



TITLE VI PROGRAM

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY WITH LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN

BAY COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION



DRAFT AUGUST 2026

Title VI Program

Bay County Transportation Planning Organization

Staffed by: Emerald Coast Regional Council

418 E Gregory St STE 100
Pensacola, FL 32502

Title VI Coordinator, Leandra Meredith

*Bay
County* **TPO**

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INTRODUCTION

Section 601 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination “on the basis of race, color or national origin” in any “program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” Other federal and state authorities prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, disability, religion, family status and income. The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 established that Title VI applies to all programs and activities of federal-aid recipients, sub-recipients and contractors whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not.

Title 49 CFR Section 21.9(b) requires recipients of federal financial assistance to submit reports to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in order for FTA to ascertain whether the recipient is in compliance with the DOT Title VI regulations, and recipients must have available “racial and ethnic data showing the extent to which members of minority groups are beneficiaries of programs receiving Federal financial assistance.” As stated in Chapter III of this Circular, FTA requires that all direct and primary recipients document their compliance by submitting a Title VI Program to their FTA regional civil rights officer once every three years, or as otherwise directed by FTA.

All Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) or Transportation Planning Organizations (TPO) are responsible for conducting planning activities that comply with 49 U.S.C. Section 5303, Metropolitan Transportation Planning, as well as subpart C of 23 CFR part 450, Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming, for a specified metropolitan planning area. Since States “pass through” planning funds to the MPO, MPOs are subrecipients of the State and must submit Title VI compliance reports for planning activities to the State to assist the State in demonstrating compliance with Title VI.



BAY COUNTY TPO

COOPERATIVE-COMPREHENSIVE-CONTINUING

In 1981, the Panama City Urbanized Metropolitan Planning Organization was created under the authority of Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes, as a mechanism to conduct a **cooperative, comprehensive, and continuing** planning process for the transportation needs of the Panama City urbanized area.

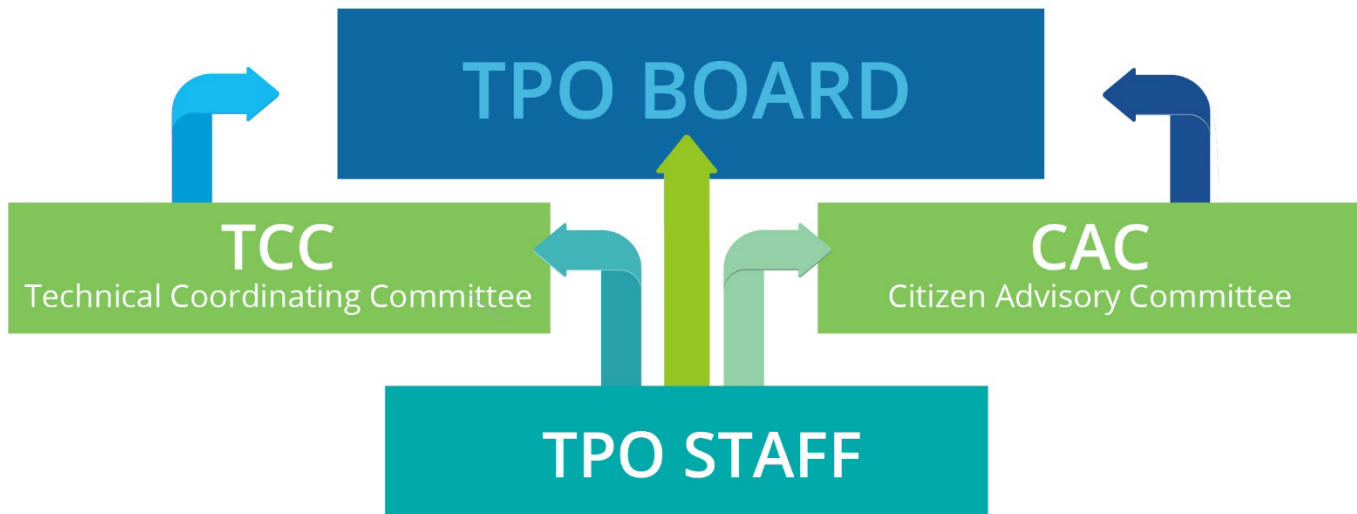
Now known as the Bay County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) it is a governing body consisting of elected officials representing the following local governments: Bay County, Callaway, Lynn Haven, Mexico Beach, Panama City, Panama City Beach, and Parker.

The Bay County TPO now includes the entire county in addition to the urbanized area. Authority is granted under amended 23 USC 134 in Section 1201(a) §134 (F)(2)(a) (Coordination in Multistate Areas). Two advisory committees make recommendations to the TPO board to ensure citizen participation and technical involvement is included in the planning process. The transportation planning process blends technical analysis and input from public and private transportation partners to identify priorities, choices, and risks to the transportation system within the Bay County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) study area. It is also used to distribute resources for future investments. Long-range planning is required to be eligible for federal and state transportation funding assistance, given the vast amount of money invested in the system each year. A TPO is designated to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process. This process is accomplished through a forum of **COOPERATIVE, COMPREHENSIVE, AND CONTINUING** transportation decision making.

TPOs are established in a study area with a population of 50,000 or more, determined by the U.S. Census. The principal responsibilities of the Bay County TPO include the development of a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), a 20-year Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), a five-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a Congestion Management Process (CMP), a Public Participation Plan (PPP), and related planning studies and projects deemed necessary to address transportation issues in the Bay County TPO study area.



TPO STRUCTURE



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD

The Bay County TPO board is comprised of local government officials who make decisions regarding transportation at the regional level. The TPO works to increase safety, security, accessibility, mobility, and connectivity for people and goods. Membership of the Bay County TPO board is comprised of elected officials from the following municipalities:

BAY COUNTY TPO MEMBERSHIP:

- 5 Bay County Commissioners
- 2 City of Callaway Commissioners or Mayor
- 2 City of Lynn Commissioners or Mayor
- 1 City of Mexico Beach Councilmember or Mayor
- 5 City of Panama City Commissioners or Mayor
- 2 City of Panama City Beach Councilmembers or Mayor
- 1 City of Parker Councilmember or Mayor
- 1 City of Springfield Councilmember or Mayor

The TPO board meets, at minimum, six times a year, at 3:30 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of the meeting month, with the exception of the first and last meeting of the year. The meetings are currently held in Panama City, Fla. at the BayWay Transit Building located at 1010 Cone Ave Panama City, FL 32401. The TPO meeting schedule can be found [online](#). A print copy of the schedule is available upon request.

CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

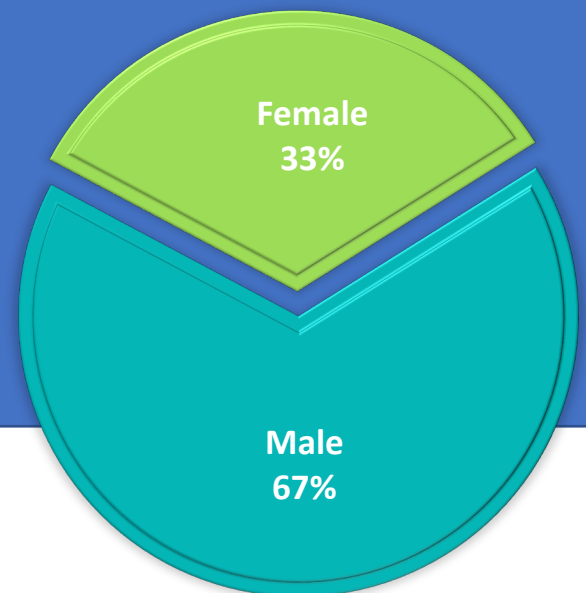
The Bay County CAC is comprised of members of the public who express an interest in transportation planning. Prospective members complete an application process and must be recommended for approval by the CAC and ultimately approved by the TPO board. Following approval, members serve at the pleasure of the TPO board. A maximum of 30 voting members may serve on the CAC.

The CAC meets, at 1:30 p.m. on the day of TPO meetings. The meetings are currently held in Panama City, Fla. at the BayWay Transit Building 1010 Cone Ave Panama City, FL 32401. The CAC meeting schedule can be found [online](#).

CAC MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION BY GENDER IDENTIFICATION AND RACE

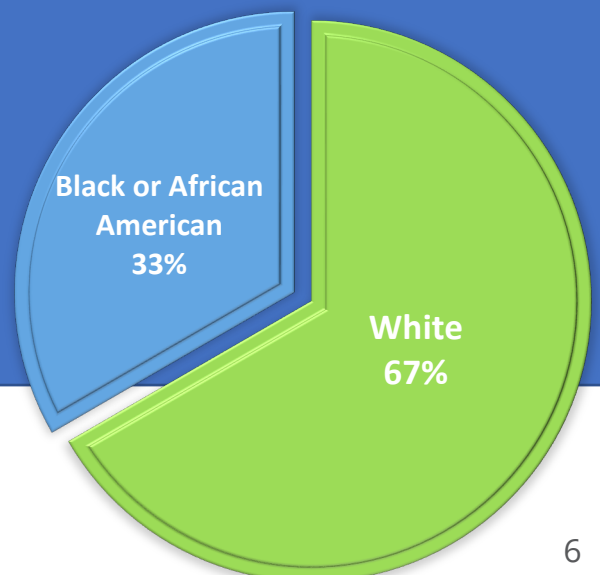
BAY COUNTY CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) SURVEY RESULTS

GENDER BREAKDOWN



BAY COUNTY CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) SURVEY RESULTS

RACIAL BREAKDOWN



CAC MEMBERSHIP

The Bay County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) provides residents with an opportunity to actively participate in the regional transportation planning process. The committee serves in an advisory capacity to the TPO Board by reviewing transportation plans, programs, and projects and providing recommendations that reflect the needs and priorities of the community. The Bay County TPO encourages residents from throughout the county to apply for membership on the CAC.

