



CITY OF MONROE
TITLE VI PROGRAM POLICY
Revised Effective December 1, 2010

Ref: FTA Circular 4702.1A Title VI and Title VI Dependent Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to effectively monitor and ensure that the City of Monroe is in compliance with all Federal and State Regulations including FTA Title VI requirements and regulations in order to carry out the provisions of the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Title VI Regulations at 49 CFR Part 21.

Policy:

The City ensures that its programs, policies, and activities comply with the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Title VI regulations. The City is committed to creating and maintaining public transit service that is free of all forms of discrimination. The City will take whatever preventive, corrective and disciplinary action necessary for behavior that violates this policy or the rights and privileges it is designed to protect.

Annual Certification and Assurance:

In order to comply with 49 CFR Section 21.7, and other regulations of the City, every application for financial assistance must be accompanied by an assurance that the applicant will carry out the program in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This requirement shall be fulfilled when the applicant submits its annual certifications and assurances to the FTA. The text of the FTA's annual certifications and assurances is available on FTA's website. The City complies with this instruction annually in order to receive FTA funding.

Notification of Protection Under Title VI:

In order to comply with 49 CFR Section 21.9 (b), and other regulations the City provides information to the public regarding their Title VI obligations and apprise members of the public of the protections against discrimination afforded to them by Title VI.

Complaint Procedures:

In order to comply with 49 CFR Section 21.9 (b), and other regulations the City developed procedures for investigating and tracking Title VI complaints filed against them and make their procedures for filing a complaint available to members of the public upon request. The City's legal department takes complaints and forwards them to the Department of Human Resources which categorizes tracks and develops responses.

Investigations, Complaints, and Lawsuits:

In order to comply with 49 CFR Section 21.9 (b), and other regulations the City's legal department prepares and maintains a list of any active investigations conducted by entities other than the FTA, lawsuits or complaints naming the City wherein they allege discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. This list shall include the date of the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint was filed; a summary of the allegation(s); the status of the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint, and actions taken by the recipient in response to the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint. The City's legal department will maintain these records.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons:

See the City's LEP plan, attached.

Additional Information Upon Request:

At the discretion of the FTA, information other than that required by the references circular may be requested, in writing, from a recipient in order to investigate complaints of discrimination or to resolve concerns about possible noncompliance with Title VI requirements. The Project Manager is available to provide additional information as needed and to respond to any inquiry.

Preparation and Submission of Title VI Program:

FTA and other agencies require recipients to report certain general information to determine their compliance with Title VI. The collection and reporting of this program constitute the recipients' Title VI Program. To ensure compliance with 49 CFR Section 21.9(b), and other regulations the City of Monroe will document its compliance with this chapter by submitting a Title VI Program to the appropriate offices once every three years.

Discrimination:

Any act or omission of an act which would prevent the use of or exclude a person from access to public transportation based on but not limited to race, sex, disability or religion.

Responsibilities:

City employees shall follow these guidelines in a manner that reflect the intent of this policy. Supervisors and managers receiving information regarding violation(s) of this order shall determine if there is any basis for the allegation and shall proceed with resolution as stated in the sections ***Supervisor Responsibility and/or Investigation of Complaints and Appeal Process.***

Supervisor Responsibility:

Each supervisor and manager shall:

- a) Ensure that there are no barriers to service or accommodation that would prevent transit usage or access.
- b) Train subordinates as to what constitutes discrimination and barriers to access.
- c) Take prompt and appropriate action to avoid and minimize the incidence of any form of discrimination.
- d) Notify the Projects Manager in writing of the circumstances surrounding any reported allegations of discrimination no later than the next business day.

Investigation of Complaints and Appeal Process:

Various methods of resolution exist. If a customer feels that his/her accommodation request and/or access to public transportation was denied, he/she may file a complaint through the following process:

- a) Submit a Title VI Complaint Form (see attachment Exhibit B)
- b) Call the Director of HR at (318) 329-2200
- c) Fax written complaint to (318) 329-2280
- d) Email HR at mike.rhymes@ci.monroe.la.us
- e) Visit the City of Monroe located at 401 Lea Joyner Expressway, Monroe, LA.
- f) Mail written complaint to Human Resources, City of Monroe, 401 Lea Joyner Exp.,
Monroe, LA 71210

The Projects Manager will investigate the complaint and make a determination. A formal investigation of the complaint will be confidential and will include but is not limited to details of the specific incident, frequency and dates of occurrences and names of any witnesses. Customer will be notified of resolution.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, an appeal process is available. An appeal request for review of a determination of unlawful denial of access or accommodation to public transportation must be filed, in writing, within 60 calendar days of the incident. The written appeal must include the customer's name, address, and telephone contact number. A statement of reason(s) why the applicant believes the denial of accommodation request or access to public transportation was inappropriate is recommended.

The Director of HR will set a mutually agreed upon time and place for the review process with the applicant and/or representatives within 30 days of request. The applicant can waive personal appearance in preference of a phone review followed by written determination.

The applicant may submit documents or other information to be included with the record and considered in the review process. A record of the review will be kept by the Project Manager. Anyone needing special accommodations may contact the Director of HR at (318) 329-2200 for assistance.

The right of the appellant to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint must not be impaired by the appellant's pursuit of other remedies, such as filing a complaint with the Department of Justice or other appropriate federal agency or the filing of a suit in state or federal court. Use of this procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.

Disposition of Complaints:

Sustained Complaints – If the complaint is substantiated, this policy and procedure prohibiting discrimination will be reviewed with the offender. Appropriate disciplinary action and/or training will be taken pursuant to the City's disciplinary procedures.

