Getting to Work: Accessible Transportation

Advancing Equitable Mobility for All

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DREDF Overview

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)  
• People with disabilities are 2x as likely to live in poverty, and have insufficient access to healthcare and services  
• Lack of transportation is reported as the biggest barrier to employment  
• Access to mobility for disabled travelers can be vastly different depending on income, race, gender, religion, immigration & LGBTQ+ status, rural vs urban settings
Past Accessible Mobility: Lifts on Buses

Transportation Industry Arguments

- 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 during disasters
Future Mobility: The AV Promise

Potential to Drastically Improve Mobility & Safety for

- Blind and low vision community
- Deaf and hard of hearing community
- Intellectual, developmental and cognitive disability communities
- People with physical disabilities, including wheelchair users
- People with neurological conditions including seizure disorders
Future Mobility: The AV Promise

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 Notice of Funding Opportunity
- May 2019 MOD Sandbox / Integrated Mobility Innovation Grants
Overall: Access, Equity an Afterthought

- Many more wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVS) required for unmet need
- Denial of service for guide dog & wheelchair users continues
- Poorly regulated scooters blocking PROW access (San Diego ADA lawsuit)\textsuperscript{v}
- Ride-hailing operators denying ADA obligations in courts (NY, DC, LA, MS)\textsuperscript{vi,vii}
- No legislative requirements for fully accessible AVs. Only 1 OEM committed.
Advancing Equitable Mobility

Strategic and Regulatory Opportunities
Coordinate & Creatively Finance Mobility

Coordinate Transportation Services: Mobility Management
  • Vets, rural, aging, disability, employee, low-income programs; cross-county

Utilize State funds and reduce fares

Partner with Employers, Insurance Co’s
  • Tax incentives for commuter benefits

Federal Grants
  • 5310 (WAVs, sidewalks, bus stops, rural, travel training), 5311 (rural)
  • Vocational rehabilitation grants for travel training
Prioritize Accessible Infrastructure

Consider the Complete Trip for Transit, New Mobility

• Adopt Access Board 2011 Rights of Way Accessibility Guidelines
  ○ 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*
  ○ *Case Studies: St. Paul, Portland, Pittsburgh, LA, NYC*
Prioritize Accessible Infrastructure

Test and Adopt Bikeshare and Scooter Parking Solutions

- Swift mile, Lyft docs, painted boxes, street corrals ...
- See: NACTO Policy 2018 Guidelines for Shared Active Transportation, National League of Cities Micromobility in Cities
Prioritize Access & Equity

Access = Equivalent Service for all Disabled Passengers \textsuperscript{xiii}

- Response Time, Cost, Geography
- Hours and Days of Service
- Information, Reservations and Constraints ...

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 equity principles for existing, future 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 and trip denials ...
  • See: Seattle data collection
Leverage Equity in Policy & Partnerships

Require integrated WAVs from Ride-hailing, AV operators

- Accessible Human Machine Interfaces (location, communication)
- Accessible Vehicle Hardware, including ramps and securement
- *See: NYC Ride Hailing, 25% WAV Trips or 80% < 10 min* xvii

Incentivize WAVs and full accessibility

- Exemptions for fully accessible TNCs, AVs
- *eg, NYC TNC congestion cap waiver* xviii
Leverage Equity in Policy & Partnerships

Establish Statewide WAV Funds

- CA SB 1376 (one tool, not a solution) \textsuperscript{xix}


- Licensing, insurance, communication, training, unbanked, w/o smartphones ...
- ADA, Title VI compliance; data for planning
- Crashworthiness for smaller accessible vehicles
- Occupant, pedestrian safety standards for ambulatory, mobility device users, bicyclists, pedestrians with darker skin

Establish Minimum Wages \textsuperscript{xx} and Workforce Transition 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 riders’ time
- Establish complaint and feedback systems
- Allow goals and plans to change based on feedback
- See: MI 2018 PlanetM grants stakeholder process
Equitable Mobility 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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Resources

• To Ride the Public’s Buses, The Advocado Press
  o https://bit.ly/ToRideBuses
• USDOT Shared Mobility FAQs & Dear Colleague Letter
  o https://www.transit.dot.gov/shared-mobility
• Greenling Institute: AV Heaven or Hell?
• Auto Alliance Accessibility Workshop
  • https://autoalliance.org/avsaccessibility/
Resources

• DREDF Fully Accessible Vehicle Checklist & Comments
• Self-Driving Cars Ruderman Report & NCD Report
• CCD Transportation Task Force AV Principles
• We Will Ride Coalition
  o https://joinwewillride.org/
• VW Inclusive Mobility Initiative
  o https://inclusivemobility.com
Resources

• USDOL ODEP AV Listening Session Report
• USDOT Automated Vehicle Activities
  • [https://www.transportation.gov/AV](https://www.transportation.gov/AV)
• USDOT ADS Demonstration Grant NOFO (up to 60M)
  • [https://www.transportation.gov/av/grants](https://www.transportation.gov/av/grants)
• USDOT Mobility on Demand (MOD) Sandbox, IMI Grants
• 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)
Endnotes


Endnotes


viii. Rall, Jaime. 2015.


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


xiii. 49 CFR § 37.105


xviii. Grossman, Alice. 24 Aug 2018

