Improve Accessibility:

Technical Resources

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Resources to Help Meet the Planning Requirements of the ADA and Rehabilitation Act

Are you interested in learning more about the ADA's and Rehabilitation Act's requirements? Are you ready to organize or start your municipality's self-evaluation? We've compiled some of the available resources to help you get started!

E-Learning and Libraries

General

- Programs like Adobe Acrobat Pro and those that are part of the Microsoft Office package have built-in accessibility checkers. Repeated use of these checkers can help you learn about making documents accessible.
- The New England ADA Center and ADA.gov have a wealth of information related to the ADA.
- The ADA Coordinator Training Certification Program is a professional certificate for ADA Coordinators. Course work is a mix of online and in-person courses. The program is coordinated and administered by the Great Plains ADA Center and overseen by the University of Missouri.
- The National Network of ADA Centers offer online courses, audio conferences, and on-site trainings on specific ADA related topics.
- The Columbia Employment Consortium provides online resources related to ADA employment law. Meeting Title I of the ADA begins with recruitment and hiring and continues through termination of employment.
- The National ADA Symposium hosts both a virtual and on-site conference annually.

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- The Vermont Arts Council has a resource page dedicated to Arts and Accessibility. It includes resources for accessible meeting and event planning.
- The U.S. Access Board's 2023 accessibility guidelines for pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way is summarized in this VLCT resource.

Transportation

- The Federal Highway Administration's Self-Evaluation Basics includes an 8-minute video that describes accessibility concepts and why they should be a focus. It is a good resource for staff, Board, and community education.
- The VTrans Civil Rights Unit has an ADA Program Resources and Useful Links webpage. It includes fact sheets, VTrans' 2023 ADA Compliance Training webinar, and the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) Workplace Accommodation Toolkit.

Website Accessibility

- The State of Minnesota IT Services' Office of Accessibility website hosts free e-Learning programs and a how-to library for creating accessible documents, maps, meetings, multimedia, social media, and websites and applications. Use the Accessibility Quick Cards as a reference or learn about buying accessible products, solutions, and services.
- W3C's website contains additional information about planning and managing accessibility for web content and mobile apps.
- Section508.gov has trainings, tools, and events for Federal employees related to making electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. The public can participate in most of these.
- The Department of Justice (DOJ) guidance identifies resources for further technical direction, and references both the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), which are voluntary and issued by the World Wide Web

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Consortium's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative, and the Section 508 Standards, which set forth accessibility requirements for federal government websites. The Section 508 Standards adopt WCAG 2.0 Level AA Success Criteria. The DOJ's rule for state and local government set WCAG 2.1 Level AA as the standard.

Self-Evaluation Checklists and Templates

All local governments are required to complete a Self-Evaluation. There are numerous checklists and templates available on the internet. We're including a few from reputable sources.

General

- The New England ADA Center's Action Steps webpage discusses steps for approaching ADA requirements and links you to resources, such as sample documents and self-evaluation forms. They include forms to evaluate program accessibility. The ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities is based on 2010 ADA standards, but it does not include all the 2010 Standards. It follows the four priorities listed in the Department of Justice regulations. Sign up for the Center's newsletter to receive training opportunity alerts.
- The Northwest ADA Center published an ADA Self Evaluation Tool. It presents a series of questions municipalities can ask when reviewing policies and procedures.
- The National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD) is a public health practice and resource center on health promotion for people with disability. This webpage includes links to several available assessments that can be used to determine the levels of inclusion and accessibility of a wide range of environments broadly and at an individual level.
- The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Accessibility Fundamentals Overview webpage can help you get started with website accessibility. Testing a

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website's conformance with WCAG requires using its "Success Criteria". The Criteria are based on levels. The 2024 DOJ rule set the standard at WCAG 2.1, Level II. The Criteria assume a moderate level of knowledge about digital accessibility. This site includes validators and tools you can use to check your website. These tools can be helpful, but they won't identify all accessibility issues.