Un-sustained Complaints – If there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disapprove the allegation(s), both parties to the complaint will be informed of the reason(s) for the disposition of the complain.

Unfounded Complaint – If it is determined that an act reported pursuant to this policy/procedure did in fact occur, but was lawful and proper within the guidelines established herein, a finding of exonerated shall be made.

David Barnes, Director of Administration



**City of Monroe
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."

These procedures do not deny the right of the complainant to file formal complaints with other State or Federal agencies or to seek private counsel for complaints alleging discrimination. Every effort will be made to obtain early resolution of complaints at the lowest level possible. Any individual, group of individuals or entity that believes they have been subjected to discrimination prohibited under Title VI and related statutes may file a written complaint to the following address:

**Director of Human Resources
City of Monroe
401 Lea Joyner Expressway
Monroe, LA 71210
Phone: (318) 329-2200**

1. Complainant's Name: _____

2. Address: _____

3. City, State, Zip: _____

4. Telephone number: (Home) _____ (Other) _____

5. Name of person discriminated against if someone other than the complainant:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

6. Which of the following best describes the reason you believe the discrimination took place?

a. Race/Color: _____

b. National Origin: _____

7. What date did the alleged discrimination take place? _____

8. In your own words, describe the alleged discrimination. Explain what happened and whom you believe was responsible. Please use the back of this form if additional space is required.

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

Complainant's Signature

Date

If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the City's resolution of the complaint, he/she has the right to file a complaint with the:

Departmental Office of Civil Rights
400 7th Street, S.W., Rm. #10215, S-30
Washington, D.C. 20590

(202) 366-4648
(202) 366-5992
TTY Access: (202) 366-9696
DC Relay: (202) 855-1000



The ADA and City Governments: Common Problems, Evaluation and Solutions

Introduction

Access to civic life by people with disabilities is a fundamental goal of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). To ensure that this goal is met, Title II of the ADA requires State and local governments to make their programs and services accessible to persons with disabilities. This requirement extends not only to physical access at government facilities, programs, and events -- but also to policy changes that governmental entities must make to ensure that all people with disabilities can take part in, and benefit from, the programs and services of State and local governments. In addition, governmental entities must ensure effective communication -- including the provision of necessary auxiliary aids and services -- so that individuals with disabilities can participate in civic life.



Curb ramps providing access to streets and sidewalks are a basic city service.

One important way to ensure that Title II's requirements are being met in cities of all sizes is through self-evaluation, which is required by the ADA regulations. Self-evaluation enables local governments to pinpoint the facilities, programs and services that must be modified or relocated to ensure that local governments are complying with the ADA.

This document contains a sampling of common problems shared by city governments of all sizes that have been identified through the Department of Justice's ongoing enforcement efforts. The document provides examples of common deficiencies and explains how these problems affect persons with disabilities. The document is not intended to be comprehensive or exhaustive.



City programs held in this municipal gazebo are covered by the ADA.

For additional information about the Americans with Disabilities Act's Title II requirements, please contact the Department of Justice ADA Information Line. This free service provides answers to general and technical questions about ADA requirements and free ADA documents, such as Commonly Asked Questions about Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Commonly Asked Questions about the Americans with Disabilities Act and Law Enforcement, Title II Highlights, Access for 9-1-1 and Telephone Emergency Services, the ADA Guide for Small Towns, and the ADA Standards for Accessible Design. You may reach the ADA Information Line at:

800-514-0301 (voice) or 800-514-0383 (TTY)

ADA information is also available on the Department's ADA Home Page on the World Wide Web at:

www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm.

Issue: "Grandfather" Clause or Small Entity Exemption

Common Problem:

City governments may believe that their existing programs and facilities are protected by a "grandfather" clause from having to comply with the requirements of Title II of the ADA. Small municipalities may also believe that are exempt from complying with Title II because of their size.

Result:

Because city governments wrongly believe that a "grandfather" clause or a small entity exemption shields them from complying with Title II of the ADA, they fail to take steps to provide program access or to make modifications to policies, practices, and procedures that are required by law. People with disabilities are unable to gain access to city facilities, programs, services, or activities because of a public entity's reliance on these common misconceptions.

Requirement:

There is no "grandfather" clause in the ADA. However, the law is flexible. City governments must comply with Title II of the ADA, and must provide program access for people with disabilities to the whole range of city services and programs. In providing program access city governments are not required to take any action that would result in a fundamental alteration to the nature of the service, program, or activity in question or that would result in undue financial and administrative burdens. This determination can only be made by the head of the public entity or a designee and must be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion. The determination that undue burden would result must be based on all resources available for use in a program. If an action would result in such an alteration or such burdens, a city government must take any other action that it can to ensure that people with disabilities receive the benefits and services of the program or activity. 28 C.F.R. § 35.150(a)(3).



Cities must remove barriers to provide alternative access to programs and services in existing facilities.

Similarly, there is no exemption from Title II requirements for small municipalities. While public entities that have less than 50 employees are not required to comply with limited sections of the Department of Justice's regulations, such as maintaining self- evaluations on file for three years and designating a grievance procedure for ADA complaints, no general exemption applies. All public entities, regardless of size, must comply with Title II's requirements. 28 C.F.R. § 35.104.

Solution: The City of Monroe provides ADA accessibility to all City facilities

Issue: Program Accessibility

Common Problem:

City governments often have failed to ensure that the whole range of the city's services, municipal buildings, and programs meet Title II's program access requirements.

Result:

People with disabilities are unable to participate in the activities of city government, such as public meetings, unable to attend city functions, and unable to gain access to the city's various programs and services. If a municipal building such as a courthouse is inaccessible, people with disabilities who use wheelchairs are unable to participate in jury duty, attend hearings, and gain access to other services, because doorways are too narrow, restroom facilities are inaccessible, and steps are the only way to get to all or portions of a facility.



