United States Department of Transportation
Draft Strategic Plan on Accessible Transportation

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Contents

INTRODUCTION

As the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT or the Department) celebrates the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), it recognizes a prime opportunity to build on its accomplishments in expanding accessible transportation for people with disabilities by continuing to remove barriers and enhance the transportation system.

The landmark ADA civil rights law addresses the rights of people with disabilities, including prohibiting discrimination based on disability. The ADA has led to major improvements in transportation across the United States. However, significant barriers still exist—particularly in rural and disadvantaged communities. At the same time, the transportation system is experiencing unprecedented innovation. New technologies such as automated vehicles and urban air mobility have the potential to enhance mobility and improve safety for people with disabilities. There is an opportunity to leverage numerous new technologies, emerging data sources, and public and private partnerships to identify and address remaining needs.

In 2018, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics reported that an estimated 25.5 million Americans experience a travel-limiting disability that makes it difficult to participate in activities of daily living. Further, the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) public health emergency has highlighted the critical need for people with disabilities to have access to transportation services that connect them to healthcare, pharmacies, grocery stores, and other essential services.

DOT is taking steps to make America's transportation system accessible to all travelers. The Department's operating administrations and the Office of the Secretary are pursuing initiatives to enhance accessibility and remove barriers in transportation access for people with disabilities. This strategic plan, which covers fiscal years (FY) 2021-2025, provides a unified vision to guide DOT in its accessibility initiatives. The Department will use the plan to address gaps in its accessibility work, enhance coordination of accessibility initiatives across the Department and the Federal government, identify opportunities for meaningful engagement of people with disabilities in its planning and policy processes, and facilitate the efficient use of DOT resources to further accessibility.[1]

The Office of the Under Secretary for Transportation Policy led the development of the strategic plan, which focuses on Department-wide initiatives as well as strategies and actions taken by operating administrations with direct responsibility for accessibility initiatives:[2]

- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)
- Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
- Office of the Secretary (OST)

[1] A summary of laws related to transportation accessibility is included as Appendix A.

[2] Other DOT operating administrations that do not have an enforcement role in public accessibility are not included in this strategic plan. These operating administrations include the Maritime Administration (MARAD), the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), and the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (SLSDC).

DOT's policy efforts related to accessibility draw upon extensive collaboration within the Department and with other Federal agencies, disability advocates, researchers, and the transportation industry. Through this strategic plan, DOT sets goals and objectives to facilitate the broad realization of accessibility in a way that improves the travel experience for all Americans, especially people with disabilities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In carrying out its accessibility goals, the Department is guided by four overarching guiding principles that cut across transportation types and operating administrations:

1. *Stakeholder Collaboration*: DOT will work collaboratively with other Federal agencies, State governments, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), local transportation agencies, the private sector, people with disabilities, and other stakeholders toward making existing transportation infrastructure accessible. DOT will leverage these stakeholder relationships to encourage new transportation projects to be designed with all users in mind. DOT will also work to address accessibility through current grant programs and will prioritize keeping existing infrastructure in good repair, acknowledging that infrastructure maintenance can have accessibility implications.
2. *Innovation*: DOT will encourage research into technologies that have the potential to remove barriers to accessibility in the transportation system. DOT will seek to complement research done by leading academic institutions, the private sector, and other entities to fill gaps that industry is not already covering. DOT will work to remove any unnecessary regulatory barriers affecting innovative products that will improve accessibility in transportation.
3. *Complete Trip*: The "complete trip" concept means that all travelers, including people with disabilities, should be able to get not just curb-to-curb and door-to-door, but point-to-point. They should be able to travel from their starting point to their destination spontaneously and independently, being able to navigate sidewalks, intersections, transit facilities, rail stations, vehicles, and all other parts of the transportation network with ease and confidence.
4. *Geographic Equity*: Rural residents with disabilities face unique challenges accessing transportation, including lack of public transit, longer distances to desired destinations, and increased reliance on personal car ownership as a means of transportation. Therefore, simply applying urban solutions to rural communities is not enough. Consistent with DOT's Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) Initiative, DOT's accessibility and technological initiatives will consider the unique needs of rural residents with disabilities and the initiatives' impact on rural communities.

STRATEGIC PLAN SCOPE

This strategic plan sets out Departmental goals and objectives for FY 2021-2025. The plan outlines DOT's principles of removing barriers to accessibility in transportation. For the purposes of this plan, a person with a disability is defined in accordance with the ADA as a person who has "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; a record of such an impairment; or [a person] being regarded as having such an impairment."[3] Three categories of disabilities and potential representative transportation needs are described below. These categories are not mutually exclusive; DOT acknowledges that individuals may fall into more than one of the categories below.

[3] 42 U.S.C. § 12102(a)

People with mobility impairments include people who use assistive devices such as wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, or canes, and people who have difficulty walking, climbing stairs, lifting heavy items, or grasping objects. Some of these individuals who are drivers need after-market modifications, such as hand controls, wheelchair ramps, and lifts. Generally, in part because of the ADA, people with mobility impairments can use public transportation, such as most buses and trains. However, factors such as lack of ramps, poor customer service, or chronic under-maintenance of equipment such as elevators may affect the ability of people with mobility impairments to use certain stops and stations. For navigation, these individuals need information about the physical accessibility of sidewalks (e.g., if curb ramps are present), including any construction that may prevent them from safely traveling to the stop or station.

People with sensory disabilities include those who are blind or visually impaired, and people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Driving a car is generally not possible for people who are blind or who have significant visual impairments. Audible walking directions and accessible pedestrian signals can help people with visual impairments navigate to transit hubs. GPS applications should identify and georeference stations and stops so individuals with visual impairments can find them more easily. Any information presented visually also needs to be announced audibly for accessibility to people with visual impairments. This information could include indicators that the bus has arrived, a stop has been reached, a train is going in a specific direction, airplane boarding has started, and other information that helps the traveler identify and locate their stop, board the correct vehicle, and exit at the intended destination. Similarly, airports, buses, and rail transportation entities should transmit audible announcements and notifications to visual displays to inform individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing of travel announcements and alerts at airports, on trains, and on buses.

People with cognitive disabilities include individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injury, and/or autism. Individuals with cognitive disabilities may benefit from travel information that is presented in plain language, visualized information, and supportive technologies, such as wayfinding, that assist with navigation. Travel training may assist an individual with a cognitive disability in successfully reaching their desired destinations. Trip planning features that allow an individual with a cognitive disability to practice making the trip virtually may reduce apprehension and uncertainty, preparing the individual to make the complete trip successfully.

