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AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT
PARATRANSIT PLAN FOR
CITY OF COLUMBUS, INDIANA

May 2013

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of Entity Submitting the Plan: City of Columbus

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Columbus, Indiana 47201

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Definition of Complementary Paratransit Service

The Americans with Disabilities Act regulations require City of Columbus, ColumBUS Transit, as a public entity that operates a fixed route system, to provide complementary paratransit services to individuals with disabilities (that is, service that is comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities who use the fixed route system). See 49 CFR Sec. 37.131 (a).

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and of 2008

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities. It provides the general framework and approach for ending discrimination for persons with disabilities. The stated national goals of the ADA are to guarantee that persons with disabilities have equality of opportunity, a chance to fully participate in society, ability to live independently and be economically self-sufficient.

Section 223 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires that public entities that operate non-commuter fixed-route transportation service also provide complementary paratransit service for individuals unable to use the fixed-route system. The regulations define minimum service characteristics that must be met for this service to be considered equivalent to the fixed-route service it is intended to complement. ADA complementary paratransit standards are provided for in 49 CFR Sec. 37.123 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

In general, the law prohibits public transit systems from denying individuals with disabilities the opportunity to use public transportation services, when they are available. It prohibits public entities from providing services that discriminate against persons with disabilities. The ADA requires the development of programs that will ensure the integration of all persons into the public transportation system, and thus all of the opportunities transportation makes possible. The goal is to ensure non-discriminatory, equitable, accessible and safe public transportation, enhancing the social and economic quality of life for people with disabilities.

Specific actions must be taken by public transit agencies to avoid discrimination. For example, the law requires that:

1. All newly purchased or leased vehicles used in fixed-route service must be accessible to persons with disabilities.
2. Public agencies which provide fixed-route public transportation service also must offer similar complementary paratransit services to individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed-route system.
3. New facilities must be accessible.
4. Alterations to facilities must include features to make them accessible.

City of Columbus, ColumBUS Transit complies with all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Service Provided by the City of Columbus, ColumBUS Transit

ColumBUS Transit operates fixed-route bus and paratransit services (called Call-a-Bus) from 6:00am to 7:00pm Monday through Friday, and 6:00am to 6:00pm Saturday. The system has a fleet inventory of five (5), heavy-duty, 30-foot, diesel buses for fixed-route operations, and five (5), 12-passenger converted vans for paratransit service. All vehicles are wheelchair accessible, thus all fixed routes are wheelchair accessible.

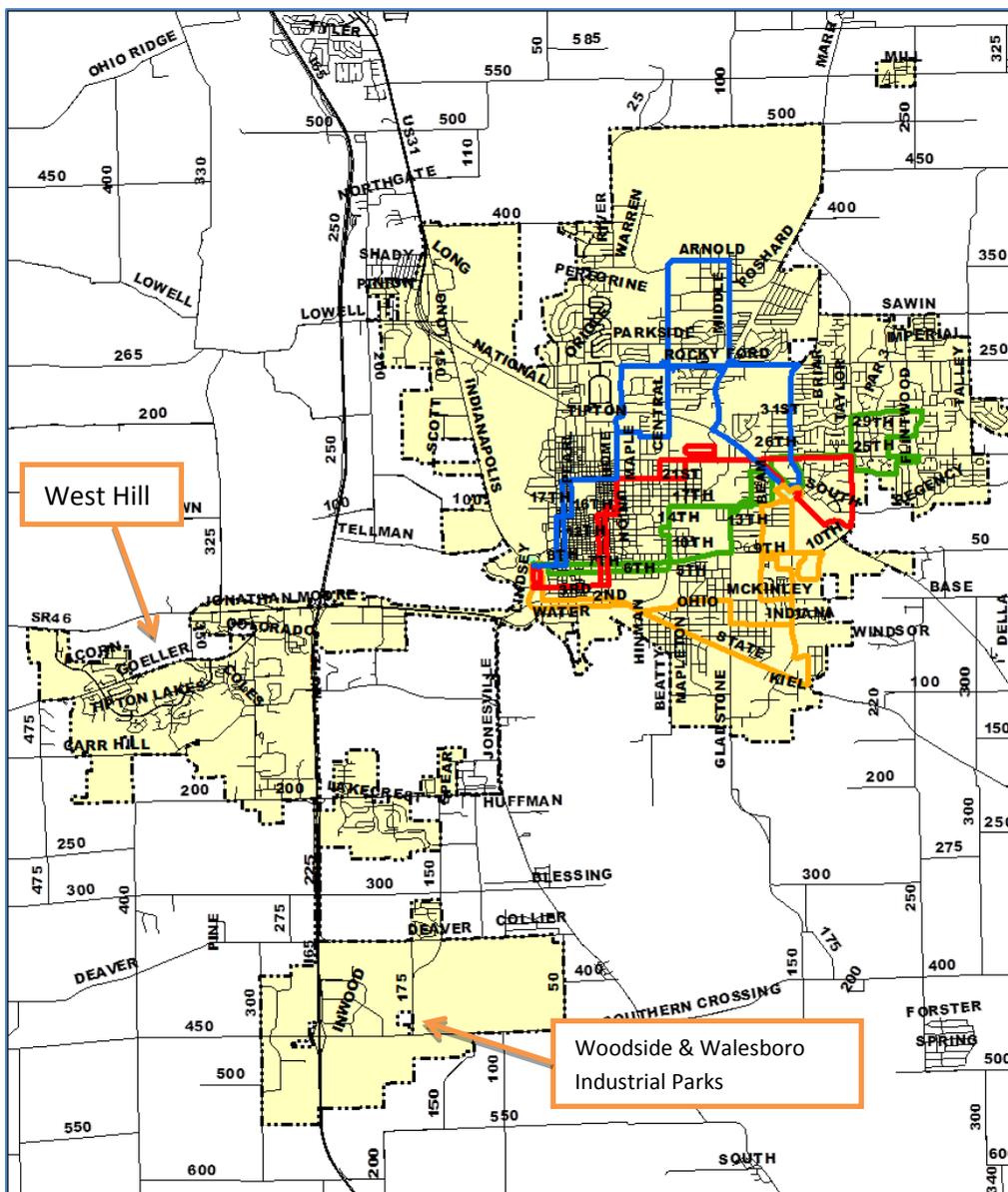
Current fixed-route service includes four (4) routes. These routes have one-hour headways, and carry about 220,000 passenger trips annually. Full-fare riders pay \$0.25 per one-way trip, plus same fare for each transfer. Half-price fares of \$0.10 per ride are available to Senior Citizens (age 60 and older), disabled individuals, and Medicare/Medicaid cardholders. High school age and younger can get free fare.

Call-a-Bus is an “origin to destination” demand-response service that is provided for persons who, because of disability, are unable to access the fixed-route bus service. The fare for this service is \$0.50 per one-way trip.

ColumBUS Transit ADA Paratransit Plan 2013

Columbus is a fairly compact community. The street network pattern is primarily a grid-system. The four existing public transit routes have a lengthy configuration. Each of the route buses leaves from Mill Race Transit Center, a new transfer station near the downtown, at five minutes after the hour as a timed-transfer point. Similarly, all four outbound buses have a common terminus at the Target Store in the Columbus Shopping Center.

In the map below, the city boundaries are shown in yellow. The four fixed routes are shown in color; they service the central city of Columbus. There is currently no fixed route service to the West Hill area of town nor the industrial parks south of town.



