

CITY OF HAMMOND, INDIANA

# American with Disabilities Act Transition and Implementation Plan

December 17, 2012

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Prepared Under the Direction of

Mayor Thomas M. McDermott, Jr.

In Conjunction With the  
ADA Transition and Implementation Plan  
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# TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN METHODOLOGY

In an effort to improve accessibility for its citizens and visitors to the community, the City of Hammond, under the direction of Mayor Thomas McDermott, Jr. commissioned the 2012 ADA Transition and Implementation Plan.

The plan is an update to the City of Hammond's ADA Study completed in March, 1994. As part of the original 1994 study, the City assessed 13 buildings including the exterior accessible route(s) and parking, interior accessible route(s), signage, and public amenities such as drinking fountains and restrooms.

The City of Hammond elected to update its 1994 ADA Study for several reasons.

- ADA standards have changed since the first study was completed and re-assessment of buildings included in the 1994 ADA Study was desired.
- The City wished to include additional buildings housing City of Hammond services to the 2012 Transition and Implementation plan.
- Assessment of other types of City of Hammond amenities including public right-of-way (PROW) and park and recreation amenities was desired.
- The City sought to fulfill the Federal Highway Administration's recommendations for ADA Transition and Implementation Plans.

Most importantly, the City of Hammond recognizes that an ADA Transition and Implementation Plan is a living document and periodic updates to the plan are needed. Standards change, priorities for accessibility within the community fluctuate, and improvements to existing amenities are made. As well, over time existing amenities, particularly those in the PROW, that once met ADA standard might no longer do so. For example, frost heave or tree root damage may create a physical barrier in a walk that was once accessible. Periodic reevaluation enables the City to reflect changes in real world conditions and to address

new accessibility standards and priorities.

## **Plan Process and Purpose**

Upon selecting a planning team led by United Consulting and including the Fehribach Group, Rundell Ernstberger Associates and VOA Associates, plan development began in April, 2012. The plan used a four-step assessment and implementation process. (See Figure 1.)

***The purpose of the 2012 ADA Transition and Implementation Plan is to identify physical barriers to accessibility that may inhibit those with disabilities from accessing and using City of Hammond amenities, and to make recommendations for either program or physical improvements to improve accessibility.***

Both the amenities assessed as part of this plan, and the priorities for improvements were based upon the needs and preferences of community stakeholders. Accordingly, a two-part public engagement process was used at the start of the planning process to determine community preferences and encourage participation from the public. Community opinions were sought at a public meeting and a series of stakeholder meetings held on June 26, 2012. The team spoke with members of the general public, persons with disabilities and their caregivers, organizations that provide services for those with disabilities, and local schools. Using this information, and working with the City of Hammond, the project team identified priorities for assessments based on a rational basis and the following criteria:

- Amenity has been identified by stakeholders as high priority
- Amenity has high public use
- Amenity is integral to public's ability to conduct business with the City of Hammond
- Amenity has high pedestrian traffic
- Amenity links other high priority amenities/areas

Figure 1: PHASES OF MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

**PHASE ONE | Prioritize Assessment Areas | Spring - Summer 2012**

**PHASE TWO | Conduct Assessments | Summer - Fall 2012**

**PHASE THREE | Identify Recommendations for Improvements | Fall 2012**

**PHASE FOUR | Prioritize Improvements | Fall - Winter 2012**

A public meeting was held on June 28, 2012 at the Ophelia Steen Family and Health Services Center. The primary focus of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to share their opinions, concerns and needs regarding accessibility in and to City of Hammond buildings, amenities and public right-of-way. Following comments by Brian Poland, Director of City Planning, Greg Fehribach (The Fehribach Group) and Cheryl Chalfant (Rundell Ernstberger Associates) first provided an overview of the proposed plan and then led an open-format discussion with stakeholders.