D

A ramp was installed to provide access to the city activities conducted in this facility.

Requirement:

Title II requires city governments to ensure that all of their programs, services, and activities, when viewed in their entirety, are accessible to people with disabilities. Program access is intended to remove physical barriers to city services, programs, and activities, but it generally does not require that a city government make each facility, or each part of a facility, accessible. For example, each restroom in a facility need not be made accessible. However, signage directing people with disabilities to the accessible features and spaces in a facility should be provided. Program accessibility may be achieved in a variety of ways. City governments may choose to make structural changes to existing facilities to achieve access. But city governments can also pursue alternatives to structural changes to achieve program accessibility. For example, city governments can move public meetings to accessible buildings and can relocate services for individuals with disabilities to accessible levels or parts of buildings. When choosing between possible methods of program accessibility, however, city governments must give priority to the choices that offer services, programs, and activities in the most integrated setting appropriate. In addition, all newly constructed city facilities must be fully accessible to people with disabilities. 28 C.F.R. §§ 35.149, 35.150, 35.151, 35.163.

Issue: Historically Significant Facilities**Common Problem:**

City governments may believe that they have no duty to make changes to historically significant buildings and facilities to improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

Result:

Many city programs, services, and activities are conducted in buildings that are historically significant. In addition, many cities operate historic preservation programs at historic sites for educational and cultural purposes. If no accessibility changes are made at these facilities and locations, individuals with disabilities are unable to visit and participate in the programs offered. For example, people who use wheelchairs would not be able to reach the courtroom or clerk's office located in a historic nineteenth century courthouse if no physical changes are made to achieve access.

Requirement:

Historically significant facilities are those facilities or properties that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or properties designated as historic under State or local law. Structural changes to these facilities that would threaten or destroy the historical significance of the property or would fundamentally change the program being offered at the historic facility need not be undertaken. Nevertheless, a city must consider alternatives to structural changes in these instances -- including using audio-visual materials to depict the inaccessible portions of the facility and other innovative solutions.



An accessible side entrance was added to this historic facility.

If alterations are being made to a historically significant property, however, these changes must be made in conformance with the ADA Standards for Accessible Design, ("the Standards"), 28 C.F.R. Part 36, § 4.1.7, or the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards, ("UFAS") § 4.1.7, to the maximum extent feasible. If following either set of standards would threaten or destroy the historical significance of the property, alternative standards, which provide a minimal level of access, may be used. This decision must be made in consultation with the appropriate historic advisory board designated in the Standards or UFAS, and interested persons should be invited to participate in the decision-making process. 28 C.F.R. §§ 35.150(b)(2); 35.151(d); Standards § 4.1.7; UFAS § 4.1.7. If these lesser standards would threaten or destroy historically significant features, then the programs or services conducted in the facility must be offered in an alternative accessible manner or location.

Solution: The City of Monroe in its design guideline for Monroe Historic Preservation requires all public buildings to comply with the ADA standards and requirements for accessibility.

Issue: Curb Ramps

Common Problem:

City governments often do not provide necessary curb ramps to ensure that people with disabilities can travel throughout the city in a safe and convenient manner.

Result:

Without the required curb ramps, sidewalk travel in urban areas is dangerous, difficult, and in some cases impossible for people who use wheelchairs, scooters, and other mobility aids. Curb ramps allow people with mobility impairments to gain access to the sidewalks and to pass through center islands in streets. Otherwise, these individuals are forced to travel in streets and roadways and are put in danger or are prevented from reaching their destination.

Requirement:

When streets and roads are newly built or altered, they must have ramps wherever there are curbs or other barriers to entry from a pedestrian walkway. Likewise, when new sidewalks or walkways are built or altered, they must contain curb ramps or sloped areas wherever they intersect with streets or roads. While resurfacing a street or sidewalk is considered an alteration for these purposes, filling in potholes alone will not trigger the alterations requirements. At existing roads and sidewalks that have not been altered, however, city governments may choose to construct curb ramps at every point where a pedestrian walkway intersects a curb, but they are not necessarily required to do so. Under program access, alternative routes to buildings that make use of existing curb ramps may be acceptable where people with disabilities must only travel a marginally longer route.



D

Curb ramps provide basic access at intersections and pedestrian crossings.

One way to ensure the proper integration of curb ramps throughout a city is to set a series of milestones for curb ramp compliance in the city's transition plan. Milestones are progress dates for meeting curb ramp compliance throughout the municipality. Milestones should occur on a regular basis throughout the course of the transition plan and must reflect a priority to walkways serving government buildings and facilities, bus stops and other transportation services, places of public accommodation, and business districts, followed by walkways serving residential areas. It also may be appropriate for a city government to establish an ongoing procedure for installing curb ramps upon request in both residential and

nonresidential areas frequented by individuals with disabilities. 28 C.F.R. §§ 35.150(d)(2); 35.151(e). In setting milestones and in implementing a curb cut transition plan for existing sidewalks, the actual number of curb cuts installed in any given year may be limited by the fundamental alteration and undue burden limitations.

Solution: The City of Monroe provides ADA accessibility to all City facilities

Issue: Effective Communication

Common Problem:

City governments often fail to provide qualified interpreters or assistive listening devices for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing at public events or meetings. In addition, city governments often fail to provide materials in alternate formats (Braille, large print, or audio cassettes) to individuals who are blind or have low vision.

Result:

Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing are unable to participate in government- sponsored events or public meetings and unable to benefit from city programs and services when they are not provided with appropriate auxiliary aids and services. Likewise, people who are blind or have low vision are unable to benefit from city government services when printed materials are the only means of communication available.

