

# **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

**WARREN COUNTY TRANSIT SERVICE**

**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Warren County Transit System (WCTS) is an on-demand curb-to-curb system that operates anywhere in Warren County. Passengers should schedule trips at least a day in advance by calling dispatch. The program is funded, in part, by state and federal funds. Fare is \$2 one way for trips within the county and service to Greater Dayton RTA's South Hub. Discounted fare is available to elderly and disabled.

## **PURPOSE**

This Plan has been created to comply with Title VI, 4702.1B Circular requirements. This plan includes an outreach plan to engage minority and limited English proficient (LEP) populations, a summary of outreach efforts to LEP and underserved populations.

## **OUTREACH TO MINORITY & LEP POPULATION**

WCTS has an extensive LEP Plan which outlines methods used to reach out to the LEP population. According to the 2010 Census, only 3911 residents speak English "less than very well," representing less than 2% of the population. Of that amount, the majority speak Spanish or Asian/Pacific Island languages (1,323 and 1,276 respectively). No discernable concentrations of persons with limited English proficiency were noted in Warren County.

However, WCTS is dedicated to providing service all any resident seeking transportation, including LEP persons.

Translation services are provided by Language Line Services, 1 Lower Ragsdale Drive, Monterey, California 93940, Phone number 1-877-862-1302. Vendor was chosen because the company can offer the services that we need on an "as-needed" basis; 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Language Line provides over-the-phone interpreting for over 170 languages.

Brochures about WCTS are available in Spanish as well as a large-print edition.

Statistical information about minority groups has been obtained from the 2010 Census. That information follows:

White person	90.8%
Black persons	3.5%
Asian persons	4.1%
Persons reporting two or more races	1.4%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino Origin	2.4%

WCTS does not discriminate or refuse service to anyone based on race.

## **SUMMARY OF OUTREACH EFFORTS**

WCTS has made efforts to communicate with LEP individuals. These efforts are outlined in the LEP Plan. They include instructing dispatch workers and drivers to encourage passengers to use the translation service line and providing Spanish brochures.

To better serve elderly and disabled passengers, WCTS offers discounted fare for qualifying individuals.

## **ENCOURAGEMENT OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

Citizens are encouraged to participate in all aspects related to the planning and implementation of the WCTS, from its residents with low- and moderate-incomes, minority, non- and limited-English proficient speaking residents as well as persons with disabilities residing in Warren County.

The City also encourages local government, social service and community agencies, to participate in planning and implementation activities as well. In order to achieve this objective, WCTS has engaged representation on the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) from various agencies serving populations that are often of low-moderate income levels, serve a diverse base of clientele or have special needs, such as the Director of Job and Family Services and the Board of Developmental Disabilities.

## **CITIZEN COMMENTARY**

Residents are provided with a public comment period for grant applications and any other documents or plans requiring specified public review and comment periods. Review is advertised in Today's Pulse which services the entire county. All documents are public and are available in the Grants Administration Office, located at 406 Justice Drive, Lebanon, Ohio 45036. Furthermore, documents will be mailed or emailed to anyone upon request.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Public hearings will be held to obtain citizens' views and to respond to proposals and questions. Annually, at least one public hearing is held prior to the grant application being submitted to ODOT. Said hearing is to be held before the proposed application is published for comment.

All public hearings will be held in the County Administrative Building. The building, located at 406 Justice Drive, Lebanon, Ohio 45036 is handicap accessible. All public hearings will be advertised in the local newspaper, Today's Pulse not less than 30

calendar days before the scheduled public hearing. All advertisements published will be placed in easily readable type in the non-legal section of the newspaper. Each advertisement will state the date, time and place of the public hearing. All public hearings will be held in locations providing complete handicap accessibility and in locations centrally located in the community to provide easy access to all residents. All public hearings will begin and be completed within timeframes when WCTS is in operation, making the hearing more accessible to persons who might be potential or actual beneficiaries.

As already noted, the County does not have high concentrations of non-English speaking persons. However, the County will make every effort to encourage participation at all public hearings by non-English speaking persons by providing interpretation and translation if requested in advance. The cost of such services will be paid for by the County using ODOT funds and will not be passed along to those persons being assisted.

## **MEETINGS**

Citizens are encouraged to attend any scheduled meetings (including Transit Advisory Committee meetings.) Notices will be posted at least 7 calendar days in advance of said meetings on the local newspaper, Today's Pulse's electronic Press Release page. All notices will state the date, time and place of the meeting.

Public hearings will be held in the County Administrative Building in Lebanon, Ohio. Public hearings will also be held during those times when WCTS is in operation, which provides a greater likelihood that participation is all inclusive.

## **AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC**

All public documents related to the WCTS will be available to the public upon request. This includes the availability of materials in a format accessible to persons with disabilities. Requests may be made to the Grants Department, located at the County Administration Building, 406 Justice Drive, Lebanon, Ohio 45036 during normal business hours on Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. (except during City holidays).

## **ACCESS TO RECORDS**

All public records, documents and reports pertaining to the WCTS are kept in the offices of the Grants Department, 406 Justice Drive, Lebanon, Ohio 45036. (Phone: 513-695-1259; Fax: 513-695-1280). Documents will be made available to the public upon request during regular business hours as stated above. Records will be retained in accordance with applicable Public Record Retention laws, but in no case for a period less than three years. Hard copies will be available for purchase at the current per-page rate as established by the Finance Department.

## **COMMENTS/COMPLAINTS**

Complaints or comments regarding WCTS may be made to the Grants Administrative Manager by calling 513-695-1209 or emailing [masosu@co.warren.oh.us](mailto:masosu@co.warren.oh.us). Technical assistance will be provided to any persons requesting such assistance in developing complaints or comments as an accommodation.

The City will provide a timely and substantial response within 15 calendar days to any complaints received regarding the operation or implementation of the WCTS or any aspect related to it. In most cases, responses will be made in the same manner in which the comment/complaint was made (verbal or written).

## **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

Public hearings and community meetings will be held in locations accessible to persons with restricted mobility. All public hearings will be held at times when the WCTS is in operation. The WCTS is the local public transit system. Its vehicles are accessible to persons with disabilities. Upon request, copies of all written materials are available in alternative formats.

## **COUNTY COMMISSIONER REPRESENTATION**

Whereas the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) advises on matters related to the operations of the WCTS and affiliated grant implementation, the Board of County Commissioners is the governing body for the WCTS. In an effort to ensure information from TAC meetings is communicated adequately to the Commissioners, the Grants Administration Manager will serve as a liaison.

County Commissioners generally meet every Tuesday and Thursday at the County Administrative Building, 406 Justice Drive, Lebanon, Ohio 45036. Meeting schedules are posted on the County website and agendas are posted in the Commissioners office.