

A Checklist for Accessible Sidewalks and Street Crossings

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that new and altered facilities be accessible. Title II of the ADA covers sidewalk and street construction and transit accessibility and references the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) or the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) for new construction and alterations undertaken by or on behalf of a state or local government. The Department of Justice (DOJ) title II regulation specifically requires that curb ramps be provided when sidewalks or streets are newly constructed or altered. (Requirements for **existing** pedestrian networks not otherwise being altered are also included in the DOJ regulation, available on line at www.ada.gov/reg2.html).

The ADA Accessibility Guidelines (www.access-board.gov/adaag/html/adaag.htm) include standards for site development applicable to **new construction and alterations** in the public right-of-way:



CURB RAMPS

✓ **A curb ramp or other sloped area is required wherever a new or altered pedestrian walkway crosses a curb or other barrier to a street, road, or highway.** Similarly, a curb ramp is required wherever a new or altered street intersects a pedestrian walkway. A curb ramp may be perpendicular to the curb it cuts or parallel with the sidewalk. Other designs may also comply, including sidewalks that ramp down to a lesser curb height, with a short perpendicular curb ramp to the street; a blended or at-grade connection, or a raised crossing that connects at sidewalk level.

✓ **The running slope of a new curb ramp should not exceed 1 in 12 (8.33%).** Steeper ramps are not usable by many pedestrians in wheelchairs and scooters. Cross slope should be limited to 1:48 (2%).

✓ **A level landing should be provided at the top of a perpendicular curb ramp.** A curb ramp must connect at the top to a level landing that is at least 48 inches (1220 mm) deep with a cross slope of no more than 1:48 (2%). The side flares of a curb ramp are not intended for accessible travel (the slope of a side flare is limited so that it will not present a tripping hazard to pedestrians).

✓ **The foot of a curb ramp should be contained within the crosswalk markings.** Pedestrians who use wheelchairs should not be directed outside the crosswalk or into an active travel lane in order to cross stopped traffic. If a diagonal ramp is used, a 48-inch long (1220 mm) bottom landing must be provided in the space between the curb radius and curb line extensions.

✓ **The transition from curb ramp to gutter should be flush.** Lips are not permitted. Gutter counterslope in the line of travel should not exceed 1 in 20 (5%) and should connect smoothly with other elements of the pedestrian network.

✓ **The boundary between the sidewalk and street should be detectable underfoot.** A 24-inch strip of truncated dome (detectable warning) material should be provided the full width of the ramp or other uncurbed connection to the crosswalk so that pedestrians do not inadvertently travel into the street.



SIDEWALKS

✓ **A sidewalk should provide for two-way circulation.** A 60-inch (1525-mm) walkway can accommodate turns and passing space and is recommended as the minimum width for urban sidewalks and for sidewalks immediately adjacent to curbs. In rural and suburban areas with 48-inch-wide (915 mm) walkways set back from the curb, passing space (60x60 inches/1525x1525 mm) can be provided at intervals of 200 ft (61 m) maximum. A 48-inch (915 mm) width allows travel with a service animal or sighted guide. Maneuvering space is also necessary at turns, at entrances and doors, at street furniture such as drinking fountains and telephones, and at pedestrian pushbuttons.

✓ **The cross slope of a sidewalk should not exceed 1:48 (2%).** Excessive cross slope requires additional energy to counteract and tends to direct wheelchair users into the street, particularly when it is wet, icy, or snowy underfoot. At driveways there should be a minimum 36-inch (915 mm) wide passage with a cross slope of no more than 1:48 (2%). Corners at intersections should comply in both directions, since the running slope of one walkway will be the cross slope of another.

✓ **Street furniture, plantings, poles and standards, and other fixed items should not protrude into travel routes.** Pedestrians with vision impairments can detect objects mounted on walls or posts if they are installed so that the leading edge is less than 27 inches (685 mm) above the sidewalk. Items mounted above this height should not project more than 4 inches (100 mm) into any circulation route. Particular care needs to be taken to ensure that temporary signage and construction barriers do not impede pedestrian travel.



STREET CROSSINGS

✓ **Consider the information needs of blind and low-vision pedestrians at intersections.** When pedestrian signals are provided, their crossing and timing information should be available to all users.

✓ **Insufficient crossing time may be a barrier for some pedestrians.** Every pedestrian cohort should be expected to contain some walkers whose rate of travel is less than 3.5 feet per second.



TEMPORARY WORK

✓ **Temporary work should be accessible.** Where construction blocks a public sidewalk for more than a short time, an alternate accessible route should be provided. Temporary events and facilities should also meet accessibility criteria.



OTHER PEDESTRIAN FEATURES

✓ **Pedestrian facilities on and along sidewalks must be accessible.** Signal actuating buttons, drinking fountains, telephones, kiosks, and other pedestrian elements should meet accessibility criteria for approach and maneuvering space, reach range, and operation.

The development of additional rights-of-way guidelines is underway and can be monitored on the U.S. Access Board's website at www.access-board.gov. The Board also maintains a toll-free technical assistance line at 800/872-2253 (V); 800/993-2822 (TTY).