



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ACCESSIBILITY JUNE 23, 2009

Executive Summary

The Department's Strategic Plan for Accessibility (Plan) was envisioned in 2002. The Plan was intended to present to the Department Management Team a broad overview of the work required in order for Department programs, facilities and services to be inclusive and comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Plan development began in January of 2002 and continued into November 2002, when the progress was stopped due to Departmental restructuring and changing priorities. The Accessibility Coordinator and Accessibility Liaisons (Accessibility Team) worked together to craft the Plan, and achieved approximately 75% completion when the Plan development was stopped.

In October 2004, the Accessibility Team (A-Team) resumed development of the Plan. The following represents the completed Department Strategic Plan for Accessibility. The major components include:

- accessibility training for Department staff;
- an accessibility assessment of all existing Department programs, services and facilities;
- involvement by public disability advocacy groups in the Department's planning process;
- development of an action plan to correct existing accessibility deficiencies;
- development of inclusive new facilities, programs and services;
- a means to evaluate and document Departmental efforts and progress toward accessibility;
- A proposed timeline for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Accessibility.

The Strategic Plan for Accessibility will be an evolving process. Information gathered in the initial phases of the Plan will direct the activities to be accomplished in the later phases.

The final goal is for the Department to offer a comprehensive and consistent approach to inclusiveness in the Department's recreational programs, facilities and services.

Available funding, human resources, and support of this Plan by the Department Management Team are all critical to its success.



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The Department's Mission Statement:

"The Michigan Department of Natural resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, accessible use and enjoyment of the State's natural resources for current and future generations."

THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DEPARTMENT) ACCESSIBILITY MISSION - The Department commits its human and financial resources to ensure that: 1) all programs, facilities and services comply with the State and Federal accessibility guidelines and standards and 2) Department employees and the public are aware that the Department's programs, facilities and services comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.

GOAL # 1: DECISIONS AFFECTING DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAMS, FACILITIES AND SERVICES ARE INCLUSIVE, INCORPORATING ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS.

Objective A: Educate and increase the awareness of Department employees and public advisory groups about the rights, needs and desires of persons with disabilities.

Action items:

- 1) **Develop and provide consistent training.**
 - a) **Identify training needs within each Department.**
 - b) **Assess current training opportunities.**
 - c) **Develop training programs, pertinent to staff job responsibilities**
 - d) **Arrange training sessions.**
 - e) **Track the training accomplishments within each Department**

- 2) **Routinely and consistently disseminate applicable information to employees and public user groups regarding current standards, proposed changes to the standards, statutes, case law and Department procedures.**
 - a) **Assess available information and resources.**
 - b) **Determine the applicability of the information to the employees within each D/O.**
 - c) **Develop information resources for staff.**



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- d) Continue to update Department accessibility procedures.
- e) Share information with staff and the public.

- f) Prepare Department response to proposed changes of standards, coordinating the response through the State of Michigan's ADA Coordinator.

- 3) Address and incorporate accessibility issues early on in the planning/visioning aspects of all new construction projects and program development.

Objective B: Ensure a connection to the State ADA Coordinator.

Action items:

- 1) Provide guidance and consultation regarding:
 - a) Accessibility reference materials and resources.
 - b) Department policies and procedures.
 - c) Interpretation of the guidelines.
 - d) Intranet Q&A.

- 2) Assist Department's outreach efforts.
 - a) Maintain and establish points of contact with disability resources, including the State of Michigan ADA Coordinator; the Great Lakes Disability and Technical Assistance Center, (GLDBTAC), the National Center on Accessibility (NCA), the U. S. Access Board, The U. S. Department of Justice, (DOJ).
 - b) Establish a point of contact and maintain a current list of public user-groups, including Disabilities Today, Paralyzed Vets, and Centers for Independent Living, etc.

GOAL # 2: ENSURE THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE OF DEFICIENCIES RELATED TO ACCESSIBILITY IN ITS FACILITIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND FORMULATE A PLAN TO ALLEVIATE THOSE DEFICIENCIES.



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Objective A: Inventory the Department's facilities, programs and services.

Action items:

- 1) Identify all existing and proposed facilities, programs and services.
- 2) Define Department programs and services.
 - a) What are the elements?
 - b) What is needed by individuals with disabilities to participate?

Objective B: Evaluate all facilities, programs and services for compliance with State and Federal accessibility guidelines.

