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www.slorta.org

SAN LUIS OBISPO REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

TITLE VI PLAN

ADOPTED: May 4, 2022

AUGUST 1, 2022 – JULY 31, 2024

Contact Information:

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The Regional Transit Authority is a Joint Powers Agency serving residents and visitors of:
Arroyo Grande Atascadero Grover Beach Morro Bay Paso Robles Pismo Beach San Luis Obispo and The County of San Luis Obispo

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TITLE VI PLAN

I. PLAN STATEMENT

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Specifically, Title VI provides that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d).

The San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA) is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1.B.

This plan was developed to guide the RTA in its administration and management of Title VI-related activities.

Title VI Coordinator Contact information:
Deputy Director/Chief Financial Officer
San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority
253 Elks Lane
San Luis Obispo, California 93401

II. TITLE VI INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Title VI information posters is prominently and publicly displayed in the RTA facility and on their revenue vehicles (a copy is in Appendix I). The name of the Title VI coordinator is available on the RTA website, at www.slorta.org . Additional information relating to nondiscrimination obligation can be obtained from the RTA Title VI Coordinator.

Title VI information is disseminated to the RTA employees annually via the Employee Education form (see Appendix A) in payroll envelopes. This form reminds employees of the RTA's policy statement, and of their Title VI responsibilities in their daily work and duties.

During New Employee Orientation, new employees are informed of the provisions of Title VI, and the RTA's expectations to perform their duties accordingly.

All employees have been provided a copy of the Title VI Plan and are required to sign the Acknowledgement of Receipt (see Appendix B).

III. SUBCONTRACTS AND VENDORS

All subcontractors and vendors who receive payments from the RTA where funding originates from any federal assistance are subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended.

Written contracts shall contain non-discrimination language, either directly or through the bid specification package which becomes an associated component of the contract.

IV. RECORD KEEPING

The Title VI Coordinator has maintained permanent records, which include, but are not limited to, signed acknowledgements of receipt from the employees indicating the receipt of the RTA's Title VI Plan, copies of Title VI complaints or lawsuits and related documentation, and records of correspondence to and from complainants, and Title VI investigations if any.

V. TITLE VI COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

How to file a Title VI Complaint?

The complainant may file a signed, written complaint up to thirty (30) days from the date of the alleged discrimination. The complaint should include the following information:

- Your name, mailing address, and how to contact you (i.e., telephone number, email address, etc.)
- How, when, where and why you believe you were discriminated against. Include the location, names and contact information of any witnesses.
- Other information that you deem significant.

The Title VI Complaint Form (see Appendix C, and also on the RTA Civil Rights website: <http://www.slorta.org/about-rta/civil-rights-information/>) may be used to submit the complaint information. The complaint may be filed in writing with the RTA at the following address:

**Title VI Coordinator
Deputy Director/Chief Financial Officer
San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority
253 Elks Lane
San Luis Obispo, California 93401**

NOTE: The RTA encourages all complainants to certify all mail that is sent through the U.S. Postal Service and/or ensure that all written correspondence can be tracked easily. For complaints originally submitted by facsimile, an original, signed copy of the complaint must be mailed to the Title VI Coordinator as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days from the alleged date of discrimination. This form is also available on the RTA website.

What happens to the complaint after it is submitted?

All complaints alleging discrimination based on race, color or national origin in a service or benefit provided by the RTA will be directly addressed by the RTA. The RTA shall also provide appropriate assistance to complainants, including those persons with disabilities, or who are limited in their ability to communicate in English. Additionally, the RTA shall make every effort to address all complaints in an expeditious and thorough manner.

1. A letter of acknowledging receipt of complaint will be mailed within thirty (30) days (Appendix D). Please note that in responding to any requests for additional information, a complainant's failure to provide the requested information may result in the administrative closure of the complaint.
2. The RTA will advise the US Department of Transportation within thirty (30) days of receipt of the allegations. The following information will be included in the notification:
 - a. Name, address and phone number of the complainant
 - b. Names(s) and address(es) of the alleged discriminating official(s)
 - c. Basis of the complaint (i.e. race, color or national origin)
 - d. Date when the alleged discrimination took place
 - e. Date when complaint was received by the RTA
 - f. A statement of the complaint
 - g. Other agencies (state, local or federal) where the complaint has been filed
 - h. An explanation of the planned investigative process that the RTA plans to take to resolve the issue in the complaint
3. Within forty-five (45) days of the receipt of the complaint, the Title VI Coordinator will conduct an investigation of the allegation and, based on the information obtained, will offer a recommendation for action in a report to the Executive Director. The complaint should be resolved in an informal way when possible and which will be recorded in the summarized report of the findings.
4. Within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the complaint, the Title VI Coordinator will send a final written response letter (see Appendix E or F) to the complainant. In the letter notifying complainant that the complaint is not substantiated (Appendix F), the complainant is also advised of his or her right to 1) appeal within seven calendar days of receipt of the final written decision from the RTA, and/or 2) file a complaint externally with the U.S. Department of Transportation and/or the FTA. Every effort will be made to respond to Title VI complaints within sixty (60) working days of receipt of such complaints, if not sooner. A copy of the final written response will be provided to the US Department of Transportation.

In addition to the complaint process described above, a complainant may file a Title VI complaint with the following offices:

**Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights
Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator
East Building, 5th Floor – TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590**

What is the tracking system?

The RTA's Title VI Coordinator will maintain a Complaint Intake Log for all Title VI complaints received establishing the race, color, or national origin or protected class of the complainant; the identity of the recipient; the nature of the complaint; the date of the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint; a summary of the allegations; the status of the investigation, lawsuit or complaint; and actions taken in response to the investigation, lawsuit or complaint. This log will be maintained electronically in accordance with FTA guidance at the RTA offices and will be available for review.

VI. LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) PLAN

The RTA has developed a Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP) to help identify reasonable steps to provide language assistance for LEP persons seeking meaningful access to RTA services as required by Executive Order 13166. A Limited English Proficiency person is one who does not speak English as their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. This plan has detail procedures on how to identify a person who may need language assistance, the ways in which assistance may be provided, training staff, how to notify LEP persons that assistance is available, and information for future plan updates. In developing the plan RTA's determined the extent of obligation to provide LEP services, the RTA has undertaken the U.S. Department of Transportation four factor LEP analysis which considers the following factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible in the RTA service area who maybe served or likely to encounter an RTA program, activity, or service;
2. The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with an RTA service;
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity or service provided by the RTA to the LEP population; and
4. The resources available to RTA and overall costs to provide LEP assistance. See Appendix K for the LEP Plan.

Vital documents, as defined by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and are considered vital by the RTA, are those documents that provide access to essential services and include but are not limited to schedules, ride guides and public hearing notices. The Title VI complaint form and notice of a person's rights under Title VI are also considered vital documents. All vital documents translated into Spanish will be available via the RTA's website, by mail, or in person at the RTA's office.

VII. COMMUNITY OUTREACH/PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

As a recipient of Federal transportation funding from the FTA, the RTA is required to develop a Public Participation Plan (PPP) in accordance with 49 U.S.C Section 5307. The RTA, in collaboration with the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG), informs the public of service changes and other important activities which pertain to the RTA's service through a specific dissemination process. The following outlines the strategies and procedures that the RTA uses to encourage and include public participation in its decision-making process.

The RTA holds public meetings bi-monthly. At these meetings the public is welcome to attend and share in discussion with a variety of Community Outreach discussions. Additionally, the RTA works with the other transit agencies in the service area and other stakeholder organizations to review and discuss the planning and have involvement in the decision making process. The RTA from time to time have do on-board survey hand-outs to customers for their feedback about a variety of issues.

Public Hearing and Comment Period for Fare Increase or Major Service Change

The RTA shall maintain an open and participative process including the consideration of public comment before any fare increase or major service change. The RTA has a policy and procedure for public comment regarding fare or service changes which is included in Appendix H.

