



TITLE VI PROGRAM

2024-2026

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ken S.", located below the title and date.

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Complaint Procedures

This section outlines the Title VI complaint procedures related to providing programs, services, and benefits. However, it does not deny the complainant the right to file formal complaints with the City of Fort Smith, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or the Federal Transit Administration, or seek private counsel for complaints alleging discrimination, intimidation, or retaliation of any kind that is prohibited by law.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs receiving federal financial assistance.

GENERAL

Any person who believes that he or she, individually, or as a member of any specific class of persons, has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin as noted below may file a written complaint with the City of Fort Smith, Transit Department, 6821 Jenny Lind, P.O. Box 1908, Fort Smith, AR 72902-1908. Comments, concerns, or complaints may also be sent by e-mail at transit@fortsmithar.gov or through our website at www.fortsmithar.gov. Complainants have the right to complain directly to the appropriate federal agency. Every effort will be made to obtain early resolution of complaints. The option of informal meeting(s) between the affected parties and the Transit Director and the Human Resources Director may be utilized for resolutions.

PROCEDURE

1. The complaint must meet the following requirements:
 - a. Complaint shall be in writing and signed by the complainant(s). In cases where the complainant is incapable of providing a written statement, a verbal complaint may be made. The Civil Rights Officer will interview the complainant and assist the person in converting verbal complaints to writing. All complaints must, however, be signed by the complainant or his/her representative.
 - b. Include the date of the alleged act of discrimination, the date when the complainants became aware of the alleged act of discrimination, the date on which that conduct was discontinued, or the latest instance of conduct.
 - c. Present a detailed description of the issues, including names and job titles of those individuals perceived as parties in the complaint.
 - d. Federal law requires complaints to be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged incident.
2. Upon receipt of the complaint, the Civil Rights Officer will determine its jurisdiction, acceptability, and need for additional information with the assistance of the Transit Director, as well as assign the complaint to the Human Resources Department to investigate the merit of the complaint.
3. The complainant will be provided with a written acknowledgment that Fort Smith Transit has either accepted or rejected the complaint.

4. A complaint must meet the following criteria for acceptance:
 - a. The complaint must be filed within 180 days of the alleged occurrence.
 - b. The allegation must involve a covered basis such as race, color, or national origin.
 - c. The allegation must involve an FST service of a federal-aid recipient, sub-recipient, or contractor.
5. A complaint may be dismissed for the following reasons:
 - a. The complainant requests the withdrawal of the complaint.
 - b. The complainant fails to respond to repeated requests for additional information needed to process the complaint.
 - c. The complainant cannot be located after reasonable attempts.
6. Once FST and Human Resources agree to accept the complaint for investigation, the complainant will be notified in writing of such determination.
7. In cases where the FST and Human Resources Department assumes the investigation of the complaint, within 90 calendar days of the acceptance of the complaint, Civil Rights Officer will prepare an investigative report for review by the Transit Director and Human Resources. The report shall include a narrative description of the incident, identification of persons interviewed, findings, and recommendations for disposition.
8. The investigative report and its findings will be reviewed by the Transit Director and Human Resources Director. In some cases, the City Attorney will review the investigative report and findings. The report will be modified as needed.
9. The Transit Director and Human Resources Director will make a determination on the disposition of the complaint. Dispositions will be stated as follows:
 - a. In the event FST is in noncompliance with the Title VI regulations, remedial actions will be listed.
10. Notice of the FST determination will be mailed to the complainant. Notice shall include information regarding the appeal rights of the complainant and instructions for initiating such an appeal. Notice of appeals is as follows:
 - a. FST will reconsider this determination if new facts come to light. If a complainant is dissatisfied with the determination and/or resolution set forth by FST, the same complaint may be submitted to the FTA for investigation. The complainant will be advised to contact the Federal Transit Administration, Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Complaint Team, East Building, 5th Floor – TCR, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590, or by phone (202) 366-4043.
11. A copy of the complaint and FST investigation report/letter of finding and the Final Remedial Action Plan, if appropriate, will be issued to FTA within 120 days of the receipt of the complaint.
12. A summary of the complaint and its resolution will be included as part of the Title VI updates to the FTA.

RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENT

The Civil Rights Officer will ensure that all records relating to FST's Title VI complaint process are maintained with department records for five (5) years.

Records will be available for compliance review audits.

Title VI Complaint Form Fort Smith Transit (FST)

Fort Smith Transit 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 Act 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 Fort Smith Transit by calling (479) 783-6464.

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Street Address: _____

Person(s) discriminated against (if someone other than complainant) – Name(s):

Street Address, City, State & Zip Code of all persons (Attached additional sheets if necessary):

Date of the Incident: _____

Which of the following best describes the reason for the alleged discrimination that took place? (*Check one*)

- Race
- Color
- National Origin (Limited English Proficiency)

Please describe the alleged discrimination incident. Provide the name and title of all FST 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 the agency/agencies and contact information below:

Agency: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone Number: _____

Street Address, City, State & Zip Code:

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 Name of Complainant

Please mail the completed form to the following addresses:

*Fort Smith Transit
Civil Rights Officer
P.O. Box 1908
Fort Smith, AR 72902-1908*

*Federal Transit Administration
Office of Civil Rights
Attention: Complaint Team
East Building, 5th Floor – TCR
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590*

Date Received: _____
Received By: _____

Active Investigations, Complaints, and Lawsuits

There are currently no active investigations, lawsuits, or complaints against FST that allege discrimination based on race, color, or national origin.

Improving Access for People with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Four Factor Analysis

Fort Smith Transit (FST), a department of the City of Fort Smith Arkansas has conducted the following analysis to address the 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 on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

FST has conducted the following analysis using the four factors identified in the Department of Transportation (DOT) LEP guidance:

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

Task 1, Step 1: Examine prior experiences with LEP individuals.

FST serves a diverse community. Fort Smith is adjacent to the military base Fort Chaffee. From 1975 to 1976, Fort Chaffee was a processing center for refugees from Southeast Asia following the Vietnam War. Many of the Asian refugees ultimately resided in the United States and some in Fort Smith. FST operators and staff interact daily with LEP persons to provide information necessary to access, navigate the system services, and obtain information regarding program activities. Oftentimes English speaking family members or friends are available to help translate individual needs and FST employs a bilingual Lead Driver who routinely assists LEP persons when needed.

Task 1, Step 2: Become familiar with data from the U.S. Census.

The 2020 Census data describes the languages spoken in Fort Smith, other than English, and the number speaking each language as follows:

LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME FOR THE POPULATION 5 YEARS AND OVER

Fort Smith, Arkansas	
Language Spoken	Estimate
Speak only English	64,703
Spanish:	12,947
French, Haitian, or Cajun:	31
German or other West Germanic languages:	312
Russian, Polish, or other Slavic languages:	22
Other Indo-European languages:	220
Korean:	6
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese):	96
Vietnamese:	1,419
Tagalog (incl. Filipino):	184
Other Asian and Pacific Island languages:	1,725
Arabic:	17
Other and unspecified languages:	79
Total:	81,761

Spanish, Vietnamese, and Laotian are the most common non-English language populations. More extensive information on the census tract can be found at:

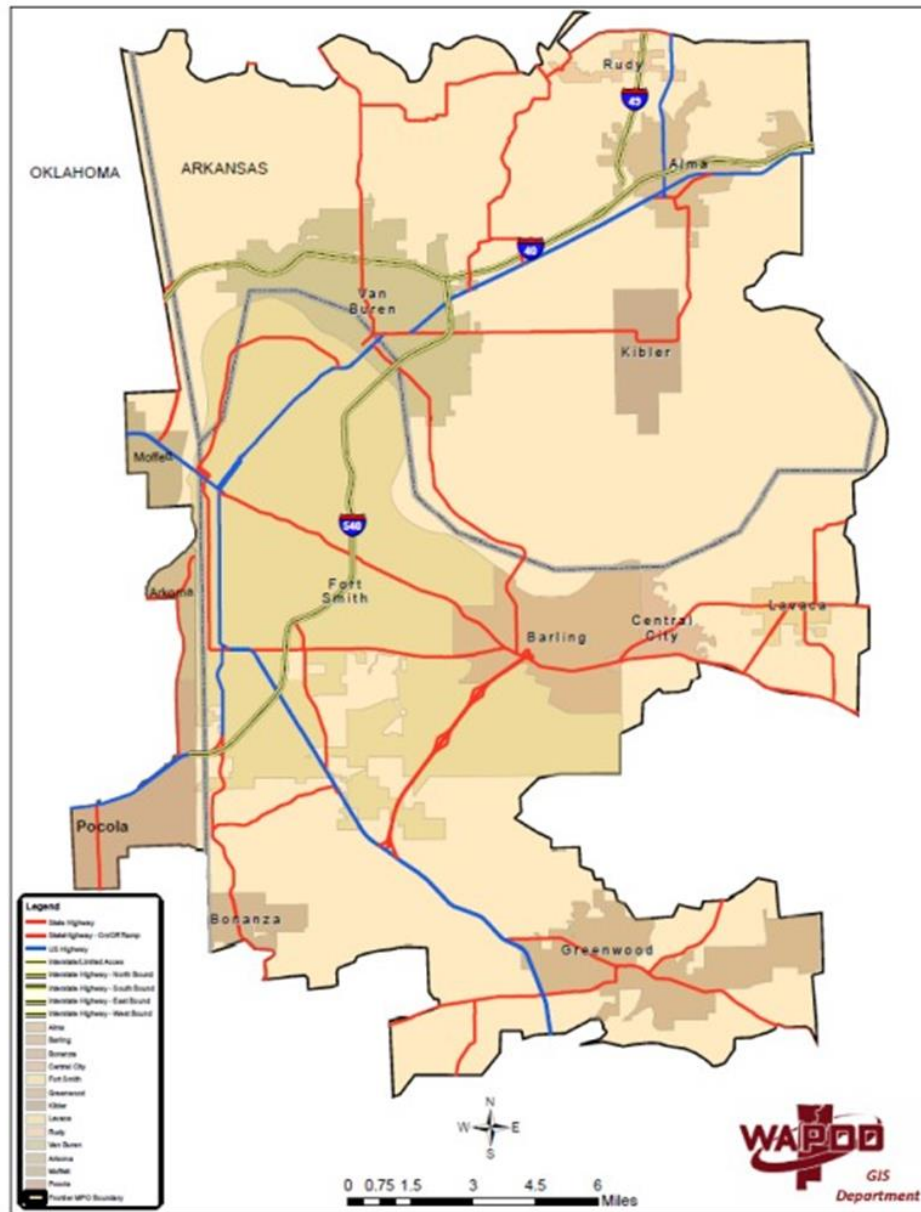
Link: [Language Spoken At Home for the Population 5 Years and Over](#)

Task 1, Step 2 A: Identify the geographic boundaries of the area that your agency serves.

FST's service area is defined by the city limits of Fort Smith.



APPENDIX C: METROPOLITAN AREA BOUNDARY MAP



Task 1, Step 2 B: Obtain Census data on the LEP population in your service area.

The below chart contains census data on English proficiency in Fort Smith, Arkansas. The data list population by language of origin and the numbers of those speaking English *very well* and *less than very well*.

Label	Speak English only or speak English "very well"		Speak English less than "very well"	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Population 5 years and over	81,761		73,892	90.4%
Speak only English	64,703	79.1%		
Speak a language other than English	17,058	20.9%	9,189	53.9%
SPEAK A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH				
Spanish	12,947	15.8%	7,005	54.1%
Other Indo-European languages	585	0.7%	501	85.6%
Asian and Pacific Island languages	3,430	4.2%	1,628	47.5%
Other languages	96	0.1%	55	57.3%

Link: [Census data on the LEP population](#)

Task 1, Step 2 C: Analyze the data you have collected.

Those who speak English other than very well determine non-proficiency.

In Fort Smith, Arkansas, 7,869 persons are identified with limited English proficiency.

Among the Spanish-speaking population, 5,942 persons are not proficient in English.

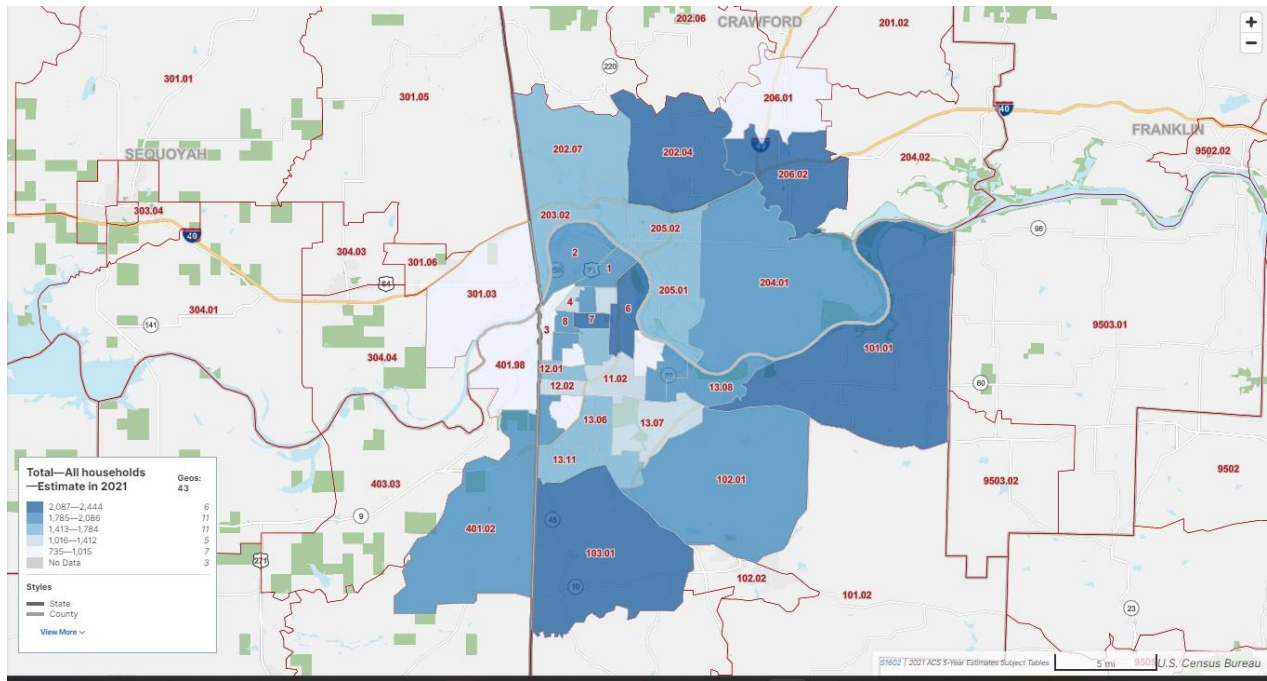
Among the Asian and Pacific Island-speaking population, 1,802 persons are not proficient in English.

There is a population of 125 remaining that speak languages other than English.

Of the total Fort Smith population (81,761), 20.2% are persons with limited English proficiency. The largest percentage 15.8% speaks Spanish. The second largest non-English speaking population at 4.2% speaks Asian and Pacific Island (*Vietnamese and Laotian*).

Task 1, Step 2D: Identify any concentrations of LEP persons in your service area.

Population concentrations identified in Step 2, C: are located within Fort Smith Transit’s service area. See below for concentrations illustrations.



Link: [S1602 | LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING HOUSEHOLDS](#)

Task 1, Step 3: Consult state and local sources of data.

Arkansas’ statistics on LEP mirror that of Fort Smith’s, showing the largest non-English speaking population to be Spanish and the second to be Asian and Pacific Island languages. [ADE Data Center](#) indicates 3,213 English Language Learners – ELL (LEP) students out of 14,907 total students in twenty-six (26) Fort Smith public schools and one (1) Fort Smith charter school. Ten (10) schools in Fort Smith contain the most significant LEP students, which reside in a concentrated area near the fixed route service corridor.

Fort Smith Public Schools	English Language Learners	Fort Smith Public Schools	English Language Learners
Ballman Elementary School	14%	John P. Woods Elementary School	10%
Barling Elementary School	11%	L. A. Chaffin Middle School	9%
Beard Elementary School	9%	Northside High School	25%
Belle Point Alternative Center	4%	Park Elementary School	41%
Bonneville Elementary School	13%	Ramsey Middle School	7%
Carnall Elementary School	13%	Raymond F. Orr Elem. School	13%
Cavanaugh Elementary School	11%	Southside High School	8%
Dora Kimmons Middle School	32%	Spradling Elementary School	50%
Elmer H. Cook Elementary School	7%	Sunnymede Elementary School	56%
Euper Lane Elementary School	12%	Sutton Elementary School	48%
Fairview Elementary School	17%	Tilles Elementary School	41%
Harry C. Morrison Elementary School	50%	Trusty Elementary School	44%
Howard Elementary School	51%	William O. Darby Middle School	29%
Fort Smith Charter Schools			
	English Language Learners		
Future School of Fort Smith	11%		

Task 1, Step 4: Community organizations that serve LEP persons.

FST has current associations with the University of Arkansas, the Adult Education Center, and the Parker Center (a subsidiary of Fort Smith Public Schools), both of which provide services for persons speaking limited English.

Task 1, Step 4.A: Identify community organizations and obtain information.

University of Arkansas Fort Smith (UAFS) is a host institution and an affiliate partner school in the ELS network, which has more than 50 study locations around the United States and is the largest network of campus-based English language instruction centers around the world. UA Fort Smith operates the **ELS Language Center** to provide an opportunity for students not only to learn English but also to be a part of campus life from the first day they arrive in Fort Smith.