Transportation

- The Vermont Agency of Transportation's ADA Program Resources & Useful Links webpage provides links to checklists, fact sheets, trainings, and other resources. It includes information about transportation facility accessibility, a workplace accommodation toolkit, and links to regional and Vermont organizations serving people with disabilities and ADA resources.
- The Minnesota Local Road Research Board (LRRB) webpage, ADA Transition Plan for Public Rights of Way, is an online Guide. Section 1 of the Guide includes sample documents, such as inventory templates and examples of detailed self-evaluations. Section 2 of the Guide has a model transition plan template.
- The appendices of the Kane County, IL ADA Transition Plan includes their inventory sheet templates for curbs, bus stops, and buildings as well as a survey form for residents and businesses to identify accessibility challenge spots.
- The Bloomington-Monroe County MPO ADA Transition Plan LPA Resources website has a field inventory data form and prioritization methodology at the bottom of the webpage.
- Pages 25-27 of the Indiana Department of Transportation 2015 Self-Evaluation and ADA Transition Plan discuss data collection items, and Appendix C has the data collection forms. Appendix D shows how assets in the database were weighted by a score that was assigned to each feature. This score was developed with input from the public and subject matter experts. It resulted in

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prioritization of the assets.

- The Federal Highway Administration's Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access: Best Practices Design Guide provides a planning overview with graphics that illustrate the concepts and includes a few checklists for assessing sidewalks.
- NACTO Design Guides include some information on accessibility using text and illustrations, they discuss requirements and best practices.

Sample Transition Plans

Municipalities with responsibility or authority over streets, roads, or walkways and those with 50 or more employees are required to develop Transition Plans. Transition Plans must address physical changes to facilities and may address non-physical changes at the municipality's discretion. These sample plans demonstrate a range of evaluation and transition planning.

- Town of Fortville ADA Transition Plan – Fortville, Indiana is a community of 4,784 (2020 Census). Its plan includes a brief description of each department of the Town and the programs and services the department provides as they relate to interactions with the public. Fortville used a Geographic Information Systems database (mapping program) to organize its self-evaluation, which allows it to update information instantaneously. This plan explains the self-evaluation methodology that is written in an easy-to-understand format and includes the inspection form template used for the evaluation. The Madison County Council of Governments assisted the Town.
- Bennington Americans with Disabilities Plan – Bennington, Vermont is a community of 15,333 (2020 Census). It used local funds to conduct a self-evaluation and to draft its transition plan. Its plan is simple and focused. The plan assigns an action person and implementation timeline to each upgrade and improvement. The plan includes annual review dates for the plan and states the

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action plan is intended to assist with budgeting. The Vermont Center for Independent Living assisted the Town.

- Montpelier ADA Transition Plan – Montpelier, Vermont is a city of 8,704 (2020 Census). It used local funds to conduct a self-evaluation and to draft its transition plan. This plan is more complex and focuses on a subset of City facilities. It explains the law, addresses alterations to historic properties, and provides a summary of findings. The plan discusses website accessibility and demonstrates what accessibility concepts mean for websites. The Institute for Human Centered Design assisted the City.
- Bethel for All - Bethel, Vermont is a community of 1,942. It is used Better Connections Program funds to make Bethel a more vibrant, accessible, connected, and welcoming place for all. Among other activities, Bethel completed an accessibility audit to evaluate crosswalks and sidewalks, public buildings and spaces, and private buildings and spaces. It also engaged residents, businesses, and nonprofits in creating a welcoming community. Appendix B of Bethel's Plan includes a Rural Accessibility Guide, which highlights and describes key aspects of the ADA 2010 Standards which are most useful to rural communities. Bethel used consultant services and used community engagement to identify accessibility challenges. Dubois & King and Direct Access assisted the Town.

Other Information

- Knowing whether the 1991 or the 2010 ADA Standards apply to buildings and facilities is important in determining if a building or facility complies with the ADA. The ADA Requirements: Effective Date and Compliance Date guide helps to explain which version of the ADA Standards to use and when.
- Establishing a committee to help engage the community, identify accessibility improvement needs, and prioritize implementation is a Best Practice. Individuals who have lived experience and differing abilities know what challenges them in

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the community. The Vermont Center for Independent Living, local senior centers, and other entities may be willing to help identify and contact individuals with lived experience.

- Phasing the inventory can help municipalities make progress when resources are limited. Divide the self-evaluation into parts: buildings, other facilities, programs, services, and communications. As noted in the *About Transition Plans,* Federal law provides guidance for prioritizing where to begin if phasing is necessary.

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