DOT ACCESSIBILITY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

Goals are the guiding statements of any strategic plan. They divide future efforts into spheres of influence and help focus future action. This document includes five strategic goals:

- Goal 1: Remove unnecessary barriers for people with disabilities to seek licensure for, operate, and/or ride in passenger and commercial motor vehicles.
- Goal 2: Remove unnecessary barriers to multimodal accessibility of public rights-of-way.
- Goal 3: Enhance opportunities for people with disabilities to walk, roll, cycle, and use micromobility services and other innovative mobility technologies to the greatest extent possible.
- Goal 4: Support the Nation's public transit systems and mobility providers in providing accessibility for people with disabilities.
- Goal 5: Advance accessible air, motorcoach, and rail intercity transportation systems for people with disabilities.

These goals are addressed in detail below. Each goal includes specific objectives that the Department plans to pursue in FY 2021-2025, along with strategies and example activities that advance these goals and objectives. These example activities do not encompass all of the accessibility-related work the Department and its operating administrations are doing and plan to do; rather, they highlight key actions DOT is taking towards meeting its accessibility goals.

GOAL 1. REMOVE UNNECESSARY BARRIERS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO SEEK LICENSURE FOR, OPERATE, AND/OR RIDE IN PASSENGER AND COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLES

New technologies such as Automated Driving Systems have the potential to increase mobility options for people who cannot or choose not to drive, or for whom public transit is not available. DOT is committed to working with industry and persons with disabilities to promote accessibility in emerging transportation technologies. In addition, people with disabilities who can safely operate passenger and commercial motor vehicles should be able to obtain the requisite licensures. The Department and its operating administrations will continue to work with State Driver Licensing Agencies (SDLAs) to prevent discrimination; make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures; and ensure program access to enable people with disabilities to obtain licenses. Objectives supporting this goal include:

- **Objective 1.1. Vehicle Accessibility**
- **Objective 1.2. Driver Licensure**
- **Objective 1.3. Commercial Motor Vehicle Licensure**

Objective 1.1. Vehicle Accessibility

Automated vehicles will someday have the potential to provide people with disabilities who do not drive easier access to jobs, healthcare, and other destinations and services. It is critical that new vehicle types and operating models are designed with the diverse needs of people with disabilities in mind. The Department plans to complement industry efforts by conducting and funding research to enhance the accessibility of personal vehicle travel, including automated vehicles, and will work with industry and stakeholders to disseminate results and advance solutions for accessible passenger vehicles.

- **Strategy 1.1.1. Advance solutions that can further enable people with physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities to use automated vehicles.**
    - *Example:* The DOT Inclusive Design Challenge asks researchers and innovators to develop solutions to our most pressing access barriers for people with physical, sensory,

and cognitive disabilities. Proposals may include both hardware and software solutions aimed to address barriers. Stage I of the Challenge requests written proposals describing proof-of-concept ideas. In Stage II, which will begin in early 2021, semi-finalists will be expected to develop a prototype of their solution, which they will demonstrate to judges upon the completion of Stage II in 2022.

  - *Example:* DOT will compile and share relevant standards, best practices, and other available guidance pertaining to the development of accessible passenger vehicles and interfaces. DOT intends for this library to serve as a resource to students, researchers, and automotive and Automated Driving System professionals to help inform the future development of accessible automated vehicles.
  - *Example:* DOT will conduct research to identify existing best practices and remaining gaps, and fund preliminary work toward a set of standards that industry can voluntarily use and adapt as automated vehicle technology innovations continue to develop.

- **Strategy 1.1.2. Leverage DOT research funds to investigate the impact of automated vehicles, logistics, and travel patterns on transportation for people with disabilities.**
  - *Example:* Ongoing DOT-funded research, including at University Transportation Centers and through DOT's Automated Driving System Demonstration Grants, is advancing accessibility considerations related to automated vehicles. For example, NHTSA research on automated wheelchair securement is investigating strategies that could be used in an automated vehicle where a driver is not available to help secure a wheelchair and occupant. Other DOT-funded research is exploring human factors issues with highly automated driving systems and supporting the development of design guidance and prototypes for accessible human-to-vehicle interaction applied to highly automated systems. Research is also investigating how automated vehicles in rural areas can provide transportation options for people who are not able to drive. DOT will use the research results to inform the development of goals and considerations related to the accessibility of automated vehicles.
  - *Example:* The Department will work with universities and other organizations to conduct research on how to leverage technologies to improve logistics, communications, scheduling, and other aspects of movement in personal vehicles (including ride hailing and other contract services). Research will also include forecasted impacts of trip-reducing options like telework, e-commerce, and telemedicine.
  - *Example:* The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology recently awarded University Transportation Center grants on the topics of Accessibility and the Impacts of e-Commerce. These veins of inquiry will continue for the next five years.
- **Strategy 1.1.3. Engage stakeholders on inclusive design of automated vehicles.**
  - *Example:* DOT will identify needs to make automated vehicles accessible to people with disabilities, determine appropriate communication strategies, identify feedback requirements, and determine how to best elicit rider trust in Automated Driving Systems.

- **Strategy 1.1.4. Pave the way for safe deployment of new technologies that increase accessibility in transportation by evaluating relevant regulations and eliminating unnecessary regulatory barriers.**
    - *Example:* As technologies develop and mature, cross-modal and emerging transportation systems have the potential to increase mobility for people with disabilities who are unable to drive. The Department's Non-Traditional and Emerging Transportation Technology (NETT) Council, in coordination with the Department's Regulatory Reform Task Force, serves a coordinating function that ensures that the appropriate and relevant experts from across the operating administrations can identify relevant regulations, determine when regulations are outdated, and/or consider whether the Department should establish new standards for cross-modal transportation technologies and systems.

Objective 1.2. Driver Licensure

Accessible and non-discriminatory SDLA locations, procedures, and services are necessary for people with disabilities to obtain drivers' licenses. The Department seeks to promote accessibility and prevent discrimination for individuals with disabilities seeking to obtain drivers' licenses. To achieve this objective, DOT will continue to partner with SDLAs to provide technical assistance, outreach, and complaint resolution to promote physical and program access for people with disabilities.

