



Middletown Transit System

Title VI Plan

**Adopted by City Council Resolution
No. R2023-32 on November 7, 2023**

Effective December 8, 2023

Middletown Transit System (MTS)
Title VI Program Update November 7, 2023

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Middletown Transit System (MTS)

Title VI Program Update November 7, 2023

INTRODUCTION

Brief Description of MTS as Transit Provider Operating Fewer than 50 Fixed Route Vehicles and with No Subrecipients

Middletown Transit System is an FTA designated recipient in Butler County, Ohio with no subrecipients. MTS operates 4 vehicles during peak service and is a part of the Cincinnati Urbanized Area.

As of September 2023, MTS operates Monday-Saturday 6:30am to 6:00pm. During service hours, 4 motor bus vehicles cover an average of 728 miles per day. Currently, MTS is staffed by two (2) Operations Managers, one (1) Customer Service Supervisor, three (3) customer service representatives and eleven (11) bus operators.

Beginning in January 2024, Middletown will contract with the Butler County Regional Transit Authority to operate commuter bus service between Middletown and Cincinnati. Initially, four (4) coaches will operate in peak service with plans to expand service to 6 peak vehicles with additional trips following the initial service launch.

MTS Title VI Plan Policy Statement

The City of Middletown hereby certifies that, as a condition of receiving Federal financial assistance under federal transit laws and by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P.L. 100.259), as amended, it will ensure that:

1. No person on the basis of race, color, sex, age, disability or national origin will be subjected to discrimination in the level and quality of transportation services and transit-related benefits.
2. The City of Middletown will compile, maintain, and submit in a timely manner Title VI information required by FTA Circular 4702.IB and in compliance with the Department of Transportation's Title VI regulation, 49 CFR part 21.9.
3. The City of Middletown will make it known to the public that those person or persons alleging discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, disability or national origin as it relates to the provision of transportation services and transit-related benefits may file a complaint with the Federal Transportation Administration and/or the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Title VI Notice to Public.

The following notice is posted on the City of Middletown website at www.cityofmiddletown.org, within MTS vehicles, in the MTS facility, and included in all public information materials such as service brochures, notices, etc.

Title VI Notice of Public Rights

The Middletown Transit System (MTS) operates all services, routes and accommodations without regard to race, color, or national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under title VI may file a complaint with the City of Middletown, Ohio and/or the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

For more information on the MTS civil rights program and the procedures to file a written complaint with The Middletown Transit System or The City of Middletown, contact 513-425-7836 or mail to Attn: City Manager's Office, One Donham Plaza, Middletown, Ohio 45042 or email title.VIcomplaint@cityofmiddletown.org.

A complainant may file a complaint directly with the FTA by completing a Title VI Complaint Form and mailing it to the Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5th Floor- TCR, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590.

For information in another language, contact 513-727-3643.
Para obtener mas informacion llame 513-727-3643.

Title VI Complaint Procedures.

These procedures apply to all complaints filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and all related statutes, relating to any program or activity administered by MTS or its subrecipients, consultants, and/or contractors. Intimidation or retaliation of any kind is prohibited by law.

These procedures do not deny the right of the complainant to file formal complaints with other state or federal agencies, or to seek private counsel for complaints alleging discrimination. These procedures are part of an administrative process that does not provide for remedies that include punitive damages or compensatory remuneration for the complainant.

Every effort will be made to obtain early resolution of complaints at the lowest level possible. The option of informal mediation meeting(s) between the affected parties and the MTS may be utilized for resolution, at any stage of the process. The City of Middletown will make every effort to pursue a resolution to the complaint. Any individual, group of individuals or entity that believes they have been subjected to discrimination prohibited under Title VI and related statutes may file a written complaint to the following address:

City of Middletown
Attn: City Manager's Office
One Donham Plaza
Middletown, OH 45042

The following measures will be taken to resolve Title VI complaints:

- 1) A formal complaint must be filed within 180 days of the alleged occurrence. (See Appendix A, Exhibit 2 for MTS Title VI complaint form.) Complaints shall be in writing and signed by the individual or his/her representative, and will include the complainant's name, address and telephone number; name of alleged discriminating official, basis of complaint (race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age), and the date of alleged act(s). A statement detailing the facts and circumstances of the alleged discrimination must accompany all complaints.
- 2) In the case where a complainant is unable or incapable of providing a written statement, a verbal complaint of discrimination may be made to the City of Middletown, City Manager's Office. Under these circumstances, the complainant will be interviewed, and the City will assist the complainant in converting the verbal allegations to writing.
- 3) When a complaint is received, the City will provide written acknowledgment to the complainant, within ten (10) days by registered mail.
- 4) If a complaint is deemed incomplete, additional information will be requested, and the complainant will be provided 60 business days to submit the required information. Failure to do so may be considered good cause for a determination of no investigative merit.
- 5) Within 15 business days from receipt of a complete complaint, the City will determine its jurisdiction in pursuing the matter and whether the complaint has sufficient merit to warrant investigation. Within five (5) days of this decision, the City or his/her authorized designee will notify the complainant and respondent, by registered mail, informing them of the disposition.

