

FINAL REPORT TO THE City of Goodlettsville

Conclusions and Recommendations

April 6, 2018

All Site Conclusions and Recommendations

Background

The City retained our firm to conduct the required access audit, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and develop a transition plan. A transition plan is a phased retrofit schedule. In our work we evaluated City sites and facilities, as well as public right-of-way (PROW) pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks.

The most effective way to review our recommendations is to start with this Conclusion Report. This facilitates greater understanding of our advice by the City, and prepares the City to address the deficits in the individual site reports. Doing so will result in making sites more accessible to people with disabilities.

A Guide to this Section

There are approximately 850 access deficits identified in the 13 site reports. That is what is required by the ADA, the identification of every access deficit at every site and facility. For every deficit, a solution must be identified. We note that for every deficit we found, we saw 10 elements that complied with the access requirements. In other words, we saw approximately 8,500 access features that complied.

This section is all about the big picture. As discussed in the cover letter with this report, the City does ***not necessarily have to make every site accessible***. It ***does*** have to make every program it conducts within its sites accessible.

We have attempted to identify some broad solutions, such as the refreshing of all accessible parking, as a way to address issues identified in the 13 site reports, and as a way for the City to better manage compliance. This approach also gives the City flexibility within its compliance efforts to apply its resources with optimal impact. Consider these systemic changes as a complement to a site-by-site approach.

However, the scope of our work does not include the design of a solution. Rather, it is performance based. For example, if a restroom must be made accessible we will make that recommendation. We will not design a solution that includes walls to be removed or plumbing solutions. Those are tasks for City staff or contractors.

We know qualified and capable designers. Once the City begins to implement retrofits, if you need references we can certainly help with that.

This is also about accountability. The adjustments to door closers, eliminating changes in level, and other recommended actions are ineffective if not maintained over time by City employees. We recommend the following to facilitate review:

First, read the final report cover letter to Amy Mitchell. It describes the concepts and requirements invoked throughout the report.

Second, read this Conclusion section. This is a review of the deficits we observed, and our suggested solutions and retrofits.

Third, read the 13 site reports and view the PROW reports. Use your computer and you will have instant access to the report for that site, the photos, and the checklists.

Fourth, use your knowledge of the sites and of your staffs' expertise. You know the City sites better than we do, and you know the staff better than we do. Blend in what you know with what we recommend in the report. There is always another way to solve an access problem...perhaps you will be the one to see that solution.

Common Issues

In our evaluation, some common issues arose. The common issues are also “big picture” items for the City and incorporate many of the specific site recommendations.

Maintenance

The City uses a conscientious staff to maintain its facilities and sites. However, over time, every facility and site yields to wear and tear. There is a correlation between maintenance and accessibility, in areas such as parking lots and playground surfaces. The recommendations below describe ways in which attention to maintenance can specifically address some access deficits.

1. **Provide training** to maintenance staffs regarding the features of an accessible route (AR) and how to ensure that it remains unobstructed. The result of this training is that staffs will place park assets such as garbage cans or signs so they are adjacent to the AR.
2. **Purchase some new tools.** The City should have enough battery-powered digital levels, and tools to measure pounds of force for doors, to equip some staff for occasional spot-checks. A great website for gauges is:

<http://www.technologylk.com/crl-door-pressure-gauge-lk-HMC035.htm?src=froogle>.

Changes in Level and Gaps

The routes that make up the City network of accessible routes are in fair condition. Wear and tear, settling, weather, and other factors combine to cause changes in level and gaps along portions of those accessible routes, making that portion noncompliant and a barrier to many visitors with physical and sensory disabilities.

Removing changes in level and gaps has a significant universal design benefit. More people with all types of conditions can more easily use City routes, such as staff pushing carts of supplies, parents with kids in strollers, and people using an assistive device such as a wheelchair, Segway, or walker.