The TPO strives to maintain a committee that reflects the geographic diversity of Bay County by seeking representation from communities across the county, including both incorporated municipalities and unincorporated areas. Individuals who are active in their neighborhoods, civic organizations, business groups, educational institutions, environmental organizations, or other community-based organizations are encouraged to apply.

To ensure new members are familiar with the transportation planning process, Bay County TPO staff provides an onboarding program that includes an informational video outlining the TPO's planning responsibilities, the role of the Citizens Advisory Committee, and members' responsibilities. The onboarding process helps new members understand how their participation contributes to the transportation planning process.

CAC members are expected to attend meetings regularly and actively participate in committee discussions. Through their participation, members provide valuable local knowledge and diverse perspectives that help shape transportation plans, programs, and projects. The committee plays an important role in ensuring that the transportation planning process remains transparent, collaborative, and responsive to the needs of communities throughout Bay County.



TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

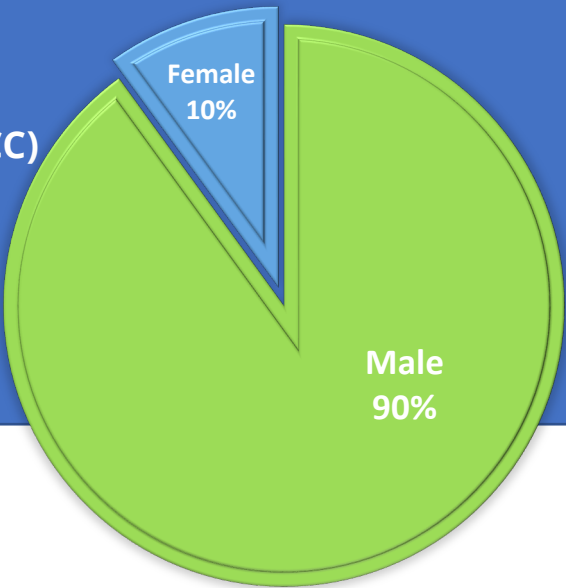
The Bay County TCC is comprised of local government technical staff. This committee participates in the planning process by providing technical advice to the TPO board.

The TCC meets at 11:00 a.m. on the day of TPO meetings. The meetings are currently held in Panama City, Fla. at the BayWay Transit Building 1010 Cone Ave Panama City, FL 32401. The TCC meeting schedule can be found [online](#).

TCC MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION BY GENDER IDENTIFICATION AND RACE

BAY COUNTY
TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE (TCC)
SURVEY RESULTS

GENDER BREAKDOWN



BAY COUNTY
TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE (TCC)
SURVEY RESULTS

RACIAL BREAKDOWN



INTERESTED PARTIES

[Subscribe](#) here for online information regarding Bay County TPO meetings, plans, programs, or committees. All public meetings and workshops are noticed seven days in advance on the Bay County TPO website calendar, community calendars and news release. Bay County TPO board, committees, and other public agendas and schedules can be found [online](#).

STAKEHOLDERS

A stakeholder is defined as any person or group that is affected by transportation plans or programs, including those who may not be aware they are affected. The following groups and individuals are considered stakeholders in the transportation planning process and the audience for various communication tools and outreach efforts:

- Transportation agencies; freight and passenger railroads; logistics providers
- Media
- Homeowners/neighborhood associations
- Civic and advocacy groups
- Business community
- Interested parties expressing an interest in transportation planning
- Area Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Agencies
- Environmental groups
- Pedestrian and bicycle users
- Special populations and groups
- Large employers
- Boards of education
- Other stakeholders identified by the TPO in outreach efforts



MINORITY POPULATION BY CENSUS TRACT

BAY COUNTY TPO DATA PROFILE

Bay County TPO Data Profile

KEY FACTS



202,123

Total Population



82,427

Total Households



2.41

Average Household Size

INCOME



\$82,514

Median Household Income



\$44,666

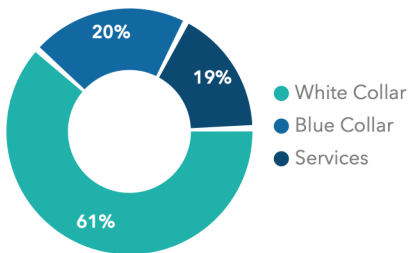
Per Capita Income



13%

Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

EMPLOYMENT



3.9%

Unemployment Rate

EDUCATION



93%

High School Grad or Higher



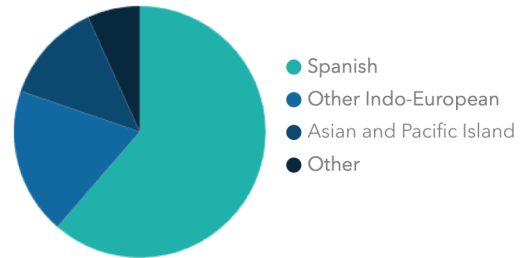
32%

Bachelor's Degree or Higher

LANGUAGE

Population Age 5+ that Speaks a Language other than English at Home

10.9%



SPECIAL POPULATIONS



21%

Population Age 65+



33%

Households with 1+ Persons with a Disability

27%

Minority Population*

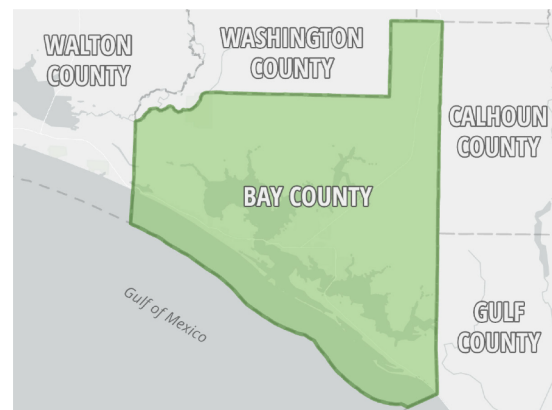
1.7%

Owner Households with No Vehicles



2.6%

Renter Households with No Vehicles



Source: 2026 Esri Estimates;
Census ACS 5-Year Estimates 2020-2024 (food stamps, language, minority, vehicles, disability)
*Minority population is the population that lists their racial status as a race other than white alone and/or lists their ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino.

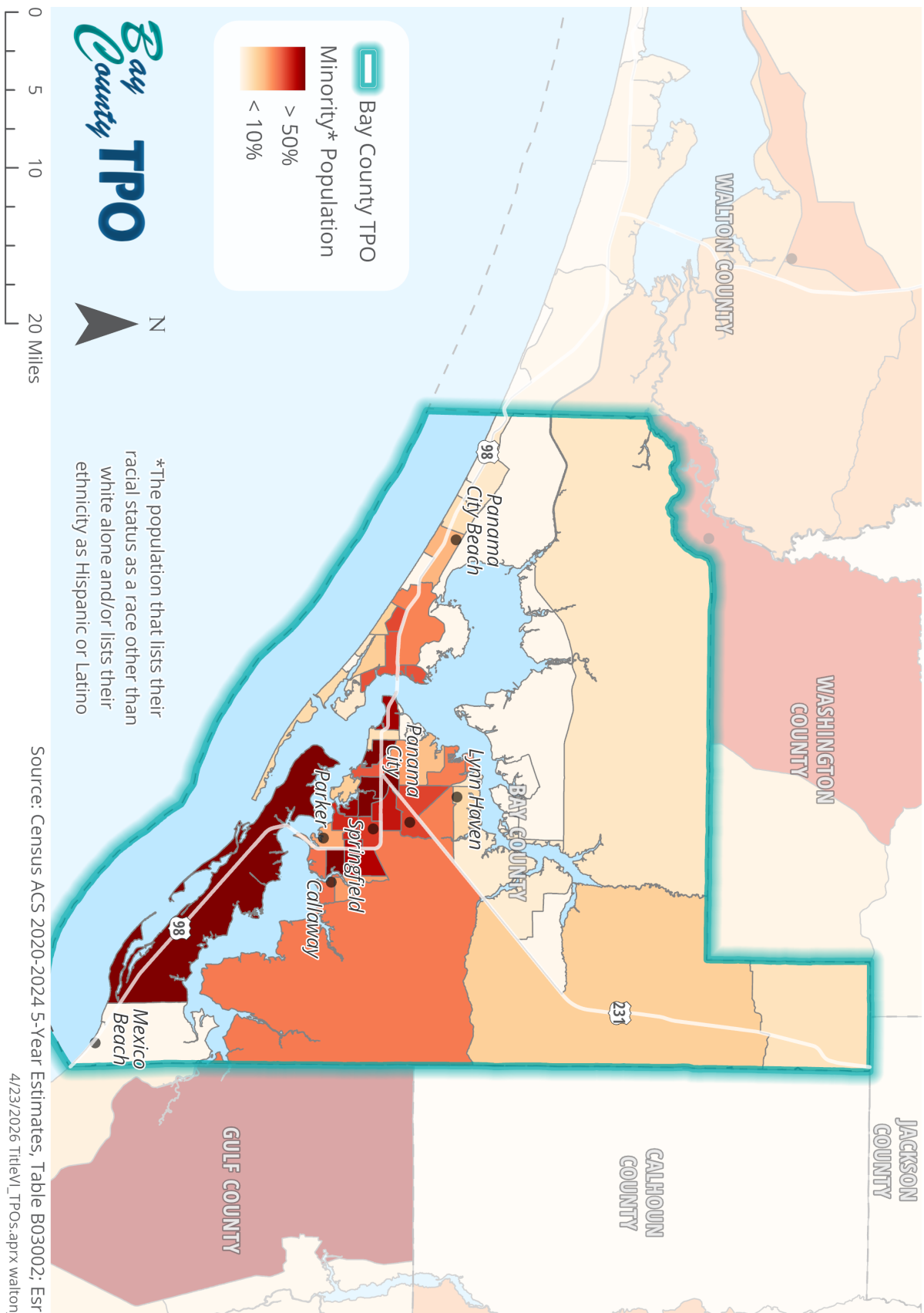
Total Land Area (Square Miles):