In order to ensure comments covered the broad range of amenities and services offered by the City of Hammond, stakeholders were asked to share their concerns and identify their priorities for improvements related to the following areas:

- Pedestrian Access
  - Neighborhoods
  - City-owned Buildings
  - Other Buildings
  - Sidewalks
  - Curb Ramps
  - Cross Walks
  - Crossing Signals
- City-owned Facilities and Amenities including
  - Buildings
  - Accessible Routes
  - Restrooms
  - Ability to participate in activities/services
- Parks and Recreation
  - Specific Parks
  - Parking
  - Accessible Routes
  - Recreation Equipment
  - Restrooms
  - Programs
  - Communication

In order to communicate the public meeting, a press release was sent to local media, posted on the city website, and distributed/posted to:

- Port Authority
- City Hall
- Parks Department
- Mayor's Office
- Mayor's Commission for Disabilities
- Lion's Club
- Purdue University
- Hospital (included in employee newsletter)
- Library



In addition to the project team and City of Hammond representatives, two members of the public attended the meeting. During the meeting a powerpoint presentation of key meeting points was displayed, and real-time captioning and signed interpretation of the presentation and stakeholder comments was provided.

Public comment received included the following:

- More information for people with disabilities on the City of Hammond website would be helpful.
- Use the website and text messages to get information to those who are hearing impaired.
- Provide better communication, better ways to get information and to ask for help with an accessibility issue.
- The Emergency Registration system is a good practice. Persons with disabilities can register so that in case of an emergency the police and fire departments are aware.
- Harrison Park, Edison Park, and Dowling Park were mentioned as high priority parks.
- The city was complimented on the number and condition of its sidewalks. No specific issues were mentioned, just generally a few walks need attention. (Respondent not sure if these walks were city or business owned.)

## Public Outreach Stakeholder Meetings

A series of four stakeholder meetings were held on June 28, 2012 at the Ophelia Steen Family and Health Services Center. Personal invitations were sent to people representing:

- Persons with disabilities and their care givers
- Organizations offering services to persons with disabilities
  - ARC Bridges
  - Tradewinds
  - Lions Club
- Disabilities Commission
- Local schools
  - Calumet College
  - Purdue Calumet College
  - City of Hammond Public Schools
- Medical providers
  - St. Margaret's Hospital
  - Regional Mental Health
- City Engineering
- Housing Authority
- Senior Housing

Twenty people shared their opinions with the team during the stakeholder meetings. As well, the team conducted additional phone and e-mail follow-up with attendees and others who were not able to join the meetings.



### Summary of Comments

- PROW has improved dramatically over the years. Some smaller neighborhoods still need work.
- A braille index and wayfinding at the Water Department Administration building and Public Works building would be helpful.
- Better signage for park and public restrooms, such as a raised symbol or letters, was requested.
- A website with ADA information (a compendium of information, resources, how to share concerns) is needed.
- Civic Center has accessible parking in the front of the building, but the accessible entrances are at the back.
- Several people commented that access to City Hall is difficult, including the proximity of parking to the entrance.
- Also mentioned was that the accessible route for City Hall has a narrow ramp.
- Snow removal to allow access is a problem in the winter.
- There are a number of people with disabilities who would like to use the Edison Pool if it were accessible.
- Harrison Park, Hessville Park and Wolf Lake are popular parks and mentioned as assessment priorities.
- Parks with Summer Feeding Programs are a priority.
- The Jean Shepherd ADA parking and entrance ramp are a concern.
- Better communication for those who are hearing impaired was requested.
- Priority areas for PROW included:
  - College campuses
  - Near the hospital
  - Clark and Hammond High Schools
  - Grocery Stores, Malls, Movie Theaters
  - Main Post Office





# Public Right-of-Way Assessments

## Priorities for Public Right-of-Way

The City of Hammond owns and maintains approximately 260 miles of roadway; over 95% of these streets include sidewalks on one or both sides of the roadway. As part of this plan, approximately 60 linear miles of public right-of-way have been assessed at various locations around the City based on a carefully determined method of prioritization (see Figure 2 Section Location Map). Eventually, it is the City of Hammond's intention to assess and prioritize 100% of its public right-of-way, specifically related to pedestrian access and ADA standards. This information will serve as an important reference tool when determining how and where to proceed with future improvements throughout the City.

