The Essentials of ADA Self Evaluations and Transition Plans

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Adapted from a

Corada Webinar Series including content from programs presented by Irene Bowen – ADA One,

Robin Jones - Great Lakes ADA Center, and Michael Edwards & Eric Stockton - Great Plains ADA Center



– ADA One, ns ADA Center

Program Description

Self Evaluations and Transition Plans were first mandated by the Rehabilitation Act 48 years ago covering all programs, activities, services, and benefits receiving federal funds. They were expanded 32 years ago under the ADA to cover all programs offered and supported by public entities (state and local governments). This program covers the basic obligations of those mandates, options for approaching the effort, the information types to include, and the methods of organizing and evaluating the resulting data so that public entities can efficiently and effectively meet their obligations to provide equal access for people with disabilities to all of their programs.



Learning Objectives

- 1. Participants will understand the objectives and minimum requirements for Self Evaluations by public entities.
- 2. Participants will know how to use the results of their Self Evaluations to manage their ADA compliance efforts.
- 3. Participants will understand the objectives and minimum requirements for Transition Plans by public entities.
- 4. Participants will understand the different approaches public entities can use when developing their Transition Plans, which details they may want to collect, and how to organize, prioritize, and use the results of their plans.



ADA Title II Basics



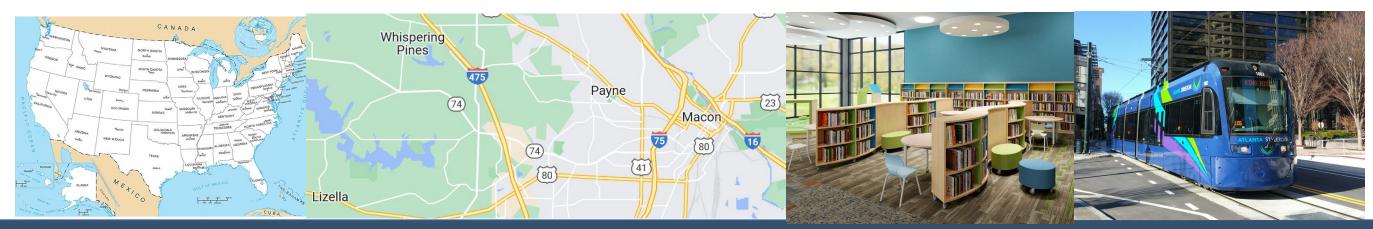
Audience Poll

- 1. If you work for a public entity and somebody calls your office with a disability-related problem with one of your programs and a question, can you look up the relevant details in your Self Evaluation or Transition Plan to answer their question within five minutes?
 - □ Yes
- 2. If not, do you know who to call to get the answer quickly? □ Yes No

Who is subject to Title II?

A public entity covered by Title II is defined as:

- 1. Any state or local government, regardless of size
- 2. Any department, agency, special purpose district, or other instrumentality of a state or local government
- 3. Certain commuter authorities and AMTRAK





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How is Title II enforced?

ADA provides 3 methods of enforcement:

- 1. File a complaint under the public entity's grievance procedure
- 2. File a complaint with a designated federal enforcement agency
- 3. File a lawsuit



5 Administrative Requirements of Title II

1. Designate a responsible employee

Someone with sufficient authority to make decisions and take action – Usually called the "ADA Coordinator"

2. Grievance Procedure

Establish and publicize a procedure for addressing complaints regarding ADA Compliance

3. Notice to the Public

Public statement of ADA Compliance to be made available across multiple platforms (print, auditory, website, etc.)



