

Title VI Nondiscrimination Program



November
2023

ROWAN
TRANSIT
SYSTEM
Be an original.™

TITLE VI PLAN REVIEW AND ADOPTION

On behalf of the Rowan County Board of Commissioners (BOC), I hereby acknowledge receipt of the Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan. We, the BOC, have ***reviewed and hereby adopt*** this Plan. We are committed to ensuring that all decisions are made in accordance with the nondiscrimination guidelines of this Plan, to the end the no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any Rowan Transit System (RTS) services and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, creed (religion), or disability, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the nondiscrimination provisions of the Federal Transit Administration.

Gregory C Edds

Dec 7, 2023

Signature of Authorizing Official

DATE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title VI Nondiscrimination Agreement	4
1.0 Introduction and History	5
2.0 Description of Programs and Services	5
2.1 Program(s) and Services Administered.....	5
2.2 Funding Sources/Tables	6
2.3 Decision-Making Process.....	7
2.4 Title VI Coordinator.....	7
2.5 Change of Title VI Coordinator and/or Head of Decision-making Body	8
2.6 Organizational Chart.....	8
2.7 Subrecipients.....	8
3.0 Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy Statement.....	9
4.0 Notice of Nondiscrimination	10
5.0 Procedures to Ensure Nondiscriminatory Administration of Programs and Services	11
6.0 Contract Administration	12
6.1 Contract Language	12
6.2 Nondiscrimination Notice to Prospective Bidders	14
7.0 External Discrimination Complaint Procedures.....	15
Discrimination Complaint Form	17
Discrimination Complaints Log.....	20
Investigative Guidance.....	21
SAMPLE Investigative Report Template	22
8.0 Service Area Population Characteristics	23
8.1 Race and Ethnicity	23
8.2 Age and Sex	24
8.3 Disability.....	25
8.4 Poverty	26
8.5 Household Income	27
8.6 Limited English Proficiency Populations.....	27
8.7 Population Locations.....	28
9.0 Title VI Equity Analyses (and Environmental Justice Assessments)	29
10.0 Public Involvement	29
10.1 Introduction.....	28
10.2 Public Notification	29
10.3 Dissemination of Information	29
10.4 Meetings and Outreach	30
10.5 Limited English Proficiency	32

10.6 Demographic Requests.....	36
10.7 Key Community Contacts	37
10.8 Summary of Outreach Efforts Since the Last Title VI Nondiscrimination Program Submission.....	37
11.0 Staff Training	38
12.0 Nonelected Boards and Committees – By Race and Gender	38
13.0 Record keeping and Reports.....	38
Appendices.....	40
Appendix A – Applicable Nondiscrimination Authorities	
Appendix B – Yearly Holiday Schedules	
Appendix C– Organizational Chart	
Appendix D– Rowan County 2020 Language Access Plan	
Appendix E– NCDOT’s Transit Review Checklist	

**TITLE VI NONDISCRIMINATION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND
THE ROWAN TRANSIT SYTEM**

In accordance with DOT Order 1050.2A, the Rowan Transit System (RTS) assures the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) that no person shall, on the ground of **race, color, national origin, sex, creed, age, or disability**, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 and related nondiscrimination authorities, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination or retaliation under any program or activity undertaken by RTS.

Further, RTS hereby agrees to:

1. Designate a Title VI Coordinator that has a responsible position within the organization and easy access to both the County Manager and Assistant County Manager/Director of Human Resources for Rowan County.
2. Issue a policy statement, signed by the BOC of the organization, which expresses a commitment to the nondiscrimination provisions of Title VI and related applicable statutes. The signed policy statement shall be posted and circulated throughout the organization and to the public and published where appropriate in languages other than English. The policy statement will be updated annually and re-signed.
3. Insert the clauses of the contract language from Section 6.1 in every contract awarded by the organization. Ensure that every contract awarded by the organization's contractors or consultants also includes the contract language.
4. Process all and, when required, investigate complaints of discrimination consistent with the procedures contained within this Plan. Log all complaints for the administrative record.
5. Collect statistical data (race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability) on participants in, and beneficiaries of, programs and activities carried out by the organization.
6. Participate in training offered on Title VI and other nondiscrimination requirements. Conduct or request training for employees.
7. Take affirmative action, if reviewed or investigated by NCDOT, to correct any deficiencies found within a reasonable time period, not to exceed 90 calendar days, unless reasonable provisions are granted by NCDOT.
8. Document all Title VI nondiscrimination-related activities as evidence of compliance. Submit information and reports to NCDOT on a schedule outlined by NCDOT.

THIS AGREEMENT is given in consideration of, and for the purpose of obtaining, any and all federal funds, grants, loans, contracts, properties, discounts or other federal financial assistance under all programs and activities and is binding.

Gregory C Edds

Authorized Signature

Dec 7, 2023

Date

Greg Edds

Chairman

Board of Commissioners

1.0 INTRODUCTION & HISTORY

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000d provides that: “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” The broader application of nondiscrimination law is found in other statutes, executive orders, and regulations, which provide additional protections based on age, sex, creed (religion), and disability, including the 1987 Civil Rights Restoration Act, which extended nondiscrimination coverage to all programs and activities of federal-aid recipients, subrecipients, and contractors, including those that are not federally-funded (see Appendix A – Applicable Nondiscrimination Authorities).

RTS became a count run department in October of 2020 and has been a recipient of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). In 2022 RTS began the process to become a direct recipient to ensure eligibility is maintained in the event RTS is able to qualify and apply for Federal Funds not processed through NCDOT. RTS has no current pending applications to any Federal agencies. RTS establishes this Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan for the purpose of complying with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as required by FTA Circular 4702.1B, and related requirements outlined within the FTA Certifications & Assurances, “Nondiscrimination Assurance.” This document details the nondiscrimination program, policies, and practices administered by RTS, and will be updated periodically to incorporate changes and additional responsibilities as they are made. This Plan will be submitted to NCDOT or FTA, upon request.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

2.1 PROGRAM(S) AND SERVICES ADMINISTERED

RTS is a small rural system providing non-emergency life-sustaining public transportation options to citizens within Rowan County, North Carolina.

RTS operates demand response transit service on a reservation basis with daily routes are designed to serve multiple passengers at a time with continuous travel to various locations throughout the County. Reservations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Operating hours are Monday through Friday, 5:30 AM to 5:30 PM, excluding holidays. When a holiday falls on a weekend during the Calendar year it may be adjusted by the County to be observed on the Friday before or Monday after.

New Years Day
Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday
Good Friday
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day (including the Friday after)
Christmas Day (including the day before and day after)

Note: The Rowan County Holiday Schedule is updated annually and posted publicly. (see Appendix B – Rowan County Holiday Schedules).

RTS provides **Medicaid Transportation**. The Medicaid Transportation program is administered by the Rowan County Department of Social Services.

RTS does not offer any fixed routes.

RTS provides transportation for:

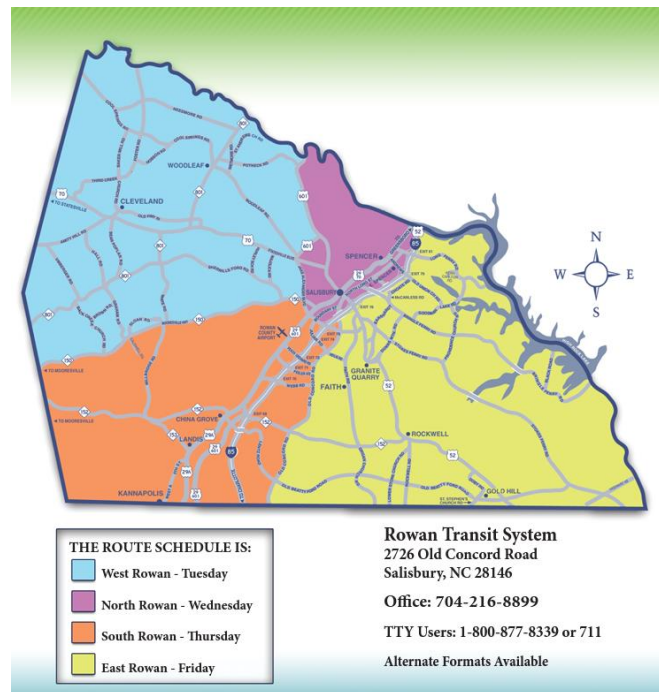
Therapeutic Recreation is a special division within the Parks and Recreation department to ensure the availability of recreation programs for individuals with disabilities. The programs offered have an

emphasis on socialization, inclusion and development of recreation/leisure skills that carry over to the home and community.

Trinity Living Center provides a community-based adult day service designed to meet the needs of frail elderly and functionally and/or cognitively impaired adults. Opportunities for socialization and access to healthcare are provided in a safe environment.

Rowan Vocational Opportunities is a non-profit rehabilitation facility with the purpose of providing work adjustment, vocational training and long term or transitory employment and life skills for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Rowan Individual Transportation Assistance (RITA) is available for transportation to medical appointments one (1) day per week for each area of the county. By having designated days, RTS can operate more efficiently to help as many passengers as possible on the same day. The fare is \$2.00 per a trip for all riders except those eligible for certain grant funded programs or Medicaid. Riders must be signed up to schedule trips. Trips must be scheduled three operating days in advance and the approximate pick up and drop off times provided when booking.



2.2 FUNDING SOURCES / TABLES

For federally assisted programs, "federal assistance" shall include:

1. Grants and loans of Federal funds;
2. The grant or donation of Federal property and interest in property;
3. The detail of Federal personnel;
4. The sale and lease of, and the permission to use (on other than a casual or transient basis), Federal property or any interest in such property without consideration or at a nominal consideration, or at a consideration which is reduced for the purpose of assisting the recipient, or in recognition of the public interest to be served by such sale or lease to the recipient; and
5. Any Federal agreement, arrangement, or other contract which has, as one of its purposes, the provision of assistance.

Each FTA Formula Grant received by our system in FY2023, and whether the funds were received through NCDOT or directly from FTA, is checked below.

