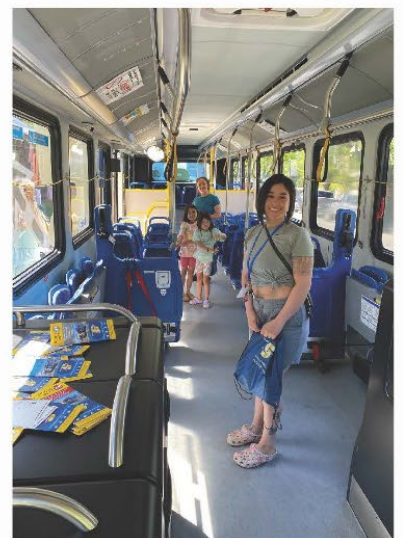




Stanislaus Regional Transit Authority Public Participation Plan



2024 Public Participation Plan Update

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Executive Summary

To carry out its mission of connecting communities with safe, reliable, and sustainable public transit service, the Stanislaus Regional Transit Authority (StanRTA) is committed to engaging all members of the community to participate in meaningful decision-making about plans and projects that may affect their lives or livelihoods. The Public Participation Plan (Plan) is a roadmap to the process of public engagement with local transit service planning. The Plan, a pillar of StanRTA's Title VI Program, that the public has meaningful opportunities to be involved in identifying and addressing the social, economic, and environmental impacts of proposed transportation decisions, both on a continual basis and in the case of special projects and major policy decisions.

This Public Participation Plan captures the methods, innovations and measurements of StanRTA's commitment to meet and exceed the prescribed requirements of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), including Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circulars C 4702.1B citing recipients' responsibilities to Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons, FTA Circular C 4703.1, guiding recipients on integrating principles of Environmental Justice into the transportation decision-making process, and Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Title VI program. The plan is also consistent with Title VI, (non-discrimination regulations) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 162(a) of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973, and The Age Discrimination Act of 1975.

The Plan formalizes StanRTA's public engagement policies and partnerships with Stanislaus County's diverse communities, ensuring that their concerns are heard, and their contributions are considered in planning and policy processes. Agencies are required to update their plans at least every three years. StanRTA's initial plan was approved in January 2022. Updates incorporated into the draft 2024 plan include:

- Added StanRTA Equity and Accessibility Advisory Committee (SEAAC) which was formed in April 2023
- Updated the Community Partners list
- Revised facilities-related outreach discussion

The plan will be presented initially to the StanRTA Equity and Accessibility Advisory Committee (SEAAC) for comment at their January 11, 2024, meeting and then posted to the StanRTA website (www.StanRTA.org) for a 30-day comment period before going to the Board of Directors on February 25, 2024, for consideration. Translated into Spanish, the document will be publicized through social media, digital, and community networks. Comments received will be incorporated as much as possible into the document.

Introduction

Community Served

StanRTA considers all who reside, work and travel within Stanislaus County to be stakeholders in transportation. StanRTA, operating as “The S”, provides fixed-route, commuter, complementary ADA paratransit service and demand responsive services throughout Stanislaus County, including limited service connecting the City of Turlock to the region. Turlock is otherwise served by Turlock Transit. Some key characteristics for the transit system in 2023 are captured below.

Fig. 1 StanRTA Snapshot

Stanislaus County Population (2020 Census)	552,878
Rider Households Below the Poverty Level (Under \$25,000)	67%
Riders Identifying as White	47%
Riders Identifying as Hispanic/Latino	43%
Riders Unemployed	40%
Fixed Route Trips 2023	2,295,352
Demand Response Trips 2023	139,588
Bus Fleet	131
Number of Routes	26

Plan Overview

The Plan has been designed to be inclusive of all populations in StanRTA’s service area and includes clear goals and methods to both provide information to and invite input from the public throughout decision-making processes. These processes run the continuum of involvement concerning service, fare changes, studies and initiatives, short- and long-range planning documents, environmental studies, project planning and construction, and transit safety education. This document will discuss the strategies used to attain feedback from the public. This Plan is to be used when StanRTA embarks upon service planning activities or other undertakings wherein public participation plays a critical role in a successful outcome.