5 Administrative Requirements of Title II

4. Conduct a Self-Evaluation

(An assessment of all programs and services to identify any barriers to participation by people with disabilities)

- Required by all entities, regardless of size
- Must be kept on file for 3 years for entities with 50 or more employees

(To be completed by July 26, 1993)





5 Administrative Requirements of Title II

5. Develop a Transition Plan

(A plan that identifies the architectural barriers that limit access to programs and activities offered by a public entity)

Only required for entities with 50 or more employees (but smaller ones still have all of the other compliance obligations including full program access)

(To be completed by July 26, 1992) All identified barriers were to be removed by July 26, 1995)



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Self Evaluations



Audience Poll

Why should I help complete a Self Evaluation? (Check all that apply to you)

- 1. What's a "Self Evaluation"?
- 2. I don't know, my boss said I had to do one for our department
- 3. To "check the box" that it's done
- 4. To comply with the ADA
- 5. To help our entity effectively serve people with disabilities

What are the minimum obligations?

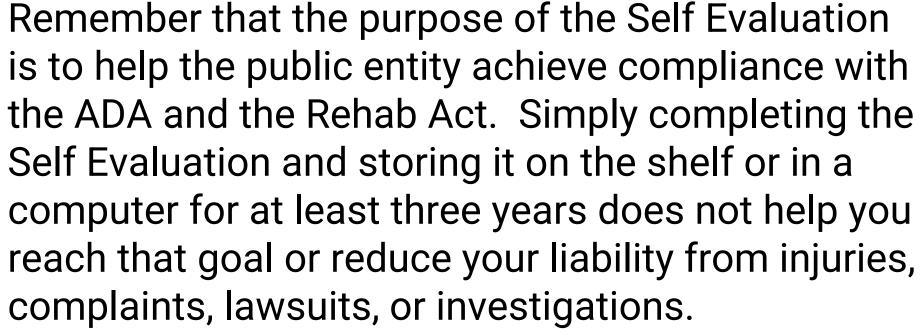
Evaluate <u>services</u>, policies, and practices, and the effects of them, that do not or may not meet Title II requirements

- \succ Describe areas examined, problems identified, modifications made
- Provide opportunity for interested persons to participate (at least to submit comments)
- If entity larger than 50 employees, keep record of self-evaluation on file and available for public inspection for at least three years
- Make any necessary modifications [action plan]



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What's the point of a Self **Evaluation**?



You really want a live effort to identify your problems, plan for eliminating them, track your progress, and document your successes.

(That is a big part of how San Francisco prevailed in the Kirola Case.)



What are the components of a Self **Evaluation**?





- \succ Examine the entities programs, services, activities and information technology
- > Evaluate how people with disabilities receive benefits and services and participate in programs and activities
- > Develop a set of priority-driven recommendations to make these programs, services, and activities accessible to people with disabilities

Why is it important?



It's the law

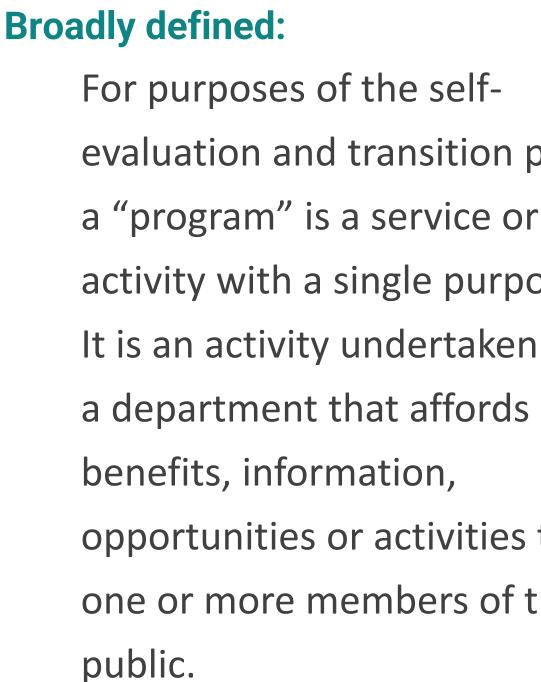
- To meet the needs of a growing and aging population
- To achieve the entity's goal to make their programs and services accessible to its citizens and visitors
- To provide equal access to people with disabilities seeking to use the entity's facilities and services
- To educate and empower government personnel about the importance of providing access



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What are "Programs, Services, and Activities"?







- evaluation and transition plan,
- activity with a single purpose.
- It is an activity undertaken by
- opportunities or activities to
- one or more members of the



How big is a program, and how many do you have? It depends on how you count...

