

# Language Assistance Plan for Brainerd & Crow Wing Public Transit

DATE adopted or approved by Transit System: 11/16/2010

## Purpose

The purpose of this Language Assistance Implementation Plan (hereinafter "plan") is to meet Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) requirements to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. As a subrecipient of FTA funds, this transit system is pledged to take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to its transit services for persons who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. The FTA refers to these persons as Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons.

The U.S. DOT's FTA Office of Civil Rights' publication "*Implementing the Department of Transportation's Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients' Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient Persons – A Handbook for Public Transportation Providers*" was used in the preparation of this plan.

## Contents

This plan contains:

- A. A needs assessment based on the four-factor analysis
- B. Language assistance measures
- C. A staff training plan
- D. Methods for notifying LEP persons about available language assistance
- E. Methods for monitoring, evaluating and updating plan

## A. LEP Needs Assessment – the Four-Factor Analysis

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

We assessed the following information (as checked) about LEP persons to determine the number or proportion of LEP persons who might use or want to use our transit services:

- GIS map showing transit service area and concentrations of LEP persons (Attachment A)
  - 2000 US Census data
- Survey results
  - Reports from drivers, dispatchers, others about contact with LEP persons
- Local school district data
- Human Services Dept. data
- Information from local organizations (religious, legal, social service, etc.) about LEP persons in service area
- Other information. Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

According to data provided by Mn/DOT from the 2000 US Census:

- The total number of LEP persons in our service area is 55,059.
- The total eligible population in our service area is 529.
- The proportion of LEP persons to the total eligible service population is 1%.

In an ongoing effort to meet the present and future transit needs of the community, the Brainerd and Crow Wing County transit system will continue to identify LEP individuals in our service area. Working with local officials including the Brainerd city planner and Crow Wing County social services staff we hope to identify those individuals requiring language assistance and continue to ensure that transit is a viable option for all residents.

**Factor 2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with our transit programs, activities, or services.**

We currently have zero data indicating a service need by persons with Limited English Proficiency. Future printed media and website will indicate the systems willingness and desire to reach out to individuals that may require language assistance.

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

Our system considers transit to be an increasingly important and essential service for many of people living in our service area. With nearly 90,000 annual trips, the public transit service of Brainerd and Crow Wing County is a vital link to individuals with transportation needs and to folks simply wishing to utilize public transportation. As a regional service center and county seat Brainerd and Baxter are the location of all County offices including Social Services, W.I.C., Health Services and Rural Minnesota Job Service. In addition, Brainerd is home to many of the area health clinics, Urgent Care and St Joseph's hospital.

Brainerd and Crow Wing transit will continue to monitor requests for service and attempt to identify those individuals needing language assistance. In addition to monitoring, we will work with our community partners (listed above) to notify the LEP population of available service.

**Factor 4. The resources available to our transit system and the overall cost to provide language assistance.**

Our current budget for marketing to or communicating with LEP persons in their language about transit services that are available to them is approximately \$250 annually. This may include funding for staff training, translation services, brochures, flyers, posters, newspaper ads, radio ads, website, etc.

The City of Brainerd IT Staff will assist the transit systems with website notification and online materials. In addition to online notification, language assistance information will be added to future printed material. Driver and staff training will be addressed at regularly scheduled meetings.

Outside resources available to the transit include a translator list available through the Crow Wing County Sheriff's office and an offer from Central Lakes College to assist the transit system with language translation and interpretation.

## B. Language Assistance Measures

*Although, we currently have no data indicating a need, we will annually...*

- *Monitor feedback from LEP communities, including clients, community organizations*
- *Assess the number of persons with LEP in the service delivery area*
- *Assess the current language needs of clients to determine whether clients need an interpreter and/or translated materials to communicate effectively with staff*
- *Assess whether existing language assistance services are meeting the needs of clients with LEP (if applicable)*

Language measures currently used and/or planned to be used by our transit system to address the needs of LEP persons include the following:

- ✓ Translating key documents in the following language(s): Spanish with additional languages upon request.  
Arranging for availability of oral translators
- ✓ Communicating with LEP persons' groups about transit services
- ✓ Posting notices in appropriate languages informing LEP persons of available services aboard vehicles.
- ✓ Notice of available services on transit website.

## C. Staff Training

To ensure effective implementation of this plan, the transit system will work with the 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractor to ensure that staff at orientation and all relevant employees on an annual basis will review:

- the transit system's Language Assistance Implementation Plan
- demographic data about local LEP population
- printed LEP persons' materials
- how to handle verbal requests for transit service in a foreign language
- responsibility to notify transit manager about any LEP persons' unmet needs.

Additionally, our 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractor has been asked to forward "all" public transit requests to the Transit Coordinator at the City of Brainerd.

## D. Notice to LEP Persons about Available Language Assistance

Our transit system plans to notify LEP persons in their own language about the language assistance available to them without cost by using the following methods:

- \_\_\_\_\_ signs on buses or at bus stops
  - ✓ brochures
  - ✓ posters
  - ✓ sending information to local organizations that work with LEP persons
  - \_\_\_\_\_ telephone messages
  - \_\_\_\_\_ local ads (newspaper, radio, TV)
- (Office of Transit LAP template 9-28-10)

- ✓ website notices
  - ✓ information tables at local events, trade shows, grocery stores, pharmacies, and churches
- Other, describe \_\_\_\_\_

### **E. Monitoring, Evaluating and Updating Plan**

The transit system will review this plan during its annual review with its Mn/DOT transit project manager by:

- assessing its effectiveness (e.g., comparing numbers of LEP persons served by year, number of requests for language assistance received during the year),
- assessing the sufficiency of staff training and budget for language assistance,
- reviewing current sources for assistance to ensure continuing availability, and
- reviewing any complaints from LEP persons or about their needs that were received during the past year.

**This plan will be reviewed by our transit system annually. Revisions of this plan will be approved or adopted by the transit system (transit manager or board) and dated accordingly.**

### **F. Dissemination of Plan**

This Language Assistance Plan is available on our website at [Brainerdcitybus.com](http://Brainerdcitybus.com).

This plan is also available at no cost in English upon request by telephone, fax, and mail or in person. If requested to be provided in another language and it is feasible to have it translated, it shall be provided at no cost to the requester.

### **G. Contact Information**

Questions or comments about this plan may be submitted to:

Name	Tom Jay
Title	Transit Coordinator
Address	501 Laurel Street
Telephone	218-828-6172
Fax number	218-828-6172
E-mail address	tjay@ci.brainerd.mn.us