



RUTGERS-NEW BRUNSWICK
Edward J. Bloustein School
of Planning and Public Policy

Bridging the Gap: Complete Streets & Accessible Mobility

Understanding and Overcoming Barriers for
Individuals with Disabilities

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-- A Street for Everyone --

What is a "Complete Street?"

Definition: A road designed for all users, not just cars.

Who it Serves: Pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists.

The NJ Commitment: Over 175 NJ municipalities and 8 counties have adopted policies to prioritize this design.



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Navigating the "Invisible" Street

Invisible Barriers: Neurodiversity & Sensory Needs

Sensory Overload: Loud noises, flickering lights, and overwhelming crowds

Cognitive Load: Complex, non-standardized signage or confusing intersections.

Lack of Predictability: A single closed sidewalk or bus detour can derail a trip for those who rely on strict routines.

- Ensure good wayfinding Signs and real-time Updates to Bus Apps





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When One Inch Makes a Mile

Physical Barriers: The "Last Inch" Challenge

The Curb Ramp "Lip": Ramps that are *almost* flush can still trap a wheelchair.

The Sidewalk Slope: Sidewalks slanted too steeply toward the street make steering a walker or manual chair difficult.

Sidewalk Clutter: Signal poles, trash cans, or dining tables blocking the dedicated path.

Inaudible Signals: Crosswalks without sound or vibration are a hard stop for low-vision travelers.

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"If Complete Streets infrastructure is the hardware of a safe city, then **travel training** is the essential software. A well-designed street provides the opportunity for access, but travel instruction provides the actual independence, transforming a physical pathway into a functional route for New Jerseyans of all abilities."



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The Vision

A Connected & Accessible New Jersey.

- Integrate Travel Trainers into the planning process.**
- Prioritize the "Last Inch" of the curb ramp.**
- Design for the most vulnerable to ensure the street works for everyone.**

Thank you!

NJTIP @ Rutgers – Travel Instruction

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