

EL PASO COUNTY
ADA Transition Plan

2026

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

EL PASO COUNTY'S COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY

El Paso County is unwavering in its commitment to equal access. We strive to ensure all individuals, regardless of disability, can fully participate in our programs, services, and utilize our facilities. This updated ADA Transition Plan outlines our ongoing efforts to identify and remove accessibility barriers. It paves the way for a more inclusive and accessible environment for everyone in our community.

PURPOSE OF THIS UPDATE

This document serves as an update to the original ADA Transition Plan adopted by El Paso County in December 2019. It reflects our unwavering dedication to continuous improvement by outlining new strategies to enhance accessibility across all county programs, services, activities and facilities.

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) GENERAL INFORMATION

The Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA, is a federal law that protects the rights of people with disabilities. It ensures they have equal access to public spaces and services. El Paso County follows guidelines set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), specifically Title II. This ensures equal access for individuals with disabilities in programs, services, activities and facilities. Furthermore, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 also applies to our programs and services, offering additional protections. Section 504 applies to programs and services that receive federal funding in many areas like healthcare, public education and transportation. It can sometimes offer broader protections than the ADA, for example, it may require us to provide certain accommodations even if they would cause a moderate financial burden.

El Paso County is unwavering in its commitment to equal access. We strive to ensure all individuals, regardless of disability, can fully participate in our programs, services, and utilize our facilities. This updated ADA Transition Plan outlines our ongoing efforts to identify and remove accessibility barriers. It paves the way for a more inclusive and accessible environment for everyone in our community.

KEY POINTS

- Public entities, like El Paso County, cannot deny access to their programs, services, or activities because of physical barriers. Title II regulations (specifically §35.130) outline the obligation to make reasonable modifications to policies and practices to avoid discrimination based on disability.
- It is required that reasonable efforts to remove barriers are made, allowing everyone to participate fully.
- Programs provided by El Paso County are required to be accessible, meaning individuals with disabilities can understand and participate without difficulty.

EL PASO COUNTY: COMMITTED TO ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL

Equal Access: A Core Principle

El Paso County is committed to ensuring equal access for individuals with disabilities in all aspects of public life. Beyond merely complying with ADA regulations, the prevention of discrimination and the promotion of inclusivity in county programs, services, and activities is paramount.

Ensuring Accessibility in County Buildings

The ADA Division adopts a proactive strategy to ensure accessibility in county buildings. Utilizing specialized software to conduct self-evaluations, physical barriers are identified that may impede access. Barriers are prioritized based on severity of impact on individuals with disabilities, ensuring the most critical issues are addressed efficiently.

The Legal Landscape: ADA and Beyond

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, amended by the ADA in 1990, prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in programs receiving federal funding, to include employment, public services, education, and healthcare.

The ADA, however, broadly protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination in all areas of public life, regardless of federal funding. This encompasses employment, public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunications.

Four Pillars of ADA Compliance

El Paso County adheres to the four key principles outlined in Title II of the ADA:

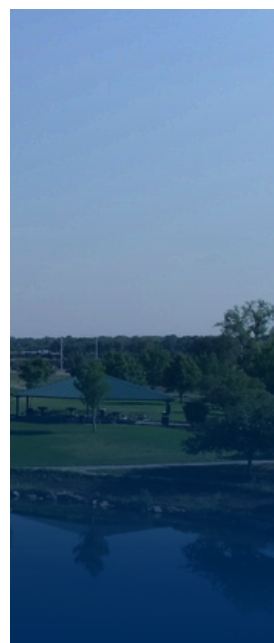
1. **Non-discrimination:** Ensuring equal access to all county programs, services, and activities, regardless of ability to include removal of physical barriers as well as providing effective communication.
2. **Self-evaluation:** Regular comprehensive assessments of programs and facilities to ensure compliance
3. **Transition Plan:** Barriers are identified, funding is secured, then steps and timelines will be developed for barrier elimination.
4. **Grievance Procedures:** A clear and accessible process is in place for individuals to report any suspected discrimination.

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) plays a vital role in enforcing Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by state and local governments, and includes the following responsibilities:

1. **Investigating Complaints:** The DOJ reviews complaints filed by individuals who believe they have experienced discrimination under Title II. These complaints often involve issues such as inaccessible facilities, failure to provide effective communication, or insufficient accommodations in public programs and services.

2. **Promoting Compliance:** The DOJ works proactively with public entities to ensure they meet ADA standards, often through technical assistance, education, and voluntary compliance agreements.
3. **Taking Legal Action:** When public entities fail to comply with the ADA, the DOJ has the authority to file lawsuits to enforce the law. These actions may result in court-ordered remedies, such as modifications to policies or facilities, and improved accessibility.
4. **Providing Guidance:** To help public entities understand their obligations, the DOJ issues regulations, guidelines, and technical assistance materials clarifying Title II requirements.
5. **Facilitating Resolution:** In many cases, the DOJ helps resolve disputes through mediation or negotiated settlements, fostering compliance without resorting to litigation.

Through these efforts, the DOJ upholds the principles of the ADA by ensuring individuals with disabilities have equal access to public programs, services, activities, and opportunities, thereby promoting inclusion and equity.



Colorado's Commitment to Accessibility

In addition to the federal ADA regulations, El Paso County aligns with key Colorado state laws that strengthen accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Combined, these laws establish a robust framework for ensuring equal access and opportunities for all residents. These key Colorado state laws include:

- Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act (CADA): Prohibits discrimination based on disability in various areas, including employment, housing, and public accommodations.
- Colorado Accessibility Standards for Buildings: Sets accessibility standards for new construction and building alterations.
- Colorado Assistive Technology Act: Promotes the availability and use of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.
- Colorado Public Accommodations Act: Prohibits discrimination in public establishments like restaurants and stores.
- Colorado Fair Housing Act: Prohibits disability discrimination in housing.

EL PASO COUNTY ADA DIVISION DELIVERS ON ACCESSIBILITY GOALS

Since adopting the 2019 transition plan, the El Paso County ADA Division has made significant strides in enhancing accessibility. This commitment ensures equal access to county services and programs for everyone.

Our team has evaluated 36 public facilities, remediated the majority of identified barriers, provided consultation and guidance to departments countywide on existing and upcoming projects, and will continue to assess buildings, parks, sidewalks, programs, services and activities for compliance on an ongoing basis. This ensures the public can fully access and engage in county services without encountering accessibility obstacles.