- a. If the decision is not to investigate the complaint, the notification shall specifically state the reason for the decision.
 - b. If the complaint is to be investigated, the notification shall state the grounds of the MTS’s jurisdiction, while informing the parties that their full cooperation will be required in gathering additional information and assisting the investigator.
- 6) When the MTS does not have sufficient jurisdiction, the City Manager or his/her authorized designee will refer the complaint to the appropriate State or Federal agency holding such jurisdiction.
 - 7) If the complaint has investigative merit, the City Manager or his/her authorized designee will assign an investigator. A complete investigation will be conducted, and an investigative report will be submitted to the City Manager within 60 days of receipt of the complaint. The report will include a narrative description of the incident, summaries of all persons interviewed, and a finding with recommendations and conciliatory measures where appropriate. If the investigation is delayed for any reason, the City Manager or his/her designee will notify the appropriate authorities, and an extension will be requested.
 - 8) The City Manager or his/her authorized designee will issue letters of finding to the Complainant and Respondent within 90 days of receipt of the complaint.
 - 9) If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the MTS resolution of the complaint, he/she has the right to file a complaint with the:

Regional Civil Rights Officer Federal Transit Administration
 200 West Adams Street, Suite 320
 Chicago, Illinois 60606
 Phone: (312) 353-3770
 Fax: (312) 886-0351

Title VI Complaint Form

See Appendix A: Exhibit 2 for a copy of MTS Title VI Complaint Form.

Record of Title VI Investigations, Complaints, or Lawsuits.

	Date	Summary	Status	Action Taken
Lawsuit	05/17/2019 CV2019-05-1015	Passenger claimed they sustained injuries from sliding out of seat into the aisle when the bus operator was forced to quickly apply the brakes to avoid a collision with another vehicle.	Closed	Dismissed
Lawsuit	02/12/2021 CV2021-02-0216	Passenger refiled the original claim.	Closed	Stipulated Dismissal

Public Participation Plan

MTS operates according to the City of Middletown City Council to:

1. Notify the public to changes in services and/or fares;
2. Solicit public input when changes are made to transit service and/or fares; and
3. Consider public input when decisions regarding changes to transit service and/or fares are made.
4. When soliciting public input MTS engages the practices outlined in FTA Circular 4703.1 “Environmental Justice Policy Guidance for Federal Transit Administration Recipients.” In particular, when conducting traditional public meetings the City carefully considers the following elements to ensure full community participation, including EJ populations:
 - Convenient and accessible locations
 - Visual description techniques
 - Inclusion of electronically accessible formats
 - Time limits for public speakers
 - Time limits for BCRTA personnel
 - Room arrangements adaptable to crowd size.
 - Dedicated personnel and resources for disabled or LEP participants
 - Reading levels/literacy
 - Description of acronyms
 - Reducing content into manageable blocks
5. MTS actively engages in community outreach. Mobility Management partners with agencies throughout the City of Middletown that serve underserved populations including Middletown City Schools, Hope House, Middletown Community Center, Butler County General Health District, Butler County Educational Service Center Success Liaison, Butler Tech and Miami University-Middletown Campus.
6. MTS Operators carry translation cards.
7. MTS offers phone interpreters.
8. All printed material is available in multiple languages and is available on the buses and in the stations.
9. The MTS/BCRTA website offers Google translate.
10. Signage within stations and onboard buses advertise the availability of translation and interpreter services.
11. Yearly public input surveys are conducted.

City of Middletown, Ohio Policy & Procedure Manual

Public Comment Regarding Service Changes

MTS will specifically seek public comment on fare and service changes under any of the following circumstances:

- Any increase to the full adult fare; and
- Any decrease in service in which 25% or more of the total non-contracted system services (based on revenue service hours) are considered for elimination.

When circumstances dictate the solicitation of public comment, then open public meetings and public hearings will be held. Citizens attending these public meetings where fare or service change is considered will be afforded an opportunity to provide comments. Letters written or referred to MTS with respect to fare or service changes will also be considered at the public meetings. In the unlikely event that a fare or service change does not require City Council approval, the City Manager or his/her designee shall review all comments received to ensure the best decision is being made. However, in most situations, City Council will have to approve legislation and therefore, members of City Council shall consider all comments to ensure they are properly representing their constituents. Additionally, when MTS proposes to increase the fares or decrease service per any of the above circumstances, at least one (1) public hearing will be held at a City Council meeting prior to adopting the subject fare or service changes.

