



Meeting Minutes

ADA Community Forum 2022 – 3rd Quarter

Date: Thursday, Sept. 8, 2022, 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Location: Virtual Google Meet (4 people in attendance)

Subject: Residents can come learn about a variety completed, ongoing and future improvements throughout the city as well as an update on web accessibility successes and progress..

Accommodations: Captioning via Google Meets

Introduction: Rob Hernandez, ADA Manager opened with introductions. Meeting began at 1:05 p.m.

Project updates.

Current Projects

ADA Manager Rob Hernandez, ADA Coordinators Jason Crowe, Mike Killebrew and Project Manager Timothy Hartong, provided updates on projects that are currently underway or getting ready to launch. Among the projects:

Timothy Hartong, Project Manager:

Sertich Ice Arena:

We are awarding a contract to renovate the restrooms. That will go along with the accessible ice skating they are doing at the facility. We have some additional plans to go along with that project including some ramps around the ice rink itself as well as accessible seating. We will be kicking off the restroom updates before the end of this year.

**Rock Ledge Ranch:**

We have just completed some concrete work to make the area more accessible. However, some areas on the site are not accessible. The way we are trying to tackle that issue is to create virtual tours via a kiosk on site. We are working with our communications department to create those captioned videos. They just rapped filming of the tours and now we are working through the logistics of getting that content onto the kiosks.

Starsmore:

The site itself is challenging. There are some accommodations there at the site that don't live up to today's standards for accessibility. We are currently working with an architect to help make that accessible in addition to some neat new features which will go along with that. We just received the first concept and are working through that process.

Parks

For those who got to see the grand opening of Panorama Park a couple weeks ago, our office was very pleased with the results. We were part of the planning that started years ago, and then we walked through to assess it just before the grand opening. The playground is state-of-the-art when it comes to accessibility, the routes and concrete are accessible, and the findings we did see, the contractors are working to correct.

The park serves an important purpose. Over the past year, our office along with the parks department assessed every playground in the city for accessibility and scored them from a 1 – which is basically not at all accessible, to a 5 – which is completely inclusive and accessible. We found that we had playgrounds ranking 4 or better in every area of town except the southeast. Panorama fills that void and is the most accessible park in town.

Mike Killebrew:**Fire Station 23:**

This project has been in the process for several years. We started with a concept design and then went through five or six more versions of it. The improvements were primarily driven by the need for accessibility. This particular site has a radio shop as well as a fire station. We also added a separate ADA accessible restroom available to the public. Last week we went through and evaluated the nearly-completed facility from the public right-of-way in and found a few issues including some in that restroom, so we will be meeting with the construction manager to get those corrected.



Upcoming Projects

Tim Hartung:

Biedelman:

There is a lot of nature programming for youth there at the facility adjacent to Sonderman Park. We are hoping to provide an accessible route down to the creek and improve overall access to the park including accessible restrooms. This was once someone's home that was donated to the city, so it does pose some challenges. Our goal is to make the programming here accessible to those children with disabilities to enjoy nature and the activities along with their classmates. We are currently meeting with engineering firms to start the planning process.

Cottonwood Park

The plus side is that there is a lot dedicated for accessible parking. The downside is it is not in very good condition. There are some great amenities here, and we want the lot to match people's expectations when they go to enjoy different aspects of this park. They are very excited to see us bring that up to spec. We are waiting for the season to be over

Swing High

This playground was the city's first universally accessible playground in the city. However, the parking lot has some issues as it is gravel and it slopes down toward Prospect Lake. This can be fixed and we are working with contractors who are interested in tackling this. We anticipate this work to be done at the end of this year or the start of next year.

Track Chairs / Beach Wheel Chairs

The Therapeutic Recreation Program has been working on securing a grant to purchase a track chair which is an off-road wheelchair that is able to tackle rocks, logs and many city trails that bring people to Colorado Springs. They said two chairs would be ideal to have at more than one location or for two people to enjoy on the same trip, so we decided to pay for another track chair.

Some of the features are rear stability wheels, four-point harness, dual port usb and attendant control.



The office also purchased beach wheelchairs and Mobi matting for the Memorial Park beach. The matting has been in use, but parks is working on a release of liability and checkout program for the wheel chairs that they will roll out when the area opens back up again in the spring.

City Parking Lots

There are four lots in Old Colorado City that either have non-compliant accessible parking or not enough accessible parking. Most or all of the existing stalls have high cross slope, bad dimensions, no signage or are positioned in a way where they don't safely connect to an accessible route to the businesses in Old Colorado City. We have worked with parking enterprise to redesign the accessible parking to address these issues.

