Busch Boulevard Accessibility Evaluation
Final Report

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Project Manager:

Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Project Sponsors:

Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board (TDCB)
YES! of America United
Real Choice Partnership

Project Partners and Participants:

Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board (TDCB)
Hillsborough MPO Staff
The Planning Commission
YES! of America United
Real Choice Partnership
City of Tampa Staff
Hillsborough County Staff
HARTline
Tampa Bay Work Force Alliance
Florida Division of Blind Services

Leonard about to make a move on the day of the evaluation.
Purpose:
To evaluate specific areas on Busch Boulevard where the accessibility of sidewalks, intersections and transit stops can be improved. To inform transportation agencies and local governments of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other access issues important to citizens with disabilities. To provide an example of how to institute a continuous dialogue between persons with disabilities and transportation agencies and local governments to address the issues of accessibility in transportation project planning, design, construction and maintenance.

Participants warm up for the evaluation.
Project Description:
Citizens with disabilities, family members, caregivers and advocates were identified, emphasizing cross-disability representation. An evaluation sheet was developed and four Busch Boulevard intersections were identified: Florida Avenue, Nebraska Avenue, 22nd Street and 56th Street. A site evaluation was conducted of the Busch Boulevard Corridor that included participation by the identified citizens, volunteers and staff members. All participants were asked to identify and document barriers to accessibility. The information was then compiled and is reported herein. This report is intentionally non-technical in that it uses pictures and general comments to convey the issues. A future where thoughtful consideration of accessibility and universal design become automatic in how we design and maintain our roadways is greatly anticipated.

One of the groups during the evaluation at 22nd Street and Busch Boulevard
General Issues:
This section presents several aspects of Busch Boulevard's accessibility that are prevalent throughout the corridor or that were discrete, but worthy of note. Some of the photographs were taken in preparing for the organized site evaluation and others were taken during the development of the Busch Boulevard Corridor Study Update that was complete in March 2004.

The 2004 Busch Boulevard Corridor Study Update and the 2000 Mobility Management Plan Study of the Busch Boulevard Corridor both included analysis of and recommendations for improvements to the sidewalk system and the infrastructure to support transit. This report is intended to supplement those efforts rather than replace them or repeat them. For more information about these documents, contact the Hillsborough County MPO or visit the website at www.hillsboroughmpo.org.

The challenges presented by these issues to people with and without disabilities are significant and are prevalent throughout incorporated and unincorporated Hillsborough County, including Tampa, Temple Terrace and Plant City. While the focus of this report is on Busch Boulevard, the issues identified in this effort exist on most of the other major commercial roads in the area.

The pictures in this section of pedestrians seen using Busch Boulevard are not staged and are not intended to represent specific accessibility issues. They are provided to document the presence of these types of users, which have many of the same safety and comfort issues persons with disabilities have when confronted by the conditions on Busch Boulevard. Section 3, which follows, documents the issues brought to light during the accessibility evaluation.
This person was using Busch Boulevard on the day of the evaluation. He got stuck in the sand and gravel shoulder and was assisted out by evaluation participants.

He is presumably headed to Nebraska Avenue from Florida Avenue. There are no sidewalks on the south side of Busch Boulevard between Florida Avenue and Nebraska Avenue.
A family makes a crossing at 56th Street. Strollers and children proved to be a common sight. Improving the corridor’s accessibility for wheelchair users will improve mobility for these users as well.

While not obvious when driving on Busch Boulevard, there are neighborhoods to the north and south of the road. Many of the residents depend on their feet and on transit for mobility.
Pedestrians seen on site visits. Shopping bags and carts are tell tale signs of everyday activities being accomplished by walking.
More pedestrians seen on site visits. Many school children use Busch to get to school.
Even more pedestrians seen on site visits. Crossings at unsignalized intersections and at mid-block locations are common.
Still more pedestrians seen on site visits. Crossing at signalized intersections is facilitated, but one must hurry!
Some of the bicyclists seen on site visits. Cyclists exhibited signs of work, school, shopping and recreational trips.
Curb cuts are lacking on many of the side streets.

Crosswalks are also missing on many of the side streets.
"Cow paths" are not accessible and demonstrate the need for a sidewalk on the north side of Busch Boulevard just east of Florida Avenue.

Clear direct pedestrian routes from the sidewalk to the building are not provided in many areas. With no sidewalk, users are forced to enter on driveways, which creates conflicts with vehicles.
Sidewalk terminates before reaching Florida Avenue on the north side of Busch Boulevard just west of the I-275 interchange (left). Travel further west and conditions deteriorate (right).

Sidewalks exist on the majority of Busch Boulevard, but are close to the street and not buffered from the travel lane.
Advertising benches placed at bus stops by the Jaycees often block required accessible path and do not enhance the waiting experience when too close to the street.