The Parker Center is known for its Student Achievement and Accountability (SAA) which provides a wide array of services designed to assist those students who exhibit a variety of needs. Identifying the individual needs of students provides the basis for Student Achievement and Accountability programs. Specially trained teachers, paraprofessionals, and volunteers guide students through programs and initiatives such as Title I, Parents as Teachers, Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) preschool services, Title VII Indian Education, Migrant Education, District Literacy Plan, District Math Plan, services for students experiencing homelessness, and Title III English Language Acquisition; all of these ultimately helping students achieve. SAA generally includes a number of state, local and federal programs under one umbrella. SAA has been known by many different titles through the years with funding from federal, state, and local governments.

The Adult Education Center offers classes to adults that speak English as a second language.

Common destinations for LEP persons in FST's service area are not limited to residential neighborhoods but also various businesses such as hotels, restaurants, department stores, medical facilities, and educational facilities.

Common difficulties for LEP persons include understanding specific policies beyond the basic steps of navigating the transit system. Fatigue is another recognizable trait of LEP persons which at times creates a barrier in communication while scheduling.

Factor 2: The frequency with which LEP individuals come into contact with your programs, activities, and services

Task 2, Step 1: Review the relevant programs, activities, and services you provide.

As identified in Task 1, LEP individuals inquire about the use and are affected by the services that FST provides on a daily basis. Operational services include fixed route service, ADA paratransit service, downtown shuttle, and UAFS campus shuttles. LEP individuals also are exposed to FST by calling our dispatch center, the administrative office, and the Citizen's Action Center, as well as using the website.

Task 2, Step 2: Review information obtained from community organizations.

UAFS and the Adult Education Center indicate daily use, especially during the Fall and Spring semesters of campus shuttle services and fixed routes.

The Adult Education Center has ELS classes throughout the year.

Spanish-speaking LEP persons ride campus shuttle service and fixed route buses throughout the community. Concentrations of Hispanic/Latino persons exist mainly in Ward 1 and Ward 2, Appendix 5.

Task 2, Step 3: Consult directly with LEP persons.

The approved the fiscal year 2023-2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), stated the Metropolitan Planning Organization will work with FST staff and passengers to develop and disseminate an annual survey to identify barriers as it relates to accessing the bus system. The 2019-2020 survey was conducted and revealed no communication barriers prohibiting access to transit services and information. The survey yielded a customer satisfaction rating in the ninety-percentile range (90%).

FST management and staff maintain progressive communication to address any concerns, including language barrier concerns, on a daily basis considering the department routinely employs only 34 full-time employees.



2023-2024 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

OTHER ACTIVITIES, FTA 5307, (CONTRACTUAL PROJECT)	Lead Agency	Partner Agencies
Task 50 Transit Performance Measures – Transit Asset Management	TRANSIT, FRONTIER MPO	WAPDD, ArDOT, FTA, local jurisdictions
Task 51 Transit Performance - Ridership Surveys	TRANSIT, FRONTIER MPO	WAPDD, ArDOT, FTA, local jurisdictions
Task 52 Transit Performance Measures – Safety and Security Management Plan	TRANSIT, FRONTIER MPO	WAPDD, ArDOT, FTA, local jurisdictions
Task 53 Strategic Plan	TRANSIT, FRONTIER MPO	WAPDD, ArDOT, FTA, local jurisdictions

TASK 50 TRANSIT PERFORMANCE MEASURES (TAM)

OBJECTIVE: Provide support of transit asset management planning and performance measures. Implementation of MAP-21 performance-based planning and programming to implement the state and transit agencies performance targets after they have been developed.

EXPECTED PRODUCTS & SCHEDULE:

Ongoing:

- Provide staff support to FST
- Provide interagency coordination
- Staff coordination with FST
- Provide any updates or amendments to the Memorandum of Agreement for Performance Measures and Data Sharing
- Perform TAM assessments on facilities, equipment, and revenue vehicles

TASK 51 RIDERSHIP SURVEYS

OBJECTIVE: Provide support in the measurement of ridership satisfaction. Implementation of FAST ACT performance-based planning and programming to implement the state and transit agencies performance targets after they have been developed.

EXPECTED PRODUCTS & SCHEDULE:

Ongoing:

- Provide staff support to FST
- Staff

coordination with FST

2023 Winter/2024

Spring:

- Develop survey questions
- Conduct annual transit ridership survey
- Provide summary findings and analysis of transit ridership survey to FST
- Update transit shelter locations for transit users

TASK 52 SAFETY AND SECURITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

OBJECTIVE: Provide support of the Safety and Security Management Plan and performance measures. Implementation of MAP-21 performance-based planning and programming to implement the state and transit agencies performance targets after they have been developed.

EXPECTED PRODUCTS & SCHEDULE:

Ongoing:

- Provide staff support to FST
- Staff coordination with FST
- Assist in the Safety Plan assessment
- Coordinate and provide assistance on a public transportation agency plan, including transit safety performance targets.

TASK 53 STRATEGIC PLAN

OBJECTIVE: Provide support to improve ridership; and continue to optimize CARES Act implementation.

EXPECTED PRODUCTS & SCHEDULE:

Ongoing:

- Develop Strategic Vision
- Coordinate with transit on Strategic plan goals
- Provide status report of Strategic plan to the Technical Committee and Policy Board

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

Task 3, Step 1: Identify your agency's most critical services.

Using public transportation is important to LEP persons. FST's most critical services are:

- Fixed Route Services
- ADA Paratransit Services
- Downtown Shuttle

If limited English is a barrier to using these services, the consequences for the individual(s) are serious, including limited access to health care, education, or employment. Critical information from FST, which can affect access, includes:

- Route and schedule information
- Fare and payment information
- System rules
- Information about how to ride
- Public service announcements
- Safety and security announcements
- Communication-related to transit planning
- Information about ADA paratransit services

Task 3, Step 2: Review input from community organizations and LEP persons.

Concentrations of Hispanic/Latino riders use FST fixed routes in northern Fort Smith. Northside routes, Midland and Grand, have high concentrations of Spanish-speaking riders.

Factor 4: The resources available to the recipient and costs

Task 4, Step 1: Inventory language assistance measures currently being provided, along with associated costs.

FST has provided the following language assistance measures to date:

- Translation services from a bilingual (Spanish-speaking) driver/dispatcher when needed. The bilingual driver/dispatcher was required to pass the Bilingual Proficiency Exam.
- Transit management has identified another city employee fluent in Vietnamese to assist as a resource in disseminating critical transit information into the Vietnamese community as well as to analyze language interpretation of critical information.
- All messages regarding bus service, schedules, and meetings are posted in Spanish/English on the interior electronic messaging sign on each bus. According to the 2019 passenger survey, 50% of the respondents indicate they receive their information from electronic messaging signs.

The following information is currently translated into Spanish and Vietnamese and additional information is available upon request:

- Translation of critical printed and website information includes:
 - Passenger Regulations
 - Ride Guide
 - Title VI Plan
 - DBE Program Plan
 - ADA Paratransit Plan
 - ADA, Title VI, and General Complaint Procedures

FST maintains a software program called SDL Desktop Translator that can translate any Word document in order to translate all our pertinent information for the Spanish and Vietnamese-speaking public. In addition to the translation of public information, FST also provides translations on signage inside transit stations, shelters, and vehicles.

FST also maintains a software program called Bablic, which is a translation management tool for our website. We ensure that language is not a barrier when it comes to accessing content on our website.

Finally, issues related to LEP persons are included in the training of bus operators as well as dispatch and administrative staff.

The cost of these measures has been less than \$1,500 annually.

Task 4, Step 2: Determine what, if any, additional services are needed to provide meaningful access.

No additional barriers to language services have been identified at this time.

Task 4, Step 3 Analyze your budget.

Like most public agencies, FST's budget is constrained by several factors, and staff resources are also limited causing staff to divide job tasks. FST believes it adapts well to budget constraints so as not to affect language services.

FST devotes resources in the printing and advertising/promotional budgets to LEP implementation measures. In addition, capital budget increases for signage inside transit facilities and vehicles have been adjusted to acquire more technical methods of language delivery.

Task 4, Step 4: Consider cost-effective practices for providing language services.

FST collaborates with the community organizations identified in Task 1 to provide cost-effective practices. FST collaborates with these organizations to provide:

- Help with translation of printed and online information.
- Travel training
- Training assistance on transit policies and procedures
- Educational opportunities to help improve access

Implementation Plan

Fort Smith Transit (FST) 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 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 FTA.

Plan for Implementation

I. Identifying LEP individuals who need language assistance

Research and fieldwork completed in the four-factor analysis indicate that a large proportion of Spanish-speaking LEP persons reside in Fort Smith. Of the total Fort Smith population (86,924) 8.4% are persons with Limited English proficiency. The largest percentage 5.6% speaks Spanish. The second largest non-English speaking population at 2.5% speaks Vietnamese and Laotian.

