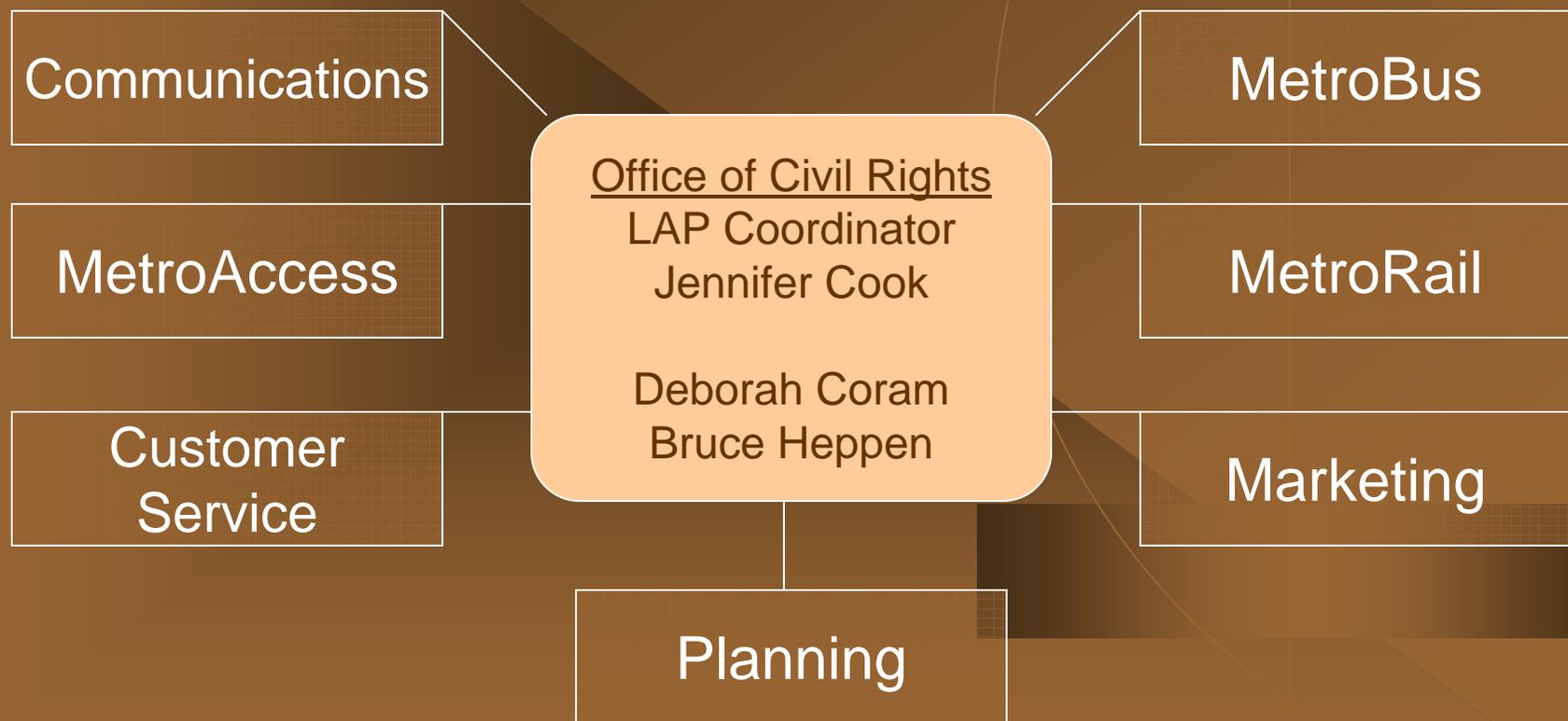


# Language Assistance Plan

**Washington Metropolitan Area  
Transit Authority (WMATA)**

8/30/2007

# WMATA LEP Responsibility Model



# Background

- ◆ Access for All (AFA) 2003 “Major Findings and Recommendations to Improve Transit Information for LEP Customers”
- ◆ 2007 “Improving Language Access to Transit in the National Capital Region”

Language access "is not just a legal requirement: but good common sense".

John B. Catoe, Jr.

General Manager  
Washington Metropolitan Area  
Transit Authority

8/30/2007

# Background

- ◆ Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- ◆ Executive Order 13166, “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency
- ◆ DOT LEP Guidance in the FTA Circular 4702.1A

# DOT LEP Guidance

- ◆ Identify LEP individuals who need language assistance
- ◆ Identify ways to provide language assistance
- ◆ Train staff
- ◆ Provide notice to LEP persons
- ◆ Monitor and update the plan

# Project Major Tasks

- ◆ Determine nature and importance of transit
- ◆ Identify the proportion of LEP persons in WMATA's Service Area
- ◆ Determine frequency of contact with WMATA's services
- ◆ Assess current resources available and the costs to provide language assistance services

# Project Major Tasks

- ◆ Determine nature and importance of transit
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# Nature and Importance of Transit

- ◆ **Key to achieving mobility for many LEP persons**
- ◆ **More than 11% of LEP persons aged 16+ use public transit as primary means of transportation to work**
- ◆ **Public transit used at higher rates by recent immigrants**

# Project Major Tasks

- ◇ Determine nature and importance of transit
- ◆ Identify the proportion of LEP persons in WMATA's Service Area
- ◇ Determine frequency of contact with WMATA's services
- ◇ Assess current resources available and the costs to provide language assistance services

# Demographics of LEP Population in WMATA's Service Area

- ◆ More than 800,000 persons (21% of the region) are foreign born
- ◆ 23% speak a language other than English at home; 10% speak English less than “very well”
- ◆ Arlington, VA, Alexandria, VA, Fairfax County, VA, & Montgomery County, MD – LEP populations exceed 10%

