

# LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN



TOWN OF CARRBORO • NC



CONSTRUYENDO  
COMUNIDADES  
BUILDING INTEGRADAS  
INTEGRATED  
COMMUNITIES

PREPARED BY THE CARRBORO  
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## Introduction

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### Why is language access important?

The Town of Carrboro is dedicated to creating a vibrant and inclusive community. In 2020, the Town adopted the [Inclusive Carrboro Communications and Community Engagement Plan](#), recognizing that effective communication between local government and residents is essential in building equitable community relationships, supporting public health and safety, and fostering civic participation. The Plan identifies the need for the Town to increase engagement with underrepresented communities, which include immigrant and refugee residents who moved to North Carolina to work, join families, and seek a better life. The Plan identifies the need to provide meaningful language access to Town information, services, meetings, and leadership opportunities for residents who have limited proficiency (LEP) in the English language – an estimated 6.5% of Carrboro residents.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the Inclusive Carrboro Communications and Community Engagement Plan, the Town has adopted the following that also emphasize the need for language access:

- Carrboro Connects 2022-2042 Comprehensive Plan, adopted in June of 2022
- Weaving Equity into Town Governance, adopted in November of 2023
- Resolution in Support of Immigrant Communities in Carrboro, passed in March of 2024

To work towards the above goals, the Town of Carrboro’s Language Access Plan (LAP) establishes policies and procedures to ensure that residents with limited English proficiency have meaningful access to Town services, information, and civic opportunities. The LAP is comprehensive, applying to all Town departments and services, unless otherwise indicated. The Town of Carrboro’s LAP will help local government staff:

- understand what to do when a community member with limited English proficiency needs language assistance,
- improve accessibility to civic engagement opportunities and Town services and resources, and
- ensure that the Town complies with federal laws and policies.

### What is the federal mandate for language access?

Federal laws and policies guarantee people access to written, verbal, or visual materials or services in their preferred languages.<sup>2</sup> Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C §§ 2000d - 2000d-7 (Title VI) and its regulations provide that no person –on the ground of race, color, or national origin – is excluded from, denied benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.<sup>3</sup> Other federal laws and regulations also have a similar prohibition on race, color,

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “Language Spoken at Home for the Population 5 Years and Over 2022,” 2018-2022 *American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates* (C16001), <https://data.census.gov/table?q=carrboro%20C16001>.

<sup>2</sup> Julia Haskins, “Moving From Language Access to Justice,” de Beaumont Foundation, June 1, 2022, <https://debeaumont.org/news/2022/moving-from-language-access-to-justice/>.

<sup>3</sup> Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C §§ 2000d - 2000d-7, <https://www.justice.gov/crt/fcs/TitleVI>

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and national origin discrimination. Executive Order 13166, issued in 2000, required federal agencies to issue Title VI guidance to recipients of federal financial assistance.<sup>4</sup>

### Background on the Town of Carrboro’s Language Access Plan

In 2023-2024, the Town of Carrboro worked with the [Building Integrated Communities](#) Program (BIC) at the [Institute for the Study of the Americas](#) at UNC-Chapel Hill and with local residents and community-based organizations, including the [Refugee Community Partnership](#) (RCP), to identify strategies and policies. This process builds on a 2023 language assessment of Town employees and extensive community engagement from 2017-2020 in surrounding Orange County that led to the [Chapel Hill Language Access Plan](#). Carrboro’s Building Integrated Communities (Carrboro BIC) team met monthly between May 2023 and March 2024 to discuss language access best practices, identify community priorities for language access services, analyze demographic data and information on the Town’s existing language access capacity, and to decide on priorities for the Town’s Language Access Plan. The Carrboro BIC team consisted of the following members:

#### Town of Carrboro Staff:

- Anita Jones-McNair, Chief Race and Equity Officer, Town Manager’s Office
- Anne-Marie Vanaman, Director, Housing & Community Services
- Catherine Lazorko, Director, Communication & Engagement
- Evelyn Greene, Communication & Engagement Specialist, Communication & Engagement
- Jon Hartman-Brown, Director, Economic Development
- Joshua Ward, Human Resources Analyst, Human Resources
- Kannu Taylor, Race and Equity Manager, Town Manager’s Office
- Malia Summey, Administrative Assistant, Housing & Community Services

#### Refugee Community Partnership:

- Daniella Runyambo, Co-Executive Director, Programs & Community Impact
- Lama Moakeh, Collective Care Manager
- Meagan Clawar, Co-Executive Director, Finance & Operations
- Madison Hayes, Co-Executive Director, Development & Communications

#### University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Institute for the Study of the Americas:

- Brianna Gilmore, Program Associate
- Emily Spangenberg, Bilingual Program Coordinator
- Hannah Gill, Associate Director of the Institute for the Study of the Americas

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<sup>4</sup> “Executive Order 13166 of August 11, 2000, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency.” *Code of Federal Regulations*, title 3 (2000): 50120-50125.  
<https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/crt/legacy/2010/12/14/eolep.pdf>

## Definitions

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**Bilingual/Multilingual:** A person who is bilingual is fluent in two languages, and a person who is multilingual is fluent in two or more languages. Someone who is bilingual or multilingual may be able to perform their job duties in two or more languages, but they are not necessarily qualified to translate or interpret (see “**Qualified Interpreter or Translator**”).

**Born outside of the U.S or Foreign-born:** The U.S. Census Bureau uses the term “foreign-born” to refer to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. This includes naturalized U.S. citizens, non-citizen U.S. nationals, lawful permanent residents (immigrants), temporary migrants (such as foreign students), humanitarian migrants (such as refugees and asylees), and unauthorized migrants.<sup>5</sup>

**Born in the U.S or Native-born:** The U.S. Census Bureau uses the terms “native” and “native-born” to refer to anyone born in the United States, Puerto Rico, a U.S. Island Area (Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or the U.S. Virgin Islands), or abroad of a U.S. citizen parent or parents.<sup>6</sup>

**English Language Learner (ELL):** An alternative to “English as a Second Language (ESL)”, “ELL” is commonly used in educational settings to refer to students whose primary or preferred language(s) is not English. ELL, as opposed to ESL, also recognizes that students may speak more than one language other than English – in other words, that English is not always a “second” language.

**Immigrant:** Any person who is not a citizen or national of the United States who is present in the United States, except for those admitted specifically under non-immigrant categories. This definition includes those who entered the U.S. under an immigrant status and those that entered the U.S. without undergoing an inspection.<sup>7</sup>

**In-Language Services:** Job-related services that are provided directly in languages other than English, without the use or aid of an interpreter or translator.

**Interpretation:** The process of adapting oral speech from one language to oral speech in another language, either simultaneously or delayed (consecutive), without loss or change in meaning. An interpreter must be competent and have knowledge in both languages of the relevant terms or concepts particular to the program or activity and the dialect and terminology used by the individual who speaks a language other than English.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About Foreign Born,” <https://www.census.gov/topics/population/foreign-born/about/faq.html>.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “About the Foreign-Born Population,” <https://www.census.gov/topics/population/foreign-born/about.html>

<sup>7</sup> *Immigration and Nationality Act*, 8 U.S.C. §1101 “Definitions”, <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title8-section1101&num=0&edition=prelim>

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, “Language Access Assessment and Planning Tool for Federally Conducted and Federally Assisted Programs,” May 2011, 5. [https://www.lep.gov/sites/lep/files/resources/2011\\_Language\\_Access\\_Assessment\\_and\\_Planning\\_Tool.pdf](https://www.lep.gov/sites/lep/files/resources/2011_Language_Access_Assessment_and_Planning_Tool.pdf)

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**Language Access:** Providing individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) reasonable and meaningful access to the same services as individuals who speak English.<sup>9</sup> It also refers to the laws and policies that guarantee people access to written, verbal, or visual materials or services in their preferred languages.<sup>10</sup>

**Language Access Plan (LAP):** A set of policies, procedures, and implementation steps established to provide the most effective services for individuals who prefer to communicate in a language other than English.

**Limited English Proficiency (LEP):** The U.S. Census Bureau’s term for individuals with limited ability to communicate (e.g. speak, read, write, or understand) effectively in English. According to the U.S. Census Bureau classification, an individual with LEP is anyone above the age of 5 who reported speaking English less than “very well”. The Bureau’s classifications are “very well”, “well”, “not well”, and “not at all”. The term “LEP” is deficit-focused; unless referring directly to Census data, this Plan uses “persons who speak a language other than English (LOTE)” as an alternative in most cases (see “**Languages Other Than English**”).

**Languages Other Than English (LOTE):** An alternative to “Limited English Proficiency.” The use of “LOTE” is an example of “asset-based language” that emphasizes language skills that individuals have, rather than focusing on level of proficiency in English.