759

Bay County TPO

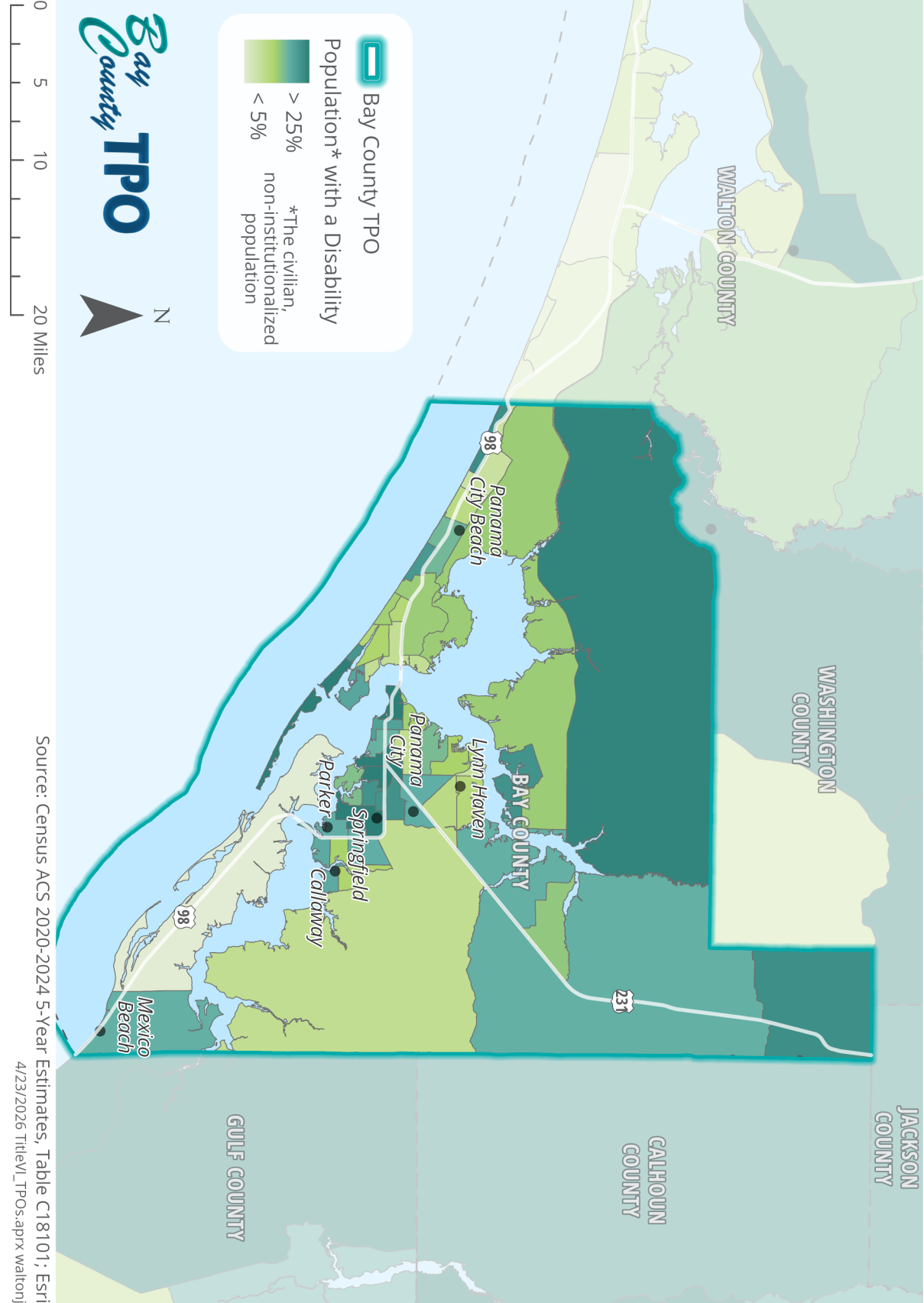
MINORITY POPULATION BY CENSUS TRACT

Minority Population by Census Tract



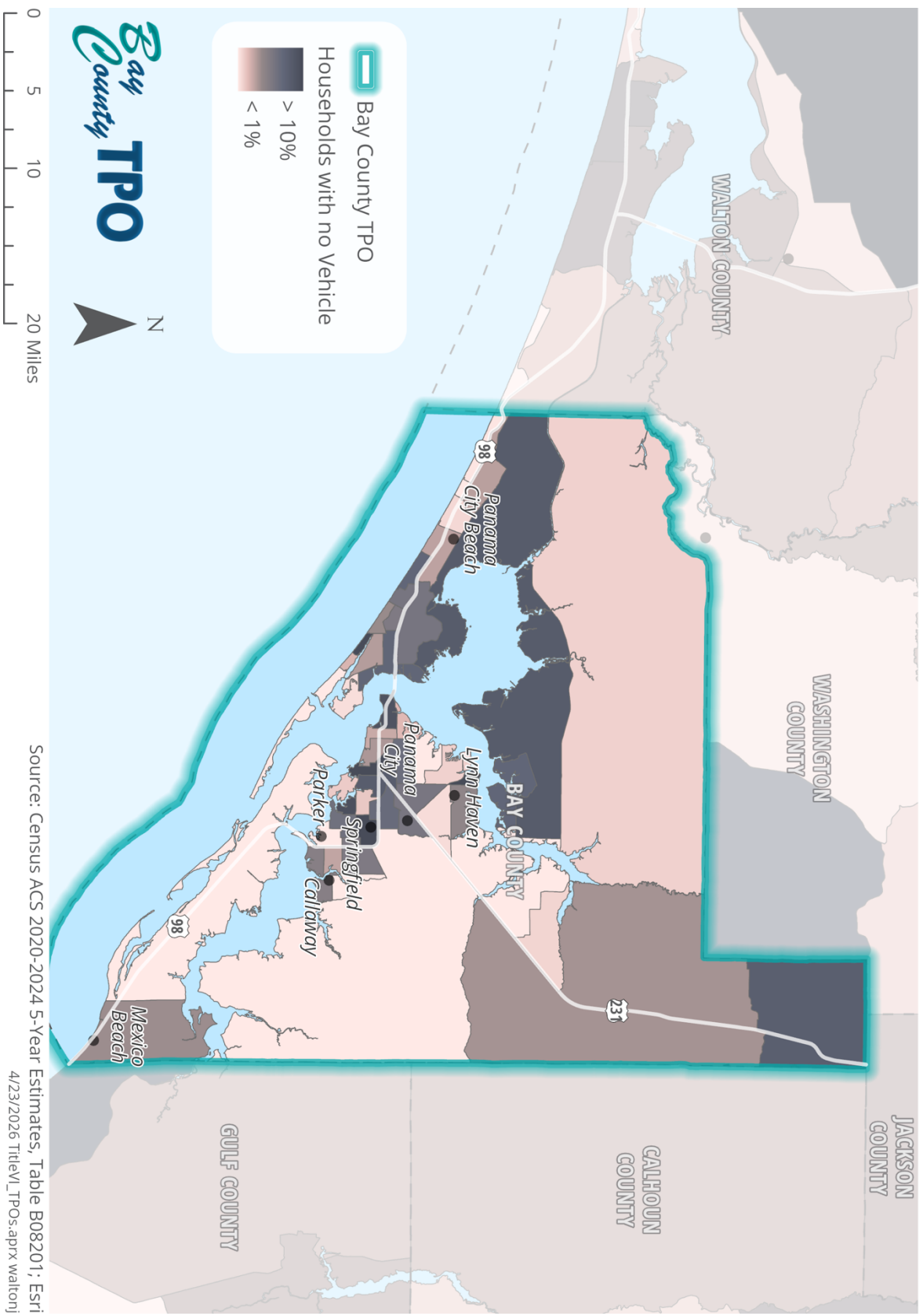
POPULATION WITH A DISABILITY BY CENSUS TRACT

Disability Status by Census Tract



HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO VEHICLE

Households with No Vehicle Available by Census Tract



TITLE VI IN THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

The Bay County TPO created the Public Participation Plan (PPP) to provide guidelines for achieving optimal engagement of the public when developing major planning documents and programs. Quality public participation is solicited early and continues throughout the planning process, helping to avoid, minimize, and mitigate negative project impacts while providing the best solutions for the community. Public input is often used in the development of plan or program goals, objectives, criteria, and overall recommendations to the TPO board. The Bay County TPO Public Participation Plan can be viewed in Appendix IV of this document.