The ADA Division prioritizes barrier removal based on Department of Justice guidelines, focusing on parking lots, entrances, restrooms, counters, drinking fountains, and facility routes, in that order.

The Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) approves an annual ADA barrier remediation budget based on available funding. This ensures the most pressing needs are addressed, within the constraints of our resources.

THE ADA TITLE II TRANSITION PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Federal law mandates specific requirements for public entities like El Paso County. This Transition Plan fulfills these requirements as outlined in Title II of the ADA. These requirements include:

1. **Identifying Accessibility Barriers:** We will continually assess our facilities and programs to identify any physical or programmatic obstacles that hinder accessibility for individuals with disabilities.
2. **Developing Solutions:** Once accessibility barriers are identified, we will develop clear and comprehensive plans to address them. These plans will outline methods for removing or mitigating the barriers.
3. **Implementation Schedule:** The Transition Plan establishes a realistic timeline for implementing the solutions we develop. This ensures ongoing progress towards achieving full accessibility.
4. **Continued Compliance:** Our commitment to accessibility extends beyond this plan. We will continually strive to comply with all aspects of the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, including maintaining administrative procedures for addressing accessibility concerns.

Monitoring and Updating Plan

El Paso County is dedicated to maintaining accessibility as an ongoing priority. This Transition Plan will be consistently reviewed and updated to reflect progress and address any emerging needs. Public comments and suggestions will also be incorporated as deemed appropriate.

ADA Coordinator

The ADA requires public entities to designate an individual responsible for monitoring compliance and investigating potential ADA violations. El Paso County has appointed dedicated ADA Coordinator(s) to fulfill this role and serves as a central point of contact for:

- **Individuals with Disabilities:** The ADA Coordinator can assist individuals with disabilities in requesting auxiliary aids, policy modifications, and other accommodations to ensure full participation in county programs and services.

- General Public and County Staff: The ADA Coordinator can address accessibility concerns raised by the public or county staff members.
- Filing Complaints: Individuals who believe they have experienced disability-related discrimination can file a formal complaint with the ADA Coordinator.

ADA Complaint Procedure

El Paso County has a clearly defined procedure for addressing complaints related to disability discrimination. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against can file a complaint with the ADA Specialist. The complaint procedure includes:

- Filing Instructions: The process outlines how to submit a complaint, including details on what information should be included.
- Investigation and Response: The ADA Coordinator will promptly investigate all complaints and provide a written response within a designated timeframe. The response will explain the County's position and offer options for resolving the complaint.
- Appeals Process: If the initial response is unsatisfactory, a formal appeal process is available.

All written complaints, appeals, and responses will be maintained by El Paso County for a minimum of three years.

<https://admin.elpasoco.com/facilities-strategic-infrastructure-management/ada-compliance/>

Public Involvement

El Paso County recognizes the importance of public participation in achieving and maintaining accessibility. We encourage ongoing public involvement through various channels:

- Direct Communication: Individuals are encouraged to directly contact the ADA Coordinator with accessibility concerns or suggestions.
- Networking with Advocacy Groups: We actively collaborate with local disability advocacy groups to gain valuable insights and perspectives.
- Public Outreach and Surveys: We may develop public outreach initiatives and surveys to gather feedback from the community and identify accessibility priorities.

The Transition Plan will be available in various accessible formats upon request. This ensures all community members have the opportunity to access and contribute to the ongoing effort towards achieving full accessibility.

SECTION 2: ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY

The public right-of-way is an area of land owned or controlled by the County for the purposes of constructing, operating and maintaining public features such as streets, alleys, sidewalks, pedestrian curb ramps, bike paths utilized for transportation, utilities and other infrastructure. El Paso County has strived to improve accessibility for pedestrian modes of travel through the expansion of an accessible transportation network. The El Paso County (EPC) Department of Public Works (DPW) is addressing pedestrian access route system needs including:



- Ensuring all new transportation capital projects include pedestrian access routes that meet the current Engineering Criteria Manual (ECM) criteria - where applicable;
- Providing funding in pavement management overlay projects for accessible features. The accessible features will meet ECM criteria for curb ramp standards at the time the concrete work is performed allowing the pavement overlay project to incorporate the accessibility where applicable;
- Ensuring all new developments and site expansions or improvements include pedestrian access routes that meet the current ECM criteria where applicable;
- Addressing specific citizen requests and grievances; and
- Exploring external funding avenues including grants, to fund additional accessibility projects.

The following criteria are considered when prioritizing projects by the Department of Public Works. These are not necessarily listed by importance because some criteria may be of higher importance on one project but lower importance on another project:

- Citizen grievances
- Proximity to government facilities
- Streets with higher traffic volumes
- Streets with public transit service
- Streets with pedestrian attractors like schools, parks and shopping
- Proximity to medical facilities
- Improved system connectivity
- Safety
- Grant availability or other funding availability factors
- Proposed overlay projects

In accordance with Section 1.9 of the ECM, the ECM Administrator retains the authority to approve deviations where necessary to improve safety, increase efficiency, maximize public benefit, or optimize the use of public funds.

EPC DPW conducted a multi-phase approach to addressing ADA concerns in the Right of Way. Phases ran concurrently with the other phases of the multi-phase approach, and a detailed timeline for each phase is located at El Paso County Department of Public Works. A summary of the multi-phase approach follows.



PHASE 1: TRAINING (COMPLETED; ONGOING PROGRAM)

EPC DPW identified early in the Transition Plan process the need for specialized training to ensure staff possess the technical knowledge required to design and construct accessible pedestrian facilities. Initial efforts included sending inspectors to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) course Designing Pedestrian Facilities for Accessibility on May 28–29, 2019, followed by distribution of training materials to engineering and inspection staff by July 15, 2019.

Since that time, all applicable engineering and inspection staff have completed ADA-related training. Training has been institutionalized as an ongoing program, with staff participating in recurring professional development opportunities to maintain familiarity with evolving standards, including PROWAG and ADA guidance.

PHASE 2: ENGINEERING CRITERIA MANUAL (ECM) REVIEW AND UPDATE (COMPLETED; MAINTAINED)

EPC DPW completed a comprehensive review of the Engineering Criteria Manual (ECM), comparing its requirements against the Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) standards. This effort resulted in targeted updates to pedestrian access route criteria, which were formally implemented on June 23, 2020.

