



Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan

July 2015

City of Anniston, Alabama
1128 Gurnee Avenue
Anniston, AL 36201
www.anniston.gov



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	PURPOSE	1
1.1	STRATEGIC PLAN AND VISION STATEMENT OF THE CITY OF ANNISTON	1
1.2	STATEMENT OF ACCESSIBILITY	2
1.3	ADA COORDINATOR	2
2	INTRODUCTION	3
3	PHYSICAL BARRIERS	5
3.1	BASELINE CONDITIONS	5
3.2	CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THE EXISTENCE OF IMPEDIMENT	5
3.3	FACILITY ASSESSMENT	6
3.3.1	<i>Parking Lot Assessments</i>	6
3.3.2	<i>Building Assessments</i>	7
3.4	SIDEWALK ASSESSMENT	8
3.4.1	<i>Sidewalk Assessment and Database Improvement</i>	11
3.4.2	<i>Sidewalk ADA Compliance Implementation</i>	11
3.5	ACTION PLAN	11
4	PROGRAMMATIC BARRIERS	12
4.1	SURVEY RESULTS	12
4.2	ACTION PLAN	13
4.2.1	<i>Communication</i>	13
4.2.2	<i>Municipally Sponsored Programs</i>	15
4.2.3	<i>Training for City Staff on ADA Compliance</i>	15
4.2.4	<i>Plan Review, Building Standards, and Code Amendments</i>	15
4.2.5	<i>Additional Transportation Services</i>	16
5	CONCLUSION & ACTION LOG	17
5.1.1	<i>Action Log for Physical Barriers</i>	17
5.1.2	<i>Action Log for Programmatic Barriers</i>	18
	APPENDIX A	20
	APPENDIX B	24
	APPENDIX C	26
	APPENDIX D	39

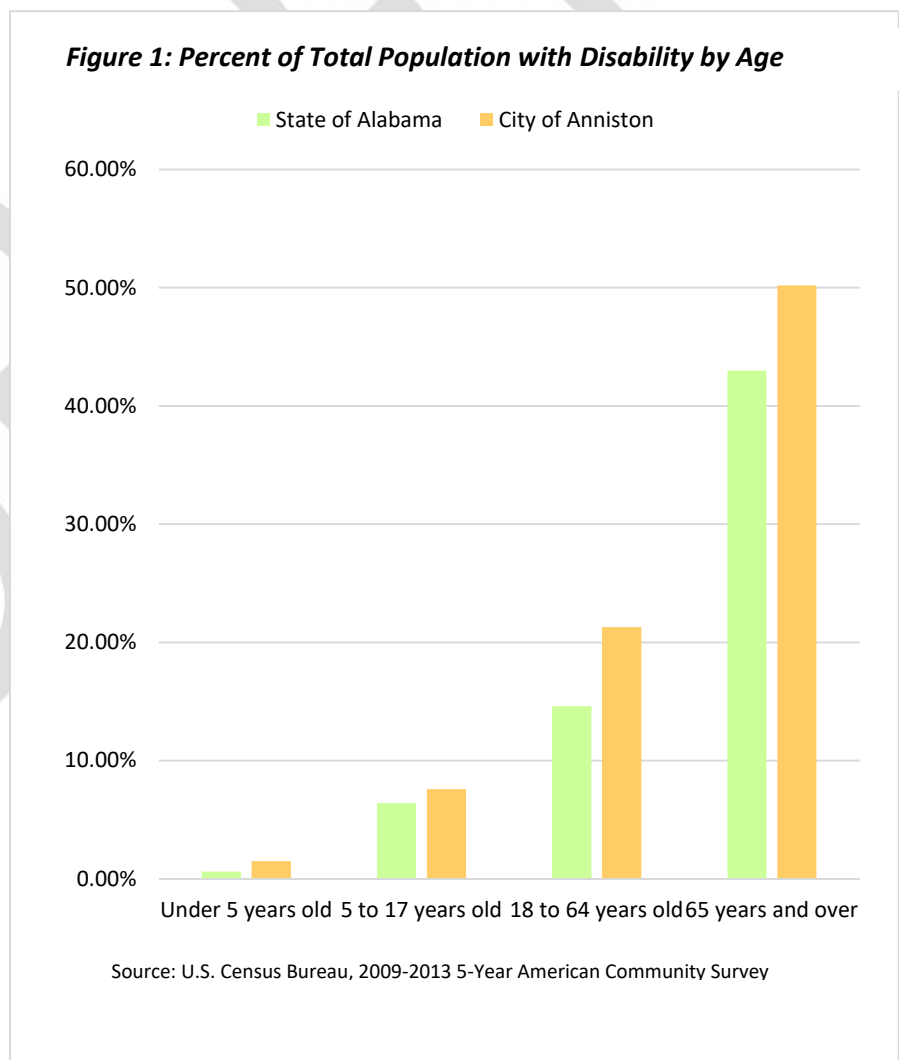
1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan (the Plan) is to ensure that all of the citizens of Anniston are provided access to the City's programs, services and activities in as timely and complete a manner as is reasonably possible. The City's elected officials and staff believe the ability to accommodate disabled people is essential to good customer service, to effective governance, and to the quality of life Anniston residents seek to enjoy. This Plan has been prepared after careful study of the City's programs, services, and activities.

1.1 STRATEGIC PLAN AND VISION STATEMENT OF THE CITY OF ANNISTON

Today, Anniston's journey is characterized by the phrase, "One City, One Vision." After years — even decades — of division and economic decline, a yearlong strategic planning process has united the city around a common vision for the future. The City Council toured the city to listen to residents' hopes, complaints, and ideas. The city convened workshops, where hundreds helped craft the Strategic Plan for the City of Anniston.

One of the challenges the strategic planning process highlighted is the aging population of Anniston. In 2010, the median age in Anniston was 41.3 years versus 37.9 for Alabama. The median age has been increasing at a rate faster than the median age has been increasing State-wide. In addition, US Census information shows that 23.3% of Anniston's total civilian population has a disability, well above the rate of 16.2% for Alabama overall. Since disability rates increase dramatically with age, and are already elevated in the City of Anniston, meeting or exceeding ADA standards is crucial to achieving the goals set forth in the city's strategic plan to position itself as a safe, attractive and prosperous place to live.