Boulders Ex: Parks & Rec.

Rocks Ex: Swimming

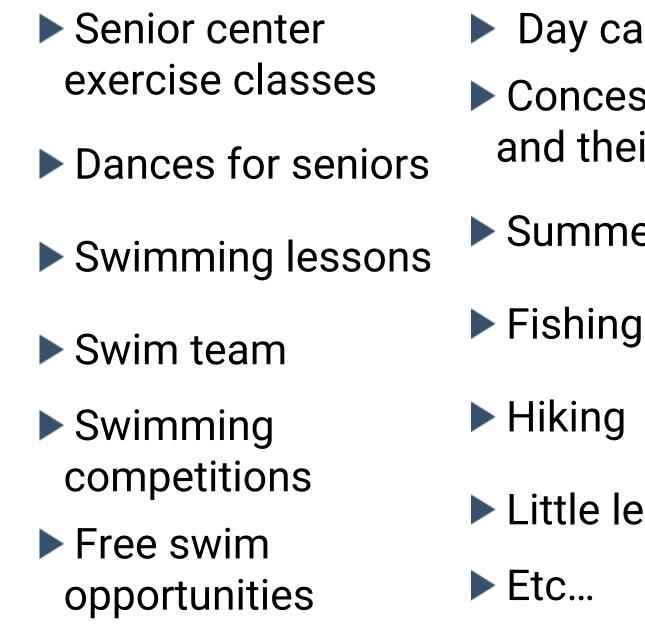
Gravel Ex: Swim Lessons

Sand Ex: Infant Swim



What are some examples of Programs?

"Programs, services, activities, aids, and benefits" provided by or on behalf of a public entity. For example, in parks and recreation:





Day care Concession stands and their offerings

Summer camp

Little league teams

Title II Basics – Non-discrimination Provisions

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs, services, and activities

- \succ No exclusion from programs
- \succ No denial of benefits or services
- \succ No provision of different aids, benefits, services
- \succ No provision of unequal aids, benefits, services



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Title II Basics – Non-discrimination Provisions

- > Integration
- Reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures
- Effective communication
 - Auxiliary Aids and Services
- \succ No eligibility criteria that exclude or screen out individuals with disabilities.





Title II Basics – Non-discrimination Provisions

- Equal access to licensing and exams
 - Accessible location
 - Alternate formats
 - Auxiliary Aids
- > No surcharges
 - Service animals
 - > Alternate format documents
- Non-discrimination in employment



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Core topics and obligations

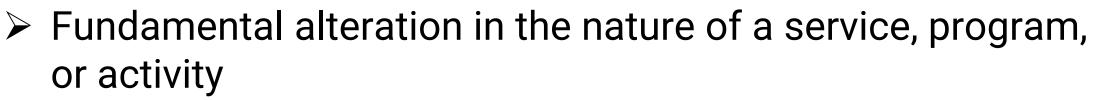






- \succ Participation requirements (initial and continuing)
- > Tests
- > Policies, practices, and procedures that may discriminate
- Separate programs/services
- Effective Communication
- \succ Infrastructure (Transportation, etc.)
- Emergency preparedness and building evacuation planning
- \succ Outside entities (vendors, contractors, grantees)
- Furniture, equipment, purchasing
- Program and employment applications

What are the basic exceptions and defenses?



- > Undue financial and administrative burdens, but:
 - Decision must be made by head of the public entity after considering all resources available and must be in writing
 - > And public entity must take other actions that will not result in fundamental alteration or undue burdens, but still provide access
- Historic properties where the sole program they offer is the preservation of history, 28 CFR 35.150(a)(2), 35.150(b)(3)
- Safe harbor



Suggested actions before you begin your Self Evaluation

- 1. Secure support from the top
- 2. Appoint an ADA Coordinator
- 3. Build your Internal team who "owns" it?
- 4. Finalize the breadth and depth of analysis
- 5. Establish the method of information gathering, analysis
- 6. Establish the method/level of how you will report findings
- 7. Determine how you will get public input - when and how?