The ECM now serves as the governing standard for all new construction and improvements within the ROW. Moving forward, DPW will continue to periodically review and update the ECM to reflect regulatory changes, industry best practices, and lessons learned from implementation, ensuring the document remains current and adaptable.

PHASE 3A: INVENTORY OF EXISTING ASSETS (COMPLETED; MAINTAINED)

An initial inventory of curb ramp locations was developed using street-view imagery collected in July 2018 as part of a countywide pavement condition study. This effort culminated in the completion of a comprehensive curb ramp location inventory in February 2020 and was used to document curb ramp locations to facilitate the collection of curb ramp attributes. This inventory is periodically updated going forward.

PHASE 3B: INVENTORY OF ASSETS ACCEPTED AFTER JULY 2018 (COMPLETED; ONGOING UPDATES)

To address gaps in the original dataset, EPC DPW conducted additional inventory efforts for assets constructed after July 2018. This included the use of updated aerial photography and field verification through GPS-based data collection in newly accepted subdivisions.

As of July 1, 2020, the inventory was considered current. Since then, the County has transitioned to a continuous update model, incorporating new ADA assets through subdivision acceptance, capital improvement projects, and the Annual Concrete Maintenance Program.

To support this effort, EPC has expanded GIS staffing and implemented an Asset Management system to track and manage ADA-related infrastructure to ensure that the inventory remains current, accurate, and integrated into County decision-making processes.

PHASE 4: COLLECTION OF ASSET ATTRIBUTES (COMPLETED; MAINTAINED)

Following completion of the curb ramp inventory, EPC DPW collected detailed attribute data for ADA assets, including condition, compliance characteristics, and serviceability. This effort was supported in part by state grant funding and was completed in spring 2023.

The resulting dataset provides a comprehensive understanding of existing conditions and forms the basis for prioritizing improvements, estimating costs, and tracking compliance over time. Attribute data collection is now incorporated into standard workflows to ensure newly constructed or modified assets are consistently documented.

PHASE 5: ADA ASSET CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAM (ACTIVE AND ONGOING)

Building upon the completed inventory and attribute data, EPC DPW developed an ADA Improvement Project Plan to systematically address identified deficiencies. This plan includes 95 capital improvement projects targeting high-priority locations. The first two of these projects targeting improvements were completed in summer 2025 with two additional projects planned to be completed in 2026.

- Implementation of ADA improvements is coordinated across multiple programs, including:
- Standalone capital improvement projects;
- The Annual Concrete Maintenance Program;
- Pavement overlay and roadway reconstruction projects; and
- Development-driven improvements.
-

Funding sources include local funds, Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) funding, Road & Bridge (R&B) funds, and state and federal grants. EPC will continue to pursue external funding opportunities to accelerate progress.

EPC will continue to maintain and prioritize responsiveness to community needs by addressing ADA-related Citizen Service Requests (CSRs) as part of ongoing maintenance and improvement activities.

Transparency remains a key component of this phase. EPC coordinates with the ADA Compliance Office to provide public updates on project progress and continues to make information available through EPC communication channels and the ADA webpage.

SECTION 3: ACCESSIBLE GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, FACILITIES, PARKS, AND OPEN SPACES

El Paso County is committed to ensuring everyone has equal access to our programs, services, and activities, regardless of disability. To achieve this, we are conducting a comprehensive review of our government buildings, facilities, parks, and open spaces.

IDENTIFYING ACCESSIBILITY BARRIERS

We are systematically examining each program, service, and activity to identify any barriers that might prevent people with disabilities from full participation. This assessment will determine the steps needed to make our programs more accessible.

- If reasonable modifications can be made to remove barriers, we will implement them promptly.
- If structural changes are necessary, the program or facility's accessibility needs will be included in our long-term accessibility plan.

SELF-EVALUATION PROCESS

As part of this ongoing review, we have already identified certain public buildings, facilities, and pedestrian features that require evaluation for accessibility barriers. This includes:

- All buildings and facilities owned or governed by El Paso County that are open to the public.
- Parks, outdoor spaces, and pedestrian features within the public right-of-way, such as sidewalks, curb ramps, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals

COMPREHENSIVE INVENTORY

The following list provides a starting point for our evaluation. It includes County-owned or leased buildings and sites offering programs, services, or activities. Please note that these lists are not exhaustive and will be updated as needed.

Facility	Total Barriers	Barriers Remediated in 2025	% Remediated in 2025	Remaining Open Barriers	% Open
Bear Creek Nature Center	31	0	0.00%	4	12.90%
Bear Creek Regional Park	30	0	0.00%	1	3.33%
Black Forest Regional Park	23	0	0.00%	11	47.80%
Calhan Community Outreach Center	19	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Centennial Hall	30	2	6.67%	2	6.67%
Citizens Service Center	140	2	1.43%	6	4.29%
Coroner's Office	17	0	0.00%	12	70.59%
Costilla Parking Garage	5	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
County Professional Building	76	1	1.32%	6	7.90%
Criminal Justice Center	77	2	2.60%	25	32.47%
Department of Human Services	5	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
DOT Calhan Office	2	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
DOT Operations Center	26	2	7.70%	7	26.90%
Environmental Building	26	2	7.70%	2	7.70%
EPC Public Health South	46	0	0.00%	6	13.04%

Facility	Total Barriers	Barriers Remediated in 2025	% Remediated in 2025	Remaining Open Barriers	% Open
EPC Veteran Services	30	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Fair and Events Complex	152	3	2.00%	48	31.60%
Fountain Creek Nature Center	19	0	0.00%	14	73.68%
Fountain Creek Regional Park	23	4	17.40%	7	30.40%
Fox Run Regional Park	118	0	0.00%	58	49.20%
Homestead Ranch Regional Park	26	0	0.00%	17	65.40%
Human Services - Peak Vista Fountain Office	15	0	0.00%	9	60.00%
Human Services 167 N. Spruce	64	2	3.13%	0	0.00%
John Ceresa Memorial Park	6	6	100.00%	0	0.00%
Judicial	528	1	0.02%	69	13.07%
Motor Vehicle East	43	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Motor Vehicle Union	28	0	0.00%	3	10.71%
Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center	20	0	0.00%	20	100.00%
Office of Emergency Management	49	0	0.00%	29	59.20%
Office of the Sheriff	42	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Palmer Lake Recreation Area	13	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

