



# ADA Self-Evaluation & Transition Plan

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CITY OF CABOT, ARKANSAS

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law that mandates equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities. The ADA prohibits discrimination in access to jobs, public accommodations, government services, public transportation, and telecommunications. The City of Cabot has undertaken a comprehensive evaluation of its policies, programs, and facilities to determine the extent to which individuals with disabilities may be restricted in their access to City services and activities.

This report describes the process developed to complete the evaluation of the City of Cabot's activities, provides policy and program recommendations, and presents a Transition Plan for the modification of facilities and programs to ensure accessibility.

This document will guide the planning and implementation of necessary program and facility modifications over the next several years. The ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan is significant in that it establishes the City's commitment to the development and maintenance of policies, programs, and facilities that include all of its citizenry.

### Federal Accessibility Requirements

The City of Cabot is obligated to observe all requirements of Title I in its employment practices; Title II in its policies, programs, and services; any parts of Titles IV and V that apply to the City and its programs, services, or facilities; and all requirements specified in the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) that apply to facilities and other physical holdings (e.g., streets, sidewalks, and pedestrian rights-of-way).

Title II has the broadest impact on the City. Included in Title II are administrative requirements for all government entities employing more than fifty people. These administrative requirements are:

- Completion of a self-evaluation;
- Development of an ADA grievance procedure;
- Designation of a person who is responsible for overseeing Title II compliance; and
- Development of a transition plan if the self-evaluation identifies any structural modifications necessary for compliance. The transition plan must be retained for three years.

## **The City of Cabot's Approach**

In an effort to comply with the ADA, the City of Cabot began a self-evaluation of its facilities and sidewalks in 1998. At that time, a Master Sidewalk Plan was established by Ordinance 19 of 1998. Between 1998 and 2006, two phases of the Master Sidewalk Plan were completed. In 2006 a plan was set in place to reprioritize public access with the help of community input. A sidewalk review of the entire City was completed and two public meetings were held. The meetings were held on May 16, 2006 and November 30, 2006 with close to 100 citizens attending and providing feedback. Citizens were notified via direct mailings, fliers, press releases and ads placed at public locations. In 2007, the information was compiled and with the help of Metroplan, a Walkable Cabot plan was created and passed in Resolution 24 of 2007. Also in 2007, Mayor Eddie Joe Williams named Karen Vocque as ADA Coordinator and established an ADA committee to audit the ADA process and provide recommendations to the Mayor. This committee included a retired military member, retired Sheriff and retired Mayor.

In 2008 a need was seen to revamp the ADA process. Bryan Higgins was named ADA coordinator and it was determined a new self evaluation and transition plan would be established. The ADA committee was called to meet in the first quarter of 2009 and all members committed to meet quarterly in order to keep a closer eye on the ADA process.

Upon completion of this plan and adoption by the City Council, it is the intent of the City's ADA Coordinator to implement the action items described. In addition, the ADA Coordinator will be charged with the responsibility for enhancing the City's ADA programs Citywide; working with internal and external stakeholders; coordinating ADA activities; and providing leadership relative to the City's commitment to a strong and effective ADA program.

## **ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan Development Process and Summary Findings**

The process developed for the preparation of the ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan included reviewing the results of the two community input meetings held in 2006, reviewing the Walkable Cabot program, collecting input from the ADA Committee, conducting an extensive self-inspection on all public buildings belonging to the City and finally reviewing all projects that have been completed since the 2006 sidewalk review.

### ***Policies, Programs, and Procedures***

After viewing the resources stated above, the City's evaluation of its policies, programs, and procedures to determine current levels of service and the extent to which its policies and programs created barriers to accessibility for persons with disabilities revealed that the City's existing ADA structure present or have the potential to present barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities. It is the intent of the City to address the following citywide programmatic accessibility barriers through the development of Administrative Directives in the following areas.

- Maintaining accessible programs
- Customer service
- City of Cabot website
- Training and staffing
- Public meetings
- Facility information and signage
- Emergency evacuation procedures

Additionally, when a policy, program, or procedure creates an accessibility barrier that is unique to a department or a certain program, the City's ADA Coordinator will coordinate with the department head or program manager to address the matter in the most reasonable and accommodating manner.

### ***Buildings, Facilities, and Parks***

In 2009, the City conducted a new survey of architectural barriers in its buildings, facilities, and parks. Only those areas open to the public were surveyed. The surveys provide the City an overview of the architectural barriers that prevent people with disabilities from using its facilities and participating in its programs.

#### *Facility Surveys*

The survey process was accomplished using teams consisting of the ADA Coordinator and a representative for each location equipped with measuring devices, diagrams and survey forms. The surveys identified physical barriers in City buildings, facilities, and parks based on ADAAG standards.

