



**Accessible Avenue**

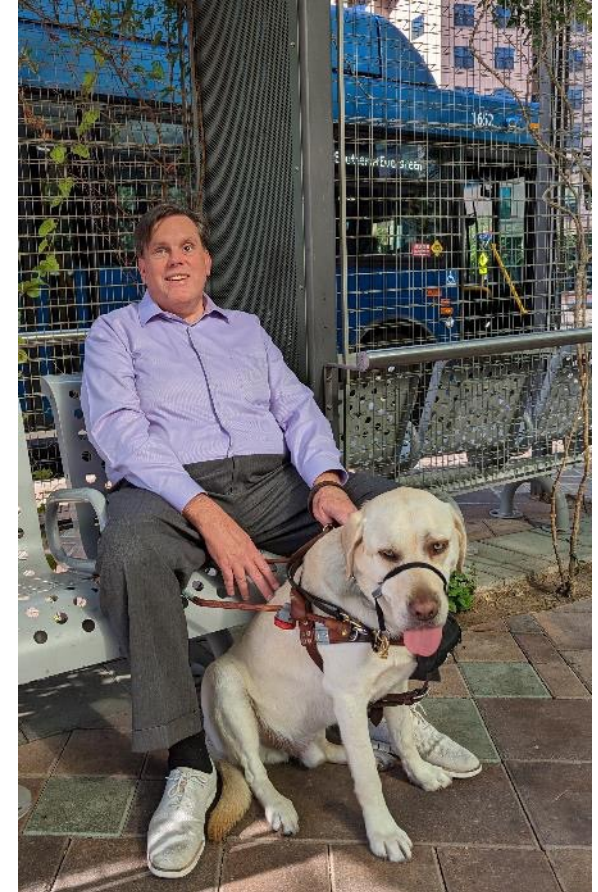
Making Mobility Accessible for Everyone

# Keeping to the Path:

A Roadmap for Pedestrian and Transportation Advocacy

# Introduction

- Lifelong member of the disability community.
- 30 years in the accessible transit & paratransit industry.
- Regular writer and speaker – *Topics ranging from the ADA to Digital Accessibility to Autonomous Vehicles*
- Author of new book – *“All Aboard: Conducting Accessible Community Involvement for Public Transit”*.



# Rural and Small-Town Mobility is a Big Deal

- 19% of Americans live in communities with populations that are below 50,000.
- Even in small towns, the accessibility of transportation and other community infrastructure is critically important
- People with disabilities regularly cite the inaccessibility of transportation and pedestrian spaces as critical barriers to equal participation in society.



# The Concept of Accessible Community Mobility

**“Accessible community mobility” refers to the ability for people to be able to move about within the communities where they live, work, and play.**

- Accessible community mobility is not the same as:
  - Compliance with the ADA.
  - Adequate funding for transportation and infrastructure projects.
  - Innovative transportation solutions.
  - A “one size fits all” approach.
- Accessible community mobility means that people with disabilities can participate equitably in what the community offers. This includes:
  - Access to employment, education, healthcare, shopping, and other destinations within a community.
  - Ability to participate in community life alongside other community members.
  - Access to the outside world that is similar to that enjoyed by other community residents.



# The Challenges of Advocating for Accessible Community Mobility



- Transportation and infrastructure are complex topics.
- Lots of federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
- Decentralized funding.
- Every community's approach to governance, decision-making, and project and service designs are unique.



## What We'll Cover

- For transit and infrastructure projects
- How projects and services are planned.
- How decisions are made and by whom.
- Tips for effective advocacy.



# Funding for Transit and Infrastructure Projects and Services

- Is it a capital or operating project?
- Federal Funds are mostly for building and buying.
- State and local funds can match, buy, operate, and maintain.
- The value that transit and infrastructure investments create for communities.



# Transit and Infrastructure Planning – It's Complicated!

- Planning processes vary by type of project, by state and by community.
- Capital projects take longer and have more steps.
- Transit services tend to be planned locally and over a shorter timeline.
- The roles of state DOTs, regional planning organizations, and local transit agencies and communities.
- How, where, and when to get involved in infrastructure and transit planning efforts.





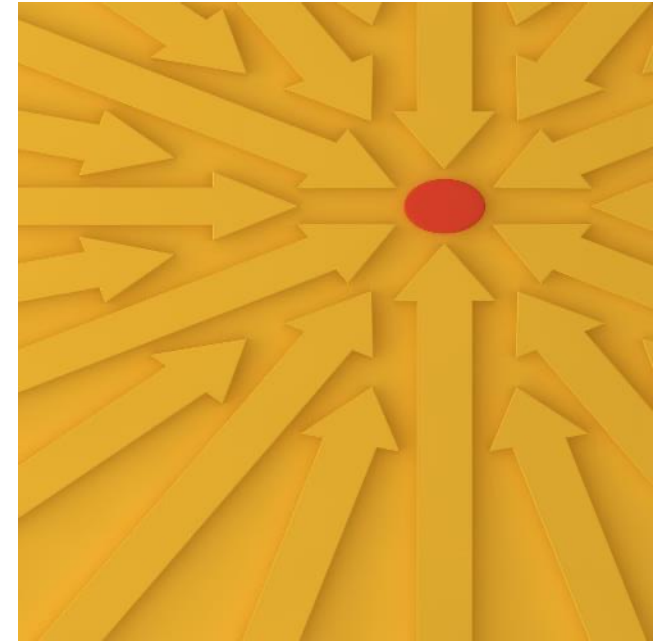
# How Decisions are Made and by Whom

## Most decision-making is local.

- Project and service proposals.
- When, where, and how transit services are provided.
- Where infrastructure is built, modified, and replaced.

## Who are the decision-makers

- City/Community Councils, County Commissions, etc.
- Transit agency and/or Human Service Agency Boards of Directors
- Regional Planning Organizations



*Many factors drive decision-making.*



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# Tips for Effective Advocacy



- Learn how funding, planning, and decision-making work in your community.
- Get involved early enough to impact decision-making.
- Build relationships with other stakeholders within the local community.
- Remember the goals of accessible community mobility.



# Questions, Comments, and Discussion



# Thank you!



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