**Meaningful Access:** According to the United States Department of Justice, “language assistance that results in accurate, timely, and effective communication at no cost to the individual with LEP needing assistance” and that is not significantly delayed, restricted, or inferior to access provided to individuals who are proficient in English.<sup>11</sup> The Town of Carrboro can provide meaningful access to programs, services, and information by proactively eliminating communication barriers and ensuring that any individual can effectively communicate with the Town in the individual’s preferred language.

**Multilingual Staff:** A Town staff member who has a demonstrated and verified proficiency in both English and at least one other strategic language.

**Naturalized Citizen:** Naturalized citizens are foreign nationals who have become U.S. citizens after completing the requirements in the Immigration and Nationality Act.

**Preferred Language(s):** The language(s) in which a person feels most empowered to express themselves and understand information. An individual may prefer different languages for spoken, sign, and/or written communications, depending on the nature and context of information being exchanged. For example, a person may prefer to speak in Burmese during an appointment, but read detailed written information in Thai.

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<sup>9</sup> “Frequently Asked Questions on Legal Requirements to Provide Language Access Services,” Migration Policy Institute, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/language%20access-translation-and-interpretation-policies-and-practices/frequently-asked>

<sup>10</sup> Haskins, 2022.

<sup>11</sup> United States Department of Justice, “Department of Justice Language Access Plan,” <https://www.justice.gov/atj/departments-justice-language-access-plan#appendix>

**Qualified interpreter or translator:** “An individual who has been assessed for professional skills, demonstrates a high level of proficiency in at least two languages, and has the appropriate training and experience to interpret and/or translate with skill and accuracy while adhering to the National Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.”<sup>12</sup> This is different than a certified interpreter or translator, who has taken additional steps to meet the requirements and pass the exams of a certifying body for their specific profession (e.g. Certified Medical Interpreter, Certified Court Interpreter, or Certified Translator).

**Refugee:** A person who has been forced to cross national boundaries due to war, violence, conflict, or persecution and cannot return home safely. Formal refugee status, which allows for permanent, legal settlement in a new country and the protection of rights under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, can be granted under certain circumstances by the United Nations.<sup>13</sup>

**Safe Harbor Guideline:** Often used alongside the Four-factor Analysis, this guideline provides parameters for identifying strategic language groups in need of agency focus, particularly as they pertain to translation of vital documents. The Safe Harbor parameters are: 1) 5% or 1,000, whichever is less, of the population eligible to be served or likely to be affected or encountered, and 2) if there are fewer than 50 people in a language group that reaches the 5% trigger above, the recipient instead can provide translated written notice of the right to receive competent oral interpretation of vital documents, free of cost.<sup>14</sup>

**Sight Translation:** The process of transforming a written message in the source language into a spoken message in the target language, often at the time of contact with the individual who prefers to communicate in the target language.

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964:** This federal law protects people from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. Under Title VI, agencies must take reasonable steps to make their programs, services, and activities accessible to individuals who prefer to communicate in a language other than English.

**Translation:** The process of adapting written text in one language to written text in another language, with consistent and accurate meanings.

**Vital Documents:** Forms and informational materials published and maintained by local governments that are critical for communication, access to resources and services, and civic participation. Vital documents are generally considered priority documents for translation, since they are crucial for residents’ access to activities, services, programs, and other resources The Town offers.

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<sup>12</sup> “FAQs-Translators and Interpreters,” National Council on Interpreting in Health Care, accessed January 24, 2023, <https://www.ncihc.org/faq-translators-and-interpreters>.

<sup>13</sup> “What Is a Refugee? Definition and Meaning,” USA for UNHCR, accessed January 24, 2023, <https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/>.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, *Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons* (June 12, 2002), <https://www.justice.gov/crt/doj-final-lep-guidance-signed-6-12-02>

## Assessment

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This section shares data that shaped the creation of the LAP, including demographic information about the Town of Carrboro and an assessment of the Town staff capacity to provide meaningful language access. Specifically, the assessment includes:

- 1) Demographic data from the U.S. Census and American Community Survey, the Orange County Health Department, the Chapel Hill-Carrboro School System, and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. The demographic data identifies the non-English languages spoken by Carrboro residents and describes language proficiency in each language group.
- 2) A 2023 Town of Carrboro Departmental Language Access Survey, which the UNC BIC team distributed to all Town staff.
- 3) Input from immigrant and refugee community partners in monthly BIC team meetings from May 2023-March 2024.

The Carrboro BIC team analyzed assessment information and data using the four-factor analysis, a framework that the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) recommends as a starting point to identify priority areas for providing resources and services to facilitate language access.

### Four-Factor Analysis

According to DOJ guidance on language access planning,<sup>15</sup> four factors can help government agencies identify priority language access services and the available resources to provide them. The four factors are:

1. Number or proportion of LEP individuals<sup>16</sup> in the community
2. Frequency with which LEP individuals use Town services or communicate with employees
3. Nature and importance of the services
4. Resources available and costs

The four-factor analysis helps agencies prioritize languages for translations, for in-person interpretation, and to identify where resources are needed to facilitate language access across services. Conclusions from the four-factor analysis can shift over time with changes in community demographics and with changes in Town resources, staff capacity, and services. Therefore, it is important to regularly collect and analyze information about community demographics and Town staff's capacity to provide language services.

### Factor 1: Number or proportion of LEP individuals in the community

The first factor involves identifying the languages Carrboro residents speak and, among these languages, which ones have higher proportions of people who say they speak English less than "very well." This factor helps determine which languages to prioritize in securing interpretation and/or translation for the

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<sup>15</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, 2002.

<sup>16</sup> While the BIC team generally prefers to note individuals' preference for "Languages Other Than English," we use the U.S. Census Bureau's terminology to refer specifically to its data ("LEP").

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greatest number of Carrboro residents. The UNC team’s research on community demographics related to languages other than English shows that Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Korean, Karen, and Burmese are the languages that are most spoken, and which have higher proportions of individuals who report speaking English less than “very well”.

**Table 1: Languages other than English spoken by LEP Carrboro residents**

Language	Estimated No. of LEP residents
Spanish	375
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	320
Korean	80
Other Indo-European languages	55
Other Asian and Pacific Island Languages	50
Arabic	25

Source: ACS 2021 (5 year estimates); Table C16001

**Table 2: Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools languages other than English spoken at home**

Language	Count
Spanish	1,489
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	355
Karen	179
Arabic (Egyptian)	114

Source: [Chapel Hill-Carrboro Town School online database](#), accessed May 2023

**Table 3: Languages other than English spoken by LEP Orange County residents**

Language	Estimated No. of LEP residents
Spanish	3,200
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	1,242
Korean	420
Japanese	240
Burmese	200
Haitian	170
Arabic	150

Source: ACS 2021 (5 year estimates micro-data); PUMA 01400 Orange County

### Countries of Origin

Carrboro’s population is globally diverse. About **14%**, or 2,971 Town residents were born outside of the United States. Carrboro’s residents born outside of the U.S. come from several different countries<sup>17</sup>. The top five countries of origin are China (which the U.S. Census defines as including Hong Kong), El Salvador, France, United Kingdom, and Korea. Since 2005, around 1,190 refugees have arrived in Orange County;

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “Nativity by Citizenship Status,” *American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates* (SE: A06001).

most come primarily from Burma/Myanmar, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, Laos, Russia, and Syria.<sup>18</sup> Since 2016, at least 80 people with refugee status have resided in Carrboro at some point.<sup>19</sup>

### Languages other than English

Carrboro residents speak many languages other than English. Around **15.6%** of Carrboro residents speak a language other than English, with Spanish being the most spoken followed by Chinese, including Mandarin and Cantonese.<sup>20</sup> Some of the top languages spoken by refugees in Carrboro are not explicitly specified by the Census Bureau to protect their privacy, but community partners, based on their work with community members in Carrboro, have reported that Karen, Burmese, and Arabic are commonly spoken. These languages are also reflected in Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools' data on languages other than English spoken in students' homes.

### English language proficiency

Speakers of non-English languages demonstrate various levels of English language proficiency. In total, around **6.5%** of Carrboro residents speak English less than "very well". Around **41%** of residents born outside of the U.S. fall under the Census Bureau's limited English proficiency (LEP) designation. There are **1,329** English Language Learners in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools system for the 2022-2023 school year.<sup>21</sup>

**Given that Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Karen, Burmese, and Arabic are the languages that are most spoken and have higher proportions of individuals who report speaking English less than "very well", this plan refers to them as Carrboro's "community languages."** These languages will appear in translated notices of available language services that are available to Town residents at no cost. The Town will focus on securing translation of vital documents and in-person interpretation for Spanish and identifying language service providers who can translate and interpret between English and Chinese, Korean, Karen, Burmese, and Arabic (see "Language Access Policies" and "Language Access Procedures" in this document). Interpretation and sight translation for languages listed here will also be available on request and, where possible, on demand.

See Appendix A for more on Carrboro's demographic data related to language, socioeconomic factors, and communications.