Grant Title	NCDOT	FTA	Details (i.e., purpose, frequency, and duration of receipt)
5307 (Urbanized Area Formula)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5310 (Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annually. Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program will provide rural operating funds in support of increased demands for Dialysis transportation and continued service to Rowan Vocational Opportunities and Trinity Living Center.
5311 (Formula Grants for Other than Urbanized Areas)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annually. Community Transportation Program (CTP) secures grant support for administrative costs, provides salary support for three positions (director, manager, safety and training officer), travel, communications, utilities, advertising, secured parking lot rent and office expenses.
5311 (b)(3) (Rural Transit Assistance)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

2.3 DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Board or Committee Name	Appointed	Elected	# of Members
Transit Advisory Committee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9
Board of Commissioners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5

2.4 TITLE VI COORDINATOR

The individual below has been designated as the Title VI Coordinator for RTS, and is empowered with enough authority and responsibility to implement the Title VI Nondiscrimination Program:

Name: Valerie Steele
 Official Title: Airport & Transit Director
 Address: 2726 Old Concord Road, Salisbury, NC 28146
 Phone: 704-216-7753
 Email: valerie.steele@rowancountync.gov

Key responsibilities of the Coordinator include:

- Maintaining knowledge of Title VI Nondiscrimination and related requirement
- Attending civil rights training when offered by NCDOT or any other regulatory agency
- Administering the Title VI Nondiscrimination Program and coordinating implementation of this Plan
- Training internal staff and officials on their Title VI nondiscrimination obligations
- Disseminating Title VI Nondiscrimination information internally and to the general public, including in languages other than English
- Presenting Title VI Nondiscrimination -related information to decision-making bodies for input and approval
- Ensuring Title VI Nondiscrimination -related posters are prominently and publicly displayed
- Developing a process to collect data related to race, national origin, sex, age, and disability to ensure minority, low-income and other underserved groups are included and not discriminated against
- Ensuring that non-elected boards and committees reflect the service area and minorities are represented

- Implementing procedures for prompt processing (receiving, logging, investigating and/or forwarding) of discrimination complaints
- Coordinating with, and providing information to, NCDOT and other regulatory agencies during compliance reviews or complaint investigations
- Promptly resolving areas of deficiency to ensure compliance with Title VI nondiscrimination requirements

2.5 CHANGE OF TITLE VI COORDINATOR

If Title VI Coordinator or Transit Director changes, this document and all other documents that name the Coordinator, will immediately be updated, and an updated policy statement (and nondiscrimination agreement, if standalone) will be signed by the new Transit Director and/or Board of Commissioners as necessary.

2.6 ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

RTS currently employs full-time staff (the number of part-time support positions fluctuates) which consist of the following job categories:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Transit Director | • Transit Safety and Training Officer |
| • Operations Manager | • Dispatchers |
| • Accounting Specialist II | • Drivers |

An organizational chart showing the Title VI Coordinator's place within the organization is in **Appendix C**.

2.7 SUBRECIPIENTS

RTS does not have pass through funds to any other organizations and, therefore, does not have any subrecipients.

3.0 TITLE VI NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of RTS, as a federal-aid recipient, to ensure that no person shall, on the ground of **race, color, national origin, sex, creed (religion), age or disability**, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any of our programs and activities, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and all other related nondiscrimination laws and requirements.

Valerie Steele

Valerie Steele, Airport and Transit Director

Dec 8, 2023

Date

Title VI and Related Authorities

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d) provides that, “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” The 1987 Civil Rights Restoration Act (P.L. 100-259) clarified and restored the original intent of Title VI by expanding the definition of “programs and activities” to include all programs and activities of federal-aid recipients, subrecipients, and contractors, whether such programs and activities are federally assisted or not.

Related nondiscrimination authorities include, but are not limited to: U.S. DOT regulation, 49 CFR part 21, “Nondiscrimination in Federally-assisted Programs of the Department of Transportation–Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act”; 49 U.S.C. 5332, “Nondiscrimination (Public Transportation)”; FTA Circular 4702.1B - Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients; DOT Order 5610.2a, “Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations”; FTA C 4703.1 - Environmental Justice Policy Guidance For Federal Transit Administration Recipients; Policy Guidance Concerning (DOT) Recipient's Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons, 74 FR 74087; The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, P.L. 101-336; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 790; Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended 42 U.S.C. 6101; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681; Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, 42 U.S.C. 4601; Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794d

Implementation

- This statement will be signed by the Transit Director of RTS and re-signed whenever a new person assumes that position.
- The signed statement will be posted on office bulletin boards, in meeting rooms, inside vehicles, and disseminated within brochures and other written materials.
- The *core* of the statement (signature excluded) will circulate *internally* within annual acknowledgement forms.
- The statement will be posted or provided in languages other than English, when appropriate.

4.0 NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

- RTS operates its programs and services without regard to **race, color, national origin, sex, creed (religion), age, and disability** in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and related statutes. Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice may file a complaint.
- For more information on the RTS civil rights program, and the procedures to file a complaint, contact us by calling 704-216-7753, (TTY 800-877-8339); email the Rowan Transit Title IV Coordinator at valerie.steele@rowancountync.gov; or visit our administrative office at 2726 Old Concord Road, Salisbury, NC 28146. For more information, visit <https://www.rowancountync.gov>
- If information is needed in another language, contact 704-216-8899.
- A complainant may file a complaint directly with the North Carolina Department of Transportation by filing with the Office of Civil Rights, External Civil Rights Section, 1511 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1511, Attention: Title VI Nondiscrimination Program; phone: 919-508-1808 or 800-522-0453, or TDD/TTY: 800-735-2962.
- A complainant may file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration by filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5th Floor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20590.

Implementation

- The notice will be posted in its entirety on our website and in any documents and reports we distribute.
- The notice will be posted in our offices and on our vehicles.
- Ads in newspapers and other publications shall include the following: “RTS operates without regard to **race, color, national origin, sex, creed (religion), age or disability**. For more information on the RTS Title VI program or how to file a discrimination complaint, please contact 704-216-8899; valerie.steele@rowancountync.gov.”
- The statement will be posted or provided in languages other than English, when appropriate.

5.0 PROCEDURES TO ENSURE NONDISCRIMINATORY ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

We are committed to nondiscriminatory administration of our programs and services, organization wide. RTS will remind employees of Title VI nondiscrimination obligations through staff training and use of the **Annual Education and Acknowledgment Form** below. The Title VI Coordinator will periodically assess program operations to ensure this policy is being followed.

Annual Education and Acknowledgement Form

Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy

(Title VI and related nondiscrimination authorities)

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, creed, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of a Federal-aid recipient.

All employees and representatives of RTS are expected to consider, respect, and observe this policy in their daily work and duties. If any person approaches you with a civil rights-related question or complaint, please direct them to the Transit Director/ Title VI Coordinator.

In all dealings with the public, use courtesy titles (e.g., Mr., Mrs., Miss, Dr.) to address or refer to them without regard to their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Title VI Nondiscrimination Program

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the RTS Title VI Nondiscrimination Program and other nondiscrimination guidelines. I have read the Title VI Nondiscrimination Program and I am committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of RTS's programs, policies, services and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, creed (religion), or disability, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related nondiscrimination statutes.

Signature

Date

Implementation

- Periodically, but not more than once a year, employees and representatives will receive, review and certify commitment to the Title VI Nondiscrimination Program.
- New employees shall be informed of Title VI Nondiscrimination provisions and expectations to perform their duties, accordingly, asked to review the Program, and required to sign the acknowledgement form.
- Periodic review of operational practices and guidelines by the Title VI Coordinator to verify compliance with the Title VI Nondiscrimination Program. Maintain documents of each review on file.
- Signed acknowledgement forms and records of internal assessments will remain on file for at least three years.

6.0 CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

RTS ensures contractors fulfill their contracts in a nondiscriminatory manner. While contractors are not required to prepare a Title VI Program, they must comply with the nondiscrimination requirements of the organization to which they are contracted. RTS and its contractors will not discriminate in the selection and retention of contractors (at any level) or discriminate in employment practices in connection with any projects.

6.1 CONTRACT LANGUAGE

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

(1) Compliance with Regulations: The contractor (hereinafter includes consultants) will comply with the Acts and the Regulations relative to Nondiscrimination in Federally-assisted programs of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), as they may be amended from time to time, which are herein incorporated by reference and made a part of this contract.

(2) Nondiscrimination: The contractor, with regard to the work performed by it during the contract, will not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, creed (religion), low-income, limited English proficiency, or disability in the selection and retention of subcontractors, including procurements of materials and leases of equipment. The contractor will not participate directly or indirectly in the discrimination prohibited by the Acts and the Regulations, including employment practices when the contract covers any activity, project, or program set forth in Appendix B of 49 CFR Part 21.

(3) Solicitations for Subcontractors, Including Procurements of Materials and Equipment: In all solicitations, either by competitive bidding, or negotiation made by the contractor for work to be performed under a subcontract, including procurements of materials, or leases of equipment, each potential subcontractor or supplier will be notified by the contractor of the contractor's obligations under this contract and the Acts and the Regulations relative to Nondiscrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin.

(4) Information and Reports: The contractor will provide all information and reports required by the Acts, the Regulations, and directives issued pursuant thereto and will permit access to its books, records, accounts, other sources of information, and its facilities as may be determined by the Recipient or the FTA to be pertinent to ascertain compliance

with such Acts, Regulations, and instructions. Where any information required of a contractor is in the exclusive possession of another who fails or refuses to furnish the information, the contractor will so certify to the Recipient or the FTA, as appropriate, and will set forth what efforts it has made to obtain the information.

(5) Sanctions for Noncompliance: In the event of a contractor's noncompliance with the Nondiscrimination provisions of this contract, the Recipient will impose such contract sanctions as it or the FTA may determine to be appropriate, including, but not limited to:

- (a) withholding payments to the contractor under the contract until the contractor complies; and/or
- (b) cancelling, terminating, or suspending a contract, in whole or in part.

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

II. During the performance of this contract, the contractor, for itself, its assignees, and successors in interest (hereinafter referred to as the "contractor") agrees to comply with the

following nondiscrimination statutes and authorities; including but not limited to:

Pertinent Nondiscrimination Authorities

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

systems, places of public accommodation, and certain testing entities (42 U.S.C. §§ 12131-12189) as implemented by Department of Transportation regulations at 49 C.F.R. parts 37 and 38;

- The Federal Aviation Administration's Nondiscrimination statute (49 U.S.C. § 47123) (prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, and sex);
- Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, which ensures Nondiscrimination against minority populations by discouraging programs, policies, and activities with disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations;
- Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, and resulting agency guidance, national origin discrimination includes discrimination because of Limited English proficiency (LEP). To ensure compliance with Title VI, you must take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to your programs (70 Fed. Reg. at 74087 to 74100);
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits you from discriminating because of sex in education programs or activities (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq);
- Federal transit laws, specifically 49 U.S.C. § 5332 (prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including gender identity), disability, age, employment, or business opportunity).

*The Contractor has read and is familiar with the terms above:

Contractor's Initials

Date

Implementation

- The nondiscrimination language above (**with** initials line) will be appended to any *existing* contracts, purchase orders, and agreements that do not include it, and initialed by the responsible official of the other organization.
- The nondiscrimination language above (**without** initials line) will be incorporated as standard language before the signature page of our standard contracts, purchase orders, and agreements.
- The Title VI Coordinator will review *existing* contracts to ensure the language has been added.

6.2 NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE TO PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS

RTS, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related nondiscrimination authorities, and Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 21 and 26, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any contact entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority and women business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, creed, limited English proficiency, low-income, or disability in consideration for an award.

Implementation

- The nondiscrimination language above will be included in all solicitations for bids for work or material and proposals for negotiated agreements to assure interested firms that we provide equal opportunity and do not discriminate.
- Outreach efforts will be made to minority and women-owned firms that work in requested fields and documented.
- Unless specifically required under Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) or Affirmative Action programs, all contractors will be selected without regard to their race, color, national origin, or sex.