Building on this foundation, Anniston has committed to the following vision in development and implementation of this plan:

1. Fiscal Soundness

The City will endeavor to make ethical, cost-effective use of the resources available in the development and implementation of this plan.

2. Accessibility

The City recognizes that it has citizens with differing levels of ability that must access the City services, programs, and facilities.

3. Success

The City will strive to deliver exceptional service to all our customers - internal & external – to continually seek ways to improve our service delivery and to foster a “customer first” mind-set in the City of Anniston.

1.2 STATEMENT OF ACCESSIBILITY

The City of Anniston shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the City can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity. The City of Anniston will not place surcharges on individuals with disabilities to cover the cost involved in making programs accessible.

1.3 ADA COORDINATOR

The ADA Coordinator for the City of Anniston, Alabama shall be appointed by the City Manager. As of the writing of this plan, the ADA Coordinator is:

Joseph M. Jankoski
Risk Manager
City of Anniston
P.O Box 2168
Anniston, AL 36202
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2 INTRODUCTION

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 is a civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination against people who have disabilities and includes provisions that apply to public entities such as state and city governments. Specifically, Title II requires nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in state and local government services. These “public entities”, including departments, agencies, or other instrumentalities, are required to comply with the ADA.

Introduction

Title II of ADA therefore requires that all programs, services and activities of public entities, including those considered “instrumentalities” of the government, assure that individuals with disabilities have reasonable access to their programs, services and activities. The Act applies to all facilities where public programs and services are offered, including both facilities built before and after 1990. As a necessary step to a program access plan to provide accessibility under ADA, State and local governments, public entities or agencies are required to perform self-evaluations of their current facilities and services, relative to the accessibility requirements of ADA. The agencies are then required to develop a Transition Plan to address any deficiencies. The Plan is required to be updated periodically until all accessibility barriers are removed. The Plan is intended to achieve the following:

- a) Identify physical obstacles that limit the accessibility of City services to individuals with disabilities;
- b) Describe the methods to be used to make the services accessible;
- c) Provide a schedule for making the access modifications; and,
- d) Identify the public officials responsible for implementation of the Transition Plan.

Accessibility is not only for individuals with needs related to mobility disabilities, but also for individuals with needs related to speech, cognitive, vision and hearing disabilities. There are many potential barriers to accessibility of State or City services, and the following are simply a few of the more common examples:

Physical Barriers

- Parking
- Path of Entry/Travel
- Doors
- Service Counters
- Restrooms
- Sidewalks/Curb Ramps

Programmatic Barriers

- Building Signage
- Customer Communication and Interaction
- Access to Public Telephones

- Emergency Notifications, Alarms, Visible Signals
- Communications (via internet, public meetings, telephone)
- Participation opportunities for events sponsored by the City

This Plan has been prepared after a careful study of Anniston's programs and facilities. The City, in preparing this document, has solicited input from several organizations dedicated to serving the ADA community, including the following:

United Cerebral Palsy of East Central Alabama
415 Castle Avenue
Anniston, Alabama 36202
256-237-8203
ecaucp.org/

The Arc of Calhoun and Cleburne Counties
401 Noble St
Anniston, AL 36201
(256) 236-2857
calhouncleburnearc.org/

Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind
1209 Fort Lashley Ave
Talladega, AL 35160
(256) 761-3660
aidb.org/

The City will also utilize these agencies as resources to facilitate implementation of this plan and to service the ADA community of the City of Anniston.

This Plan has been posted to the City's web site for review and consideration by the general public. The City provides the opportunity for interested individuals to provide feedback on the ADA Plan at a public meeting held on XXXXX, 2015. In addition, notice has been provided of its existence in any official and unofficial City publications.

Responsibility for coordination of implementation of this plan will reside with the City ADA Coordinator. City facilities, programs, services, policies, practices and procedures will continue to be surveyed on an on-going basis, and the ADA Transition Plan may be revised to account for changes to City functions.

3 PHYSICAL BARRIERS

A public entity may not deny the benefits of its programs, activities, and services to individuals with disabilities because its facilities are inaccessible. A public entity's services, programs, or activities, when viewed in their entirety, must be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. This standard, known as "program accessibility," applies to all existing facilities of a public entity. Public entities, however, are not necessarily required to make each of their existing facilities accessible.

A self-evaluation/assessment of accessibility has been completed for most of the City's facilities and parking lots, as noted in section 3.3. The remaining self-evaluation/assessments will be completed in conjunction with the execution of this Plan. The evaluations will be made based on the criteria for baseline conditions and the existence of impediment as outlined below.

3.1 BASELINE CONDITIONS

City's facilities are reviewed in light of several "baseline" conditions, including:

- a) Access to parking and entry into the facilities themselves;
- b) Access to a clear and distinct path of travel;
- c) Access to programs and services themselves;
- d) Access to public areas and restrooms; and
- e) Access to related amenities.

3.2 CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THE EXISTENCE OF IMPEDIMENT

Criteria have been established to determine whether corrective action needs to be taken at a particular facility. The criteria includes, but is not limited to:

- a) **The nature of unique programs or services.** Some facilities and sites are the only location that a particular program or service may be provided; so there is limited flexibility to move the program or service to a more accessible facility.
- b) **Facilities already in compliance with ADA accessibility guidelines.** Several of the City's major facilities were constructed or underwent major renovations after the effective date of the ADA.
- c) **Ability to relocate programs from one facility to another accessible facility.** Because the City may offer special programs and services at more than one location, consideration was given to distribution of the special programs and services when viewed in their entirety;
- d) **Current state of accessibility.** The current condition of each facility in terms of barriers already removed, or planned to be removed.
- e) **Cost.** The cost of alternatives to physical barrier removal versus the cost of an alternative corrective action plan; and public use.
- f) **Population Served.** The population served by a particular program or service and whether the public can obtain service from an alternative City location.

These criteria may also be utilized by City staff and elected officials to prioritize implementation of recommended Action Items, as outlined in Section 5. In particular, as the City is prioritizing facilities for constructing recommended improvements, they should consider the criteria listed above.

3.3 FACILITY ASSESSMENT

Self-evaluations/assessments have been completed for 19 City-owned and operated facilities and 46 City-owned parking lots. Preliminary results have indicated that there are two main areas focus for future consideration of cost-effective retrofits:

- Water fountain height and alcove/set back issues.
- Renovation of bathrooms to achieve compliance and potential need to resolve conflicts with both code requirements (i.e. number of bathrooms) and available space (i.e. rehab of a bathroom may result in less facilities post construction).