3. ***Eliminate changes in level*** by the end of 2020. Using the rationale that the most severe changes in level are the greatest barriers to access, make changes in level of greater than .75" the highest priority. Make changes in level of between .5" and .75" the second priority. Make beveling of changes in level of .25" to .5" the third priority.
4. ***Add*** change in level of more than .25" ***to maintenance safety checklists*** in 2018. This will help identify and correct these problems before they expand. Make or buy pre-measured shims and distribute to employees for their use and ease of measurement.
5. ***Add inspections for gaps*** of greater than .5" ***to maintenance safety checklists*** in 2018. Identify and fill these gaps before they expand. ***In the alternative, consider resurfacing segments of deteriorated asphalt routes.***

Employee Work Areas

The City of Goodlettsville employs skilled full time staff, making City services available to residents. The City employs many more on a part-time or seasonal basis. The City likely already has employees with disabilities and in the future, will have **more** employees with disabilities, in all categories...full time, seasonal, and regular part time.

It is important to address access to work areas, and the title II regulation and the work of the Access Board do so. Section 203.9 of the 2010 Standards for Accessible Design clearly describes the requirements for the treatment of employee areas.

Generally, a person with a disability should be able to **approach**, **enter**, and **exit** the work area. This is addressed in the Standards by requirements for accessible routes, maneuvering clearance, and accessible means of egress. Other factors are door width, and threshold changes in level.

This approach is effective so long as when the City hires an employee with a disability, or a current employee acquires a disability, the City will remove architectural barriers in work areas or make other title I reasonable accommodations. Title I is the portion of the ADA that applies to employer-employee relationships.

Excluded from this exception are some common spaces in employee areas. These must meet the technical requirements for access, and cannot meet only the approach, enter, and exit test:

- corridors;
- toilet rooms;
- kitchenettes for employee dining use, and
- break rooms.

The two recommendations below are important for all employees at all City sites.

6. **Address accessibility in the City personnel policies**, and note that, upon request by an employee, the City will make reasonable accommodations, which **may** include the removal of architectural barriers in workspaces.
7. **Require new construction, and alterations or additions** that include employee work areas, to be designed and constructed so they are compliant with the 2010 Standards for Accessible Design and the Tennessee Accessibility Code.

Accessible Parking

The City maintains approximately 1,350 standard parking spaces at sites, and 50 more that it designates as accessible parking stalls. In correcting or refreshing accessible stalls, the City could address all of them at once to eliminate inconsistencies and come into compliance.

8. **Create a parking stall template.** A suggested template is below.

Parking Stall Dimensions

Stalls are a minimum of 8' wide. An adjacent access aisle must also be a minimum of 5' wide. The access aisle must be diagonally striped with **high quality paint**. The access aisle can be shared with another accessible stall.

The collection of signs must include the US Department of Transportation R7-8 standard sign (the blue icon in a wheelchair). Below that must be the statewide fine sign. Unless the City of Goodlettsville has adopted a higher fine by ordinance, the sign must note the statewide fine.

Federal settlement agreements require a third sign, on at least one stall, that says VAN ACCESSIBLE. This stall must be 11' wide with a 5' access aisle. An acceptable alternate is 8' and 8'.

Finally, the bottom edge of the R7-8 sign is a minimum of 60" above the finished grade. We suggest that the signpost be centered at the head of the accessible stall and we suggest that the curb cut and detectable warning run the distance of the access aisle.

The most common deficit in accessible parking stalls and access aisles is the slope. Standards limit the slope to ***not more than 2.08% in any direction***. ***This is a challenging requirement that can take considerable effort to meet.***

Connection to the Accessible Route

The access aisles should connect to an AR. The maximum running slope for the AR is 5%, and to account for heaving and settling, we recommend 4%. The maximum cross slope is 2%.

Passenger Loading Zone

The loading zone must have an access aisle adjacent and parallel to vehicle pull-up space. The loading zone access aisle must be a minimum of 60" wide and 20' long. Confirm this template to ensure compliant stalls.

9. In 2019, ***implement a plan to correct or refresh every accessible stall*** at every City facility. Incorporate this task into other plans that require parking lot repair, restriping, or resurfacing. This is an alternative to a site-by-site approach and may be more cost-effective for the City.

Running Slope and Cross Slope

We saw running slopes steeper than permitted. At some sites, this was a minimal issue, but at other sites, it was a significant variance. This condition naturally occurs when concrete settles, or when connections between new and old routes are off by fractions of an inch. Cross slope is equally important, as it serves drainage as well as access purposes.

