



***Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission***

**Nondiscrimination Plan:
Title VI Civil Rights Program and
Implementation Plan,
Language Assistance Plan, and
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and
Americans with Disabilities Act Program**

Adopted February 6, 2025

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A. Introduction & Executive Summary

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) welcomes and is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any RTC program or activity on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, due to limited English proficiency, due to ability, or on the basis of age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious creed, veteran or socioeconomic status.

In addition to affirming and advancing the RTC's overall commitment to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation or subjected to discrimination in any RTC activities, including the decision-making process, employment and contracting, this Nondiscrimination Plan serves as the RTC's federally-required Title VI Civil Rights Program and Implementation Plan, Language Assistance Plan, and Americans with Disability Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act program (*see Appendix 1, Attachment 1 for additional information on antidiscrimination regulations*).

Who is the RTC?

The RTC, as the state-designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE), countywide rideshare agency (Cruz511), and Measure D Transportation Taxing Authority for Santa Cruz County is responsible for planning for regional transportation projects; selecting projects to receive certain federal, state, and local funding (programming); providing services to assist travelers; and implementing certain capital infrastructure projects. The RTC works in close coordination with the local jurisdictions, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO), the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), and other organizations providing transportation services to people in Santa Cruz County. The RTC is a public agency overseen by a governing board made up of County Supervisors, city council members, and transit representatives.

Why is the Nondiscrimination Plan Important?

The planning, programming and project implementation work of the RTC and its partners can improve the quality of life of Santa Cruz County residents, workers, and visitors. It can increase access to jobs, schools, recreational areas, and other destinations, as well as improve health and reduce emissions. However, transportation systems can also result in barriers or disproportionately benefit or negatively impact some people. It is critical to ensure that no person is excluded from participation or subjected to discrimination with regard to the transportation services, planning,

programming, and implementation activities conducted by RTC employees, board members, affiliates, and contractors.

What's New?

This **RTC Nondiscrimination Plan** is an update to the RTC's *2021 Title VI Program and Language Assistance Program*. At the recommendation of its Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC), which serves as the local Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), the plan has been expanded to include Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act implementation (Section D). It also has been expanded to affirm RTC's steadfast commitment to equity and individuals and groups that have been underrepresented and too often discriminated against. The document includes updated policies, an expanded summary of RTC efforts to increase access and combat inequities, and updated information on how to file a complaint if anyone feels that they have been discriminated against by the RTC. This plan was adopted by the RTC board on February 6, 2025 (Appendix 13).

The RTC will review and update the Nondiscrimination Plan at least every three years. RTC's Nondiscrimination Coordinator will be the lead responsible for updating the plan, soliciting feedback from RTC advisory committees, stakeholders, and the public on the plan and RTC's anti-discrimination, and integrating feedback will be gathered, and how new federal or state regulations will be incorporated.

Complaint Procedures

Any person who believes they have been subjected to discrimination may file a complaint by:

1. Submitting the complaint in writing to the RTC Nondiscrimination Coordinator within 180 days of the alleged incident, unless the time for filing is extended by the RTC for good cause.
2. Including a detailed description of the incident, contact information, and any supporting evidence.

RTC will investigate complaints promptly and take appropriate action. A Complaint Form that individuals may use is included in Appendix 3 and on the RTC's website: <https://www.sccrtc.org/about/title-vi-civil-rights-program/>.


Nondiscrimination Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, limited English proficiency, sex, disability, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any operation of the RTC as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations. The RTC will additionally conduct its work without unlawful discrimination on the grounds of religious creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, veteran or socio-economic status throughout its planning and decision-making processes. RTC strives to provide meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities to all individuals.

This policy applies to all operations of the RTC, including its employees, affiliates, contractors and anyone who acts on behalf of the RTC. This policy also applies to the operations of any department or agency to which the RTC extends federal financial assistance. Federal financial assistance includes grants, training, use of equipment, donations of surplus property, and other assistance.

Prohibited discrimination may be intentional or unintentional. Seemingly neutral acts that have disparate impacts on individuals of a protected group and lack a substantial legitimate justification are a form of prohibited discrimination. Harassment and retaliation are also prohibited forms of discrimination. Examples of prohibited types of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age include: Denial to an individual any service, financial aid, or other benefit; Distinctions in the quality, quantity, or manner in which a benefit is provided; Segregation or separate treatment; Restriction in the enjoyment of any advantages, privileges, or other benefits provided; Discrimination in any activities related to transportation planning, programming, and project implementation, or transportation infrastructure or facilities built or repaired; and Discrimination in employment.

Title VI compliance is a condition of receipt of federal funds. The RTC shall adhere to policies that prevent discrimination in employment, procurement, and the provisions of its services to the public. The RTC shall collect and analyze demographic data to identify and address potential inequities. The RTC's Nondiscrimination/Title VI Coordinator is authorized to ensure compliance with this policy and antidiscrimination regulations, including but not limited to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C § 2000d and related statutes, the requirements of 23 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) pt. 200 and 49 CFR pt. 21.



Sarah Christensen, Executive Director

2/6/2025

Date

Nondiscrimination/Title VI/ADA Coordinator

The RTC's Nondiscrimination Coordinator also serves as the RTC's Title VI and ADA Coordinator. They are responsible for implementing, monitoring, and ensuring compliance with Title VI, ADA and other nondiscrimination policies and regulations. Any questions regarding this plan should be directed to:

RTC Nondiscrimination Coordinator
1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Phone: (831) 460-3200; info@sccrtc.org

Implementation, Monitoring and Enforcement

This document includes policies and guidance to RTC staff and the public regarding implementation, monitoring, and enforcement. This includes regular training for staff, as well as ongoing evaluation of and updates to RTC programs and procedures (see Appendix 12).

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) also monitors local agencies for compliance with federal anti-discrimination laws and guidance. Potential consequences of failure of agencies that receive federal funds to comply with federal antidiscrimination regulations or requirements could include:

- Being placed on a corrective action plan;
- Imposed sanctions, including suspension or termination of or refusal to grant or to continue federal financial assistance;
- Declined approval of projects, grants, or contracts;
- Withheld reimbursements to RTC or payments to contractors;
- Referred to USDOT or the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ) for legal action; and/or
- Other actions deemed appropriate under the circumstances, until compliance or remedial action has been accomplished by the RTC or contractor.

Land Acknowledgement

The RTC recognizes that what we refer to as "Santa Cruz County" is the unceded territory of [Indigenous peoples](#), many of whose descendants were taken to missions Santa Cruz and San Juan Bautista during the violent Spanish colonization of the Central Coast of California. The RTC acknowledges the history and presence of Indigenous peoples throughout Santa Cruz County, their enduring relationship to their traditional homelands, and that today Indigenous peoples are working hard to restore traditional stewardship practices on these lands and to heal from historical trauma.

B. RTC Title VI Civil Rights Program and Plan

Background

Before the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, there was no law preventing discrimination and segregation in the United States among people of different colors, races, ethnicities, or national origins, including people who speak different languages. The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) ***Nondiscrimination Plan*** (which also serves as the RTC's Title VI Civil Rights Program and Implementation Plan, Language Assistance Plan, and Americans with Disabilities Act Plan) was developed to guide the RTC in its administration and management of Title VI and other nondiscrimination-related activities, and details how RTC meets the requirements set forth in federal regulations and state guidance. The RTC agrees to comply with Title VI and other regulations set by the USDOT or its departments, as it relates to Title VI and additional nondiscrimination requirements.

Section 601 under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states the following:

"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."

With passage of the Civil Rights Act and other nondiscrimination regulations, local public agencies that receive federal assistance, including the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), are required to:

- Develop a Title VI program. The purpose of the program is to prohibit discrimination and ensure nondiscrimination by establishing policies and procedures. The program is as specified in Caltrans and USDOT guidance
- Participate in Title VI program assessments conducted by Caltrans.
- Designate a Title VI Coordinator to administer the RTC's Title VI Program in accordance with federal laws and regulations.
- Develop a written Title VI Implementation Plan for enforcement that sets out its priorities and procedures for Title VI. The plan must be approved by the RTC's governing body and be submitted to Caltrans.
- Develop a Title VI complaint form, a log for Title VI complaints received, and develop procedures for prompt processing and disposition of Title VI complaints received.
- Implement and monitor the Title VI program, following federal requirements.

- Complete the Caltrans Title VI Program Assessment Online Form biennially (by June 30 every odd year or when requested).

The RTC's Nondiscrimination Plan describes how the RTC is addressing each of these requirements.

Organization, Staffing, and Structure

Title VI Coordinator

The RTC's Title VI Coordinator (also referred to as the RTC Nondiscrimination Coordinator) is responsible for implementing, monitoring, and ensuring compliance with Title VI regulations. This includes:

- Submitting to Caltrans a Title VI plan and annual reports on the agency's behalf;
- Developing procedures for promptly processing and resolving complaints of discrimination;
- Investigating complaints, compiling a complaint log, and reporting complaints to Caltrans;
- Developing a program to conduct Title VI reviews and assessments of pertinent program areas;
- Identification and resolution of discrimination when found to exist;
- Pre- and post-grant reviews for compliance with Title VI requirements;
- Assisting staff, affiliates, and contractors to correct Title VI issues or practices that arise as a result of complaints or self-monitoring and review activities;
- Developing procedures for and ensuring the collection and analysis of statistical data (race, color, national origin, sex, age, and disability) of participants in and beneficiaries of the RTC's Federal-aid programs, projects, activities and services;
- Developing Title VI information for public dissemination;
- Establishing procedures for resolving deficiency status and reducing to writing the remedial action agreed to be necessary.

Any questions regarding this plan should be directed to RTC Nondiscrimination Coordinator (who also serves as the RTC's Title VI Coordinator):

RTC Nondiscrimination Coordinator

1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Phone: (831) 460-3200

info@sccrtc.org

Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1B and FHWA Title VI Requirements (23 CFR Part 200). This includes addressing the general reporting requirements for recipients and sub-recipients of federal funding to ensure that their activities comply with Department of Transportation (DOT) Title VI regulations. Below are summaries of these requirements and how RTC's Title VI Program fulfills that requirement.

1. Requirement to Provide Title VI Assurances

In accordance with federal guidance, applications for federal financial assistance must be accompanied by an assurance that the applicant will carry out the program in compliance with USDOT's Title VI regulations. This requirement shall be fulfilled when the applicant/recipient submits its annual certifications and assurances to FTA and Caltrans.

RTC annually submits its Certifications and Assurances to the California Department of Transportation on the Caltrans required form for the specific fiscal year. Category 01 of the Caltrans certifications and assurances form includes nondiscrimination assurance in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

2. Requirement to Prepare and Submit a Title VI Program

Sub-recipients 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.

RTC Nondiscrimination Title VI Civil Rights Program is adopted by resolution of the RTC board and submitted to the California Department of Transportation. The RTC regularly prepares revisions to its Title VI Civil Rights Program, effective on the date of the new resolution.

3. Requirement to Notify Beneficiaries of Protection Under Title VI

The Title VI Program shall include recipient's Title VI notice to the public that indicates the recipient complies with Title VI, informs members of the public of the protections against discrimination afforded to them by Title VI, and includes a list of locations where the notice is posted.

Appendix 1 of this RTC Title VI Program is the public Title VI Notice to Beneficiaries consistent with USDOT guidelines.

4. Requirement to have Title VI Complaint Procedures and a Complaint Form

All recipients shall develop 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. Recipients must also develop a Title VI complaint form, and the form and procedure for filing a complaint shall be available on the recipient's website.

Appendix 2 of this RTC Nondiscrimination Plan is the RTC's Discrimination Complaint Procedures, and Appendix 3 is a copy of RTC's Discrimination Complaint form.

The complaint procedures and form are available in English and Spanish on RTC's website www.sccrtc.org and at the RTC office. Individuals may also request that the RTC mail them a paper copy of the procedures and form.

5. Requirement to Record and Report Transportation-Related Title VI Investigations, Complaints, and Lawsuits

All recipients of federal funds are required to prepare and maintain a list of any of the following that allege discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin: active investigations conducted by entities other than Caltrans or USDOT; lawsuits; and complaints naming the recipient. This list shall include the date that 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, or final findings related to the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint.

Consistent with federal and state guidelines, RTC shall maintain a list of all investigations, lawsuits and complaints naming RTC. A copy of this list is provided in Appendix 4 of this Nondiscrimination Plan. In addition, RTC will maintain permanent records of all related documents. RTC has not received any Title VI complaints of discrimination and therefore does not have any investigations or lawsuits to report.

6. Requirement to Promote Inclusive Public Participation

The content and considerations of Title VI, the Executive Order on Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and the DOT LEP Guidance shall be integrated into each recipient's established public participation plan or process (i.e., the document that explicitly describes the proactive strategies, procedures, and desired outcomes that underpin the recipient's public participation activities).

In partnership with the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), which serves as the metropolitan planning organization covering Santa Cruz County, the RTC participates in the development and implementation of the

public participation plan for the AMBAG region. The RTC's public participation plan activities included in the AMBAG public participation plan and additional planned engagement efforts are shown in Appendix 5 of this Nondiscrimination Plan. RTC ensures that members of the public, including equity priority communities (minority, LEP, low-income, youth, seniors, people with disabilities and other populations historically underrepresented or discriminated against), will be empowered to participate in decisions involved with RTC's transportation planning and programming activities.