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<sup>18</sup> Town of Chapel Hill, *Town of Chapel Hill Language Access Plan*, Chapel Hill NC: 2019; Orange County Health Department, "2019 Annual Report," accessed June 4, 2023, <https://orangecountync.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/480>; Orange County Health Department, "2020 Annual Report," accessed June 4, 2023, <https://orangecountync.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/615>; Orange County Health Department, "2021 Annual Report," accessed June 4, 2023, <https://orangecountync.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/599>.

<sup>19</sup> Jennifer Morillo, "Preferred Language and County of Origin of Recent Arrivals to Orange County" (email correspondence with Brianna Gilmore, April 25, 2023).

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "Nativity by language spoken at home by ability to speak English for the population 5 years and over," *American Community Survey 5-year Estimates 2021 ACS (B16005)*.

<sup>21</sup> North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, "Report to the North Carolina General Assembly: Headcount of English Learners," December 1, 2022, <https://webservices.ncleg.gov/ViewDocSiteFile/72507>

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### Factor 2: Frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with Town programs or services

The second factor identifies the community languages that Town of Carrboro staff most frequently encounter on the job. This factor, combined with demographic data on community languages other than English, helps determine not only which languages to prioritize, but also the types of language services to prioritize, which Town departments have greater needs for language services, and how to focus staff resources and training on language access.

According to a Departmental Language Access Survey the BIC team distributed to Town employees in 2023, Spanish is the most frequently encountered language among Town of Carrboro staff. Half of the survey respondents – 25 out of 50 -- noted encountering Spanish on the job, and of those respondents, 19 said they encounter Spanish “frequently” or “very frequently.” Other languages that staff reported “frequently” encountering are Burmese, Japanese, and Korean. Less-frequently encountered languages include Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Karen, Portuguese, Russian, and Vietnamese.

Staff that report encountering languages other than English “very frequently” or “frequently” are in the following departments:

- Communication & Engagement
- Fire & Rescue
- Planning, Zoning & Inspections
- Police
- Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources
- Town Manager

Other departments whose staff reported encountering languages other than English less frequently include:

- Economic Development
- Housing & Community Services
- Human Resources
- Town Clerk

Of the departments that report encountering languages other than English, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources reported encountering the widest variety of languages other than English.

Departments across the Town did not report using a standardized data method to identify and track languages staff encounter on the job, and as a result, respondents’ answers may not reflect the actual frequency by which they encounter certain languages. For example, some respondents did not distinguish between Karen and Burmese when listing the languages they encounter on the job. Some responded with variations on “Karen/Burmese”, and they may encounter either of the two languages more or less frequently than reported.

### Factor 3: The nature and importance of the recipient’s program, activity, or service

The third factor helps identify which programs, activities, or services most benefit residents or have the greatest impact on their quality of life. The Town of Carrboro provides many important services, including emergency response, connections to housing-related and other vital resources, community

outreach and engagement, permitting and zoning, recreational opportunities, and financial assistance applications. The Town is committed to providing language access across programs that facilitate public health, safety and meaningful access to services and participation in civic life, including translation of vital documents and interpretation at public meetings and community engagement events.

#### Factor 4: Resources available to the recipient and costs

Funding is allocated annually for language services, namely contracting with language services providers for translation and interpretation. Additionally, funding to support the Town's advisory boards and commissions can currently be used toward supporting language access for meetings, encouraging a more diverse membership. The Town of Carrboro and the Refugee Community Partnership are also eligible for implementation funding from Building Integrated Communities at UNC-Chapel Hill after adoption of the Language Access Plan in 2024 to support implementation of the Town's language access goals over the next year.

In addition to monetary resources, the following resources are available to facilitate language access in Carrboro:

- The Town recently purchased a new transmitter for its set of interpretation equipment. Fifteen headsets are available, along with the new transmitter, for community members and organizations to rent free of charge.
- Police, Fire & Rescue, Housing & Community Services, Communication & Engagement, and Planning, Zoning & Inspections reported contracting with language service providers for interpretation and/or translation needs.
- The Police and Fire & Rescue departments have staff who use Spanish on the job frequently – at least once a week. Other departments noted the availability of staff who occasionally use their Spanish language skills on the job (Planning, Zoning, & Inspections; Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources; Communication & Engagement).

#### Summary of findings from the Town of Carrboro Departmental Language Access Survey

In addition to the findings mentioned in the four-factor analysis outlined above, some of the key findings from the 2023 Town of Carrboro Departmental Language Access Survey are:

- The Communication & Engagement Department, the Fire & Rescue Department, the Planning, Zoning & Inspections Department, the Police Department, and the Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources Department reported having staff who speak at least some Spanish and use their Spanish language skills on the job. No departments reported using a standardized tool to assess employees' proficiency in languages other than English, nor do they offer a stipend or pay incentive for using languages other than English on the job.
- Some respondents mentioned the use of Google Translate or similar machine translation programs to communicate with residents who speak languages other than English. Machine translation can be a useful tool, but it is recommended that machine translations or interpretations be edited by a qualified language service provider to ensure accuracy.
- Some respondents also mentioned the use of residents' family members or self-provided interpreters in interactions. Professional interpretation standards advise the sole use of trained and vetted interpreters instead. The Town will commit to notifying residents of their right to

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interpretation free of charge and to training staff members on how to secure professional, qualified interpreters.

- Three departments reported receiving federal funding: ARPA, CARES Act, Community Development Block Grant-COVID (CDBG-CV), HUD, and unspecified “others” (Communication & Engagement, Economic Development, and Housing & Community Services)
- There is currently no standardized method of tracking requests for or use of language services across departments, nor is there a standardized method for identification of languages other than English that staff encounter on the job.

For more detailed information and results from the Town of Carrboro’s Departmental Language Access Survey, see Appendices B & C at the end of this Plan.

### Summary of Community Priorities Identified in Monthly Carrboro BIC Meetings

During monthly Carrboro BIC meetings, the team discussed community priorities and best practices for engaging multilingual, immigrant, and/or refugee community members along with general best practices for providing language access. The following list synthesizes top priorities and language access recommendations that Refugee Community Partnership leaders and Orange County Housing Department staff shared:

- Continue to build relationships with community leaders and organizations who work with migrant, refugee, and other community members who prefer to speak languages other than English. Many community leaders, especially among migrant and refugee residents, are familiar with working with governments in their home countries and can play important liaison roles in the U.S.
- Identify and use communication channels that community members already know and use. For example, many community members do not use email and prefer to use platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook to communicate and find information. RCP has emphasized that audio messages and videos that can be disseminated over social media or on messaging platforms in community languages are very effective. Flyers and other printed materials are also generally preferred over email.
- Consider the context of outreach materials and other communications, and that public services or systems might not be familiar to all residents if they do not have a reference from other places they have lived for comparison. One team member shared the example of a flyer for a public library being unclear to some community members not because they didn’t understand the translation of the flyer, but because they weren’t familiar with public libraries.
- Interpretation or audio messages may be in higher demand than translation of written materials for communicating some information. In general, in-person interaction is valued, goes a long way in building trust and relationships, and considers differences in literacy levels.
- It is important to set up a consistent and reliable language access infrastructure to build trust with community members. If people know reliable systems are in place, they are more likely to use them and engage.

## Language Access Policies

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Language Access Policies establish the Town’s commitment to language access and how the Town provides meaningful access to services, programs, and processes for residents who prefer to communicate in a language other than English. These policies follow guidance outlined in the U.S. Department of Justice’s [Language Access Assessment and Planning Tool for Federally Conducted and Federally Assisted Programs](#)<sup>22</sup> and the Migration Policy Institute’s [A Framework for Language Access](#).<sup>23</sup>

### General Statement of Policy

It is the policy of the Town of Carrboro to ensure that no person shall, on the ground of race, color, national origin, limited English proficiency, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any of its programs and activities, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and other pertinent nondiscrimination authorities.

The Town of Carrboro will provide timely meaningful access to all Town programs, resources, and services for any individuals who prefer to speak a language other than English. Staff will inform community members of their right to free language services and secure these services when they are needed.