10. ***Adopt a policy*** that in new construction and alterations the AR slope shall not exceed 1:21, or 4.7%, as opposed to 1:20, or 5%. This allows for field error.
11. ***Adopt a policy*** that in new construction and alterations the ramp slope shall not exceed 1:13, or 7.7%, as opposed to 1:12, or 8.33%. This allows for field error. It also makes ramps easier to use for everyone, not just people with disabilities. This universal design approach is also a risk management tool.
12. ***Adopt a policy*** that in new construction or alterations the cross slope shall be an integral part of the project and shall not exceed 2% or 1:50.

Detectable Warnings

The US Access Board suspended the detectable warning requirement in the late 90's, for a period of several years. It was restored in 2002. However, it is not required in as many locations in the 2010 Standards.

We still, however, as a smart practice, recommend the use of detectable warnings. It is typical to see noncompliant detectable warnings in every community. The detectable warnings at curbs ***that are not compliant*** are often a crosscut of concrete, or a grid laid on wet concrete to create a diamond-shaped indentation. Over time, the City should replace these.

13. As with parking, ***develop a template for detectable warnings.***
14. In the same year that parking is refreshed, ***implement a plan to correct or refresh every detectable warning*** at every curb or crossing at City facilities. If necessary, phase this out over a period of two or three years.

Door Opening Force Requirements

In City buildings and facilities, there are approximately 300 doors. Many have closer mechanisms. Some of these need adjustment to bring the pounds of force (lbf) necessary to open the door into compliance (5 lbf for interior doors and 8.5 lbf for exterior doors). However, some of the closers are just old. The wear and tear of 20 or more years erodes the closer effectiveness.

15. ***Evaluate and determine the age of door closers.***
16. ***Add door closer maintenance checks*** to safety checklists in 2018 and for closers with 10 years of service or less, aggressively maintain them for effectiveness.
17. ***Purchase and install new door closers*** for all exterior doors (with closers 20 years old or more) and 50% of interior doors in 2018 or as soon as is possible.
18. ***Purchase and install*** new door closers for all remaining interior doors (with closers 20 years old or more) in 2019 or as soon as is possible.

Signage

City signs serve several purposes. First, signs assist wayfinding in buildings, such as the City Hall.

Second, signs identify important permanent elements of facilities, such as restrooms. Third, signs facilitate access by people with vision and physical limitations. We did not note a signage template at the sites we evaluated.

The 2010 Standards treats two types of signs differently. Signs for permanent spaces, such as a bathroom, must be in both Grade 2 Braille and raised lettering. Signs that are directional or informational only require visual lettering of a certain size. Be certain to incorporate these approaches into signs in buildings and sites operated by the City.

19. **Develop a sign template** in 2018 that describes where and in what facilities signs will be used. The template could include size of sign, mounting height, mounting location, size of characters, space between characters, contrast between characters and background, icons or symbols used in the signs, City information in the signs (name of facility? phone number?), and more.
20. **Implement signage template and refresh** City site signage in 2020.

Bathrooms

Bathrooms are an essential part of a visit to a City of Goodlettsville site. Exercise, food and beverage, social activities, and more all rely on one of the oldest designs known to us. Making those facilities accessible is tremendously important. Additionally, **portable toilets** placed temporarily at sports fields and event venues **must** be accessible and **must be served by an AR**.

21. **Develop a bathroom template in 2018**. Confirm it with the State of Tennessee Plumbing Code. Be sure to include temporary facilities such as portable toilets in the template. The template should address the toilet, grab bars, items in the stall such as toilet paper and hooks, the stall itself, operating mechanisms, mirrors, sinks, hand towels, and more.
22. **Include bathroom renovations** in the City Capital Improvement Plan.
23. **Consider the use of automatic flush controls**. These have environmental benefits and are also a great way to eliminate some accessibility problems.
24. **In the interim, implement non-structural modifications recommended in each section of this report**, such as lowering mirrors, remounting grab bars, changing the height of toilets and urinals, installing compliant stall hardware, and so forth. These less costly changes on a site-by-site basis serve City residents well until resources to renovate restrooms on a comprehensive scale.
25. **Make one portable toilet**, if made available at a site, accessible. This includes a portable toilet placed at a picnic shelter or adjacent to sports fields. These must be accessible and must be served by **an AR**. **The City has sites with portable toilets; this must be addressed. Use our single-user toilet checklist, and require compliance by City vendors.**

Alarms

In existing facilities where an aural or audible fire alarm system is provided, a visual alarm is not required unless the building was constructed after January 26, 1992 or has been upgraded since that same date. If an alarm in an existing facility is audible only, it need not be modified with a visual alarm unless it is replaced or upgraded in the future.