Services Provided by other Entities

Five other organizations were identified as providing some level of paratransit service in the City of Columbus. These are:

- Area XI Agency on Aging – providing transportation for persons over 60 and for those on Medicare going to a medical appointment.
- Development Services Inc. – Provides service to consumers of their agency for work related purposes.
- Head Start – Provides service to low income children to attend Head Start programs.
- Mill Race Center – Service in support of the center.
- Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation – Provides school bus transportation, including 17 accessible vehicles.

Rules for ADA Eligibility for Complementary Paratransit Services

ADA complementary paratransit service must be provided to all passengers described as being ADA eligible under 49 CFR Sec. 37.123. ADA eligibility includes the following:

1. Any individual with a disability who is unable, as a result of a physical or mental impairment (including a visual impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a lift or other boarding assistance device), to board, ride or disembark from an accessible vehicle in the fixed- route system. Included in this category are individuals with mental or visual impairments who cannot navigate the fixed-route system.
2. Persons who cannot use vehicles without lifts or accommodations. These persons are eligible for paratransit service if accessible fixed-route vehicles are not available on the bus routes in which they need to travel, when they need to travel during operational hours of ColumBUS Transit. (All ColumBUS Transit fixed-route vehicles are accessible).
3. Persons with specific impairment related conditions that cannot travel to a boarding location or from a disembarking location to their final destination. The condition must prevent the person from using the fixed-route system. Conditions that make getting to the fixed-route bus stop “more difficult” do not grant eligibility. Second, architectural barriers (such as no curb cuts) are not under the control of ColumBUS Transit, and environmental barriers (such as distance, terrain, and weather) do not, when considered alone, confer eligibility. If, however, travel to or from a boarding location is impossible when these factors are combined with the person’s specific impairment-related condition, conditional paratransit service will be provided to eligible passengers.

Call-a-Bus ADA Eligibility Certification Process

Applications for Call-a-Bus ADA eligibility for ColumBUS Transit's complementary paratransit service are available at ColumBUS Transit's office located at The Mill Race Station, 850 Lindsey Street, Columbus, Indiana 47201 or a request for an application to be mailed can be made by calling the ColumBUS Transit office at (812) 376-2506. Applications are also available for download from ColumBUS Transit's website located at www.columbus.in.gov by clicking on the "Departments" tab, then on "ColumBUS Transit". This site also includes hours of operation, holiday schedules, fares, and route information.

There is a two part application (see Appendix A) which you must complete before you are allowed to use ColumBUS Transit Call-a-Bus service. The first part is the *Applicant's Questionnaire* to be filled by the applicant or someone on the applicant's behalf. The second part is the *Medical Professional's Questionnaire*, where a medical professional familiar with the applicant answers questions about his or her ability to use fixed route bus service. ColumBUS Transit uses this information to determine eligibility for using the Call-a-Bus Service.

The Call-a-Bus service is not available to a person until he/she is determined to be eligible. Once the completed application is received, ColumBUS Transit will notify the applicant within twenty-one (21) days of his/her eligibility status. If a determination has not been made within 21 days of receiving the completed application, the applicant will be treated as eligible and will be provided service until ColumBUS Transit determines their eligibility. The applicant will receive a letter verifying whether they are eligible for service or not, and if so, what type of eligibility, and for how long. If the eligibility is limited or denied, ColumBUS Transit will state specifically the reason for the limitation or denial. For visually-impaired customers, a phone call will be made in addition to the letter.

Incomplete Applications

Under conditions where the applicant satisfactorily shows the *Medical Professional's Questionnaire* cannot be completed in a reasonable time due to protracted appointment dates or other causes beyond the control of the applicant, ColumBUS Transit staff will make a temporary determination regarding eligibility based only on the *Applicant's Questionnaire*. If granted, it will extend until 21 days after the provided appointment date. If not granted, it will be reconsidered as a new application once the completed Questionnaire is received.

Types of Eligibility

There will be three (3) types of eligibility: Temporary Eligibility, Conditional Eligibility, Full Eligibility. There can also be Temporary Conditional Eligibility. Temporary Eligibility will expire on a specified date determined by ColumBUS Transit staff based on the application information. Full Eligibility is not eternal, but will expire in a maximum of 5 years. A Conditional Eligibility,

for example, may allow individuals to take Call-a-Bus trips to certain destinations due to inaccessible infrastructure, where other destinations can be accessed successfully by the individual using the fixed-route system. Certain weather conditions like snow or high temperatures may also determine criteria for Conditional Eligibility.

Eligibility Expiration/Reapplication

ColumBUS Transit can request any or all customers to reapply at any time based on health conditions or after legal or policy changes, among other reasons, but must give 90-day minimum notice of expiration in writing. These requests cannot be arbitrary or capricious, discriminatory, or unreasonably frequent.

Eligibility Determination Process

The Call-a-Bus service is not available to a person until he/she is determined to be eligible. Eligibility will be determined by trained ColumBUS Transit staff and will be based on ADA eligibility standards described in 49 CFR 37.123 and 49 CFR 37.125. Regulation 49 CFR 37.125(a) states, "The process shall strictly limit ADA paratransit eligibility to individuals specified in 37.123 of this part." The Transit Coordinator will review applications to ensure that due process has been observed. The applicant will receive a letter describing their eligibility. If eligibility is denied or limited, the letter will describe why they were denied or provided limited service, and how they can appeal the decision. The letter will be sent in the format requested in the application.

Appeals Process for ADA Eligibility

If the applicant disagrees with the determination, he/she may appeal the decision. The appeals process will be carefully explained to all applicants who are rejected or granted limited eligibility. The following steps will be used to appeal the eligibility determination:

- The applicant will have sixty (60) days to file an appeal with the Transit Coordinator, which can be mailed, emailed or presented in person to the ColumBUS Transit Mill Race Station.
- An appeals committee consisting of the Transit Coordinator, MPO Director, the City Director of Operation and Finance, and a selection of two peer Call-a-Bus customers will investigate all eligibility appeals. The Transit Coordinator may collect additional information as part of the review. The applicant will have the opportunity to be heard in person or may submit all his/her arguments in writing or an accessible format. The appeals committee will have fourteen (14) days from the date of the appeal to render a decision. After fourteen (14) days, the applicant will be presumed eligible until a decision has been reached. The applicant will be notified by letter, and other methods requested.

- If a customer appeal is denied and the applicant believes the ADA paratransit eligibility process was unfair, the applicant can file a complaint with the Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington D.C. 20590 (866) 377-8642 (Voice) (800) 877-8339 (TTY)

If you are interested in becoming a peer member of the Appeals Committee, please contact the Operations Assistant.

ADA Eligible Visitors Policy

Visitors not from this jurisdiction may be able to use Call-a-Bus. Visitors who are ADA eligible with another transit system may use Call-a-Bus services. Visitors shall provide ColumBUS Transit with documentation that (1) they are not residents of Columbus, and (2) they are paratransit eligible elsewhere. If they cannot show ColumBUS Transit staff they are eligible elsewhere, but can show sufficiently they are a visitor and are disabled, they may use Call-a-Bus services for up to 21 different days for one (1) year. If the visitor needs further service, he/she must apply for Call-a-Bus eligibility.

Meeting the Requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act

Under ColumBUS Transit Paratransit Service Plan, the level of service provided to persons determined to be ADA eligible is similar to ColumBUS Transit's fixed-route bus service. Six service criteria are included in the regulations. The following is a description of how ColumBUS Transit's paratransit service meets or exceeds the service criteria:

Service Area:

ADA complementary paratransit service is provided to all origins and destinations within the service area defined as the city limits of Columbus. For Columbus Transit, the basic service is not only centered on each fixed-route and extending $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to either side of the fixed-route, but also includes all areas within the city limits of Columbus.