Suggested actions before you begin your Self Evaluation

- 8. When do you want to start and how will you implement changes (immediately when barriers are identified? After you finish the process?)
- 9. Finalize what the internal resources are in terms of time, money, expertise (will people be "assigned" or will you seek "volunteers"?)



Suggested actions before you begin your Self Evaluation

10.Determine if you will use outside consultants and, if so, how they will be used: Entity-driven or Consultant-driven?

11. How will your process encourage ongoing improvement?

12. How will your process and documentation system(s) facilitate efficient and effective process management, internal communications, and on-going compliance into the future?



Under every approach, plan for training!!!





- **Disability awareness**
- Process of assessment
- Difficult areas
- Different strokes for different folks
- Periodic/refreshers
- It must be Required
- In person or by webinar
- Track who's been trained and who needs it

For further information

This PowerPoint was taken from a free, more detailed live and on-demand webinar series on Self Evaluations being developed by Corada. For information about that program, go to www.ADASelfEvaluations.com.

Self Evaluation software available from various companies: Corada Pro – Self-Evaluation and Compliance Management BlueDAG - ADA Grievance Tracking, Notices, & SE Logs



Audience Poll

Self Evaluations do not include detailed information about physical barriers that limit access to programs provided by the public entity.

 \Box True

False

What should I read?

Title II Regulations and commentary Title II Technical Assistance Manual 2010 Standards for Accessible Design Title II Action Guide **ADA Best Practices Toolkit** Title II Statute State and Local Accessibility Laws

These may be found at your regional ADA Center, on <u>www.ADA.gov</u>, www.ADAta.org, or on www.Corada.com







Additional resources

City of Tacoma, Washington -- Self evaluation developed by staff http://cms.cityoftacoma.org/hrhs/ada/FinalADAPlanJune08.pdf

San Francisco -- Contractor-developed http://www.sfgov2.org/index.aspx?page=546

Sacramento approach (standard activities vs. unique services) http://www.cityofsacramento.org/adaweb/summary.html#sapproach



For further information

Fulton County, GA – county-wide report (contractor – ADA One)

http://fultoncountyga.gov/images/stories/OEEO/FC_I_ADA_SEval.pdf

Somerville, MA – self-evaluation as basis for transition plan (contractor) (mostly facilities)

http://www.somervillema.gov/sites/default/files/Somerville2013-Self-Evaluation.pdf



Transition Plans – Part One



Why do a Transition Plan now?

Since 1990, most of you have seen thousands of barriers to people with disabilities removed, policies changed, and opportunities expand for people with disabilities. But much, much more remains to be done. How can you move to the next level of ADA compliance providing integrated, safe access for people with disabilities? A functional Transition Plan is one of your best tools.



Information Covered in Part 1

When is a Transition Plan required?

- Where do the obligations apply?
- What is program access?
- What is a program & what makes a program accessible?
- Top 14 TP considerations
- Most common facility types
- Most common physical barriers



Information Covered in Part 2

- When to use physical access v. alternative methods
- Four requirements of a Transition Plan
- How to select standards that identify barriers to program access
- Two approaches for finding program access barriers



Information Covered in Part 3

How to prevent and monitor barriers

Things to know about leased facilities

Practicalities of transition planning

How to fund accessibility work



Title II ADA Regulation at 28 CFR 35.150(d) **Transition Plan:**

"If structural changes to facilities will be undertaken to achieve program accessibility, a public entity that employs 50 or more persons shall develop ...

a transition plan setting forth the steps necessary to complete such changes."

Opportunity for interested parties to participate Copy available for public inspection (no time given) Make changes by January 26, 1995 (as expeditiously as possible)



When is a transition plan required?

30 years later, what is required now?

Your programs must be accessible.

A transition plan helps keeps track of everything you still need to fix.

Instead of a dead-end report, it needs to be a live database, or a spreadsheet as a minimum.

With it, you can manage all of your accessible facilities, new facilities, new programs, program relocations, requests from participants, capital planning, progress tracking, etc.