The RTC's efforts to promote inclusive public participation include, but are not limited to:

1. Accessible meetings: public board and committee meetings, community meetings, and workshops accessible online and in-person
2. Notice of public meetings and outreach events distributed through diverse channels. Many RTC notices are also translated into Spanish.
3. Holding meetings and workshops throughout the county and at various times of day
4. Offering different ways to receive input from community members (polls, surveys, online workshops and open houses)
5. Outreach events: tabling at community events and food markets
6. Availability of materials and translation services in multiple languages
7. Accessibility of materials in alternative formats (audio, large print, sign language, etc.)
8. Accommodations for individuals with disabilities
9. Social media posts
10. E-news: email announcements about upcoming events, meetings, and opportunities to provide input on RTC projects and programs.
11. Traditional media: Utilizing local newspapers, radio stations (including multilingual options) with PSAs and targeted ads
12. Establishing and maintaining relationships with community groups, community leaders, and other stakeholders
13. Regular meetings of the RTC's Elderly/Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC) focused on needs of people with disabilities, seniors and low-income residents

14. Document input received and how the input received was considered in the design and/or selection of projects to address those needs
15. Ongoing evaluation of outreach and engagement efforts to identify the best practices and identify successes and areas for improvement
16. Provide ongoing input on planning projects in Santa Cruz County ensuring accessibility for all users.
17. Information accessible on the agency website: www.sccrtc.org

Additionally, in 2025 the RTC will be releasing an equity-focused engagement toolkit as part of its Transportation Equity Plan, which includes additional strategies to engage community members that have been historically underrepresented in transportation planning and projects implementation efforts in Santa Cruz County. The toolkit will be available for use by other agencies and consultants working on local transportation projects. Some of the recommendations to promote more robust and targeted public participation from equity priority communities and households which the RTC has not previously integrated into its public participation plans include:

- More robust and regular evaluation of outreach and engagement plans and outreach done for each project and outreach activity.
- Create checklist of outreach strategies for project managers and consultants to consider when developing the public outreach plan for each project and program.
- Expand number of community groups the RTC regularly engages with, including groups representing priority populations which may not typically be focused on transportation, and more youth oriented groups.
- Provide stipends to community members to serve on RTC advisory committees.

Additional outreach and antidiscrimination ideas identified by RTC committee, board, and staff members in a December 2024 survey are included in [Appendix 5](#).

7. Requirement to Provide Meaningful Access to Limited-English Proficient (LEP) Persons
Consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, DOT's implementing regulations, and Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency" (65 FR

50121, Aug. 11, 2000), recipients shall take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to benefits, services, information, and other important portions of their programs and activities for individuals who are limited-English proficient (LEP).

Please see RTC Language Assistance Plan, included as Section C of this document. RTC's Four Factor Analysis and Action Plan are contained therein.

8. Minority Representation on Planning and Advisory Bodies

Title 49 CFR Section 21.5(b)(1)(vii) states that a recipient may not, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, "deny a person the opportunity to participate as a member of a planning, advisory, or similar body which is an integral part of the program." Recipients that have transportation-related, non-elected planning boards, advisory councils or committees, or similar committees, the membership of which is selected by the recipient, must provide a table depicting the racial breakdown of the membership of those committees, and a description of efforts made to encourage the participation of minorities on such committees.

Appendix 6 shows RTC's Table Depicting racial and ethnic breakdown of representation on RTC Committees.

In order to encourage participation in RTC committees, especially from members of equity priority populations, the RTC will:

- Consider providing stipends to community members that have volunteered to serve on RTC advisory committees
- Conduct targeted outreach to equity priority community members
- Consider expansion of the RTC's Social Services Transportation Advisory Council or SSTAC (currently called the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee) to include members or representatives of underrepresented groups, including but not limited to people of color, LEP, low-income, unhoused populations, and youth. As part of the development of the RTC's *Equity Action Plan*, the RTC created a temporary Transportation Equity Workgroup which will end in June 2025, but the RTC will encourage continued participation of Equity Workgroup Members in the SSTAC.
- Continually evaluate additional opportunities to engage underrepresented communities in its advisory committees and workgroups.

9. Requirement to Provide Additional Information Upon Request

Caltrans, on behalf of FHWA, and FTA may request, at its discretion, additional information a recipient in order to investigate complaints of discrimination or to resolve concerns about possible noncompliance with DOT's Title VI regulations.

RTC will fully cooperate with any state or federal investigation of discrimination complaints as required by Title VI regulations.

Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations

In accordance with Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations", the RTC will develop strategies to address disproportionately high and adverse health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations to promote nondiscrimination in Federal-aid programs substantially affecting human health and the environment, and to provide minority and low-income communities access to public information and an opportunity for public participation in matters relating to human health or the environment. **This work is being integrated into the RTC's first Equity Action Plan (to be completed in mid-2025), the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and overall work program.**

Data Collection

The RTC periodically collects and analyzes demographic data on participants and beneficiaries of RTC programs and activities. Examples include:

- Tracking the race/ethnicity of residents relocated through right of way acquisition;
- Requesting demographic information from members of the public participating in online surveys;
- Collecting U.S. Census and other data on populations impacted by RTC projects;
- Reporting demographic information in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and other planning documents and grant applications;
- Requesting demographic information from staff and committee members.

The RTC uses demographic information to target outreach efforts, evaluate investments of public funds, and target disparities.

Annual Work Plan (Goals and Accomplishment Report)

Consistent with Caltrans requirements, the RTC will develop an annual report of Title VI accomplishments and upcoming goals, and any updates to the Title

VI Program to reflect organizational policy changes, and a Work Plan Outlining Title VI monitoring and review activities planned for the upcoming RTC fiscal year.

Accomplishments since adoption of the 2021 Title Plan which are part of the RTC's ongoing work plans have included, but not been limited to:

- Securing a Caltrans Planning Grant to develop a Transportation Equity Action Plan
- Formation of a Transportation Equity Workgroup
- Working with the USDOT Thriving Communities Program to address disparities in Santa Cruz County, with a focus on areas with greater concentration of low income and Latino households
- Regularly meeting with community-based organizations and stakeholders to identify, discuss and coordinate equity-focused projects and programs
- Securing funding for transportation projects and programs that reduce disparities
- Offering translation services and ADA accessibility services to members of the public
- Regular meetings of the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC)
- Joining the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)
- Several staff attending equity trainings hosted by CalCOG
- Several staff attending equity-focused trainings hosted by Caltrans and other agencies and organizations
- Micro-grants to community organizations focused on reducing disparities
- Integrating equity metrics in funding and planning evaluation
- Developing an updated regional definition of equity priority communities
- Reviewing statistics regarding needs and challenges for underserved communities and regarding participation and engagement in RTC activities and outreach efforts.
- Expanding outreach to low-income communities, people of color, and people with limited English proficiency and engage communities in long term planning.
- Hiring a consultant team to provide diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility training to staff, committee, and board members.

Near-Term Goals for implementation of the Nondiscrimination Plan:

- Trainings:
 - Distribute and provide training on the Nondiscrimination Plan. All staff and Commissioners are to confirm receipt of the Nondiscrimination Plan and Title VI (Appendix 7).

- Provide training to RTC contractors, staff, board members, committee members, and partners on language access, equity, cultural competence, and anti-discrimination. Ensure they understand evolving laws and regulations.
- Budget funding for ongoing professional development for staff involved in public outreach and engagement.
- Continue to be a member of the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) and require staff to attend at least one GARE training or meeting relevant to the work they do.
- Increase representation in RTC advisory committees until the committee makeup more closely matches the demographics of Santa Cruz County.
 - Conduct targeted outreach to recruit more representative members to serve on RTC advisory committees.
 - Provide stipends to volunteers serving on RTC advisory committees.
 - Expand membership in and rename the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC) to include historically disadvantaged and underserved community members.
- Complete and implement the Transportation Equity Action Plan.
- Outreach:
 - Complete Equity Engagement Toolkit and share with partner agencies.
 - Review engagement best practices and integrate into outreach planning for each project and program. Complete engagement evaluation at the beginning of each project and after each public outreach event or activity to evaluate the effectiveness of increasing participation from underrepresented communities.
 - Regularly share best practices for public outreach and lessons learned with RTC staff and partner agencies.
 - Establish closer relationships with at least 10 community-based organizations and leaders that serve underrepresented community members that the RTC has not previously or regularly met with. Regularly attend meetings of those organizations. Pay for staff to join organizations that make it easier to establish relationships with community groups and leaders.
- Translation Services:
 - Translate at least 50% of RTC project and program fact sheets into Spanish.
 - Increase the number of Spanish-speaking staff.
 - Ensure Spanish-speaking staff or translators are available at all community outreach meetings.

- Accessibility:
 - Conduct ADA assessment.
 - Provide ongoing training to staff to ensure written materials, RTC website, and RTC meetings are accessible to people with various disabilities.
- Secure grants for transportation projects and programs that reduce disparities.

C. RTC Language Assistance Plan

RTC has developed this Language Assistance Plan (LAP) to help identify reasonable steps to provide language assistance for people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), English-language learners, and deaf community members who seek meaningful access to RTC services, meetings, and planning efforts. A person with Limited English Proficiency, as defined by federal law, is one who does not speak English as their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English.

This plan details procedures for identifying a person who may need language assistance, the ways in which assistance may be provided, staff training, how to notify LEP persons that assistance is available, and potential future updates to the plan.

Language Assistance/Limited English Proficiency Policy

As a public agency, the RTC should serve all members of the community, not just English speakers. The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) will take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access and an equal opportunity to participate in RTC services, activities, programs, planning and project development efforts. The policy of RTC is to ensure meaningful communication with LEP persons.

Language assistance will be provided through the use of competent bilingual staff, staff interpreters, contracts or formal arrangements with organizations providing interpretation or translation services, or technology and telephonic interpretation services. All staff will be provided with notice of this policy and procedure, and staff that may have direct contact with LEP individuals will be trained in effective communication techniques, including the effective use of an interpreter.

The RTC will conduct a regular review of the language access needs of Santa Cruz County residents, as well as update and monitor the implementation of this policy and these procedures, as necessary. The RTC will develop a language assistance evaluation and implementation program to ensure that people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) who are served by Federal-aid programs administered by the RTC are provided, free of charge, meaningful access to programs, services, and information without unduly burdening the fundamental activities of the RTC.

As appropriate, and in consideration of existing federal and state guidance, the RTC will conduct an LEP Needs Assessment using a Four Factor Analysis to identify the need to provide reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access

by Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons to Federal-aid programs administered by the RTC.

Background

In accordance with Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency", the purpose of this Language Assistance Plan is to clarify the responsibilities of RTC to persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) for any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance. To ensure meaningful access to services for LEP individuals, the RTC:

- Identifies LEP populations within Santa Cruz County.
- Provides language assistance services such as translated materials and interpreters.
- Offers staff training on how to access and provide LEP resources.

Executive Order 13166

Executive Order 13166 "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," reprinted at 65 FR 50121 (August 11, 2000), directs each Federal agency that is subject to the requirements of Title VI to publish guidance for its respective recipients clarifying that obligation. Executive Order 13166 further directs that all such guidance documents be consistent with the compliance standards and framework detailed in the Department of Justice's (DOJ's) Policy Guidance entitled "Enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964--National Origin Discrimination Against Persons with Limited English Proficiency." (See 65 FR 50123, August 16, 2000, DOJ's General LEP Guidance.) Different treatment based upon a person's inability to speak, read, write, or understand English may be a type of national origin discrimination.

Executive Order 13166 applies to all federal agencies and all programs and operations of entities that receive funding from the federal government, including state agencies, local agencies and governments (such as RTC), private and non-profit entities, and sub-recipients.

Four-Factor Analysis

The U. S. Department of Transportation (DOT) issued its Policy Guidance Concerning Recipient's Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons [Federal Register: December 14, 2005 (Volume 70, Number 239)]. This policy states that DOT recipients are required to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to programs by LEP persons. This coverage extends to the recipient's entire program. There are four factors for agencies to

consider when assessing language needs and determining what steps they should take to ensure access for LEP persons, regardless of whether or not the agency chooses not to prepare a written LEP plan. A brief description of the self-assessment undertaken in each of these areas follows.

In developing the plan, RTC undertook a four-factor analysis as required by U.S. DOT. This considers the following factors:

- 1) The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by RTC.
- 2) The frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with RTC programs, activities, or services;
- 3) The nature and importance of the programs, activities or services provided by RTC to people's lives; and
- 4) The resources available to RTC for LEP outreach and the costs associated with that outreach.

A summation of these considerations is provided in the following section.

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by RTC.

In order to understand the proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by RTC, RTC examined the latest American Community Survey Estimates: Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 years and Over; State & County Quick Facts for Santa Cruz County, California.

The 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates for Santa Cruz County (2023 ACS) show a population of 253,944 individuals aged 5 years and over.