26. **Determine in 2018** if systems have been upgraded or replaced since 1992.
27. **Develop a plan in 2019** for the installation of aural and visual alarms in renovations.
28. **Retrofit construction that occurred since 1992** to include aural and visual alarms by the end of 2020.

Brochures and Website

The use of a park grid in City brochures, and an online Map of Parks and Facilities, is a great tool for residents and can now be used to communicate about accessibility. Create icons to note access work the City staff completes and indicate in your grid where, for example, the accessible picnic areas are, or where the accessible playgrounds are.

29. **Update the parks and facilities** information on the website to reflect City plans regarding our recommended retrofits, to note which sites are accessible or will be made accessible.

Website

The title II regulation requires that all public communication used by the City be available to people with disabilities. Many people with vision impairments use websites every day with the aid of technical equipment.

The City is required to evaluate its website and make it compliant with the Website Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0. These changes make the website easily read by a person with impaired vision who uses a screen reader to read the website.

A link at the US Department of Justice website offers guidance on this. The City IT staff should become familiar with this issue. Go to <http://www.ada.gov/websites2.htm>.

The City can also check the accessibility of its website at a free service. Link to Cynthia SAYS at http://www.icdri.org/test_your_site_now.htm and test your website.

30. **Evaluate the City website** and make changes so that the information on the site is accessible to people with disabilities.

Playgrounds

The **minimum required** of the City by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of two to five playgrounds be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” described in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar recurring sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing playgrounds should be made accessible. Again, a good practice is to treat this as a planning exercise and aim for one of every three playgrounds being made accessible.

Our evaluation included seven playgrounds. Of these, four are accessible. We recommend no new access. Any playground being added in the future must comply with the 2010 Standards and will therefore be accessible.

The Program Access Chart, along with City of Goodlettsville Playground Map at the end of this section, illustrates the areas where we recommend that work occur so that every resident is close to an accessible playground. [[Goodlettsville Playground Map](#)]

31. ***Make the corrections*** so the playgrounds at site below ***remain*** accessible:

- ***Brooks Park***
- ***Gateway Park***
- ***Peay Park (2)***

32. ***Leave as is*** the playground at the parks named below, and when future alterations or renovations occur at those sites, make them accessible.

- ***Moss-Wright Park (2)***
- ***Pleasant Green Park***

33. ***Advertise the accessible playgrounds*** in the City website and publications. This is an important way to make the public aware of opportunities, and complies with the section 35.106 notice requirement in the title II regulation.

Sports Courts

The ***minimum required*** of the City by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of sports courts be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” found in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar recurring sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing courts should be accessible. We recommend that at least one of every three be accessible. There are six courts and two basketball courts are accessible; no others are accessible

We recommend access to the 3 tennis courts at Peay Park.

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, along with the City of Goodlettsville Sports Court Map, illustrates the areas where we recommend work occur so that every resident is close to an accessible court. [[Goodlettsville Sports Court Map](#)]

34. **Make corrections** cited in report so the basketball courts below **remain** accessible:
 - **Moss-Wright Park (2)**
35. **Make corrections** cited in report so the tennis courts below **become** accessible:
 - **Peay Park (3)**
36. **Leave as is**, the volleyball court at Moss-Wright Park;
37. **Advertise the accessible courts** in City website and publications.

Ball Fields

The **minimum required** of the City by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of baseball/softball be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” found in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar recurring sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing ball fields should be accessible. We recommend that at least one of every three be accessible.

There are 14 fields and four are accessible. **We recommend access to two more fields.**

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, along with the City of Goodlettsville Ball Fields Map, illustrates areas where we recommend work occur so that every resident is close to an accessible ball field. [[Goodlettsville Ball fields Map](#)]

38. **Make corrections** cited in reports so the ball fields **remain** accessible:
 - **Moss-Wright Park (4 of 12)**
39. **Make corrections** cited in reports so the ball fields **become** accessible:
 - **Moss-Wright Park (2 of 12)**
40. **Leave as is** the ball fields at the following sites:
 - **Moss-Wright Park (6 of 12)**
 - **North Creek Park (2)**
41. **Advertise the accessible ball fields** in City website and publications.

