Partnering with Your ADA Coordinator to Achieve Universal Access

Presented at 2005 Purdue Road School by:

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Accessible Infrastructure Makes a Difference in all Communities

20%, or 1 in 5, of Americans have a disability, per the 2000 Census

It is projected that by 2010, 1 in 3 Americans will have a disability
First-Class Citizenship

Accessible infrastructure = equality of opportunity to access:
- transportation
- employment
- housing
- recreation
- civic involvement

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Fact or Fiction?

The ADA is a building code
The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

The ADA is a Civil Rights Law which prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities.

The ADA’s primary goal is to bring persons with disabilities into the mainstream of American society and the economy.
The ADA is a Civil Rights Law

Title II of the ADA, which applies to state and local governments, states that:

“No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be

excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity.

or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity.”

ADA Standards

The ADA requires that all new construction and alterations meet specific design standards

Department of Justice ADA Home Page

http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm
Accessibility is Not a New Requirement

For over 30 years, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 has required entities receiving federal funds to provide accessible programs and services to persons with disabilities.

The Disability Rights Movement
Accessibility is Always an Ongoing Obligation

There is no such thing as a “grandfather clause”

Inaccessibility, not alterations or new construction, is what triggers need for improvements

Programs that Work

Title II requires ADA Coordinator for all government entities with 50 or more employees to coordinate and facilitate efforts of the departments to comply with the ADA
Indianapolis Mayor’s Office of Disability Affairs

Created by Mayor Peterson in 2000 to coordinate implementation of the ADA within city government at the same time that it partners with municipal corporations, not-for-profit organizations, and private businesses to identify and implement initiatives that go beyond compliance with the law to enhance the inclusion of persons with disabilities in Indianapolis.

The Mayor Office of Disability Affairs Promotes Universal Access

Universal Access

Designing Environments that are responsive to the spectrum of human needs and accessible for the widest possible range of users.

Disability is not a special condition of the few, but a common characteristic that effects most of us for some part of our lives.

If a design works well for persons with disabilities, it works well for everyone.
Mayor’s Advisory Council on Disability

Advises the Mayor and the City Administration on issues that impact people with disabilities.

Provides a forum for community issues/activities affecting citizens with disabilities.

Fosters public awareness and education of the needs and abilities of citizens with disabilities.

Commitment

Mayor’s Accessibility Review and Oversight Committee

Created by 2002 Executive Order to promote universal access through the regular review and enhancement of city departments’ services so that inclusive and universally accessible facilities, programs, and policies are incorporated on an ongoing basis.
Education

Access and Safety are Top Priority

Internal and External Education

Curb/Sidewalk Selection Criteria

Improving Accessibility for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

Areas with High Use (Schools, Churches, Health Facilities, Community Centers, Bus Stops)

Geographic Balance

Economic and Neighborhood Development Projects
Access Ramp Priorities

Citizen Requests
High Volume Pedestrian Traffic Areas
High Service Employment Consumer Needs and Commercial Properties
Areas Providing Special Needs, Goods or Services to Persons with Disabilities

Access Ramp Inventory

GIS Inventory
Visual Display of Areas of Greatest Need
Easy Access to Information on a Specific Location
Combining with Public Transportation Information to Prioritize Improvements to Bus Stops
Tracking and Monitoring Response to Citizen’s Requests

Identify and Streamline Citizen Request Points of Contact
Tag Disability-Related Requests
Communication Between Intake Personnel and ADA Coordinators
Regular Meetings Between ADA Coordinator and Engineering Staff to Review Requests

Responding to Citizen’s Requests

Disability Mobility Coordinator:
Communicates with Citizen
Inspects Location--Holistic and Comprehensive Evaluation
Works with ADA Coordinator and DPW Engineering and Operations to Assign to Appropriate Curb/Sidewalk Program
Disability Curb and Sidewalk Programs

IndyAccess Program

Patch Program

Capital Improvement Program

IndyAccess Program

Will replace or repair curb/sidewalk and install access ramps for citizens unable to access their home or their business

Rotating quote that enables remedies to be accomplished within 1 year for mid-sized citizen requests
**Patch Program**

City will install temporary fixes to improve access for persons with disabilities until permanent repairs can be made.

**Capital Improvement Program**

Access Ramps are Part of All New Construction and Alterations

Matching Citizen Requests with Work Included on Capital Improvement Program
Coordination and Partnerships

Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (Indygo):
- Blue Card Program for Drivers
- Bus Shelter Program

Coordination and Partnerships

Educating Business Owners
- Sidewalk furniture
- Sidewalk Cafes
- Accessible Parking Meters
- Inventory
- Remove Barriers that Prevent Wheelchair Lifts from Deploying
Accessibility is a Financial Investment

Courts and Department of Justice consider City’s entire budget when reviewing a complaint

Attorney’s fees, litigation, loss of goodwill in community and retrofits are more expensive than good design and construction at the outset

Protecting your City’s Assets

The Only Wrong Answer is to Do Nothing

When the Department of Justice Receives a Complaint, it Reviews All of the City’s Programs

Cities that Approach the Issue as One of Minimal Compliance Rather than Inclusion Have Timelines and Costs Dictated to them by the Department Of Justice
Accessible Design Leads to Positive Recognition and Goodwill

As a result of its strong accessibility programs, Indianapolis was recognized as one of six finalists out of 150 competitors in the National Organization on Disability’s Accessible America Competition.