



# Lake Bluff Public Library Universal Design Assessment

DRAFT FOR LIBRARY REVIEW | NOVEMBER 27, 2023

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# 1. Executive Summary

Engberg Anderson (EA) was retained by the Lake Bluff Public Library to assist in the preparation of a Universal Design Review of the existing building and property. This review included an accessibility code review of the interior and exterior spaces as well as a broader review in an effort to assist the Library in providing more inclusive spaces that better meet the Library service needs of the community.

Representatives of the Library and Engberg Anderson engaged in two workshops to discuss strategy and set goals for the Study, the facility, and the site.

The group established 4 goals:

- 1. Improve patron enjoyment and satisfaction with their visit to and use of the spaces and services.**
- 2. Define recommendations that improve access to and utility of the existing spaces and grounds.**
- 3. Identify physical parameters the limit access, utility and enjoyment of the building for some members of the community.**
- 4. Identify way to improve environmental quality and occupant wellness**

Subsequent portions of the workshops identified areas of known or suspected issues related to building performance. Topics included site access, accessibility, environmental quality, building organization, and community.

As a result, several recommendations are made in the areas of accessibility, patron enjoyment/ satisfaction, and environmental quality/ wellness. These have been grouped into near-term, mid-term, and long-term improvements with the overall recommendation that annual budgeting include allocation of funds to make coordinated improvements to the facility.

- Near term item include additions, changes, or modifications that do not require professional services and are assumed to be less than \$25,000 in capital costs. Some of the items listed below could also be added to facility maintenance plan.
- Mid-term items include additions, changes, or modifications that would require some level of professional services and would exceed the capital cost limit. Items here include critical items that limit accessibility and access in the building and would include minor changes to the building configuration.
- Long-term items include additions, changes, or modifications that require professional services and would be a major impact on the building use and configuration. These items would also a significant cost impact.

Tables on the following pages provide an overview of the recommendations, suggested timeframe, and the improvement made possible by the recommendation.

## A. NEAR TERM SERVICE AND ACCESSIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

| Near term service and accessibility related items |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Improvement Category                                 |                                      |                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | All= All Occupants, Public= Public Patrons, S= Staff |                                      |                                        |
| Zone                                              | Recommendation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Accessibility                                        | Patron<br>Enjoyment&<br>Satisfaction | Environmental<br>Quality &<br>Wellness |
| Library Mission                                   | Review/update the mission statement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | All                                                  | All                                  |                                        |
| Pedestrian Access                                 | Clarify the site signage along with renovating the 1974 entry sidewalk. An accessible sidewalk is still required; however, the scale of the path can be reduced.                                                                                                                                                         | All                                                  |                                      |                                        |
| Site Signage                                      | We recommend completing the changes noted in the Pedestrian Access section. Additionally, we recommend reviewing the necessity of two separate site building signs and prioritizing a sign at the main entry. The main entry sign could be more impactful.                                                               | Public                                               |                                      |                                        |
| Site Amenities                                    | We recommend working with the Village of Lake Bluff to provide additional clear signage for the drive-up book drop. This should help reduce the confusion of the main entry book drop.                                                                                                                                   | Public                                               |                                      |                                        |
| Wayfinding and Signage                            | We recommend installing accessible room signage at all building spaces.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Public                                               |                                      |                                        |
| Wayfinding and Signage                            | We recommend installing architectural wayfinding signage for restrooms, Youth Services, and the meeting space.                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Public                                               |                                      |                                        |
| Collections                                       | We recommend the Library review the shelving layout and provide for code required turning radius.                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Public                                               | Public                               |                                        |
| Doors                                             | We recommend the Library relocate obstructions at doors to provide universal access to the building.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Public                                               |                                      |                                        |
| Restrooms                                         | We recommend each public use restroom have the following toilet accessories: double roll tissue dispenser, soap dispenser, waste receptacle, napkin disposal, hook, baby change station, and either a paper towel dispenser or hand dryer. Faucets, soap dispensers and paper towel dispensers should be automated where | All                                                  |                                      | All                                    |

| Near term service and accessibility related items |                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Improvement Category                                 |                                      |                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                         | All= All Occupants, Public= Public Patrons, S= Staff |                                      |                                        |
| Zone                                              | Recommendation                                                                                                                                                                                          | Accessibility                                        | Patron<br>Enjoyment&<br>Satisfaction | Environmental<br>Quality &<br>Wellness |
|                                                   | possible. Additionally, consideration to a napkin dispenser should be reviewed.                                                                                                                         |                                                      |                                      |                                        |
| Entry & Vestibule                                 | We recommend the Library remove the walk-off mat.                                                                                                                                                       | All                                                  |                                      |                                        |
| Entry & Vestibule                                 | We recommend the Library provide a bench.                                                                                                                                                               | Public                                               |                                      |                                        |
| Open Space & Collections                          | Recommend the Library update the layout of the furniture and shelving at the Mezzanine to meet building and accessibility code. Refer to pathway section for additional information on elevator access. | Public                                               | Public                               |                                        |
| Air Quality                                       | We recommend that the Library maintain the existing HVAC equipment and replace filters regularly. We also recommend that the Library clean the ducts every 3-5 years.                                   |                                                      |                                      | All                                    |
| Finishes                                          | We recommend repairing or replacing finishes that are delaminating and floor materials that present tripping hazards.                                                                                   | All                                                  |                                      | All                                    |

## B. MIDTERM SERVICE AND ACCESSIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

| Midterm service and accessibility related items |                                                                                                                                                      | Improvement Category                                 |                                      |                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                      | All= All Occupants, Public= Public Patrons, S= Staff |                                      |                                        |
| Zone                                            | Recommendation                                                                                                                                       | Accessibility                                        | Patron<br>Enjoyment&<br>Satisfaction | Environmental<br>Quality &<br>Wellness |
| Site Amenities                                  | We recommend the Library consider change the paved seating areas from pavers to stamped concrete.                                                    | Public                                               |                                      |                                        |
| Site Amenities                                  | We recommend the Library evaluate site areas which are not universally accessible to determine if spaces are not meeting the needs of the community. | Public                                               |                                      |                                        |
| Site Amenities                                  | We recommend the Library consider a compressive bike parking area that is clearly marked.                                                            | Public                                               |                                      |                                        |

| Midterm service and accessibility related items |                                                                                                                                                                          | Improvement Category                                 |                                       |                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                          | All= All Occupants, Public= Public Patrons, S= Staff |                                       |                                        |
| Zone                                            | Recommendation                                                                                                                                                           | Accessibility                                        | Patron<br>Enjoyment &<br>Satisfaction | Environmental<br>Quality &<br>Wellness |
| Wayfinding and Signage                          | We recommend looking at arranging the book stacks to make the main stair more visible from the main entry.                                                               | Public                                               | Public                                |                                        |
| Collections                                     | We recommend the Library evaluate the collection size and determine if reducing the collection or devoting more floor space to shelving would increase item circulation. | Public                                               | Public                                |                                        |
| Doors                                           | We recommend the Library consider adding an access control system.                                                                                                       |                                                      |                                       | All                                    |
| Vertical Circulation                            | We recommend the Library provide guardrails at the main stair.                                                                                                           | Public                                               |                                       |                                        |
| Restrooms                                       | We recommend the Library provide automatic flush valves and sinks.                                                                                                       |                                                      |                                       | All                                    |
| Staff Entry                                     | We recommend the Library provide a security camera and additional lighting in this area.                                                                                 |                                                      |                                       | Staff                                  |
| Break Room                                      | We recommend the staff break room be brought up to the requirements of the Illinois Accessibility Code. This would include new cabinets and sink as well as furniture.   | Staff                                                |                                       | Staff                                  |
| Community Room                                  | The Library should consider an audio and assistive listening system for hearing impaired patrons and program options.                                                    | Public                                               |                                       |                                        |
| Lower Level Stair Lobby                         | We recommend the Library relocate the drinking fountain to allow code required access to the restroom.                                                                   | Public                                               |                                       |                                        |
| Youth Services Annex                            | The Library should consider relocating or creating a secure area for staff.                                                                                              |                                                      |                                       | Staff                                  |
| Youth Program Room                              | We recommend the Library replace the cabinet and sink to meet accessibility code.                                                                                        | Public                                               |                                       |                                        |
| Security                                        | We recommend the Library provide a camera security system                                                                                                                |                                                      |                                       | All                                    |
| Security                                        | We recommend the Library consider a paging system.                                                                                                                       |                                                      |                                       | All                                    |

