

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes



Date & Time: Thursday, Feb 27, 2020 from 2:30-4:00 P.M.

Location: 10151 Montana, Sun Metro Operations Cetner

Agenda Minutes

I. Welcome/Roll Call

Meeting was called to order at 2:50 pm with following members present. Committee introduced themselves, as well as city employees that were present.

Member	Appointment	Present
Marc Salazar	District 1	Present
Vacant	District 2	
Emre Umucu	District 3	Present
Jose Martinez	District 4	
Betty Castorena	District 5	Present
Vacant	District 6	
Josue Rodriguez	District 7	Present
Vacant	District 8	
Vacant	Mayor	
Julio Perez	Secretary	Present
Omar DelaRosa	Legal	

II. Call to the Public – Public Comment

Julio Perez asked the quorum members to reach out to the following City Rep offices so they can fill their vacancies: 2,6,8 & Mayor's Office.

III. Business Items

Approval of Aug 22nd, 2019 City's Accessibility Advisory Committee Minutes – Chairperson approved unanimously.

IV. Discussion

A. Bus stop enhancement update

Sun Metro provided an update that there's now a contract for bus stop enhancement and the contractor should be starting soon to continue to update the bus stops for accessibility.

B. Discussion and update on District Representative meetings

Mar Salazar reported that he met with his City Representative and the commissioner to discuss ADA needs among other items – he distributed some brochures as well. Marc recommends that members keep their City Representative apprised of all the AAC activities so they know we're doing our job – then in the process ask if there's anything else you can do.

C. Discuss ideas for public outreach

No other ideas have come up other than each individual group using flyers and word of mouth. Julio Perez recommended to reach out to each City Representative's office to attend one of their public meetings in order to get input from the public.

Question was asked how to find out when the City Rep meetings are: Julio Perez recommended to reach out to their office directly and just ask.

Julio Perez suggested that one of the best ways to get people to attend the meeting is to personally invite them – when members of the advocacy groups invite each other, they attend.

Someone asked if they can create a website to advertise this meeting – Julio Perez answered that as long as it's their own website and does not reference belonging to the City of El Paso, it is Ok.

D. Presentation on ADA improvements throughout the City

Julio Perez presented the same powerpoint of all the improvements that were carried out throughout the last 3 yrs – this presentation has already been given twice at the AAC and will also be presented to City Council soon. (date to be determined)

2017 – Public asked for information regarding what the City was doing. City Manager asked to start an overall self-assessment. A task force was created with members of all City departments – ADA advocacy groups were involved, they provided input and approved the final plan.

- Creation of a task force with over 40 members from every department
- Process involved community input via the Accessibility Advisory committee
- Every ADA advocacy group involved
 - Monthly progress reports

- Public input incorporated into the process
- Final plan presented and approved by the community

ADA is all about People:

- Mobility
- Access to services
- Employment
- Quality of life
- Equal Treatment

What the assessment include?

- Physical barriers
- Services
- Policies and procedures
- Public outreach

It did not include gap and corner ramp inventory – as it is always changing and it's only a snapshot in time.

Assessment

- General Accessibility
 - Applications, pamphlets, flyers & general information
 - Information and documentation available in alternate format upon request
 - Video with closed captioning features
 - Access to all services provided by City – by department
- Technology
 - Mobile applications, kiosks, vending machines
 - Websites, online access to documentation & information
- Policies and Procedures
 - ADA sensitivity training
 - Operating procedures to maintain ADA compliance
- Public meetings
 - ADA accommodations and accessible services

Assessment Results

- 100% completed in FY2018
- 25 departments/divisions assessed via a city-wide ADA task force
 - All City Services
 - 156 Public Facilities
 - 256 Parks
 - 2,757 bus stops
 - Process to address City sidewalks, curb cuts and audible signals
- Monthly community meetings
- Transition Plan reviewed and accepted by community

Assessment highlights

- Buildings, parks and services in general are very accessible.
- Only 9% of the parks presented minor issues
- Over 80% of all bus stops have been improved for ADA compliance
- Great visible progress in sidewalks, curb cuts and audible signals.
- Extraordinary response from City staff in complying with ADA and accommodating citizens with disabilities
- Strong permitting and inspection process to ensure ADA compliance on all new construction

Immediate improvements completed

- Better communication and engagement with citizens – via community meetings and AAC
- Plan to provide all online documentation in accessible format.
- Centralized process to address policies & procedures for City departments on ADA compliance
- Provision of ADA sensitivity training to ALL City employees
 - Part of every new employee's orientation training
- Centralized, online repository of all ADA on-demand improvements
 - Provides transparency and information on projects being completed

