

# **2025 ADA Transition Plan**

## **Annual Update**

# Background

In September of 2022, City staff in collaboration with community stakeholders, consulting firms, and engineering teams, completed an updated ADA Transition Plan. The purpose of this Plan is to guide the City in implementing and advancing the culture of inclusivity and accessibility for all residents which includes increasing access to the City's programs, services, activities, parks, and facilities for individuals with disabilities. Each year, the City will prepare an Annual Report based on the work that various departments have performed to provide information relating to the City's Transition Plan progress.

## Guidance for Implementation

In its second full year as a subcommittee of the Commission on Aging and Disabilities, the ADA Advisory Committee continued to provide invaluable guidance and support to staff striving to demonstrate the City's commitment to accessibility and inclusion. Official membership increased to include 13 members this year and the group welcomed an increased average of 18 attendees at each meeting. The Committee successfully achieved goals included in its 2025 work plan, including:

- Supporting the City's Disability Services. The Committee gathered monthly for a total of 12 meetings in 2025 with agendas which included the review and analysis of inquiries and grievances received by the community, guest speakers from the City describing their roles related to ADA compliance and advancement, planning for local staff and community accessibility-related events, and sharing personal experiences and suggestions for improvement.
- Promoting the execution of the City's ADA Transition Plan. Committee members advocated for prioritization of the Plan and educated visitors, community collaborators, and City representatives about the Plan's intended purpose.
- Resource and referral. Committee members and meeting visitors dedicated their time to sharing information about the City's ADA/Disability Services and staying up to date on local and national topics, trends, and concerns.
- Training and education. The Committee's involvement in planning accessibility-focused events supported several in-house disability awareness trainings provided for City staff as well as multiple events and services available for the community during 2025.

# Construction Projects

The Capital Planning and Engineering Bureau completed several projects dedicated to improving accessibility in 2025.

## Facilities

The City completed renovations for the Ecology Center in October of 2025 which included accessibility improvements for the lobby, classrooms, offices, and restrooms.

## Parks

Bent Park Fieldhouse	Installation of accessible entrances and complete restroom renovation.
Independence Park	Improvements continued, including installation of a new playground which includes ground-level and elevated accessible components. Seating areas with adjacent spaces for individuals using wheelchairs were added. 545 linear feet of accessible pathways created in addition to 340 linear feet of public sidewalk. An accessible paved plaza space and an accessible route to a public stage were added.
Larimer Park	Improvements continued, including installation of a new playground which includes ground-level and elevated accessible components. Seating areas with adjacent spaces for individuals using wheelchairs were added. 780 linear feet of accessible pathways created.
Court Improvements	Locations include Dodge and Oakton, Lincoln and Bryant, Central and Elm, and Church and Florence. Installation of accessible gates (anticipated completion Dec. 2025)
James Park	Installation of an accessible pickleball court.
Twiggs Park	Playground reconstruction, addition of accessible pavements and drinking fountains (anticipated completion Dec. 2025)