### C. LONG TERM SERVICE AND ACCESSIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

| Long term service and accessibility related items |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Improvement Category                                 |                                      |                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | All= All Occupants, Public= Public Patrons, S= Staff |                                      |                                        |
| Zone                                              | Recommendation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Accessibility                                        | Patron<br>Enjoyment&<br>Satisfaction | Environmental<br>Quality &<br>Wellness |
| Vehicle Access                                    | The Library could benefit from dedicated and increased parking. However, based on the available site and the surrounding neighborhood this is a significant challenge. We recommend the Library discuss this issue with the Village of Lake Bluff to review possible solutions. This will help keep the Library in the broader thinking about Downtown parking. | Public                                               | Public                               |                                        |
| Building Configuration                            | We recommend looking at impact of relocating the Community Room to the First Floor or the Mezzanine Level.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Public                                               | All                                  | All                                    |
| Building Configuration                            | The staff workroom is convenient to the service point but is not an adequate size for the number of staff. Based on the configuration of the building and the recent quiet reading room, it is not currently advised to expand the existing space. Additionally, the remote location of the director is not ideal for operations.                               |                                                      | Staff                                |                                        |
| Service Points                                    | The Library should consider options for the main service point. Although it is located conveniently for staff workroom access, it is hidden from main entry.                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                      | Public                               |                                        |
| Pathways                                          | We recommend the library provide an accessible pathway Mezzanine pathway between the elevator and the Mezzanine.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Public                                               |                                      |                                        |
| Restrooms                                         | All the restrooms are surrounded by structural walls. It will be difficult to modify these spaces to provide the required space. We recommend the Library consider renovating at least two restrooms in the building to meet accessibility requirements.                                                                                                        | All                                                  |                                      |                                        |
| Staff Workroom                                    | The staff space should be expanded to provide adequate and accessible space. It is understood that space is at a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Staff                                                | Staff                                | Staff                                  |

| Long term service and accessibility related items |                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Improvement Category                                 |                                      |                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                           | All= All Occupants, Public= Public Patrons, S= Staff |                                      |                                        |
| Zone                                              | Recommendation                                                                                                                                                                                            | Accessibility                                        | Patron<br>Enjoyment&<br>Satisfaction | Environmental<br>Quality &<br>Wellness |
|                                                   | premium based on the scale of the library, but the current workspace does not meet best practices and does not meet code.                                                                                 |                                                      |                                      |                                        |
| Director Office                                   | Recommend the Library consider locating the Director's office in the Library closer to staff.                                                                                                             |                                                      | Staff                                |                                        |
| Lactation Room                                    | We recommend the Library provide a lactation room. This space could be used by both staff a patrons.                                                                                                      |                                                      |                                      | All                                    |
| Acoustics                                         | We recommend looking at isolating the youth service department from the First Floor of the Library through the use of glass walls. Additionally, we would recommend acoustic panels at drywall locations. |                                                      | Public                               | All                                    |

## 2. The Community & Its Library

The Lake Bluff Public Library and the Lake Bluff History Museum share a building in Lake Bluff, IL. The building is approximately 11,800 square feet in total. The Library occupies about 10,000 square feet of the building and the Museum leases the remaining area. The building includes a basement space, first floor and Mezzanine space. The Library occupies all 3 levels and the Museum only occupies the first floor and small Mezzanine space. The Library and the Museum share the main entry vestibule and elevator. The remaining spaces are separated.

The building has had several renovations from the original building constructed in 1974. In 1999 the Library expanded the building to include the Lake Bluff History Museum. The building had several system updates from 2001-2020 which included HVAC replacements, roof replacement, and fire system upgrades. The Library also made an interior renovation in 2011.

### A. MISSION

*"The mission of the Lake Bluff Library is to act as a vibrant community center that provides materials and services to enhance individual knowledge, offer personal enjoyment, expand technological resources, and facilitate civic interaction."*

► *The mission was set in 2013. We recommend that the Library review the mission statement every 10 years and provide alternations as necessary based on community evolution.*

### B. VISION

As put forth in the Lake Bluff Public Library's Values Statement, which was approved by the Lake Bluff Public Library Board of Trustees in August of 2020, the organization "strives to make the Library a safe and welcoming place for all patrons." In doing so, the Library holds several values to be at the heart of what it does, including the following:

- Accountability- Responsible use of taxpayer funds and transparent communication about financial and operational activities is of critical importance to the Library.
- Accessibility - Information in a wide range of formats is made available to all patrons.
- Customer Service - The Library strives to provide high quality, friendly, and courteous customer service to all patrons.
- Democracy- The Library provides equal access to materials and an equal voice for all.
- Diversity - The Library strives to include diverse perspectives on major issues, a range of voices and views from many different countries and ethnicities, and a carefully curated core of materials in each subject and collection.
- Service - Guidance with collection usage, research, and technology are among the many services available.

It is in support of these values that the Lake Bluff Public Library embarked on a journey to learn more about its effectiveness in space and in service to people of all abilities. Because of the professional background of Library Director Renee Grassi, the Lake Bluff Public Library could now be analyzed and observed through a new lens—one of inclusion and accessibility.

The hope of this work, in collaboration with Engberg Anderson Architecture, is by producing a Site Evaluation and Accessibility Final Report, the Library will learn how its space, service, and site can be improved to truly be a place for all people. Specifically, this report will help guide the Library with the Board of Trustees to prioritize capital improvements that put the organization in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. This Report will also help ensure the sustainability of the building and property for years to come. Furthermore, this work will help create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for the community so that a variety of audiences, especially those who have not visited the Library before, are supported and welcome with a space that addresses their needs.

In short, this work is a significant and necessary step forward in the Library's aspirational goals to do better for the Lake Bluff Public Library community.

### **C. DEMOGRAPHICS**

*A Lake Bluff demographics summary is attached to this report.*

The Lake Bluff community is highly educated with over 80% of the population having a college degree or higher and another 8% having some college experience. The majority of the residents are families in a single-family home with 3 or more bedrooms. The medium household income is \$174,000 with over 90% home ownership. The populace is mostly white (non-Hispanic) with a median age of 39 years. Almost every resident has at least 1 vehicle with the majority of households having 2. Over 90% of the community is employed and the majority have to commute to a job. (The current available data is from 2016-2020. Based on the surge of work from home opportunities, the number of commuters has likely dropped)

Although the majority of the community speaks English, there are still about 12% of the community that is either bilingual or non-native English speaking. The three most common other languages are Spanish, Chinese, and Indo-European languages. About 15% of the residents are single living alone and about 10% of residents make less than \$50,000 per year.

The Lake Bluff Community does not have any standout deficiencies in education, economic means, or language barriers. The residents are well balanced in age leaning towards a younger population. About 30% of the residents are over 50 years.

The Library is uniquely positioned to provide services to a wide range of users without the need to focus on a specific community need.

### **D. CULTURE AND IDENTITY**

Nestled at the northernmost point of the North Shore, Lake Bluff stands in stark contrast to many of its neighboring communities. Known for affluence and abundance, the North Shore has a reputation as one of the most desirable places to live in Chicago. This is an area known for extravagance and, at times, research showed,

somewhat -high-brow. But North Star's research revealed an interesting characteristic that distinguishes Lake Bluff from other North Shore communities.

Upon visiting Lake Bluff, one immediately senses a uniqueness about the community. Instead of extravagance, the residents and stakeholders in the Village focus their attention on experiences. Lake Bluff is known for welcoming and down-to-earth residents whose ability to make you feel at home gives new residents (and even life-long ones) and visitors a laid back, casual feeling.

Events and festivals, like the 4th of July Parade and the Lake Bluff Halloween events (where close to 1,800 children come to trick-or-treat), add a lively and energetic atmosphere to the community. Bringing residents together, whether through a large block party or intimate neighborly get-together, is one of the things Lake Bluff does best. In fact, when asking people what brought them to Lake Bluff instead of other North Shore communities, respondents overwhelmingly said - the laid-back and down-to-earth nature of the community."

Along with this small-town charm, Lake Bluff boasts a beautiful lakefront that hasn't been overdeveloped, but instead has retained its authenticity with a small covered picnic area, fire pits and a - yacht club featuring a few small kayaks and sailboats (a great example of Lake Bluff's humorous side). Along the bluffs and throughout the area beautiful architecture dots the community with aesthetically pleasing homes and Village assets.

Also, downtown Lake Bluff is a focal point to the Village, where residents and visitors come to enjoy a great craft-brew, fantastic dinner at Inovasi or shop at the local farmer's market. And finally fantastic parks and recreational assets and highly-recognized schools make Lake Bluff a popular destination for families.

As with any community, Lake Bluff is not without its challenges. Research showed that the population of the Village is declining due to an aging majority and high property tax rates when compared to surrounding area. The community's small size makes it difficult to reach true economies of scale to keep costs low and therefore ease the burden for local residents. Additionally, some mentioned in the research that the lack of big box retail was an additional barrier to lowering the property tax rates; while others did not think that big box retail was representative of the culture in Lake Bluff. Some small business owners, particularly in the Downtown area, mentioned the lack of repeat foot traffic from residents was a challenge to keeping their doors open over the long-term.

The Village of Lake Bluff stands apart from other communities because of its culture of laid-back, down-to-earth atmosphere. The residents of the North Shore, as a general rule, have most everything needed to live an affluent, material life. But, when everything is at your fingertips, what do you envy? Residents in Lake Bluff are less concerned with the name brand clothing or living up to the standards of the North Shore; they are more concerned with experiencing life with family and friends. Having a deep sense of belonging to your neighbors and your community is a priceless reward for living in Lake Bluff.

*Source: <https://www.lakebluff.org/residents/lake-bluff-branding-initiative>*

### 3. The Library Site

#### A. PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

##### Observations

The main entry to the building is not intuitive. The 1999 building renovation and addition relocated the main entry to what is now the center of the building. This was done to provide a single entry to the Library and Museum through a shared vestibule. The original 1974 entry is on the northwest side of the building facing downtown and includes a large glass wall.