# Demographics of LEP Population in WMATA's Service Area

<b>WMATA Jurisdiction</b>	<b>LEP Population</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
District of Columbia	38,236	7.1%
Arlington County, VA	29,793	16.6%
Alexandria City, VA	17,193	14.3%
Fairfax County, VA	122,821	13.2%
Montgomery County, MD	105,001	12.9%
Prince George's County, MD	53,743	7.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>366,757</b>	

*Brookings Report does not specify LEP data for cities of Falls Church or Fairfax, VA.*

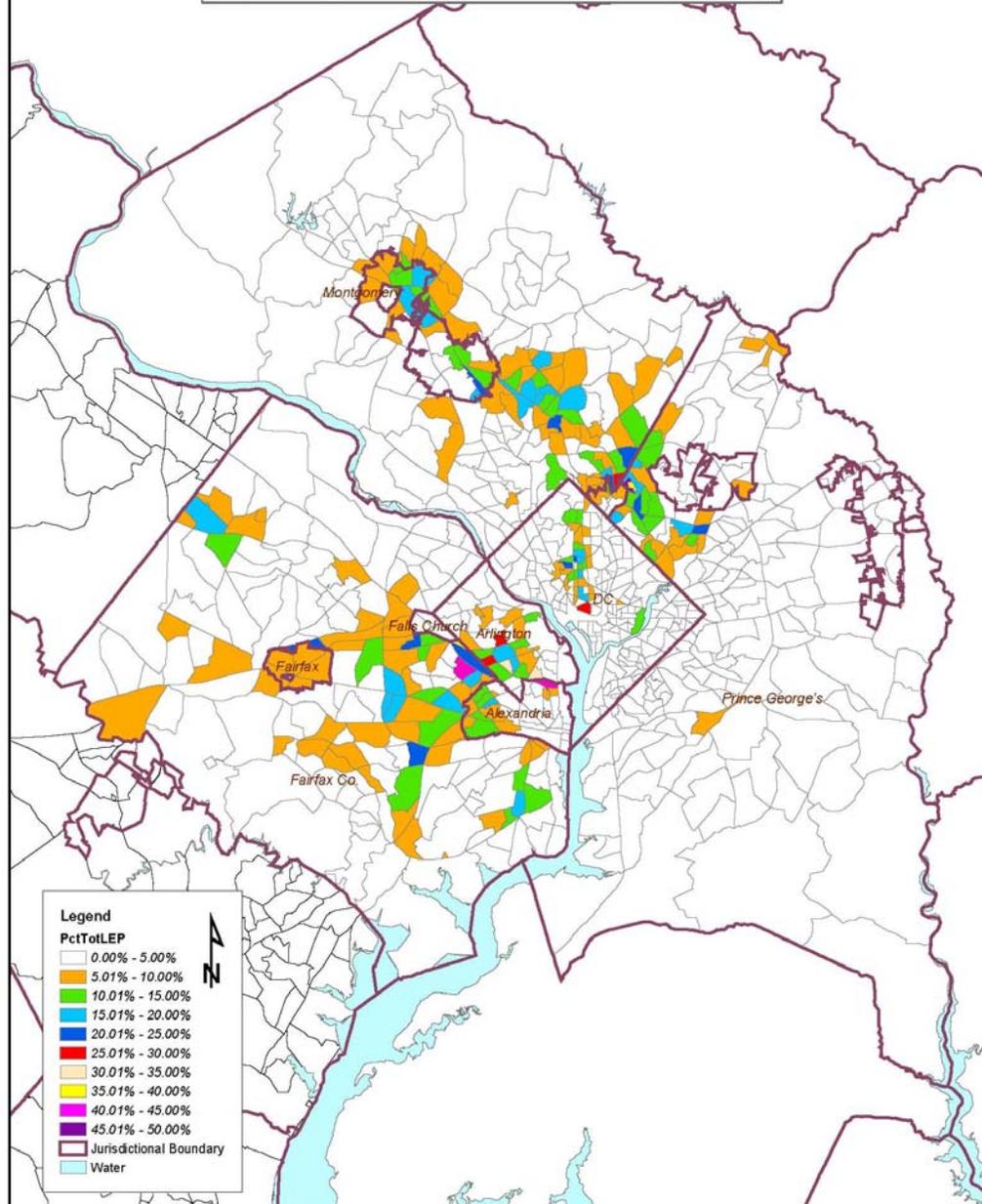
# Demographics of LEP Population in Washington, DC Region

<b>Language</b>	<b># of LEP Speakers</b>	<b>% of LEP Speakers</b>
<b>Spanish</b>	<b>215,581</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>Korean</b>	<b>29,919</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Vietnamese</b>	<b>24,181</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Chinese</b>	<b>21,722</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>French</b>	<b>12,705</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Arabic</b>	<b>8,197</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Amharic</b>	<b>7,377</b>	<b>2%</b>