Advertising bench is blocking sidewalk here. However, having a place to sit and wait is a good thing when benches are placed appropriately.
Many of the bus stops are not accessible nor hospitable. Access to the stops is also an obvious issue.

Many of the driveways are very wide, which provide space for vehicles to access sites quickly and in unpredictable ways. Conflicts arise out of this situation.
This large turning radius at 30th Street invites high speed turns, which may result in high speed crashes with people trying to cross the street.

Pedestrian refuge islands are not permanent or raised in several locations. Stripes communicate to cars, but do not provide for a comfortable experience for pedestrians.
Documented Issues from the Accessibility Evaluation:

This section provides a summary of the issues observed during the accessibility evaluation that was conducted on November 17, 2005. The evaluation focused on four intersections with Busch Boulevard: Florida Avenue, Nebraska Avenue, 22nd Street and 56th Street. The report includes issues that are prevalent throughout the corridor or that were discrete, but worthy of note. Some of the photographs were taken in preparing for the organized site evaluation and others were taken during the development of the Busch Boulevard Corridor Study Update that was complete in March 2004.
Busch Boulevard Accessibility Evaluation
Section 3 Documented Issues from the Accessibility Evaluation

Busch Blvd and Florida

Crosswalks

- There are no crosshatches or other high visibility indicators at crosswalks.
- There is worn paint in the crosswalk and all four intersections need restriping.
- Too great a distance to cross Busch Boulevard in time allotted.
- No bumps or grooves on ground to indicate crosswalk alignment.
- Crosswalk at SW corner before railroad leads to railroad tracks.
- Need something to indicate the end of the road as sight impaired users are crossing intersections.

- Crosswalk at SW corner before railroad leads to railroad tracks.
Busch Blvd and Florida Avenue

Curb Ramps

- There is no landing area at top of curb ramp.
- Ramp is too steep, feels unsafe and unbalanced, and pushes you into street. Slope on NE corner very steep.
- No place to stand while waiting to cross or land at the end of crossing.
- Curb ramps send you out into traffic. Ramps at 45 degrees are not desirable.
Busch Blvd and Florida Avenue

Pedestrian Signals

- There is not access to pedestrian signal button at SE, SW and NW corners.
- On NE corner, button is set back very far and there is grass in between.
- Signal pole at CVS has 2 buttons next to each other and there is no way of knowing which one is the direction a sight impaired user wants to go.
- Signal buttons may be too high at NW corner.
- There is no audible signal for crossing.
- There is no countdown signal.
- Pedestrian timing is inadequate to make crossing.
- Traffic crossing warning light is broken while looking east down Busch Boulevard while on the west side of the street.
- All crossing times need to be checked, times for crossing vary from as few as 6 second from green to flashing red to as many as 32 seconds.
Busch Blvd and Florida

Pedestrian Signals

- Crosswalk signs have no Braille or raised facing for vision impaired people to use.

- Walk sign button to far from sidewalk and is not in an area where visually impaired persons can locate it easily.
Busch Blvd and Florida Avenue

Sidewalks

- Equipment and utilities are where sidewalk is supposed to be.
- There is no paved path to get from sidewalk into Allied Tires parking lot. Most go north on Florida Avenue to get in.
- Sidewalk is not continuous over railroad tracks and does not exist on the south side of the street.
Busch Boulevard Accessibility Evaluation

Section 3 Documented Issues from the Accessibility Evaluation

Busch Blvd and Florida Avenue

Sidewalks

- Poles in the middle of sidewalk block path and sidewalk is too close to street.

- There are no sidewalks in certain areas and little space for new sidewalks where needed.
Busch Blvd and Florida Avenue

Sidewalks

- Extreme cross sloping exists in certain areas.
- The shoulder is rough on railroad side of road. Wheelchair is bouncing.
- Cracks in sidewalk impede movement and present hazard.
- There is no barrier between railroad tracks and shoulder where sidewalk should be.
- There is no pedestrian blocking gate across the railroad track on the SE and SW sides of the intersection.
- The path to cross the tracks heading south on Florida Avenue on the west side of the street is hazardous.
- The inner rail of the pedestrian crossing point on the SE side of Busch Boulevard needs to be regraded. It sticks up about an inch.
- This is a tripping/blocking hazard on the SW island of Florida Avenue where a piece of metal sticks up about 4 inches.
- Trees and shrubs are very close to the roadway on the NE side of Busch Boulevard.
- Railroad crossing barriers severely limit visibility when attempting to cross Florida Avenue while heading north on the west side of the street.