Public Noticing Requirements

Public notices shall inform the public of proposed actions which initiated the public comment process, how comments will be received, and, if applicable, the locations, dates, and times of scheduled public hearings or workshops. Prior to any public hearing or comment period, a public notice will be prepared and sent to the local media. At a minimum, this legal notice will be published in the local newspaper of general circulation. The RTA will also post a copy of the public notice, along with dates and times of any public hearing or workshop, on the RTA's public website. In addition, notices may be posted on any bus or transit facility to further inform the public of an opportunity to participate in any fare increase or major service change decision making process. Transit riders of routes proposed for adjustment will be further notified of the public comment process by an appropriate combination of on-vehicle flyers, posters, pamphlets, electronic rider alerts, e-mails, and other available means as determined by staff for each scenario.

Scheduling Public Hearing or Workshop Locations and Times

As funding allows, transit service adjustments that have system-wide implications may require multiple public meeting times and locations in order to maximize convenience to riders that are affected. To the greatest extent possible, public meetings will be scheduled at locations in proximity to the area(s) affected by the proposed adjustments, and in proximity to regular bus routes. All facilities utilized for public workshop will be accessible to persons with disabilities. All major service changes and fare adjustments shall be adopted at a public hearing of the RTA Board.

When proposed service adjustments will affect only a limited area, efforts will be made to schedule the meeting at a location near the affected area. Meetings will be scheduled to begin at a convenient time, usually midday and/or early evenings.

Procedure for Conducting Public Workshops

Comment forms will be offered to attendees at any public hearing or workshop to register their presence and desire to speak, or as an alternate method of providing their written comments. Public workshops will begin with a welcome and introduction of staff present. The purpose, proceedings, and proposed actions which necessitated the public hearings will be explained for clarification. When the explanation of proposed actions is completed, the public will be invited

to offer their comments. All persons wishing to comment will have the opportunity to do so. This offering will precede the close of the public workshop.

Documentation of Public Hearings

Official records of the RTA's public workshops on fare increases, major service changes, or any unmet transit needs will be generated and presented to the Board of the RTA and SLOCOG at a regularly scheduled meeting. Records of all public comments will be maintained on file.

Addressing Public Comments Received

All comments, received either in writing or verbally during a public hearing, workshop, or comment period, or as otherwise conveyed to the RTA prior to an established date for the Board's decision regarding any proposed major service change or fare increase, will be entered into the public record of the comment process. Staff will evaluate and analyze all relevant comments received to see whether they are reasonable to meet.

Outreach to Engage Minority and Limited English Proficient Populations

The RTA will continue assessing the language needs of citizens in its service area. To the greatest extent possible, to elicit public participation from minority and Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations, the RTA will engage in the following outreach activities:

- Schedule meetings at times and locations that are convenient and accessible for minority and LEP communities
- Employ different meeting sizes and formats
- Coordinate with the community- and faith-based organizations, educational institutions, and other organizations to implement public engagement strategies that reach out specifically to members of affected minority and/or LEP communities
- Consider radio, television, or newspaper ads on stations and in publications that serve LEP populations
- Provide opportunities for public participation through means other than written communication, such as personal interviews or use of audio or video recording devices to capture oral comments.

Summary of Outreach Efforts Made Since Last Title VI Program Submission

Below is a summary of specific outreach efforts made in the last three years (since the last Title VI Program submission):

- January 2020 – Public Hearing on South County Transit Short Range Transit Plan
- February 2020 – participate in SLOCOG Public Hearing: Unmet Transit Needs
- March 2020 - Customer perception survey completed with over 500 responses
- April 2020 – Public Hearing to declare COVID-19 Fiscal Emergency
- April 2020 – Public Hearing with the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors for the RTA incurring indebtedness for the purposes of financing the new bus maintenance facility
- February 2021 – participate in SLOCOG Public Hearing: Unmet Transit Needs
- February 2022 – participate in SLOCOG Public Hearing: Unmet Transit Needs
- Ongoing - Annual Budget Public Hearings

The RTA submits to the California Department of Transportation and Federal Transit Administration annually an application for funding. The application requests funding for both capital and operating assistance. Part of the annual application is a public notice, which includes a 30-day public comment period.

The RTA relies upon the SLOCOG, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to meet the public participation requirements for the Federal Transportation (FTA) Program of Projects (POP).

VIII. ACTIVE INVESTIGATION, LAWSUIT OR COMPLAINT

The RTA has had no active investigations, lawsuits or complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin.

IX. SUBRECIPIENTS MONITORING

Primary recipients shall ensure subrecipients are complying with Title VI. Subrecipient Title VI program shall be submitted every three years in line with the primary recipient's program. Subrecipients will also submit annual complaint logs to primary recipient which will be kept in an electronic storage device for further review by FTA as necessary.

Subrecipients shall submit Title VI Programs to the primary recipient from whom they receive funding, in order to assist the primary recipient in its compliance efforts, on a schedule to be determined by the primary recipient. In the event an entity receives funds from more than one primary recipient, the subrecipient shall submit Title VI Programs to all primary recipients from which it receives funds. Chapters III, IV, V, and VI and appendices detail the specific information that shall be included in Title VI Programs, based on recipient characteristics.

The RTA recognizes the need to monitor their subrecipients' compliance with the FTA circular. The RTA does pass funding to a subrecipient, the City of Atascadero. This relationship necessitates compliance monitoring, which is conducted annually and noted on the subrecipient site visit monitoring form. The City of Atascadero Title VI program was adopted in 2019.

Subrecipient Assistance and Monitoring

The RTA conducts the following subrecipient procedures and protocols to facilitate subrecipient compliance with C4702.1B:

The Grants department will notify subrecipient management of applicable policies and procedures and provide instructions and timelines for how the RTA staff will monitor subrecipients' Title VI compliance in accordance with the FTA circular. The procedures state that the RTA staff will provide any assistance requested to assist subrecipient's full implementation of their program by:

- notifying the subrecipients of their responsibilities;

- offering resources and information as needed, and provide technical assistance as requested, to support subrecipient's development of a Title VI program, including staff support from the RTA;
- checking in monthly until the subrecipient's Title VI program is adopted by their governing body; and
- conducting annual compliance checks to verify subrecipient's compliance with their Title VI program.

X. BOARD DEMOGRAPHICS

RTA Board of Directors is all elected members. Therefore, this does not apply.

XI. EQUITY ANALYSIS FOR BUILDING SITE

The RTA current bus maintenance facility located at 253 Elks Lane, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 and during the planning process, the RTA completed the Equity Analysis which was adopted by the RTA Board on July 10, 2019 which included a public hearing. See Appendix L for the full analysis.

The Executive Summary of that Equity Analysis states:

Prior to constructing new facilities, recipients of federal transportation funding must consider how the location of a proposed facility may impact the affected minority and low-income community. While the impacts of constructing and operating a facility need to be environmentally analyzed for potential impacts, the selection of the site location must also be scrutinized to ensure that the site was selected in a non-discriminatory manner.

As required by Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964, the RTA has conducted a Fixed Facility Equity Analysis intended to ensure that the location of the planned new Bus Maintenance Facility was selected without regard to race, color, or national origin. In addition, as required under Executive Order 12898 *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, staff has completed a parallel review to ensure minority and low-income populations are not disproportionately affected by the selection of the preferred site.

Along with data and studies undertaken as part of the environmental review process, the RTA has determined that the selection of the proposed Bus Maintenance Facility site at 253 Elks Lane in San Luis Obispo would not result in a disparate impact to minority or low-income populations.

XII. RESOLUTION APPROVING TITLE VI PLAN

A copy of this resolution can be found in Appendix J of this Plan.

XIII. SERVICE STANDARDS

Vehicle Load Standards

RTA uses a standard of 1.5 ratio as the maximum vehicle load on a peak trip. The average of all loads during the peak operating period should not exceed vehicles' achievable capacities, which are 36 passengers for a 15' mini-bus, 55 passengers for low-floor 40-foot buses, and 63 passengers for standard 40-foot buses. The exact maximum passenger capacity may be affected by specific manufacturer's recommendations which may be different for certain vehicle types. Demand Response (DR) does not have load standard but we try to maximize boarding to increase efficiencies.