### 1. Policies for Translation and Interpretation

#### **A. The Town will offer translation and interpretation for its programs, activities, services, and resources free of charge.**

- i. The Town will notify community members of their right to access interpretation and translation services free of charge to ensure their meaningful access to Town communications and information.
- ii. The Town will make its best effort to ensure timely access to translation and interpretation services.
- iii. Town staff will respond in a timely manner to written correspondence and phone calls in languages other than English by requesting the assistance of bilingual or multilingual employees or contract language service providers.
- iv. The Communication and Engagement Department will help staff determine what type of language service(s) they need for programs, materials, meetings, or events. This includes:
  - a. Simultaneous interpretation
  - b. Consecutive interpretation
  - c. Written translation
  - d. Sight translation
  - e. In-person, over-the-phone, or video interpretation

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<sup>22</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Federal Coordination and Compliance Section, “Language Access Assessment and Planning Tool for Federally Conducted and Federally Assisted Programs,” May 2001, [https://www.lep.gov/sites/lep/files/resources/2011\\_Language\\_Access\\_Assessment\\_and\\_Planning\\_Tool.pdf](https://www.lep.gov/sites/lep/files/resources/2011_Language_Access_Assessment_and_Planning_Tool.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> Jacob Hofstetter et al., *A Framework for Language Access: Key Features of U.S. State and Local Language Access Laws and Policies* (Washington, D.C.: Migration Policy Institute, 2021), [https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/language-access-2021\\_final.pdf](https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/language-access-2021_final.pdf)

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- v. The Town will encourage language access efforts in the community through its interpretation equipment lending program, available to community groups free of charge upon request.
  - vi. The Town will coordinate language services for community advisory boards to encourage and facilitate diverse community representation.
- B. The Town will translate vital documents and emergency communications into its identified community languages.**
- i. Vital documents are those that are necessary to use or receive Town services, information, or programs. The Town will create and maintain an inventory of vital documents that are housed in a central location that is accessible to staff.
  - ii. Translated vital documents will be available online or in hard copy upon request.
  - iii. The Town will distribute key messages and urgent information during emergency situations in its most-spoken community languages with the highest proportion of speakers who are considered LEP in Census data.
- C. The Town will support multilingual staff to provide in-language services or to interpret and translate as part of their job duties.**
- i. The Town will coordinate language skills assessments to evaluate the proficiency of multilingual staff who speak the Town's community languages and are willing to use their language skills on the job.
  - ii. If fluent in a community language other than English, staff will also be assessed for translation and/or interpretation skills, which is a prerequisite to using these skills on the job.
  - iii. The Town will support ongoing training and skills development for multilingual employees who use their language skills as part of their job duties.
- D. The Town will provide interpretation and translation for meetings and one-on-one interactions on request.**
- i. Individuals may request interpretation for public meetings, small group meetings, or one-on-one interactions with Town staff, as well as the translation of any pertinent Town documents or written communications.
  - ii. Public meeting notices will include statements in the Town's identified strategic languages announcing upon-request interpretation for public meetings.
  - iii. Interpretation may be provided by in-person interpreters, video interpreters, telephonic interpreters, or qualified multilingual staff.
- E. The Town commits to using competent, trained, and culturally sensitive translators and interpreters, including the use of qualified multilingual employees.**
- i. The Town will use professional translators and interpreters, including qualified multilingual staff, who are trained in their field and follow professional practice standards and a code of ethics.
  - ii. The Town commits to *not* using unqualified translators and interpreters to assist with language services. Examples of unqualified translators and interpreters include residents' family members or friends, or people under the age of 18.
  - iii. Communication and Engagement staff will identify and maintain a network of qualified resources for language services, including a list of trained and qualified multilingual Town staff, and a list of vetted vendors for translation services, in-person interpretation services,

## Town of Carrboro Language Access Plan

and video and telephonic interpretation services. The list of vetted vendors will be available on the Town's intranet or provided via email upon request.

- iv. Translated materials and interpretation will be evaluated for accuracy. The Town will solicit input and feedback on the accuracy of translation and interpretation from community partners and leaders.

### 2. Policies for Notice of Availability of Language Assistance Services

#### **A. The Town will notify individuals who prefer a language other than English of their right to language assistance services at no charge.**

- i. Staff will inform individuals of their right to language services at no charge.
- ii. The Communication and Engagement Department will create a written public notice, in the Town's identified community languages, informing residents about available language services, including how to request translation or interpretation services and how to submit a language access complaint.
- iii. Language assistance notices will be provided in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to:
  - o Posters in Town reception areas and other points of entry at facilities
  - o On the Town website
  - o On Council and Advisory Board meeting agendas
  - o Using a telephone voicemail menu in the Town's community languages
  - o At Town Information Centers
  - o Inside buses operated by Chapel Hill Transit
  - o In recreational brochures and flyers

### 3. Policies for Staff Training

#### **A. The Town will provide periodic staff training and new employee orientation on its Language Access Plan.**

- i. All staff will be trained in the policies and procedures in the LAP and the availability of language services and resources.
- ii. User guides for accessing services and effective communication techniques as well as tips on working with an interpreter will be available to all staff on the Town intranet in the Communication & Engagement folder.

### 4. Policies for Language Access Services Assessment and Analysis

#### **A. The Town will update its LAP periodically based on language service needs and resources.**

- i. The Town's interdepartmental communication team will meet annually to assess its use and effectiveness.
- ii. The Town will evaluate the community need for language services by analyzing demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau and seeking information from community stakeholders.
- iii. The Town will conduct an annual internal language access survey to evaluate staff language access use, resources, and needs.

5. Policies for Language Access Reporting, Monitoring, and Compliance

**A. The Town will prepare an annual compliance report that documents language access services provided.**

- i. Department liaisons will document usage and requests for language access services and prepare a summary report of which services have been used, for which languages, and in what context.

**B. The Town will accept and respond to all language access complaints in community members' preferred languages.**

- i. The Town will notify individuals who prefer a language other than English of their right to make a complaint of discrimination based on LEP status or a failure to adequately provide services.
- ii. The language access complaint process will be available in Town reception areas and on the Town's website.
- iii. Any person who believes to have been denied language access services may file a complaint to the Town by telephone message to the Language Access Line (919-918-7391), online form, or letter. The Communication & Engagement Department will review complaints.

## Language Access Procedures

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This section outlines key procedures that the Town of Carrboro will adopt to carry out the policies described in the previous section. The Town will regularly review and refine the procedures described below and develop new procedures as needed to better serve community members who prefer to speak languages other than English and to support staff in providing language services.

### Procedures for Determining the Need for Language Assistance

If an individual requests a translation or interpretation, a qualified multilingual employee or the Town's contracted service provider will provide language assistance. Staff will not rely solely on their own assessment of an individual's English proficiency to determine need for interpretation or translation and will follow the procedures outlined below.

#### *At point of first contact with an individual:*

- Town staff will take reasonable steps to identify an individual's preferred language and determine their need for language assistance. Staff can determine language assistance needs in several ways, including:
  - Noting the individual's stated language preference or by asking the individual for their preferred language.
  - Using "I Speak" language identification cards distributed to all public-facing staff.
  - Contacting a language service provider contracted by the Town.
  - Requesting the assistance of a multilingual employee.
- If the need for language assistance is identified or likely, staff should notify the individual of their right to interpretation at no charge. This should be done as early as possible in an interaction, including during the process of identifying the individual's preferred language.

#### *At public meetings, small group meetings, and one-on-one interactions:*

- Individuals may request language assistance for public meetings, small group meetings, or one-on-one interactions with Town staff, including interpretation of spoken words or translation of written content pertinent to the meeting.
- At the time of the request, Town staff will note the language preference of the individual requesting language services, where language assistance is needed, and other information needed for timely fulfillment of the request.
- Requests should be submitted as far in advance as possible to allow adequate time to arrange language assistance services in consultation with the Communication and Engagement department. Staff will take reasonable steps to provide access to language services. If the request is made later than the minimum time required, or if an individual who prefers a language other than English arrives to a meeting without providing notice, service may not be available.
- Town staff will take reasonable steps to promote the availability of interpretation services and relevant translated materials at public meetings.
  - The availability of free interpretation for public Council and Advisory Board meetings will be advertised in notices translated into community languages on meeting agendas. Notices will include instructions for requesting interpretation.
  - If a Town department is planning a public meeting where it is expected that many community members will participate, staff will secure appropriate language services in

## Town of Carrboro Language Access Plan

advance of the meeting. For these meetings, staff will advertise the availability of language services in multilingual outreach materials.

- Town staff will make reasonable efforts to disseminate notices of availability of interpretation and translation services through community members' preferred communication channels.
- To request interpretation for a public meeting, residents can call the Town's Language Access Line at 919-918-7391.

### Selection of Language Service Providers

The Town will aim to use the following order of priority when scheduling interpreters and translators:

- First, use trained and qualified multilingual Town staff.
- If Town staff are not available or if the requested meeting or written material requires highly specialized and/or technical knowledge, particularly if it is legal or medical in nature, staff will request a contracted interpreter or translator. The contract service provider should be certified in legal and/or medical interpretation. Preference will be given to in-person interpretation when possible.
- For interpretation: if neither of the above are available, use a telephonic or video remote interpretation service.
- For translation: preference is to use qualified staff or contracted translators. Staff will take reasonable steps to have qualified staff and/or contracted translators edit any text that is machine translated, such as through Google Translate or similar applications.