The 1999 entry is set back and is hidden from normal view of the library. The Library has a small roof awning that shadows the space. There are pathways and signage to provide clues, however intuitively the original 1974 entry still feels like the main entry to the building.

The previous entry was abandoned and is now used as an emergency exit. However, the previous entry still has the look and feel of a main building entry. The space as a large sidewalk which has the feel of an important waypoint. The building also has two monument signs which do not help discern one area from another. This is confusing to patrons and further exacerbates the issues with the 1999 entry.

##### Recommendation

- *We recommend the Library clarify the site signage along with renovating the 1974 entry sidewalk. An accessible sidewalk is still required; however, the scale of the path can be reduced.*



1974 Entry



Current Entry

## B. VEHICLE ACCESS

### Observations

The Library does not have any on-site public parking. There is a small one-way parking lot on the south side of the building for staff. The staff parking areas has approximately 10 spaces. Signage for the staff parking lot is not clear and residents do end up parking and taking up staff spaces.

Public street parking is available around the Library. The Library has approximately 20 street spaces directly around the building, with one accessible space right in front of the Library. The parking is shared with other business in the area and tends to be full most of the day. All the street parking has a time limit and the limit varies between 30 minutes to 2 hours. The amount of parking could be a limiting factor for program attendance as well as general use of the Library.

### Recommendation

- *The Library could benefit from dedicated and increased parking. However, based on the available site and the surrounding neighborhood this is a significant challenge. We recommend the Library discuss this issue with the Village of Lake Bluff to review possible solutions. This will help keep the Library in the broader thinking about Downtown parking.*



*Library Main entry looking west*

## C. SITE SIGNAGE

### Observations

There are two monument signs located on the north side of the building noting the Library and Museum. The sign at the corner of Oak and Scranton Avenue face downtown Lake Bluff. This sign functions as a general location sign for the Library. The corner monument sign also contributes to the pedestrian entry confusion issue. The sign is an intuitive queue of where patrons should expect the main entry to be located.

The second monument sign is located by the actual building entry. This is a post hanging sign which is located at eye height. The sign is less visible from the majority of the parking and coupled with the pedestrian access design noted above, is not successfully directing patrons to the main building entry.

The staff entry does not have any signage or identifying element on the site.

### Recommendation

► *We recommend completing the changes noted in the Pedestrian Access section. Additionally, we recommend reviewing the necessity of two separate site building signs and prioritizing a sign at the main entry. The main entry sign could be more impactful.*

## D. SITE AMENITIES

### Observations

**The Library has two exterior book drops.** The main entry to the building has a book drop located at the bottom of the stairs. At this location, people tend to leave their car running on the street and exit the vehicle to return books. The book drop is not clearly signed.

The second book drop is located on Oak Avenue at the south property line. Oak Avenue is a one-way street and the Library located a book drop on the east side of the street to be a drive-up book drop. The book drop is not clearly signed and, as a result, vehicles tend to stop in the road to return a book. Also, based on the location, cars have the ability to block the driveway of a neighboring private Residence.

**The site also has several seating and garden areas located around the site.** The seating areas at the main entry and along Scranton Avenue both have pavers. Pavers have and will continue to shift and move over time. This is mainly due to temperature change in the local climate. These require on-going maintenance to prevent the pavers and flag stone from becoming a tripping hazard for patrons, in particular individuals who have mobility issues, specifically: walkers and canes.

Additionally, the Library has seating areas located in grassy garden spaces. These spaces are not accessible to patrons with mobility issues.

**The Library has two areas for patrons to park bicycles.** The bike racks at the west side of the building are in poor condition. They are not anchored to the site and have rust. The bike racks along Scranton Avenue are in good shape, but the bikes intrude into the seating area. The Library does have a significant number of bikers and the number of spaces provided is not sufficient.

### Recommendations

- ▶ *We recommend working with the Village of Lake Bluff to provide additional clear signage for the drive-up book drop. This should help reduce the confusion of the main entry book drop.*
- ▶ *We recommend the Library consider change the paved seating areas from pavers to stamped concrete.*
- ▶ *We recommend the Library evaluate site areas which are not universally accessible to determine **if** spaces are not meeting the needs of the community.*
- ▶ *We recommend the Library consider a compressive bike parking area that is clearly marked.*



*Oak Street Book Drop*

## 4. Accessibility

### A. BUILDING CONFIGURATION

The building is configured as a split structure with the Museum on the east wing and the Library taking up the west wing of the Mezzanine and First Floor. The Library takes up the entire Lower Level. The Lower Level provides approximately the same useable Library area as the First Floor plus the Mezzanine combined.

The main entry lobby service both the Museum and the Library space. This space contains a single use restroom as well as the building's elevator. The elevator provides an accessible path to the Mezzanine and Lower Level.

The Library's First Floor and the Mezzanine are devoted to the adult collection and spaced. The Library's Lower Level houses the Youth Services department which extends under the Museum and the Community Room space. The building has very limited staff and storage space which does not adequately meet their needs.

The overall current configuration of the building is a result of the various constraints imposed by building geometry, phased construction, and shifts in service paradigms for both the Library and the Museum.

The specific arrangement of the Library is a typical zoning strategy that attempts to group the noisier activities of the Children's area and Community Room away from the more contemplative spaces of the Adult area. This acoustic separation is short circuited by the open areas between the Lower Level and First Floor and between the First Floor and the open Mezzanine. Small spaces for staff are generally grouped near the spaces those staff members support. While this does promote some efficiencies in providing service to the public, there are compromises to both the public space and the staff work space that arise from this strategy. There are other options that could be studied, however each has pros and cons.

### 1. LOWER LEVEL

#### Observations

The Youth Services department on the Lower Level allows for a large contained space on a single level. The Lower Level is only half sunk into the ground and has garden-level windows to let in natural light. The added space under the Museum contains a program room, storage and collection spaces.

The drawback to the current arrangement is the size and location of the elevator. Parents with strollers need to wait in lines for the elevator. Additionally, the elevator opens into a small lobby at the center of the Youth Services area. This is acceptable for patrons who want to use the Youth Services department but not for patrons who want to use the Community Room.

The main Community Room is also located on this Lower Level. This does free up space on the First Floor and Mezzanine and makes for easy use of the Community Room for larger events planned for children. This arrangement does, however, have drawbacks. Anyone with mobility issues would need to travel through the

narrow Elevator Lobby and a portion of the Youth Services area to access the Community Room. This is an inconvenience for those individuals and a security risk for children.

Recommendations

- We recommend looking at impact of relocating the Community Room to the First Floor or the Mezzanine Level.

A shared Staff Workroom could be relocated to the current Community Room space which would be adjacent to the Staff Entry and Staff Breakroom. However, this would make staff remote from the First Floor activities. This would address some of the security issues with the elevator.

A Community Room on the Mezzanine Level would still require use of an elevator to meet accessibility requirements but would remove the need for patrons to pass through the Youth Services department.

A Community Room on the First Floor would be ideal for programs but would take away valuable space from staff and other Library services.



Existing Lower-Level Diagram

|                                  |                       |                   |                    |            |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Public Space<br>(Youth Services) | Stair and<br>Elevator | Community<br>Room | Staff<br>Breakroom | Mechanical |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------|

