

COTTONWOOD, INC.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2024 - 2025

(October 2024 – September 2025)

Updated October 2024

The Cottonwood Inc. Board of Trustees reviews and approves the Accessibility Plan annually to ensure the promotion of full accessibility for persons served. Following is a summary of 2023-2024 goals and accomplishments and the Accessibility Goals for 2024-2025.

GOALS FOR 2023-2024
(October 2023 – September 2024)

1. East Door of Building 2

Install accessible automatic door opener on the east door of building 2

Target Date: July 2024

Completed: February 2024

Also 2024;

- Sealed parking lot
- Painted parking blocks and curbs for greater visibility
- Began pilot for remote supports in Residential

Additional improvements accomplished in 2023-2024 as well as general accessibility features of our services that promote full accessibility for individuals include:

Residential accessibility accomplishments in 2024:

Accessibility:

- Installed additional grab bars in bathrooms
- Increased laundry capacity at two sites
- Assisted people in accessing wheelchairs, walkers, and other durable medical equipment
- Purchased adaptive silverware
- Purchased hospital bed for home use
- Switched consumer bedrooms to allow ground floor living access
- Installed bed rails to prevent falls
- Worked with another department to provide transportation for individual with dementia-related issues
- Advocated for risk assessments to assess changing abilities and needs
- Purchased timer to remind consumer about completing necessary tasks
- Purchased bell to alert consumer to staff presence and need for med administration
- Changed staffing patterns to accommodate shifting consumer needs and abilities
- Changed method of med administration for individuals experiencing difficulty swallowing

- Installed netting around balcony to help ensure consumer safety
- Installed new flooring throughout three houses and multiple bedrooms
- Installed alarms on doors at three sites to alert staff to consumer movements
- Purchased fall alert monitors
- Helped people move to more accessible sites to better accommodate emergent health needs
- Reassigned vehicles to accommodate mobility issues
- Rearranged staff visits to accommodate consumer work schedules

Life Enrichment Services accessibility accomplishments in 2024:

Accessibility:

- Consumers have access to keys for personal lockers
- Door alarm in the LES south room
- New patio furniture
- New round tables and consumer chairs

CORE accessibility accomplishments in 2024:

Accessibility:

- Installed benches outdoors
- Installed barriers from cars between the parking lot and patio
- Bought adjustable height tables for wheelchairs for crafts or meals
- Installed a sound bar to the TV so people could hear music, movies or trainings better
- New staff computers
- Installed new drop-down rails for accessible stalls
- Removed rail that was a barrier between the toilet and changing table
- Removed machines from kitchen to allow for more space for wheelchairs
- Posted sign language charts around the building for individuals served that are deaf
- Provided an electric recliner for the living room area
- Purchased a lift van for CORE
- Added wide chairs for user comfort
- Increased staff from 4 to 8 to accommodate the increase in client participation
- Moved furniture around and added tables to accommodate wheelchair access
- Provided new lockers so consumers could lock up their belongings if they so choose
- Obtained a swivel disk for a consumer's restroom need
- Installed live streaming cameras to outdoor area of CORE

Retirement Enrichment Services accessibility accomplishments in 2024:

Accessibility:

- Moved to new Retirement location April 15, 2024
- Installed an automatic door opener to front door

- Ramp built onto the back deck
- Large sturdy furniture purchased for back deck and umbrella installed
- Toilet seat risers installed
- Vanity mirrors installed in bathrooms
- Door handles replaced with accessible levers
- Door to larger restroom was rehung to open outward to accommodate large walkers and wheelchairs
- Secured and taped down area rugs
- Purchased noise cancelling headphones for iPads
- Purchased 4 iPads
- 4 new recliners purchased
- Training for DSP staff for care giving for people with dementia
- Added door signage for bathrooms and mechanical room
- Larger TV installed on wall
- Personal lockers were purchased for consumers personal items



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2024 CONSUMER TRANSPORTATION SUMMARY

The majority of consumer rides to and from work are provided by T-Lift/Transdev, an organization hired by the City of Lawrence to provide both fixed route and door-to-door paratransit services. JobLink works closely with T-Lift to schedule approximately 423 demand rides per week. In addition, there are around 131 rides scheduled each week which have been set up with T-Lift as subscription rides, which guarantees that these individuals will always have their rides available, as opposed to the demand rides, which sometimes cannot be scheduled because the time the ride is needed is booked. The Data Manager monitors both the demand and the subscription rides to ensure accuracy.