Facility	Total Barriers	Barriers Remediated in 2025	% Remediated in 2025	Remaining Open Barriers	% Open
Parks Dept. Headquarters	29	0	0.00%	29	100.00%
Peak Vista - Jet Wing	30	0	0.00%	30	100.00%
Pikes Peak Center	184	0	0.00%	33	17.93%
Pikes Peak Regional Development Center	23	0	0.00%	23	100.00%
Public Health WIC Office	19	0	0.00%	18	94.74%
Public Health WIC Office - Widefield**					
Rainbow Falls	2	2	100.00%	0	0.00%
Sahwatch Parking Garage	53	0	0.00%	4	7.50%
Santa Fe Regional Trailhead Restroom	22	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Widefield Park	18	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Totals	2109	29	1.38%	493	23.38%



**Leased building/space*
*** No longer leased building/space*

EL PASO COUNTY'S COMMITMENT TO ADA COMPLIANCE

We are actively working to ensure our programs, services, and facilities are accessible to everyone, regardless of disability. Here's a breakdown of our ongoing efforts:

- **Developing a Revised Self-Evaluation:** We're creating a comprehensive self-evaluation document that aligns with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.
- **Ongoing ADA and Section 504 Compliance:** We strive to meet all aspects of the ADA and Section 504. Here's how we're achieving this:
 - **Employee Training:** We provide continuous ADA education for staff empowered to address and implement accessibility measures.
 - **Enhanced Public Communication:** We're improving outreach efforts to better inform the disabled community about available programs and services.
 - **Grievance Procedure Updates:** We're revising and publishing a clear grievance procedure for addressing accessibility concerns.
 - **Strengthened Self-Evaluation:** We're continually improving our ADA Self-Evaluation process for ongoing accessibility assessment.
 - **Transition Plan Development:** We're creating a concrete plan to address identified accessibility barriers and improve access over time.

ACCESSIBLE PARKS AND OUTDOOR SPACES FOR EVERYONE

El Paso County is committed to creating inclusive parks and outdoor spaces that are enjoyable for everyone, regardless of ability. We recognize that past accessibility standards may not fully meet the needs of all users.

To address this, we are:

- **Following Updated ADA Regulations:** We adhere to the latest ADA regulations and accessibility guidelines set forth by the US Access Board and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA). These regulations provide a comprehensive framework for creating accessible outdoor spaces.

Accessibility Inventory

The following list provides a starting point for our accessibility assessments. This list includes all County-owned parks and outdoor spaces. Please note that this list is not exhaustive and will be updated as improvements are made and new parks are acquired.

SOUTH DISTRICT 2024:

Park Name / Division	Acres	Miles of Trail
Stratmoor Hills Community Park	1.15	0
Stratmoor Valley Trailhead Park	3	0.12
Widefield Community Park	50.5	2
Fountain Creek Regional Park	388	6.75
Schreder Open Space	12	0
Crews Gulch Regional Trail	16	2.8
Fountain Creek Regional Trail	32	14.6
John Ceresa Memorial Park	10	0.6
Clear Spring Ranch Open Space	930	6
Christian Open Space	80	0
Kane Ranch Open Space	495	2.08

CENTRAL DISTRICT 2024:

Park Name / Division	Acres	Miles of Trail
Bear Creek Regional Park	545	10.5
Bear Creek Regional Trail	0	3.3
Ute Pass Regional Trail	18	6
Rainbow Falls Historic Site	4.9	0.15
Jones Park Open Space	1,115.00	6.7



**NORTH DISTRICT
2024:**

Park Name / Division	Acres	Miles of Trail
Fox Run Regional Park	410	6
Fox Run Regional Trail	9	3
Black Forest Regional Park	382	13.6
Palmer Lake Recreation Area		
New Santa Fe Regional Trail	145	18.1
Black Forest Section 16	120	4
Pineries Open Space	1,070	8.5
Forest Lakes Regional Trail	5.15	3
Cherry Creek Regional Trail	6.45	2.13
Santa Fe Open Space	60	1.75
Arroyo Lane/Sand Creek Trail Property	4	0

**ALL DISTRICT TOTALS
2024:**

Park Name / Division	Acres	Miles of Trail
All Districts	7,883.15	145.88

**EAST DISTRICT
2024:**

Park Name / Division	Acres	Miles of Trail
Rock Island Regional Trail	156	10.6
Drake Lake Natural Area	22	0.1
Falcon Regional Park	225	0.75
Eastonville Regional Trail	0	1.07
Meridian Ranch Regional Trail	0	0.43
Heritage Ranch Open Space	13	0
Latigo Trails Open Space	100	0
Woodlake Open Space	92	0
Falcon Vista Open Space	17	0
Peyton Pines Open Space	48	0
Forest Green Open Space	15	0
Homestead Ranch Regional Park	458	4
Paint Mines Interpretive Park	770	3.9
Palmer Divide Regional Trail	0	3.35
El Paso County Fair and Events Complex	55	0

ENSURING ACCESSIBLE PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES

El Paso County is committed to creating and maintaining parks and public spaces that are accessible and enjoyable for everyone. Here's how we're achieving this:

Following Accessibility Standards:

- All new construction and improvement projects adhere to the latest accessibility guidelines, including the International Building Code, the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA).
- We stay up to date on guidance provided by the US Access Board.

Identifying Accessibility Barriers:

- We plan accessibility field surveys to assess existing parks and outdoor spaces. This will help us identify areas that don't meet current accessibility standards.
- The surveys will consider factors like terrain and the overall function of the space to determine if full compliance is possible.
- The data collected will create a prioritized list of improvements needed to address accessibility barriers.

Prioritizing Accessibility Efforts:

- Due to budgetary constraints, we prioritize accessibility improvements based on usage and impact. High-traffic areas will be addressed first, unless safety concerns dictate otherwise.
- Our goal is to maximize overall community benefit and make the best use of public funds.

Maintaining Accessibility:

- We understand the importance of maintaining accessible features within parks and outdoor spaces.
- While we cannot monitor everything daily, we encourage the community to report any inoperable features or equipment that hinder accessibility.
- We will address these concerns promptly and prioritize repairs that impact safety and accessibility.