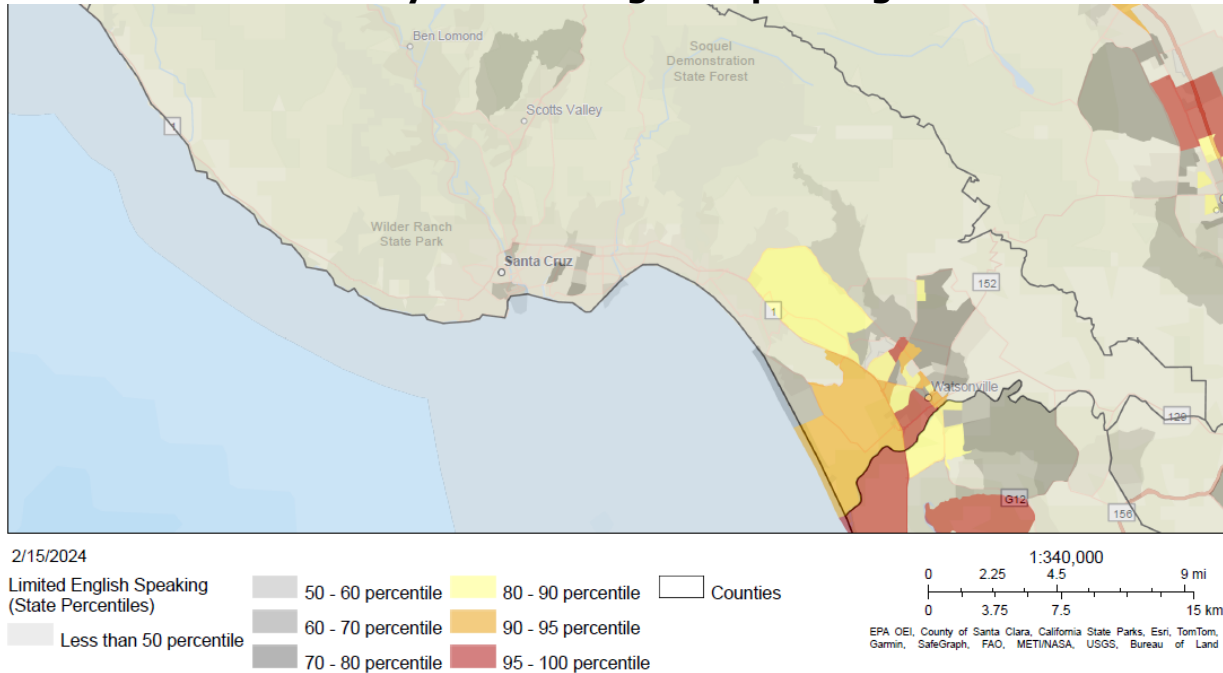
According to the ["Languages Spoken At Home" data](#) from the 2023 ACS:

- An estimated **30,068 or 11.8%** of the 253,944 Santa Cruz County residents aged 5 or over **speak English less than "very well"**, of which the primary languages spoken are:
 - Spanish: 25,513 (10% of Santa Cruz County residents age 5+)
 - Other Indo-European languages: 1,573 (0.62%)
 - Asian and Pacific Island languages: 2,542 (1.00%)
 - Other languages: 440 (0.17%)

- A total of 32.6% or 82,831 residents speak a language other than English at home, of whom 52,763 also speak English very well.
- 67.4% or 171,113 of Santa Cruz County residents speak only English.

Several areas in Santa Cruz County have some of the highest percentiles of individuals with limited English Proficiency in the state.

Santa Cruz County Limited English-Speaking Census Areas



Note: Map of Census Areas in Santa Cruz County with the highest percentiles of limited English-speaking residents, as compared to the rest of California. Areas over the 80 percentile are concentrated in and around Watsonville.

USDOT has adopted the Department of Justice’s Safe Harbor Provision, which outlines circumstances that can provide a “safe harbor” for recipients regarding translation of written materials for LEP populations. The “Safe Harbor Provision,” as defined by Department of Justice, stipulates that if a recipient provides written translation of vital documents for each eligible LEP language group that constitutes five percent (5%) or 1,000 persons, whichever is less, of the total population of persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered, then such action will be considered strong evidence of compliance with the recipient’s written translation obligations.”

Based on the 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates: Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over, no language groups other than Spanish fall under the ‘Safe Harbor Provision’ in Santa Cruz County. According to the 2023 ACS, each language group other than Spanish spoken by people with Limited English Proficiency make up less than 5% of the total population age five and over. The language

groupings “Other Indo European” and “Asian and Pacific Island” each include many languages. Speakers of individual languages within each group who speak English less than “very well” fall below the thresholds in the “Safe Harbor Provision.”

Even if they fall below the thresholds in the “Safe Harbor Provision,” for any languages other than English, community members may request translation services and the RTC will attempt to provide services where feasible through methods such as automated translation services for meetings and written materials.

2. The frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with RTC programs, activities, or services.

RTC regularly assesses the frequency at which staff have or could possibly have contact with LEP persons. RTC staff interacts with non-English, primarily Spanish speakers throughout the year.

According to a survey of RTC staff (December 2024):

- **17% of RTC staff speak Spanish fluently and regularly** at home or with others.
- **Another 35% of staff speak at least some Spanish and can communicate about RTC projects and programs to some degree**, though they do not speak Spanish fluently or regularly at home or with others.

Staff were asked how many members of the public they interact with in the course of their work at RTC that either do not speak English or do not speak English very well.

- **55% of staff indicated that on average interact with one to ten members of the public that do not speak English very well per month.**
- The most frequent languages, other than spoken English that staff encounter is Spanish (95% of staff), Mixteco, Mextec Bajo or Zapoteco (16% of staff), or sign language (5% of staff).

According to the 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates: “Selected Social Characteristics in the United States,” the largest geographic concentration of LEP individuals in RTC's service area are Spanish-speaking.

During 2024, the RTC provided translation services several times. Below is a summary of some of the instances that Spanish translation was available.

Public Engagement - Spanish Translation – 2024
***LEP Log of interpretation and translation
requests and services provided***

- **2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)**
 - Survey (1/23/24) – Translated to Spanish
 - Survey (7/9/24) – Translated to Spanish
- **Zero Emission Passenger Rail & Trail Project (ZEPRT)**
 - Virtual open house (2/5/24-3/4/24) – Spanish version available
 - Open house (2/12/24) – Materials available in Spanish and translators on hand for in-person translation
 - Open house (2/13/24) – Materials available in Spanish and translators on hand for in-person translation
 - Open house (6/24/24) – Materials available in Spanish and translators on hand for in-person translation
 - Open house (6/25/24) – Materials available in Spanish and translators on hand for in-person translation
 - Virtual open house (6/6/24-7/18/24) – Spanish version available
 - Informational community session (10/23/24) – Spanish translation available
 - Informational community session (10/28/24) – Spanish translation available
 - Community workshop (11/12/24) – Materials available in Spanish and translators on hand for in-person translation
 - Virtual open house (11/12/24-12/20/24) – Spanish version available
 - Community workshop (11/13/24) – Materials available in Spanish and translators on hand for in-person translation
 - Informational community session (12/16/24) – Spanish translation available
- **Climate Adaptation and Vulnerability Assessment (CAVA)**
 - Public workshop (6/11/24) – Materials available in Spanish and translators on hand for in-person translation
- **Rural Highway Safety Program** – Survey (10/3/24) – Translated to Spanish
- **Highway 1 Construction Updates – throughout the year** – Updates sent out weekly with on upcoming traffic impacts. Notices are translated into Spanish and emailed out and posted on construction updates webpage.

3. The nature and importance of the programs, activities or services provided by RTC to people’s lives.

Access to the RTC’s transportation planning, programming, project development and implementation processes are an essential service for Santa Cruz County residents and visitors.

The RTC’s numerous transportation planning and programming efforts include several points where community members can provide feedback or engage in

discussions about transportation projects and plans. The RTC regularly hosts workshops and public meetings, with major decisions made at the RTC's publicly noticed monthly board meetings, where members of the public are always welcome to testify. The RTC also provides information and resources about transportation projects and plans in Santa Cruz County to the community through the RTC website, fact sheets, new releases, social media, emails, and other methods.

The RTC's Cruz511 and Go Santa Cruz County transportation demand management programs provide assistance and incentives to commuters, businesses, and residents to walk, bike, carpool or ride the bus. The Cruz511.org website also provides traffic condition information to travelers.

The RTC's Freeway Service Patrol program provides free roving tow truck assistance to stranded motorists along Highway 17 and Highway 1 during peak travel periods to remove incidents quickly.

The RTC also provides funding for bus transit and paratransit services to Santa Cruz METRO, Lift Line/Community Bridges, and the Volunteer Center. Santa Cruz County's "transit-dependent" population includes elderly persons, people with disabilities, youth, and individuals below the poverty line and without vehicles. And provides funding for local road, bicycle, pedestrian, and highway projects and programs implemented by cities, the County of Santa Cruz, and non-profit organizations that serve members of the community.

4. The resources available to RTC for LEP outreach, as well as the costs associated with that outreach.

RTC has assessed its available resources that could be used for providing LEP assistance. Working to balance limited resources with community needs, the RTC has made provisions to make translators available at public meetings when such services are requested and to translate RTC's documents that are most widely used by the public into Spanish. When advertised public hearings, open houses or workshops are held, bilingual staff or translators can be requested for who attends who needs Spanish language assistance to fully participate. RTC has staff members who are proficient in Spanish language and can perform as translators, but when Spanish-proficient staff are not available, the RTC is able to hire translators. The cost of translation services is integrated into project budgets.

Language Assistance Plan

After analyzing the four factors, RTC developed the following Language Assistance Plan to assist persons of Limited English Proficiency.

How RTC staff may identify an LEP person who needs language assistance:

- The RTC will promptly identify the language and communication needs of the LEP person. If necessary, staff will use a language identification card (or "I speak cards") to determine the language of LEP individuals attending RTC meetings and events.
- The RTC will inform LEP persons of the availability of language assistance, free of charge, by providing written notice in languages LEP persons will understand. At a minimum, notices will be posted in the RTC office and on the RTC website.
- The RTC will reach out to communitywide organizations, immigrant and refugee networks to help identify and notify LEP persons of available translation services.
- Examine records of requests for language assistance from past meetings and events to determine the possible need for assistance at future events.
- Survey staff regarding their experience having any direct or indirect contact with LEP individuals.
- Create and maintain an LEP Log to track interpretation and translation requests received and services provided.

Language Assistance Measures

- RTC will continue to include a notice in its meeting agendas stating that Spanish interpreter services will be provided upon request.
- RTC will continue to provide Spanish interpreters for advertised public hearings and workshops held in the Watsonville area and include a notification in the outreach materials and agendas for outreach events that such services will be available. For all other meetings and outreach events, members of the public can request that the RTC provide translation services. RTC's agendas include information on how to request a translator to be available.
- RTC staff who are fluent in Spanish will continue to be available for Spanish language communication with the community.
- When an interpreter is needed, in person or on the telephone, RTC staff will first attempt to determine what language is required, and then seek services of a staff interpreter, or authorized interpreter for hire or utilize the telephone interpreter service - Language Line Services at <http://www.language.com/>.

- Offer staff that are bilingual, differential pay as a means to recruit Spanish-speaking staff and increase the availability of translation.
- Create and maintain an LEP Log and benchmarks to track interpretation and translation requests received and services provided over time.
- When translation of vital documents is needed, staff will submit documents for translation into frequently encountered languages to administrative staff.

RTC Staff Training

All RTC staff will be provided with the LAP Plan and will be educated on the following procedures every two years. This information will also be part of the staff orientation process for new hires. Training topics are listed below:

- Understanding the Title VI and LEP and other nondiscrimination responsibilities and policies.
- Language assistance services RTC offers.
- Who the Spanish speaking staff members are and how to contact them when needed.
- Who are the authorized translators and interpreters for hire and how to enlist their services when needed.
- How to use telephonic interpretation and translation services.
- Documentation of language assistance requests and service provided.
- How to handle a complaint of discrimination.
- Procedures for the collection of statistical data (race, color, and national origin) of participants in, and beneficiaries of, federally funded projects, plans and programs.
- Procedures for analyzing the data collected to determine the effectiveness of outreach methods, and to ensure that no group is excluded during the decision-making process or is not given an opportunity to voice their opinions or concerns.
- Conducting internal Title VI reviews of RTC projects and programs and external reviews of sub-awardees (see example in Appendix 5).
- Including required Title VI assurances in all sub-contracts and sub-agreements with federal funds, where applicable.

Outreach Techniques

RTC will use the following outreach techniques for people with Limited English Proficiency:

- When staff are hosting a meeting, open house or workshop or presenting a pertinent topic, all meeting notices and flyers and agendas will give notice that interpretation services can be provided. Meeting notices will also be translated into Spanish.
- RTC will continue to send notices of meetings, public hearings, open houses, workshops and other events to Spanish media outlets.
- RTC will continue to place ads and public service announcements in Spanish media outlets as necessary for RTC programs and projects.
- When advertising general public meeting notices, staff will state that a translator will be available in Spanish, or in another language if requested.
- RTC will increase the number of pertinent materials translated for meetings, workshops, open houses into Spanish, or in another language.

Monitoring and Updating the Language Assistance Plan

RTC's Language Assistance Plan (LAP) is designed to be easily updated. The RTC will follow the Title VI Program update schedule of submission every three years or as needed to reflect changes in state and federal requirements or agency operations.

