Advancing Complete Streets
The Accessibility Component

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Easter Seals Project ACTION & the National Center on Senior Transportation

**Project ACTION (Accessible Community Transportation in Our Nation)**
Promoting cooperation between the transportation industry and the disability community since 1988

Increasing mobility for people with disabilities under the ADA and beyond through training, technical assistance, and resources

Funded through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration

**National Center on Senior Transportation (NCST)**
Increasing transportation options for older adults and enhancing their ability to live more independently within their communities
Four Core Activities

- Training
- Technical Assistance
- Research
- Outreach – Website & newsletters
- Publications and resource materials
- Social media, conferences, & advisory committees
Training Resources

- *Distance Learning Webinars*
- 2010 - Building Livable Communities through Increased Pedestrian Access; Using the *Toolkit for Assessing Bus Stop Accessibility and Safety*
- 2011 - Planning for Accessibility of Livable and Sustainable Communities
- Creating Livable, Accessible Communities by Completing Our Streets
- Environmental Barrier Analysis
Training Resources

In-Person Events

• Accessible Transportation Coalitions Initiative
  – Held annually by application; 10 communities in 2011
  – Consists of a 2-day event with 1 year of follow-up technical assistance
  – Local discussion and planning among disability, transportation, and community officials
Technical Assistance

National (800) Line Available

- Monday-Friday 9 am to 5 pm Eastern
- (800) 659-6428 or projectaction@easterseals.com
- ADA requirements, service animals, paratransit
- Transit facility access, pedestrian access, community coordination
- Involving people with disabilities in the planning process
Research

• ESPA and NCST staff support Transportation Research Board advisory panels
• ESPA collaborates with university researchers
• Recent projects:
  Carnegie-Mellon (RERC-APT) and University at Buffalo Universal Design
  University of Illinois at Chicago, Texas A&M and University of California-Berkley
  Transportation, Health & Wellness Connection
Outreach – Resources & Publications

• Reaching out through:
  – Print and e-newsletters, conferences, website and social media, products, and publications

• Universal Design and Access Resources
  – *Accessible Pathways & Livable Communities Pocket Guide*
  – Getting There Together training activity (online)
  – *Toolkit for the Assessment of Bus Stop Accessibility and Safety*
Technical Assistance Questions
What We’re Hearing…

• How do we fund improvements?
• Who owns the bus stop property? Who is responsible for taking care of it?
• How do we handle barriers such as overgrown trees?
• How do we advocate for accessible bus stops in our community?
• How do we form public-private partnerships to improve or maintain a transit stop or facility?
• How can we make fixed-route transit more accessible?
Raising Awareness of the Accessibility Component of Complete Streets

- **Accessible Pathways & Livable Communities Pocket Guide**
  - For planners, public works, local officials & advocates
  - Basics for getting started in your community
What We’re Trying to Avoid

What We’re Trying to Accomplish

Photos: National Complete Streets Coalition
Community Actions to Develop Accessible Infrastructure

Include people with disabilities in the planning process

- Describing gaps in service/identifying environmental barriers
- Prioritizing improvements and providing feedback on pathway alteration during construction

Incorporate accessible features into transportation facility design

- Wider fare gates at transit facilities
- Installing an additional elevator
- Visual and audible pedestrian signals
- Signal timing long enough for people to cross the street
Fundamental Steps for Improving the Traveler’s Experience

- Community Action Steps for Improving Accessibility
  - Improve bus stop and transit system accessibility
  - Conduct a community bus stop inventory
  - Barrier-free design, wayfinding, safety and warning detection
  - Design stops using ADA standards
  - Add benches, trash receptacles and bike storage
  - Protect riders against heat, cold and wind
Green Yet Accessible

Accessible Streetscapes

**Curb Zone** - pedestrians transition to the street

**Furniture Zone** - buffer between vehicles and pedestrians (Landscaping, benches, signs, bike racks, etc.)

**Pedestrian Zone** - provides 5 to 6 feet of pedestrian or wheelchair movement

**Frontage Zone** - entrances, doors, cafes, planters

Coordinate so that landscaping doesn’t conflict with accessible parking locations…

Pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden 2006
Return on Investment

- **Benefits of Accessible Communities**
  - Assists 36 million people with disabilities in U.S. to live in an independent environment
  - Narrows the employment gap (39% employment rate for people with disabilities/80% for those without)
  - Helps maintain health and wellness
  - Reduces traffic and pedestrian fatalities
  - Provides safe mobility for seniors
  - Boosts economic and social vitality, protects environment & enhances community engagement

Statistics: 2008 American Community Survey
Other ESPA Resources

• Print Resources include:
  – *Accessible Pathways to Bus Stops and Transit: A Process Guide*
  – *Including People with Disabilities in Coordinated Transportation Plans*
  – *Universal Design and Accessible Transit Systems: Facts to Consider When Updating or Expanding Your Transit System*

• ESPA & PBIC Online Toolkit
  – *Getting There Together* – 2 hour adaptable training
  – Introductory level training (ADA 101, Signage, Paths of Travel, Pedestrian Signals)
  – Includes environmental barrier analysis form
  – Community-wide analysis
Other ESPA Resources

- **Bus Stop Accessibility Toolkit**
  - *Accessible Pathways to Bus Stops and Transit: A Process Guide*
  
  Transcript from June 2010 audio conferences available at [www.projectaction.org](http://www.projectaction.org)

Principles of barrier-free design
Bus stop checklist
Use of technology
Sample forms and policies
Livable Communities Partners

• Partner Organization Support
  – Co-sponsored publications and webinars
  – Website and newsletter features
  – Outreach events

Recent partnership endeavors:
  – AARP
  – American Public Transportation Association
  – Community Transportation Association of America
  – National Complete Streets Coalition
  – Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center
  – Regional Transportation Agencies
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