Language Implementation Plan for Limited English Proficiency Persons

Central Puget Sound Region

PUGET SOUND REGIONAL COUNCIL
August 2012

Title VI Notice: PSRC fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, call 206-587-4819. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Public Notice: Persons with disabilities may request this information be prepared and supplied in alternate formats by calling PSRC’s ADA Coordinator, Thu Le at 206-464-6175. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may contact Thu Le through TTY/TDD at 206-464-5409. Servicios de Traducción Disponible 206-971-3052, Diana Martinez. Có dudes de traducción sang tiếng Việt. Xin liên lạc Thu Lê số 206-464-6175.
Introduction

The Puget Sound Regional Council develops policies and coordinates decisions about regional growth, transportation, and economic development planning within King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties. PSRC is composed of over 80 county, city, port, transit, tribal, and state agencies serving the region. The region is home to a population of some 3.7 million residing in over 6,000 square miles of land.

Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient, or "LEP." Language for LEP individuals can be a barrier to accessing important benefits or services, understanding and exercising important rights, complying with applicable responsibilities, or understanding other information provided by federally funded programs and activities.

PSRC takes reasonable steps to ensure that all persons have meaningful access to its programs, services, and information, at no cost. PSRC is developing Language Implementation Plan for Limited English Proficiency persons as part of its Title VI Plan. This plan is specifically aimed at individuals who have a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English, referred to as limited English proficient (LEP).

An LEP Plan starts with an assessment to identify LEP individuals who need language assistance. Implementation includes the development of language assistance methods, notification to LEP individuals, and monitoring of the plan.

In addition to the Language Implementation Plan for Limited English Proficiency, PSRC also uses a Public Participation Plan, a Title VI Plan for civil rights, and Environmental Justice analyses on its plans and programs. Find out more at www.psrc.org or from the Information Center at 206-464-7532.


Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act provides that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance (refer to 23 CFR 200.9 and 49 CFR 21). The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 broadened the scope of Title VI coverage by expanding the definition of the terms “programs or activities” to include all programs or activities of Federal Aid recipients, subrecipients, and contractors, whether such programs and activities are federally assisted or not (Public Law 100-259 [S. 557] March 22, 1988).

Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Service for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, clarified the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with regards to accessibility of federal programs and services to persons who are not proficient in the English language. This executive order stated that individuals who do not speak, read, write, or understand English well are entitled to language assistance under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with respect to a particular type of service, benefit, or encounter.
### Table 1: Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English, Persons Age 5 Years and Over
2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Spanish or Spanish Creole</th>
<th>Other Languages¹</th>
<th>Total, All Languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Estimate MoE</td>
<td>Estimate MoE</td>
<td>Estimate MoE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSRC REGION</td>
<td>92,440 2,594</td>
<td>34,250 1,886</td>
<td>293,306 5,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total population</td>
<td>2.7% 0.1%</td>
<td>1.0% 0.1%</td>
<td>8.7% 0.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>King County</td>
<td>54,680 2,035</td>
<td>28,670 1,704</td>
<td>193,156 4,354</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of total population</td>
<td>3.1% 0.1%</td>
<td>1.6% 0.1%</td>
<td>11.0% 0.2%</td>
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<td>Kitsap County</td>
<td>3,035 672</td>
<td>237 129</td>
<td>7,703 981</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of total population</td>
<td>1.3% 0.3%</td>
<td>0.1% 0.1%</td>
<td>3.3% 0.4%</td>
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<td>Pierce County</td>
<td>16,158 1,081</td>
<td>1,243 299</td>
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<td>% of total population</td>
<td>2.2% 0.1%</td>
<td>0.2% 0.0%</td>
<td>5.7% 0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snohomish County</td>
<td>18,567 1,061</td>
<td>4,100 615</td>
<td>51,159 2,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total population</td>
<td>2.9% 0.2%</td>
<td>0.6% 0.1%</td>
<td>7.9% 0.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Prepared by PSRC Staff based on data from American Community Survey (ACS) 2006-2010 (Table B16001).

¹ Other languages include: African languages, Russian, German, Other Pacific Island languages, Japanese, Other Asian languages, French (incl. Patois, Cajun), Other Indic languages, Other Slavic languages, Mon-Khmer, Cambodian, Hindi, Other Indo-European languages, Arabic, Scandinavian languages, Laotian, Persian, Italian, Polish, Thai, Serbo-Croatian, Portuguese or Portuguese Creole, Urdu, Other West Germanic languages, Greek, Hmong, Gujarati, Hebrew, Other Native North American languages, Other and unspecified languages, Armenian, Hungarian, French Creole, Navajo, Yiddish

² "Speak English 'very well'" Includes "Speak only English"
Determination of Need

The U.S. Department of Transportation recommends using four factor LEP analysis to determine the need for language assistance measures. The four factors are:

1. The number and proportion of LEP persons served or encountered in the eligible service population.
2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in to contact with PSRC programs, activities, or services.
3. The importance to LEP persons of PSRC’s program, activities, and services.
4. The resources available to PSRC and overall cost to provide LEP assistance.