Short and long term improvements

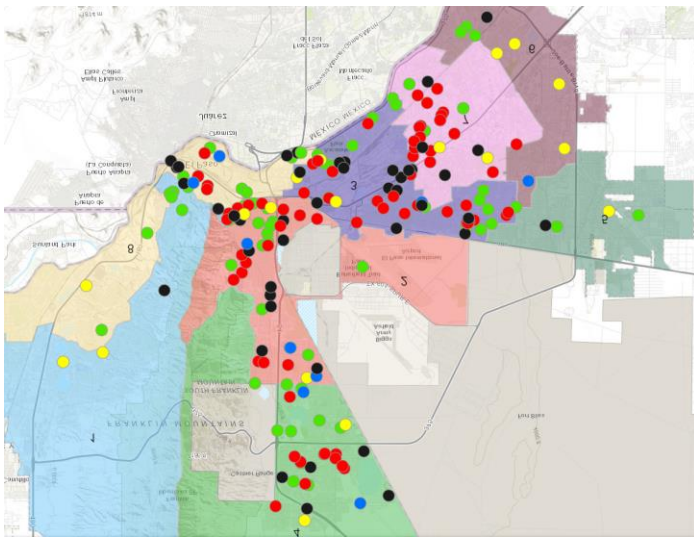
- On-demand ADA Request Program
- City started approving up to 500K annually to address accessibility impediments to City services
- Started in FY 2017 – Over 190 projects completed under this program
- Citizens contact the ADA Office via 311, EP311 app
- Request assessed, assigned to Streets and Maintenance & placed on project list
- Progress report posted online

This program is managed by Streets and CID

YEAR	Allocated	Expenditures	Encumbrance	Balance	Cumulative Carry Over
FY 2016	\$ 500,000	\$ 284,228	\$ 6,488	\$ 215,772	\$ 209,284
FY 2017	\$ 250,000	\$ 372,400	\$ -	\$ (122,400)	\$ 86,884
FY 2018	\$ 516,000	\$ 598,574	\$ 146,695	\$ (82,574)	\$ (142,385)
FY 2019	\$ 500,000	\$ 85,172	\$ 40,000	\$ 414,828	\$ 232,443
FY 2020	\$ 500,000	\$ 180,622	\$ 193,183	\$ 319,378	\$ 551,821

Current funding availability is 551K with about 25 requests in queue

All project posted online



Total ADA improvements

Completed: 2018 - 2020	
ADA Amenities (bathrooms, handrails, warning tiles)	359,837
Curb Ramps	806,353
Sidewalks	1,159,582
Signals/Signs	982,592
Bus Stop Improvements	647,000
ADA Street Improvements	2,766,913
Total	6,722,277

Other ADA improvements

Training

- Over 96% of all employees received **ADA sensitivity training**
 - Training extended to third parties that provide service on behalf of the City
 - Example: Destination El Paso, MV Transportation for the LIFT Technology
- **EP311** app upgraded to comply with ADA requirements
- Partnered with UTEP to research and **develop mobile apps** that assist citizens with disabilities and the elderly
 - Currently working on securing **funding** to develop an app that will guide citizens through accessible paths and locations

Airport

- Incorporated technology app (**AIRA**) for **passengers who are blind**
 - Launched March 2019
 - 266 minutes used since the program started
- Landscape and Architectural Lighting Project
 - Completed November 2019
 - **Enhanced lighting** around walkways for greater visibility
 - **Sidewalks expanded** in many areas to 10 ft. wide, installed ramps, all comply with ADA requirements

- HAWK Safety pedestrian **crosswalk system** installed on Terminal Drive
- Flight Information Display System Upgrade
 - In Progress, currently out to bid
 - **Visual emergency notifications** on flight display screens for passengers with hearing disabilities
 - Fire Alarm Strobe System for **visual and hard-of-hearing** disabilities
 - New Public Announcement (PA) **audio messaging system** for passengers who are blind

Parks and Rec

- Hiring a **Therapeutic Services Coordinator** to work on ADA-related programmatic improvements
- Key Staff additional **6-hour** specialized **ADA inclusion training**
- Partnered with Emergence Health Network which offers an 8 week summer camp for **children with disabilities**
- **Recreational** centers have numerous activities specifically for citizens with disabilities
- Created first **All Abilities playgrounds** (Ponder Park & Thorn Park).
 - **3 more in design** – through a Texas Parks and Wildlife 1m grant

Public Health

- Enhancing the community outreach efforts. Carried out the 2019 “Creating Resiliency Among **Vulnerable Populations**”

Fire Department

- Increased communication and outreach to ADA advocacy groups for input and participation under the **Emergency Preparedness Plan**

PIO

- Incorporated **closed captioning** into the “City in 5” public videos.