7.0 EXTERNAL DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

These discrimination complaint procedures outline the process used by RTS to process complaints of alleged discrimination filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related nondiscrimination laws that are applicable to RTS programs, services, and activities. Complaints will be investigated by the appropriate authority. Upon completion of an investigation, the complainant will be informed of all avenues of appeal. Every effort will be made to obtain early resolution of complaints at the lowest level possible by informal means.

FILING OF COMPLAINTS

1. **Applicability** – These procedures apply to the beneficiaries of our programs, activities, and services, such as the members of the public and any consultants/contractors we hire.
2. **Eligibility** – Any person or class of persons who believes that he/she has been subjected to discrimination or retaliation prohibited by any of the Civil Rights authorities based upon race, color, sex, age, national origin, creed (religion) or disability, may file a written complaint. The law prohibits intimidation or retaliation of any sort. The complaint may be filed by the affected individual or a representative and must be in writing.
3. **Time Limits and Filing Options** – A complaint must be filed no later than 180 calendar days after the following:
 - The date of the alleged act of discrimination; or
 - The date when the person(s) became aware of the alleged discrimination; or
 - Where there has been a continuing course of conduct, the date on which that conduct was discontinued or the latest instance of the conduct.

Complaints may be submitted to the following entities:

- **Rowan Transit System**, Administrative Office, 2726 Old Concord Road, Salisbury, NC 28146
 - **North Carolina Department of Transportation**, Office of Civil Rights, External Civil Rights Section, 1511 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1511; 919-508-1830 or toll free 800-522-0453
 - **US Department of Transportation**, Departmental Office of Civil Rights, External Civil Rights Programs Division, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590; 202-366-4070
 - **Federal Transit Administration**, Office of Civil Rights, ATTN: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Bldg. 5th Floor – TCR, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590
 - **US Department of Justice**, Special Litigation Section, Civil Rights Division, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20530, 202-514-6255 or toll free 877-218-5228
4. **Format for Complaints** – Complaints shall be in **writing** and **signed** by the complainant(s) or a representative and include the complainant's name, address, and telephone number. Complaints received by fax or e-mail will be acknowledged and processed. Allegations received by telephone or in person will be reduced to writing, may be recorded and will be provided to the complainant for confirmation or revision before processing. Complaints will be accepted in other languages, including Braille.
 5. **Discrimination Complaint Form** – The Discrimination Complaint Form is consistent with the FTA Certifications & Assurances, "Nondiscrimination Assurance."
 6. **Complaint Basis** – Allegations must be based on issues involving race, color, national origin, sex, age, creed (religion) or disability. The term "basis" refers to the complainant's membership in a protected group category.

Protected Categories	Definition	Examples	Applicable Statutes and Regulations
			FTA
Race	An individual belonging to one of the accepted racial groups; or the perception, based usually on physical characteristics that a person is a member of a racial group	Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, White	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR Part 21; 49 U.S.C. 5332(b); FTA Circular 4702.1B
Color	Color of skin, including shade of skin within a racial group	Black, White, brown, yellow, etc.	
National Origin	Place of birth. Citizenship is not a factor. Discrimination based on language or a person's accent is also covered.	Mexican, Cuban, Japanese, Vietnamese, Chinese	
Sex	Gender	Women and Men	49 U.S.C. 5332(b); Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
Age	Persons of any age	21-year-old person	Age Discrimination Act of 1975
Disability	Physical or mental impairment, permanent or temporary, or perceived	Blind, alcoholic, para-amputee, epileptic, diabetic, arthritic	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
Creed	Religion	Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Atheist	49 U.S.C. 5332(b)

Complaint Processing

1. When a complaint is received, an Acknowledgment Letter and a Complainant Consent/Release Form will be mailed to the complainant within ten (10) business days by registered mail.
2. We will consult with the NCDOT Title VI Program to determine the acceptability and jurisdiction of all complaints received. (Note: If NCDOT will investigate, the Title VI Program will be responsible for the remainder of this process. We will record the transfer of responsibility in our complaints log).
3. Additional information will be requested if the complaint is incomplete. The complainant will be provided 15 business days to submit any requested information and the signed Consent Release form. Failure to do so may be considered good cause for a determination of no investigative merit.
4. Upon receipt of the requested information and determination of jurisdiction, we will notify the complainant and respondent of whether the complaint has enough merit to warrant investigation.
5. If the complaint is investigated, the notification shall state the grounds of our jurisdiction, while informing the parties that their full cooperation will be required in gathering additional information and assisting the investigator.
6. If the complaint does not warrant investigation, the notification to the complainant shall specifically state the reason for the decision.

Complaint Log

1. When a complaint is received, the complaint will be entered into the Discrimination Complaints Log with other pertinent information and assigned a **Case Number**. (Note: All complaints must be logged).
2. The complaints log will be submitted to the NCDOT's Civil Rights office during Title VI compliance reviews. (Note: NCDOT may also be request the complaints log during pre-grant approval processes).
3. The **Log Year(s)** since the last submittal will be entered (e.g., 2015-2018, 2017-2018, FFY 2018, or 2018) and the complaints log will be signed before submitting the log to NCDOT.
4. When reporting **no complaints**, check the **No Complaints or Lawsuits** box and sign the log.

ROWAN TRANIST SYSTEM
DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT FORM

Any person who believes that he/she has been subjected to discrimination based upon race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, or disability may file a written complaint with RTS, within 180 days after the discrimination occurred.				
Last Name:		First Name:		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Mailing Address:		City	State	ZIP
Home Telephone:	Work Telephone:	E-mail Address		
Identify the Category of Discrimination: <input type="checkbox"/> RACE <input type="checkbox"/> COLOR <input type="checkbox"/> NATIONAL ORIGIN <input type="checkbox"/> SEX <input type="checkbox"/> CREED (RELIGION) <input type="checkbox"/> DISABILITY <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY <input type="checkbox"/> AGE <i>*NOTE: Title VI bases are race, color, national origin. All other bases are found in the "Nondiscrimination Assurance" of the FTA Certifications & Assurances.</i>				
Identify the Race of the Complainant <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian American <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____				
Date and place of alleged discriminatory action(s). Please include earliest date of discrimination and most recent date of discrimination.				
Names of individuals responsible for the discriminatory action(s):				
How were you discriminated against? Describe the nature of the action, decision, or conditions of the alleged discrimination. Explain as clearly as possible what happened and why you believe your protected status (basis) was a factor in the discrimination. Include how other persons were treated differently from you. (Attach additional page(s), if necessary).				
The law prohibits intimidation or retaliation against anyone because he/she has either taken action, or participated in action, to secure rights protected by these laws. If you feel that you have been retaliated against, separate from the discrimination alleged above, please explain the circumstances below. Explain what action you took which you believe was the cause for the alleged retaliation.				

Names of persons (witnesses, fellow employees, supervisors, or others) whom we may contact for additional information to support or clarify your complaint: (Attached additional page(s), if necessary).

Name

Address

Telephone

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Have you filed, or intend to file, a complaint regarding the matter raised with any of the following? If yes, please provide the filing dates. Check all that apply.

☐ NC Department of Transportation _____

☐ Federal Transit Administration _____

☐ US Department of Transportation _____

☐ US Department of Justice _____

☐ Federal or State Court _____

☐ Other _____

Have you discussed the complaint with any RTS representative? If yes, provide the name, position, and date of discussion.

Please provide any additional information that you believe would assist with an investigation.

Briefly explain what remedy, or action, are you seeking for the alleged discrimination.

****WE CANNOT ACCEPT AN UNSIGNED COMPLAINT. PLEASE SIGN AND DATE THE COMPLAINT FORM BELOW.**

COMPLAINANT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

MAIL COMPLAINT FORM TO:

Rowan Transit System
2726 Old Concord Road, Salisbury, NC 28146
704-216-8889
valerie.steele@rowancountync.gov

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Complaint Received: _____

Processed by: _____

Case #: _____

Referred to: ☐ NCDOT ☐ FTA Date Referred: _____

DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS LOG

Log Year(s):

CAS E NO.	COMPLAI NANT NAME	RAC E/ GEN DER	RESPON DENT NAME	BASIS	DATE FILED	DATE RECEI VED	ACTION TAKEN	DATE INVESTI G. COMPL ETED	DISPOSITION

No Complaints or Lawsuits ☐

I certify that to the best of my knowledge, the above described complaints or lawsuits alleging discrimination, or **no complaints or lawsuits** alleging discrimination, have been filed with or against the **Rowant Transit System** since the previous Title VI Nondiscrimination Program submission to NCDOT.

Signature of Title VI Coordinator or Other Authorized Official

Date

Print Name and Title of Authorized Official

INVESTIGATIVE GUIDANCE

- A. Scope of Investigation** – An investigation should be confined to the issues and facts relevant to the allegations in the complaint, unless evidence shows the need to extend the issues.
- B. Developing an Investigative Plan** – It is recommended that the investigator prepares an Investigative Plan (IP) to define the issues and lay out the blueprint to complete the investigation. The IP should follow the outline below:
1. Complainant(s) Name and Address (Attorney name and address if applicable)
 2. Respondent(s) Name and Address (Attorney for the Respondent(s) name and address)
 3. Applicable Law(s)
 4. Basis/(es)
 5. Allegation(s)/Issue(s)
 6. Background
 7. Name of Persons to be interviewed
 - a. Questions for the complainant(s)
 - b. Questions for the respondent(s)
 - c. Questions for witness(es)
 8. Evidence to be obtained during the investigation
 - a. Issue – e.g., Complainant alleges his predominantly African American community was excluded from a meeting concerning a future project which could affect the community.
 - i. Documents needed: e.g., mailing list which shows all physical addresses, P.O. Box numbers, property owner names, and dates when the meeting notification was mailed; other methods used by the RPO to advertise the meeting.
- C. Request for Information** – The investigator should gather data and information pertinent to the issues raised in the complaint.
- D. Interviews** – Interviews should be conducted with the complainant, respondent, and appropriate witnesses during the investigative process. Interviews are conducted to gain a better understanding of the situation outlined in the complaint of discrimination. The main objective during the interview is to obtain information that will either support or refute the allegations.
- E. Developing an Investigative Report** – The investigator should prepare an investigative report setting forth all relevant facts obtained during the investigation. The report should include a finding for each issue. A sample investigative report is provided below.
- F. Communication of Findings and Complaint Resolution** - Suggestions or modifications for a resolution will be communicated to the complainant in writing (in the language the complaint was received), including any specific action steps taken to resolve the matter. All efforts shall be made to complete the informal resolution process withing 30 business days.
- G. Appeals** - There is no right to appeal the resolution of an informal complaint. However, the party has the right to file a formal complaint within 180 calendar days of the event or last occurrence of the event.