Factor 1: Number and proportion of LEP persons in the service area

PSRC looked at American Community Survey data for people who speak English “less than very well” as Limited English Proficient persons. Table 1 shows the languages spoken at home, by ability to speak English, for persons five years of age and older, with number and percentage broken out by county. Looking at the regional totals, the five most frequently spoken languages other than English are Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Tagalog. None of these language groups have five percent or more limited English proficiency in the region. Given the predominance shown in Table 1, Spanish is the language most likely to be requested with 2.7% of the region’s Spanish speakers unable to speak English well.

Factor 2: Frequency of LEP populations’ contact with programs, activities, services.

PSRC has been offering Spanish and Vietnamese translation on its website and publications for several years. PSRC has been able to offer these translation services from staff who are native speakers of Spanish and Vietnamese. The notices are in the two different languages and include the phone number of staff who will be able to help Spanish or Vietnamese speakers in their native language when they call. Spanish has been advertised since 2003 and Vietnamese since 2007. During this time, PSRC has not received a single request for translation services.

Since 1999, PSRC has placed special emphasis on including Title VI and Environmental Justice populations in its outreach efforts. In addition to diversifying its mailing lists, PSRC has worked through consulting firms to conduct targeted outreach, including holding “brown bag” sessions and focus meetings, with minority and low-income community group members. Such meetings provide insight into the needs and concerns of residents who too often have limited participation in regional government and decision making. During this time, translation services have not been requested or recommended for any of these community group meetings. Also, throughout its planning processes, PSRC regularly updates its mailing lists to include community groups and organizations representing the traditionally underserved, who may include LEP persons.

More recently, PSRC has contracted with community based organizations through the Growing Transit Communities Partnership, which is a grant-funded effort through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program. PSRC and its partners received over $4.9 million to embark on a three-year process to develop detailed implementation strategies for VISION 2040—an integrated regional plan that articulates a long-range
vision for sustainable growth that federal housing, transportation, and other federal investments can support, called the Growing Transit Communities Partnership. The Partnership’s efforts are focused the implementation of the region’s high capacity transit system, including Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Light Rail. The approved budget for the Growing Transit Communities Partnership includes dedicated funds for translation services and materials.

Within the Partnership are key focus areas, one of which is the formation of a Regional Equity Network. During the grant period, the Equity Network will develop and support a regional network to promote equitable community planning and mobilize residents and community groups representing diverse populations to participate in local planning and decision-making. Specifically it will accomplish these goals through:

- Promoting equitable community planning and engagement
- Mobilizing residents and community groups representing diverse populations to participate in local planning and decision-making
- Creating a $450,000 community and neighborhood small grant program for organizations to engage key constituents and communities

The Regional Equity Network, along with the other Partnership efforts of strategies for Affordable Housing and Corridor Actions, and catalyst demonstration projects, is expected to inform PSRC on new and effective ways of engaging traditionally underrepresented groups, including those of whom English is not a first or primary language.

Factor 3: Importance to LEP population of programs, services, activities.

PSRC works with the central Puget Sound counties (King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap), cities and towns, ports, tribes, transit agencies, and the state to develop policies and make decisions about long-term regional issues on land use, transportation, and the economy. PSRC does not provide any direct projects or services to the population of the central Puget Sound region.

PSRC does distribute funds through several transportation programs, including funds for those with special transportation needs, who may include LEP persons. The development of both the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Transportation 2040, the Regional Transportation Plan (MTP) includes a Title VI/Environmental Justice analysis to determine impacts of these programs on the traditionally underserved. All funds PSRC distributes to eligible recipients must be consistent with adopted regional plans, the approval and adoption process of which are guided by PSRC’s Public Participation Plan and all other applicable laws and regulations. Furthermore, PSRC requires project sponsors receiving federal funds through PSRC to certify annually that they are meeting all federal, state, and local requirements in their operations. So, while not a direct service provider, PSRC ensures that its plans, policies, and programs comply with the law, and are inclusive and beneficial to those who live in the central Puget Sound region.

Factor 4: Resources available to PSRC and overall cost to provide LEP assistance.

PSRC remains committed to providing translation services to people who request them and will seek creative, low-cost measures to assist LEP individuals and show the agency’s willingness to provide translation services when needed, particularly when PSRC is engaged in Title VI or Environmental Justice
outreach as part of its major plan updates. PSRC will continue to monitor all requests for translation services and flexibly respond to such requests as they occur.