Each update of the LAP Plan will examine plan components including:

- How many LEP persons were encountered annually?
- Were the needs of these LEP persons met?
- What is the current LEP population in RTC's service area?
- Is a change needed in the types of language translation services provided?
- Is there still a need for continued language assistance for previously identified RTC programs? Are there other programs that should be included?
- Have RTC's available resources, such as technology, staff, and financial costs changed?
- Has RTC fulfilled the goals of the LAP Plan?
- Were any complaints received?

The RTC's Communications Specialist and Nondiscrimination Coordinator will be responsible for reviewing and evaluating the RTC's implementation of the Language Assistance Plan at least once per year and regularly soliciting input from the staff and stakeholders on the best methods to expand outreach and increase efforts to meet the needs of people with limited English proficiency.

Dissemination of RTC Language Assistance Plan

RTC will include this Nondiscrimination Plan, which includes the RTC's Language Assistance Plan and Title VI Program on the RTC website (www.sccrtc.org). Any person, including social service, non-profit, and law enforcement agencies and other community partners with internet access, will be able to access the plan. Copies of the Language Assistance Plan will be provided, on request, to any person(s) requesting the document via phone, in person, by mail or email. LEP persons may obtain copies and translations of the plan upon request.

D. Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (ADA/Section 504) Program

ADA Policy

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) shall not discriminate on the basis of disability in any services, programs, activities or benefits it provides to the general public.

- Employment: RTC does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its hiring or employment practices and complies with the ADA Title I employment regulations.
- Effective Communication: The RTC will, upon request, provide auxiliary aids and services leading to effective communication for people with disabilities, including but not limited to qualified sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, documents in large print and other ways of making communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision impairments.
- Modifications to Policies and Procedures: The RTC will make reasonable modifications to policies and procedures to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy programs, projects, services, and activities. For example, people with service animals are welcomed in the RTC's offices and at its meetings, even where pets and other animals are prohibited.
- Requests: To request an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures contact the RTC at 831-460-3200 or info@sccrtc.org as soon as possible, preferably five days before the activity or event.

Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against or have a complaint should contact the RTC's Nondiscrimination/Title VI/ADA Coordinator and file the complaint form included in the RTC's Nondiscrimination Plan and available online at www.sccrtc.org or by calling 831-460-3200 or emailing info@sccrtc.org.

Background: ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, public services, and all

public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to ensure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in federally funded programs & activities.

In addition to Title I of the ADA which prohibits discrimination in employment, as an agency that implements transportation projects, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) is required to also comply with Title II of the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and must not discriminate on the basis of disability in any transportation program, activity, service or benefit they provide to the general public; and to ensure that people with disabilities have equitable opportunities to use the public rights-of-way system.

[Section 28 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 35: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services \(28 CFR 35\)](#) also requires all public entities to provide information to the public, program participants, program beneficiaries, applicants and employees about the ADA and how it applies to the public entity; and requires that facilities constructed on behalf of, or for the use of, a public entity shall be designed and constructed so that the facility is accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.

[49 CFR 27](#) requires nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities receiving or benefiting from federal financial assistance. The State of California has also adopted regulations in Section 54 of the California Civil Code that specifies all buildings, structures, sidewalks, curbs, and related facilities constructed in California by the use of state, county or municipal funds, or the funds of any political subdivision of the state, shall be accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.

“ADA Standards for Accessible Design” (2010) regulations Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 “ADA” in the Federal Register on September 15, 2010. These regulations adopted revised, enforceable accessibility standards called the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design “2010 Standards” or “Standards”. The 2010 Standards set minimum requirements – both scoping and technical – for newly designed and constructed or altered State and local government facilities, public accommodations, and commercial facilities to be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

ADA Complaint Procedure

Anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability in employment practices and policies or the provision of services, activities, programs, and benefits by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) can submit a complaint of discrimination to the RTC. The complaint should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination such as name, address, phone number of complainant and location, date, and description of the problem.

The RTC's Nondiscrimination/Title VI/ADA Coordinator will coordinate the RTC's efforts to comply with implementation of complaint procedures and will expeditiously process any ADA complaints, consistent with the RTC's Discrimination Complaint Procedures (See Appendix 2).

Individuals filing a complaint or grievance are encouraged to use the RTC's Discrimination Complaint Form (Appendix 3). Alternative means of filing a complaint such as personal interviews or a recording of the complaint will be made available for persons with disabilities, as needed and upon request.

The complaint should be submitted by the complainant and/or his/her/their designee as soon as possible, but no later than 180 calendar days after the alleged violation to:

RTC Nondiscrimination/Title VI/ADA Coordinator
1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Phone: (831) 460-3200
info@sccrtc.org

Addressing Accessibility

1. Examples of RTC efforts to address specialized needs of individuals with disabilities include:
 - a. Ensuring that the RTC's website, surveys, and materials are accessible;
 - b. Holding community meetings at locations that are easily navigable for people with various disabilities, accessible by bus and in buildings that meet ADA standards;
 - c. Providing funding for ADA and non-ADA paratransit services;
 - d. Making sign language interpretation available;
 - e. Proactively address accessibility, particularly for online or digital engagement;
 - f. Administration of the TNC Access for All program;
 - g. Including information about accessibility accommodations on RTC board and committee agendas;

- h. Continuation of the RTC's Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC) and Pedestrian Safety Workgroup;
 - i. Conducting targeted outreach to and establishing partnerships with organizations that provide services to people with disabilities and seniors;
 - j. Preparing and regularly updating the RTC's transit Unmet Needs List and Coordinated Human Services Plan;
 - k. Trainings for staff;
 - l. Publish and regularly update the Guide to Specialized Transportation Services Document for seniors and people with disabilities in Santa Cruz County listing accessible transportation services available in Santa Cruz County including eligibility requirements, hours/schedule, service charges, service area, and more details;
 - m. What Pedestrians and Motorists Want Each Other to Know: This brochure, prepared by the E&D TAC Pedestrian Safety Workgroup, includes safety tips intended to help both motorists and pedestrians understand each other's expectations and offer helpful tips, especially involving pedestrians with disabilities;
 - n. Administer the Hazard Report Program that allows individuals to report bicycle and pedestrian safety hazards that impede accessibility in Santa Cruz County;
 - o. Regularly provide input on planning documents and proposed projects throughout Santa Cruz County regarding ADA accessibility standards.
2. Design: The RTC will comply with federal [2010 ADA Standards](#), Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (which contains California building regulations), or local code, whichever provides the greatest access or protection to individuals with disabilities. All new and altered pedestrian facilities such as, but not limited to, sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian overpasses, underpasses, and ramps must be made accessible to persons with disabilities in accordance with federal and state accessibility standards on all federal-aid projects.
- a. The RTC shall ensure compliance with federal, state, and local ADA regulations, laws and codes during the Plans, Specifications & Estimate (PS&E) phase of project development.
 - b. Caltrans will conduct a final inspection to ensure that capital projects are constructed in accordance with the ADA.
3. Self-evaluation and ADA Section 504 Certification: The RTC shall regularly assess its ADA policies and practices. The self-evaluation will be used to identify and correct those policies and practices that are inconsistent with Title II requirements. The self-evaluation should

demonstrate the RTC's good faith efforts to comply with Title II's requirements. The RTC's self-evaluation shall:

- Identify all programs (including public right-of-way facilities), activities, and services and their locations.
- Survey facilities and determine whether there are physical barriers at RTC facilities that may limit the accessibility of its programs or activities to individuals with disabilities RTC programs. If non-structural changes, such as moving programs, should be made, include them in the self-evaluation. If structural changes are needed, include them in a transition plan. IdThis includes the public right-of-way accessing the RTC's office, restrooms, and meeting spaces;
- Determine whether employees and officials are familiar with the public entity's ADA obligations, including the requirement to make reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures.
- Determine whether employees and officials know how to arrange for auxiliary aids and services, such as sign language interpreters, material in Braille, and assistive listening systems; to ensure that communication with people with disabilities is as effective as others.
- Evaluate the accessibility of designs for capital projects that will be used by the public, including, but not limited to trail and highway projects.
- Describe the methods and schedule that will be used to make the facilities accessible;
- Review policies and procedures for RTC services, activities and programs policies to determine whether they ensure an equal opportunity for people with disabilities to participate and benefit.;

The RTC will submit an ADA Section 504 Program Assessment and ADA Annual Certification Form annually to Caltrans (per Section 9.3 of the Caltrans Local Assistance Procedures Manual).

4. The RTC's Nondiscrimination Coordinator will be responsible for implementation and monitoring of the RTC's accessibility policies and procedures.

E. Employment & Procurement

Employment

Employment Policies

As provided by State and Federal laws, the RTC will ensure equal employment opportunity (EEO) and nondiscrimination in all personnel transactions including, but not limited to, the recruitment, selection, transferring, promotion, retention, discipline, compensation, assignment, benefits, training, evaluation, layoff, and rehire of qualified persons; to be fair and impartial with all of its employees and applicants for employment, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, medical condition (cancer related and genetic characteristics), marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender, age, veteran status, pregnancy or any other protected classification under applicable law; and

The RTC is committed to equal employment opportunity and views equality of opportunity, fair access, equal treatment and the concept of diversity in the workforce as necessary elements of its merit system; these elements shall be integrated, and considered congruent, with its Human Resource practices; and

Each employee of the RTC shall take affirmative steps, within his or her job responsibility, to implement this policy and to protect the rights it guarantees.

Recruitment efforts: The underlying objectives of RTC's employment policy are to reach and consider all segments of the population through a positive recruitment program and to recruit personnel who are capable of making a distinct and positive contribution to the effective operations of RTC.

Procurement

Procurement Policies

It is the policy of RTC to:

- Never exclude any person from participation in, deny any person the benefits of, or otherwise discriminate against anyone in connection with the award, performance of, or administration of any contract on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, religious creed, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status.
- Create a level playing field on which disadvantaged business enterprises (DBE), and small businesses can compete fairly for contracts and subcontracts relating to RTC's procurement and professional, technical, and operational services activities.

- Help remove barriers to the participation of DBE's in RTC contracts using "race-neutral" methods, such as those described in the Caltrans Local Assistance Procedures Manual.
- Ensure that any DBE participation percentages on federally funded contracts are narrowly tailored, in accordance with applicable law.
- Ensure that only firms that fully meet [49 CFR part 26](#) eligibility standards are permitted to participate as DBEs in federally-assisted contracts.
- Implement the State of California, Department of Transportation Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program Plan as it pertains to Local Agencies.

The RTC Executive Director is responsible for adherence to this policy. The DBE Liaison Officer, in coordination with the RTC Internal Services fiscal and contract staff, is responsible for development, implementation, and monitoring of this program. It is the expectation of the Regional Transportation Commission that stipulations and provisions contained in the RTC's Nondiscrimination Plan and DBE Program be adhered to both in the spirit and the letter by all RTC personnel.

This policy shall be circulated to all RTC employees and to members of the community that perform or are interested in performing work on RTC contracts.

RTC Procurement Manual and DBE Program

The *RTC's Procurement Procedures Manual* outlines the RTC's process to assure that the agency engages in full and fair competition, and obtains the best value, price, and quality for taxpayer-funded goods and services. The RTC's procurement procedures follow federal and state requirements, including those outlined in the *Caltrans Local Assistance Procedures Manual*. In solicitations for consultant support, the RTC shall utilize "race-neutral" methods to encourage the participation of firms that are considered "Disadvantaged Business Enterprises" (DBE), including woman-, minority-, and veteran-owned companies.

For contracts funded by federal transportation funds, the RTC follows federal and state guidelines regarding setting DBE participation goals, ensuring that consultants make Good Faith Efforts to involve DBEs as subcontractors, prompt payment and nondiscrimination clauses in contracts, and other such requirements. The purpose of the RTC's procurement process is to assure that the RTC engages in full and fair competition, and obtains the best value, price, and quality for taxpayer-funded goods and services. The procurement procedures in the *RTC's Procurement Procedures Manual* follow the federal and state requirements. DBE contract goals are not allowed for State-Only

funded contracts based on Proposition 209, but DBE participation is encouraged.

Notices regarding any contract work by RTC staff (RFPs, RFQs, etc.) should be sent to DBE firms interested in providing the required services. A list of certified DBEs organized by type of services offered is provided by Caltrans at the following link (<https://californiaucp.dbesystem.com/>).

Appendix 1: Nondiscrimination Notice to Beneficiaries - Title VI and ADA



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission **Nondiscrimination Notice to Beneficiaries**

Your Rights Against Discrimination under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other Antidiscrimination laws

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) strives to provide meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities to all individuals. The RTC operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, sex, age, gender, sexual orientation, religious creed, ancestry, veteran or socioeconomic status in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other antidiscrimination laws and regulations (see [Attachment 1](#)) and RTC policies throughout its planning and decision-making processes. **Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under state or federal nondiscrimination regulations, including Title VI or the ADA, may file a complaint with RTC.**

For more information on RTC's Nondiscrimination Civil Rights the procedures or to file a discrimination complaint, go online at <https://www.sccrtc.org/>, see Appendix 2 (procedures) and Appendix 3 (complaint form) of the RTC's Nondiscrimination Plan and contact:

RTC Title VI Coordinator
1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 460-3200
info@sccrtc.org
<https://www.sccrtc.org/about/title-vi-civil-rights-program/>

A complainant may also file a complaint directly with the Caltrans Office of Civil Rights at Title.VI@dot.ca.gov; Federal Transit Administration Civil Rights Division (Attention: Complaint Team East Building, 5th Floor – TCR) at 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590; or Federal Highway Administration, U.S.DOT Office of Civil Rights, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, 8th Floor E81-105, Washington, DC 20590.

