

**Snohomish County ADA Citizen Advisory Committee for Facilities in
the Public Right-of-Way (ADAPROW Committee)**

MEETING SUMMARY

DATE: November 20, 2013

TIME: Commenced at 9:06 a.m. and adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

LOCATION: Main County Campus. Conference 4D00, 4th Floor West

ATTENDANCE: Corinna Fale, Brian Way, Mark Villwock, Jim Bloodgood, Ryan Peterson, Andy Lentz, Candice Soine.

Excused Absences: John Dineen, Harold Wirch

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

To maximize compliance with ADA standards the County's ADA program is structured around the following four concepts:

- a. Setting expectations
- b. Defining standards
- c. Evaluating compliance with the standards
- d. Establishing accountability when compliance is not/cannot be achieved

The ADA team has been working on multiple projects that support the preceding concepts including a Transition Plan that will set expectations, a Decision Matrix that will clarify standards, Measuring Guidelines to establish evaluation methods, and a Maximum Extent Feasible (MEF) Design Review Policy and Procedure to account for non-compliant facilities.

- 1. Maximum Extent Feasible (MEF) Design Review Policy and Procedure** – An internal County policy was recently adopted that establishes an accountability method whereby designers,

engineers, project managers, and inspectors can document and receive approval to construct pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way that do not fully comply with ADA standards due to existing physical constraints.

The County will soon begin a formal rule making process to apply the MEF Policy and Procedure to external clients as well. The formal rule making process will include a public review/comment period and revisions could be made based on public input/feedback. ADAPROW committee members were provided with a copy of the County's MEF Design Review Policy and Procedure.

2. ADA Decision Matrix and ADA Measuring Guidelines –

ADAPROW committee members were provided with draft copies of the County's ADA Decision Matrix and ADA Measuring Guidelines.

A discussion was held about Response 3 to Scenario B of the Decision Matrix and committee members were asked to consider several alternatives and provide an opinion/recommendation. It was determined that there are two questions that needed to be answered.

First, should curb ramps be required to be installed on one side of a crossing (Curb Ramp "A") if there are no pedestrian facilities on the opposite side of the crossing?

Second, if Curb Ramp "A" is required to be constructed should pedestrian facilities or a level landing or area of refuge be required to be constructed on the other side of the crossing?

Concerns have been expressed that if curb ramps were required on one side of a crossing and no pedestrian facilities were available on the other side of the crossing that blind or visually impaired persons may attempt to cross the roadway and find themselves stuck on the other side of the road in the traveled

way. A contradictory concern is that if curb ramps are not provided on the side of the road where improvements are being made then citizens in wheelchairs will not be able to access the facilities.

Several members suggested that blind or visually impaired individuals usually receive help scouting out potential walk routes before using them and that as a practical measure they will not attempt to navigate unfamiliar pathways without prior knowledge of the route – especially along roadways that have not been fully developed – and are not likely to find themselves stuck in the middle of the traveled way.

It was suggested that at the very least a curb cut and a landing could be constructed on the side of the road where alteration work is occurring but the ramp be left for construction when future development occurs on the opposite side of the road.

The Committee did not make any final recommendations (three committee members were absent) but the committee members were asked to think about potential responses to Scenario B and to study the remainder of the Decision Matrix and provide final recommendations at the next meeting.

The goal is to have the documents posted to the ADA website and disseminated for public review at the same time as the MEF Design Review Policy and Procedure is going through the formal rule-making process and public comment/review period.

- 3. Bus Stop and Rail Crossing Inventory Update** – Andy Lentz provided an update on the County's efforts to inventory and evaluate bus stops and rail crossings located in unincorporated Snohomish County. Ryan Peterson and Andy Lentz, with the help of Oliver Slobodo, met with officials from Community Transit and discussed ADA compliance issues at Community Transit bus stops located in the County right-of-way.

