

ADA EXECUTIVE SUMMARY TO COUNCIL

10 October 2015

Introduction

In 2013 the City of Lawton decided to revise and improve its ongoing efforts to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Pursuant to this determination the City decided it would (1) conduct a comprehensive self-evaluation; (2) undertake a comprehensive facility assessment, (3) develop a new and constantly evolving transition plan, and (4) create the Lawton Access Board. The City is continually reviewing and revising all its policies and procedures to enhance compliance with the ADA in a variety of areas including, but not limited to new construction, addressing and responding to complaints, monitoring compliance, and maintaining records of ADA improvements both undertaken and facilitated by the City. A progress report such as this one will be presented annually to the Lawton City Council in future years so that the council is aware of ongoing activities and has the opportunity to provide feedback and guidance to staff.

Self-Evaluation Report

On February 25, 2014, the Lawton City Council accepted the Self-Evaluation Report recently undertaken by City staff as part of the ongoing process of assessing and improving program accessibility within the City as required by Title II of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).

The self-evaluation is a process City staff uses to assess operations that include effective communication with the citizens regarding ADA issues and/or compliance; notice to citizens regarding ways in which Title II of the ADA protects them from discrimination; the grievance procedure for both citizen and employee complaints; and any needed modifications to the city policies and practices to ensure equal access to its programs, services, and activities.

Facilities Assessment

On March 25, 2014, Council accepted the Facilities Assessment Report undertaken by City staff as part of the ongoing process of assessing and improving program accessibility within the City as required by Title II of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).

The facilities assessment is a comprehensive assessment of each facility which it owns or controls within City public right-of-ways (including buildings, parks & recreation sites, streets and sidewalks and other facilities that may be leased by the City where City programs are offered). The facilities assessment incorporates the findings of the City of Lawton Access Survey report, dated February 5, 2013. It assesses, but is not limited to, site arrival points, sidewalks and curb ramps, pedestrian signals, bus stops, parking areas, parks and recreation areas, toilet rooms and bathing rooms within City facilities, drinking fountains, and auditoriums.

Transition Plan

On June 24, 2014 council accepted the Transition Plan developed by City staff and the Lawton Access Board as part of the ongoing process of assessing and improving program accessibility within the City as required by Title II of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).

The Transition Plan takes the information gathered from the Self-Evaluation and the Facilities Assessment to create a plan of action for eliminating barriers identified in facilities it owns or controls within City public right-of-ways (including buildings, parks & recreation sites, streets and sidewalks and other facilities that may be leased by the City where City programs are offered) as well as barriers identified in our documentation and programs provided. The Transition Plan is a continually evolving document that continues to add new goals after previous goals have been achieved.

Lawton Access Board

On December 17th, 2013, Council approved the creation of the Lawton Access Board and appointed the following individuals: Kay Love, Sharon Fanning, Joseph Harper, Don Kesler, and Assistant City Manager Jim Russell as the City's ADA Coordinator.

This board, comprised of citizens and the ADA Coordinator, works closely with other city staff in key departments such as Public Works and Parks and Recreation to facilitate and improve compliance with a broad range of accessibility issues. The board not only helped to create the Transition Plan but also monitors progress of the plan as well. By working closely with city staff the board helps to set reasonable goals and priorities within the Transition Plan. The board's members also receive citizen complaints/concerns and offer advice and guidance on proper and practical resolutions within the requirements of the ADA. Working together with city staff barriers to access are identified and addressed in order to ensure all citizens of Lawton are afforded the opportunity to fully experience all city programs, documentation, and facilities.

Summary

The City is addressing accessibility improvements identified in the Transition Plan according to a specified schedule with targeted funding goals. The scheduled funding goal for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2015 was \$250,000. The costs associated with citywide accessibility improvements either funded or facilitated by the City of Lawton for that period were categorized and tracked by City of Lawton Development & Construction Manager, Rusty Whisenhunt, and totaled \$878,457.60. This means that for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2015, the City of Lawton exceeded its targeted funding amount by \$628,457.60 or 251.4%. A copy of Mr. Whisenhunt's report is attached.