To request language assistance from bilingual or multilingual Town staff:

- The Town will maintain an accurate and current list showing the language, phone number and availability of bilingual staff who have been assessed for translation, interpretation, and in-language services.
- The list of qualified bilingual or multilingual staff will be available to all staff on the Town intranet.
- Departments can directly contact the appropriate bilingual staff member to interpret or translate, if an employee who speaks the needed language is available and qualified to provide the service.
- If no staff member is available or if the service needed is not one that a staff member is qualified or obligated to provide, the department will request a contract interpreter or translator in consultation with the Communication and Engagement Department. Legal, medical, or other highly specialized or sensitive content will be assigned to a contract language service provider.

### Procedures for Requesting Translation or Interpretation Services

Communication and Engagement staff will assist with fulfilling interpretation and translation requests. The Communication and Engagement Department has contracts with several language services providers who can provide both translation and interpretation services. An updated list of service providers and their contact information is available on the Town intranet in the Communication and Engagement folder. It can also be provided upon request by the Communication and Engagement Department.

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### *Procedures for Requesting Translation*

- Community members can request translation of written materials through Town staff or by calling the Town's Language Access Line: 919-918-7391.
- Town staff can submit requests for translation of written materials through the Communication and Engagement Department. Town staff should allow as much time as possible to secure translation services. Longer documents and/or documents that use specialized language may take longer to translate.
- The Town will prioritize using trained and qualified multilingual staff for translation services when possible. If Town staff are not able or qualified to translate requested content, translation services will be secured through a contracted language service provider.

### *Procedures for Requesting Interpretation*

- The Town commits to not using residents' family, friends, or minors as interpreters, and staff will notify individuals who prefer to speak languages other than English of their right to an interpreter provided by the Town.
- Community members can request interpretation through Town staff or by calling the Town's Language Access Line: 919-918-7391.
- Town staff can submit requests for interpretation through the Communication and Engagement Department. Town staff should allow as much time as possible to secure interpretation services.
- Interpretation services will be provided in person using qualified multilingual staff when possible and suitable. If Town staff are not available, or if a meeting will run longer than an hour or require specialized vocabulary beyond staff knowledge or training, an in-person interpreter contracted through a language service provider is preferred.
- For on-demand services where a qualified multilingual staff member is not available or where it is not practical to ask a staff member, telephonic interpretation or video interpretation will be provided.

### *Procedures for Identifying Vital Documents and Information*

- The Town will prioritize translation of vital documents and information into Spanish and into other languages upon request or if staff anticipate a need for a particular language. "Vital" documents and information are those that are critical for communicating emergency messages; accessing Town programs, services, or benefits; that affect residents' quality of life; or that are required by law. Subject matter written on Town public websites may constitute vital documents or information. Documents that require a signature are generally considered vital.
  - Examples may include, but are not limited to:
    - Emergency messages
    - Key consent and complaint forms
    - Intake forms with the potential for important consequences
    - Written notices of eligibility criteria, rights, denial, loss, or decreases in benefits or services
    - Notices on right to and availability of free language services
    - Applications to participate in a Town program or activity
    - Applications to receive benefits or services
    - Short descriptions of departments or services

## Town of Carrboro Language Access Plan

- Town departments should follow procedures for requesting translation services through the Communication and Engagement Department to ensure timely availability of their respective vital documents.
- The Communication and Engagement Department will consider translation of documents that are not considered “vital” on a case-by-case basis. In some cases, sight translation by an interpreter or qualified multilingual staff member may be an appropriate substitute for full written translation of non-vital documents.
- The Town’s interdepartmental Communication Team will compile an inventory of vital documents and policies and procedures for document revisions, translations, and periodic review of what is considered vital. The Town will seek advice from department directors, public-facing staff, and community partner organizations in identifying vital documents.

### Procedures for Notice of Availability of Language Assistance Services

- Notices will be provided in a variety of ways including, but not limited to:
  - Flyers or posters in appropriate Town reception areas and other points of entry at facilities, including inside buses.
  - The Town website and social media.
  - Attachments to vital Town documents and select broadly distributed brochures/pamphlets.
  - Central Town telephone and voicemail messages.
  - Through community organizations and other stakeholders, who will inform Carrboro residents of their right to language access services provided free of charge.

### Procedures for Staff Training and Orientation on the Town’s Language Access Plan

The Town will provide training on language access policies and procedures to all staff upon hire and periodically throughout the duration of their employment. Language access training will be reviewed annually with the Plan and updated accordingly. Staff training may include:

- Overview of language service policies and procedures
- Resources available to support compliance with the Language Access Plan
- When language requests are appropriate to make of qualified multilingual staff, and when it is more appropriate to request from a contract language service provider
- Skill building on language access procedures (for example, how to respond to phone calls placed to the Town in languages other than English)
- Awareness of community priorities
- Familiarization with the LEP discrimination complaint process

#### *Additional specialized staff training*

Additional training may be provided for staff who have frequent interaction with residents who prefer a language other than English or who are multilingual and provide language services as part of their job. These trainings may include:

- Best practices for working with translators and interpreters
- Considerations for requesting language assistance from multilingual staff
- Ethical considerations for interpretation or translation

## Town of Carrboro Language Access Plan

- Community demographics and priorities

### Procedures for Monitoring and Updating the Language Access Plan

- Every fiscal year, the Town will prepare an annual compliance report monitoring the LAP. Staff's annual report will include review of data related to the number of residents who are LEP or speakers of languages other than English. Sources for these data may include:
  - Federal demographic data, such as the U.S. Census and American Community Survey
  - Local demographic data, such as language data from local schools, health service providers, and nonprofit organizations
  - Reporting on the Town's language assistance services, including preferred languages, the usage and cost of language services, and tracking of language assistance requests.
  - An internal language access survey sent to departments to evaluate language services use, resources, and needs
  - Feedback from residents and community-based organizations regarding the effectiveness and availability of language services in the Town
  - Reports from language service complaints
  - Review of the Town's language contract(s) with local vendors
  - Review of Town engagement and outreach on language access and assistance
- The Town will update the LAP as needed upon review of the data outlined above.

### Procedures for Filing and Resolving Complaints about Language Services

Title VI ensures that no person—on the grounds of race, color, or national origin—be excluded from, denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any services receiving federal financial assistance. Any person who believes they have been mistreated by an unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint with the Town of Carrboro. The person or organization filing the complaint may complain on behalf of another person or group.

#### *Filing Complaints*

- Any person who believes that they were denied Language Access services may file a complaint to the Town by telephone message, online form, or letter in their preferred language.
  - Complaints may be filed by telephone by calling the Town of Carrboro Language Access Line: 919-918-7391.
  - Complaints may be filed by filling out a form online.
  - Complaints may be filed in writing in letter directed to the attention of the Communication & Engagement Department at 301 W. Main St. Carrboro, NC 27510.
- Complaints should describe as completely as possible the claimed discrimination, including the following information:
  - Name, address, and telephone number of the complainant
  - The circumstances, individuals involved, and other details of the complaint
  - Signature and date

#### *Investigation Process*

- The Communication & Engagement Department will review complaints and forward them to the appropriate department director or supervisor for further action.

## Town of Carrboro Language Access Plan

- The Communication & Engagement Department will coordinate communication back to complainants, in their preferred language, with the results of any actions or investigations taken.

## Language Access Implementation Plan

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The Language Access Implementation Plan outlines immediate goals to enact the Policies and Procedures outlined above. After considering the elements of the four-factor analysis described in the Assessment section of this document, and after weighing community priorities and current Town resources for language access, the implementation plan is organized around the following strategic goals:

- **Goal #1: Increase availability of written translations of vital documents and information, starting with Spanish.**
  - Create a notice of availability of language access services to advertise around Town and on Town communications and meeting agendas. The statement will be translated into Spanish, Chinese, Burmese, Karen, Korean, and Arabic and will include information on the Language Access Line and how to request interpretation and translation.
  - Identify qualified translators who can edit machine translations of sections of the Town's website that provide vital information. This will help verify the accuracy and readability of automated translations.
  - Translate identified vital information and documents on the Town's website and make digital and hard copy translations of documents available.
  - Develop a style guide and word bank of frequently used terms and phrases unique to Carrboro's services to ensure accuracy and consistency in written translations.
- **Goal #2: Develop an internal language access committee to put language access structures in place. The Town's Communication Team will function as the inaugural committee to accomplish the following:**
  - Identify vital documents and information for members' respective departments, as well as other frequently used or frequently requested information for translation.
  - Develop a system to track language access data across departments, including data on languages encountered, number and type of language access requests received, and which providers fulfilled requests for services, and cost of services.
  - Work with RCP to pilot dissemination of Town information through The Hive, RCP's communication platform.
  - Work with RCP to facilitate input and ongoing feedback from refugee and migrant residents on language access services as they become available.
  - Develop an internal system to provide staff with information on existing language access services, how to access them, and how to notify residents of available services and their rights to them.
  - Help determine future language access priorities by sharing information on best practices for reaching and communicating with community members who speak languages other than English, identifying gaps in services, and noting what colleagues need to serve the community most effectively.
  - The Communication and Engagement Department will develop budgeting and invoicing processes for payment of language services.
- **Goal #3: Increase availability of interpretation at public events and meetings.**
  - Identify service providers for Town's community languages and create guidance for residents and Town employees to request interpretation. This guidance will include how

## Town of Carrboro Language Access Plan

far in advance interpreters need to be booked, how many interpreters may be needed for the event/meeting, the type and quantity of interpretation equipment to use, and other considerations.