The elements and their related features addressed in the facility survey include:

Parking Area	Corridor or Aisle
Passenger Loading Zone	Building Level
Curb Ramp	Interior Stairway
Walk	Elevator
Exterior Ramp	Interior Ramp
Exterior Stairway	Multiple User Restroom
Site Furnishings	Single User Restroom
Grandstand or Bleacher	Bathing Facility
Swimming Pool	Room
Game and Sports Area	Eating or Dining Area
Play Equipment Area	Auditorium
Viewing Area	Library
Drinking Fountain	Dressing or Locker Room
Telephone	Picnic Area
Sign	
Door	

### *Facility Reports*

A facility report has been produced for each site and building, detailing each item found to be in noncompliance with ADAAG and Title 24 standards. The facility report for each site includes:

- *Barrier Identification Table:* **Each specific barrier** encountered during the survey process is listed in table format. Barriers are organized by architectural element and located by reference number on the facility diagram.
- *Conceptual Solution:* A feasible conceptual solution to resolving the barrier is provided in text format.
- *Cost Estimate:* A cost estimate is provided for the removal of each barrier.
- *Priority Level:* A priority is given for each barrier removal.

### *Removal of Architectural Barriers*

Recognizing that the City has limited funds and cannot immediately make all buildings, facilities, and parks fully accessible, City staff utilized the following criteria as the basis for prioritizing the removal of architectural barriers:

- *Program uniqueness:* Some programs are unique to a building, facility, or park and cannot occur at another location;
- *Level of use by the public:* Buildings, facilities, and parks that receive a high level of public use should receive a high priority; and
- *Geographic distribution:* By selecting a range of buildings, facilities, and parks that are distributed throughout the City, the City can ensure maximum access for all residents.

### *Prioritization of Barrier Removal*

The following table, *Architectural Barrier Removal Projects*, includes a list of buildings, facilities, and parks that receive a high level of use by the public, provide programs and/or services that are unique and cannot occur in another location, and that are distributed throughout the City thereby providing maximum access for all residents. The table includes those buildings, facilities, and parks that are considered by the City as being its highest priorities for addressing the removal of architectural barriers.

The criteria listed below were used to determine the priorities for addressing specific barriers in each building, facility, and park.

- *Priority One:* The highest priority is placed on those barrier removal items that provide accessibility at the main entrance of a facility or improve a path of travel to the portion of the facility where program activities take place (e.g., parking, walks, ramps, stairs, doors, corridors, etc.).
- *Priority Two:* A second level priority is placed on those barrier removal items that improve or enhance access to program use areas (e.g., pools, sports areas, public offices, restrooms, etc.).
- *Priority Three:* A third level priority is placed on those barrier removal items that improve access to amenities serving program areas (e.g., drinking fountains, telephones, site furnishings, vending machines) and/or areas or features not required to be modified for accessibility (no public programs located in this area, or duplicate features). (NOTE: The table set forth below does not include Priority Three items.)

It is the intent of the City to address those items listed as Priority One and Two within a time frame of one to five years depending on immediate necessity, degree of complexity, and overall cost. In general, Priority Three items do not inhibit a person's ability to access or participate in a City program or event. Therefore, the City intends to address these items through routine maintenance, a building/facility remodel or improvement, or upon a request from a program manager or department head that a modification is necessary.

The City of Cabot reserves the right to change the barrier removal priorities in order to allow flexibility in accommodating community requests, petitions for reasonable modifications from persons with disabilities, and changes in City programs.

**CITY OF CABOT  
 Architectural Barrier Removal Projects**

<b>Buildings</b>	<b>Priority One</b>	<b>Priority Two</b>
City Hall/Police	Police Side needs Van Access	Restroom Mirrors up too high No protective covering on sink drains
Fire Station #4	Handicap parking needs repainting	
City Annex	Sidewalk repair coming from City Hall.	Access signs need to be placed by restrooms
Public Works	Back parking lot handicap parking Front parking lot handicap parking Signs pointing to entrances to each office (Public Works, Water, Chamber, etc.) Grates need to be less than 1/2"	Ramp connecting Public Works side to Chamber of Commerce Side
Animal Shelter	Door going into animal viewing area has abrupt level change over 3/4"	ADA designed restroom needs sign Visitation room need ADA access
Veterans Park Community Center		
<b>Other Facilities</b>	<b>Priority One</b>	<b>Priority Two</b>
Richie Road Facilities	No Access to Bleachers all fields Needs extra Handicap parking spot Hoyt Frizzle needs van access	No Access to Concessions Restrooms out of ADA Compliance all Walking trail has uneven surfaces Van access for pavilion/walking trail
1 <sup>st</sup> Street Facilities	Sidewalk connection from handicap parking Minor sidewalk repair at football field Concession stand blocks sidewalk to football field	Needs ADA access to concession stand Needs access to pavilion area
Fairlen Ward Memorial Park	Needs parking spaces in general	

It is the intent of the City to have its ADA Coordinator work together with department heads and budget staff to determine the funding sources for architectural barrier removal projects. Once funding is identified, the ADA Coordinator will coordinate the placement of the projects in the City's Capital Improvement Plan to be addressed on a fiscal year basis.