These issues have generally been encountered city-wide, and will need to be addressed case by case to minimize overly burdensome financial implications associated with potential renovations.

3.3.1 Parking Lot Assessments

The City of Anniston Engineering Department staff inspected city-owned parking lots and found that out of the 45 properties that include parking lots, 32 currently do not meet ADA parking space requirements, and may need restriping and/or reconfiguration. Table 2 below provides a summary of the 45 parking lots that were inspected and their ADA compliance status.

Table 1: City Parking Lot Assessment Summary

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Parking Lot Assessment Notes</i>
ADA COMPLIANT	
Fire Station	under construction - design meets ADA
Cane Creek Golf Course	±150 spaces - 6 HC spaces; adequate
Meeting Center	±230 spaces - 8 HC spaces
Jacksons Parking Lot at 15th	15 spaces - 2 HC spaces
Cheaha Place	±140 spaces - 6 HC w 1 van
Fire Station #1	±30 spaces - 6 HC
Armory – Street Department	26 spaces - 2 HC
Senior Center	45 spaces - 5 HC
Aquatic Center	188 spaces- 15 HC spaces(4 van)
Soccer field	±120 spaces- 6 HC w/1 van
Justice center	105 spaces - 5 HC
NON-ADA COMPLIANT	
Pelham Heights Baseball park	±50 spaces - 0 HC spaces; 2 min (1 van)
Fire Station	6 spaces - 0 HC spaces; 1 min(van)
Legarde Park	15 spaces - no HC; min 1 van space
WWTP	4 spaces - 1 HC space ; needs van space
Henry Rd Fire Station	6 spaces - 0 HC spaces; 1 min(van)
Across Wilmer from Meeting Center	50 spaces - No HC spaces
Wilmer/Williams Alley	40 spaces - no HC spaces
Municipal Lot behind Peerless, Atlanta Avenue	21 spaces-1 HC (restripe for van near Peerless) 15 spaces - 2 HC , 38 spaces - 2 HC

Facility	Parking Lot Assessment Notes
City Hall	±100 spaces - 3 HC; 4 required w/1 van
old AWWSB	±30 spaces - no HC; min 2 required
Across from EARPDC parking	± 94 spaces - no HC spaces; min 4 HC spaces
12th/Noble	61 spaces - 1 HC; add 2 HC spaces
Lyric Square Parking Lot	77 spaces - 2 HC; restripe for 3 spaces
Williams Alley and 11th	14 spaces - 0 HC; 1 van space required
Parking Deck	±150 spaces - no HC; min 6 w/ 1 van
10th St across from Regions	46 spaces - no HC
Anniston Public Library	44/2 , 38/0 ; min 4 spaces w 1/van
Fire Station on Dooley	5 spaces - no HC; min 1 van
Baseball/softball parking	±125 spaces- 0 HC; 5 HC w/ 1 van
Berman, Museum, Lenlock	42/3 @ museum, 28/0 parking, 50/2 @ Berman, ±70/2 @ Lenlock; restripe @ Berman & Lenlock
Norwood Hodges Community Center	±90 spaces - 3 HC; min 4 w/1 van
Airport	±200 spaces - 3 HC; min 6 spaces w/ 1 van
City Garage	27 spaces - No HC spaces; remove 2 - 1 van

3.3.2 Building Assessments

Table 2 contains a list of 35 city owned and operated facilities that should be inspected for compliance with the ADA. Facilities were inspected by the City Building Officials according to prevailing code and the standards listed above. As of July 2015, the City has performed assessments on 19 out of 36 identified City facilities and will complete the remaining assessments by the end of 2016. The assessment results for each of the 19 completed facility assessments is included in Appendix D.

Table 2: City Facility Assessment Summary

CITY OF ANNISTON PUBLIC BUILDINGS ADA DEFICIENCY REVIEW		
NO	FACILITY	ADDRESS
1	City Hall	1128 Gurnee Avenue
2	Public Works (Armory)	2501 McClellan Boulevard
3	Police Station	174 W. 14th Street
4	Fire Station 1	225 E. 17th Street
5	Fire Station 2	103 E. F Street
6	Fire Station 3	34 Traffic Circle
7	Fire Station 4	1923 Cooper Avenue
8	Fire Station 5	2500 Henry Road
9	Fire Station 6	Anniston Airport
10	Anniston Regional Airport	2504 Anniston Airport Boulevard
11	Carver Community Center	720 W. 14th Street
12	Norwood Hodges Community Center	3125 Spring Valley Road
13	South Highland Community Center	229 S. Allen Avenue

14	Wiggins Community Center	2202 W. 17th Street
15	City Meeting Center	1615 Noble Street
16	Cane Creek Golf Shop / Restaurant	2247 Galloway Gate Road
17	Anniston Sports Complex	356 Summerall Gate Road
18	Anniston Soccer Complex	745 Summerall Gate Road
19	Aquatics Center / Miller Gym	130 Summerall Gate Road
20	Senior Recreation Center	980 Littlebrandt Drive
21	Washington Swimming Pool	203 S. Leighton Avenue
22	Carver Swimming Pool	720 W 14th St
23	Project Pay / Scout Hut (Unity House)	6300 McClellan Blvd.
24	Zinn Park Bathrooms	Anniston
25	Nettles Park Bathrooms / Concession Stand	214 S. Christine Avenue
26	Norwood Park Bathrooms / Concession Stand	429 W 29th St
27	Randolph Park Bathrooms	W 17th St
28	Pelham Park Bathrooms	Cave Road
29	Holly Farms Cabin	6514 Weaver Road
30	Ladiga Trail / Holly Farms Bathrooms	6514 Weaver Road
31	Anniston Museum of Natural History	800 Museum Drive
32	Berman Museum	840 Museum Drive
33	Botanical Gardens	2 Museum Drive
34	LeGarde Park Bathrooms	4301 McClellan Boulevard
35	Norfolk Southern Railway Station (AmTrak)	126 W. 4th Street

3.4 SIDEWALK ASSESSMENT

The City of Anniston initiated a pilot study field inventory of pedestrian right-of-way to assess the overall condition of sidewalks throughout the City and to determine the level of accessibility and physical locations of any barriers. By conducting a condition assessment, the City was able to identify sidewalk maintenance needs and necessary improvements. The goal is for the City is to identify any physical barriers and provide better accessibility to residents through improved connectivity between neighborhoods, commercial corridors, and other community resources.