- Determine priority areas for interpretation (for example, at Town Council meetings, certain events, in certain departments, public hearings, etc.) through consultation with RCP members, other community organizations, and the Communication Team.
- **Goal #4: Strengthen recruitment, support, and management of multilingual staff members to provide quality in-person language services.**
  - Identify departments or positions that are most likely to engage or respond to community members who speak languages other than English. Determine whether there are already staff who speak the Town's identified languages in those departments or roles, and if not, develop a plan to recruit staff who do.
  - Develop language for job postings to indicate that people who are fluent in community languages other than English are encouraged to apply.
  - Determine a compensation structure for multilingual employees who provide in-language services and/or who interpret or translate as part of their job duties.
  - Develop a language assessment tool with a local language service provider to identify the skills that multilingual staff are qualified to use as part of their job. (For example, providing in-language services plus interpretation, only providing in-language services, ability to translate, etc.)
  - Develop parameters and responsibilities for multilingual staff members with the Human Resources Department and other department directors.

## Appendices

### Appendix {A}: Carrboro Demographic Report Immigrants and Refugees

**Population:** From 2017-2021, the total population of the Town of Carrboro was about 21,237 people. About 2,971, or 14%, of Town residents were born outside of the U.S.<sup>24</sup> Since 1990, the number of Carrboro residents born outside of the U.S. has steadily increased with 20% entering the country before 1990 and the majority, 34%, entering the country in 2010 or later.<sup>25</sup>



**Country of Origin:** Carrboro’s residents born outside of the U.S. come from several different countries. Below, the top ten countries of origin are listed in Table 1. Overall, local trends in the growth of both Latin American and Asian immigrant populations in Carrboro mirror recent immigration patterns that exist statewide. Over the last decade, there has been a decrease in immigrants from Mexico accompanied by an increase in immigrants from Central America, specifically from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.<sup>26</sup> Around 60% of Carrboro’s foreign-born residents are naturalized citizens.<sup>27</sup> A small minority of residents from Latin America speak indigenous languages.

Since 2005, around 1,190 refugees have directly arrived/resettled in Orange County; most come primarily from Burma/Myanmar, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, Laos, Russia, and Syria.<sup>28</sup> Since 2016, at least 80 refugees have resided in Carrboro.<sup>29</sup>

**Table 1: Top 10 countries of origin for Carrboro residents born outside the U.S.**

Country of Origin	Population Estimate	Percentage of residents not born in the U.S.
China (incl. Hong Kong and Taiwan)	583	19.6%
El Salvador	184	6.2%
France	160	5.4%
U.K.	154	5.2%
Korea	134	4.5%
Mexico	127	4.3%
India	101	3.4%
Colombia	92	3.1%
Germany	72	2.4%
Pakistan	72	2.4%

Source: ACS 2021 (5 year estimates), Table A07001

<sup>24</sup> 2021 ACS (5 yr. estimates). Table SE:A06001: Nativity by Citizenship Status. U.S. Census Bureau.

<sup>25</sup> 2021 ACS (5 yr. estimates). Table SE:A10058: Year of Entry of Foreign-born population. U.S. Census Bureau.

<sup>26</sup> Ruiz Soto, A. G., Bottone, R., Waters, J., Williams, S., Louie, A., & Wang, Y. (2021, November). Charting a New Regional Course of Action: The Complex Motivations and Costs of Central American Migration Executive Summary. Washington D.C.; Migration Policy Institute.

<sup>27</sup> 2021 ACS (5 yr. estimates). Table SE:A06001

<sup>28</sup> Town of Chapel Hill(2019, November 13). Town of Chapel Hill Language Access Plan. Chapel Hill. Health Department, 2019 Annual Report (2019); 2020 Annual Report (2020); 2021 Annual Report (2021). Retrieved June 4, 2023, from <https://orangecountync.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/480>, <https://orangecountync.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/615>, <https://orangecountync.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/599>, Orange County Health Annual Reports from 2019, 2020, 2021.

<sup>29</sup> Morillo, Jennifer. “Preferred Language and County of Origin of Recent Arrivals to Orange County.” Received by Brianna Gilmore, April 25, 2023.

These estimated numbers do not reflect migration patterns in and out of Carrboro and Orange County.

## English Language Ability



15.6% of Carrboro residents speak a language other than English, with Spanish being the most spoken followed by Chinese, including Mandarin and Cantonese.<sup>30</sup> The top languages spoken among the immigrant and refugee communities of Carrboro shown in Table 2 largely correlate to the languages spoken in the countries listed in Table 1. Among the top 10 countries of origin, 3 of the countries, El Salvador, Mexico, and Colombia, are predominantly Spanish speaking, which likely accounts for the large population of Spanish speakers in addition to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation immigrants from Latin America.

**Table 2: Speakers of languages other than English in Carrboro**

Non-English Language	Estimated No. of Speakers	Percent of Total Population
Spanish or Spanish Creole	1,327	6.5%
Chinese (Incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	601	3%
Other Indo-European Languages	328	1.6%
Other Asian and Pacific Island Languages	191	0.9%
Other and Unspecified Languages	184	0.9%
French, Haitian, or Cajun	172	0.8%
Korean	104	0.5%
Tagalog (Incl. Filipino)	69	0.3%
Vietnamese	59	0.3%
Russian, Polish, or Other Slavic Languages	55	0.3%
Arabic	51	0.3%
German or Other West Germanic Languages	35	0.2%

Source: ACS 2021 (5 year estimates); Table C16001

Examples of Asian and Pacific Island languages spoken in the U.S. include Hmong, Urdu, Bengali, Iloko, Nepali, and Burmese. Examples of “other” Indo-European languages spoken by in the U.S. include Gujarati, Portuguese, Polish, Hindi, and Persian. Speakers of non-English languages demonstrate various levels of English-language proficiency. Table 3 shows the self-rated English-speaking ability of residents who speak a language other than English. Around 41% of residents born outside of the U.S. fall under the limited English proficiency (LEP) designation. Residents born outside of the U.S. who speak Asian and Pacific Island languages constitute the largest number of limited English proficient residents with

<sup>30</sup> ACS21\_5yr: B16005. Nativity By Language Spoken At Home By Ability To Speak English For The Population 5 Years And Over.

approximately 438 residents. In total, around 6.5% of Carrboro residents speak English less than “very well”.<sup>31</sup>

**Table 3: Languages other than English spoken by LEP Carrboro residents**

Language	Estimated No. of LEP residents
Spanish	375
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	320
Korean	80
Other Indo-European languages	55
Other Asian and Pacific Island Languages	50
Arabic	25

Source: ACS 2021 (5 year estimates); Table C16001

**Table 4: Languages other than English spoken by LEP Orange County residents**

Language	Estimated No. of LEP residents
Spanish	3,200
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	1,242
Korean	420
Japanese	240
Burmese	200
Haitian	170
Arabic	150

Source: ACS 2021 (5 year estimates micro-data); PUMA 01400 Orange County

## Education



Carrboro has a higher percentage (42% overall) of residents 25 and older with a graduate or professional degree than the North Carolina average (12%).<sup>32</sup> Carrboro residents born abroad also have a comparatively high level of education. Among Orange County residents born outside of the United States, 41% have a graduate or professional degree

**Table 5: Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools languages other than English spoken at home**

Language	Count
Spanish	1,489
Chinese	355
Karen	179
Arabic/Egyptian	114

Source: [Chapel Hill-Carrboro Town School online database](#), accessed May 2023

<sup>31</sup> Morillo. April 25, 2023.

<sup>32</sup> ACS (5yr estimates: 2017-2021) Table S1501: Educational Attainment, U.S. Census Bureau.

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compared to the 33% of residents born in the U.S.<sup>33</sup> These education levels likely reflect the global recruiting practices of institutions of higher education and companies in the Triangle area. However, populations born outside of the U.S. have lower *general* educational attainment than populations born in the U.S. In particular, high school graduation rates for immigrants and refugees are comparatively low.<sup>8</sup> Local school systems can provide data regarding their multi-lingual or English Language Learner (ELL) programs. There are **1,329** English Language Learners in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Town School system.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> ACS (5yr estimates: 2017-2021) Table S0501: Selected Characteristics of the Native and Foreign-born populations, U.S. Census Bureau

<sup>34</sup> Headcount of English Learners Report to the NC General Assembly, December 2022

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United States Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey (5 Year Estimates) 2017-2021. Table SE:A06001: Nativity by Citizenship Status, Table SE:A10058: Year of Entry of Foreign-born population, Table B16005: Nativity by Language Spoken At Home By Ability To Speak English For The Population 5 Years And Over, Table S1501: Educational Attainment, and Table S0501: Selected Characteristics of the Native and Foreign-born populations. Generated by Brianna Gilmore using Social Explorer.