### ***Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Programs***

The City of Cabot has a number of programs devoted to making the City's streets and sidewalks more accessible.

- *New Development:* New development projects and those projects are required to install sidewalks and curb ramps.
- *Citizen Request Program:* Citizens are able to submit a request to have a new curb ramp installed or an existing curb ramp repaired at any location within the City.
- *Annual Installation, Repair, and Maintenance Program:* On an annual basis, the City's Public Works Department repairs sidewalks and installs new curb ramps as part of routine maintenance.
- *Street-Related Capital Improvement Projects:* Sidewalks and/or curb ramps may be installed and/or repaired in all street-related capital improvement projects (e.g., street widening or other street upgrades).
- *Federally Aided Street Overlay Construction Projects:* The City will begin to seek federal funding through the use of Metroplan to continue our Walkable Cabot program.

As a component of this Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan, the City of Cabot conducted a physical survey and inventory of curb ramps and sidewalks in the areas of the City with the highest levels of pedestrian traffic, including the Central Business District of downtown to make to determine what recommendations and alterations might be necessary in order to meet current ADAAG technical requirements.

It is the goal of the City to continue its efforts to improve pedestrian accessibility. To achieve this goal, the City plans to utilize the following criteria to guide its sidewalk and curb ramp program:

- *Provide access to state or local facilities or offices.*  
Since the ADA requires that funding priority be given to "walkways serving local and state government offices and facilities," these conditions have received the highest priority in the City's self-evaluation process.
- *Provide access to places of public accommodation.*  
Locations that provide access to "public, commercial, medical, professional, educational, or recreational services" are high priorities for curb ramps sites.
- *Enhance safety at pedestrian crossings.*  
High priority is given to curb ramps that will allow for safe crossings at controlled or marked intersections.
- *Create connected systems of accessible pathways.*  
City staff will look for opportunities to complete a partially accessible intersection or pathway and to expand an existing pathway system.

- *Plan with commercial and residential builders.*  
New building locations will be required to place sidewalks strategically in order to intersect with the City's planned sidewalks or existing sidewalks. The City will also conduct an inspection on the pre-poured form as well as the finished project on all commercial and residential sidewalks.

The City of Cabot has determined that the Walkable Cabot plan created in 2006-2007 is the best course along with the added benefit of curb ramp/sidewalk requests/repair requests and as part of its on-going responsibilities to improve accessibility for pedestrians, the City intends to institute regular (annual) public forums to supplement the Citizen Curb Ramp Request Program.

### ***Undue Burden***

The City does not have to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a program or activity, would create a hazardous condition for other people, or would represent an undue financial and administrative burden.

The determination that an undue financial burden would result must be based on an evaluation of all resources available for use in a program. For example, if a barrier removal action is judged unduly burdensome, the City must consider other options for providing access that would ensure that individuals with disabilities receive the benefits and services of the program or activity.

### ***On-going Accessibility Improvements***

Opportunities for further improvement of City services and facilities will continue to arise as advances are made in technology and the provision of programs for people with disabilities. Additionally, as the City acquires new facilities and develops new programs, it will be necessary to review each of them for access compliance.

It is the intent of the City to keep its programs up-to-date through increased community involvement and partnerships with organizations of and those offering services to persons with disabilities.

### ***Measuring the Success of the Transition Plan***

It is the intent of the City to annually evaluate the success of improving access to its programs by compiling statistical measures of success. Examples of such measures of success include:

- Measuring the level of public participation in programs.
- Revising evaluation forms to include questions about how adequately special needs were met.
- Tracking the number of people with disabilities who participate in selected programs.
- Tracking the number of requests for programs that are accessible to people with disabilities.

- Tracking attendance and repeat registrants.
- Asking staff to evaluate the success of a program.
- Surveying program participants about desired improvements.
- Conducting an initial assessment/suggestion box program for accessibility.
- Soliciting feedback from personal contact (i.e., word-of-mouth).
- Comparing programs to goals and objectives published by the federal government.
- Preparing and distributing a participants' questionnaire to measure increases in participation, and, where appropriate, socialization, health, and self-esteem.

### ***Grievance Procedure***

As part of the Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan process, the City of Cabot has created and adopted a uniform complaint procedure to resolve complaints related to discrimination under the ADA. All complaints will be routed through our ADA website at [www.cabotar.gov/ada](http://www.cabotar.gov/ada). Individuals without internet access will have two options. They may call the ADA phone line (501.843.1170) and leave a message for the ADA Coordinator or they may come to City Hall where a computer with internet access will be made available to them or a City Employee will collect their information and enter their complaint into the system.

### **Attachments**

- A1. Walkable Cabot Program
- A2. 2006 Sidewalk Review
- A3. Sidewalk/Curb Ramps Completed
- A4. Schedule of Sidewalks/Curb Ramps