

**FORT BEND COUNTY
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

Title VI

Title VI Program and Compliance Report

Public Transportation Department Fort Bend County, Texas

December 2009
Revised March 2010

TEXAS TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE
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DISCLAIMER

This report was prepared with funds provided from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). The contents of this report reflect the views of the authors, who are responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official view or policies of the FTA or TxDOT.

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INTRODUCTION

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is the federal law that protects individuals and groups from discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. Title VI established a standard that outlawed discrimination in the conduct of all federal activities. Another concern was that high and adverse environmental impacts of private or governmental actions might fall disproportionately on populations protected by Title VI. With this concern in mind, Executive Order 12898 was issued in 1994 to establish requirements for *environmental justice* to ensure that everyone within the U.S. receives equal protection under the law. Executive Order 12898 directed each federal agency to review its procedures and to make environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing the effect of all programs, policies, and activities on minority populations.

All programs and activities of entities that receive federal financial assistance must also comply with Executive Order 13166 “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency.” All recipients of federal funds must take reasonable steps to ensure that limited English proficient (LEP) persons have meaningful access to its programs, services, and information provided. Persons who do not speak English as their primary language and have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English may be considered LEP.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) issued Title VI Regulations (49 CFR part 21) to ensure that no person is excluded from or denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the DOT. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is an agency within the DOT that provides financial and technical assistance to state and local public transit systems. FTA Circular 4702.1A provides recipients of FTA financial assistance with guidance and instructions necessary to carryout the DOT Title VI Regulations and to integrate into their programs and activities principles of environmental justice and access to services for persons with limited English proficiency.

The Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department is a recipient of federal funds from the FTA and must follow the guidance included in FTA Circular 4702.1A. This report serves two purposes: 1) to provide an assessment of current compliance by Fort Bend County with the requirements of Title VI pursuant to FTA Circular 4702.1A; and 2) to establish procedures for future Title VI compliance.

This document is organized into seven sections following this introduction. The material covered in each section is described as follows:

- **Section 1** provides an overview for the guidance and instructions in FTA Circular 4702.1A.
- **Section 2** includes information about the population demographics for Fort Bend County and highlights the transit services and programs sponsored by the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department.

- **Section 3** discusses the sources and types of data used in assessing compliance with Title VI. Maps illustrating the outcomes of the assessment are also presented.
- **Section 4** looks more specifically at what languages other than English are spoken at home by Fort Bend County residents and gauges the extent to which these populations access transit services.
- **Section 5** presents a statement of policy for compliance with Title VI, instructions for how a member of the public may file a discrimination complaint, and procedures for tracking and investigating Title VI complaints.
- **Section 6** documents the types of public information about transit services currently provided by the Public Transportation Department and summarizes public outreach and involvement activities. The LEP Plan is included in Section 6.
- **Section 7** provides system-wide service standards and policies in compliance with the FTA Circular 4702.1A program-specific guidance for recipients that provide transit service in a large urban area.

Appendices include demographic data by census block groups and by census tracts in Fort Bend County, summaries of public outreach activities, and a copy of the Title VI Complaint Form.

SECTION 1. FTA GUIDANCE AND INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview for the guidance and instructions in FTA Circular 4702.1.A. The circular applies to all recipients of FTA financial assistance. Compliance with the guidance and instructions is addressed in Sections 3 through 7 of this document.

OBJECTIVES

Consistent with DOT Title VI Regulations and the principles of environmental justice and access to services for persons with limited English proficiency, the FTA Circular 4702.1A sets forth the following objectives:

- Ensure that the level and quality of transportation service is provided without regard to race, color, or national origin;
- Identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects of programs and activities on minority populations and low-income populations;
- Promote the full and fair participation of all affected populations in transportation decision making;
- Prevent the denial, reduction, or delay in benefits related to programs and activities that benefit minority populations or low-income populations; and
- Ensure meaningful access to programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department must follow FTA Circular 4702.1.A general requirements to ensure that programs, policies, and activities comply with DOT Title VI Regulations. These requirements include:

- Submit an annual Title VI assurance as part of the annual Certification and Assurance to FTA;
- Notify beneficiaries of protection under Title VI;
- Develop Title VI complaint procedures for investigating and tracking Title VI complaints and make procedures for filing a complaint available to members of the public;
- Prepare and maintain a list of any active Title VI investigations, complaints, and lawsuits conducted by entities other than FTA; and
- Ensure meaningful access to LEP persons by developing and carrying out a language implementation plan.

FTA requires the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department to conduct an annual review to ensure Title VI compliance and to prepare and submit a Title VI Program to FTA every three years. The program is required to include the following information:

- Evidence of notice to the public that the Public Transportation Department complies with Title VI and instructions to the public on how to file a discrimination complaint;

- Procedures for tracking and investigating Title VI complaints;
- List of any Title VI investigations, complaints, or lawsuits;
- Summary of public outreach and involvement activities and steps undertaken to ensure that minority and low-income people have meaningful access to these activities; and
- Plan for providing language assistance for persons with limited English proficiency.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR LARGE URBANIZED AREAS

The FTA Circular 4702.1A has program-specific guidance for recipients that provide service to geographic areas with a population of 200,000 people or greater. These requirements apply to the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department because a portion of the county is in the Houston urbanized area, as shown in Figure 1.

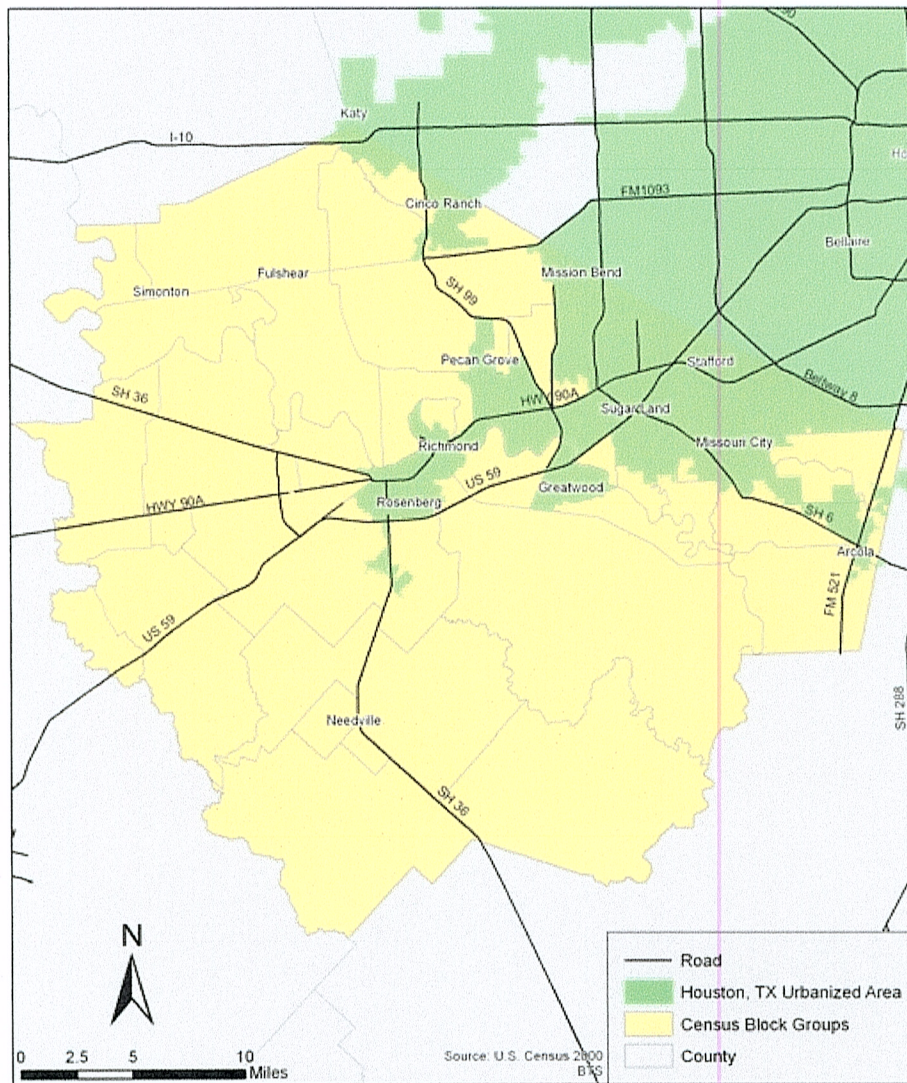


Figure 1. Houston Urbanized Area in Fort Bend County.

The following list is the FTA Circular 4702.1A program-specific guidance for recipients that provide transit service in a large urban area:

- Collect demographic data and produce maps showing the extent to which members of minority groups and low-income populations are beneficiaries of transit services;
- Monitor transit service throughout the county through analysis of surveys and demographic data;
- Adopt quantitative system-wide service standards to guard against discriminatory service design or operations decisions;
- Adopt system-wide service policies necessary to guard against service design and operational policies that have disparate impacts; and
- Evaluate significant system wide service and fare changes and proposed improvements at the planning and programming stages to determine whether those changes have discriminatory impact.

The Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department is required to document compliance with the program-specific requirements of Title VI for agencies that serve large urban areas. Compliance is documented in a report to FTA every three years.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

The primary law governing the FTA environmental protection process is the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), as amended. Many different federal laws, rules, and regulations govern environmental review of federally assisted mass transportation projects. NEPA establishes protection of the environment as a national priority and mandates that environmental impacts must be considered before any federal action likely to significantly affect the environment is undertaken. Other special purpose statutes and procedures may apply as well, depending on specific circumstances, e.g., protective measures for historic properties, wetlands, floodplains, etc. If related environmental review requirements apply, they are to be undertaken as part of the NEPA compliance process.

The process for complying with NEPA and federal surface transportation statutes is defined in the joint Federal Highway Administration/ FTA Environmental Impact and Related Procedures (23 C.F.R 771). The regulation sets forth the agencies' policy of combining all environmental analyses and reviews into a single process. It defines the roles and responsibilities of FTA and its grant applicants in preparing documents, and in managing the environmental process within the various project development phases. http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/NEPA_reg_clean.pdf

Applicants intending to apply for federal transit funding should notify FTA at the time a project concept is identified. Once the applicant has furnished sufficient information and documentation, FTA will advise the applicant of the probable class of action and the related level of documentation required in the NEPA process. Recipients and sub-recipients of federal funding for construction projects should integrate an environmental justice analysis into the NEPA documentation. Recipients are not required to conduct environmental justice analyses of projects where NEPA documentation is not required.