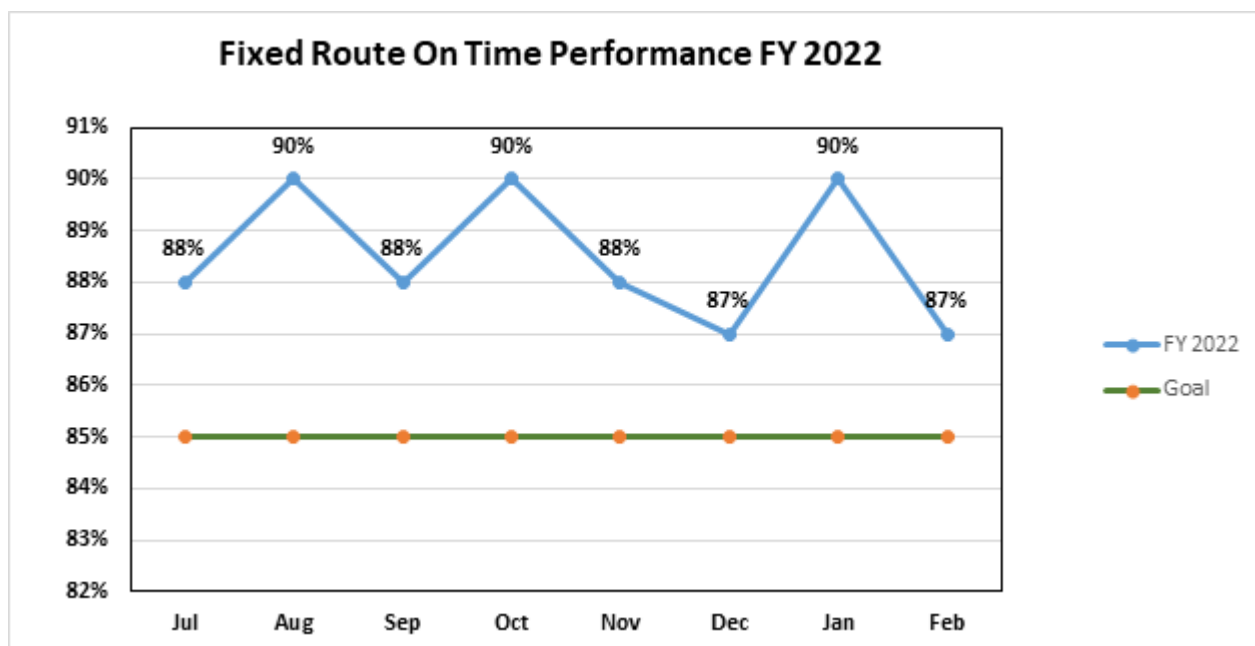
Vehicle Headway Standards

Service operates on regional trunk lines every 60 minutes (more frequently during peak a.m. and p.m. commute times) from early morning to late in the evening, five days a week, with the exception of the less populated North Coast Route #15. On weekends, service operates 5 times per day on Saturdays and 3 times per day on Sundays, throughout RTA's system. DR service does not allow any passenger to be on a vehicle in a single trip more than two hours. The dispatch software parameter is set to flag dispatchers if a trip is close to or will exceed two hours.

Scheduling involves the consideration of a number of factors including: ridership productivity, transit/pedestrian friendly streets, density of transit-dependent population and activities, relationship to the Regional Transportation Plan, relationship to major transportation developments, land use connectivity, and transportation demand management.

On-Time Performance Standards

Fixed route service is considered on-time if at no point the bus is six or more minutes late. With the introduction of the ITS system in 2016, early departures are now being included in the metric. In addition, every published time-point is now being considered, which gave a more realistic and accurate numbers. The result of the increased accuracy is a decline in the performance metric, not necessarily in the overall service quality. The goal is now 85% or greater set by RTA's Strategy Business Plan (SBP) after gaining more reliable information from the ITS system. RTA has met its goal of 85% and will look at adjusting the SBP to 90% in an effort to work at continuing to improving the timeliness of its service.



RTA continuously monitors on-time performance and system results are published and posted as part of monthly performance reports covering all aspects of operations.

DR service is considered on-time if the van arrives within 30 minutes of the appointed pick-up time. The goal is 95% or greater, and Runabout has surpassed this goal in each month of FY 22, achieving an overall OTP result of 98.4%. Staff will continue to monitor Runabout's OTP to ensure we continue to achieve this strong result.

Service Availability Standards

RTA try to distribute transit service so that 100% of all regional fixed route service are within a 3/4 mile walk of intercity bus transfer points.

XIII. SERVICE POLICIES

Vehicle Assignment Policy

Fixed Route bus assignments take into account the operating characteristics of buses of various lengths, which are matched to the operating characteristics of the route. Local routes with lower ridership may be assigned 15-foot buses rather than the 35, 40 or 45-foot buses. Some routes requiring tight turns on narrow streets are operated with 35-foot rather than 40 or 45-foot buses. All fixed route buses are equipped with air conditioning, next stop LCD screens, automated stop announcement systems and CAD/AVL systems.

DR bus assignment take into account the characteristics of the pick-up and drop-off location for each client and whether the clients have a mobility device or not. The DR service is provide in two types of vehicle; Low Floor Minivans and Ford F250 Cutaways.

Transit Amenities Policy

Installation of transit amenities along bus routes are based on the number of passenger boardings at stops and stations along those routes. DR service does not have transit amenities but an assessment is done and reported to dispatch if there are any safety issue when we pick up or drop-off passenger. These issues are then inputted in our dispatch system and is noted on each drivers manifest the service that location.

XV. RTA DOES MEET THE REMAINING CRITERIAS

Demographic and service profile maps and charts

Demographic ridership and travel patterns, collected by surveys

Results of their monitoring program and report, including evidence that the board or other governing entity or official(s) considered, was aware of the results, and approved the analysis

A description of the public engagement process for setting the “major service change policy,” disparate impact policy, and disproportionate burden policy

Results of service and/or fare equity analyses conducted since the last Title VI Program submission, including evidence that the board or other governing entity or official(s) considered, was aware of, and approved the results of the analysis

Appendix A Employee Annual Education Form

Title VI Policy

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

All employees of the RTA are expected to consider, respect, and observe this policy in their daily work and duties. If a citizen approaches you with a question or complaint, direct him or her to the Deputy Director/Chief Financial Officer who is the Title VI Coordinator.

In all dealings with citizens, use courtesy titles (i.e. Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Miss) to address them without regard to race, color or national origin.

Appendix B Acknowledgement of Receipt of Title VI Plan

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority's Title VI Plan. I have read the plan and am committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1.B.

Your signature

Print your name

Date

Appendix C TITLE VI COMPLAINT FORM

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act requires that “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” If you feel you have been discriminated against in transit services, please provide the following information in order to assist us in processing your complaint and sent it to:

Provide address here

Please print clearly:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____ (home) _____ (cell) _____ (work)

Person discriminated against: _____

Address of person discriminated against: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Please indicate why you believe the discrimination occurred:

_____ Race
_____ Color
_____ National Origin

What was the date of the alleged discrimination? _____

Where did the alleged discrimination take place? _____

Please describe the circumstances as you saw it: _____

Please list any and all witnesses' names and phone numbers:

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

☐ Yes ☐ No

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:

☐ Federal Agency: _____

☐ Federal Court _____

☐ State Court _____

☐ State Agency _____

☐ Local Agency _____

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

Name: _____

Title: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Please attach any documents you have which support the allegation. Then date and sign this form and send to the Title VI Coordinator at:

**Title VI Coordinator
Deputy Director/Chief Financial Officer
San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority
253 Elks Lane
San Luis Obispo, California 93401**

Your signature

Date

Print your name

Appendix D Sample Letter Acknowledging Receipt of Complaint

Today's Date

Ms. Jo Doe
1234 Main St.
San Luis Obispo, California 93401

Dear Ms. Doe:

This letter is to acknowledge receipt of your complaint against the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority alleging _____.

An investigation will begin shortly. If you have additional information you wish to convey or questions concerning this matter, please feel free to contact this office by telephoning _____, or write to me at this address.

Sincerely,

**Title VI Coordinator
Deputy Director/Chief Financial Officer
San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority
253 Elks Lane
San Luis Obispo, California 93401**

Appendix E Sample Letter Notifying Complainant that the Complaint Is Substantiated

Today's Date

Ms. Jo Doe
1234 Main St.
San Luis Obispo, California 93401

Dear Ms. Doe:

The matter referenced in your letter of _____ (date) against the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority alleging Title VI violation has been investigated. (An/Several) apparent violation(s) of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, including those mentioned in your letter (was/were) identified. Efforts are underway to correct these deficiencies.