Action items:

- 1) Develop a comprehensive accessibility compliance check list for all Departmental facilities, programs and services.
- 2) Train internal audit teams to evaluate facilities, programs and services OR hire the services of an outside agency to conduct the evaluations.
- 3) Identify facilities, programs and services that comply and those that have deficiencies. Enter and maintain the information into a database.
- 4) Analyze and summarize the compliance status of each facility, program and service.
- 5) Every five years, review and update the compliance status of all facilities, programs and services.

Objective C: Prioritize Department deficient facilities, programs and services that require action to become compliant.

Action items:

- 1) Have each D/O review their compliance status and provide a priority list for action, including a suggested schedule of implementation to improve each facility, program and service identified to be deficient.
- 2) Compile the D/O's prioritized lists into a Department prioritized list, considering:
 - a) Target dates for completion.



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- b) Percentage of each type of facility or program/service to be updated.
- c) The geographic distribution of types of facilities that are to be updated.
- 3) Seek input from Department's Accessibility Advisory Council (AAC) on the proposed list.
- 4) Present a Department compliance plan with priorities to Department Management Team for approval.

Objective D: Implement the Department compliance plan.

Action items:

- 1) Provide the Department compliance plan to the respective division/offices for implementation;
- 2) Communicate the compliance plan through the Department's internet site.

Objective E: Monitor and report progress of the Department compliance plan.

Action items:

- 1) Develop annual progress report of accessibility activity within the Department.
- 2) Present Department progress report to Department Management Team annually.

GOAL # 3: STAFF SHALL BE AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ACCESSIBILITY.

Objective A: Identify operational costs and staff needs for:

- 1) Inventory and training.
- 2) Database development and management.
- 3) Materials and outreach.
- 4) Maintaining the A-Team and AAC.



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Objective B: Department identifies additional funding needs for facility, program and service upgrades.

Action items:

Each D/O identifies the costs associated with updating the facilities and programs for which they have management responsibility.

Objective C: Pursue grants and other outside funding and resources.

Action items:

- 1) Each D/O identifies potential funding to upgrade facilities, programs and services.
- 2) Pursue partnerships with municipalities federal, state, local units of government, and private organizations.
- 3) Establish a lump sum of annual Department or D/O funds to improve and upgrade existing identified facilities, programs, and/or services.

GOAL # 4: EFFECTIVELY CONVEY INFORMATION REGARDING ACCESSIBLE PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES TO THE PUBLIC AND DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES.

Objective A: Maximize effectiveness of current communication methods.

Action items:

- 1) Review, evaluate and improve written materials, Department web-based information, video, press releases.
- 2) Collaborate with the Department Office of Communication.
- 3) Solicit and respond to public suggestions, comments and recommendations to improve our facilities, programs, and services.
- 4) Ensure that the legal requirements and complaint process are posted at Department operated and maintained facilities, and that public complaints shall be responded to appropriately.

Objective B: Develop additional means to communicate news of Department's accessible facilities, programs, and services.



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Action items:

- 1) Utilize a variety of media resources to expand public outreach.
- 2) Showcase Department accessible facilities, programs and services through special events.
- 3) Maintain Department intranet and internet to:
 - a) Communicate accessibility successes and initiatives to employees and the public.
 - b) Continue to provide the search engine feature to highlight accessible elements.
- 4) Submit Department completed projects, programs or services to media, organizations, and/or publications for recognition and exposure.

GOAL # 5: EVALUATE THE DEPARTMENT'S PERFORMANCE IN ACHIEVING THE ACCESSIBILITY MISSION TO MODIFY THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES ACCORDINGLY.

Objective A: Identify the best means to monitor the Department's compliance with accessibility requirements, which are dynamic.

Action items:

- 1) Consult with other federal, state, and local units of government for guidance and examples of effective compliance monitoring.
- 2) Determine the most efficient, cost effective compliance monitoring methods.

Objective B: Implement compliance monitoring.

Action items:

- 1) Locate the program areas and establish geographic boundaries for monitoring.
- 2) Conduct monitoring of the geographic areas on a rotating basis.
- 3) Establish specific review periods for internal assessment annually
- 4) Compile the results of the compliance monitoring and include results in the annual report given to the management team and provide a courtesy copy to the State ADA Coordinator.



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Objective C: Evaluate the effectiveness of compliance monitoring

Action items:

- 1) Develop an evaluating tool to assess the compliance monitoring process.**