



Appendix C: ADA Focus Group Meeting Notes



City of Dallas ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan

**ADA FOCUS GROUP MEETING NOTES
July 1, 2020 10:00 – 11:30 AM**

Project: City of Dallas ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan
 Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting
 Interpreters: Chrissy Herron and Sarah Latas
 Handouts: Agenda; Presentation Slides
 Attendees:

Name	Agency
Gary Copeland	City of Dallas, ADA Compliance
Nelson Rossy	City of Dallas, Dallas Fire
Beverly Davis	City of Dallas, Director - Fair Housing
Bronson Inyabri	City of Dallas, Fair Housing & Human Rights
Meres Reyes	City of Dallas, Fair Housing & Human Rights
Jessica Esquivel	City of Dallas, Fair Housing & Human Rights
Belinda Gilbert	City of Dallas, Fair Housing & Human Rights
Kjerstine Nielsen	City of Dallas, Library
Priscyla Bento	City of Dallas, Policy Manager
Efrain Trejo	City of Dallas, Public Works
Ana Camacho	City of Dallas, Senior Services
Kathryn Rush	City of Dallas, Transportation
Kierra Williams	City of Dallas, Transportation
Erin Eurek	Kimley-Horn, Consultant Team
Brian Shamburger	Kimley-Horn, Consultant Team
Kristi Avalos	Accessology, Consultant Team
Traswell Livingston	Aids Services of Dallas
Carla Weiland	Camp Summit
Carlos Turic	Dallas Wheelchair Tennis Club
Steve Patrnick	DART, Bus Stops
Tammy Haenftling	DART, Mobility Management (Paratransit)
Jennifer Jones	DART, Passenger Amenities
Sheila Grady	Deaf Action Center
Gema De La O	Deaf Action Center
Jennifer Ford	Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas
Lorraine Friedman	Jewish Family Service of Greater Dallas
Blake Lindsay	Envision Dallas
Glendon Bentley	Lonestar Paralyzed Veterans of America
Tate Ringer	Metrocare
Linda Thompson	Metrocare
Blaine Bridgford	Metroplex Adaptive Water Sports
Public participant	Neighborhood Association
Charlotte Stewart	Reach of Dallas
Lynda Ender	The Senior Source



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Discussion Items

- Focus Group Question: Why not use the City's Interagency Agreements to ensure compliance? It has existed for years, but in my view, has been ineffective. Public Works and DART should know about these agreements.

City Response: A Task Force meeting is held bi-monthly for DART-City to discuss projects, joint efforts to improve safety, and pedestrian and ADA accessibility to bus stops, shelters, and rail stations.

- Focus Group Question: Is there a plan to address the ADA compliance needed throughout the City in the interim? Or are these communities just to wait for changes? Keep in mind, many of these outdated infrastructure issues are in older low-income communities.

City Response: Yes, the Department of Public Works has identified a need to develop a Sidewalk Master Plan in conjunction with the City-wide ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan that establishes asset management policies for sidewalks through the use of a data driven model and stakeholder input to prioritize future improvements. The Sidewalk Master Plan will incorporate Equity, Safe Routes to School, ADA Transition Plan, and Five-Year Infrastructure Management Plan into a newly created sidewalk selection criteria matrix.

- Focus Group Question: Will ADA be also implemented in Dallas airports?

Consultant Team Response: Yes, any areas within the Dallas airports that are owned by the City of Dallas will need to eventually be included into the City of Dallas ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan.

- Focus Group Comment: There are a lot of systemic discrimination/systemic barriers for deaf people linguistic wise. DART is not accessible so I think I would like a physical meeting to discuss accessibility for deaf/hard of hearing people.

- Focus Group Question: Did you receive the Walkable Ways document that was uploaded to our group?

City Response: This document will be provided to the Consultant Team.

- Focus Group Question: For Public Works -- why don't contractors know that when they are doing sidewalk, curb and gutter replacements, that they MUST make the new work ADA compliant? We had an issue with a contractor last year about this.

City Response: All construction projects are required to adhere to federal accessibility standards. Projects with estimated construction cost over with over \$50,000 must be reviewed by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) to check that the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS) are met. TDLR received equivalency certification from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) on September 23, 1996 that the TAS, including the appendix and Architectural Barriers Administrative Rules Chapter 68, met or exceeded the new construction and alteration requirements



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of Title III of the ADA and are consistent with the 1991 ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), except as noted in TAS.

- Focus Group Question: Are you also considering the City's Age Friendly Plan?

City Response: Yes, the Age component is part of the Equity Lens and will be incorporated into the Sidewalk Master Plan.

