



**Albany Transit System**  
**2007 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Plan**  
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# ADA PLAN

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## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1:</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1-1</b>
<b>Chapter 2:</b>	<b>Existing Services.....</b>	<b>2-1</b>
<b>Chapter 3:</b>	<b>Compliance Review Criteria .....</b>	<b>3-1</b>
<b>Chapter 4:</b>	<b>Recommendations .....</b>	<b>4-1</b>

## List of Tables

<b>Table 2-1:</b>	<b>ATS Fixed-Route Bus Fare .....</b>	<b>2-2</b>
<b>Table 2-2:</b>	<b>ATS Route System .....</b>	<b>2-3</b>
<b>Table 3-1:</b>	<b>ADA Parking Space Requirements .....</b>	<b>3-2</b>

## **CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION**

### **Overview of Albany Transit System**

The City of Albany's public transportation system was privately owned and operated until 1974. In 1974, the City took over the public transportation system. Today, Albany Transit System (ATS) operates the public transportation system. ATS operates as a division of city government providing public transportation services to the City of Albany.

### **Organizational Goals**

The ATS organizational goals are listed below.

- **Customer Service Focus:** Provide safe, dependable, high-quality transportation services to all customers, and support our employees in that endeavor.
- **System Development:** Expand and reorganize transportation services to retain current customers and attract new ones by providing services that meet customer and community needs while supporting transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly land use patterns.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Ensure cost-effective and efficient use of resources and aggressively pursue funding partnerships to supplement local resources.
- **Community Benefits:** Provide social, economic, and environmental benefits to the community through system operations and improvements, and promote community awareness of these contributions.
- **Prepare for the Future:** Pursue process improvements, business practices, and technologies that will support cost-effective and customer-friendly service delivery in the future.
- **Invest in Employees:** Provide training and career development support that enhances employee's ability to perform their jobs and be prepared for promotional opportunities.

### **Paratransit Services**

In addition to the fixed-route system, ATS offers a shared-ride, curb-to-curb paratransit service for people who are unable to use the fixed-route services due to disabilities.

ATS's paratransit mission is to expand mobility options by advocating for a fully accessible and useable public transit system and providing innovative community transportation services. The paratransit service is a complement to Albany's fixed-route service and uses a variety of wheelchair equipped vehicles to provide approximately 2,000 scheduled trips each month. Paratransit service is provided to "Any individual with a disability who is unable, as the result of a physical or mental impairment (including a visual impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistant device), to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is regularly accessible to and useable by people without disabilities".

## **Legislation**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990. It is federal legislation which requires equal access for persons with disabilities to public accommodations, public services, transportation, and telecommunications, and prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of disability.

As required by ADA, ATS must adhere to federal guidelines for its services and facilities. All new transit buses must be accessible in accordance with ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) to persons with disabilities. In addition, new transit facilities (e.g. intermodal centers, transfer stations, bus shelters) and alterations to existing facilities must also be accessible in accordance with ADAAG.

With regard to the provision of service, ATS is required to provide complementary paratransit service for persons with disabilities who cannot utilize fixed-route bus services. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is responsible for ensuring compliance with the ADA. As part of its compliance efforts, FTA conducts reviews of transit agency's fixed-route transit and ADA complementary paratransit services. The full ADA Guidelines, including 49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38, are available online at [www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/civil\\_rights\\_2360.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/civil_rights_2360.html). This plan is a guide that identifies some of the necessary steps for compliance with the ADA regulations.

## **CHAPTER 2 EXISTING SERVICES**

### **Existing Fixed-Route Service**

ATS operates seven fixed-route buses on ten routes. The hours of operation are generally 5:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., seven days a week with abbreviated service on Sundays. According to the Dougherty Area Regional Transportation (DART) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the largest volume of traffic served by ATS is along the MLK/ Albany Mall/ Darton College route. The majority of ridership consists of transit dependent passengers with no other means of transportation. The LRTP also states that other segments of the City's population do not ride the bus simply because of the availability of the automobile and adequate supplies of free parking at destinations in Albany.