The Public Hearing will meet the following criteria:

1. Published public notice will be given as to the date, time, location and purpose of the public hearing;
2. The notice will allow for mailed written public comment in lieu of attendance at the hearing;
3. The public notice will be printed at least 10 calendar days prior to the hearing;
4. The public hearing will be held in a location accessible to persons with mobility challenges;
5. A record of the proceedings will be made. Transcripts of the proceedings may be obtained at the expense of those requesting such a transcript;
6. Comments from the public will be taken up to the closing time of the public hearing. The moderator of the public hearing reserves the right to limit comments to five (5) minutes or less;
7. For the sake of the record, persons submitting comments at the hearing will be asked to provide their name and address.
8. MTS may make a presentation concerning a fare increase or service reduction;
9. The Middletown Mayor will hold, chair, and moderate the public hearing proceedings.

City Council members are the ones responsible for voting on the changes or denying them. Therefore, they are the ones that review all comments for legislation requiring Council approval. The Council members represent the constituents of the City and have an obligation to seriously review all comments so they can make the best decision for said constituents. Prior to the Public Hearing, MTS will forward all comments received on that point to City Council for consideration. Those and any additional comments received at the hearing will be used as part of City Council's determination whether to approve the changes. Unless emergency passage is necessary, any legislation shall require 2 readings to ensure citizens and City Council have had ample time to submit, review, and consider all comments and concerns.

Membership of Non-Elected Committees and Councils

City Council meetings are well advertised and open to the public. The public may participate in the public comment portion of the meetings to air their opinions or participate in public hearings as scheduled. City Council meetings are available to view live or at a later date through a link on the City website (www.cityofmiddletown.org).

City Council members are elected at large. Council members inform their constituents of relative city issues and projects affecting their specific community interests. The following table depicts the minority representation of the Middletown City Council members:

	Total	Minority
Male	3	0
Female	2	0

MTS Monitoring of Subrecipients

MTS has no subrecipients.

Equity Analysis of Construction Projects.

During the reporting period, MTS has not undertaken any construction project that requires an environmental justice analysis.

Evidence of Board Review and Approval of Title VI Program and Policies.

Appendix A, Exhibit 3 contains the City of Middletown City Council resolution indicating review and approval of MTS 2023 Title VI Program. The City of Middletown City Council will approve updates to the 2023 plan on November 7, 2023.

Service Evaluation Factors

Annually MTS will monitor and evaluate the following performance metrics:

MTS Service Standards by Mode as of September 8, 2023

Vehicle Load

Peak and Off-Peak

Motor Bus	Less than or equal to 1.25 passengers per seat.
Commuter bus	Less than or equal to 1 passenger per seat.

Vehicle Headway

	Peak	Off-Peak
Motor Bus	Less than or equal to 60 minutes.	Less than or equal to 60 minutes.
Commuter bus	Less than or equal to 30 minutes.	N/A

Increased vehicle headways shall first be applied to routes with a history of sustainable high load factor.

On-Time Performance (OTP)

Peak and Off-Peak

	Acceptable Early	Acceptable Late	Minimum Standard On- Time
Motor Bus	0-1 minutes	0-5 minutes	85%
Commuter bus	0-1 minutes	0-5 minutes	85%

On-time performance is measured by calculating arrivals at designated time points only.

Service Availability

MTS regularly evaluates the county-wide trips provided per capita based upon the most recent census data available. MTS’s current goal is 25%.

	Minimum Distance between Designated Stops
Motor Bus	0.25 mile
Commuter bus	1 mile

Vehicle Assignment

Currently, MTS has 13 revenue vehicles (see Appendix A: Exhibit 4 for MTS vehicle roster) to assign to meet service needs. The MTS Garage provides the MTS Acting Coordinator and Manager with the vehicles available for service (identifying fleet scheduled for preventive maintenance and/or repair per pre and post trip inspections). The MTS Acting Coordinator and Manager assigns available vehicles to meet passenger load and wheelchair requirements. Vehicle assignments vary daily. The MTS Acting Coordinator and Manager is fully trained to cycle all vehicles through all routes and locations to ensure equitable distribution of assets based on age and condition regardless of community or passenger groups. In addition, the Director of Operations ensures that all vehicles are cycled through in an equitable fashion.

There are seven specific amenities that MTS will consider: bus signage, concrete boarding pads, benches, shelters, trash receptacles, concrete bus pads, and schedule holders/real-time displays.

Determining factors that will be used to evaluate whether or not a particular bus stop will be eligible for placement of a specific amenity include but are not limited to: ridership levels, operating characteristics, traffic patterns, terrain, local ordinances or regulations governing the placement of transit amenities, and levels of elderly and disabled boardings.

Bus Stop Signage

Bus stop signs are placed to notify passengers where the bus will stop, to provide reference for bus operators, and to assist in marketing the system. To mark the location of all fixed route and commuter bus stops, MTS will provide signs and install them free of charge.

