## What is the Paratransit Plan?

The Paratransit Plan is a document that puts on paper and clarifies what the formal operational procedures are for RTS Access.

It ensures that the level of paratransit service provided by Regional Transit Service Access is comparable to fixed route service.

“Comparable” means the service criteria set forth by law. This includes service area, no restrictions on trip purpose, response time, no capacity constraints, fares, hours and days of service, and the process for determining eligibility.

## Why Do We Have a Paratransit Plan?

In 1991, the Secretary of Transportation made having a paratransit plan a requirement. By 1997, all fixed route providers had to comply by preparing a plan and submitting it to the Federal Transportation Administration.

Regional Transit Service Access updates the plan every few years to ensure customers and employees have the most accurate information possible.

## When Do We Update the Plan?

We are required to update the plan when the Federal Transportation Administration identifies non-compliance and tells us to fix it.

We are also required to update the plan if we find a non-compliance on our own and report it to the Federal Transportation Administration.

We are required to update the plan if Regional Transit Service introduces new fixed route service.

As a best practice, it is recommended to update the plan periodically to ensure compliance with the law, to help capture improvements to our procedures and processes, and to incorporate community feedback in a formal manner.

## Why Update the Plan Now?

In 2017, we are not proposing changes to Regional Transit Service Access service area, fares, eligibility criteria or any of the other service criteria. We have not been issued any findings of non-compliance from the Federal Transportation Administration. However, we have a big opportunity to establish clarity, continuity, compliance, and communication with an updated Paratransit Plan. That is the reason we are recommending this 2017 update.

## Proposed Changes for Review

### Identifies the Basic Operating Mode (Curb-to-Curb)

The Paratransit Plan proposes that we eliminate the usage of the term “enhanced service.” It was unclear and caused confusion for employees and customers. The basic operating mode is curb-to-curb. Any requests customers make for assistance beyond the curb is considered a reasonable modification request.

### Identifies a Process if a Regional Transit Service Fixed Route Change Affects the Service Area

If a fixed route service change affects the service area for Regional Transit Service Access, affected customers will receive written advance notice with time to make alternate arrangements.

### Increased Opportunities to Enroll in Subscription Trips

The Paratransit Plan proposes that customers with two weekly repeat trips can qualify for a subscription. This is down from three weekly trips. Written procedures in the Plan describe the qualifications, allowances, restrictions, and expectations proposed regarding subscriptions.

### No-Show Rules Easier to Understand

The Paratransit Plan proposes a procedure that uses a Federal Transportation Administration calculation method for no-shows. The procedure uses simpler language and examples to explain the rules for no-shows and late cancellations. The Paratransit Plan also provides separate information to explain service suspensions based on no-shows and service suspensions based on prohibited behavior.

### Pickup Periods for Return Trips and No-Strand Policy

This process establishes the concept of a final pickup period. There will be no return trips after the final pickup period. The proposed procedure in the Paratransit Plan explains the concepts of round-trips, return trips, and same-day service. The procedure also explains the circumstances when Regional Transit Service Access will provide return trips so that customers are not stranded.

### Easier Application Process for Paratransit Eligibility

The proposed application includes easy to use instructions and a checklist. The application has few pages and questions presented in multiple-choice format. The Medical Certification portion of the application is accentuated and because it is an important component.

### Highlighting Timely Service

The proposed Paratransit Plan explains how we have increased our On-Time Performance (OTP) goal from 93.5% to 95.0%. We provide the procedures we use for tracking and calculating on-time performance so that customers can see the level of importance given to on-time performance in the service we provide.

### Other Relevant Topics of Note

The Paratransit Plan includes information about the procedures we follow for considering Reasonable Modification Requests.

## Next Step: Public Hearing

The Public Hearing about the proposed Paratransit Plan updates will be held on Tuesday, November 28, 2017 from 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM. It will be held in the Regional Transit Service Board Conference Room located at 1372 East Main Street, Rochester New York 14609.