Athletic Fields

The **minimum required** of the City by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of athletic fields be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” found in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar recurring sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing athletic fields must be accessible. We recommend that at least one of every three be accessible.

There are 16 fields and none are accessible. **We recommend access to three.**

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, along with the City of Goodlettsville Athletic Fields Map, illustrates areas where we recommend work occur so that every resident is close to an accessible athletic field. [[Goodlettsville Athletic Fields Map](#)]

42. **Make corrections** cited in reports so the fields below **become** accessible:

- **Moss-Wright Park (football - 1 of 2)**
- **Moss-Wright Park (soccer - 2 of 13)**

43. **Leave as is** the fields at the following sites:

- **Moss-Wright Park (football - 1 of 2)**
- **Moss-Wright Park (soccer - 11 of 13)**
- **North Creek Park**

44. **Advertise the accessible athletic fields** in City website and publications.

Picnic Areas

The **minimum required** of the City by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of picnicking be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” described in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar recurring sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing picnic sites should be accessible. There 8 picnic areas and one is accessible.

We recommend access to three more. Many of these sites need tables or other minor corrections.

The issue of picnic area access is not yet settled as a final and enforceable standard. There is significant guidance from the US Access Board, and we have applied it here to City picnic areas. We note that the US Access Board does not have the authority to establish a Standard, which is the step above the **final guideline** that

exists today. That said, we recommend the City continue as a smart practice to adhere to the Access Board guidance on this matter.

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, with the City of Goodlettsville Picnic Areas Map, illustrates areas where we recommend work occur so that every resident is close to an accessible picnic area. [[Goodlettsville Picnic Areas Map](#)]

45. ***Make corrections*** needed to ***maintain or create access***, including adding tables, to picnic areas at:
 - ***Moss-Wright Park (2 of 3)***
 - ***Pleasant Green Park (2 of 4)***
46. ***Leave as is*** the picnic areas at the following sites:
 - ***Brooks Park***
 - ***Moss-Wright Park (1 of 3)***
 - ***Pleasant Green Park (2 of 4)***
47. ***Advertise accessible picnic areas*** in the City website and publications.

Public Right-of-Way (PROW)

The title II regulation requires the City to address PROW assets in a slightly different way than facilities. At section 35.150(d)(2), the City is required to establish PROW assets that serve state or local government sites and facilities as the highest PROW retrofit priority.

Other priorities include privately owned places of public accommodation (shopping or entertainment or dining areas) and places of employment. Residential can be the last priority. The City should also add nonprofits and faith-based sites somewhere before residential, but after state and local government.

We recommend the following priorities:

Priority One: PROW serving state and local government sites;

Priority Two: PROW serving retail and major employers;

Priority Three: PROW serving nonprofits and faith-based sites; and

Priority Four: PROW serving residential areas.

We recognize there will be some overlap. Schools area priority one site, but schools are typically located in residential areas. Where overlap occurs, use the highest priority.

Public Feedback

An integral part of the self-evaluation of sites and facilities, and the development of a transition plan, is the involvement of the public. A public forum should be conducted for this purpose. We would be happy to return to assist with this process.

These can be very positive events. The community typically appreciates what steps have been taken by the City and provide valuable feedback regarding priorities and preferences.

Transition Plan

The City must have a transition plan per 35.150(d) of the DOJ title II regulation. The plan should identify the barrier, the corrective work, the date by which the work will occur (in our reports, the Phase), and the person responsible for barrier removal.

Barriers should be removed as soon as is possible. No City can remove all barriers at the same time. Phasing the work to be done allows for access to occur and makes the best use of the resources of the City of Goodlettsville.

We recommend that retrofit work occur in three phases. We also note the work we recommend need *not* occur in a category titled City Option. Should the City plans change, or should other resources become available, the corrective work needed at these sites is known.

We have made cost *references* for the corrective work recommended. We note that these are not estimates and should be used only for planning purposes. The final design, the year in which the work will occur, the relationship with the contractor, and many other factors must be considered before a cost estimate is made.