- **Strategy 1.2.1. Work with SDLAs to ensure that eligible individuals who apply for a driver's license are not denied a license or services of a SDLA based on their protected status.**
    - *Example:* NHTSA's Office of Civil Rights receives approximately 75 complaints and inquiries annually against SDLAs from various sources including individuals with disabilities, advocacy groups, and the Department of Justice (DOJ). NHTSA's Office of Civil Rights will continue to work with SDLAs through technical assistance and outreach to ensure that individuals are not denied a driver's license or services based on their protected status and that SDLAs make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to accommodate people with disabilities.
- **Strategy 1.2.2. Work with SDLAs to resolve complaints of discrimination.**
    - *Example:* NHTSA's Office of Civil Rights will continue to work with SDLAs to resolve complaints of alleged discrimination under the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.[4] NHTSA's Office of Civil Rights is currently investigating 21 ADA complaints against SDLAs. Examples of resolutions include: physical modifications to inaccessible entrances, designation of accessible parking spaces, modification of policy to enable an individual with a learning disability to have additional time to take a driver's license exam, and a medical review to determine if an individual with a medical condition has the capacity to safely operate a motor vehicle.
- **Strategy 1.2.3. Work with States to ensure that SDLA locations are accessible to people with disabilities.**
    - *Example:* NHTSA's Office of Civil Rights will continue to work with SDLAs and the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) to provide on-going

[4] *Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Pub. L. 93-112),* as amended (29 U.S.C. 794).

technical assistance and complaint resolution to ensure physical and program access for people with disabilities.

Objective 1.3. Commercial Motor Vehicle Licensure

To obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL) for operating a Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV), applicants must demonstrate that they have the skills, knowledge, and physical qualifications to operate this type of vehicle. These physical qualification requirements have historically precluded some people with disabilities who are otherwise qualified from obtaining CDLs. The Department will continue to work with SDLAs to provide opportunities for people with disabilities, including those who are deaf or hard of hearing, who can safely operate commercial motor vehicles. It will also evaluate regulatory issues concerning commercial drivers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

- **Strategy 1.3.1. Develop and finalize resources for SDLAs.**
    - *Example:* FMCSA intends to finalize several technical assistance resources to support SDLAs in using reasonable accommodations to provide people who are deaf or hard of hearing with equal opportunity to drive CMVs while maintaining safety standards. FMCSA will convene a working group to review and finalize these resources, including the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Resource Guide and American Sign Language videos to aid applicants for a CDL during the skills test.
- **Strategy 1.3.2. Evaluation of regulatory issues concerning commercial drivers who are deaf or hard of hearing**.
    - *Example:* FMCSA has granted more than 450 exemptions to individuals who do not meet the current hearing standard for CMV drivers since 2013, with the number of hearing exemption applications varying from a few dozen in a given year to more than 100. To date, the number of hearing applications received is a fraction of the number of medical exemption applications that FMCSA processes each year. FMCSA will investigate the safety of CMV operations to determine the crash risk associated with drivers who are deaf and hard of hearing, assist in the consideration of exemption applications, and explore the appropriateness of rulemaking to update the hearing standards in 49 CFR 391.41. The study will produce a more complete picture of CMV operators who are deaf and hard of hearing, more accurate correlations between hearing ability and safety performance, and will identify relevant training and testing practices for deaf and hard of hearing CMV drivers.

GOAL 2. REMOVE UNNECESSARY BARRIERS TO MULTIMODAL ACCESSIBILITY OF PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY[5]

Public roadways and pedestrian facilities in public rights-of-way are critical resources that provide access to multiple modes of transportation, from walking to rail. DOT is committed to working with local communities to enhance the accessibility of the public right-of-way. As a result, more people with disabilities will be able to use means of transportation to successfully complete trips from starting point to destination.

This goal includes the following targeted objectives:

- **Objective 2.1. Data and Deployment**
- **Objective 2.2. Civil Rights**
- **Objective 2.3. Standards**
- **Objective 2.4. Public Participation**
- **Objective 2.5. Workforce Development**

Objective 2.1. Data and Deployment

As technology continues to evolve and integrate with the Nation's transportation systems, it is critical that information and data are shared across DOT and with the public. Integrating data, systems, and related definitions and standards will allow the Department to leverage advancing transportation technologies effectively and consistently to improve the user experience across modes, with a particular focus on addressing barriers for travelers with disabilities.

- **Strategy 2.1.1. Establish standard definitions for data.**
    - *Example:* FHWA has a data consistency working group for data specifications. The Department has developed and will continue to develop voluntary industry reporting guidelines and establish forums and research plans to align data specifications at a national level. Data specifications will align with grantee needs under the ITS4US (Complete Trip) Deployment Program competition, an ongoing multimodal effort led by the Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office (ITS JPO) through partnership with OST, FTA, and FHWA, which aims to advance innovations to promote independent mobility for all travelers. These efforts are consistent with the White House Federal Data Strategy.
- **Strategy 2.1.2. Facilitate the integration and deployment of emerging technologies and innovative partnerships to foster mobility options for all travelers.**
    - *Example:* The ITS4US (Complete Trip) Deployment Program will provide funds to enable communities to showcase innovative business partnerships, technologies, and practices that promote independent mobility for all travelers. The program aims to procure and award large-scale, replicable deployments that enhance access and mobility for all travelers regardless of location, income, or disability.

[5] For the purposes of this Strategic Plan, "public right-of-way" refers to public land or property, usually in interconnected corridors, that is acquired for or dedicated to transportation purposes. (U.S. Access Board, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Proposed Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public-Rights-of-Way (76 Fed. Reg. 44664 (July 26, 2011)). Pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way include sidewalks, pedestrian street crossings, pedestrian signals, transit stops, and other facilities for pedestrian circulation and use.

Objective 2.2. Civil Rights

DOT's Departmental Office of Civil Rights (DOCR) and operating administration Civil Rights Offices and oversight teams play a critical role in investigations, complaint resolution, transition planning, guidance, and the development of resources. The Department's Civil Rights offices are committed to enforcing compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA, as well as investigating and resolving cases of discrimination to ensure that people with disabilities can fully access the Nation's transportation systems.