*Source: 2000 Census Bureau – includes jurisdictions not in WMATA Service Area.*

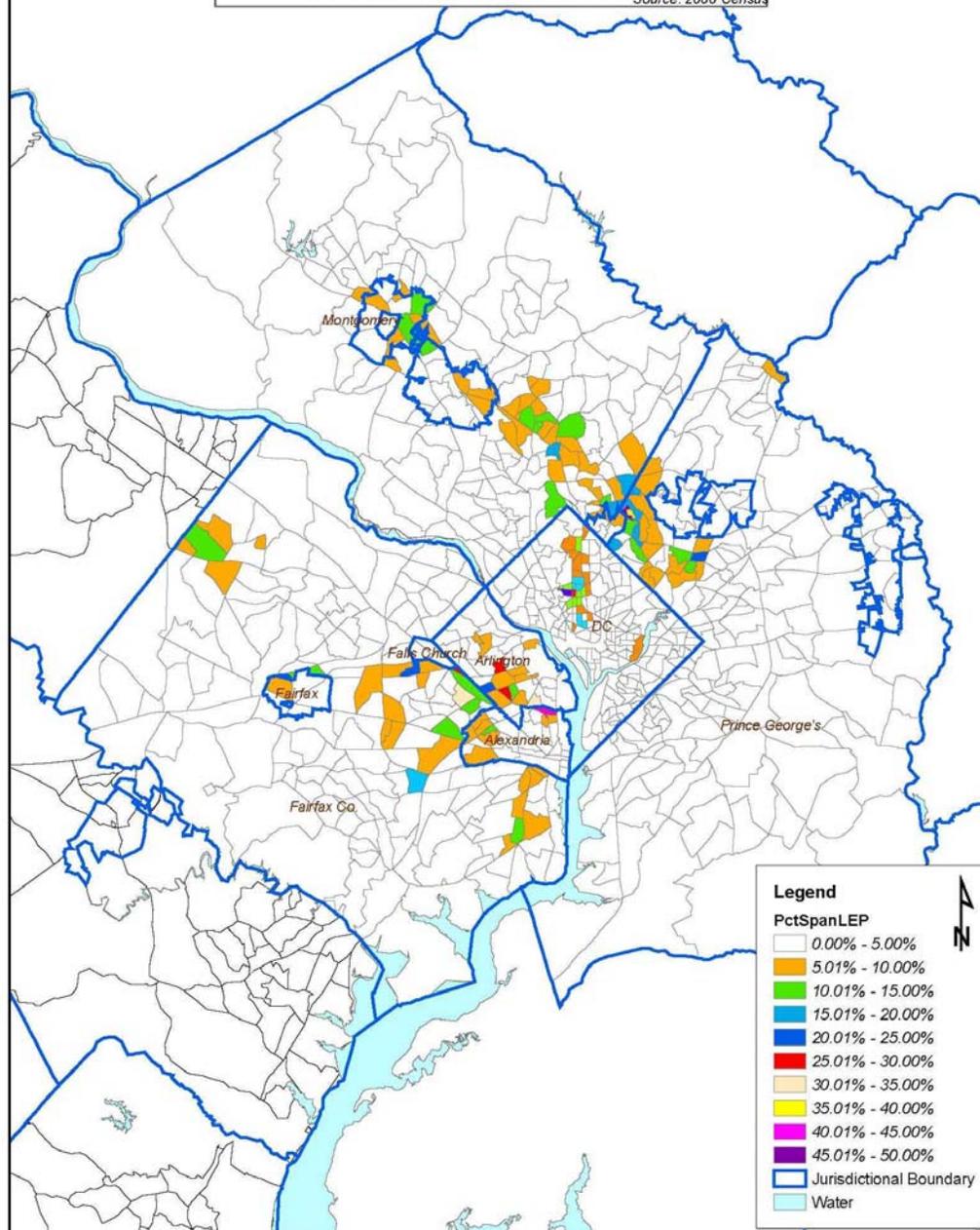
Source: 2000 Census

## LEP Populations in WMATA Service Area (Spanish, Indo-Euro, Asian-Pacific, Other)



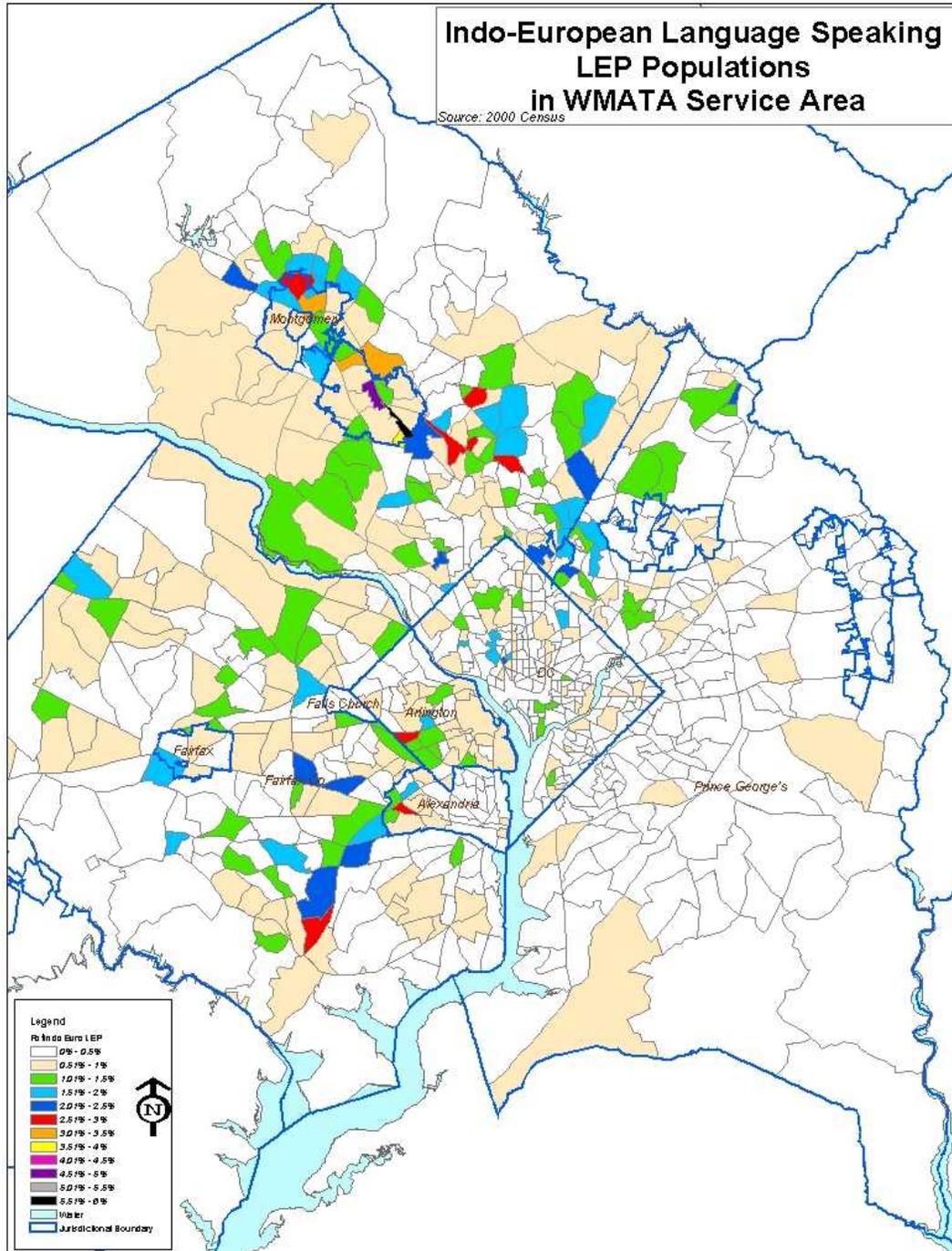
# Spanish Speaking LEP Populations in WMATA Service Area