Thank you for calling this important matter to our attention. You were extremely helpful during our review of the program. *(If a hearing is requested, the following sentence may be appropriate.)* You may be hearing from this office, or from federal authorities, if your services should be needed during the administrative hearing process.

Sincerely,

**Title VI Coordinator
Deputy Director/Chief Financial Officer
San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority
253 Elks Lane
San Luis Obispo, California 93401**

Appendix F Sample Letter Notifying Complainant that the Complaint Is Not Substantiated

Today's Date

Ms. Jo Doe
1234 Main St.
San Luis Obispo, California 93401

Dear Ms. Doe:

The matter referenced in your complaint of _____ (date) against the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA) alleging _____ has been investigated.

The results of the investigation did not indicate that the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, had in fact been violated. As you know, Title VI prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in any program receiving federal financial assistance.

The RTA has analyzed the materials and facts pertaining to your case for evidence of the city's failure to comply with any of the civil rights laws. There was no evidence found that any of these laws have been violated.

I therefore advise you that your complaint has not been substantiated, and that I am closing this matter in our files.

You have the right to 1) appeal within seven calendar days of receipt of this final written decision from the RTA, and/or 2) file a complaint externally with the U.S. Department of Transportation and/or the Federal Transit Administration at
Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator
East Building, 5th Floor - TCR 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE Washington, DC 20590

Thank you for taking the time to contact us. If I can be of assistance to you in the future, do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

**Title VI Coordinator
Deputy Director/Chief Financial Officer
San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority
253 Elks Lane
San Luis Obispo, California 93401**

Appendix G Samples of Narrative to be included in Posters to be Displayed in Revenue Vehicles and Facilities

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Specifically, Title VI provides that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d).

The San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1.B. **If you feel you are being denied participation in or being denied benefits of the transit services provided by the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority, or otherwise being discriminated against because of your race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability, you may contact our office at:**

**Title VI Coordinator
Deputy Director/Chief Financial Officer
San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority
253 Elks Lane
San Luis Obispo, California 93401**

For more information, visit our website at www.slorta.org or contact the Title VI Coordinator at (805) 781-4833.

Appendix H **POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING FARE OR SERVICE CHANGES**

ORIGINALLY ADOPTED: September 8, 2012

REVISION DATE: March 7, 2018

The San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA) recognizes the importance of considering public input prior to implementing changes to fares and/or service levels. The RTA hereby establishes procedures through which public input shall be solicited and considered. These procedures comply with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regulations for federally supported transit projects. The RTA transit system is supported in part through funds available through the FTA.

Staff would begin the process of proposing changes by working with City Manager(s) and/or County Public Works officials in affected jurisdictions to identify problems, to develop alternatives, and to ultimately determine the optimal solution(s). This is particularly important in cases where fixed route buses would travel along corridors not currently served or where bus stop changes are being proposed.

The RTA requires solicitation of public comment for the following types of fare or major service changes:

Fare Changes: Any fare increase or decrease is considered a major change and requires solicitation and consideration of public comments.

Fixed Route Service Changes: A change in fixed route transit service is considered a major change if any of the following pertain to the change:

Major Service Restructuring or Realignment: Significant restructuring or realignment of service would include changes to routes that affect at least 25% of the existing route mileage, or relocation or elimination of the existing timed transfer points. Installation of a new bus stop or elimination of existing bus stop is not considered a major service restructuring or realignment.

Major Service Reduction: A major service reduction includes an increase in service headways, decrease in daily operating hours or span of service, or reduction in service days.

ADA Paratransit (Runabout) Service Changes: A change in Runabout service is considered a major change if any of the following pertain to the change:

Service Reduction: A major service reduction is defined as any reduction in span of service (operating hours), reduction in days on which service is available, or reduction in the area served by Runabout.

Service Availability: A major change in service availability is defined as the introduction of revised eligibility criteria for access to the service or introduction of significant changes in procedures for service participation (e.g., introduction of a more rigorous application process).

In all cases defined above, the RTA shall adhere to the following procedures to solicit public input:

- Begin the process of proposing changes by working with City Manager(s) and/or County Public Works officials in affected jurisdictions to determine the optimal solution(s). This is particularly important in cases where fixed route buses would travel along corridors not currently served or where bus stop changes are being proposed.
- Schedule informational meetings to solicit public comment at the Transit Centers during busy boarding times (preferable to busy departure times) and talk to fixed route riders. Staff will include informational materials available for take-away if relevant.
- Inform fixed route riders about upcoming changes on LCD screens on-board the buses, on social media and company website, as well as at top (30) bus stops with email and phone options for feedback. Where appropriate staff will include an online survey for more guided questions and opportunities for analysis.
- Post announcements on fixed route buses and Runabout vans in both English and Spanish.
- Inform group ticket purchasers of changes via phone discussions, including Department of Social Services, school district offices, senior centers, Chamber of Commerce.
- Inform other transit agencies (Morro Bay, SLO Transit, Atascadero, SMAT).
- Schedule a public hearing by the RTA Board of Directors.
- Publish an advertisement in a newspaper or print addition with general local distribution (SLO Tribune, New Times) announcing the public hearing no less than five (5) days prior to the date of the meeting.
- Post announcements of the public hearing in all RTA fixed route or Runabout vehicles at least five (5) days prior to the date of the meeting.
- Present proposed changes at City Councils in affected areas of the County. Present at the County Board of Supervisors as applicable.
- Send letter to Runabout riders who used the service in the previous six months if the change would affect these riders.

- If a fare change is proposed, staff would include information on the “Purchase Passes” section of the RTA webpage.
- Receive and document comments via telephone, email, US mail, text or delivered in person.
- Report in summary format all information received in the public comment process to the RTA Board of Directors as part of the hearing process.

Appendix I Title VI Public Poster

Posters are in all vehicles and the administrative office. They are printed on ledger sized paper (11" x 17") for most locations.

Title VI Policy:



Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states: "No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA) respects civil rights and operates its programs and services without regard to race, color or national origin. RTA is committed to complying with Title VI requirements in all of its programs and services. For more information on the Title VI transit obligations, contact RTA as listed below:

Making a Title VI Complaint

Any person who believes he/she has been subjected to discrimination in the delivery of or access to public transportation services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, may file a complaint with the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority. Such complaint must be filed in writing with RTA no later than 30 days after the alleged discrimination. For information on how to file a complaint, contact RTA as listed below:

CFO/Deputy Director San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority
253 Elks Lane, San Luis Obispo, California 93401 (805) 781-4833

Póliza del Título VI:



Derechos Civiles del Acta de estados de 1964, ninguna persona en los Estados Unidos podrá ser excluida de participar en programas que reciben asistencia financiera Federal, o negar beneficios o ser sujetos a discriminación por causa de raza, color, o origen nacional.

El sistema de tránsito de San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA) respeta los derechos civiles y administra sus programas y servicios sin consideración a raza, color o origen nacional. El sistema de tránsito de San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority(RTA) está comprometido a cumplir en todos sus programas con los requisitos del Título VI.

Para más información de las obligaciones de Tránsito del Título VI comuníquese con el sistema de tránsito de San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA) de acuerdo a la información siguiente:

Para presentar una queja del Título VI:

Qualquier persona que cree que ha sido discriminada en el servicio de o acceso a los servicios de transportación pública a base de raza, color o origen nacional, puede presentar una queja con el sistema de tránsito de San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA). Dicha queja puede ser presentada por escrito con RTA a no más tardar de 30 días después de la supuesta discriminación. Para información como presentar una queja, comuníquese con RTA a la información siguiente:

CFO/Deputy Director, San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority
253 Elks Lane, San Luis Obispo, California 93401, 805-781-4833

Appendix J

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING A TITLE VI POLICY
STATEMENT AND PLAN**

SAN LUIS OBISPO REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

RESOLUTION NO. 22-20

WHEREAS, The San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA) was formed to provide public transportation to all of the citizens of San Luis Obispo County; and

WHEREAS, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance; and

WHEREAS, RTA commits to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any RTA program or activity regardless of the funding source; and

WHEREAS, RTA as the administrative agent for the City of Paso Robles, City of Atascadero, and City of Arroyo Grande and Grover Beach (South County Transit) receives Federal transportation funding;

WHEREAS, RTA receives Federal funding from other agencies that also have Title VI requirements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority approves the proposed Title VI Policy Statement and Plan in order to meet Title VI and attendant federal requirements. The Deputy Director and CFO, in her capacity, will serve as the Title VI Coordinator and is authorized to revise and update the plan as necessary.