The ATS fleet is fully compliant with ADA (American With Disabilities Act of 1990) requirements. All of the buses in the fleet are equipped with wheelchair lifts and ramps. In addition, all of the fixed-route vehicles feature Kneeling Bus technology (air suspension lowers the front end of the bus for easier customer boarding). The fixed-route buses accept exact cash, tickets, weekly, or monthly passes. Bus drivers do not provide change. Passengers with Medicare Cards and proper identification may ride the fixed-route bus for half the regular fare. Seniors age 65 or older also receive a reduced fare. Priority seating in the front of the bus is available to seniors and disabled passengers. Hearing and visually impaired passengers are permitted to bring service dogs on the bus.

**Table 2-1  
ATS FIXED-ROUTE BUS FARES**

Base Cash Fare	\$1.00	Exact fare only – operators do not make change.
Senior Disabled Cash Fare	\$0.50	Be prepared to show ID upon request when boarding. A senior is 65 years of age or older. A person with a disability needs a Medicare Card with proper ID or a transit issued ADA ID card.
Child under age 5	\$0.00	Generally considered to be no taller than the fare box.
Child 6-12 years old	\$0.50	Exact fare only – operators do not make change.
Transfers	\$0.00	No fee required.
Weekly unlimited pass	\$9.00	Unlimited riding privileges for the week issued.
Monthly unlimited pass	\$36.00	Unlimited riding privileges for the month issued.
Monthly unlimited senior/disabled pass	\$20.00	Unlimited riding privileges for the month issued. A senior is 65 or up with proper ID. A disabled person has a Medicare Card with proper ID or an ATS issued ADA ID card. Must show ID at time of purchase and upon request when boarding.
Monthly unlimited student pass	\$25.00	Unlimited riding privileges for the month issued. Must show student ID when purchased and upon request when boarding.



The applicant completes the first section and a licensed healthcare professional certifies the second section. After receiving an application, ATS has 21 days to either approve or deny an application based on the information provided. All paratransit customers must submit a new application every two years.

### **Hours and Days of Service**

Paratransit services are available any time the fixed-route system is in operations, generally from 5:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Paratransit reservations can be made between regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Customers may schedule up to three round-trips with one phone call. To ensure passengers receive return trips, a passenger must schedule the return trip when scheduling the originating trip. Passengers can schedule “standing trips” if they have the same reoccurring trip; however, standing requests cannot be changed more than once per month or the privilege is revoked. The reservation system takes voicemail messages at any time. Passengers need the following information when calling to schedule a trip.

- Customer’s name
- Customer’s address
- Whether the customer is using a wheelchair or other personal mobility device
- Customer’s telephone number
- Customer’s birth date
- Whether there are any other special considerations for the customer to travel
- Date transportation is needed
- The time of the appoint or the time the customer needs to be at destination
- The time that the customer needs to be picked up to arrive back at origin
- Destination address, zip code, and telephone number
- General purpose of the appointment
- Detailed drop-off and pick-up location information
- Are any additional people or service animals traveling with the passenger?

## **Fares**

ADA requires that complementary ADA paratransit services within  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles of a fixed-bus route charge a fare not to exceed twice the fixed-route base fare. In accordance with this requirement, the ATS one-way paratransit passenger fare is \$2.00. Drivers will collect the fare when the passengers board the vehicles. Passengers must have exact change.

## **Response Time**

The reservations staff determines the passenger pick-up time using the following information.

- The distance being traveled – longer distances take more time
- The time of day – peak traffic times and the number of passengers requesting the same trip time results in longer ride times
- Inclement weather – rain decreasing the speed of the paratransit vehicle and the other vehicles traveling on the roadway, which results in longer ride times
- Picking up and dropping off other passengers – the system is a shared ride system and other passengers are picked up and dropped off along the way

Reservations staff will give the customer an estimated pick-up time after scheduling the trip. Passengers need to be ready up to thirty minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. Drivers may arrive up to thirty minutes after the scheduled pick-up time and still arrive at the destination on-time. Passengers should plan to be on the vehicle for a minimum of thirty minutes. Trips generally take twice as long as fixed-route trips.

While this plan encompasses many of the paratransit service requirements currently employed by ATS for compliance with the ADA, for specific or individual information Albany Transit System should be contacted directly at (229) 430-5182 or online at [http://albany.ga.us/ats/ats\\_index.htm](http://albany.ga.us/ats/ats_index.htm).