The bus stop sign:

- Identifies the location as a bus stop.
- Includes the number/letter identifier for the bus route(s) using the stop and, when possible, the destination of the route(s).
- Displays the transit information telephone number.

There are multiple criteria involved in placing a bus stop sign. Concerns for passenger and public safety, convenience, bus stop visibility and passenger comfort must all be addressed. Signage designating stops will be placed at all MTS bus stops.

The following are general guidelines for bus stop sign locations and clearances:

- Every effort will be made to place bus stop signs on an existing utility pole or an existing standard.
- If an existing securement point is unavailable, the sign should be installed on an exclusive standard. In no case should the sign be located closer than 24 inches from the curb back.
- The minimum distance between bus stops is 528 feet (i.e., 1/10 of a mile).
- The bottom of the sign should be seven (7) feet above ground level, and the top should be no higher than ten feet.

Concrete Board Pad Location

Boarding pads should be included at all bus stops that have 25 or more passenger boardings per day.

Trash Receptacles

Bus stops that have either a cap and bench or a shelter should be provided with a trash receptacle. At bus stops without a cap and bench or a shelter, a trash receptacle can be installed if a request has been made, the bus stop has boarding of 25 or more passengers per day and, the jurisdiction, business, or property owner agrees to empty the receptacle as needed, but at least weekly.

Benches

Bus stops with 25 or more boardings per day can be provided with a concrete boarding pad and a bench.

Shelters

Shelters should be provided for bus stops with more than 50 boardings per day. The placement of shelters is preferred to the cap and bench due to their superior protection from the elements. Through local regulations, however, some jurisdictions restrict their use. Each local jurisdiction should be contacted for the placement of a shelter.

Schedule Holders and Real-time Displays

All MTS fixed routes and commuter buses will contain schedule holders and/or real-time displays that show bus arrival times and route information at a specific stop. MTS will actively seek opportunities to place schedule holders and MTS customer information at key locations along its fixed route and commuter bus alignment and at key destinations such as the Butler County Government Services Center. Major Transfer Centers and areas with more than 100 boardings per day should be provided schedule holders and/or real-time displays.

Maintenance of Amenities

Well maintained bus stops and amenities are crucial to the image of MTS as well as the jurisdictions in which they are located. Maintenance of each amenity that meets MTS requirements and guidelines will be provided by MTS. Any damaged or dirty bus stop site or amenity will be immediately corrected to create a positive impression for transit patrons and the general public.

In those cases where a local jurisdiction or private property owner requests installation of a BCRTA amenity even though the minimum requirement cannot be met, it will be the responsibility of the party requesting the amenity to either maintain it or make arrangements with BCRTA to provide maintenance.

Appendix A: Exhibits

Exhibit 1: Summary of MTS General Public Transit Services

<i>ROUTE NAME</i>	<i>TYPE</i>	<i>SERVICE DAYS</i>	<i>FREQUENCY</i>	<i>VEHICLE TYPE</i>
RED LINE	MOTORBUS	M, TU, W, TH, FR, SA	60 MINS	28 Passenger Transit Bus/ 14 Passenger LTV
GREEN LINE	MOTORBUS	M, TU, W, TH, FR, SA	60 MINS	28 Passenger Transit Bus
BLUE LINE	MOTORBUS	M, TU, W, TH, FR, SA	60 MINS	28 Passenger Transit Bus
GOLD LINE	MOTORBUS	M, TU, W, TH, FR, SA	60 MINS	28 Passenger Transit Bus

Exhibit 2: MTS Title VI Complaint Form



**Title VI Complaint Form
Middletown Transit System (MTS)**

MTS is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of its services on the basis of race, color or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Action of 1964, as amended. Title VI complaints must be filed within 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination.

The following information is necessary to assist us in processing your complaint. If you require any assistance in completing this form, please contact the Title VI Coordinator by calling (513) 785-5378. The completed form must be returned to The City of Middletown, The City of Middletown, Department of Community Revitalization, One Donham Plaza, 4th Floor, Middletown, Ohio 45042 or email title.VIcomplaint@cityofmiddletown.org

Your Name:	Phone:
Street Address:	Alt Phone:
	City, State & Zip Code:
Person(s) discriminated against (if someone other than complainant):	
Name(s):	
Street Address, City, State & Zip Code:	

Date of Incident: _____

Which of the following best describes the reason for the alleged discrimination took place (Circle one):

- Race
- Color
- National Origin (Limited English Proficiency)
- Sex
- Disability
- Age

Please describe the alleged discrimination incident. Provide the names and titles of all MTS employees involved if available. Explain what happened and whom you believe was responsible. Please use the back of this form if additional space is required.