A grant awarded to the city of Lawrence Transit allowed for free fares in 2024. This grant covered the "T" (the fixed route bus) buses, T-Lift Paratransit, and Lawrence On Demand (formerly Night Line). Riders saved \$2.00 per paratransit and Lawrence On Demand rides, and \$1.00 per fixed route rides (\$.50 for riders with disabilities), or monthly savings on paratransit pass of \$68, and the fixed route \$34 (\$17 for riders with disabilities), due to this grant.

T-Lift and the "T" (the fixed route bus) run Monday through Saturday from 6:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. The fixed route implemented the redesign of bus routes. Routes are simplified, realigned, and interlined to better serve the community. In January 2024, a hub for all buses, Central Station opened. The KU bus routes, and the "T" began the new routes. In May and again in August, the new routes were monitored and adjusted to meet ridership demand. Each fixed route bus and paratransit vehicle is equipped with a wheelchair lift or ramp and audio announcement equipment. While bus stops are identified with signs, individuals using mobility devices are allowed to board and exit at the nearest ADA accessible location to a bus stop. Several fixed route buses run until 10:00p.m. during KU Spring and Fall semesters.

Para transit rides can be scheduled no earlier than 6:15 a.m. to comply with the mandatory 30 minute "window" (waiting period) which surrounds a ride. Generally, rides are scheduled to be up to 45 minutes in length in order to accommodate routing, although some rides are scheduled up to an hour in advance because of the distance between the pick-up and drop off location. The final rides for the day can be scheduled no later than 7:45p.m., also to accommodate the "window."

The new Lawrence On Demand, previously, Night Line is a night/afterhours shared ride bus service. Rides are scheduled in advance through a cell phone app or through T-lift for those unable to navigate the app. Rides are available Monday-Saturday, 8:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. and on Sunday 8:00am to 6:00pm. The fare on Lawrence On Demand is also free in 2024 saving riders \$2.00 each way. In previous years, no reduced fare was offered and only accepted cash. Vehicles are accessible for riders with special needs.

Currently, about 20 rides per week are scheduled through Independence, Inc.'s door-to-door paratransit service. The cost per ride for this service is \$3.00 per in-town ride, \$5.00 per ride within Douglas County, and \$30 fare for out-of-town, round-trip medical appointments. This generally is paid by the consumer's family or support team directly to Independence, Inc. Rides for this service are limited not only by availability, but also are based upon "need." The determination of "need" is made solely by Independence, Inc. Independence, Inc. paratransit rides are available Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**GOALS FOR 2024-2025
(October 2024 – September 2025)**

1. Accessible Outdoor Deck Space

Building 3 will have an accessible outdoor deck space designed and built

Target Date: July 2025

Completed:

2. Residential Remote Supports

Smart home technology to support residents to provide more independent, accessible housing opportunities

Target Date: September 2025

Completed:

3. Vehicle Accessibility Assessment

Representatives from each department will meet to identify gaps ensuring that new vehicles purchased will meet the identified needs

Target Date: December 2024

Completed:

Ongoing activities to promote full participation & accessibility include:

- All news/media releases and public information requests are carefully reviewed and monitored by the Director of Community Relations/Development and the CEO
- Staff members will continue to actively participate on local councils, such as parks and recreation, transportation, housing, employment, to promote full community participation for persons with developmental disabilities
- Consumer input will continue to be actively solicited regarding all aspects of their life through informal discussions, Consumer Committee meetings and through individual service planning meetings
- An annual review of this plan and the Accessibility policy will be conducted by the Management Team, Safety Committee, Consumer Committee, and Cottonwood Board of Trustees to determine progress made and address areas of deficiency
- Electronic signatures are offered as an option for annual documents such as PCSPs, ROIs, etc. to expedite the signing process and remove barriers related to meeting/delivering signed physical copies

Colleen Himmelberg,
CEO