



**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**  
**COMPLEMENTARY PARATRANSIT PLAN**

Revised November 2021

## COMPLEMENTARY PARATRANSIT PLAN

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a major piece of civil rights legislation enacted in 1990. The goal of the ADA is to ensure that persons with disabilities have equality of opportunity, a chance to fully participate in society, are able to live independently, and can be economically self-sufficient.

Title II of the ADA addresses public services, including public transportation. The law prohibits transit agencies from denying individuals with disabilities the opportunity to use public transportation if they are capable of using it. It also prohibits transit agencies from providing service which discriminates against persons with disabilities. The primary emphasis of the ADA is on providing fixed route service that is accessible to persons with disabilities.

The law and its regulations specify what must be done in order to make the service accessible. This includes requirement for vehicles, bus stops, and facilities which must be maintained in an operating condition; information about available services, provided in accessible formats; and personnel who are trained in operating procedures to assist persons with disabilities. The following three categories define the individuals with disabilities that are eligible for ADA paratransit.

“Any individual with a disability who is unable, as a result of a physical or mental impairment (including a vision impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.” [37.123 (e) (1)]

“Any individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a wheelchair lift or other boarding device and is able, with such assistance, to board, ride, and disembark from any vehicle which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities if the individual wants to travel on a route of the system during the hours of operation of the system at a time, or with a reasonable period of such time, when such a vehicle is not being used to provide designated public transportation routes.” [37.123 (e) (2)]

“Any individual with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition which prevents such individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on such system.” [37.123 (e) (3)]

The ADA recognized that some persons are not able to use fixed route service, even if it is accessible. For those persons, transit agencies must provide complementary paratransit service. Such paratransit service must be comparable to the system’s fixed route service. Comparability is measured by six service criteria which are: 1) the service area; 2) response time; 3) fares; 4) days and hours of service; 5) trip purpose; and, 6) capacity constraints. The ADA specifies who is eligible for this complementary paratransit service.

BATA has fixed route service in the urbanized Traverse City area and must publish a plan that describes how it will meet and implement the ADA requirements. This document is that plan. It describes the actions that have been taken to assure compliance with the ADA.

## **Section 1**

### **General Information**

Name of Entity Submitting the Plan:

BATA (Bay Area Transportation Authority)

Address:

3233 Cass Road, Traverse City, MI 49684

Name of Contact Person:

Eric Lingaur

Title of Contact Person:

Director of Communications and Development

Phone Number of Contact Person:

231-933-5534

BATA serves an area of 813 sq. miles and includes all of Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties. Please see the attached map showing the major geographical jurisdictions. Both counties are rural in nature, with a 2012 population of 89,112 for Grand Traverse County and 21,607 for Leelanau County.

BATA has 84 vehicles in its fleet with 79 lift-equipped.

## **Section 2**

### **Description of the Fixed/Flex Route Service**

#### **2.1 Organization and Structure of the Service**

BATA operates 5 fixed routes within the Traverse City area and 6 flex routes throughout Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties. All services are provided in-house. No contractors are used. This is the only fixed and flex service in Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties, BATA's service area. In accordance with State law, all fixed route services are lift equipped.

#### **2.2 Area and Population Served**

In 2020, the Grand Traverse County population is 95,238 and covers 465 square miles. Leelanau County population is 22,301 and covers 348 square miles. The City of Traverse City where BATA has most of its fixed route service has a 2020 population of 15,902 and covers 8.3 square miles.

## **2.3 Days and Hours of Operation**

We advise riders to check [www.bata.net](http://www.bata.net) regularly for current changes to routes, schedules, and hours of operation. Traditionally most services run from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. seven days a week.

## **2.4 Fare Structure**

City Loops regular fare: \$1.50

Village Loop regular fare: \$3.00

East Traverse Loop regular fare: \$3.00

Link Service (All demand response or on-demand service):

Village Link: \$3.00

Link On-Demand \$6.00

Passengers who qualify for BATA's reduced fare program include senior citizens, veterans and active military, students, children and persons with a disability pay ½ fare or 50% of the fare list above. Free transfers are given so passengers can complete a one-way trip by paying one fare. Reduced Fare applications can be found on our website at [www.bata.net](http://www.bata.net)

## **2.5 Fleet Information**

All buses allocated to fixed routes are lift-equipped and ADA compliant. BATA's complementary paratransit service, all lift-equipped buses, has been deemed adequate to complement our fixed routes.

## **2.6 Financial Information**

Annual fixed/flex route ridership for unlinked passenger trips for FY2021 was 319,245. The estimated cost for providing this service is \$8,806,335 at 104,221 service hours.