Have you filed a complaint with any other federal, state or local agencies? (Circle One) Yes / No
 If so, list agency/agencies and contact information below:

Agency: Street Address, City, State & Zip Code:	Contact Name: Phone:
Agency: Street Address, City, State & Zip Code:	Contact Name: Phone:

I affirm that I have read the above charge and that it is true to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

Complainant's Signature _____ Date _____

Print or Type Name of Complainant: _____

Date Received: _____ Received By: _____

Email title.Vlcomplaint@cityofmiddletown.org

Exhibit 3: MTS Board Resolution Approving 2023 Title VI Plan

RESOLUTION NO. R2023-32

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING AN UPDATE TO THE POLICY REQUIRED BY TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, AS AMENDMED, FOR THE MIDDLETOWN TRANSIT SYSTEM.

BE IT ORDAINED, by the City Council of the City of Middletown, Butler/Warren Counties, Ohio that:

Section 1

City Council hereby approves and adopts an update to the Title VI Plan for the Middletown Transit System. This document details how the City incorporates non-discrimination policies and practices in providing services to the public. A copy of the plan update is attached as Exhibit "A", and made a part hereof.

Section 2

It is hereby determined that the subject matter of this legislation is not of a general and permanent nature, does not provide for a public improvement and does not assess a tax or payment.

Section 3

This resolution shall take effect and be in force at the earliest time permitted by law.

/s/ Nicole Condrey
Nicole Condrey, Mayor

1st reading: October 17, 2023
2nd reading: November 7, 2023
Adopted: November 7, 2023
Effective: December 8, 2023

Attest: /s/ Amy Schenck
Clerk of City Council

Exhibit 4: MTS Vehicle Roster

Make/Model	Vehicle #	Year
Gillig G27	640	2016
Gillig G27	641	2016
Gillig G27	642	2016
Gillig G27	643	2016
Gillig G27	644	2016
Gillig G27	645	2021
Eldorado Aerotech	749	2016
Eldorado Aerotech	750	2016
MCI D45 CRT LE	2201	2022
MCI D45 CRT LE	2202	2022
MCI D45 CRT LE	2203	2022
MCI D45 CRT LE	2204	2022
MCI D45 CRT LE	2205	2022

Exhibit 5: Safe Harbor Analysis

Top 10 Most Common Languages in Butler County, OH			
	ESTIMATE	MARGIN OF ERROR	PERCENT
Total Population	349,153	±40	
Speak only English	324,542	±1,111	92.95
Spanish or Spanish Creole	11,368	±740	3.26
Speak English “very well”	5,820	±658	1.67
Speak English less than “very well”	5,548	±621	1.59
Chinese	2,193	±483	0.63
Speak English “very well”	941	±262	0.27
Speak English less than “very well”	1,252	±390	0.36
Vietnamese	1,088	±413	0.31
Speak English “very well”	450	±204	0.13
Speak English less than very well”	638	±293	0.18
French	1,021	±287	0.29
Speak English “very well”	689	±202	0.20
Speak English less than “very well”	332	±157	0.10
German	1,010	±311	0.29
Speak English “very well”	831	±301	0.24
Speak English less than “very well”	179	±91	0.05
Arabic	805	±241	0.23
Speak English “very well”	620	±200	0.18
Speak English less than “very well”	185	±98	0.05
Hindi	619	±226	0.18
Speak English “very well”	531	±182	0.15
Speak English less than “very well”	88	±77	0.03
Gujarati	421	±234	0.12
Speak English “very well”	298	±170	0.09
Speak English less than “very well”	123	±87	0.04
Russian	350	±162	0.10
Speak English “very well”	197	±105	0.06
Speak English less than “very well”	153	±92	0.04

According to the US Census Bureau (2021), Butler County, OH does not have significant amounts of LEP groups to trigger Safe Harbor Provisions. FTA C 4702.1B (2012) states that federal funding recipients need to provide translated material for each LEP language group that is “five percent (5%) or 1,000 persons, whichever is less, of the total population of persons eligible to be served or likely to be affected or encountered.”

Appendix B: Language Assistance Plan

Improving Access for People with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Four Factor Analysis

On behalf of MTS, the Butler County Regional Transit Authority (BCRTA) has conducted this analysis to meet requirements under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which seeks to improve access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The purpose is to ensure that no person 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 from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Analysis Using Four Factor Framework

The following analysis was completed using the four factors identified in the DOT LEP Guidance:

Factor 1: The number and proportion of LEP persons served or encountered in the eligible service population.

Step 1a. Examine how LEP persons interact with the agency.

On behalf of MTS, BCRTA has developed materials and tools to assist LEP individuals. To request information in another language other than English, MTS provides a Google Translate widget on its website (www.butlercountyrta.com) and provides an over-the-phone interpreter service for riders. This gives LEP persons the opportunity to communicate directly with or to receive a call back from an interpreter. LEP service is tracked by the number of encounters and minutes our third-party interpreter is used to provide a request for services. In addition, MTS works with local universities/social service agencies to provide interpreters and/or interpreted service information upon request. All notices for The City of Middletown City Council public meetings include notice that an interpreter will be provided upon request. MTS vehicles also have signage on board about the translation services offered to all customers.