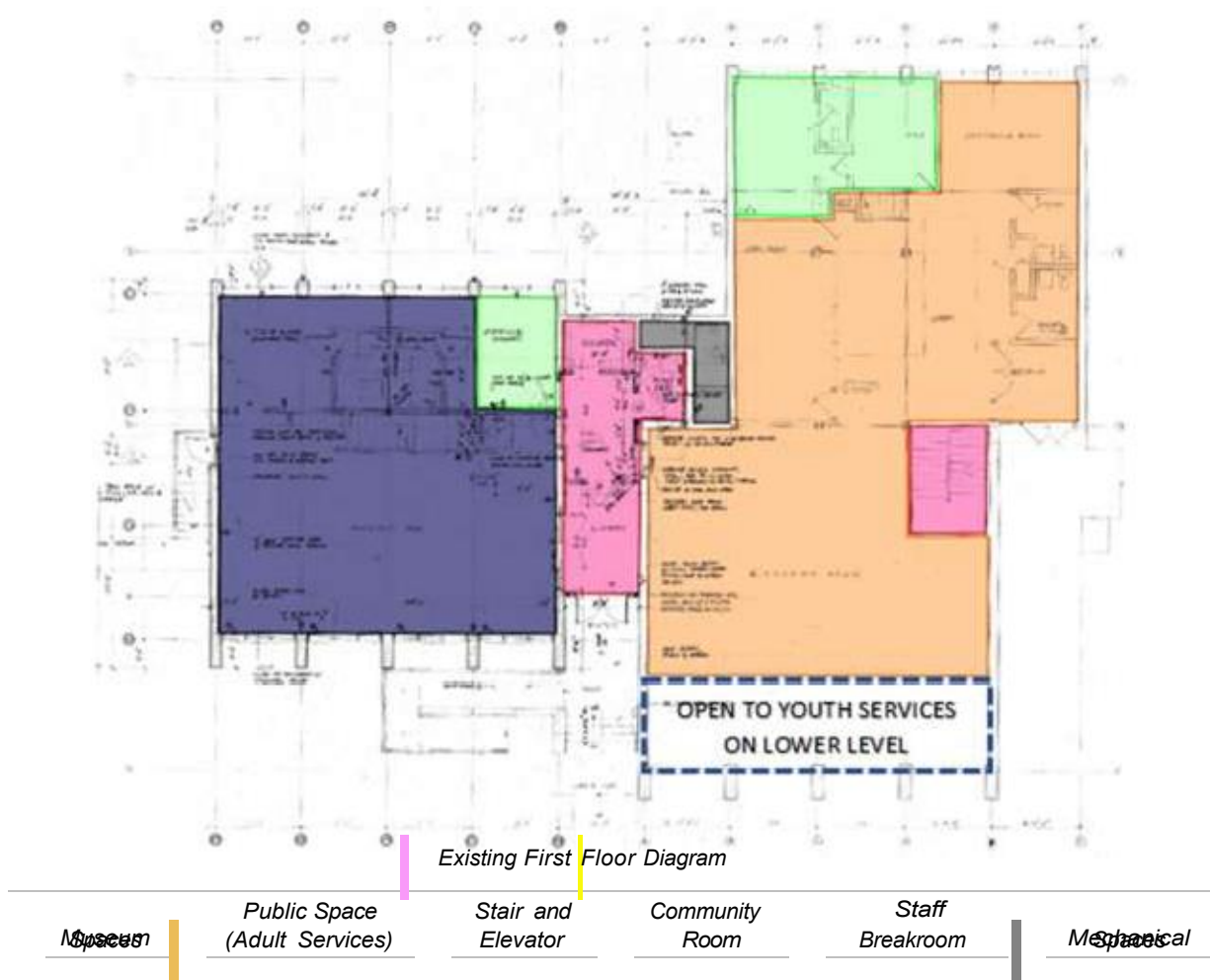
## 2. FIRST FLOOR

### Observations

The First Floor contains the Library Entry, Lobby, primary service point, Staff Workroom, popular adult collections, the Stroh Room (quiet reading room) and study spaces. This level has the majority of the Library traffic. The space is open to the Youth Services department via a large opening in the floor. The First Floor has plenty of access to natural light. The Library recently created a quiet reading room to address some of the noise and traffic issues.

The services and available collection are ideal on the First Floor of the Library. Patrons do not need to travel very far into the Library to seek help, pick up a hold or find a popular item. Study tables although located in a busy area, are close to the staff service point.

The Staff Workroom is cramped and is not adequate for the number of people typically based there and is separate from the Director's Office. Refer to the staff space section below.



### Recommendation

- The staff workroom is convenient to the service point but is not an adequate size for the number of staff. Based on the configuration of the building and the recent quiet reading room, it is not currently advised to expand the existing space. Additionally, the remote location of the director is not ideal for operations.

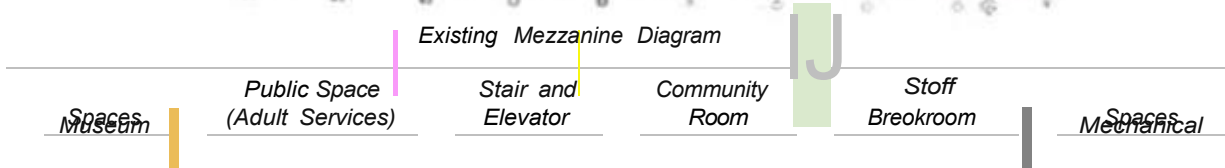
## 3. MEZZANINE LEVEL

### Observation

The Mezzanine contains adult collections, study tables/counter and other seating areas. The space is accessible by the main stair, side stair, and elevator through a small corridor space. Other than some issues noted below the only drawbacks of the space are acoustics and vertical access. The space is out of the main traffic zone.



4.



A meeting on the Mezzanine Level is possible and could address some of the security issues with the current location. The Mezzanine has adult collections and study spaces that would need to be relocated.

This space is not recommended for use as Youth Services: the space is not an adequate size, has vertical access issues, and would most likely need to be staffed.

## B. WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE

### Observations

**Wayfinding in the building is challenging.** Ideally, patrons will find their way to and through a space intuitively without reliance on a large number of signs. Wayfinding signage is typically only needed when the navigation of a space or spaces is not intuitive. The scale of the Lake Bluff Public Library should require minimal wayfinding signage. However, the location of a few key existing building elements does make signage necessary. For example, the elevator is not located in the main space. Patrons looking to use the elevator often have to retrace their steps to the lobby to access it. The main stairs are hidden behind book stacks. The incorporation of simple architectural finishes or elements can create clues for restroom and staff service points, which would make navigation less dependent on signage.

At a secondary level, the Library is lacking in wayfinding and room identifying signage.

- The building required life safety and accessible signage is not code compliant and is missing in some areas. Room identification signage is strictly governed by accessibility code. Text size, contrast, and pictograms are prescribed by codes and provide a universal experience for all buildings. There are some things that can be customized but the intention is to clearly communicate space information to the broadest population possible.
- The bookstacks also do not have indicators as to how the collection is laid out.

**Caution should be taken with any new or modified signage system.** Too much signage will be ignored and will fade into the background. Start with creating a hierarchy of signage that allows a person to mentally prioritize tasks or services.

Architectural signage is a cross between wayfinding signage and aesthetic integration. An example of this is the new stainless steel Lake Bluff Library sign in the First Floor. Signage can be integrated into the design of the space to help the intuitive navigation without detracting from the experience of the space.

### Recommendations

- ▶ *We recommend looking at arranging the book stacks to make the main stair more visible from the main entry.*
- ▶ *We recommend installing accessibility code compliant room signage at all building spaces.*
- ▶ *We recommend installing architectural wayfinding signage for restrooms, Youth Services, and the meeting space.*



*Library Entry looking toward Elevator*



*Library Entry looking toward Entry/Exit*

## C. SERVICE POINTS

### Observations

**The Library has two primary service points each of which has notable deficiencies.**

The primary public service point is located on the First Floor of the Library around the corner from the building entry.

- Patrons need to make two turns once they enter the building to interact with staff.
- The main building entry is not visible from the primary service point.
- The primary service point does not have visibility to the Mezzanine.
- The service point on the First Floor is easily accessed by the staff from the Workroom.
- The desk does have a side approach accessible work counter.
- The acoustics at the desk are poor. Patrons on the First Floor or in the Mezzanine can hear conversations at the desk. Based on the layout of the space this is a difficult issue to fully address.

The second service point is located on the Lower Level in the Youth Services department.

- This desk can see the majority of the Youth Services spaces, the main stair, as well as have some visibility to patrons who use the elevator.

- The Library does not have a dedicated Youth Services Workroom and many of the tasks are performed at the desk.
- The desk does have a side approach accessible work counter.

### Recommendation

- *The Library should consider options for the main service point. Although it is located conveniently for staff workroom access, it is hidden from patrons as they enter the building via the main entry.*



*First Floor Public Service Point*



*Lower Level Public Service Point*

## **D. COLLECTIONS**

### Observations

**The Library's collections are generally accessible and housed on a variety of shelving types.** The collections can be found on all three levels of the Library. The Illinois Accessibility code requires that 50% of all shelving be at an accessible level. This is a zone from 15 inches off the floor up to 48 inches off the floor. Typically this space will fit about 3 shelves. In order to have the full collection accessible, the shelving height should be limited to 60 inches with no bottom shelf.

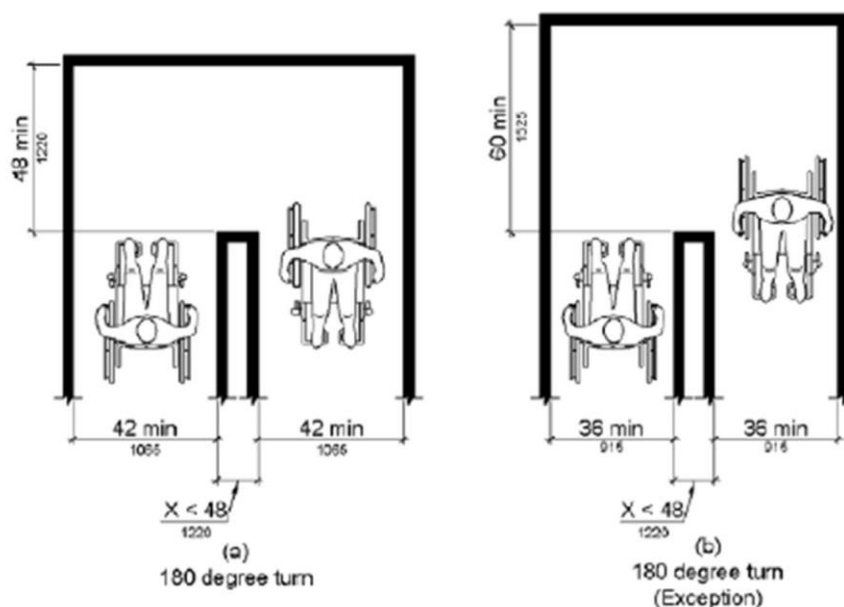
**Youth Services:** For the most part the Youth Services collection is on 48- to 60-inch-tall shelving. The Library does have a few taller shelving units, however the majority of the collection is accessible.