How to Report Accessibility Issues:

- To report an accessibility issue or concern within an El Paso County park or outdoor recreation area, please contact:
- Brande Blair – ADA Coordinator
- Phone: 719.520.6811
- Email: brandeblair@elpasoco.com or ADACompliance@elpasoco.com

SECTION 4: DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY & COMPLIANCE

In April 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) updated its regulations for Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The revised rule requires state and local governments to ensure that any services, programs, or activities offered through websites and mobile applications meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA standards. This ensures that individuals with disabilities can access government services and participate fully in civic and community life without barriers.

In addition to the DOJ update, the State of Colorado enacted House Bill 21-1110 (HB21-1110), which provides further requirements for digital accessibility through rules outlined in 8 CCR 1501-11. A key distinction between the federal rule and HB21-1110 is the broader scope of Colorado's legislation: it mandates that all information and communication technology (ICT), not just websites and mobile apps, must be fully accessible. This includes all hardware, software, and systems used by the public or government employees, whether internal or public facing.

El Paso County is committed to making its website and its information and communication technology (ICT) accessible to as many people as possible. Our ongoing accessibility efforts focus on the usability of our online technology and on identifying barriers that impact access to information.

Digital accessibility efforts are overseen by the El Paso County Department of Communications Accessibility and Compliance Webmaster, in conjunction with the Digital, Strategy, and Technology Department and County Administration. To learn more about the work and commitment to digital accessibility at El Paso County, visit www.elpasoco.com/digital-accessibility.

TO REPORT A DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY ISSUE OR REQUEST ACCOMMODATION

To request reasonable accommodations or to report inaccessible information and communication technology (ICT), please fill out the form, [Request a Reasonable Accommodation or Report Inaccessible ICT](#) or send an email to EPCDigitalAccessibility@ElPasoCo.com with your name, preferred contact method and information on the El Paso County site, page, document, or application you are having issues with or are requesting a reasonable accommodation or modification.

Important Details to Note When Submitting A Request:

- Each request is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. We aim to respond to all communications within two (2) business days to begin the process for accommodations, addressing accessibility barriers, or providing feedback.
- Reasonable accommodation or modifications are provided at no cost to the requester.
- Accommodation requests that would impose an undue financial, technical, or administrative burden on El Paso County may not be fulfilled as requested.

If another method for submitting a request or report is needed, an alternative method will be provided for individuals with disabilities upon request.

For additional information or general questions, please contact the Accessibility and Compliance Webmaster at EPCDigitalAccessibility@ElPasoCo.com or call 719-520-6464.

SECTION 5: SURVEYING, IDENTIFYING, REMOVAL OF BARRIERS AND FUNDING

El Paso County is committed to identifying and removing barriers that hinder access to our programs, services, and facilities for people with disabilities.

STANDARDIZED ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

We utilize the ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities, aligned with Department of Justice ADA Title III regulations, to prioritize accessibility improvements. This checklist focuses on four key areas:

1. **Accessible Approach and Entrance:** Ensuring easy access to buildings and facilities.
2. **Access to Goods and Services:** Guaranteeing that people with disabilities can readily access services offered.
3. **Accessible Public Restrooms:** Providing restrooms that are usable and convenient for everyone.
4. **Access to Other Amenities:** Making features like drinking fountains and public common areas accessible.

FIELD SURVEYS FOR ACCESSIBILITY

We conduct field surveys to assess accessibility in our parks, buildings, and public spaces. These surveys focus on the following elements:

- Pedestrian pathways and routes
- Parking lots, access aisles, and curb ramps
- Building entrances
- Service counters
- Restrooms and drinking fountains
- All other public service areas

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The data collected during these surveys will be used to identify and prioritize accessibility barriers. This information will be entered into a central database system (BlueDAG) for easy access and analysis.

The BlueDAG system will allow us to:

- **Organize data:** Sort information by location, type of barrier, priority level, and other relevant categories.
- **Generate reports:** Create reports that summarize accessibility issues and guide future actions.
- **Develop Transition Plans:** Use the collected data to create individual and overall transition plans outlining steps to address accessibility barriers.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

We take data security seriously. The BlueDAG system utilizes cloud-based technology to ensure the collected information is protected.

In addition to identifying barriers, we will also develop a comprehensive inventory of all public buildings and facilities owned or governed by El Paso County.

IDENTIFYING ACCESSIBILITY BARRIERS WITH BLUEDAG & CITYWORKS SOFTWARE

El Paso County ADA Coordinators use the BlueDAG mobile app to gather data during field assessments. This app helps us identify features within our parks, buildings, and public spaces that don't meet accessibility standards (ADA barriers). The collected information automatically populates a central database and informs our Transition Plan for addressing these barriers.

Examples of Information Collected with BlueDAG and City Works:

- **Crosswalks:** Presence, width, type, alignment, tactile warnings, islands, disabled access.
- **Curb Ramps:** Presence, location at intersections.
- **Intersection Geometry:** Standard right angle, T-shaped, Y-shaped, skewed, or irregular.

- **Pedestrian Signals:** Type, size, height, location of actuator buttons.
- **Tactile Guide Strips:** Presence, location, height, width, and color.
- **Transit Stops:** Type (light rail, bus, etc.)
- **Facility Measurements:** Dimensions of parking areas, pedestrian routes, entrances, restrooms, counters, tables, doors, signage, and more.

ASSIGNING FIELD SURVEYS FOR ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENTS

The El Paso County ADA Division has created a schedule for ongoing accessibility evaluations. This schedule guides our staff in assessing accessibility within County-owned or leased buildings, parks, outdoor spaces, and facilities.

Data Collection with BlueDAG

During field evaluations, staff use the BlueDAG mobile app to collect data. BlueDAG automatically records the location (longitude and latitude) for each assessment and adds it to a central mapping tool within the database. Data can also be exported to Microsoft Excel for further analysis.

Barrier Removal Considerations

A. OVERALL ACCESSIBILITY GOALS

The ADA requires us to operate our programs and services in a way that is accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities. However, the ADA acknowledges that:

- Making every existing facility completely accessible may not always be possible.
- Accessibility modifications shouldn't fundamentally alter the nature of a program or service.
- Undue financial and administrative burdens should be avoided.

In these situations, the ADA allows for alternative methods to ensure program accessibility, without requiring physical changes to facilities.

1. Determining Accessibility Needs

The first step to identifying necessary physical changes is to understand the specific programs and activities offered within El Paso County facilities.

