, which covers a larger area of SLATE-Z. This map also shows that despite the high concentration of poverty in certain census tracts, the most severe poverty areas do not always have the highest numbers of single parent families.

Conclusions

Mapping the locations of the services and the distribution of single parent families within SLATE-Z provides insight into the distribution of services. Single parent households may be in greater need of additional assistance given time constraints. When services are in close proximity to each other, it may be easier for parents to access multiple types of services including childcare, financial assistance, and workforce development that can increase their likelihood of reaching economic mobility. Through analysis, the financial/business services, worksource services, and family/community services are not necessarily in the proximity of each other. They are not within the 1,000 feet walking distance, which may limit their ability to aid parents. In addition, the thematic maps demonstrate that the services are predominately in areas of high poverty, which is beneficial for individuals experiencing poverty. The areas with Census tracts with high poverty do not necessarily have the highest number of single parent households. Single parent households exist in high numbers all over the SLATE-Z area, with a significant amount living in Census tracts in the middle of SLATE-Z.

Limitations

The analysis of the services within SLATE-Z was constrained by time and resources. The services were chosen based on the data gathered from focus groups and service providers within SLATE-Z. The data was limited in that it did not provide a full range of services within the boundary. With additional time, it may have been pertinent to conduct a broader search for other SLATE-Z services. The services within SLATE-Z may service a large concentration of single parent families, unfortunately their data went unanalyzed as it was not attained.

In addition, with time, I would have liked to do a cost analysis of the prices associated with the childcare facilities. This analysis may have been beneficial in understanding why there was a concentration near the southern part of the SLATE-Z boundary.

Access to city zoning requirements would have provided greater insight into why services exist in their current locations. It cannot be concluded in this analysis that the location of services is based solely on concentration of poverty.