Public Works Transition Plan

Transition plans are required by the American with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. It provides a plan for the removal of access barriers identified through a self-evaluation and inventory. It also includes a budget and schedule for those improvements.

Our office currently working on the transition plan for public works which includes:

- Engineering
- Traffic Engineering
- Streets Operation and Maintenance
- Mountain Metro Transit

The process includes gathering information from these different divisions and weaving that together into one plan. I anticipate the first draft to be done by the end of the month. We are still waiting for a few important bits of information to be reported to me.

What I can tell you is public works has been doing a great job over the past several years not only making sure new sidewalk, curb ramps, pedestrian signals, etc. are compliant, but also listening to the public and prioritizing old, non-compliant work, that needs to be replaced to compliance.

Digital Accessibility Update



ADA Coordinator Kevin McDaniel, provided the updates on web accessibility plan and the Strategic Plan.

Kevin McDaniel, ADA Coordinator:

In 2020 the mayor signed a proclamation for us to be web accessible by June of this year. Last year Governor Polis signed an order that all cities in the state would meet the WCAG 2.1 standards. This is slightly more stringent than what we originally signed on for as being compliant to WCAG 2.0 which is required by the federal governor.

The standards are attempting to come up with a streamlined way for these communities to know more specifically what they need to do to be considered accessible.

Our transition plan was completed in July 2020, and a month or so later is when the state came out and said all cities need to create a web accessibility transition plan.

We completed our plan and were able to get to about 90% of our applications in compliance by June 2022. It is very difficult to get to this point in a two-year period. We are going to do our very best to meet the goal of the WCAG 2.1 standards by July 1, 2024.

Our assessments and evaluations are ongoing. We continue to go through some of our partners' applications and websites and run reports on the findings and have regular trainings for both internal and external stakeholders to help guide them toward compliance. So far, we have had 91 attendees taking part in 14 hours of training. We have seen 4% of the findings corrected.

This is a complex process. Our compliance starts with our transition plan. I don't believe 100% compliance will be possible for anyone, but we will to the maximum extent feasible.

Our web accessibility plan won the Kathy Vincent Award in 2021 which was a great honor and I hope we can live up to that with the next steps of this process.

Strategic Plan Update

The Airport Master Plan is a great example of how we hope to work with our vendors. Not only have we identified the issues, but we went line by line on how to correct it creating an action plan.



Conclusion:

Rob: I feel confident in saying we are ahead of just about every city and even our own state. We have been receiving calls and emails from cities throughout our state as well as throughout the country about the work we have been doing.

Questions.

Patricia Yates: Is there a way we can present some feedback to you on the presentation?

Rob: Yes, I can provide my email.

Patricia: The Southeast area of the city doesn't always get to participate. We have a population that speaks different languages and has different challenges.

Rob: Our office is working to ensure those with different language challenges get the accommodations they need to have equal access to everything the city has to offer through our LAP/LEP program.

Rob: As I am working through making sure my son gets the services he needs, I learn there are a lot of programs that people are not aware of.

Patricia Yates: Do you still have the ADA Forum that was held at Hotel Elegante a few years ago?

Rob: That was put on by the Independent Center which provides some great services, but that event has been virtual the past two years due to COVID.

Chat Comments and Questions:

Tim Hartong
2:03 PM
Thanks Chris!

Rob Hernandez, ADA Manager
2:04 PM
Thanks for attending Chris!



Rob Hernandez, ADA Manager
2:10 PM
robert.hernandez@coloradosprings.gov

DeAnna Rumsey
2:10 PM

Looks good. Super excited about the work thus far. Is there a mechanism in place so that future contracts with third party vendors will include a criteria that they are adhering to the WCAG standards?

Kevin (audio answer): The way we are doing it, there is document called a VPAT, which explains how information and communication technology products such as software, hardware, electronic content and support documentation meet WCAG. We modified it to say what our requirements are and require vendors to sign each aspect of compliance. If they cannot, they have to explain why they cannot meet compliance.

Tim Hartong
2:16 PM

Aside from Rob's direct email address, adacompliance@coloradosprings.gov is another great means to get a hold of someone at the City!

DeAnna Rumsey
2:16 PM

You're talking about the Celebration of the ADA. We held a Fest-Able this year instead. It was held in July at the Independence Center.