[Title VI Information](#) | [File A Complaint & Learn More](#) | [BCRTA \(butlercountyrta.com\)](#)
www.cityofmiddletown.org



Step 1b. Identification of LEP communities and assessing the number or proportion of LEP persons from each language group to determine the appropriate language services for each language group.

As of 2021, the US Census Bureau estimates the population of Butler County, Ohio was 390,357. The top 10 most common languages in the county are: English (93%), Spanish (3%), Chinese (< 1%), Vietnamese, French, German, Arabic, Hindi, Gujarati, and Russian.

Step 1c, 1d. Investigate the literacy skills of LEP populations in their native languages, in order to determine whether translation of documents will be an effective practice; and whether LEP persons are underserved by the recipient due to language barriers.

According to the US Census Bureau (2021), only 1% or less of each LEP group speaks English less than “very well”. Therefore, translated LEP materials are not required, yet MTS has online translation tools and alternative materials upon request.

Factor 2: The frequency with which LEP individuals come into contact with the program.

Step 2a. Review the relevant programs, activities, and services you provide.

Appendix A, Exhibit 1 of the MTS Title VI plan summarizes MTS services. MTS provides Regional Commuter routes and Middletown night service in cooperation with the City of Middletown.

Step 2b. Review information obtained from community organizations.

The Transit Alliance of Butler County, a nonprofit organization with a mission to create an effective, efficient and coordinated approach to meet the current and future local and regional transportation needs for Butler County citizens, agencies, and businesses, held a community forum on May 17, 2011, to discuss public transportation issues and unmet need. The common themes were additional evening and weekend trips for jobs, affordable fares, and increasing public awareness of current services. LEP access was not identified as an unmet need. In addition, LEP access issues were not identified in the region’s locally developed Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, revised in 2016. MTS also identified organizations that improve access for LEP persons and sent surveys to request information (Figure 1).



Improving Access for Limited English Persons (LEP)

BCRTA is seeking your assistance to assure all persons have equal access to the benefits of our federally funded programs and services. Please take a few minutes to answer these brief questions. This will help us to determine additional needs for transportation and interpretation services that ensure the best possible service to all clients, regardless of their language of origin.

Date:	Organization:
Contact Person:	Telephone:
	Email Address:

Geographic Service Area: _____

of LEP Persons Served: _____

Has the size of LEP population you serve increased, stayed the same, or decreased over the past five years?

Increased Greatly ___ Increased Somewhat ___ Stayed the Same ___ Decreased ___

Do you use outside sources (volunteers, refugee service, etc. other than family to assist with the translations/interpreting? Frequently ___ Sometimes ___ Never ___

What source(s) _____

IN order of frequency, which language groups do you encounter when working with limited English proficient clients: (1. being the most frequent and 7 being the least frequent):

Spanish ___ Bosnian ___ Russian ___ Arabic ___ African ___ Asian ___ Other _____

What needs or expectations for public transit services has this population expressed?

Has the population inquired about how to access public transit or expressed a need for public transit service? No ___ Yes ___ (Please explain)

Are there locations that the population has expressed difficulty in accessing via the BCRTA public transit service? No ___ Yes ___ (Please explain)

What is the best way to obtain input from the LEP population?

What additional agencies, organizations, and/or persons should BCRTA reach to analyze how to assure access to LEP populations in and around Butler County?

Would you like to be contacted by BCRTA to discuss BCRTA Service, LEP Assistance, or other public transit issues?

Yes ___ No ___

Figure 1

After reviewing records and contacting community organizations MTS has made telephone and website translation available in all requested languages. MTS will also make written materials available in all languages upon request. However, after speaking with community organizations MTS has assessed that lack of LEP resources is not the problem but rather the communication of their availability.

Step 2c. Consult directly with LEP persons.

To request information in a language other than English, MTS provides and tracks a Google Translate widget on its website and provides an over-the-phone interpreter service for callers. This gives LEP persons the opportunity to communicate their request and receive information at their literacy level and convenience.

To help ensure our interaction with LEP persons is consistent and positive, MTS operators carry language identification cards (Figure 2) to help identify interpreter needs for uncommon languages. Our new employee orientation process requires operators to be trained and acknowledge MTS goals in regard to LEP policies and procedures.

The MTS goals are as follows:

- MTS will produce and distribute rider guides and other materials in commonly requested second languages.
- MTS will provide, and office staff will be trained in the use of interpreter services that may be made available over the phone in a wide variety of other languages for the purposes of providing service information and scheduling services.
- MTS will provide, and the driving staff will be trained in the use of interpreter services that may be made available over the phone in a wide variety of languages for the purpose of providing service information and clarifying operational passenger needs.
- MTS vehicle operator will carry, on their person, an emergency procedures pocket handbook that will include directions for assisting LEP individuals. The pocket guide will also include a “language map” to assist LEP individuals and MTS staff in determining the language of choice for any LEP individual.
- All MTS personnel who engage in regular client contact will be required to review this procedure and acknowledge their understanding and compliance in writing to ensure even application of the procedures mentioned herein.