Approach to Public Participation

This Plan guides all of StanRTA's outreach to gather important public input on possible changes to bus service, new projects in planning and construction, fare changes and other programs. As the system expands, StanRTA has an unprecedented opportunity to invest in the region's public transit network. This transformation through transportation will benefit and impact stakeholders throughout the region. StanRTA will form connections with communities and individuals who have deep relationships and insights into community-specific needs and opportunities, through comprehensive, equitable and sustained public participation programs. This Plan meets and exceeds the requirements set forth by the FTA, FHWA, and Title VI, and it aligns with StanRTA's mission and vision for excellence in service and support. The Plan is accountable, first and foremost, to the public, and it reflects the agency's dedication to provide a robust and inclusive public engagement program that sustains, strengthens, and deepens our relationships with stakeholders countywide.

Many non-English speaking, Limited English Proficient (LEP) and low-income communities use public transit as a primary method of transport. Stanislaus County recently estimated that 46% of county residents speak a language other than English. Of that group 36% speak Spanish. The County's population is 49.48% Hispanic or Latino. StanRTA must continue to emphasize access to multilingual resources, hold meetings that are flexible around working hours, enhance new outreach methods, measure the effectiveness of community outreach, and encourage participation, especially for those who rely on walking, bicycling, buses and shared rides for their daily trips.

Outreach Strategies.

Public participation should be considered at the earliest stages of any StanRTA project that may impact the surrounding community, its riders, and potential riders. As projects vary greatly in scope and size, the public participation process will similarly vary for each with certain minimum public participation standards employed consistently. The following outlines tools and strategies to ensure that public input is invited and all foreseeable impacts to the community are considered.

Continuous Outreach and Participation. StanRTA is increasing its efforts to overcome linguistic, institutional, cultural, economic, historical, or other barriers that have prevented minority and low-income populations, and persons with disabilities, from effectively participating in StanRTA's decision-making process. These efforts include employee education; holding community forums and public meetings; attending events of importance to populations from which StanRTA seeks input, including community events likely to attract individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP); and carefully selecting from among a wide range of tools when developing outreach plans based on the breadth

of a project or decision's potential impacts, and the locations and known communication needs or preferences of the targeted population(s).

Along with providing information on issues at the heart of specific outreach efforts, and then considering feedback offered, StanRTA also lets participants know how they can stay informed about StanRTA activities through web-based information, project information, and surveys. Public outreach is tailored to achieve specific public participation goals, such as sharing information, answering questions, establishing priorities and/or reaching consensus. This Plan includes—and suggests staff use—multiple feedback mechanisms, tools, strategies, and considerations so that staff can provide, and participants can select, their preferred methods of interaction. For example, some participants may not be comfortable in a large group meeting; they may prefer to complete a written survey, or get their questions answered in Spanish or another language through Customer Service.

StanRTA seeks public participation year-round to learn from and engage directly with passengers and the community. These efforts help strengthen connections, build trust, and open lines of communication between the public and STANRTA staff and leadership. The investment enables StanRTA to be more responsive to community needs and provides a solid platform from which project-based efforts are launched.

Specific or Project-Based Participation. StanRTA values the input of community members as potential changes are discussed and scales its outreach to match the potential impact upon the diverse communities comprising the ridership of the fixed route and demand response services and Stanislaus County as a whole. Therefore, StanRTA has organized its standards for minimum public participation requirements into three categories of project outreach. These categories are based on the estimated impact that a service change, whether programmatic, financial, or service-related, will have on the public. At the beginning of any project, staff will identify into which outreach category that project falls and develop a participation plan accordingly. At any time during its process, the project may be reclassified to a higher level if StanRTA staff deems it appropriate. The levels are described below.

