

**MINUTES**

**DECATUR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**COMMISSIONERS' BOARD ROOM**

**TUESDAY, JULY 26, 2022**

PRESENT: CHAIRMAN PETE STEPHENS, VICE CHAIRMAN DENNIS BRINSON, COMMISSIONERS, BOBBY BARBER, JR, RUSTY DAVIS, GEORGE ANDERSON, AND STEVE BROCK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR ALAN THOMAS, COUNTY ATTORNEY BRUCE KIRBO, AND COUNTY CLERK MICHELLE WEST.

**INVOCATION AND THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Stephens called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. After the call to order, County Attorney Kirbo gave the invocation and all those assembled pledged allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Vice Chairman Brinson made a motion to approve the agenda, as presented. Commissioner Anderson seconded the motion, a vote was taken and unanimously approved.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

There were no Special Presentations.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no Public Participation.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the minutes of the Commissioners' meeting held July 26, 2022, as presented. Commissioner Brock seconded the motion, a vote was taken and unanimously approved.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no Old Business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Consider Approval of Language Access Plan.** Chairman Stephens recognized County Administrator Thomas who stated the Language Access Plan is included in their packets and it was drafted by Bob Roberson, our consultant for CDBG projects. County Administrator Thomas recommends approval and adoption of the Language Access Plan to the Board. Commissioner Barber made the motion to approve the plan, a copy of which is attached. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, a vote was taken and unanimously approved.

**Consider Approval of Errors & Releases.** Chairman Stephens recognized County Administrator Thomas who recommended that the Board approve the errors and releases, stating the Tax Commissioner and the Board of Assessors have approved. Vice Chairman Brinson made a motion to approve the Errors and Releases. Commissioner Brock seconded the motion, a vote was taken and unanimously approved.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – PERSONNEL**

Commissioner Davis made the motion to enter into executive session to discuss personnel. Commissioner Brock seconded the motion, a vote was taken and unanimously approved.

After the executive session, the Commissioners assembled back in the board room. Commissioner Brock made the motion to enter back into regular session. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, a vote was taken and unanimously approved.

Chairman Stephens stated personnel was discussed in executive session. Chairman Stephens stated he was excited to announce that County Administrator Thomas has agreed to extend his employment contract for an additional two years. Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the contract. Commissioner Brock seconded the motion, a vote was taken and unanimously approved.

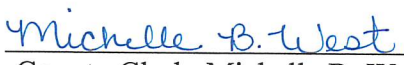
**COMMISSIONERS/ADMINISTRATOR'S REMARKS**

The Commissioners thanked everyone for coming.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting, on motion by Commissioner Barber, was duly adjourned. Commissioner Anderson seconded the motion, a vote was taken and unanimously approved.

Approved:   
Chairman, Pete Stephens

Attest:   
County Clerk, Michelle B. West



**Language Access Plan  
Decatur County, Georgia  
December 2021**

**P.O. Box 726  
Bainbridge, Georgia 39818  
229-248-3030**

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# LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Prepared By: Bob Roberson  
Bob Roberson and Associates, Inc.  
23 Eighth Avenue, SE  
Moultrie, Georgia 31768  
(229) 890-8662  
bassts@windstream.net

List of Current Applicable Funded Grants/Programs (to be automatically amended as projects are funded):

1. Grantee: Decatur County, Georgia  
CDBG Grant Number: 21p-y-043-1-6183  
Target Area: Philyaw Subdivision Street and Drainage Improvements
2. Grantee: Decatur County  
CDBG-EIP Grant Number: 21q-y-043-1-6257  
Project: Infrastructure Extensions to serve A1 Trusses

This *Language Access Plan* has been prepared to address Decatur County responsibilities as a recipient of federal financial assistance from Georgia Department of Community Affairs programs and grants funded by HUD as they relate to the needs of individuals with limited English language skills.

The plan has been prepared to ensure compliance with HUD's guidance and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and its implementing regulations. Under HUD's guidance, Decatur County must take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

Executive Order 13166, titled *Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency*, indicates that differing treatment based upon a person's inability to speak, read, write or understand English is a type of national origin discrimination. It directs each agency to publish guidance for its respective recipients clarifying their obligation to ensure that such discrimination does not take place. This order applies to all state and local agencies which receive federal funds, including Decatur County.

