

# Framingham Community Electricity Program (FCE)

## Education and Outreach Plan

February 25, 2023 - *Draft*

This document presents a draft public Education and Outreach Plan for the Framingham Community Electricity Program (Program). This Education and Outreach Plan was developed by the City of Framingham and builds on a preliminary framework that was utilized to begin local education efforts on aggregation and develop the City's vision for its program. The outreach efforts described in this plan have been customized to ensure that the population of Framingham has as much access as is possible to program information and resources.

Framingham (City) will be able to finalize the strategy once the Program launch date and pricing have been established, which cannot happen until after the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) approves the City's aggregation plan and the City selects an electricity supplier for the Program.

### I. Education and Outreach Schedule

#### A. Aggregation Plan Development Period

While developing its Aggregation Plan, the City endeavored to begin engaging the community with the Program by announcing a public comment period of 30 days and soliciting comments (see Petition, Attachment G for copies of comments received). A public presentation of the plan was made during that 30-day period on \_\_\_\_\_ (see Petition for Approval of Municipal Aggregation Plan (Petition), Attachment F for a copy of the presentation). The formal announcement, public comment period, and public presentation of the plan were publicized as follows:

- Posted on the home page of the City website
- Posted on the home page of the Framingham Community Electricity Program website
- Sent out via social media posts on official City social media accounts
- Via announcement at a City Council meeting
- Posted on bulletin boards in municipal buildings such as the City Hall, the Framingham Public Library branches, and the Callahan Senior Center
- Sent out to the local newspaper, the *MetroWest Daily News*, and other local media publications, such as the *Framingham SOURCE*, the *Framingham Tab*, *Wicked Local*, the *Brazilian Times*, *O Jornal*, and *Sampan*
- Sent to municipal agencies and community organizations with a request that they share the information with their constituents/members, including:
  - o Environmentally-focused boards and committees, such as the City Council Environment and Sustainability Subcommittee, Framingham Sustainability Committee, and the School Committee Climate Change, Environment, and Sustainability Subcommittee
  - o Environmental advocacy organizations in Framingham, such as Energize Framingham, Keep Framingham Beautiful (KFB), and Transition Framingham

- Agencies and organizations that provide support to vulnerable community members, such as the Framingham Housing Authority, the City of Framingham Veterans’ Services, the Pelham Lifelong Learning Center, the Framingham Council on Aging / Callahan Senior Center, the South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC), the MetroWest YMCA, Daniel’s Table, Hope Food Pantry, the Salvation Army, and A Place to Turn
- Organizations that provide support to non-native speakers of English, including Framingham Adult ESL Plus, the Framingham Public Library, the Brazilian American Center (BRACE), and the Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS)
- Faith communities via outreach to the Framingham Interfaith Community Association

The City also developed initial program branding and launched an informational website, which is available at *FraminghamCommunityElectricity.com*, and made customer support available to the public through the website so the public could get early answers to questions about the program.

See Petition, Attachment E for a copy of communications sent out about the public presentation of the plan and public comment period.

### B. Regulatory Review Period

While Framingham’s aggregation plan is undergoing regulatory review, the City plans to build general awareness about aggregation and about the City’s goals to increase the renewable energy content of the community’s electricity supply.

- As part of those efforts, the City will endeavor to provide information to residents and businesses through the community organizations that they interact with and that serve them. The City will prioritize groups that provide support for Environmental Justice (EJ) neighborhoods and vulnerable populations, such as low-income homeowners; renters, in particular those living in subsidized housing; seniors; immigrant populations and non-English speakers; those connected to faith-based communities; food pantries; and veterans. The City will also involve groups whose missions focus on environmental and sustainability issues in outreach. The City will offer to speak to staff and to constituents and provide information about the program. For this effort, the City will reach out to organizations such as those listed previously in Section A.

An initial informational handout will be created to help educate the community about the program and made available online and in City buildings.

To ensure access to program information during this period and on an ongoing basis during program operation, the City will provide basic information about the Aggregation Plan, links to download the Aggregation Plan and associated documents, and a link to the program website in a prominent location on the City’s website. Once complete and approved by the DPU, the final version of all Program documents and educational materials will be made available and updated on the program website.