SECTION 2. OVERVIEW OF FORT BEND COUNTY

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the population demographics for Fort Bend County and to highlight the transit services provided by the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department.

POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS IN FORT BEND COUNTY

Fort Bend County is located along the Gulf Coast region of Texas, within the Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown metropolitan area, the sixth-largest metropolitan area in the United States with a population of 5.7 million as of the 2008 U.S. Census estimate. Fort Bend County represents just less than 10 percent of the total population in the metropolitan area.

Population Growth

The population of Fort Bend County has grown significantly since 1990, as shown in Table 1. The county's 2000 population was 354,452; the U.S. Census Bureau estimates the county's population as 532,141 in 2008, a 50 percent increase in eight years.

Table 1. Population in Fort Bend County.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Percent Growth</i>
1990	225,421	
2000	354,452	57%
2008	532,141	50%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

The growth from 1990 to 2008 represents a 136 percent increase. The Texas State Data Center estimates by 2020 the population in Fort Bend County could reach 770,000.

Urban and Rural Fort Bend County

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 886 square miles, of which, 875 square miles is land and 11 square miles is water. The average population density was 400 persons per square mile in 2000 and 600 persons per square mile in 2008. Geographically, large portions of the county are rural; however, cities are growing rapidly.

Most of the population of Fort Bend County falls within the Houston urbanized area (see Figure 1). In 2000, the Fort Bend County population was 354,452, and 316,561 or 89.3 percent was in the urbanized area. The remaining population 37,891 or 10.7 percent was in rural Fort Bend County.

Diversity

Fort Bend County is diverse as reflected in racial and ethnic population demographics. Table 2 identifies the population in Fort Bend County by race and ethnicity. The data for 2000 are based on the U.S. Census decennial survey. The data for 2008 are from the U.S. Census American

Community Survey (ACS) 1-year estimate for 2008. The ACS data are published for selected geographic areas with populations of 65,000 or greater, and represent the results for a sample of data.¹ The fastest growing ethnic and racial groups are Hispanic or Latino and Asian.

Table 2. Population of Fort Bend County by Race and Ethnicity.

<i>Race and Ethnic Group</i>	<i>2000</i>		<i>2008</i>	
	<i>Population</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Total Population	354,452		532,141	
Hispanic or Latino	74,871	21.1%	127,021	23.9%
Not Hispanic or Latino	279,581	78.9%	405,120	76.1%
White alone	163,788	46.2%	209,995	39.5%
Black or African American alone	69,579	19.6%	106,688	20.0%
Asian alone	39,545	11.2%	79,594	15.0%
Two or more races, not Hispanic or Latino	5,407	1.5%	8,843	1.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	621	0.2%		
Some Other Race alone	544	0.2%		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	97	<0.1%		

Source 2000: Census 2000 (SF1)

Source 2008: American Community Survey 2008 (1-year estimate)

Incorporated Cities

Thirteen incorporated cities fall within the boundaries of Fort Bend County.² Table 3 identifies the cities and provides the population and growth from 2000 to 2008.

¹ The American Community Survey (ACS) is a nationwide survey by the U.S. Census Bureau designed to provide communities with current information about how the population is changing. The ACS collects and produces population and housing information every year as compared to every 10 years by the decennial census. Beginning with the 2005 ACS, and continuing every year thereafter, 1-year estimates are available annually for geographic areas with a population of 65,000 or more. In 2008, the Census Bureau released its first 3-year estimates based on ACS data collected from 2005 through 2007. These 3-year estimates are available annually for geographic areas with a population of 20,000 or more. The first official set of 5-year estimates based on data collected in 2005–2009 will be released in August 2010 for smaller geographic areas (census tracts and census block groups). A census block is the smallest geographic area for census data, but ACS data will not be available at the census block level.

² A small portion of the City of Houston falls within Fort Bend County.

Table 3. Incorporated Cities in Fort Bend County.

<i>City</i>	<i>2000 Population</i>	<i>2008 Population</i>	<i>Percent Growth</i>
Arcola	1,048	1,230	17%
Beasley	590	670	13%
Fulshear	716	954	33%
Katy (a)	11,775	13,913	18%
Meadows Place	4,606	4,912	6%
Missouri City (b)	52,913	74,723	41%
Needville	2,609	3,457	32%
Orchard	408	477	16%
Richmond	11,081	13,493	21%
Rosenberg	24,043	33,595	39%
Simonton	718	873	21%
Stafford	15,681	19,541	24%
Sugar Land	63,328	80,704	27%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

(a) Katy is incorporated in Harris County, with portions in Fort Bend County and Waller County

(b) Missouri City is incorporated in Fort Bend County, with portions in Harris County

Poverty

Under the federal guidelines for environmental justice, low-income population means a person whose median household income is at or below the poverty guidelines. In 2000, about 25,000 persons in Fort Bend County (7.1 percent of the total population) were living below the poverty level. While the poverty level in Fort Bend County is well below the state of Texas (15.4 percent) and Harris County (15 percent), the number of individuals living below the poverty level has increased from 7.1 percent in 2000 to 8.2 percent (about 44,000 persons) according to the American Community Survey (ACS) 2006-2008.

Seniors and Persons with a Disability

The focus of federal Title VI regulations is not on demographics of age and disability. However, the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department does develop services that are responsive to the needs of seniors (persons age 65 and over) and persons with a disability.

Approximately 5.7 percent of all persons residing in Fort Bend County in 2000 were 65 years of age or older. This compares with the senior population for the state of Texas at 9.9 percent and Harris County at 7.4 percent. The Fort Bend County ACS estimate for 2006-2008 is 6.5 percent persons 65 years of age or older.

Based on Census 2000 for Fort Bend County, 14.5 percent of civilian, non-institutionalized persons over age 5 reported a disability. The data are not available from ACS for more recent years. The 2000 estimate of persons with a disability in Fort Bend County compares to 18.5 percent for the state of Texas and 19.2 percent for Harris County.

FORT BEND COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

The Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department is the public transit provider within Fort Bend County. The Public Transportation Department provides five transit services/programs: demand response, shared ride transportation service; commuter express bus; Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC); New Freedom; and services for elderly and persons with a disability.

Fort Bend County offers shared ride transit services to all citizens of Fort Bend County. The transportation service provides trips within Fort Bend County and to the Texas Medical Center in Houston (which includes service to the Veterans Administration Hospital and a stop at the Social Security office). In order to schedule or cancel a ride, a rider may call 866-751-TRIP between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday (excluding Fort Bend County holidays) and ask for the "Fort Bend County Reservations." Reservations can be made 30 days or up to 1 business day in advance of the appointment time. Rides are typically scheduled for first destination drop-off by 8:00 a.m. and the last pick-up will be no later than 5:00 p.m. Repeat rides may be scheduled in advance. Rides will be accepted on a "time and space" available basis. Trip fares are \$1.00 per person each way. Passengers must be ready 15 minutes before scheduled pick up time. This is a curb-to-curb service; however, persons with disabilities can request door-to-door service.

Fort Bend County operates the TREKEXPRESS, a peak period commuter bus service to two major employment centers in Harris County. The service consists of two bus routes, one to Greenway Plaza and the other to Uptown/Galleria. The routes are managed by a transportation management operation known as TREK and funded by the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department. TREK is a non-profit group dedicated to enhancing mobility in Greenway and Uptown/Galleria areas. Both TREKEXPRESS routes originate in Fort Bend County from two park and ride lots along US 59 South. One of the park and rides is located at the University of Houston Sugar Land campus at University Boulevard and US 59, and the second park and ride lot is located at the AMC Movie Theatre on Town Center Boulevard near First Colony Mall. The Greenway Plaza route offers a connection to the Metropolitan Transit Authority (METRO) West Bellfort Park & Ride. At this location, riders are able to transfer to METRO routes to downtown Houston and the Texas Medical Center. TREKEXPRESS service runs Monday through Friday (excluding Fort Bend County holidays) during peak commuter periods. Buses leave the park and ride lots between 5:10 a.m. and 8:10 a.m. and return from the activity centers between 3:15 p.m. and 6:40 p.m. at 15 to 20 minute intervals. The fare varies from \$1.00 to \$2.25 each way depending on the origin and destination.

Fort Bend County also participates in three transportation programs for specialized populations: JARC, New Freedom, and services for seniors and persons with disabilities. Job Access and Reverse Commute provides transportation to individuals on welfare and other people with low-income to and from jobs and activities related to employment. This is considered the "job access" portion of JARC. The service also takes individuals from urbanized areas to non-urbanized (rural) areas where suburban employers are located, and this accounts for the "reverse commute" portion of JARC.

The Public Transportation Department also provides New Freedom public transportation services. New Freedom is a transportation program dedicated to people with disabilities who live in rural areas. New Freedom provides reserved bus service in the mornings and afternoons, Monday through Friday (excluding Fort Bend County holidays) and the fare is \$1.00 for each one-way trip. An attendant may accompany a rider in need of assistance, free of charge. The New Freedom program also includes bus stop monitors and rider attendants to assist passengers who cannot travel independently.

Fort Bend County also provides transportation services to assist private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of seniors and persons with disabilities. Funds from FTA Section 5310 are used to contract for services. The county also assists human service agencies to provide transportation for seniors to congregate meal programs and other activities at senior centers in Fort Bend County.

Figure 2 illustrates the locations for regional public transportation services from Fort Bend County to destinations in Harris County. The regional destinations include Greenway Plaza, Uptown/Galleria, and METRO West Bellfort Park & Ride for TREKEXPRESS and the Texas Medical Center for shared ride, demand response public transportation.