## **CHAPTER 3 COMPLIANCE REVIEW CRITERIA**

Every station, bus stop, bus stop pad, terminal, building or other transportation facility, shall comply with the applicable provisions of 49 CFR. All newly designed or newly constructed buildings and facilities must be in compliance with ADA regulations. All structures bought with federal dollars will be ADA accessible. FHWA ensures that federally funded transportation projects providing public facilities in the right-of-way are accessible to persons with disabilities. When public agencies provide pedestrian facilities, the facilities must be accessible to persons with disabilities to the extent technically feasible. The following is a list of ADA requirements for new construction of bus stops and shelters.

### **BUS STOPS AND SHELTERS**

- Where new bus stop pads are constructed at bus stops, bays or other areas where a lift or ramp is to be deployed, they shall have a firm, stable surface; a minimum clear length of 96 inches (measured from the curb or vehicle roadway edge) and a minimum clear width of 60 inches (measured parallel to the vehicle roadway) to the maximum extent allowed by legal or site constraints; and shall be connected to streets, sidewalks or pedestrian paths by an accessible route. The slope of the pad parallel to the roadway shall, to the extent practicable, be the same as the roadway. For water drainage, a maximum slope of 1:50 (2%) perpendicular to the roadway is allowed. The minimum clear width for single wheelchair passage shall be 32 in (815 mm) at a point and 36 in (915 mm) continuously.
- Where provided, new or replaced bus shelters shall be installed or positioned so as to permit a wheelchair or mobility aid user to enter from the public way and to reach a location, having a minimum clear floor area of 30 inches by 48 inches, entirely within the perimeter of the shelter. Such shelters shall be connected by an accessible route to the boarding area.
- Bus stop boarding and alighting areas shall provide a clear length of 96 inches (2440 mm) minimum, measured perpendicular to the curb or vehicle roadway edge, and a clear width of 60 inches (1525 mm) minimum, measured parallel to the vehicle roadway.

## CAPITAL PURCHASES

Any new construction project must meet ADA accessibility requirements. ADA requires any public agency with more than 50 employees to make a transition plan. The transition plan identifies the necessary steps to make a facility accessible to persons with disabilities.

Accessible sites and exterior facilities shall meet the following minimum requirements.

- At least one accessible route shall be provided within the boundary of the site from public transportation stops, accessible parking spaces, passenger loading zones if provided, and public streets or sidewalks, to an accessible building entrance.
- If parking spaces are provided for self-parking by employees or visitors, or both, then accessible spaces shall be provided in each such parking area in conformance with the table below.

**Table 3-1**

**ADA Parking Space Requirements**

Total Parking in Lot	Required Minimum Number of Accessible Spaces
1 to 25	1
26 to 50	2
51 to 75	3
76 to 100	4
101 to 150	5
151 to 200	6
201 to 300	7
301 to 400	8
401 to 500	9
501 to 1000	2 percent of total
1001 and over	20 plus 1 for each 100 over 1000

Source: [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov)

- Accessible parking spaces shall be a minimum of 96 inches wide. Access aisles adjacent to accessible spaces shall be 60 inches wide at a minimum. One in every eight spaces shall be served by an access aisle at least 96 inches wide and be designated “van accessible”.

- Parking spaces shall be located on the shortest accessible route of travel from the parking lot to an accessible entrance.

Accessible new construction buildings shall comply with the above requirements and the following additional requirements.

- The minimum clear width for single wheelchair passage shall be 32 inches at a point and 36 inches continuously. The minimum width for two wheelchairs to pass is 60 inches. The space required for a wheelchair to make a 180-degree turn is a clear space of 60 inches in diameter or a T-shaped space.
- The minimum clear floor or ground space required to accommodate a single, stationary wheelchair and occupant is 30 inches by 48 inches.
- If the clear floor space only allows forward approach to an object, the maximum high forward reach allowed shall be 48 inches. The minimum low forward reach is 15 inches.
- If the clear floor space allows parallel approach by a person in a wheelchair, the maximum high side reach allowed shall be 54 inches and the low side reach shall be no less than 9 inches above the floor.
- Objects projecting from walls (for example, telephones) with their leading edges between 27 inches and 80 inches above the finished floor shall protrude no more than 4 inches into walks, halls, corridors, passageways, or aisles.
- If carpet or carpet tile is used on a ground or floor surface, then it shall be securely attached; have a firm cushion, pad, or backing, or no cushion or pad; and have a level loop, textured loop, level cut pile, or level cut/uncut pile texture. The maximum pile thickness shall be 1/2 inch.
- If gratings are located in walking surfaces, then they shall have spaces no greater than 1/2 inch wide in one direction. If gratings have elongated openings, then they shall be placed so that the long dimension is perpendicular to the dominant direction of travel.
- The minimum width of a curb ramp shall be 36 inches.
- If a ramp has a rise greater than 6 inches or a horizontal projection greater than 72 inches, then it shall have handrails on both sides. Outdoor ramps shall be designed so that water will not accumulate on the surface.

