Policy Overview
Public entities that operate fixed-route bus service are required to provide complementary paratransit service to persons with disabilities who, because of their disabilities, are unable to use the regular fixed-route system. Cedar Rapids Transit (CRT) contracts for the provision of the complementary paratransit service with Linn County LIFTS. The complementary paratransit service will be provided and monitored as described in this document.

Eligibility Decisions
Eligibility for complementary paratransit is based on the current functional ability of persons with disabilities to use fixed-route transit service. ADA regulations break eligibility types into three categories:

1) Inability to Navigate the System Independently - Any person with a disability who is unable to board, ride, or deboard from an accessible vehicle without the assistance of another person (except for the operator of a lift or other boarding device).

2) Lack of Accessible Vehicles, Stations, or Bus Stops - Any person with a disability who could ride an accessible vehicle but the route is not accessible or the lift does not meet ADA standards.

3) Inability to Reach a Boarding Point or Final Destination - Any person with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition that prevents the person from traveling to or from a bus stop.

The goal of the eligibility process is to ensure that only persons who meet the regulatory criteria are regarded as ADA eligible. Eligibility is not based on a diagnosis or type of disability, use or type of mobility aids, age, income, inconvenience, or whether or not individuals can drive or have access to private transportation.

Eligibility decisions will be made by Cedar Rapids Transit within 21 days after receipt of a completed application. If an eligibility decision is not made within 21 days, the applicant will be presumed eligible and will be provided service unless the application is denied at a later date. The applicant will be given a written notice that explains the reason for the determination and notice of the right to appeal.

An appeals process will be allowed for persons denied eligibility or granted conditional eligibility. Applicants need only to state their intent to appeal and are not required to give a full justification in writing prior to an opportunity to be heard. An appeal must be received by CRT within 60 days of the denial of the person’s application. The process will include an opportunity to be heard and to present information. The applicant may be required, at no cost, to be examined by a medical representative of CRT.

Written notification of an appeal determination, with the reason for it, will be made within 30 days of the appeal hearing. If the decision takes longer than 30 days, paratransit service will be provided from that time until a decision to deny the appeal is issued. The CRT Transit Manager, Linn County LIFTS Director, and the Linn County Mobility Manager will make the appeal decisions.
Provision of Service
ADA complementary paratransit service will be provided to ADA eligible individuals, an accompanying personal care attendant (PCA), and one other companion accompanying the ADA-eligible individual, if they have the same origin and destination. Additional companions will be allowed if space is available. Service will be provided as “origin-to-destination” which means that “door-to-door” assistance will be provided to passengers that need assistance beyond the curb in order to use the service as long as the driver is not out of visual contact with the vehicle or unattended passengers for a lengthy period of time.

Days and Hours of Service
The days and hours of service will be the same as the Cedar Rapids Transit fixed-route days and hours of service.

Service Area
ADA paratransit service will be provided for origins and destinations within a ¾-mile corridor on each side and a ¾-mile radius at the end of each fixed-route operated by Cedar Rapids Transit.

Trip Reservations, Negotiated Pickup Times, Denials, and Missed Trips
Requests for reservations will be accepted during normal business hours on a next day basis (not 24 hours in advance) and on all days prior to days of service including Sundays and holidays. The phone reservation system will have the capacity to handle the call volumes for trip reservations and cancellations. Advance reservations will be permitted up to fourteen days before a requested trip.

Trip reservations will be scheduled within one-hour of the requested pickup time. ADA regulations allow for negotiated pickup times within a one-hour plus or minus window. If the requested ride cannot be scheduled within the one-hour window, the trip will be tracked as a denial. Even if the rider accepts an offer of a trip that is outside the one-hour window, the trip will be tracked as a denial since the trip does not meet the ADA service criteria. If only one leg of a round trip can be reserved, and the rider declines the trip, it will be tracked as two denials. If the rider refuses an alternate time within the one-hour window, it is not a denial for the purposes of ADA compliance.

If the paratransit vehicle arrives after the 30-minute pickup window and the passenger has left or declines the trip, the trip will be recorded as a missed trip and not a no-show.

No-shows, Late Cancellations, and Suspensions
Passengers are given a 30-minute pickup window which is plus or minus 15 minutes of their scheduled pick-up time. If they are not available during that pickup window, they may be charged as a no-show. If a care provider is required to receive the passenger at the destination but is not present, the ride may be charged as a no-show. Passengers must call at least one hour prior to the ride to cancel the ride or they may be charged as a no-show. No-shows may be excused for passengers that can demonstrate that the no-show was due to circumstances beyond their control.

Passengers who establish a pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips may be suspended for a reasonable period of time. The suspension and appeals process for patterns or practices of excessive missed trips are identified in the LIFTS Riders Manual.
**Fares**
The ADA complementary paratransit fare will not exceed twice the base fare for a trip of similar length, at a similar time of day, on the fixed-route system. No fare will be charged for PCA’s, but companions must pay the same fare as the ADA-eligible individual. Discounted fares or free fares offered on a promotional basis on the fixed-route service do not require a corresponding reduction of the ADA complementary paratransit fare. The base fare for Cedar Rapids Transit is $1.50 per one-way trip, so the ADA paratransit service fare is $3.00 per one-way trip.

**Visitors**
Visitors that present ADA eligibility documentation from another public transit provider or have an apparent disability will be provided service. If a visitor does not have ADA eligibility, they will be required to provide proof of residency and proof of disability. A visitor may be required to apply for eligibility in order to receive service beyond a combination of 21 days during any 365-day period beginning with the visitor’s first use of service.

**Subscription Service**
Subscription service will not absorb more than 50% of the number of trips available at a given time unless there is non-subscription capacity. If there are no capacity constraints, then additional subscription service may be allowed.

**No Restrictions for Trip Purpose**
No restrictions or priorities will be based on trip purpose. Just as individuals may ride the fixed-route system for any purpose, complementary paratransit riders can ride the paratransit system for any purpose.

**Avoiding Capacity Constraints**
The availability of complementary paratransit service to eligible individuals will not be limited due to any of the following capacity constraints:
- Restrictions on the number of trips an individual can take;
- Waiting lists for access to service;
- Operational patterns or practices such as substantial amount of significantly untimely pickups, substantial amount of trip denials or missed trips, or substantial amount of trips with excessive trip times, untimely drop-offs, or poor telephone performance. “Pattern or practice” refers to regular or repeated actions, such as repeated denials on peak days, not isolated or singular events or operational problems beyond our control such as unanticipated weather or traffic problems.

**Monitoring Compliance**
CRT will monitor the ADA complementary paratransit service to ensure adequate capacity to meet demand for next-day trips. Performance data will be collected to determine if the ADA complementary paratransit service meets the regulatory requirements particularly in regard to capacity constraints.

LIFTS will be required to collect and provide the following performance data for quarterly compliance meetings:
- Ridership and fares
- Early, late, and on-time trip data
- Denials, missed trips, trip restrictions, waiting lists
- Excessive trip time analysis
- Phone performance data
- Passenger suspensions and/or appeals
- Passenger complaints
- Vehicle maintenance records

The Transit Manager, Transit Programs Coordinator, or Transit Data Coordinator from CRT will meet with the Director or Operations Manager from LIFTS on a quarterly basis to review the performance data and discuss any necessary adjustments to the ADA complementary paratransit service.