### C. Electricity Supply Contract is Signed

After the regulatory review process is complete, the electricity supply contract is signed. Signing the electricity supply contract does not itself include any outreach to the general community, but it is a

milestone that moves the City toward the formal education and outreach efforts that immediately precede program launch.

The contract is signed as a result of a competitive procurement process, and includes the program pricing, the program structure, the amount of any additional renewable electricity that will be made available to participants, the electricity supplier, and the electricity supply contract duration.

#### D. Formal Public Education and Outreach Period

During the period of time between electricity supply contract signing and program enrollment, the City will conduct a formal public education and outreach effort. That effort will include the following:

##### 1. Contract Announcement, Website Update, and Outreach to Community Organizations

The City will publicize a **press release/announcement** about the Program launch and Program details (including pricing, options, and enrollment) as follows:

- Posted on the home page of the City website
- Posted on the home page of the Framingham Community Electricity Program website
- Sent out via social media posts on official City social media accounts
- Via announcement at a City Council meeting
- Posted on bulletin boards in municipal buildings such as the City Hall, the Framingham Public Library branches, and the Callahan Senior Center
- Via public cable access segment
- Sent out to the local newspaper, the *MetroWest Daily News*, and other local media publications, such as the *Framingham SOURCE*, the *Framingham Tab*, *Wicked Local*, the *Brazilian Times*, *O Jornal*, and *Sampan*
- Sent to municipal agencies and community organizations with a request that they share the information with their constituents/members, including:
  - o Environmentally-focused boards and committees, such as the City Council Environment and Sustainability Subcommittee, Framingham Sustainability Committee, and the School Committee Climate Change, Environment, and Sustainability Subcommittee
  - o Environmental advocacy organizations in Framingham, such as Energize Framingham, Keep Framingham Beautiful (KFB), and Transition Framingham
  - o Agencies and organizations that provide support to vulnerable community members, such as the Framingham Housing Authority, the City of Framingham Veterans' Services, the Pelham Lifelong Learning Center, the Framingham Council on Aging / Callahan Senior Center, the South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC), the MetroWest YMCA, Daniel's Table, Hope Food Pantry, the Salvation Army, and A Place to Turn
  - o Organizations that provide support to non-native speakers of English, including Framingham Adult ESL Plus, the Framingham Public Library, the Brazilian American Center (BRACE), and the Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS)
  - o Faith communities via outreach to the Framingham Interfaith Community Association

- Shared during energy bill checkup calls offered to residents to increase local utility bill literacy and awareness of energy efficiency resources.

The **Program website** will be updated to include the following information:

- Supplier name
- Customer support information
- Program pricing and program option descriptions
- Information about the renewable energy content in the Program offerings
- A form that allows customers to select a Program option
- Opt-out information and a form for opting out online
- Information about how to opt in to the Program for those customers who will not be automatically enrolled, including an online enrollment form
- Information on submitting tax-exemption documentation
- Additional resources, such as the approved aggregation plan and the electricity supply contract

## 2. “Coming-Soon Postcard Mailing by the Supplier

- To ensure the public is looking for and recognizes the opt-out letter as an important and legitimate communication from the City, a “coming-soon” postcard will be mailed to eligible customers in Framingham. The contracted electricity supplier will cover the cost of the postcard and will execute the mailing.

## 3. Opt-Out Letter Mailing by the Supplier and Public Education Events

- The opt-out letter and reply card will be mailed to eligible customers in Framingham, accompanied by the D.P.U.-required Language Access Document.<sup>1</sup>
- The City will host **at least two community-wide public education sessions** that are available to the general public: **at least one public education session with the Callahan Senior Center targeted for seniors and at least one additional session**. The public information sessions will be publicized as part of the Program announcement and as described in Section D.1, which includes on the municipal website, through the City’s social media accounts, and sent out to relevant municipal agencies and community organizations with a request that they share the information with their constituents/members.
- The City will offer to provide brief informational presentations during regularly scheduled meetings of civic associations and other community-based organizations.