2. Collaboration and Input

Since 2015, El Paso County has established working groups to help us understand accessibility needs and make informed decisions. These groups include representatives from various departments, such as Public Works, Parks, Communications, and Facilities Management.

B. TRANSITION PLAN: PRIORITIZING BARRIER REMOVAL AND ACCESSIBILITY SOLUTIONS

El Paso County's Transition Plan outlines how we will identify, prioritize, and address accessibility barriers within our facilities. Here's a breakdown of the process:

1. Evaluating Barriers and Accessibility Options:

The first step involves thoroughly examining each accessibility barrier. We consider:

- **Impact on Program Accessibility:** How significantly does the barrier hinder access to programs and services?
- **Alternative Solutions:** Can program accessibility be achieved without removing the barrier? Are there alternative ways to deliver programs or services in accessible locations?

Example: Imagine a courthouse with courtrooms on the third floor, only accessible by stairs. This creates a barrier to accessing court services. In this case, we would explore options:

- ****Barrier Removal:**** Installing an elevator would directly address the barrier.
- ****Alternative Solutions:**** Offering court services at an accessible location, relocating courtrooms to the first floor, or constructing a new accessible courthouse could also be considered.

We prioritize the most efficient use of public funds while aiming to make programs accessible.

2. Prioritizing Barrier Removal:

When physical construction is necessary to remove barriers, the Transition Plan guides our approach. The web-based BlueDAG program provides details on each barrier and recommends corrective actions. These deficiencies are then included in upcoming building modifications.

Implementation:

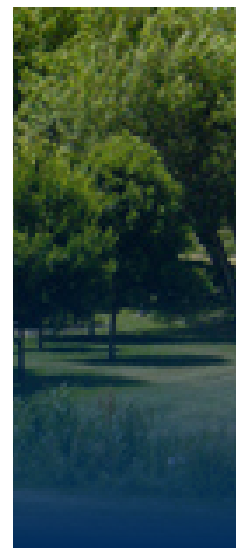
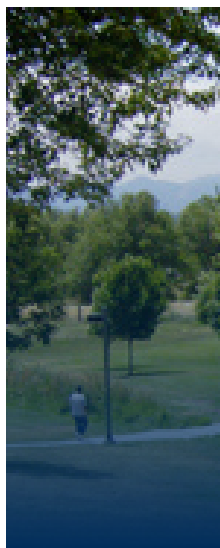
- Modifications may be completed by internal staff or contracted out.
- Quality control measures ensure that implemented solutions effectively address accessibility concerns.

C. SELECTION OF BARRIER REMOVAL METHODS

El Paso County utilizes a collaborative approach to selecting the most effective methods for removing accessibility barriers. Here's how it is applied:

- **ADA Coordinator Expertise:** Our ADA Coordinators collaborate with existing departments to implement capital improvement and maintenance programs that address accessibility concerns.
- **Considering Multiple Factors:** The ADA Division works with affected departments, the public, and disability rights organizations to determine the best solution for each barrier. Several factors are considered:
 - **ADA Compliance:** Ensuring the chosen method meets accessibility standards as defined by the ADA and Section 504.
 - **Public Safety:** Prioritizing solutions that maintain or enhance public safety.
 - **Efficiency:** Finding solutions that are cost-effective and maximize overall benefit to the community.
 - **Effective Use of Funds:** Utilizing public resources responsibly to achieve the greatest accessibility improvements.

Flexibility for Optimal Outcomes: While the ADA Division strives for adherence to standard barrier removal methods, there may be situations where alternative approaches are necessary. In these cases, the focus is on achieving the best possible outcome, considering public safety, efficiency, and the most effective use of public funds.



D. DETERMINATION OF BARRIER REMOVAL PRIORITIES

El Paso County prioritizes the removal of physical barriers based on the following criteria:

Priority 1: Grievances from the Public and Individuals with Disabilities

- Grievances submitted by the public, particularly those from individuals with disabilities, will be addressed first, regardless of the specific building or facility involved. This applies to all buildings and facilities owned, operated, or governed by El Paso County.

Priority 2: Identified Problem Areas

- Physical locations identified as problematic through public involvement mechanisms, such as consumer surveys and the Transition Plan comment period, will be addressed as the second priority for barrier removal.

Priority 3: On-Site Evaluations

- Physical barriers identified during official Title II ADA on-site evaluations conducted by the ADA Coordinator will be addressed as the third priority. This applies to all buildings, facilities, parks, and outdoor spaces owned, operated, or governed by El Paso County.

E. BARRIER REMOVAL SCHEDULE

Funding and Prioritization:

- The final barrier removal schedule will be determined by available funding. A key function of the Transition Plan is to assist the ADA Division in securing annual funding sources.
- Once funding is secured, a detailed schedule and list of activities will guide construction efforts.

Project Details and Timeline:

- Specific access improvement projects are listed in the BlueDAG Master Database, with a summary included in the table of contents.
- The plan currently forecasts projects over three fiscal years, representing the initial phase of a 10-year implementation strategy. This timeframe is expected to achieve a high degree of compliance with barrier removal priorities 1, 2, and 3. Detailed breakdowns beyond three years are impractical due to potential changes over time.
- Full compliance is anticipated within 20 years, subject to funding availability. Existing ADA findings are expected to be addressed within the current and following two years.

Project Adjustments and Review:

- Project locations and groupings are subject to review and recommendations by various stakeholders, including the Board of County Commissioners, ADA Division
- Director of Facilities, Transition Plan Implementation team, and the public.
- Specific locations and project groupings may be adjusted within the plan based on further review by relevant departments and potential impacts from other construction programs.
- Completed field surveys provide the basis for identifying existing conditions requiring correction under proposed projects. Note that some projects may be part of the broader ADA Transition Plan and funded by other means such as federal or state grants

Cost Estimates:

- Cost figures in both detailed and summary tables are preliminary, based on unit costs and estimating parameters developed specifically for this plan. They include estimated soft costs like engineering, bidding, permits, utilities, and contingencies.
- The detailed project table may not depict the exact locations of all sidewalks, driveways, buildings, or facility work, as some will be determined by public input and evaluated alongside other projects or construction programs.