Response Time:

As stated in the regulations, pick up times will be negotiated with ADA eligible passengers to make scheduling more efficient. As a shared-ride service, Columbus Transit is allowed to negotiate within a one-hour window on either side of the requested pick up time. Any negotiation of time will be discussed with the passenger prior to pick up. The vehicle can arrive up to fifteen (15) minutes before or after the agreed upon time.

Fare Structure:

Fares charged for an ADA eligible complementary service trip to ADA eligible users will be twice the amount of the base cash fare paid by passengers of the Columbus Transit fixed-route system. The 2012 fare for a one-way complementary paratransit trip is currently fifty cents (\$.50). This price is subject to change.

Personal Care Attendants (PCA) traveling with the ADA eligible passengers will not be charged, as defined in the regulations.

Trip Purposes:

There are no priorities for trip purpose.

Hours and Days of Service:

ADA complementary paratransit service shall be offered during the same days and hours that Columbus Transit offers fixed-route service. As of the adoption of this Plan, the hours of operation are Monday-Friday 6:00am to 7:00pm, and Saturday 7:00am to 6:00pm. These hours are subject to change without a change to this document.

Hours and Days of Reservation Requests:

Telephone reservation requests are accepted Monday - Saturday 8:00am to 5:00pm, Sunday reservation hours are also 8:00am to 5:00pm, but these may be taken by a message machine and may be responded to Monday morning. Recorded requests are not guaranteed.

Reservations can be made from fourteen (14) days before the trip to the day before the trip. No same-day requests will be accepted (see exception below).

No-same-day Request Exception

Same-day requests may be granted only in situations where (1) the need was unknown in time to meet the day-before policy, (2) no reasonable alternatives to Call-a-Bus are available, (3) and there is an urgency, although one that does not extend to an emergency (911) call. This is determined by the Operations Assistant or Transit Coordinator.

Capacity Constraints:

There are no capacity constraints at this time. Call-a-Bus has strict service standards that are adhered to. Call-a-Bus strives to accept every trip request.

ColumBUS Transit does not limit the number of Call-a-Bus trips an eligible passengers can make.

Personal Care Attendant Policy

Personal Care Attendants (PCA) will be permitted to accompany ADA eligible riders on ADA eligible trips at no charge. ColumBUS Transit will require that passengers state the need for a PCA when they schedule their trip. ColumBUS Transit does not provide PCA's.

One guest will be allowed to accompany an ADA eligible complementary paratransit passenger on their ADA eligible paratransit trip. More than one guest will be allowed on a space available

basis. The PCA is not considered to be a “guest” or companion. All guests, family members, companions, or friends are required to pay the applicable paratransit fare.

Columbus Transit’s Origin-to-Destination Assistance Policy

It is the policy of ColumBUS Transit to provide paratransit services within the City limits of Columbus. Transportation service is provided by ADA accessible buses or vans. To ensure timely service, ColumBUS Transit’s paratransit services are considered curb-to-curb. Operators are trained to provide minimal assistance only.

Drivers will help to and from the door if Personal Care Attendant, friend, family member, or companion have been asked but are not available, and such special assistance has been requested the day before the trip or earlier.

Shopping Trips

To ensure timely service, passengers are encouraged only to bring what they can carry on their own or with the assistance of a PCA.

Pick-up Policies

Call-a-Bus has a 30-minute pick-up window which allows the Call-a-Bus vehicles to arrive 15 minutes before to 15 minutes after the scheduled pickup time. Customers must board within 5 minutes of the vehicle that arrive within the 30-minute window. Drivers can leave after waiting 5 minutes if the customer does not appear.

- Customers will be charged with a “No Show” if they do not board the van within 5 minutes after the van arrives. If the driver has not left after 5 minutes, the customer will still be charged with a “No Show”.
- If the Call-a-Bus vehicle will be more than 15 minutes late for a scheduled pick-up time, ColumBUS Transit will make every effort to let the Customer know.
- If the Call-a-Bus vehicle is 20 minutes later than the scheduled pick-up time, then the Call-a-Bus trip is free.

Cancellation Policies

To cancel reservations, passengers should notify dispatch as soon as possible, but at least one (1) hour before their scheduled transport time. Canceling within one (1) hour of the schedule time will result in a “No Show”.

The customer may be considered a “No Show” if:

- No Show – customer does not show up for a scheduled ride

- Late Boarding – Boards more than 5 minutes after the van arrives (van can leave after 5 minutes).
- Not Riding - Chooses not to ride once the van arrives
- Late Cancellation - Cancels the ride within 1 hour of scheduled time

No Shows will not be imposed for circumstances beyond the customer's control.

If the customer does not show up for a trip, any subsequent trips scheduled for the same day will be canceled. ColumBUS Transit shall notify the customer of the No Show within 24 hours. This can be done verbally in person, by phone, email, etc. as long as there is an acknowledgement from the customer of the notification.

If the customer receives a No Show three (3) times within a three (3) month period, their paratransit eligibility may be suspended for thirty (30) days. Customers will be notified of suspensions in writing, usually by mail.

No Show Appeals

A Call-a-Bus customer may appeal a No Show. The appeal must be in writing and provided to the Transit Coordinator within ten (10) days of the notification. Appeals may be initiated by the customer or by another person on the customer's behalf and document the specific reason that the incident was beyond the customer's control or other reasons the appeal should be granted. The appeal will be determined by the Transit Coordinator within fourteen (14) days, or the No Show will be removed.

Suspension Appeals

The customer may appeal suspensions within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the suspension letter. Appeals may be initiated by the customer or by another person on the customer's behalf and received by mail or presented in person to the Transit Coordinator. The appeal must document the specific reason that the incident was beyond the customer's control or other reasons the appeal should be granted.

For suspensions, the same Appeals Committee as described in the "***Appeals Process for ADA Eligibility***" section above will be used. The customer will have the opportunity to be heard in person or may submit all his/her arguments in writing or an accessible format. The Committee will issue a response in writing within fourteen (14) calendar days of the receipt of the appeal. During the appeals process, the customer's eligibility will remain until the outcome of the appeal.

Description of the Public Participation Process

ColumBUS Transit, in an effort to solicit full public participation, has defined a comprehensive public participation process.

The city also solicited the input of persons with disabilities in the development and implementation of the ADA paratransit service through the City’s Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) which consists of service agencies and disabled riders that utilize the paratransit service (see Appendix B). The TAC was substantially involved in the development of the proposed changes to the plan. Minutes of TAC meetings can be found in Appendix C.

The city conducted a public hearing to solicit public comment on this Plan and the changes herein. This was held on Monday, April 1th, from 2:00pm to 6:00pm. The Plan was available in hard copy at the ColumBUS Transit Mill Race Station and the City Hall Clerk/Treasurers office, and online. Notices were also up at the Mill Race station and on all the buses. The legal notice, the notice in the buses, and the comments/responses from the Public Hearing and during the public input period can be found in Appendix D [pending completion].

Lastly, the City’s Board of Public Works shall consider adopting this Plan at their public meeting.

Board or Works Approval

The revised Americans with Disabilities Act Paratransit Plan for the City of Columbus, Indiana was approved on the ____ day of _____ 2013 by the City of Columbus Board of Public Works. This policy will go into effect no sooner than 1 month from this approval date. The expected date of implementation is the ____ day of _____ 2013.