NEED AN INTERPRETER?

1. Dial **1.800.CALL.CLI (1.800.225.5254)**
2. When the operator answers, tell them:
 - a. Your customer code is **132860**
 - b. You are calling from **Butler County RTA**
 - c. The language that you need
 - d. Your Name, client's name
 - e. Please let the operator know if you would like to connect to multiple parties (call a patient/client at home for example).
3. The operator will connect you with an interpreter promptly.



CERTIFIED LANGUAGES
INTERNATIONAL

24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Direct Dial: 503-484-2425

Recommendations for Effectively Using the Services of an Over-the-Phone Interpreter

For Outbound Calls:

- If you need to call a limited English proficient (LEP) party at home or need a third-party dial-out to include an additional party, please *first* inform the CEI Customer Service Representative (CSR) *before* the interpreter is connected.
- Once the interpreter is connected, you may tell the interpreter who to ask for (the LEP's name).
- At this time, you may also tell the interpreter how to proceed if the call goes to an answering machine and what message to leave if desired.

For Inbound Calls:

- Explain to the LEP that all information is confidential, and encourage questions.
- Speak clearly.
- Smile and be kind; this helps the LEP feel more comfortable.
- If face-to-face and multiple people are in the room, speak one at a time.
- Short sentences are easiest to interpret.
- Speak freely; all CLI interpreters are sworn to confidentiality and the Interpreter's Code of Ethics.
- Encourage the interpreter to clarify terms with you if necessary.

Phone and Video Remote Interpreting | Certified Languages International

Figure 2

To help identify the service needs of an LEP person, the MTS sends customer surveys (Figure 3, 4) to riders annually. The survey asks the rider to respond with a check mark in one of the following boxes; strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The question to identify the LEP needs was, "I am unable, or someone I know is unable to use MTS service due to a language barrier."

BCRTA
Butler County Regional Transit Authority

Butler County Regional Transit Authority Customer Survey 2023

BCRTA Services I use: U Routes (Miami U) ___ Regional Routes (R) ___ Middletown (MTS) ___
 ADA Service ___ BGO (Demand Response) ___

For each statement, please check one response:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The vehicles are clean (inside and out).					
2. The drivers are friendly and professional.					
3. The call takers are friendly and professional.					
4. I feel the drivers are safe.					
5. Scheduling a ride is easy.					
6. When I call, I am usually able to schedule pick-up at the time I want					
7. I arrive at my destination (s) on time.					
8. The bus arrives on time.					
9. A language barrier does NOT prevent me or someone I know from being able to use BCRTA services.					
10. Overall, I am happy with the service.					

Please tell us more: _____

Would you like BCRTA to contact you? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, please complete the information below:

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

You may also contact BCRTA at (513)785-5237, request@butlercountyrta.com or by visiting: <https://www.butlercountyrta.com/customer-service/general-inquiry/> and filling out the contact form or by sending us a letter in the mail at: 3045 Moser Court, Hamilton, Ohio 45011

Figure 3



Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey 2023



Scan Me!

Figure 4

The following reflects the answers reported in the BCRTA Customer Survey

- 67.7% Strongly agreed that a language barrier does not prevent them or someone they know from utilizing BCRTA services.
- 21.5% Agreed that a language barrier does not prevent them or someone they know from utilizing BCRTA services.
- 10.8% Neither agreed or disagreed that a language barrier does not prevent them or someone they know from utilizing BCRTA services.
- 0% Disagreed that a language barrier does not prevent them or someone they know from utilizing BCRTA services.
- 0% Strongly disagreed that a language barrier does not prevent them or someone they know from utilizing BCRTA services.

Factor 3: The importance to LEP persons of your program, activities, and services.

Step 3a. Identify your agency's most critical services.

- Curb-to-Curb On-Demand (BGo)
- ADA Paratransit (BCare)
- Fixed Route Services

Critical information from MTS which can affect access includes service and schedule information, fare and payment information, system rules, and information about how to ride. However, public transit services continue to be limited in Butler County and are relatively expensive (demand-response fares). If limited English is a barrier to using these services, then the consequences for the individual are serious, including limited access to obtain health care, education, or employment.

Step 3b. Review input from community organization and LEP persons.

After reviewing records and contacting community organizations MTS has made telephone and website translation available in all requested languages. MTS will also make written materials available in all languages upon request. However, after speaking with community organizations MTS has assessed that lack of LEP resources is not the problem but rather the communication of their availability.

Factor 4: The resources available to the recipient and costs.

Step 4a. Inventory language assistance measures currently being provided along with associated costs.