Level One

These projects are minor in scope and nature. Routine service and route modifications and any short-term projects whose impact on current transit riders of both or either fixed route and demand response services, and potential riders, needs to be identified during the planning stages. Examples of Level One projects include:

- Minor route and service changes that cumulatively are less than 20% of the total service provided

- Routine rider
- surveys
- Infrastructure improvements such as bus stop amenities
- Changes to fare media

Level Two

These projects are of a scope that may impact a portion of the transit ridership and community. This is the most frequent and includes route changes, service frequency, fare increases, and minor facilities or capital projects that may include:

- Reduction in the span of transit service and/or the frequency of transit service
- Fare increases
- Elimination of any route
- Addition of any route
- Small renovations or additions to existing capital facilities
- Distribution of transit vehicles and transit amenities

Level Three

Longer-term or larger-scale projects are those whose impacts on fixed-route and/or demand response riders and potential riders need to be identified during planning stages. These may include:

- Significant change in service levels whether in a single or multiple service changes
- Short and Long Range Transit Plans
- Adoption of Comprehensive Operational Analysis recommendations
- Coordinated plans
- Major infrastructure improvements impacting services
- Facility or yard construction projects

Planning Strategies

When engaging in specific outreach, StanRTA generally applies the following strategies:

Strategy 1: Early Engagement Is Best

StanRTA deliberately structures its major planning initiatives and funding decisions to engage the public as soon as input can be meaningful. Staff will identify resources for public engagement early in the process, including staff availability and expertise, time and schedule, and budget dollars. Identifying needs for, acquiring, and providing translations and interpreters for people who don't speak English very well will also be considered early in planning for engagement activities. This requires considering public engagement at the very beginning of processes, planning activities, grant applications, etc.

Strategy 2: Ensure Access for All

StanRTA works to provide Stanislaus County residents with opportunities for meaningful participation, regardless of disabilities or language barriers. StanRTA also recognizes that one should not need to be a transportation professional to understand our written and oral communications. In this spirit, StanRTA commits to the following:

- Provide auxiliary aids and interpreters to persons with disabilities and language barriers.
- Strive to communicate in plain language.
- Use visual tools to present detailed information in a way that is readily understood.

To reach low-income, minority, and LEP communities within StanRTA's service area, geographically focused public meetings and forums are used to achieve the public participation outcomes described in this plan. In addition to traditional methods of one-way pushes of communication, StanRTA uses strategies recommended by community members for specific neighborhoods or populations.

Participation activities can be publicized in print materials produced by StanRTA, such as brochures, flyers, rider alerts, and posters.

- Brochures typically provide more content and serve as information sources.
- Posters are designed to publicize activities and highlight key information such as dates, times, and locations of activities.

These materials can be distributed system-wide or in targeted areas. They can also be available at StanRTA facilities, such as in the form of customer bulletins and notices placed in display cases. Print materials can be produced in targeted languages to ensure

inclusivity and can also be produced in formats suitable for electronic distribution through StanRTA’s website, email communications, and social media.

Strategy 3: Respond to Written Comments

StanRTA pays close attention to the views of the public. StanRTA is committed to responding to letters, faxes, and e-mails sent by members of the public as they relate to StanRTA programs and services.

Strategy 4 Inform the StanRTA Board and Public of Areas of Agreement & Disagreement

StanRTA staff summarizes comments heard from various parties so that there is a clear understanding of whether there is consensus on a given issue.

Strategy 5 Notify Public of Proposed or Final Actions

StanRTA staff makes every effort to ensure that meeting minutes reflect public comments and document how comments are considered in Board decisions. StanRTA strives to inform participants on how public input has helped to shape key decisions and actions.

Public Participation Tools

StanRTA employs an array of marketing and communications tools and strategies to inform and engage the public in the planning and development phases of service and fare changes, studies, and activities. These tools have been developed over time to reach diverse audiences across a variety of mediums when and where they are most receptive to the information. Key information is developed in Spanish and English, the two languages identified to guide CDOT employees and its agents in taking reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to LEP persons.