## 4. Anticipated Materials for the Public Education Effort

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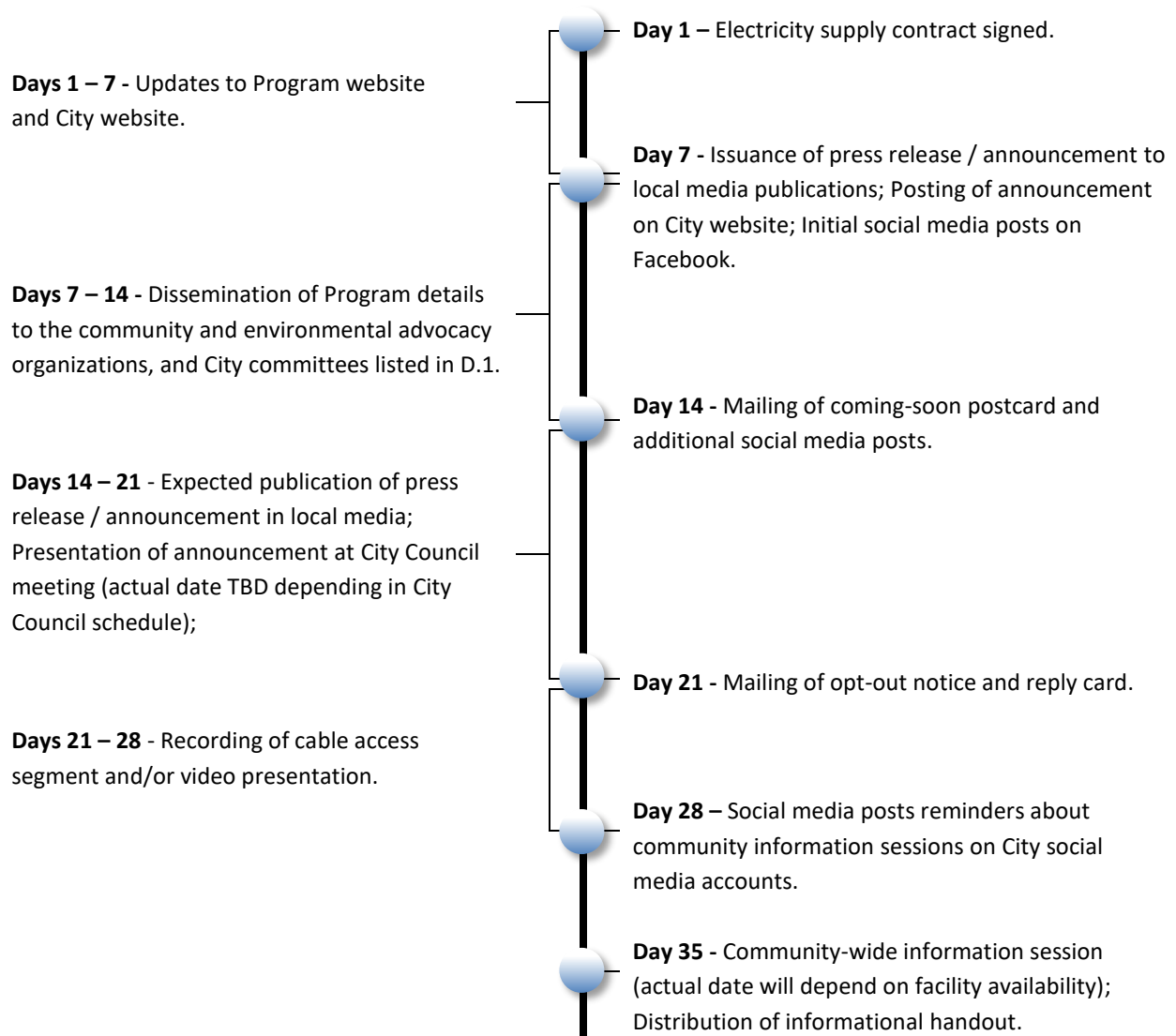
<sup>1</sup> The required Language Access Document translates the following text into 26 languages that, according to U.S. Census Bureau data, are the languages spoken by Massachusetts residents with limited English proficiency:

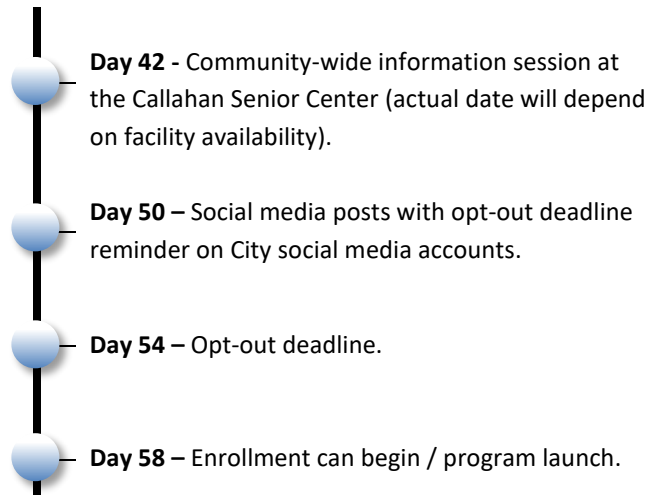
*Important notice enclosed from Framingham about your electricity service. Translate the notice immediately. Call the number or visit the website, above, for help.*

- a. **Informational presentation:** An informational presentation will be created to provide a Program overview at public education events
- b. **An informational handout:** An informational handout will be created and distributed in public buildings, to community groups, and at public information sessions about the Program. The handout will provide updated Program details such as pricing, Program options, how to opt out, and participation information.
- c. **Social media posts**

## 5. Illustrative Program Outreach Timeline

Framingham will endeavor to launch the program as soon as is possible after signing an electricity supply contract. The timeline below is illustrative. The actual timeline will be dependent on the actual length of time between when the supply contract is signed and the program is scheduled to launch, as well as other factors such as the availability of public spaces for meetings.





Discounts provided by Eversource to low-income customers will not be impacted by their enrollment in the Program.

#### E. After Program Launch

After Program launch, customer support provided by MassPowerChoice, the City’s Program consultant, will remain available via phone, email, and the web for the duration of the Program.

The City will notify customers of any change in product price or renewable energy content consistent with all notification requirements for the competitive supply market required by the Department of Public Utilities that are applicable to aggregation programs. The City will notify customers of any change in Program price (including a change in Program price at the start of a new supply period) at least 30 days prior to any such change. At a minimum, the City will provide that notification by sending a notification to all program participants by mail, and by issuing a media release, posting a notice in City Hall, posting a notice on the City’s municipal website and publicizing it via City social media accounts, and posting a notice on the Program website.

If, after Program launch, there is a change in law (i.e., “regulatory event or “new taxes per Article 18 of the ESA) that results in a direct, material increase in costs during the term of the ESA, the City and the competitive supplier will negotiate a potential change in the Program price. At least 30 days prior to the implementation of any such change, the City will notify consumers of the change in price by issuing a media release and posting a notice in City Hall and on the City website. The City will notify the DPU Consumer Division prior to the implementation of any change in Program price related to a change in law. Such communication will occur at least ten days prior to the consumer notification and include copies of all media releases, City Hall and website postings, and other communications the City intends to provide to customers regarding the change in price.

As part of its ongoing service, the City will provide the disclosure information required by G.L. c. 164, § 1(F)(vi) and 220 C.M.R. § 11.06. Like the other Massachusetts aggregations, the City has requested a waiver from the requirement that the disclosure label be mailed to every customer and seeks

permission instead to provide the information through alternative means. Specifically, on a quarterly basis or as received by the program's electricity supplier, the City will publicize either the disclosure label or a link to download a PDF of the complete disclosure label along with explanatory text such as the following:

*The electricity supplier for Framingham Community Electricity, the City's electricity program, has sent an updated electricity generation disclosure label. Participants in Framingham Community Electricity can use this label to learn about the electricity supplied through the program, including the sources of that electricity.*

The City's intention is to publicize the labels in March, June, September, and December. The City will publicize them in the following ways:

- By posting a physical notice and disclosure label on a bulletin board at City Hall, the Callahan Senior Center and the Framingham Public Library branches
- As a news item on the home page of the City website
- Via posts on the City's official social media outlets
- Via messages on cable access
- By posting a notice and disclosure label on the Program website

## II. Access for Customers with Limited English Proficiency and Who Require Other Assistance

The American Community Survey offers information on languages and language groups within the City of Framingham.

