



Office of Accessibility

Meeting Minutes

ADA Community Forum 2023 – 1st Quarter

Date: Thursday, March 9, 2023, 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Location: Virtual Google Meet (5 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 and a tribute to Judy Heumann who passed on March 4, 2023. Meeting began at 1:04 p.m.

Remediation Process

Rob Hernandez discussed how the city actively identifies ways to prioritize remediation efforts by:

- Collaborating with internal and external stakeholders
- Prioritizing based on best practices set by the DOJ and public feedback
- Leveraging internal stakeholders resources
- Aligning with the City's strategic plan where appropriate

Kevin McDaniel added that OA plans to present this process to the new administration.

Project updates.

Current Projects

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

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Track Chairs

Title II Coordinator Jason Crowe spoke about the City purchasing two all-terrain track chairs which arrived in February. The Therapeutic Recreation Program purchased one with a grant and OA purchased the other. Park staff test drove them upon arrival and TRP is working on a check-out program and identifying trails where they will be available to explore.

Rock Ledge Ranch:

Timothy Hartong, Project Manager: Kiosk / Filming: The ranch is a historic site with buildings from the 1800s which makes it challenging to make the area accessible. So, we plan to provide a kiosk with virtual tours available. We completed the bulk of the filming last fall. We hope to have the kiosk delivered next month to begin adding the videos and user-friendly software.

Question: Deanna Rumsey: Is there an audio description as part of the kiosk as well
Hartong: Yes, that will be included as part of this.

Question: Hank Scarangella: So, thanks. Where will the kiosk be located?

Hartong: The carriage house. In a previous project our office provided an accessible route to the carriage house as well as other locations at the ranch.

Starsmore:

Hartong: The building itself was a residence that was donated in 1989 or 1990 and moved to North Cheyenne Canyon. It isn't necessarily compliant, so we are working on making improvements including accessible routes to and throughout the building. We are also collaborating with Parks to add an ADA compliant plaza as an educational space for programming. We just had our 60% design meeting.

Westside Community Center

Hartong: The Therapeutic Recreation Program recently moved into the community center from Memorial Park. The fact that they are there has bumped up this facility on our priority list. We are looking to do some work on the entrance including some concrete work, a lift inside where there are stairs at a level change and some other miscellaneous projects around the facility.

Question: Vickie Pacheco: Are you going to be providing anything for hearing accessibility in the Westside Community Center?

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Hartong: Right now, we are not planning anything specifically because I think they are still trying to figure out how they're going to be using the building.

Palmer Community Dog Park

Hartong: This project is the result of some input we received from the community. We thought it would be a great project to tackle. We are working through some concerns about drainage at this particular area and how we are going to provide an accessible route that doesn't get covered in mud. We had a great meeting with parks and maintenance folks.

Police Station Counters:

Hartong: OA is working on a plan to bring service counters at police substations to a compliant height.

Question: Erin Nichols: Is there going to be some sort of window intercom system or hearing loops so they can meet ADA requirements.

Hartong: Definitely. These counters are a bit more challenging because of bulletproof glass, but we are putting together a comprehensive project that includes all of that.

Oak Meadows / Fire Station 16

Crowe: This is a collaboration between Parks, CSFD and OA. This is a challenging part of town because it is on the mountain, so there are a lot of slope issues. We are looking to make improvements to both the park and the fire station as it is one of six stations with a community room. With the park we are looking to replace both old, sand surface playgrounds with one nice new compliant playground. The accessible route from parking to the playground will also serve to lay an accessible route to the community room at the fire station.

Colorado Springs Airport

Michael Killebrew, Title II ADA Coordinator: The City received \$6 million as part of the new FAA infrastructure law. This money will go toward upgrading the main terminal. Improvements include two restrooms and a family restroom which will be fully gutted and re-done. OA has assessed the entire airport, and contractors will be using the evaluations as they renovate and improve the terminal. Other improvements include hearing loops at each gate, improvements at the service animal relief area, the ramped floor in the terminal, and workstations (which are too high).

Question: Vickie Pacheco: Is there anything to share about the renovation of the Senior Center? Any information as far as looping?



Killebrew: Not right now, but there will be. So, next time we do this we will make sure and talk about that.

Hernandez: We are still somewhat in the early stages. So, we're in the process of gathering information so we can put something together.

Web Accessibility Update

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

Kevin McDaniel, ADA Coordinator: HB21-1110 requires that all cities and municipalities meet web accessibility guidelines by July 1, 2024. The City has almost 100 websites and all have to be tested. There are 169 different tests that must be done for every page of every website. The state law is very different than what the ADA requires.

However, we expect the federal government may roll out something very similar to Colorado's law. Many think, however, that the federal law will be more flexible. They have to offer municipalities a chance to change their culture.

The reason it is so challenging is because I can build something to be accessible today, but if people add content to it, and they're not following directions and it has a violation then the City is technically in violation. Any violation is a penalty. It is going to be important that developers, designers, content creators, hosts, chiefs directors – anyone who has access to a social media account – they will have to have very specific training and practices they need to follow.

Question: Deanna Rumsey: How can we in the community support you? I am in conversations with higher ed all the time, so, is this a content or curricula-driven conversation I can spearhead?

McDaniel: Yes, ma'am. I appreciate it.

So, out of the 100 or so websites we have, 31% have been sent back to me complete now. Right now, we have another 9% that are scheduled to be complete soon. I would like to work on procurement language that says we only buy accessible products moving forward. We have some vendors who have stepped it up.

We also deal with document compliance. When we started, we had 40% of our documents that were tagged. Now we are running at 84% tagged. The secret is training our employees. We had 472 people participate in trainings.



Conclusion:

Hernandez: So that concludes our presentation for this quarterly forum. I just want to thank everyone for joining us today. We're going to give you 22 minutes of your time back so you can enjoy the rest of your afternoon. We look forward to seeing you again at the next quarterly.