- There is no sidewalk on Burger King site there is a lot of traffic. User must walk through on site traffic to get to transit stop.
Busch Blvd and Florida Avenue

Intersection

- Medians do not provide refuge areas for pedestrians and need to be extend out further to crosswalk.
- Pork chop island at SW corner forces you to go the wrong direction over rail road tracks.
- A pipe is sticking out of sidewalk and the paint is worn.
- User can't cross Busch Boulevard at the pork chop island.
- Refuge islands are not available at center median.
Busch Blvd and Florida Avenue

Transit Stops

- Transit stop shelter is needed.
- Pavement is needed to board bus.
- Need bus stop in parking lot of Tampa Bay Workforce Alliance.
- There is no pavement at bus stop. How do visually impaired users know where it is?
Busch Blvd and Florida Avenue

Vehicle Conflict

- High speed right turning vehicles in the area are enabled by a turn lane with a wide turning radius.

- Moving cars is obviously valued over moving people here. Right turn lane is installed where sidewalk should be.
Busch Blvd and Nebraska Avenue

Crosswalks

- Guide dog is trained to go straight at crosswalk and crosswalk is not straight.
- Guide dog shows user curb at end of crossing. Inconsistent curb style, construction and intersection geometry leads to confusion.
- Railroad tracks confused guide dog during crossing.
- Crosswalk has worn paint.
- Crosswalk is too close to the traffic stop bar and is not visually distinct from the stop bar.
- There is no accommodation for vision impaired users (using canes) in pavement treatment.
- Waiting area on south side of street is between tracks and warning arms. User is stuck right next to train tracks.
- Crosswalk from north to south is out of alignment. It forced woman pushing baby stroller to go into westbound oncoming traffic lane to access sidewalk on north side.
- Medians do not provide adequate refuge area.
- Sidewalks and waiting area at intersections are not large enough and landing area is not provided.
Busch Blvd and Nebraska Avenue

Curb Ramps

- Curb ramps at the NE corner are too narrow and too steep and direction causes difficulty.
- Curb ramps are inadequate at south side of street.
- Landing areas at top of ramps are not provided.

Pedestrian Signals

- Signal has approximately 2 second walk signal before flashing red comes up. Users are confused by this and hesitate to enter intersection/perform crossing at appropriate time.
- Audible signals are not present.
- Push button cannot be reached on NW and NE corner.
- Pedestrian signals are not long enough.
- There is no accommodation for vision impaired users in signal signage at button.
- Pedestrian signals are separated by grass at the NE corner.
- User can't see EB pedestrian signal, which is blocked by SB vehicles.
Busch Blvd and Nebraska Avenue

Sidewalks

- There is no sidewalks on the south side of the street.
- Sidewalk on NE corner has broken, uneven surface.
- Sidewalk is missing segments in area of the intersection.
- Sidewalk is too close to traffic on north side of street.
- Where sidewalks do not exist on south side of street, uneven surface limits mobility.
- Sidewalk ends just past bus stop on NB Nebraska Avenue.
- Sidewalk ends west of Nebraska Avenue at the NW corner of intersection.
- Sidewalk is not continuous across railroad tracks.
- Railroad tracks are unfinished/exposed on one side.
- Power pole is blocking sidewalk at southwest corner on Nebraska Avenue.
- There are no sidewalks on SW corner. It looks like business might have paved over them.
- A driveway conflict exists at NE corner where gas station has a continuous drop [sloping] curb.
Busch Blvd and Nebraska Avenue

Transit Stops

- Transit stop at NB Nebraska Avenue shown. There was no good place to wait for bus on Busch in EB direction.

- There are no transit pull offs provided.
- User saw bus waiting in travel lane for extended period of time.
- Transit stop and shelter are needed on south side of Busch Boulevard.
- There is no accessible route to transit stops on the south side of Busch Boulevard in the area of Nebraska Avenue.
**Busch Blvd and Nebraska Avenue**

**Vehicle Conflict**

- Southbound cars waiting to turn right block crosswalk.
- There are many driveways and turning vehicles.
- The eastbound right turn at the railroad tracks is very busy. Geometry of SE corner and volume of turns makes it difficult for pedestrian to assert themselves during crossing.
- Group saw 6 cyclists at intersection. Lack of bike lanes cause cyclists to ride on what little sidewalk there is. Bikes on sidewalk create conflicts for pedestrians and wheelchairs.
- The large number of right-turning vehicles creates conflict, especially at SB and NB Nebraska Avenue and EB Busch Boulevard.
Busch Boulevard Accessibility Evaluation
Section 3 Documented Issues from the Accessibility Evaluation

Busch Blvd and 22nd Street

Crosswalks

- This intersection lacks a crosswalk with direct access across Busch Boulevard to the HARTline bus stop on the west side of 22nd Street. Pedestrians may try to jaywalk to save time instead of making three crossings.