Sample Investigative Report

- I. COMPLAINANT(S) NAME** (or attorney for the complainant(s) – name and address if applicable
Name, Address, Phone: ###-###-####)
- II. RESPONDENT(S)** (or attorney for the respondent(s) – name and address if applicable
Name, Address, Phone: ###-###-####)
- III. APPLICABLE LAW/REGULATION**
- IV. COMPLAINT BASIS(ES)**
- V. ALLEGATIONS**
- VI. BACKGROUND**
- VII. INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURE**
- VIII. ISSUES / FINDINGS OF FACT**
- IX. CONCLUSION**
- X. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

APPENDIX

8.0 SERVICE AREA POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

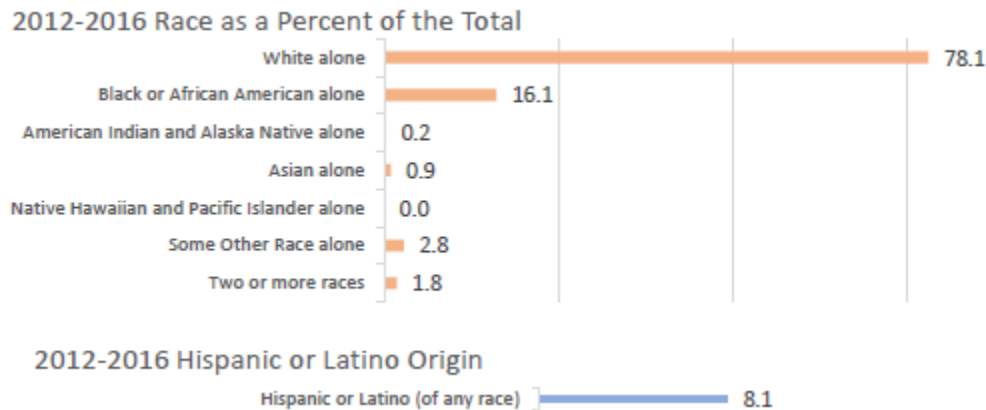
To ensure that Title VI reporting requirements are met, we will collect and maintain population data on potential and actual beneficiaries of our programs and services. This section contains relevant population data for our overall service area. This data provides context for the Title VI Nondiscrimination Program and will be used to ensure nondiscrimination in public outreach and delivery of our programs and services.

8.1 Race and Ethnicity Age and Sex:

The following table was completed using data from US Census 2020 Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin BO2001/BO3003

Race and Ethnicity Age and Sex	Number	Percent
Total Population	140,978	100
White	107,430	76.20
Black or African American	22,737	16.12
American Indian or Alaska Native	802	0.57
Asian	1,431	1.0
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	16	0.011
Some other Race	4,079	2.89
Two or More Races	4,483	3.18
HISPANIC OR LATINO (of any race)	12,736	9.03

Graph from census.nc.gov



8.2 Age and Sex:

The following table was completed using data from US Census 2020 ACS Demographic and Housing estimates DP05

Label	Estimate	Margin of Error	Percent	Percent Margin of Error
SEX AND AGE				
Total population	140,978	*****	140,978	(X)
Male	69,673	±139	49.4%	±0.1
Female	71,305	±139	50.6%	±0.1
Sex ratio (males per 100 females)	97.7	±0.4	(X)	(X)
Under 5 years	8,016	±67	5.7%	±0.1
5 to 9 years	8,933	±634	6.3%	±0.4
10 to 14 years	8,775	±628	6.2%	±0.4
15 to 19 years	9,379	±206	6.7%	±0.1
20 to 24 years	8,447	±219	6.0%	±0.2
25 to 34 years	17,565	±133	12.5%	±0.1
35 to 44 years	16,361	±79	11.6%	±0.1
45 to 54 years	19,231	±156	13.6%	±0.1
55 to 59 years	10,335	±567	7.3%	±0.4
60 to 64 years	9,283	±549	6.6%	±0.4
65 to 74 years	14,547	±141	10.3%	±0.1
75 to 84 years	7,310	±416	5.2%	±0.3
85 years and over	2,796	±402	2.0%	±0.3
Median age	40.3	±0.4	(X)	(X)
Under 18 years	31,420	*****	22.3%	*****
16 years and over	113,431	±305	80.5%	±0.2
18 years and over	109,558	*****	77.7%	*****
21 years and over	104,077	±321	73.8%	±0.2
62 years and over	30,053	±607	21.3%	±0.4
65 years and over	24,653	±181	17.5%	±0.1
18 years and over	109,558	*****	109,558	(X)
Male	53,496	±114	48.8%	±0.1
Female	56,062	±114	51.2%	±0.1
Sex ratio (males per 100 females)	95.4	±0.4	(X)	(X)
65 years and over	24,653	±181	24,653	(X)
Male	11,135	±173	45.2%	±0.4
Female	13,518	±49	54.8%	±0.4
Sex ratio (males per 100 females)	82.4	±1.3	(X)	(X)

8.3 Disability Characteristics:

The following table was completed using data from US Census 2020 Disability Characteristics S1810

The disabled Population in Rowan County is 16.2%

Subject	Total		With a Disability		Percent with a Disability	
	Estimate	Margin of Error +/-	Estimate	Margin of Error +/-	Estimate	Margin of Error +/-
Total civilian noninstitutionalized population	138,750	±255	22,426	±1,127	16.2%	±0.8
Population under 5 years	8,015	±67	0	±31	0.0%	±0.5
Population 5 to 17 years	23,310	±73	1,560	±286	6.7%	±1.2
Population 18 to 64 years	29,390	±177	3,051	±563	10.4%	±1.9
Population 65 years and over	54,359	±268	8,749	±785	16.1%	±1.4
SEX						
Male	67,962	±309	10,731	±786	15.8%	±1.2
Female	70,788	±184	11,695	±797	16.5%	±1.1
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN						
White	106,127	±978	17,794	±1,062	16.8%	±1.0
Black or African American	22,159	±533	3,384	±377	15.3%	±1.7
American Indian and Alaska Native	771	±314	106	±54	13.7%	±6.8
Asian	1,414	±196	54	±50	3.8%	±3.6
Native American and Other Pacific Islander	5	±10	5	±10	100.0%	±100.0
Some other Race	4,009	±821	283	±157	7.1%	±3.9
Two or more races	4,265	±803	800	±276	18.8%	±6.7
Hispanic or Latino	99,842	±205	17,449	±1,038	17.5%	±1.0

8.4 Poverty:

The following table was completed using data from US Census 2020 Disability Characteristics S1810

Poverty, for all People in Rowan County is 16.2%

Subject	Total		Below poverty level		Percent below poverty level	
	Estimate	Margin of Error +/-	Estimate	Margin of Error +/-	Estimate	Margin of Error +/-
Population for whom poverty status is determined	136,894	±466	22,210	±2,390	16.2%	±1.7
AGE						
Under 18	31,038	±170	7,828	±1,091	25.2%	±3.5
18 to 64	82,180	±383	12,350	±1,407	15.0%	±1.7
65 years and over	23,676	±255	2,032	±363	8.6%	±1.5
SEX						
Male	66,921	±423	10,279	±1,135	15.4%	±1.7
Female	69,973	±252	11,931	±1,590	17.1%	±2.3
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN						
White	105,571	±981	14,345	±1,792	13.6%	±1.7
Black or African American	21,062	±549	5,282	±1,105	25.1%	±5.3
American Indian and Alaska Native	771	±314	155	±117	20.1%	±14.6
Asian	1,402	±198	97	±114	6.9%	±8.5
Native American and Other Pacific Islander	5	±10	0	±31	0.0%	±100.0
Some other Race	3,990	±824	1,263	±479	31.7%	±9.9
Two or more races	4,093	±811	1,068	±524	26.1%	±14.0
Hispanic or Latino	12,588	±59	4,536	±852	36.0%	±6.8
All individuals below:						
50 percent of poverty level	8,383	±1,318	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
125 percent of poverty level	29,191	±2,438	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
150 percent of poverty level	36,213	±2,623	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
185 percent of poverty level	46,931	±2,744	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
200 percent of poverty level	51,992	±2,787	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)

8.5 Household Income:

The following table was completed using data from US Census 2020 Income in the Past 12 Months S1901

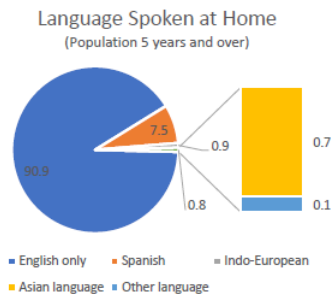
Subject	Households	
	Estimate	Margin of Error +/-
Total	54,137	±744
Less than \$10,000	6.3%	±0.9
\$10,000 to \$14,999	5.7%	±1.1
\$15,000 to \$24,999	11.7%	±1.2
\$25,000 to \$34,999	10.6%	±1.1
\$35,000 to \$49,999	14.4%	±1.1
\$50,000 to \$74,999	19.5%	±1.4
\$75,000 to \$99,999	12.9%	±1.2
\$100,000 to \$149,999	11.2%	±1.0
\$150,000 to \$199,999	4.3%	±0.8
\$200,000 or more	3.5%	±0.7
Median income (dollars)	51,054	±1,487
Mean income (dollars)	67,690	±2,645

8.6 Limited English Proficiency Population:

The following table was completed using data from US Census Language Spoken at Home By Ability to Speake English for the Population 5 Years and Over B16004

Speak English Less Than "Very Well"	Estimate	Margin of Error	Percentage of Population
TOTAL POPULATION	9,897	±832	9,897
Speak only English	9,672		
Speak Spanish	183		
Speak Asian and Pacific Island Languages	15		
Speak other Indo-European Languages	27		
SPANISH			
Age 5 to 17 years			
Speak English "well"	6	±9	
Speak English "not well"	8	±15	
Age 18 to 64 years			
Speak English "well"	34	±42	
Speak English "not well"	0	±28	
65 years and over			

Graph from census.nc.gov



8.7 POPULATION LOCATIONS

Federal-aid recipients are required to identify the characteristics and locations of populations they serve, particularly by race/ethnicity, poverty, and limited English proficiency. We will document this narratively or through maps that overlay boundaries and demographic features on specific communities, and provide this information to NCDOT, upon request.

9.0 TITLE VI EQUITY ANALYSES (AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ASSESSMENTS)

Title VI Equity Analyses. In accordance with FTA Circular 4702.1B, a Title VI equity analysis will be conducted whenever we construct a facility, such as a vehicle storage facility, maintenance facility, or operation center. The equity analysis will be conducted during the planning stage, with regard to the location of the facility, to determine if the project could result in a disparate impact to minority communities based on race, color or national origin. Accordingly, we will look at various alternatives before selecting a site for the facility. Project-specific demographic data on potentially affected communities and their involvement in decision-making activities will be documented. Title VI Equity Analyses will remain on file indefinitely, and copies will be provided to NCDOT, upon request, during compliance reviews or complaint investigations.

Environmental Justice Analyses. As required by FTA C 4703.1, environmental justice (EJ) analyses will be conducted to determine if our programs, policies, or activities will result in disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects on minority populations and low-income populations. EJ applies to our projects, such as when we construct or modify a facility, and our policies, such as when there will be a change in service, amenities or fares. Thus, we will look at various alternatives and seek input from potentially affected communities before making a final decision. Demographic data will be collected to document their involvement in the decision-making process. EJ analyses will remain on file indefinitely, and copies will be provided to NCDOT, upon request, during compliance reviews or complaint investigations.