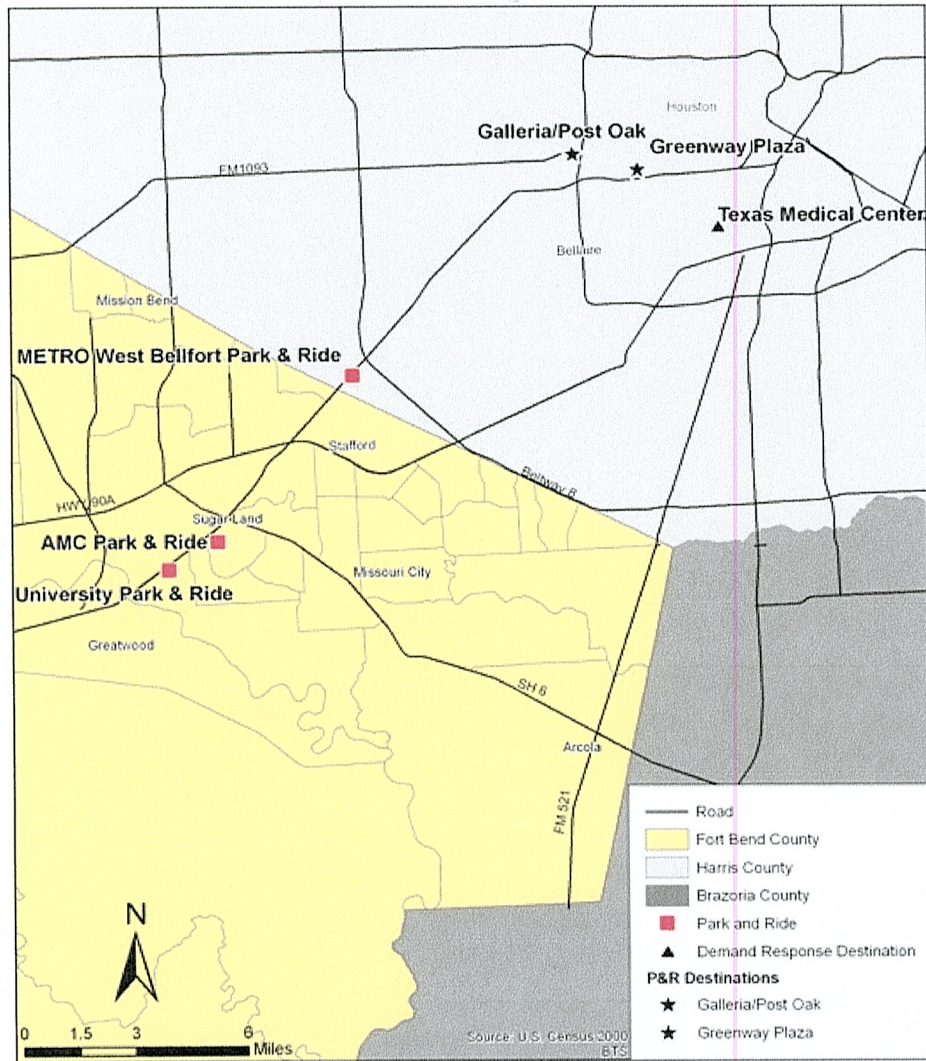


Figure 2. Fort Bend County Public Transportation Regional Transit Destinations.

SECTION 3. ASSESSMENT OF TRANSIT SERVICES

On behalf of the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department, the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) collected demographic data and produced maps showing the extent to which areas of concentration of minority groups, low-income populations, and persons with limited English-proficiency have access to public transportation services. The Public Transportation Department also sponsored a survey of users of commuter bus services to document demographic characteristics of riders.

This section will discuss the sources and types of data used for the assessment of transit services. Maps illustrating the outcomes of the assessment are also presented. Appendix A of this report presents data tables.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Demographic information from Census 2000 provides the data to determine if members of minority groups, low-income populations, and persons with limited English-proficiency have access to public transportation services in compliance with Title VI. The assessment also includes two demographic groups not required by the Title VI guidelines: seniors and persons with disabilities. These are important target populations for transit service in Fort Bend County.

Geographic Areas

Census data are available at two categories of geographic area: census tracts and census block groups. Census tracts are small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county. The primary purpose of census tracts is to provide a stable set of geographic units for the presentation of decennial census data. Census tracts generally have between 1,500 and 8,000 people, with an optimum size of 4,000 people. The spatial size of census tracts varies widely depending on the density of settlement. Census tracts are identified by a four-digit basic number.

Figure 3 illustrates a map of Fort Bend County showing the locations of major highways and incorporated cities. The numbers indicate census tracts.

A census block group is a cluster of census blocks having the same first digit of their four-digit identifying numbers within a census tract. For example, block group 3 within a census tract includes all blocks numbered from 3000 to 3999. Block groups generally contain between 600 and 3,000 people, with an optimum size of 1,500 people.

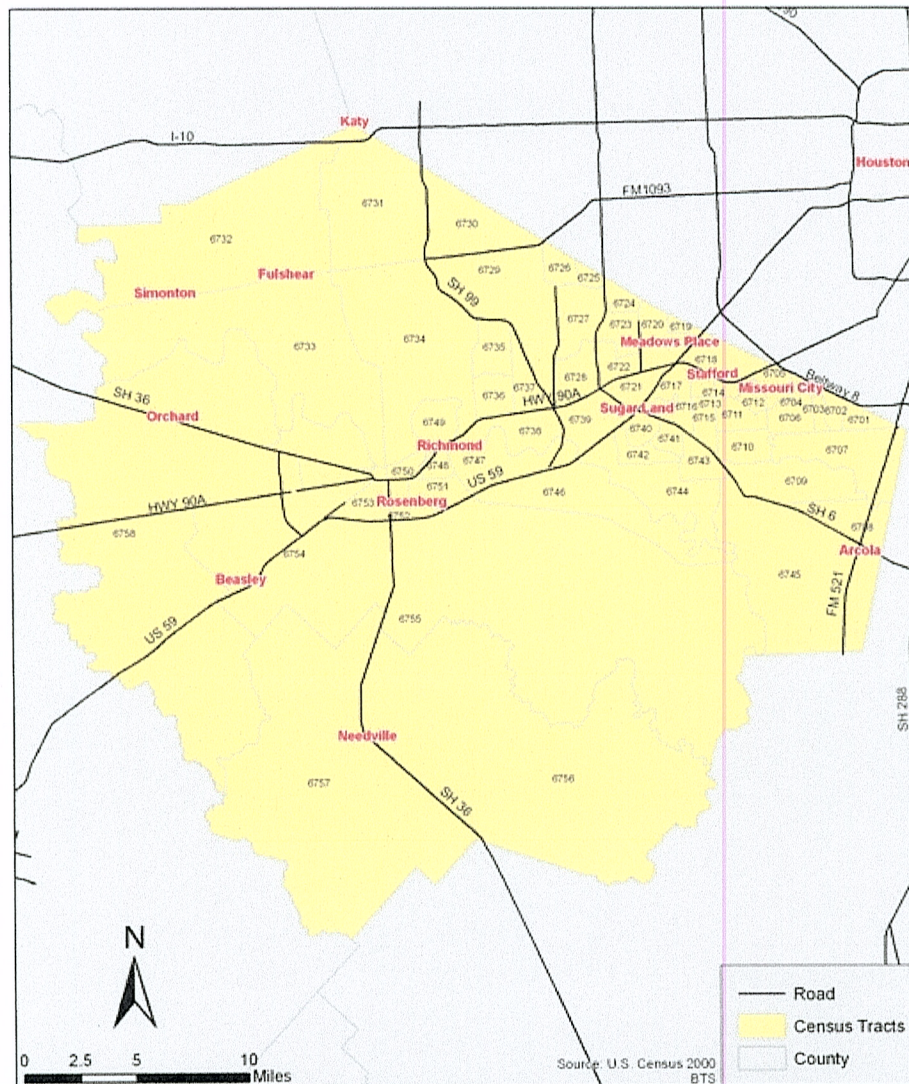


Figure 3. Census Tracts in Fort Bend County.

Source of Data

Census 2000 data are available at the census block group level for most demographic information. Data for minority population, low-income households, households that are linguistically isolated, age, and persons with disability are provided at the census block group level. Information about language spoken at home is available at the larger census tract level.

In the future, the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) will be the source of detailed demographic data rather than the decennial census. The Census Bureau will release the first official set of 5-year estimates for smaller geographic areas (census tracts and census block groups based on data collected in 2005–2009) in August 2010. Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department will use the ACS 2005–2009 data for Title VI assessments after August 2010.

Demographic Data

Below is a list of the Census 2000 demographic data used for the assessment of transit service with a short description and the geographic level used for the assessment.

- **Minority Population** – For the purposes of this assessment, minority population is defined as race or ethnicity other than non-Hispanic white. The data are reported by census block group as a percent of population that is minority.
- **Households Below Poverty Level** – Low-income population is defined by household income below poverty level in 1999 (data collected by Census 2000). The data are reported by census block group as a percent of households below poverty status.
- **LEP Population** – LEP are those persons over 5 years of age who speak English “not well” or not at all. The data are reported by census block group as a percent of population over 5 years of age.
- **Households Linguistically Isolated** – Limited English proficiency is also defined as all households in which no member of the household 14 years and over speaks English “very well.” The data are reported by census block group as a percent of households that are linguistically isolated.
- **Language Spoken at Home** – Nation of origin is not a demographic specifically provided by Census 2000 data. For the purposes of this analysis, the population that speaks a language other than English at home identifies the nation of origin. The data are reported by census tract as population 5 years and over in which a language other than English is spoken at home. Research describing languages other than English spoken at home in Fort Bend County is discussed in Section 4 of this report.
- **Senior Population** – Senior population is defined as persons 65 years of age or older. The data are reported by census block group as a percent of population that is 65 years of age or older.
- **Persons with a Disability** – The data for persons with a disability are reported by census block as a percent of the civilian, non-institutionalized population at least 5 years of age as of Census 2000. A person with a disability has any of the following three conditions:
 1. Five years old and over and reported a long-lasting sensory, physical, mental or self-care disability;
 2. Sixteen years old and over and reported difficulty going outside the home because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting six months or more; or
 3. Sixteen to 64 years old and reported difficulty working at a job or business because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting six months or more.

Statistical Analysis

The analysis identifies where the percent of the total target population residing in an area (census block group or census tract) exceeds the average of the target population for Fort Bend County as a whole.

Appendix A presents a table that shows the actual numbers and percents for each Title VI target population by census block group. Those block groups where the target population percent exceeds the average for Fort Bend County are highlighted in the table.

HOME LOCATIONS FOR TRANSIT USERS

The Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department maintains a database of riders and home addresses for all demand response transit services (shared ride public transportation for the general public, JARC, New Freedom, and service for seniors and persons with disabilities). Fort Bend County geocoded the list of addresses and projected the data on maps of the county to compare to demographic data. The successful geocode rate was 92 percent of all addresses in the database.

Fort Bend County sponsored a survey of all TREKEXPRESS riders in May 2008. The survey responses provide the source of data to identify the home locations of TREKEXPRESS riders. These data were also geocoded and projected on the maps of the county. The survey responses also made it possible to document the demographic characteristics of TREKEXPRESS riders. These data are presented later in this section.

Figure 4 illustrates the locations of transit user home addresses as compared to the population density by census block group for Fort Bend County. The purpose of the map is to demonstrate that the majority of transit riders originate from the most densely populated urban areas. Rural transit residents represent approximately 20 percent of all home addresses for transit users. Rural areas of the county average less than 400 persons per square mile.