- There crosswalk paint is worn and needs distinguishing striping or colored asphalt.
- There is no extension time at lights when pedestrian signal is pushed before crossing.
Busch Blvd and 22nd Street

Curb Ramps

- There is no curb cut at NW corner.
- Curb ramps are too steep and slope causes wheelchair to roll back.
- 45 degree ramps with no landing area cause wheelchair to turn while on ramp.
Busch Blvd and 22nd Street

Pedestrian Signals

- There is no pedestrian signal button on SW corner.
- Pedestrian signal buttons are too high.
- Signal pole with button is set too far back from sidewalk.
- Pedestrian crossing time is too short. Elderly user only got half way before light turned yellow.
- Pedestrian signal crossing Busch Boulevard flashing red almost immediately.
- Audible signals are not provided.
Sidewalks are narrow in area of intersection.
There is a hole 30 yards from the SE corner.
Sidewalk is slanted and ramp is angled into street
Space between sidewalk and curb could cause a wheelchair to get stuck.
Access to Walgreens is difficult. There is one set of stairs, which causes people have to walk through the grass.
Access to Walgreens is difficult for visually impaired persons due to uneven terrain.
Grass ridge adjacent to sidewalk is too slanted for strollers, wheelchair users, and sight impaired to access Walgreens.
Temporary construction signs are blocking sidewalk.
Busch Blvd and 22nd Street
Transit Stops

- At bus stop at corner near Walgreens, lack of paved waiting area requires wheelchair user to wait on sidewalk, blocking path.
- There is no street light at bus stop.
- No bus pull outs are provided.
- No pad to street for bus access is provided.
- No shelter is provided at stops.
- Bus bench is blocking sidewalk at the SW corner.
- No bus pad is provided at NE corner.
- Bus stop area is inadequate to accommodate wheelchairs because platform does not line up with curb areas.
- Curb grass is maintained too high for bus lift.
- There are no bus stop schedules provided.
Busch Blvd and 22nd Street

Intersection

- The ramp landing needs to be closer to actual crosswalk.
- No refuge island provided.
- Stop bar not set back far enough from crosswalk.

- There refuge areas are limited for those who cannot cross before the signal changes.
Busch Boulevard Accessibility Evaluation
Section 3 Documented Issues from the Accessibility Evaluation

Busch Blvd and 22nd Street

Vehicle Conflict

- Users should not be forced to share sidewalks with bicycles. No bicycle facilities are provided on Busch Boulevard.

- Very wide driveways limit the amount of protected sidewalk area.
Busch Blvd and 56th Street

Crosswalks

- All four crosswalks are very bumpy and uneven.
- Paint is worn at all crosswalks and stop bars.
- Crosswalks are set far back and it confuses guide dog.
Busch Blvd and 56th Street

Curb Ramps

- Ramp direction causes difficulty. All four corners force you out into the street.
Busch Blvd and 56th Street

Pedestrian Signals

- Pedestrian signal button on pole at SE corner is set far back from intersection.
- Pedestrian signal is not functioning.
- Pedestrian signal provides 2 second crossing before flashing red comes up.
Busch Boulevard Accessibility Evaluation
Section 3 Documented Issues from the Accessibility Evaluation

**Busch Blvd and 56th Street**

**Sidewalks**

- Sidewalk is too close to traffic.
- Paved slope at end of crosswalk presents an obstacle in sidewalk at NE corner.
- South side sidewalk one block east of 56th is uneven and surface is broken.
- There is a large electrical pole in path of travel.
- There is no sidewalk access to Burger King or CVS.
- Sidewalk is too close to traffic at SE corner leading to pedestrian signal.
- Sloping grass causes problem for wheelchair users.
- Big shrubs block access and visibility.
Busch Blvd and 56th Street

Transit Stops

- There is no pavement between the sidewalk and the curb at the SE corner.
- SE corner does not have pull off or shelter.
- Because of site design, waiting area is limited.
Busch Blvd and 56th Street

Vehicle Conflict

- At the NW corner, ramp leads right into a sloped sidewalk.
- It is difficult to turn at SE corner. Path is uneven due to low signal box and paving.
- The only way to enter shopping plaza at SE corner is through the 2 driveways.
- There are no walkways at all at shopping plaza at SE corner. Guide dog doesn’t know where to go.
- There is a large number of right-turning vehicles creating conflicts with pedestrians, especially at SB 56th Street and EB Busch Boulevard.

Intersection

- Texturing on horizontal surfaces for visually impaired does not exist at NE corner.
- A median refuge area is needed on Bullard Parkway east of 56th Street.