City representatives conducted a sidewalk inventory in March 2015 in a pilot area in downtown Anniston, where there is a representative mix of commercial businesses, residential areas, and a sidewalk network. Within the pilot area, 12.2 miles of sidewalk were assessed. During the GPS inventory, technicians utilized GPS equipment and other standard measuring tools to develop a map of existing sidewalks, ramps, and problem areas. The assessment included characteristics of slope and other aspects of ADA compliance at each point. In addition to ramp characteristics, maintenance needs were also recorded in the field at specific locations along each sidewalk segment. Maintenance needs identified in the field included the following category:

- **Sediment / Vegetation** - these were defined as areas where excessive vegetation or overgrowth has occurred across a sidewalk.

- **Structural Damage** - defined as significant damage to the sidewalk material, hindering the movement for wheelchairs or people with other disabilities.
- **Obstructions** - occurs when natural elements or manmade features impede the flow of movement along a sidewalk segment.
- **Erosion** - instances where erosion or sedimentation, most likely related to drainage has created an unsafe and potential dangerous situation along a give sidewalk section.

The table below contains a summary of the information collected during the sidewalk inventory pilot study. To view a map of this information, please see Appendix B.

Table 3: Sidewalk Inventory Pilot Study

ADA Compliance Issue	Number
Compliant Ramps	20
Non-Compliant Ramps	162
Missing Ramps	94
Other Areas of Non-Compliance	130

The photographs on the following pages illustrate sidewalk and ramp conditions observed during this pilot study. The City anticipates that these conditions are indicative of the overall condition of the sidewalk network within the City of Anniston. The City staff will utilize this data to identify barriers to accessibility, to schedule future sidewalk GIS inventory field work, and to develop sidewalk improvement projects for inclusion in the Corrective Plan. Projects will be prioritized based on the sidewalks level of use, project cost, and potential to improve overall City connectivity. Sidewalk improvement projects will be implemented as funding is identified, or in association with other City projects that necessitate construction in the City street right-of-way or on City property. The City plans to coordinate sidewalk improvements for ADA Compliance with implementation of proposed projects within the City ROW as part of the Anniston Area Bicycle Pedestrian Program integration Plan.

Figure 2: Photographs of Typical City Sidewalk Conditions



Obstruction with utility box



Compliant warning indicator



Storm drain blocking ramp



Non-compliant cracks



Missing ramp - steps



Non-compliant cross slope



Missing ramp – curb



Compliant driveway

3.4.1 Sidewalk Assessment and Database Improvement

During the sidewalk assessment pilot project, there were several reoccurring conditions that represent a challenge for accessibility. At each location that a non-compliant condition occurred, a GPS point was added to the inventory and notes were taken to describe the condition. A revision of the data collected in the field could help make the resulting data more useable. Currently, a notes field is used to describe any problematic condition encountered in the field. After evaluating several hundred sidewalk locations in the City of Anniston, enough observations have been made to now revisit the database scheme used for collecting the sidewalk inventory. The database should be altered to include the most common condition problems into a selectable list. This would create a standardized database that can be queried and more readily integrated into capital works Improvements to the sidewalk assessment and database are included in the Action Log.

3.4.2 Sidewalk ADA Compliance Implementation

The City of Anniston will utilize available data and other plans of record to prioritize future inventory and sidewalk improvement work along corridors. For example, the City can review citywide topography to identify overly steep grades where compliant slopes are not attainable, and limit future sidewalk inventory work to proceed along corridors where ADA compliance is attainable. Moreover, corridors can be prioritized to compliment other access improvements. Documents such as the Strategic Plan for the City of Anniston, Bicycle/Pedestrian Program Integration Study, Downtown Anniston Historic District, and the planned Multi-Modal Transportation Center will inform the next phase of sidewalk inventory, and will identify areas in the City in need of further study and evaluation. All recommended actions to identify corridors for future inventory and sidewalk improvement work have been included in the Action Log in Chapter 5.

The City may also begin to further evaluate development plans that include sidewalks such that selected sidewalk ADA deficiencies are addressed by the property owner and/or developer in conjunction with the development or redevelopment project. The City would review each project (especially in the downtown area) relative to opportunities to engage the owner in the repair, rehabilitation or re-construction of non-compliant or damaged sidewalks incidental to their onsite construction efforts. Examples included use of the damaged sidewalk as the construction entrance such that the owner would replace the sidewalk after project completion.

3.5 ACTION PLAN

Through the self-evaluations summarized above, deficiencies in the City of Anniston's facilities, including buildings, parking lots and sidewalks, that diminish the ability of disabled persons to benefit from the City's programs, services and activities have been identified. For those buildings that have had an assessment, a correction plan or other course of action has been noted, along with a schedule for completion of the correction. The Action Log is included in Section 5. For those facilities that have not yet had an assessment, a date by which the City will perform the assessment has been included in the Action Log.

4 PROGRAMMATIC BARRIERS

The City recognizes not all barriers to the City's programs, services and activities are physical in nature. Other administrative barriers exist that must be overcome to provide complete government services to those who are disabled. The City conducted a self-survey of all City Departments to identify any programmatic barriers that may impact accessibility of City programs, services or activities. To review a copy of the self-survey form, please see Appendix C.

4.1 SURVEY RESULTS

The City of Anniston conducted a detailed survey to evaluate each department in the City with regard to ADA compliance. The purpose of this exercise was to identify areas where the City falls short in accommodating people with disabilities. The City will utilize the results of the surveys to identify measures that can be taken to better serve all residents. Included herein is a general overview of the survey and results. The appendix includes a copy of the survey form as well as department specific summaries of the results.

Some City departments interact with the public outside the confines of a public facility. For example, the Police and Fire Departments generally interact with the public in the field. As a result, the employees in many cases are required to adapt to situations that arise in the field. For example, in responding to a call or incident, the physical or mental health of the person needing assistance is not necessarily provided through dispatch. As a result, those responding may need to modify the approach for resolving the issue. In addition, the Police department is responsible for the transport of detained and jailed individuals, requiring specific training and equipment to assess ADA needs in the field.