Upon motion of Director Headding, seconded by Director Gibson, and on the following roll call, to wit:

AYES: Arnold, Bright, Gibson, Headding, moreno, ortiz-legg, Paudling, Pease, Waage
NOES: none

ABSENT: Compton, Peschong, Strong

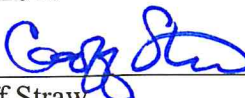
ABSTAINING: none

The foregoing resolution is hereby passed and adopted by the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority of San Luis Obispo County, State of California, at a regular meeting of said Board of Directors held on the 4th day of May 2022.

Resolution No. 22- 20



Edward Waage
President of the RTA Board

ATTEST:



Geoff Straw
Executive Director

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGAL EFFECT:

By: 

Jon Ansolabehere
RTA Counsel

Dated: 5/4/2022
(Original signature in BLUE ink)

Appendix K

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan Revised 5-1-19

Introduction

This Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan has been prepared to address San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority's (RTA) responsibilities as a recipient of federal financial assistance as they relate to the needs of individuals with limited English language skills. The plan has been prepared in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Federal Transit Administration Circular 4702.1B dated October 1, 2012, which state that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin.

Executive Order 13166, titled Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, indicates that differing treatment based upon a person's inability to speak, read, write or understands English is a type of national origin discrimination. It directs each federal agency to publish guidance for its respective recipients clarifying their obligation to ensure that such discrimination does not take place. This order applies to all state and local agencies which receive federal funds.

Plan Summary

RTA has developed this LEP Plan to help identify reasonable steps for providing language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency who wish to access services provided by RTA. As defined in Executive Order 13166, LEP persons are those who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English.

This plan outlines how to identify a person who may need language assistance, the ways in which assistance may be provided, staff training that may be required, and how to notify LEP persons that assistance is available.

In order to prepare this plan, RTA undertook the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) four-factor LEP analysis which considers the following factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served or are likely to encounter a RTA program, activity or service.
2. The frequency with which LEP persons comes in contact with RTA programs, activities or services.
3. The nature and importance of programs, activities or services provided by RTA to the LEP population.
4. The resources available to RTA and overall cost to provide LEP assistance.

A summary of the results of the RTA four-factor analysis is in the following section.

Four-Factor Analysis

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served or are likely to encounter a RTA program, activity or service.

RTA staff reviewed the 2010-2015 America Community Survey Report and determined that 47,780 persons in San Luis Obispo County [18.2% of the population] speak a language other

than English. Of this number, 10,271 persons [4%] have limited English proficiency; that is, they speak English “not well” or “not at all.”

In San Luis Obispo County, of those persons with limited English proficiency, 9,473 speak Spanish or Spanish Creole, 487 speak Asian and Pacific Island languages, and 174 speak other Indo-European languages.

2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with RTA programs, activities or services.

RTA assessed the frequency with which staff and drivers have, or could have, contact with LEP persons. This includes documenting phone inquiries and surveying vehicle operators for requests for interpreters and translated documents. To date, the most frequent contact between LEP persons are with dispatchers. Translated documents have included postings on the buses, relating to fares and transit rules written in Spanish. All schedules and ride guides are also written in Spanish.

3. The nature and importance of programs, activities or services provided by RTA to the LEP population.

The largest proportion of LEP individuals in the RTA service area speaks Spanish. Three concentrated areas have been identified in San Luis Obispo County. The City of Paso Robles and City of Atascadero has 9.8% of adult speakers who speak English less than very well. The City of San Luis Obispo has 5.5% of adult speakers who speak English less than very well. And the City of Nipomo has 11.4% of adult speakers who speak English less than very well. Services provided by RTA that are most likely to encounter LEP individuals are the fixed route system which serves the general public and the demand-response (Dial-A-Ride) system which serves primarily senior and disabled persons.

4. The resources available to RTA and overall cost to provide LEP assistance.

RTA assessed its available resources that could be used for providing LEP assistance, including determining how much a professional interpreter and translation service would cost on an as needed basis, which of its documents would be the most valuable to be translated if the need should arise, and taking an inventory of available organizations that RTA could partner with for outreach and translation efforts. The amount of staff and vehicle operating training that might be needed was also considered. Based on the four-factor analysis, RTA developed its LEP Plan as outlined in the following section.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan Outline

How RTA staff may identify a LEP person who needs language assistance:

1. Examine records to see if requests for language assistance have been received in the past, either at meetings or over the phone, to determine whether language assistance might be needed at future events or meetings.
2. Have a staff person greet participants as they arrive at RTA sponsored events. By informally engaging participants in conversation it is possible to gauge each attendee's ability to speak and understand English.
3. Have Census Bureau Language Identification Flashcards available at RTA meetings. This will assist RTA in identifying language assistance needs for future events and meetings.
4. Have Census Bureau Language Identification Flashcards on all transit vehicles to assist vehicle operators in identifying specific language assistance needs of passengers. If such individuals are encountered; vehicle operators will be instructed to try to obtain contact information to give to RTA's management for follow-up.
5. Vehicle operators and other front-line staff, like dispatchers, dial-a-ride schedulers, and service development planners, will be surveyed annually on their experience concerning any contacts with LEP persons during the previous year.

Language Assistance Measures

There are numerous language assistance measures available to LEP persons, including both oral and written language services. There are also various ways in which RTA staff responds to LEP persons, whether in person, by telephone or in writing.

- RTA will provide Hispanic Education and Outreach Programs which will continue to provide vital information to LEP groups on RTA programs and services;
- Network with local human service organizations that provide services to LEP individuals and seek opportunities to provide information on RTA programs and services;
- Provide a bilingual Community Outreach Coordinator at community events, public hearings and Board of Director meetings. Placement of statements in notices and publications that interpreter services are available for these meetings, with 48 hours advance notice per Brown Act;
- Survey bus drivers and other front-line staff, like dispatchers, dial-a-ride schedulers, and service development planners, bi-annually on their experience concerning any contacts with LEP persons during the previous year;

- Provide Language Identification Flashcards onboard the RTA fleet, in Road Supervisor vehicles and at transit systems administrative offices;
- Post the RTA Title VI Policy and LEP Plan on the agency website, www.slorta.org;
- Provide group travel training to LEP persons with the assistance of bilingual staff;
- Include language “Spanish a plus” on bus driver recruitment flyers and onboard recruitment posters;
- When an interpreter is needed for a language other than Spanish, in person or on the telephone, staff will attempt to access language assistance services from a professional translation service or qualified community volunteers. A list of volunteers will need to be developed.

Staff Training

The following training will be provided to RTA staff:

1. Information on the RTA Title VI Procedures and LEP responsibilities
2. Description of language assistance services offered to the public
3. Use of Language Identification Flashcards
4. Documentation of language assistance requests
5. How to handle a potential Title VI/LEP complaint?

Outreach Techniques

When staff prepares a document or schedules a meeting, for which the target audience is expected to include LEP individuals, then documents, meeting notices, flyers, and agendas will be printed in an alternative language based on the known LEP population. Interpreters may be available as needed.

Monitoring and Updating the LEP Plan

RTA will update the LEP as required by U.S. DOT. At minimum, the plan will be reviewed and updated when data from the 2019 America Community Survey Report is available, or when it is clear that higher concentrations of LEP individuals are present in the RTA service area. Updates will include the following:

- The number of documented LEP person contacts encountered annually
- How the needs of LEP persons have been addressed?
- Determination of the current LEP population in the service area
- Determination as to whether the need for translation services has changed
- Determine whether local language assistance programs have been effective and sufficient to meet the need
- Determine whether RTA’s financial resources are sufficient to fund language assistance resources needed
- Determine whether RTA has fully complied with the goals of this LEP Plan

- Determine whether complaints have been received concerning RTA's failure to meet the needs of LEP individuals

Dissemination of the RTA LEP Plan

A link to the RTA LEP Plan and the Title VI Procedures is included on the RTA website at www.slorta.org.