The method of prioritization mentioned above identified several locations that provide connectivity to multiple high priority amenities and areas, including places like government buildings, schools, hospitals, healthcare providers, libraries, post offices, commercial businesses, shopping centers, etc. Public comments were also taken into account when determining these areas. A few of the largest and most concentrated of these areas include the Robertsdale neighborhood (near Calumet Avenue and Indianapolis Boulevard), downtown Hammond, and the Woodmar neighborhood (near Purdue University – Calumet Campus). In addition to these main locations, several commercial spokes radiate outward, generally along the major north-south and east-west thoroughfares.

## Assessment Process

To assess the public right-of-way, visual inspections were made of all sidewalks, curb ramps, and expected paths of travel within the prioritized area (see Prioritization Map). A majority of the sidewalks assessed as part of this report were in good shape, clear of obstructions, and in full compliance with the standards. Areas found to have various ADA compliance concerns including: maximum allowable slopes, minimum allowable horizontal and vertical clearances, maximum vertical grade differentiation, and detectable warnings were documented in a summary spreadsheet and corresponding plan sheets.

It is important to note that this method of reporting does not specifically reference all the locations throughout the City of Hammond that are in compliance with current ADA standards and guidelines. The assessment process is intended to help the City of Hammond identify where additional money can be

spent to improve ADA accessibility in the PROW and prioritize those locations in a logical manner.

Recent and ongoing roadway construction projects continue to improve the City's infrastructure and bring non-compliant areas up-to-date with current standards. The 2012 assessments will be a useful tool as the City of Hammond continues these efforts.

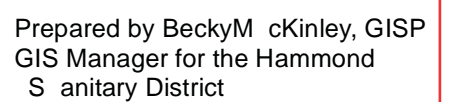
## Assessments and Recommendations

Overall a high percentage of City of Hammond public right-of-way is very accommodating to all pedestrians. Very few high priority compliance issues were identified during the assessments associated with this report. The most common compliance issue by far was the lack of detectable warnings on curb ramps.

Detectable warnings are mostly used as an aid for visually impaired individuals to both align themselves correctly before crossing an intersection and delineate the boundary between the sidewalk and roadway. It is important to note that detectable warnings are not necessarily synonymous with truncated domes, which represent one type of detectable warnings. Truncated domes are currently favored by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and are required on most federal aid projects, although this requirement was not implemented until July 26, 2001 at the conclusion of a 10 year research period. Because this issue does not represent a physical barrier to an individual's mobility, but rather enhances and provides additional information concerning the intended path of travel, it is considered a lower priority to address.

In addition to the corrective measures suggested in this report, there are several supplementary initiatives the City could pursue to improve infrastructure and augment its efforts to provide a fully accessible public right-of-way. While not mentioned directly in the summary of compliance issues, adding new public walks could provide a more direct path of travel and convenient access in some locations. These additional public walks could be provided on an as-needed or an as-requested basis. Also, busy intersections like those in downtown Hammond or near the Purdue University Calumet Campus with high volumes of both cars and pedestrians are ideal locations to consider additional audible or tactile cues to aid the visually impaired in identifying the proper direction of travel during each traffic signal cycle.

### Figure 2: Section Location Map





# City of Hammond Building Assessments

## Priorities for City of Hammond Buildings

The public areas of all City of Hammond buildings with regular public access were assessed as part of the 2012 ADA Transition and Implementation Plan. These include the following buildings which were also part of the 1994 ADA Study:

- City Hall
- Civic Center
- Sanitary District Administration Building
- Animal Control
- Planning and Development Department
- Dan Rabin Transit Plaza (site only, building not in use)
- Public Works Complex
- Housing Authority Administration Office
- Turner Park Administration Office
- Central Fire Station
- Water Department Business Office

Additional buildings included in the 2012 report include:

- Jean Shepherd Center
- Central Police Station
- Lost Marsh Clubhouse
- Port Authority/Marina Facility
- Wolf Lake Aquatic and Play Center
- Wolf Lake Park Pavilion

## Assessment Process

Each building was individually visited, and by interviewing the staff on site, areas used by the public were identified. These public areas were visually inspected and compliance issues such as maximum allowable reach ranges and minimum allowable clearances were recorded and itemized. Emphasis was placed on common paths of travel, restrooms, bathrooms, and service areas used by the public.