When do program access requirements apply?

- Program access requirements related to facility access apply in addition to the requirements for new construction and alterations, and in addition to self evaluation requirements related to communications, policies, practices, and procedures.
- ▶ When no new construction or alterations are taking place, there is still an obligation to remove barriers that limit program access.



What is "Program Access?"

- A broad term used by access specialists to describe access to facilities where
 programs are offered
- Program access means that there are no physical barriers that limit access for people with disabilities to programs that your public entity offers.



Title II: Typical Questions

Title II: programs in existing facilities must be accessible when viewed in their entirety (cannot deny benefits, services, etc. due to inaccessible facilities).

- What is a program? (covered earlier)
- What are the characteristics of an accessible program?
- ► What is an "existing" facility?
- ► When is a feature or an element accessible?
- ► Are the ADA Standards the limit?



Some characteristics of program access

- Provide equal opportunity
- Range of choices similar to others'
- ► Integration
- Privacy / confidentiality
- ► Dignity



Existing Facility

DOJ definition in 2010 Reg's. - An "existing facility" is one that exists...

I -- that is, on a given date

One facility can be both new and existing.

Significance for program access: ALL buildings & facilities are evaluated



When is a feature or element "accessible?"... when it meets the relevant standards

Reference point since March 15, 2012 -

► 2010 ADA Standards (Even for alterations in older facilities)

Stds:



Major new obligations for elements newlycovered in the 2010

- ▶ Pools
- Exercise machines and equipment
- Residential facilities dwelling units
- Play areas
- ► Team or player seating 46

Since the Standards changed in 2010...

- Existence of a barrier is (at least initially) measured by looking to the 2010 ADA Standards
- Remedy to a barrier is measured the same way
- SO what happened when the "measure" changed between the time the facility was built and now?



Safe harbor for program accessibility

Existing elements that complied with pre-2010 requirements (either UFAS or 1991 ADA Standards on a building-by-building basis) are "safe" from further changes for the sake of program accessibility and path of travel requirements until they are altered. Newly-covered elements are not safe harbored.

2010 ADA regulations at section 35.150(b)(2)(i)

2010 ADA regulations at section 35.151(b)(4)(ii)(C)



Are the Standards the Limit?

The program access obligation is more flexible than the Standards, but the equal opportunity requirements may require you to go "beyond" the standards...

Automatic doors

More accessible parking

Bariatric fixtures/equipment

Etc.



Other Limits Program access does not require:

Fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity Undue financial and administrative burdens



BUT:

- Any undue burden decision must be made by the head of the public entity after considering all resources available and it must be in writing
- And, the public entity must still take other actions that will not result in fundamental alteration or undue burdens, but still provide program access
- See also historic exceptions, 28 CFR 35.150(a)(2), 35.150(b)(3) – This exception applies ONLY when the facility's **sole** purpose is to preserve history.

Transition Planning Considerations

- 1. Overview of the requirements of the law for physical & program access
- 2. Breadth and scope of facility types covered
- **3**. Types of physical barriers
- **4**. Alternative methods

- in the plan
- 6. Which Standards?
- 7. Logical approaches to providing physical access



5. What must be included

Transition Planning Considerations

- 8. Facility selection for program access
- 9. Surveying facilities for program access

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12. Leased facilities
13. TP practicalities
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14. Funding the work

- **10.** Information needed
- **11**. Barrier prevention and monitoring



I. Physical access is like a seven-layer cake

Program access (It's the icing that covers everything)

- 1. Operations (including communications about accommodations)
- 2. Maintenance
- 3. Facilities offering programs under contract with your entity
- 4. Leased facilities (Site selection)
- 5. Path of travel to altered areas and additions
- 6. Alterations
- 7. New construction and additions





II.a. Typical breadth of facility types covered



1. City and town halls and administrative centers

2. Courthouses

3. Jails, Prisons, and detention centers

- 4. Police stations
- 5. Fire stations
- 6. Sheriffs' departments

II.b. Typical breadth of facility types covered



7. Animal shelters

- 8. Libraries
- 9. Museums
- **10**. Fairgrounds
- 11. Convention centers
- 12. Auditoriums and theaters
- 13. Baseball and football stadiums
- 14. Visitors centers

eaters II



- **15**. Parks, also including
 - a. Public Gardens
 - b. Recreation centers
 - **C.** Golf courses
 - d. Ice skating rinks
 - e. Public swimming and wading pools
 - f. Playgrounds
 - Ball fields g.