Outreach Team.

StanRTA added a marketing and community engagement staff member to its team in 2022. Prior to this, all marketing and outreach activities were handled by operations team members and the operations contractor. There is now a marketing team focused on both building a continuous presence with the communities of Stanislaus County but also dedicated to crafting project-based approaches to solicit input.

StanRTA's marketing team ensures information on major decisions and projects (e.g., service changes, fare changes, service delays, detours, pilot services, etc.) is conveyed to the public. Responsibilities of the department include the following:

- Developing and maintaining positive and effective communication with the community and various levels of government that interface with or impact the development of programs and operations.
- Creating all communications for StanRTA's daily passengers and implementing strategic marketing activities.
- Establishing and maintaining active working relationships with all relevant local media, including minority-based media, to communicate pertinent information to StanRTA's customers and stakeholders. Typical content shared with local media includes consideration of potential service and fare changes, decisions on fare and service changes and enhancements, alerts and updates on emergency situations posing an immediate threat to the safety and security of StanRTA customers or its service area, and policy changes.
- Issuing news releases or other forms of communication to media outlets and the public. These include announcements of public workshops and hearings and news of upcoming collaborative events.

The marketing team and operations group jointly:

- Coordinate with individuals, institutions, and organizations, while implementing community-based public involvement strategies to reach out to members in

affected communities, especially including minority and/or low-income communities.

- Provide opportunities for public participation through traditional and alternative means, from written communication to personal interviews or use of audio or video recording devices to capture oral comments.
- Identify and make use of locations/facilities and meeting times that are convenient and accessible to low-income and minority communities.
- Implement StanRTA's Language Assistance Plan and associated federal guidance concerning the agency's responsibilities to LEP persons to overcome barriers to public participation.
- Ensure LEP individuals who will be affected by potential actions receive meaningful access to the public awareness/involvement process.
- Meaningful access means that the affected parties will receive the necessary communication assistance required to allow them to participate in governmental services/activities.
- Develop comprehensive communication plans that ensure the delivery of information on StanRTA's programs and activities through a range of both traditional and alternative means. This includes but is not limited to, the translation of vital information into languages other than English, the creation and distribution of information in alternative formats for individuals with disabilities, and the use of communication strategies outside of advertising in the county's largest-circulation newspaper.

Traditional Media

Traditional media is one means to reach a large audience through newspapers, radio, and television. There are two ways to tap into these resources: paid advertising and unpaid editorial coverage. Paid advertising provides a guaranteed line of communication to an identified audience with maximum message control.

- Press releases
- Media Advisory
- Print display ads, classified ads, legal notices
- Radio spots, sponsorships, live remotes, and advertorials
- Television spots on local public access channels

Thematic/timely campaigns: Timely campaigns (such as the Free Fares July or Dump the Pump) deliver a surge of StanRTA collateral to current and potential customers regarding impactful topics.

- *Collateral: Posters, Social Media ads, Car Cards, etc.*
- *Languages: English/Spanish*

Display (*vehicle and bus stop*): The most noticed form of StanRTA advertising by non-riders is the buses and stops themselves. StanRTA advertising on the interior of the buses strengthens that connection even further. A new infotainment system is planned for late 2024 which will dramatically increase StanRTA’s capacity to communicate with passengers and the community. The system will add video displays to the interiors of buses, at mobility hubs and high use bus stops and transit centers. These displays will stream agency information and targeted project updates in English and Spanish.

Media Outlets

Broadcast: Broadcast advertising (radio ads and sponsorship on AM/public radio stations in particular) target prospective transit riders in their cars, which can deliver a timely message.