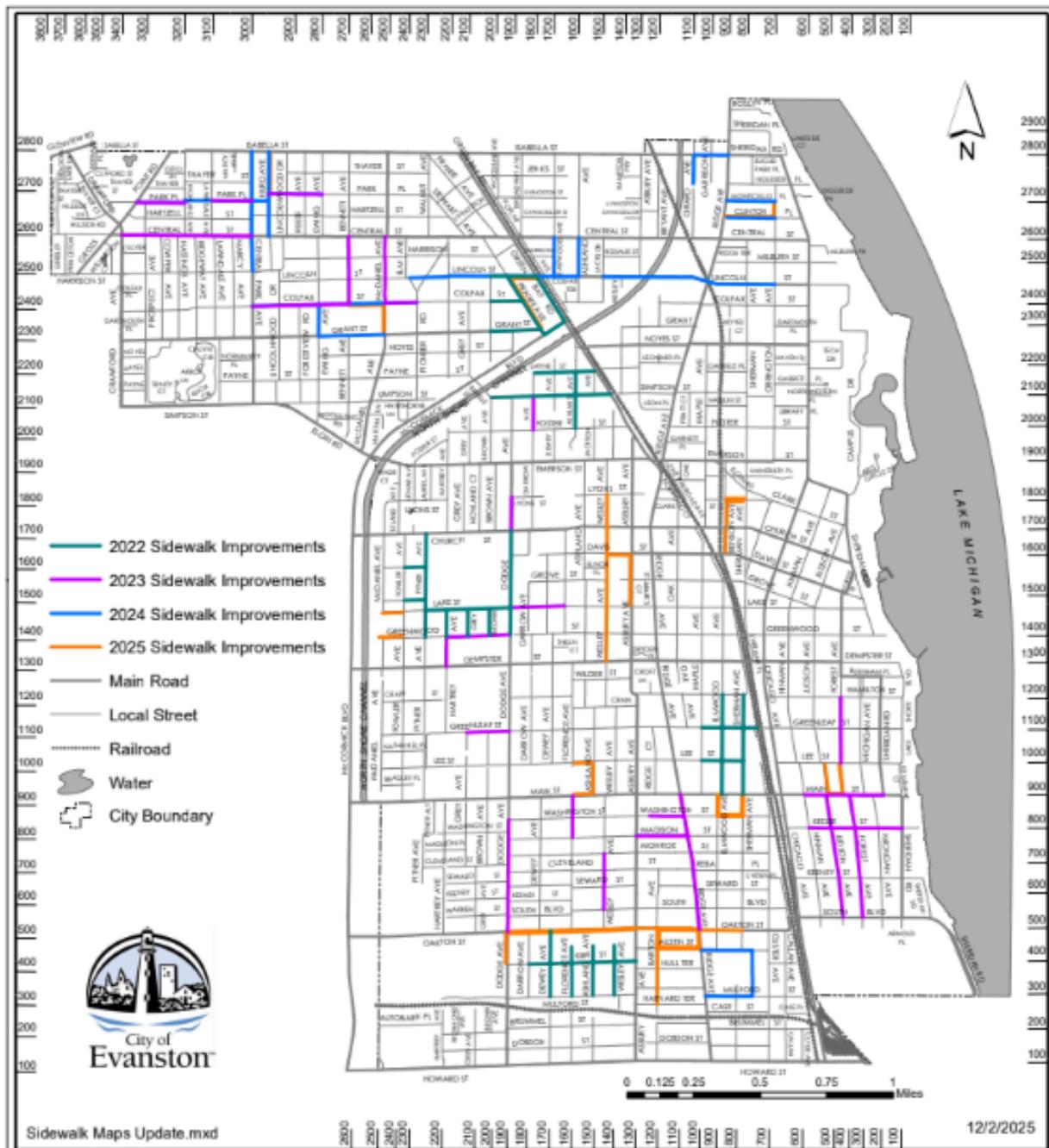
## Right-of-Way

The City's Sidewalk Improvement Program organizes project locations following an equitable priority system for rating sidewalk construction and replacement. It includes phases focused on meeting the community's needs and reaching ADA program access. In 2025, the City removed and replaced approximately 35,300 square feet of sidewalk.

A map of the City's Sidewalk Improvement Program progress is included on the following page. Image description: Color-coded highlights of sidewalks throughout Evanston illustrate projects completed in 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025.

To receive details about project locations and years of completion in a format that meets your accessibility needs, please contact the City's ADA Coordinator at [disabilityservices@cityofevanston.org](mailto:disabilityservices@cityofevanston.org) / (847) 424-5496.

## **Sidewalk Improvement Program**



The City continues to look to the U.S. Access Board's PROWAG (Pedestrian Right Of Way Accessibility Guidelines) when updating right-of-way services. PROWAG provides scoping and technical requirements to ensure that sidewalks, curb ramps, on-street parking, driveways, intersection crossings, and pedestrian push buttons, in addition to other rights-of-way elements, are readily accessible and usable by pedestrians with disabilities. A list of right-of-way projects completed in 2025 is included below.