This notice is posted in the RTC office, 1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250, Santa Cruz, CA and on the RTC website: www.sccrtc.org. A summarized version of this notice will also be included in RTC meeting agendas.

Attachment 1: Pertinent Nondiscrimination Authorities

As a recipient of United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) funding, the RTC is explicitly required to comply with and enforce certain nondiscrimination requirements in the award and administration of USDOT-funded contracts and procurements. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., 78 stat. 252), prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin); and 49 CFR Part 21.
- The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, (42 U.S.C. § 4601), prohibits unfair treatment of persons displaced or whose property has been acquired because of Federal or Federal-aid programs and projects;
- Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973, (23 U.S.C. § 324 et seq.), prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex;
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (29 U.S.C. § 794 et seq.), as amended, (prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability); and 49 CR Part 27;
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, (42 U.S.C. § 6101 et seq.), prohibits discrimination on the basis of age);
- Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982, (49 U.S.C. § 471, Section 47123), as amended, prohibits discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, or sex;
- The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, (PL 100-209), Broadened the scope, coverage and applicability of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, by expanding the definition of the terms “programs or activities” to include all of the programs or activities of the Federal-aid recipients, sub-recipients and contractors, whether such programs or activities are Federally funded or not;
- Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibit discrimination of the basis of disability in the operation of public entities, public and private transportation systems, places of public accommodation, and certain testing entities (42 U.S.C. §§ 12131 – 12189) as implemented by Department of Transportation regulations 49 C.F.R. parts 37 and 38;
- The Federal Aviation Administration’s nondiscrimination statute (49 U.S.C. § 47123) prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, and sex;

- Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, which ensures discrimination against minority populations by discouraging programs, policies, and activities with disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations;
- Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, and resulting agency guidance, national origin discrimination includes discrimination because of limited English proficiency (LEP). To ensure compliance with Title VI, agencies and contractors must take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to programs (70 Fed. Reg. at 74087 to 74100);
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination because of sex in education programs or activities (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq)

As a recipient of State funding the RTC is also required to comply with state regulations and laws including:

- California Government Code Section 1135 Et Seq/Article 9.5, as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, mental disability, physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, or sexual orientation, related to any program or activity that is conducted, operated, or administered by the state or by any state agency, is funded directly by the state, or receives any financial assistance from the state.

Appendix 2: Discrimination Complaint Procedures

Discrimination Complaint Procedures for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)

It is the policy of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) to ensure that no individual is discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, English language proficiency, sex, disability, age, religious creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, veteran's or socio-economic status, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and other federal, state, and local antidiscrimination statutes, regulations, and policies.

This prohibition against discrimination applies to all programs and projects of the SCCRTC, its contractors, consultants, and anyone else who acts on behalf of SCCRTC.

Any person who believes they have been discriminated against based on race, color, or national origin by the RTC or its affiliates may file a complaint by completing and submitting the RTC's Discrimination Complaint Form. RTC investigates complaints received no more than 180 days after the alleged incident.

RTC will only process complaints that are complete. Complainants must fill in and sign the form provided. Complaints must include the complainant's contact information and details of the alleged discrimination. Title VI allegations must be based on issues involving race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability. Complaints of discrimination may be filed with:

SCCRTC
Attn: Nondiscrimination/Title VI/ADA Coordinator
1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
info@sccrtc.org (Subject: Title VI Complaint)

Once the complaint is received:

1. The RTC's Nondiscrimination Coordinator will review it to determine if the RTC has jurisdiction.
2. The complainant will receive an acknowledgement letter informing them that the complaint has been received and whether the complaint will be investigated by RTC.
3. The RTC will forward complaints to be investigated to Caltrans, which will forward complaints to the federal administering agency, where

appropriate. * The RTC should send complaints within one business day of receipt to Caltrans via email to Title.VI@dot.ca.gov.

4. RTC has 30 days to investigate the complaint. If more information is needed to resolve the case, RTC may contact the complainant. The complainant has 15 business days from the date of the letter to send requested information to RTC. If RTC is not contacted by the complainant or does not receive the additional information within 15 business days, RTC can administratively close the case. The case can be administratively closed also if the complainant no longer wishes to pursue their case.
5. For ADA-related complaints, within 15 calendar days after receipt of the complaint, the RTC's Nondiscrimination Coordinator will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions.
6. After RTC reviews the complaint, it will issue one of two letters to the complainant, and, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant: a Letter of Finding (LOF) or a closure letter. The response will explain the position of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint. An LOF summarizes the allegations and the interviews regarding the alleged incident and explains whether any disciplinary action, additional training of the staff member, or other action will occur. A closure letter summarizes the allegations and states that there was not a legal violation and that the case will be closed. If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision, she/he has 30 days after the date of the letter to do so.
7. All complaints received, and responses, will be kept by RTC for at least three years.
8. A person may also file a complaint directly with:

Caltrans Office of Civil Rights (OCR): Title.VI@dot.ca.gov

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
U.S.DOT Office of Civil Rights
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
8th Floor E81-105
Washington, DC 20590

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
Civil Rights Division
Attention: Complaint Team East Building, 5th Floor – TCR
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

*Title VI Complaints Processed Under the Federal Highway Administration:

Title VI complaints filed with Caltrans in which Caltrans is named as the Respondent will be forwarded to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Division Office. The Complainant will receive an acknowledgement letter informing them that the complaint has been received and forwarded to the FHWA. Per the FHWA Guidance Memorandum, *Processing of Title VI Complaints*, dated June 13, 2018, all Title VI complaints received by a sub-recipient are to be forwarded to Caltrans to be submitted to FHWA Division Office. Complaints should be sent within one business day of receipt via email to Title.VI@dot.ca.gov. If Headquarters Office of Civil Rights (HCR) determines a Title VI complaint against a sub-recipient that can be investigated by Caltrans, HCR may delegate the task of investigating the complaint to Caltrans.

Title VI Complaints Processed Under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA):

Title VI complaints filed with Caltrans in which Caltrans is named as the Respondent will be investigated by Caltrans. Per FTA, Title VI complaints are to be handled at the local level or elevated to FTA under egregious Title VI discriminatory circumstances. The Complainant will receive an acknowledgement letter informing them that the complaint has been received and whether the complaint will be investigated by Caltrans or forwarded to FTA.

Title VI complaints filed with Caltrans against a sub-recipient will be investigated by Caltrans. If the complaint is filed with the sub-recipient, the sub-recipient is responsible for investigating the complaint in accordance with FTA Circular 4702.1B, Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients.

Filing a Local Complaint: FTA recommends, but does not require, that individuals first file a complaint directly with the local agency [RTC] to give the agency an opportunity to resolve the situation. FTA grantees are required under the ADA, Title VI, and EEO to have local complaint procedures.

Caltrans OCR Investigation Process: If the Caltrans Office of Civil Rights (OCR) is delegated the responsibility of performing an investigation, OCR has 90 days to investigate the complaint. If additional time is needed, OCR will call the Complainant and inform them.

If more information is needed to resolve the case, the OCR investigator may contact the Complainant. The Complainant has ten business days from the date of the letter to send the requested information to the investigator assigned to the case.

If the investigator is not contacted by the Complainant or does not receive the additional information within ten business days, OCR can administratively close the case. A case can be administratively closed also if the complainant no longer wishes to pursue their case.

OCR will consult with HCR regarding the disposition of the complaint. Disposition of Title VI complaint will be undertaken by HCR, through either (1) informal resolution or (2) issuance of a Letter of Finding of compliance or noncompliance with Title VI. A copy of the Letter of Finding will be sent to all parties via the Division Office.

Appendix 3: Discrimination Complaint Form

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission Discrimination Complaint Form

INSTRUCTIONS: This is a printable form. The form can also be filled out online at: <https://sccrtc.org/about/title-vi-civil-rights-program/>.

Simply complete, print, and send to: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)

Attention: Nondiscrimination Title VI/ADA Coordinator
via email to info@sccrtc.org or

mail to 1101 Pacific Ave, Ste 250 Santa Cruz, CA 95060

If you need assistance completing this form, please call 831-460-3200.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) operates its programs, projects, services, and activities in compliance with state and federal laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (Title VI), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and U.S. DOT and California policies and guidance. The SCCRTC is required to conduct its work without unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, age, sex, disability, religious creed, sexual orientation, ancestry, or veteran's status. The RTC is also required to provide full and fair participation for all socio-economic groups throughout its planning and decision-making processes. Additionally, the RTC is required to provide meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities to individuals with limited English proficiency.

If you feel you have been discriminated against, please contact the RTC's Nondiscrimination/Title VI/ADA Coordinator and provide the following information to assist RTC in processing your complaint. This form is available in alternate formats and multiple languages. Should you require these services or any other assistance in completing this form, please let us know.

Please print clearly

1. Contact Information

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip Code:

Phone Number:

Email:

Accessible format requirements?

(Large print) (Audiotape) (TDD) (Other)

2. Who do you allege was the victim of discrimination or ADA violation?

- You A Third-Party Individual A Class of Persons

If you are filing this complaint on behalf of another individual, please supply the name and relationship of the person for whom you are submitting this complaint form and explain why you have filed for a third party:

Name:

Relationship:

Why you have filed for a third party:

If you are filing on behalf of the third party, have you obtained the permission of the aggrieved party. Yes No

3. I believe the discrimination experienced was based on (please indicate the nature of the alleged discrimination and check all that apply):

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Race | <input type="checkbox"/> Sex | <input type="checkbox"/> Ancestry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Color | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion | <input type="checkbox"/> Veteran's status |
| <input type="checkbox"/> National origin | <input type="checkbox"/> Creed | <input type="checkbox"/> Socioeconomic Status (low-income) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English Proficiency | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation | <input type="checkbox"/> Background/Culture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender identity | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Age | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender expression | |

4. Information on Alleged Discrimination.

Please describe the action or decision which caused you to believe there was discrimination. Include a description of what happened and how you or the person or group you are filing on behalf were discriminated against. Include names, dates, times, witnesses, and any other information that would assist us in our investigation of your allegations. Please include any other documentation that is relevant to this complaint. You may attach additional pages to explain your complaint.

Date and Place of Occurrence:

Name(s) of the person(s) who you believe is discriminating:

Please list all witnesses' names and phone numbers:

5. What type of corrective action or remedy would you like to see taken?

6. Do you consent to the investigator sharing your name and other personal information with other parties on this matter when doing so will assist in investigating and resolving your complaint? Yes No

7. Have you previously filed a Title VI complaint with this agency? Yes No

8. Have you filed this complaint with any other Federal, State, or local agency, or with any Federal or State Court? Yes No
 - a) If yes, provide **contact information at the agency or court** where the complaint was filed:
Agency:
Name:
Title:
Address:
Telephone Number:
Email:

 - b) If yes, please provide a copy of the complaint.

c) If yes, have you filed a lawsuit regarding this complaint?

Yes No

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

I believe the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature and date required below:

Signature: _____

Printed Name:

Date:

Please submit this signed form in person or by mail to the address below or email this form to info@sccrtc.org.

RTC Nondiscrimination/Title VI/ADA Coordinator
1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
info@sccrtc.org

Appendix 4: List of Discrimination Investigations, Complaints, and Lawsuits

Per FTA Circular 4702.1B, “all recipients are required to prepare and maintain a list of any of the following that allege discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin”:

- Active investigations conducted by federal, state, or other entities
- Lawsuits; and
- Complaints naming the recipient

The RTC has not received any Title VI Investigations, Complaints or Lawsuits.

Below is the format of the list that will be used for tracking these incidents:

Investigations, Lawsuits and Complaints

	Date (Month, Day, Year)	Summary (Include the basis of complaint: race, color, or national origin)	Status	Action(s) Taken
Investigations				
1.				
2.				
Lawsuits				
1.				
2.				
Complaints				
1.				
2.				

Appendix 5: Public Participation Plan Activities

Public participation is an integral part of regional transportation planning, programming, and project implementation. Public involvement is a significant major component of the transportation planning and programming processes. RTC works to ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, all Santa Cruz County residents and stakeholders, especially underrepresented groups, are actively involved in the decision-making process.

The following table provides a **summary** of activities that the RTC undertakes on an ongoing basis to encourage participation of the entire Santa Cruz County community in the work of the RTC. The RTC approved a [Public Participation Plan](#) for the RTC, developed with the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, in October 2023. The Public Participation Plan provides additional information on some of the outreach and engagement strategies that the RTC utilizes. The RTC is additionally developing an equity-focused outreach toolkit in 2025.