Kristen Brown, Mayor

ATTEST:

Susan Fye, Member

Luann Welmer, Clerk-Treasurer

Jayne Farber, Member

MPO Certification of Revised Paratransit Plan

The City of Columbus Metropolitan Planning Organization hereby certifies that it has reviewed the revised ADA paratransit plan prepared by the City of Columbus as required under 49 CFR Part 37.139(h) and finds it to be in conformance with the transportation plan developed under 49 CFR 613 and 23 CFR 450 --the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) joint planning regulation.

Additionally, by signature this certification is to certify that the City of Columbus is committed to providing ADA paratransit service as part of the Indiana Department of Transportation's Regional Transportation Coordination Plan.

Signature

Title

Name of authorized official

Date

APPENDIX A - Sample Eligibility Application



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CALL-A-BUS ELIGIBILITY APPLICATION

The purpose of this application is to provide an opportunity for you to describe how your disability prevents you from riding the ColumBUS fixed route system. This includes any environmental (weather, ice, etc.) as well as physical barriers (terrain, steps, etc.) that prevent you from riding the fixed route. Information contained in this application will be kept confidential and shared with the professionals involved in the evaluation of your eligibility for *Call-a-Bus* or others only if disclosure is required by law.

Please complete this application as thoroughly as possible and to the best of your ability. If you have difficulty answering any questions on the application or if you need assistance completing this form, please call *Call-a-Bus* at (812)376-2506. **We cannot begin processing the application until it is complete.** If a question does not apply to you, please write "Not Applicable" or "NA."

There are two sections to this application;

Applicant's Questionnaire - to be filled out by the applicant or by someone on the applicant's behalf.

Medical Professional's Questionnaire - to be filled out by a medical professional familiar with the applicant's abilities.

The application will not be considered complete by *Call-a-Bus* staff until both Questionnaires are completed in full¹ and delivered or mailed to:

Call-a-Bus
850 Lindsey Street
Columbus, IN 47201
(812)376-2506

¹ Incomplete Application: Under conditions where the applicant satisfactorily shows the Medical Professional's Questionnaire cannot be completed in a reasonable time due to protracted appointment dates or other causes beyond the control of the applicant, *Call-a-Bus* staff will make a temporary eligibility determination based only on the Applicant's Questionnaire. If granted, it will extend until 21 days after the provided appointment date. If not granted, it will be reconsidered as a new application once the completed Questionnaire is received. (See the *Call-a-Bus* Paratransit Plan)

Applicant's Questionnaire:

Please Print:

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____ Apt _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Email Address _____

Emergency Contact _____ Relationship _____ Phone _____

If the applicant is being assisted in this section, the assistant should complete this part below:

Name _____ Daytime Phone _____

Address _____

Relationship to Applicant _____ Date _____

Email Address _____

To whom should we communicate with regarding eligibility, etc.? Please circle one:

Applicant Assistant Other

If "Other", please fill in below:

Name _____ Daytime Phone _____

Address _____ or email _____

Relationship to Applicant _____ Date _____

Will you need future materials in an alternative format? If yes, please circle one:

Large Print Email Audio Cassette Compact Disc

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DISABILITY AND MOBILITY EQUIPMENT

What is the disability that prevents you from using the ColumBUS Transit fixed route system?

- My disability is permanent
- My disability is temporary until ____/____ (month/year)
- My disability changes from day to day? Explain _____

What mobility aid do you use? (check all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manual Wheelchair | <input type="checkbox"/> White Cane | <input type="checkbox"/> Walker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Motorized Wheelchair | <input type="checkbox"/> Crutches | <input type="checkbox"/> Braces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service Animal | <input type="checkbox"/> Cane | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prosthesis | <input type="checkbox"/> Portable Oxygen | _____ |

Wheelchair users: _____ Length _____ Width _____ Weight

YOUR USE OF COLUMBUS TRANSIT FIXED ROUTE SYSTEM (Check all that apply)

- I use the ColumBUS Transit fixed route service frequently.
- I have never attempted to ride the fixed route buses.
- I believe I could learn to ride the fixed route bus, if someone would teach me.
- I can use the fixed route bus sometimes, if the conditions are right.
- If I use fixed route service now, I will need the assistance of another person. (sometimes/always)
- I am not sure if I can ride the fixed route buses.
- It is impossible for me to use the fixed route buses to some destinations.
- Would you like travel training to learn to ride the fixed route bus?

DISABILITY EFFECT

- I have difficulty understanding or remembering the schedule or my way to and from the bus.
- I have difficulty or cannot climb stairs and can only board a bus with a lift/ramp.
- I have a visual disability which prevents me from getting to and from the bus.
- My medical condition is such that I can ride the fixed route bus only when I am feeling well.
- My disability prevents me from getting to and from the bus stop.

YOUR ABILITY TO USE THE COLUMBUS TRANSIT FIXED ROUTE SYSTEM

1) List things about riding a fixed route bus that are difficult for you?

2) Can you cross the street by yourself? (Yes/No/Sometimes) Explain _____

3) If you have used the fixed route system, when did you use it last? _____ What Route? _____

4) What is the closest bus stop to your home? (ex. 5th and Jackson). _____

a) Can you get to this stop by yourself? (Yes/No/Sometimes) Explain: _____

Medical Professional's Questionnaire

This Questionnaire is to be filled out by a medical professional who is not only familiar with the applicant's diagnosis, but who is also familiar with his/her mobility. ColumBUS Transit policy requires this to be a medical professional (Physician, licensed Nurse, Physical Therapist, Rehabilitation Specialist, licensed Psychologist, etc). If you have any questions regarding what professionals will be accepted, please call ColumBUS Transit at (812) 376-2506.

GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL REPORT TO *Call-a-Bus*

Your patient/client has requested eligibility for *Call-a-Bus* ADA transportation service. Because of your professional relationship with this applicant, you are uniquely qualified to help clarify his or her **functional abilities and limitations**. The following are guidelines for using *Call-a-Bus*. These guidelines may help you understand the information we need to determine the applicant's eligibility for *Call-a-Bus*.

ColumBUS Transit fixed-route and *Call-a-Bus* Service

ColumBUS Transit offers two different types of transportation: ColumBUS Transit fixed-route service and *Call-a-Bus* paratransit service.

ColumBUS Transit fixed-route service provides many accessibility features that make it possible for people with different types of disabilities to use it. These features include: low-floor buses, bus kneeling, and low-slope boarding/alighting ramps (no steps); tie-downs and passenger restraints for wheelchairs; bus stop announcements; large print bus identification signs; priority seating; and alternative-format schedules.

Call-a-Bus paratransit service provides curb-to-curb transportation on a shared-ride basis to eligible individuals whose disability prevents them from using the fixed-route bus transportation at all, or under certain circumstances.

The basis for *Call-a-Bus* ADA eligibility is the American with Disabilities Act. Eligibility is based on:

- **Functional ability** to independently perform the tasks necessary for bus use including: getting to and from the bus stop, getting on the bus, riding the bus and understanding how to navigate the system in a variety of environments. A diagnosis by itself does not qualify an individual for *Call-a-Bus*.
- Whether the disability **prevents** the individual from performing these tasks (as opposed to the task being more inconvenient or difficult)
- Whether the individual can perform these tasks **all of the time, only under some circumstances, or never**. An example of "some circumstances": the individual can use the fixed-route if it is two level blocks or less to the bus stop, and no snow or ice are present.

Information we need from you:

You may expand, in as much detail as you can provide, how this individual's physical, sensory, cognitive or emotional problems may impact his/her ability to travel on a bus. Please relate your comments to the specific tasks necessary to get to and from a bus stop, board, ride and navigate the ColumBUS Transit fixed route system.