The primary goals of the Bay County TPO PPP are to:

INFORM THE PUBLIC *Inform the public, to the maximum extent possible with available resources, of opportunities to participate in the transportation decision-making process.*

INVOLVE THE PUBLIC *Involve the public early and often in the transportation planning process.*

INCLUDE THE PUBLIC *Reach out to the geographical, organizational, and demographic communities that compose the TPO study area to increase the public's opportunity to participate in developing transportation plans and services.*

IMPROVE THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS *Continually identify and implement ways to improve the public participation process.*

The PPP is assessed on a quarterly basis to ensure effectiveness as trends and technologies change. All major or minor changes proposed for the plan are reviewed annually and implementation of major updates initiates a 45-day public review period. Changes to the plan will be posted online. A link to the document with changes will be provided to the TPO board, advisory committees, interested parties, and partners.

The current PPP document was adopted in Feb. 2022 and can be found on the ECRC website [here](#) or by contacting Public Involvement at 850-332-7976.



SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Each public participation process provides an opportunity to develop methods to reach traditionally underserved populations, such as minorities and low-income. Potential underserved populations may also include youth, persons with disabilities, and senior citizens.

Identification of Special Populations

U.S. Census data is used to identify the Bay County TPO study area demographics which include, race, age, and limited English proficiency communities. Coordinating with agencies throughout the study area that serve special populations aids in the identification of traditionally underserved populations.

Outreach efforts are recorded via interactive maps with demographic data and projects, with emphasized attention paid to special populations that may be affected because of plans and programs. Mapping this data shows corresponding projects relative to communities that would be most impacted and allows staff to identify populations most affected by the plans and programs.

The interactive map, along with U.S. Census demographic data, is also utilized to focus outreach efforts in communities of traditionally underserved and limited English proficiency populations. Enhanced outreach methods, such as community pop-up events, can be implemented to involve traditionally hard to reach populations in the transportation planning process. TPO staff diligently pursues representation, participation, and input from special populations. Special populations are encouraged to participate through outreach efforts in communities with a high concentration of minorities, correspondence with special population media outlets, and partnerships with agencies that serve special populations. Relationships with local special population community groups, such as the NAACP, diverse business organizations, and cultural associations, have proven particularly effective in reaching and encouraging participation of special populations.

Additionally, the bylaws of the [Citizens Advisory Committee](#) address diversity requirements for diverse representation to ensure all members of the public have every opportunity to be involved in the transportation planning process.



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Bay County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) recognizes that transportation decisions can influence the social, economic, and environmental well-being of the communities it serves. As part of the transportation planning process, the TPO considers potential environmental effects alongside community needs, mobility, accessibility, and quality of life to support informed and balanced decision-making.

Consistent with the principles of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Bay County TPO is committed to providing equitable access to transportation planning activities and encouraging meaningful participation from all members of the public. Public outreach efforts are designed to reach a broad cross-section of the community, including minority, low-income, older adult, transit-dependent, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations.

Throughout public outreach activities, participants may be asked to provide their residential ZIP codes through surveys, comment forms, or other engagement materials. Participation data will be periodically reviewed and compared with demographic information to assess the geographic distribution of participants and identify areas where additional outreach may be beneficial.

If participation from identified ZIP code areas is disproportionately low, the Bay County TPO will implement additional outreach strategies to improve engagement. These strategies may include coordinating with local governments and community organizations, providing information through a variety of communication methods, holding meetings in accessible locations, or conducting outreach activities within or near communities where participation has been limited.

This ongoing evaluation helps the Bay County TPO refine its public involvement strategies, improve accessibility, and ensure that transportation planning decisions are informed by a diverse range of community perspectives while considering the potential social, economic, and environmental effects of transportation investments.



TITLE VI EQUITY ANALYSIS

Title 49 CFR, Appendix C, Section (3)(iv) requires that “the location of projects requiring land acquisition and the displacement of persons from their residences and business may not be determined on the basis of race, color, or national origin.” For purposes of this requirement, “facilities” does not include bus shelters, as they are considered transit amenities. It also does not include transit stations, power substations, or any other project evaluated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Facilities included in the provision include, but are not limited to, storage facilities, maintenance facilities, operations centers, etc. In order to comply with the regulations, the Bay County TPO will ensure the following:

1. Bay County TPO will complete a Title VI equity analysis for any facility during the planning stage regarding where a project is located or sited to ensure the location is selected without regard to race, color, or national origin. The Bay County TPO will engage in outreach to persons potentially impacted by the siting of the facility. The Title VI equity analysis must compare the equity impacts of various siting alternatives, and the analysis must occur before the selection of the preferred site.
2. When evaluating locations of facilities, the Bay County TPO will give attention to other facilities with similar impacts in the area to determine if any cumulative adverse impacts might result. Analysis should be done at the U.S. Census tract or block group level where appropriate to ensure that proper perspective is given to localized impacts.
3. If the Bay County TPO determines that the location of the project will result in a disparate impact on the basis of race, color, or national origin, the Bay County TPO may only locate the project in that location if there is a substantial legitimate justification for locating the project there, and where there are no alternative locations that would have a less disparate impact on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Bay County TPO must demonstrate and document how both tests are met. The Bay County TPO will consider and analyze alternatives to determine whether those alternatives would have less of a disparate impact based on race, color, or national origin, and then implement the least discriminatory alternative.

The Bay County TPO has not recently constructed any facilities, nor does it currently have any facilities in the planning stage. Therefore, the Bay County TPO does not have any Title VI Equity Analysis reports to submit with this Plan. The Bay County TPO will utilize the demographic maps included in Appendix for future Title VI analysis.



MOBILITY NEEDS

The Bay County TPO uses multiple procedures to assess the mobility needs of minority populations. Census data, mapping, and information provided from partner organizations are used in analyzing these mobility needs. Each year the TPO goes through the Long Range Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Plan, and Project Priorities processes as well as other projects, such as Corridor Management Studies. The TPO also participates in the 5-year major update of the Transportation Development Plan (TDP). The TDP targets minority and LEP concentrated population areas for outreach and input in the process. The TPO uses ArcGIS software to map outreach efforts, demographic data, and currently prioritized projects to determine areas that need focus for inclusion in the transportation planning process. Minority, disability, and vehicle access density maps can be found in the Bay County TPO Area Demographic Profile section of this document, starting on page 8 of this document.

Vehicles Available by Household (Owner and Renter Occupied)		
Vehicles Available	Households	Percent of Households
No Vehicle	3,666	4.27%
One Vehicle	27,368	34.74%

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

In the event the Bay County TPO acts as a primary recipient and passes funds to a sub-recipient, the TPO and sub-recipient will enter into an agreement for operation that lays out the specific duties of the TPO and sub-recipient, budget and vehicles and equipment maintenance. Each quarter the sub-recipient will submit a statement to the TPO. The TPO will then reimburse the sub-recipient for qualified amounts and expenses. Should the need arise, Bay County will hold a competitive application process. In this process staff will reach out to service providers within the TPO boundary with a concentration on applicants that provide service to the minority population. Currently, the Bay County TPO has no sub-recipients and has received no funding request. Should this change, the plan will be updated to reflect the updated information.