Item	Frequency	Web	Email	Mail	Media	Other
SCCRTC Meetings/ Agenda Packets	1-2 times per month, second meeting in a workshop format	Posted 3-6 days prior to meeting	Notification sent to distribution list and interested parties (e-news) when packet posted on web	Packet mailed to Commissioners and major libraries.	Main meeting is televised and rebroadcast on Community TV; media notified by email when packet is posted on web	Meetings are held throughout the County; hard copy of packet available in agency office, major libraries and some partner agency offices
SCCRTC Actions	As needed for high profile program/project decisions	Press release and/or news feed posted	Notification to interested parties (e-news), if appropriate	None generally	Press release distributed before and/or after key SCCRTC actions (meeting)	Notification included in committee packets as appropriate

Item	Frequency	Web	Email	Mail	Media	Other
SCCRTC Highlights	Following main monthly meeting	Posted day or two following meeting	Notification sent to city council members, transit district board members, media, chambers of commerce and SCCRTC committee members	None	(see email)	--
Public Hearings	As needed for high profile program/project decisions	Notice posted 10 days or more prior to hearing, materials posted with packet (at least 4 days prior)	Notification to interested parties (e-news) and those who receive the SCCRTC packets	(see SCCRTC packets)	Press release sent 1-2 weeks in advance, media advisory sent the day before if a public event, paid ads may also be placed 1-2 weeks in advance	Notification included in committee packets as appropriate, signs may also be placed on A-frame barricades on major thoroughfares.
Correspondence from the Public	Varies	Entry included in correspo	If correspondence is received via email, it is	None	None	Correspondence addressing specific SCCRTC projects may be

Item	Frequency	Web	Email	Mail	Media	Other
		ndence log posted with packets	acknowledged via email.			included with that item in the SCCRTC meeting packets.
SCCRTC Committees	Every 1-2 months	Packets posted on web	Packets emailed, notification about packet availability emailed to interested parties (e-news)	Packets mailed to committee members that request it, fees may apply per SCCRTC Rules and Regulations	None, unless included in an important recommendation to the SCCRTC	--
Approved SCCRTC plans, documents and/or project information	As available (examples would be completed environmental analyses, RTPs, feasibility analyses, Traffic Monitoring Reports, Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), etc.)	Plans, documents, info posted on the web	Link to posted document emailed to interested parties (e-news)	Documents mailed to major libraries, if public comment is solicited	Press release sent out when document available with information about the public hearing, if one planned	Hard copies available in RTC offices and public libraries, as appropriate.

Item	Frequency	Web	Email	Mail	Media	Other
Social media	Several times per month	Post Facebook , Twitter, events, and videos, as available	None	None	None	--
Language Assistance	Alternate formats (Spanish, hearing or sight impaired, etc) of various documents and materials are available as appropriate	The RTC website has Spanish translation options and will be fully accessible for disabled users.	Currently limited	Currently limited	Coordinate with, submit media releases to, and include ads and announcements in Spanish language media, as appropriate	Agendas for public include notice in Spanish of availability of interpreter for those who require Spanish language assistance to participate
Collaboration with local tribal and community groups and other public agencies	Several times per month					RTC staff and board members regularly meet with community partners who provide insight and can assist with outreach to hard-to-reach groups.

Additional Outreach and Anti-discrimination Strategies

This Nondiscrimination Plan and the Monterey Bay Area Public Participation Plan identify several methods to better engage community members who are underrepresented or have been historically discriminated against in its projects and program, the list below summarizes input received from RTC staff, committee, and board members in a December 2024 survey. RTC staff will work on integrating into its outreach plans and procedures.

- Ensure there is a clear mechanism in place for gathering feedback on the implementation of the RTC’s Nondiscrimination and Public Participation Plans. This feedback should be solicited from the public and stakeholders after every major transportation project or program to continually improve the process.
- Increase outreach focused on Spanish speaking communities
 - Include at least one Spanish-speaking staff member at all outreach events
 - Use staff who speak Spanish and are from that specific area of the county for the outreach
 - Provide more Cruz511, fact sheets, and meeting materials in Spanish.
 - More venues to provide comments and input in other languages, specifically Spanish.
 - Multilingual flyering for events at schools, churches, and business areas.
 - More targeted outreach campaigns
 - Advertisements in other local language newspapers
 - Post information at ethnic markets and seek community input on other places to post information.
 - Offer services that directly impact disinvested communities
- Ensure meetings and outreach opportunities and materials are accessible to all
 - Hold meetings around the county, and continue Zoom for remote participation by the public
 - Provide translated materials and translators at RTC meetings and outreach events
 - Provide materials in Braille, large print, and accessible online formats. Also, provide sign language interpreters for meetings.
 - Use simple, easy to understand language in materials

- Partner with community-based organizations that have already built trust and rapport in those communities
 - Collaborate with and solicit assistance from local non-profits, community groups, and community leaders that can provide insight and outreach to harder to reach groups.
 - Attend more community events and meetings of groups that organize historically discriminated individuals or are equity focused, rather than expecting these groups to attend RTC hosted events.
 - Build closer partnerships with NGO's that represent underrepresented communities.
 - Meet with these organizations to educate them on what we do and how their participation can make a difference in their community.
 - Work with other organizations that members of the public trust to engage and spread info.
 - Send job postings directly to community-based organizations to share with their networks
- Get out in the community and meet them where they are:
 - Have engagement practices that do not simply consist of public meetings and public workshops, since regular residents don't attend those. Place more value on input received from door to door or table in public places, less value on any self-selected input.
 - Participate more in events and activities where members of the community will already be at to reach them where they will be located, such as community centers, parks, places of worship, grocery stores, or schools
 - In-person outreach at existing community events or piggyback with larger agencies holding events
 - Door knocking campaigns in priority neighborhoods.
 - Call them on the telephone, offer rides to meetings
- Provide incentives to participate:
 - Provide financial stipends to volunteers serving on RTC advisory committees
 - Provide financial incentives to attend workshops, fill out surveys
 - Provide childcare and food during meetings.
 - Offer swag giveaways

- Shift of RTC resources to prioritize engagement and solutions for underrepresented portion of our region.
- Provide assistance to organizations who serve underrepresented (transit district, local jurisdictions, community organizations) in pursuing funding and planning to more effectively serve underrepresented. Improve accessibility to engage on projects, programs, etc.
- Engage the entire community:
 - Continue website and social media updates
 - Prepare and mail annual reports in English and Spanish to all households about RTC projects
- RTC policies and procedures:
 - Augment procurement practices (notifications, assistance for firms located within marginalized communities or recognized as disadvantaged)
 - Pay to have agendas published in popular media
- RTC Staffing
 - Hire staff who specifically works on outreach in other languages and translation. This could also include higher bilingual pay to entice people who speak other languages to work here.
 - Invest in a designated staff person that reaches out directly and proactively to these individuals
 - Implement discrimination-prevention practices in RTC hiring, professional development, performance management, etc. internally. Provide training and resources for staff to better engage and provide services to the underrepresented portion of the region.
 - Work to ensure that the RTC Board and staff better represent the diversity of the community
 - Training on implicit/unconscious bias and nondiscrimination
 - Keep up on trainings and best practices, continue making as much bilingual/multilingual
 - Do more recruitment/advertising in BIPOC orgs. More recruitment of staff in the Watsonville area.
 - Provide Assistance applying for bicycle incentive program, personalized assistance for transit/bike/etc. trip planning; ask individuals and non-profits who provide other assistance

- Increased verbal communication via radio, especially in Spanish. Have announcements made on Spanish-speaking radio stations, especially during harvest season.
- Encourage staff to participate by allowing overtime or management unpaid overtime to participate in these events held outside of typical work hours.

Community Engagement Questionnaire for RTC Outreach

Projects that result in community engagement co-benefits create opportunities during planning, design, and implementation for communities to directly engage with the project, provide input that is incorporated into it, and collaborate on its development. Overall, the methods for estimating the community engagement co-benefits are qualitative, based on tracking the extent and impact of public participation in project planning, design, and implementation. The assessment evaluates the quantity, quality, and equity of community engagement.

The following questionnaire includes excerpts from the Community Engagement Co-Benefit Assessment Methodology for California Climate Investments (CCI). Guidance on how to answer some of these questions is provided in Section C of the full methodology available at: www.arb.ca.gov/cci-cobenefits.

To estimate the community engagement co-benefit, users will respond to the five questions. Based on the responses to the questions, the level of community engagement will be evaluated as low, medium, or high. ***The agency will then mark Low, Medium, or High on the when documenting Priority Population Benefits.***

Community Engagement Questionnaire

1. Is the project a neighborhood-scale, city/regional-scale, or rural project?
2. With regard to public events:
 - a. Briefly describe the events held.
 - b. What was the approximate total attendance at those events?
3. With regard to other opportunities provided for community members to comment or provide input on the project (e.g., internet- or telephone-based input opportunities) or separate meetings with specific stakeholders, community leaders, and organizations, beyond those included above:
 - a. What is the approximate total number of people who provided commentary or input on the project through these opportunities?
 - b. Briefly describe the opportunities provided. (Please respond in fewer than 100 words)
4. Which of the following took place as part of the events and other opportunities identified in questions 2 and 3?
 - a. Informed the community about various aspects of the project, including the process by which major decisions about the project would be made.
 - b. Solicited and recorded written or spoken input from the community

- about specific aspects of the project or potential project alternatives before decisions on those aspects and alternatives were finalized.
- c. Incorporated proposals or ideas from the community into project alternatives or components.
 - d. Reported back to the community on how the input in 4(b) and 4(c) was incorporated.
 - e. Developed project features or project alternatives collaboratively with the community by one or more of the following means: (Check all that apply):
 - i. One or more workshops or other meetings in which the community developed a project alternative or specific component to address unmet community needs, which was subsequently included in the project's application for funding or final design.
 - ii. Formal cooperation with a community-based organization (i.e., via a memorandum of understanding, community benefits agreement, steering committee, labor agreement, etc.) to acquire or distribute funding, identify project alternatives or project components, or otherwise enhance community engagement in project design, planning and implementation.
 - iii. Delegation of authority to choose between project alternatives or components to the community through a steering committee, organized voting process, representative community-based organization, or other means.
 - iv. A community-based organization, community-driven steering committee, or similar entity designed, planned, and implemented the project in whole or in significant part.
5. Considering all the events and input opportunities, which of the following statements are true (check all that apply):
- a. The participants comprised a broadly representative sample of the population potentially benefiting from, or affected by, the project.
 - b. Project proponents identified key community leaders and organizations and engaged them directly.
 - c. The events and input opportunities were hosted at varied and accessible times and locations throughout the area potentially affected by the project and included both in person and online forms of engagement. Events and written materials were offered in languages other than English.
 - d. The participation process was conducted or assisted by a professional facilitator or public participation expert.
 - e. The project proponents, or those acting on their behalf, prepared and followed a community engagement plan that meets the minimum criteria originally established by the Transformative Climate Communities Program (option is available for all project types).

Engagement Assessment

To determine the overall benefit of Community Engagement efforts, assess the responses to the quantity, quality, and equity-oriented questions as low, medium, or high. For the quantity category, which measures the number of people giving input on the project, the scoring is different for projects of different scales and contexts — neighborhood-scale, city/regional-scale, and rural. These scoring thresholds reflect considerations of total population size and population density in the area potentially affected by the project. Scores related to quantity, quality, and equity of community engagement are then aggregated to provide a total project community engagement score.

Evaluation of Community Engagement in Projects

Quantity

Total event attendance + number of people commenting through other opportunities:

- For regional-scale projects: **LOW** 0-49; **MEDIUM** 50-99; **HIGH** 100 or more
- For neighborhood-scale projects: **LOW** 0-24; **MEDIUM** 25-59; **HIGH** 60 or more
- For rural projects: **LOW** 0-14; **MEDIUM** 15-29; **HIGH** 30 or more

Quality

Selection in response to **Community Engagement Questionnaire**, Question 4: **LOW** 4a or 4b; **MEDIUM** 4c or 4d; **HIGH** Any from 4e

Equity

Selection in response to **Community Engagement Questionnaire**, Question 5: **LOW** None or 1; **MEDIUM** 2 or 3; **HIGH** 4 or more

The total community engagement level will then be evaluated based on the quantity, quality, and equity of community engagement as follows:

- If two or more of these categories are **low**, the overall engagement level is **LOW**
- If two or more of these categories are **medium**, the overall engagement level is **MEDIUM**
- If two or more of these categories are **HIGH**, the overall engagement level is **HIGH**
- If each category is in a separate rank (one low, one medium, and one high), the overall engagement level is **MEDIUM**

Appendix 6: Representation on RTC Committees

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) is required by federal guidelines to include a table depicting the racial breakdown of its non-elected planning boards, advisory councils or committees and a description of efforts made to encourage participation. The RTC strives to have advisory committees and staff members that reflect the diversity of Santa Cruz County. The RTC recruits for participation in its advisory committees when there are membership openings and encourages participation from members that reflect the diversity of the Santa Cruz County community. Recruitment efforts include outreach materials and advertisements in English and Spanish.

The RTC has three committees made up of members of the community that are selected by the RTC board: the Bicycle Transportation Advisory (Bike) Committee, the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC), and the Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee (TOC). The E&D TAC also serves as the local Social Services Transportation Advisory Council for Santa Cruz County which advises the RTC, transit providers and local agencies on federal and state requirements and local concerns regarding transportation accessibility issues for the elderly and persons with disabilities, as set forth in the California Transportation Development Act.

While Title VI and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) guidelines only require the RTC to report on representation on RTC committees where members are appointed by the RTC board, as part of the RTC's equity efforts, staff surveyed members of all of the RTC's Committees and RTC staff. This included the Transportation Equity Workgroup established to assist with the development of the RTC's Equity Action Plan and the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC), which is made up of staff from local jurisdictions, neither of which are appointed by the RTC board.