10.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Effective public involvement is a key element in addressing Title VI in decision-making. This **Public Participation Plan** describes how RTS will disseminate vital agency information and engage the public. We will seek out and consider the input and needs of interested parties and groups traditionally underserved by transportation systems who may face challenges accessing our services, such as minority and limited English proficient (LEP) persons. Underlying these efforts is our commitment to determining the most effective outreach methods for a given project or population.

General public involvement practices will include:

- Expanding traditional outreach methods. Think outside the box: Go to hair salons, barbershops, street fairs, etc.
- Providing for early, frequent, and continuous engagement by the public.
- Use of social media and other resources to gain public involvement.
- Coordinating with community- and faith-based organizations such as the Hispanic Liaison, educational institutions, and other entities to implement public engagement strategies that reach out specifically to members of affected minority and/or LEP communities.
- Providing opportunities for public participation through means other than written communication, such as personal interviews or use of audio or video recording devices to capture oral comments.
- Considering radio, television, or newspaper ads on stations and in publications that serve LEP populations. Outreach to LEP persons could also include audio programming available on podcasts.

10.2 PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Passengers and other interested persons will be informed of their rights under Title VI and related authorities regarding our program. The primary means of achieving this will be posting and disseminating the policy statement and notice as stipulated in Sections 3.0 and 4.0, respectively. Additional measures may include verbally announcing our obligations and the public's rights at meetings, placing flyers at places frequented by targeted populations, and an equal opportunity tag-on at the end of radio announcements. The method of notification will be determined through an initial screening of the area.

10.3 DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

Information on Title VI Nondiscrimination and other programs will be crafted and disseminated to employees, contractors and subrecipients, stakeholders, and the general public. Public dissemination efforts may vary depending on factors present, but will generally include: posting public statements setting forth our nondiscrimination policy in eye-catching designs and locations; placing brochures in public places, such as government offices, transit facilities, and libraries; having nondiscrimination language within contracts; including nondiscrimination notices in meeting announcements and handouts; and displaying our Notice of Nondiscrimination at all our public meetings.

At a minimum, nondiscrimination information will be disseminated on our website and on posters in conspicuous areas at our office(s). Project-related information and our most current Title VI-related information will be maintained online.

10.4 MEETINGS AND OUTREACH

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to public involvement. A variety of comprehensive and targeted public participation methods will be used to facilitate meaningful public involvement. Methods for engaging stakeholders and target audiences, including traditionally underserved and excluded populations (i.e., minorities, youth, low-income, the disabled, etc.) will include the following:

Identification of Stakeholders

A stakeholder is any person or group that is impacted by an RTS transportation plan, program, or project, including county residents who are not aware they are affected. Stakeholders include our general public; public and civic organizations; and underserved communities such as people with disabilities, low-income, and racial and ethnic minorities. Networking with local jurisdiction professionals and media will help ensure that all stakeholders are identified.

Public Relations and Outreach

Public relations and outreach (PRO) strategies aim to conduct well-planned, inclusive, and meaningful public participation events that foster good relations and mutual trust through shared decision-making with the communities we serve.

- We will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.
- Public events will aim to be collaborative, fun, and educational for all, rather than confrontational and prescriptive.
- Media plans will typically involve multiple channels of communication like mailings, radio, TV, and newspaper ads.
- Abstract objectives will be avoided in meeting announcements. Specific “attention-grabbing” reasons to attend will be used, such as “Help us figure out how to relieve congestion on [corridor name]” or “How much should it cost to ride the bus? Let us know on [date].”
- Efforts will be made to show how the input of participants can, or did, influence final decisions.
- We will do our best to form decision-making committees that look like and relate to the populations we serve.
- We will seek out and identify community contacts and partner with local community- and faith-based organizations that can represent, and help us disseminate information to, target constituencies.
- Demographic data will be requested during public meetings, surveys, and from community contacts and committee members.

Public Meetings

“Public meeting” refers to any meeting open to the public, such as hearings, charrettes, open house and board meetings.

- Public meetings will be conducted at times, locations, and facilities that are convenient and accessible.
- Meeting materials will be available in a variety of predetermined formats to serve diverse audiences.
- An assortment of advertising means may be employed to inform the community of public meetings.
- Assistance to persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency will be provided, as required.

Small Group Meetings

A small group meeting is a targeted measure where a meeting is held with a specific group, usually at their request or consent. These are often closed meetings, as they will typically occur on private property at the owner’s request.

- If it is determined that a targeted group has not been afforded adequate opportunities to participate, the group will be contacted to inquire about possible participation methods, including a group meeting with them individually.
- Unless unusual circumstances or safety concerns exist, hold the meeting at a location of the target group's choosing.
- Share facilitation duties or relinquish them to members of the target group.
- Small group discussion formats may be integrated into larger group public meetings and workshops. When this occurs, the smaller groups will be as diverse as the participants in the room.

Community Surveying

- Opinion surveys will occasionally be used to obtain input from targeted groups or the general public on their transportation needs, the quality or costs of our services, and feedback on our public outreach efforts.
- Surveys may be conducted via telephone, door-to-door canvassing, at community fairs, by placing drop boxes in ideal locations, or with assistance from other local agencies like social services.
- Surveys will be translated into languages other than English, when appropriate.

Goals

The goal of public engagement is to acquire feedback from all sectors of our community to identify the transportation needs and priorities that ensure plans and programs are fair across all levels of society. Information received aids RTS decision-makers with pertinent, relevant information, and provides the public opportunities to raise concerns. Engagement also allows RTS to identify gaps in current transportation offered and so that effort can be made towards development of effective solutions. that are inclusive, practical, and effective. CAMPO seeks to provide opportunities in the transportation planning process to interested parties as well as engage members of the community who have not been traditionally involved. Transportation decisions are ultimately more responsive to the region's needs because of the public engagement process.

RTS has the following goals:

- Ensure a broad cross-section of the Rowan County public has an opportunity to be involved in the transportation planning decision-making process.
- Make specific efforts to increase the opportunities for involvement by groups of citizens who do not generally participate in community affairs, particularly low-income and minority populations.
- Ensure information on county government activities is widely available to the public.
- Maximize use of all communication tools to assist in the exchange of information including website and other electronically accessible formats.
- Work with Information Services to ensure any technical information is available in an understandable form and that all segments of county residents are afforded access to this information.

10.5 LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons are individuals for whom English is not their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. These individuals reported to the U.S. Census Bureau that they speak English less than very well.

To comply with USDOT's LEP Policy Guidance and Executive Order 13166, this section of our Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan outlines the steps we will take to ensure meaningful access by LEP persons to all benefits, services and information provided under our programs and activities. A four-factor analysis was conducted to determine the LEP language groups present in our planning area and the specific language services that are needed.

Four Factor Analysis

This Four Factor Analysis is an individualized assessment that balances the following four factors:

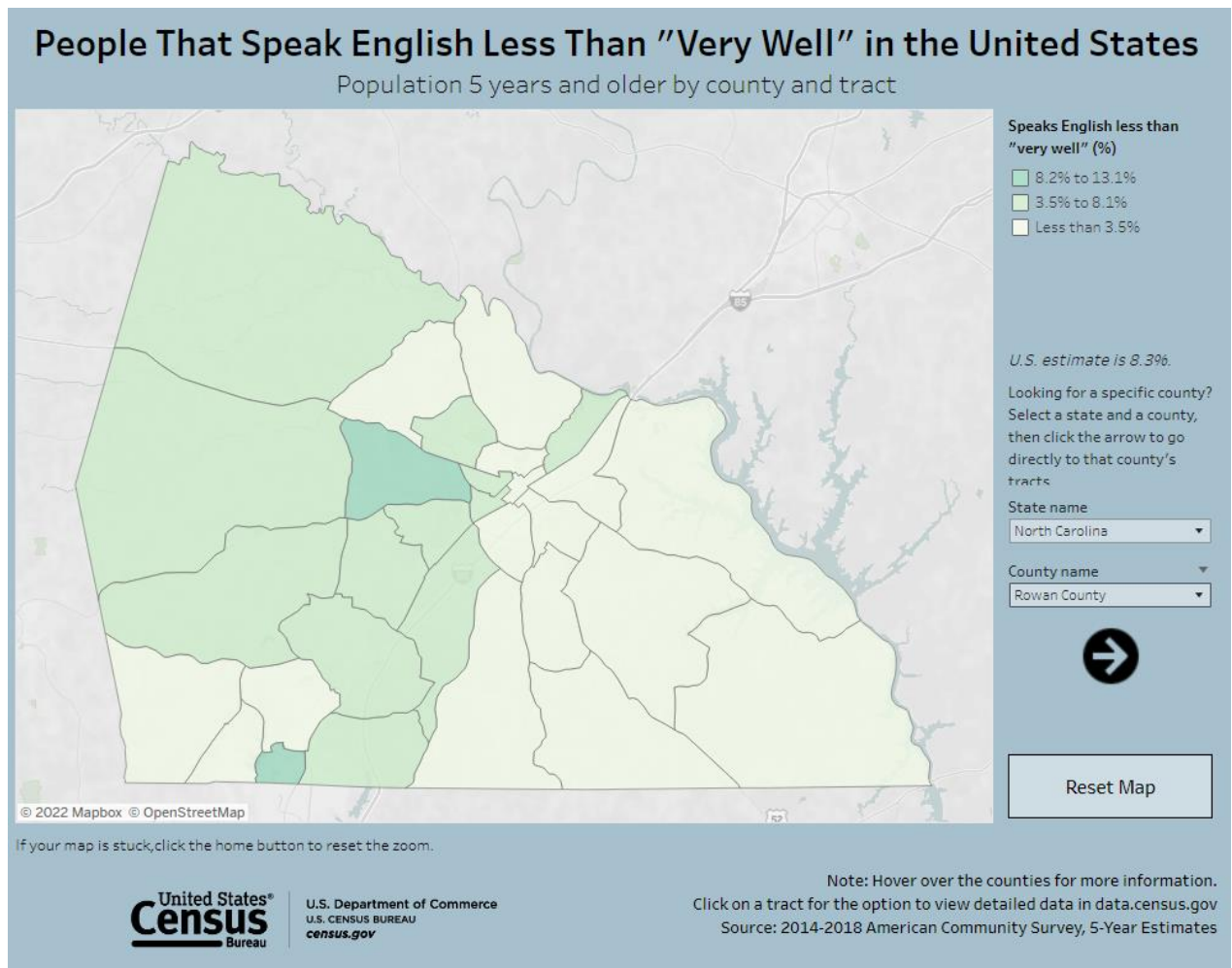
- (1) The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by a program, activity, or service of the recipient or grantee;
- (2) The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program;
- (3) The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the recipient to people's lives; and
- (4) The resources available to the recipient and costs.

Factor #1: *The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program, activity, or service of the recipient.*

The US Census Bureau – 2020 reports there are numerous languages spoken in Rowan County (Spanish, Asian and Pacific Island Languages, other Indo-European Languages). After English, the second largest language group is Spanish.