The most recent data is from 2020<sup>2</sup> and provides information about a combination of specific languages and language groups. Based on 2020 report data, out of a total of 68,562 residents over the age of five:

- 42,175 speak only English, and 26,387, or 39%, also or only speak other languages.
- Of those that speak other languages, 10,285, or approximately 39% (15% of the total population), speak English "less than very well."
- Among those who speak English "less than very well," the majority are speakers of Spanish (3,453 or 5.04% of the total population). We know that speakers of "other Indo-European languages" account for another large population with limited English ability (5,045 or 7.36% of the total population), but this report does not specify which languages are included. For that we must reference a different census report, which is explored later in this document.

The table below provides a summary of the 2020 American Community Survey data. Please see Appendix A for a copy of the original data and the data source used in the table.

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<sup>2</sup> Table C16001: Language Spoken at home for the population 5 years and over

## 2020 Census data – Language and language group populations speaking English “less than very well”

Language	Number of speakers	% of total Framingham population
Spanish	3,453	5.04%
French, Haitian, or Cajun	127	0.19%
German or other West Germanic languages	0	0.00%
Russian, Polish, or other Slavic languages	273	0.40%
Other Indo-European languages	5,045	7.36%
Korean	46	0.07%
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	829	1.21%
Vietnamese	229	0.33%
Tagalog (incl. Filipino)	50	0.07%
Other Asian and Pacific Island languages	47	0.07%
Arabic	31	0.05%
Other and unspecified languages	155	0.23%

For detail on specific languages instead of language groups, the older 2015 American Community Survey<sup>3</sup> provides greater detail. (The same detail is not available for the City of Framingham in 2020 American Community Survey data.) The table below offers that detail and assumes a total Framingham population of 65,767, as reported in the 2015 data. This slightly older but more detailed data clarifies that the largest language populations that speak English “less than very well” include speakers of Spanish (3,790 or 5.76% of the population) and speakers of Portuguese or Portuguese Creole (4,295 or 6.53% of the population). Please see Appendix A for a copy of the original data and the data source.

## 2015 census data – Specific language populations speaking English “less than very well”

Language	Number of speakers	% of total Framingham population
Spanish or Spanish Creole	3,790	5.76%
French (incl. Patois, Cajun)	53	0.08%

<sup>3</sup> Table B16001: Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over



French Creole	76	0.12%
Italian	64	0.10%
Portuguese or Portuguese Creole	4,295	6.53%
German	19	0.03%
Yiddish	0	0.00%
Other West Germanic languages	0	0.00%
Scandinavian languages	0	0.00%
Greek	76	0.12%
Russian	481	0.73%
Polish	0	0.00%
Serbo-Croatian	19	0.03%
Other Slavic languages	13	0.02%
Armenian	10	0.02%
Persian	23	0.03%
Gujarati	137	0.21%
Hindi	229	0.35%
Urdu	0	0.00%
Other Indic languages	291	0.44%
Other Indo-European languages	12	0.02%
Chinese	535	0.81%
Japanese	25	0.04%
Korean	101	0.15%
Mon-Khmer, Cambodian	31	0.05%
Hmong	0	0.00%
Thai	0	0.00%
Laotian	1	0.00%
Vietnamese	68	0.10%

Other Asian languages	195	0.30%
Tagalog	47	0.07%
Other Pacific Island languages	5	0.01%
Navajo	0	0.00%
Other Native North American languages	0	0.00%
Hungarian	0	0.00%
Arabic	136	0.21%
Hebrew	36	0.05%
African languages	7	0.01%
Other and unspecified languages	0	0.00%

To ensure adequate access to the aggregation opt-out letter and other information about the Program for electricity customers with limited English proficiency, Framingham will:

- Translate program materials into Spanish and Portuguese.
  - o Distribute translated program materials to community organizations and agencies that support speakers of Spanish and Portuguese, such as Framingham Adult ESL Plus, the Framingham Public Library, the Brazilian American Center (BRACE), and the Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS)
- Offer to provide presentations to the staff and constituents, members, or clients of each organization and agency with an interpreter present.
- Provide at least one general public information session with Spanish interpretation and at least one with Portuguese interpretation.
- Translate the opt-out letter into Spanish and Portuguese and provide links to download the translations on the opt-out letter and on the home page of the Program website.
  - The first page of the opt-out letter will include the following text, translated in Spanish and Portuguese:

*This letter contains important information about your electricity bill from the City of Framingham. This letter is available in [LANGUAGE NAME] online at [WEBSITE ADDRESS]. To ask questions, call 1-8XX-XXX-XXXX.*
- Provide on-demand machine translation of the Program website before, during, and after Program launch, including price change announcements, which are featured on the website home page.