- **Strategy 2.2.1. Update resources to enhance operations and provide clarity.**
    - *Example:* FHWA develop technical assistance tools to improve the processing of ADA complaints. FHWA will also develop a National Highway Institute (NHI) course on conducting investigations, and will develop resources for local governments to address accessibility barriers in their jurisdictions.
- **Strategy 2.2.2. Facilitate implementation of State DOT ADA Transition Plans.**
    - *Example:* Transition Plans identify actions needed to correct barriers to individuals with disabilities. FHWA will provide opportunities for State DOTs to share best practices, lessons learned, and innovative approaches to ADA Transition Plans at events, including webinars, ADA showcases, and peer exchanges.
- **Strategy 2.2.3. Promote strategies to encourage a proactive culture of compliance, address backlog of ADA complaints, and speedily address new complaints.**
    - *Example:* DOCR is developing strategies to promote the importance of considering accessibility at each stage of transportation delivery processes. This includes developing a framework for promoting proactive compliance (rather than reactive complaint processing) and working with the operating administrations to identify ways in which they can engage recipients to adopt universal design as a key principle in their transportation systems.
    - *Example:* FHWA's Backlog Team, which consists of staff from the Resource Center, Office of the Chief Counsel, and Division Civil Rights Specialists, participated in a 12-month special project to review and draft the Letters of Finding (LOFs) for ADA complaints as a collateral duty to expedite the processing of complaints. Due to this project's success, FHWA has extended it another 12 months. FHWA will also provide individualized technical assistance to States with the highest number of pending ADA complaints, including technical assistance on investigation methods and report drafting. FHWA will propose changes to the current ADA complaints process, including having Division Offices draft investigation plans and LOFs to expedite the processing of these complaints.

Objective 2.3. Standards

Clear and uniform accessibility standards for pedestrian facilities allow individuals with disabilities to travel in cities and towns across the country. Investment in infrastructure with recognized design and construction standards will increase accessibility and mobility for all Americans. DOT will advance national standards on rights-of-way accessibility, including efforts in conjunction with partner organizations.

- **Strategy 2.3.1. Collaborate with other agencies to advance rules governing rights-of-way.**
    - *Example*: The Department will select a representative to fill the DOT seat on the Access Board, contingent upon the availability of Senate-confirmed staff.

- **Strategy 2.3.2. Explore ways to address ADA effective communication requirements.**
    - *Example:* FHWA is exploring ways to communicate alternate pedestrian routes in work zones to conform with ADA requirements regarding equally effective communication with individuals with disabilities.

Objective 2.4. Public Participation

Public participation, including the participation of people with disabilities, throughout the transportation planning and project development process is essential for providing safe, accessible, and reliable transportation systems for all. Advancing the use of a variety of virtual tools and techniques creates a better understanding of complex technical planning and project development information. These tools also make participation more accessible for greater numbers of people, including people with disabilities. The Department recognizes the importance of providing effective and accessible mechanisms for public participation so that travelers with disabilities can have a hand in shaping transportation systems that work for all.

- **Strategy 2.4.1. Advance the use of virtual tools and techniques that create a better understanding of complex technical planning and project development information and make participation more accessible.**
    - *Example:* FHWA will evaluate the effectiveness of virtual tools and resources for expanding public involvement opportunities for all transportation users, including people with disabilities.
    - *Example:* Through the Every Day Counts Initiative, FHWA enhances processes at the State level by deploying proven innovations to increase efficiency in project delivery, safety, congestion, and automation. FHWA will continue providing technical assistance to State DOTs and MPOs to leverage Virtual Public Involvement (VPI) when appropriate and other enhanced inclusion efforts to ensure people with disabilities can meaningfully participate in Federal-aid highway program decision making and national research and outreach efforts.
- **Strategy 2.4.2. Connect communities by integrating transportation programs, activities, and projects through community connections innovations.**
    - *Example:* Through the Every Day Counts Initiative, FHWA helps State DOTs use transportation innovations, partnerships, and technologies to bring communities together and connect people to services and opportunities. A connected community is accessible for all transportation users and connected to other communities through sustainable and resilient transportation networks and systems in a state of good repair. If the community connections principles are followed, the anticipated outcomes include more effective community engagement, improved multimodal access for all users, revitalized communities or enhanced economic competitiveness, and overall successful project and program delivery outcomes through a stakeholder-driven process. FHWA developed a community connections framework and toolkit to help practitioners identify infrastructure gaps and to help ensure equitable access to safe, reliable, affordable, connected, and multimodal transportation networks for all users.

Objective 2.5. Transportation Workforce Development

The development and training of the transportation workforce are important mechanisms for achieving accessible transportation systems for all. Well-designed training programs, tools, and resources will encourage the alignment of knowledge and business practices with the Department's accessibility vision. The Department will promote strategies for knowledge and capacity building, collaboration, and research that advance its accessibility goals.

- **Strategy 2.5.1. Work with universities to develop accessibility content in degree programs.**
    - *Example:* FHWA program offices will work with universities to develop accessibility content that universities and other organizations (such as the Transportation Research Board, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, Institute of Transportation Engineers, National Association of City Transportation Officials, and disability organizations) can use in their degree programs and in guidelines for both design and communication. FHWA will also continue to evaluate and update the University Curriculum and Courses created through the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center, and will continue to collaborate with University Transportation Centers, universities, and colleges on developing accessibility content for engineering, landscape architecture, environmental design, and urban planning professional degree programs. Further, FHWA will evaluate workforce development activities.
- **Strategy 2.5.2. Expand delivery of external training resources and consistently assess opportunities to update materials.**
    - *Example:* The Department will create and implement accessibility training that has a multimodal focus and utilizes a mix of formal and informal training and knowledge building to communicate core concepts, priorities, and best practices for improving accessibility in public rights-of-way.

GOAL 3. ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO WALK, ROLL, CYCLE, AND USE MICROMOBILITY SERVICES[6] AND OTHER INNOVATIVE MOBILITY TECHNOLOGIES TO THE GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE

Equal access to non-vehicular transportation modes is key to achieving a fully accessible transportation system that promotes complete trips for all. Research and innovation will remove barriers and create an environment that permits and supports access to non-vehicular modes. Objectives include:

- **Objective 3.1. Implementation of Innovations**
- **Objective 3.2. Bicycle and Pedestrian Accessibility**
- **Objective 3.3. Micromobility Access**

Objective 3.1. Implementation of Innovations

The Department seeks to advance implementation of multimodal innovation, network connectivity, and emerging mobility technologies to accommodate people with disabilities. Technologies providing information and options to travelers such as wayfinding, navigation, and trip planning solutions are key to overcoming accessibility barriers. Through research and identification and evaluation of tools and technologies, DOT will facilitate improved understanding of accessible transportation facilities, innovative trip planning and navigation methods, and vulnerable road user interaction with vehicles with automated driving systems.