The Safe Harbor Threshold is calculated by dividing the population estimate for a language group that “speaks English less than very well” by the total population of the county. The LEP Safe Harbor Threshold provision stipulates that for each LEP group that meets the LEP language threshold (5% or 1,000 individuals, whichever is less), the Transit System must provide translation of vital documents in written format for non-English speaking persons.

In Rowan County, with a total population estimate of 146,875, 3.31% of the population five (5) years and over across the County identified themselves as Spanish speaking and “speaks English less than well”. This language group is below the 5% threshold, but greater than the 1,000 person threshold. This means RTS is required to provide written translation of vital documents. All other language groups included are below the safe harbor threshold.



<https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/people-that-speak-english-less-than-very-well.html>

RTS currently provides written translation of vital documents and publishes an informational brochure including and route map in Spanish on its website. In the future, if RTS meets the Safe Harbor Threshold for any other language group, it will provide written translation of vital documents in such languages and consider measures needed for oral interpretation.

Factor #2: *The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program.*

RTS staff are trained on what to do when assisting a person that speaks English less than well. RTS will track the number of encounters and consider adjustments as needed to its outreach efforts to ensure meaningful access to all persons and specifically to LEP and minority populations of RTS programs and services. RTS provides over 31,500 rides per year and has encountered (0) zero LEP persons using the service within the last six months. RTS will provide rides to any qualifying resident who requests transportation. If an individual has speech limitations, the dispatcher or driver will work with the Transit Operations Manager, to ensure the individual receives access to our service.

Factor #3: *The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the recipient to people's lives.*

RTS understands an LEP person with language barrier challenges may also face difficulties obtaining health care, education or access to employment. A transportation system is a key link to connecting LEP persons to these essential services. RTS has identified activities and services which would have serious consequences to individuals if language barriers prevented access to information or the benefits of those programs. The activities and services include providing emergency evacuation instructions in our facilities, stations and vehicles and providing information to the public on security awareness or emergency preparedness. RTS's assessment of what programs, activities and services that are most critical included contact with community organization(s) that serve LEP persons, as well as contact with LEP persons themselves to obtain information on the importance of the modes or the types of services that are provided to the LEP populations.

<p>Factor #4: <i>The resources available to the recipient and costs.</i></p>

RTS has worked to implement low-cost methods of reaching LEP persons. RTS brochures are printed in English and Spanish and are placed across the county in locations such as the Senior Center (hosts a Latino Lunch Club), dialysis locations, libraries and other county departments. Additionally, presentations of the services available are made at various public events held by the Economic Development Council, Chamber of Commerce, local organizations, and clubs.

Rowan County uses Language Line services on an as needed, pay as you go basis. There has been no use of this service over the past year. RTS has a Spanish speaking person on staff that assists in the translation of documents. This has ensured RTS can aid LEP Spanish-speaking persons, when needed.

LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN

Rowan County has a Language Access Plan included in **Appendix D**.

Language Assistance Measures

The following general language assistance measures are reasonable and achievable for our organization at this time:

- Translating public notices posted in the local paper and at stations, stops, and in vehicles into **any languages that meet the safe harbor threshold in Factor 1**.
- Vital documents—such as brochures with service times and routes—are translated into Spanish across the entire service area, and available in our facilities, doctor's offices, and shopping centers.
- Making a concerted effort to inform LEP persons of available language assistance via staff, broadcast media, relationship-building with organizations, and our website.
- Posting vital bulletin board information and disseminating community surveys in various languages.
- Providing translation and interpretive services when appropriate (upon request or predetermined) at meetings.
- Determining how best to take public involvement to LEP groups directly, including through small group meetings.
- Language line translation services.
- Where possible, utilizing or hiring staff who speak a language other than English and can provide competent language assistance.
 - Note: We will not ask community-based organizations (CBO) to provide, or serve as, interpreters at our meetings. Relying upon CBOs in that capacity could raise ethical concerns. If a CBO decides (on its own) to translate any materials for its constituents, or bring interpreters it trusts to our meetings, we will not object. That is their right.
- Establishing a process to obtain feedback on our language assistance measures.

Written Translation and Oral Interpretation

Vital documents will be translated for each eligible LEP language group in our service area that constitutes 5% or 1,000, whichever is less, of the population of persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered. Translated materials will be placed online and in appropriate public (or private) places accessible to LEP persons. The safe harbor provisions apply to the translation of written documents only, and do not affect the requirement to provide meaningful access to LEP individuals through competent oral interpreters where oral language services are needed and are reasonable. When appropriate, translation of any document will be communicated orally in the appropriate language.

In the event that the 5% trigger is reached for a LEP language group that is fewer than 50 persons, written notice will be provided in the primary language of that group of the right to receive competent oral interpretation of vital written materials, free of cost. The most effective method of notice, which could be an ad in the local newspaper or other publication, a radio commercial, or door hangers, will be determined in consideration of the circumstances on the ground and in coordination with LEP community contacts.

Staff Support for Language Assistance

RTS employees are oriented on the principles of The Title VI Nondiscrimination Program and the RTS Language Assistance Plan. New employees will be provided guidance on the needs of clients served and how best to meet their needs. RTS will ensure its contractor/transit provider also educates its staff on The Title VI Nondiscrimination Program requirements, and specifically LEP provisions.

An important discussion point is that of language assistance. If a driver, dispatcher, or employee needs further assistance related to LEP program participants, her/she will work with the Operations Manager and/or Title VI Coordinator to identify strategies to meet the language needs of the participants of the program or service.

Project-Specific LEP Outreach

A project-specific four factor analysis will be conducted for any project or outreach event limited to a specific geographical area (i.e., the project study area or outreach area, respectively). Language assistance will be provided in accordance with the measures already outlined, including translating written materials for each LEP language group that is 5% or 1,000, whichever is less, of the project or outreach area population.

Monitoring and Updating the LAP

Monitoring of daily interactions with LEP persons will be continuous, thus language assistance techniques may be refined at any time. This county's LAP will be reviewed annually, and/or after any identified concern, by RTS administrative staff to evaluate if measures and staff training are effective. Resource availability and feedback from the general public will be factors in the evaluation and any proposed updates. To the best of our ability, RTS will attempt to never eliminate a successful existing LEP service. Suggestions for revisions and/or updates are submitted to the Assistant to the County Manager/ Management Analyst for review and implementation. Any significant LEP program revisions must be approved and adopted by the Rowan County Board of Commissioners and dated accordingly. The Rowan County Language Access plan is included in **Appendix D.**

10.6 DEMOGRAPHIC REQUEST

The following form was used to collect required data on Key Community Contacts and nonelected committee members.

RTS is required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related authorities to record demographic information on members of its boards and committees. Please provide the following information:

Race/Ethnicity: <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____	National Origin: (if born outside the U.S.) <input type="checkbox"/> Mexican <input type="checkbox"/> Central American: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> South American: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Puerto Rican <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese <input type="checkbox"/> Korean <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Age: <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 45-64 <input type="checkbox"/> 18-29 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 and older <input type="checkbox"/> 30-44
Disability: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
I choose not to provide any of the information requested above: <input type="checkbox"/>	

Completed forms will remain on file as part of the public record. For more information regarding Title VI or this request, please contact RTS at 704-216-8889 or by email at valerie.steele@rowancountync.gov

Please sign below acknowledging that you have completed this form.

Thank you for your participation!

Name (print): _____

Signature: _____

Implementation

- Forms will be completed prior to NCDOT Title VI reviews and remain on file for three years.
- All new and existing members of appointed decision-making boards or committees will be **required** to complete this form for reporting purposes.
- If a member, for whatever reason, selects "*I choose not to provide any of the information requested above,*" this will be accepted as a **completed** form.

- If a member chooses not to provide any of the information on the form, the Title VI Coordinator will be permitted to indicate that member's race and gender, based on the Coordinator's best guess.
- Data from these forms may be used to complete a Demographic Request Table.
- Once a new member submits this form, the Demographic Request Table for the associated committee will be updated.

10.7 KEY COMMUNITY CONTACTS

Contact Name	Community Name	Interest or Affiliation	Also a Committee Member? (Y/N)
Micah Ennis	Department of Social Services	Director	No
TJ Brown	Emergency Management	Emergency Services Deputy Chief	No
Alyssa Harris	Health Department	Director	No
Gary Yelton	Rowan Vocational Opportunities	Executive Director	Yes
Nan Buehrer	Rufty Holmes Senior Center	Executive Director	Yes
Beth Huber	Trinity Living Center	Executive Director	Yes
Edward Hailey	Therapeutic Recreation	Director	Yes

Contact information for key community contacts is not public information and is maintained outside of this document. Any staff member who wishes to contact any individual listed above must request that information from the Title VI Coordinator.

10.8 SUMMARY OF OUTREACH EFFORTS MADE SINCE THE LAST THE TITLE VI NONDISCRIMINATION PROGRAM SUBMISSION

RTS was formerly operated by a contract provider. Effective October 1, 2020 RTS became a County run system. Outreach efforts made since the last submission include creating an updated brochure to distribute county wide describing services.

The following format is used to document RTS outreach efforts in reports to NCDOT. All meetings and disseminations of information capture information for the table below:

Meeting Date	Meeting Time	Meeting Purpose	Target Audience	Information Disseminated
10/25/2023	11:30AM	Transportation to Employment	Manufacturing Leadership	PowerPoint Presentation on available services

11.0 STAFF TRAINING

All employees will receive basic Title VI training at least once every three years. New hires will receive this training within 30 days of their start date. Basic training will cover all sections of this Plan and our overall Title VI Nondiscrimination Program obligations. Staff may receive specialized training on how the program, applies to their specific work areas. Those who routinely encounter the public, such as office personnel, call center staff, and vehicle drivers, will receive annual refresher training. Trainings will be provided or organized by the Title VI Coordinator and will often coincide with updates to our nondiscrimination policies and procedures. Records of staff trainings, such as agendas, sign-in sheets, copies of calendars, and certificates, will remain on file for at least three years (and in personnel files).

12.0 NON-ELECTED BOARDS AND COMMITTEES – BY RACE AND GENDER

The table below depicts race, gender and disability compositions for each of our nonelected (appointed) decision-making bodies. Member names and full demographics for each committee are available, upon request.

Body	Male %	Female %	Caucasian %	African American %	Asian American %	Native American %	Other %	Hispanic %	Disability %
Service Area Population	49.4	50.6	76.2	16.12	1.0	0.57	0.0	9.03	16.2
Transit Advisory Board	50	50	.75	0.13	0.13	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.13

Strategies for Representative Committees

Diversification goals will be provided to our nonelected boards and committees to help ensure that their membership mirrors our service area demographics, as adequately as possible. We will provide periodic updates on our outreach efforts at meetings. When there is an opening on a board or committee, we will ensure the following:

- Current members will be made aware of diversity goals and polled for nominees.
- Officials from local minority groups will be made aware of the diversity goals and polled for nominees.
- Key Contacts from LEP groups will be contacted and polled for nominees.
- A recruitment notice for a Board Member opening will be posted on our website.
- An advertisement of recruitment notice for a Board Member will be placed with the local newspaper and other publications popular with minorities and other protected groups.