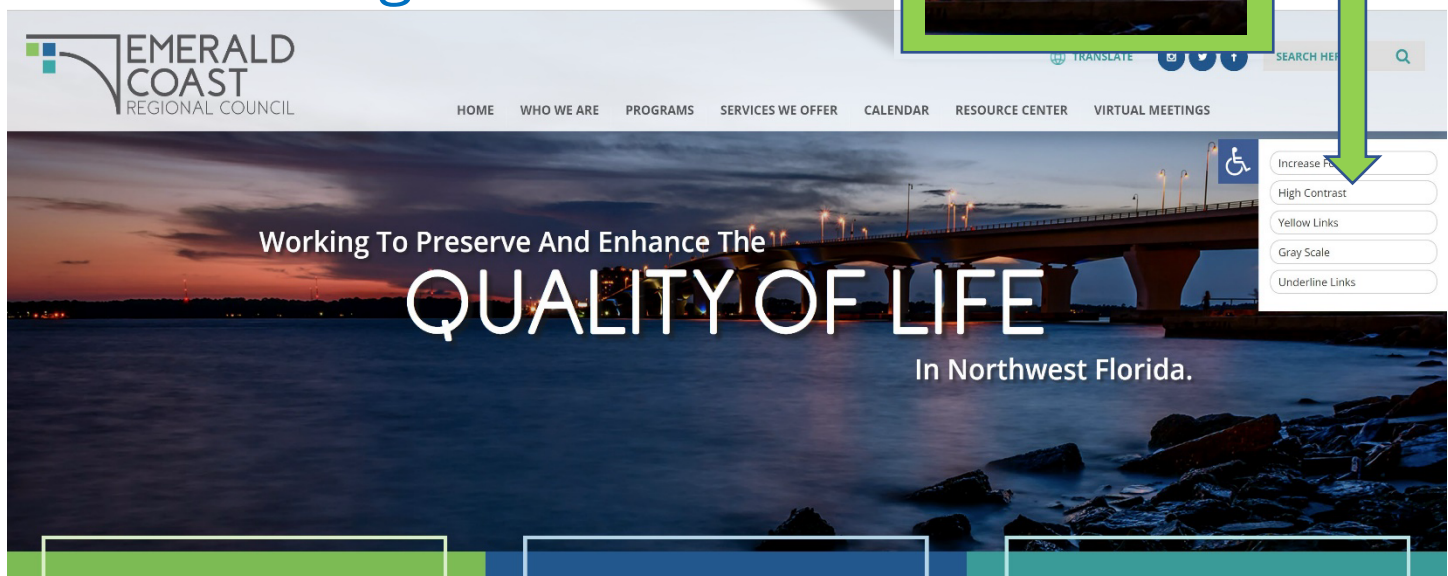


PROGRAM INFORMATION ACCESSIBILITY

All documents, created and distributed by the Bay County TPO, are available in electronic, print, and/or translated forms upon request.

The Bay County TPO is committed to providing a website that is accessible to the widest possible audience, regardless of technology or ability. The TPO is actively working to increase the accessibility and usability of ECRC.org and program/project webpages, and in doing so adhere to many of the available standards and guidelines. The Bay County TPO endeavors to conform to level AA of the web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG) 2.1. These guidelines explain how to make web content more accessible for people with disabilities. Conformance with these guidelines will help make the internet user-friendly for all people. The Bay County TPO has built webpages using code compliant with the standards and displays correctly in current browsers. While the Bay County TPO strives to adhere to the accepted guidelines and standards for accessibility and usability, it is not always possible to do so in all areas of the website. The Bay County TPO continually seeks solutions that will bring all areas of the website up to the same level of overall web accessibility. In the meantime, should any website users experience any difficulty in accessing information on the website, please contact staff at PublicInvolvement@ecrc.org or 850-332-7976, Florida TTY 711.

www.ecrc.org



TITLE VI PROGRAM STATEMENT

Bay County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) As a transportation planning organization, the Bay County TPO provides a forum for local elected officials, transportation experts and citizens to work together to improve mobility for residents, businesses, and visitors. Recipients of federal funds, such as metropolitan planning organizations, must comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other nondiscrimination requirements, ensuring that no person is subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion and family status in employment and the provision of government services. This requirement includes the creation of a Title VI Program, along with a regular review of its effectiveness and conformity with federal and state law. This Title VI Program works in concert with the organization's Public Involvement Plan and Limited English Proficiency Plan, which identify specific tactics for outreach and involvement (i.e., notification, information, and opportunities for diverse participation). The Bay County TPO Title VI Program is reviewed annually by ECRC staff and is sent to our partners at the Florida Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration for revision and suggested edits.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Section 324 of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973; Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987; the Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992

The TPO is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any of its programs, activities, or services on the basis of race, color or national origin. All persons, regardless of their immigration status, are covered under this regulation. In addition, the TPO prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in its employment and business opportunities.

The TPO will not condone retaliation against an individual for his/her involvement in asserting his/her rights pursuant to Title VI or because he/she filed a complaint or participated in an investigation under Title VI, and /or this regulation.

As a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) fund recipient, as well as a Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) fund recipient, the TPO will ensure that its programs, policies, and activities comply with both FTA and FDOT Title VI Regulations of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The TPO will submit its Title VI Program to the FTA once every three (3) years to ensure compliance with Title VI Requirements.

The TPO will maintain a list of any Title VI investigations, complaints, or lawsuits filed which allege the TPO discriminated against a person or group on the basis of race, color, or national origin. This list will include:

- a) The date the investigation, complaint, or lawsuit was filed
- b) A summary of the allegation(s)
- c) The status of the investigation, complaint, or lawsuit
- d) Any actions or corrective actions taken by the TPO in response to the investigation, complaint or lawsuit

The TPO will ensure that the level and quality of its transportation service is provided without regard to race, color, or national origin.

The TPO will make good faith efforts to achieve environmental justice as part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high, and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, activities, and services on minority populations and low-income populations within the TPO’s service area as provided herein.

The TPO will ensure that Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals have access to the TPO’s programs, activities, and services.

The TPO will seek out and consider the viewpoints of minority, low-income and Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations in the course of conducting public outreach and involvement activities. The TPO’s public participation strategy will offer early and continuous opportunities for the public to be involved in the identification of social, economic and environmental impacts of proposed transportation decisions.

The TPO will ensure that individuals have access to its programs, activities and services by developing and carrying out the language plan herein. The TPO will continually assess the language assistance needs of the population to be served.

The TPO will use the following four (4) factors to determine what measures must be undertaken to provide reasonable and meaningful access to LEP individuals:

- a) Languages likely to be encountered and the number or proportion of LEP persons in the eligible service population likely to be affected by the program, activity, or service
- b) Frequency with which LEP individuals come into contact with TPO programs, activities, and services
- c) Importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the TPO to LEP individual’s lives

Resources needed to provide effective language assistance and costs.

The purpose of the document is to detail specific compliant procedures for better documentation efforts related to Title VI and related statutes.

List of Locations Where Title VI Notice is Posted

Bay County Transportation Planning Organization’s Title VI notice to the public is currently posted at the following locations:

Location Name	Address
Emerald Coast Regional Council Pensacola Office	418 E Gregory St Ste 100, Pensacola, FL 32502
Emerald Coast Regional Council Website	www.ecrc.org

Such notices may also be posted or announced with local stakeholders and community centers. New locations may be added as needed.



TITLE VI PUBLIC NOTICE (FTA VERSION IN ENGLISH & SPANISH)

**Notifying the Public of Rights
Under Title VI
Bay County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)**

The TPO operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with the TPO.

For more information on the TPO's civil rights program, and the procedures to file a complaint, contact 850-332-7976, ext. 220; email leandra.meredith@ecrc.org; or visit our administrative office at 418 E Gregory St Ste 100, Pensacola, FL 32502. For more information, visit www.ecrc.org.

A complainant may file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration by filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East building, 5th Floor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20590.

If information is needed in another language, contact 850-332-7976, ext. 220.

Approved by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

**Notificación al Público de Derechos
Bajo el Título VI
Bay County Organización de Planificación de Transporte (TPO)**

El TPO (por sus siglas en español) opera sus programas y servicios, sin distinción de raza, color y origen nacional, de conformidad con el Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles. Cualquier persona que cree que él o ella ha sido agraviada por cualquier práctica discriminatoria ilegal bajo el Título VI, puede presentar una queja ante el TPO.

Para obtener más información sobre el programa de derechos civiles del TPO, y los procedimientos para presentar una queja, contacte a 850-332-7976, ext. 220; leandra.meredith@ecrc.org correo electrónico; o visite nuestra oficina administrativa en at 418 E Gregory St Ste 100, Pensacola, FL 32502.. Para obtener más información, visite www.ecrc.org.

El demandante puede presentar una queja directamente con la Administración Federal de Transporte mediante la presentación de una queja ante la Oficina de Derechos Civiles, Atención: Coordinador de Programa del Título VI, edificio Oriente, 5th Flúor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20590.

Si se necesita información en otro idioma, llame al 850-332-7976, ext. 220.

Aprobado por la Administración Federal de Tránsito (FTA)

TITLE VI PUBLIC NOTICE

(FDOT VERSION IN ENGLISH & SPANISH)

Notifying the Public of Rights Under Title VI

Bay County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)

No person in the United States and State of Florida shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, handicap/disability, income status, retaliation, or other reason be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination or retaliation, under any Federally or non-federally funded activity or program administered by a recipient of federal financial assistance.

Any person who believes he or she has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with the TPO. For more information on Title VI or to file a complaint, contact the Title VI Coordinator at 850-332-7976, ext. 220 or visit www.ecrc.org

Approved by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)

Notificación al Público de Derechos Bajo el Título VI

Bay County Organización de Planificación de Transporte (TPO)

Ninguna persona en los Estados Unidos será, sobre la base de raza, color u origen nacional, sexo, edad, hándicap/discapacidad, nivel de ingresos, represalias, or otro razón ser excluida de participar en, negado los beneficios de, o ser objeto de otro modo a discriminación o represalia, bajo cualquier actividad o programa federal o no fondos federales administrado por un receptor de la asistencia financiera federal.

Cualquier persona que cree que él o ella ha sido agraviada por cualquier práctica discriminatoria ilegal bajo el Título VI, puede presentar una queja ante el TPO. Para obtener más información sobre el Título VI o para presentar una queja, comuníquese con el Coordinador del Título VI al 850-332-7976, ext. 220 o visite www.ecrc.org.