- Elevator operation shall be automatic. Each car shall be equipped with a self-leveling feature that will automatically bring the car to floor landings within a tolerance of 1/2 inch under rated loading to zero loading conditions. This self-leveling feature shall be automatic and independent of the operating device and shall correct the overtravel or undertravel.
- The minimum time for elevator doors to remain fully open in response to a car call shall be 3 seconds.
- The minimum space between two hinged doors shall be 48 inches. Handles, pulls, latches, locks, and other operating devices on accessible doors shall have a shape that is easy to grasp with one hand and does not require tight grasping, tight pinching, or twisting of the wrist to operate. Lever-operated mechanisms, push-type mechanisms, and U-shaped handles are acceptable designs. When sliding doors are fully open, operating hardware shall be exposed and usable from both sides. Hardware required for accessible door passage shall be mounted no higher than 48 inches above finished floor.
- Drinking fountain spouts shall be no higher than 36 inches, measured from the floor or ground surfaces to the spout outlet. The spouts of drinking fountains and water coolers shall be at the front of the unit and shall direct the water flow in a trajectory that is parallel or nearly parallel to the front of the unit. The spout shall provide a flow of water at least 4 inches high so as to allow the insertion of a cup or glass under the flow of water. On an accessible drinking fountain with a round or oval bowl, the spout must be positioned so the flow of water is within 3 inches of the front edge of the fountain.
- Standard toilet stalls with a minimum depth of 56 inches shall have wall-mounted water closets. If the depth of a standard toilet stall is increased at least 3 inches, then a floor-mounted water closet may be used. Arrangements shown for standard toilet stalls may be reversed to allow either a left- or right-hand approach.
- In standard stalls, the front partition and at least one side partition shall provide a toe clearance of at least 9 inches above the floor. If the depth of the stall is greater than 60 inches, then the toe clearance is not required.

- If toilet stall approach is from the latch side of the stall door, clearance between the door side of the stall and any obstruction may be reduced to a minimum of 42 inches.
- In accordance with the regulation, grab bars shall be provided inside toilet stalls.
- At least one urinal shall be stall-type or wall-hung with an elongated rim at a maximum of 17 inches above the finish floor. A clear floor space 30 inches by 48 inches shall be provided in front of urinals to allow forward approach. Urinal shields that do not extend beyond the front edge of the urinal rim may be provided with 29 inches clearance between them.
- Sinks shall be mounted with the counter or rim no higher than 34 inches above the finish floor. Each sink shall be a maximum of 6-1/2 inches deep. Knee clearance that is at least 27 inches high, 30 inches wide, and 19 inches deep shall be provided underneath sinks.

## **FIXED-ROUTE SERVICE**

To achieve compliance with the Department of Transportation's regulations, including 49 CFR Part 37, all new, used, or remanufactured buses and vans shall comply with the following information.

- All vehicles shall provide a level-change mechanism or boarding device and sufficient clearances to permit a wheelchair or other mobility device. At least two securement locations and devices shall be provided on vehicles in excess of 22 feet.
- If a number of wheelchair users exceeding the number of securement locations on the bus seek to travel on a trip, the operator shall assign the securement locations on a first come-first served basis. The operator shall offer boarding assistance and the opportunity to sit in a vehicle seat to passengers who are not assigned a securement location. If the passengers who are not assigned securement locations are unable or unwilling to accept this offer, the operator is not required to provide transportation to them on the bus.
- The entity may recommend to a user of a wheelchair that the individual transfer to a vehicle seat. The entity may not require the individual to transfer.