Specifically, the Growing Transit Communities Partnership will be working directly with LEP populations, and the lessons learned from engaging those groups, and effective ways developing presentations and materials, or conducting outreach for LEP populations will be documented as part of the Regional Equity Network efforts. This documentation will help to inform PSRC on its continuing efforts in public engagement.

**Language Assistance Measures**

PSRC uses Language Assistance Measures to provide meaningful, early and continuous opportunities for all interested Puget Sound residents to participate in the dialogue that informs key decisions, regardless of language barriers. These creative, low-cost solutions include:

**Staff**

PSRC has a diverse staff that has acquired many language skills as well as a few native speakers of other languages. These staff have agreed to be on call for assistance when immediate language needs arise. PSRC will call for professional language assistance once this intermediary step occurs. These staff have language skills:

Diana Martinez – Spanish  
Thu Le - Vietnamese  
Amy Ho, Sarah Lee - Chinese  
Rocky Piro – German

**Online Translation**

PSRC has added Microsoft Translate tools to its website. This tool will prompt anyone looking at PSRC’s website from a computer that is not set to English that the translation tool is available. Microsoft Translate offers 37 different languages.

**Reception**

PSRC’s reception staff keeps an *I Speak* card at the front desk. The *I Speak* card is a print out of a number of languages, which a non-English speaking person can point to and identify their language. Reception then can seek translation help for that person in their language.

**Visualization Techniques**

Visualization techniques are one way to communicate with LEP or low-literacy persons. PSRC uses visualization techniques such as maps, charts, graphs, illustrations, presentations and videos at all types of meetings and in all types of print materials to explain concepts behind actions and decision-making. PSRC may also use handouts and posters to display visual information. PSRC’s boardrooms are equipped with computers, projectors, and sound systems for displaying visual and audio information. PSRC uses style guides for data presentation and PowerPoint presentations to present a consistent, streamlined, and easy to understand visual message.

**Notification Techniques**
PSRC regularly notifies community groups and the media when there are opportunities for public comment or new information is available. This includes notifying community-based organizations that support LEP groups as well as non-English media sources. PSRC’s website, publications, and news releases include a notification of the public’s rights under Title VI and include notification of the availability of Spanish and Vietnamese translation services.

**Agendas**

**Mailing List Improvements**
PSRC continuously updates its mailing lists and databases to maintain and initiate contact with interested parties, targeting those traditionally underserved and/or gaps in existing databases. PSRC mailing lists include tribes, community groups, Title VI relevant populations, businesses, membership, and local governments. For example, during the development of Transportation 2040, PSRC worked to build its mailing list to include environmental resource agencies, tribes, minority–owned businesses, and community organizations that represent Title VI, Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficient populations. To join PSRC’s mailing list, contact reception at 206-464-7090 or use the online form at psrc.org.

**Accessibility for Sight and Hearing Impaired**
PSRC maintains an accessible website and a TDD/TTY line. All PSRC meetings are conducted in facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities and to people who rely on public transit.

In addition to these regularly used measures, PSRC also uses additional outreach techniques that may include LEP populations during major planning processes:

**Focus Groups**
PSRC, sometimes with the help of consulting firms, have convened targeted outreach sessions, such as brown bag or focus group meetings, with community leaders that represent Title VI, Environmental Justice, and Limited English Proficient populations. These meetings are an effective way to increase participation from communities PSRC may not have come into contact with previously, including LEP individuals. These meetings will include translation services if the participating community leaders recommend it or is requested in advance.

**Community Based Organizations**
A foundational element of the Growing Transit Communities Partnership was the deliberate inclusion of community based organizations and community development corporations as key stakeholders. These entities are represented on the steering committees, subcommittees, and task forces that comprise the overall organizing body of the Partnership. Their involvement at all levels of the grant effort is critical to its overall success and is indicative of the “big tent” approach that the HUD Federal Partnership expects.

In order to help facilitate linkages between community-based organizations and land use and transportation planning and decision-making, the Growing Transit Communities’ Equity Grant Program has provided, through a competitive process, small grants (between $5,000-$15,000) to
nonprofit organizations as the central Puget Sound region implements its high capacity transportation network. Grants to community-based organizations will provide resources to organize and increase participation of underrepresented communities and help identify and give voice to community priorities. Meaningful community engagement and local capacity to be involved in transportation and land use planning is a core strategy to achieve equitable transit communities. The grants are being distributed in four rounds from fall 2011 through spring 2013, and the recipients, goals of the subgrants, and outcomes will be documented as part of the grant effort. These findings will also be presented to the Growing Transit Communities Oversight Committee and are expected to help inform the Corridor Action Strategies, and in the future, PSRC regional policies. Lastly, once the grant-funded effort ends, it is envisioned that coordination among community based organizations, community development corporations, and regional policy makers will be ongoing.

**Monitoring and Updating of the LEP Plan**

PSRC will monitor requests for translations and adjust practices to meet demand will periodically update this plan as needed to reflect changes.