- **Strategy 3.1.1. Evaluate tools and technologies for accessible facility inventory and condition assessment.**
    - *Example:* FHWA will continue to explore current and potential technologies that may be used to inventory and assess condition of accessible facilities for walking, rolling, biking, and using adaptive micromobility devices.
- **Strategy 3.1.2. Identify approaches for assisting people with disabilities with trip planning and easily navigating facilities.**
    - *Example:* FTA will work to promote data specifications for demand response transit and interactions among software systems owned by different transit providers. These specifications allow different transit providers to access common trip information such as a rider's reservation details, origins, and destinations, which improves interoperability, reduces costs per passenger served, and improves service quality. Demand response transit data specifications may give riders more choices for taking transit and may help providers serve the public more efficiently.
    - *Example:* DOT will encourage other common data specifications, such as the General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS), that can help riders more easily access route, schedule, fare, and arrival time information, especially when combined with accessible smart phone and app technology that can improve trip planning and navigation.

[6] A micromobility device is any small, low-speed, human or electric-powered transportation device, including bicycles, scooters, electric-assist bicycles (e-bikes), electric scooters (e-scooters), and other small, lightweight, wheeled conveyances. Micromobility includes public shared fleet, private commercial, and private personal device use.

- **Strategy 3.1.3. Conduct research on safe accommodation of people with disabilities interacting with vehicles with automated driving systems.**
    - *Example:* NHTSA is conducting a literature review to investigate the current knowledge surrounding safety considerations specific to pedestrians, bicyclists, and road users who have disabilities when interacting with vehicles with automated driving systems. The review provides considerations for physical, visual, hearing, cognitive, and combined disabilities.
- **Strategy 3.1.4. Assist communities in developing tools to identify gaps in their networks that will improve accessibility, assist in project selection, and improve multimodal network data quality across jurisdictions.**
    - *Example:* FHWA will continue to support communities in conducting pilot projects to use network connectivity measures using a performance-based planning and project development approach.

Objective 3.2. Bicycle and Pedestrian Accessibility

Accessible design, operation, maintenance, and asset management of bicycle and pedestrian networks is critical for people with disabilities to travel on demand. The Department aims to enhance bicycle and pedestrian[7] accessibility throughout the transportation planning, engineering, and construction process. DOT will guide research, provide technical assistance and resources, and conduct training to advance bicycle and pedestrian accessibility for people with disabilities, in coordination with interagency partners where appropriate.

- **Strategy 3.2.1. Provide resources to State, regional, and local governments to improve pedestrian and bicyclist accessibility and safety.**
    - *Example:* FHWA will continue working to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist deaths by providing targeted resources to the 16 States and 35 cities with the highest pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and/or fatality rates. This effort, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Focus States and Cities Initiative, supports peer exchanges, quarterly webinars, and technical assistance and training to improve accessibility and safety and develop action plans.
- **Strategy 3.2.2. Evaluate research gaps regarding accessibility and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists with disabilities.**
    - *Example:* FHWA will assess results from pilot programs, peer exchanges, case studies, and technical assistance to determine gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle accessibility space requiring additional research and resource development.
    - *Example:* NHTSA will perform a National Survey on Pedestrian and Bicyclist Attitudes and Behaviors that will assess current walking and bicycling trends (including e-bikes and e-scooters), behaviors, and attitudes. It will also assess the ability to travel within the community among people with disabilities, health impairments, and conditions that limit walking.
    - *Example:* NHTSA is conducting a study assessing the extent to which crashes are associated with bicyclist and motor vehicle driver actions and evaluating a High Visibility Enforcement program aimed at modifying the behavior of motorists passing bicyclists in two localities with a large number of bicycle crashes attributed to the

[7] Pedestrians include people using assistive devices, such as wheelchairs.

behavior. People who use mobility scooters often use bicycle facilities (for example, when sidewalks are inaccessible). The findings of this project provide a foundation for further exploration of safe passing of all users of these facilities.

Objective 3.3. Micromobility Access

Micromobility devices could play a critical role in supporting complete trips, particularly for first- and last-mile gaps to transit, and could help increase mobility and accessibility for people with disabilities because they are less strenuous to operate than conventional bicycles and scooters. By advancing research in this rapidly evolving field, sharing best practices, building partnerships with internal and external stakeholders, and stimulating innovation to further the state of the practice, DOT will advance micromobility accessibility for people with disabilities.

- **Strategy 3.3.1. Identify and share best practices on powered, unpowered, and adaptive micromobility devices, and work to fill research gaps.**
    - *Example:* In coordination with DOT's Micromobility Working Group, FHWA will explore various research topics including how the design of micromobility devices accommodates people with differing abilities and how communities can prevent micromobility device parking from impeding accessibility for people with disabilities.
    - *Example:* FHWA will provide a forum for jurisdictions to share best practices on maintaining compliance with accessibility requirements, mitigating safety concerns about micromobility device use and parking (e.g., geofencing and dedicated parking), and integrating adaptive bicycles into multimodal networks, within shared fleets, and on public lands.
- **Strategy 3.3.2. Help stimulate innovation that promotes equitable deployment and provides safe and comfortable use of emerging mobility devices for people with disabilities.**
    - *Example:* The FHWA Micromobility Research Agenda includes Standards for Equity with Micromobility as a high-priority research topic. FHWA could build on micromobility typology graphics to demonstrate the range of accessible micromobility vehicles (e.g., adaptive scooters and/or e-bikes) and accessibility devices (e.g., wearable sensors) that accommodate a range of people with disabilities.
    - *Example:* Building on the lessons learned from FHWA's research on Planning Multimodal Networks in a Connected and Automated Vehicle Future, FHWA could extend this project over time to conduct research and describe scenarios of how micromobility planning may change as deployment of connected and automated vehicle technology begins widespread deployment.
    - *Example:* FHWA will explore partnerships or build on existing FHWA-sponsored events associated with mobility innovation and advancing multimodal networks to enhance information sharing with industry manufacturers and key stakeholders to learn how new and existing technologies are assisting people with disabilities and identify where there may be gaps.

