

Accessible
Community
Transportation
In Our Nation

Applying Research to Increasing Accessibility Capability Internationally

Transportation Research Board Conference
World Bank Hosted Innovation Workshop

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Easter Seals Project ACTION

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WWW.PROJECTACTION.ORG



- Who we are & What we do
- Our areas of strategic focus
- Our recent research publications
- Thoughts on priority research areas of need
- Thoughts on how research should be done

Federal Transit Administration Training and Technical Assistance Centers

Easter Seals

Project ACTION

- Expand accessible transportation **for people with disabilities** of all ages
- Audience – transportation and disability community
- 21 years

National Center on Senior Transportation – Easter Seals and National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

- Expand family of transportation services **for older adults**
- Audience – human services and transportation community
- 5 years

Demographic Imperatives Continue to Expand Need for More Accessible Communities

TA Center Functions

- **Training** – webinars, distance learning, conference calls, travel training, mobility planning services
- **Technical Assistance** – toll-free number, e-mail
- **Outreach** – conferences, disseminate useful materials, website, newsletter
- **Applied Research** – Research contracts, Student Scholars programs and various community grants

- Livability – accessibility component & key indicators
- Mobility Management
- Americans with Disabilities Act transportation education and support
- Older Adults & their Family of Transportation Services
- Health/wellness & transportation
- Youth with Disabilities and Career Transition Transportation Education
- Partnership Expansion and Coalition Building

Livable & Sustainable Communities Attributes

- Have Multi-modal Accessibility
- Safe
- Equitable
- Affordable
- Efficiently use resources
- Universally designed to do good
- Person-directed
- Ensure economic viability for people and business
- Healthy for people and the earth



Person using a Wheelchair boarding an Accessible Bus

Livability Accessibility – Useful Trends

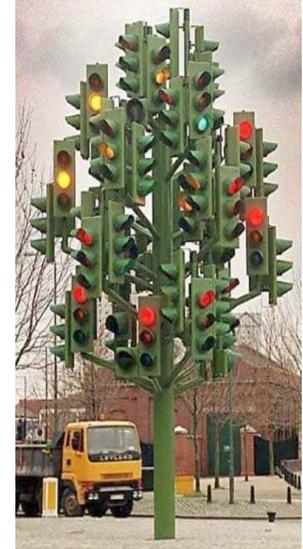
- Travel Training to leverage accessible fixed route public transit
- Vanpools
- Vouchers
- Universal or Inclusive Design
- Accessible Rail
- Accessible Taxis
- Volunteer Driver Programs
- Public/Private Partnerships
- Operator Sensitivity Training
- General Public Awareness Campaigns



Paratransit Service

Mobility Management - Person-Directed Context

- Over last ten+ years evolved from Transit program to Community Program
- Connects people with the right transportation options
- Requires dual community analysis
 - Accessibility needs of people in the community
 - Assessment of accessibility & resources in the community
- Identifies gaps in livability/accessibility
- Advocates to fill those gaps
- Develops and implements helpful programs



Confusing array of signs



Significant positive changes occurred in public transportation after the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 including changes made by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-325)

More collaboration and working together to solve accessibility issues

- ADA Eligibility
- ADA responsibilities and good customer service
- ADA Paratransit Topics
- Service Animals
- Motor Coach & Charter Rules
- Wheelchair and Mobility Devices

Older Adult Family of Services Emerging Trends

- Accessible taxis
- Travel Training/Mobility Mentoring
- Public/private partnerships like ITN America
- Volunteer Driver programs
- Safe driving continuation, license policies
- Coordinate transportation across social services, health services, employment services, vocational rehabilitation, education, retail/recreation, public transit



Older adult recreation

**“Transportation seems to be the single biggest problem”
Focus Group Participant**

Health/Wellness & Transportation – AARP 2009 Profiles of Long-Term Care and Independent Living

- 85+ population increase - 74% 2007 to 2030, and 118% from 2030 to 2050
- Family caregivers provide most long-term care (\$ 375B vs. Medicaid \$ 97B) – almost 3.7x that of Medicaid
- Older people with disabilities often deplete their life savings
- Medicaid Long-term care still primarily nursing homes
- 3-1 is the number of people Medicaid can support in the community (HCBS) vs. in a nursing facility

FTA now assessing transportation role in healthcare & health/wellness

- Assistive technologies
- Web Information/Referral
- Social Networking (Twitter, Facebook, online collaboration)
- Intelligent Transportation

Systems

- handheld devices
- Global positioning systems
- Scheduling/dispatching
- Smartcards
- One call telecommunication



Woman using a laptop

Youth with Disabilities

We Need:

- Greater regional coordination & regional planning
- Student transportation to enable “spontaneous” living
- Universal design for universal access
- Intersection of cross county rural, urban and suburban transportation options
- Expansion of transportation public/private partnerships
- Information & knowledge of transportation taught to all students
in general education curricula
- Greater community awareness of needs of and the perspectives of youth with disabilities

ESPA & WVSA Arts Project



Above is a mixed-media rendering of a city street scene. In the main focal point there is a bus with people riding it. Surrounding the bus are bicycles and other modes of transportation, all creating a vibrant urban atmosphere

Build Coalitions - Customers and Providers Private and Public

- Transit providers
- People with disabilities
- Older Adults
- Human Services Providers
- School System
- Students
- People of limited income
- Business Community
- Faith-based community
- Non-profit community
- Civic leaders
- Planners
- Housing Industry
 - Builders
 - Realtors
 - Owner associations

Recent research publications

www.projectaction.org



Researcher

- **Accessibility Design Guide for Bus Rapid Transit Systems**
- **Resource Guide to Effective Approaches for Increasing Stop Announcements and Route Identification**
- **A Survey on the Use of Taxis in Paratransit Programs**
- **Guide to Effective Communication Technology for Paratransit Service**
- **Accessible Pathways to Bus Stops and Transit Facilities: A Process Guide**
- **Universal Design & Accessible Transit Systems: Facts to Consider When Updating or Expanding Your Transit System – Fact Sheet collaboration with RERC-APT, Robotics Institute Carnegie Mellon University
Center for Inclusive Design & Environmental Access, University at Buffalo, State University of New York**
- **International Project on Accessible Transportation - A Report and Findings to Date**

Key Indicators – Assess Public Transportation & Path of Travel Accessibility

- Accessible buses, commuter rail, and transit facilities
- Accessible pathways
 - Signage
 - Bus stops
 - Trip planning and overall navigability
 - Universal design around transit hubs/stations
 - Streets
- Multi-modal accessibility
- International Accessibility Survey



Accessible Pathway

Livability and Accessibility Preferences for People with Disabilities

- **Identify & assess key indicators**
 - Travel preferences/
perceptions/characteristics/behaviors
of customers with disabilities and older
adults
 - Effectiveness of mobility management
for life satisfaction
 - Travel training outcomes
 - Relationship between health/wellness
and transportation access

Others

- Diversity communities & social equity/social justice aspects of transportation access
- How to serve people on the autism spectrum with transportation
- Best practices for assisting people with traumatic brain injury to navigate transportation systems
- Economic/cross-policy inter-relationships

Research Methodology Suggestions

- Less case studies more comparative profiles
- Involve people with disabilities – CBPR (community based participative research)
- Find level of effect and relationships – regression, correlation, statistical analysis
- More quantitative analysis using large Census and household survey datasets with disability and transportation variables
- Econometric studies of transportation and cost-benefit analyses

Thank You

Easter Seals Project ACTION

Questions? Please feel free to email:

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