Location:	Right-of-way work completed to meet ADA standards:
Oakton Street (Asbury to McCormick)	Oakton Street Corridor Improvement Project: Traffic signal and intersection upgrades, installation of new street lights and upgrades to existing street lights, construction of new concrete sidewalks, a shared-use pedestrian/bike path, improved bus stops, roadway widening, pedestrian crosswalk enhancements, landscaping.
District 65 schools	Schools impacted: Oakton, Chute, Dawes, Lincoln, Park, Washington, Martin Luther King, Dewey, Kingsley, Lincolnwood, Orrington, and Willard. IDOT-Safe Routes to School Sidewalk Replacement Project included removal and replacement of existing sidewalks, curbs, and gutters to make walking/biking safer and to encourage active travel.
Various	MFT (Motor Fuel Tax) Street Resurfacing Project: included curb, asphalt surface, and sidewalk replacements at 24 City locations.
Green Bay Road (McCormick to Isabella) & Central Street (Prairie to Broadway)	New accessible ramps were constructed at intersections, new sidewalk construction along Green Bay Road.
Alley North of Grant, East of Hartrey	Improved four curb ramps at alley entrances to meet ADA standards.
Alley North of Lincoln, East of Hartrey	Improved four curb ramps at alley entrances to meet ADA standards.
Dodge Avenue and Lee Street	Installed pedestrian crossing with medians, two solar powered LED crossing signs with pedestrian push buttons, and striping.

Dodge Avenue and Monroe Street	Installed pedestrian crossing with medians, two solar powered LED crossing signs with pedestrian push buttons, and striping.
Sheridan Road and Clinton Place	Installed pedestrian crossing with curb ramps, two solar powered LED crossing signs with pedestrian push buttons, and striping.
Sheridan Road and Keeney Street	Installed two solar power LED crossing signs with pedestrian push buttons
Lee Street from Dodge Avenue to Darrow Avenue	Installed approximately 230 feet of new sidewalk meeting ADA standards
Lee Street and Darrow Avenue	Installed new curb ramp to meet ADA standards
Lee Street and Dewey Avenue	Installed new curb ramp to meet ADA standards
Greenwood Street from McDaniel to Fowler	Installed approximately 380 feet of new sidewalk meeting ADA standards. Improved approximately 12 curb ramps.
Dempster Street Beach House	Installed approximately 200 feet of new sidewalk meeting ADA standards. Improved three curb ramps.
Benson Avenue between Davis Street and Clark Street; and Clark Street between Benson Avenue and Sherman Avenue	Removed approximately 20,000 square feet of deteriorated brick sidewalk and replaced with concrete sidewalk meeting ADA standards.
Greenwood Park Picnic Pad	Installed approximately 130 feet of new sidewalk meeting ADA standards. Installed one concrete picnic pad, accessible picnic table, and accessible grill.
Various Locations on Ridge Avenue and on Lake Street	Installed 20 ADA accessible transit stop concrete pads
Darrow Avenue and Crain Street	Improved six curb ramps.

Lyons Street and Leland Avenue	Improved four curb ramps.
Park Place and McDaniel Avenue	Improved two curb ramps.
Park Place and Walnut Avenue	Improved two curb ramps.
Livingston Street and Woodbine Avenue	Improved one curb ramp.
Jenks Street and Woodbine Avenue	Improved one curb ramp.
Isabella Street and Woodbine Avenue	Improved four curb ramps.

## Updates to City Programs, Services, and Activities

### Parks & Recreation Department

In February of 2025, the Parks & Recreation Department installed the City's second sensory room, a dedicated space to support sensory regulation, at Robert Crown Community Center. Additional accessibility tools include social stories, white boards, noise-canceling headphones, and other small sensory items which are available for visitors to check out at the front desk.

Newly created "Accessibility Advisor" positions were added to the Inclusion & Accessibility Division's staffing team. These roles support the City's ADA efforts by providing accessibility training, evaluating programs and facilities, and helping to make Evanston more inclusive for all residents. Two Advisors were hired in spring of 2025. Their unique perspectives, lived experiences, advocacy, knowledge, and support have had an invaluable impact on the City's Disability Services.

"Advocacy Avenue" was introduced at Prieto Community Center. This display and resource area aims to emphasize love, acceptance, education, and advocacy for the disability community and features a different disability-related theme each month. Community members are welcome to explore each month's topic through articles, definitions, statistics and support contact information, as well as through hands-on activities and children's books available to borrow while visiting the center. Topics

featured in 2025 included Autism Acceptance, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health Awareness, Alzheimer's and Brain Health, and Disability Pride.