Aprobado por el Departamento de Transporte de la Florida (FDOT)

TITLE VI COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The Bay County Transportation Planning Organization abides by both the Federal Transit Administration and the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Title VI/Nondiscrimination Programs. As a result, it is the policy of this agency, under ***Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Section 324 of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973; Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987; the Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992***, and related statutes and regulations, that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability/handicap, or income status, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination or retaliation under any federally or non-federally funded program or activity administered by this agency or its sub-recipients.

Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against by the TPO, (hereinafter referred to as "TPO") may file a Title VI complaint by completing and submitting the TPO's Title VI Complaint Form. The Title VI Coordinator investigates complaints received no more than 180 days after the alleged incident. The Title VI Coordinator will only process complaints that are complete. The following procedures will be used to investigate formal Title VI complaints:

Once the complaint is received, the Title VI Coordinator will review it to determine if our office has jurisdiction. The complainant will receive an acknowledgement letter or email informing her/him whether the complaint will be investigated by our office. The complaint will be confidential.

The TPO has 60 days to investigate the complaint. If more information is needed to resolve the case, the Title VI Coordinator may contact the complainant. The complainant has 10 business days from the date of contact to send requested information to the investigator assigned to the case. If the investigator is not contacted by the complainant or does not receive the additional information within 10 business days, the Title VI Coordinator can administratively close the case. A case can be administratively closed also if the complainant no longer wishes to pursue their case.

After the investigator reviews the complaint, he/she will present the case to the TPO board only. The TPO will issue one of two determinations to the complainant: a closure letter/email or a letter/email of finding. A closure letter/email summarizes the allegations and states that there was not a Title VI violation and that the case will be closed. A letter/email of finding summarizes the allegations and the interviews regarding the alleged incident, and explains whether any disciplinary action, additional training of the staff member, or other action will occur. If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision, he/she has 30 days after the date of the determination letter/email to do so. The complaint case will be filed in the office electronically.

The person may also file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration, at FTA Office of Civil Rights, East Building, 5th Floor TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E., Washington, D.C. 20590.



Complaint of Discrimination

The Bay County Transportation Planning Organization abides by both the Federal Transit Administration and the Florida Department of Transportation's Title VI/Nondiscrimination Programs. As a result, it is the policy of this agency, under ***Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Section 324 of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973; Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987; the Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992***, and related statutes and regulations, that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability/handicap, or income status, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination or retaliation under any federally or non-federally funded program or activity administered by this agency or its sub-recipients.

Section I:

Complainant(s) Name:

Complainant(s) Address:

Telephone (Home):

Telephone (Work):

Email Address:

Accessible Format
Requirements:

Large Print ☐

TDD ☐

Audio Tape ☐

Other ☐

Section II:

Are you filing this complaint on your own behalf?

Yes* ☐

No ☐

***If you answered "yes" to this question, go to Section III.**

If not, please supply the name and relationship of the person for whom you are complaining for:

Name:

Relationship:

Please explain why you have filed for a third party:

Please confirm that you have obtained the permission of the aggrieved party if you are filing on behalf of a third party:

Yes ☐

No ☐

Section III:

I believe the discrimination I experienced was based on (check all that apply):

☐ Race

☐ Color

☐ National Origin

☐ Sex

☐ Age

☐ Handicap/Disability

☐ Income Status

☐ Retaliation

☐ Other

Date of Alleged Discrimination:

Explain as clearly as possible what happened and why you believe you were discriminated against. Describe all the people who were involved. Include the name and contact information of the person(s) who discriminated against you (if known) as well as names and contact information of any witness. If more space is needed, please use the back of this form.

Section IV

Have you previously filed a Title VI complaint with this agency?

Yes ☐No ☐**Section V**

Have you filed this complaint with any other Federal, State, or local agency, or with any Federal or State Court?

Yes ☐No ☐

If yes, check all that apply and list name of agency/court if known:

☐ Federal Agency: _____☐ Federal Court: _____☐ State Agency: _____☐ State Court: _____☐ Local Agency: _____**Section VI**

Please provide information about a contact person at the agency/court where the complaint was filed.

Name:

Title:

Agency:

Telephone:

Address:

You may attach any written materials or other information that you think is relevant to your complaint.

Complainant(s) or Complainant(s) Representatives Signature:

Date of Signature:

Please submit this form in person at the address below, or mail this form to:

Bay County TPO

Leandra Meredith, Title VI Coordinator,
at 418 E Gregory St Ste 100, Pensacola, FL 32502.
(850) 332-7976, Ext. 220 phone (850) 637-1923 fax
leandra.meredith@ecrc.org

Internal Use Only

Date Complaint Was Received:

Date Investigation Was
Completed:

Investigator Assigned:

Complaint of Discrimination

La Organización de Planificación de Transporte del Bay County permanece tanto por la Administración Federal de Tránsito y el Departamento de Programas Título / No Discriminación VI de Transporte de la Florida. Como resultado de ello, es la política de este organismo, en el **Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964; Sección 504 de la Ley de Rehabilitación de 1973; Ley de Discriminación por Edad de 1975; Sección 324 de la Ley Federal de Carreteras-Aid de 1973; Ley de Restauración de Derechos Civiles de 1987; la Ley de Derechos Civiles de Florida de 1992**, y los estatutos y reglamentos relacionados, que ninguna persona en los Estados Unidos será, sobre la base de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo, edad, discapacidad / impedimento o estado de ingresos, ser excluido de la participación en, ser negado los beneficios de, o ser sujeto de otro modo a discriminación o represalia bajo cualquier programa no federal con fondos federales o actividad administrada por esta agencia o sus sub-receptores.

Sección I:

Nombre Del Demandante:

Dirección Del Demandante:

Teléfono (Casa):

Teléfono (Trabajo):

Dirección De Correo Electrónico:

Requisitos formato
accessible:

Letra Grande ☐

TDD ☐

Audio Tape ☐

Otro ☐

Sección II:

¿Está presentando esta queja en su propio nombre?

***Si usted contestó "sí" a esta pregunta, vaya a la Sección III.**

Sí* ☐

No ☐

Si no es así, por favor provea el nombre y la relación de la persona a la que usted se está quejando por:

Nombre:

Relación:

Por favor, explique por qué usted ha presentado por una tercera persona:

Por favor, confirma que ha obtenido el permiso de la parte perjudicada, si usted está presentando en nombre de un tercero:

Si ☐

No ☐

Sección III:

Creo que la discriminación que experimenté fue basado en (marque todo lo que corresponda):

☐ Raza

☐ Color

☐ Origen Nacional

☐ Sexo

☐ Edad

☐ Handicap/Discapacidad

☐ Estado de Ingresos

☐ Represalias

☐ Otro

Fecha de la Discriminación Presunta:

Explique lo más claramente posible lo que pasó y por qué cree que fue discriminado. Describa todas las personas que estuvieron involucradas. Incluya el nombre y la información de contacto de la persona (s) que lo discriminó (si se conoce), así como los nombres y la información de los testigos en contacto. Si se necesita más espacio, por favor use el reverso de este formulario.

Sección IV

¿Ha presentado previamente una queja del Título VI con esta agencia? Si ☐ No ☐

Sección V

¿Ha presentado esta queja ante cualquier otro, estatal o agencia local Federal, o ante cualquier tribunal federal o estatal? Si ☐ No ☐

En caso afirmativo, marque todo lo que corresponda:

☐ Agencia federal	_____	☐ Tribunal Federal:	_____
☐ Agencia Estatal:	_____	☐ Tribunal Estatal:	_____
☐ Agencia Local:	_____		

Sección VI

Por favor provea información sobre una persona de contacto en la agencia/tribunal donde se presentó la denuncia.

Nombre:	Título:
Agencia:	Teléfono:
Dirección:	

Puede adjuntar cualquier material escrito o cualquier otra información que usted piensa que es relevante para su queja.

Demandante (s) o recurrente (s) Representantes Firma Del: Fecha de la firma:

Por favor envíe este formulario en persona en la dirección abajo, o envíe este formulario a:

Bay County TPO
Leandra Meredith, Coordinador del Título VI
at 418 E Gregory St Ste 100, Pensacola, FL 32502.
(850) 332-7976 Teléfono (850) 637-1923 Fax
leandra.meredith@ecrc.org

Sólo para uso interno:

Fecha De Recibimiento por Bay County TPO:	Fecha De La Investigación Completada:	Investigador Asignado:
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TITLE VI INVESTIGATIONS, COMPLAINTS & LAWSUITS

There have been no Title VI complaints, investigations, or lawsuits filed with the Bay County TPO.

<i>Type of Process</i>	<i>Date*</i>	<i>Summary**</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Action(s) Taken</i>
<i>Investigations</i>				
1.				
<i>Lawsuits</i>				
1.				
<i>Complaints</i>				
1.				

*Month, Day, and Year

**Including basis of complaint: race, color, national origin, sex, age, handicap/disability, income status, retaliation, or other)

LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN

The TPO will seek out and consider the viewpoints of minority, low-income and Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations in the course of conducting public outreach and involvement activities. The TPO's public participation strategy will offer early and continuous opportunities for the public to be involved in the identification of social, economic, and environmental impacts of proposed transportation decisions.