Research among bus operators and customer service staff indicates that the frequency of contact with LEP persons speaking Spanish is daily.

II. Language assistance measures

The following resources will be used to provide language assistance:

a. Written language:

- The language translation services available through Microsoft Word software
- Bilingual driver/dispatcher

b. Oral language:

- Bilingual driver/dispatcher

All phone calls from LEP persons that cannot be interpreted by a seasoned dispatcher are transferred to our bilingual driver lead person.

It may be difficult for a non-bilingual bus operator to provide assistance to an LEP person who boards the vehicle and requests information. In such circumstances, the bus operator could ask if another passenger on the bus could serve as a translator, or the driver could provide the phone number for dispatch (479-783-6464) for translation assistance. In some instances, the LEP person provides the bus operator with handwritten prominent landmarks to illustrate their desired destination.

FST's interpreter must maintain his/her competency as a condition of his/her language incentive pay.

III. Training staff

FST employees are likely to come into contact with LEP persons. These include bus operators, dispatchers, supervisors, and any other front-line employees.

Training on FST's responsibility to serve LEP persons is implemented by the following means:

- Orientation and initial training for new bus operators, and ongoing training, will include information on serving LEP persons, with retraining at least one time per year.
- Dispatchers, management, and front-line employees will take part in ongoing training, with at least one training session per year on the topic of serving LEP persons.

IV. Providing notice to LEP persons

FST incorporates a variety of methods to communicate with transit users and the public. These include printed schedule information, electronic message signs inside the vehicles and the downtown transfer station, websites, news releases, community meetings, and informational booths during community events.

FST will use the same methods to notify LEP persons of the availability of language assistance and when applicable to notify customers of the availability of translated documents.

V. Monitoring and Updating the LEP Plan

Ongoing outreach efforts will include a process to obtain feedback on FST's language assistance efforts. Based on the feedback received, FST will make alterations necessary to improve access for LEP persons to prevent barriers to transportation.

VI. Hiring of a Civil Rights Officer

FST hired a CRO to help maintain the department's Title VI program as outlined in Circular 4702.1B. Be responsible for recognizing, creating, and implementing plans to promote diversity within the department. Promote and develop training programs to enhance employee understanding of inclusion issues.

Regulate diversity issues and ensure the organization follows appropriate legislation and employment law regulations around bias and inclusion. Support and guide the recruitment team to help create a brand that appeals to diverse applicants and removes bias. Identify external trends and recognize best practices that will increase diversity among the workforce. Maintain relationships with diversity-related businesses, intending to work together and improve our department brand. Prepare and build relationships among colleagues through diversity and inclusion training. Review the organization's workplace, policies, and procedures, ensuring that these are all-inclusive.

Conduct a “Four Factor Analysis” to determine the specific language services that are appropriate to provide, determine the number of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons served or encountered in the service area, determine the frequency with which LEP individuals come into contact with the department’s transportation program, determine the importance of services to LEP persons and the resources available to the recipient and costs.

Provide Limited English Proficiency (LEP) training to dispatchers, drivers, and front-line personnel as required by Title VI. Connect with alternative language community organizations relating to expanding the department’s LEP Program.

Monitor, process, record and disseminate Title VI complaint procedures, complaint forms, active investigations, complaints, and lawsuits.

Fort Smith Transit Title VI Notice

The following notice is displayed on every FTS bus:



Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d).

FST is committed to practicing non-discrimination. If you believe you have been subjected to discrimination, you may file a complaint with the Transit Director

For more information, visit us on the web at fortsmithar.gov & click on Transit Services or call the Transit Director at (479) 783-6464.

Title VI notices are also displayed at the FST transfer station and administrative offices.

Minority Representation on Planning & Advisory Bodies

The following are members of the Transit Advisory Commission in 2020. The Mayor appoints members.

Member	Sex/Race/Disability	Term Expiration
Dustin Perceful	Male/Caucasian/NA	Current Member
Dr. Ann-Gee Lee	Female/Asian/NA	Current Member
Jo Elsken	Female/Caucasian/NA	Current Member
Bradley Martin	Male/Caucasian/NA	Current Member
Melissa Woodall	Female/ Caucasian/NA	Current Member

The Transit Director coordinates with the Mayor prior to the recommendation of applicants specific to the Transit Advisory Commission to encourage the selection of members that are sensitive to the needs of the department's ridership clientele. Although there are no minorities or persons with disabilities currently serving on the commission, past representation consisted of minority commissioners, individuals experiencing vision impairment, and commissioners requiring the use of mobility devices.

Providing Assistance and Monitoring of Sub-recipients

Fort Smith Transit does not extend FTA financial assistance to any sub-recipients.

Construction Projects throughout Reporting Period

During the last reporting period, FST completed the construction and installation of the transfer station awning and a touchless entryway system into the interior public restrooms at 200 Wheeler Avenue. FST also installed a new emergency generator at 6821 Jenny Lind Road.

Going forward FST anticipates the design and construction of an alternate access road for the 19+ acre site which houses the main office and maintenance facility locations also at 6821 Jenny Lind Road. The access road project will include acquisition of easements that will not displace persons from their residence or business. Other planned improvements included CNG station expansion of a slow fill option. The department also anticipates exploring a fleet of electric paratransit vehicles and associated electric charge station improvements. Representing the later period of the Title VI Plan includes construction of an addition to the existing transfer station to better serve our clients and operational needs.

Public Participation Statement

Fort Smith Transit (FST) utilizes an internal public participation plan to ensure activities recognize the importance of public participation and communication with all area citizens. As a method of continuity, FST utilizes the local Frontier Metropolitan Planning Organization's Public Participation Plan to fulfill FST's transportation improvement plan activities. The plans is provided on pages 27-41.

FST extends complimentary services to a number of public service agency clients in order to grant free transit access to low-income and minority persons. Representatives of the same public service agencies are used as communication liaisons to assist in a more nontraditional means of engaging low-income and minority populations in the planning process.

As a method of conveying the public participation plan, FST will make the plan available in English and foreign language. FST will also work with the Frontier MPO as a function of the Unified Program of Works Projects to develop and disseminate surveys to both onboard and nonusers of the transit system. The surveys will assist in obtaining useful information in the planning process from a cross-section of public interest.

Public Outreach Activities:

Fort Smith Transit's typical public outreach activities include City of Fort Smith Board of Directors meetings (two times per month), public ward (neighborhood) quarterly meetings, and Transit Advisory Commission meetings (quarterly). FST also participated in various presentations to community and civic groups throughout the three-year period. FST collaborated with the local MPO to conduct annual passenger surveys and area employer surveys. The local MPO hosted technical and policy board meetings quarterly. The City of Fort Smith also provided departments with a Communications Coordinator giving the transit department direct contact and cohesion with local media. This provided an excellent source of public outreach throughout the past three years. Regarding the Title VI Plan outreach specifically, the Transit Director and Civil Rights Officer provide program documents on display at Ward meetings, which are conducted as neighborhood meetings at various locations throughout Fort Smith on a quarterly basis. These meetings offer city departments an opportunity to display programs and services available to the community. Questions generally range from a wide variety of topics; however, no questions or public comments were received specific to Title VI.

Neighborhood Ward Meetings:

January 27, 2022 (Ward 1)

November 15, 2022 (Ward 2)

2021 – None due to the Pandemic

Community and Civic Groups Presentations:

October 28, 2022 (Gorman Towers Senior Living)

March 21, 2023 (Gorman Towers Senior Living)

April 8, 2023 (Family Literacy Night-Kimmons Middle School)

June 6, 2023 (Partners in Education-Fort Smith Public Schools School)

June 23, 2023 (Gorman Towers Senior Living)

TRANSIT CIVIL RIGHTS INFO MEETING



- Title VI Program 2024-2026
- Equal Employment Opportunity Plan (EEO) 2023
- Small Business Enterprise Program (SBE) 2024-2026
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program (DBE) 2024-2026

MONDAY, JULY 17TH | 6:00PM

Elm Grove Community Center 1901 N Greenwood Ave. Fort Smith, AR 72904

WEDNESDAY, JULY 19TH | NOON

Creekmore Community Center 3301 S M St, Fort Smith, AR 72903

FOR MORE INFORMATION
(479) 783-6464
fortsmithar.gov/transit

**GREGORY
CARTHON**
CIVIL RIGHTS OFFICER





Public Participation Plan

Introduction

The Fort Smith Transit (FST) has prepared the following Public Participation Plan (PPP) in addition to the plan provided by the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). This combined effort is done to ensure transit projects and processes receive adequate public input. FST's PPP in conjunction with the Frontier MPO's PPP complies with the federal requirements for public involvement and participation. This specific document represents the goals of FST for public participation and involvement. These procedures will provide opportunities for citizens to contribute ideas and opinions on transit-related activities. Efforts will be made to assure participation includes traditionally underserved individuals. These individuals include the elderly, low-income, minorities, persons with disabilities, and persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). FST will coordinate with the local MPO to ensure the combined public participation plans will address the requirements for public involvement as identified in 32 CFR 450.316.