- Focus Group Comment: Website Review - YES!!!
- Focus Group Question: Why does the City still allow water hydrants, traffic and signal poles, and signal boxes on City sidewalks -- especially new ones?

City Response: Unfortunately, due to right-of-way (ROW) constraints all utilities, including signs, must be placed on the City's ROW. However, the City must provide the require clear width of walking surfaces per 2010 ADA Standard for Accessible Design.

- Focus Group Comment: I feel that this effort will be a waste if we settle for minimum standards rather than best practices.
- Focus Group Question: Can we be sent a link for the prioritization criteria?

Consultant Team Response: The prioritization criteria are documented in the draft Transition Plan, which will be provided by the City to this group for review.

- Focus Group Question: Will there be an opportunity to see the Transition Plan before it is presented to City Council?

City Response: The draft Transition Plan will be provided to the ADA Focus Group for review and comment prior to the City Council Meeting.

- Focus Group Question: Can you send the full criteria the assessment used for evaluating the website - so we can all see the most current standards?

City Response: The full website assessment report, including evaluation criteria will be provided to the ADA Focus Group for review.

- Focus Group Question: How long do we have to survey our clients and get the information to you? How long is the comment period?

City Response: Comments for the Transition Plan are due by July 21 – 12:00pm.

- Focus Group Question: Why are we still building sidewalks next to the curb rather than setting them back 4 to 6 feet to allow a buffer zone or parkway that keeps pedestrians and vehicles separated -- especially along major thoroughfares?



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City Response: Sidewalks abutting the curb occur when there are right-of-way (ROW) constraints and significant topography changes across the ROW. However, the preferred placement of sidewalks is away from the curb and near or next to the ROW line.

- Focus Group Comment: Thank you for the interpreters and CART. Appreciate the accessibilities.
- Focus Group Question: Why do some curb cuts have bumps on them? Bad for balance, high heels, small wheels, etc.

Consultant Team Response: The bumps on the curb cuts are called detectable warnings. The detectable warnings are intended to indicate to pedestrians where the curb has been removed and to warn pedestrians that they are entering a vehicle travel way. Per the 2006 ADA Standards for Transportation Facilities, detectable warning surfaces are required to be installed at all curb ramps used by state and local governments to provide public transportation.

- Focus Group Question: The first City of Dallas ADA Transition Plan was developed in 1992/1993. Has nothing been done since then?

City Response: The Barrier Free Ramp program provides for the construction of new barrier free ramps (BFRs) at street intersections, crosswalks, or other identified paths intended for pedestrian use in crossing a vehicular way where BFRs do not exist. Additionally, BFR projects may be requested by the general public; however, the priority is given to walkways serving government offices and facilities (including schools), health care facilities (hospitals, clinics, retirement facilities, etc.), bus stops and transportation centers (DART), commercial district (private businesses offering goods and services to the public), followed by walkways serving residential areas.

- Focus Group Question: Nothing much gets done in Dallas unless it's in court. What is the City doing to proactively address concerns?

City Response: The Infrastructure Management Program (IMP) for sidewalk improvements focuses on smaller scale project to fill in gaps of missing sidewalks and broken panels. The selected projects were based upon projects identified by the City's Needs Inventory. Selection criteria includes addressing ADA concerns, locations relative to schools, senior facilities, places of congregation, and City core areas near regional transportation centers.

- Focus Group Question: Is this is the only time this group will be meeting?

City Response: The Focus Group will be asked to meet if it is determined that another group discussion is needed to satisfy questions and comments in this phase of the project. Also, as the City moves on to other phases, the group may again be asked to meet to provide comments.

- DART Question: How can DART more effectively serve the deaf community? Would like to have a physical meeting instead of video meeting to discuss.

Focus Group Response: Deaf people don't always understand English and visual signage is better.



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- Focus Group Comment: Thank you all for helping make our city more accessible to all! I look forward to working with all of you in the future and will survey our clients and send comments. Thank you!
- Focus Group Comment: Thank you, we appreciate that.
- DART Comment: Thank you for the opportunity to participate. Please feel free to reach out if DART can be of assistance.
- Focus Group Comment (received via email): I hope that part of your consultant recommendations will strongly remind the various agencies participating in this effort that ADA is the law and not just a set of suggestions. On the same level as Civil Rights, Accessibility is a right and I am very disappointed that the City of Dallas has performed so poorly in making access to public facilities possible in the years since 1990 -- 30 years -- when the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed! As you saw in the photos I sent from 15 years ago, little has changed, let alone improved. The saddest part of it all is that we have had the capacity to do better and chose not to.