- Include the DPU-required Language Access document as a cover sheet with the opt-out letter mailing. The Language Access document will include the following text translated into 26 languages:

*Important notice enclosed from Framingham about your electricity service. Translate the notice immediately. Call the number or visit the website, above, for help.*

In addition, the Language Access document will include the MassRelay TTY phone number for both Spanish and English speakers.

- Provide on-demand phone interpreting in 200 languages via the Program’s toll-free customer service telephone number before, during, and after Program launch.

### l. Access for Customers with a Physical Disability or Who Require Visual or Audio Assistance

To the extent possible, all public education events will be held in accessible spaces such as City buildings. In the event public education events cannot be presented as in-person events, they will be held online and as such will be accessible to those with limited mobility. Customers who are deaf or hard of hearing may request an ASL interpreter at these public events from customer support using the web form or via email, and this option will be communicated as a part of the City's publicity about the events.

Before Program launch and on an ongoing basis after Program launch, customers who are blind or otherwise visually impaired may request assistance reading Program materials and the Program website, which will include price change information, by calling the customer support number. For customers who are deaf or hard of hearing, the Language Access Document, which will accompany the opt-out letter, will include TTY phone numbers for use by both English- and Spanish-speaking customers. In addition, customer support will be available via multiple modalities: voice (phone) as well as written (web form and email) both before and after Program launch.

### l. Competitive Supply Customers

Where the City’s education and outreach materials address the availability of the Program to competitive supply customers, those materials will disclose that such customers may be subject to penalties or early termination fees from their competitive supplier if they switch from competitive supply to the City’s Program during the term of a competitive supply contract.

## Appendix A – Source data for population speaking English less than very well

Table C16001, Language Spoken at home for the population 5 years and over

Original source data for Table C16001, entitled *Language Spoken at home for the population 5 years and over*, from the 2020 American Community Survey.<sup>4</sup>

Framingham city, Massachusetts		
Label	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total:	68,562	±588
Speak only English	42,175	±1,687
Spanish:	9,357	±1,130
Speak English "very well"	5,904	±792
Speak English less than "very well"	3,453	±737
French, Haitian, or Cajun:	712	±258
Speak English "very well"	585	±223
Speak English less than "very well"	127	±85
German or other West Germanic languages:	107	±90
Speak English "very well"	107	±90
Speak English less than "very well"	0	±31
Russian, Polish, or other Slavic languages:	831	±370
Speak English "very well"	558	±306
Speak English less than "very well"	273	±140
Other Indo-European languages:	10,885	±1,429
Speak English "very well"	5,840	±936
Speak English less than "very well"	5,045	±779

<sup>4</sup> The table can be accessed directly at the following link:  
<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=Framingham%20massachusetts%20c16001&y=2020&tid=ACSDT5Y2020.C16001>

Korean:	110	±83
Speak English "very well"	64	±62
Speak English less than "very well"	46	±42
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese):	1,609	±553
Speak English "very well"	780	±368
Speak English less than "very well"	829	±390
Vietnamese:	462	±331
Speak English "very well"	233	±242
Speak English less than "very well"	229	±161
Tagalog (incl. Filipino):	192	±156
Speak English "very well"	142	±108
Speak English less than "very well"	50	±56
Other Asian and Pacific Island languages:	734	±379
Speak English "very well"	687	±373
Speak English less than "very well"	47	±39
Arabic:	442	±284
Speak English "very well"	411	±253
Speak English less than "very well"	31	±44
Other and unspecified languages:	946	±386
Speak English "very well"	791	±326
Speak English less than "very well"	155	±132

Table B16001: Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over

Original source data for Table B16001, entitled Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over, from the 2015 American Community Survey.<sup>5</sup>