The Planning and Development Services and Finance Departments both have routine contact with the public. The Planning and Development Services Department handles all plan review and permitting in the City and thus handles a significant amount of public traffic as well as performing a central role in ensuring that ADA compliance is included in future development during plan review. The Finance Department handles municipal solid waste service payments and business licensing, which results in high volumes of people accessing this department on a daily basis. While the licensing process can be completed via email, bill payment is currently only offered in person.

The Parks and Recreation Department has the most regular contact with residents in the City. This department is in continuous contact with the public due to the numerous recreational services provided on a daily basis. Parks and Recreation is the only department that provides services that are exclusively for persons with disabilities as well as wheelchair accessible transportation.

In most departments, no formal policies are in place with a clearly defined procedure for accommodating people with disabilities. Generally, each case is handled independently and the appropriate accommodations have been made on a case by case basis. However, the City of Anniston strives to make programs available for anyone to participate. Each department is committed to providing quality services to all residents in the City and is taking the necessary steps to confirm that they provide their service in a manner that is accessible to all residents.

The Human Resources Department is the only department with a formal reasonable accommodation request procedure, which is included in personnel policies and documented in an Employees Handbook. Such best practices can be expanded to include procedures specific to other departments as needed.

Table 4: Public Outreach By Department

How do departments communicate with members of the public about their services?						
	Verbal Outreach	Brochures	Flyers/ Notices	Newspaper/ Bulletin	Website/ Social Media	Other
Parks and Recreation Department	X	X	X	X	X	
Human Resources			X	X	X	
Fire Department	X			X	X	
City Clerk				X	X	
Planning and Development Services	X	X	X		X	
Finance Department						X
Anniston Police Department						X

4.2 ACTION PLAN

Based on the results of the self-surveys, which are included in Appendix C, the City has identified future steps and activities that the City can explore to ensure that people with disabilities have access to City services and programs. The City's future plan must address the following elements:

4.2.1 Communication

Effective communication is essential to providing accessible services in that whatever is written or spoken must be as clear and understandable to people with disabilities as it is for people who do not have disabilities.

The City uses many forms of communications with residents including the web site, public notices relating to City administration and open public meetings, and other communications regarding the City's programs, services, and activities. In order to ensure that all forms of communication are accessible, the City is taking specific actions to improve communications, including the following:

1. ADA Grievance Policy and Procedures. The City will develop a formal Grievance Policy and Procedure for ADA compliance. This document will be distributed to all City departments and made available at public buildings. It will also be posted on the website. Draft forms of these materials are provided in Appendix A.

2. Reasonable Modification Policy. The City has a Reasonable Modification Policy for ADA compliance. This policy will be distributed to all City departments and posted at public buildings. It will also be posted on the website. Draft forms of these materials are provided in Appendix C.

3. Public Information. All forms of public communication about City programs and activities must address ADA compliance issues specific to the program or activity. In order to ensure that public communication has the appropriate verbiage/statement regarding ADA compliance, they should be periodically reviewed by the ADA coordinator.

4. Agenda text. The City will begin printing certain portions of meeting agendas in large-font type so that the content of agendas of public meetings can be more easily reviewed. Major agenda points will be printed in 14 point font.

5. Website communication. The City posts agendas on the City's web site, which, when used with the free Adobe Acrobat Reader function, allows for enlargement so that the contents of agendas may be viewed from one's personal computer. The City is exploring upgrades to its website to increase accessibility for meeting materials, as well as provide online bill-pay options.

6. Accommodations for participation in Public Meetings. The City will research the feasibility of incorporating equipment, available upon request, specially designed to assist hearing impaired persons to fully participate in City Council Meetings. The City will explore the feasibility of producing documents in Braille or acquiring other aids or services, including software that can convert text into speech. The City will also investigate contracting qualified interpreter services and other providers so that interpreters and other aids and services may be available on short notice.

7. Accessibility of Public Meetings. The City has already taken substantial efforts toward ensuring public meetings are held in ADA-accessible facilities. The City continue to work toward ensuring that all public meetings are held in ADA accessible facilities, and, to the extent feasible, will make specific accommodations, where necessary, to ensure that meetings among residents and City staff can be held within ADA accessible facilities.

8. Closed Captioning Television. The City will investigate the possibility of including closed captioning for Public Meetings televised on the local cable access channel.

9. Accessibility of Phone Communication. The City will investigate tele-typewriting devices (TTD/TTY) to determine feasibility of offering this service for City's public phone line (s). The City may consider the purchase of such devices or a virtual/contractual service that can be made available upon request.

10. ADA Compliance in Legal Documents. The City must include appropriate ADA compliance language in all legal documents including, but not limited to: contracts, request for proposals, requests for qualifications, bid requests, job advertisements, and public notices.

11. ADA Compliance for Hiring Procedures. The ADA Compliance officer should review the application, interview and hiring procedures within each department of the City to ensure compliance with ADA.

4.2.2 Municipally Sponsored Programs

The City is committed to allowing persons with disabilities to participate in municipally sponsored programs. This includes recreation opportunities sponsored by the City's Parks and Recreation Department, community meetings and other events hosted or sponsored by the City. The City will achieve this goal by integrating all of the steps outlined above into these programs, including providing for effective communications and ensuring meeting and events are, to the extent possible, held in ADA-accessible parks and facilities. The City is taking additional specific actions to improve accessibility, including the following:

- 1. Formal ADA Recreational Policy:** The Parks and Recreation Department will develop a formal policy for accommodating disabled persons, where feasible. The City has recently added a handicap accessible lift at the public pool, and has historically allowed disabled participants in City sponsored recreational programs on a case by case basis. However, a formal policy has not previously been established. It shall be the City's policy not to discriminate against disabled persons wishing to participate in a City-sponsored recreational activity, and as such, the City will do their best to accommodate all participants.
- 2. Accessible Vehicle Transportation:** Departments that operate transportation vehicles for the public include Parks and Recreation and Police. Only the Parks and Recreation Department has a handicap accessible vehicle. At least one handicap accessible vehicle should be purchased by the City, or be made available to rent at short notice for use by all departments as necessary.