**Adult Services and Media:** The majority of the adult collection is on 84- and 90-inch-tall shelving with some 54- and 60 inch shelving mixed in. It appears that the Library does meet accessibility code and has provide 50% of the collection in the reach zone, however that still leaves a significate portion of the items out of reach.

**Significantly, the aisle widths on the first and second floor do not meet accessibility code.** Primary aisles and end-aisles or cross-aisle must meet one of two configurations. The preferred arrangement is for aisles of 42- inches in width with an end-aisle or cross-aisle of 48-inches to permit a 180-degree turn into the next aisle. As an exception, a 36-inch wide aisle is permitted with and end-aisle of cross-aisle of 60-inches. (See the illustration on the next page.)

## Recommendations

- We recommend the Library review the shelving layout and provide for code required turning radius. It appears that the library does have enough space to shift the shelving to meet aisle clearance requirements of the Illinois Accessibility Code.
- We recommend the Library conduct this evaluation in parallel with a circulation effectiveness study to determine if the display and arrangement of the collection is promoting discovery, discernment, and fulfillment. Collection circulation levels in many libraries are increased when aisle widths are increased, presented in a marketplace, displayed using the rule of three, and presented face out at eye level.



Aisle Turning Width

## **E. PATHWAYS**

### Observations

The main pathways through the Library are generally unobstructed and meet accessibility code. Note that this does not refer to the collection notes above for bookstack aisle configuration.

The only primary pathway that does not conform to current building codes is located at the Mezzanine. The connection between the elevator and the Mezzanine does not have enough width and is only 41 inches wide. The required width is 60 inches at the door.

A facility should have an egress pathway for individuals with significant mobility issues. The Library does not currently have an accessible means of egress from the lower level and from the mezzanine. Building code allows for several different ways to address accessibility from floors above and below grade.

- An accessible ramp could be provided from levels above and below grade. This option takes up significant space and are costly to install and maintain.

- An area of rescue assistance can be provided with intercom. This option requires a fire rated space on each level.
- A generator can be provided for emergency power to the elevator. The elevator can then be used as the accessible means of egress. This has secondary benefits to the Library and will have a significant installation cost.

### Recommendations

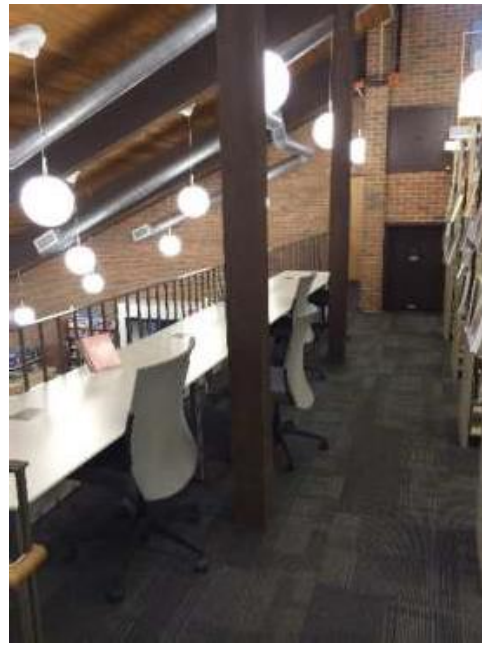
- *We recommend the library provide an accessible pathway Mezzanine pathway between the elevator and the Mezzanine.*

*The Mezzanine pathway is a difficult issue. Based on the building constraints there is not an easy solution. The pathway would need to be wider and the door possibly removed. Some modification is necessary to make the Mezzanine an accessible space.*

*Options could include structurally extending the walkway or removing the door.*



*Mezzanine access from elevator*

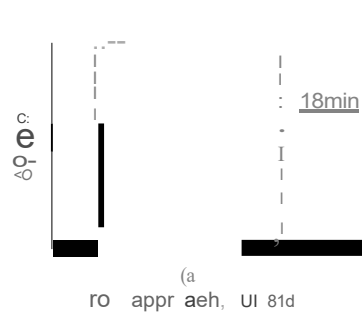
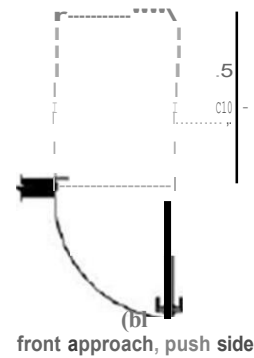
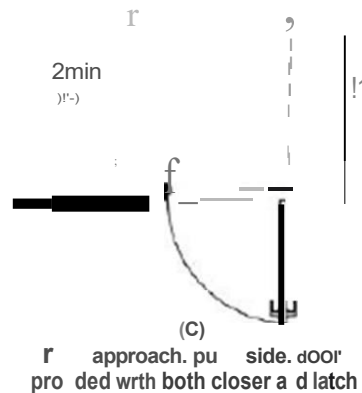
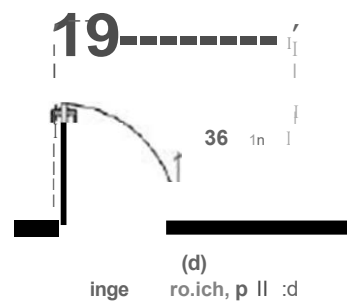
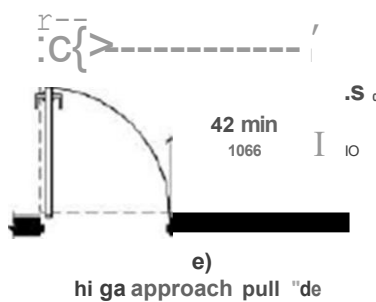
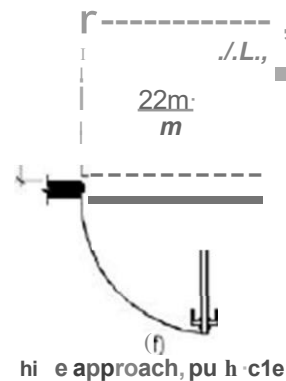


*Aisle along Mezzanine seating*

## **F. DOORS**

### Observations

**Many of the doors throughout the Library do not provide adequate space per accessibility code.** All doors require an 18-inch area on the pull side to open the door. Some doors are constrained by built-in building elements. For example, the lower-level drinking fountain by the restroom door impedes access. Additionally, the door on the Mezzanine to the elevator does not meet the minimum requirements. The diagram below shows the minimum requirements for all door clearances.



#### Accessible Door Clearances

The building does not have an access control system. Access control systems provide increased security for both staff and patrons. Almost every door can benefit from access control, however the primary doors to consider would be: all exterior doors and doors which separate staff from the public.

#### Recommendations

- We recommend the Library relocate obstructions at doors to provide universal access to the building.
- We recommend the Library consider adding an access control system. Vertical

## G. CIRCULATION

### Observations

The elevator was added to the building in the 1999 addition. The location was selected to be shared by both the Library and Museum. The location is not intuitive for patrons. Patrons access the elevator from the vestibule on the first floor, a nebulous lobby space on the Mezzanine, and the Youth Services department on the Lower Level. This arrangement compromises the security of the building by forcing adults using the elevator to the Community Room to travel from through the Youth Service area.

Existing elevators that have structural building walls are not required to be enlarged per Illinois accessibility code. The existing elevator has a 42 inch wide door and the cab is 51 inches by 81 inches wide.

The main stair does not have a guard rail, only a hand rail. Stairs that exceed 24 inches in vertical height are required to have a 42-inch guard rail in addition to a handrail.

### Recommendations

- *We recommend the Library provide guardrails at the main stair.*



*Main Elevator*



*Main Stair*

## H. RESTROOMS

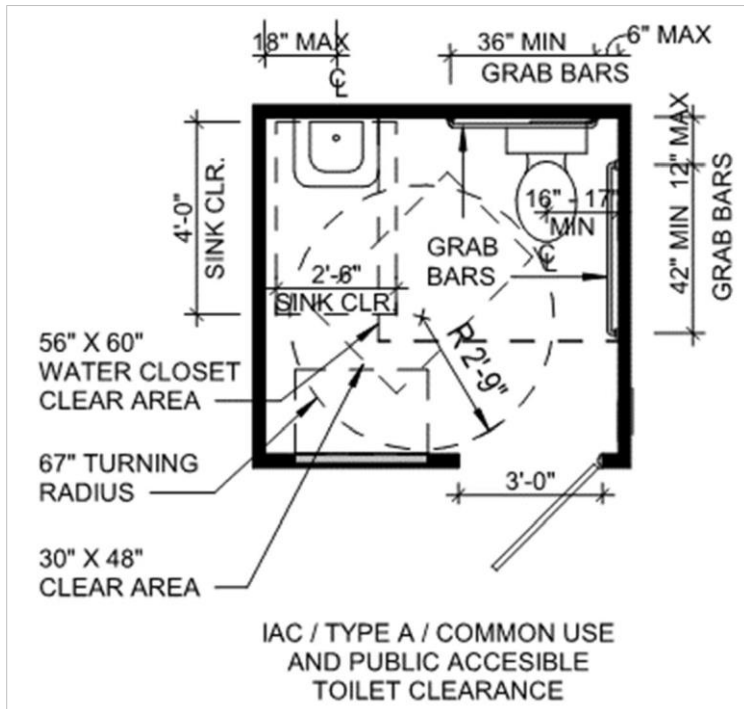
### Observations

All the restrooms in the building are single use and none of them conform to ADA guidelines. All single use restrooms need to have a clear 60-inch turning circle and have a 60-inch x 56-inch clear space around the toilet to allow a person to transfer from a wheel chair. Additionally, all restrooms need to have the three grab bars

installed around the toilet. Lavatories need to have a clear 30-inch by 48-inch clear space including below sink protection. The diagram below shows the general requirements.