Any person or agency with internet access will be able to access and download the plan from the RTA website. Alternatively, any person or agency may request a copy of the plan via telephone, fax, mail, or in person and shall be provided a copy of the plan at no cost. LEP individuals may request copies of the plan in translation which RTA will provide, if feasible. Questions or comments regarding the LEP Plan may be submitted to the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority, Title VI Coordinator:

San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority
253 Elks Lane
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Phone: 805-781-4833
Fax: 805-781-1291
Email: tarnold@slorta.org (Title VI Coordinator)

Appendix L Equity Analysis for Planned New Bus Maintenance Facility Adopted July 10, 2019

I. Executive Summary

Prior to constructing new facilities, recipients of federal transportation funding must consider how the location of a proposed facility may impact the affected minority and low-income community. While the impacts of constructing and operating a facility need to be environmentally analyzed for potential impacts, the selection of the site location must also be scrutinized to ensure that the site was selected in a non-discriminatory manner.

As required by Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964, the RTA has conducted a Fixed Facility Equity Analysis intended to ensure that the location of the planned new Bus Maintenance Facility was selected without regard to race, color, or national origin. In addition, as required under Executive Order 12898 *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, staff has completed a parallel review to ensure minority and low-income populations are not disproportionately affected by the selection of the preferred site.

Along with data and studies undertaken as part of the environmental review process, the RTA has determined that the selection of the proposed Bus Maintenance Facility site at 253 Elks Lane in San Luis Obispo would not result in a disparate impact to minority or low-income populations.

II. Background

TITLE VI AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE REQUIREMENTS

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. As a recipient of federal funds, the RTA is required to conduct a Fixed Facility Equity Analysis, highlighted in both the federal Title VI guidance¹ and under Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulation² that is intended to ensure that the location is selected without regard to race, color, or national origin. This analysis must also “give attention to other facilities with similar impacts in the area to determine if any cumulative adverse impacts might result.”

In addition, Executive Order 12898³ *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations* requires DOT recipients to undertake analyses to ensure adverse impacts do not disproportionately impact minority and low-income

¹ FTA Circular C4702.1B

² Title 49 CFR Section 21.9(b)(3) and Appendix C, Section (3) (iv)

³ FTA Circular 4703.1

communities. It should be stressed that disproportionately high and adverse effects, not population size, are the bases for environmental justice. While the minority or low-income population in an area may be small, this does not eliminate the possibility of a disproportionately high and adverse effect of a proposed action. Although we present population size in a latter part of this report, the environmental reviews completed to identify and address impacts/mitigations under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) are an important element of this evaluation.

POLICIES

The RTA has developed policies and procedures to satisfy all requirements established by federal guidance under FTA Circulars C4702.1B and 4703.1. The RTA's policies were established so that no person would be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity provided by the RTA. The policies also provide for meaningful access to programs for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The RTA provides public notice of its policy to uphold and assure full compliance with Title VI on their agency website (<https://www.slorta.org/about-rta/civil-rights-information/#title>).

Information regarding the RTA's Title VI policies and the procedures for filing civil rights complaints are provided in English and Spanish.

PROJECT CONTEXT

The RTA is a Joint Powers Authority created by a Joint Powers Agreement with the County of San Luis Obispo, and the Cities of Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Paso Robles, Grover Beach, Morro Bay, Pismo Beach, and San Luis Obispo. Pursuant to section 6500 et seq. of the California Government Code, a Joint Powers Authority is established when two or more public agencies by agreement jointly exercise any power common to the contracting agencies. The purpose of the Joint Powers Agreement is to enable the RTA to exercise the common powers of the member agencies to own, operate, and administer a county-wide public transportation system within the boundaries and over the territory within the jurisdiction of the Joint Powers Authority. Specifically, the RTA manages regional fixed route and paratransit services throughout San Luis Obispo County and is contracted by the County of San Luis Obispo and the City of Paso Robles to operate and provide services in the unincorporated areas and the Paso Express fixed route and Paso Robles Dial-A-Ride services. Five fixed-route services run throughout the region from as far north as San Miguel and San Simeon to as far south as Orcutt in Santa Barbara County.

In January 2015, the RTA completed the *Siting Analysis Report*, which provided a summary of the RTA's need for a long-term transit administration, operations, and maintenance facility. The report was intended to inform the RTA Board of Directors and the public, and for the RTA Board of Directors to provide RTA staff with direction, regarding the next steps to develop the project. The *Siting Analysis Report* includes a review of the RTA operations and system needs, and a brief review of several alternative sites considered for the facility.

As described in the *Siting Analysis Report* presented to the RTA Board of Directors at its January 7, 2015 meeting, the RTA has determined that the existing transit administration, operations, and maintenance facility in the City of San Luis Obispo will not support expansions in regional transit service and is inadequate to support existing services efficiently. The existing facility does not contain enough bus maintenance bays, sufficient storage space for batteries and tires, or any potential expansion space. The existing facility is also located at 179 Cross Street, several miles from the downtown San Luis Obispo transit center located at corner of Palm Street and Osos Street, resulting in increased travel costs and poor customer service (Refer to Figure 3). As detailed on page B-2-8 and explained in the *Siting Analysis Report*, RTA staff determined the necessary size (in square feet) of each functional area for the maintenance facility using the *Transit Garage Planning Guidelines* model (SG Associates, Inc. 1987). This information was then presented to the RTA Property Subcommittee, which was comprised of two elected Board of Directors members and supported by RTA staff and technical staff members from the City of San Luis Obispo.

SITE SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS

As detailed in the *Siting Analysis Report*, the site selected for development of a permanent operating base for the RTA should meet several criteria. The site should:

- Be located reasonably close to the points at which fixed route buses begin and end revenue service.
- Be large enough to support development of required facilities (about 6.0 acres gross area).
- Be reasonably level, so that extensive grading is not required.
- Have provision of communications, water, electric and sewer service, or access to same.
- Be free of hazardous wastes or be capable of remediation at low cost.
- Be in an area of compatible land uses (preferably industrial or commercial).

The first criterion – location with respect to the start and end points of revenue service – is necessary to minimize non-revenue (“deadhead”) vehicle-miles and vehicle-hours. It should be noted that deadhead operating costs occur daily for the life of the facility. Excess deadhead costs can become large over time and can affect the ability to provide service. The RTA route operations now and projected in the future are concentrated in the San Luis Obispo area, while park-outs will be provided in Paso Robles, Arroyo Grande and Cambria to meet local transportation needs. A facility site within or immediately adjacent to the San Luis Obispo urbanized area is therefore necessary, in order to minimize deadhead costs.

There are a number of factors indicating that the appropriate site is located in the southern portion of San Luis Obispo, or to the west of San Luis Obispo along State Route 1, for the following reasons:

- All of the parcels within or adjacent to the City of San Luis Obispo that are zoned Office, Service-Commercial or Manufacturing are located to the south, relatively close to the Airport.
- A parcel along State Route 1 between San Luis Obispo and Morro Bay might also be largely compatible with surrounding uses.
- While property costs tend to be lower the further one travels from San Luis Obispo city limits, deadhead costs would increase the further a facility is located from the downtown transit center located at Osos/Palm.
- In addition, travel time reliability also tends to decline the further one travels to/from downtown San Luis Obispo. This has been quantitatively demonstrated in the SLOCOG 2014 US-101 Mobility Study.

For these reasons, the search of potential sites was confined to southern/southeastern San Luis Obispo and to land near the County Corporation Yard at Kansas Street / State Route 1.

Potential Sites Examined

A list of potential sites to be examined was developed by RTA staff and reviewed by the RTA Property Subcommittee. The Subcommittee was originally formed during development of the *2006 SLOCOG Moving Toward the Efficiencies of Synergy: Operating Plan and Financial Analysis for a Coordinated Transit Maintenance and Dispatch Facility* report. The Subcommittee continued to meet when it became clear that the RTA's current 2.7 acre leased site at 179 Cross Street in San Luis Obispo would not meet long-term needs of the region.