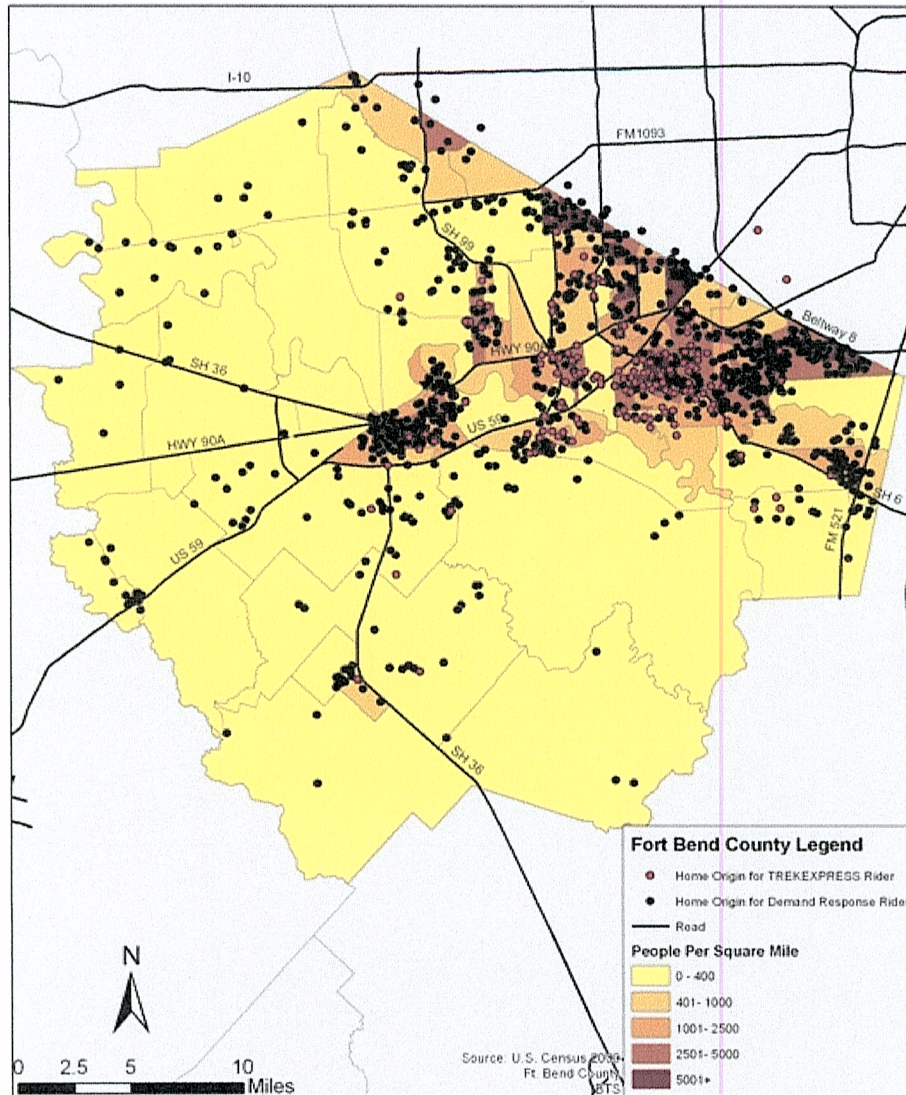


Figure 4. Transit Rider Home Addresses and Population Density by Census Block in Fort Bend County.

ASSESSMENT

The statistical analyses of demographic characteristics by census block group were displayed on geographic information system (GIS) maps. The data points for home addresses of Fort Bend County transit users were overlaid on each of the GIS maps to permit comparison of the home locations of transit users to areas of concentration of target populations. Each overlay provides a graphic tool to assess the distribution of public transportation services as compared to a Title VI population or other target groups in Fort Bend County.

Table 4 displays the demographic data used to map and analyze the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department services. Figure 5 through Figure 10 are used to assess compliance with Title VI.

Table 4. Fort Bend County Demographic Data Used for Maps.

<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Minority Population</i>	<i>Percent Minority</i>
354,452	190,681	53.8%
<i>Total Households (HH)</i>	<i>HH Below Poverty Level</i>	<i>Percent HH Below Poverty Level</i>
111,164	7,094	6.4%
<i>Total Population Age 5 and Over</i>	<i>LEP Population</i>	<i>Percent LEP</i>
327,666	16,825	5.1%
<i>Total HH</i>	<i>Linguistically Isolated HH</i>	<i>Percent Linguistically Isolated HH</i>
111,164	5,710	5.1%
<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Population Age 65 and Over</i>	<i>Percent Age 65 and Over</i>
354,452	19,972	5.6%
<i>Total Civilian Population 5+ Not-Institutional</i>	<i>Population With Disability</i>	<i>Percent With Disability</i>
322,662	46,724	14.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Minority Population

In Figure 5 census block groups are mapped with both demand response and TREKEXPRESS home addresses overlaid. The highlighted census block groups are above the county average percent minority population of 53.8 percent. The distribution of home addresses within the highlighted areas indicates that transit user home addresses are within census block groups with higher percent minority population than the county average.

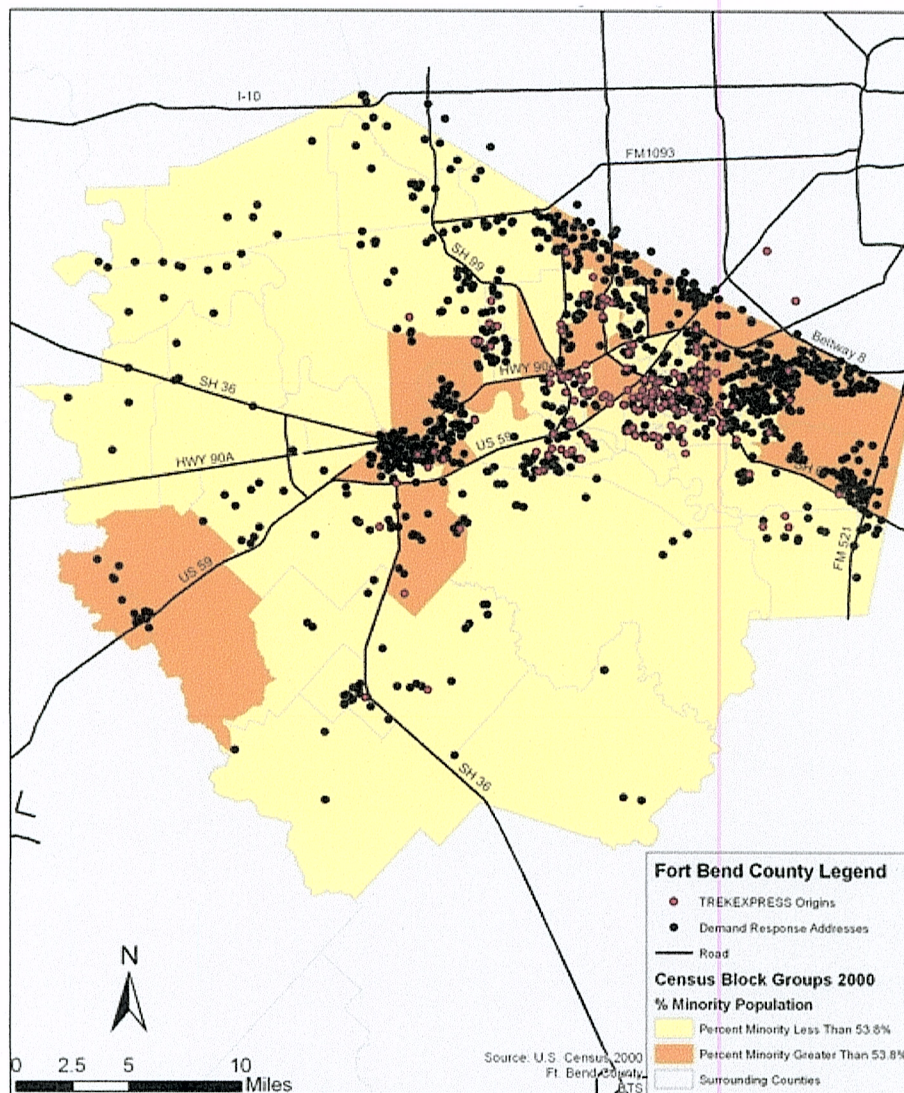


Figure 5. Transit Rider Home Addresses and Concentrations of Minority Population.

Households Below Poverty Level

Figure 6 highlights the census block groups in Fort Bend County that are above the county average 6.4 percent of households below the poverty level (1999). Many of the areas with higher percent of households below the poverty level are in the less densely populated, rural areas of the county. The distribution of home addresses within the highlighted areas indicates that transit user home addresses are within census block groups with higher percent households below the poverty level than the county average.

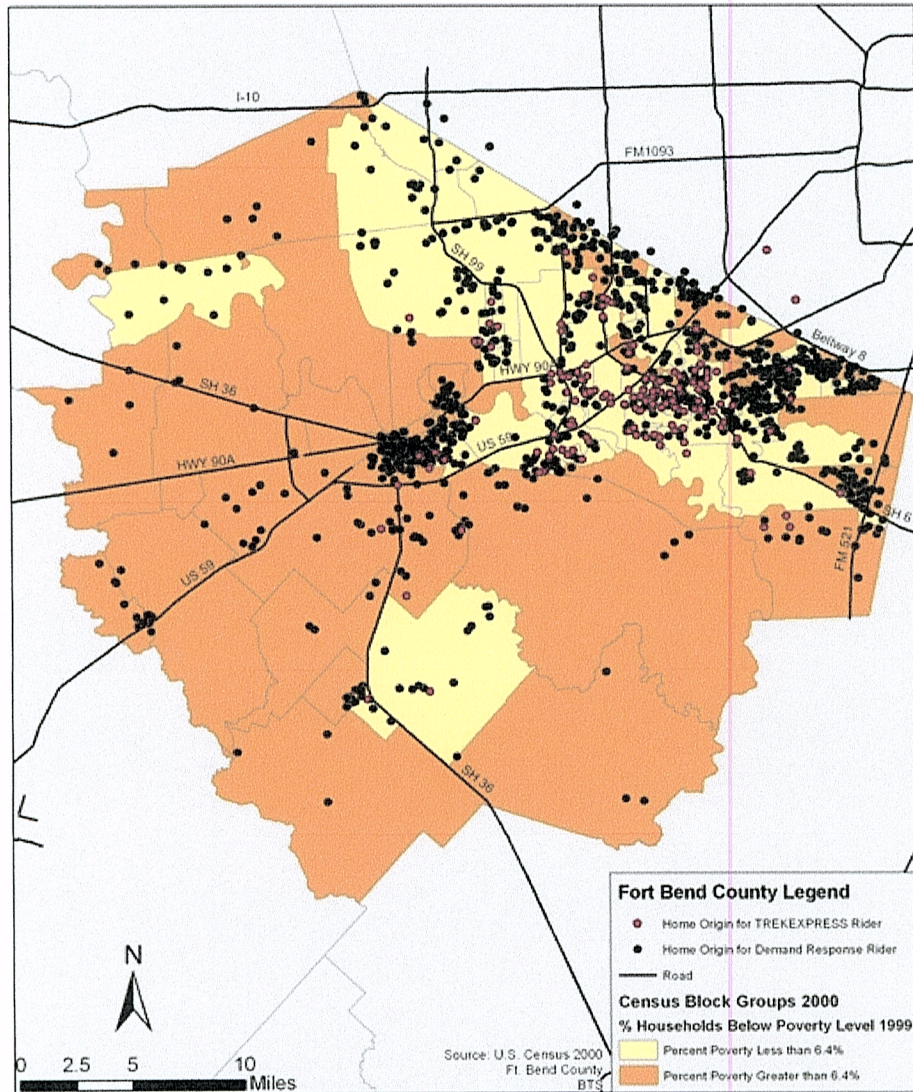


Figure 6. Transit Rider Home Addresses and Concentrations of Households Below Poverty Level.