- *Cumulus Radio – KWIN 98.3 /HAWK 104.1/ Kat Country 103.3*
- *Benefit: Targeted audiences, ability to change message quickly*
- *Languages: English/Spanish*

Newspapers and Magazines Print/E-Editions: Advertisements and legal notices are placed in local newspapers and magazines. Some publications offer cover placement, inserts, or special sections and press releases. StanRTA works to develop relationships with the papers to get visibility for large transit planning and service projects. Local publications StanRTA works with:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| • <i>Modesto Bee</i> | • <i>Riverbank News</i> |
| • <i>Modesto View</i> | • <i>Latino Times</i> |
| • <i>Oakdale Leader</i> | • <i>City of Modesto Activity Guide</i> |
| • <i>Patterson Irrigator</i> | • <i>Turlock Junior</i> |
| • <i>Patterson Chamber Guide</i> | • <i>Languages: English/Spanish</i> |

Digital Communications

The Internet has had a significant impact on how StanRTA communicates directly with its riders and community. As newspaper readership has fallen, social media has become an ever-growing tool for spreading news and announcements. StanRTA maintains a strong presence on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, frequently adding new stories, rider alerts, and timely information. The ability to disseminate important transit information through StanRTA’s website and transit apps has revolutionized how stakeholders are informed and engaged.

Website. The agency’s website, *www.StanRTA.org*, provides detailed information about current transit service, upcoming service changes, long- and short-term planning projects, board agendas and staff reports, and other initiatives.

Social media. Social media provides another avenue for customer service as well as a way to drive people to the website for detailed information. Earned and paid advertising on social media expands the organization’s reach from existing followers and their networks to any users who meet defined criteria (such as home community, age, interests, etc.). StanRTA maintains a continuous presence on social media., providing information that can be shared with riders in real time using:

- Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/RideTheS>)
- X (formerly known as Twitter) (@StanRTARideTheS)
- Instagram (StanRTA – The S) Facebook
- YouTube) (@StanRTARideTheS)
- LinkedIn
- Threads (@StanRTARideTheS)

Video Outlets: Paid advertising in movie theaters or other video outlets allows big screen impacts to a diverse audience. The novelty of these advertisements cannot be found elsewhere, which can generate excitement.

- Galaxy Theatre
- Regal Cinemas

Printed Materials

Printed pieces, or collateral, are created to support almost every marketing or communication effort StanRTA undertakes. Print outreach can be expensive, but it is an effective method of reaching ridership. Important StanRTA transit information is prepared in Spanish, either as a separate version or a single brochure in both languages. Other formats can be provided upon request for the visually impaired. Among the most common print tools at the agency’s disposal are:

- Brochures
- Signage (includes signs at bus stops, posters at shelters, card cards, and digital displays posted inside the bus.)
- Maps, schedules, and timetables
- Direct mail and door hangers

Public Meetings

Public meetings, are a good way to give out information to a broad segment of the population. These meetings serve a variety of purposes from fulfilling legal obligations in the case of public hearings to fostering in-depth discussion and opportunities for input on planning decisions. These meetings function best when a cross-section of the community comes together for open discussion of proposals, challenges, and issues facing stakeholders.

Hybrid meetings. COVID indelibly changed the public’s expectations for how meetings are conducted. They expect a virtual livestream option to join formal, board of directors meetings as well as community outreach events. StanRTA has implemented this protocol for its Board of Directors and SEAAC meetings and provides virtual meetings via Zoom whenever outreach events are held. Many meetings are recorded and made available on the StanRTA YouTube channel for viewing at convenient times. Outreach meetings are often conducted in English and Spanish, depending upon the target constituency. A certified translator contracts with StanRTA to provide real-time, on-site support for those requiring language support. All meeting notices include the following language for individuals requiring translation or alternative communications options:

Notice Regarding Non-English Speakers: Stanislaus Regional Transit Authority SEAAC meetings are conducted in English. Anyone wishing to address the Committee is advised to have an interpreter or to contact Valerie Fabela at (209) 477-7011 during regular business hours at least 72 hours prior to the time of the meeting so that the Stanislaus Regional Transit Authority can provide an interpreter.