If you have any questions regarding *Call-a-Bus* or this Questionnaire, contact the Transit Coordinator at ColumBUS Transit (812) 376-2506. Thank you for your cooperation.

Please email or mail application to:

Call-a-Bus
850 Lindsey Street
Columbus, IN 47201
(812)376-2506

PROFESSIONAL VERIFICATION

Applicant's Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Relationship:

Relationship with the applicant: _____ No. of years: _____

Date of last face-to-face contact (by you or your agency)? _____

Diagnosis:

Primary Diagnosis: _____ No. of years: _____

Current treatment: _____

Prognosis: _____

Treatment: _____ Expected Recovery: _____

Medication

Compliant in taking medication

Secondary Diagnosis: _____ No. of years: _____

Medication's effect on the individual's ability to travel independently: _____

Functional Abilities:

Applicant can walk. Describe walking ability (distance, speed) under good, level conditions: _____

Urban conditions (weather, terrain, street width/condition) where applicant could not walk: _____

Can the walking applicant:

Navigate around large objects

Negotiate gravel surfaces

Navigate around small objects

Negotiate loose dirt/sand surfaces

Locate curbs

Walk up a 16' reasonable slope

Step up a 6" curb

Walk up a 30' reasonable slope

Step down a 6" curb

Cross streets at a crosswalk

Negotiate sidewalks in good condition

Locate a safe place to cross

Negotiate on broken pavement

Activate a "walk" light

Negotiate on uneven/grassy surfaces

Wait without a bench for 10 minutes

Mobility aid(s) used by the applicant: Type? _____ No. of years: _____

Describe travel mobility (distance, speed) under good, level conditions: _____

Urban conditions (weather, terrain, street width/condition) where mobility fails: _____

Can the mobility-aided applicant:

- Maneuver onto a low-floor bus ramp
- Negotiate up a curb ramp
- Negotiate down a curb ramp
- Place fare in farebox
- Handle fare tickets

Conditions:

Are any of the following conditions affected by the applicant's disability? (check all that apply)

- Orientation
- Problem solving
- Short-term memory
- Long-term memory
- Other (Please explain) _____
- Gait or balance
- Sense of time
- Judgment
- Communication
- Sensitivity to cold weather
- Sensitivity to hot weather
- Inappropriate social behavior*
- Anxiety level

*Please describe any inappropriate social behavior _____

Are any of the following conditions observed from the applicant? (check all that apply)

- High day-to-day variability in disability
- Inconsistent performance
- Auditory hallucinations
- Visual hallucination
- Seizures: Type: _____
 - o medication controlled? _____

Please explain any checked conditions: _____

Training:

Would travel training for the fixed route system be appropriate for the applicant? _____

Would training tools help with fixed route travel? (Ex. Memory cards, written route directions, photos, etc.)

Is the goal of traveling independently on the fixed route system within the context of treatment? _____

Additional info:

Any additional appropriate information about the applicant: _____

I certify that this information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____ Licensed Title _____

Agency _____

Address _____

Phone _____

APPENDIX B – Transit Advisory Committee Members

Alicia McCreary – United Way 2-1-1

Bob Oxley – Transit user

Bob Pitman – Mill Race Center

Brandon Shumaker – Developmental Services, Inc.

Eric Frey – Administrative Resources Association

Jackie Combest – Transit user

Tom Heller – Citizen

Vicky Warner – Rural Transit Assistance Program

Lori Wilkerson – Family Social Services Agency

Staffed by:

Laurence Brown – CAMPO Director

Cindy Setser – Transit Coordinator

Rae-Leigh Stark - Planning

APPENDIX C – Transit Advisory Committee Minutes

**Transit Advisory Committee
Sept 28, 2012
Meeting Minutes**

Minutes written by: Laurence Brown

Attendees:

Laurence Brown - MPO Director
Cindy Setser - Transit Coordinator
Vicky Warner - RTAP Director
Bob Oxley - Call-a-Bus user
Jackie Combest - Call-a-Bus user
Alicia McCreary - 2-1-1 Director
Brittany Calas - Cummins employee
Ryenne Fenimore - Cummins employee
Tom Heller - Citizen / transit enthusiast

Introductions

Cummins - Alicia McCreary is the new director of the 2-1-1 program at United Way. She invited two Cummins employees, Brittany and Ryenne, who are looking into transit as a community involvement project, in particular, interested in transit to job locations like Woodside / Walesboro Industrial areas.

Laurence gave a short presentation on the trends and costs of transit. He compared Columbus transit with the transit of similar-sized cities. Columbus is in the middle with regard to budget and cost/trip. He also presented data comparing fixed route costs and paratransit. Fixed route is about \$4.50/trip and Call-a-Bus is about \$25/trip. While the fixed route is basically the same as it was 25 years ago, Call-a-Bus is now 4 buses and it was 2 buses.

Eligibility

Laurence introduced the main topic of modifying the Call-a-Bus policies. First topic is changing eligibility from a "self declaration" to eligibility based on ADA requirements. There will be a more substantial application that has an 'applicant questionnaire' and a 'professional questionnaire'. He also pointed out that a deadline of May 1, 2013 is being considered as date by which all currently eligible riders are to re-apply for eligibility.

Jackie asked for us to read what those requirements were. Laurence read bullets 1,2 & 3 from the draft policy document which quotes regulation 49 CFR 37.123. Jackie realizes some users don't need to use Call-a-Bus (could use fixed route), but was worried that this might oust some that do.

Jackie was concerned that this might cost him \$75 to get the professional application done by a physician. Bob worried that some have long waits for doctor appointments, and might not get their applications in on time; it might take 6 months to get an appointment. Laurence pointed out that the 'professional' did not

need to be a physician, but someone familiar with the applicant. Vicky worried that some disabilities are hidden and there must be care taken not to deny eligibility when it's necessary under these cases. Jackie wondered if there was an ability to grant conditional eligibility when the application cannot be filled until after the due date; maybe based on a date of the doctor's (or other professional's) appointment?

No same-day requests

Laurence discussed the policy change of not accepting same-day Call-a-Bus appointments. These appointments are problematic with scheduling drivers and pick-ups and is a contributor to our "denials" (caller turn-downs) and we are beginning to exceed the allowable FTA limit of denials.

Bob & Jackie said that they both have had times where they needed same-day, so would like to consider exceptions. Jackie provided an anecdote where his wife was taken to the hospital (he accompanied her); she was admitted into the hospital and he needed a ride home.

Fixed Route Study

Industrial Park

Vicky said industries did get together in 2007 and wanted services to Woodside industrial park, for example. Cindy indicated she is not getting calls for that, but does get lots of calls for trips to West Hill and businesses along the 46 corridor. Bob suggested that the companies provide a shuttle to Woodside.

Other Fixed Route Issues

Jackie – He thinks that 1-hour headway is sufficient. He's not so happy with Target as a hub, he would prefer Fair Oaks Mall. Tom wants the study to be broad, instead of just tweaking, looking at the hubs and all routes for possible improvement. Vicky indicated MAP-21 may allow system expansions, but the legislation ends at the end of 2014. Vicky helpfully describe the RFP process for such a study.

Fare discussion

Alicia was concerned about increasing the fare; many say they can't afford it. Jackie doesn't want it to be \$3-4. Bob suggests that we need to have discount prices, or no cost for transfers, or day passes.

Other Comments

Tom – fixed-routes do a pretty good job of collecting people from neighborhoods, but not as good at delivering them to where they want/need to go.

Jackie – would like to see more bus routes touch at locations where transfers can occur, rather than just meet at transfer stations. Tom strongly seconded this.