A summary of the demographic information provided by those who responded to the optional survey is reflected below.

Representation on RTC Committees and Staff

Body	# of Responses	White, (not Latino or Hispanic)	Latino or Hispanic	Asian or South east Asian	Native American or Alaska Native	Black or African American	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	Middle Eastern or North African	Two or More Races	Decline to State
County Population¹	261,547	55.2%	35.2%	5.4%	1.9%	1.5%	0.2%	NA	4.6%	NA
E&DTAC	8	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Bike	11	90%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	9%
TOC	4	100%	0%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	25%	0%
ITAC	10	70%	10%	10%	0%	0%	0%	10%	20%	0%
Equity Workgroup	7	29%	29%	14%	29%	14%	0%	0%	14%	0%
RTC Staff	20	65%	25%	15%	0%	0%	0%	0%	10%	5%

1- Source: US Census, Population estimates, July 2023.

2- Not all committee or staff members responded to the survey. Totals shown reflect responses which were received from both members and alternates.

Primary Languages Spoken at Home, Sex/Gender

Language Group	English	Spanish	Other Indo European	Asian & Pacific Islander	Other Language		Female	Male	Non-binary
Population	67.4%	25.5%	3.6%	2.8%	0.7%				
E&D TAC	100%	25%	0%	0%	0%		50%	50%	0%
Bike	100%	9%	0%	0%	0%		45%	55%	0%

Language Group	English	Spanish	Other Indo European	Asian & Pacific Islander	Other Language		Female	Male	Non-binary
TOC	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%		25%	75%	0%
ITAC	100%	10%	0%	0%	0%		20%	80%	0%
Equity WG	100%	29%	0%	0%	0%		57%	43%	0%
RTC Staff	100%	17%	0%	0%	0%		60%	35%	5% DTS

Appendix 7: Employee and Board Member Education Form and Acknowledgement of Receipt of the Nondiscrimination Plan and Title VI Program

SCCRTC Nondiscrimination Policy

It is the policy of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, limited English proficiency, sex, disability, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any operation of the RTC as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations. The SCCRTC will additionally conduct its work without unlawful discrimination on the grounds of religious creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, veteran's or socio-economic status throughout its planning and decision-making processes. The RTC strives to provide meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities to all individuals.

This policy applies to all operations of the RTC, including its employees, affiliates, contractors and anyone who acts on behalf of the RTC. This policy also applies to the operations of any department or agency to which the RTC extends federal financial assistance. Federal financial assistance includes grants, training, use of equipment, donations of surplus property, and other assistance.

Prohibited discrimination may be intentional or unintentional. Seemingly neutral acts that have disparate impacts on individuals of a protected group and lack a substantial legitimate justification are a form of prohibited discrimination. Harassment and retaliation are also prohibited forms of discrimination.

Examples of prohibited types of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age include: Denial to an individual any service, financial aid, or other benefit; Distinctions in the quality, quantity, or manner in which a benefit is provided; Segregation or separate treatment; Restriction in the enjoyment of any advantages, privileges, or other benefits provided; Discrimination in any activities related to transportation planning, programming, and project implementation, or transportation infrastructure or facilities built or repaired; and Discrimination in employment.

Title VI compliance is a condition of receipt of federal funds. The RTC shall adhere to policies that prevent discrimination in the provision of its services to the public. The RTC shall collect and analyze demographic data to identify and address potential inequities. The RTC's Nondiscrimination/Title VI Coordinator is authorized to ensure compliance with this policy, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C § 2000d and related statutes, and the requirements of 23 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) pt. 200 and 49 CFR pt. 21.

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Nondiscrimination/Title VI Plan

I hereby acknowledge receipt of RTC’s Nondiscrimination/Title VI Plan and Nondiscrimination Policy. I have read the plan and am committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits or services delivered by the RTC, its contractors, consultants, and anyone else who acts on behalf of RTC on the basis of race, color, national origin, English language proficiency, age, sex, mental disability, physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, religious creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, veteran’s or socio-economic status, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, California Government Code Section 11135, and other antidiscrimination statutes and regulations and RTC policies. I will strive to provide meaningful access to RTC programs, planning and decision-making processes, services, and activities to all individuals.

Your signature

Print your name

Date

Appendix 8: Letter Acknowledging Receipt of Complaint

Today's Date

Ms. Jane Smith
1234 Main St.
Capitola, CA 95060

Dear Ms. Smith:

This letter is to acknowledge receipt of your complaint against RTC 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 (831) 460-3200, or write to:

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
Attn: Nondiscrimination/Title VI/ADA Coordinator
1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
info@sccrtc.org

Sincerely,

RTC Nondiscrimination Coordinator

Appendix 9: Letter of Finding (Notifying Complainant that Complaint Is Substantiated)

Today's Date

Ms. Jane Smith
1234 Main St.
Capitola, CA 95060

Dear Ms. Smith:

The matter referenced in your letter of _____ (date) against RTC alleging a 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 bringing this important matter to our attention. Your input was helpful during our review of this matter. ***(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,

RTC Title VI Coordinator

Appendix 10: Closure Letter (Notifying Complainant that the Complaint Is Not Substantiated)

Today's Date

Ms. Jane Smith
1234 Main St.
Capitola, CA 95060

Dear Ms. Smith:

The matter referenced in your complaint of _____ (date) against the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), 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 have 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.

RTC has analyzed the materials and facts pertaining to your case for evidence of RTC'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 appeal this decision within thirty calendar days of receipt of this final written decision from RTC.

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

Sincerely,

RTC Nondiscrimination Coordinator

Appendix 11: Title VI Assurances

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Standard Title VI/ Non-Discrimination Assurances DOT Order No. 1050.2A

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) (herein referred to as the “Recipient”), HEREBY AGREES THAT, as a condition to receiving any Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration, or Federal Rail Administration, is subject to and will comply with the following:

Statutory/Regulatory Authorities

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C § 2000d *et seq.*, 78 stat. 252), (prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin);
- 49 C.F.R Part 21 (entitled *Nondiscrimination In Federally-Assisted Programs Of The Department Of Transportation—Effectuation Of Title VI Of The Civil Rights Act Of 1964*);
- 28 C.F.R. § 50.3 (U.S. Department of Justice Guidelines for Enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)

The preceding statutory and regulatory cites hereinafter are referred to as the “Acts” and “Regulations,” respectively.

General Assurances

In accordance with the Acts, the Regulations, and other pertinent directives, circulars, policy, memoranda, and/or guidance, the Recipient hereby gives assurance that it will promptly take any measures necessary to ensure that:

“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 otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity,” for which the Recipient receives Federal financial assistance from DOT, including the FHWA.

The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 clarified the original intent of Congress, with respect to Title VI and other Non-discrimination requirements (The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973), by restoring the broad, institutional-wide scope and coverage of these non-discrimination statutes and requirements to include all programs and activities of the Recipient, so long as any portion of the program is Federally assisted.

Specific Assurances

More specifically, and without limiting the above general Assurance, the Recipient agrees with and gives the following Assurances with respect to all programs or activities for which the Recipient receives Federal financial assistance:

1. The Recipient agrees that each "activity," "facility," or "program," as defined in §§ 21.23 (b) and 21.23 € of 49 C.F.R. § 21 will be (with regard to an "activity") facilitated, or will be (with regard to a "facility") operated, or will be)with regard to a program") conducted in compliance with all requirements imposed by, or pursuant to the Acts and the Regulations.
2. The Recipient will insert the following notification in all solicitations for bids, Requests For Proposals for work, or material subject to the Acts and the Regulations made in connection with all programs or activities for which the Recipient receives Federal financial assistance, and in adapted form, in all proposals for negotiated agreements regardless of funding source:

"The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC), in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively insure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin for an award."

3. The Recipient will insert the clauses of Appendix A and E of this Assurance in every contract or agreement subject to the Acts and the Regulations.
4. The Recipient will insert the clauses of Appendix B of this Assurance, as a covenant running with the land, in any deed from the United States effecting or recording a transfer of real property, structures, use, or improvements thereon or interest therein to a Recipient.
5. That where the Recipient receives Federal financial assistance to construct a facility, or part of a facility, the Assurance will extend to the entire facility and facilities operated in connection therewith.

6. That where the Recipient receives Federal financial assistance in the form, or for the acquisition of real property or an interest in real property, the Assurance will extend to rights to space on, over, or under such property.
7. That the Recipient will include the clauses set forth in Appendix C and Appendix D of this Assurance, as a covenant running with the land, in any future deeds, leases, licenses, permits, or similar instruments entered into by the Recipient with other parties:
 - a. for the subsequent transfer or real property acquired or improved under the applicable activity, project, or program; and
 - b. for the construction or use of, or access to, space on, over, or under real property acquired or improved under the applicable activity, project, or program.
8. That this Assurance obligates the Recipient for the period during which Federal financial assistance is extended to the program, except where the Federal financial assistance is to provide, or is in the form of, personal property, or interest therein, or structures or improvements thereon, in which case the Assurance obligates the Recipient, or any transferee for the longer of the following periods:
 - a. the period during which the property is used for a purpose for which the Federal financial assistance is extended, or for another purpose involving the provision of similar services or benefits; or
 - b. the period during which the Recipient retains ownership or possession of the property.
9. The Recipient will provide for such methods of administration for the program as are found by the Secretary of Transportation or the official to whom he/she delegates specific authority to give reasonable guarantee that it, other recipients, sub-recipients, sub-grantees, contractors, subcontractors, consultants, transferees, successors in interest, and other participants of Federal financial assistance under such program will comply with all requirements imposed or pursuant to the Acts, the Regulations, and this Assurance.

10. The Recipient agrees that the United States has a right to seek judicial enforcement with regard to any matter arising under the Acts, the Regulations, and this Assurance.

By signing this ASSURANCE, the Recipient also agrees to comply (and require any sub-recipients, sub-grantees, contractors, successors, transferees, and/or assignees to comply) with all applicable provisions governing DOT's access to records, accounts, documents, information, facilities, and staff. You also recognize that you must comply with any program or compliance reviews, and/or complaint investigations conducted by DOT. You must keep records, reports, and submit the material for review upon request to DOT, or its designee in a timely, complete, and accurate way. Additionally, you must comply with all other reporting, data collection, and evaluation requirements, as prescribed by law or detailed in program guidance.

The Recipient gives this ASSURANCE in consideration of and for obtaining any Federal grants, loans, contracts, agreements, property, and/or discounts, or other Federal-aid and Federal financial assistance extended after the date hereof to the recipients by the U.S. Department of Transportation under all programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance. This ASSURANCE is binding on California, other recipients, sub-recipients, sub-grantees, contractors, subcontractors and their subcontractors', transferees, successors in interest, and any other participants in all programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance. The person(s) signing below is authorized to sign this ASSURANCE on behalf of the Recipient.

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

(Name of Recipient)

By *(original signed by)*

Sarah Christensen, Executive Director

DATED 02/06/2025

Title VI Assurances - Appendix A

During the performance of this contract, the contractor, for itself, its assignees, and successors in interest (hereinafter referred to as the “contractor”) agrees as follows:

1. **Compliance with Regulations:** The contractor (hereinafter includes consultants) will comply with the Acts and the Regulations relative to Non-discrimination in Federally-assisted programs of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, as they may be amended from time to time, which are herein incorporated by reference and made a part of this contract.
2. **Non-discrimination:** The contractor, with regard to the work performed by it during the contract, will not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability in the selection and retention of subcontractors, including procurements of materials and leases of equipment. The contractor will not participate directly or indirectly in the discrimination prohibited by the Acts and the Regulations, including employment practices when the contract covers any activity, project, or program set forth in Appendix B of 49 CFR Part 21.
3. **Solicitation for Subcontracts, Including Procurements of Materials and Equipment:** In all solicitations, either by competitive bidding, or negotiation made by the contractor for work to be performed under a subcontract, including procurements of materials, or leases of equipment, each potential subcontractor or supplier will be notified by the contractor of the contractor’s obligations under this contract and the Acts and the Regulations relative to Non-discrimination on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability.

4. **Information and Reports:** The contractor will provide all information and reports required by the Acts, the Regulations, and directives issued pursuant thereto and will permit access to its books, records, accounts, other sources of information, and its facilities as may be determined by the Recipient or the FHWA to be pertinent to ascertain compliance with such Acts, Regulations, and instructions. Where any information required of a contractor is in the exclusive possession of another who fails or refuses to furnish the information, the contractor will so certify to the Recipient or the FHWA, as appropriate, and will set forth what efforts it has made to obtain the information.

5. **Sanctions for Noncompliance:** In the event of a contractor's noncompliance with the Non-discrimination provisions of this contract, the Recipient will impose such contract sanctions as it or the FHWA may determine to be appropriate, including, but not limited to:
 1. withholding payments to the contractor under the contract until the contractor complies; and/or
 2. cancelling, terminating, or suspending a contract, in whole or in part.