Requirement:

Title II requires that city governments ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. Thus, city governments must provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services for people with disabilities (e.g., qualified interpreters, notetakers, computer-aided transcription services, assistive listening systems, written materials, audio recordings, computer disks, large print, and Brailled materials) to ensure that individuals with disabilities will be able to participate in the range of city services and programs. City governments must give primary consideration to the type of auxiliary aid or service that an individual with a disability requests. The final decision is the government's.



A sign language interpreter at a public meeting may be needed to provide effective communication for people who are deaf.

The type of auxiliary aid or service necessary to ensure effective communication will vary in accordance with the length and complexity of the communication involved and the needs of the individual. For example, sign language interpreters are not required for all interactions with people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Employees can often communicate effectively with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing through standard written materials and exchange of written notes. For simple transactions like paying bills or filing applications, these methods may be sufficient. For more complex or extensive communications, however, such as court hearings, public meetings, and interrogation by police officers, interpreters or assistive listening systems are likely to be necessary.

City governments should ensure that auxiliary aids and services are also provided for individuals who are blind or have low vision. Alternate formats, such as Brailled or large print materials, qualified readers, computer disks, or audio recordings are examples of appropriate auxiliary aids.

City governments are not required to take any actions that will result in a fundamental alteration or in undue financial and administrative burdens. 28 C.F.R. §§ 35.160-35.164.

Solution: The City of Monroe provides sign language interpreter and other communication needs for citizens with disabilities upon request in advance for any public meeting.

Issue: Local Laws, Ordinances, and Regulations

Common Problem:

City governments may fail to consider reasonable modifications in local laws, ordinances, and regulations that would avoid discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

Result:

Laws, ordinances, and regulations that appear to be neutral often adversely impact individuals with disabilities. For example, where a municipal zoning ordinance requires a set-back of 12 feet from the curb in the central business district, installing a ramp to ensure access for people who use wheelchairs may be impermissible without a variance from the city. People with disabilities are therefore unable to gain access to businesses in the city.



City zoning policies were changed to permit this business to install a ramp at its entrance.

Requirement:

City governments are required to make reasonable modifications to policies, practices, or procedures to prevent discrimination on the basis of disability. Reasonable modifications can include modifications to local laws, ordinances, and regulations that adversely impact people with disabilities. For example, it may be a reasonable modification to grant a variance for zoning requirements and setbacks. In addition, city governments may consider granting exceptions to the enforcement of certain laws as a form of reasonable modification. For example, a municipal ordinance banning animals from city health clinics may need to be modified to allow a blind individual who uses a service animal to bring the animal to a mental health counseling session. 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(b)(7).

Solution: The City of Monroe provides ADA accessibility by State design standard for all side-walks in the City.

Issue: 9-1-1 Systems

Common Problem:

City governments do not provide direct and equal access to 9-1-1 systems, or similar emergency response systems, for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and use TTY's (TDD's or text telephones) or computer modems.

Result:

People who are deaf or hard of hearing, or those who have speech impairments, and use TTY's or computer modems for telephone communication are unable to access emergency services (police, fire and ambulance) that are necessary for health and safety. When direct emergency services are not available, emergency calls for individuals with disabilities are not responded to appropriately, or in a timely manner, and in some instances, not at all.

Requirement:

City governments that provide emergency telephone services must provide direct access to TTY calls. This means that emergency telephone services can directly receive calls from TTY's and computer modem users without relying on state relay services or third parties. A TTY must be located at each individual operator station. City governments must ensure that emergency operators are trained to use the TTY not only when they recognize the tones of a TTY at the other end of the line, but also when they receive a "silent call." 28 C.F.R. §§ 35.161, 35.162. (See Access for 9-1-1 and Telephone Emergency Services)

Solution: The City of Monroe provides TTY phone services in all City facilities.

Issue: Law Enforcement Policies, Practices, and Procedures

Common Problem:

When dealing with persons with disabilities, law enforcement agencies often fail to modify policies, practices, or procedures in a variety of law enforcement settings -- including citizen interaction, detention, and arrest procedures.

Result:

When interacting with police and other law enforcement officers, people with disabilities are often placed in unsafe situations or are unable to communicate with officers because standard police practices and policies are not appropriately modified. For example, individuals who are deaf or have hearing impairments and use sign language may be unable to communicate with law enforcement officers if they are taken into custody and handcuffed behind their backs. Similarly, individuals with epilepsy or diabetes may be placed at great risk if they are not permitted access to their medications.

Requirement:

Title II of the ADA requires law enforcement agencies to make reasonable modifications in their policies, practices, or procedures that are necessary to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities, unless making such modifications would fundamentally alter the program or service involved. Law enforcement officers should be prepared to make reasonable modifications, for example, by allowing, in appropriate circumstances, arrestees who are deaf to be handcuffed in front of their bodies so that they can communicate with others and by allowing detainees access to their medication. 28 C.F.R. § 35.150(b)(7). (See Commonly Asked Questions about the Americans with Disabilities Act and Law Enforcement)

Solution: The City of Monroe Police Department, Community Service Division is trained to accommodate all individual with disabilities with specific needs.

Issue: Self-Evaluation and Transition Plans

Common Problem:

City governments often have not conducted thorough self-evaluations of their current facilities, programs, policies, and practices to determine what changes are necessary to meet the ADA's requirements, and have not developed transition plans to implement these changes.

Result:

When self-evaluations are not conducted and transition plans not developed, city governments are ill-equipped to implement accessibility changes required by the ADA. Without a complete assessment of a city's various facilities, services, and programs, it is difficult to plan or budget for necessary changes, and the city can only react to problems rather than anticipate and correct them in advance. As a result, people with disabilities cannot participate in or benefit from the city's services, programs, and activities.