Federal Planning Requirements

Federal law and regulations require processes to consider projects, planning strategies, and implementation methods that will:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
2. Increase the safety and security of the transportation system;
3. Increase the accessibility and mobility of individuals;
4. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
5. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transit system, across and between modes, for individuals;
6. Promote efficient system management and operation; and
7. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transit system.

Freedom of Information Act

In order to ensure adequate public notice and provision of timely information, all meetings of the Transit Advisory Commission and subcommittee and focus groups (if any) are subject to the provisions of the Arkansas Code Annotated, 25-19-101.

Public Notification and Participation

FST meeting notices will be provided to local media in advance of a meeting. Notice of public meetings and hearings will be publicized as early as possible or at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting date. A checklist of all media types FST will utilize is referenced as a tool to ensure all notification sources are utilized (See Appendix B). Official notification of public meetings, public hearings, and public review and comment periods will also be posted on the FST website

All FST meetings relating to customer information, services, programs, projects, and amenities are open to the public. Meetings will be conducted in a location that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Meeting information, as well as language translation services, can be provided upon request. A reasonable period of time (15- 20 minutes) will be provided for comments from members of the public prior to the adjournment of said meetings.

Public participation and/or hearings are required for proposed fare increases, major service changes such as route modifications or time alterations, or other federally required projects such as Title VI, DBE/WBE/SBE, ADA Paratransit Plan, etc. Every effort will be made to publicize all major transit projects at public meetings or where applicable.

Reasonable Public Access to Information

FST is available during normal business hours to discuss transit information with citizens and other interested parties. FST offices are located at 6821 Jenny Lind Road, Fort Smith, Arkansas. FST staff is also available to meet with outside groups after normal business hours. Arrangements for staff to attend meetings after normal business hours must be made at least one (1) week in advance of the meeting. Copies of all available documents and other materials are available.

Activities to Enhance Public Participation and Involvement

The following activities and initiatives will be incorporated into FST's public involvement.

1. Online Surveys

FST will coordinate with the Frontier MPO in developing the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to include survey activities that measure transit performance and services.

2. Visualization Techniques

In addition to surveys, FST will incorporate visualization techniques into its media and public involvement activities, which may include:

- Utilization of the City of Fort Smith's dedicated television channel for public notices.
- Assisting in a coordinated and comprehensive campaign to elevate the regional awareness of transit activities and functions.
- Utilization of FST apps, social media, automated onboard announcement system, and RouteMatch floodgate IVR and SMS text systems.

- Utilization of the City's Communications Coordinator to highlight transit activities and services through local media outreach.
- Through the transit department's website and miscellaneous public presentations by invitation to community organizations.

3. Outreach to Minority, LEP, and Underserved Populations

FST will make adjustments as necessary to accommodate public participation needs and desires of minority, LEP, and underserved populations.

- It should be noted that survey results indicate 50% of the department's ridership base receives their information from electronic messaging signs available on each bus. Messages are posted in LEP formats to engage participation.
- Steps have been taken to acquire LEP services for processing department information, as well as for improved community notification of services and events.
- Transit Advisory Commission Meetings are scheduled during the noon hour to accommodate residents during their lunch breaks and nightly ward meetings are held at various wards throughout the city to address neighborhood concerns.
- Transportation Assistance Program (TAP) vouchers are made available to non-profit and health and human service organizations to encourage coordination among community organizations.
- Transportation to and from meetings is made free to passengers.

4. Type of Public Involvement

FST strives to involve as many individuals as possible for community support. Below are some examples:

Cancer Support House
 Dialysis
 Pregnancy Help Center
 Community Rescue Mission
 Salvation Army
 Arkansas Department of Community Corrections
 First Presbyterian Church
 Harbor House
 Hope Campus

Public Participation Process for Fare and Service Changes

The following are procedures Fort Smith Transit will follow to ensure effective public participation concerning fare and service changes. This policy is in addition to the Metropolitan Planning Organization Public Participation Plan.

Items requiring a 30-day public hearing:

- Fare Increases
- Public Charter Rate Changes
- Routing Structure
- Days and Hours of Operation
- Transfer Locations
- Continual/Permanent Changes in Fixed Routes

Items requiring a public hearing to be conducted at regular meetings:

- Passenger Regulations
- Penalties to Assess
- Free Ride Days
- Holiday Closings

Items not requiring a public hearing:

- Temporary route deviations for construction, local events, holidays, weather or natural disaster, emergency vehicles, accidents, or incidents.
- Routing alterations in parking lots, apartment complexes, subdivisions, or alterations necessary to mitigate immediate safety concerns.
- Added service does not require a public hearing; however, staff may elect to conduct a public hearing for added service to determine public comments or suggestions. Staff will evaluate service additions to ensure equality or no disparate impacts exist based on race, color, or national origin.
- Reduced demand response service due to insufficient requests.

Public Hearing Process:

The process for items requiring a public hearing begins with presenting the proposal to the Transit Advisory Commission in an open public meeting. The commission determines whether to open a thirty (30) day public hearing to seek public comments. If the commission opens a public hearing, staff begins the public hearing process by publishing in local news media, social media, City Access channel, onboard electronic messaging, scheduling software notifications, and smartphone app push notifications. All public comments are recorded over the 30-day comment period. The Transit Commission reconvenes following the notification period to consider all public comments. The commission either approves the change as originally presented, adjusts accordingly, or denies any change. The commission will set a start date to give transit staff adequate time to notify the public and prepare for implementation.



Metropolitan Planning Organization

Public Participation Plan

Public Meeting Date: Aug. 21, 2012

Technical Committee Review: Aug. 23, 2012

Policy Board Review and Adoption: Sept. 17, 2012

Frontier Metropolitan Planning Organization

1109 South 16th Street
P.O. Box 2067
Fort Smith, AR 72902

(479) 785-2651 Phone
(479) 785-1964 Fax

www.frontiermpo.org

FRONTIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Resolution Adopting the Public Participation Plan

WHEREAS, The Frontier MPO is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Fort Smith Urbanized Area, having been so designated by the Governors of Arkansas and Oklahoma for the expressed purposes of carrying out the transportation planning requirements of U.S.C. Title 23, Chapter 134 and U.S.C. 49, Subtitle III, Section 5303; and

WHEREAS, the Frontier Public Participation Plan has been prepared by the MPO in consultation with all member local and state governments and local, state and federal transportation agencies in a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive planning process; and

WHEREAS, the Public Participation Plan is consistent with local, regional, and state transportation and other planning goals and objectives and has been prepared in accordance with all relative state and federal rules and regulations; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Frontier MPO Policy Board hereby approves and adopts the Frontier MPO Public Participation Plan for the Fort Smith Metropolitan Planning Area. Further be it resolved that the Frontier MPO Policy Board recommends that the Public Participation Plan be accepted by the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration as the official Public Participation Plan for the above cited area.

Approved and adopted by the Frontier MPO Policy Board and signed this 17th day of September 2012.



Mayor Bob Freeman, City of Van Buren
Frontier MPO Policy Board

ATTEST:



Mr. Tim Conklin
Frontier MPO Director

Prepared By:

**FRONTIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING
ORGANIZATION**

In Cooperation with:

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department
Oklahoma Department of Transportation
Federal Highway
Administration Federal
Transit Administration

And

The Arkansas Cities of;

Alma, Barling, Bonanza, Central City, Fort Smith, Greenwood, Kibler, Lavaca, and

Van Buren And

The Oklahoma Towns

of; Arkoma and Pocola

And

Crawford and Sebastian Counties in
Arkansas Le Flore and Sequoyah
Counties in Oklahoma

And

Western Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc.
Fort Smith Transit
Department Fort Smith
Regional Airport
Western Arkansas Intermodal Transportation Authority

September 2012

The preparation and publication of this document was financed in part by funds provided by the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration. The provision of Federal financial assistance should not be construed as denoting U.S. Government approval of plans, policies, programs or projects contained herein.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

The Frontier Metropolitan Planning Organization complies with all civil rights provisions of federal statutes and related authorities that prohibit discrimination in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. Therefore, the Frontier MPO does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, or national origin, religion or disability, in the admission, access to and treatment in Frontier programs and activities, as well as the Frontier hiring or employment practices. Complaints of alleged discrimination and inquiries regarding the Frontier MPO's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to Cindy Hughes, Title VI/Title II (ADA/504/508) Coordinator, 1109 S. 16th Street, AR 72901, (479) 785-2651 (Voice/TTY 711) or email chughes@wapdd.org. Additional information can be found on our website, www.frontiermpo.org.

This notice is available in large print, on audiotape and in Braille upon request.

**FRONTIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING
ORGANIZATION**

Public Participation Plan

Introduction

The Frontier Metropolitan Planning Organization Public Participation Plan (PPP) has been developed to assure that the transportation planning process conducted by the Frontier Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) complies with Federal requirements for public involvement and participation. This document presents the goals of the Frontier MPO for public participation and involvement, as well as the public involvement procedures designed for various MPO activities. These procedures will provide opportunities for citizens to contribute ideas and opinions early and at every stage of the planning process. Efforts will be made to assure participation in the transportation planning and programming process by traditionally underserved individuals, including elderly, low income and minority individuals, persons with disabilities, and persons with Limited English proficiency (LEP).

The Frontier MPO will, to the extent reasonable and practical, ensure that the PPP will address the requirements for MPO public involvement as identified in 23 CFR 450.316 Metropolitan Planning Process: Elements. Copies of these requirements are found in **Appendix A** of this document.

Federal Planning Requirements for an MPO

Federal law and regulations require each MPO to conduct a planning process that must consider projects, planning strategies, and implementation methods that will:

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
- Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and freight;
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- Promote efficient system management and operation; and
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

Freedom of Information Act

In order to ensure adequate public notice and provision of timely information, all meetings of the Frontier Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board and all subcommittee and focus groups are subject to the provisions of the Arkansas Code Annotated, 25-19-101 and the Oklahoma Annotated Statutes, 25-301-314.

Public Notification and Participation

The Frontier MPO Policy Board and Technical Committee meeting notices will be provided to local newspapers of general circulation sufficiently in advance of a meeting to meet newspaper guidelines for publication during the week of and prior to the meeting. When, and if, non-English newspapers of general circulation are initiated in the Frontier region, the Frontier MPO Staff will work with these newspapers to have the above meeting notices printed in the appropriate language in their publications. These notices do not need to be paid notices. The notice of public meetings and hearings will be published at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the meeting date. A copy of paid newspaper publications shall be retained in the Frontier MPO files for a period of three (3) years after the end of the Fiscal Year.

Official notification of Public Meetings, Public Hearings, and Public Review and Comment periods will also be posted on the Frontier MPO website and will be provided for posting at the following locations and other locations identified by Frontier MPO staff in order to encourage minority and other underserved populations to participate in the process:

- The Administrative Offices of each local member jurisdiction,
- Departments of Human Services,
- Regional Library,
- Frontier MPO / WAPDD office, and
- Frontier MPO website.

All Frontier MPO Policy Board and Technical Committee meetings are open to the public and will be conducted in a location that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A reasonable period of time (15 – 20 minutes) for comments from members of the public will be provided prior to the adjournment of said meetings.

Reasonable Public Access to Technical and Policy Information

The Frontier MPO staff is available during normal business hours to discuss technical and policy information with citizens and other interested parties. The Frontier MPO offices are located at 1109 South 16th Street in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Frontier MPO staff is also available to meet with outside groups after normal business hours. Arrangements for staff to attend meetings after normal business hours must be made at least one (1) week in advance of the meeting. Copies of all available documents and other materials are available for the cost of postage.

Environmental Justice

Pursuant to Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, dated February 11, 1994, and the subsequent

U.S. Department of Transportation Order 5680.3, issued April 15, 1997, the Frontier MPO promotes Environmental Justice in all aspects of the Frontier transportation planning process. These procedures augment and reaffirm the Frontier MPO policy to adhere to and advance the principles of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA) as amended, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) as amended, the

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users

(SAFETEA-LU), Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), and other statutes, regulations and guidance that address or affect infrastructure planning and decision making; social, economic, or environmental matters; public health; and public involvement. To these ends, notices of meetings and public hearings will be specifically provided in minority and ethnic gathering places to promote participation in the transportation planning process. Minority and ethnic communities will be monitored through census data to guarantee their inclusion in the process as populations fluctuate over time. Special accommodations (e.g. interpreter, sign language interpreter, large print copy, etc.) may be requested of the Frontier MPO staff during normal business hours at least five (5) business days prior to the meeting. Frontier MPO staff will attempt to accommodate all such requests.

Transit Projects

The public involvement procedures outlined in these Procedures serve as the public participation process required for the development of transit projects as per FTA Circular 9030 and 9040. The Frontier MPO will assist any and all public transit providers in their respective outreach programs that have developed to advance participation by transit users. The Frontier MPO and any and all public transit operators will address the Program of Projects requirements as per Federal Transit Administration Circulars. Additionally, any and all public transit operator’s capital projects and operational costs are included in the Frontier MPO Transportation Improvement Program which is developed through a cooperative and collaborative process with interested parties and other private and public transportation providers.

MPO WORK PRODUCTS

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Public Comment Period Days	Number of Calendar
Public Comment Period for Draft MTP Document	30
Public Comment Period of Final MTP Document	15

Major updates to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan will be conducted every five (5) years. The Frontier MPO will host three (3) public meetings and/or provide notice of availability for public outreach to involve interested parties in the early stages of the plan development. Notices of public hearings and/or notice of availability for public outreach for the MTP will be published and posted as stated in the Public Notification and Participation section above. After the draft MTP is developed, the Frontier MPO will host three (3) additional public meetings and/or notice of availability for public outreach to solicit comments on the draft plan. A final draft MTP will be presented to the Technical Committee and any appropriate focus group for review and comment prior to recommendation to the Frontier MPO Policy Board for adoption. All public comments received will be made a part of the final adopted document.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Public Comment Period Days	Number of Calendar
Public Comment Period for Draft TIP Document	10
Public Comment Period for TIP Amendments	10

The Transportation Improvement Program is updated every four (4) years and maintained annually. Frontier MPO staff works directly with the MPO member local governments and with the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department and the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and Fort Smith Transit to identify proposed projects for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program. After all proposed project requests are identified, Frontier MPO staff, in conjunction with the Technical Committee, will prepare a draft Transportation Improvement Program for public review. Notices of public review and comment period for the TIP will be published and posted as stated in the Public Notification and Participation section above. Upon resolution of public comments, the Technical Committee will review the TIP and a recommendation to adopt the TIP will be made to the Frontier MPO Board. If no adverse public comments are received, a recommendation to approve the TIP may be made by mail-out, fax or e-mail ballot. Final TIP will be published and made available to the public.

Public Participation Plan (PPP)

Public Comment Period Days	Number of Calendar
Public Comment Period for Draft Public Participation Plan Document	45

Review of the Public Participation Plan (PPP) will be conducted annually and updates will be adopted as necessary. The public comment period will be 45 calendar days. The PPP will be presented to the Technical Committee for review and for a recommendation to the Frontier MPO Board for adoption.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Public Comment Period	Unified Planning Work Program	Number of Calendar Days
Public Comment Period for		10

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a description of the proposed transportation planning activities of the Frontier Metropolitan Transportation Program during the coming fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). The program is prepared annually and serves as a basis for requesting Federal planning funds. It also serves as a management tool for scheduling, budgeting, and monitoring the planning activities of the participating agencies.

Regional Transportation Improvement and Mobility Studies and Corridor Plans

Public Comment Period Days	Number of Calendar Days
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Public Comment Period for Studies and Corridor Plans	15
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Notices will be distributed to the citizens who live in the specific study areas in order to obtain the input of persons of interest who would most likely be affected by any proposed improvements. After consideration by the Technical Committee and at least one public meeting at a location convenient to the affected citizens, regional studies and corridor plans will be presented to the Frontier MPO Board for adoption.

Public Transit Studies and Plans

Public Comment Period Days	Number of Calendar Days
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Public Comment Period for Studies and Corridor Plans	15
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Notices will be distributed to the citizens who live in the specific study areas in order to obtain the input of persons of interest who would most likely be affected by any proposed improvements. After consideration by the Technical Committee and at least one public meeting at a location convenient to the affected citizens, regional studies and corridor plans will be presented to the Frontier MPO Board for adoption.

Amendments to Adopted Documents

Public Comment Period Days	Number of Calendar Days
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Public Comment Period for Studies and Corridor Plans	10
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Whenever proposed amendments to adopted non-administrative documents such as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are necessary, the Frontier MPO will notify members of the Technical Committee by mail, facsimile or by e-mail to initiate the amendment process, and post notification that the amendment is available for public review. This notification will serve as the ten (10) calendar day public notice of the upcoming meeting. Notices of public review and comment period for proposed amendments will be published and posted as stated in the Public Notification and Participation section above. The proposed amendment will be stated on the posted notice. Mail-out, e-mail, or faxed ballots may be used for amending the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and other time sensitive Frontier MPO business matters on a case-by-case basis. Copies of the ballots will become a part of the record of Frontier MPO activities and a summary of the vote will be included as an addendum to minutes of the previous meeting.