The TPO will ensure that individuals have access to its programs, activities, and services by developing and carrying out the language plan. The TPO will continually assess the language assistance needs of the population to be served. The TPO will use the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) Four-Factor LEP Analysis to determine appropriate measures to provide reasonable and meaningful access to LEP individuals.

The baseline analysis of minority and disadvantaged populations in the Bay County TPO boundary is derived from the U.S. Census Bureau data. The following table and maps provide a county-by-county snapshot.

FOUR-FACTOR ANALYSIS

Factor One: Demographics

The first part of the organization's self-assessment involves data on the number of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons eligible to be served, likely to be served, or likely to be encountered by the organization through programs, services, or activities. The Bay County TPO collects data related to language from several sources. The broadest data available to the organization is compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau in the American Community Survey.

Persons Speaking English "not well" or "not at all" (Age 5+)
TPO Area Total
2.8%

Of persons that speak a language other than English, data on the percentage of those individuals who also reported they speak English "less than very well" is of particular importance in identifying those likely to be encountered by the organization or eligible for language assistance.

English Language Proficiency for Bay County Area Residents			
Language Spoken	Person Speaking English Not Well	% of LEP Population	% of Bay County Area Population Age 5+
Spanish	3,622	73.6%	2.1%
Other Indo-European Languages	652	13.2%	0.4%
Asian and Pacific Island Languages	467	9.5%	0.3%
Other Languages - Various	180	3.7%	0.1%
Total	4,921	100.0%	2.8%

Based on the information in the table above, Spanish and European languages are the highest LEP population of individuals in each category. Due to the diversity of these languages, the TPO will provide translated material upon request in a timely and efficient manner. The TPO will provide Spanish translated material for core documents and outreach material.

Additional Data:

The Bay County TPO maintains records of additional data to track limited English proficiency needs. Though results are not formal, the data does provide a timely snapshot of current requests and activities related to language assistance. Given the time between U.S. Census Bureau reports, this information can provide a timelier indication of shifts in the community's demographic makeup.

Years	Category	Results
2022-2025	Public Hearing: Request for translation	0
2022-2025	Public Hearing: Comments submitted in a language other than English	0
2022-2025	General Inquiries: Request for information in another language	0

Factor Two: Frequency of Contact

Though the Bay County TPO has regular public hearings, board meetings and committee meetings throughout the year, community outreach is the main source of contact (or potential contact) between the organization and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Persons. As a result, the frequency of contact is difficult to anticipate.

The organization's Public Involvement Plan notes a special emphasis on community outreach opportunities that engage traditionally underserved populations.

Contact Initiated/Administered by the Bay County TPO		
Program/Activity	Frequency	Resources Available
Board Meetings	Every Other Month	Bilingual employee, Special assistance notice in meeting public notice, LEP notice on all agendas, case-by-case response
Committee Meetings	Every Other Month	Bilingual employee, Special assistance notice in meeting public notice, LEP notice on all agendas, case-by-case response
Community Events	The Bay County strives to do at least two community events per year.	Bilingual employee, Spanish language material, "I speak" Cards
Public Hearings/Workshops	Depends on project	Bilingual employee, Special assistance notice in meeting public notice, LEP notice on all agendas, case-by-case response

Factor Three: Importance of Program

Transportation planning organizations receive funds to develop transportation plans for a designated urban area. The planning process is guided by federal and state law, including public involvement requirements to ensure diverse public outreach, notice, and opportunities for input.

The planning process does not include any direct service or program that requires vital, immediate or emergency assistance, such as medical treatment or services for basic needs (like food or shelter). Additionally, Bay County TPO does not require documents, such as completed application, for public participation. However, determining whether materials, information, and/or notification related to an action is “vital”, the absence of direct services or application requirements is not the only consideration.

Future transportation projects and investments are shaped by three distinct plans developed by the Bay County TPO:

- 1. Transportation Improvement Program**
- 2. Long Range Transportation Plan**
- 3. Unified Planning Work Program**

Given the impact of these plans on northwest Florida’s future transportation system, the Bay County TPO places a special emphasis on language assistance for educational materials and public input tools related to the Transportation Improvement Program, the Long Range Transportation Plan, and the Unified Planning Work Program. These tools are often helpful with outreach related to other programs and studies.

While meaningful access for all participants and the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population is the intent behind services identified in this plan, the availability of resources may limit the language services in some areas. Additionally, services provided one year may not be possible in a future year because of available resources.

Language assistance involving notification of services, translation of public input forms and/or surveys related to a formal public hearing, and maintenance of the translated documents online have high priority. Other activities, such as community events, optional meetings, and specialized speakers have a lower priority if/when resources preclude the organization from executing all language assistance options.

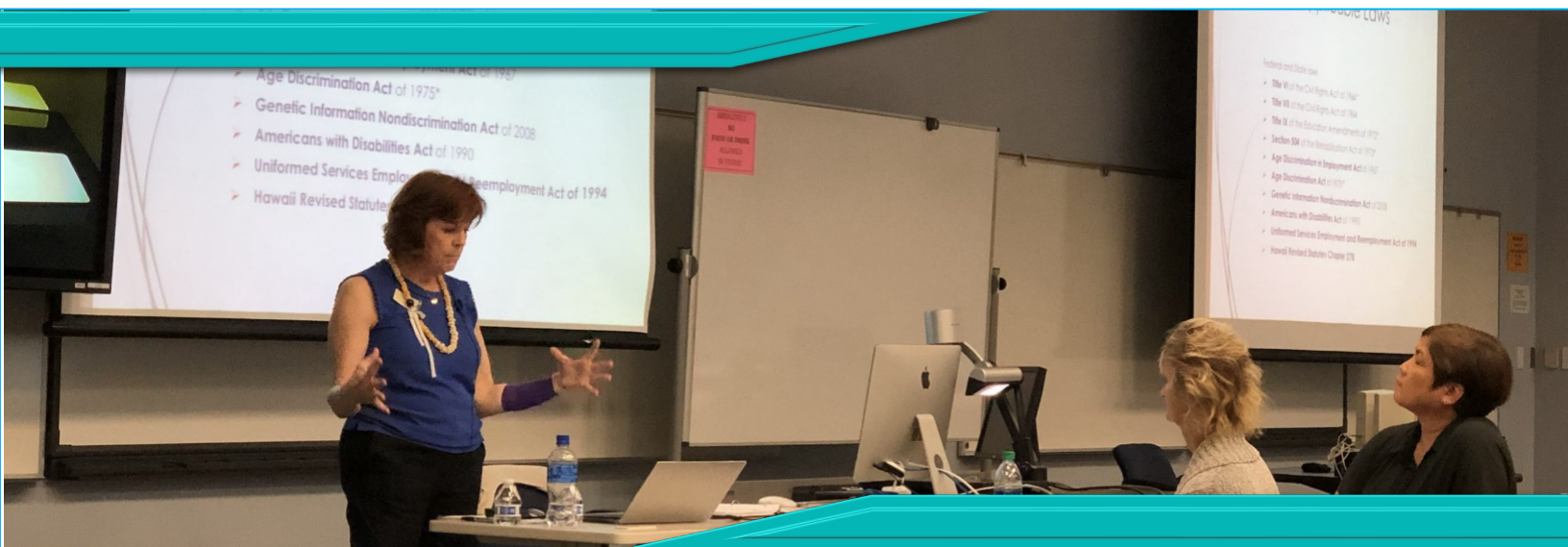
Factor Four: Resources

In developing the Limited English Proficiency Plan, the Bay County TPO has identified resources for potential recipients and associated costs for services. The organization maintains a file with specific contact information for service providers and volunteer-based programs, allowing timely updates. Costs are often determined by the type and scope of services provided. As a result, some resources list “indeterminable” as an associated cost until a specific project is identified.

Resources and Associated Cost		
Resource	Associated Cost	Application
Translation (General)	\$29.00 per page *estimate	Translation services for standard forms and documents. -Outside services and bilingual staff
Interpretation Services	\$75-\$100 per hour *Minimum of 2 hours	Services for public meetings. -Outside services and bilingual staff
Notice	Indeterminable	Notification of availability of free language services to LEP persons is included within meeting notices. Notification is also sent to other language publications in the TPO area.
“I Speak” Cards	Printing Cost, Vary	“I Speak” cards are available at all outreach events and public meetings.

Title VI Training

A region-wide Title VI training is held every other year for TPO and local municipal staff. This training traditionally provides an overview of Title VI policy, updated requirements, and real-world exercises. Annually, staff reviews the Title VI program and provides updated resources, policy, and procedure to internal staff. Annual review details can be found on page 33 of this document.



LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE

The Language Assistance Plan provides an implementation process to address appropriate language needs identified in the organization's self-assessment, completed in the previous section of this document.

Goals

- Provide meaningful access to vital Bay County TPO programs and services for the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population identified using the four-factor analysis presented in the previous section of this document.
- identify various resources, with or without associated costs, to ensure the organization can balance meaningful access to programs and services, while not incurring undue burdens on financial resources.
- Complete plan updates every three years and staff reviews annually to ensure resources identified remain consistent with identified needs.