F. FUNDING

The ADA Transition Plan Implementation Program aims to maximize the use of existing and potential funding programs and sources. Accessibility improvements and barrier removal will be funded through various means, either as dedicated projects or integrated into other initiatives. Potential funding sources include but are not limited to the following:

- Capital Improvement Projects (General Fund)
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- Competitive Grants
- Pikes Peak Regional Transportation Authority (PPRTA)

G. CONSTRUCTION MONITORING AND STATUS REPORTING

Importance of Monitoring and Reporting:

- Ensuring accessibility improvements comply with current codes and standards is crucial for an effective compliance program.
- Monitoring construction activities and reporting progress demonstrates good faith efforts towards meeting legislative and regulatory requirements.

Monitoring and Reporting Procedures:

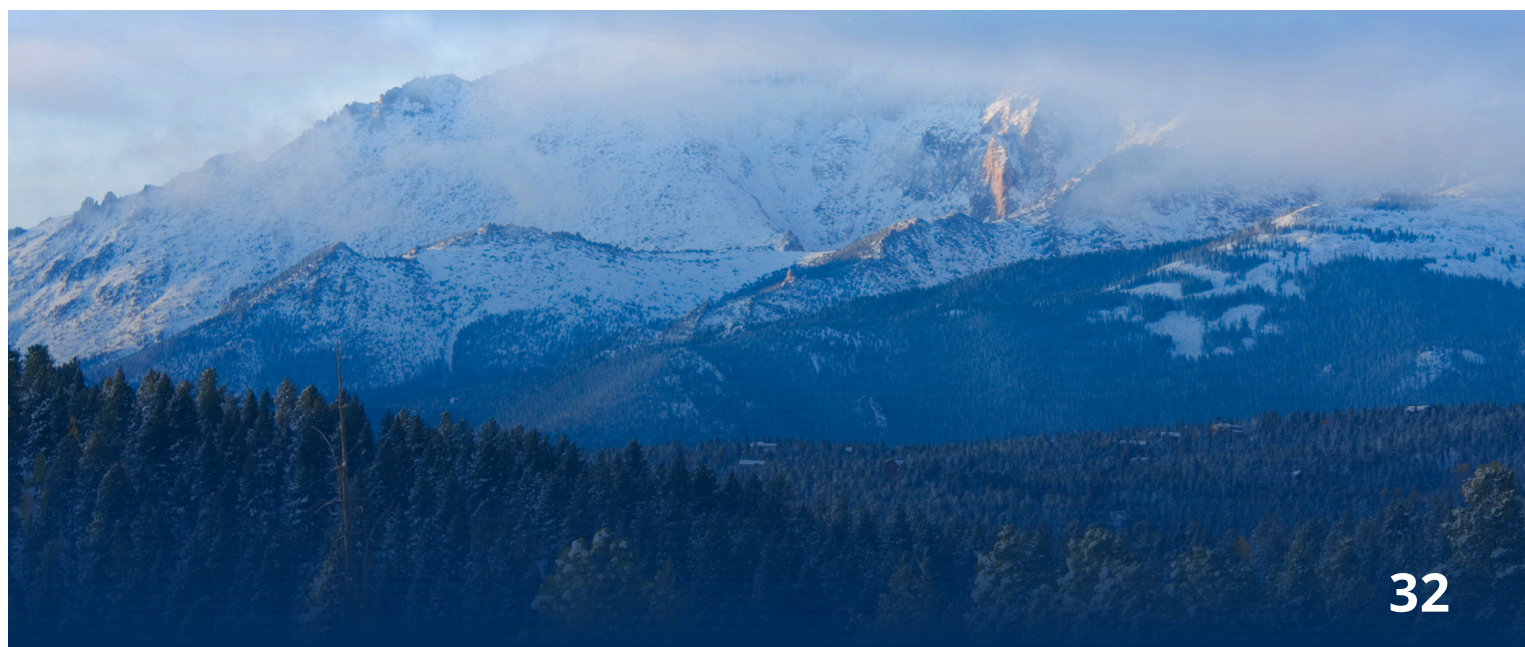
- This section outlines methods for monitoring construction activities and tracking compliance with the ADA Transition Plan across all El Paso County construction locations.
- These procedures are currently under development and will be finalized by the ADA Department in collaboration with the Transition Plan Implementation team, county working groups, and public input.

Field Inspections:

- All accessibility improvements undertaken by El Paso County require on-site inspections by the ADA Coordinator, Department Project Manager, or a trained public right-of-way inspector.

Accessibility Standards:

- El Paso County adheres to all applicable state and federal accessibility standards and codes during on-site surveys and remedial efforts. This includes, but is not limited to, the 2010 ADA Design Standards and state building codes.
- Public right-of-way standards are further specified in the Engineering Criteria Manual and Land Development Code.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accessible – A building, facility, or portion thereof that complies with the applicable ADA Standard for Accessible design and 28 C.R.R. 35.151.

Accessible Means of Egress – A continuous or unobstructed way of egress travel from any point in a building or facility that provides an accessible route to an area of refuge, a horizontal exit, or a public way.

Accessible Pedestrian Signal (APS) – A device that communicates information about the WALK and DON'T WALK phases in audible and vibrotactile formats.

Accessible Route – A continuous unobstructed path connecting all accessible elements and spaces of a building or facility. Interior accessible routes may include corridors, floors, ramps, elevators, lifts, and clear floor space at fixtures. Exterior accessible routes may include parking access aisles, curb ramps, crosswalks at vehicular ways, walks, ramps, and lifts.

Alteration – A change to a building or facility that affects or could affect the usability of the building or facility or part thereof. Alterations include, but are not limited to, remodeling, renovation, rehabilitation, reconstruction, historic restoration, resurfacing of circulation paths or vehicular ways, changes or rearrangement of the structural parts or elements, and changes or rearrangement in the plan configuration of walls and full-height partitions. Normal maintenance, reroofing, painting or wallpapering, or changes to mechanical and electrical systems are not alterations unless they affect the usability of the building or facility.

Americans with Disability ACT (ADA) – The Americans with Disabilities ACT is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in everyday activities. (Pub. L. 101-336, 104 Stat. 327, 42 U.S.C. 12101-12213 and 47 U.S.C. 255 and 611).

2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design – Department of Justice regulations regarding enforceable accessibility standards. These standards set minimum requirements –both scoping and technical- for newly designed and constructed or altered State and local government facilities, public accommodations, and commercial facilities to be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. It also establishes a revised reference point for State and Local Government Facilities (Title II) that chooses to make structural changes to existing facilities to meet their program accessibility requirements. https://www.ada.gov/2010ADASTandards_index.htm

Architectural Barriers Act – Federal law which 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. 42 U.S.C.A. Ch. 51 §4151-4156.

