

**To:** CapMetro Board of Directors

**From:** Sharmila Mukherjee  
EVP, Chief Strategic Planning and Development Office

**Date:** May 20, 2024

**Subject:** Title VI Policy Update and Data Sources for Service Equity Analyses

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### **RE: Public Hearing on Title VI Policy Update**

At the public hearing held on April 10, 2024, members of the board and the public expressed interest in the data sources CapMetro employs for the proposed Title VI service equity analyses. Attendees sought clarity on our decision-making criteria regarding the use of Census data versus on-board survey data. To foster transparency and understanding within our community, the following memo provides clear explanations about these data sources and when they would be used. **The proposed policy change will allow CapMetro to use on-board survey data when appropriate, as opposed to being solely reliant on Census data under the current policy.**

### **Data Sources**

Pursuant to FTA regulations, CapMetro recently conducted an exhaustive on-board survey, yielding statistically significant demographic insights about our ridership. This on-board survey data, gleaned from over 23,000 completed surveys, offers a granular understanding of our riders and their demographic characteristics. It is invaluable for analyzing changes that primarily affect users of our existing transit system, such as a change in a route's headways.

Conversely, Decennial Census<sup>1</sup> or American Community Survey (ACS) data<sup>2</sup> remains the preferred choice for evaluating service changes that include a route alignment change or the introduction of new routes. Census-derived data provide geographic insights primarily about the resident populations near proposed transit routes. Census data is also used to develop a market analysis for the transit service plan, which occurs every five years and helps CapMetro to understand and identify gaps in transit service throughout the Central Texas region.

**Therefore, it's crucial to recognize that both Census and on-board survey data hold significance in our Title VI service equity analysis.** While the on-board survey data is

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<sup>1</sup> Data collected every 10 years.

<sup>2</sup> Smaller samples of data collected every 1-5 years to provide estimates.

optimal for assessing existing service impacts, Census data remains vital for informing decisions regarding route modifications and expansions (see Table 1).

*Table 1: Data Sources and Types of Corresponding Service Changes*

On Board Survey Data	Census Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data collected at the <b>route level</b> and of <b>current users</b></li><li>• Changes are typically <b>non-geographic</b> in nature</li><li>• Changes primarily affect <b>current riders</b> of an existing transit route</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data gathered <b>within proximity</b> to future route alignment of <b>potential users</b> in the area</li><li>• Changes are typically <b>geographic</b> in nature</li><li>• Changes primarily affect <b>potential riders</b> or those who currently lack access to transit</li></ul>

By incorporating both sources of data into our analysis, we ensure a comprehensive understanding of demographic dynamics within our ridership, enabling us to make more equitable and informed decisions across our transit services.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.