GOAL 4. SUPPORT THE NATION'S PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEMS AND MOBILITY PROVIDERS IN ENHANCING ACCESSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Public transit is critical to mobility for people with disabilities. However, the rider experience varies considerably based on an individual's disability, geographic location, and access to different services. DOT will promote initiatives to improve service delivery and collaborate with stakeholders and Federal, State, and local entities to explore standards and provide oversight. The Department is also committed to exploring how new service models may further enhance mobility; these efforts include innovative research and partnerships focused on harnessing new technologies to provide services to people with disabilities.

Within this goal area are four targeted objectives:

- **Objective 4.1. Transit Facilities**
- **Objective 4.2. Improved Service**
- **Objective 4.3. Vehicle Standards**
- **Objective 4.4. Mobility Innovation**

Objective 4.1. Transit Facilities

As the Nation's transit operators upgrade their facilities and build new ones, the Department will maintain its focus on increasing the number of accessible transit facilities. The Department will enhance oversight of ADA compliance in transit systems and will continue to allocate funding and explore standards to achieve this objective.

- **Strategy 4.1.1. Increase the number of accessible rail transit stations.**
    - *Example:* A number of pre-ADA rail stations across the U.S. are not accessible and pose mobility challenges for older Americans and individuals with disabilities. FTA and FRA will prioritize making stations accessible.
    - *Example:* FTA will establish an internal Construction Review Team to structure and formalize its existing processes to evaluate projects involving the construction or alteration of transit facilities to ensure that all applicable ADA requirements are met, particularly where project sponsors indicate site-specific conditions (new construction) or structural infeasibilities (alterations) that may interfere with full accessibility.
    - *Example:* FTA will expand its specialized ADA compliance reviews of fixed route systems to include light, rapid, and commuter rail service, specifically including use and maintenance of accessible features at rail stations and aboard rail vehicles.
- **Strategy 4.1.2. Collaborate with stakeholders and Federal, State, and local entities to explore the development of potential standards for wayfinding technologies for transit facilities.**
    - *Example:* The Department will collaborate with the U.S. Access Board and DOJ, as well as with the disability community, to consider standards for wayfinding technologies that can be rapidly and easily incorporated into transit facilities and systems and pedestrian connections to improve independent access by people who are blind or have low vision, or who would otherwise benefit from wayfinding cues.

Objective 4.2. Improved Service

People with disabilities use many different devices and accommodations to lead an independent life, including wheelchairs and service animals. The Department recognizes that such individuals often encounter inconsistent service when traveling, and intends to explore issues related to better accommodation of both by improving service and minimizing barriers.

- **Strategy 4.2.1. Consider harmonizing the accommodation of service animals.**
  - *Example:* The Department intends to consider updating the definition of "service animal" consistent with the definition enacted by DOJ in 2010.

- **Strategy 4.2.2. Improve the means by which wheelchair users are accommodated in transit service.**
  - *Example:* The Department intends to research methods to reduce conflict between wheelchair users and other riders for space aboard fixed route buses and trains.

Objective 4.3. Vehicle Standards

Accessible transit and rail vehicles allow people with disabilities to navigate the Nation's public transportation system without facing barriers to access or use. The Department will work with its grant recipients and other stakeholders to advance the accessibility of new and existing transit vehicles, and to equip vehicles with necessary features.

- **Strategy 4.3.1. Collaborate with stakeholders to review accessibility standards for vehicles and systems.**
  - *Example:* DOT will explore the implementation of the U.S. Access Board's revised accessibility standards for buses and vans.
  - *Example:* DOT will continue to work with the U.S. Access Board to modernize accessibility standards for rail vehicles, including continued coordination on the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Advisory Committee's recommendations.
  - *Example:* DOT will collaborate with the U.S. Access Board in the development of any new accessibility standards that may be required for new types of vehicles and systems.

Objective 4.4. Mobility Innovation

Innovations in mobility have the potential to make our Nation's transportation systems more effective, reliable, accessible, and safe for all. Through oversight and inclusive processes, the Department and its operating administrations will promote continued accessibility of transit services as systems adopt innovative mobility solutions. Further, the Department will ensure that innovation does not come at the cost of reduced mobility for people with disabilities.

- **Strategy 4.4.1. Improve collaboration between Federal aid recipients and secondary providers.**
  - *Example:* FTA will leverage existing review processes to help ensure its recipients' contracts or other relationships contain provisions to ensure compliance with ADA requirements relevant to their mode of transportation, whether by the private entities themselves or using the public entity's own fleet and resources. For fixed route services (including actual and virtual flag-stop service), all vehicles will be ADA accessible; demand-responsive service must ensure equivalent service to persons with disabilities, including wheelchair users, according to established criteria.

- **Strategy 4.4.2. Promote accessibility and inclusion in research and innovation funding.**

- *Example:* FTA will continue to prioritize awards in mobility innovation grants (such as the Integrated Mobility Innovation Program and the Accelerating Innovative Mobility Program) for applications that substantively demonstrate a commitment to accessibility and inclusion of local disability communities in their planning activities and new service initiatives.
- *Example:* DOT will continue to fund and support the Accessible Transportation Technology Research Initiative (ATTRI) to develop and implement transformative applications to improve mobility options for travelers with disabilities.

- **Strategy 4.4.3. Work with communities to incorporate technology into their public transit services.**
  - *Example:* The goal of FTA's Mobility on Demand (MOD) initiative is to encourage communities to leverage technologies in public transit systems to achieve a multimodal, integrated, automated, accessible, and connected transportation system. Through the program, FTA funds project teams at the local level to innovate, explore partnerships, develop new business models, integrate transit and MOD solutions, and investigate new, enabling technical capabilities such as integrated payment systems, decision support, and incentives for traveler choices. The MOD Sandbox Program builds on the Department's ongoing initiatives to promote innovative transportation technologies.

- **Strategy 4.4.4. Improve mobility for individuals with disabilities and older adults by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options.**
  - *Example:* FTA supports transportation services that are planned, designed, and carried out to meet the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities and seniors in large urbanized, small urbanized, and rural areas through grants issued under the Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (49 U.S.C. § 5310) Program. Funds can be used on "traditional" project investments such as wheelchair lifts, mobility management programs, and technology systems, as well as on "nontraditional" projects such as volunteer driver programs, accessible pedestrian signals, and improved wayfinding technology.