The total of corrective work we recommend is \$1,202,092.20, and we believe it can be implemented over a period of seven years. We emphasize that the City has some flexibility here, but that work should be completed as soon as is possible.

In Phase One, we recommend work in the amount of \$758,030.45. Generally, the work in this Phase falls into two categories: easy to do with existing staff and resources (low-hanging fruit), and old requirements (such as parking) at sites otherwise accessible. The City should decide how many years are within a phase. ***Here we would suggest that Phase One is a four-year process.***

In Phase Two, we recommend work in the amount of \$253,028.50. Generally, the work in this Phase includes changes to recreation amenities, such as playground surfaces, ball fields, and athletic fields. The City should decide how many years are within a phase. ***Here we would suggest that Phase Two is a two-year process.***

In Phase Three, we recommend work in the amount of \$90,033.25. Generally, the work in this Phase falls into two categories: elements not yet addressed by a final Standard, such as trails, and elements where correction is complex or costly. The City should decide how many years are within a phase. ***Here we would suggest that Phase Three can be accomplished in one year.***

We identified work in the amount of \$25,908.00 in City Option. Generally, this is an element or site with access deficits where we believe the City already meets the program access test and need not make these sites accessible, until later altered for another purpose.

Funding Access Retrofits

We have developed this section of the report to discuss some of the funding sources other cities, counties, park districts, and government entities have used for accessibility compliance. This is not intended as a comprehensive list, but is a good primer.

No Dedicated Federal Source

There is no dedicated source of federal funds for accessibility renovations to existing sites. This will not likely change in the future. As an example of the unpredictability of federal funding, we look to the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON). The LAWCON stateside portion, even with a dedicated funding source, is typically underfunded by as much as 80%.

Earmarks or Federal Discretionary Funds

Some of our municipal clients, in years past, have pursued Congressional earmarks for access work. Earmarks are not in practice today in Washington. However, we cannot predict whether that will remain the case. We recommend that the City ask its Members of Congress for help in identifying federal funds that could be used for access.

Community Development Block Grant Funds

Several of our clients have acquired federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for accessibility renovations at existing sites. CDBG funds often have a scale of priority. It would be important to establish accessibility as a priority for CDBG applications, which tend to be very competitive.

State Grants Programs

Several states, and several of our clients, have successfully pursued state legislation to set aside dedicated state funds that can be used for specific purposes, including access retrofits. To name a few, Illinois, New Jersey, Colorado, Ohio, Florida, and Texas all have sources of revenue funded in various ways, such as a real estate transfer tax.

While the various states have all at times not fully funded these grant programs, they remain an effective tool for Cities regarding site acquisition and development.

State Discretionary Funds

Most state legislatures provide some type of discretionary funding for members of the legislature. In some states, these are relatively small grants of under \$50,000. In other states, it is common to see legislative grants of \$500,000 or more. As with earmarks these have become less popular in recent years, but still exist in many states.

Private Giving

Some of our clients have successfully sought private gifts for accessibility purposes. The private giving area is subject to fluctuations depending on the economy, political issues, and related fiscal impacts. In our experience, pursuing private giving works best when an agency such as the City has an employee dedicated to this purpose.

Corporate Giving

Some of our clients have successfully sought grants from corporations. These may, for corporate purposes, come from marketing (such as naming rights to a City facility) or from community giving. Many corporations have a related foundation that manages corporate giving. A good example here is the Mitsubishi Foundation. In our experience, pursuing corporate giving works best when an agency such as the City has an employee dedicated to this purpose.

Community Foundations and Other Foundations

Community foundations, which operate on a regional basis, have also been involved in accessibility giving. Perhaps the greatest example here is the multi-million dollar Kellogg Foundation project that improved accessibility in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and other states that bordered the Kellogg headquarters in Michigan.

Other Methods

There are other methods to offset access costs. These worked in that community, and may or may not work in Goodlettsville.

A New Jersey community takes 100% of accessible parking fines and applies those towards recreation for people with disabilities.

Several Illinois park districts have added a \$1 to \$10 surcharge to every registration. Those Districts earmark the fees generated for access and inclusion expenses.