## **2.7 Other Relevant Information**

Vehicle lifts are cycled as part of their pre-trip inspection in order to ensure their proper operation. When a lift fails during a pre-trip inspection the bus is taken out of service and replaced. If a lift fails to operate while the vehicle is in service, the operator reports this to the dispatcher and a replacement vehicle is sent. Routine maintenance procedures incorporate inspection and maintenance of the wheelchair lifts and tie downs.

BATA has instituted a comprehensive training program for drivers which incorporate all the provisions of the ADA. Drivers are required to announce stops on the fixed route system, transfer points, major intersections, major destinations and any other stop on request.

Fixed route schedules can be made available in accessible formats.

### **Section 3**

#### **Description of Current Paratransit Services**

BATA operates the only paratransit service in Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties. Paratransit is provided for senior citizens, people with disabilities, and the general public by reservation or request.

Paratransit service by definition is a ride scheduled by an eligible rider on the day prior to when the ride is needed. BATA paratransit is provided to serve both urban and rural areas in our two counties. BATA's demand response services provide paratransit service Monday through Sunday with limited hours and area on Saturdays and Sundays. Link On-Demand service is available in the Traverse City area providing Paratransit service 7 days a week.

### **Section 4**

#### **4.1 Eligibility Requirements**

In order to inform riders, potential riders, and other individuals and organizations about ADA paratransit eligibility; BATA will distribute brochures, instruct drivers to inform riders and directly meet with agencies that connect with individuals with disabilities.

BATA does not require passengers to certify or recertify eligibility for paratransit ridership. It is provided to any rider with a Disability Reduced Fare card. If a paratransit ride is requested, BATA will grant that request with a one-day prior reservation and without capacity constraints. As mentioned, BATA now provides microtransit service in the Traverse City area. This Link On-Demand service provides paratransit service 7 days a week when requested up to one day prior with no capacity constraints.

Visitors: Persons visiting the area who show evidence or claim to be eligible for ADA paratransit service in other areas will be considered eligible for BATA's paratransit service.

#### **4.2 Suspension Policy**

BATA's Etiquette Committee reviews rider incidents to assess passenger conduct on its buses and in its facilities. If a customer is in violation of BATA's code of conduct policies, then progressive discipline is implemented and an individual's ridership history is used to determine whether a warning, probation or suspension is warranted. BATA's Code of Conduct Policy may be found on BATA's website and posted at each transfer station.

Suspensions may also be issued to passengers that violate BATA's No-Show Policy. An individual with a No-Show incident is sent a letter of warning. An individual who has 3 No-shows in a calendar month is considered an extensive behavior pattern or practice and receives a No-Show Violation and may receive a suspension of riding privileges for one month. Continued violations will incur longer suspensions.

### **4.3 Service Area**

All of Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties.

### **4.4 Response Time**

Complementary paratransit trips are scheduled with prior day registration and no capacity constraints, per the ADA Guidelines. Same day paratransit using demand response service is available based on capacity and provided at a premium rate. Same day paratransit using Link On-Demand service is available in Traverse City with no capacity constraints and a response time of 30 minutes or less. Half fare rates apply to this premium. A full Advanced Registration policy is available at both transfer stations and on our website.

### **4.5 Fares**

Paratransit fares are flat rate. Full fare for the general public is \$3.00 or \$6.00 depending on the service type. Seniors, students, veterans and active military, children and persons with disabilities are eligible to ride for half fare. Personal Care attendants ride for free for passengers presenting a Disability Reduced Fare card. Any change in fares will not result in an ADA eligible passenger paying more than twice the fare for the fixed route service.

### **4.6 Trip Purpose**

All paratransit destinations, regardless of purpose, are accepted and handled on an equal basis.

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

Link On-Demand Service (Traverse City)

Sunday through Friday: 6:00 am – 10:30 pm

Saturday: 6:00 am – 11:30 pm

Village Link Service

Monday through Friday: Exact hours vary according to specific route area and riders are asked to call BATA Customer Service for current information of hours and availability.

Saturday and Sunday: No Village link Service Available. The Village Loops are designed as flex routes to be able to deviate up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile to accommodate ADA guidelines.

### **4.8 Capacity Constraints**

For paratransit rides scheduled one day in advance, there will be no capacity constraints for ADA eligible passengers. Rides will be scheduled within a window of one hour before or after the time requested. If scheduling conflicts exist, priority will be given to ADA eligible passengers and lower priority passengers will be scheduled outside the one-hour window. To eliminate capacity constraints for ADA eligible trips,

an additional bus will be added to eliminate missed or denied trips, untimely pickups, or excessively long rides.

## **Section 5**

### **Public Participation Process**

BATA meets regularly with community groups and stakeholder agencies to collect information for service improvement.

BATA coordinates a volunteer Local Advisory Council as mandated by MDOT to review the BATA Vehicle Accessibility Plan, as well as for bi-annual meetings focused on service improvement for Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties. BATA also holds community input meetings for major route changes and general feedback sessions.

**End**