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## Appendix {B}: Town of Carrboro Language Access Capacity Survey – Questionnaire

Carrboro's Building Integrated Communities (BIC) team requests your help gathering information about how your department communicates with residents who speak languages other than English. Over the next year, the Carrboro BIC team will create a Language Access Plan to make Town communications and interactions accessible to all residents of Carrboro in their preferred languages. Thank you in advance for filling out this survey. Your responses will help us develop the Language Access Plan. For questions, please contact Emily Spangenberg, Bilingual Program Coordinator for BIC: [espangen@email.unc.edu](mailto:espangen@email.unc.edu)

**\*Underlined and bold-font questions** were sent to department directors only.

### Section 1: Multilingual Employees and Staff Policies

- Do you speak any languages other than English?
- Do you use a language other than English as part of your job duties?
- Were you hired for bilingual or multilingual skills as part of your job description?
- How often do you use a language other than English as part of your job?
- Has your department assessed your proficiency in any language other than English?
- Describe how your department has assessed your skills or proficiency in any language other than English.
- Do you receive a stipend or an incentive for using a language other than English as part of your job duties?
- Describe the stipend or incentive
- How did you first start to receive the stipend or incentive?
- Have you completed any training or certification programs to translate or interpret between English and any other language?
- **Do you have staff in your department who speak languages other than English?**
- **To the best of your knowledge, how many staff members speak languages other than English, and which languages?**
- **Do any of the staff in your department use a language other than English as part of their job duties?**
- **How many staff members, and which languages?**
- **Were they hired with bilingual or multilingual skills as part of their job description?**
- **How often do they use this language (or languages) as part of their job?**
- **Does your department have a procedure to assess their proficiency in languages other than English?**
- **Describe the procedure or assessment used to determine staff proficiency in languages other than English.**
- **Does your department offer a stipend or incentive to employees who are fluent in a language other than English and who use that language as part of their job?**
- **Describe how an employee begins to receive the stipend or incentive.**
- Does your department provide staff training on how to interact with or assist community members who speak languages other than English?
- Please briefly describe the training.

## Section 2: Interactions with the Public & Customers Who Speak Languages Other than English

- What non-English languages do you most frequently encounter in your interactions with community members as part of your job, and how often do you encounter them? (Almost never, Not frequently, Frequently, Very Frequently)
- **To your knowledge, what non-English languages do staff most encounter in your department, and how often do staff encounter them? (Almost never, Not frequently, Frequently, Very Frequently)**
- Does your department have a method or procedure to determine your clients' or customers' preferred languages?
- How do you determine your clients' or customers' preferred languages?
- Does your department use a data collection method to record or track the preferred languages of your clients or customers?
- Please describe the data collection method you use.

## Section 3: Language Assistance Services and Policies

- **Does your department currently offer communications in languages other than English? If yes, please list them to the best of your knowledge, along with the languages that are available.**
- **Does your department currently provide translated written forms, applications, or other documents necessary to access Town services?**
- Does your department provide any of the following when staff interact with community members who speak languages other than English? Select all that apply.
  - Over-the-phone (telephonic) interpreter
  - Video interpreter
  - Staff member(s) trained as an interpreter
  - Staff member(s) trained as a translator
  - Bilingual or multilingual staff members (not trained or not sure if trained as interpreter/translator)
  - Interpretation or translation with contract language service organization
  - Other
  - I'm not sure
  - We currently do not provide any of these services
- **How does your department identify a need for translation or interpretation?**
- **How does your department most often use translation services or interpretation services?**
- **Does your department provide any of the following regarding the availability, use, or quality of language services? Select all that apply.**
  - **A language access coordinator who arranges interpretation and/or translation**
  - **Translated signs or notifications on how to submit a language access complaint (regarding accessibility or quality)**
  - **A way to track language services costs**
  - **A written language access plan and/or policy**

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- **Other**
- **I'm not sure**
- **We currently do not have any of these**

### Section 4: Additional Questions

- **Does your department receive any type of federal funding? (If yes, please name the source)**
- **Do you provide a portion of these federal funds to any outside organizations (e.g. through grants to nonprofits or payments to subcontractors)?**
- Do you have any other comments or information you'd like to share regarding language services in your department?
- Would you like to be informed about the progress of Carrboro's language access plan?

## Appendix {C}: Summary of Town of Carrboro Departmental Language Access Capacity Survey Results

**Background and Purpose:** In 2023, the Carrboro Building Integrated Communities (BIC) Team gathered information from each Town department to learn about their current need and use of language access services by distributing an online departmental language access survey. The survey asked employees about their departments’ policies and procedures for facilitating language access, current language services available to them, and about current bilingual staff who use language skills as part of their job duties. The survey was divided into four sections:

1. Multilingual Employees & Staff Policies
2. Interactions with the Public & Customers Who Speak Languages Other than English
3. Language Assistance Services & Policies
4. Additional Questions – on federal funding (for department heads or directors only) and open-ended question for comments on departmental language access services (all respondents)

Responses have informed the development and implementation of the Town of Carrboro’s Language Access Plan. A summary of key findings and more detailed breakdowns of responses in each section follow.

### Surveyed Departments and Staff:

Surveyed departments: Staff in 100% of the Town’s 13 departments participated in the Language Access Survey. The survey was distributed to all department directors or managers and all employees within each department. The response rate to the survey was about 29% (50 respondents out of a total of 175 Town employees), and 12 department directors or senior managers completed the survey on behalf of their departments.

### **Responding Departments**

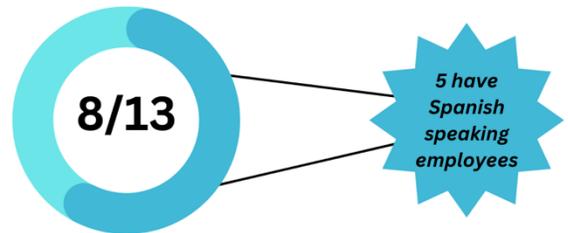
Town Manager  
Town Clerk  
Communication and Engagement  
Economic Development  
Finance  
Fire-Rescue  
Housing and Community Services  
Human Resources  
Information Technology  
Planning, Zoning & Inspections  
Police  
Public Works  
Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources

## Section 1: Multilingual Employees and Staff Policies

**Slightly more than half of the Town’s departments have staff who speak a language other than English. Five of these departments have staff who use Spanish on the job at least sometimes.<sup>35</sup>**

- Eight of the Town’s 13 departments report having staff members who speak a language other than English.
- Languages spoken include: Spanish, French, Italian, Swedish, Tagalog. Spanish is the most-commonly spoken language other than English in Carrboro (see Demographic Report in Appendix A).
  - **Spanish** is the only one of these languages that employees reportedly use on the job at least occasionally (Communication & Engagement; Fire-Rescue; Planning, Zoning & Inspections; Police; Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources).
  - Employees in the **Fire-Rescue and Police** departments reportedly **use Spanish most frequently** on the job (“at least once a week” or “every day”).
  - The survey did not capture respondents’ fluency levels in languages other than English, so information presented here does not necessarily note fully bilingual staff.

### Carrboro Departments with Multilingual Employees



**The Town does not currently recruit specifically for skills in languages other than English, nor do departments report providing compensation for or assessment of skills in languages other than English.**

- To their knowledge, none of the employees who use a language other than English on the job reported having been hired specifically for their language skills.
- No department reported offering additional monetary compensation to employees who speak languages other than English and use those skills on the job.
- None of the employees who speak a language other than English on the job reported having completed an assessment or evaluation of their proficiency in other languages to use their language skills as part of their job duties.

**The Town’s emergency services departments provide training to their employees on how to communicate with or otherwise assist community members who speak languages other than English.**

- Fire & Rescue and the Police Departments note providing training on how to use Language Line, which provides remote interpretation support.
- Fire & Rescue and the Police Department also provide training and print resources on commonly used phrases or questions in their respective fields. The Police Department noted this these phrases are available in Spanish.
- Planning, Zoning & Inspections notes that staff can sign up for training through CHICLE, but that training would be outside of standard work hours.

<sup>35</sup> These results reflect a combination of self-reporting and department directors reporting on behalf of staff in their departments. The survey did not ask about levels of proficiency or fluency in languages, so these results do not necessarily show the number of fully bilingual or multilingual staff. The survey did not ask about respondents’ preferred languages.

## Section 2: Interactions with the Public and Customers Who Speak Languages Other than English

**Spanish is the language that staff report encountering most frequently on the job**, with half of respondents noting they encounter the language “very frequently” or “frequently.” Other languages that staff report encountering **frequently** are **Burmese, Japanese, and Korean**.

**Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources** reported encountering the **widest variety of languages**.

**Departments that most frequently encounter languages other than English are: Communication and Engagement; Fire & Rescue; Planning, Zoning & Inspections; Police; Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources; and the Town Manager’s office - about half of the Town’s departments.**

Most respondents noted that their departments **do not use a standardized method to identify community members’ preferred languages, to identify a need for interpretation or translation, or to collect data to track languages that staff encounter**. Those that collect data or identify needs for language services do so **mostly on an ad hoc basis**.

- Communications & Engagement provides demographic surveys at events.
- Planning, Zoning & Inspections conducts demographic surveys and asks community members to note their preferred languages during community engagement events. Staff note that they do not usually clean, organize, or otherwise present these data.
- Staff in Housing & Community Services note tracking language services costs.
- Some departments note using Google Translate or relying on community members to translate, interpret, or help identify languages.

The graphics below summarize which languages staff encounter and how often departments encounter each language.

# Frequency of Languages Encountered by Department

Blue text/not italicized - NOT frequently      Green text/ italicized- Frequently

## Recreation, Parks, & Cultural Resources

*Spanish*      *Burmese*      *Korean*      *Japanese*  
Chinese      Karen      Hebrew  
Portuguese      Russian

## Fire & Rescue

*Spanish*      *Karen*  
Korean      Chinese      German  
Burmese      Vietnamese

## Public Works

Spanish      Burmese      Karen  
Arabic      German

## Police

*Spanish*      *Burmese*      *Karen*  
Chinese

## Communication & Engagement

French      *Spanish*      Karen  
Burmese

## Planning, Zoning & Inspections

*Spanish*  
Burmese      Karen

## Town Manager

*Spanish*      *Burmese*

## Human Resources

Spanish      Karen

## Housing & Community Services

Spanish

## Information Technology

Spanish

## Town Clerk

Spanish

## Economic Development

Spanish

### Section 3: Language Assistance Services & Policies

Most departments do not report a standardized method or procedure for requesting interpretation or translation when needed. **Staff in about half of the departments note reaching out to colleagues who are multilingual, but not necessarily trained or assessed for interpretation or translation skills.** This represents the most used language resource. Only the Police Department notes having a certified translator or interpreter on staff.

**Just under half of the Town’s departments have access to interpretation or translation through a contract language service organization.**

The following table summarizes the resources that staff report using to communicate with community members who speak languages other than English:

<b>Resources available to staff to communicate with community members who speak LOTE</b>	<b>Departments reporting service/method</b>
Staff members who are certified translators or interpreters	Police
Staff members who are multilingual, but not certified translators or interpreters (or not sure if multilingual colleagues are certified)	Communication & Engagement Fire & Rescue Planning, Zoning & Inspections Police Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources Town Clerk Town Manager
Interpretation or translation with a contract language service organization	Communication & Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CHICLE, El Centro Hispano</li> </ul> Fire & Rescue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language Line via Orange County Emergency Services</li> </ul> Police <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language Line</li> </ul> Planning, Zoning & Inspection Town Manager
Over-the-phone interpretation	Fire & Rescue Police
* Community members/family members	Fire & Rescue
* Google Translate	Economic Development Fire & Rescue
* Other Apps and/or Interpretation Technology	Communication & Engagement Police
<b>* Recommended best practices are to use qualified interpreters and/or translators; a language access plan will help staff avoid using family and/or community members and unvetted automatic or machine translations.</b>	

Town departments note they are **already regularly providing the following communications or other language services for community members** who speak languages other than English:

<p><b>Fire and Rescue</b></p> <p>Job postings in English, Spanish, Karen, and Burmese</p> <p>Language Line (through Orange County Emergency Services)</p>	<p><b>Economic Development</b></p> <p>Occasionally provided when doing targeted outreach to Latinx or BIPOC audiences</p> <p>Partner organizations help get the word out and/or provide assistance to community members who speak LOTE</p>	<p><b>Housing &amp; Community Services</b></p> <p>Flyers in Spanish, Burmese, Karen (including shared materials from Orange County)</p> <p>Contract with language services for outreach and community events</p>	<p><b>Police</b></p> <p>Materials such as Miranda Rights form, Other rights forms, Consent to search forms translated into Spanish</p> <p>Language Line; officers who are bilingual in English and Spanish translate and/or interpret</p>	
<p><b>Communication and Engagement</b></p> <p>Some flyers and signage are translated; Online forms that are not PDFs are translated via Google Translate</p>	<p><b>Human Resources</b></p> <p>Translated signs and notifications on how to submit a language access complaint</p>	<p><b>Public Works</b></p> <p>Some printed materials about stormwater management</p>	<p><b>Town Clerk</b></p> <p>Working on making translated agendas and advisory board materials and applications available on request</p>	<p><b>Town Manager</b></p> <p>Some application forms are translated into Spanish or Burmese</p>

## Section 4: Additional Questions – Federal Funding (for department directors only) and Open-Ended Question for Comments on Departmental Language Access Services (for all respondents)

**Three departments – Communication & Engagement, Economic Development, and Housing and Community Services – reported receiving federal funding.** All three departments also noted that they provide a portion of these federal funds to organizations outside of the Town.

- Communications and Engagement notes having received ARPA, HUD, and other funds.
- Economic Development notes having received ARPA funds.
- Housing & Community Services notes having received CARES Act and Community Development Block Grant-COVID funds.

**This section also asked all respondents the following question: “Do you have any other comments or information you'd like to share regarding language services in your department?” Responses are included below. Any potentially identifying information has been redacted.**

- I think it is very important that we have some of our written publications be translated to Spanish. I also think we need at least 1 staff person who can translate English to Spanish and vice versa.
- The language access plan is very important for our department. We are looking forward to assisting as we move forward with the plan.
- [My department] works with the public and contractors that [do not] always understand English. Therefore an app on our cells phone would be great.
- A translation app on the town’s phone would be great. Or a Spanish version of our permitting program for the citizens portal. On the Admin side have it show up as English.
- We are interested in having our outreach material translated into several different languages for our residents.
- On our...Emergency Forms we do ask what language is spoken if other than English. This is to help me and other staff communicate with families and children.
- We need better systems. When and how to do provide translated materials and/or interpretation services. Needs to be streamlined and needs to be cost effective. Need a better way to communicate on the website.
- I personally purchased a set of earbuds which actively translate basically any language, and often specific dialects, instead of relying on other means.
- We need Spanish-speaking employees or to provide some department/role-specific language helps to, or classes for, staff in Spanish, and if possible, other languages we encounter.
- It is difficult to have our documents translated into Spanish. It depends on what any given leadership sees as a priority at the time. I believe this is because it currently comes out of dept. budget which is limited. However, we have been able to get [one of our documents] translated into Spanish but not every time we make an update in the English version.
- I believe all of our signage, including directional signs, should be translated into Spanish.

### Appendix {D}: Carrboro's Building Integrated Communities Collaborators

Carrboro's Building Integrated Communities (BIC) team consisted of representatives from the Town of Carrboro, the Refugee Community Partnership, and UNC-Chapel Hill's Institute for the Study of the Americas:

#### Town of Carrboro Staff:

- Anita Jones-McNair, Chief Race and Equity Officer, Town Manager's Office
- Anne-Marie Vanaman, Director, Housing & Community Services
- Catherine Lazorko, Director, Communication & Engagement
- Evelyn Greene, Communication & Engagement Specialist, Communication & Engagement
- Jon Hartman-Brown, Director, Economic Development
- Joshua Ward, Human Resources Analyst, Human Resources
- Kannu Taylor, Race and Equity Manager, Town Manager's Office
- Malia Summey, Administrative Assistant, Housing & Community Services

#### Refugee Community Partnership:

- Daniella Runyambo, Co-Executive Director, Programs & Community Impact
- Lama Moakeh, Collective Care Manager
- Meagan Clawar, Co-Executive Director, Finance & Operations
- Madison Hayes, Co-Executive Director, Development & Communications

#### University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Institute for the Study of the Americas:

- Brianna Gilmore, Program Associate
- Emily Spangenberg, Bilingual Program Coordinator
- Hannah Gill, Associate Director of the Institute for the Study of the Americas

Special thanks to the following people who provided valuable insights on community languages, helped define implementation goals for the Plan, provided feedback on drafts of the Plan, or shared expertise on engagement with community members who prefer to speak languages other than English:

- Andreina Malki, UNC-Chapel Hill
- Brett Greene, Town of Carrboro
- Council Member Eliazar Posada, Town of Carrboro
- Diane Villwock, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools
- Gini Bell, Refugee Community Partnership
- Huda Muhnaia, Refugee Community Partnership
- Jennifer Morillo, NC Division of Public Health
- Mariela Hernandez, Orange County Housing Department
- Rose Gao, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools
- Sandra Pereira, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools
- Sofia Godoy, UNC-Chapel Hill