

# Translation and Interpretation Guidelines for Oakland General Plan Update, Phase 2

Last updated September 18, 2024

## Purpose

The City of Oakland adopted [Ordinance No. 12324](#) in 2001, establishing equal access to city services by requiring City Departments to offer bilingual services and materials if a concentrated portion of the public utilizing city services is a Limited English Proficient (LEP) person, meaning the individual does not speak English because it is not their primary language.<sup>1</sup> Language access services include interpretation of oral communications and translation of written communications by Bilingual Employees, Qualified Interpreters, and Qualified Translators; telephone, internet, or video interpretation; and translated materials.

In Oakland, the current Threshold Language Groups are Spanish and Chinese. Threshold language groups refer to groups of “at least 10,000 LEP residents of the City who speak a shared language other than English.” The Language Access Plan directs the City to develop a process for identifying and translating Vital Documents into the languages of Threshold Language Groups. Vital documents refer to written information, regardless of format, that provide critical information on how to access City services and/or benefits. The City Administrator also identifies LEP groups, which refers to “at least 1,000 limited English-speaking residents of the City who speak a shared language other than English.”

While there are no vital documents under the threshold definition related to the General Plan Update (GPU), the GPU team has prepared these Translation and Interpretation Guidelines for Phase 2 of the Oakland General Plan Update to ensure that the process is as accessible as possible to Oaklanders speaking languages other than English, who are critical stakeholders in the update. These guidelines should provide clarity in procedures and expectations, so that the public clearly understands what GPU documents will be translated, which events will have interpretation services available, and how the public can make specific language access requests. This document will also provide clear and consistent guidance for staff and consultants in providing this service. The General Plan Update is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Oaklanders to help shape their city; the GPU Update team is committed to ensuring accessibility to GPU information and events.

## About the General Plan Update (GPU)

The City of Oakland is [updating its General Plan](#), a document required by the State that sets a vision for the city’s future development. The General Plan shares community priorities, values, and aspirations. It includes goals, policies, and implementation measures to achieve the community’s vision. California law requires specific topics called “Elements” to be covered in a General Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> City of Oakland Language Access Plan, [https://cao-94612.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/documents/Title-VI-LEP-Plan\\_English\\_-11.30.2022.pdf](https://cao-94612.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/documents/Title-VI-LEP-Plan_English_-11.30.2022.pdf).

The GPU process has two phases. Phase 1 began in November 2021 and ended in October 2023. The city adopted the Housing, Environmental Justice, and Safety Elements. Phase 2 will begin in Fall 2024 and will focus on:

- Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE),
- Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation (OSCAR) Element
- Noise Element
- Infrastructure and Capital Facilities Element.

Through the GPU, the city aims to create livable and connected neighborhoods where people have access to everything they need. Once adopted in 2026, the General Plan will guide Oakland's strategic development for the next 20 years.

## GPU Language Access Procedures

The GPU aims to advance racial justice, equity, and transparency in and through the planning process. The GPU team is dedicated to ensuring that access to project information, documents, events, and activities related to the GPU process is available and accessible to all. This section outlines the translation and interpretation services the GPU team will provide for Phase 2 of the General Plan Update taking into consideration both the City's Language Access Policy and the available resources of the department. This document should be considered in the context of the full [GPU Phase 2 Engagement Plan](#).

### GPU Documents for Translation

These types of documents are planned to be translated by default into Spanish and Chinese, Oakland's threshold languages, and into the languages of LEP Language Groups upon request:

1. Key summary documents, such as flyers, presentations, etc.
2. Key engagement materials, such as surveys, core videos, etc.
3. Informational Materials at Key Milestones (to inform development of Elements)
4. Public Review Drafts of Elements – Goals, Policies, Actions + Executive Summaries
5. Public Hearing Drafts – Goals, Policies, Actions + Executive Summaries (only updated content)

### GPU Events for Interpretation

These types of events are planned to have interpretation in Spanish and Chinese, Oakland's threshold languages, and into the languages of LEP Language Groups upon request:

1. Zoom Workshops at Key Milestones
2. In-Person Community Workshops
3. In-language Focus Groups
4. Public Hearings and Public Meetings
5. Events targeted at specific communities that have a high percentage of LEP Persons

The types of documents and events for translation are subject to change.

# How to Request Language Access Services for the General Plan Update

## For GPU-Related Documents and Events

To request interpretation for events or translation of documents related to the GPU, please email the General Plan Team at [generalplan@oaklandca.gov](mailto:generalplan@oaklandca.gov). Please submit requests five (5) days in advance.

## For City Council Meetings

For accessibility and interpretation requests for City Council meetings, please contact the Office of the City Clerk **at least five (5) business days before the meeting or hearing in question**, at: [cityclerk@oaklandca.gov](mailto:cityclerk@oaklandca.gov).

## For Planning Commission

For accessibility and interpretation requests, please contact [oaklandplanningcommission@oaklandca.gov](mailto:oaklandplanningcommission@oaklandca.gov). Contact the Planning Commission to request disability-related accommodations, American Sign Language (ASL), Mandarin, Spanish or another language interpreter **at least five (5) business days before the event**.

All meetings held in-person are wheelchair accessible. Please refrain from wearing scented products as a courtesy to attendees with chemical sensitivities.