While many parts of the assessed buildings were found to be accommodating to people with disabilities, the assessment process only noted those instances where accessibility could be improved. The cataloging and prioritizing of these barriers to accessibility will permit the City of Hammond to make informed decisions about implementing improvements to its facilities.

## Assessments and Recommendations

The accessibility of a building was at most times directly related to its age. For the most part, newer buildings such as the Wolf Lake Aquatic Play Center, the Main Police Station, or the Recreation Center at Pulaski Park, are successful in accommodating users of all abilities. These newer buildings appear to conform to the latest accessibility and building codes

and serve well as a model of compliancy for future accessible building projects.

On the other end of the spectrum, City Hall and the Civic Center were built in 1930's when no accessibility requirements yet existed and building code standards were different. As might be expected more thought must be given as to how to accommodate users with disabilities in these locations. Both buildings together with the Planning and Development Department building may be of cultural, architectural, and historic significance and therefore eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Alterations to such buildings may be exempt from certain ADA requirements or allow for alternate methods of compliancy either physically or programmatically. Ultimately, the goal for these buildings is to make improvements and provide accommodations for users with disabilities while respecting the historical integrity of the building.

The remaining buildings assessed were mostly found to be barrier free and allow for unrestricted movement within the public areas. Compliancy issues found were in most cases minor and do not restrict access as much as they make usage more challenging. For example, several toilet rooms were found to have dispensers located outside of the maximum reach range for a person using a wheelchair, or grab bars were located incorrectly or of insufficient length. In both cases, relocating or replacing the accessories should bring them within compliancy.

In some of the building assessed, the addition of directional or permanent room signage, mounted correctly and with the required color, contrast, or braille character criteria, would provide significant benefit to those with disabilities. In many cases, this can be easily resolved by providing, replacing or relocating existing signage.

Lastly, a few compliancy issues were found which may not be easily remedied due to either structural or economic considerations. Some of these items may eventually be resolved through new construction, as may be the case with the Dowling Park Field building which does not currently offer accessible toilets but is slated to be replaced with a complex of new buildings planned by Purdue University. Where structural and/or economic considerations hinder full accessibility, high priority should be given to making these amenities as accessible as possible and providing programmatic alternatives for people with disabilities.

# Parks and Recreation Assessments

## Priorities for Parks and Recreation

The park and trail amenities that make up the City of Hammond's park system range in size from small neighborhood parks to large parks attracting many visitors. In selecting which parks to assess, the team considered comments from stakeholders, recreation activities, high-usage parks, the relationship to other amenities/neighborhoods frequented by persons with disabilities, geographic diversity, and the location of summer feeding programs. The following seven parks, were assessed as part of this plan: Forsythe Park, Pulaski Park, Harrison Park, Edison Park, Riverside Park, Hessville Park, and Dowling Park.

## Assessment Process

Site visits were made to the seven parks in order to conduct a visual inspection of the recreation amenities at each site. The team also reviewed the programs and recreation uses at each park in order to understand how visitors use the park, and what, if any barriers to accessibility might exist.

The 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design were primarily used to evaluate the accessibility of the park and recreation amenities. These standards include parameters for parking, paths of travel and other general elements and features, as well as specific standards for outdoor recreation facilities including playgrounds and pools.

The 2009 Draft Final Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas were also used to evaluate the accessibility of the park amenities. *It is important to note that these are guidelines and not yet enforceable standards.* These guidelines include recommendations for amenities including: trails, beach access, picnic tables, grills, and outdoor recreation access routes. "Although accessibility specifications for these recreational facilities are not yet adopted by standard-setting agencies, they are considered "best available information" and should be used when constructing new or altering existing facilities." (Source: Indiana Department of Natural Resources 2011-2015 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan)

## Assessments and Recommendations

The park and recreation amenities assessed range from those installed many years ago, prior to the existence of any ADA standards, to recently constructed facilities. As with the building assessments, the accessibility of the park amenities tends to correspond with their age. Older amenities are generally less accessible while

some of the newer amenities successfully provide accommodations to users of all abilities, and serve as a model of accessibility for future projects.

In many cases, the addition of an accessible route from parking areas to recreation amenities within the park would benefit those with disabilities, as well as others such as the elderly or parents with strollers. Not only would such a route increase accessibility, but it could also serve as a walking path and provide a recreation amenity used by all.