Several communities have successfully sought budget increases to address accessibility backlogs, just as they have with maintenance backlogs. Those increases may be general fund allocations, proceeds from successful referenda, or reallocations of under expended funds originally budgeted for other municipal purposes.

Risk Management

Investing in safety saves money for a City by avoiding legal expenses related to injuries on City properties. The same concept applies here. Investing in access retrofits saves the City of Goodlettsville the cost of staff time and attorneys to defend against ADA lawsuits or complaints.

While we do not believe a decision about access should hinge solely on risk management factors, we do recommend that the City be aware of this factor going forward. ADA enforcement continues to grow and touch more and more communities.

Implementation

Title II of the ADA is relatively straightforward. That said, we offer some suggestions below regarding implementation of the several mandates in the regulation.

1. ***Maintain a strong relationship with disability advisory groups.*** Make it a point to continue to seek out and work with these groups, and seek their feedback on future initiatives.
2. ***Acquire and maintain the Certified ADA Coordinator credential.*** There is no nationwide credential required for ADA implementation. However, a Certified ADA Coordinator will benefit the City, keeping it current on implementation strategies and smart practices from special purpose districts, counties, and cities throughout the United States.
3. ***Identify available sign language interpreters and enter into agreements*** before situations arise where the City needs such services. Negotiate rates, availability, environments where the work will occur, and so forth.
4. One of the title II requirements for communications produced by the City requires the City to respond to inquiries in the form in which the inquiry is made. We also believe that this is the courteous way to respond. Here, if an inquiry to the City comes in the form of a Braille document, the response from the City should also be in Braille.

We recommend that the City either locate the nearest Braille printer and enter into an arrangement for use, or simply acquire one and have employees learn how to use it. For a review of this topic by the American Foundation for the Blind, visit [this site](#).

5. **Acquire assistive listening systems.** There are three principal types: inductive loop systems, infrared systems, and FM systems. These devices are helpful for persons with some residual hearing. These devices separate speech from ambient noise and amplify speech. People who are deaf or hard of hearing may prefer, for various reasons, one type of device. The National Association of the Deaf has a brief review of the topic [here](#).

6. **Monitor the development of the website accessibility requirements.** The Department of Justice suspended the website accessibility guideline in 2016 because technology had advanced so much that the old guideline, developed in 2011, was obsolete. The plan was that the Department of Justice would reevaluate the guidance and issue a final and enforceable Standard in 2018.

It is fair to say that plan is in jeopardy. A recent Presidential directive requires that for every new regulation issued, two must be rescinded. That has created significant turmoil in the world of accessibility, where there are only three regulations (title II, title III, and the 2010 Standards).

To rescind one of the three would have disastrous consequences for Tennessee residents with disabilities. We believe it likely that no new standards related to accessibility will be issued in the immediate future.

7. **Develop an ongoing series of disability training for employees.** Every day, new products appear on the market, agencies issue new enforcement decisions, and cities and counties cities perfect new strategies for inclusion and access. Keep current on these developments and share this news with City staffs.

8. **Require employees to add access and inclusion subject matter to their “diet” of continuing education.** It is important to seek out and attend training events that relate to the work of the employee, and focus on access and inclusion.

Conclusion

The City of Goodlettsville has a variety of recreation facilities and sites. The skilled staff operates facilities and sites the community wants and enjoys. This report identifies some issues that are typical in a City infrastructure. The City takes steps towards accessibility every year and that undoubtedly helped.

The City should determine to what extent it will act on our recommendations and any staff recommendations. Access work should occur every year during the transition plan. While no one can say with certainty how long the City can stretch these projects, the City should make access retrofits an ongoing part of its annual budgets. Department of Justice officials have said work must be completed as soon as is possible.

Be certain to understand that the City could be forced to accelerate its pace. Making access work a high priority is critical.

Your strategy should definitely address the common issues identified in this report.

The City of Goodlettsville should be commended for undertaking this task. Although this access audit and the transition plan are both mandated tasks, many of your neighbors have not completed these steps.

In closing, thanks again to the staff at the City for their cooperation and spirit. All of the team at our firm enjoyed working with them.

Call me at the WT Group, LLC Accessibility Practice at 224-293-6451 if there are any questions. Thanks again for inviting us to work with the City of Goodlettsville.



Submitted by

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