Assembly Area – A building or facility, or portion thereof, used for the purpose of entertainment, educational or civic gatherings, or similar purposes. These areas include, but are not limited to, classrooms, lecture halls, courtrooms, public meeting rooms, public hearing rooms, auditoria, or theaters.

Auxiliary Aids and Services – A wide range of services and devices that promote effective communication. The type of auxiliary aid or service necessary to ensure effective communication will vary in accordance with the length and complexity of the communication involved. Common examples include telephone handset amplifiers, large print, provision of a note taker, and:

1. Assistive Listening System (ALS) – An amplification system utilizing transmitters, receivers, and coupling devices to bypass the acoustical space between a sound source and a listener by means of induction loop, radio frequency, infrared, or direct-wired equipment.
2. Qualified Interpreter – An interpreter who, via a video remote interpreting (VRI) service or an on-site appearance, is able to interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary, given the deaf or hard of hearing individual's language, skills, and education. Qualified interpreters include, for example, sign language interpreters, oral transliterators, and cued-language transliterators.
3. Text Telephone/Teletype Terminal/Teletypewriter (TTY) – A device that allows individuals with hearing disabilities to place calls to standard telephone users via keyboard or assistive device.
4. Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) – An operator service that allows people with hearing disabilities to place calls to standard telephone users via keyboard or assistive device.
5. Videophone – A Telephone with a camera and screen for visual, real-time communication.
6. Video Relay Service (VRS) – A telephone service using interpreters connected to callers by video hook-up that is designed to provide persons who are deaf and use American Sign Language with telephone services that are functionally equivalent to those provided to users who are hearing.
7. Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) – An interpreting service that uses video conference technology over dedicated lines or wireless technology offering a high-speed, wide-bandwidth video connection that delivers high-quality video images as provided in 28 C.F.R. § 35.160(d).

Barriers – Natural and/or manmade environmental obstacles that either limit or prevent full access by an individual with disability: physical constraints can include underlying terrain, right-of-way availability, underground structures, adjacent developed facilities, drainage, or the presence of a notable natural or historic feature.

Corrected Barrier - Remediated obstacles that either limit or prevent full access by an individual with disability, identified during facility, park or right-of-way evaluation.

County Engineer - The County Road Engineer for El Paso County with authority and duties as designated in Colorado Revised Statutes or his/her authorized designee.

Curb Ramp – A short ramp cutting through a curb or built up to it. Curb ramps can be perpendicular or parallel, or a combination of parallel and perpendicular ramps.

Detectable Warning Surfaces – truncated domes, typically prefabricated and installed or stamped into a walkway, providing a tactile surface at the transition from a curb and the street or other hazardous vehicular crossings, assisting pedestrians with vision disabilities in determining when they enter the street.

Disability – A physical or mental impairment substantially limiting one or more of the major life activities: a record of such an impairment: or being regarded as having such an impairment.

ECM Administrator – The County Engineer or their authorized designee.

Element – An architectural or mechanical component of a building, facility, space, site, or public right-of-way.

Engineering Criteria Manual or ECM – The manual adopted by the El Paso County Board of County Commissioners for the purposes of setting and revising standards for the design and construction of public improvements and common subdivision or private development, to serve new development, and for repair and reconstruction of existing public improvements.

Equivalent Facilitation – The use of designs, products, or technologies as alternatives to specified accessibility requirements that provide substantially equivalent or greater accessibility and usability.

EPC BoCC – El Paso County Board of County Commissioners

Facility - All or any portion of building, structures, sites, complexes, equipment, rolling stock or other conveyances, roads, walks, passageways, parking lots, parks, trails, open spaces, or other real estate or property, including the site where the building, property, structure, or equipment is located.

Fundamental Alteration - is a change that is so significant that it alters the essential nature of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations offered.

Impairment - Any physiological disorder, or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more body systems or any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.

Open Barrier Finding - Obstacles identified that either limit or prevent full access by an individual with disability, during facility, park or right-of-way evaluation.

Public Building or Facility - A building or facility or portion of a building or facility designed, constructed, or altered by, on behalf of, or for use of a public entity subject to title II of the ADA and 28 CFR part 35 or to title II of the ADA and 49 CFR 37.41 or 37.43

Public Entity - Any state or local government, any department, agency, special purpose district, or other instrumentality of a state or local government, or certain commuter authorities as well as AMTRAK.

Public Rights-of-Way - Public land or property, usually in interconnected corridors, acquired for or devoted to transportation purposes.

Public Use - Interior or exterior rooms, spaces, or elements made available to the public. Public use may be provided at a building or facility that is privately or publicly owned.

Qualified Individual With a Disability - An individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for receipt of services or participation in programs or activities provided by a public entity.

Qualified Individual With a Disability - An individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for receipt of services or participation in programs or activities provided by a public entity.

Reasonable Accommodation - Changes or adjustments providing, without undue burden, means for an individual with a disability to perform the duties or tasks required. Where existing physical constraints make it impractical for altered elements, spaces, or facilities to reasonably comply with new construction requirements, compliance is required to the extent practicable within the scope of the project.

Tactile - An object that can be perceived using the sense of touch.

Technically Infeasible Barrier - With respect to an alteration of a building or a facility, something that has little likelihood of being accomplished because existing structural conditions would require removing or altering a load-bearing member that is an essential part of the structural frame: or because other existing physical or site constraints prohibit modification or addition of elements, spaces, or features that are in full and strict compliance with the minimum requirements.

Transition Plan - A plan setting forth the steps necessary to complete structural changes to facilities to achieve program access.

Undue Burden - Excessive or disproportionate financial and administrative burdens associated with modifying an existing facility and incurred by a covered entity, likely due to factors including, but not limited to, the nature and cost of the action; the overall financial resources of the owner(s); the number of persons employed at the site; the effect on expenses and resources; legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation, including crime prevention measures; or any other impact of the action on the operation of the site; the geographic separateness, and the administrative or fiscal relationship of the site or sites in question to any parent corporation or entity; if applicable, the overall financial resources of any parent corporation or entity; the overall size of the parent corporation or entity with respect to the number of its employees; the number, type, and location of its facilities; and if applicable, the type of operation or operations of any parent corporation or entity, including the composition, structure, and functions of the workforce of the parent corporation or entity.



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