The rooms are all locked and require a staff member to assist with the exception of the restrooms on the First Floor in the Library. The practice is intended to increase security but is uncomfortable for patrons to ask to use the facilities.

The faucets and flush valves are not automatic. Manual sinks can be left running and can be hard to operate for people with mobility issues. Additionally, the Library would like to add automatic openers to the restrooms where possible. This would improve accessibility and hygiene.



Sample Accessible Single Use Bathroom Layout



Youth Services Bathroom

### Recommendations

- ▶ We recommend each public use restroom have the following toilet accessories: double roll tissue dispenser, soap dispenser, waste receptacle, napkin disposal, hook, baby change station, and either a paper towel dispenser or hand dryer. Faucets, soap dispensers and paper towel dispensers should be automated where possible. Additionally, consideration to a napkin dispenser should be reviewed.
- ▶ All the restrooms are surrounded by structural walls. It will be difficult to modify these spaces to provide the required space. We recommend the Library consider renovating at least two restrooms in the building to meet accessibility requirements.
- ▶ We recommend the Library provide automatic flush valves and sinks.

# 5. Room & Space Evaluations

## A. FIRST FLOOR SPACES

### 1. ENTRY & VESTIBULE

#### Observations

The First floor of the Library is raised out of the ground about 4 feet. The main entry has a concrete stair along with a looping sloped sidewalk.

- The slope of the sidewalk visually looks to be at the limit of what is required by accessibility code. A site topographic survey would be needed to verify the slope.
- The sloped sidewalk does not have an intermediate landing and does not have handrails.
- A ramp that is less than 1:20 slope is not required to have landings or handrails. Ramps over a 1:20 slope need intermediate landings at every 30 inches of rise and must provide handrails.

The main entry doors have an automatic opener that is touchless and opens the main door to the vestibule. The vestibule leads into the Library through a pair of glass doors. The vestibule doors do have an automatic operator.

The Library has provided a walk-off mat over the walk-off carpeting.

- The walk-off mat is a tripping hazard and catches the bottom rail of the door. The carpeting installed in the vestibule is intended to act as the walk-mat. However, this will require on-going cleaning and replacement of carpet times in the vestibule.

The vestibule does not have a seated waiting space. Additionally, patrons tend to leave strollers in the main entry which creates congestion, accessibility and egress issues.

#### Recommendations

- ▶ *We recommend the Library remove the walk-off mat.*
- ▶ *We recommend the Library provide a bench.*
- ▶ *We recommend creating a stroller parking area that does not block the code required egress pathway out of the building. This should be secure, out of travel paths, and convenient & intuitive for arriving parents or caregivers.*



*Entry Lobby*

## 2. SEATING & COLLECTION AREAS

### Observations

The general space of the Library has open pathways with tables and chairs arranged with adequate space to comfortable use of these seats.

The collection aisles and turning space in many areas does not conform to accessibility code. Please refer to the "Collection" section in the "Accessibility" portion of this report for details. The library does have enough space to shift the shelving to meet aisle clearance requirements of the Illinois Accessibility Code.

The First Floor is generally intuitive to navigate based on the size. The seating and collection area is just inside the main entry. The service desk is a little hidden around a corner but is visible after a few steps. The restrooms and quiet study room are also easily located once inside the space. The main stair is hidden behind book stacks however, it is visible by staff from the main service point.



*First Floor of Library*



*First Floor of Library*

### 3. STROH ROOM

#### Observations

The Stroh Room was recently completed and provides a quite space to the open plan of the Library.



*Stroh Room*

### 4. STAFF WORKROOM

#### Observations

The Staff workroom does provide enough space for the number of staff occupying this space. It is recommended that a space provide between 100 to 150 square feet per person. The space is just under 400 square feet which should be sized for a maximum of 4 people. The space does not provide accessible access to counter space or workstations. The equipment and supplies block use of the cabinets as well the main entry.

Height adjustable desks are nearing the point where they will become required or expected standard office furniture. Height adjustable designs should be considered when furniture is replaced or added.

#### Recommendations

- *The staff space should be expanded to provide adequate and accessible space. It is understood that space is at a premium based on the scale of the library, but the current workspace does not meet best practices and does not meet code.*

### 5. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

#### Observations

The Director's Office is located off the main lobby and is not in the Library proper. The location poses security concerns as well as creating a separation between the Director and the rest of the staff. The glass door allows for views into the lobby space, but also allows patrons to know when the Director is alone. The space does not

have any privacy from view or from acoustics. The Director's office can hear activity in the main lobby and in the Museum spaces.

### Recommendations

- *Recommend the Library consider locating the Director's office in the Library closer to staff.*



*Director's Office*

## **B. MEZZANINE SPACES**

### **1. SEATING & COLLECTION AREAS**

#### Observations

The Mezzanine space is open to the First Floor and is accessed by two stairs and the building elevator. The space includes collections, study counter, and lounge furniture. The space has access to natural light. As noted in other sections of the report, the bookstack aisles and the elevator pathway do not meet building or accessibility codes. Through minor modifications the collections could be made accessible. However, the elevator pathway would require significant changes.

#### Recommendations

- *Recommend the Library update the layout of the furniture and shelving at the Mezzanine to meet building and accessibility code. Refer to "Pathway" section in the "Accessibility" portion of this report for additional information on elevator access.*



Mezzanine



Mezzanine

## C. LOWER-LEVEL SPACES

### 1. STAFF ENTRY

#### Observations

The staff entry is located at the Lower Level and doubles as one of the emergency exits from the Community Room. The door does not have an automatic opener. The staff currently use an exterior concrete stair down to a door which is located at the southwest corner of the building. The only accessible entry of the building is main entry. The door does open into a vestibule and is immediately adjacent to the break room. Staff must travel through either the Community Room space or a mechanical storage closet to access the main library.

The area does have some security concerns. The staff entry is at a half level below ground at the southwest corner of the building. It is close to the parking lot; however, it is not clearly visible from Scranton Avenue which is a main street.

#### Recommendations

► *We recommend the Library provide a security camera and additional lighting in this area.*

### 2. BREAKROOM

#### Observations

The Breakroom doubles as the Kitchenette for the Community Room. This room does not have the required clearance around the doors which is blocked by furniture. The sink does not have an accessible approach and exceeds 34 inches in height.

### Recommendations

- *We recommend the staff break room be brought up to the requirements of the Illinois Accessibility Code. This would include new cabinets and sink as well as furniture.*



*Staff Break Room Sink*



*Staff Break Room Equipment*

## **3. COMMUNITY ROOM**

### Observations

The Community Room is directly off the main stair and is approximately 550 square feet. The Community Room has access to 2 exits and life safety occupancy of 78 people. To access the Community Room by elevator, a patron would need to walk through the Youth Services Department. The space has access to a small kitchenette/ break room and storage space. The space does not have any acoustic treatments.

The space has a projection screen but does not have a built-in projector or audio system.

### Recommendations

- *The Library should consider an audio and assistive listening system for patrons with hearing challenges.*

## **4. STAIR LOBBY**

### Observations

This area is directly at the bottom of the main stair and is the entry to Youth Services, has access to a small restroom and access to the Community Room. A drinking fountain was recently installed in the lobby and blocks accessible entry into the small restroom.

- *We recommend the Library relocate the drinking fountain to allow code required access to the restroom.*



*Lower-Level Stair Lobby Drinking Fountain*

## **5. YOUTH SERVICES**

### Observations

The Youth Services zone is located right off the main building stair. The area has access to light through garden windows and is connected to the First Floor above at the north windows. The space has a mix of study tables, children's computers, lounge seating and collections. The majority of the collections are housed on 60-inch shelving. The open design of the space allows the service point to have easy views into all areas.

Drawbacks are:

- The opens space does not control acoustics well. Acoustics issues are magnified by the lower and First Floor being connected.
- The elevator location requires adults utilizing the elevator for access to the Community Room to pass through the Youth Services area.

## **6. YOUTH SERVICES ANNEX**

### Observations

The annex space is located to the east of the elevator under the Museum. This space includes collection spaces along with play and interactive learning areas for younger children. The area has access to garden windows.

The space also includes the Youth Services Managers desk. The Youth Services department does not have a dedicated workroom. All Youth Services off desk work is done at the service desk. A combination service desk / work desk does help save space but is very inefficient for staff and is hard to keep organized and clean.