- **15**. Parks, also including
 - h. Bleachers
 - İ. **Tennis centers**
 - Band shells .
 - k. Gazebos
 - . Marinas and fishing facilities
 - m. Nature trails
 - **n**. Shared use paths

II.e. Typical breadth of facility types covered



16. Airports, public transportation stops, and transit stations

17. Public rights of way elements

18. Waste disposal/landfill facilities open to public use

19. Schools

20. All other public entity owned and/or controlled public facilities and areas where programs are offered

III.b. Types of physical obstacles listed most frequently in DOJ Agreements

- 1. Parking
- 2. Curb ramps
- **3**. Routes from public transportation, accessible parking, streets and/or sidewalks to accessible entrances

- 4. Routes through the facilities connecting elements
- 5. Doors and door hardware
- 6. Ramps and handrails
- 7. Stairs and handrails



accessible spaces and

III.b. Types of physical obstacles listed most frequently in DOJ Agreements

- 8. Elevator cabs and lobbies
- 9. Platform lifts
- **10**. Rest rooms, accessible plumbing fixtures, and accessories

- 12. Dressing and lockers
- 13. Alarms
- 14. Signage

11. Showers and bathing facilities



III.c. Types of physical obstacles listed most frequently in DOJ Agreements

- **15**. Drinking fountains
- **16**. Telephones
- 17. Service and ticket sales counters
- 18. Concession stands and gift shops

- **19**. Wheelchair seating in assembly areas
- 20. Access to stages and performing areas
- 21. Assistive listening systems
- 22. Libraries



Audience Poll

Which of the following are characteristics of program access? (Select all that apply.)

- □ Provide equal opportunity
- □ Equal benefit
- Range of choices similar to others'
- Integration
- Privacy / confidentiality
- Dignity

Part Two



IV.a. Physical access v. alternative methods

- A. Flexibility allowed in achieving program accessibility: almost any method that results in making services, programs or activities accessible
- B. BUT Public entity must give priority to those methods that provide for integration of persons with disabilities
- C. Physical access is not required to every facility where alternative methods are as effective in providing program access, but, where structural changes are required, a Transition Plan is required



IV.b. Physical access v. alt. methods

- Alternative methods for compliance in existing facilities may include:
 - Redesigning equipment
 - Reassigning services to accessible buildings
 - Assigning aides to beneficiaries or home visits
 - Delivery of services at alternate sites
 - Alteration of existing facilities
 - Construction of new, accessible facilities
 - Use of accessible rolling stock or other conveyances
 - Other methods to achieve "readily accessible to and usable by"



V. Four requirements of a Transition Plan

- Identify all physical obstacles (barriers) in the facilities that limit program access
- Detail the methods that will be used to make the (programs) and/or) facilities accessible
- **Schedule** the steps to be taken each year to achieve compliance
- ► Name of official responsible for implementation

[If authority over streets, roads, walkways, include schedule for curb ramps or other sloped areas where pedestrian walks cross curbs. 28 CFR 35.150(d)(2)&(3)]



VI. Determine which Standards will be used to identify barriers

- 2010 ADA Standards
- 1991 ADA Stds. or UFAS (for Safe Harbor)
- State and/or Local Standards (Safe Harbors?)
- Rehab. Act Section 504 program access standard
- Public right of way (PROW Guidelines?)
- Shared use paths (PROW SNPRM?)
- Outdoor developed areas (ABA?)
- Other(s)?





VIII.c. Multi-site programs

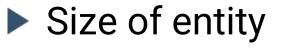
Entities have discretion in determining how many spaces in a building and how many facilities serving a multi-site program must be made accessible to achieve overall program accessibility.