LEP Population

In Figure 7 transit rider home origins are compared to the census block groups that are above the county average 5.1 percent LEP population. The distribution of home origins within the highlighted areas indicates that transit user home addresses are within census block groups with higher concentrations of LEP population than the county average.

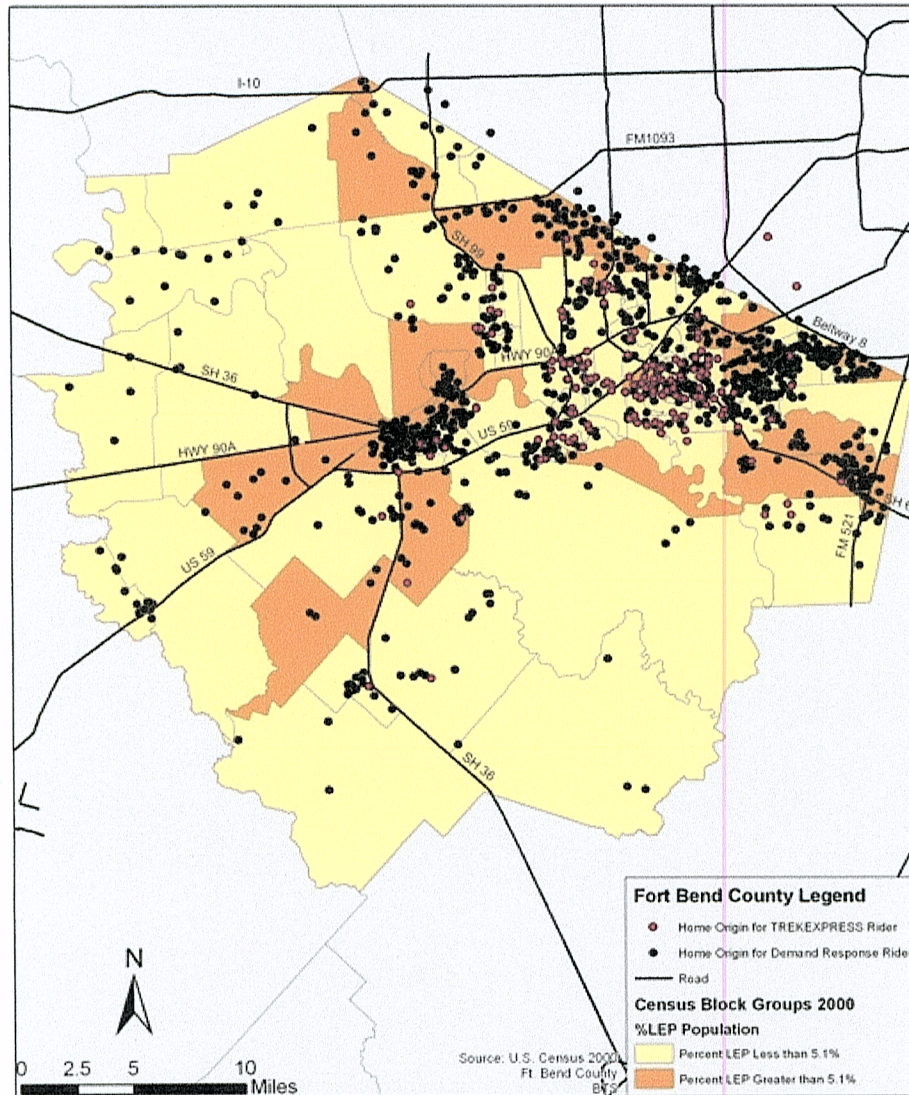


Figure 7. Transit Rider Home Addresses and Concentrations of LEP Population.

Linguistically Isolated Households

Limited English proficiency is also measured by households that are linguistically isolated. Figure 8 highlights the census block groups that are above the county average 5.1 percent linguistically isolated households. The distribution of transit rider home origins within the highlighted areas indicates that Fort Bend public transportation services are accessed within census block groups with higher concentrations of linguistically isolated households than the county average.

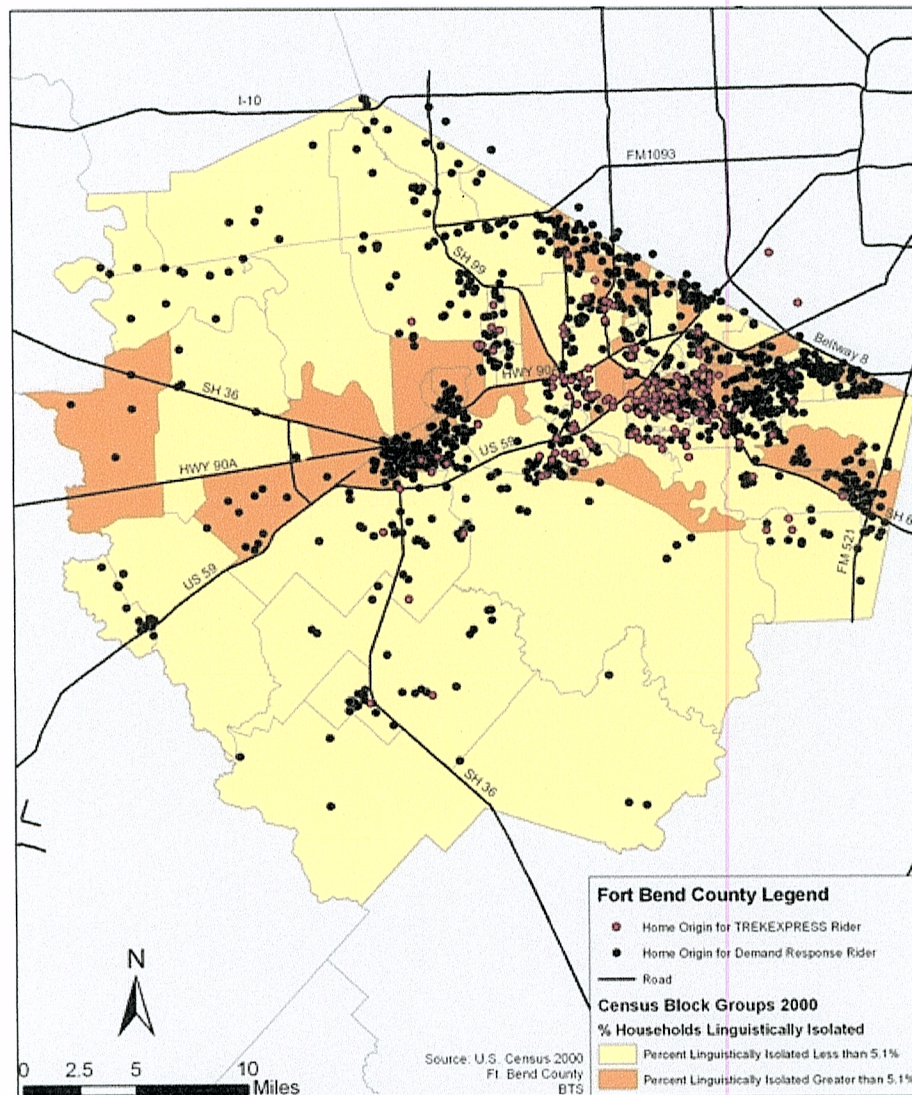


Figure 8. Transit Rider Home Addresses and Concentrations of Linguistically Isolated Households.

Population 65 Years and Older

Figure 9 displays block groups within Fort Bend County with a percent of population 65 years of age and over that is greater than the county average 5.6 percent. Senior population is not specifically addressed by the Title VI objectives but represents an important target market for the demand response services provided by Fort Bend County Public Transportation.