The Library has used book stacks to create a makeshift office, however this space does not provide any privacy or security. Any patron at any time could enter this space and if the areas is not staffed have access to Library systems and personal items.



Main Entry to Youth Services



Open Mezzanine edge above Youth Services



Lower Level Stair Staff Work Area in the Annex

### Recommendations

- The Library should consider relocating or creating a secure area for staff.

## 7. YOUTH PROGRAM ROOM

### Observations

The Youth Program room is located off the Youth Services Annex space. The room is an open flexible space with a sink. The furniture is stackable chairs and folding tables which allows for the space to be reconfigured based on the need. The space does have access to natural light. The room does not have any built-in audio-visual equipment.

The counter and sink in the room are not accessible. The counter is over 34 inches and the sink is in the corner which does not allow for a side approach.



Program Room

### Recommendations

- *We recommend the Library replace the cabinet and sink to meet accessibility code.*

## **8. SUPPORT SPACES AND STORAGE**

### Observations

Storage spaces are critical to allow for flexible meeting and program spaces. The Youth Storage space is the main pathway to access the buildings sprinkler room and elevator machine room. Access to these building system systems is critical and need to remain clear. This requirement does limit the effectiveness of the storage space.

## **9. LACTATION ROOM**

The Library does not currently provide a dedicated space for nursing. Such a space that is recommended for both patrons and staff. Lactation rooms should be clean spaces and separate from restroom facilities.

### Recommendations

- *We recommend the Library provide a lactation room. This space could be used by both staff a patrons.*

## **10. RECEIVING AND DELIVERY**

### Observations

The Library does not have a dedicated receiving and delivery space. Deliveries are currently made though the main building entry. Based on the configuration of the library, this space would be difficult to provide. The staff entry is only accessible through the use of stairs and is not connected to staffed space.

## **D. SECURITY**

### Observations

The Library does not have a camera security system. These systems help to increase safety and security both in the building and around the site. Additionally, we recommend an access control system as noted in the Door section above.

The Library does not have a paging system. These system and aid in emergencies as well as when libraries are closing. Additionally, a paging system could be upgraded to a white/pink noise system to help address acoustics.

### Recommendations

- *We recommend the Library provide a camera security system*

- ▶ *We recommend the Library consider a paging system.*

## E. FURNITURE

### 1. SEATING

#### Observations

The Library has many types of seating available to the public. Public seating should provide a variety of options based on the variety of patrons and services the Library has. Location of seating should also be taken into consideration. Locate seating areas in both active and quiet zones. Patrons use the space in different ways and allowing flexibility and choice will serve the largest number of people.

Task Seating is typically used at study tables and computer areas. Seating should be both armed and armless to serve all types of body types and ages. Computer seating should have glides or wheels to allow for user adjustment. Chairs should have some flex to the back to increase the chair's durability and provide patron comfort.

Lounge Seating should be easily cleanable and also have arm and armless options. Vinyl surfaces allow for easy cleaning and increased durability.

Seating that is too low or plush can cause problems for people with mobility issues.

Meeting and Program spaces should have light, comfortable, and stackable chairs. These chairs do have arms or armless options. A light weight chair can easily be moved by staff and patrons to allow for flexible space configurations. Stackable chairs allow the furniture to be moved easily and maximize storage spaces.

Staff Seating is an important item to consider. Library staff spend a large portion of their day at an office or service desk. Proper ergonomic support is required for staff health and wellness. Consider replacing staff chairs every 8 to 10 years. Consider height adjustable work surfaces to address ergonomics and accessibility.

#### Recommendations

- ▶ *When the Library has an opportunity to reconfigure space, we recommend evaluating furniture performance, condition, ergonomics, ease of maintenance and make replacements as needed to support the new configuration. The new furnishings in the Stroh Room are an example of furniture replacement being coordinated with a space reconfiguration.*
- ▶ *Absent any reconfiguration of space or change in use, we recommend evaluation and possible replacement of staff and public chairs every 8 to 10 years.*

## 2. SURFACES

### Observations

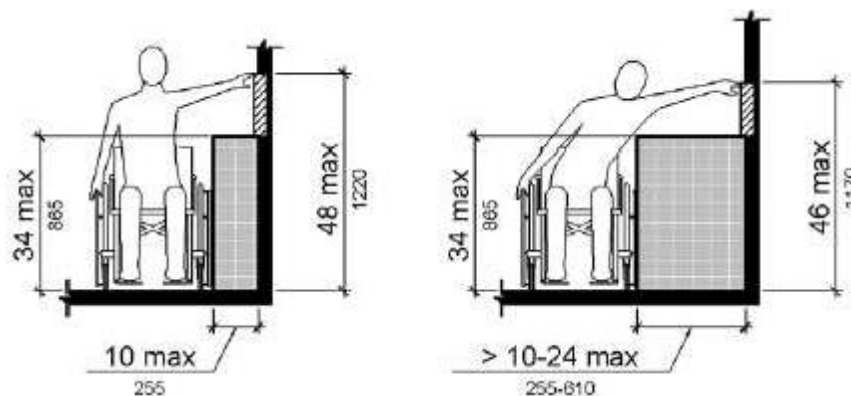
The Lake Bluff Public Library offers a variety of tables and counters for patrons. Counters and work surfaces for adults should be between 29 and 34 inches to comply with accessibility code. The Library should provide an equal experience for any counter or work surface that exceeds 34 inches.

Leg placement for study tables should allow for ADA access as well as be coordinated with chair sizes. Surfaces should be durable and easily maintained.

Flexible laptop tables are light and can be height adjustable to allow for use from a wide range of people. We recommend these be incorporated into lounge seating zones.

Motorized adjustable height tables are rapidly becoming standard for office furniture and it should not be long before this option will be a standard for public tables. There is furniture available now, but is still not considered a standard requirement or expectation.

The OPAC on the first floor does not meet surface accessibility requirements. The OPAC surface needs to be located at 34 inches maximum height.



Counter and Reach Diagram

### Recommendations

- ▶ Replace or modify the OPAC on the first floor to meet surface accessibility requirements. The OPAC surface needs to be located at 34 inches maximum height.
- ▶ When the Library has an opportunity to reconfigure space, we recommend evaluating work surfaces (tables, carrels, pods) to determine if performance, condition, ergonomics, ease of maintenance meet patron and staff needs. Make replacements as needed to support the new configuration.

## 3. EQUIPMENT

### Observations

Libraries have a variety of equipment and services available to customers. The equipment design is not always something that can be dictated. Selection of equipment should include accessibility as part of any effort to relocate existing or acquire new equipment. Copiers and printers do not typically conform to accessibility

guidelines. Self-check machines and book return systems should also conform to the requirements in the surfaces section above. It is recommended to provide side stands or tables for both returning and checking out materials. Some manufacturers provide extended surfaces at an optional cost.

### Recommendations

► *We recommend using a multi-level evaluation of location, configuration and accommodation with each piece of equipment including:*

- *Floor area clearances, approach paths, side or frontal approach heights*
- *Location of controls.* Controls and access tend to be designed for someone who is standing. Evaluate reach and view parameters for individuals in wheelchairs.
  - o Verify tabletop equipment is not installed where access is above 48 inches.
  - o Document scanners should be located on a standard table top or duplicate equipment should be provided if standing height is offered.
  - o Verify floor mounted equipment has adjustable screens and easy access to placing and receiving documents.

## 6. Environmental Quality & Occupant Wellness

### A. ACOUSTICS, LIGHTING CONTROL, & DAYLIGHT

#### 1. LIGHTING

##### Observations

The Library has updated/retrofit their existing building with LED lighting. This has addressed previous concerns about low illumination levels in the building. The Library does not have an interior lighting control system. Building lights need to be manually switched off each night and switched on in the mornings.

The Library is planning on to add some additional site lighting. The Library has recently replaced many of the site light fixtures with LED fixtures. The exterior lighting is on a photosensor and time clock.

#### 2. ACOUSTICS

##### Observations

Noise transfer between the three levels of the Library is an issue. Each level is open to a space below through a stepped series of balconies. The Mezzanine is open to and overlooks the First Floor and the First Floor is open to and overlooks the Youth Services department which is one of the primary noise generating areas in the building.

Acoustics control can be addressed in different ways by absorbing the sounds or isolating them. Typically, a combination of both options are employed. Examples of absorbing sound would be acoustical ceiling tiles (ACT), carpeting, or fabric wrapped foam panels. Isolation is constructing a barrier to reflect sound away from an area or space.

The Lake Bluff Public Library has a significant number of reflective surfaces. These surfaces such as the wood ceiling, masonry walls, and glass windows reflect and their geometric arrangement promotes and amplifies the sound transfer between the levels and within the spaces. We understand the aesthetic value of the current building design and would not recommend making significant aesthetic changes. Architecturally strategic glass walls and acoustic panels would help isolate and absorb much of the noise transfer without detaching from the design.

The HVAC system produces a significant amount of noise on the first floor and mezzanine level. Based on the limited space available for the HVAC system and the nature of the HVAC system installed, there is very little noise reduction that is possible without significant system modifications. Please refer to the separate HVAC facility report.