Decatur County has developed this *Language Access Plan* to help identify reasonable steps for providing language assistance to persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) who wish to access services provided through programs funded by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs/HUD. As defined by Executive Order 13166, LEP persons are those who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English. This plan outlines how to identify a person who may need language assistance, the ways in which assistance

may be provided, staff training that may be required, and how to notify LEP persons that assistance is available.

In order to prepare this plan, Decatur County used HUD's four-factor LEP analysis which considers the following factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the Community Development programs;
2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with Community Development programs;
3. The nature and importance of the Community Development programs and services provided by Decatur County to the LEP population;
4. The resources available to Decatur County and overall cost to provide LEP assistance.

### **SAFE HARBORS**

In accordance with HUD Safe Harbors for LEP, Decatur County will translate written Community Development documents for groups that are at least 5% of the population eligible (and more than 50 persons) or 1,000 persons, whichever is less. If there are fewer than 50 persons in a language group that reaches the 5% trigger above, Decatur County will not translate the vital Community Development written materials, but will provide written notice in the primary language of the LEP group of the right to receive competent oral interpretation of those written materials, free of cost.

The size of the language group determines the recommended provision for written language assistance.

<b>Size of Language Group</b>	<b>Recommended Provision of Written Language Assistance</b>
1,000 or more in the eligible population	Translated vital documents
More than 5% of the eligible population or beneficiaries and more than 50 in number	Translated vital documents
More than 5% of the eligible population or beneficiaries and 50 or less in number	Translated written notice of right to receive free oral interpretation of documents.
5% or less of the eligible population or beneficiaries and less than 1,000 in number	No written translation is required.

## **II. MEANINGFUL ACCESS: FOUR-FACTOR ANALYSIS**

### **1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the programs.**

Decatur County staff reviewed the most currently available census information from the Georgia DCA website and determined that of the population of 24,892 persons over 5 years of age, 824 persons in Decatur County (3.31% of the total population) speak a language other than English. Of those 824 persons, 290 (1.17% of the total population and 35.19% of the population speaking a language other than English) have limited English proficiency; that is, they speak English less than "very well". In Decatur County, of those persons with limited English proficiency, 238

Speak Spanish, 1 speaks other Indo-European languages, 51 speak Asian and Pacific Islander languages, and no persons speak a language not identified in the Survey.

A review of the residents that are in the FY 21 CDBG Target Area revealed that all are able to understand English very well. There are no persons of Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander or Indo-European origin residing in the Target Area. This does not meet the threshold described above for translating vital documents or translated written notice of right to receive free oral interpretation of documents. Oral Interpretation Services are available for clients upon request.

Language Spoken*	# of Residents Over 5 Years of Age*	Speaks English Less Than "Very Well"*
English	24,068 (96.70%)	N/A
Spanish	713 (2.86%)	238 (0.96%)
Other Indo-European	60 (.24%)	1 (0.004%)
Asian & Pacific and Other	51 (.20%)	51 (0.20%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,892 (100.0%)</b>	<b>290 (1.20%)</b>

CDBG Grant Number: 21p-y-043-1-6183

Target Area: Philyaw Subdivision Street and Drainage Improvements

CDBG Grant Number: 21q-y-043-1-6257

Project: Infrastructure Extensions to serve A1 Trusses

At the present time, GA DCA has identified no Census Tracts in Decatur County that meet LEP criteria:

**2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with Community Development services.**

Decatur County Administrative Staff reviewed the frequency with which staff have, or could have, contact with LEP persons. This includes documenting phone inquiries or office visits, as well as public hearings and interactions during surveys. Over the past two years, there have been no requests for interpreters and no requests for translated program documents.

A review of the residents that are in the FY 2021(21p-y-043-1-6183) CDBG Target Area revealed there are no persons residing in the area who speak languages other than English. Surveyors of family size and income in the neighborhood indicated that all households were English proficient. The CDBG-EIP project does not require any survey of residents as the infrastructure extensions will take place within an established industrial park.

Frequency of Interaction: Annually

For Project Applications:

- a. When notifying the public about the potential grant and activities
- b. When surveying income in the target area

**3. The nature and importance of programs, activities or services provided by Community Development to the LEP population.**

The 2021 CDBG project proposes street paving and drainage improvements in Philyaw Subdivision. As noted above, there are no LEP persons residing in the project neighborhood. The 2021 EIP project will not take place within a residential area.