Services and Resources		
Area	Service	Description
Notification	Print Publication	Special assistance notice in public meeting notices, LEP-specific notice on all agendas, targeted ads in other language publications (when vital)
	Website	LEP-specific notice webpage and on TPO webpage
	Internal Partners	Access to notification resources of all members of the Bay County TPO partnership
	Direct Mail	On request, ability to customize direct mail by requested language
Outreach Material	General Brochures	General information brochures available in Spanish or other languages upon requested
	Community Survey	Customized language specific surveys available upon request
	Targeted Forms	Complaint form available in Spanish, "I Speak" cards available to identify additional language needs
Public Hearing	Overview Material	Bilingual employees, Spanish language brochures, Spanish language forms, news release for public hearings send to other language publications, "I Speak" cards
Bilingual Employees	Miscellaneous	Currently the Bay County TPO has two bilingual employees on staff who communicate in English and Spanish

Outside Translation Providers

Bay County TPO staff maintains a more detailed list of contact information for translation and ADA services. A brief list is below:

Outside Translation/Service Provider	
Provider	Service/Translation Provided
Sign Language Services, Inc.	Sign Language Interpretation
Disability Resource Center (Panama City)	Sign Language Interpretation
Connect: Sign Language Interpreters	Sign Language Interpretation
Professional Interpreting Service for the Deaf, Inc.	Sign Language Interpretation
Alliance Services	Document Translation (any language)
Technical Translation	Document Translation (any language)
Escambia County Area Transit	ADA Information
Center for Independent Living	ADA Information
UWF Student Disability Center	ADA Information
Escambia County	ADA and Community Information

Updates done annually will include verifying information on this list.



ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

The Bay County TPO staff must assess the effectiveness of Title VI and LEP procedures and strategies to ensure that funds and time are well invested, and public participation goals are achieved without discrimination. It is standard practice that all TPO plans and programs require an evaluation of public outreach activities on a quarterly basis. If the assessment reveals that the public participation goals are not being achieved, the techniques may be modified or changed. Quarterly assessment meetings are held internally for transportation and other program staff to assess all outreach opportunities and plan or program specific goals. The assessment meetings give staff an opportunity to develop, evaluate, and modify goals. The Title VI Program will be evaluated on an annual basis in coordination with public outreach.

TITLE VI EVALUATION METRICS

The Bay County TPO's Title VI activities can be evaluated through numerous methods. Currently, the TPO tracks the following metrics:

- Number of complaints received
- Number of translation requests received
- Number of special population outreach opportunities
- Estimated special population reach

ANNUAL REVIEW AND UPDATES

This plan will be updated every three (3) years to: (1) ensure compliance with federal and state law, (2) update demographic statistics to accurately track northwest Florida's population and language needs, (3) confirm the Bay County TPO's commitment to providing services for persons with limited English proficiency, and (4) provide an assessment of the plan's effectiveness in addressing nondiscrimination objectives. The plan will be reviewed annually by staff to ensure effectiveness and to implement minor updates, as needed. This annual review is done by using the Annual Title VI Program Review Checklist found in appendix II of this document.



APPENDIX I: SIGNED RESOLUTION

Placeholder

APPENDIX II: ANNUAL TITLE VI PROGRAM REVIEW CHECKLIST

Annual Title VI/ADA and LEP Review Checklist

___Has the information been placed in a visible location?

Actions taken to comply:

___If such information is available, are staff members aware that they have this information?

Actions taken to comply:

___Are announcements and virtual attendee dialogue audible?

Actions taken to comply:

___Are any announcements, such as security awareness announcements, able to be made in languages other than English?

Actions taken to comply:

___Does the station display information or instructions using pictographs?

Actions taken to comply:

___Are "I Speak" cards taken to community meetings?

Actions taken to comply:

___Are translated versions of any written materials available on request?

Actions taken to comply:

___Can members of the public provide oral as well as written comments?

Actions taken to comply:

___Do meeting notices, press releases, and public service announcements include the translation services statement?

Actions taken to comply:

___Does the agency website have a link to requesting translation service request on its home page?

Actions taken to comply:

___Does the agency have the most current LEP data available reflected in the process plan?

Actions taken to comply:

___Is the current plan still effective for the current LEP data?

Actions taken to comply:

Title VI Coordinator: _____ Date of Review: _____

APPENDIX III: DEFINITIONS

Adverse Effect means having a harmful or undesired effect.

Age means the length of existence extending from the beginning to any given time.

Color means the natural appearance of a person's skin.

Disability means a condition of being unable to perform a task or function because of a physical or mental impairment.

Discrimination refers to any act or inaction, whether intentional or unintentional, in any program or activity of a Federal aid recipient, sub-recipient, or contractor that results in disparate treatment, disparate impact, or perpetuates the effects of prior discrimination based on race, color, or national origin.

Handicap means a person who has some condition that markedly restricts their ability to function physically or mentally or socially.

Income means the amount of money or its equivalent received during a period of time in exchange for labor or services, from the sale of goods or property, or as profit from financial investments.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons are individuals for whom English is not their primary language and who have a limited ability to speak, understand, read, or write English. It includes people who reported to the U.S. Census that they do not speak English well or do not speak English at all.

Low-Income Population means any readily identifiable groups of low-income individuals who live in geographic proximity, and if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed transient persons who will be similarly affected by a proposed DOT program, policy, or activity.

A Minority Person is a citizen of the United States whose race or ethnicity is a non-dominant race within the group. In the United States, racial/ethnic minorities are generally considered to include Hispanic/Latinos, African Americans, Asians, Native Americans, Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, and those of two or more races.

African American or Black is a US citizen who has origins in any of the African racial groups of Africa and is regarded as such by the community of which the person claims to be a part.

American Indian and Alaska Native, which refers to people having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Asian, which refers to people having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent.

Hispanic or Latino, which includes people of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders, which refers to people having origins in any of the original people of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

National Origin means the particular nation in which a person was born, or where the person's parents or ancestors were born.

Race A term used to describe a group of people who share physical characteristics, such as skin color and facial features. They may also share similar social or cultural identities and ancestral backgrounds. There are many racial groups, and a person may belong to or identify with more than one group.

Recipient means one that has received or is receiving Federal financial assistance. The term includes sub-recipients of a recipient and sub-recipients in FTA State administered programs.

Retaliation is any adverse action taken against another individual because of his/her participation in the complaint, investigation, or hearing relating to this policy or the provision of federal or state law.

Sex means the differentiation between a male and female with reference to the reproductive organs.

Vital Documents are documents that convey information that critically affects the ability of the customer to make informed decisions about his/her participation in the program (e.g., public notices, consent forms, complaint forms, eligibility rules, notices pertaining to the reduction, denial or termination of services or benefits, right to appeal, and notices informing customers of the availability of free language assistance).

APPENDIX IV: BAY COUNTY TPO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

The 2026 Bay County Public Participation Plan is currently being updated. The Draft 2026 Public Participation Plan will be uploaded to the Emerald Coast Regional Council website on August 20, 2026 for public viewing. Visit the [Bay County Marketing and Outreach Page](#) to learn more.



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

DRAFT - UPDATED AUGUST 2026

CONTACT: MARKETING AND OUTREACH, MARKETING@ECRC.ORG
P.O. BOX 11399, PENSACOLA, FL, 32524 | 850-332-7976

Title VI and Non-Discrimination Policy Statement



The Bay County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) is the metropolitan planning organization for Bay County. As a metropolitan planning organization, the Bay County TPO provides a forum for local elected officials, transportation experts, and citizens to work together to improve mobility for residents, businesses, and visitors. Recipients of federal funds, such as metropolitan planning organizations, must comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other nondiscrimination authorities. This ensures that no person is subjected to discrimination on the basis of: race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, and/or family status in employment and/or the provision of government services. This requirement includes the creation of a Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan, along with a regular review of effectiveness and conformity with federal and state law.

The Bay County TPO Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan works parallel to the TPO's Public Involvement Plan which identifies specific tactics for outreach and involvement (i.e. notification, information, and opportunities for diverse participation).

The Bay County TPO is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any of its programs, activities, or services on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, and/or family status. All persons, regardless of their citizenship, are covered under this regulation. In addition, the TPO prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, and/or family status in its employment and business opportunities.

The Bay County TPO will not condone retaliation against an individual for asserting his/her rights pursuant to Title VI or because he/she filed a complaint or participated in an investigation under Title VI, and/or this regulation.

The Bay County TPO will maintain a list of any Title VI investigations, complaints, or lawsuits filed which allege the TPO discriminated against a person or group on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, and/or family status. This list will include: The date the investigation, complaint, or lawsuit was filed; A summary of the allegation(s); The status of the investigation, complaint, or lawsuit; and Any actions or corrective actions taken by the TPO in response to the investigation, complaint, or lawsuit.

The Bay County TPO will ensure that the level and quality of its transportation service is provided without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, and/or family status.

The Bay County TPO will promote the full and fair participation of all affected populations in the transportation decision-making process.

The Bay County TPO will make good faith efforts to achieve environmental justice as part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, activities, and services on minority populations and low-income populations within the TPO service area as provided herein.