

LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN

BACKGROUND

Sound Transit is committed to ensuring that limited English proficient (LEP) persons have meaningful access to the benefits, services, information, and other activities and programs provided by the agency. Accordingly, Sound Transit continuously seeks to improve the services it provides to enable communication between persons with LEP and the agency. This Language Assistance Plan (LAP), reevaluated at least once every five years, includes an analysis that identifies the LEP populations served by Sound Transit and information on how the agency provides language assistance.

FOUR-FACTOR ANALYSIS

Sound Transit uses information obtained in a Four Factor Analysis to determine what language services should be provided. The Four Factor Analysis is an individualized assessment that balances the following four factors:

1. The number and proportion of LEP persons served or encountered in the eligible service population.
2. The frequency with which LEP individuals encounter Sound Transit's programs, activities and services.
3. The importance to LEP persons of Sound Transit's programs, activities and services.
4. The resources available to the recipient and costs.

FACTOR 1 – THE NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF LEP PERSONS SERVED OR ENCOUNTERED IN THE ELIGIBLE SERVICE POPULATION

This report contains an assessment of the total LEP populations within the Sound Transit service area. The information presented here is based on 2022 Census data release from the American Community Survey and Washington State Small Area Population estimates. In 2022, the Sound Transit (ST) district had a population of 3,306,990, based on Washington State Small Area Population estimates. Using 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) data, we estimated that 10.3% of residents in the ST district are Limited English Proficient (LEP). Since ACS data are based on five-year rolling estimates, the total population reported by ACS is consistently lower than the estimates provided by the state.

The standard approach to estimating the LEP population at Sound Transit is to apply the ACS percentage to the state's population estimate. Based on this method, 10.3% of 3,306,990 results in an estimate of 341,413 LEP residents. However, if using the ACS population estimate directly, the number would be 314,013. The previous LEP population analysis was based on 2014 Census data from the American Communities Survey. The proportion of LEP residents' population in the Sound Transit service area remains similar to the 2014 estimate at roughly 10 percent.

Sound Transit reviewed the largest groups speaking a language other than English at home. A table of the languages, the percentage of foreign language speakers and the percent of the total population in the Sound Transit District appears in Table 1. There are also language groups that while combined do not reflect a numerical breakdown of the subset of languages within that group. As such, it is not feasible to prepare documents ahead of a specific request or an identified need associated with public participation efforts in compliance with Title VI.

Languages Spoken at Home

The Sound Transit district is very large (1,087 square miles across three counties). Because it is not feasible to provide translated materials in all languages identified, Sound Transit examined the largest groups listed for languages spoken at home. For each of these groups, more than 25,000 people and approximately 1 percent or more of people within the district speak that language at home. This includes both people who are and are not proficient in English.

Language Spoken at Home	Pop. Within Sound Transit Dist.	% of Sound Transit Dist. Pop.
Speak only English	2,283,055	72.6%
Spanish	221,637	7.1%
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	110,924	3.5%
Other Asian and Pacific Island languages	106,989	3.4%
Other Indo-European languages	105,470	3.4%
Other and unspecified languages	66,092	2.1%
Russian, Polish, or other Slavic languages	62,668	2.0%
Vietnamese	54,064	1.7%
Korean	43,777	1.4%
Tagalog (incl. Filipino)	41,298	1.3%
French, Haitian, or Cajun	17,759	0.6%
Arabic	15,990	0.5%
German or other West Germanic languages	13,644	0.4%
Total	3,143,367	100%

Table 1. Languages Spoken at Home

Persons Speaking English “Less than very well”

The assessment of home-spoken languages is an important piece of information but does not on its own indicate the English proficiency levels of people who speak other languages at home. Using the DOT definition of LEP (those who self-report their English ability as less than “very well”) and further analyzing the ACS data, Sound Transit was able to determine the six largest groups and their portions of the LEP population and of the Sound Transit District as shown in Table 2.

Language	% of Sound Transit Dist.	LEP Pop. in Sound Transit District
Spanish	2.7%	88,992
Chinese	1.6%	52,285
Other Asian languages	1.1%	37,472
Vietnamese	1.0%	34,117

Indo-European languages	0.8%	26,778
Russian, Polish, Slavic languages	0.8%	26,563
Korean	0.7%	24,705
Other languages	0.7%	24,203
Tagalog	0.4%	14,841
Arabic	0.2%	6,341
French, Creole	0.1%	3,857
German, Dutch	0.0%	1,259

Table 2. Percent Who Speak English "Less than very well"

The six largest language groups comprise 236,207 people. Of these, Spanish is by far the largest single LEP group in the Sound Transit District with a population of 88,992. The Spanish language group makes 2.7 percent of the people in the ST District. Chinese is the second largest LEP language group with 52,285 people and 1.6 percent of the people in the ST District. Vietnamese is the third largest LEP language group with 34,117 people and 1.0% of people in the ST District. Each of the remaining three language groups (Other Asian languages, Indo-European languages, and Russian, Polish, Slavic languages) are spoken by more than one thousand people but fewer than 1% of people in the ST District.

Comparison with LEP Requirements in Education

In the state of Washington, the Transitional Bilingual Education Program (TBIP) exists to support multilingual/English learner (MLs) students to become proficient in English. The most common languages spoken by students in the TBIP in 2024 in the ST District were Spanish, Ukrainian, Russian, and Vietnamese.

School Year	Primary Language	Student Count
2024	Spanish	34,519
2024	Ukrainian	3,279
2024	Russian	3,261
2024	Vietnamese	2,871
2024	Dari	2,756
2024	Somali	1,871
2024	Arabic	1,743
2024	Chinese-Mandarin	1,693
2024	Pashto	1,386
2024	Portuguese	1,214
2024	Amharic	1,202
2024	Marshallese	1,153
2024	Samoan	971
2024	Korean	958
2024	Punjabi	909

2024	Tigrinya	720
2024	Chinese-Cantonese	679
2024	Tagalog	674
2024	Chinese-Unspecified	632
2024	Cambodian	632

Table 3. TBIP Student Languages in School Districts

Schools also provide enrollment numbers of students considered English Language Learners (ELL). Among school districts within the ST district, 18.1% of enrolled students were considered English Language Learners in the 2023 – 2024 school year (Table 4).

School Year	All Student Count	ELL Student Count	ELL Percent
2024	435,888	79,051	18.14%

Table 4. ELL Student Count in School Districts

Many school districts and tribal schools in the Sound Transit district also offer dual-language programming, where students learn in both English and another language. Many students enrolled in dual-language programs speak a second language at home with their families; therefore, enrollment in these programs can serve as a proxy for major language groups in an area.

Table 5 shows the most common languages offered in dual-language programs for the 2023 – 2024 school year in the Sound Transit district.

School Year	Instructional Language	Dual Language Program Count
2023	Spanish	47
2023	Chinese-Mandarin	6
2023	Japanese	3
2023	Vietnamese	3
2023	Puyallup Language- Lushootseed	1

Table 5. Dual-Language Programs in School Districts

Comparison with Court Interpreter Data

In Washington state, parties in court cases have the right to an interpreter. The three counties within the ST service area each have their own Language Access Plans that identify the languages used most often in court cases where interpreters are requested.

The languages identified as one of the most frequently used languages in one or more county courts as of 2024 are found in Table 6, Table 7, and Table 8.

Language	Percent of Interpreted Events (Pierce)
Spanish	43.33%
Russian	8.29%
Samoan	7.22%

Vietnamese	4.34%
American Sign Language	3.77%
Korean	3.74%
Swahili	3.63%
Khmer (Cambodian)	3.09%
Chinese-Mandarin	2.45%
Chuukese	2.35%
Tagalog (Filipino)	2.28%
Arabic	2.13%

Table 6. Pierce County Percent of Interpreted Events

Language	Percent of Interpreted Events (King)
Spanish	47.21%
Chinese-Mandarin	5.97%
Russian	4.62%
Vietnamese	4.30%
Somali	3.76%
Punjabi	2.98%
Arabic	2.62%
Amharic	2.41%
Chinese-Cantonese	2.05%
Samoan	1.49%
Tigrinya	1.46%
Portuguese	1.42%

Table 7. King County Percent of Interpreted Events

Language	Percent of Interpreted Events (Snohomish)
Spanish	63.79%
Russian	7.40%
Vietnamese	2.57%
Chinese-Mandarin	2.44%
Arabic	2.29%
Marshallese	1.71%
Chuukese	1.56%
Amharic	1.42%
Portuguese	1.29%
Farsi	1.24%
Punjabi	1.22%

Hindi	1.18%
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Table 8. Snohomish County Percent of Interpreted Events

The most frequently used languages align very closely with ST's top 6 languages for translation. Some emerging languages not previously identified by Sound Transit can serve as the basis for further research into the breadth of these languages in the region.

Comparison of Data from Other County Services

People accessing benefits through the Women, Infant & Children (WIC) program or through the county public health clinics also have the right to an interpreter. Data on interpreter usage for these services tracks closely with the top languages identified by the courts.

Pierce (2023)		
English	22,767	88.39%
Spanish	1,883	7.31%
Russian	327	1.27%
Ukrainian	302	1.17%
French	81	0.31%
Dari	76	0.30%
Arabic	55	0.21%
Vietnamese	52	0.20%
Cambodian	24	0.09%
Punjabi	23	0.09%
PIERCE Total	25,757	

Table 9. Interpreter Usage in Pierce County

King (2023)		
English	25,214	63.81%
Spanish	6,994	17.70%
Dari	1,567	3.97%
Ukrainian	775	1.96%
Pashto	699	1.77%
Russian	534	1.35%
Somali	433	1.10%
Amharic	392	0.99%
Vietnamese	376	0.95%
Chinese	292	0.74%
KING Total	39,512	

Table 10. Interpreter Usage in King County

Snohomish (2023)		
English	11,717	72.01%
Spanish	2,708	16.64%
Ukrainian	609	3.74%
Russian	472	2.90%
Arabic	155	0.95%
Portuguese	130	0.80%
Dari	77	0.47%
Amharic	70	0.43%
Vietnamese	67	0.41%
French	58	0.36%
SNOHOMISH Total	16,272	

Table 11. Interpreter Usage in Snohomish County

Assess whether LEP Populations are Underserved due to Language Barriers

Sound Transit's annual Passenger Experience survey was fielded in fall 2024. Of the 17,448 survey respondents, 13,767 (79%) speak only English, 2,440 (14%) speak English very well, and 1,241 (7%) speak English less than very well, which suggests that LEP riders are underrepresented in the survey.

Respondents were also asked to give Sound Transit a letter grade overall, and the differences between language groups are minor. The letter grades were converted to a number scale to provide averages. Those who speak English less than very well provided a rating of 3.3, compared to 3.2 for English-only speakers and 3.1 for those who speak English very well. These results suggest that non-fluent English speakers may perceive ST's services more positively overall.

For regular day-to-day travel information, riders rated their experience on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Results were consistent across language groups, with average ratings ranging from 3.7 to 3.9.

FACTOR 2 – THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH LEP INDIVIDUALS COME INTO CONTACT WITH SOUND TRANSIT'S PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

This section provides an assessment on the frequency with which LEP persons encounter Sound Transit's programs.

Requests for Interpretation or Translation

ST tracks the number of requests for interpretation and translation services by department, as shown in Table 12 and Table 13. Between 2022 and 2025, 487 requests were received for translation services, while 130 requests were received for interpretation services. The Communications, Marketing, and Engagement department received the most requests, followed by the Executive department.

Department	Number of Requests
Communications, Marketing, and Engagement	376

Executive	66
Information Technology (IT)	29
Design, Engineering, and Construction Management (DECM)	4
Planning, Environment, and Project Development (PEPD)	4
Operations	3
Other	2
Safety	2
Finance	1
TOTAL	487

Table 12. Number of Requests for Translations Services by Department

Department	Number of Requests
Communications, Marketing, and Engagement	69
Executive	55
Other	3
Design, Engineering, and Construction Management (DECM)	2
Planning, Environment, and Project Development (PEPD)	1
TOTAL	130

Table 13. Number of Requests for Interpretation Services by Department

Origin and Destination Survey

Sound Transit conducted an origin-destination (OD) survey in the spring of 2024. This survey is THE most up to date data source on travel patterns by different language groups. The survey is designed to capture passenger information at the trip level.

In this survey approximately 22,000 weekday trip records were collected across Sound Transit services and a select number of routes from King County Metro and Community Transit (peer agencies in our district). Routes from peer agencies were selected for the survey if they operated in areas that will be served by recent and future extensions of Link Light Rail (Lynnwood Link Extension and Federal Way Lin Extension) and are not necessarily representative of the entire region.

The OD survey results suggest that 27.6% weekday trips are made by people who spoke a language other than English at home. The remaining 72.4% are made by passengers who only speak English.

Among surveyed trip takers that speak other languages at home, 4.5% speak English less than well and approximately 1% do not speak English at all. Trip takers who speak English less than well or not at all are considered LEP in this discussion. The remaining 93.6 % of trip takers who speak other languages at home speak English well or very well and are considered proficient.

FACTOR 3 – THE IMPORTANCE TO LEP PERSONS OF SOUND TRANSIT’S PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

This section provides an assessment of the importance of Sound Transit’s services and programs to LEP populations.

Trip Times

Overall weekday trip patterns look similar across language proficiency groups throughout the day with a slightly higher proportion of LEP passengers making trips in the early morning before 6 AM and in the evening peaks around 5 PM and 8 PM. Low English proficiency riders also seem to have a slightly lower proportion of trips in the morning hours between 8 AM and 12 PM (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Time of Trip by Language Proficiency

Trip Purpose

Among trips taken by LEP riders, 51% are for work, compared to 47% for both proficient and English-only riders. LEP riders also have the highest share of trips for errands and essential services (19%), compared to 9% for proficient and 11% for English-only riders. Together these results suggest a higher reliance on transit for essential travel among LEP passengers. Trips for education and childcare make up 7% of LEP trips, while they account for 16% of proficient and 10% of English-only trips. This difference is likely due to this category capturing trips by college students which are predominantly only English or proficient speakers. Social and recreational trips make up a slightly smaller share of LEP trips (9%) than proficient (11%) and English-only (13%) trips (Figure 2).

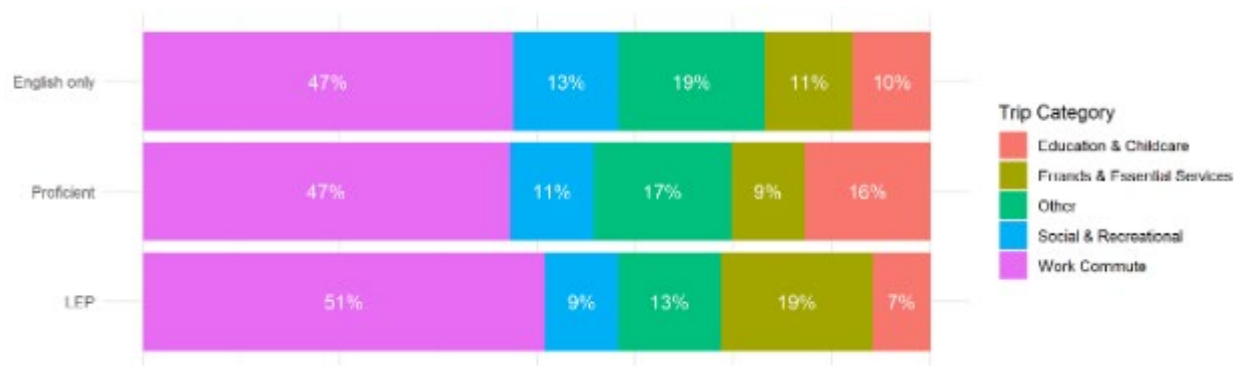


Figure 2. Trip Purpose by English Proficiency

The distribution of trip purposes by time of day is largely consistent across language proficiency groups with a few small differences. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) passengers show a higher concentration of education and childcare trips during the morning peak (7 AM – 9 AM), which might indicate that LEP trip takers use transit to get their kids to school or daycare at a higher proportion than English only or English proficient riders. Similarly, essential service trips among LEP passengers peak around 5 PM, a trend slightly less pronounced in other groups. Work commutes exhibit similar peak periods across all language proficiency groups. Social and recreational trips increase in the late afternoon and peak in the evening for all passengers (Figure 3).

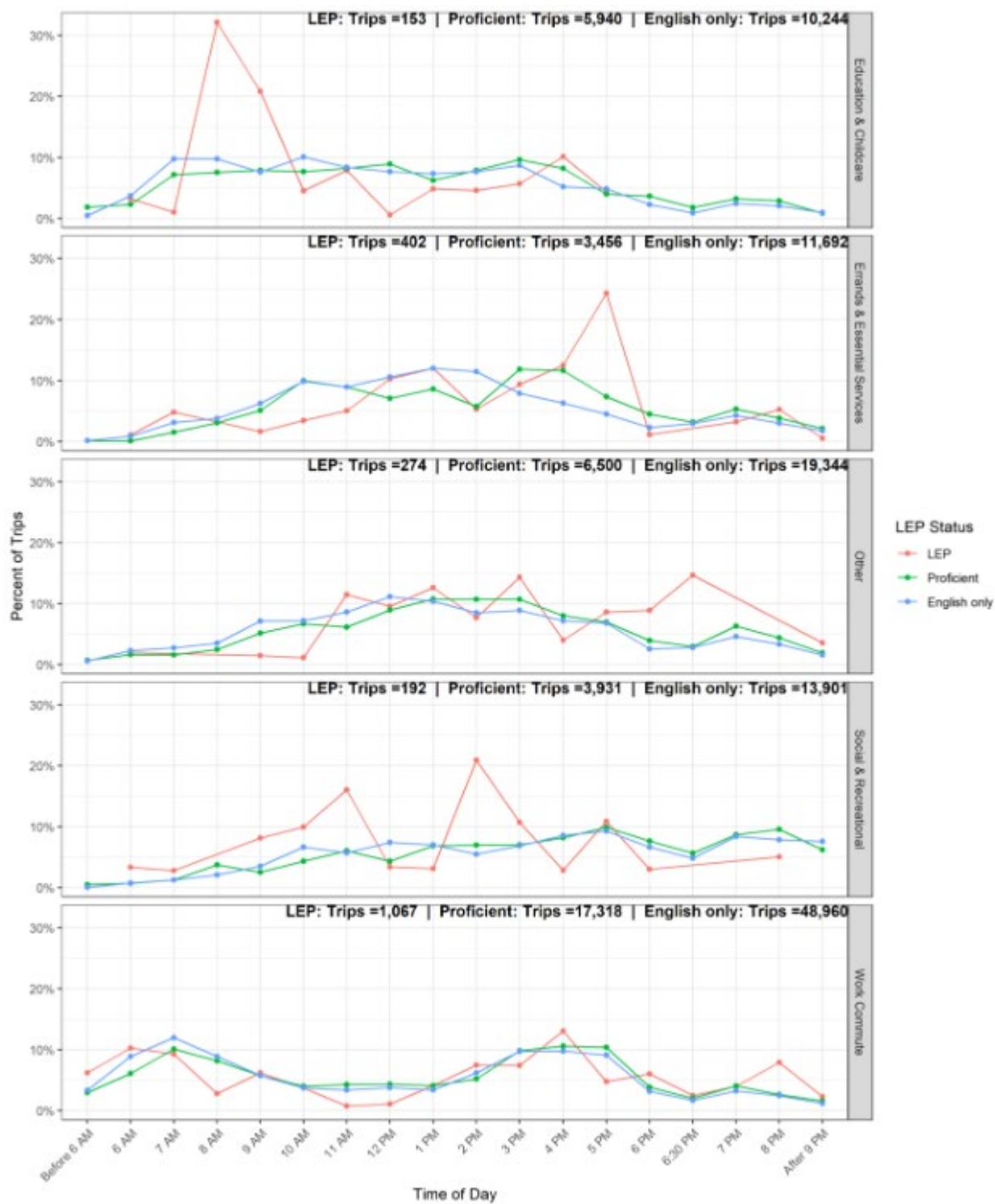


Figure 3. Trip Purpose by Time of Day and English Proficiency

Transfers

Trips made by LEP passengers are more likely to require transfers compared to proficient and English-only speakers. While a majority of LEP trips (59%) do not require transferring, this share is lower than trips by proficient (71%) and English-only riders (73%). Additionally, 31% of LEP trips require one transfer, a higher proportion than proficient (23.3%) and English-only travelers (23%). The disparity grows for two-transfer trips, with 10% of LEP passengers requiring them, compared to 5% of proficient and 4% of English-only travelers (Figure 4). These results suggest that LEP trip takers may live in areas with fewer direct transit connections to their desired destinations, compared to those who are proficient or only English speakers.

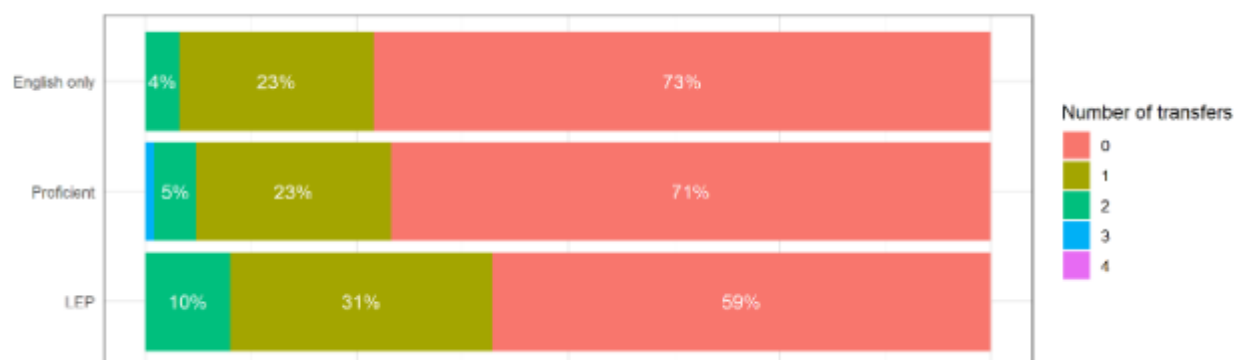


Figure 4. Number of Transfers on Trips by Level of English Proficiency

Transit Access and Egress Mode

Trips taken by LEP (Limited English Proficiency) passengers show some small differences in modes used to access transit and reach their final destinations (Figure 5 and Figure 6). A higher percentage of LEP passengers (91%) walk or roll to their first point of access to transit, compared to 83% of proficient passengers and 81% of English-only passengers. LEP passengers are less likely to access transit by car, with only 2% of LEP trips initiated by car and 4% by getting a ride. In comparison, 5% of proficient trips and 8% of English-only trips are initiated by car, while 5% of proficient trips and 8% of trips by people who speak English-only are initiated by getting a ride. The lower reliance on car travel may be related to lower levels of access to a vehicle among the LEP population. LEP passengers stated that they could have accessed a vehicle for 10% of trips to 42% of proficient and 46% of English-only trip takers. Additionally, 75% of LEP trip takers said they did not have a license compared to 25% for English only and 31% for English proficient trip takers. Although bicycle or e-bike use is low across all groups, LEP passengers use bicycles or e-bikes at an even lower rate. For example, only 0.5% of LEP trips involve bicycles or e-bikes, compared to 3% of English-only trips. These patterns are also consistent when looking at how passengers travel from transit to their final destination.

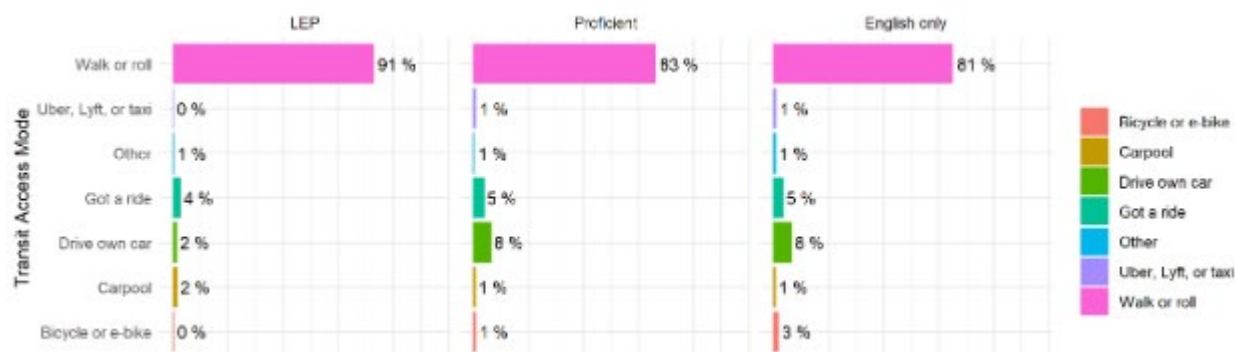


Figure 5. Transit Access Mode by Level of English Proficiency

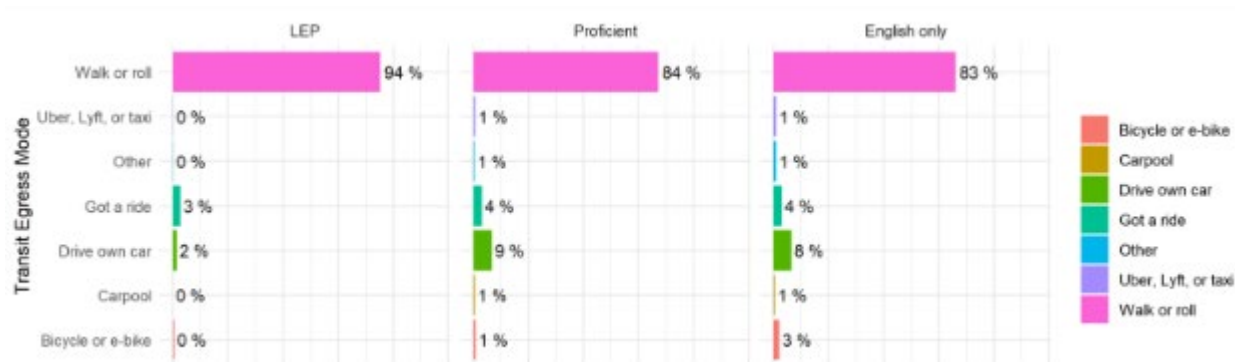


Figure 6. Transit Egress Mode by Levels of English Proficiency

Fare Payment

When comparing fare payment methods, LEP passengers show a different distribution than proficient and English-only passengers (Figure 7). A significant portion, 49%, of LEP passengers use the ORCA card. However, this is a lower proportion compared to proficient passengers at 63% and English only at 68%. 15% of LEP passengers are recorded as riding without paying, compared to 2% of proficient and 2% of English-only passengers.

A key distinction is the higher usage of cash on-board among LEP passengers, at 14%, compared to just 2% for proficient and 2% for English-only trip takers. Access to various payment methods may be related to other differences in the LEP population. For example, LEP trip takers are less likely to own a smartphone with a plan (5% do not own one compared to 2% for proficient and 3% for English-only trip takers) and are also more likely to lack a credit card (21% do not have one compared to 5% for proficient and English only trip takers).

LEP trip takers were also less likely to use a U Pass compared to those who were English proficient and English only, which may be related to the composition of the college student and university staff population. Finally, when asked about their fare category, 6% of LEP trip takers used LIFT, compared to 1% for both those who were English only and Proficient (Figure 8).

These results may suggest that LEP riders may need assistance for fare payment including information in their preferred languages and access to reduced fare programs. Programs to promote contactless payment options should seek to

understand the barriers that LEP riders face when accessing these methods which may include lack of access to a credit card or limited information.



Figure 7. Payment Method by Level of English Proficiency

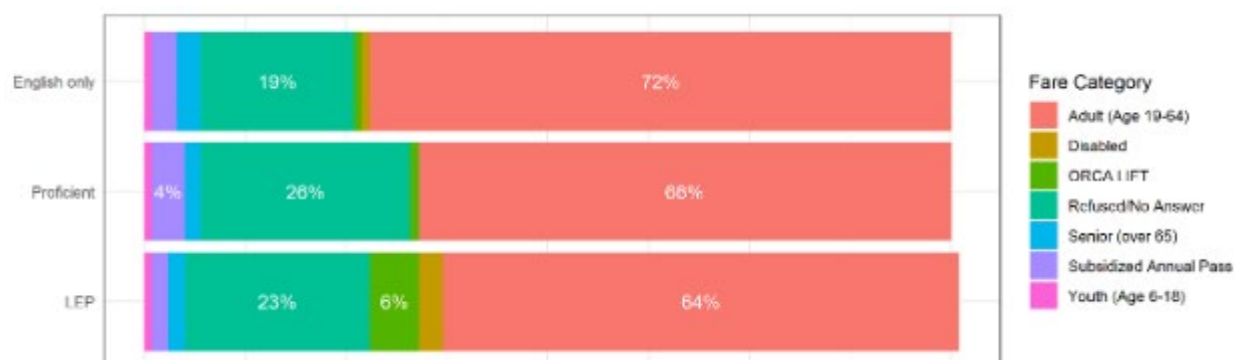


Figure 8. Fare Category by Level of English Proficiency

Origins and Destinations

LEP trips are concentrated in several key corridors and neighborhoods throughout the region, particularly in South King County and South Seattle (Figure 9 and Figure 10). These areas, including Federal Way, Kent, Renton, Tukwila, SeaTac, and Des Moines. In Seattle, neighborhoods such as Rainier Valley, Beacon Hill, Chinatown-International District, and South Park experience notable LEP travel. University District and Sea-Tac Airport also serve as key destinations for LEP travelers. The high concentrations of LEP trips along these corridors reflect the importance of public transit in connecting these diverse communities to opportunities throughout the region.

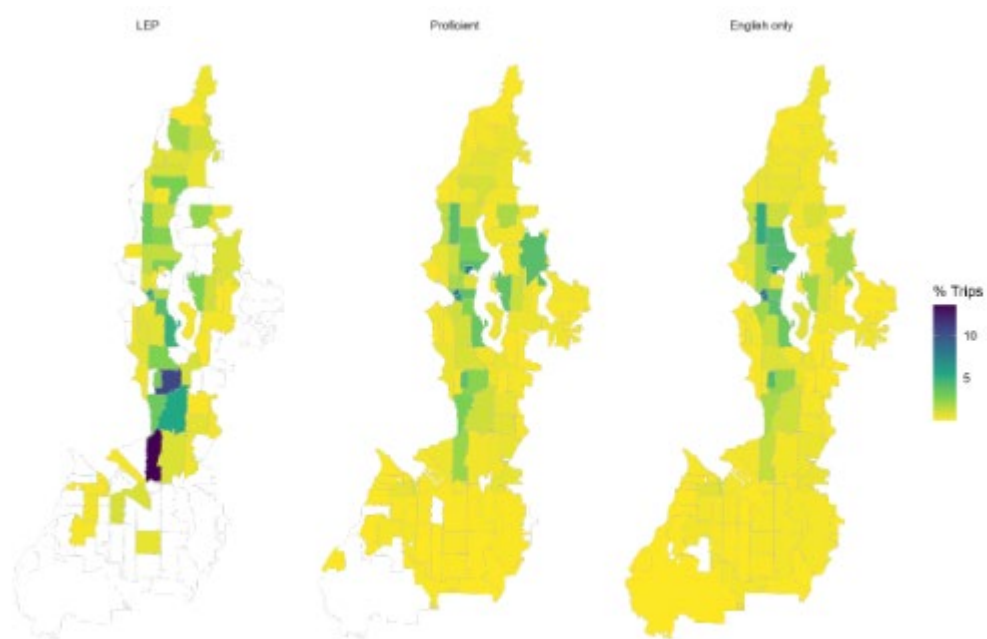


Figure 9. Proportion of Trips Originating in Zipcode by English Proficiency

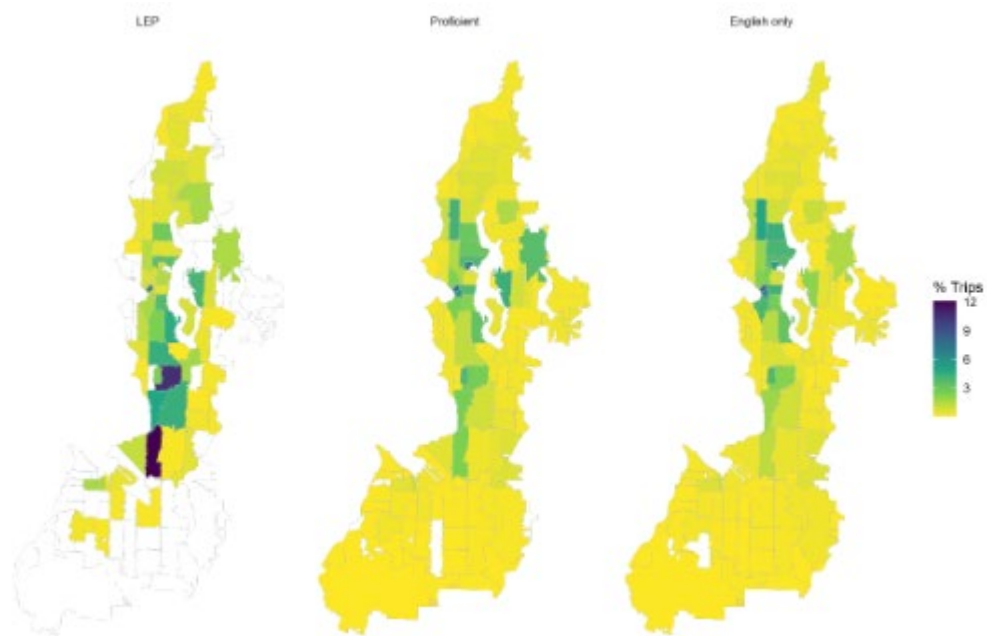


Figure 10. Proportion of Trips Ending in Zipcode by English Proficiency

FACTOR 4 – THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE RECIPIENT AND COSTS

Sound Transit uses a variety of language assistance methods through all its activities including environmental study and design, construction, operations and customer service. To this end, Sound Transit has also developed a Language Access Toolkit to help guide its interactions with LEP populations.

Translation of Written Materials

Sound Transit produces translated versions of vital documents in the most spoken languages as outlined by the Four-Factor Analysis. The agency continues to explore the costs and merits of other customized publications and the most effective distribution methods for reaching the region's major LEP language group populations. Sound Transit has more than one translation vendor under contract to ensure a continuity of services.

Interpretation Services at Public Meetings (and Related Services)

Sound Transit has on-going practices that ensure that community outreach activities are accessible to non-English speaking persons to make sure that they can participate in them meaningfully. These include:

- Making in-person interpreter services available upon request for public meetings and important events.
- Using Zoom's on-demand interpretation services during virtual public meetings.
- Providing translated key documents including project information to community groups and service providers in a project area.
- Inserting language blocks into non-translated print publications, to let LEP persons know what the material is about and how they can contact Sound Transit to learn more.
- Placing non-English language ads into publications that serve LEP persons to inform them of project-related issues (e.g. release of environmental documents, safety information).

Language Line Phone Services

ST provides over-the-phone interpreter services to LEP persons on an individualized basis. The cost of providing such services is approximately \$1 per minute. ST has determined this to be a cost-effective way to respond to the needs of LEP individuals as it directly involves persons interested in ST services.

Using Nonverbal Messages and Illustrations

ST's style guide includes both icons and illustrations that help communicate without using words. In wayfinding, icons bypass language and literacy barriers and act as visual language to help riders navigate the transit system.

Ticket Vending Machines

ST's Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs) are located at all ST Link light rail and Sounder stations and provide fare information for Link light rail, Sounder, and the regional ORCA card. The TVM's are accessible in English as well as in each of the next six most prevalent languages in the ST district. In addition to accessible TVMs, the ORCA program includes a website, mobile app, and advertising accessible in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Russian, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

Frontline Staff

Frontline staff who speak languages other than English can carry cards or wear buttons that let passengers know what languages they speak. Front-line staff can also provide language assistance cards to LEP passengers that provide information on how to get information in other languages (see LAP Appendix A).

In addition, Sound Transit has an e-learn as part of an ambassador training series. The e-Learn helps educate staff about how to provide “Passenger First” customer service and instructs staff to provide equitable assistance to LEP passengers.

Staff has found over the phone interpretive services in which a person can get specific information tailored to their needs, including follow-up questions and answers, to be an effective method of communicating with LEP customers. This approach mirrors the use of on- site interpretive services provided to LEP community members to facilitate their ability to participate in community outreach and construction update meetings. Providing oral interpretive services also serves various subsets of the LEP population who may not have the ability to read or write a language they speak.

Costs

The costs associated with supporting LEP persons can be identified through contracts with Language Line Solutions, Universal Language Service and AvantPage. These contracts provide interpretation services on-site, over the phone, over video conferencing and through Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) services and captioning. Universal Language Service rates are summarized in Table 15, while AvantPage is summarized in Table 16.

Service	Description	Price
On-Site Interpretation: American Sign Language / SPANISH / LOTS (Languages other than Spanish, 150 languages supported). Same-Day, ASAP appointments accepted for ASL and all languages.	Sign Language / Business Hours (RID / NAD certified), 2HR minimum	\$105.00 hr. \$115.00 hr. \$68.00 hr.
	Sign Language / AFTER Business Hours (RID / NAD certified), 2HR minimum	\$72.00 hr. \$68.00 hr.
	Spanish/Business Hours, 1HR minimum	\$72.00 hr.
	Spanish/after 5PM, evenings, weekends, 1HR minimum	
	Other than Spanish/Business Hours, 1HR minimum	
	Other than Spanish/after 5PM, evenings, weekends, 1HR minimum	
Over the Phone (OPI) Interpretation: Over 200 languages supported, 24/7/365	Spanish (Registered / Certified)	\$0.85 per min. \$0.95 per min.
	Languages other than Spanish (Registered / Certified)	
Video Remote Interpretation:	Sign Language (RID / NAD certified)	\$2.45 per min. \$1.45 per min.

ASL and 50 languages supported, 24/7/365, On-demand or prescheduled	50+ most common Languages (Registered / Certified)	
CART/Captioning	On-site CART/Captioning	\$191.00 hourly
One week notice requested.	Remote CART/Captioning	\$181.00 hourly
3 hour minimum. If canceled in less than two days in advance, fully billable. Includes unedited transcript.		

Table 14. Universal Language Cost

Service	Price	Unit
Over the Phone Interpretation (OPI)	\$0.85	Per minute
Video Remote Interpretation (VRI)	\$1.25	Per minute
American Sign Language (ASL)	\$2.15	Per minute
Spanish (Minimum 2 hours) <i>remote simultaneous interpreting</i>	\$200.00	Per hour
Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese (Minimum 2 hours) <i>remote simultaneous interpreting</i>	\$250.00	Per hour
Spanish onsite interpretation	\$250.00 (+\$60 travel fee)	Per hour
Cantonese onsite interpretation	\$300.00 (+\$60 travel fee)	Per hour
Mandarin onsite interpretation	\$300.00 (+\$60 travel fee)	Per hour
Vietnamese onsite interpretation	\$300.00 (+\$60 travel fee)	Per hour
ASL onsite interpretation	\$320.00 (+\$60 travel fee)	Per hour
Other Languages onsite interpretation	\$300.00 (+\$60 travel fee)	Per hour
CART	\$250 (+5% PM fee)	Per hour

Table 15. AvantPage Service Cost

Table 17 shows the total amount invoiced per company for interpretation services conducted between 2023 and 2025.

Company	2023	2024	2025
AvantPage	\$ 222,541.48	\$ 285,029.74	\$ 56,108.85
Language Line Solutions	\$ 1,072.97	\$ 3,702.75	\$ 10,155.20
Universal Language Service	\$ 408.00	\$ 22,283.01	\$ 33,507.44

Table 16. Interpretation Costs Incurred per Company

SUMMARY POINTS

From the Four-Factor Analysis, Sound Transit has determined:

- The six largest LEP language groups in the Sound Transit District are (in order Spanish, Chinese (including Mandarin & Cantonese), other Asian and Pacific Island languages, other Indo-European languages, other unspecified languages, and Russian, Polish, or other Slavic languages.
- While a wide array of LEP language groups are found throughout its service district, the largest group prevalent throughout the Sound Transit region is LEP Spanish speakers.
- Spanish speakers consistently are the most commonly requested LEP group seeking language assistance services.
- While Spanish speakers and Chinese (Mandarin) are the two largest groups, Sound Transit is committed to address the needs of the variety of LEP groups throughout its region. For this reason, Sound Transit has a telephone interpreter service that can accommodate more than 100 languages. In addition, Sound Transit's website was redesigned in 2018 to include Google Translate, an integrated translation function that can automatically translate [soundtransit.org](https://www.soundtransit.org) content into 103 languages.
- Sound Transit's Community Outreach activities throughout each project's lifecycle provide connections to community leaders and information regarding the LEP groups within each project area to reach all potential riders.
- Sound Transit continues to expand its non-English communications program in response to the demographic changes experienced in the region.

Putting Insights into Practice

FTA requires that transit systems provide "meaningful access" for LEP populations. Meaningful access is based on the four factors outlined in the Four-Factor Analysis section above. The Four-Factor Analysis helps the agency develop an implementation plan. Together the Four-Factor Analysis and the Implementation Plan form the Language Assistance Plan.

Sound Transit balances its overall commitment to the various LEP groups in the region with improvements targeted to the most commonly spoken languages in the region and sustains a focus on the following actions and measures:

- Continue to leverage the tiered approach for identifying 'Vital Documents' which help guide when and where Sound Transit needs to provide translations.
- Continue to develop and deepen relationships with organizations that serve LEP populations to ensure Sound Transit is responsive to any unique needs.

- Be adept to respond to any LEP person.
- **Staff training** - Community outreach staff and front-line staff including station agents and fare ambassadors are trained to respond to LEP individuals in person and using the telephone language line.
- **Community or project specific materials** - Sound Transit staff and consultants have access to translation services. Key materials for residents are translated or include a language block for languages relevant to that geographic area.
- **Engage LEP populations directly to gain insight and understand needs** - Survey and meet with community organizations that serve LEP populations to assess, and where appropriate, implement expanded methods to serve LEP transit riders. Where possible, employ methods to engage directly with LEP persons and obtain direct feedback.

Vital Documents

A vital document is any document that is critical for obtaining services and benefits, or which may be associated with the potential of important consequences. In determining documents needed to provide meaningful access to ST services for LEP customers, ST has defined three levels of Vital Documents. As written translations may not always be the most effective method of reaching all LEP persons or rendering transit information accessible this approach allows for the prioritization of translated materials according to the availability of resources. Depending on context, the translation of vital documents may consist of a translated document, a translated summary or key points, pictograms or a translated notice of available language assistance.

Tier 1 – Safety, security, and civil rights

Information categorized in Tier 1 is essential for accessing critical agency programs or activities or involves legal notices or rights. Providing translation or LEP accessible versions of this type of information is the highest priority. Tier 1 documents should be translated into the safe harbor languages (a threshold reached when a language specific LEP population exceeds 1,000 individuals or 5% of the population in the area) as determined by the Four Factor analysis.

Tier 2 – Basic information that makes programs and services accessible

Tier 2 includes information that helps LEP passengers better understand ST programs and facilitates the use of ST services. Tier 2 documents should be made available in English and secondly in Spanish, the most frequently encountered language in the ST district.

Tier 3 – Information to empower customers/Planning information

This tier of information encompasses materials that enhance the customer experience. Tier 3 information also enables LEP persons to participate in ST transportation decision-making.

For a more in-depth breakdown of how agency documents may be categorized according to this tier system see LAP Appendix B.

LAP Appendix A

I SPEAK LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE CARD - FRONT



I SPEAK LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE CARD – BACK**Language Assistance**

Information and assistance in your language is available upon request. Please contact us at 1-800-823-9230.

Spanish

Asistencia lingüística para los pasajeros de Sound Transit

La información y asistencia en su idioma se encuentra a su disposición, previa solicitud. Comuníquese con nosotros a través del 1-800-823-9230.

Gracias

Chinese

向 Sound Transit 乘客提供語言協助
可應要求提供您所用語言的資訊與協助。請聯絡我們：1-800-823-9230。
謝謝

Vietnamese

Hỗ Trợ Ngôn Ngữ Dành Cho Hành Khách
Sound Transit

Thông tin và hỗ trợ bằng ngôn ngữ của quý vị được cung cấp theo yêu cầu. Xin vui lòng liên lạc chúng tôi qua số 1-800-823-9230.

Cảm Ơn Quý Vị

Tagalog

Tulong na Wika para sa Mga Mananakay ng
Sound Transit

Impormasyon at tulong sa inyong wika ay available kapag hiniling. Mangyaring tawagan kami sa 1-800-823-9230.

Salamat

Korean

Sound Transit 이용자를 위한 언어 지원
요청 시 여러분의 언어로 정보 및 지원을
제공합니다. 1-800-823-9230번으로 저희에게
연락하십시오.
감사합니다

Russian

Языковая помощь пассажирам Sound Transit
По запросу предоставляется информация и
помощь на вашем языке. Обращайтесь к нам
по телефону 1-800-823-9230.
Благодарим вас!



LAP Appendix B

EXAMPLES OF INFORMATION BY VITAL DOCUMENT TIER

Tier	Information Type
Tier 1 - Safety, security and civil rights: Information that protects customers' physical safety and informs Sound Transit customers of their legal rights.	▪ Safety and Security information ▪ Notice of Rights ▪ Transit Alerts – Emergency ▪ Rider Conduct Rules/Policy
Tier 2 - Information critical to access: Information that helps LEP patrons to understand Sound Transit service to facilitate ease of use.	▪ Trip planner tool ▪ How to pay ▪ How to ride ▪ How to transfer ▪ Service changes ▪ Schedules and service maps ▪ Transit alerts ▪ Fare rates ▪ ORCA card + pass ▪ Accessibility information
Tier 3 - Information to empower customers: Information and materials that help LEP customers to understand and participate with Sound Transit at a higher new level.	▪ Passenger notices ▪ Bike information ▪ Rider etiquette ▪ Station and facilities amenities ▪ Destination Information ▪ Feedback and public involvement opportunities ▪ Expansion Planning info ▪ Construction project updates