The public comment period for document amendments will be ten (10) calendar days. Proposed documents, amendments, and public comments will be referred to the Technical Committee for review and recommendation and to the Frontier MPO Policy Board for adoption. The following amendments to adopted documents are entirely exempt from the public involvement process:

- (A) Emergency transportation improvement projects that are identified as necessary for the public safety and welfare of the citizens of any Frontier MPO member government or jurisdiction.
- (B) Minor technical, editorial, or otherwise non-substantive revisions including

the following:

- Minor cost changes
- Changes in cost shares
- Splitting or phasing of projects
- Other administrative changes such as in the lead agency or funding source

Activities to Enhance Public Participation and Involvement

The following activities and initiatives will be incorporated into the Frontier MPO public involvement and outreach programs as well as into the overall planning process and MTP development.

1. On-line Surveys

The Frontier MPO will have an annual work element in its Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) that will enable the Frontier MPO to offer on-line survey capabilities for MPO planning activities as well as for planning activities of Frontier MPO member jurisdictions. A reputable web-based survey vendor will host this service. “Hard Copy” survey forms of the on-line surveys will be distributed to the appropriate affected populations within the Frontier MPO area.

2. Interactive Frontier MPO GIS Mapping

The Frontier MPO will offer an on-line GIS interactive map of the Frontier MPO Area that will have the capabilities of presenting all appropriate information pertaining to MTP elements and proposed amendments, TIP projects and proposed amendments, traffic related data elements that are considerations for individual project selection. The interactive mapping function will provide the Frontier MPO with numerous opportunities to present information on a wide range of planning activities and specific projects to the general public as well as to targeted underserved groups.

3. Visualization Techniques

In addition to the on-line surveys and the web-based GIS program, the Frontier MPO will incorporate visualization techniques into the planning process and public involvement activities which may include:

- Utilization of the City of Fort Smith’s dedicated television channel for public notices and MTP/TIP proposed amendments and revisions.
- A coordinated and comprehensive campaign to elevate the regional awareness of the Frontier MPO planning activities and functions of the Frontier MPO through the development of a Frontier MPO banner, Project fact sheets, speaker bureaus, transportation fairs, Frontier MPO logo utilization in Frontier MPO sponsored events, and articles of interest prepared by the Frontier MPO staff for local newspapers and regional magazines.
- Increased circulation of Frontier MPO products and proposed documents through the use of the Fort Smith Multi-Cultural Center, the Fort Smith Ministerial Alliance, and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC).

- Annual production of maps presenting the Annual Listing of Projects.
- The expanded use of digital photography and photographs in Frontier MPO public meetings, advertisements, and publications.
- An upgrade of the Frontier MPO website to create a more user friendly and interactive experience for the visitor as well as to provide the Frontier MPO an improved platform for animations, digital presentations, and timely information regarding the performance of the region's transportation network and proposed improvements to the region's transportation network.

APPENDIX A

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

Excerpted from 23 CFR 450.316

- Include a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and TIPs and meets the requirements and criteria specified as follows:
- Require a minimum public comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or revised;
- Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects (including but not limited to central city and other local jurisdiction concerns);
- Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans and TIPs and open public meetings where matters related to the Federal-aid highway and transit programs are being considered;
- Require adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including, but not limited to, approval of plans and TIPs (in nonattainment areas, classified as serious and above, the comment period shall be at least 30 days for the plan, TIP and major amendment(s));
- Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the planning and program development processes;
- Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, including but not limited to low-income and minority households;
- When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft transportation plan or TIP (including the financial plan) as a result of the public involvement process or the interagency consultation process required under the U.S. EPA's conformity regulations, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan and TIP;
- If the final transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the one which was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised plan or TIP shall be made available;
- Public involvement processes shall be periodically reviewed by the MPO in terms of their effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to all;
- These procedures will be reviewed by the FHWA and the FTA during certification

reviews for TMAs, and as otherwise necessary for all MPOs, to assure that full and open access is provided to MPO decision making processes; and,

- Metropolitan public involvement processes shall be coordinated with statewide public involvement processes wherever possible to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans, and programs and reduce redundancies and costs.

APPENDIX B

FRONTIER MPO PLANNING ACTIVITY	PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES
Policy Board Meetings Technical Committee Meetings	<p>Ten (10) Day Notice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontier MPO website (www.frontiermpo.org) • Post at the Frontier MPO / WAPDD office • Email Press Release • Agendas include a public comment period for action items
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	<p>Thirty (30) Day Public Comment Period for Draft MTP Fifteen (15) Day Public Comment Period of Final MTP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontier MPO online surveys • Frontier MPO website (www.frontiermpo.org) • Multicultural Center, LULAC, Focus Groups • Articles in local magazines • City Cable Channel • Brochures/Flyers
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	<p>Ten (10) Day Public Comment Period for the Draft TIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontier MPO website (www.frontiermpo.org) • Post at the Frontier MPO / WAPDD office • Email Press Release • Multicultural Center, LULAC, Focus Groups
Public Participation Plan (PPP)	<p>Forty-five (45) Day Public Comment Period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontier MPO website (www.frontiermpo.org) • Post at the Frontier MPO / WAPDD office
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	<p>Ten (10) Day Public Comment Period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontier MPO website (www.frontiermpo.org) • Post at the Frontier MPO / WAPDD office • Email Press Release
Regional Transportation Improvement and Mobility Studies and Corridor Plans	<p>Fifteen (15) Day Public Comment Period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontier MPO website (www.frontiermpo.org) • Post at the Frontier MPO / WAPDD office
Public Transit Studies and Plans	<p>Fifteen (15) Day Public Comment Period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontier MPO website • Frontier MPO online surveys
Amendments to Adopted MPO Documents	<p>Ten (10) Day Public Comment Period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontier MPO website (www.frontiermpo.org) • Post at the Frontier MPO / WAPDD office • Email Press Release

System-Wide Service Standards

To comply with FTA regulations in adopting system-wide service standards to guard against any service design or operational decision that may have a disproportionate impact on minority or low-income populations, FST has implemented the following service standards as described in Chapter V of the FTA's Title VI Circular 4702.1A.

Vehicle Load Factor

The following maximum vehicle load factor standards shall apply:

Local Routes (Peak Hours) – 125% of seated capacity

Local Routes (Off-Peak Hours) – 100% of seated capacity

In the event that these standards are consistently exceeded, FST will determine to either substitute a larger bus on the route or add an additional trip to the schedule in order to bring the service within the Vehicle Load Factor standard.

Vehicle Headway – Frequency of Service

The frequency of bus service is consistent across all fixed routes to maintain continuity. FST has established the following headways to be maintained:

Peak & Off-Peak Hours – 60 minutes minimum

On-Time Performance

Although shortages of workers or equipment breakdowns, or accidents may keep trips from operating, it is FST's goal that 85% of all trips scheduled will be operated on time.

For the purpose of this standard, on-time is defined as any arrival prior to the designated stop time and departures no later than 15 minutes after the designated stop time. FST practices consistency in all services to ensure reliability.

Distribution of Transit Amenities

FST receives requests for shelter and benches and places the location on a waiting list. Specific requests are given priority based on several factors including ridership in the area, space available to place a shelter or bench, the estimated cost, and difficulty in placing a shelter in the requested location. Also after receiving approvals from the proper city, departments, and the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) for local streets designated as state highways.

The exact cost associated with placing a bus shelter or bench in a specific location depends on several factors, including right-of-way access, geographic features, the location of existing utilities, the amount of space available to lay a pad, curb cuts, sidewalks, and ADA accessibility.

Bus shelters are typically placed in locations within retail businesses, high-traffic land uses, schools, and some residential neighborhoods. Based on the above quantitative and qualitative information review for locating bus shelters and benches, FST attempts to place a shelter or bench at bus stops that have high passenger boarding counts per day with the goal of placing shelters at bus stops with a minimum of 15 passengers per day or placing benches at bus stops with a minimum of 10 passengers per day.

Service Availability

FST staff developed its fixed route network by analyzing common points of interest locations from prior demand response passenger activity. The transit department offers transportation services throughout the entire city limits (See Appendix 11), whether that is fixed route/paratransit service or demand response services outside the fixed route network. Transit staff routinely monitors demand response service activity to determine if ridership points of interest are sufficient to warrant the implementation of a fixed route. There are a number of elements overall to factor into a decision involving fixed route development such as U.S. Census information, history of demand response ridership, points of interest and planned development, etc.

Vehicle Assignment

Vehicle assignment refers to the allocation of transit vehicles to ensure that all areas covered receive the same quality of rolling stock benefits. Benefits include the vehicle age and on-board amenities.

FST buses differ primarily by length of vehicle and age. Amenities such as air conditioning and upholstery are standard. Age is the primary variable to consider inequitable vehicle assignments. At the time of this report, 100% of Fort Smith Transit is operating fleet remains within its useful life. Vehicles that may have exceeded their useful life are used primarily as backup vehicles. In order to ensure equitable distribution, each route is randomly assigned buses without regard to vehicle age or mileage.

A sample table showing FST vehicle assignment by route and vehicle size is on the next page. These assignments change with ridership levels, service adjustments, and available equipment.