Requirement:

All city governments were required to complete a self-evaluation of their facilities, programs, policies, and practices by January 26, 1993. The self-evaluation identifies and corrects those policies and practices that are inconsistent with Title II's requirements. Self-evaluations should consider all of a city's programs, activities, and services, as well as the policies and practices that a city has put in place to implement its various programs and services. Remedial measures necessary to bring the programs, policies, and services into compliance with Title II should be specified -- including, but not limited to: (1) relocation of programs to accessible facilities; (2) offering programs in an alternative accessible manner; (3) structural changes to provide program access; (4) policy modifications to ensure nondiscrimination; and (5) auxiliary aids needed to provide effective communication.



City policies, including those affecting service animals, should be reviewed during the self-evaluation.

If a city that employs 50 or more persons decides to make structural changes to achieve program access, it must develop a transition plan that identifies those changes and sets a schedule for implementing them. Both the self-evaluation and transition plans must be available to the public. 28 C.F.R. §§ 35.105, 35.150(d).

Solution: The City of Monroe evaluates all its facilities and mandated all new construction to ADA accessible in the bid process. Also service animals are allowed in all City facilities.



Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan

I. LEGAL BASIS AND PURPOSE

This document serves as the plan for the City of Monroe to provide services to limited English proficiency (LEP individuals in compliance with Federal law. The purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for the provision of timely and reasonable language assistance to LEP persons who come in contact with the City of Monroe other than the City's Transit System and Airport. These divisions have their own plans but the assistance available in this plan will also be available to those divisions. This plan was developed to ensure equal access to services for persons with limited English proficiency and hearing impaired persons.

II. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A. Data Used

1. The latest census data available was used to determine that there is little chance of contact with those with little or no English proficiency. The City of Monroe 1% Hispanic or Latino residents and the Parish of Ouachita only 2.4%. 1.3% of Monroe's population was foreign born.

III. LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE RESOURCES

A. Interpreters Available

The University of Louisiana at Monroe has a Spanish language program. Its faculty is available for help in communication with Spanish speakers. In addition, the Fourth Judicial District Court, the governmental agency most likely to require assistance in communicating with persons with limited English proficiency has contacts who are available to assist. For immediate assistance the City of Monroe is entering into a contractual relationship with Language Line Services to provide 24/7 telephone support. All City employees will be notified of this service and training for contact personnel will be provided as soon as a contract is finalized.

Sign language interpreters will be provided at City for all deaf court customers in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act. Spoken language interpreters will be provided at no cost to City customers who are "disabled in communication" when requested or the need becomes apparent.

B. Notification of Availability of Resources

The City of Monroe is currently assessing the need for written notices for customers of the City. It is expected that no later than February 28, 2011, notices printed in Spanish

will be available to all customers notifying them of how to obtain assistance. These notices will be available in water, sanitation, and planning and urban development offices. The following resources will be available:

- Language Identification Card / I Speak Card
- Customer service / Counter help
- Face to face interpreters

Language Identification Cards

The “Language Identification Card / I Speak Card” is used to aid in identifying the language that the LEP individual speaks.

Multi-Lingual Employees

The City of Monroe is making as a hiring preference, multiple language skills for employees in areas which might require same.

C. Translated Forms & Documents

There are currently no translated forms but in the event that a form is needed in a language other than English, such will be made available.

IV. TRAINING

The City of Monroe is committed to providing LEP training opportunities for all employees who may come in contact with LEP individuals. The LEP Coordinator will work to ensure that new employees are trained on the LEP plan as part of their orientation by their managers.

V. PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND EVALUATION OF LEP PLAN

A. LEP Plan Approval & Notification

The City of Monroe's LEP Plan has been approved by the Department of Administration, and a copy is available for review by the public at City Hall.

B. Evaluation of the LEP Plan

The LEP Coordinator will review this plan on an annual basis and make any changes based on the review.

The evaluation will include identification of any problem areas and development of required corrective action strategies. Elements of the evaluation may include:

- Assessing the number of LEP persons requesting in the day to day operating of the City of Monroe
- Assessing current language needs to determine if additional services or translated materials should be provided
- Assessing whether staff members adequately understand LEP policies and procedures and how to carry them out
- Gathering feedback from LEP communities

Any revisions made to the plan will be communicated by posting on the City of Monroe website.

LEP Contact Person

Chris Fisher

Planning and Urban Development Department

chris.fisher@ci.monroe.la.us

(318) 329-2200

LEP Coordinator

David L. Barnes, Jr.

Department of Administration

(318) 329-2200

The effective date of this LEP plan is (January 1, 2011).

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1954; 45 C.F.R. & 80 et seq; and 28 C.F.R.

& 42 et seq.



Monroe Urbanized Area MTP 2035 by OCOG.

PUBLIC VISIONING PROCESS

To gather public input regarding the planning process for the MTP Update, OCOG held a series of Visioning and Scenario Based Planning Workshops. These workshops solicited public input regarding the future of the transportation system in the Monroe Urbanized Area, which includes Monroe, West Monroe, Richwood, and Sterlington. At these workshops, stakeholders and members of the public shared their concerns, ideas, values, and visions. The following is a description of that process and its outcomes.