13.0 RECORD-KEEPING AND REPORTS

As a subrecipient of FTA funds through NCDOT, we are required to submit a Title VI Nondiscrimination Program update to NCDOT every three years, on a schedule determined by NCDOT. Records will be kept to document compliance with the requirements of the Title VI Nondiscrimination Program. Unless otherwise specified, Title VI-related records shall be retained indefinitely. These records will made available for inspection by authorized officials of the NCDOT and/or FTA. Reports on Title VI Nondiscrimination -related activities and progress to address findings identified during Title VI compliance reviews may also be provided, upon request. It will occasionally be necessary to update this Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan or any of its components (e.g., complaints, Public Involvement, and LEP). Updates will be submitted to NCDOT for review and approval and adopted by our Board when required.

In addition to items documented throughout this Plan, records and reports due at the time of compliance reviews or investigations may include:

Compliance Reviews

- Title VI Program Plan
- List of civil rights trainings provided or received
- Summaries from any *internal* reviews conducted
- Ads and notices for specific meetings
- Findings from reviews by any other *external* agencies
- Title VI Nondiscrimination equity analyses and EJ assessments
- Discrimination Complaints Log

Complaint Investigations

- Investigative Reports
- Discrimination complaint, as filed
- List of interviewees (names and affiliations)
- Supporting Documentation (e.g., requested items, photos taken, dates and methods of contact, etc.)

Appendix A

Applicable Nondiscrimination Authorities

During the implementation of this Title VI Nondiscrimination Program, the organization, for itself, its assignees and successors in interest, is reminded that it has agreed to comply with the following non-discrimination statutes and authorities, including but not limited to:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d *et seq.*, 78 stat. 252), (prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin); and 49 CFR Part 21.
- The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, (42 U.S.C. § 4601), (prohibits unfair treatment of persons displaced or whose property has been acquired because of Federal or Federal-aid programs and projects);
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (29 U.S.C. § 794 *et seq.*), as amended, (prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability); and 49 CFR Part 27;
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, (42 U.S.C. § 6101 *et seq.*), (prohibits discrimination on the basis of age);
- The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, (PL 100-209), (Broadened the scope, coverage and applicability of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, by expanding the definition of the terms "programs or activities" to include all of the programs or activities of the Federal-aid recipients, sub-recipients and contractors, whether such programs or activities are Federally funded or not);
- Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in the operation of public entities, public and private transportation systems, places of public accommodation, and certain testing entities (42 U.S.C. §§ 12131-12189) as implemented by Department of Transportation regulations at 49 C.F.R. parts 37 and 38;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits you from discriminating because of sex in education programs or activities (20 U.S.C. 1681 *et seq.*).
- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq.*, Pub. L. 88-352), (prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed (religion), sex, or national origin);
- 49 CFR Part 26, regulation to ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of DOT-assisted contracts in the Department's highway, transit, and airport financial assistance programs;
- Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, which ensures discrimination against minority populations by discouraging programs, policies, and activities with disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations;
- Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, and resulting agency guidance, national origin discrimination includes discrimination because of limited English proficiency (LEP). To ensure compliance with Title VI, you must take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to your programs (70 Fed. Reg. at 74087 to 74100);
- Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973, (23 U.S.C. § 324 *et seq.*), (prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex);
- Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982, (49 USC § 4 71, Section 4 7123), as amended, (prohibits discrimination based on race, creed (religion), color, national origin, or sex);
- The Federal Aviation Administration's Non-discrimination statute (49 U.S.C. § 47123) (prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, and sex);
- Federal transit laws, specifically 49 U.S.C. § 5332 (prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including gender identity), disability, age, employment, or business opportunity).

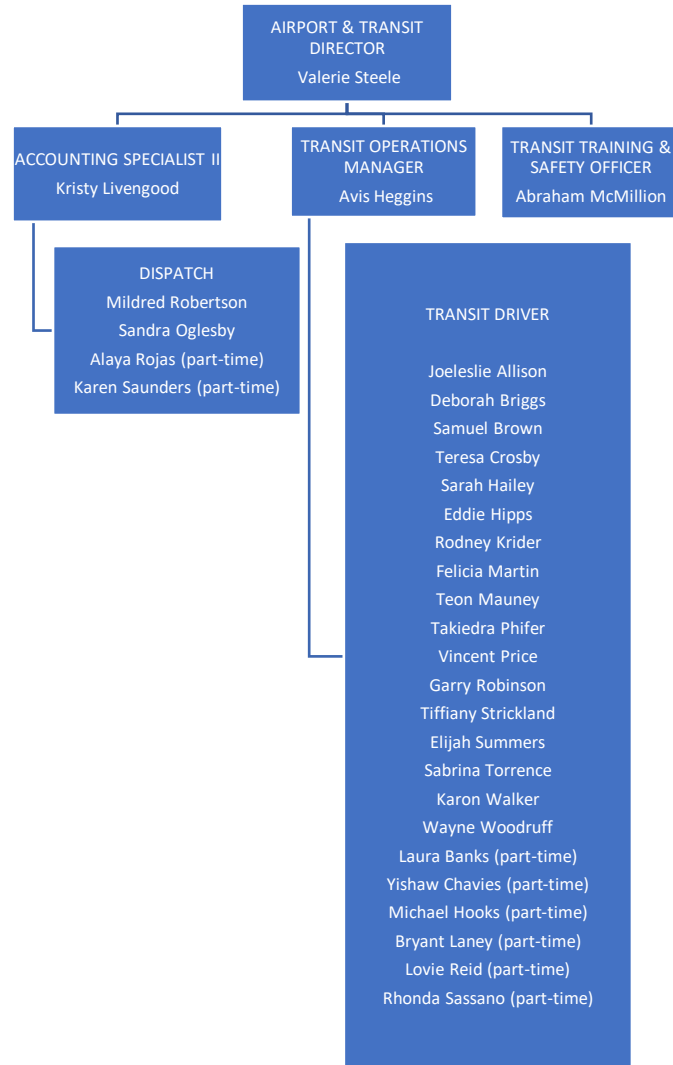
Appendix B- Holiday Schedules

Rowan County 2023 Holiday Schedule		
Holiday	Observance Date	Day of Week
New Year's Day	January 2, 2023	Monday
Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday	January 16, 2023	Monday
Good Friday	April 7, 2023	Friday
Memorial Day	May 29, 2023	Monday
Independence Day	July 4, 2023	Tuesday
Labor Day	September 4, 2023	Monday
Veterans Day	November 10, 2023	Friday
Thanksgiving	November 23 & 24, 2023	Thursday & Friday
Christmas	December 25, 26 and 27, 2023	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

**Rowan County
2024 Holiday Schedule**

Holiday	Observance Date	Day of Week
New Year's Day	January 1, 2024	Monday
Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday	January 15, 2024	Monday
Good Friday	March 29, 2024	Friday
Memorial Day	May 27, 2024	Monday
Independence Day	July 4, 2024	Thursday
Labor Day	September 2, 2024	Monday
Veterans Day	November 11, 2024	Monday
Thanksgiving	November 28 - 29, 2024	Thursday & Friday
Christmas	December 24 - 26, 2024	Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday

Appendix C Organizational Chart



Appendix D Language Access Plan

Providing Meaningful Communication with Persons with Limited English Proficiency

Rowan County, North Carolina February 2020 thru February 2024

The purpose of this Policy and Plan is to ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable federal and state laws and their implementing regulations with respect to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on the ground of race, color or national origin by any entity receiving federal financial assistance. Administrative methods or procedures, which have the effect of subjecting individuals to discrimination or defeating the objectives of these regulations, are prohibited.

POLICY:

In order to avoid discrimination on the grounds of national origin, all programs or activities administered by Rowan County will take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access and an equal opportunity to participate in benefits and services for which such persons qualify. This Policy defines the responsibilities the agency has to ensure LEP individuals can communicate effectively.

DEFINITIONS:

Limited English Proficient (LEP) individual – Any prospective, potential, or actual recipient of benefits or services from the agency who cannot speak, read, write or understand the English language at a level that permits them to interact effectively with health care providers and social service agencies.

Vital Documents – These forms include, but are not limited to, applications, consent forms, all compliance plans, bid documents, fair housing information, citizen participation plans, letters containing important information regarding participation in a program; notices pertaining to the reduction, denial, or termination of services or benefits, the right to appeal such actions, or that require a response from beneficiary notices advising LEP persons of the availability of free language assistance, and other outreach materials.

Title VI Compliance Officer: The person or persons responsible for administering compliance with the Title VI LEP policies.

Substantial number of LEP: 5% or 1,000 people, whichever is smaller, are potential applicants or recipients of the agency and speak a primary language other than English and have limited English proficiency.

PROCEDURES:

1. IDENTIFYING LEP PERSONS AND THEIR LANGUAGE

Rowan County will promptly identify the language and communication needs of the LEP person. Staff will use a language identification card (or "I speak cards," provided Community Investment and Assistance (CI) and LEP posters to determine the language. In addition, when records are kept of past

interactions with individuals or family members, the language used to communicate with the LEP person will be included as part of the record.

2. OBTAINING A QUALIFIED INTEPRETER

List the current name, office telephone number, office address and email address of the Title VI compliance officers:

Siobhan Allen MGH, MCC
130 W. Innes Street Suite 210
Salisbury, North Carolina 28144
Siobhan.Allen@rowancountync.gov

Elizabeth Garcia Administrative Assistant V
130 W. Innes Street Suite 210
Salisbury, North Carolina 28144
Elizabeth.Garcia@rowancountync.gov

(P) 704- 216-8199 (F) 704-216-8195

(Note: The agency must notify the CI Compliance Office immediately of changes in name or contact information for the Title VI compliance officer.)

Check all methods that will be used:

- ☐ Maintaining an accurate and current list showing the language, phone number and hours of availability of bilingual staff (*provide the list*);
- ☐ Contacting the appropriate bilingual staff member to interpret, in the event that an interpreter is needed, if an employee who speaks the needed language is available and is qualified to interpret;
- ☐ Obtaining an outside interpreter if a bilingual staff or staff interpreter is not available or does not speak the needed language.

Language Line

1-800-528-5888 or 1-831-648-7582

Have/has agreed to provide qualified interpreter services. The agency's (or agencies') telephone number(s) is/are (*insert number (s)*), and the hours of availability are 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

☐ Other (*describe*):

Additional interpretive resources may be available through coordination with the Rowan County Health Department or Department of Social Services.

All staff will be provided notice of this policy and procedure, and staff that may have direct contact with LEP individuals will be trained in effective communication techniques, including the effective use of an interpreter.

Some LEP persons may prefer or request to use a family member or friend as an interpreter. However, family members or friends of the LEP person will not be used as interpreters unless specifically requested by that individual and **after** the LEP person has understood that an offer of an interpreter at no charge to

the person has been made by the facility. Such an offer and the response will be documented in the person's file. If the LEP person chooses to use a family member or friend as an interpreter, issues of competency of interpretation, confidentiality, privacy, and conflict of interest should be considered. If the family member or friend is not competent or appropriate for any of these reasons, competent interpreter services will be provided to the LEP person.