GOAL 5. ADVANCE ACCESSIBLE AIR, MOTORCOACH, AND RAIL INTERCITY TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Linking our Nation's cities and regions with accessible transportation systems will provide the widest range of options to ensure every member of our community can participate in economic, recreational, and social opportunities. This goal covers efforts to improve accessibility in our Nation's aviation, motorcoach, and rail transportation.

Objectives related to intercity transportation include:

- **Objective 5.1. Air Transportation**
- **Objective 5.2. Motorcoach**
- **Objective 5.3. Passenger Rail**

Objective 5.1. Air Transportation

The Department will continue to advance the accessibility of the Nation's air transportation system. Air transportation is the connective tissue of the United States, allowing consumers to access safe, low-cost fares that take people on business, recreational, and family trips. Oversight, investigations, and resource development have the potential to dramatically improve the air travel experience for people with disabilities. Finally, people with disabilities may experience gains from package delivery with unmanned aircraft systems.

- **Strategy 5.1.1. Speedily investigate disability-related complaints against airlines.**
    - *Example:* DOT's Office of Aviation Consumer Protection (OACP), a component of the Office of the General Counsel (OGC), will continue to monitor compliance, conduct investigations, and enforce, as appropriate, violations of aviation civil rights requirements against airlines. OACP aims for a median investigation time of 365 days or less for disability-related complaints.
- **Strategy 5.1.2. Promote passenger outreach and education.**
    - *Example:* OACP will continue to meet regularly with representatives from advocacy organizations representing individuals with disabilities, monitor its disability hotline, ensure DOT's website contains clear, useful information about the rights of air travelers with disabilities, and publish the DOT's monthly Air Travel Consumer Report and an annual report reflecting the number and type of disability-related complaints that airlines received directly each year.
    - *Example:* FAA will continue and expand training initiatives such as the annual National Civil Rights Training Conference for Airports. Training events help provide guidance and best practices to airport sponsors. Trainings provide information on passenger outreach and education, as well as enhance airport sponsor compliance with Federal accessibility laws. Topics include ensuring disability access compliance, reasonable accommodation and modification obligations, and accessible aircraft boarding equipment and service.
    - *Example:* FAA's Office of Civil Rights will ensure continued outreach on Federal accessibility laws and regulations through industry conferences, FAA webinars, and other trainings in collaboration with stakeholders. Topics will include accessible ground transportation, best practices in facility design, accessible aircraft boarding issues, service animals, reasonable accommodations and modifications, complaint resolution processes, and responsibility for oversight of tenants and contractors.

- **Strategy 5.1.3. Improve guidance and regulation to foster an accessible air transportation system.**
    - *Example:* OACP will continue to assess the need for amendments to DOT's Air Carrier Access Act regulation to advance accessibility in air transportation for passengers with disabilities. OACP will also continue to conduct activities, including issuing guidance documents, to better educate airlines of their obligations under the law.
    - *Example:* FAA's publication of Advisory Circulars assists airports in complying with laws and regulations regarding individuals with disabilities. For example, FAA Advisory Circular 150/5360-14A - *Access to Airports by Individuals with Disabilities* identifies and presents the main features of relevant statutes and regulations and lists sources of assistance or additional information. This Advisory Circular also presents and reconciles accessibility regulations contained in multiple Federal sources to assist with compliance.
    - *Example:* FAA maintains a dedicated online resource, the FAA Civil Rights Connect System, for collecting required reports from airports relating to Federal accessibility laws. Additional material in this online resource includes materials from FAA trainings, recorded webinars, prior compliance review reports, and redacted complaint investigation letters of finding. Recent guidance documents include FAA's *Best Practices for Enhancing Traveler Experience: Addressing the Needs of Persons with Disabilities*.
- **Strategy 5.1.4. Ensure airport operators' compliance with Federal accessibility laws.**
    - *Example:* FAA's Office of Civil Rights Airport Disability Compliance Program (ADCP) will provide guidance, conduct training sessions, update policies, and review existing programs and activities. The ADCP will complete at least 90 percent of required training, technical assistance activities, and compliance reviews required by the FAA Civil Rights Business Plan by the required target dates.
    - *Example:* FAA reviews will continue to assess airport facilities, policies, and programs. Reviews also ensure that airports designate a local coordinator for accessibility matters, utilize accessible facilities, work with air certificate holders to provide equipment and trained personnel for safe and accessible aircraft boarding.
    - *Example:* FAA will continue conducting reviews and engaging with airports to complete self-assessment reviews. FAA subject matter experts assist airports with addressing any identified issues. In addition to helping to ensure that airports are accessible, the resource also helps airports to meet their obligations under law to periodically evaluate their compliance status.
    - *Example:* FAA will continue to conduct investigations of complaints from members of the public alleging that an airport is not in compliance with Federal accessibility laws. FAA investigations require a complete investigation or informal resolution within 180 days. FAA will continue engaging with airports that have their own complaint processes.
- **Strategy 5.1.5. Encourage and support technological advancements to deliver goods.**
    - *Example:* FAA will continue to expand the use of unmanned aircraft for the safe delivery of goods by working with industry to facilitate air carrier operations. For people who prefer this option, this has strong potential to reduce the number of necessary trips by people with disabilities. FAA has issued air carrier certificates to Wing, UPS Flight

Forward, and Amazon to deliver goods by drone to consumers in Virginia, North Carolina, and Oregon. The first air carrier operations by unmanned aircraft began in April 2019 and, if successful, FAA will continue to work with applicants that wish to conduct package delivery operations with unmanned aircraft.

Objective 5.2. Motorcoach

Intercity motorcoach transport fills a key role in the American transportation system.[8] Motorcoaches offer lower-cost services, serve low-volume destinations, and generally fill an intercity niche alongside driving or flying. Ensuring the safety and accessibility of the country's intercity motorcoach fleet is a core role for the Department. Future activities will include improved oversight, tracking, and training related to accessibility in the motorcoach industry.