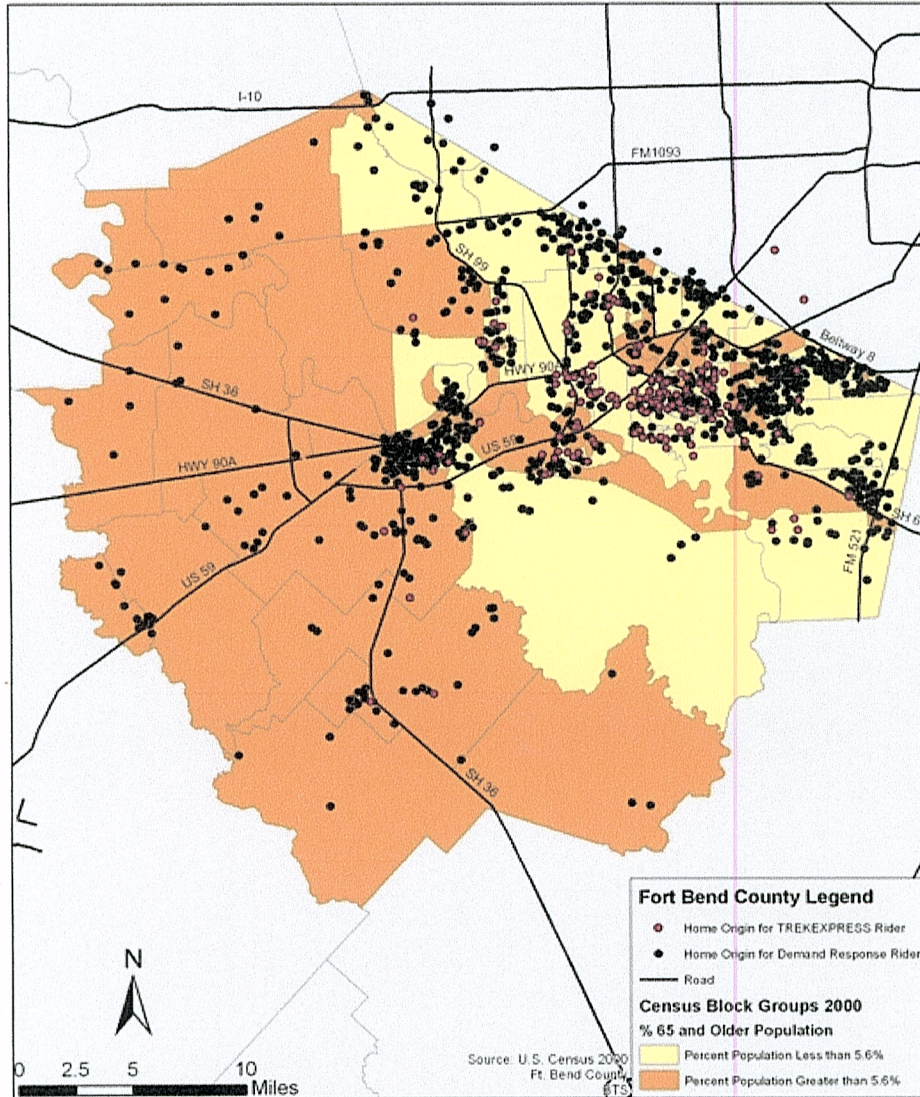


Figure 9. Transit Rider Home Addresses and Concentrations of Population 65 Years and Older.

Population with Disabilities

Figure 10 displays the census block groups with a concentration of persons with disabilities greater than the Fort Bend County average 14.5 percent. The public transportation services provided by the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department emphasize demand response services with specific programs for persons with disabilities.

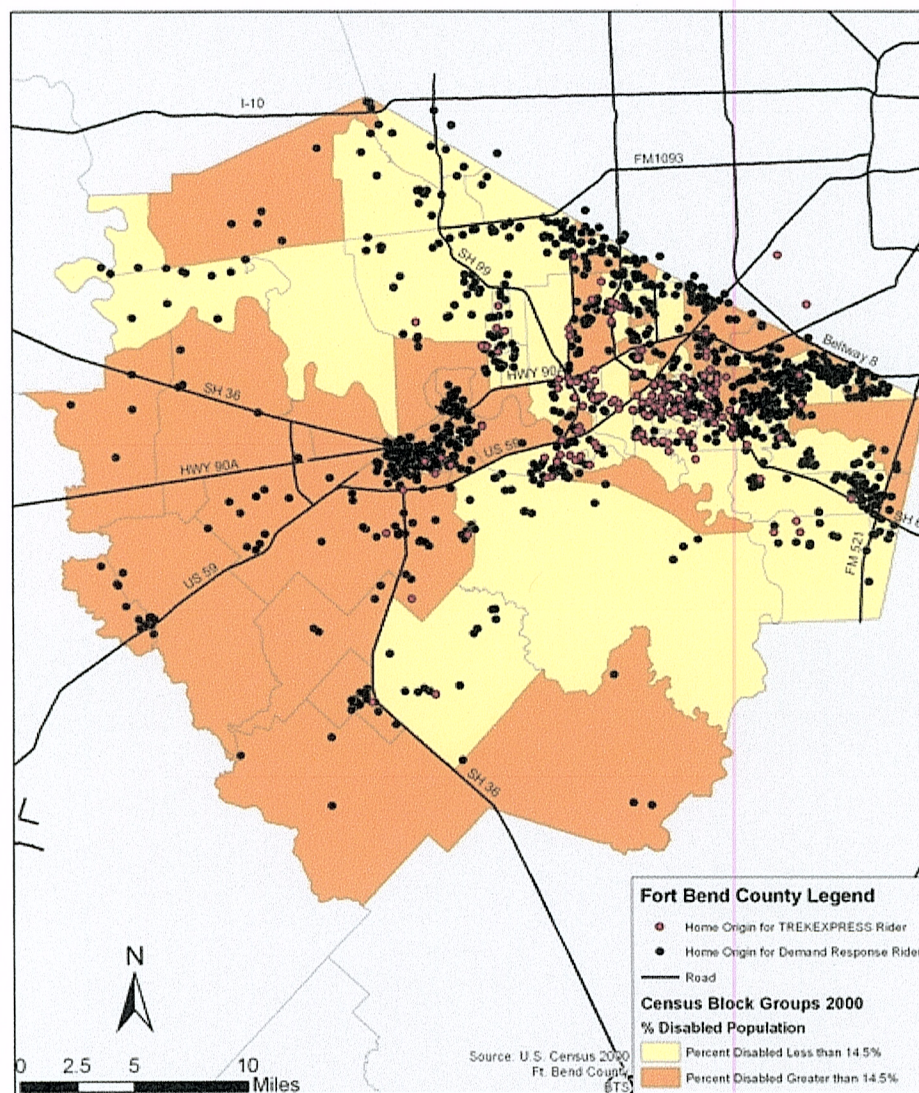


Figure 10. Transit Rider Home Addresses and Concentrations of Persons with Disabilities.

TRANSIT RIDER SURVEY FOR TREKEXPRESS

FTA Circular 4702.1A provides guidance for recipients of federal funding that provide transit service to geographic areas with a population of 200,000 people or greater. The circular calls for periodic surveys to monitor transit service.

The Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department sponsored a survey of riders on the TREKEXPRESS service in May 2008. The purpose of the passenger survey was to collect information about fixed route transit passenger demographics, travel patterns and opinions of the service. The survey was conducted on two weekdays, May 27 and 28, 2008. A surveyor was assigned to each bus trip on the route to Uptown/Galleria the first day, and a surveyor was on each bus trip to Greenway Plaza the second day.

The survey method was a self-administered survey distributed to each passenger as he or she boarded a TREKEXPRESS bus for the AM inbound trip. Passengers were asked to complete the survey and return it to the surveyor at the end of the bus trip. Table 5 shows the final survey results. Completed surveys were returned by 82 percent of all boarding passengers.

Table 5. TREKEXPRESS Boardings and Passenger Surveys by Route.

<i>Route</i>	<i>Boardings</i>	<i>Surveys</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Greenway	202	162	80%
Uptown/Galleria	93	81	87%
Total	295	243	82%

Source: TREKEXPRESS Passenger Survey May 2008

The TREKEXPRESS survey respondents provided demographic information about themselves and their household. Of all transit riders responding to the survey, 52 percent were male and 48 percent were female. The average age of all riders was 47 years. The youngest respondent to the survey was 20 years of age and the oldest was 73 years of age.

Table 6 summarizes the race and ethnicity of TREKEXPRESS passengers.

Table 6. TREKEXPRESS Survey Race and Ethnicity.

<i>Race and Ethnicity</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>
White/Non-Hispanic	99	41%
Asian American	81	33%
Black/African American	18	7%
Hispanic/Latino	14	6%
Native American	1	<1%
Other	20	8%
No response	10	4%
Total	243	100%

Source: TREKEXPRESS Passenger Survey May 2008

Table 7 lists the percent of TREKEXPRESS passengers by average total household (family) income in 2006. The year 2006 was selected to be consistent with the earlier surveys of transit services for The Woodlands in Montgomery County and METRO in Harris County by the Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC).

Table 7. TREKEXPRESS Survey Household Income.

<i>Household Income in 2006</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Below \$16,000	2	<1%
\$16,000 to \$31,999	2	<1%
\$32,000 to \$53,999	10	4%
\$54,000 to \$80,999	37	15%
\$81,000 to \$99,999	30	12%
\$100,000 or More	135	56%
No response	27	11%
Total	243	100%

Source: TREKEXPRESS Passenger Survey May 2008

Respondents to the survey were asked how long each passenger had been riding transit. As illustrated in Table 8, about 1 in 4 passengers (25 percent) began riding transit within 6 months of the survey date. On the other hand, more than 40 percent of those who responded to the survey have been riding the transit service 2 years or more.

**Table 8. TREKEXPRESS Survey
How Long Have You Been Riding Transit?**

<i>Duration Riding Transit</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Less than 6 months	60	25%
6 to 12 months	26	11%
1 to 2 years	54	22%
2 to 5 years	58	24%
More than 5 years	40	16%
No response	5	2%
Total	243	100%

Source: TREKEXPRESS Passenger Survey May 2008

Passengers were also asked how often each uses transit. Of all respondents to the survey, 62 percent reported using transit 5 or more days per week ("transit" could include services offered by Houston METRO on Saturday and Sunday). Another 31 percent ride transit 3 or 4 days per week. The responses to the survey as summarized in Table 9 document that 93 percent of TREKEXPRESS passengers ride transit frequently (3 or more days per week).

**Table 9. TREKEXPRESS Survey
How Often Do You Ride Transit?**

<i>Frequency Riding Transit</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>
6 or 7 days per week	3	1%
5 days per week	148	61%
3 or 4 days per week	75	31%
1 or 2 days per week	6	2%
Once in a while	3	1%
This is my first time	3	1%
No response	5	2%
Total	243	100%

Source: TREKEXPRESS Passenger Survey May 2008

An important reason for conducting the TREKEXPRESS passenger survey was to determine rider opinion about transit services. Table 10 summarizes passenger opinions about four key indicators of service quality. Of all respondents to the survey, 97 percent to 99 percent strongly agreed or agreed that TREKEXPRESS service is on-time, safe, clean and drivers are friendly. TREKEXPRESS rider opinion of service is very high in all categories.

Table 10. TREKEXPRESS Rider Opinion of Service Quality.

<i>Service Quality Indicators</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Transit services operate on time	48%	49%	3%	0%
I feel safe when riding bus	54%	45%	0.4%	0.4%
Drivers are helpful and friendly	51%	48%	0.8%	0%
Vehicles are clean	45%	53%	0.8%	0.8%

Source: TREKEXPRESS Passenger Survey May 2008

SECTION 4. ACCESS TO TRANSIT FOR PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

In previous statistical analyses of demographic characteristics by census block group, Fort Bend County identified the concentrations of population that have limited English proficiency. Two demographic variables were documented and mapped: LEP persons over 5 years of age who speak English not well or not at all and households that are linguistically isolated (no member of the household 14 years and over speaks English very well).