REVENUE VEHICLES

Unit #	Asset #	Year/Model	Fuel Type	Fuel Capacity	VIN #	Tag #	Vehicle Length	Actual Seating Capacity	Standing Capacity	FTA Service Yrs/Miles	Warranty	Acquired	Disposition	Title Status	FTA Tag #	Use	Comments
6	199	2007 Freightliner	Diesel	60 Gal	4UZAACBV17CY15789	NONE	30'	24	10	14/350000	N	May 2007		CITY	Removed	DTWN - FR	Awaiting Motor Rebuild 2022
52	429	2015 Eldorado Aerolite	Unleaded/CNG	55 Gal Unleaded 34 CNG/25.6 Useable	FDDEE3FL6EDA71936	X21836	22'	9/2WC	4	5/150,000	N	March 2015	Auction 2022	CITY	Removed	DR	Converted to Bifuel 5/26/2015 - Stripped - Auction 2022
53	430	2015 Eldorado Ntl. Advantage	Unleaded/CNG	55 Gal Unleaded 34 CNG/27.6 Useable	FDDEE4FL3FDA06985	X21837	25'	16/2WC	5	7/200,000	N	March 2015		ArdOT	FT-1079	FR	Converted to Bifuel 6/16/2015
54	130	2016 Starecraft A1s tar	Unleaded/CNG	55 Gal Unleaded CNG/20 Useable	FDDEE4F57DC53620	X22787	26'	16/2WC	5	7/200,000	N	August 2016		ArdOT	FT-1091	FR	Converted to Bifuel 2017
55	133	2016 Starecraft A1s tar	Unleaded/CNG	55 Gal Unleaded CNG/20 Useable	FDDEE4F59DC53621	X22786	26'	16/2WC	5	7/200,000	N	August 2016	Stripped	ArdOT	FT-1087	FR	Converted to Bifuel 2017 - Stripped
57	338	2016 Starecraft A1s tar	Unleaded/CNG	55 Gal Unleaded CNG/20 Useable	FDDEE4F59DC53618	X23878	26'	16/2WC	5	7/200,000	N	November 2016		ArdOT	FT-1090	FR	Converted to Bifuel 2017
58	339	2016 Starecraft A1s tar	Unleaded/CNG	55 Gal Unleaded CNG/20 Useable	FDDEE4F58DC53619	X23879	26'	16/2WC	5	7/200,000	N	November 2016		ArdOT	FT-1089	FR	Converted to Bifuel 2017
59	671	2018 Starecraft A1s tar	Unleaded/CNG	55 gal/15 gal equiv	FDDEE3F5JDC27981	X23881	20'	9/2WC	4	5/150,000	N	June 2018		ArdOT	FT-1108	DR	Converted to Bifuel 2019
60	663	2018 Starecraft A1s tar	Unleaded/CNG	55 gal/15 gal equiv	FDDEE3F5JDC27982	X23884	20'	9/2WC	4	5/150,000	N	June 2018		ArdOT	FT-1109	DR	Converted to Bifuel 5/2021
61	668	2018 Starecraft A1s tar	Unleaded/CNG	55 gal/15 gal equiv	FDDEE4F5JDC31314	X23882	26'	16/2WC	5	7/200,000	N	June 2018		ArdOT	FT-1107	FR	Converted to Bifuel 2021
62	666	2018 Starecraft A1s tar	Unleaded/CNG	55 gal/15 gal equiv	FDDEE4F53JDC28138	X23883	26'	16/2WC	5	7/200,000	N	June 2018		ArdOT	FT-1106	FR	Converted to Bifuel 2021
63	997	2019 Starecraft A1s tar	Unleaded/CNG	55 gal/15 gal equiv	FDDEE4F57KDC46823	X24588	26'	17/2WC	5	7/200,000	Y	August 2019		ArdOT	FT-1120	FR	Converted to Bifuel 2021
64	993	2019 Starecraft A1s tar	Unleaded/CNG	55 gal/15 gal equiv	FDDEE4F59KDC46824	X24589	20'	9/2WC	2	5/150,000	Y	August 2019		ArdOT	FT-1119	DR	Converted to Bifuel 8/2021
65	992	2019 Starecraft A1s tar	Unleaded/CNG	55 gal/15 gal equiv	FDDEE4F58KDC46825	X24590	20'	9/2WC	2	5/150,000	Y	August 2019		ArdOT	FT-1118	DR	Converted to Bifuel 12/2020
66	991	2019 Starecraft A1s tar	Unleaded/CNG	55 gal/15 gal equiv	FDDEE4F52KDC46826	X24591	20'	9/2WC	2	5/150,000	Y	August 2019		ArdOT	FT-1117	DR	Converted to Bifuel 12/2020
67	969	2022 Gillig G31D102H4	CNG	67 CNG Gal	15GCEB3116N3197590	X25962	40'	36/3WC	34	12/500,000	Y	August 2022		CITY		FR	
68	112	2022 Gillig G31D102H4	CNG	67 CNG Gal	15GCEB3118N3197591	X25967	40'	36/3WC	34	12/500,000	Y	October 2022		CITY		FR	
69	208	2022 Gillig G31D102H4	CNG	67 CNG Gal	15GCEB311XN3197592	X25967	40'	36/3WC	34	12/500,000	Y	November 2022		CITY		FR	
70	113	2022 Gillig G31D102H4	CNG	67 CNG Gal	15GCEB311N3197593	X25966	40'	36/3WC	34	12/500,000	Y	October 2022		CITY		FR	
71	139	2022 Gillig G31B102H4	CNG	67 CNG Gal	15GCEB3116N3197594	X25968	35'	30/3WC		12/500,000	Y	October 2022		CITY		FR	Wrecked Prior to Delivery
72	168	2022 Gillig G31B102H4	CNG	67 CNG Gal	15GCEB3118N3197595	X25969	35'	30/3WC		12/500,000	Y	October 2022		CITY		FR	
73	254	2022 Gillig G31B102H4	CNG	67 CNG Gal	15GCEB3110P3198498		35'	30/3WC			Y			CITY		FR	

Units to be Replaced with 1 - 2023 Gillig Coach Bus 58

ADMINISTRATIVE/MAINTENANCE VEHICLES

Unit #	Asset #	Year/Model	Fuel Type	Fuel Capacity	VIN #	Tag #	Warranty	Acquired	Removed from Fleet	Title Status	Use	Comments
137		1998 Dodge Half-Ton	Unleaded	26 Gal	3B7HCL6ZXW261986	517VUJ	N	October 2009	June 2022	CITY	N/A	Hail Damage 5/2016 - \$1,521.93 Ins Pmt - Auctioned 2022
164		2001 Dodge 1 Ton Service Truck W/Crane	Diesel	35 Gal	3B6MF36681M563801	X10676	N	Transfer from Utilit. 9/2014		CITY	N/A	Maintenance
620		2020 Dodge Ram 1500 (1/2 Ton)	Unleaded	26 Gal	1C6RR7X17LS131531	522YNT	N	May 2020		CITY	N/A	Maintenance
444		2015 Ford Fusion S Hybrid	Unleaded	25 Gal	3FA0PUU2FR199263	919THK	N	December 2014		CITY	N/A	Admin
108		2009 Ford Expedition	Unleaded	35 Gal	1FMFK15569E04339	6130HK	N	June 2009		CITY	N/A	Admin
871		2022 Dodge Ram 1500 (1/2-Ton)	Unleaded	26 Gal	1C6RR7X13NS163251	PENDING	Y	June 2022		CITY	N/A	Admin
476		1999 Jeep Cherokee	Unleaded	25 Gal	1J4FF68S1XL643946		N	Transfer from Utilit. 9/2015	7/2022	CITY	N/A	Admin

Units to be Replaced with 6 - 2022 Gillig Coach Buses: 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57

Transit Security

It is the goal of FST to provide safety measures that protect the public and FST employees against any intentional act or threat of violence or personal harm, either from a criminal or terrorist act. FST has deployed digital surveillance and recording technology on each revenue vehicle, at FST administrative offices, maintenance facility, and the downtown transfer station. FST has implemented a safety and security training program for FST employees.

Legal Notice

City of Fort Smith Transit Department

Title VI Program Plan

2024 – 2026

Fort Smith Transit is accepting comments from the public regarding the implementation of a Title VI Plan. This plan prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs receiving federal financial assistance. The Title VI Plan includes a formal complaint process and seeks to reduce barriers to accessing transit services.

The Title VI Plan is available for inspection during normal business hours at the Fort Smith Transit offices located at 6821 Jenny Lind, Fort Smith, Arkansas, by calling 479-783-6464, by e-mail request at transit@fortsmithar.gov, or online using the web link below.

The Transit Department will accept comments on this plan for a period of forty-five (45) days following the date of this notice. Comments should be addressed to: Fort Smith Transit, P.O. Box 1908, Fort Smith, Arkansas 72902, or by email at transit@fortsmithar.gov.

<https://www.fortsmithar.gov/government/departments/transit/news-and-notices/-fsiteid-1#!/>