6. **Incorporation of Provisions:** The contractor will include the provisions of paragraphs one through six in every subcontract, including procurements of materials and leases of equipment, unless exempt by the Acts, the Regulations and directives issued pursuant thereto. The contractor will take action with respect to any subcontract or procurement as the Recipient or the FHWA may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance. Provided, that if the contractor becomes involved in, or threatened with litigation by a subcontractor, or supplier because of such direction, the contractor may request the Recipient to enter into any litigation to protect the interests of the Recipient. In addition, the contractor may request the United States to enter into the litigation to protect the interests of the United States.

Title VI Assurances – Appendix B
CLAUSES FOR DEEDS TRANSFERRING UNITED STATES PROPERTY

The following clauses will be included in deeds effecting or recording the transfer of real property, structures, or improvements thereon, or granting interest therein from the United States pursuant to the provisions of Assurance 4:

NOW THEREFORE, the U.S. Department of Transportation as authorized by law and upon the condition that the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission will accept title to the lands and maintain the project constructed thereon in accordance with Title 23 U.S.C., the regulations for the administration of the preceding statute, and the policies and procedures prescribed by the FHWA of the U.S. Department of Transportation in accordance and in compliance with all requirements imposed by Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, U.S. Department of Transportation, Subtitle A, Office of the Secretary, Part 21, Non-discrimination in Federally-assisted programs of the U.S. Department of Transportation pertaining to and effectuating the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252; 42 U.S.C. § 2000d to 2000d-4), does hereby remise, release, quitclaim and convey unto the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission all the right, title and interest of the U.S. Department of Transportation in and to said lands described in Exhibit A attached hereto and made a part hereof.

(HABENDUM CLAUSE)

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD said lands and interests therein unto the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission and its successors forever, subject, however, to the covenants, conditions, restrictions and reservations herein contained as follows, which will remain in effect for the period during which the real property or structures are used for a purpose for which Federal financial assistance is extended or for another purpose involving the provision of similar services or benefits and will be binding on the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, its successors and assigns.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, in consideration of the conveyance of said lands and interest in lands, does hereby covenant and agree as a covenant running with the land for itself, its successors and assigns, that (1) no person will on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination with regard to any facility located wholly or in part on, over, or under such lands hereby conveyed [,] [and]* (2) that the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission will use the lands and interests in lands and interest in lands so conveyed, in compliance with all requirements imposed by or pursuant to Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, U.S. Department of Transportation, Subtitle A, Office of the Secretary, Part 21, Non-discrimination in Federally-assisted programs of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and as said Regulations and Acts may be amended[, and (3) that in the event of breach of any of the above-mentioned non-discrimination conditions, the Department will have a right to enter or re-enter said lands and facilities on said lands, and that above described land and facilities will thereon revert to and vest in and become the absolute property of the U.S. Department of Transportation and its assigns as such interest existed prior to this instruction].*

(*Reverter clause and related language to be used only when it is determined that such a clause is necessary in order to make clear the purpose of Title VI.)

Title VI Assurances - Appendix C

CLAUSES FOR TRANSFER OF REAL PROPERTY ACQUIRED OR IMPROVED UNDER THE ACTIVITY, FACILITY, OR PROGRAM

The following clauses will be included in deeds, licenses, leases, permits, or similar instruments entered into by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission pursuant to the provisions of Assurance 7(a):

- A. The (grantee, lessee, permittee, etc. as appropriate) for himself/herself, his/her heirs, personal representatives, successors in interest, and assigns, as a part of the consideration hereof, does hereby covenant and agree [in the case of deeds and leases add "as a covenant running with the land"] that:
 1. In the event facilities are constructed, maintained, or otherwise operated on the property described in this (deed, license, lease, permit, etc.) for a purpose for which a U.S. Department of Transportation activity, facility, or program is extended or for another purpose involving the provision of similar services or benefits, the (grantee, licensee, lessee, permittee, etc.) will maintain and operate such facilities and services in compliance with all requirements imposed by the Acts and Regulations (as may be amended) such that no person on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, will be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the use of said facilities.

- B. With respect to licenses, leases, permits, etc., in the event of breach of any of the above Non-discrimination covenants, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission will have the right to terminate the (lease, license, permit, etc.) and to enter, re-enter, and repossess said lands and facilities thereon, and hold the same as if the (lease, license, permit, etc.) had never been made or issued.*

C. With respect to a deed, in the event of breach of any of the above Non-discrimination covenants, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission will have the right to enter or re-enter the lands and facilities thereon, and the above described lands and facilities will there upon revert to and vest in and become the absolute property of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission and its assigns.*

(*Reverter clause and related language to be used only when it is determined that such a clause is necessary to make clear the purpose of Title VI.)

Title VI Assurances - Appendix D

CLAUSES FOR CONSTRUCTION/USE.ACCESS TO REAL PROPERTY ACQUIRED UNDER THE ACTIVITY, FACILITY OR PROGRAM

The following clauses will be included in deeds, licenses, permits, or similar instruments/agreements entered into by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission pursuant to the provisions of Assurance 7(b):

- A. The (grantee, licensee, permittee, etc., as appropriate) for himself/herself, his/her heirs, personal representatives, successors in interest ,and assigns, as a part of the consideration hereof, does hereby covenant and agree (in the case of deeds and leases add, "as a covenant running with the land") that (1) no person on the ground of race, color, or national origin, will be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the use of said facilities, (2) that in the construction of any improvements on, over, or under such land, and the furnishings of services thereon, no person on the ground of race, color, or national origin, will be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits or, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination, (3) that the (grantee, licensee, lessee, permittee, etc.) will use the premises in compliance with all other requirements imposed by or pursuant to the Acts and Regulations, as amended, set forth in this Assurance.
- B. With respect to (licenses, leases, permits, etc.) in the event of breach of any of the above of the above Non-discrimination covenants, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission will have the right to terminate the (license, permits, etc., as appropriate) and to enter or re-enter and repossess said land and the facilities thereon, and hold the same as if said (license, permit, etc., as appropriate) had never been made or issued.*
- C. With respect to deeds, in the event of breach of any of the above Non-discrimination covenants, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission will there upon revert to and vest in and become the absolute property of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission and its assigns.

(*Reverter clause and related language to be used only when it is determined that such a clause is necessary to make clear the purpose of Title VI.)

Title VI Assurances - Appendix E

During the performance of this contract, the contractor, for itself, its assignees, and successors in interest (hereinafter referred to as the “contractor”) agrees to comply with the following non-discrimination statutes and authorities, including, but not limited to:

Pertinent Non-Discrimination Authorities:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d *et seq.*, 78 stat. 252), prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin); and 49 CFR Part 21.
- The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, (42 U.S.C. § 4601), (prohibits unfair treatment of persons displaced or whose property has been acquired because of Federal or Federal-aid programs and projects);
- Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973, (23 U.S.C. § 324 *et seq.*), prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex;
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (29 U.S.C. § 794 *et seq.*), as amended, (prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability); and 49 CR Part 27;
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, (42 U.S.C. § 6101 *et seq.*), prohibits discrimination on the basis of age);
- Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982, (49 U.S.C. § 471, Section 47123), as amended, (prohibits discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, or sex);
- The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, (PL 100-209), (Broadened the scope, coverage and applicability of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, by expanding the definition of the terms “programs or activities” to include all of the programs or activities of the Federal-aid recipients, sub-recipients and contractors, whether such programs or activities are Federally funded or not);
- Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in the operation of public entities, public and private transportation systems, places of public accommodation, and certain testing entities (42 U.S.C. §§ 12131 – 12189) as implemented by Department of Transportation regulations 49 C.F.R. parts 37 and 38;

- The Federal Aviation Administration's Non-discrimination statute (49 U.S.C. § 47123) (prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, and sex);
- Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, which ensures discrimination against minority populations by discouraging programs, policies, and activities with disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations;
- Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, and resulting agency guidance, national origin discrimination includes discrimination because of limited English proficiency (LEP). To ensure compliance with Title VI, you must take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to your programs (70 Fed. Reg. at 74087 to 74100);
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits you from discriminating because of sex in education programs or activities (20 U.S.C. 1681 *et seq*).

Appendix 12: Nondiscrimination Program Review Procedures

Each RTC department of the RTC, Planning, Capital Projects, and Internal Services, will conduct periodic reviews of its program areas for compliance with RTC nondiscrimination goals and policies and maximize participation of individuals and groups that have been historically discriminated against. This review may include, but is not limited to:

1. Compliance Review: Conducting compliance review, make findings and recommendations. Collection and review of RTC documents, manuals, standard operating procedures, and training materials.
2. Complaints: Reporting, tracking, investigating suspected violations and addressing any complaints of discrimination.
3. Set Goals: Set goals to work toward for the next fiscal year.
4. Evaluate real-world implementation of executed projects and programs.
 - Representation analysis: compare demographics to actual distribution of benefit/burden. Compare demographics to actual public engagement.
 - Barrier analysis: Test whether practices have a disproportionate, adverse impact, acting as a barrier to participation (e.g. venue for public meetings; language access; outreach).
 - Selection analysis: Determine whether the selection rate for one demographic group of beneficiaries is lower than other groups (e.g. selection of consultants; hiring)
 - Contracting: Conduct pre-award and post-award nondiscrimination compliance for all contracts. Spot check contracts to ensure required nondiscrimination language is included.
5. Training: Track training for RTC staff. In addition to nondiscrimination trainings, RTC may also provide nondiscrimination information through various methods such as emails, staff meetings, brochures, and handouts.
6. Language Access to Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals
 - Make language identification cards available in publicly accessible areas
 - Tract interpretation services provided and translated documents.
 - Provide information to public and staff on process to request interpretations.
 - Utilize the LEP Four Factor Analysis to determine languages to be translated.
7. Website: Ensure website includes up-to-date link that routes users to the Title VI/Nondiscrimination website and contact information for the RTC Nondiscrimination/Title VI/ADA Coordinator.

8. Data Collection: Collect demographic data at public meetings, surveys, and other outreach activities to analyze the effectiveness and usefulness of public outreach efforts and to ensure meeting inclusivity goals and ensure that no group is excluded during the decision-making process or is not given an opportunity to voice their opinions or concerns.
9. Right-of-Way: Right-of-way staff should distribute Title VI information to the public, property owners, and tenants.
10. Subrecipients: Monitor subrecipients for compliance with their contract agreements and nondiscrimination practices, including spot checks of their contracts, documents, public websites, Title VI and LEP information. Contract managers should send reminders to subrecipients to comply with Title VI.
11. ADA Evaluation:
 - Annually: Review and evaluate RTC's ADA policies and practices, identify and correct those policies and practices that are inconsistent with the latest state and federal requirements, including Title II.
 - Annually & Ongoing: Identify physical obstacles in the RTC's facilities that limit the accessibility of its programs or activities to individuals with disabilities. This includes the public right-of-way accessing the RTC's office, restrooms, and meeting spaces.
 - Describe the methods and schedule that will be used to make the facilities accessible
 - During Preliminary Design and prior to final design: Evaluate the accessibility of designs for capital projects that will be used by the public, including, but not limited to trail and highway projects.
 - Responsible party: Project manager and Caltrans
 - Describe the RTC's good faith efforts to comply with Title II's requirements.
 - ADA Certification: By June 30 of each year - Complete ADA certification with Caltrans for the following federal fiscal year (October 1 to September 30).

Appendix 13: RTC Board Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 27-25

Adopted by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
on the date of February 6, 2025
on the motion of Commissioner **Rotkin**
duly seconded by Commissioner Alternate **Schiffrin**

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE 2025 NONDISCRIMINATION PLAN:
TITLE VI CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAM, LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN, AND
SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT/AMERICANS WITH
DISABILITIES ACT PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Santa Cruz County and as a recipient of federal financial assistance, is required to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other nondiscrimination statutes, including provisions detailed in the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration and Federal Highway Administration requirements and guidelines;

WHEREAS, the RTC strives to provide meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities to all individuals and is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any RTC program or activity on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, due to limited English proficiency, due to ability, age or sex, or on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, religious creed, veteran's or socioeconomic status; and

WHEREAS, the RTC has prepared the 2025 Nondiscrimination Plan: Title VI Civil Rights Program, Language Assistance Plan, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act/Americans with Disabilities Act Program to ensure compliance with anti-discrimination laws, regulations, policies and goals;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION THAT:

1. The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission 2025 Nondiscrimination Plan: Title VI Civil Rights Program, Language Assistance Plan, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act/Americans with Disabilities Act Program (Exhibit A) is hereby adopted;
2. The Executive Director is authorized to implement the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission 2025 Nondiscrimination

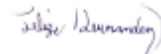
Plan and to make minor modifications to reflect best practices and meet any subsequent federal or state requirements; and,

3. The RTC hereby authorizes stipends of fifty dollars (\$50) per meeting for Bicycle Advisory Committee, Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC), Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee, and Transportation Equity Workgroup members.

AYES: COMMISSIONERS **Keeley, Pedersen, Koenig, Hernandez, DeSerpa, Rotkin, Martinez, and Commissioner Alternates Schiffrin, Kalantari-Johnson, G. Johnson, and Quiroz-Carter**

NOES: COMMISSIONERS

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS



Felipe Hernandez, Chair

ATTEST:



Sarah Christensen, Secretary

Exhibit A: 2025 Title IV Civil Rights Program and Language Assistance Plan

Distribution: RTC Fiscal, Caltrans, FHWA, FTA

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