The purpose of this section is to look more specifically at what languages other than English are spoken at home by Fort Bend County residents and to gauge the extent to which these populations may access transit services. The analysis will help the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department to develop and carry out a language implementation plan.

Several sources of information were accessed to identify languages other than English that are most prevalent in Fort Bend County. Data from Census 2000 were analyzed to identify linguistically isolated households that speak Spanish. Census 2000 was also a source of data to identify the specific languages spoken at home. More recent data were collected from the largest school districts in Fort Bend County about languages spoken by “English as a Second Language” (ESL) students.

SPANISH LINGUISTICALLY ISOLATED HOUSEHOLDS

Table 11 compares the number of linguistically isolated households in Fort Bend County to the number of Spanish linguistically isolated households (meaning Spanish is the language spoken by the household). Spanish is the language spoken in 63 percent of linguistically isolated households.

Table 11. Fort Bend County Linguistically Isolated Households.

<i>Total Households (HH)</i>	<i>Linguistically Isolated HH</i>	<i>Percent Linguistically Isolated HH</i>
111,164	5,710	5.1%
<i>Total HH</i>	<i>Spanish Linguistically Isolated HH</i>	<i>Percent Spanish Linguistically Isolated HH</i>
111,164	3,611	3.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME

Nation of origin is one of the Title VI demographic categories; however, nation of origin is not a demographic specifically provided by Census 2000 data. For the purposes of this analysis, the population that speaks a language other than English at home identifies the nation of origin. The Census 2000 data are reported by census tract as population over age 5 in which a language other than English is spoken at home. Appendix B presents the data.

A benefit of looking at languages spoken at home is to identify the languages that are most familiar to a person whose nation of origin is not the United States. This information will serve as guidance for Fort Bend County to provide language assistance for growing segments of the population.

According to Census 2000, there are three languages other than English spoken at home by more than 1 percent of the Fort Bend County population. These languages are: Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese. As shown in Table 12, Spanish is the language spoken at home by the largest percent of the population over age 5, almost 18 percent.

Table 12. Languages Other than English Spoken at Home.

<i>Total Population 5+</i>	<i>Population 5+ Spanish Spoken at Home</i>	<i>Percent Spanish Spoken at Home</i>
327,666	57,612	17.6%
<i>Total Population 5+</i>	<i>Population 5+ Chinese Spoken at Home</i>	<i>Percent Chinese Spoken at Home</i>
327,666	9,779	3.0%
<i>Total Population 5+</i>	<i>Population 5+ Vietnamese Spoken at Home</i>	<i>Percent Vietnamese Spoken at Home</i>
327,666	5,120	1.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Spanish Spoken at Home

Figure 11 shows the census tracts where the percent of the population over age 5 who speak Spanish at home is greater than the county average 17.6 percent. The distribution of transit rider home origins within the highlighted areas indicates that Fort Bend public transportation services are accessed within census tracts where a higher percent of the population speak Spanish at home.

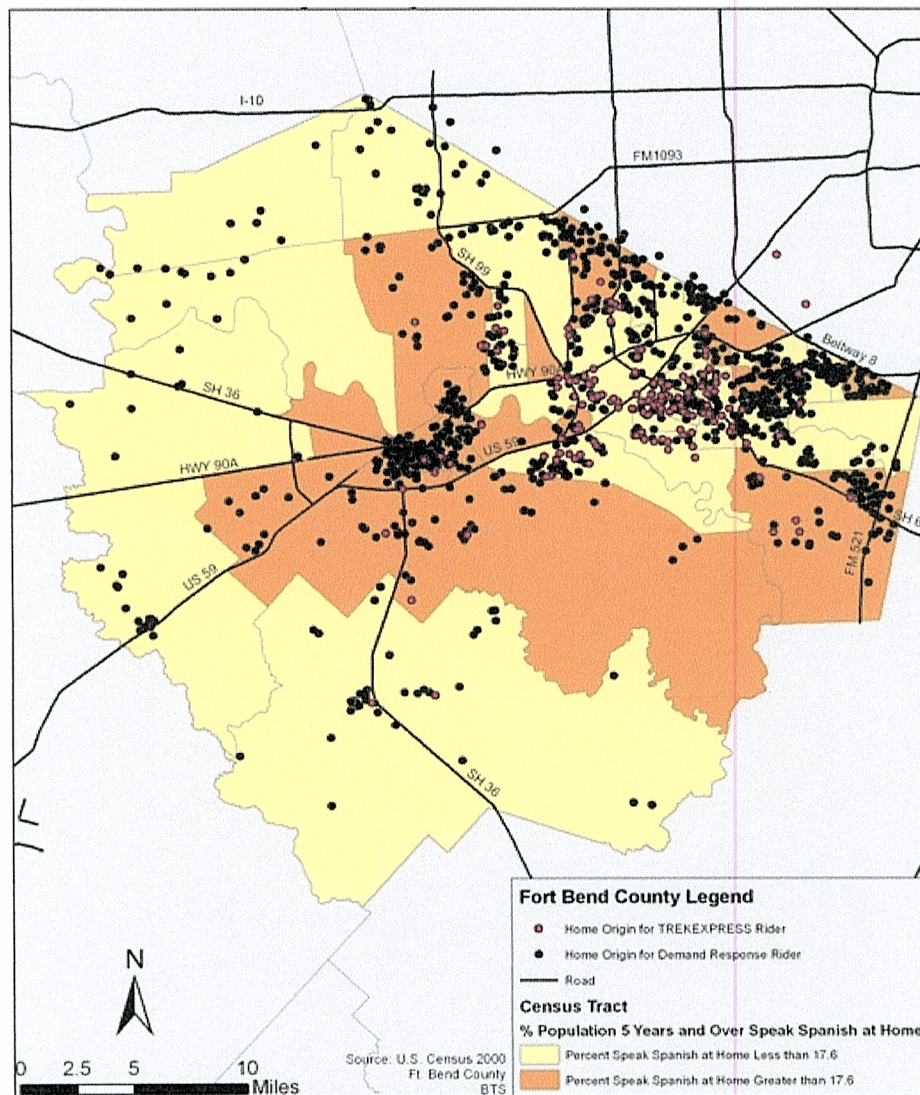


Figure 11. Transit Rider Home Addresses and Concentrations of Population that Speak Spanish at Home.

Chinese Spoken at Home

Figure 12 shows the areas where the percent of the population over age five who speak Chinese at home is greater than the county average 3.0 percent. The distribution of transit rider home origins within the highlighted areas indicates that Fort Bend public transportation services are accessed within census tracts where a higher percent of the population speak Chinese at home.

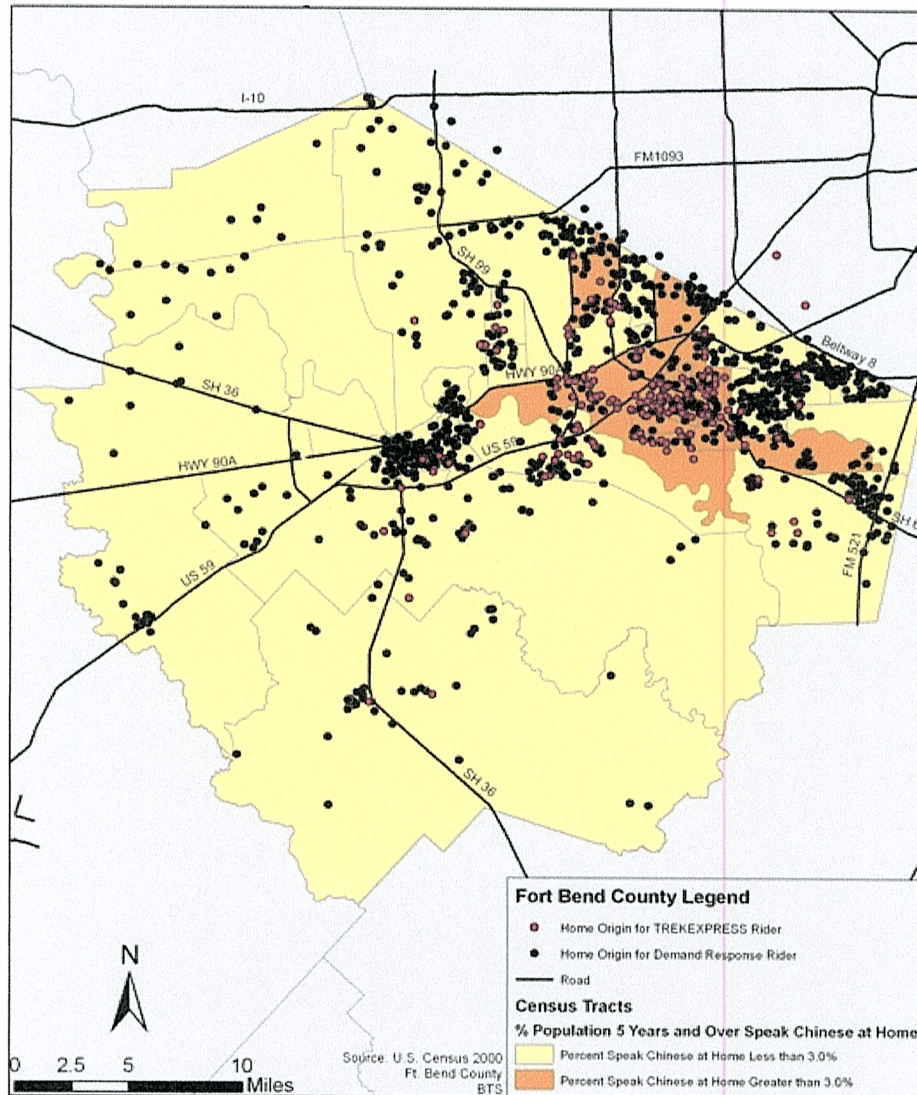


Figure 12. Transit Rider Home Addresses and Concentrations of Population that Speak Chinese at Home.

Vietnamese Spoken at Home

Figure 13 shows the census tracts where the percent of the population over age 5 speak Vietnamese at home is greater than the county average 1.6 percent. Just as reflected by the analysis of the population that speak Chinese at home, Fort Bend public transportation services are accessed within census tracts where a higher percent of the population speak Vietnamese at home.