A Sensory Tool Drive kicked off Autism Acceptance month in April and community members generously donated new and gently-used items including noise-cancelling headphones, stuffed animals, fidgets, and notepads which were gathered in donation boxes at all of the City's community centers. Following the Drive, the Parks & Recreation Department welcomed students with disabilities from ETHS's Transition House along with Police Department and C.A.R.E. Team staff who joined together to sort and organize donated items, creating 50 sensory toolkits. These toolkits, along with visual communication boards, were then provided to Police and C.A.R.E. Team staff to carry in their vehicles and offer as a form of support for Autistic and Neurodivergent individuals involved in emergency situations.

This fall, the Department introduced access mats, available for use at any of the City of Evanston's programs and activities. These 3-by-3 foot durable mats can be temporarily placed over grass and sand to create or extend accessible paths and seating areas for people who use mobility devices or for anyone who may benefit from a more stable surface. These mats can be requested in advance of City of Evanston events and may also be reserved for individual visits to parks and beaches.

## Transportation and Mobility Services

The City's Bicycle Access Voucher Pilot program, launched in October 2024, continued this year and included an Adapted Bike Voucher (EABV) option for community members who would benefit from accessible biking equipment. EABV offerings included electric tricycles, recumbent bicycles, standard E-bikes, and E-cargo bikes.

The "Divvy for Everyone" program also continued this year with memberships for 53 individuals. Divvy for Everyone provides income-based access to unlimited 45-minute rides on classic bikes as well as discounts on e-bikes for individuals who may benefit from this transportation option.

Transportation and Mobility staff continued collaboration with transportation service providers including CTA (Chicago Transit Authority), RTA (Regional Transit Authority), Metra, and Pace to communicate the Evanston community's needs and concerns in an effort to improve accessible transportation. The City continued to build out Evanston's network of ADA-compliant concrete bus pads and installed 20 pads in 2025.

# Information Technology Department

The IT Division, as part of the City's Digital Accessibility Initiative with the Communications Team and ADA Coordinator, completed the following key activities in preparation for the April 24, 2026 WCAG 2.1 AA (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) federal compliance deadline:

## Website & Content Accessibility

- Reached the final stages of the City-wide website redesign, including full remediation of City webpages and installation of a mandatory accessibility-proofing tool in the new system.
- Consulted with the City's Accessibility Advisors to guide the redesign and content remediation.
- Initiated the remediation of high-priority PDFs to reduce the City's long-standing document backlog.
- Continued developing staff toolkits, templates, and training materials to support accessible content creation.
- Began systematically reviewing and improving digital interfaces and templates used across City processes to ensure accessibility

## Policy & Governance

- Authored a comprehensive Digital Accessibility Policy (currently under review.)
- Added digital accessibility criteria and requirements into relevant software procurement agreements
- Conducted foundational governance work to strengthen accountability for third-party compliance

## Training, Capacity Building & Engagement

- Delivered four targeted presentations introducing digital accessibility requirements and best practices to City staff
- Held monthly meetings of the interdepartmental Digital Accessibility Initiative to coordinate progress and share updates
- Participated in professional development focused on accessibility
- Reserved 2026 budget for ongoing accessibility tools, consulting, and staff training

## Administrative Services: Parking

Parking staff continue to manage the W Permit Space program, which converts public curb space to a permitted parking space for individuals with physical disabilities who would benefit from parking their vehicles near their homes. The program currently manages 82 spaces.

Accessibility improvements were completed in the Sherman Plaza and Church St. Garages this year. This included adding new accessible spaces, widening existing spaces and loading areas, updating signage, and painting/striping new lines. New TIBA-branded equipment was installed in the garages. These control systems provide a smoother, easier entry and exit process for those visiting the garages, and new pay stations have accessibility features such as full-color touch screens and voice annunciators for visitors who would benefit from this assistance. The new equipment has many options for payment, including Apple and Google Pay, an improvement from the old equipment that only accepted cash or cards. Additionally, the new license plate recognition system allows visitors to enter and exit by scanning their license plates.