Importance of the Program(s): Denial or delay of access to services or information would not have serious or life-threatening implications for any LEP individual.

**4. The resources available to Decatur County, and overall cost to provide LEP assistance.**

Decatur County reviewed its available resources that could be used for providing LEP assistance, including which documents would be most valuable to be translated if the need should arise. An "I Speak" card/poster will be made available to determine needed language translations. A notice (see below) will be posted in all ads for GA DCA/HUD programs regarding who to contact should language assistance be needed. Language translation, if needed, would be provided through the available bi-lingual staff and/or the Language Line for which Decatur County would pay a fee.

**III. LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE**

A person who does not speak English as their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English may be a Limited English Proficient person and may be entitled to language assistance with respect to Community Development services. Language assistance can include interpretation, which means oral or spoken transfer of a message from one language into another language and/or translation, which means the written transfer of a message from one language into another language.

The Name of the individual at Decatur County responsible for coordination of LEP Compliance is:

Alan Thomas, County Administrator  
Decatur County Board of Commissioners  
P.O. Box 726  
Bainbridge, Georgia 39818  
(229) 248-3030  
athomas@decaturcountyga.gov

How Decatur County may identify an LEP person who needs language assistance:



- a. When notifying the public about the potential grant and activities
- b. When surveying income in the target area

**3. The nature and importance of programs, activities or services provided by Community Development to the LEP population.**

The 2021 CDBG project proposes street paving and drainage improvements in Philyaw Subdivision. As noted above, there are no LEP persons residing in the project neighborhood. The 2021 EIP project will not take place within a residential area.

Importance of the Program(s): Denial or delay of access to services or information would not have serious or life-threatening implications for any LEP individual.

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P.O. Box 726  
Bainbridge, Georgia 39818  
(229) 248-3030

How Decatur County may identify an LEP person who needs language assistance:

- Post notice of LEP Plan and the availability of interpretation services free of charge in languages LEP persons would understand;
- Add statement (see below) to public meeting and event notices concerning GA DCA/HUD programs;
- All staff involved with Community Development activities will be informally surveyed periodically on their experience concerning any contacts with LEP persons during the previous year; and
- When Decatur County conducts a Public Hearing, an informational meeting or event, a staff person may greet participants as they arrive. By informally engaging participants in conversation it is possible to gauge each attendee's ability to speak and understand English. Although translation may not be able to be provided at the event (unless previously requested) it will help identify the need for future events; and
- Language Identification Cards/Posters will be used as necessary to determine a client's language needs.

**Language Assistance Measures**-Although there is a small percentage in Decatur County of eligible LEP households, that is, persons who speak English "not well" or "not at all", it will strive to offer the following measures:

1. The County Administration will take reasonable steps to provide the opportunity for meaningful access to LEP clients who have difficulty communicating English.
2. The following resources will be available to accommodate LEP persons:
  - Interpreters if available will be provided within a reasonable time period; or
  - Language interpretation will be accessed through Language Line Solutions.
3. Language Identification Cards/Posters will be used as necessary to determine a client's language needs.
4. The following statements will be added to public meeting and event notices concerning GA DCA/HUD programs:

"Persons with special needs relating to handicapped accessibility or foreign language should contact Alan Thomas, County Administrator at 229-248-3030 before \_\_\_\_\_. This person can be located at offices of the Decatur County Board of Commissioners, 203 W. Broughton Street and is available between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays, or you may call 229-248-3030. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service, at (TDD) 1-800-255-0056 or (Voice) 1-800-255-0135."

#### **IV. STAFF TRAINING**

The following training will be provided to all Community Development staff:

- Information on the Title VI Policy and LEP responsibilities;

- Description of language assistance services offered to the public;
- Documentation of language assistance requests; and
- How to handle a potential Title VI/LEP complaint.

All contractors, subcontractors and sub-recipients performing work for or receiving federal funds for Community Development projects will be required to follow the Title VI/LEP guidelines.

## **V. TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENTS**

● Decatur County weighed the cost and benefits of translating documents for potential LEP groups. Considering the expense of translating the documents, the likelihood of frequent changes in documents and other relevant factors, at this time no documents require translation.