4. Community Transit was able to provide the County with bus stop location and ridership data to help in the evaluation process. The data have also been helpful in establishing a curb ramp ranking and prioritization system.

Andy provided a summary of the ADA requirements for bus stops and bus shelters. Andy then summarized the inventory efforts using the data provided by Community Transit. Community Transit services approximately 1,548 bus stops. Approximately 226 of those bus stops are located on roads operated by Snohomish County. After conducting field reviews and studying aerial and Google Street view photos it was determined that 20 of the 226 bus stops located on County ROW are ADA compliant.

Most of the non-compliance issues are related to inadequate or boarding and alighting spaces and non-compliant slopes on bus shelter pads. The County will hold a follow-up meeting with Community Transit officials to create a transition plan for bringing non-compliant facilities up to standard.

Andy also provided a summary of the County's rail crossing inventory. There are 29 rail crossings of County roads of which only 1 crossing has pedestrian facilities on either side (there is a gap in the pedestrian facilities at the actual crossing). The crossing is located east of Snohomish-Woodinville Road on 240 St SE and will be reconstructed as part of an upcoming County project related to the Wellington Hills Regional Park.

5. **Sidewalk Inventory Update** – Andy Lentz and Ryan Peterson provided an update on the sidewalk inventory. So far, approximately 120 miles out of 480 miles of sidewalk have been inventoried. Approximately 80 percent of the sidewalk inventoried to-date is out of compliance with current ADA standards.

The most common elements out of compliance are the sidewalk cross-slopes. Most of the sidewalk in the County was constructed using bubble levels and construction crews and inspectors didn't have the digital inclinometers that we use for our inventory purposes. With a bubble level it is not possible to measure slopes during form setting and construction to the level of accuracy required to achieve compliance without building in a lot of room for error.

Most of the cross slopes that are out of compliance are measured between 2 percent and 4 percent (2 percent is the maximum allowable by the ADA). As the inventory and transition planning progress the Committee, along with the general public through the public meeting process, will be asked to help establish a prioritization and ranking method for sidewalk reconstruction.

Due to weather and staffing issues the inventory has come to a stop but is expected to pick back up and be completed early next year (2014).

The sidewalk inventory method employed by the County includes an evaluation of vertical deflections, horizontal gaps, obstructions, and damage assessments. County Road Maintenance crews are already working on fixing problems identified during the inventory.

6. Curb Ramp Ranking and Prioritization Method – The second half of the meeting was focused on the curb ramp ranking and prioritization method. County staff took suggestions and input provided by the ADAPROW Committee during the regularly scheduled meeting in July and created a couple of ranking and prioritization methods for the Committee to consider.

The ranking methods included a two part scoring system comprised of a score based on the curb ramp barrier severity and a score based on curb ramp location and proximity to facilities

such as government buildings, transportation facilities and bus stops, schools, and service centers catering to the disabled and senior citizens.

County staff was also able to obtain generalized latitude and longitude information for DART Paratransit pick-up and drop-off locations from Community Transit which will be used to assign points to curb ramps in proximity of those locations.

Committee members suggested additional criteria that they would like County staff to consider including development density and potential, and existing commercial/retail density.

Due to the complexity of the ranking systems and the level of detail to which they were discussed it would be nearly impossible to adequately summarize the discussions in the meeting minutes. County staff will further refine the ranking and prioritization method and present a preferred draft to the Committee at the next meeting.

In the meantime, the County will provide a summary of the suggested points and classification breakdowns for the proposed barrier score, and the proposed buffer distances and points for the location score to Committee members via email so that Committee members will have a chance to provide input and feedback before the next meeting.

ADAPROW COMMITTEE ACTION ITEMS:

1. Review the ADA Decision Matrix and provide feedback.
2. Review the ADA Measuring Guidelines and provide feedback.
3. Review the preferred curb ramp barrier severity and location score methodology, classifications, recommended point breakdowns, and buffer values.

Meeting Minutes taken by Candice Soine, Secretary