Examples: City parks, libraries, parking facilities, & county courthouses (But be very careful with courts. Judges are usually very resistant to moving cases around the building, even when that is needed for access by people with disabilities.)



VIII.d. Multi-site programs

DOJ 2010 regulation preamble describes factors for evaluation of a multi-site program for "accessibility in its entirety"



- Program features at each site
- Distance between sites
- Travel times
- Number of sites
- Public transportation
- Integrated setting

DOJ did not adopt the concept of a "reasonable number"



VIII.e Setting facility priorities

Which facilities and elements are the most important to review and fix first?

- Highest use
- Most critical for people with disabilities and seniors
- Those where corrective work has been requested by users
- Facilities with frequent use without advanced notice
- Facilities offering unique programs and services
- Distributed locations
- Access to public transportation

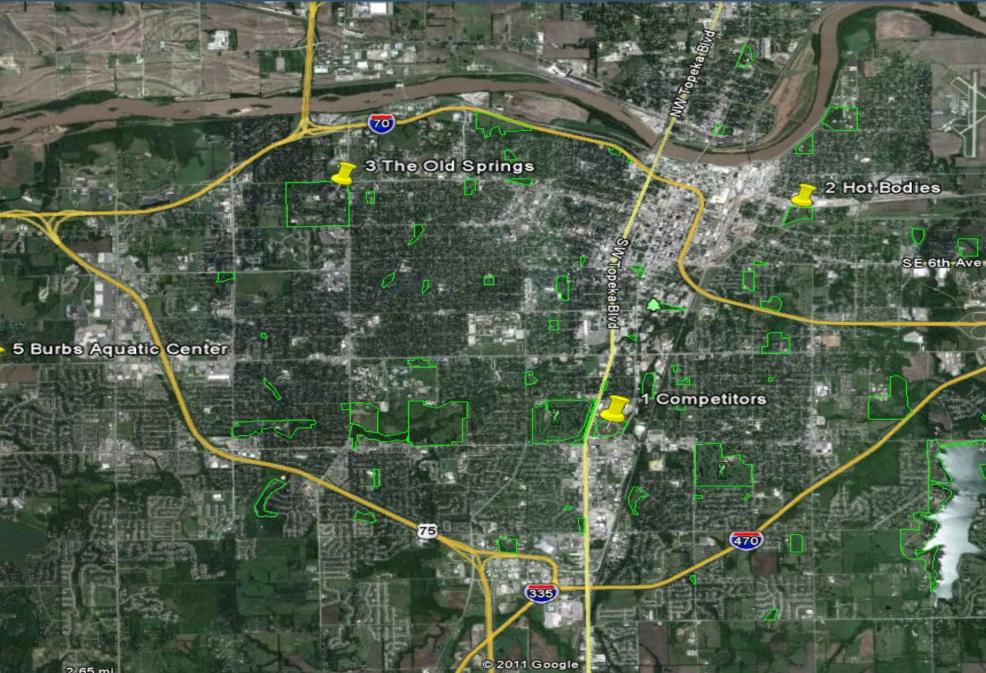


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Some factors to consider when setting facility priorities:

- Programs offered
- Communities served

- Geographic distribution
- Public transportation



corada

4 Campground Pool

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VIII.g. Setting curb ramp priorities

Which curb ramps tend to have the highest priorities?

- Those where work has been requested by users
- Curb ramps serving facilities for seniors and people with disabilities
- Highest use
- Closest to critical program facilities (like emergency shelters) and healthcare)
- Areas where no curb ramps currently exist



VIII.h. Public input options (Interested parties)



When

- At beginning
- After tentative findings
- Before final
 - recommendations

How

- Public hearings
- Meetings with
 - constituencies
- Online surveys/comments

Who

- Advisory committee(s) Advocacy organizations
- Individuals

X. Additional information needed about each facility, each barrier, and each solution

Practically speaking, some additional information may be needed about each facility, each barrier, and each solution to actually execute the work. Care must be taken to organize that information to communicate the barriers information effectively, to make decisions consistently and appropriately, and to efficiently coordinate and implement the plan.