Meeting Adjourned

Transit Advisory Committee

Oct 26, 2012

Meeting Minutes

Minutes written by: Laurence Brown

Attendees:

Laurence Brown – MPO Director
Cindy Setser – ColumBUS Transit Coordinator
Bob Oxley – Call-a-Bus user
Jackie Combest – Call-a-Bus user
Tom Heller – Citizen / transit advocate
Brandon Shumaker – Developmental Services: Fleet and property manager
Bob Pitman – Mill-Race Center Director
Alicia McCreary – 2-1-1 Director
Rae-Leigh – Planning staff
Lori Wilkerson – FSSA

Minutes:

Brandon – talked about what Developmental Services does. Serve 37 Counties. Headquartered in Columbus. Runs routes to pick people up and then deliver them home in the evening. This is true for most of their facilities throughout the state.

Bob Pitman – Explained some of the transportation equipment that Mill-Race Center has. 3 vans, one is 20 passenger, 2 smaller vehicles – works with “Just Friends” .

Laurence – describes the three documents for the ADA, (1) the policy document, (2) the eligibility application, and the User Handbook. We will be breaking out, financially, the cost of Call-a-Bus from the costs of the fixed route system to analyze costs. We have also received a “grant” award from Call-a-Bus software for \$60,000; the grant is actually for \$48,000 of federal dollars, and we’ll need to provide \$12,000.

There is an interest to try to make sure that the Call-a-Bus is being used as ADA law demands – being used by those that cannot use the fixed route system due to their disability. We will be searching for that person so that this can get a legal vetting to make sure it is inside the law and good policy.

ADA Policy Changes based on last month’s comments

Issue #1 There was a concern at the last meeting with regard to people not being able to get their application completed because of delays getting their professional portion done; delayed appointments, etc.

Laurence explained the suggested policy: Applicants that show the Professional’s Questionnaire cannot be completed by this date may (based on the Applicant’s Questionnaire) receive Temporary Eligibility until it is completed and eligibility is determined.

Jackie – thought we might want to require that an appointment has been schedule. Cindy – Some people only have yearly exams and another visit might be a financial burden. Bob O – might want to put

a list of professionals.¹ Laurence – We will make sure we give some examples. Jackie –was concerned about the expiration – Currently says May 1st. Laurence – We might change that to June 1st. Tom –might want to time eligibility it with the software system use, so we don't have to enter this stuff twice. Cindy – is concerned about that too. Jackie – We ought to get the software system up and running before this eligibility issues starts. Tom – Really suggests that even getting used to the software system will take some time itself

Laurence – Policy change: any level of eligibility makes your fare free for the fixed route system.

Big discussion on Eligibility

Bob Pitman – Was saying that the eligibility was always confusing and a moving target. Lots of discussion on what should be eligible, what are the sidewalk/street conditions that might cause access to be so limited that these locations should be conditionally eligible? Bob P asked, compared to other transit systems, whether we had an unusually heavy paratransit use. Laurence – our paratransit is 30% or our funding, and most are 10-15%. We've gone from 2 buses to 4 buses on Call-a-Bus, and really needing a 5th.

Cindy – She believes that the free ride on fixed route if eligible is going to help some.

Issue #2 – Staff had suggested last meeting to end same-day reservations, and some thought there were times when it should be allowed. Laurence - Bloomington has no exceptions to same-day reservations. Points out that Bloomington has much better taxi service than Columbus:

3 part exception was proposed by Laurence:

- 1) Did not have known about the need in time to meet the scheduling deadline.
- 2) There was no alternative to Call-a-Bus
- 3) There was an urgency

Jackie felt that this was good; that it would have allowed him to use the system on the day he did really need it. They were ok with this.

Laurence summarized the procedure for passing the ADA policy – talk to mayor, have a public hearing, take to BOW. He also noted that we are trying to find an expert to vet this for us.

Route study –

Laurence – introduced the RFP. Study to look at West Hill, # of Hubs, 30 minute service, express route, increase service hours. Scope of Work: Review Ridership compensation, Projected ridership, on-board data collection, identify trip generators and potential generators, public participation, identify service alternatives, identify route statistics, Pedestrian Environment inventory,

Cindy –she has daily requests for West Hill. She has someone once/week that comes and asks about West Hill. Cindy's concerned that she wouldn't have the bus capacity to handle it. Bob Pitman – Definitely wants something going out to WestHill.

Tom – RFP should ask for a strengths and weakness analysis. Reexamination of the system. Cover the community better, improve frequency, within a budget; is our route structure (two hubs) handcuffing

¹ Professional's Application says the following: "We suggest taking these forms to your Physician, Health Care Professional (Nurse, Physical Therapist, Rehabilitation Specialist, etc.), case manager, social worker. Etc. If you have any questions regarding what professionals will be accepted or if the professional you have chosen is charging you a fee for the completion of this paperwork, please call the ColumBUS at (812) 376-2506."

us? We cover the territory well, but don't deliver people well. Jackie – Likes the idea of the routes touching before we do anything about removing hubs. Bob O – 3 hubs and 20 buses in Jacksonville, and can move people across the town easily. Triangle of hubs in the downtown.

Tom – Kroger is a place that is probably underserved. Cindy – First time in 32 years we are going down US31. Last route studies just tweaked.

Jackie – Before we make these change, do it by car and make sure it works in the car before you actually implement them. Sometimes it looks good on paper, and gets implemented without test, and doesn't work. Laurence – The consultant will not only do the plan, but implement it (design and build). Also, don't want to wait to finish the plan before we do something that is obviously a good idea.

Brandon – Was Cummins going to run a bus out there to West Hill?

Alicia – Not happy with Human Services moving out where people can't get to them via transit.

Brandon – Bartholomew is the only County in the state that does not provide rural transit. Cindy - The County Council turned down a \$60,000 request to get rural transit system. Substantial disappointment throughout the committee on this decision.

Other:

Alicia – Suggested that we mark bus stops well; pavement markings was mentioned.

DBE – hearing necessary; what it is: % of our contracts that are to DBEs (Disadvantaged Business Enterprises).

Fares – Laurence wants to keep this on the agenda. Tom – is there a chance of farebox theft? Most agree that there's not much potential to take from the fare box.

Bob Pitman – asked if increasing the farebox revenue does anything to fed funding. Laurence - Really, it reduces federal reimbursement by half of the new farebox funds. So, we only get half the farebox revenue.

Adjourn

Transit Advisory Committee

Dec 14, 2012

Meeting Minutes

Minutes written by: Laurence Brown

Attendees:

Laurence Brown – MPO Director
Cindy Setser – ColumBUS Transit Coordinator
Jackie Combest – Call-a-Bus user
Tom Heller – Citizen / transit advocate
Trena Carter – ARA
Bob Pitman – Mill-Race Center Director
Alicia McCreary – 2-1-1 Director

Minutes:

Bob P – asked us to correct a couple of things. 3 vans: 1 - 20 passenger, 2 – smaller.

Call-a-Bus Software

Laurence – purchasing Call-a-Bus software. Will do a Request for Proposals. Trena mentions that we need to include DBE firms. Laurence said we need to get this going soon. Cindy spoke about the details we will want to describe about our system, and Trena mentioned that the original application for the grant might have a description in it.

Laurence – Call-a-Bus paratransit plan includes 3 documents, the Paratransit Plan, the application(s), and the Handbook. Asked Jackie if we needed to do any special format so that he can read it. Jackie said there is a machine that can read documents and speak the words. Laurence thought we would want to make it with text and not photos so the machine reads it easily. Trena suggested we create an mp3 of these and put them on a link on the website.