Another common recommended improvement is the provision of ADA compliant parking stalls and signage. In many cases, improvements can be made by restriping parking stalls to provide the appropriate number and type of accessible stalls, and/or providing the appropriate signage. In some cases, for example, where slopes present a physical barrier, moving the parking stalls to another location or resurfacing a portion of the parking lot may be necessary.

Playgrounds are a popular recreation amenity, and all of the parks assessed contain at least one. The recently constructed Pulaski Park playground demonstrates Hammond's commitment to accessible recreation amenities and it serves as a model for future playground improvements. This playground offers a universally accessible surface, a variety of transition and access options, and fully integrated play equipment. Other Hammond playgrounds offer a path and ramp system to provide access to the upper decks of composite playground equipment. While some of these systems could be improved, the practice of providing ramped access has great merit.

Other recommended improvements to community parks include retrofitting or replacing some existing amenities to provide better access. For example, the addition of benches and accessible picnic tables along accessible routes would enable those with disabilities to more easily use and enjoy recreation activities.

Finally, the City of Hammond recognizes that changes to its community swimming pools are needed to provide a more accessible experience. However, as many of the pools are reaching the end of their useful life, costly accessibility retrofits to an aging amenity may not be a prudent use of resources. A long-term strategy for upgrading pools to address both accessibility and the replacement of aging facilities, will allow the City to use available resources to systematically improve pool accessibility over time.

Having identified physical barriers to accessibility the project team worked with the Transition and Implementation Plan Steering Committee to develop a plan of action for making improvements to increase accessibility. In establishing priorities for improvements the team based its recommendations on several criteria. First, those recommendations relating to health and safety were given high priority. Next, the team evaluated how well the facility or amenity meets basic user needs such as the availability of accessible parking and path of travel, and the ability to use the restroom or a drinking fountain. Then the team considered the amenities, programs and services provided at each amenity. Finally, those areas identified as high priority by community stakeholders received special consideration.

It is likely that funding for the following proposed improvements will be achieved from a variety of sources and options. In some instances funding may be earmarked specifically for making accessibility improvements. These include the allocation of departmental budgets, maintenance funds, or projects funded through bonds or sales tax. In other cases, improvements may be achieved as part of another project. For example, a scheduled roadway project may provide an opportunity to make PROW improvements. Grants and outside funding sources provide yet another avenue for funding improvements.

## Public Right of Way Implementation Plan

The City of Hammond has in place a number of projects and programs to address accessibility within the public right of way and will address the physical barriers found in this plan both through road improvement projects and the yearly sidewalk maintenance program.

- As major improvements of roads are undertaken, accessibility is incorporated into the design and construction process so that accessibility barriers are addressed when construction occurs.
- The City of Hammond spends approximately \$100k per year on sidewalk repairs including repairs of accessibility barriers that may exist.
- Sidewalks, curb ramps, and other accessible pedestrian improvements are made as new commercial and residential development projects are constructed
- The City of Hammond has in place a mechanism for the public to request sidewalk and curb ramp repairs, and is responsive to the needs of those with disabilities in prioritizing and making those repairs.

In 2013, the City will begin construction of several local roadway projects that include sidewalk improvements on Forestdale Avenue between 169th & 167th Streets, and River Drive between Bertram & Northcote. As well, several federal roadway improvements are on tap for Indianapolis Boulevard, Columbia Avenue, and 169th Street will address accessibility barriers in those areas.

## Building/Facility Implementation Plan

The master plan team assessed sixteen buildings located throughout the City of Hammond, as well as various park and recreation buildings. The strategy for removing access barriers in these facilities recognizes that some of these barriers can be addressed either through programmatic changes or simple modifications, while other barriers will require a more involved and costly retrofit or renovation to address the barrier.