Children and other residents will **not** be used to interpret, in order to ensure confidentiality of information and accurate communication.

3. PROVIDING WRITTEN TRANSLATIONS

- i. The Rowan County will set benchmarks for translation of vital documents into additional languages. *(please ensure to keep records of those documents that apply to your agency)*
- ii. When translation of vital documents is needed, Rowan County will submit documents for translation into frequently-encountered languages.
- iii. Facilities will provide translation of other written materials, if needed, as well as written notice of the availability of translation, free of charge, for LEP individuals.

4. PROVIDING NOTICE TO LEP PERSONS

Rowan County) will inform LEP persons of the availability of language assistance, free of charge, by providing written notice in languages LEP persons will understand. Example: The notification will include, in the primary language of the applicant/recipient, the following language: IMPORTANT: IF YOU NEED HELP IN READING THIS, ASK THE AGENCY FOR AN INTERPRETER TO HELP. AN INTERPRETER IS AVAILABLE FREE OF CHARGE.

All interpreters, translators and other aids needed to comply with this policy shall be provided without cost to the person being served, and individuals and their families will be informed of the availability of such assistance free of charge.

At a minimum, notices and signs will be posted and provided in intake areas and other points of entry, including but not limited to the main lobbies, waiting rooms, etc.

J. Newton Cohen, Sr. Rowan County Administration
1st floor bulletin board
130 W. Innes Street, Salisbury, NC 28144

Rowan County Planning & Development Department
2nd floor bulletin board
Salisbury, NC 28144

Rowan County Health Department
1811 E. Innes Street
Salisbury, NC 28146

Rowan County Department of Social Services
1813 E. Innes Street
Salisbury, NC 28146

Notification will also be provided through one or more of the following: public notices in local newspapers (as applicable) and information distributed to and available at all Rowan County departments.

5. MONITORING LANGUAGE NEEDS AND IMPLEMENTATION

On an ongoing basis, Rowan County will assess changes in demographics, types of services or other needs that may require reevaluation of this policy and its procedures. In addition, Rowan County will regularly assess the efficacy of these procedures, including but not limited to mechanisms for securing interpreter services, complaints filed by LEP persons, feedback from residents and community organizations, etc.

I. Compliance Procedures, Reporting and Monitoring

A. Reporting

The agency will complete an annual compliance report and send this report to CI. (Format will be supplied by CI)

B. Monitoring

The agency will complete a self-monitoring report on a quarterly basis, using a standardized reporting system proposed by the local government. These reports will be maintained and stored by the Title VI Compliance Officer and will be provided to CI upon request.

The agency will cooperate, when requested, with special review by the CI.

II. Applicant/Recipient Complaints of Discriminatory Treatment

A. Complaints

The agency will provide assistance to LEP individuals who do not speak or write in English if they indicate that they would like to file a complaint. A complaint will be filed in writing, contain the name and address of the person filing it or his/her designee and briefly describe the alleged violation of this policy. The form can be found at <https://www.nccommerce.com/documents/cdbg-compliance-plans>.

The agency will maintain records of any complaints filed, the date of filing, actions taken and resolution.

The agency will notify the appropriate section within CI of complaints filed, the date of filing, actions taken and resolution. This information will be provided within 30 days of resolution.

B. Resolution of Matter

If the matter cannot be resolved by informal means, the individual will be informed of his or her right to appeal further to CI. This notice will be provided in the primary language of the individual with Limited English Proficiency.

The CI Compliance Office will conduct an investigation of the allegations of the complaint. The investigation will afford all interested persons and their representatives, if any, an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint.

The investigation will not exceed 30 days, absent a 15-day extension for extenuating circumstances.

If the investigation indicates a failure to comply with the Act, the local unit of government, agency Director or his/her designee will so inform the recipient and the matter will be resolved by informal means whenever possible within 60 days.

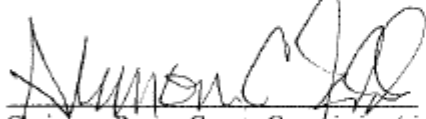
If the matter cannot be resolved by informal means, then the individual will be informed of his or her right to appeal further to the Department of Justice. This notice will be provided in the primary language of the individual with Limited English Proficiency.

If not resolved by CI, then complaint will be forwarded to Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Field Office.

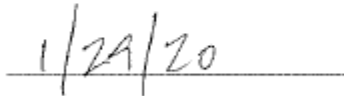
SUBMITTED AND ADOPTED BY:

Gregory C. Edds

Chairman, Rowan County Commission



Chairman, Rowan County Commission (signature)



Date

Appendix E
NCDOT's Compliance Review Checklist for Transit

I. Program Administration (General Requirements) Requirement: FTA C 4702.1B – Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for FTA Recipients, Chapter III – General Requirements and Guidelines. Note: Every NCDOT subrecipient receiving any of the FTA Formula Grants listed above must complete this section.	
Requested Items (Please attach electronic documents (.pdf, .doc, etc.) or provide links to online versions)	Completed
1. A copy of the recipient's <i>signed</i> NCDOT's Title VI Nondiscrimination Agreement	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Title VI Policy Statement (<i>signed</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Title VI Notice to the Public, including a list of locations where the notice is posted	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Type the name and title of your Title VI Coordinator and attach a list of their Title VI duties Name/Title:	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Title VI Complaint Procedures (i.e., instructions to the public regarding how to file a Title VI discrimination complaint)	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Title VI Complaint Form	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. List of transit-related Title VI investigations, complaints, and lawsuits (i.e., discrimination complaints log)	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Public Participation Plan, including information about outreach methods to engage traditionally underserved constituencies (e.g., minorities, limited English proficient populations (LEP), low-income, disabled), as well as a summary of outreach efforts made since the last Title VI Program submission	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Language Assistance Plan for providing language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP), based on the DOT LEP Guidance, which requires conducting four-factor analyses	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. A table depicting the membership of non-elected committees and councils, the membership of which is selected by the recipient, broken down by race, and a description of the process the agency uses to encourage the participation of minorities on such committees	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. A copy of board meeting minutes, resolution, or other appropriate documentation showing the board of directors or appropriate governing entity or official(s) responsible for policy decisions <i>reviewed and approved</i> the Title VI Program	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. A description of the procedures the agency uses to ensure nondiscriminatory administration of programs and services	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. If you pass through FTA funds to other organizations , include a description of how you monitor your subrecipients for compliance with Title VI, and a schedule for your subrecipients' Title VI Program submissions. ➤ No Subrecipients <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. A Title VI equity analysis if you have constructed or conducted planning for a facility , such as a vehicle storage facility, maintenance facility, operation center, etc. ➤ No Facilities Planned or Constructed <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Copies of environmental justice assessments conducted for any construction projects during the past three years and, if needed based on the results, a description of the program or other measures used or planned to mitigate any identified adverse impact on the minority or low-income communities ➤ No Construction Projects <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. If the recipient has undergone a Title VI Compliance Review in the last 3 years, please indicate the year of the last review and who conducted it. Year/Agency:	<input type="checkbox"/>

II. Transit Providers

Requirement: FTA C 4702.1B, Chapter IV – Requirements and Guidelines for Fixed Route Transit Providers.

Note: All NCDOT subrecipients that provide fixed route public transportation services (e.g., local, express or commuter bus; bus rapid transit; commuter rail; passenger ferry) must complete this section.

➤ **Not Applicable** ☐ (Check this box if you do not provide fixed route services, and skip questions 17 and 18. This section does not apply to you if you *only* provide demand response services.)

Requested Items (Please attach electronic documents (.pdf, .doc, etc.) or provide links to online versions)	Completed
17. Service standards (quantitative measures) developed for <i>each specific fixed route mode</i> that the recipient provides (standards may vary by mode) must be submitted for each of the following indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Vehicle load for each mode (<i>Can be expressed as the ratio of passengers to the total number of seats on a vehicle. For example, on a 40-seat bus, a vehicle load of 1.3 means all seats are filled and there are approximately 12 standees.</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Vehicle headway for each mode (<i>Measured in minutes (e.g., every 15 minutes), headway refers to the amount of time between two vehicles traveling in the same direction on a given line or combination of lines. A shorter headway corresponds to more frequent service. Service frequency is measured in vehicles per hour (e.g., 4 buses per hour).</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">On time performance for each mode (<i>Expressed as a percentage, this is a measure of runs completed as scheduled. The recipient must define what is considered to be “on time.” Performance can be measured against route origins and destinations only, or against origins and destinations as well as specified time points along a route.</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Service availability for each mode (<i>Refers to a general measure of the distribution of routes within a transit provider’s service area, such as setting the maximum distance between bus stops or train stations, or requiring that a percentage of all residents in the service area be within a one-quarter mile walk of bus service.)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Service policies (system-wide policies) adopted to ensure that service design and operations practices do not result in discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin, must be submitted for each of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Transit amenities for each mode (<i>e.g., benches, shelters/canopies, printed materials, escalators/elevators, and waste receptacles. NOTE: Attach this information <u>only</u> if you have decision-making authority over siting transit amenities or you set policies to determine the siting of amenities.</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Vehicle assignment for each mode (<i>Refers to the process by which transit vehicles are placed into service throughout a system. Policies for vehicle assignment may be based on the type or age of the vehicle, where age would be a proxy for condition, or on the type of service offered.</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature: Gregory C Edds
Gregory C Edds (Dec 7, 2023 19:03 EST)

Email: greg@gregedds.com

Signature: Valerie Steele
Valerie Steele (Dec 8, 2023 08:09 EST)

Email: valerie.steele@rowancountync.gov


RTS Title VI Nondiscrimination Program

Final Audit Report


2023-12-08


Created:	2023-12-07
By:	Sarah Pack (Sarah.Pack@rowancountync.gov)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAbF7f8cLfMrgeT9WTXb7PYTvvslJIG8tG


"RTS Title VI Nondiscrimination Program" History


 Document created by Sarah Pack (Sarah.Pack@rowancountync.gov)
2023-12-07 - 2:35:27 PM GMT


 Document emailed to greg@gregedds.com for signature
2023-12-07 - 2:38:07 PM GMT


 Email viewed by greg@gregedds.com
2023-12-07 - 3:15:45 PM GMT


 Signer greg@gregedds.com entered name at signing as Gregory C Edds
2023-12-08 - 0:03:32 AM GMT


 Document e-signed by Gregory C Edds (greg@gregedds.com)
Signature Date: 2023-12-08 - 0:03:34 AM GMT - Time Source: server

 Document emailed to valerie.steele@rowancountync.gov for signature
2023-12-08 - 0:03:36 AM GMT

 Email viewed by valerie.steele@rowancountync.gov
2023-12-08 - 1:08:25 PM GMT

 Signer valerie.steele@rowancountync.gov entered name at signing as Valerie Steele
2023-12-08 - 1:09:27 PM GMT

 Document e-signed by Valerie Steele (valerie.steele@rowancountync.gov)
Signature Date: 2023-12-08 - 1:09:29 PM GMT - Time Source: server

 Agreement completed.
2023-12-08 - 1:09:29 PM GMT