

## Partnering with Your ADA Coordinator to Achieve Universal Access

Presented at 2005 Purdue Road School by:

Juli Paini

The City of Indianapolis  
Mayor's Office of Disability Affairs

## 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

# FICTION

## 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.