Source: 2000 Census



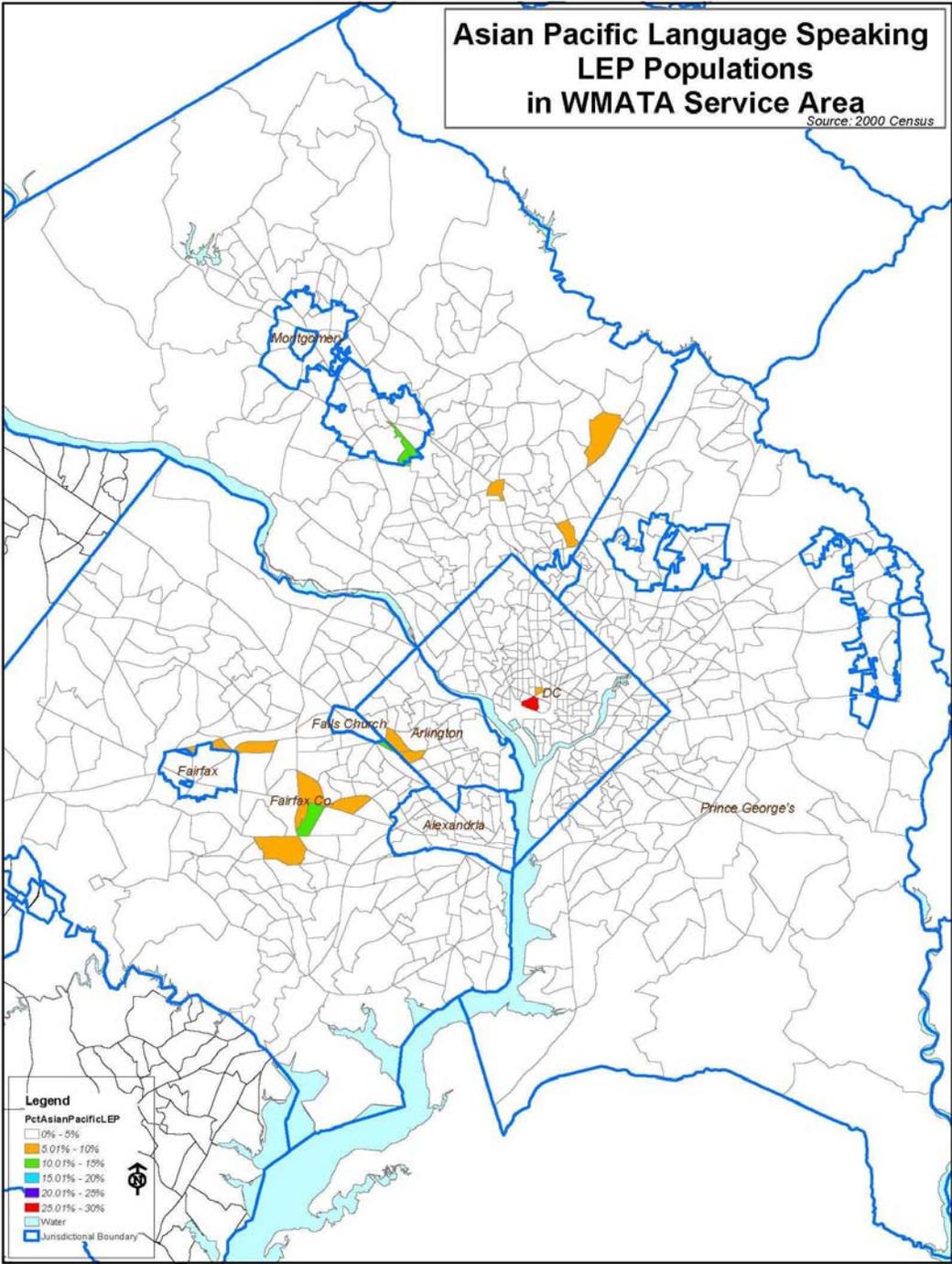
# Indo-European Language Speaking LEP Populations in WMATA Service Area