4.2.3 Training for City Staff on ADA Compliance

In order to ensure effective implementation of this plan, and to afford staff with the tools necessary to provide better accessibility, the City will provide the following training on the following topics for staff:

1. ADA Transition Plan training for all City staff
2. Specialized training for field staff that may deal with the public as part of their job duties
3. ADA Coordinator training

Building Department staff recently attended an ADA Accessibility Training Seminar in Auburn, Al. The City may elect to send staff to training offered elsewhere or utilize materials from other training seminars to inform staff regarding ADA compliance issues.

4.2.4 Plan Review, Building Standards, and Code Amendments

To move toward ADA compliance as a seamless part of routine maintenance and future development, COA is committed to amend or otherwise adjust municipal code and plan review procedures to ensure

that every opportunity to cost-effectively achieve ADA compliance is captured. The City will undertake the following changes to City policy and code to facilitate implementation of this Plan.

1. The City will utilize future, planned development to leverage investments in future sidewalk ADA projects, including ADA compliance of surrounding right-of-way.
2. The City will review existing city standards and ordinances as it relates to ADA compliance, including zoning, subdivision and engineering standards. The City will reconsider the existing requirement that calls for the private property owner to maintain the public sidewalk segment that fronts his/her property. The City also intends to add “ADA Compliance” items to the standard plan review checklist.
3. Curb cut driveway slopes that are not ADA compliant are one of the biggest issues identified as part of the pilot study. The City’s existing curb cut permit process should be reviewed and modified to better address ADA compliance issues associated with sidewalk slope transitions. The City Engineer has developed specifications for driveway curb cuts to ensure that future driveways are constructed in compliance with ADA standards.

4.2.5 Additional Transportation Services

As a compliment to ADA compliance in city programs, the COA will provide additional public notification on available ADA-compliant transportation services. The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission offers a regional fixed-route bus system, with a central transfer point at the Amtrak Station in Anniston. ADA requires areas that offer fixed route service to also offer transportation for those with disabilities that is equivalent to the fixed route service. Calhoun County has this system for residents of Anniston, Oxford, Weaver, Jacksonville, and Hobson City. The system is curb-to-curb demand response. The cost is \$1.00 each way, and requires an application process to qualify. There are currently four vans that are used in Paratransit operations.

The City of Anniston can provide information to the public about these transportation services and explore future partnerships for potentially increasing accessibility to public meetings and services.

5 CONCLUSION & ACTION LOG

The City is taking the actions referenced below and will continue to look for ways to remove barriers to access so that the disabled citizens of Anniston are given reasonable access to the City's programs, services, and activities.

To confirm follow-up on corrective actions recommended by the Plan, the City will institute an ADA Action Log, documenting its efforts at compliance with the ADA. The Action Log below addresses recommendations made to address physical and programmatic barriers to accessibility. Each recommendation is translated into an action items with an implementation lead and anticipated implementation/completion dates. After the adoption of this Plan by the City Council of Anniston, the ADA Action Log will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. The ADA Action Log shall be available upon request.

5.1.1 Action Log for Physical Barriers

<i>Physical Barriers</i>	<i>Implementation Lead</i>	<i>Completion Date</i>
1. Complete ADA inspections at remaining Anniston Facilities.	Planning Department	2016
2. Perform assessment of identified renovation/construction projects based on criteria and develop prioritized ADA Facility Improvement Plan.	Planning Department	2016
3. Hire a design professional to evaluate facility assessments and plan necessary improvements.	Public Works Department	2017
4. Solicit quotes to perform renovation/construction work necessary to bring facilities into compliance with ADA standards	Public Works Department	2017
5. Implement ADA Facility Improvement Plan, as funding becomes available.	Public Works Department	Beginning in 2018
6. Refine and improve database for sidewalk inventory program.	Public Works/Engineering	2016
7. Expand sidewalk inventory pilot area and complete assessment of ADA compliance.	Public Works/Engineering	2019
8. Develop prioritized Sidewalk Improvement Corridors.	Planning Department	2019
9. Implement Sidewalk Improvement Plan as funding becomes available.	Public Works Department	Beginning in 2019

5.1.2 Action Log for Programmatic Barriers

<i>Programmatic Barriers</i>	<i>Implementation Lead</i>	<i>Completion Date</i>
1. Select and train ADA Coordinator.	City Manager	Beginning in 2015
2. Post ADA Grievance Policy and Procedures	ADA Coordinator	2016
3. Distribute Reasonable Modification Policy	ADA Coordinator	2016
4. Applicable public communication approved by ADA coordinator, such as large-font agenda text	Public Information Officer	2016
5. Improve web site communication accessibility, including bill pay options	Public Information Officer	2016
6. Research ways to provide more accommodations for participation in public meetings	ADA Coordinator	2016
7. Ensure public meetings are held in an accessible facility	ADA Coordinator	2017
8. Determine availability of closed captioning for public meetings videos	Public Information Officer	2016
9. Investigate TTD/TTY to determine feasibility of offering this service	ADA Coordinator	2016
10. Include appropriate ADA Compliance language in Legal Documents	City Attorney	2016
11. Review hiring procedures in each department to determine compliance with ADA	Human Resources Department	2016
12. Develop Formal ADA Recreational Policy	Parks and Recreation Department	2018
13. Investigate availability of accessible vehicle purchase or rental	Purchasing Department	2016
14. Promote county Paratransit services as appropriate	ADA Coordinator	Beginning in 2016
15. Perform training for City staff on ADA Transition Plan	ADA Coordinator	2016

<i>Programmatic Barriers</i>	<i>Implementation Lead</i>	<i>Completion Date</i>
16. Investigate available training courses for field staff	ADA Coordinator	2016
17. Review and update city code for ADA compliance	Planning Department	2016
18. Analyze plan review process and amend for ADA compliance in new development and renovations	Planning Department	2016
19. Create and implement new curb cut specs	Public Works/Engineering	2015
20. Explore additional opportunities for continual upgrades to achieve ADA compliance, such as a sidewalk CIP, other ongoing plans and maintenance	ADA Coordinator	Ongoing

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APPENDIX A

ADA GRIEVANCE POLICY & REASONABLE MODIFICATION POLICY

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ADA GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This grievance procedure has been developed to provide for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by the U.S. Department of Justice regulations, which implement Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Grievances should be filed with the City's Human Resources Department at:

City of Anniston
ATTN: ADA Coordinator
City of Anniston
P.O. Box 2168
Anniston, AL 36202