OUTREACH METHODS

The study team utilized various outreach methods to inform the public about the update process and the Visioning and Scenario Based Planning Workshop's. The study team invited transportation stakeholders and the public to attend one of three visioning workshops through personal invitations sent to "interested parties" on OCOG's mailing list. To notify the general public within the Monroe Urbanized Area, advertisements were placed in local print media that announced the date, time, and location of the Visioning Workshops. The advertisements ran for a full week in the Monroe News-Star, and one week each in the Monroe Free Press and the University of Louisiana at Monroe Hawkeye newspaper. West Monroe is served by the weekly paper the Ouachita Citizen, where the advertisement

Visioning and Scenario Based Planning Workshops solicited public input regarding the future of the transportation system 'in the Monroe Urbanized Area, which includes Monroe, West Monroe, Richwood, and Sterlington.

ran for two weeks. The study team also distributed media releases and advisories announcing the Visioning Workshops. The media advisory provided information on the date, time, location, and purpose of the Visioning Workshops.

SCENARIO WORKSHOP REGISTRATION AND MATERIALS

During registration, participants were given a set of dots with a color based on where they lived: Monroe, West Monroe, Richwood, or Ouachita Parish. Before leaving the registration area the participant was asked to place one of their dots on a map of the area in the general location of their home. He or she was then asked to sit at a table. Approximately four to eight (4-8) people were at each table. At each table, there was also a member of the study team to facilitate group activities and to help answer participant questions. Assistants to the facilitators recorded comments and concerns to supplement information that participants recorded in their individual participant workbooks (which were collected at the end of the workshop). After signing in, each participant was given a participant workbook that included an agenda and the workshop exercises for the evening.

VISIONING WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

At each table, the participants were welcomed by a member of the study team and any elected officials in the room were introduced. Mr. JD Allen served as the moderator for all three workshops.

Mr. Allen introduced himself as the moderator for the evening. He then started a PowerPoint presentation that he used throughout the workshop.

The moderator told the participants that this process is based largely on a public participation program to set the vision for future growth through open dialogue, collaboration, and the use of scenario-based planning tools. He said the purpose of the workshop was for the public to tell the MPO about the transportation needs and challenges over the next 25 years and to *give* input regarding the importance of the criteria used to evaluate MPO

1.

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transportation projects. He told participants that they would be asked to do three things:

2. Help the MPO to understand the critical transportation issues that they expect to be facing in the future.
3. Help the MPO to *evaluate* the importance of a new list of criteria, which are used to evaluate various land use scenarios and transportation projects.
4. Share with the MPO their vision of what the future transportation system in the Monroe Urbanized Area should look like in order to *serve* the needs of the people living in the study area.



The moderator then provided participants with a workshop *overview*. He said that they would be working in table groups in order to *give* everyone an opportunity to participate. The moderator stated that each table would be facilitated by a member of the study team. The participants were then guided through a series of workshop exercises designed to solicit their input as part of the Visioning Process.

WORKSHOP EXERCISE – STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT

The moderator introduced Exercise I and asked the facilitators at each table to lead a discussion of the stakeholder groups represented. The participants were directed to the list of stakeholder groups in their workbooks and asked to place an X in their own workbooks next to *all* of the stakeholder groups

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to which they belonged. The table below presents the results of that exercise. All tables and figures presenting workshop results show data from all three workshop sessions.

Table 3-2: Stakeholders Present

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Private Auto/SUV/Pickup User	29
Bicycle User	12
Pedestrian Facilities (sidewalks, hike & bike trails, etc.) User	17
Public Transit User (inside Monroe)	4
Public Transit User (outside Monroe)	1
Transit for the Elderly and Disabled User	2
Airport User	25
Intercity Bus and/or Rail User	2
Water Port User	1
Responsible for Transportation of Children	5
Business Owner	12
Member of Community Group (such as neighborhood association, civic club, etc.)	20
Member of Environmental Protection Organization	2
Member of Historic or Cultural Preservation Organization	6
Representative of an Agency that Provides Traffic Control	0
Representative of an Agency that Supports Ride-Sharing	2
Representative of an Agency that Regulates Public Parking	0
Representative of an Agency that Is Responsible for Transportation Safety	4
Representative of a Law Enforcement Agency	1
Representative of an Agency that Is Responsible for Land Use Management	3
Representative of an Agency that Is Responsible for Natural Resources	0
Representative of an Agency that Is Responsible for Environmental Protection	0
Representative of an Agency that Is Responsible for Energy Conservation	0

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STAKEHOLDER GROUP	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Representative of an Agency that Is Responsible for Historic Preservation	4
Transit Operator	3
Airport Operator	a
Port Authority	a
Private Transportation Provider (e.g. taxis, buses, etc.)	1
City or Parish Elected Official	1
Tribal Official	a
Planning Organization Member	5
Freight Handler - or Freight Company Owner	a
Member of a Population that Is Traditionally Underserved by the Transportation System	6
Resident of Monroe, West Monroe, or Richland	18
Resident of Ouachita Parish - Outside of the City Limits of any Incorporated City	17

WORKSHOP EXERCISE II- CURRENT STATE OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The moderator introduced Exercise II by explaining to the participants how the MTP Update process works, focusing on the fact that the plan must address transportation issues over the next 25 years. The moderator then asked the participants to complete the following two tasks:

Task1. With the other members of your table group, please answer the following questions:

Thinking about future changes to the region and the nation, (Hurricanes and/or environmental changes - Gas prices - Aging Boomers - Economic Changes - Land Use Changes - etc.), are there any users of the transportation system that will be poorly served if there are no changes to the system?

Each table had a general discussion of the question. The facilitators recorded the following themes from that discussion:

Factors affecting transportation



- Many people will be living to an older age (increasing population of older and persons with disabilities), and will have transportation needs different than today.
- We may not be driving.
- Young people today are overweight - obesity will affect transportation.
- Need alternative fuel; cost of oil is an issue.
- Need low cost ways to transport people to their destinations.
- Growth affects neighborhoods.
- We will be shuffling great-grandchildren around.
- More jobs will be coming to the area meaning more cars on the road.
- Small cars will be more prevalent.