A total of twelve sites were originally identified by the Subcommittee, and these candidate sites were then reviewed with local real estate professionals and Public Works staff from the city and county. The following eight sites in the City of San Luis Obispo were found to be potentially adequate for current service levels but too small for future planned service levels:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. 2950 Broad Street (3.3 acres) | 5. 4100 Vachell Street (2.6 acres) |
| 2. 3450 Broad Street (3.5 acres) | 6. 2923 & 3021 So. Higuera St. (2.7 acres) |
| 3. 2885 South Higuera Street (2.9 acres) | 7. Orcutt St. at Duncan St. (3.2 acres) |
| 4. 284 South Higuera Street (2.9 acres) | 8. 201 Bridge Street (3.4 acres) |

Based on those evaluations, the twelve original sites were narrowed down to four sites. All of the remaining four sites currently have proper zoning of either Public Facility, Manufacturing, or

Office. Only the Prado site is located in an identified 100-year floodplain. The four sites can be described as:

1. Kansas at State Route 1 in unincorporated San Luis Obispo County (6 acres)
2. 125 Venture Drive in the City of San Luis Obispo (9.3 acres)
3. 4880 Broad Street in the City of San Luis Obispo (5.7 acres)
4. 40 Prado Road in the City of San Luis Obispo (10 acres) – more recently referred to as 253 Elks Lane

Based on a number of factors presented in the *Site Consideration for a RTA Long-Term Garage Facility* document presented to the RTA Board of Directors in January 2015, the 40 Prado Road site was determined to be the most centrally located and economically feasible option that had the fewest impacts on residential areas and vulnerable populations. This document further explains the reasoning for selecting 40 Prado as the preferred site as it relates to impacts to minority and low-income occupants.

PUBLIC PROCESS ON SITE SELECTION

Before taking the site selection to the public, it was necessary to ensure that the site would be available, cost effective, and eligible to receive grant funds or loans for development. As a result, conducting aspects of the site development such as seeking funding, consulting with local planning agencies regarding the ability to construct on the site, and considering the impacts to minority and low-income communities has delayed engaging the public-at-large until it was clear that the site should be further considered. Along with the analysis of adverse impacts to minority residents and businesses, as well as low-income populations, the public engagement process set the stage for environmental clearance.

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE TIMELINE AND/OR ACTIVITIES

The preferred site at 40 Prado is associated with an Initial Study Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) report that was certified by the RTA Board of Directors in September 2017. Additional technical studies are currently being undertaken to document conditions and related data that has changed since the date the original IS/MND was certified, resulting in reduced impacts. More specifically, the RTA has reduced the building size and eliminated two core functions originally identified in the IS/MND (on-site liquid fueling and automated bus wash system). As such, the IS/MND is currently undergoing amendments that will be incorporated into amended state (CEQA) and federal (NEPA) environmental review documents in summer 2019.

III. Project Description

The September 2017 IS/MND report envisioned construction of an approximately 45,000 square-foot, two-story combined administration headquarters and bus maintenance building on the eastern portion of the approximately 6.5 acre project site. However, after further master

planning and preliminary engineering efforts, in March 2019 the building has been reduced from two stories to one, equating to roughly 29,000 square feet. As such, all three functions – administration, bus operations and maintenance – will all be located on one floor, and will include maintenance bays, large- and small-parts storage, clean-room workspace (for high-tech components servicing), offices, a conference room, and employee restrooms, showers, and lockers. The remainder of the project site would be developed for outdoor circulation, storage, servicing, and inspection. The proposed on-site parking would accommodate approximately 67 public transit buses and vans as well as 84 employee and visitor vehicles. In total the developed area proposed for the project remains approximately 4.2 acres. The remaining 2.3 acres is anticipated to be used for the future Prado Road overpass and Elks Lane re-alignment. Construction of the project would require development of the proposed building to withstand a 100-year flood level event.

PREFERRED SITE LOCATION

As described in the September 2017 IS/MND report, the project site is a 6.5-acre parcel (Assessor's Parcel Number [APN] 053-041-071), located at 253 Elks Lane adjacent to the intersection of Elks Lane and Prado Road, in the City of San Luis Obispo, California. The site is regionally accessible from United States Highway 101 (U.S. 101) which runs in the north-south direction, parallel to Elks Lane, west of the site. The project site is within the floodplain of San Luis Obispo Creek located to the east of the site.

The site is currently occupied by a small U-Haul facility, including a building and parking lot, in the southwest corner of the site. The remainder of the property is vacant with scattered ruderal vegetation and most recently used as a leased employee parking/carpool/vanpool center for a distant multi-year construction project. Thus, most of the site was graded and paved for a parking and transportation use. One high-voltage electric power transmission tower is located near the center of the site.

The project site parcel is designated Office in the City of San Luis Obispo General Plan Land Use Element. The site is also located within the General Plan's Sunset Drive-In Theater/Prado Road Area Special Focus Area. According to the City's Zoning Map, the project site is zoned Office with a Planned Development overlay (O-PD). The project site is also located in the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport Land Use Plan Safety Area S-1b, which has been substituted by City overrule for the requirements of the Airport Overlay Zone which are outlined in Chapter 17.57 of the City's Zoning Regulations (Zoning Regulations Section 17.22.010.B).

Existing uses surrounding the site include the following:

West: Elks Lane and U.S. 101, which run in the north-south direction parallel to Elks Lane, are located to the west of the project site. The U.S. 101 northbound on-ramp from Prado Road is located near the southwest corner of the site and runs parallel to the western boundary of the site connecting Prado Road to U.S. 101. Beyond U.S. 101 are a variety of commercial uses zoned Commercial Retail with a Planned Development overlay (C-R-PD).

North: The Sunset Drive-In Theater is located north of the project site with a mobile home park and the San Luis Cemetery (also known as the International Order of Odd Fellows and Lawn Cemeteries) beyond. This area has a General Plan designation of Community Commercial and is zoned Community-Commercial with a Special Focus overlay (C-C-SF).

East: To the east of the project site is the recently completed Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo (CAPSLO) Homeless Services Center. Next to this lot is a storage yard with three existing structures. Two residential structures are located at the east end of the storage yard. A bus stop is planned for the area adjacent to the CAPSLO Homeless Services Center to be served primarily by the municipal transit operator (SLO Transit). The area is zoned Office with a Special Focus overlay (O-SF).

South: The City of San Luis Obispo's corporation yard, which includes the Water Reclamation and Resources Facility (WRRF), is located across Prado Road, directly south of the project site, in the Public Facility (PF) zone. The SLO Transit (local fixed route system) bus maintenance facility is also located within the City's corporation yard. The U.S. 101 northbound off-ramp to Prado Road extends from U.S. 101 in the north-south direction parallel to western boundary of the City's corporation yard property.

IV. Site Selection Process

The RTA closely followed its Environmental Evaluation Policy to complete the CEQA IS/MND Report. The Policy was adopted by the RTA Board of Directors at its May 4, 2016 meeting. While the Policy primarily focuses on environmental reviews required under CEQA, it also provides direction to staff when developing environmental reviews required under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), including requests for Categorical Exclusions (CE) such as the one submitted to the Federal Transit Administration for the Bus Maintenance Facility on September 7, 2017. The Policy identifies public outreach and agency coordination steps, including coordinating input through the State Clearinghouse agency outreach process, County Clerk notification responsibilities, and other outreach requirements.

A draft copy of the CE request and of the draft CEQA IS/MND Report were presented to the RTA Board at its July 12, 2017 meeting. At that meeting, the RTA Board directed staff to open the minimum 30-day public comment period, and to schedule a September 6, 2017 public hearing to consider certifying the CEQA Mitigated Negative Declaration finding. The RTA published notice of the public hearing in The Tribune newspaper on August 23, 2017; this publication has the highest circulation in the county. Working with SLO City Planning Department officials, we sent notification of the public hearing via postcards to persons living within 1,000 feet of the property. Finally, notice of the public hearing was posted at the project site, on our website and on the LCD information screens inside each RTA bus. The State Clearinghouse assigned our project SCH number 2017071040, and the public comment period was officially recognized from July 20, 2017 through August 18, 2017. As detailed in an August 21, 2017 letter from Scott

Morgan, Director of the State Clearinghouse, no comments were submitted by any of the responding agencies through the State Clearinghouse process.

The RTA Board conducted a public hearing on September 6, 2107. Staff provided a summary of public agency and citizen input received, as well as a list of slight language and graphics revisions that were included in the final CEQA IS/MND Report. No persons provided oral or written testimony during the Public Hearing. The RTA Board of Directors voted 11 to 0 in favor of:

1. Certifying the CEQA finding,
2. Authorizing the RTA Executive Director to submit the NEPA Categorical Exclusion request letter, and
3. Authorizing the RTA Executive Director to solicit proposals for design/engineering services for the RTA Bus Maintenance Facility Project.