Laurence – Meeting with an attorney, Greg Fehribach in early January. Big question is -- are we going to ask people to reapply for eligibility or just have the new policies apply to new applicants. It is suggested that we might want to do it in the summer if we do it at all. Jackie thinks it's legitimate to have people reapply. Trena indicated that we do need to make sure that the people that might be affected by this are notified of the public hearing and the what the policy will be.

Application

Bob P asked about the current application. Cindy said that it is really self-certification, a very simple, one-page application asking for name and address and self-certifying that you're eligible. She gave an example of people that take Call-a-Bus now but are able to ride the fixed route. Bob says that people could really have a hard time filling out this application. It might need to be a caregiver that fills it out. Tom H thought the form could be more user-friendly. He thought it could be compressed and ordered better. A discussion of how the software is going to work with regard to keeping information about the passengers, their disabilities.

Trena thought we might want to make the full re-applying date later because of the need for each application to have a professional fill it out. Laurence talked about the order of events and that we're going to finish the fixed route study in the summer and change the routes by the end of the year. Trena

mentioned that if the routes change, this may change the conditional eligibility. Cindy thought we would be able to deal with this. Laurence thought this does suggest that we might want to wait till after the changing of the routes.

Bob P thought that a housing manager might know more than a doctor about a person's ability to get around. He was also worried about people with mental disabilities that are masked. Cindy indicated that a medical professional is her preference.

Route study

Laurence discussed the companies that responded to the RFP and why PB was chosen. Trena asked if we sent it to DBE. Laurence said one was, but this is MPO funded, so the DBE requirement is not required, although we still should. Laurence talked a little about Tim Reynolds, the project lead for the route study. He listed the things that they are supposed to look at. Tom H was concerned about their limit of three scenarios. Laurence is hoping they will have many more on the table, and then it will be reduced to three, but we could change it when the contract is written. Tom H asked about the Philadelphia company, and Laurence indicated they had a nice set of deliverables, and their pay rate was low, so there were lots of hours in the effort.

Triennial Review Responses

Laurence discussed the issue of being late to FTA on responses and the DBE requirement they had. Cindy said we're still not completely done with that; things like the public participation plan for fare changes. The FTA regulator was impressed with the submission, otherwise. So there are things still to be submitted to complete the Triennial Review response.

DBE Program

The DBE policy was signed by the mayor and does not need to get formally approved by the Board of Works, although it went on their agenda somewhat by accident. They tabled it but didn't need to approve it anyway. We haven't heard back from FTA after submitting it.

Transit Advisory Committee

Laurence read the ordinance out loud describing the Transit Advisory Committee. It has a typo in the code; it says "board", but should say "broad". We need to find the people that want to be on this committee and submit it to the mayor for formal appointment. Jackie suggested Bob Easterly. Bob P pointed out that this group was to meet quarterly, but it was almost always used for 5310 funds, and getting buses, and a formal process existed and this committee was part of that.

Laurence talked about the Transportation Safety Committee. He said it is to make all modes safer, but if it focuses on bike/ped/transit safety, the car safety tends to improve substantially too. He also mentioned that TAC is a subcommittee of this new committee, and it is going to substantially be the Steering Committee for the routes study. So, it's raising its clout. Cindy wasn't aware of the SRTS committee, and Trena asked how that worked with the MPO. Bob P suggested that both the Hospital and the business community need to get involved.

Adjourn

APPENDIX D – Public Hearing Notice, Comments, Responses

THE REPUBLIC
LEGAL
ADVERTISEMENT

Client: Columbus Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Address: 123 Washington St Columbus, In 47201	BILL TO: Columbus Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Address: 123 Washington Street Columbus, In 47201 <small>TEARSHEETS WILL BE SENT TO BILLING ADDRESS</small>
Date: March 21, 2013 Phone: 376-2502	Contact Name: Laurence Brown Department: MPO

THE REPUBLIC

Date(s):

Please run on:
Mar 22, 23, 2013

PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the ColumBUS Transit System will conduct a public hearing for the purpose of soliciting input on proposed changes to ColumBUS Call-a-Bus services at the following time and location:

April 1, 2013
2:00 PM until 6:00 PM
Columbus City Hall, Meeting Hall
123 Washington St.
Columbus, IN

At this hearing ColumBUS Transit will present information regarding its proposed update to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit Plan for the City of Columbus. The original Paratransit Plan was submitted in 1992.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires public entities providing fixed route service to the general public to also provide complementary paratransit service to those persons unable to use the fixed route system. Paratransit Plans must contain the following: when the service is required, eligibility criteria, level of service to be provided, and standards of operation as described in the federal code 49 CFR 37.121 through 49 CFR 37.155.

Interested persons will be given an opportunity to make comments on the proposed plan at this hearing. An interpreter will be provided upon request for those individuals requiring this service.

ColumBUS Transit's proposed updated ADA Paratransit Plan will be available for review beginning March 22, 2013. Copies may be obtained in person, at City Hall, Clerk Treasurer's Office, 123 Washington St., Columbus, IN, or ColumBUS Transit Mill Race Station, 850 Lindsey St., Columbus, IN 47201, or found online at www.CAMPO.IN.gov, or can be mailed or provided in alternative formats by contacting the ColumBUS Transit Mill Race Station in person or by calling (812)376-2506.

Written comments will be accepted by ColumBUS Transit Mill Race Station 7:00AM to 6:00PM Monday-Saturday from March 22 through April 5, 2013.

Cindy Setser
Transit Coordinator
ColumBUS Transit

Notice Placed in Buses



ColumBUS Transit invites you to participate in a Public Hearing regarding changes to Call-a-Bus Policies.

The changes are focused on compliance with American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulation for paratransit services. Transit and MPO staff will be available to answer questions and receive comments.

The policy document being changed is the
**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT
PARATRANSIT PLAN FOR
CITY OF COLUMBUS, INDIANA**
available at City Hall, Clerk/Treasurer Office, at
the ColumBUS Transit Mill Race Station, or
online at www.CAMPO.in.gov

**ColumBUS Transit Public Hearing
Monday, April 1, 2013
2:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Columbus City Hall, Meeting Hall
123 Washington St, Columbus**

If you require additional information please
call ColumBUS Transit at (812) 376-2506

**Public Hearing on ADA Paratransit Plan – Minutes
Held April 1, 2013 2:00pm – 6:00pm,
Columbus City Hall / Meeting Hall**

Attendees – Bob Oxley (Call-a-Bus user/member of public), Eric Frey (ARA Director/ColumBUS Transit consultant), Cindy Setser (ColumBUS Transit Coordinator), Laurence Brown (CAMPO Director).

Minutes & Response to public comments: The only member of the public was Bob Oxley. The other attendees are officials and are not considered members of the public in this document. These minutes are to document public comment and respond to public comments regarding the Paratransit Plan. These minutes also describe discussions by officials to improve the Paratransit Plan document and to prepare for its implementation.

Laurence: Opened the meeting by reading the Legal Notice placed in The Republic Public Notice section on May 22nd, and May 23rd.

Laurence handed out copies of the new “Call-a-Bus Application”, and copies of the ADA Paratransit Plan. Laurence gave a PowerPoint presentation. He showed trends in ridership & expenses of the fixed route and Call-a-Bus.

Bob asked if the expenses also included the cost of the buses. Bob thought the higher cost/trip might be due to the purchase of new buses since 2006. Laurence was not sure. Note: The question/comment by the member of the public was not regarding the Paratransit Plan, but about the data in the presentation.