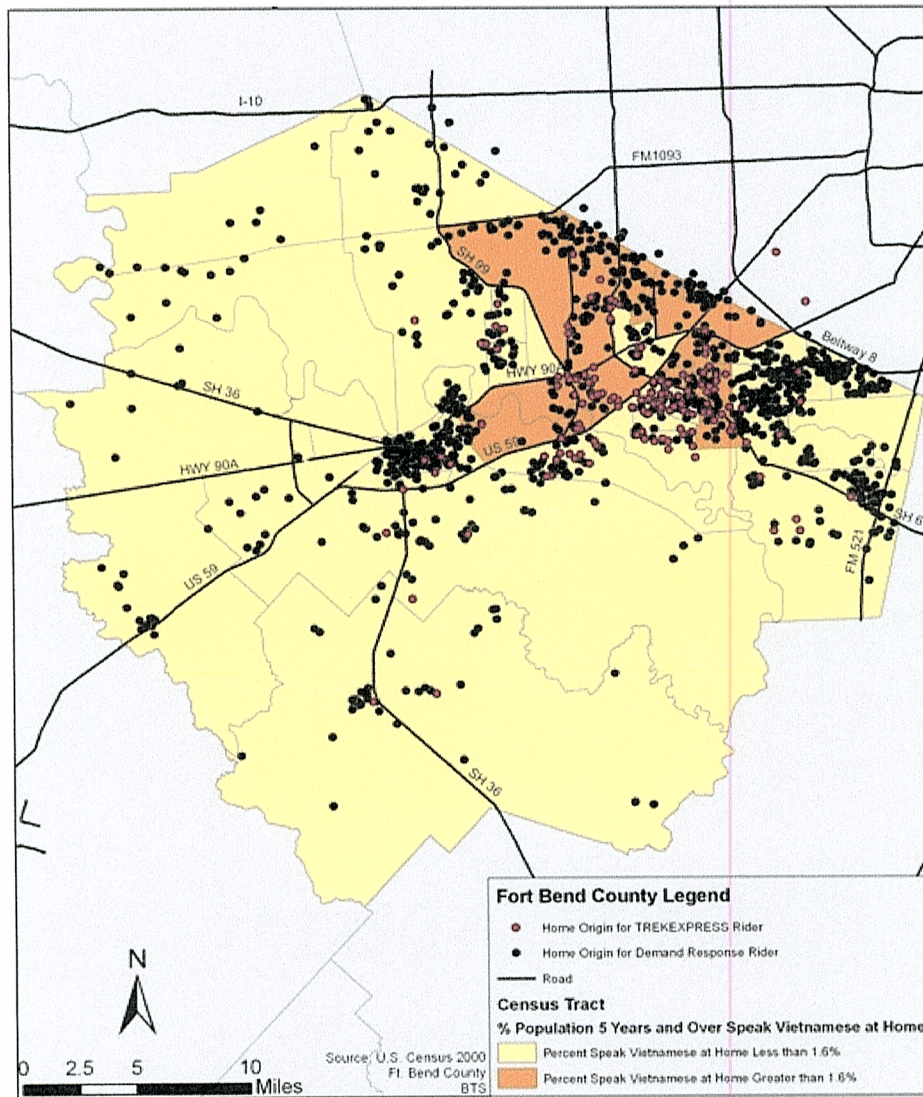


Figure 13. Transit Rider Home Addresses and Concentrations of Population that Speak Vietnamese at Home.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)

All school districts maintain a database for languages spoken by students for whom English is a second language. The data are updated every school year and provide a record of specific languages spoken within each school in the district. School district ESL data provide a way to monitor growth in the populations that speak other languages by looking at trend lines year to year. Fort Bend Independent School District (FBISD) and Lamar Consolidated Independent School District (LCISD) are the two largest school districts in Fort Bend County.

Table 13 displays languages spoken by ESL students in FBISD as of the fall 2009. The most ESL students speak Spanish as the native language. The next two largest numbers of ESL students speak Vietnamese and Urdu (the native language of Pakistan).

Table 13. Top Ten Non-English Languages Spoken in FBISD Fall 2009.

<i>Language</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percent in District</i>
Spanish	1,680	2.42%
Vietnamese	524	0.75%
Urdu	444	0.64%
Mandarin (Chinese)	252	0.36%
Malayalam	157	0.23%
Arabic	133	0.19%
Cantonese (Chinese)	133	0.19%
Hindi	126	0.18%
Pilipino (Tagalog)	100	0.14%
Ibo/Igbo	81	0.12%

Source: FBISD (69,425 total students)

Table 14 displays languages spoken by ESL students in LCISD. LCISD has a larger percent of ESL students who speak Spanish as the native language than FBISD.

Table 14. Top Ten Non-English Languages Spoken in LCISD Fall 2009.

<i>Language</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percent in District</i>
Spanish	3,583	14.97%
Vietnamese	149	0.62%
Urdu	81	0.34%
Ibo/Igbo	53	0.22%
Arabic	48	0.20%
Cantonese (Chinese)	34	0.14%
Pilipino (Tagalog)	30	0.13%
Mandarin (Chinese)	28	0.12%
Other Languages	28	0.12%
Malayalam	18	0.08%

Source: LCISD (23,934 total students)

SECTION 5. TITLE VI POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

According to the guidance provided by FTA Circular 4702.1, the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department must ensure that programs, policies, and activities comply with DOT Title VI Regulations.

The purpose of this section is to present a statement of policy for compliance with Title VI, instructions for how a member of the public may file a discrimination complaint, and procedures for tracking and investigating Title VI complaints. The Public Transportation Department has a responsibility to provide public notice to the beneficiaries of its public transportation services of protection under Title VI.

TITLE VI STATEMENT OF POLICY FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Fort Bend County is committed to a policy of non-discrimination in the conduct of its business, including the Title VI responsibility to deliver equitable and accessible transportation services. Fort Bend County officially formed the Public Transportation Department in June 2005 to provide residents with safe and efficient public transportation services while maintaining service quality and customer satisfaction.

The Public Transportation Department recognizes its responsibility to the Fort Bend County community in which it operates and to the society it serves. The Public Transportation Department will utilize its best efforts to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under the Fort Bend County program of transit service delivery and related benefits. Further, the Public Transportation Department will utilize best efforts to provide equitable and accessible public transportation services to persons of low income and persons with limited English proficiency.

In order to comply with the Title VI requirements, the Public Transportation Department strives to accomplish the following objectives:

- Ensure that the level and quality of transportation service is provided without regard to race, color or national origin;
- Identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects of programs and activities on minority populations and low-income populations;
- Promote the full and fair participation of all affected populations in transportation decision making;
- Prevent the denial, reduction or delay in benefits related to programs and activities that benefit minority populations or low-income populations; and
- Ensure meaningful access to programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency.

The responsibility for carrying out Fort Bend County's commitment to Title VI responsibilities rests with the Director of the Public Transportation Department. All managers, supervisors, and

employees in the Public Transportation Department share in the responsibility for making the Title VI Program a success.

Fort Bend County is committed to safeguarding against discrimination in its provision of public transportation services. Any person who feels he or she may have been discriminated against is encouraged to report in writing such a violation to the Fort Bend County within 180 days of the alleged discrimination. Additional information concerning the Fort Bend County Title VI obligations and the complaint procedure can be found by calling (281) 633-7433 or on the county's web site <http://www.co.fort-bend.tx.us/getsitepage.asp?sitePage=23544>.

FILING A DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT

The responsibility for carrying out Fort Bend County's commitment to Title VI responsibilities rests with the Director of the Public Transportation Department. All managers, supervisors, and employees in the Public Transportation Department share in the responsibility for making the Title VI Program a success.

Any person who feels he or she may have been discriminated against is encouraged to report in writing such a violation to the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department within 180 days of the alleged discrimination. If the individual believes that he/she has been excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination based on race, color, national origin, language, or income level under Fort Bend County's Public Transportation Department programs for transit service delivery or related benefits, the individual may file a complaint with the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department:

- Mail to the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department, Attention Assistant Director of Public Transportation, 12550 Emily Court, Suite 400, Sugar Land, TX 77478;
- Telephone (281) 633-7433;
- Fax (281) 243-6710; or
- Email at Transit@co.fort-bend.tx.us.

Appendix E of this report provides a copy of the recommended complaint form. Comments can be submitted in a format other than the complaint form. If the complaint is filed verbally, the information will be documented in writing by the Public Transportation Department.

TRACKING AND INVESTIGATING TITLE VI COMPLAINTS

The Assistant Director will review and investigate every complaint promptly. Reasonable measures will be undertaken to preserve any information that is confidential. At a minimum the Assistant Director will:

- Identify and review all relevant documents, practices and procedures;
- Identify and interview persons with knowledge of the Title VI violation, i.e., the person making the complaint; witnesses or anyone identified by the Complainant; anyone who may have been subject to similar activity, or anyone with relevant information.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Assistant Director will complete a final report and deliver it to the Director of Public Transportation. If a Title VI violation is found to exist, remedial steps as appropriate and necessary will be taken immediately. The complainant will also receive a final report together with any remedial steps. The investigation process and final report should take no longer than twenty-five (25) business days. If no violation is found and the complainant wishes to appeal the decision, he or she may appeal directly to the Director of Public Transportation, 12550 Emily Court, Suite 400, Sugar Land, TX 77478.

The Assistant Director will maintain a log of Title VI complaints received from this process which shall include the date the complaint was filed; a summary of the allegations; the status of the complaint; and actions taken by the Department of Public Transportation in response to the complaint. Should Fort Bend County receive a Title VI complaint in the form of a formal charge or lawsuit, the complaint will be forwarded to the Fort Bend County Attorney.

Complaints may also be filed with the following organization no later than 180 days after the date of the alleged discrimination:

Federal Transit Administration's Office of Civil Rights
Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator
East Building, 5th Floor - TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590
202-366-4018
http://www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/title6/civil_rights_5104.html

The Assistant Director will prepare and maintain a list of any active Title VI investigations, complaints, and lawsuits conducted by entities other than FTA.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department is responsible for notifying the public and beneficiaries of public transportation services of protection under Title VI and providing instructions on how to file a discrimination complaint.

To notify the public and beneficiaries of public transportation services of protection under Title VI, the Public Transportation Department will do the following:

- Post the Title VI policy statement, instructions on how to file a complaint, and access to the complaint form on the departmental website.
- Post the Title VI policy statement and instructions on how to file a complaint in the office of the Public Transportation Department.
- Include the Title VI policy statement and instructions on how to file a complaint in a published format (flyer, brochure) that can be available at public outreach events and distributed to transit users.
- Disseminate the Title VI information to all employees.

All material will be provided in English and Spanish.

