Partnering for Engagement

Accessibility of Public Spaces

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Vision & Principles

• DREDF is a legal and policy center led by people with disabilities, and parents of children with disabilities.

• We seek a just world where all people, with and without disabilities, live full and independent lives free of discrimination.

• Access to transportation for all is a civil right.
Disability & Mobility in the U.S.

• Nearly 1 in 4 people in the U.S. has a disability (up to 61 million) i
• People with disabilities are 2x as likely to live in poverty, and have insufficient access to healthcare and services ii,iii
• Lack of transportation is reported as the biggest barrier to employment iv
• Access to mobility for disabled travelers can be vastly different depending on income, race, gender, religion, immigration & LGBTQ+ status, rural vs urban settings
Past Mobility: Lifts on Buses, Curb Cuts

Arguments Against

• Access was too expensive or impossible
• Paratransit / segregated service cheaper than integration

Lessons for Stakeholders & Policymakers

• Accessibility is possible if it’s a priority
• Accessibility is cheaper at the outset
• Integration supports inclusion, decreases isolation and benefits society
Present Mobility: Access, Equity Concerns

98% of Buses are Accessible, yet

- Inaccessible architecture, modes, and technology & attitudinal barriers remain
- Many bus stops, sidewalks, transit stations are NOT accessible
- Transit in some cities cutting bus routes which decreases paratransit service areas
- Reliance on inaccessible ride-hailing, new modes creating access gaps, threatening system resiliency & lives during disasters
Overall: Access, Equity an Afterthought

- Poorly regulated scooters blocking PROW access (San Diego ADA lawsuit) v
- Limited accessible bikeshare, scooters
- Ride-hailing operators denying ADA obligations in courts (NY, DC, LA, MS) vi, vii
Future Mobility

Potential to Dramatically Improve Mobility & Safety

• For people with limited access to accessible vehicles or services, or who are currently unable to drive or obtain a license

• If AVs are universally designed and safe; public rights of way (PROW) transit facilities, shared mode devices are accessible

Provide Access to

• Employment, education, community and civic participation, voting, shopping, spending time with friends, running ordinary errands for family, transportation in the event of an emergency or evacuation
Future Mobility: The AV Promise (3.0)

AVs Likely Shared through Ride-Hailing & Transit

• Low Speed Shuttles & Buses
• AV Passenger Fleets (Waymo, Valley Metro & Lyft)

USDOT FTA Encouraging Innovation, Partnerships

• FTA Strategic Transit Automation Research (STAR) Plan
• March 2019 $60M ADS Demonstration Grants
• May 2019 MOD Sandbox / Integrated Mobility Innovation Grants
• Accessible Transportation Technologies Research Initiative (ATTRI)
Partnering for Engagement

*Strategic and Regulatory Opportunities*
Prioritize Accessible Infrastructure

Consider the Complete Trip for All Modes

• Adopt Access Board 2011 Rights of Way Accessibility Guidelines viii
  o Recommendations for accessible sidewalks, bus stops, street crossings, curb cuts, and pedestrian signals ...

Catalogue and Improve Bus Stops and Sidewalks

• TransitCenter’s Recent Report, *From Sorry to Superb: Everything You Need to Know About Great Bus Stops* ix
  o *Case Studies: St. Paul, Portland, Pittsburgh, LA, NYC*
Prioritize Access & Equity Across Modes

Access & Equity

• Integrated, Universal Design vs 2-tiered services
• Affordability
• Access for unbanked & those without smartphones
• Meet Title VI, EJ obligations, and provide quality jobs
Message Equity, Identify Gaps

Develop local equity principles for service, partnerships
  • Consider Maintenance of Effort in transit, state services
  • See: Seattle Transit Equity Program, SFCTA Equity Principles

Adopt new mobility performance measures, collect data
  • ID paratransit deserts, daily & emergency planning accessible service gaps
  • Measure access to affordable, accessible housing; jobs; EJ impacts
  • Collect customer complaints ...
Leverage Equity in Policy & Partnerships


• Communication, training, unbanked, w/o smartphones ...
• ADA, Title VI compliance; data for planning
• Occupant, pedestrian safety standards for ambulatory, mobility device users, bicyclists, pedestrians with darker skin

Establish Shared Mobility Worker Living Wages, Workforce Plans
Utilize Disability Rights Law & Decisions

**Americans with Disabilities Act Findings (1990)**
- Disabilities in no way diminish a person’s right to fully participate in all aspects of society
- Society has tended to isolate and segregate individuals with disabilities
- [who] continually encounter various forms of discrimination, including ... transportation barriers

**Olmstead v L.C. Supreme Court Decision (1999)**
- Public entities must provide community-based services to persons with disabilities
- Local Olmstead Plans
Benefit from Community Collaboration

Follow the Golden Rule

• “Nothing About Us Without Us”
• Provide a seat at the head of the table for disabled, marginalized community members
• Respect and incentivize community members’ time
• Establish complaint and feedback systems
• Allow goals and plans to change based on feedback
• Work with disability orgs: Centers for Independent Living, CCD member organization chapters (ACB, United Spinal, P&As ...), NFB
Resources

- To Ride the Public’s Buses, The Advocado Press
- USDOT Shared Mobility FAQs & Dear Colleague Letter
  - [https://www.transit.dot.gov/shared-mobility](https://www.transit.dot.gov/shared-mobility)
- US Access Board
  - [https://www.access-board.gov](https://www.access-board.gov)
- NCD Transportation Reports, Rooted in Rights Videos
- Accessible Transportation Tech. Research Initiative (ATTRI)
  - [https://www.its.dot.gov/research_areas/attri/index.htm](https://www.its.dot.gov/research_areas/attri/index.htm)
Resources

• USDOL ODEP AV Listening Session Report

• USDOT Automated Vehicle Activities
  o https://www.transportation.gov/AV

• CCD Transportation Task Force AV Principles

• Auto Alliance Accessibility Workshop
  • https://autoalliance.org/avsaccessibility/

• Greenling Institute: AV Heaven or Hell?
Access and Equity is Possible

We are in a moment of reimagining mobility. Anything is possible. We need to hold each other and ourselves accountable to principles of justice and equity.

Thank You

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Endnotes


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ix. From Sorry to Superb: Everything You Need to Know about Great Bus Stops, TransitCenter. October 2018. transitcenter.org/publications/sorry-to-superb