In general, the City of Hammond will make ADA improvements to its facilities by:

- *Integrating improvements into routine maintenance and repair work.* For example, when a parking lot is resurfaced as part of regular maintenance, adjustments to slope or path of travel can be made at the same time.
- *Addressing physical barriers that can be easily remedied with modest resources.* Relocating existing amenities such as soap dispensers or mirrors to be within recommended ranges, or moving objects that impede path of travel, may cost little to implement, but can provide a more accessible experience for those with disabilities.
- *Addressing physical barriers as part of planned renovation projects.* When a facility is renovated or remodeled, the City of Hammond will look for ways to also address physical barriers.
- *Undertaking a project to remove a specific barrier.* Where programmatic or planned maintenance and/or renovations do not address a physical barrier, the City may undertake a project to address that specific barrier as funding allows.

Specific items to address physical barriers include the following:

**Civic Center:** The Civic Center is undergoing a multi-phase renovation project that will update current amenities and provide greater accessibility. Planned improvements include parking, accessible routes to and within the building, the swimming pool and

service counters . This multi-phase project will be implemented over time as funding allows. In addition, the City of Hammond will also increase accessibility by providing ADA compliant signage, adding accessible door handles, and eliminating protruding objects.

**Jean Shepherd Center:** The City Of Hammond Parks and Recreation Department will improve accessibility at the Jean Shepherd Center by eliminating protruding objects, making adjustments to amenities such as mirrors and paper towel dispensers, and adding ADA compliant hand rails to the entrance ramp.

**Hammond Port Authority Amenities:** Several of the facilities that were assessed are managed by the Hammond Port Authority (HPA).

- Forysthe Park
- Hammond Marina Building
- Lost Marsh Clubhouse and Youth Clubhouse
- Wolf Lake Aquatic Center
- Wolf Lake Pavilion

The HPA has dedicated funds from the Port Construction Fund to address parking and interior signage improvements in 2013 and 2014. Following the completion of these improvements, the next priority will be improvements to exterior accessible routes, and access to amenities within buildings.

### **Park and Recreation Implementation Plan**

The City of Hammond Park and Recreation Department has established a three-part strategy to make its park and recreation amenities more accessible to people with disabilities.

First, the department will address physical barriers that while easily remedied with modest resources, will provide better access to people with disabilities. These types of improvements include:

- Improvements to accessible parking
  - Adding accessible parking spaces, including van accessible parking spaces, and access aisles
  - Providing clear markings and signage
- Adding appropriate signage at restrooms and other amenities
- Relocating amenities such as mirrors, paper towel dispensers and hooks to be within reach of those with disabilities
- Relocating or adding accessible benches along an accessible route
- Adding insulation/pipe protection to exposed drain pipes underneath sinks

The department will implement these changes over the next year within the seven parks that were assessed as part of its annual maintenance program for the park system.

In addition to addressing these types of accessibility barriers, the Hammond Park and Recreation Department will also incorporate improvements over the next five to ten years that will take more planning and in some cases, significant resources to address. As the park department undertakes significant renovation projects to update its parks and recreation amenities, improvements to accessibility will be incorporated with the planning and design process. Recent improvements to Pulaski Park successfully used this approach and allowed the park department to address access to amenities in an integrated manner.

Several of the parks and recreation amenities are slated for future improvements. In some cases, these improvements are underway and will provide a more accessible experience for users with disabilities. In other cases, long-range improvements are planned, but have not yet been funded and/or designed.

**Dowling Park:** Major renovations and improvements are set to take place at Dowling Park within the next few years, in conjunction with a project by Purdue University Calumet.

**Harrison Park:** Major renovations and improvements will take place at Harrison Park within the next few years in conjunction with a project by the City of Hammond Planning and Development Department. Various phases of the project will include updates to parking, the playground, tennis courts, and the pavilion and picnic shelter. The first phase begins in 2013 and focuses on improvements to the tennis courts.

**Hessville Park:** Hessville Park is under consideration for a total renovation and improvement by the City of Hammond, including plans for the swimming pool, playground, concession building, ice skating rink, tennis courts and others. Timing of the improvements is to be determined.

**Riverside Park:** Riverside Park is under consideration for a total renovation and improvement by the City of Hammond, including plans for the parking lot, playground, tennis courts, concession stand, softball field and field building. Timing of the improvements is to be determined.



playground, tennis courts, concession stand, softball field and field building. Timing of the improvements is to be determined.