- The entity shall not refuse to permit a passenger who uses a lift to disembark from a vehicle at any designated stop, unless the lift cannot be deployed, the lift will be damaged if it is deployed, or temporary conditions at the stop, not under the control of the entity, preclude the safe use of the stop by all passengers.
- Each vehicle shall contain sign(s) which indicate that seats in the front of the vehicle are priority seats for persons with disabilities, and that other passengers should make such seats available to those who wish to use them. At least one set of forward-facing seats shall be so designated. Characters on required signs shall have a width-to-height ratio between 3:5 and 1:1 and a stroke width-to-height ratio between 1:5 and 1:10, with a minimum character height (using an upper case "X") of 5/8 inch, with "wide" spacing (generally, the space between letters shall be 1/16 the height of upper case letters), and shall contrast with the background either light-on-dark or dark-on-light.
- Interior handrails and stanchions shall permit sufficient turning and maneuvering space for wheelchairs and other mobility aids to reach a securement location from the lift or ramp.
- Any stepwell or doorway immediately adjacent to the driver shall have, when the door is open, at least 2 foot-candles of illumination measured on the step tread or lift platform.
- Other stepwells and doorways, including doorways in which lifts or ramps are installed, shall have, at all times, at least 2 foot-candles of illumination measured on the step tread, or lift or ramp, when deployed at the vehicle floor level.
- Where provided, the farebox shall be located as far forward as practicable and shall not obstruct traffic in the vestibule, especially wheelchairs or mobility aids.
- Vehicles in excess of 22 feet in length, used in multiple-stop, fixed-route service, shall be equipped with a public address system permitting the driver, or recorded or digitized human speech messages, to announce stops and provide other passenger information within the vehicle.
- Where passengers may board or alight at multiple stops at their option, vehicles in excess of 22 feet in length shall provide controls adjacent to the securement location for requesting stops, which alerts the driver by auditory and visual indicators that a mobility aid user wishes to disembark.

- The required controls shall be mounted no higher than 48 inches and no lower than 15 inches above the floor, shall be operable with one hand and shall not require tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist. The force required to activate controls shall be no greater than 5 lbf (22.2 N).

### **Wheelchair and Mobility Device Lifts**

- The design load of vehicle lifts shall be at least 600 pounds. Working parts, such as cables, pulleys, and shafts, which can be expected to wear, and upon which the lift depends for support of the load, shall have a safety factor of at least six, based on the ultimate strength of the material. Nonworking parts, such as platform, frame, and attachment hardware which would not be expected to wear, shall have a safety factor of at least three, based on the ultimate strength of the material.
- Vehicle controls shall be interlocked with the vehicle brakes, transmission, or door, or shall provide other appropriate mechanisms or systems, to ensure that the vehicle cannot be moved when the lift is not stowed and the lift cannot be deployed unless the interlocks or systems are engaged.
- When a lift is inoperable, the vehicle should be taken out of service before the next day of service. If there is no spare vehicle available to take the place of a vehicle with an inoperable lift, such that taking the vehicle out of service will reduce the transportation service the entity is able to provide, the public entity may keep the vehicle in service with an inoperable lift for no more than five days (if the entity serves an area of 50,000 or less population) or three days (if the entity serves an area of over 50,000 population) from the day on which the lift is discovered to be inoperative.
- Platforms stowed in a vertical position, and deployed platforms when occupied, shall have provisions to prevent their deploying, falling, or folding any faster than 12 inches/second or their dropping of an occupant in the event of a single failure of any load carrying component.
- The lift platform shall be equipped with barriers to prevent any of the wheels of a wheelchair or mobility aid from rolling off the platform during its operation. Each side of the lift platform which extends beyond the vehicle in its raised position shall have a barrier a minimum 1-1/2 inches high.