- **Strategy 5.2.1. Integrate ADA enforcement into existing safety, compliance, and automated tracking processes.**
    - *Example:* The FMCSA ADA Program, which focuses on private Over-the-Road Bus (OTRB) companies providing interstate passenger transportation, is managed separately from FMCSA's safety programs. The separation creates disparate oversight of the OTRB industry. To enhance oversight of OTRB operators' compliance with the ADA requirements, FMCSA will integrate the ADA program into the Activity Center for Enforcement (ACE) and ACE Intervention Management, which are part of the Compliance, Safety, and Accountability Program.
- **Strategy 5.2.2. Enhance staff training on ADA compliance.**
    - *Example:* Currently, FMCSA has 18 Field staff trained to conduct ADA investigations. By January 1, 2023, FMCSA plans to achieve a 50 percent increase in the number of FMCSA Field staff trained in conducting investigations of compliance with the ADA regulations for OTRB companies. An FMCSA working group will complete the necessary updates to the training content, then will design and implement a strategy to conduct the staff training. Initial training will be a combination of classroom instruction and on-the-job mentoring with most recurrent training via webinar. Post-training monitoring and coaching will occur to ensure staff proficiency.

Objective 5.3. Passenger Rail

The Nation's intercity passenger rail systems—primarily Amtrak, but also some privately operated and State-supported carriers—play a key role in certain larger intercity markets. Amtrak also serves many small communities that have few other intercity transport options. The Department will continue to enhance the accessibility of the Nation's passenger rail systems and stations.

- **Strategy 5.3.1. Improve ADA accessibility of passenger rail stations.**
    - *Example:* FRA will continue to (1) monitor Amtrak's progress on its five-year plan for station accessibility improvements, (2) conduct regular compliance reviews, and (3) evaluate projects and enforce rules involving the construction or renovation of intercity rail facilities to ensure that all applicable ADA requirements are met. In the annual appropriations act, Congress often mandates that Amtrak spend a set amount per year toward ADA compliance. By 2026, Amtrak plans to achieve full ADA compliance for

[8] The terms motorcoach and Over-the-Road Bus are used interchangeably in this strategic plan.

stations or components of stations where it has legally responsibility. Components of a station may include the parking lot, station, and/or platform. Stations may not achieve full ADA compliance when other entities, such as city, State, town, or transportation authority, do not fulfill their ADA responsibilities.[9]

- **Strategy 5.3.2. Improve the accessibility of passenger rail cars.**
    - *Example:* FRA will encourage Amtrak and other rail providers to commit to higher levels of access for passengers with disabilities in new rail cars. It will use available methods (e.g., through grants) to encourage maximum rail car accessibility by Amtrak and other operators. FRA will engage with the disability community to gather input into new rail car designs. FRA will also continue to monitor compliance and provide technical assistance to new and proposed public-private partnerships providing intercity and high-speed services. FRA will continue to fund new intercity and high-speed ADA compliant passenger rail cars.
    - *Example:* FRA is currently working on research for inclusive and universal accessible design for the next generation of passenger railcars (including bi-level rail cars), such as larger lift access ramps, more accessible seating space, and wider vestibules. One example includes passenger access to the sink from the seated position on the toilet. Currently on most rail cars, passengers must transfer back to their wheelchairs to access the sink. FRA is also studying the containment of wheeled mobility devices in railcar accident scenarios.

[9] As of July 2020, of the 386 stations or components of stations for which Amtrak has ADA responsibility, it has achieved ADA compliance for 60 stations. The remaining stations are partially accessible: 307 stations have deficiencies, such as no visual displays for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, and 19 are unusable by people who use wheelchairs.

CONCLUSION

Over the next five years, the Department looks forward to furthering the work of removing unnecessary transportation barriers for people with disabilities and enhancing accessibility across the transportation system. To coordinate implementation of this Accessibility Strategic Plan and evaluate progress toward achieving the plan's objectives and strategies, the Department will regularly convene an internal Accessibility Working Group (Working Group) with representation from every operating administration. The Working Group will discuss implementation activities in support of the plan, assess whether strategies identified in the plan are on track to be accomplished, highlight milestones achieved, and identify implementation risks and develop mitigation strategies. Discussions through this Working Group will promote greater program transparency and accountability, and may lead to follow-up actions to address barriers to implementation.

The ADA and other legislative milestones have led to major improvements in transportation across the United States. However, significant barriers to accessing our transportation system still exist for people with disabilities. The Accessibility Strategic Plan outlines the Department's vision for a more inclusive and accessible transportation system, and establishes clear strategies to make that vision a reality. In implementing the strategies identified in this plan, DOT is guided by four cross-cutting and enabling principles: fostering strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders, promoting innovative technologies, supporting complete trips for all travelers, and advancing geographic equity. By working together, we can help ensure that the dream of a new era of freedom, inclusion, and mobility becomes a reality.

APPENDIX A: LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITIES

Several legislative authorities define legal protections for people with disabilities and are relevant to transportation access. The strategic plan pulls together principles from these authorities and ensures their mandates remain central to the current DOT program. These include:

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): prohibits discrimination based on disability in employment, State and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications.[10]
- Rehabilitation Act: prohibits discrimination based on disability in programs conducted by Federal agencies, in programs receiving Federal financial assistance, in Federal employment, and in the employment practices of Federal contractors.[11]
- Architectural Barriers Act (ABA): requires that buildings and facilities that are designed, constructed, or altered with Federal funds, or leased by a Federal agency, comply with Federal standards for physical accessibility. ABA requirements are limited to architectural standards in new and altered buildings and in newly leased facilities. They do not address the activities conducted in those buildings and facilities.[12]
- Over-the Road Bus Transportation Accessibility Act: requires over-the-road bus transportation operators to comply with DOT's ADA regulations concerning accessible transportation as a condition to obtaining and retaining active operating authority registration issued by FMCSA. DOT and DOJ have concurrent ADA enforcement jurisdiction over these operations.[13]
- Air Carrier Access Act: prohibits discrimination in air transportation by domestic and foreign air carriers against qualified individuals with physical or mental impairments. For U.S. Carriers, it applies to all operations and aircraft, regardless of where those operations take place. For foreign carriers, it applies to flights that begin or end at a U.S. airport and to aircraft used for those flights.[14]

[10] *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Pub. L. 101-336),* as amended.

[11] *Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Pub. L. 93-112),* as amended.

[12] *Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) of 1968 (Pub. L. 90–480),* as amended.

[13] *Over-the-Road Bus Transportation Accessibility Act of 2007 (Pub. L. 110-291)*

[14] *Air Carrier Access Act of 1986 (Pub. L. 99-435),* as amended.