Laurence pointed out that the purpose of these changes to the policies described in this Paratransit Plan document were to make sure the people that need Call-a-Bus, get it, and that those that can use fixed route, do so. And this way we can provide more fixed route services to areas that are not currently served, while also providing more frequency for the fixed route service that exists. This is very cost-effective.

Laurence summarized the changes by reading an “**Executive Summary of ADA Paratransit Policy changes being considered for Call-a-Bus.**” That summary is a part of these notes.

Cindy and Bob both questioned whether it was clear in the Paratransit Plan that applicants were not able to use Call-a-Bus until they were determined eligible, unless the time it took to make an eligibility determination was longer than 21 days, then they would be temporarily eligible until a determination was made.

Response: This is implied in the Paratransit Plan’s current language, but we will change the language so that it is stated explicitly. The summary sheet language is more explicit and will be used as the model for the Plan language.

Laurence described a policy change that allows all people that have any level of eligibility to ride the fixed route for free. Cindy was concerned with the ability to identify this group as they board. This might require a special ID, and maybe even a photo ID to keep people from improperly giving these free-passes to other people that are not Call-a-Bus eligible.

Laurence described the area of service. Laurence and Cindy stated some concern that people outside the new area that have been served for years, and purchased property based on the previous service area might need to be grandfathered in. Laurence explained that the bus is formally not to go beyond $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the fixed route unless it is in the city limites, but people can live beyond that and use the service; it's just a matter of them getting the rest of the way to their destination.

Bob indicated that he might be found not fully eligible because he is capable of riding the fixed-route. However, he has to go into the street from his house in his wheelchair to get to the bus stop. No sidewalks reach the bus stop.

Response: Laurence indicated that Bob was a potential candidate for a Conditional Eligibility because he can ride fixed-route buses; it is probably, then, a matter of his ability to get to the stops. At this point, from his house, he cannot reach the bus stop by sidewalk. Cindy indicated that weather conditions would likely be in his conditional criteria if his eligibility is ever determined to be considered conditional. (Note: this response does not make an eligibility determination, it simply points out some of the possible issues that will considered in his eligibility determination.)

Laurence read the rule verbatim that reservations can be made "up to 14 days in advance." Historically, ColumBUS Transit has allowed people to make reservations after the 20th of each month for the entire next month. This is almost 6 weeks in advance. Bob thought this method is an advantage for riders because they can get the entire month taken care of. Laurence wondered who is harmed by a longer than 2-week reservation time. Eric indicated that the problem of the existing method is that things could be booked up for the month causing people that have shorter notice of their needs to be denied. Laurence thought that we don't want to have any more denials, but we are having them. And, it is likely that the scheduling software have a 14-day limit, and we will likely need to adhere to that.

Cindy noted that we have fixed hours for the drivers, and Bloomington, which has no denials, has flexible start-times daily for their drivers. Eric wondered when the peak demands are and when the peak denials are. Laurence suggested that we take a good look and good data on when those occur and see if we can adjust bus schedules so that these are eliminated.

Laurence said that the goal is to make sure that those that are legitimately eligible are never getting denied. Currently, some of the denials are those people that cannot use the fixed route system and would be fully eligible under the new criteria. This needs to be fixed. If this gets fixed, the 14-day reservation limit should not be a problem with regard to denials. If someone is eligible and calls the day before, they should get the ride they want – no denial.

In the next month, ColumBUS Transit will have to really spend some time preparing. They have to determine what areas are accessible, and what conditional locations can be reached. They also need to firmly describe the appeals process and the scheduling changes so that people are well aware of the changes before they occur.

Bob asked about the timing of the implementing these changes.

Response: ColumBUS Transit will use the eligibility application and the appeals process immediately after approval by the Board of Work, and the other scheduling changes will be implemented after thoroughly informing the public of the changes.

Public Hearing ended

Executive Summary of ADA Paratransit Policy changes being considered for Call-a-Bus:

Eligibility – Eligibility was “All persons aged 60 years and older and those person who claim to have a disability.....Eligibility is based on self declaration.” (1992 paratransit plan). Eligibility will now be based substantially on ADA requirements.

Eligibility Types - There will be three (3) types of eligibility: Temporary Eligibility, Conditional Eligibility, Full Eligibility. There can also be Temporary Conditional Eligibility. Temporary Eligibility will expire on a specified date determined by ColumBUS Transit staff based on the application information. Full Eligibility is not eternal, but will expire in a maximum of 5 years. A Conditional Eligibility, for example, may allow individuals to take Call-a-Bus trips to certain destinations due to inaccessible infrastructure, where other destinations can be accessed successfully by the individual using the fixed-route system. Certain weather conditions like snow or high temperatures may also determine criteria for Conditional Eligibility.

Application – The application has changed to a two part application, an Applicant’s Questionnaire, and a Professional’s Questionnaire. These are fairly substantial applications compared to the previous application. The potential “Professional” are limited to “medical professionals”. Physician, Physician Assistant, Licensed Nurse, Licensed Chiropractor, Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, and Licensed Psychologist or Licensed Counselor

New Applicants – New Applicants cannot ride Call-a-Bus until they are found eligible. ColumBUS Transit has 21 days to determine eligibility after receiving a completed application. Applicants that show the Professional’s Questionnaire cannot be completed in a reasonable time may (based on the Applicant’s Questionnaire) receive Temporary Eligibility until it is completed and eligibility is determined.

Eligibility Expiration – due to policy changes herein, there will be a point where all riders are asked to reapply for eligibility. That date will be determined by the Transit Coordinator. ColumBUS Transit shall give 90-day minimum notice of expiration in writing. These requests cannot be arbitrary or capricious, discriminatory, or unreasonably frequent. Currently eligible riders will remain eligible during the application process. Again, Applicants that show the Professional’s Questionnaire cannot be completed by the expiration date may (based on the Applicant’s Questionnaire) receive Temporary Eligibility until the application is completed and eligibility is determined.

Eligibility Appeals - The appeals panel will be: the Transit Coordinator, the MPO Director, the City Director of Operations & Finance, and two Call-a-Bus Peers appointed by the Transit Coordinator.

Scheduling a Trip – Telephone reservation requests are accepted Monday - Saturday 8:00am to 5:00pm, Sunday reservation hours are also 8:00am to 5:00pm, but these may be taken by a message machine and may be responded to Monday morning. Recorded requests are not guaranteed.

No same-day requests will be accepted (see exception below).

Same-day requests may be granted only if (1) the situation was unknown in time to meet the day-before policy, (2) no reasonable alternatives to Call-a-Bus are available, and (3) there is an urgency, although one that does not extend to an emergency (911) call. This is determined by the Operations Assistant or Transit Coordinator.

Fixed Route Fare – Call-a-Bus-eligible customers (any eligibility) can ride fixed-route services for free.

Driver Assistance Exception – Drivers will help to and from door if personal care attendant, friend, family member, or companion have been asked but are not available, and the driver's assistance has been requested the day before the trip or earlier.

Call-a-Bus late Arrival – If the Call-a-Bus vehicle is 20 minutes late from the scheduled time, the trip is free.

Service Area – The service area includes the City of Columbus boundaries and anywhere outside the boundaries that is within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from a fixed route. These are firm boundaries for the curb-to-curb service. ColumBUS has access to a GIS map of this area.

No Shows – Three No Shows in a 3-month period results in a 30-day suspension (this is not a change). Each individual No Show can be appealed. This appeal is determined by the Operations Assistant and reviewed by the Transit Coordinator. A suspension can also be appealed.

Suspension Appeals – These will be determined by the 5 member panel described above for Eligibility