- The platform surface shall be free of any protrusions over ¼ inches high and shall be slip resistant. The platform shall have a minimum clear width of 28-1/2 inches at the platform, a minimum clear width of 30 inches measured from 2 inches above the platform surface to 30 inches above the platform, and a minimum clear length of 48 inches measured from 2 inches above the surface of the platform to 30 inches above the surface of the platform.
- Any openings between the platform surface and the raised barriers shall not exceed 5/8 inches in width. When the platform is at vehicle floor height with the inner barrier (if applicable) down or retracted, gaps between the forward lift platform edge and the vehicle floor shall not exceed ½ inch horizontally and 5/8 inch vertically. Platforms on semi-automatic lifts may have a hand hold not exceeding 1-1/2 inches by 4-1/2 inches located between the edge barriers.
- The entrance ramp, or loading-edge barrier used as a ramp, shall not exceed a slope of 1:8, measured on level ground, for a maximum rise of 3 inches, and the transition from roadway or sidewalk to ramp may be vertical without edge treatment up to ¼ inch. Thresholds between ¼ inch and ½ inch high shall be beveled with a slope no greater than 1:2.
- No part of the platform shall move at a rate exceeding 6 inches/second during lowering and lifting an occupant, and shall not exceed 12 inches/second during deploying or stowing. This requirement does not apply to the deployment or stowage cycles of lifts that are manually deployed or stowed. The maximum platform horizontal and vertical acceleration when occupied shall be 0.3g.
- Platforms on lifts shall be equipped with handrails on two sides, which move in tandem with the lift, and which shall be graspable and provide support to standees throughout the entire lift operation. Handrails shall have a usable component at least 8 inches long with the lowest portion a minimum 30 inches above the platform and the highest portion a maximum 38 inches above the platform.

### **Wheelchair and Mobility Device Ramps**

Vehicle ramps 30 inches or longer shall support a load of 600 pounds. Ramps shorter than 30 inches shall support a load of 300 pounds. All ramp surfaces shall be continuous and slip resistant. The ramp design shall accommodate both four-wheel

and three-wheel mobility aids. The transition from the roadway or sidewalk and to the vehicle floor to the ramp may be vertical without edge treatment up to ¼ inches with side barriers of at least 2 inches high to prevent wheels from slipping off. All step edges, thresholds, and the boarding edge of ramps or lift platforms shall have a band of color(s) running the full width of the step or edge which contrasts from the step tread and riser, or lift or ramp surface, either light-on-dark or dark-on-light.

If handrails are provided, the handrails shall allow persons with disabilities to grasp them from outside the vehicle while starting to board and continue to use them throughout the boarding process. The top shall be between 30 inches and 38 inches above the ramp surface. The handrails shall be capable of withstanding a force of 100 pounds concentrated at any point on the handrail without permanent deformation of the rail or its supporting structure.

### **ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE**

If the City of Albany enters into a contract or other arrangement with a private entity to operate fixed-route or demand responsive service, the City shall ensure that the private entity meets the ADA complementary paratransit service requirements that would apply if the City provided the service.

The ADA paratransit service requirements limit the fare to no more than twice the fare for a comparable trip on the fixed-route system. Transit providers should avoid any practice by which eligible riders are "steered" into a service category to which "premium charges" are applied. Transit operators are free to provide any level of additional service that they or their communities find necessary including paratransit service to individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria, operating paratransit service beyond the fixed-route service area, providing service when the fixed-route system is not running, or by exceeding the basic next-day service requirement. These additions to the complementary paratransit service are not bound by the service criteria for ADA complementary paratransit.

Public hearings are required for changes to the paratransit reservations system. The ADA implementing regulations require that public participation include outreach, consultation with individuals with disabilities, opportunity for public comment, a public hearing and the creation of a mechanism for continued participation of persons with disabilities in the development and assessment of services to persons with disabilities.

The ADA paratransit service shall be “origin-to-destination”. The service must go from the user’s point of origin to the point of destination. The City decides whether the paratransit service is classified as door-to-door or curb-to-curb as long as the service gets the passenger from his or her point of origin to his or her destination.

- The entity shall schedule and provide paratransit service to any ADA paratransit eligible person at any requested time on a particular day in response to a request for service made the previous day. Reservations may be taken by reservation agents or by mechanical means.
- The entity may negotiate pickup times with the individual, but the entity shall not require an ADA paratransit eligible individual to schedule a trip to begin more than one hour before or after the individual's desired departure time.
- The entity may permit advance reservations to be made up to 14 days in advance of an ADA paratransit eligible individual's desired trips. When an entity proposes to change its reservations system, it shall comply with the public participation requirements equivalent to those of §37.137 (b).
- A personal care attendant shall not be charged for complementary paratransit service.
- Section 37.131(f) of the regulations requires that ADA complementary paratransit services be operated without capacity constraints. Capacity constraints also include other operating policies or practices that tend to significantly limit service to persons who are ADA complementary paratransit eligible.

