



Town of Clarksburg, Massachusetts

PART A – Executive Summary

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Prepared by the



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Introduction

The Institute for Human Centered Design (IHCD) has prepared this report on behalf of the Town of Clarksburg, Massachusetts as part of the Town's ongoing effort to assess the current level of ADA compliance in programs, services and activities and Town-owned facilities. In preparing for this report, IHCD teams surveyed the Town's portfolio of facilities and properties that were included in the Request for Proposal (RFP).

The building facility survey set includes five (5) public buildings and one (1) school building. The accessibility survey of those facilities includes all the spaces where the Town offers programs, services and activities to members of the public. The outdoor facility set includes two (2) outdoor areas. The accessibility survey of those spaces encompassed elements such as accessible routes, walking surfaces, slopes, picnic tables, play areas and recreational areas. In addition, the parking lots associated with all facilities were also surveyed.

IHCD submitted separate reports for each facility that was surveyed. To assist in prioritizing accessibility improvements to ensure compliance with the ADA Title II, each of the submitted reports include an overview that identifies the most substantial accessibility issues and order of magnitude cost estimates for corrective action. Additionally, a detailed catalog that supplements the ADA Self-Evaluation narrative overview is also included. The catalog provides element-by-element photos of compliance issues, location and measurements - when applicable - at each assessed facility or outdoor area accompanied by recommendations and cost estimation for each accessibility issue.

In addition, a spreadsheet of priorities for corrective action organized by type of building and including order of magnitude cost has been provided to the Town. When the Town presents findings and recommendations to the community and receives feedback, some recommendations may need cost adjustment. The spreadsheet is a capital planning and budgeting tool - the "*ADA Transition Plan*" - and are intended as a long-term tool to update as work is completed. The Town should make a good faith effort to complete the work in a reasonable time. (IHCD recommends a three to five-year period). The ADA regulations do not set out precise timeframes to complete the work; we are basing the timeframes on conversations with the Department of Justice and their Project Civic Access settlement agreements with municipalities.

Together, the ADA Self-Evaluation and ADA Transition Plan will enable the Town to make substantial progress in meeting its ADA responsibilities. The recommendations for corrective

action of policies and procedures of the ADA Self-Evaluation are not included in the ADA Transition Plan since that is limited to capital accessibility issues. But they are a blueprint for meeting compliance responsibilities other than capital expenses.

A complete assessment of the Town's policies, practices and procedures was also submitted. The ADA administrative requirements help ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are addressed in all services, programs and activities that the Town provides.

See the complete summary in *Part B – Evaluation of Non – Discriminatory Policies and Practices in Programs, Services and Activities* report.

A Website Accessibility and Usability Assessment report will be submitted. That report will provide information about the Town's website accessibility issues and will also include recommendations for corrective measures.

Most of the surveyed facilities are substantially accessible and meet most accessibility requirements. Continued facility alterations, and/or renovations will significantly reduce barriers and realize the Town's commitment to inclusion and equal rights. In the meantime, the greatest problems posed by existing barriers can be ameliorated by establishing policies and procedures to accommodate members of the community with disabilities. It is worth noting that the Town has taken several significant steps in this direction:

- The Town of Clarksburg has hired a consultant (IHCD) to undertake its ADA self-evaluation.
- The Town has an ADA Notice posted on a bulletin board in the Town Administrator's office.
- The Town has developed a Grievance Procedure.

IHCD's review and recommendations of the Town-owned facilities was based on compliance with the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design if not compliant with the 1991 ADA Standards and/or 521 CMR of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board. Best practice and inclusive design recommendations were also provided when appropriate. Inclusive design recommendations include elements that are not required in the accessibility standards but may create enhanced experiences for all users.

Many key facilities and outdoor areas are generally usable by people with disabilities but are not in full compliance with current accessibility requirements. At the Town Hall, for example, while there is an entrance at ground level on the rear of the building (west side), the entrance

lacks compliant maneuvering clearance. The Town Hall also lacks an interior vertical accessible route to the upper floors, where the Town Clerk, the Town Administrator and the Historical Commission are located. The Town Hall and the Police Station share an entrance, parking and toilet room, yet there are no accessible parking spaces, and the single-user toilet room is not fully accessible. The Community Center, where many Town meetings are held, lacks a fully accessible toilet room and a fully van accessible parking space.

Any corrective actions needed to ensure program accessibility must comply with the requirements of the 2010 ADA Standards and/or 521 CMR. Furthermore, when doing alterations and/or renovations, keep in mind that an alteration that decreases the accessibility of a building below the requirements for new construction at the time of the alteration is prohibited.

Key Recommendations for the Building Facilities:

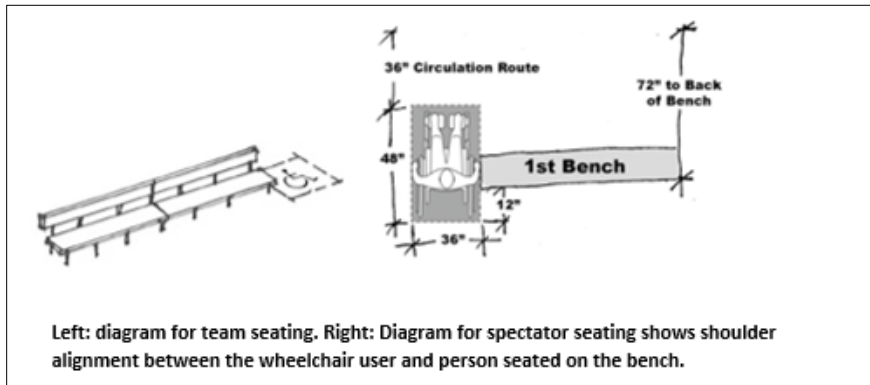
- Where parking is provided, ensure fully accessible parking spaces are provided and locate the accessible parking spaces near the accessible entrances.
- Ensure that fully accessible toilet rooms are provided in each building with public toilet rooms where programs services or activities are provided (e.g., Community Center). Where it is technically infeasible to provide accessible multi-user toilet rooms or where single-user toilet rooms are not compliant, provide an accessible single-user toilet room (e.g., Fire Station).

Key recommendations for the Elementary School:

- Ensure that fully accessible toilet rooms are provided in each building. As mentioned before, where it is technically infeasible to provide accessible multi-user toilet rooms provide an accessible single-user toilet room in the same area as the existing multi-user toilet rooms.
- Ensure that accessible sinks (with knee and toe clearance) are provided in at least one classroom per grade. If accessible sinks are already provided, ensure they have insulated pipes and that noing is stored under the sink in the clear floor space.
- Ensure that work surfaces are accessible. Many of the work surfaces are adjustable, so they just need to be positioned at the appropriate height in order to provide the required knee clearance.
- Remove cabinets, trash cans, etc. in order to provide at least the minimum required maneuvering clearance at some classroom doors.

Key Recommendations for the Outdoor Facilities:

- Ensure that accessible routes that connect all areas of sport activity are provided. This includes the areas of sport activity at the Veterans Memorial Field.
- Ensure there is at least 36 inches by 48 inches clear floor space adjacent to the bench at team seating areas at the baseball field and spectator seating area at the basket court.



- Ensure that accessible routes are provided to and around playgrounds; in addition, ensure that an accessible route is provided in the play area to all play components. The playgrounds at the elementary school have a surface consisting of Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF). Note that the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) does not consider Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) to comply with its regulation requiring an accessible route to and around playground equipment.



Fig. #1 Suggested route connecting the playgrounds.