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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 25, 2021

NTS Introduces On-Demand Ride Service for Rides to Work and School

Cedar Rapids, Iowa – Book your ride, board your vehicle, and arrive at your destination – that’s how modern public transport works today. Neighborhood Transportation Service, a program of Horizons, A Family Service Alliance, introduces a corner-to-corner on-demand public transit service. This new transportation option has been launched in partnership with Via, the leader in TransitTech.

Book a \$6.00 ride through a mobile app within the city limits of Cedar Rapids, Marion, and Hiawatha to work, training, and school during NTS’ hours of operation (7 p.m. to 6 a.m. Monday through Friday, and 24 hours on weekends). Via complements and extends the existing night and weekend service while providing flexible and affordable mobility options when and where passengers need to go. The vision of the partnership is to use technology to expand access to public transit countywide, alleviating congestion, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and improving affordable mobility options without the need for a private vehicle.

Download the NTS Horizons application in the App Store or Google Play and create an account. Riders will enter a desired pickup and drop-off address, schedule a pick up or drop off time, and receive the vehicle’s estimated pickup time, location and information in real time. Via’s advanced algorithms will enable multiple riders to seamlessly and safely share the same vehicle, directing passengers to a nearby virtual bus stop within a short walking distance for pickup and drop-off, allowing for quick and efficient shared trips without lengthy detours. Riders will be able to easily track the vehicle’s progress in real-time in the mobile app.

Riders without access to a smart phone will still have the option to call our main office at (319) 398-3943 Monday through Friday before 3 p.m. to schedule a ride. Users also have the option to pay with cash or check if they purchase their tickets in the Horizons building, 819 Fifth St. SE in Cedar Rapids.

The service will expand transportation accessibility to a diverse population. The NTS app will be available at launch in English, Spanish and French. NTS will also offer wheelchair-accessible vehicles and door-to-door service for those with limited mobility.

Following social distancing guidelines set forth by the Linn County and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the service will limit the number of riders per vehicle, perform frequent and thorough wipe downs of the vehicle’s interior and high-contact surfaces, deep clean the vehicles daily, and require riders to wear a face covering. In addition, all NTS vehicles have been equipped with a plastic partition between drivers and riders, and the vehicle’s power sliding doors will provide a touchless entry and exit for riders.

This service was made possible thanks to a grant from the State of Iowa Workforce Development CARES Act.

About Horizons, A Family Service Alliance:

Horizons, A Family Service Alliance works to instill hope, change lives, and brighten futures for families in need. Headquartered in Cedar Rapids, Horizons provides a variety of services across East Central Iowa including financial counseling, community health and nutrition programs, and transportation services.

www.horizonsfamily.org.