Framingham CDP, Massachusetts		
Label	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total:	65,767	±454
Speak only English	41,367	±1,463
Spanish or Spanish Creole:	8,465	±907
Speak English "very well"	4,675	±712
Speak English less than "very well"	3,790	±554
French (incl. Patois, Cajun):	305	±156
Speak English "very well"	252	±98
Speak English less than "very well"	53	±111
French Creole:	314	±216
Speak English "very well"	238	±167
Speak English less than "very well"	76	±119
Italian:	256	±100
Speak English "very well"	192	±82
Speak English less than "very well"	64	±46
Portuguese or Portuguese Creole:	7,826	±1,143
Speak English "very well"	3,531	±677
Speak English less than "very well"	4,295	±721
German:	117	±88
Speak English "very well"	98	±85

<sup>5</sup> The table can be accessed directly at the following link:  
<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=Framingham%20massachusetts%20b16001>

Speak English less than "very well"	19	±20
Yiddish:	35	±45
Speak English "very well"	35	±45
Speak English less than "very well"	0	±28
Other West Germanic languages:	0	±28
Speak English "very well"	0	±28
Speak English less than "very well"	0	±28
Scandinavian languages:	50	±57
Speak English "very well"	50	±57
Speak English less than "very well"	0	±28
Greek:	331	±247
Speak English "very well"	255	±204
Speak English less than "very well"	76	±86
Russian:	1,198	±415
Speak English "very well"	717	±277
Speak English less than "very well"	481	±209
Polish:	95	±99
Speak English "very well"	95	±99
Speak English less than "very well"	0	±28
Serbo-Croatian:	49	±57
Speak English "very well"	30	±42
Speak English less than "very well"	19	±31
Other Slavic languages:	13	±20
Speak English "very well"	0	±28
Speak English less than "very well"	13	±20

Armenian:	23	±26
Speak English "very well"	13	±21
Speak English less than "very well"	10	±16
Persian:	116	±123
Speak English "very well"	93	±96
Speak English less than "very well"	23	±28
Gujarati:	278	±226
Speak English "very well"	141	±87
Speak English less than "very well"	137	±170
Hindi:	724	±464
Speak English "very well"	495	±255
Speak English less than "very well"	229	±274
Urdu:	4	±8
Speak English "very well"	4	±8
Speak English less than "very well"	0	±28
Other Indic languages:	466	±273
Speak English "very well"	175	±120
Speak English less than "very well"	291	±200
Other Indo-European languages:	112	±82
Speak English "very well"	100	±73
Speak English less than "very well"	12	±18
Chinese:	960	±289
Speak English "very well"	425	±141
Speak English less than "very well"	535	±199
Japanese:	38	±45



Speak English "very well"	13	±21
Speak English less than "very well"	25	±40
Korean:	297	±188
Speak English "very well"	196	±162
Speak English less than "very well"	101	±72
Mon-Khmer, Cambodian:	35	±50
Speak English "very well"	4	±8
Speak English less than "very well"	31	±50
Hmong:	0	±28
Speak English "very well"	0	±28
Speak English less than "very well"	0	±28
Thai:	0	±28
Speak English "very well"	0	±28
Speak English less than "very well"	0	±28
Laotian:	1	±9
Speak English "very well"	0	±28
Speak English less than "very well"	1	±9
Vietnamese:	96	±106
Speak English "very well"	28	±42
Speak English less than "very well"	68	±74
Other Asian languages:	788	±320
Speak English "very well"	593	±255
Speak English less than "very well"	195	±134
Tagalog:	195	±114
Speak English "very well"	148	±89

Speak English less than "very well"	47	±45
Other Pacific Island languages:	156	±156
Speak English "very well"	151	±156
Speak English less than "very well"	5	±8
Navajo:	0	±28
Speak English "very well"	0	±28
Speak English less than "very well"	0	±28
Other Native North American languages:	23	±32
Speak English "very well"	23	±32
Speak English less than "very well"	0	±28
Hungarian:	0	±28
Speak English "very well"	0	±28
Speak English less than "very well"	0	±28
Arabic:	457	±266
Speak English "very well"	321	±180
Speak English less than "very well"	136	±120
Hebrew:	134	±117
Speak English "very well"	98	±102
Speak English less than "very well"	36	±46
African languages:	443	±247
Speak English "very well"	436	±247
Speak English less than "very well"	7	±10
Other and unspecified languages:	0	±28
Speak English "very well"	0	±28
Speak English less than "very well"	0	±28