From 2020-2023, MTS has experienced limited requests for LEP services. The experience has been almost exclusively requests for Spanish alternatives. To request information in another language other than English, MTS provides a Google Translate widget on its website and provides an over-the-phone interpreter service for riders. This gives LEP persons the opportunity to communicate directly with or to receive a call back from an interpreter. LEP passenger use is tracked by the number of encounters and minutes our third-party interpreter is used to provide a request for services. MTS provided fifteen encounters with an interpreter.

MTS estimated costs over the last 3 years are between \$2,000 to \$5,000 to improve accessibility and provide additional LEP resources. This estimate includes upgrades to the website to facilitate more accessibility for LEP persons and \$1,907.86 spent on interpreter services.

Step 4b. Determine what, if any additional services are needed to provide meaningful access.

Due to the small size of our agency, limited resources, public reviews and expected population growth, MTS should focus its language measures on extending access for persons by local awareness and advertising. In addition, MTS should include LEP related issues in all personnel training, including administrative, dispatch, and bus operator training.

Step 4c. Analyze your budget.

Due to its limited size and services, MTS does not have a line-item marketing budget. However, MTS could allocate \$3,000 per year for LEP services.

Step 4d. Consider cost effective practices for providing language services.

MTS should collaborate with identified community organizations to provide cost effective practices such as 1) help with translations of printed and online information; 2) distribution channels for printed information; 3) translation assistance for LEP persons; and 4) educational and outreach opportunities to help improve access for LEP person. In addition, MTS should research and pursue language assistance products and translation services developed and paid for by local, regional, or state government agencies.

MTS has adopted the following implementation plan to meet requirements under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which seeks to improve access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The purpose is to ensure that no persons 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 from the FTA.

Plan for Implementation

1. Identifying LEP individuals who need language assistance.

The four-factor analysis indicates that the largest group of LEP persons speaks Spanish. In addition, the largest concentrations of LEP persons are in the Hamilton, Fairfield and West Chester township portions of Butler County which are within the portion of Butler County within the Cincinnati Urbanized Area.

Discussions with the bus operators and dispatch personnel indicate that the current frequency of contact with LEP persons has been extremely limited. However, there are demographic changes which could lead to a growing number of LEP persons in need of local public transit.

MTS is in the process of following up on sent letters, service information and surveys to agencies identified as serving LEP populations. Survey results will assist in further identifying LEP individuals and language assistance needs.

2. Language assistance measures.

MTS will continue to track the Google Translate widget on its website and will provide printed materials in requested languages as well as identify distribution outlets to share such information. In addition, MTS will continue to maintain its over-the-phone translation service to allow LEP persons to receive service information in their native language.

MTS updates its implementation plan based on survey results and subsequently targets outreach to address new information.

3. Training staff

MTS bus operators, dispatch and scheduling personnel, and administrative staff may come into contact with LEP persons. Training on MTS's responsibility to serve LEP persons will be addressed as follows:

- MTS will post updated information on employee boards concerning MTS's responsibility for serving LEP persons.
- Orientation and initial training for new bus operators, and ongoing training and retraining sessions will include information on serving LEP persons.
- MTS will include information on serving LEP persons and MTS responsibilities in the MTS Employee Handbook which will be reviewed and verified (employee sign off) by each MTS employee.

4. Providing notice to LEP persons.

MTS will conduct outreach efforts to the target organizations and other organizations identified through the current survey. The Customer Care and Communications Manager will lead these efforts.

5. Monitoring and Updating the LEP Plan.

The City of Middletown City Council reviewed and approved the 2017 LEP plan in June of 2018. The City of Middletown City Council will review and approve the 2023 LEP plan on September 27, 2023.

The City of Middletown City Council will review the LEP Plan and survey results annually. MTS will include an LEP question on its annual customer satisfaction survey.

The Executive Director and Operations Directors of Butler County Regional Transit Authority, on behalf of MTS, will be responsible for monitoring the plan, and reporting changes and updates to The City of Middletown City Council.

Appendix C: Public Participation Plan and Hearings/Engagements

OKI 2023 Strategic Regional Policy Plan Survey: [OKI – How Do We Grow From Here? – 2023 Public Questionnaire Survey \(surveymonkey.com\)](#)

OKI Transportation Improvement Program: <https://tip.oki.org/> Short Range Planning Study (SRPS):
[BCRTA Short Range Planning Study \(SRPS\) Public Engagement Round 1](#) [BCRTA Short Range Planning Study \(SRPS\)](#)

[Public Engagement Round 2](#) Public Comments/Hearings, Service Changes/Removal of Routes R2 and R4:

[Public-Comment-on-Proposed-Service-Suspension-9-21-21.pdf \(butlercountyrta.com\)](#) [Public-Comment-on-Proposed-Service-Suspension-1-11-2022.pdf \(butlercountyrta.com\)](#)

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