Modes and projects

- We'll have a need for public transit and different types of transit like ramps, small shuttles, handicap accessible, electric sidewalks, small train/light rail.
- Lighter and smaller buses that run more efficiently.
- Transit for the elderly, handicapped, and low-income population (Including rural areas).
- Connect transit to V-Vehicle & community college.
- Train service (Amtrak) in the region and to Baton Rouge and shuttle to Sterlington.
- Need 'more turning lanes.
- Need new bridge, fix and maintain the bridges we have.'
- Bike share and car share would be viable.
- Need more bicycle infrastructure including streets wide enough to accommodate bicyclists and a route connecting to the ULM campus.

¹ During the period leading up to the workshops, one of the bridges crossing the Ouachita River was stuck in the "open" position preventing automobile traffic from crossing the river.

- Need more sidewalks.
- Need more safety signs for crossing US 165.
- Traffic congestion on US 165 near ULM is a problem.
- Lots of traffic on Louisville.
- There is too much traffic congestion for this size town.
- W Monroe will be very congested in future.
- Louisville Ave. very congested - maybe need more lanes?
- Only 3-4 major E-W arterials - more E-W needed.
- Expand Well Road crossing over IH 20.
- We need to separate cars from freight.
- Airport can be a transportation hub & bigger airport would lower the prices.

Growth/no growth areas

- There are high growth areas that were forest just a few years ago.
- There hasn't been any change in the past 26 years.
- People will be moving to the central area and require buses to get around.
- Sterlington is growing.
- There's not much land left to build on.
- Parish needs more land use controls.



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Task 2. If there are any important issues that have not been recorded by your facilitators, please write them in your workbook.

The facilitators asked the participants to complete Task 2. The following comments represent the general comments recorded in participant workbooks:

- " Get DOTD to study Phillips Bridge and route connecting to the university
- " Overall population will age, currently population is not growing - it's stable.
- Anticipate major economic growth between Hwy 80 and IH20 east of city.
- Transportation was key to these groups: car manufacturing (Vo-Tech), river port, sweet potato farmers Delta Community College.
- Need trains, 15 bus routes, and 35 buses.
- " Install traffic cameras for safety/security.
- " Increase bike connections.
- " Everyone will be poorly served by the transportation system if we don't make changes.
- " Hurricanes may cause increases in population and need for services at higher rate than previously. Transit & transportation alternatives will be have to [be] planned for and built quickly. Keep up on studies of land use and migration patterns.
- Need, more safety for pedestrians and on walkways & sidewalks.
- Anticipate congestion before it happens. Need more options for modes of travel and for conserving energy.
- Redo/reduce streets & driveways along 18th and 19th St., Louis Ave.
Better traffic & congestion planning to anticipate more car-s on the road.

Presentation Evaluation Criteria

The moderator presented to the participants a list of major criteria used to evaluate transportation projects. He explained that the list has been developed over many years of gathering input from the public and reflects

Table 3-3: Weighted Scoring of Criteria by Participants - All Tables

Criteria	Total Number of Dots
Reduce Congestion	71
Improve Quality of life	57
Support Economic Development Goals	50
Improve Safety	46
Increase Connections	44
Improve Access	34
Conserve Energy	34
Support land Use Goals	27
Protect Environment	20
Promote Efficiency	20
Connect Modes of Travel	19
Increase Multi Modal Options	17
Preserve Rights-of-Way	13
Improve Security	9

the recommended criteria in the new SAFETEA-LU legislation. The following is the list of criteria presented:

- Improve Safety,
- Improve Security,
- Protect Environment,
- Reduce Congestion,
- Promote Efficiency,
- Support Economic Development Goals,
- Support Land Use Goals,
- Increase Connections,
- Improve Access,
- Connect Modes of Travel,
- Conserve Energy,
- Improve Quality of Life,
- Increase Multi-Modal Options, and
- Preserve Rights-of-Way.

WORKSHOP EXERCISE III – RANKING AND SCORING CRITERIA

The moderator introduced workshop exercise III and asked facilitators to lead their respective table groups in completing the following three tasks:

Task 1. Briefly discuss the criteria presented by the moderator

There was a brief discussion and explanation of the criteria after which the table groups moved on to complete task 2.

Task 2. Group Ranking of the criteria

The participants at each table placed ten dots on a chart listing the criteria to indicate the criteria that they felt were the most important. By counting the dots next to each criterion, each table could clearly see which criteria were deemed the most important to the people at their table. By averaging the rank received by each table, an overall prioritized list of the criteria was revealed. The following table indicates the number of ranking dots received by each criterion.

Task 3. Individual Scoring of the Criteria

Please use the following chart to ensure each individual criterion - once again based solely on your personal preferences.

Participants were asked to score each criterion on a scale from 1 to 5. The results from the scoring of the criteria are listed in Table 3-4.

As a result, the following is a list of the criteria in ranked order:

Table 3-4: Individual Criteria Scoring

Criteria	Average Score
Reduce Congestion	3.9
Improve Quality of life	4.4
Support Economic Development Goals	3.9
Improve Safety	4.0
Increase Connections	3.8
Improve Access	3.9
Conserve Energy	3.8
Support land Use Goals	3.4
Protect Environment	3.8
Promote Efficiency	3.7
Connect Modes of Travel	3.7
Increase Multi Modal Options	3.5
Preserve Rights-of-Way	3.4
Improve Security	3.3

PRESENTATION ON GROWTH TRENDS

The moderator presented a series of maps showing recent growth trends in the area.

The moderator also explained that the traffic flow diagrams in the workbooks are based on the currently available population projections and may need to be amended.