Aviso con Respecto a Personas que no Hablan el Idioma de Inglés: Las reuniones de la Mesa Directiva del Consejo de Gobiernos de Stanislaus son conducidas en Inglés. Cualquier persona que desea dirigirse a la Mesa Directiva se le aconseja que traiga su propio intérprete o llame a Valerie Fabela al (209) 477-7011 durante horas de oficina regulares o a lo menos 72 horas antes de la reunión, para proporcionarle con un intérprete.

Meeting Strategy

The format and content of public meetings can vary, from informal conversations at pop-up events to proscriptive public hearings before StanRTA’s Board of Directors. No matter the context of the public gathering, the function will have the following in common:

- Meetings will be held at varying times, dates, and locations across the service area to ensure equitable access.
- Meetings will be held in the communities where projects or plans are under consideration.

- Meetings will be held at locations accessible for persons with disabilities and close to public transportation.
- Staff will conduct outreach by joining existing meetings, functions, activities, and programs to reach community members where they already gather.
- Interpreters and interpretation equipment will be provided for non-English speaking people when warranted.
- Hearing notices on proposed changes will be disseminated, when applicable, by placing notices within a specific timeline in newspapers or publications that serve non-English speaking populations to maximize visibility and community participation.

Community Engagement

Many other public, private, and non-profit organizations conduct activities related to the services provided by StanRTA. When and where possible, Transit staff works with these organizations to gather input, provide information, or raise awareness about The S fixed route and demand response services.

- Partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs), local governments, social service agencies, and faith-based organizations, including organizations that serve non-English speaking populations.
- Fielding and responding to inquiries from the community, government, and business leaders.
- Participation in community events, including fairs, festivals, and parades.
- Inclusion of bilingual staff when possible and appropriate.
- Distribution of marketing materials (including translations) and meeting notices on buses and through CBOs, social service partners, and other public agencies.

Some events StanRTA participates in annually are:

StanrRTA Dump the Pump Campaign	Dia de los Muertes
Free Fares July	Trunk or Treat
Healthy Aging and Fall Prevention Summit	DRAIL Day of Disability
Rideshare Week	Annual Night Out
Celebration of Light Parade	Modesto City Schools Backpack Drive
Age with Movement Celebration	Kids Connect Backpack Drive
Earth Day in the Park Festival	UTN Study Outreach Events
1 st Friday Street Fairs	Service Change Outreach
Modesto Nuts Baseball	Customer Appreciation Day
4 th of July Parade (City of Modesto)	Stanislaus County Fair

Customer Service

The public can call StanRTA's customer service call center (209) 527-4900 during operational hours to give and receive vital information. Many customers rely upon the telephone for trip planning, information about upcoming changes or projects, and to relay complaints and compliments. The customer service number is always provided on StanRTA materials. The customer service center is staffed with both English and Spanish speakers. Language Line interpretation service, available to customers speaking other languages and as a tool for monolingual staff, is used on a daily basis.

Surveys and Focus Groups

Surveys play a crucial role in collecting data about riders, the service, and the impacts of specific projects. They also can measure changes over time. Some of the surveys periodically conducted by StanRTA are:

- Annual fixed-route passenger survey. A statistically valid survey capturing rider demographics and travel characteristics to comply with Title VI and Environmental Justice requirements, and to understand customer transit behavior.
- Community and online surveys of riders and nonriders to understand community transit needs and desires that may or may not be project-based. These are conducted as needed and in conjunction with major planning studies.
- Focus groups in targeted difficult-to-reach communities to gather service needs data
- Targeted surveys and focus groups to understand the needs of customers and the opinions of the community at large, including customer satisfaction.