The Grievance Procedure consists of the following:

1. A complaint should be filed in writing (but can be submitted in alternate format due to the needs of an individual's disability), containing the name and address of the person filing it, and briefly describing the alleged violation of the regulations or discriminatory act.
2. A complaint should be filed within 30 calendar days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation. (Processing of allegations of discrimination, which occurred before this grievance procedure was in place, will be considered on a case-by-case basis.)
3. An investigation, as may be appropriate, will follow the filing of a complaint and will be conducted by the City's ADA Coordinator. These rules contemplate informal but thorough investigations, affording all interested parties and their representatives, if any, an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to a complaint.
4. The City's ADA Coordinator under the direct supervision of the HR Director will provide for review for the City Attorney, a written determination, as to the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, and a copy will be forwarded to the City Manager, along with the original complaint, no later than thirty (30) days after its filing.
5. The City's ADA Coordinator will maintain the files and records of the City of Anniston relating to all ADA grievances/complaints filed.
6. The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint filed hereunder will not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of an ADA complaint with the responsible federal department or agency, such as the U.S. Department of Justice at (800) 514-0301. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.
7. These rules will be construed to protect the substantive rights of interested persons to meet appropriate due process standards, and to assure that the City of Anniston complies with the ADA and implementing regulations.

This information can be made available in an alternate format and the grievance can be submitted in an alternate format.

CITY OF ANNISTON ADA GRIEVANCE FORM

Name: _____

Address:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Location of Problem:

Description of Problem:

****Please attach additional pages if needed***

The complaint should be submitted by the grievant and/or his/her designee as soon as possible but no later than 30 calendar days after the alleged violation to:

City of Anniston
ATTN: ADA Coordinator
P.O. Box 2168
Anniston, AL 36202

REASONABLE MODIFICATION POLICY

Access to Programs, Services, and Activities

NON-DISCRIMINATION

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any City program or activity.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the City, or be subjected to discrimination by the City. Nor shall the City exclude or otherwise deny equal services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability of an individual with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association.

DEFINITION

A "qualified individual with a disability" is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the City.

REASONABLE MODIFICATION

The City shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the City can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.

COMMUNICATIONS

The City shall take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. To this end, the City shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, a service, program, or activity conducted by the City. In determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is necessary, the City shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individual with disabilities.

AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES

"Auxiliary aids and services" includes:

1. Qualified interpreters, note takers, transcription services, written materials, assistive listening systems, and other effective methods for making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments
2. Qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, brailled materials, large print materials, or other effective methods for making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments
3. Acquisition or modification of equipment or devices
4. Other similar services and actions

APPENDIX B

SIDEWALK ASSESSMENT PILOT PROJECT MAP

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Insert map here

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APPENDIX C

SURVEY RESULTS

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City of Anniston

ADA Compliance Survey Summary

Finance Department

I. Department Background

The Anniston Finance Department has 1 to 10 employees and operates with a budget of \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 dollars annually. The department receives garbage service payments, administers business licenses, and does limited fieldwork enforcing business licensing.

II. General Public Contact

The department provides service for 5,000 to 10,000 citizens, of which it is estimated less than 10% have disabilities. The department currently informs members of the public about its services on garbage bills and business license renewals. No transportation is provided by the department. The department does have safety standards for applicants, which are determined through staff observation, testing and records check. The department does not have programs specifically for disabled persons. They have an automated phone menu which can be bypassed to reach a department representative, but the department does not provide TTY/TDD phone services. The department does not provide phones for the public to use to make outgoing calls.

Disabled persons are not portrayed in public materials and the department does not advertise building accessibility to the public. The department does not provide information through videos, but it does include exhibits and/or interpretive displays, and provides alternatives such as written format and email to make the materials accessible to people with disabilities. There is no documented method for the public to request auxiliary formats of department material, however it is possible for department staff to provide materials in alternative formats upon request, which can typically fulfilled within one hour.

The department holds public events, but does not notify the public on architectural accessibility of the proposed location. The department makes meeting content available to people with disabilities via their website. The department pays for costs incurred from accommodating people with disabilities out of the general budget. Individuals may request a modification to department practices to accommodate a disability on a case-by-case basis, however this procedure is not documented in written form, nor is the public notified that they may make such requests. There currently is no alternative for an individual whose request is denied. Department staff are informed about how to handle requests for modification through word of mouth and experience. Such requests for modification are received by this department 1 to 10 times per year, and in the past year procedures have been modified for one individual with a cognitive disability. In this case, the department's customer service representative helped the individual fill out an application.

Access to this department does require individuals to wait in line, however there is an option to sit in the lobby and fill out any forms, or print forms off the website and email them. Any staff member can offer these alternatives upon request. There are no general restrictions on service animals. There is no procedure for an applicant to file an ADA compliance grievance. The department buildings have emergency evacuation procedures. Staff is aware of emergency exits, and some training has been

conducted, however the emergency procedures are not documented in written form, and do not specifically make provisions for disabled person. The department is equipped with visual emergency alarms in addition to audio alarms.

III. Intensive “Client” Contact

N/A

IV. Contracting

N/A

V. Purchasing

The department purchases computer equipment or applications for use by the public, but currently does not pursue products that may provide greater accessibility to people with disabilities. The department does put equipment or large system purchases out to bid, but the RFP/Q does not have a standard component about accessibility features.

VI. Staff Training & Technical Assistance

The department does not have an ADA coordinator and department staff do not receive training in how to use auxiliary aids and services. Department staff would benefit from training and/or technical assistance in providing departmental and communication access, such as assistance developing policies and procedures, training in legal requirements, training in providing accommodations, and resources for alternative formats & auxiliary aids.

VII. Recommendations

- a. Adopt and post a citywide procedure for filing an ADA compliance grievance
- b. Develop a program for online bill pay
- c. Develop method for the public to request auxiliary formats of department material
- d. Develop written policies and make them publicly available for accommodating disabled persons
- e. Expand alternative formats for department materials and employ auxiliary aids to improve access to department information
- f. Incorporate the evacuation of disabled persons into the existing emergency evacuation plan
- g. Integrate disabled persons in public materials
- h. Provide ability to accommodate disabled persons
- i. Provide detailed ADA training for all staff that works with the public.
- j. TTY/TDD capabilities

Human Resources Department

I. Department Background

The Anniston Human Resources Department has 1 to 10 employees and operates with a budget of less than \$500,000 dollars annually. The Human Resources Department does not issue licenses or certifications.