● Due to the relatively small eligible local LEP population, Decatur County does not have a formal outreach procedure in place at this time. Translation resources have been identified. When and if the need arises for LEP outreach, Decatur County will consider the following option:

- When staff prepares a document, or schedules a meeting, for which the target audience is expected to include LEP individuals, then relevant documents, meeting notices, flyers, and agendas will be printed in an alternative language based on the known LEP population, if requested.

## **VI. MONITORING AND UPDATING THE LAP PLAN**

Decatur County will update the LAP Plan as required. At a minimum, the plan will be reviewed and updated every five years using American Fact Finder for census information, or when it is clear that higher concentrations of LEP individuals are present in Decatur County. Updates will include the following:

- The number of documented LEP person contacts encountered annually;
- How the needs of LEP persons have been addressed;
- Determination of the current LEP population in the service area;
- Determination as to whether the need for translation services has changed;
- Determine whether local language assistance programs have been effective and sufficient to meet the need;
- Determine whether Decatur County financial resources are sufficient to fund language assistance resources needed;
- Determine whether Decatur County fully complies with the goals of this LAP Plan; and
- Determine whether complaints have been received concerning the County's failure to meet the needs of LEP individuals.

## **VII. DISSEMINATION OF THE DECATUR COUNTY LAP PLAN**

The LAP Plan will be on the Decatur County website page and provided to anyone requesting the information.

## **VIII. RECORDS**

Decatur County will maintain records in the office of the County Clerk regarding its efforts to comply with Title VI LEP obligations. These records will be reviewed periodically and open to the public in an effort to improve service.

## **IX. COMPLAINTS/FINDINGS**

Any person who believes they have been denied the benefits of this LAP or that Decatur County has not complied with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000(d) and Executive Order 13166 regulations may file a complaint with the County LAP Coordinator. The County LAP Coordinator may be the first point of contact for any complaints or appeals, but the DCA LAP Coordinator must be informed of all complaints and appeals. The LAP Coordinator will provide oversight of the complaint/appeal resolution process. To file a complaint, submit the written complaint to:

Alan Thomas, County Administrator  
Decatur County Board of Commissioners  
P.O. Box 726  
Bainbridge, Georgia 39818

Or

DCA 504 Coordinator  
60 Executive Park South, N.E.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30329-2231  
[fairhousing@dca.ga.gov](mailto:fairhousing@dca.ga.gov)

## **X. A AVAILABLE FEDERAL LEP RESOURCES**

HUD's LEP Website:

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/lep.xml>

Federal LEP Website:

<http://www.lep.gov/>

LEP and Title VI Videos:

<http://www.lep.gov/video/video.html>

"I Speak" Card:

<http://www.lep.gov/ISpeakCards2004.pdf>



**Mark Harrell**  
**DECATUR COUNTY TAX COMMISSIONER**  
*P.O. Box 246 / 112 W. Water St*  
*Bainbridge, GA 39818*  
*Phone: 248-3021 / Fax: 248-2110*

7/14/2022

**E & R / NOD - Mobile home Tax Digest**

**2022 Digest Year**

Map & Parcel	Name	100% Value From	100% Value To	Memo
67A 6	Gonzalez Tanya Y	\$ 15,869.00	\$ -	Delete 2022 mobile home tax bill. Homestead put back on for 2022 tax year.
76D 50	Luce C J	\$ 3,366.00	\$ -	Delete 2022 mobile home tax bill. Mobile home demolished in 2021.
76D 50	Montano-Rueda Jose Luis % Edwin Wims	\$ 5,614.00	\$ -	Delete 2022 mobile home tax bill. Mobile home demolished in 2021.
76D 50	Smith Orris Ingle % Adams Bros. Farm	\$ 11,458.00	\$ -	Delete 2022 mobile home tax bill. Mobile home demolished 2021.
76D 50	Vickers Gene	\$ 11,366.00	\$ -	Delete 2022 mobile home tax bill. Mobile home demolished 2021.
76D 50	Wims Edwin Bush	\$ 10,248.00	\$ -	Delete 2022 mobile home tax bill. Mobile home demolished 2021.
76D 50	Wims Edwin Bush	\$ 962.00	\$ -	Delete 2022 mobile home tax bill. Mobile home demolished 2021.
		<b>\$ 58,883.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	

Mark Harrell - Tax Commissioner

David J. Kendrick - Board of Assessors

Pete Stephens, Chairman - Board of Commissioners