

Accessible Transportation: Designing for Everyone

OBJECTIVE: We need transportation that is intentionally designed for people to walk, use a wheelchair, ride the bus, and use paratransit to get around Durham. Infrastructure, like sidewalks, roads, paratransit, and public transit, needs to be designed for residents of all abilities and ages to comfortably, safely, and conveniently move around Durham.

BACKGROUND: Sidewalks with broken and unmaintained pavement create barriers for residents with mobility challenges, such as those with physical disabilities and seniors, or anyone who uses a wheelchair, a cane, or a stroller. Many places are missing curb cuts or ramps to actually access the sidewalks, forcing residents to move in the street with traffic. Crossings often do not have ramps with raised bumps or appropriately timed and audible signals, causing unsafe conditions for residents with visual impairments. Residents feel that many drivers do not have sufficient awareness of visually or otherwise physically disabled residents to drive around them safely, and that the built environment prioritizes movement of cars over people. Residents who rely on paratransit systems like Durham ACCESS feel that the system is inconvenient and undignified. These transportation barriers discourage and prevent people from participating in community life in Durham.

We want sidewalks and street networks connected to transit lines and bus stops intentionally designed for everyone, prioritizing those with physical or mental disabilities along with seniors. We want on-demand, rideshare, and paratransit system improvements that are convenient, with reasonable wait times and multiple options for getting a ride.

Quotes from Durham Residents

“What looks like a short distance on a map is often a quarter mile to walk from a bus stop. There are NO sidewalks along much of Durham's roadway. If you use a walker or wheelchair-- Forget it.”

“Think about folks who don't have access to a car or have disabilities or cannot access a bus stop”

“All facilities would have access for wheelchairs or baby carriages. Everything would be handicapped accessible.”

“Citizen who is blind need more opportunities for mobility. Greater access to pedestrian mobility; more bus shelters; ADA access, bus stop access regarding crossing ability; walkable access to bus stops; trash cans next to bus stops, solar compactors at stops would be feasible”

“They have to call [Durham ACCESS] two weeks out but not before, what if I have an emergency, they should be able to accommodate those situations, better quality riding buses some of the streets are really bad, sometimes I go home with a headache from being on the bus for 3 hours”