Partnerships with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)

CBOs play an important role in public participation. As part of the community participation process, StanRTA staff work with many ethnic, cultural, faith-based, and neighborhood groups, social service agencies, local governments, educational agencies, families and persons with disabilities, civic groups, and senior-oriented organizations. Staff work with and through CBOs to schedule and conduct outreach. A list of many of the organizations that have supported or participated in outreach processes over the past three years follows.

Alzheimer's Association	Parkinson's Association of Northern California
American Cancer Society	Patterson Joint Unified School District
Area Agency on Aging	Public Coordinating Committee
CalFRESH	Project Sentinel
California Rural Legal Assistance	Ralston Tower Apartments
CSU Stanislaus	ResCare Home Care
Casa de Modesto	Riverbank Unified School District
Catholic Charities	Robertson Community Center
Center for Human Services	RSVP Retired Senior Volunteers
Central Valley Opportunity Center	Salida Municipal Advisory Council
Ceres Unified School District	Salvation Army
Dale Commons	Samaritan Village
Disability Resource Agency for Independent Living (DRAIL)	Satellite Dialysis Center
English Oaks Nursing & Rehab Center	Senior Coalition of Stanislaus County
Generations Health Care	Social Services Transit Advisory Council
Empire Municipal Advisory Council	Society for Disabilities
Family Resource Center of Newman	South Modesto Municipal Advisory Council
First Five of California	Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG)
Golden Valley Health Centers	Stanislaus County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services
Gospel Mission	Stanislaus County Child Support Services
Stanislaus Latino Chamber of Commerce	Stanislaus County Library
Health Plan of San Joaquin	Stanislaus County Office of Education
Healthy Aging Association	Stanislaus County Probation Department
Howard Prep	Stanislaus County Veterans Services
Interfaith Ministries	Stanislaus Elder Abuse Prevention Alliance (SEAPA)
Keyes Municipal Advisory Council	Stanislaus Regional Housing Authority
King Kennedy Center	Stanislaus Special Olympics
LGBT Alliance	The Park at Modesto
LOVE Stanislaus County	Turlock Transit
Modesto Chamber of Commerce	Unite Us
Modesto City Schools—Special Education	United Cerebral Palsy
Modesto Downtown Improvement District	United Way
Modesto Institute for Continued Learning (MIDL)	Valley Caregivers Resource Center
Modesto Junior College	Valley Mountain Regional Center
Modesto Senior Citizens Center	Stanislaus County Veterans Affairs
MOVE Stanislaus	Visually Impaired Persons Support
National Federation of the Blind	West Modesto Community Collaborative
Oakdale Senior Service Center	
Optimal Hospice Care	

StanRTA Equity and Accessibility Advisory Committee

In spring 2023, the StanRTA Board of Directors created the Equity and Accessibility Advisory Committee (SEAAC), an 11-member oversight group, to provide formal guidance and leadership on policies, plans, services, fares, and activities falling under Title VI and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The SEAAC meets quarterly. Topics addressed by the SEAAC in 2023 included a proposal to allow veterans and active military to ride the bus for free, a review of a minor service change in July, and service performance. Each meeting includes the opportunity for members to introduce topics for further inquiry.

The SEAAC members are provided a \$50 stipend for each meeting attended. Membership is comprised of five members, each representing a supervisorial district, two at-large delegates, two public agency members, and two community-based organizations.

Conclusion

This Plan is an accountability tool for the public. StanRTA is committed to engaging the public in public transportation issues, making use of multiple outreach techniques and creative targeted engagement activities. Through its work with community partners, StanRTA will continually improve the identification and implementation of strategies that remove barriers to access and participation for all community members.

Since the last plan's preparation in 2022, StanRTA has done much to strengthen its outreach efforts:

- Built outreach networks
- Solidified community-based partnerships
- Implemented a formal oversight structure (SEAAC)
- Established ongoing outreach activities and events
- Formulated successful project-based outreach programs
- Expanded marketing and outreach agency resources

Cumulatively, this work embodies StanRTA's commitment to inclusivity for low-income and minority communities, and those Limited English Proficiency.