Swimming Pools: The City of Hammond is in the process of determining how best to make needed upgrades to its four outdoor and one indoor pool. These pools have served the community for many years, and will require either renovations or reconstruction to address aging infrastructure in addition to providing greater accessibility for those with disabilities. The redesign and/or retrofit of the pools will include improvements to pool access and will most likely occur over time as the planned improvements are funded.

# CITY OF HAMMOND ADA POLICY AND PROCEDURE

# APPOINTMENTS AND COMMITTEES

## **ADA Transition and Implementation Plan Steering Committee**

A four-person committee was established to oversee the development of the 2012 City of Hammond ADA Transition and Recommendation Plan. The committee was composed of representatives from various City of Hammond Departments and included:

- Sharon Daniels, Acting ADA Coordinator
- Mark Gordish, City of Hammond, Engineering
- Brian Poland, Director of City Planning
- Cynthia Rangel, Staff Liaison for the Mayor's Commission on Disabilities

The Steering Committee met with the planning team throughout the planning process in order to develop the initial study areas, self-evaluation and prioritization methodology, and receive input on the project in general.

## **City of Hammond ADA Coordinator**

At the time of this plan, Sharon Daniels is serving as Acting ADA Coordinator.

In addition to the ADA coordinator, several groups provide direction and oversee efforts to provide accessible amenities and programs within the City of Hammond.

## **Mayor's Commission on Disabilities**

The Mayor's Commission on Disabilities exists for two purposes. It provides guidance to the City of Hammond in matters concerning disabilities, and it works with other Hammond organizations to link services to individuals with disabilities. The majority of Commission members are disabled themselves; other members serve as advocates for the disabled.

The Commission, formed in 1985, holds monthly meetings, sponsors a ramp assistance program that provides assistance to residents with the installation of wheelchair ramps, and hosts an annual awards breakfast that honor individuals, local businesses and organizations that have improved the lives of the disabled. The Mayor appoints people who live and/or work in Hammond to the Commission. Each member serves a three-year term and may be reappointed.

## **Hammond Human Relations Commission**

The Hammond Human Relations Commission was established by city ordinance in 1967. The Commission strives to insure for all citizens equal opportunity in education, employment, business opportunity, access to public accommodations and acquisition through the purchase or rental of housing or other real property regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, place of birth, disability or familial status (housing only). The Commission will endeavor to improve relationships between persons of different races, creeds, nationalities, sexes and disabilities within the City of Hammond. The Commission will work with all racial, ethnic, gender, disabled and religious groups to improve communication and understanding in order to eliminate discriminatory practices.

# GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

In December, 2011, the City of Hammond established a procedure for complaints that a program, service, or activity is not accessible to persons with disabilities as follows.

City of Hammond  
Grievance Procedure under  
The Americans with Disabilities Act

This Grievance Procedure is established to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ('ADA'). It may be used by anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability in the provision of services, activities, programs, or benefits by the City of Hammond. The City's Personnel Policy governs employment-related complaints of disability discrimination.

The complaint should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination such as name, address, phone number of complainant and location, date, and description of the problem. Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or a tape recording of the complaint will be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.

The complaint should be submitted by the grievant and/or his/her designee as soon as possible but no later than 60 calendar days after the alleged violation to:

ADA Coordinator  
Hammond Human Relations - City Hall  
5925 Calumet Avenue, first Floor  
Hammond, IN 46320

Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the complaint, the ADA Coordinator or his/her designee will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and the possible resolutions. Within 15 calendar days of the meeting, the ADA Coordinator or his/her designee will respond in writing, and where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, such as large print, Braille, or audio tape. The response will explain the position of the City of Hammond and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint.

If the response by the ADA Coordinator or his/her designee does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complainant and/or his/her designee may appeal this decision within 15 calendar days after receipt of the response to the Mayor's Chief of Staff or his/her designee.

Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the appeal, the Mayor's Chief of Staff or his/her designee will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within 15 calendar days after the meeting, the Mayor's Chief of Staff or his/her designee will respond in writing, and, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, with a final resolution of the complaint.

All written complaints received by the ADA Coordinator or his/her designee, appeals to the Mayor's Chief of Staff or his/her designee, and responses from these two offices will be retained by the City of Hammond for at least three years.