### **Paratransit Visitors**

Each public entity shall treat as eligible for its complementary paratransit service all visitors who present documentation that they are ADA paratransit eligible, under the criteria of §37.125 of this part, in the jurisdiction in which they reside.

- With respect to visitors with disabilities who do not present such documentation, the public entity may require the documentation of the individual's place of residence and, if the individual's disability is not apparent, of his or her disability. The entity shall provide paratransit service to individuals with disabilities who qualify as visitors under paragraph (b) of this section. The entity shall accept a certification by such individuals that they are unable to use fixed-route transit.
- A public entity shall make the service to a visitor required by this section available for any combination of 21 days during any 365-day period beginning with the visitor's first use of the service during such 365-day period. In no case shall the public entity require a visitor to apply for or receive eligibility certification from the public entity before receiving the service required by this section

### **MOBILITY DEVICES**

Some individuals with disabilities may use Segways as personal mobility devices in lieu of wheelchairs or scooters. According to the Department of Transportation's ADA Rule, Segways are not considered wheelchairs. However, a Segway, when used by a person with a disability as a mobility device, is part of the broad class of mobility aids that Part 37 intends will be accommodated (see for instance §§37.5 and 37.165). In this way, a Segway occupies a legal position analogous to canes, walkers, etc. Transportation providers must "permit individuals with disabilities who do not use wheelchairs" to use a vehicle's lift or ramp to enter the vehicle. Transportation providers are not required to allow all Segway users to bring their devices on board. A transportation provider seeking to exclude a mobility device on direct threat grounds should first consult with the appropriate DOT operating administration for guidance.

## **CHAPTER 4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

ATS's existing operational policies include many of the ADA guidelines listed in the Compliance Review section of this plan. A few of ATS's policies and procedures that meet the current ADA guidelines include equipping all fixed-route and paratransit vehicles with wheelchair lifts/ramps, designating seats for the elderly and disabled in the front of the fixed-route buses, providing paratransit service to the entire City of Albany, and charging only twice the fixed-route rate for paratransit service within ¼ mile of the fixed-route service.

To ensure compliance with the ADA regulations 49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38, ATS should conduct annual reviews of its capital assets using the current ADA guidelines. The ADA Plan should be updated every three years to ensure that the guidelines still comply with and include the most recent ADA and ADAAG legislation. The annual review should also include a fare structure review that ensures fares remain compliant with ADA regulations after fare structure changes are made.

ATS should conduct a preventative maintenance quarterly review of fixed-route and paratransit vehicles. The quarterly review should examine the vehicle's lifts and other ADA regulated equipment. At a minimum, the inspector should test the lifts, ramps, handrails, securement devices, signage, illumination, and controls for requesting stops.

Steps should be taken towards the creation of a bus stop inventory. An inventory will allow better determinations for demand response eligibility based on fixed-route access. ATS should also conduct quarterly reviews on the fixed-route bus stops to ensure that passengers have safe ingress and egress points. The quarterly review should look for any existing obstructions and make sure that wheelchair lifts/ramps can be deployed.

Customers living with disabilities should be provided with adequate avenues to request information and services. ATS should consider implementing programs and technologies that help customers including those with disabilities. Programs that help assist individuals with disabilities include implementation of a volunteer bus-buddy or

travel training program. Technologies could include Interactive Voice Response (IVR), kiosk, and web-based traveler information systems. ATS should implement annual sensitivity training highlighting ADA issues. The training should be mandatory for ATS personnel and any personnel providing subcontracting service to ATS. ATS should also coordinate with agencies that assist individuals with disabilities so that ATS is aware of the specific needs of residents living with disabilities.

All ATS information (schedule books, public notices, plans, etc.) should contain standard language regarding how to make request for accessible formats and/or accessible transportation services.

In addition to the recommendations above all procurement solicitations (Request for Proposal, Request for Bid, Request for Quote, etc.) for capital assets should include language requesting ADA accessible products along with the vendor's assurance of compliance with ADA regulations. By adding the appropriate language to procurement solicitations and contract documents ATS will continue to comply with ADA regulations.

The Albany Transit System has done an excellent job thus far complying with the federal regulations for the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Maintaining current practices along with implementation of the recommendations suggested in this section will ensure continued compliance.