The RTA publicized the final/amended CEQA IS/MND Report with the County Clerk for 30 days, which completed our CEQA obligations per State law. The County Clerk notice also referenced the fact that the final CEQA Report is posted on our website.

SITE SELECTION GOALS AND RESULTS

In January 2015, the RTA Board accepted the *Siting Analysis Report*, which included evaluations of site functionality, site efficiency and site development. The RTA then competitively procured Environmental Planning Services in February 2016, led by a team from Rincon Consultants to develop the CEQA and NEPA reports. Over the ensuing 15 months, the RTA worked with our consultants, public agency representatives and adjoining neighbors to evaluate any potential impacts of the proposed project. In particular, we worked closely with City of SLO, SLO County Air Pollution Control District, County Regional Airport, and Tribal representatives. A total of fifteen mitigation measures were identified to avoid impacts during preconstruction (four measures), construction (ten measures) and post-construction/operations (one measure). None of the impacts of the new facility would result in avoidable discriminatory impacts based on race, color, or national origin, nor disproportionate impacts on low-income populations.

The goals below include the evaluative measures within each CEQA category. The 40 Prado location (Census Tract Block Group 111.03-2) was selected as the preferred site based on how well it performed against the goals developed by the Property Subcommittee and presented in the *Siting Analysis Report*; the other three alternative site were evaluated but ultimately rejected.

V. Analysis of Adverse Impacts & Effects on Minority and Low-Income Populations

As referenced in the September 2017 IS/MND, the preferred 40 Prado location has been analyzed for impacts in the following 18 areas required under CEQA:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Aesthetics | 10. Land Use Planning |
| 2. Agricultural & Forest Resources | 11. Mineral Resources |
| 3. Air Quality | 12. Noise |
| 4. Biological Resources | 13. Population & Housing |
| 5. Cultural Resources | 14. Public Services |
| 6. Geology & Soils | 15. Transportation |
| 7. Greenhouse Gas Emissions | 16. Tribal Cultural Resources |
| 8. Hazards & Hazardous Materials | 17. Utility & Service Systems |
| 9. Hydrology & Water Quality | 18. Mandatory Findings of Significance |

In addition, the RTA conducted a parallel evaluation of impacts as they relate to areas covered under NEPA. Following certification of the IS/MND, the RTA submitted a request for a Categorical Exclusion (CE) to the FTA Region 9 office on September 7, 2017. The FTA provided a concurrence letter on September 29, 2017. The CE letter details the analysis of potential impacts in the following 16 areas required under NEPA:

1. Metropolitan Planning & Air Quality Conformity
2. Land Use & Zoning
3. Traffic & Parking Impacts
4. Carbon Monoxide, PM2.5 and PM10 Hot Spots
5. Historic & Cultural Resource Impacts
6. Noise & Vibration Impacts
7. Acquisitions & Relocations
8. Hazardous Materials
9. Community Disruption & Environmental Justice Analysis
10. Use of 4(f) Resources
11. Impacts on Wetlands
12. Floodplain Impacts
13. Impacts on Water Quality, Navigable Waterways, and Coastal Zones
14. Impacts on Ecologically-Sensitive Areas & Endangered Species
15. Impacts on Safety & Security
16. Impacts Caused by Construction

The conclusion under both CEQA and NEPA analyses is that the proposed project will have a less-than-significant impact that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. The IS/MND commits the RTA to implement a range of Preconstruction, Construction, and Post-Construction/Operations mitigations to ensure any

adverse impacts are addressed. Although some construction noise and vibration may occur during daylight hours, overall impacts associated with operation of the project on the site would remain similar to current conditions and consistent with the planned use at the site.

For the purposes of environmental justice analysis, federal agencies are required to identify whether a proposed project will possibly have disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority or low-income populations within the proposed project vicinity. The proposed project vicinity, or the affected environment for the environmental justice analysis, consists of the proposed project site and adjacent census blocks. For the purposes on this analysis, an impact is considered to be significant and require mitigation if it would result in any of the following:

Impact 1. Substantially affect employment, industry, or commerce, including requiring the displacement of businesses or farms;

Impact 2. Substantially affect property values or the local tax base;

Impact 3. Substantially, disproportionately affect minority, low-income, elderly, disabled, transit-dependent, or other specific interest group(s); or

Impact 4. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Based on all four of these impact areas, the proposed project will not result in any adverse socioeconomic and environmental justice effects. Additionally, the proposed project would have a beneficial effect to the minority communities in the project vicinity by providing additional employment opportunities.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA USE

Although the project is deemed to have no significant adverse impact to the environment, it is important to further determine if any of the less-than-significant impacts identified in the IS/MND report would disproportionately impact minority or low-income populations near the preferred site. To determine the presence of minority and low-income populations near the four alternative sites, we compiled information at both the 2010 U.S. Census block group level and the 2017 American Community Survey census tract level. A **block group** is a cluster of census blocks, and generally have populations between 600 and 3,000 people; a **census tract** is a cluster of block groups with populations generally between 1,500 and 8,000 people. However, if too few sample cases are reported at the block group level, then that data is not available. This was the case when attempting to evaluate populations living below poverty at the block group level. So all of the data presented for the four alternative sites reflects census tract information; we also present statewide, county and city data for comparison.

Using mapping software, a 1000-foot buffer was drawn around each alternative site that was considered to determine each potentially impacted census tract. Residents falling within the buffer were included for analysis. While 1000-feet may appear to be a fairly large area, it

represents a conservative approach to analysis, as it identifies potential impact areas that may be greater than actually would be impacted. The reader will remember that postcards were sent to all persons living within 1,000 feet during the IS/MND public comment period. No input was received from persons identifying as low-income, although we worked directly with Tribal interests to identify how to mitigate cultural resources that might be discovered during ground-disturbing activities. No other input was received from communities identifying as a minority population.

As shown in Table 2 below, the population in poverty in the census tract that includes the preferred site at 40 Prado (15.6%) is well below the entire City of San Luis Obispo (32.4%), although it is slightly higher than the countywide proportion (13.8%). The proportion is roughly the same as the statewide average (15.1%).

The minority population percentages of three of the four alternative site locations are higher than either the City or the County of San Luis Obispo as a whole, although the proportion of all four sites are well below the statewide average.

Table 1: Poverty and Minority Populations Near Potential Sites				
Location	Population in Poverty	Poverty Percentage	Minority Population	Minority Percentage
<i>Preferred Site: 40 Prado</i> (Census Tract 113.02)	436	15.6%	407	27.9%
Alt Sites 1 & 2: 125 Venture Dr & 4880 Broad (Census Tract 115.03)	400	11.0%	340	15.3%
Alt Site 3: Kansas @ SR-1 (Census Tract 115.04)	38	5.2%	395	29.8%
City of San Luis Obispo	14,899	32.4%	7,180	15.3%
County of San Luis Obispo	36,420	13.8%	39,535	14.1%
State of California	5,773,408	15.1%	15,375,605	39.4%
Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates				

To get a better understanding of minority communities in the area that includes the preferred 40 Prado site, staff evaluated race at the much more detailed 2010 Census block group level. We discovered a relatively high proportion of Hispanic or Latino residents live near the preferred 40 Prado site: 23.0% in Census Tract 111.03 Block Group 2. In comparison, 14.7% of City residents and 20.8% of County resident reported their race as Hispanic or Latino. The statewide average is much higher at 37.6%. Staff mailed a copy of this analysis to the Promotores Collaborative on June 27, 2019 and invited representatives to provide comments in writing or in-person at the July 10th public hearing.

VI. Conclusions

In accordance with both federal and state environmental law and federal guidance, the RTA has conducted focused environmental impact evaluations for the proposed Bus Maintenance Facility Project. This has included both technical studies and analyses associated with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as well as a qualitative site selection evaluation and public review that is required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Based upon the analyses conducted, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to the environment. Additionally, based on the qualitative site selection evaluation and public review of the proposed sites, the site was chosen without regard to race, color or national origin, nor are low-income communities disproportionately impacted.