## Recommendations

- ▶ *We recommend looking at isolating the Youth Service department from the First Floor of the Library through the use of glass walls.*
- ▶ *Additionally, we would recommend acoustic panels at drywall locations.*
- ▶ *Additionally, a paging system could be upgraded to a white/pink noise system to help address acoustics.*

## **B. THERMAL COMFORT**

### **1. HUMIDITY**

#### Observations

The Library indicated they have reports of high humidity issues in the building. While it is important to note that each individual has personal preferences on temperature and humidity, there are industry standards to which most libraries are designed. The goal of these standards is to maintain temperatures between 70 - 75 degrees with between 30%-40% relative humidity. Dehumidification is a standard component of any cooling system and will function to keep spaces from exceeding the high end of this range. Humidification systems are less common based on the installation, operation, and maintenance costs associated with these systems. Most libraries then do nothing to increase relative humidity when the ambient moisture level falls below the low end of this range. As one would expect, the Lake Bluff Public Library does not have a humidification system.

There are a number of challenges in the building that complicate the control of moisture levels.

- The existing system is a constant volume system that can heat or cool but not do both simultaneously.
- The three levels of the library are connected through Mezzanine spaces. The Mezzanine spaces short circuit the heating and cooling zones and create hot zones in the mezzanine and cold zones on the lower level.
- The Director office is on a separate system from the Library. This room is next to a mechanical room and has acoustic issues. The space is typically cold and dry in the winter and stuffy and humid in the summer. The Library does not have access to temperature controls for this space.

#### Recommendations

- ▶ *We recommend replacing the existing HVAC system (21 years old in the annex/museum and 16 years old in the majority of the Library) with a variable air volume system. This would improve the ability of the system to respond to a wider range of environmental conditions including relative humidity. Please refer to the separate HVAC facility report.*
- ▶ *Another possibility is to transition to a variable refrigerant flow system. This would have allow better response to environmental conditions and could reduce noise levels by reducing duct sizes. Its disadvantage is that it is a total change from the current approach and would leverage less of the existing equipment than a shift to a variable air volume system.*

## 2. TEMPERATURE

### Observations

It is common to allow some temperature adjustment in staff and public spaces. A five-degree adjustment can allow patrons some control over the space and address personal temperature preferences.

The Library has limited base board heating around the space at the windows. There is no perimeter radiation (heating) at the north facing window areas. Base board heating is recommended to reduce condensation on the windows and address cold spots.

### Recommendations

- ▶ *We recommend addition of base board heating and ducted cooling to areas near windows that have more significant temperature changes throughout the seasons.*
- ▶ *We recommend evaluation of a transition from a constant volume HVAC system to either a variable air volume or a variable refrigerant flow system would allow greater control over temperature throughout the building.*

## 3. NOISE

The Library also indicated that air flow is an issue as well as excessive noise on the First Floor next to the service desk. Rebalancing the HVAC system can help with air flow issues. Some system noise can be mitigated with acoustic insulation, however the unit(s) in the area should be reviewed by a mechanical contractor to verify they are working as intended.

On the lower level, the HVAC return grille is located behind the service desk. The space has reported excessive noise from the system.

As noted in the section on "Acoustics" the HVAC system produces a significant amount of noise but based on both the limited space available for the HVAC system and the nature of the HVAC system installed, there is very little noise reduction that is possible without significant system modifications. Please refer to the separate HVAC facility report. Absorbing the noise generated is a more pragmatic approach to mitigating the impact of the sound generated.

- ▶ *We would recommend acoustic panels at drywall locations.*
- ▶ *Additionally, we recommend installing a paging system that can be upgraded to a white/pink noise system to help address acoustics.*

## C. AIR QUALITY

### Observations

No specific air quality issues were noted by the library.

### Recommendations

- ▶ *We recommend that the Library maintain the existing HVAC equipment and replace filters regularly. We also recommend that the Library clean the ducts every 3-5 years.*

## **D. FINISHES**

### Observations

Building finishes are wearing as expected given their age and durability. The flooring did not have any tripping hazards with the exception of the entry mat noted in the "Entry & Vestibule" section of this report. The resilient material on the main stair should be monitored as it is starting to show wear.

Walls and ceilings show expected wear based on the age.

Some laminate cabinets and counter tops have nicks and are delaminating in a few areas. However, based on the age this is not uncommon. The counters with plumbing do not meet accessibility code and should be replaced.

### Recommendations

- ▶ *We recommend repairing or replacing finishes that are delaminating and floor materials that present tripping hazards.*

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END OF REPORT



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### Illinois Environmental Barriers Act and Accessibility Code

Governmental units in Illinois, including libraries, must comply with the Environmental Barriers Act of Illinois. Generally, the Act [\[11.Q ILCS 25/\]](#) relates to any public facility, meaning "any building, structure or improved area" (owned, leased, or financed in whole or in part by a governmental unit) including public telephones, drinking fountains, and restrooms. "Improved areas" include parking areas, sidewalks, ramps, and landscaped areas.

"Environmental barriers" are features of the built environment that restrict access to or use of the built environment by a person with a "physical, mental, or communication disability or condition". The State, through its [Capital Development Board](#), has adopted and published its Accessibility Code ("Standards") which dictates the minimum design, construction, and alteration requirements. These standards apply to any new facility or portion thereof constructed after September 25, 1985. They also apply to alterations of existing public facilities as discussed below.

If an alteration costs more than 15% but less than 50% of the reproduction cost of the facility, the standards must be met in the part being altered and in the means of ingress and egress intended for general public use. If the alteration costs more than 50% of the reproduction cost of the facility, the entire facility must meet the standards. If the alteration is less than 15%, compliance with the standards is not mandatory unless the cost of the alteration is \$100,000 or more, and then the portion altered must comply. In the case of alterations, the percentage calculation is the total actual combined costs of alterations made within any 30-month period.

In no case should any alteration create an environmental barrier. There are severe penalties under the Act for any architects or engineers signing compliance certificates where the Act is violated or for the person issuing building permits. Moreover, any owner could be guilty of a business offense and fined up to \$1,000.

Finally, with respect to governmental units leasing or renting facilities or parts thereof that do not comply with the standards, "all reasonable efforts to terminate such lease, rental, or use by January 1, 1990" was to be made.

[Illinois State Library](#)



## Public Libraries and the Law

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| <b>American with Disabilities Act (ADA)</b><br>Annual Report of Receipts and Disbursements<br>Campaign Finance<br>Checklist of Annual Requirements for Public Libraries<br>Conflict of Interest<br>Copyright Laws<br>Employee Records Act<br>Freedom of Information Act and Open Meetings Act<br>Illinois Environmental Barriers Act and Accessibility Code<br>Illinois Governmental Ethics<br>Intergovernmental Cooperation<br>Library Records Confidentiality Act<br>Local Records Act<br>Non-Resident Service<br>Purchasing<br>Types of Libraries<br>Useful ILCS Citations |
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### American with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Act provides anti-discrimination protection in employment, public services, public accommodations, and telecommunications for Americans with disabilities. "Disability" is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities and includes a record of such impairment or being regarded as having an impairment. It does not include a person currently using illegal drugs or who abuses alcohol.

Libraries and other units of state or local government are required to have a designated coordinator of compliance activities, establish a grievance resolution procedure, and initiate a self-evaluation survey of current services, policies, and procedures. The survey was to be completed by January 26, 1993. All interested individuals were to be given an opportunity to participate. It is a violation to design and construct a new facility for occupancy after January 26, 1993 which is not "readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities... except where to do so would be structurally impracticable." Elevators need not be installed in libraries under three stories or with fewer than 3,000 square feet per floor.

Alterations must be accessible. When alterations to primary function areas are made, an accessible path of travel to the altered area (and the bathrooms, telephones, and drinking fountains serving that area) must be provided to the extent that the added accessibility costs are not disproportionate to the overall cost of the alterations.

Physical barriers in existing facilities must be removed if removal is readily achievable (i.e., easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense). The nature and cost of the action, the size of the establishment, number of employees, the overall financial resources of the public entity, the type of operation and structure, and the impact of the action upon library operations will be considered in determining whether the action is "readily achievable." Buildings that are eligible for the National Registry for Historic Places need not take action which threatens or destroys the historic character of the property, but alternative accessibility avenues must be provided.

If not readily achievable, alternative methods of providing the services must be offered if those methods are readily achievable. Auxiliary aids and services must be provided to individuals with vision or hearing impairments or other individuals with disabilities so that they can have an equal opportunity to participate or benefit unless an undue burden would result.

One manner for libraries to shift responsibility for compliance in contracts for new construction or renovation/remodeling of existing facilities is to provide that the architect and contractor are responsible for ADA compliance. The basic standard used for accessibility guidelines under ADA are the guidelines of the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, and the primary enforcement arm is the United States Attorney General acting through the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

### Additional Resources

- [ADA.gov: Information and Technical Assistance on the ADA](#)
- [ADA Update: A Primer for State and Local Governments](#)
- [The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Revised ADA Regulations Implementing Title II and Title III](#) (ADA.gov)
- [Environmental Barriers Act](#) [410 ILCS 25]
- [Illinois Accessibility Code](#) [71 Ill. Adm. Code 400]

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