Bridges

- Working on remodeling their customer service windows for **wheelchair accessibility**

Municipal Courts

- Municipal Court and Pebble Hills station remodeled for ADA compliance
- **Live Chat** option added to website to allow defendants to chat online – esp. those with disabilities
- Video arraignment is adding **closed captioning**
- **Accessible** online **forms**
- Bond Office has been remodeled to comply with ADA

Libraries

- **Talking Book** program introduced to help those with visual impairments, physical and **learning disabilities**
- Several libraries had their **parking spaces** restriped to bring them up to code
- Sergio Troncoso library added **automatic doors** easier access and additional parking spaces added – to meet higher demand
- All libraries added **JAWS** software for citizens who are **blind** plus specialized

equipment for other disabilities

Sun Metro

- **80%** of inaccessible **bus stops** are now accessible
- All **Brio** stations are **100% accessible** and extend to nearest intersection
- **Real-time mobile apps** are ADA-compliant
 - Each bus stop has an ADA-accessible placard
- All construction projects include funding to enhance **passenger accessibility**
- Bus **external voice annunciation** system added for bus stops
- Continue to install **squared bus stop poles** for passengers who are blind (project ongoing)

Zoo

- All **paths of travel** within service area are 100% accessible
- **Bathroom** entrance ramps reconstructed
- Added ADA-compliant **signage** throughout
- **Binoculars** added for wheelchair access
- **Giraffe encounter** has 2 ADA complaint access points.
- Other ADA enhancements **for seating, viewing**, walkability and information access
- **Carousel** has an ADA ramp and an ADA accessible space on carousel

Animal Services

- Animal Services Paw podcast (**pawcast**) is **closed captioned**
- Animal Services and the Socorro Clinic **front lobby** desk is ADA accessible
- **Paths of travel** to outside kennels made accessible
- All **printed material** improved for font size accessibility
Police Department
- Police Officers go through a much more **comprehensive training** that covers specific interaction scenarios **with citizens with disabilities**

Museum and Cultural Affairs

- Multiple improvements to the **Museum of Archeology** – funded by the Quality of Life Bonds
- Hallway expanded to make **bathrooms** ADA compliant
- **Staff breakroom** completely redone for accessibility
- **Parking lot** resurfaced to comply with ADA

In Summary

- Robust and comprehensive plan to continue to address ADA improvements
 - All departments are involved
 - Improved sidewalks through street resurfacing and reconstruction
 - Multiple capital improvements
 - City permitting & inspection process to ensure compliance
 - Street resurfacing and reconstruction
 - On-going efforts to improve facility, parks and services

- Requiring third-party vendors to also comply with ADA
- ADA on-demand Request Program to address specific needs
- Solid community outreach and communication process
- **Goal:** Ensure the City continues to be a place of inclusion and opportunity for everyone regardless of physical or cognitive abilities

Comments

I appreciate the efforts being put forth by our [City] to ensure that all aspects of our city government are accessible to everyone. An accessible and inclusive El Paso is key in encouraging our citizens with different abilities to participate in our community which includes but not limited to transportation, housing and employment.

George Zavala – ADA Advocate

We are very grateful for the funding that has been made available for on demand accessibility improvements that has not only helped us to better access several neighborhood stores, parks, churches, bus stops, and friends' homes without having to deal with dangerous cracks and gaps in the sidewalks or without having to go back and forth into street traffic from our pathways, but it has also made us feel confident in the city's ability and commitment to meeting the various accessibility needs of many others of differing disabilities as well as people like the elderly, children, and students who also benefit from the improvements being made.

Marc and Dolores Salazar – Accessibility Advisory Committee

E. Discussion of potential agenda items for next meeting

Emre recommended to present UTEP's disability program and the activities they have. Julio Perez recommended to invite UTEP's ADA coordinator as well so we can understand what type of programs they have to help students with disabilities.

Julio Perez recommended having someone from WorkForce Commission to tell us about their programs/resources to help someone gain employment.

Josue recommended having a workshop to train citizens on how to identify ADA issues (i.e. parking lot, bathrooms). Julio Perez recommended having someone to talk about housing accessibility. Marc mentioned maybe having someone from the housing authority or community development to discuss their ongoing projects related to accessibility. Marc said he would reach out to someone he knows at the housing authority to get more information.

Next meeting: Mar 26th, 2020 – 2:30-4:00pm.

V. Adjournment – 4:05 PM