II. General Public Contact

The department provides service for less than 1,000 citizens, of which it is estimated less than 10% have disabilities. General department information is provided through flyer notices in community, newspaper and bulletin advertisements, and its website. No transportation is provided by the department. The department does not have an automated phone menu, nor does it provide TTY/TDD phone services. The department does not provide phones for the public to use to make outgoing calls. The department does not advertise its architectural accessibility to the public. The department does not provide information through videos, exhibits or interpretive displays. Individuals may request a modification to department practices to accommodate a disability, and a reasonable accommodation request procedure is included in personnel policies. Department staff are informed about how to handle requests for modification in the Employee Handbook. Requests for modification are received by this department 1 to 10 times per year.

III. Intensive “Client” Contact

Applications for this department are available via the department website, and applicants may apply at the department office, by mail, or on the website. A member of the department’s staff is available to help those individuals who may require assistance in completing an application. Applicants are assessed for drug use by self-identification by individual, staff observation, and testing.

IV. Contracting

N/A

V. Purchasing

N/A

VI. Staff Training & Technical Assistance

Department staff receive general information at orientation pertaining to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The department does not have an ADA coordinator.

VII. Recommendations

- a. Adopt and post a citywide procedure for filing an ADA compliance grievance
- b. Detailed training on developing policies, legal requirements and accommodating disabled persons
- c. Develop a standard component addressing accessibility in all RFP/Qs for publicly used equipment
- d. Develop method for the public to request auxiliary formats of department material
- e. Develop written policies and make them publicly available for accommodating disabled persons

- f. Expand alternative formats for department materials and employ auxiliary aids to improve access to department information
- g. Incorporate the evacuation of disabled persons into the existing emergency evacuation plan
- h. Integrate disabled persons in public materials
- i. Provide ability to accommodate disabled persons
- j. Provide detailed ADA training for all staff that works with the public.
- k. Provide wheelchair accessibility in transportation
- l. TTY/TDD capabilities

Park and Recreation Department

I. Department Background

The Anniston Park and Recreation Department has over fifty employees and operates with a budget over \$1,000,000 annually and is not responsible for issuing any licenses or certifications. The department has continuous contact with the public, providing numerous recreational services on a daily basis

II. General Public Contact

The department provides service for over 10,000 citizens, of which it is estimated 10% to 25% have disabilities. General department information is provided through verbal outreach, flyer notices in community, newspaper and bulletin advertisements, and its website. At times, transportation is provided by the department, and it is wheelchair accessible. The department has safety standards that qualified applicants are able to care for themselves and do not have a record of violent crime. The safety standards are met through self-identification by applicants, staff observation, staff interviews, testing and records check. The department has programs specifically for disabled persons, and disabled persons are always permitted to participate in general department activities. The department has an automated phone menu but it does not provide TTY/TDD phone services or a simple (1 step) way to bypass the menu and speak directly with a department representative. The department does provide a standard phone to make outgoing calls when needed. The department does not portray disabled persons in its public materials, and it does not advertise building accessibility to the public. The department does not provide captioning or an audio narration option for its video, movie, or television materials for the public. The department also uses exhibits and/or interpretive displays. It is possible for PARD staff to provide materials in alternative formats upon request, but these procedures are not documented or publicized. The department does hold public events, but does not provide notification on the architectural accessibility of the event space. Costs incurred from accommodating people with disabilities is paid for from fees, a specific budget line item, the General Fund, and grants. This department does not currently have a process in place for members of the public to request a modification of department practices to accommodate people disability. There are general restrictions on animals, but this policy may be modified to allow for service animals. There is no procedure for an applicant to file an ADA compliance grievance. The department buildings have documented emergency evacuation procedures, but they do not specifically make provisions for disabled persons, nor do the buildings have visual and audio alarms.

III. Intensive “Client” Contact

The department has eligibility requirements which may be modified to accommodate individuals with disabilities. Members of the public are not notified before they are enrolled in the department that they may request modifications. Members of the public can apply to this department in person at the department office or by an authorized representative. A member of the staff is available to help those individuals who may require assistance in completing an application. This department requires documentation in order for an individual to participate or receive services. Department staff provide services to assist an individual in obtaining required documentation, making phone calls, photocopies, and obtaining documentation directly (with a signed release). These services are provided upon request. This department prohibits service to individuals based on their illegal use of drugs, which is determined by self-identification by individual, staff observation, staff interview, testing, and records check. This department has staffed drop-in hours for potential applicants or department participants who may not have an appointment. This department has a waiting room, and people who are waiting are notified of their turn by verbal announcement or individual contact by a receptionist or other staff. This department has requirements that a person must meet in order to remain in the department/continue to receive service, and the department is currently unable to modify these requirements to accommodate individuals with disabilities. This department has service termination criteria based on disciplinary standards, but they do not currently include an effort to determine whether the cause for termination is related to a disability. Individuals are notified in person and in advance that their participation in department services will be terminated before actual termination, and there is a process for appealing service termination, which is explained in the termination notice. The notice includes the phone number to call and register an appeal, and a form to complete.

IV. Contracting

This department’s Request for Proposal/Qualification process includes criteria on the potential contractor’s history of providing service to people with disabilities.

V. Purchasing

N/A

VI. Staff Training & Technical Assistance

Staff members receive general information pertaining to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Fair Housing Amendments Act as needed. There is not an ADA coordinator and the staff is not trained in auxiliary aids and services.

VII. Recommendation Recommendations

- a. Adopt and post a citywide procedure for filing an ADA compliance grievance
- b. Develop a program specifically for disabled persons
- c. Develop a standard component addressing accessibility in all RFP/Qs for publicly used equipment
- d. Develop written policies and make them publicly available for accommodating disabled persons

- e. Expand alternative formats for department materials and employ auxiliary aids to improve access to department information
- f. Incorporate the evacuation of disabled persons into the existing emergency evacuation plan
- g. Integrate disabled persons in public materials
- h. Provide ability to accommodate disabled persons
- i. Provide detailed ADA training for all staff that works with the public.
- j. Provide wheelchair accessibility in transportation
- k. TTY/TDD capabilities

City Clerk

I. