



## Title VI Program

## Table of Contents

Purpose of the Plan.....	4
Title VI Program .....	4
Triennial Submissions to IDOT and FTA.....	4
Title VI Complaint Procedures.....	4
Title VI Investigations, Complaint, and Lawsuit Record Keeping Procedures.....	6
Limited English Proficiency (LEP)Plan .....	6
Meaningful Access to LEP Persons .....	6
Four Factor Analysis.....	6
Language Assistant Plan for LEP Individuals .....	7
Title VI Policy Statement on Language Access Plan .....	8
Beneficiary Notification Protection under Title VI .....	8
Location of Notice to the Public .....	9
Submission of Title VI Program .....	9
Conducting Analysis of Construction Projects .....	9
Promoting Inclusive Public Participation .....	9
Service Equity Analysis.....	10
Minority, Low-Income, and Limited English Proficiency Populations Concentrations ...	10
Service Monitoring.....	10
Standards for Fixed-Route Service .....	10
Monitoring and Evaluation of Service Standards .....	11
Service Policies .....	11
Service Design Policy .....	12
Service Operations Policy.....	12
Major Service Change Policy .....	12
Fare Policy .....	12
Accessibility and Amenities Policy .....	12
Public Participation and Feedback Policy.....	12
Monitoring and Implementation .....	13
JAX Environmental Justice and Title VI Summary .....	13
Statement on Subrecipient.....	13
Public Participation Plan.....	13

Long Range Service Plan (LRSP).....	13
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) & Updates.....	14
The Program of Projects (POP) .....	14
Fare increases or service reductions greater than 20%. ....	15
Public Participation Plan (PPP) and Updates.....	15
Standard Public Involvement Items .....	15
Outreach Methods.....	16
General Population.....	16
Target or Focus Groups .....	16
Key Agencies, Stakeholders and Organizations .....	17
Public Involvement Tools and Techniques.....	17
Electronic Media .....	17
Print Media.....	17
Meetings and Other Public Forums .....	18
Use of Public Input .....	18
Public Participation Tracking .....	18
Updating and Evaluation of the Public Participation Plan.....	19
Board Selection .....	19
Summary of Public Outreach .....	19
Exhibit I: Title VI Assurance.....	20
Exhibit II: Title VI Complaint Form.....	21
Exhibit III: Jackson County Population by Language (2023) .....	23
Exhibit IV: Carbondale Population by Language (2023) .....	24
Exhibit V: MPO Maps .....	25
Exhibit VI: 2023 Population Data Tables.....	30
Exhibit VII: Title VI Protection Notice to the Public .....	34

## **Purpose of the Plan**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, applies to the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration (FTA) sub-recipients. The purpose of Title VI is to ensure that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, and national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the FTA. The program described herein describes Jackson County Mass Transit District's, doing business as JAX Mass Transit (JAX) efforts to comply with Title VI regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Transportation. The objectives of the JAX Title VI program are to:

- Ensure that the level and quality of transportation service is provided equitably and without regard to race, color, and national origin.
- Avoid, minimize, or mitigate 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.
- Ensure 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 that persons with limited English proficiency have meaningful access to programs and activities that are administered by recipients and sub-recipients.

## **Title VI Program**

JAX has established the following program to comply with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and FTA, Title VI Regulations.

*"All information about the process, materials necessary to apply for eligibility, complaint process, and notices and determinations concerning eligibility will be made available in accessible formats upon request." Accessible formats in English, large print, audio and Braille also available in Spanish"*

JAX complies with the requirements of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Title VI Program. JAX will submit an annual assurance to verify Title VI compliance as part of the standard certifications and assurances it submits to IDOT with grant applications. JAX will also submit a Title VI assurance online as a part of the online applications with FTA. JAX shall also collect Title VI Assurances from any sub-recipients prior to passing through FTA funds. JAX's Title VI Assurance is attached as Exhibit I.

## **Triennial Submissions to IDOT and FTA**

JAX will report the information contained in this section to IDOT and FTA on a triennial basis with the first submission parceled as part of the plan. The following report addresses each of the eight primary Title VI considerations and the associated forms, policies, and activities of its Title VI program.

## **Title VI Complaint Procedures**

In order to comply with 40 CFR Section 21.9 (b), JAX has developed procedures for investigating and

tracking Title VI complaints. The procedures for filing a complaint will be made available to members of the public. The JAX Title VI Complaint Form is attached to this document as Exhibit II. The following measures will be taken in dealing with Title VI complaints:

1. A formal complaint must be filed within 180 days of the alleged occurrence. Complaints shall be in writing and signed by the individual or his/her representative, and will include the Complainant's name, address, and telephone number; the name of the alleged discriminating official, basis of the complaint (race, color, and national origin) and the date of the alleged act(s). A statement detailing the facts and circumstances of the alleged discrimination must accompany all complaints. Exhibit II provides JAX's Title VI complaint form.
2. In the case where a Complainant is unable or incapable of providing a written statement, a verbal complaint of discrimination may be made to JAX's Representative. Under these circumstances, the complainant will be interviewed, and the Representative will assist the Complainant in converting the verbal allegation into writing.
3. JAX will investigate complaints filed against contractors, consultants, or other sub-recipients. Complaints filed directly against JAX shall be forwarded to the IDOT Title VI Coordinator for investigation.
4. When a complete complaint is received, the Title VI Coordinator will provide written acknowledgement to the Complainant within five (5) days by registered and regular mail. At the same time, the complaint will be forwarded to the State of Illinois for investigation.
5. If a complaint is deemed incomplete, additional information will be requested from the Complainant within 15 business days from receipt of the original complaint. The Complainant will be provided 60 business days to submit the required information. Failure to do so may be considered good cause for a determination that the claim has no investigative merit.
6. Within 15 business days from receipt of a complete complaint, JAX will determine its jurisdiction in pursuing the matter and whether the complaint sufficient merit to warrant investigation. Within five (5) days of this decision, the Complainant and Respondent will receive notification of the disposition by registered and regular mail.
  - a. If the decision is not to investigate the complaint, the notification shall specifically state the reason for the decision.
  - b. If the decision is to be investigated, the notification will inform the parties that their full cooperation will be required in gathering additional information and assisting the investigator.
7. When JAX does not have sufficient jurisdiction, the complaint will be referred to IDOT for further investigation.
8. If the complaint has investigative merit, an investigator will be assigned. A complete investigation will be conducted, and an investigation report will be submitted within 45 days of receipt of the complaint. The report will include a narrative description of the incident, summaries of all the people interviewed, and a finding with recommendations.

9. A letter of findings will be issued to the Complainant and Respondent. Where appropriate, these letters will include conciliatory measures. A copy of the investigative report shall be forwarded to IDOT within 60 days from receipt of the complaint. If the investigation is delayed for any reason, the investigator will notify the appropriate authorities, and an extension will be requested.
10. If the Complainant is dissatisfied with JAX's resolution of the complaint, he/she has the right to file the complaint with the IDOT Title VI Coordinator directly.

### **Title VI Investigations, Complaint, and Lawsuit Record Keeping Procedures**

To comply with 49 CFR Section 21.9 (b), JAX has prepared and maintains a list of active investigations, lawsuits, or complaints naming JAX that alleged discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The list includes:

- The date of the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint was filed.
- A summary of the allegation.
- The status of the investigation; and
- Actions taken in response to the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint.
- An example format of the record keeping can be found in table 1.

JAX has adopted Title VI record keeping procedures for complaints, lawsuits, and investigations.

*Table 1: Title VI Complaint Record Keeping*

<i><b>File Date</b></i>	<i><b>Summary of Allegation</b></i>	<i><b>Actions Taken</b></i>	<i><b>Status of Investigation</b></i>

### **Limited English Proficiency (LEP)Plan**

#### ***Meaningful Access to LEP Persons***

Title VI and its implementing regulations require that FTA sub-recipients take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to the benefits, services, information, and other important portions of their program and activities that have Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals. Circular 4702.1B states that LEP person are *"persons for whom English is not their primary language and who have a limited ability to speak, understand, read, or write English. It includes people who reported it to the US. Census that they do not speak English well, or do not speak English at all."*

#### ***Four Factor Analysis***

JAX has assessed the four main factors involved in developing a Language Assistance Plan as

described in the Federal Transit Administration guidance entitled "Implementing the Department of Transportation's Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients' Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons: A Handbook for Public Transportation Providers." These steps are as follows:

1. Identify the number or proportion of LEP people eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program or the recipient grantee. Based on the 2023 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates (<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>), JAX undertook a detailed analysis of the populations of Jackson County and the City of Carbondale. A large part of this analysis was of the languages spoken in Jackson County, Illinois and the City of Carbondale and estimated the number of residents with Limited English Proficiency by language group. A summary of this data is provided in Exhibit III through Exhibit VI. JAX also restricted the language analysis to the urbanized area of Carbondale IL. The summary of that data in Exhibit V is also below.
2. Determining the frequency with which LEP individuals encounter the program. JAX does receive ride requests from individuals who have a difficulty communicating in English but those happen on an infrequent basis. Most of those individuals have a speech impediment. In the case that an individual does speak in a foreign language, Spanish, usually obtain an interpreter on their own and communicate their rides through them. In the event that the individual does not have an interpreter phone apps are utilized to bridge the gap. There exist individuals for whom English is a second language that speak in a foreign language, usually Japanese or Chinese, who contact us directly; however, they do have a sufficient grasp of the English language to get the ride scheduled.
3. Defining the nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the recipient to peoples' lives. JAX provides transportation for the general public. The organization does not discriminate by race, color, and national origin. The benefit of our transportation system to the LEP individuals or any individual in fact is to get to and from a place that could not be obtained otherwise. Places include but not restricted to the following: medical appointments, shopping, or employment.
4. Describing the resources available to the recipient and costs involved. Brochures and ride schedules can be translated. Verbal interpretations of rides are also possible. The cost varies based on various factors. Organizations that are willing to translate or interpret can be found online. For example, LinguaVox is an online organization that is willing to provide services of being a translator or interpreter when needed. There are written translating software that are for free or cost a certain amount. Interpreters can also be hired into our organization. The cost involved is the amount of pay and outsourcing the individual.

### ***Language Assistant Plan for LEP Individuals***

JAX wants to provide strong evidence of compliance with the PTA on written material so a viewing of the "Safe Harbor Provision" within PTA circular 4702.IB was necessary. The provision states that a LEP language group that speaks "English less than very well" is 1,000 individuals or 5% of the population, whichever is less, is the threshold of supplying the group with written material in their corresponding language. Since 5% of the population of Jackson County is 2,742, and Carbondale is 1,239, then 1,000 has been determined to be the threshold. After viewing exhibits IV and V; none of the LEP groups meets or exceeds the threshold so the provision

is applicable for JAX projects. In the dispatching department, the lack of experience of direct contact from LEP individuals constitutes a lack of likelihood of receiving demand from them. Thus, JAX will presently not need to hire an interpreter for LEP individuals but will treat the encounter by LEP individuals on a case-by-case bases. In that case, a phone call comes in from a LEP individual then the person will be directed to an interpreter within the person's household or in a conference call with an interpreter to get the ride scheduled if possible. Any written ride schedules will be translated into English and scheduled if possible. In this case, an LEP individual enters JAX facility then an interpreter will be called to assist the individual in attempting to schedule the ride. If an LEP individual requests a brochure or any other transportation material within JAX, the information will be given to the individual by mail within two business days.

### ***Title VI Policy Statement on Language Access Plan***

JAX is committed to providing meaningful access to services for individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). As part of this commitment, the district has implemented the following procedures to monitor, evaluate, and update the Language Access Plan (LAP), as well as to train employees to effectively provide language assistance.

#### **Monitoring, Evaluating, and Updating the Language Access Plan:**

JAX regularly monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of its Language Access Plan to ensure it meets the needs of LEP populations. The plan is reviewed annually, and updates are made based on the results of the Four-Factor Analysis, public feedback, and any changes in the community's demographics. The evaluation process includes assessing the availability of language resources, the adequacy of language assistance services, and the frequency of LEP encounters.

#### **Training Employees on Language Assistance:**

JAX provides training to all staff, particularly frontline employees, on how to effectively provide timely and reasonable language assistance to LEP individuals. Training includes how to access language services, how to offer and arrange for interpretation and translation services, and how to ensure that LEP individuals can engage with JAX services without barriers. Employees are also trained to understand the rights of LEP individuals under Title VI and the importance of cultural competence.

#### **Translation of Vital Documents:**

In accordance with the Safe Harbor Provision, JAX ensures that vital documents are translated into the language(s) of frequently encountered LEP groups within the district. Vital documents include, but are not limited to, route maps, schedules, fare information, public notices, and the Title VI Protection Notice. JAX identifies the languages spoken by significant LEP populations within its service area and ensures that these documents are accessible to those individuals.

*Through these measures, JAX is dedicated to providing equitable access to transit services for all individuals, regardless of their language proficiency.*

### **Beneficiary Notification Protection under Title VI**

To comply with 49 CFR Section 21.9(d), sub-recipients shall provide information to the public regarding their Title VI obligations and apprise members of the public of the protections against discrimination afforded to them by Title VI. JAX disseminates this information to the public

through measures that include posting on the transit system website and social media sites and postings at county offices and areas frequented by JAX riders. The notice will be translated into languages other than English consistent with LEP Guidelines. Exhibit VI is JAX's Title VI Protection Notice to the Public.

### ***Location of Notice to the Public***

JAX is committed to ensuring that the Title VI Protection Notice is accessible to the public. The notice will be made available at the following locations:

- JAX Administrative Office and all satellite locations
- On all JAX buses in service
- Posted prominently on the Title VI Program page of the JAX website ([www.ridejax.com](http://www.ridejax.com))
- Included in the JAX Route Brochure

### **Additional Information Requests**

JAX fully understands that FTA and IDOT may request additional information to investigate complaints of discrimination or to resolve concerns about possible noncompliance with Title VI.

JAX will cooperate with the FTA and IDOT, and all requested information will be provided in a timely manner.

### **Submission of Title VI Program**

To ensure compliance with 49 CFR Section 21.9 (b), this report will serve as documentation of JAX's Title VI compliance. JAX will prepare and submit updates to this Title VI program to the IDOT and FTA on a triennial basis.

### **Conducting Analysis of Construction Projects**

JAX will integrate an environmental justice analysis into the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document of construction projects. If a construction project requires NEPA documentation, JAX will complete IDOT's standard environmental assessment (EA) and will submit the EA as part of each triennial Title VI submission.

### **Promoting Inclusive Public Participation**

In compliance with the DOT Order on Environmental Justice, JAX conducts public outreach and involvement activities with minority and low-income populations. JAX undertakes public outreach activities including:

- Provide notice and affording members of the public, including minority and low-income populations, the opportunity to comment on proposed service and fare changes.
- Provide members of the public with the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process for projects subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- Provide members of the public, including minority and low-income populations the opportunity to participate in or to comment of the agency's strategic plan or capital improvement program.
- Offers the public, including low-income and minority populations' routine opportunities to provide feedback or comment on the level and quality of service.

## **Service Equity Analysis**

### ***Minority, Low-Income, and Limited English Proficiency Populations Concentrations***

JAX provides transportation services via demand response. Rider access and travel times vary with each request. Management ensures a balance of resources available to meet specific demand. Demand factors related to concentrations of people with disabilities and households without access to a vehicle are also considered.

Included on the following pages are demographic profile maps that illustrate minority, low income and LEP populations in relation to JAX's service area.

## **Service Monitoring**

The JAX staff will monitor service level and service quality to ensure that no person or group of persons shall be discriminated against with regard to the route, scheduling, or quality of transportation service furnished by the JAX system on the basis of race, color, and national origin. Frequency of service, age and quality of vehicles assigned, quality of facilities, and location of routes shall not be determined based on race, color, and national origin.

## **Standards for Fixed-Route Service**

JAX Mass Transit is committed to providing equitable service to all communities, including those with minority and low-income populations. To ensure that the fixed-route services are offered fairly and without discrimination, JAX has established the following service standards, which are monitored and evaluated regularly for compliance with Title VI requirements:

### **1. Vehicle Load Standard**

- **Definition:** The vehicle load standard refers to the maximum number of passengers allowed per bus.
- **Standard:** Buses should not exceed 120% of their seated capacity during peak hours.
- **Equity Considerations:** Ensure that bus routes serving minority and low-income communities do not experience disproportionate overcrowding compared to other routes.

### **2. Vehicle Headway (Frequency) Standard**

- **Definition:** The vehicle headway standard defines the amount of time between consecutive buses on a given route.
- **Standard:** For high-demand routes, buses should be scheduled to run at intervals of no more than 30 minutes during peak hours and no more than 30 minutes during off-peak hours.
- **Equity Considerations:** Routes serving underserved or minority communities should receive sufficient frequency to meet demand and minimize long wait times.

### **3. On-Time Performance Standard**

- **Definition:** The on-time performance standard measures the percentage of buses that arrive within a defined window of their scheduled time.
- **Standard:** At least 85% of buses should arrive within 5 minutes of their scheduled time.

- **Equity Considerations:** Evaluate on-time performance across different routes to ensure that minority and low-income communities are not disproportionately impacted by delays.

#### 4. Service Availability Standard

- **Definition:** The service availability standard refers to the geographic coverage of bus routes and service times.
- **Standard:** Transit services should be available within a reasonable walking distance (typically 1/2 to 3/4 mile) of residential areas, particularly in high-density or low-income neighborhoods.
- **Equity Considerations:** Ensure that bus routes are equitably distributed across all neighborhoods, especially those with a high concentration of minority and low-income populations.

#### 5. Transit Amenities Standard

- **Definition:** The transit amenities standard includes the availability of facilities and infrastructure such as bus stops, shelters, benches, and accessibility features.
- **Standard:** JAX does own, lease, operates or maintain bus stops, shelters, benches or other accessibility features.

#### 6. Customer Service Standard

- **Definition:** The customer service standard defines how transit riders can access information, file complaints, and receive assistance.
- **Standard:** JAX will maintain a customer service system that allows for easy communication and resolution of complaints, with a commitment to respond within 48 hours.
- **Equity Considerations:** Ensure that customer service resources are accessible to LEP populations and communities with limited access to technology.

### ***Monitoring and Evaluation of Service Standards***

JAX will regularly monitor and evaluate these service standards through:

- **Annual rider surveys** to assess satisfaction and identify potential service gaps.
- **Data collection** on vehicle load, headways, on-time performance, and service coverage.
- **Community feedback** through public meetings, hearings, and outreach activities, particularly targeting minority and low-income populations.

Any disparities or inequities identified in service delivery will be addressed to ensure all communities receive fair and equal access to JAX's services.

### **Service Policies**

JAX has adopted a series of service policies that are regularly reviewed and updated. These policies are developed with careful consideration of the needs of all populations, including minority and low-income communities.

### ***Service Design Policy***

JAX ensures that the design of its transit network is equitable by considering the geographic distribution of minority and low-income populations, as well as their specific mobility needs. Service designs, including route alignments, frequency, and capacity, are evaluated to ensure that they do not disproportionately burden or benefit any specific group. Jax will consider routes serving minority and low-income areas receive appropriate frequency, capacity, and coverage to meet demand and improve access.

### ***Service Operations Policy***

JAX strives to operate services in a way that ensures equitable access for all riders, with a particular focus on providing reliable service to historically underserved communities. This includes fair distribution of resources such as vehicles, staffing, and facilities to prevent service disparities. Jax will ensure that operational practices, including bus assignments, are not skewed in favor of or against any particular demographic group.

### ***Major Service Change Policy***

JAX evaluates all major service changes (such as route eliminations, extensions, or reductions in frequency) to ensure that such changes do not have a disproportionately negative impact on minority or low-income populations. A **service equity analysis** is conducted prior to the implementation of any major service change. If any service change is anticipated to disproportionately affect minority or low-income communities, JAX will take steps to mitigate these impacts, including modifying service proposals or offering alternative transportation solutions.

### ***Fare Policy***

JAX establishes fare structures that ensure affordability and access for all riders, including low-income individuals. Any changes to fare structures undergo an **equity analysis** to ensure that they do not result in discrimination or create barriers for minority or low-income populations. JAX will ensure that fare increases or changes do not disproportionately burden minority or low-income riders. Affordable fare programs, such as discounted passes, are considered for low-income populations.

### ***Accessibility and Amenities Policy***

JAX provides accessible transit services and amenities, ensuring that all individuals, including those with disabilities, can access and utilize transit services. This includes maintaining ADA-compliant facilities, buses, and stops, and ensuring that routes serving minority and low-income communities have appropriate accessibility features. JAX will evaluate the distribution of accessible amenities to ensure equitable access for minority and low-income communities, particularly those with a higher concentration of people with disabilities. JAX does not currently own or maintain bus stops, shelters, etc.... JAX leases an Administrative Office.

### ***Public Participation and Feedback Policy***

JAX encourages public input and feedback to ensure that service policies reflect the needs of all communities, particularly those that are underserved or have LEP populations. Public hearings, town hall meetings, and surveys are regularly conducted to gather feedback from a diverse group of riders. Special efforts are made to engage minority, low-income, and LEP communities in the

decision-making process to ensure that their needs are represented in service policies.

### ***Monitoring and Implementation***

JAX regularly monitors and evaluates its service policies to ensure compliance with Title VI requirements. Data is collected on service utilization, performance, and rider demographics to assess whether policies and operations are serving all populations equitably. Any potential disparities are addressed through corrective actions to maintain compliance with Title VI.

### **JAX Environmental Justice and Title VI Summary**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. IDOT, Ff A, and JCMID advance Title VI and environmental justice by involving the public in transportation decisions. Effective public involvement programs enable transportation professionals to develop systems, services, and solutions that meet the needs of the public, including minority and low-income communities.

There are three: ~~fundamental~~ environmental justice principles. The three principles are:

1. To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations.
2. To ensure full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision making process.
3. To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

### **Statement on Subrecipient**

JAX Mass Transit affirms that it does not have any subrecipients receiving federal funds or providing transit services on behalf of the district. As a result, JAX is not required to monitor or enforce Title VI compliance for subrecipients. However, JAX remains committed to ensuring that all its operations, including those conducted directly, comply with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In the event that JAX engages with subrecipients in the future, the district will ensure full compliance with Title VI requirements, including conducting the necessary reviews and monitoring to prevent discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

### **Public Participation Plan**

MAP-21 mandates earlier and more extensive public involvement. The JAX public engagement process is designed to meet these goals for several key planning and programming areas:

1. In developing a long-range service plan (LRSP)
2. In developing the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
3. In developing an annual Program of Projects (POP)
4. In considering fare increases or service reductions greater than 20%.

The following section describes procedures for providing public participation related to these activities and provides general public involvement guidance for other JAX activities.

### **Long Range Service Plan (LRSP)**

The Long-Range Service Plan is a 10-year (or more) transportation investment and transit policy

document. It provides the JAX Board with guidance in making regional transportation investments and is updated by one year during the annual TIP and POP processes. The following steps will be taken to afford the public the opportunity to engage in the development of the LRSP:

- JAX will utilize the Statewide 10-year Downstate Capital Needs Assessment conducted by the Illinois Department of Transportation and Rural Transit Assistance Center to determine proposed capital investment.
- JAX will consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) and the regions that are affected by transportation in order to coordinate the planning process functions.
- JAX will seek input from low income and minority populations, persons with disabilities, persons with limited English proficiency (by special arrangement) and veteran's outreach groups.
- A legal public notice will be published in various regional and local newspapers no fewer than 15 days and no more than 30 days in advance of the public comment period.
- In addition to the notice published for the public comment period, meetings will be publicized by way of the JAX website at [www.Jackson Countymt.com](http://www.JacksonCountymt.com).
- Make available the Draft LRSP at all offices of JAX, post it to the website at [www.Jackson Countymt.com](http://www.JacksonCountymt.com).
- Provide a 30-day review and comment period on the Draft LRSP, generally to end one week prior to tentative plan adoption.
- Provide a public comment summary memo to the JAX Board prior to the plan adoption and to IDOT or FTA as required.
- Provide public notification not fewer than 15 days nor more than 30 days in advance of consideration of action by the JAX Board on the LRSP.
- If comments received during the designated comment period affect a significant change to the content of the LRSP, JAX will provide an additional 30-day opportunity for public comment.

### **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) & Updates**

The TIP is a financially constrained three-year program covering the most immediate implementation priorities for transportation projects and strategies from the LRSP for the urban area. It is the District's way of allocating its limited transportation resources among the various capital and operating needs of the urban area, based on a clear set of short-term transportation priorities.

The three-year TIP is updated annually with information for an additional year and submitted to the Southern Illinois Metropolitan Planning Organization (SIMPO). The annual submission and any updates are part of the regional multi-modal TIP. JAX participates in and relies on the SIMPO public engagement process for any federal compliance requirements for the TIP process.

### **The Program of Projects (POP)**

The Program of Projects (POP) lists the transportation projects, operating and capital, which would be the basis of grants submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Since the POP is essentially a fiscal year program pulled from the active TIP, it will be available for public

comment during the SIMPO TIP process and available for comment at the annual JAX service plan hearing held annually prior to grant submission. All public notifications such as those in the newspaper, flyers or websites of the POP and service hearings shall explicitly list the amount of Federal funding and the funding program.

**Fare increases or service reductions greater than 20%.**

- JAX will consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) and the regions that are affected by any service reduction or fare increase exceeding 20%.
- JAX will seek input from low income and minority populations, persons with disabilities, persons with limited English proficiency (by special arrangement) and veteran's outreach groups.
- A legal public notice will be published in various regional and local newspapers no fewer than 15 days or more than 30 days in advance of the public comment period.
- In addition to the notice published for the public comment period, meetings will be publicized by way of the JAX website at [www.JacksonCountymtd.com](http://www.JacksonCountymtd.com).
- Make available notices of service reductions or fare increases at all offices of JAX, post them to the website at [www.JacksonCountymtd.com](http://www.JacksonCountymtd.com).
- Provide a 30-day review and comment period on the proposed service reduction or fare increase, generally to end one week prior to tentative adoption.
- Provide a public comment summary memo to the JAX Board prior to the adoption and to IDOT or FTA as required.
- Provide public notification not fewer than 15 days nor more than 30 days in advance of consideration of action by the JAX Board on any service reduction or fare increase exceeding the threshold.
- If comments received during the designated comment period affect a significant change to the content of the planned service reduction or fare increase, JAX will provide an additional 30-day opportunity for public comment.

**Public Participation Plan (PPP) and Updates**

The Public Participation Plan outlines strategies, techniques, and methods utilized to engage the public in the transportation planning and programming process.

**Standard Public Involvement Items**

JAX conducts regular Board meetings, maintains a website, and may periodically hold public meetings for planning and programming activities. The following measures will be taken to encourage public engagement:

- A meeting notice will be provided via website, public space at Administrative Office at least 48 hours prior to each regular JAX Board meeting.
- Meeting agendas will be posted at JAX Facilities prior to meetings.
- Active plans, programs, and policies along with other relevant public information will be available for public consumption on the JAX website at [www.JacksonCountymtd.com](http://www.JacksonCountymtd.com)
- JAX will utilize mapping and graphic displays as able to help convey plan and program information.

- Public meetings hosted by JAX will be held at convenient locations and times.

## **Outreach Methods**

### ***General Population***

JAX planning documents, information regarding past and future meetings, and JAX activities in general, are available to the public through the JAX website ([www.JacksonCountyMTD.com](http://www.JacksonCountyMTD.com)) or at the JAX office (602 E College St, Carbondale, IL 62901). The public may call, visit or email JAX staff at any time to voice concerns, opinions or ideas. A variety of outreach techniques will be used to proactively engage the general population and traditional stakeholders in the JAX service area, according to the desired participation goal for the particular activity. These techniques include traditional outreach techniques that JAX has utilized in the past to engage the regional population. Efforts will be made to promote understanding and engagement in the transportation planning process. For example, public notices and releases will be drafted in a manner that minimizes the use of technical terminology and public meetings or workshops will be held in convenient locations that are accessible and common gathering places, such as convention/community centers, pavilions, schools, libraries or Chambers of Commerce. The techniques and resources that JAX will utilize in its general outreach activities may include, but will not be limited to the following:

- Websites (JAX or MPO member communities), newsletters, or other displays (notices, articles, fliers)
- Public meetings/workshops
- Meetings
- Newspapers (legal notices, articles, community bulletin boards, interviews)
- Press releases to print media, radio, and television.
- Email or written announcements to key stakeholders.
- Questionnaires or opinion surveys
- Social media
- Mailing list

### **Target or Focus Groups**

Much of the regional population can be informed of JAX planning activities through general outreach methods. However, there are “traditionally under-served” segments of the population that may benefit from additional outreach efforts. The traditionally under-served in the general population have been defined by federal and state agencies to include those individuals who may have in the past been neglected in outreach activities or excluded during the planning process, such as the elderly; minorities; low-income households; persons with disabilities, those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and veteran’s outreach groups.

In addition to the general outreach techniques and resources previously described, JAX will utilize the following additional resources in its targeted outreach activities:

- Outreach to residents, businesses and other affected groups within a focused area when the planning effort is specific to that area.
- Timely notices by email or postal mail, and when reasonable by phone
- Fliers or other displays in high-volume locations including social activity centers, such as grocery stores, churches, community centers.

- Festivals or other periodic events
- Outreach to specific organizations and inter-agency groups that aid or provide services to those who are:
  - People with disabilities
  - Low Income
  - Elderly
  - Minorities
  - Limited English Proficiency

### **Key Agencies, Stakeholders and Organizations**

Many local governments, organizations, agencies and stakeholders that are, or may be, uniquely impacted by transportation decisions in the JAX service area are represented on the Technical and/or Advisory Committees of SIMPO. SIMPO will be a key point of contact for all planning and programming. Efforts will be made to engage other key agencies, stakeholders and organizations, particularly those associated with Human Service Transportation Planning (HSTP) or service provision in the region. Agencies that are involved with public safety and security, such as fire departments, will also be identified for outreach activities.

### **Public Involvement Tools and Techniques**

This section contains descriptions of the various public involvement tools and techniques that JAX may use for outreach purposes.

#### **Electronic Media**

Electronic media such as the JAX website, press releases, meeting minutes and electronic mailings will be utilized to engage and inform the public. JAX's website is used as an informational/educational tool as well as to advertise opportunities for public involvement. The website contains background information about JAX, meeting information, major planning documents or links to documents (TIP, POP, etc.), press releases, postings and active consulting services requests. JAX will periodically utilize the website to host surveys or post comment forms. Formal press releases are normally e-mailed to local media including newspapers, radio stations and local television outlets. They are used to announcing upcoming public planning meetings and to providing information on specific issues related to ongoing planning efforts. Direct electronic mailings are routinely used for meeting notices and for meeting-related communications with committee members and other interested parties.

#### **Print Media**

Print media such as legal advertisements or notices; direct mailings; announcements/fliers; public opinion surveys; and comment forms are useful tools to engage and inform the general public. JAX uses legal notices to announce major actions pending and, in certain cases, may use public hearings. Major actions may include a scheduled or proposed plan update (TIP, LRSP, POP). Legal notices are also used occasionally to advertise other activities. Fliers and other announcements are used to promote meetings and activities that are not regularly scheduled, such as workshops and public meetings. They may be posted at public meeting sites such as libraries and municipal offices, and in neighborhood activity centers such as grocery stores and churches, in priority focus areas for targeted outreach. Print questionnaires or surveys are sometimes used when specific input from the public is desired, although electronic surveys are more desirable and easier to manage. Surveys may be distributed at meetings, left for later

collection in public places or actively distributed and collected, or they may be mailed. Likewise, comment forms are sometimes used when specific input from the public is desired, particularly concerning plan development or adoption.

### **Meetings and Other Public Forums**

JAX anticipates using a variety of meeting and forum types to provide opportunities for the public to engage in the planning process, such as open houses, workshops, small group meetings and public hearings, as well as monthly Board meetings. JAX utilizes these varieties of meeting types to achieve different public outreach objectives. Typically, meetings will be held, with either a workshop or an open-house type of orientation, to solicit input from the public during plan development and adoption stages. Efforts are made to hold public meetings at convenient times and at locations that are accessible to all community members.

Multiple visualization tools may be employed to facilitate meeting discussion, such as graphic displays, aerials, internet-available mapping, and Geographic Information Systems portals.

Occasionally, JAX may host federally required hearings on certain transportation planning efforts. These will be legally advertised meetings in which a formal, structured procedure is used to take public comment. The proceedings are recorded and transcribed for the record. The JAX Board meetings are open to the public and notifications of meeting times are provided to local media outlets each month. Meeting agendas are posted at JAX facilities prior to each meeting and on the JAX website as soon after meetings as possible.

### **Use of Public Input**

JAX staff will provide a report on public outreach engagements with information such as levels of participation, general points of discussion, and other relevant feedback from the public at monthly meetings of the JAX Board. The JAX staff will consider public input and attempt to integrate that input into the decision-making process in the most appropriate way. For processes that require a public comment period the JAX staff (or consultant) will create a memo listing all the comments received during the official comment period and deliver that to the JAX Board prior to their taking action on any plan, program, fare increase or service reduction.

### **Public Participation Tracking**

Also, in order to improve upon the participation process as a whole, and to improve upon the use of public input, the JAX staff will track public involvement activities. The tracking information, (Relevant data collected below), captures key meeting information, notification methods, general summary of gathered information, follow-up steps and an assessment of ways to improve the engagement process. The data will help JAX evaluate how chosen participation efforts have worked as well as allow them to continuously improve public outreach efforts.

JAX Participation Tracking Relevant Data Collected:

1. Event
  - a. Date
  - b. Conducted by
  - c. Number of attendees
2. How were participants notified of the event?
3. Summary of public comments/concerns/interests
4. How is information to be used?

5. Is there follow-up with the public?
  - a. Specific contact necessary, who, by whom?
  - b. Additional meetings?
  - c. Will plans, documents, follow-up information be made available to the public, where and when?
6. Process suggestions
  - a. What worked well in this public participation activity?
  - b. What would I change next time?
  - c. Feedback from participants on ways to improve the process.

### **Updating and Evaluation of the Public Participation Plan**

The JAX Public Participation Plan will be updated periodically, concurrent with the update of the Long-Range Service Plan (LRSP), or sooner if it is determined necessary by JAX.

Evaluation of the plan will occur as a first step when the LRSP is being updated. The plan will be evaluated against performance on the three major objectives established in Section One. Additionally, staff will seek to identify specific areas for improving public involvement based on:

- Participation tracking performance.
- Participants' assessments and suggestions
- Technical, Advisory and Policy Committee expectations

### **Board Selection**

JAX is committed to ensuring that the composition of its Board of Directors reflects the diverse communities it serves. In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, JAX will ensure that the selection of Board members is conducted in a manner that is free from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin.

JAX does not appoint community members to any current advisory board, community planning board, community zoning board or board of trustees.

In the situation that JAX will be responsible for recommending or selecting board members, the process for selecting Board members will be transparent and inclusive, with consideration given to promoting equitable representation of all groups, including minority, low-income, and underserved populations. Efforts will be made to encourage diverse candidates from various backgrounds to apply, ensuring that Board decisions reflect the needs and interests of the entire community.

JAX is committed to maintaining fair and impartial selection processes for all positions, ensuring that individuals are not discriminated against in any aspect of the selection process.

### **Summary of Public Outreach**

From January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2024, JAX has held annual public hearings in March. These hearings were advertised in the local Southern Illinois publication, and a voice message was added to the district's telephone system. Additionally, JAX conducted phone surveys using the district's phone system from March 1, 2022, to May 31, 2023. In May 2024, the district hosted community town hall meetings at the Carbondale Township. Lastly, in August 2024, administrative staff audited the fixed-route system and conducted rider interviews.

## Exhibit I: Title VI Assurance

### Title VI Assurance



#### **Title VI Assurance to the Federal Transit Administration**

*Jackson County Mass Transit District hereby agrees that, as a condition to receiving any Federal financial assistance from the Department of Transportation it will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Department of Transportation, Subtitle A, Office of the Secretary, Part 21, Nondiscrimination in Federally-Assisted Programs of the Department of Transportation--Effectuation of the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other pertinent directives, to the end and that in accordance with the Act, Regulations, and other pertinent directives, no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which JCMTD received Federal financial assistance from the Department of Transportation, including the Federal Transit Administration and, hereby gives assurance that it will promptly take any measures necessary to effectuate this agreement. This assurance is required by subsection 21.7(a) of the Regulations. More specifically and without limiting the above assurances, JCMTD gives the assurances as listed in the "Verification of Level and Quality of Service," with respect to the Federal Transit Administration Grant Program. This assurance is given in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any and all Federal grants, loans, contracts, property, discounts or other Federal financial assistance extended after the date hereof to the Recipient by the Department of Transportation under the Federal Transit Administration.*

## Exhibit II: Title VI Complaint Form

### Title VI Complaint Form



#### **Section I:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have accessible format requirements? Check each that applies.

Large Print ☐ Audio Tape ☐ TDD ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Office of Civil Rights is responsible for civil rights compliance and monitoring, which includes ensuring that providers of public transportation properly abide by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-income Populations," and the Department of Transportation's Guidance to Recipients on Special Language Services to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Beneficiaries.

In JCMTD's complaint investigation process, we analyze the complainant's allegations for possible Title VI and related deficiencies by the transit provider. If deficiencies are identified, they are presented to the transit provider and assistance is offered to correct the inadequacies within a predetermined timeframe. The State of Illinois may also refer the matter to the U.S. Department of Justice for Enforcement.

#### **Section II:**

Are you filing this complaint on your own behalf? Yes ☐ No ☐ (If you answered 'Yes' to this question go to Section III)

If the answer is 'No' please supply the name of the person for whom you are filing a complaint:

\_\_\_\_\_  
First Name Middle Name/Initial Last Name

Please explain why you have filed on behalf of another person:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please confirm that you have obtained permission of the aggrieved party if you are filing on behalf of another person: Yes ☐ No ☐

## Title VI Complaint Form



### **Section III:**

Have you ever filed with any other organization? Yes ☐ No ☐ (if you answered 'No' to this question go to Section IV)

If you answered 'Yes' please check all that apply:

IDOT ☐ Department of Justice ☐ Equal Opportunity Commission ☐ Other ☐

If 'other,' please be specific by providing the name of the organization(s) below:

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Please provide information about a contact person at the agency/court where the complaint was filed.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

If necessary, please provide on separate sheet(s) contact information of each organization indicated in Section III. *Please note the above information is helpful for administrative tracking purposes. However, if litigation is pending regarding the same issue(s), we will defer to the decision of the court.*

### **Section IV:**

On separate sheets of paper, please describe your complaint. You should include specific details such as names, dates, times, route or bus number, witnesses, and any other information that would assist us in our investigation of your allegations. Please also provide any other documentation that is relevant to your complaint.

*Please note JAX cannot accept your complaint without a signature.*

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Print Name	Signature	Date
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### Exhibit III: Jackson County Population by Language (2023)

Table: ACSST5Y2023.S1601

	Jackson County, Illinois					
	Total	Percent	Percent of specified language speakers			
			Speak English only or speak English "very well"	Percent speak English only or speak English "very well"	Speak English less than "very well"	Percent speak English less than "very well"
Label	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Population 5 years and over	49,916	(X)	48,468	97.1%	1,448	2.9%
Speak only English	44,949	90.0%	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Speak a language other than English	4,967	10.0%	3,519	70.8%	1,448	29.2%
SPEAK A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH						
Spanish	1,904	3.8%	1,330	69.9%	574	30.1%
5 to 17 years old	456	0.9%	379	83.1%	77	16.9%
18 to 64 years old	1,282	2.6%	833	65.0%	449	35.0%
65 years old and over	166	0.3%	118	71.1%	48	28.9%
Other Indo-European languages	1,665	3.3%	1,223	73.5%	442	26.5%
5 to 17 years old	194	0.4%	132	68.0%	62	32.0%
18 to 64 years old	1,293	2.6%	964	74.6%	329	25.4%
65 years old and over	178	0.4%	127	71.3%	51	28.7%
Asian and Pacific Island languages	848	1.7%	553	65.2%	295	34.8%
5 to 17 years old	158	0.3%	122	77.2%	36	22.8%
18 to 64 years old	634	1.3%	406	64.0%	228	36.0%
65 years old and over	56	0.1%	25	44.6%	31	55.4%
Other languages	550	1.1%	413	75.1%	137	24.9%
5 to 17 years old	126	0.3%	126	100.0%	0	0.0%
18 to 64 years old	393	0.8%	270	68.7%	123	31.3%
65 years old and over	31	0.1%	17	54.8%	14	45.2%
CITIZENS 18 YEARS AND OVER						
All citizens 18 years old and over	40,872	(X)	40,353	98.7%	519	1.3%
Speak only English	38,442	94.1%	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Speak a language other than English	2,430	5.9%	1,911	78.6%	519	21.4%
Spanish	1,034	2.5%	858	83.0%	176	17.0%
Other languages	1,396	3.4%	1,053	75.4%	343	24.6%

Data Source: <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2023.S1601?q=Jackson+County,+Illinois+language>

1

## Exhibit IV: Carbondale Population by Language (2023)

Table: ACSST5Y2023.S1601

	Carbondale, Jackson County, Illinois					
	Total	Percent	Percent of specified language speakers			
			Speak English only or speak English "very well"	Percent speak English only or speak English "very well"	Speak English less than "very well"	Percent speak English less than "very well"
Label	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Population 5 years and over	23,686	(X)	22,899	96.7%	787	3.3%
Speak only English	20,771	87.7%	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Speak a language other than English	2,915	12.3%	2,128	73.0%	787	27.0%
SPEAK A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH						
Spanish	805	3.4%	572	71.1%	233	28.9%
5 to 17 years old	111	0.5%	34	30.6%	77	69.4%
18 to 64 years old	636	2.7%	503	79.1%	133	20.9%
65 years old and over	58	0.2%	35	60.3%	23	39.7%
Other Indo-European languages	946	4.0%	747	79.0%	199	21.0%
5 to 17 years old	10	0.0%	10	100.0%	0	0.0%
18 to 64 years old	867	3.7%	668	77.0%	199	23.0%
65 years old and over	69	0.3%	69	100.0%	0	0.0%
Asian and Pacific Island languages	656	2.8%	438	66.8%	218	33.2%
5 to 17 years old	105	0.4%	75	71.4%	30	28.6%
18 to 64 years old	519	2.2%	345	66.5%	174	33.5%
65 years old and over	32	0.1%	18	56.3%	14	43.8%
Other languages	508	2.1%	371	73.0%	137	27.0%
5 to 17 years old	126	0.5%	126	100.0%	0	0.0%
18 to 64 years old	354	1.5%	231	65.3%	123	34.7%
65 years old and over	28	0.1%	14	50.0%	14	50.0%
CITIZENS 18 YEARS AND OVER						
All citizens 18 years old and over	19,801	(X)	19,581	98.9%	220	1.1%
Speak only English	18,451	93.2%	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Speak a language other than English	1,350	6.8%	1,130	83.7%	220	16.3%
Spanish	545	2.8%	479	87.9%	66	12.1%
Other languages	805	4.1%	651	80.9%	154	19.1%

Data Source: <https://data.census.gov/table?q=Carbondale,+Jackson+County,+Illinois+language>

1

## Exhibit V: MPO Maps

Figure 1: Demographic Map

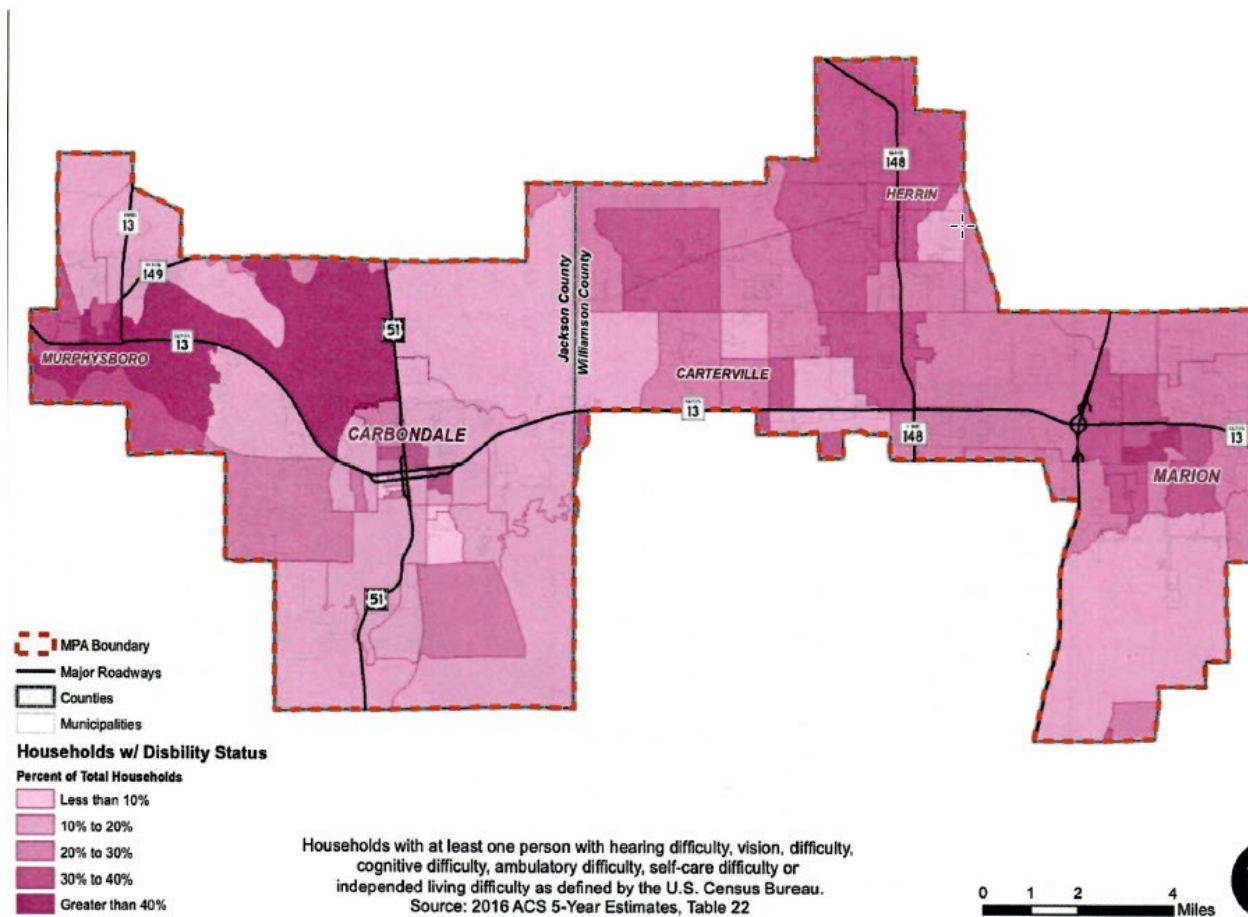


Figure 2: Elderly Map

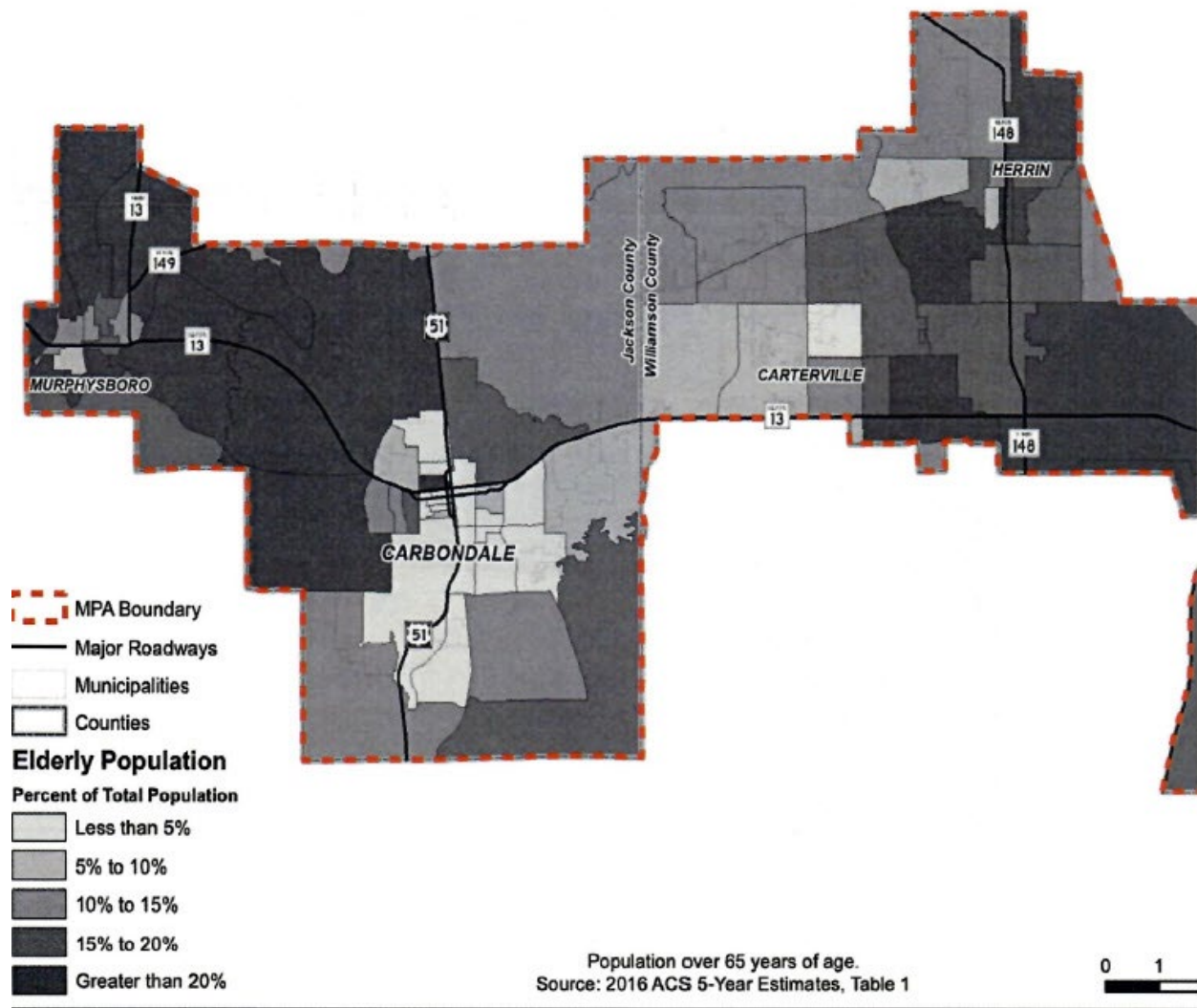


Figure 3: Employment Density

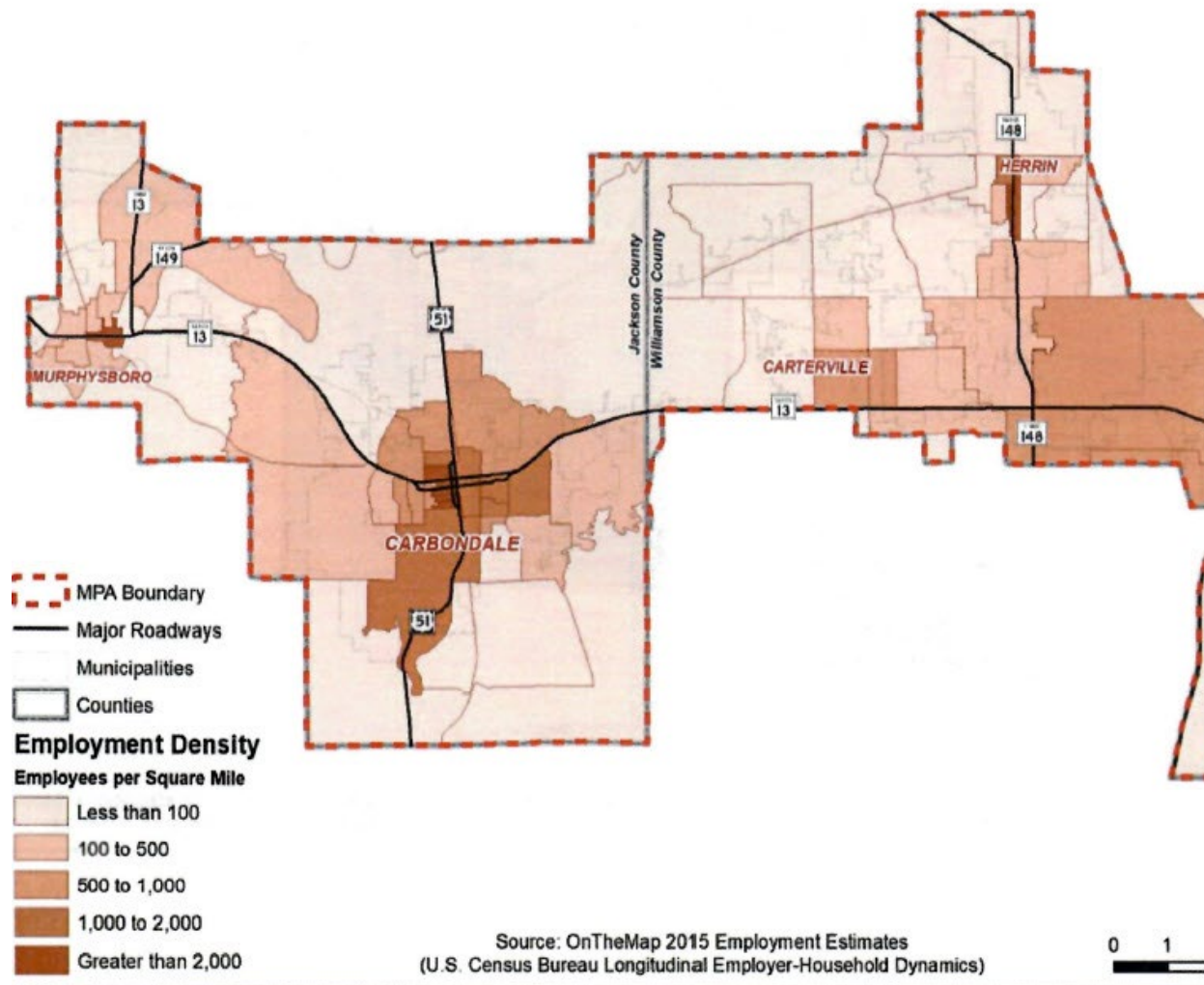


Figure 4: Zero Vehicle Households

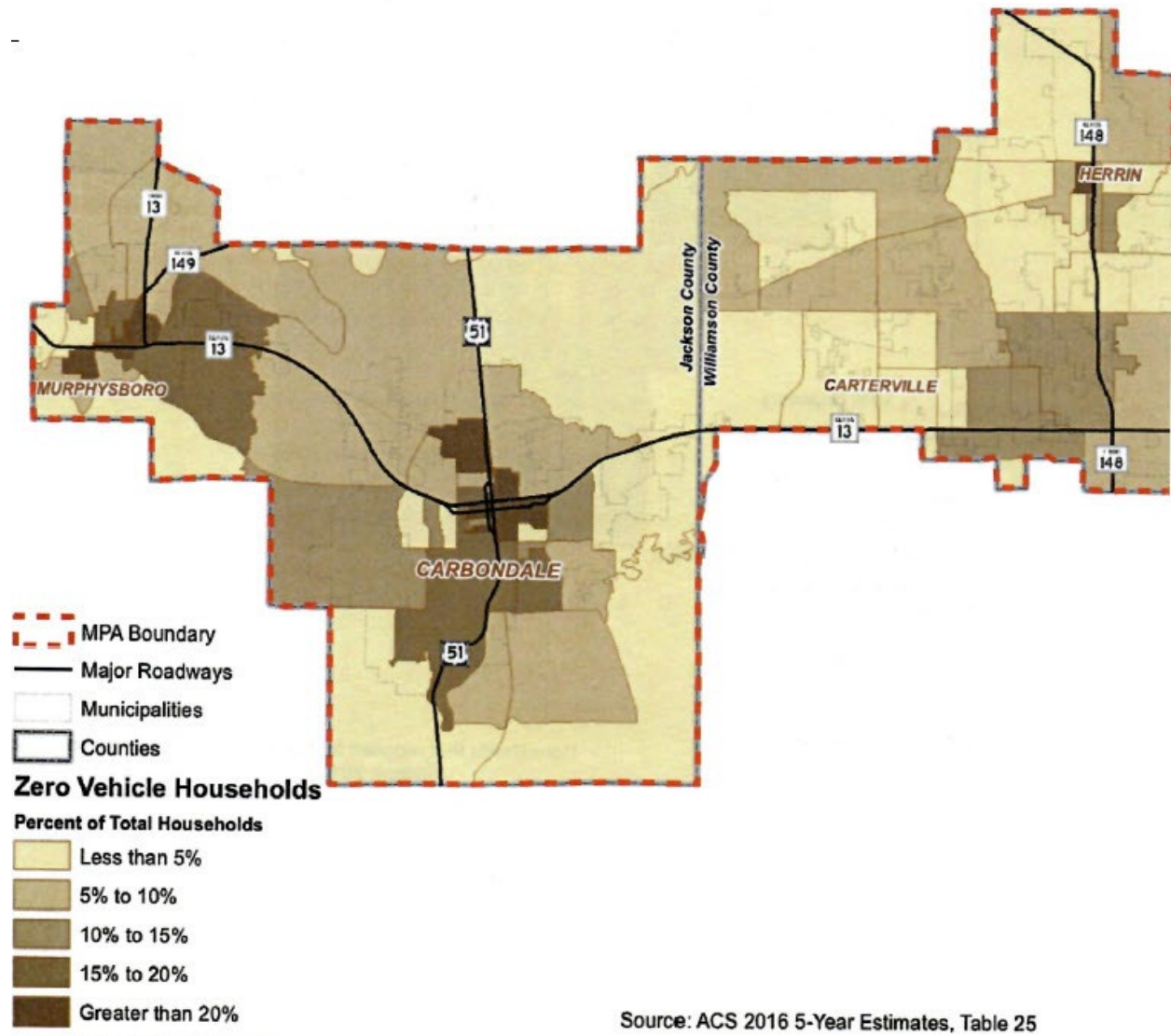
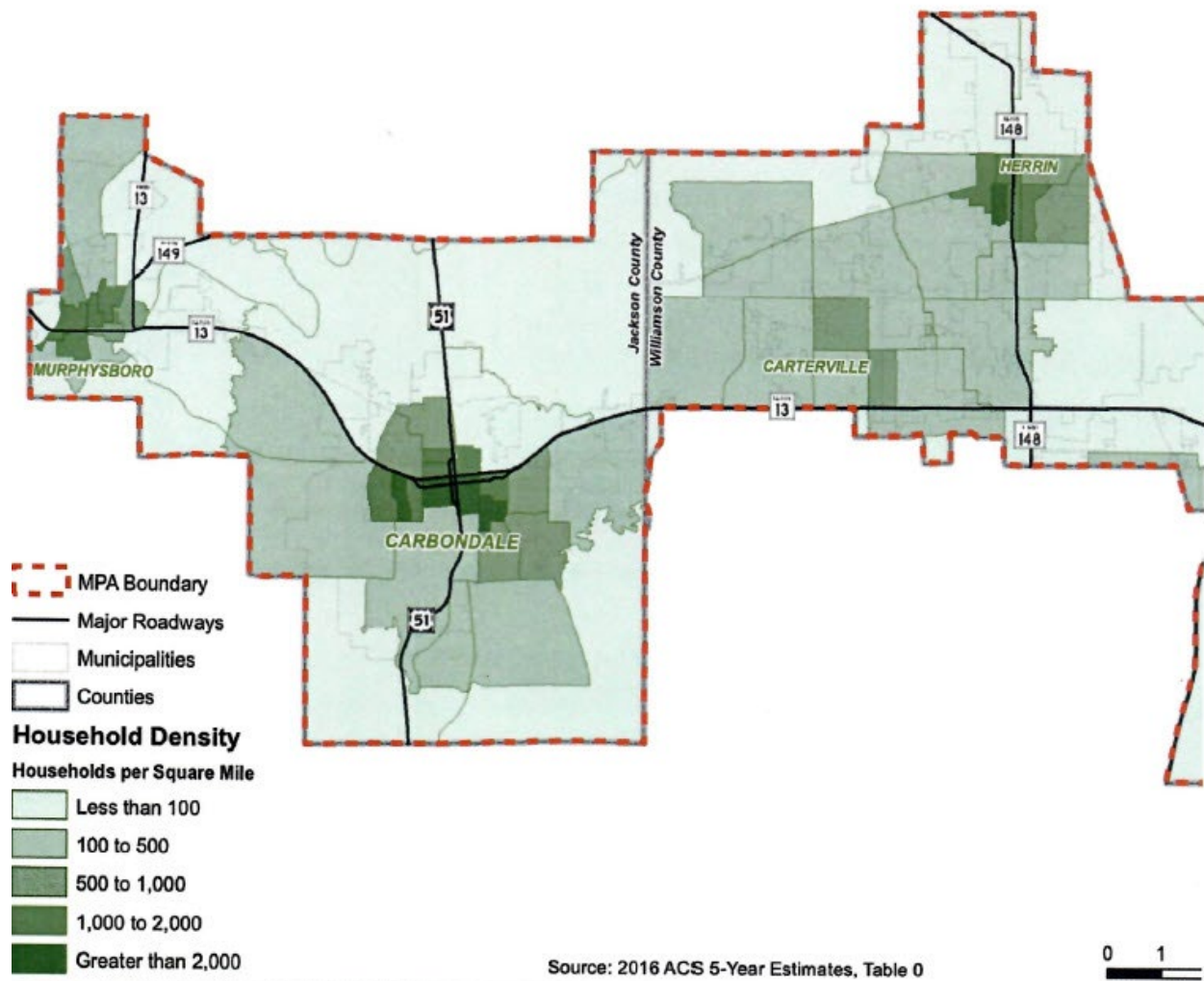


Figure 5: Household Density Map



## Exhibit VI: 2023 Population Data Tables

Table 2: Jackson County Population by Language

Table: ACSST5Y2023.S1601

	Jackson County, Illinois					
	Total	Percent	Percent of specified language speakers			
			Speak English only or speak English "very well"	Percent speak English only or speak English "very well"	Speak English less than "very well"	Percent speak English less than "very well"
Label	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
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Data Source: <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2023.S1601?q=Jackson+County,+Illinois+language>

Table 3: Carbondale Population by Language

Table: ACSST5Y2023.S1601

	Carbondale, Jackson County, Illinois					
	Total	Percent	Percent of specified language speakers			
			Speak English only or speak English "very well"	Percent speak English only or speak English "very well"	Speak English less than "very well"	Percent speak English less than "very well"
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Other languages	805	4.1%	651	80.9%	154	19.1%

Data Source: <https://data.census.gov/table?q=Carbondale,+Jackson+County,+Illinois+language>

Figure 6: Jackson County Population by Age and Sex

Population Pyramid: Population by Age and Sex in Jackson County, Illinois

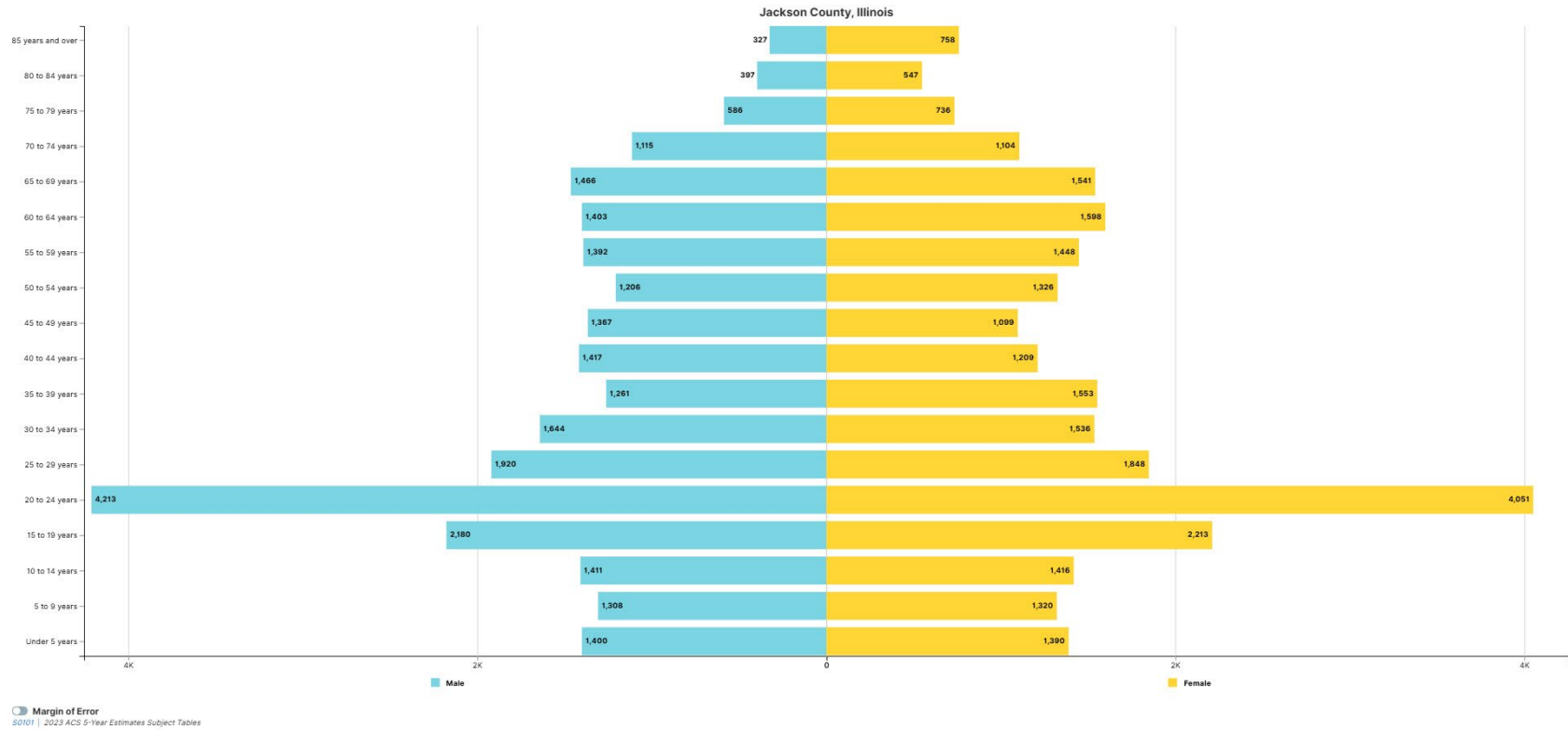


Figure 7: Older Populations

Older Population by Age in Jackson County, Illinois

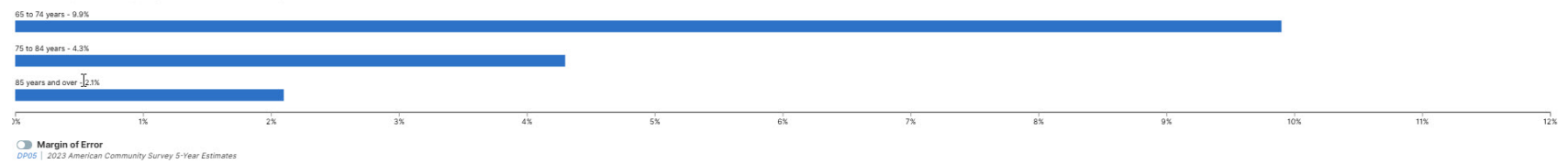


Figure 8: Types of Languages

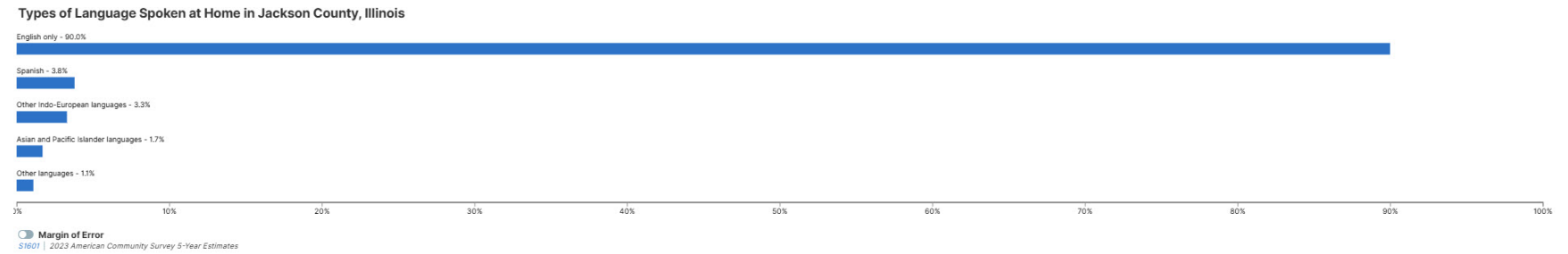


Figure 9: Residential Mobility

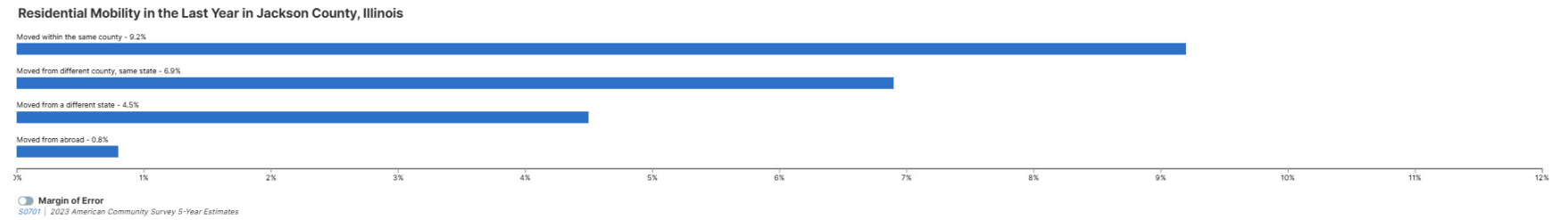
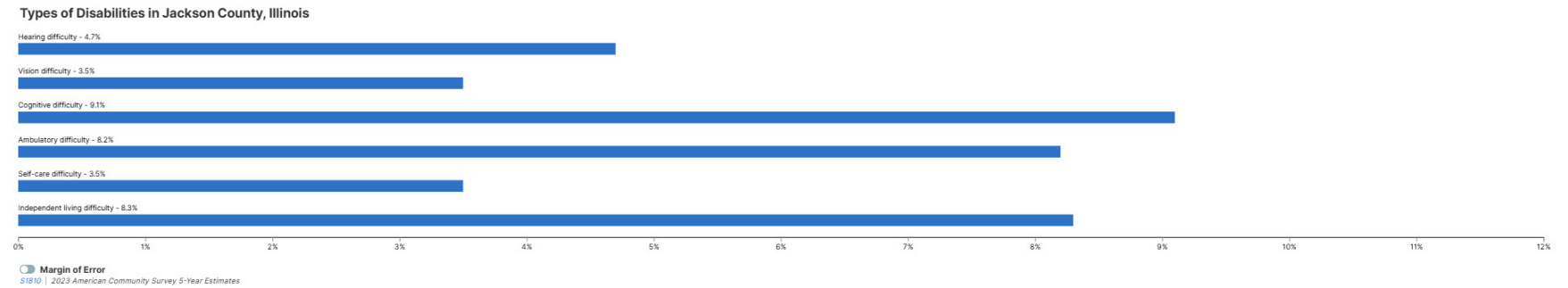


Figure 10: Types of Disabilities



## Exhibit VII: Title VI Protection Notice to the Public

### Title VI Protection Notice to the Public



Jackson County Mass Transit District, doing business as JAX Mass Transit (JAX) hereby gives the public notice of its policy to uphold and assure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and all related statutes.

Title VI and related statutes prohibiting discrimination in Federally Assisted programs require that no person in the United State of America shall on the grounds of race, color, and national origin be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to, discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial Assistance.

Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discretionary practice regarding JCMTD's programs has the right to file a formal complaint.

To obtain the formal complaint procedures, official complaint form and to request additional information regarding JCMTD's Title VI Obligations, please call **618-549-0304** or **come to the office at:** 975 Charles Road. Carbondale, IL 62901

Complaint forms must be completed, signed, and delivered to JAX Administrative Office **within one hundred and eighty days (180) days** following the date of the alleged occurrence.

All information about the process, materials necessary to apply for eligibility, complaint process, and notices and determinations concerning eligibility will be made available in accessible formats upon request.

Attn: Chief Executive Officer  
JAX Mass Transit District  
975 Charles Road  
Carbondale, IL 62901  
[ceo@ridejax.com](mailto:ceo@ridejax.com)