Lastly, the moderator explained the transit map. The moderator once again asked that the participants share their knowledge and experience regarding transit needs of the community when completing the remaining exercises.

WORKSHOP EXERCISE IV - DIALOGUE ON GROWTH TRENDS

The moderator asked that the facilitators lead a dialogue answering the following questions:

Do you think that these growth trends accurately indicate what will happen in the future? What aspects of the trends do you think are desirable? What aspects of the trends do you think are detrimental to the area?

The facilitators took notes on the dialogue and those remarks that differ from those received in exercise II are listed below:

Growth/no growth areas

- Development outside of the city limits will continue.
- Increase of population toward V-Vehicle plant, Gardiner, Denver, Centrum, Accent.
- Growth will go up north US 165 (near the lake) & IH 20 east & west.
- No growth near the Wildlife Management Area and the dump.
- The area between Monroe and Rayville is low and prone to flooding.
- We should grow towards Sterlington.
- New Industry - V-Vehicle, Delta Community College, Motor Speedway, West Monroe Commercial Park.
- South US 165 - residential & commercial growth.



- North US 165 - new homes, new growth.
- There will be residential growth if new sewer is implemented.
- If the levee is decertified growth east of the river will move to west Ouachita Parish.
- Just north of IH20 in Monroe is marshland.
- Residential growth past Sage.
- Northeast area is good for growth and expansion.
- Growth (mainly residential) in west Ouachita Parish and there is nothing wrong with building there.

Projects

- Connection road between IH 20 & Sterlington.
- North US 165 bus service needed as well as to West Monroe & Thomas Road, Industrial Park, Glenwood, and Swartz.
- Bike path along the levee.
- Transit to paper mill.
- Bus from Monroe to West Monroe needed.
- New Jersey has "jug handle" left turns which work well- could work in Monroe.
- Reducing congestion on Louisville will help businesses.
- Need signal synchronization on US 165.

Other comments

- Need to improve Monroe urban school system.
- With the development of certain businesses, housing, and school districts will need to be improved and land use regulated with the use of zoning.

The facilitators then asked the participants to record in their workbooks anything that the participant felt was of particular importance or anything that needed further clarification after the dialogue. The comments they recorded are as follows.

- I support infill development.
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas.
- Lack of infrastructure to limit growth and land use control.
- Growth towards Sterlington, Richwood and little growth toward Vicksburg.
- The flood plain should be considered when permitting building.
- Need another bridge over the Ouachita River.
- Growth goes toward Sterlington & eastward.
- We need to think about land conservation as we go into the future.
Increasing roadway capacity encourages urban sprawl.

PRESENTATION - THE PUBLIC'S ROLE IN THE MTP UPDATE PROCESS

The moderator explained the public's role in the MTP Update process and explained that the following factors should be considered in evaluating any transportation system:

Trip purposes that need to be considered when creating a working transportation system:

1. Journey to work
2. Goods movement and trade
3. Tourism, entertainment, and recreation
4. Economic generators
5. Community travel (short trips near home)
6. Evacuation for emergencies - natural and man-made

Modes of travel included in the transportation system:

1. Streets and highways
2. Public transit
3. Bike ways
4. Pedestrian ways
5. Airports

6.

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6. Rail lines
7. Water ports
8. Intermodal transfer points - including parking

Users of the transportation system:

1. Adults who drive
2. Adults who do not drive - poor, elderly, disabled
3. Children
4. Freight movers
5. Tourists
6. Emergency services - ambulance, fire, police

WORKSHOP EXERCISE V -THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IN2035



The moderator introduced workshop exercise V and asked the facilitators to lead the participants at each table in completing the following tasks:

Task 1. *The table groups discussed the changes in their personal needs over the next 25 years as well as the changes in the environment and community.*

Task 2. *The participants marked a number of areas on the maps where they believed that changes were needed.*

The participants marked a number of areas on the maps where they believed that changes were needed. A map summarizing participants' marks

is presented as Figure 3-7. However, some comments were general and not easily represented graphically. These remarks include:

- We should get rid of eighteen-wheelers in the downtown area - truck bypass.
- New bridge over the Ouachita River at Hideaway White's Ferry Road or north of there and south of IH 20, south of Cheniere Brake- build a loop around the city.
- Sidewalks throughout the city and the Parish.
- A recreation center is needed outside the city limits as well as transit (more bus routes).
- Straighten out LA 15.
- We need trails around the bayous and along the river.
- Transit feeder service into West Monroe area and in the downtown.
- We need intercity bus routes among the following communities:
Calhoun, Swartz, Richwood, Monroe & West Monroe.
- Why don't we have a US interstate other than IH 207
- We'll need a new airport terminal in the next 25 years.
- Build overpasses to get around trains - stopped trains create a problem for buses & emergency vehicles.
- Port in W. Ouachita.
- Certify the levee or all items fail.
- Downtown parking garage needed.
- Transit service areas needs to improve (expand) due to need of access to facilities dealing with medical accommodations.
- Needed preparedness for migration northwards from the coast due to storms .
- Roads that are blocked off need better markings to identify their closure or disuse.

***Task 3.** Record any comments that you would like regarding this exercise.*

The results from the map exercise and the comments written by the participants are listed below:

- Complete streets where possible!
- We need Phillips Bridge and sidewalks.
The transit (bus) should travel between Monroe & West Monroe.
- Need bus service in West Monroe! As well as on North 165, Richwood, Schwartz and other areas.
- We need more bike paths and a fourth river crossing.

WORKSHOP CLOSING

At the close of the workshop, the moderator thanked the participants for coming and sharing their knowledge and experience. He then explained the next steps in the MTP Update process, and the way in which participants could continue to have input into the process.