In conjunction with the City-wide survey completed by parking staff in 2023, new accessible parking spaces have been installed on streets in various locations throughout the City to meet block-by-block requirements in metered areas.

## Emergency Response Planning

Collaboration between the Fire Department, the Health & Human Services Department, and the ADA Coordinator emphasized accessibility improvements within the City's Emergency Response Planning. Education, awareness, and detailed projects in 2025 focused on:

- Identification of hazards and threats for vulnerable populations/individuals with access or functional needs
- Incorporating mobility, communication, transportation, and health maintenance access
- Reviewing legal parameters and federal requirements related to accessible emergency response planning
- Prioritizing information shared by the disability community. In April 2025, a survey was provided that included the opportunity for residents with disabilities, family members, allies, staff, volunteers, and members of disability advocacy groups to

share their feedback related to accessibility barriers that they have experienced, needs related to emergency communication, accessible transportation, and reunification, as well as future trainings to support individual and community preparedness.

- Visiting organizations that serve individuals with disabilities to discuss needs, concerns, and goals directly with residents. The valuable information gathered from this outreach will continue to guide the City's planning.

## ADA/Disability Services Trainings

Disability awareness and education continues to be a priority in Evanston. In addition to the training opportunities established with support from the ADA Advisory Committee, City Departments prioritize division-specific virtual and in-person trainings that increase accessibility and inclusion related to their specific roles in serving the community. Below is a comprehensive list of trainings completed by City staff in 2025.

Training:	City Department/s Represented:
Effective Communication with Individuals Experiencing Mental Health-Related Conditions	Police
Disability Awareness: Individuals in Custody	Police
Autism Awareness	Police
Disability Awareness: Service Animals	Police
Disability Awareness: Transparency Statements and Individuals Experiencing a Mental Health Crisis	Police
Various Trainings: National Association of Government Web Professionals Conference	IT
Various Trainings: Chicago Regional Digital Government Summit	IT
Disability Acceptance Event: Search, Inc. - Connecting with the Community Through Art	Parks & Recreation
Common Myths & Mixups of Accessible Parking	Administrative Services/Parking

Neurodiversity Unmasked	Disability Access Liaison Team: various Departments
Hidden Disability Sunflower Program	All City Departments
Mental Health First Aid Training	Health and Human Services, Parks & Rec
National ADA Virtual Conference	ADA Coordinator
National ADA Symposium	ADA Coordinator
Illinois Recreation Therapy Association Conference	Parks & Rec
Crisis Prevention Institute: Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training	Parks & Rec, Library
Inclusion Services and Support	Parks & Rec
Summer Camp Directors' Orientation: Inclusion Panel	Parks & Rec
Disability Pride Panel	Parks & Rec
Neurodivergence & Crisis Support	Parks & Rec

### Community Events Offered:

- Monthly ADA Advisory Committee Meetings
- Sensory Tool Drive: April 2025
- Coffee with the C.A.R.E. Team: May 2025
- Disability Pride Panel: July 2025

## ADA Inquiries, Grievances, and Resolutions

Communication from the community is vital to the continued improvements to accessibility and inclusion in the City's programs, services, and activities. Community members' inquiries and grievances were communicated via direct email and phone call to the ADA Coordinator, email to the City's Disability Services email address, electronic Inquiry/Grievance Form, 311 ADA/Disability Service request, or through in-person appointments at Prieto Community Center.

Inquiries are identified as a way to share feedback, suggestions, and requests for ADA alterations and/or accommodations. Grievances are identified as communication about situations in which an individual feels that discrimination occurred. The steps in place once receiving this communication remain consistent with the ADA Coordinator connecting with applicable City staff to come to a resolution. Below are the total number of City inquiries, grievances, and resolutions communicated in 2025. Resolutions noted “still in progress” include requests related to extended City projects.

Inquiries: City-run Programs, Services, Activities	68
Grievances: City-run Programs, Services, Activities	2
Resolutions Still in Progress: City-run Programs, Services, Activities	2
Inquiries: Places of Public Accommodation	25

Equally important to accessibility within government-run programs, services, and activities is access to businesses and commercial services, also known as places of public accommodation, located within the City. All inquiries of this nature which are received are communicated to these local business and service providers, and the City is committed to providing ADA resources and support to everyone in the community.