X.e. Organizing and communicating the information

Difficulties with hard copy data, plans, & spreadsheets Database with standard analysis options and tailored reports

Database live on a secure internet server with layered access for specific user types



X. f. Organizing and communicating the graphic information

- Photos (before and after)
 - Site and floor plans of facilities, parks, etc.
 - Geographic information systems to manage PROW and site data and to document process (GIS)
- Map(s) showing all facilities with the accessible ones and their accessible entrances designated
 - Map(s) showing most accessible routes (keep updated)



Part Three



XI.a. Barrier prevention and monitoring

- Conduct plan reviews of new projects during design
- Verify construction in the field
- Check alterations projects
- Watch and train maintenance staff
- Train and oversee custodial / housekeeping staff



XI.b. Barrier prevention and monitoring

- Coordinate with operations personnel
- Work with public service representatives
- Coordinate with Purchasing Verify accessibility of products specified
- Follow up with vendors and suppliers
- Verify access to new and changing programs



XII.a. Leased facilities

- Under title II, a state or local government should attempt to lease accessible facilities. If they are not available, then the program access requirements will apply to any inaccessible leased facilities.
- Necessary changes must be negotiated with the landlord.
- Refusal on the part of the landlord does not make the changes technically infeasible.



Coordinate your physical facility access solutions with the operations, maintenance, procurement, and various program providers to assure consistent "program access" in practice

Don't assume that fixing physical barriers will fix all of the problems, that part of your work only provides opportunities for your staff and to provide program access



XIV Funding the Work - Avoid New Barriers

Trying to improve access is like getting yourself out of a hole. Your first task should be to stop digging the hole any deeper.

Your first "funding source" to improve access should be to avoid the costs of fixing new barriers that should have never been built.



XIV.a. Funding the work

Stop the processes that are creating new barriers

- Train ALL design and construction team members
- ADA plan reviews of new construction and alterations
- Reviews and approvals of standard accessible products
- Training and support for maintenance and operations teams
- Train front-line "public-contact" & "customer service" staff



XIV.b. Funding the work

Look for opportunities and methods to piggyback ADA work onto other projects

New construction

- Additions
- Alterations projects





XIV.c. Funding the work

Look for opportunities and methods to piggyback ADA work onto other projects

Ongoing maintenance work

- Never allow a new, non-compliant element to replace an old one
- List barriers as their responsibility in your DB
- Integrate repairs with their normal work
- Require regular reports on progress





XIV.d. Funding the work

Seek new funding sources

- Donations and partnership projects
- State funding sources
- Federal funding sources (CDBG, FEMA, DOT, Direct, etc.)
- Accessible parking ticket revenue
- Crowd Source funding...



XIV.e. Funding the work

Look to your landlords and tenants

- Write your leases to require compliance
- Give them detailed lists of what is wrong with their facilities (It will make it more difficult for them to declare ignorance) later if they or you are sued)
- Remind them that THEY may be eligible for tax credits and deductions



XIV.f. Funding the work

Look to your landlords and tenants

- Verify compliance before entering into ANY new leases
- Verify their compliance before renewing every lease
- Give your vendors your Title II compliance responsibilities when they provide services for you or in your facilities



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XIV.g. Funding the work

Trade – Find Win-Win opportunities!

- Offer great deals to non-profits, like low rent, in exchange for services:
 - Braille printing
 - Transcription services
 - Captioning
 - ► ASL interpreters
 - Ask them what else they might be able to provide inexpensively





Questions & Answers



For further information

This PowerPoint was taken from a free, more detailed ondemand webinar series on Transition Plans available on Corada. For information about that program, go to www.ADATransitionPlans.com.

ADA Facility Surveying and Transition Planning software available from various companies:

BlueDAG Facility Surveying and Transition Plan Builder Deepwalk – Sidewalks and Curb Ramps Survey Solutions - Endelman & Associates



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