Source: 2000 Census



# Asian Pacific Language Speaking LEP Populations in WMATA Service Area

Source: 2000 Census



# Demographics of LEP Population in WMATA's Service Area

- ◆ **Public School District Data on LEP students registered during 2006/2007**
  - ◆ **District of Columbia**
  - ◆ **Montgomery County**
  - ◆ **Fairfax County**
  - ◆ **Prince George's County**

# Demographics of LEP Population in WMATA's Service Area

- ◆ **Current public school districts show a few additional concentrations:**
  - ◆ **Woodbridge and Occoquan in southern Fairfax County**
  - ◆ **Adelphi in Prince George's County**
  - ◆ **Germantown in Montgomery County**
  - ◆ **Georgetown in Northwest Washington, DC**

# Project Major Tasks

- ◇ Determine nature and importance of transit
- ◇ Identify the proportion of LEP persons in WMATA's Service Area
- ◆ Determine frequency of contact with WMATA's services
- ◇ Assess current resources available and the costs to provide language assistance services

# Frequency of Contact by LEP Persons with WMATA Services

- ◆ Frequency of encounter by persons that require language assistance is approximately one percent (1%) of all calls.



**Call Center Data**

# Frequency of Contact by LEP Persons with WMATA Services

- ◆ Frequency of encounter by persons that require language assistance is approximately less than one percent (1%) of all visits.



**WMATA Website  
Data**

# Frequency of Contact by LEP Persons with WMATA Services

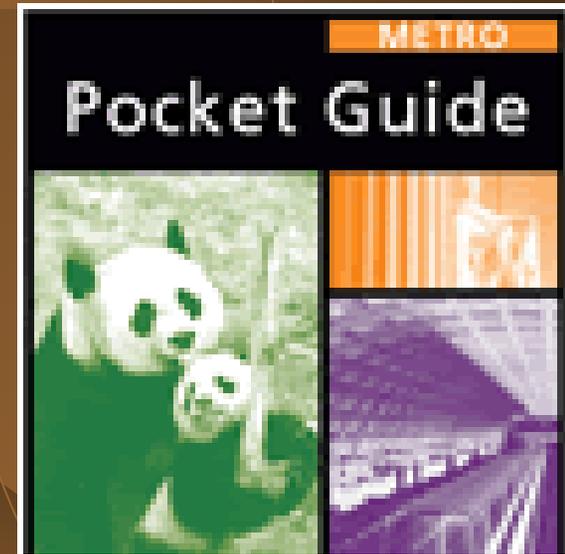
Translation	Monthly Average
English to Japanese	3,170
English to Spanish	3,046
English to Korean	2,662
English to French	2,378
English to Chinese	2,332
English to German	1,962



**WMATA Website  
Data**

# Frequency of Contact by LEP Persons with WMATA Services

- ◆ Available in ten languages
- ◆ Jan. – Apr. 2007
  - ◆ 89.3% English
  - ◆ 3.1% Spanish
  - ◆ 1.7% Chinese
  - ◆ 1.2% French
  - ◆ 0.8% Korean & Japanese
  - ◆ 0.5% Vietnamese & Arabic
- ◆ 10.7% of downloads in other languages



**10.7% of downloads in other languages**

*Jan. – Apr. 2007*

# Frequency of Contact by LEP Persons with WMATA Services

- ◆ **Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire**
  - ◆ Fewer than 4% of all respondents of Hispanic heritage
- ◆ **Rail Passenger Survey**
  - ◆ Estimated 15,000 LEP persons ride daily
  - ◆ 5% of all persons

# Frequency of Contact by LEP Persons with WMATA Services

- ◆ **Metro Bus Ridership**
  - ◆ **Estimated 62,500 LEP persons ride daily**
  - ◆ **Approximately over 25% of all bus riders**

# Frequency of Contact by LEP Persons with WMATA Services

- ◆ **Metro Access Ridership**
  - ◆ **Estimated 30 LEP persons ride daily**
  - ◆ **Approximately 1% of all MetroAccess riders**

# Frequency of Contact by LEP Persons with WMATA Services

- ◆ 1% of calls to Call Center
- ◆ Less than 1% of Website translations
- ◆ 11% of Pocket Guide downloads
- ◆ 4% Hispanic respondents to Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire
- ◆ 5% of riders on rail
- ◆ 25% of riders on bus

# Summary of Input from Community Representatives

- ◆ LEP community not aware of multilingual materials and language assistance services.
- ◆ Community organizations do not have information from WMATA to share with LEP persons.
- ◆ LEP persons rely on friends and family members to teach them how to ride transit.
- ◆ LEP persons often work more than one job and rely on Metro to get them there, often far distances.
- ◆ LEP persons, especially new immigrants, are wary of outsiders and rely on community groups and leaders.

# Summary of Input from Community Representatives

- ◆ Metro should train community groups to train LEP persons.
- ◆ Machine translators are often inaccurate and out of context.
- ◆ WMATA information on other languages should be simple and easy to understand...not detailed and complicated.
- ◆ Trip planner is hard to use...even if available in native language.
- ◆ Consider use of landmarks to aid with directions.
- ◆ LEP persons not familiar with computers and machines such as fare vending equipment.
- ◆ Advertise and make announcements on Telemundo and other Spanish speaking TV and radio.

# Summary of Input from Community Representatives

- ◆ LEP persons are moving out to Prince William, Manassas and beyond to find affordable housing.
- ◆ Many recent immigrants satisfy their transportation needs by sharing a single auto among several family members.
- ◆ Immigrants who have a bad experience on transit may hesitate to use it again.
- ◆ First generation immigrants may use transit, but second generation wants to get a car.
- ◆ Front line employees, including transit police, can be rude and threatening to LEP persons.
- ◆ Bus stop announcements (on LED screens) should be in English so LEP persons can learn street names.

# Project Major Tasks

- ◇ Determine nature and importance of transit
- ◇ Identify the proportion of LEP persons in WMATA's Service Area
- ◇ Determine frequency of contact with WMATA's services
- ◆ Assess current resources available and the costs to provide language assistance services

# Gracias Kamsahamnida Cám ón M goi Xie xie Merci Shukran Amesegunalhun

- ◆ Boat People SOS
- ◆ CASA of Maryland
- ◆ DC Office of Language Access
- ◆ Hispanic Committee of Virginia
- ◆ Multicultural Community Service
- ◆ Prince George's County Language Access Office
- ◆ Sudanese American Community Development Organization

# Access for All Subcommittee Report

- ◆ Existing transit materials not well distributed.
- ◆ Inadequate information in customer-friendly formats targeted to LEP speakers.
- ◆ Front-line employees lack consistent customer service skills and cultural sensitivity.
- ◆ LEP speakers not involved in language access decisions at transit agencies.
- ◆ No central point of contact or language access plan.
- ◆ Three locations “Hot Spots” are identified for focused language access efforts.

# Today's Oral Language Assistance Measures

- ◆ Metro Service Call Center: 12 bilingual operators and translation service for 85 languages
- ◆ Rail Station Announcements in Spanish
- ◆ How to Ride Metro Video in five languages
- ◆ Work with Hispanic media
- ◆ Translation services with “Next Bus”
- ◆ IVR Trip Planning available in Spanish in the fall
- ◆ Translators at community public meetings

# Today's Written Language Assistance Measures

- ◆ Metro Bus schedules – English/Spanish
- ◆ Metro Pocket Guides available in ten languages
- ◆ Spanish translations as appropriate
  - ◆ Bus detour signs
  - ◆ Service change brochures and signs
  - ◆ Signage at rail stations
- ◆ Bus maps at selected shelters
- ◆ Spanish media advertisements
- ◆ SmarTrip brochure available in Spanish
- ◆ WMATA website
- ◆ Translated materials at public community meetings

# Today's "Other" Language Assistance Measures

- ◆ Translators and translated materials at public meetings where warranted.
- ◆ Recent consultation with LEP Groups representing LEP persons in development of the draft LAP.
- ◆ Metro's Hispanic Coordinator works with Spanish media (TV, print, radio) to get information to community.
- ◆ WMATA has an ongoing diversity recruitment program.
- ◆ Functional Spanish language training program for front-line staff (pilot in October...rollout in January).
- ◆ Mandatory training in customer service and diversity awareness for front-line staff.
- ◆ Metro maps include nearby attractions and landmarks (pocket guide, rail and bus maps)

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Adopt standard operating procedures for frontline staff and contractors when encountering a LEP customer.
  - ◆ Use of “I Speak” Cards
  - ◆ Language assistance notifications
  - ◆ Provision of written translated materials
  - ◆ Customer call center contact information
  - ◆ Use of mobile telephones or vehicle radio
  - ◆ Emergency procedures

**Front-line transit employees lack consistent customer service skills and cultural sensitivity.**

**Stress customer service and provide cultural sensitivity training to front-line employees.**

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Expand and enhance the written translation services available on WMATA's website
  - ◆ Add Vietnamese, Amharic and Arabic.
  - ◆ Label language 'links' by name.
  - ◆ Increase written materials with simple descriptions.

**Existing transit materials not well distributed.**

**Create additional transit information in non-English languages.**

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Expand and enhance the written translation services available on WMATA's website
  - ◆ Explore a better web translation software
  - ◆ Spanish version of Trip Planner (*in development*).

**Online trip planner in languages other than English.**

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Provide written notification of free language assistance in seven languages (Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese, French, Arabic and Amharic).
  - ◆ Signs on buses, rail cars and at rail stations. (Start with Hot Spots). Expand systemwide.
  - ◆ Outreach documents to local media, schools, community and religious organizations

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Provide written notification of free language assistance in seven languages
  - ◆ WMATA website and Intranet
  - ◆ Emphasize at staff training

**Existing transit materials not well distributed.**

**Inadequate transit information in customer-friendly formats.**

**Point of contact for language access not widely known.**

**Partner with local organizations to distribute materials.**

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Distribute WMATA multilingual materials (Metro Pocket Guide, How to Ride Metro video/DVD) to community organizations.

**Existing transit materials not well distributed.**

**Post instructional videos online and widely distribute videos to community/faith-based organizations.**

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Develop and implement a program of “training” LEP community leaders on how to use WMATA services and how to obtain language assistance services.

**Inadequate transit information in customer-friendly formats.**

**Partner with local businesses, school, community & faith based organizations to distribute materials, advertise translation service, sell passes, and provide training.**

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Increase WMATA's internal bilingual capabilities by identifying and certifying bilingual employees to provide oral language assistance. Continue to recruit and hire bilingual frontline employees.

**Recruit frontline employees from communities served.**

**Compensate bilingual employees fairly.**

**Pilot assigning bilingual customer service reps to ride highly used routes and available at high traffic crossroads. Possibly use community volunteers.**

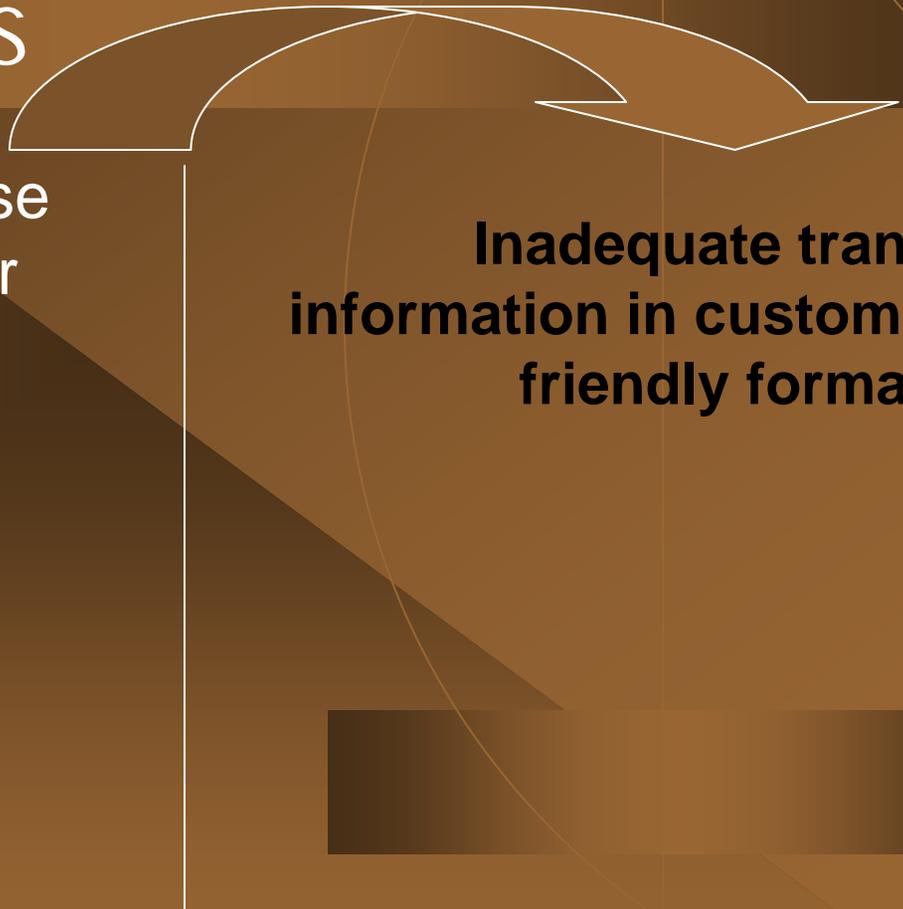
# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Expand public announcements on Metrorail and Metrobus in LEP languages, initially safety and security messages, in Spanish and English, and on Metrobus Annunciator system.

**Inadequate transit information in customer-friendly formats.**

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Consider increased use of pictographs or other symbols to convey messages on how to use Metro and safety information.



**Inadequate transit information in customer-friendly formats.**

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Develop and implement front line staff training on WMATA LEP policies and procedures.



**Front-line transit employees lack consistent customer service skills and cultural sensitivity.**

**LEP related training part of new employee orientation and on-going re-certification training.**

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

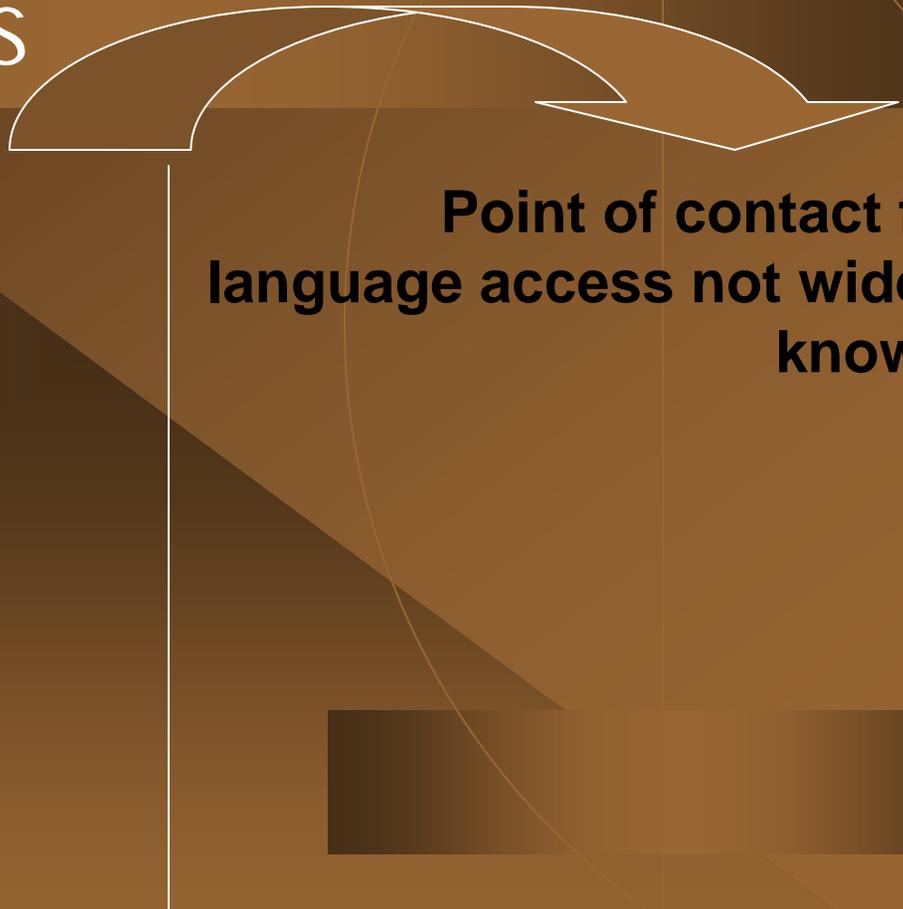
- ◆ In monitoring and updating of the LAP, solicit feedback from the LEP community via questionnaire. Solicit feedback from AFA Subcommittee and WMATA's RAC.

**Limited English speakers have not been adequately involved in language access decisions.**

**Incorporate successful strategies from “Hot Spots” program.**

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Establish a Language Access Plan (LAP) Committee and LAP Coordinator.



**Point of contact for language access not widely known.**

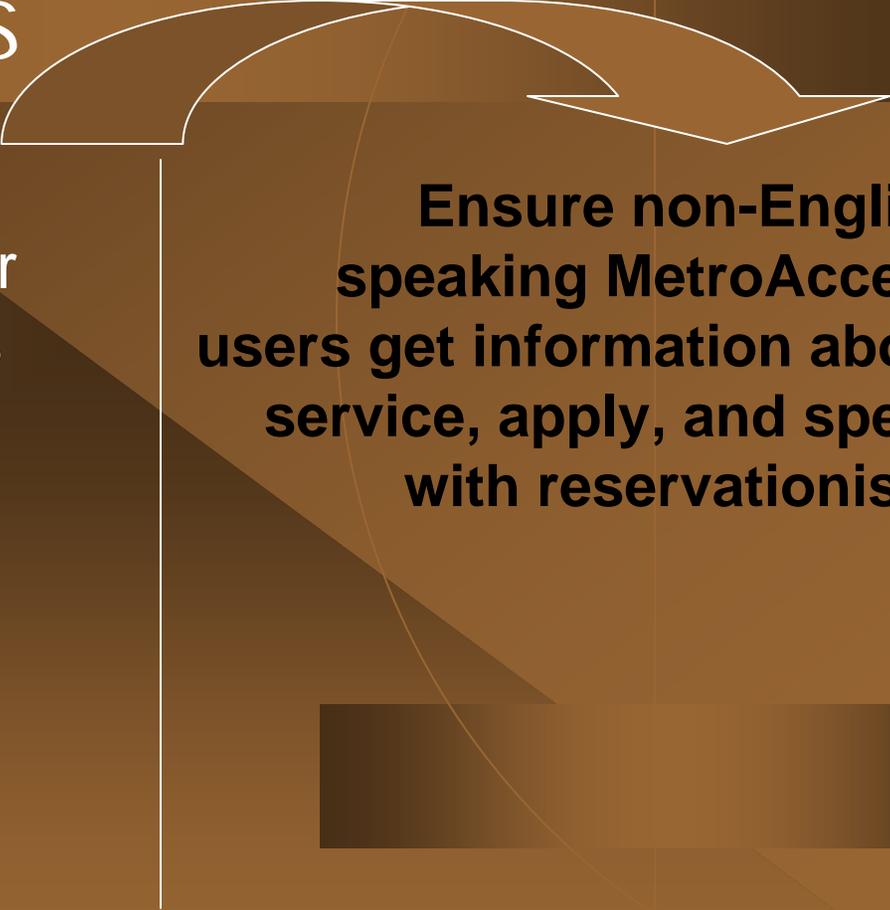
# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Utilize bilingual Metro staff to monitor language assistance measures by using the website, contacting the call center and by posing as customers to identify continuing barriers faced by LEP persons.

**Pilot assigning bilingual customer service reps on highly used routes and high traffic crossroads. Community volunteers could be trained to provide assistance.**

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Expand use of translation line to other parts of Metro such as MetroAccess.
- ◆ Work with Access Services to determine LEP needs of persons with disabilities.



**Ensure non-English speaking MetroAccess users get information about service, apply, and speak with reservationists.**

# Recommendation of Additional Language Assistance Services

- ◆ Enhance current mandatory training in customer service and diversity awareness to include cultural sensitivity to LEP persons.

**Front-line transit employees lack consistent customer service skills and cultural sensitivity.**

# Monitor and Update LEP Plan

- ◆ Feedback Questionnaire to LEP Community
- ◆ Annual Presentation to WMATA's RAC and AFA Subcommittee
- ◆ Measure changes to LEP demographics
- ◆ Measure actual frequency of contact
- ◆ Use bilingual staff, posed as customers, to identify continuing barriers.
- ◆ Participate in coalition of local government LEP coordinators

# Language Assistance Plan Implementation Timetable – Page 1

Item	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr '08	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr '08	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr '08	FY 2009	FY 2010
Adopt LEP SOPs	Finalize & distribute SOPs	Train frontline Employees in "Hot Spots"	Train frontline Employees in "Hot Spots"	Train frontline Employees & implement SOPs systemwide	Train frontline Employees & implement SOPs system wide
Enhance written translation services on wmata.com		Add Vietnamese & Arabic; name links – not flags	Assess translation service	Make translation changes as appropriate	Make translation changes as appropriate
Written notification of language assistance services	Finalize notification language	Print car cards and posters/post on website	Place on Metro vehicles and place in "Hot Spot" areas		

# Language Assistance Plan Implementation Timetable – Page 2

Item	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr '08	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr '08	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr '08	FY 2009	FY 2010
Distribute multilingual materials	Assess existing materials and distribute those available	Revise and/or create new materials	Print and assemble materials	Distribute materials to "Hot Spots"	Complete distribution system wide
"Train the Trainer" Program			Develop curriculum and materials		Initiate training sessions in "Hot Spot" areas
Identify and recruit bilingual staff	Continue recruitment efforts	Conduct survey of current staff	Investigate certification training		Certify bilingual staff
Public announcements	Develop SOP for bilingual announcements		Begin bilingual safety and security announcements		Begin bilingual service disruption announcements
Consider use of symbols and pictographs				Obtain examples from other transit systems	Determine applicability and develop plan

# Next Steps

- ◆ Presentation to Access for All Advisory Committee: 8/30/2007. Comments from AFA: 9/7/2007
- ◆ Present to Title VI Language Advisory Committee: 8/30/2007
- ◆ Present to Executive Leadership Team – September
- ◆ WMATA Board Advisory Item – October
- ◆ Adopt Plan and begin implementation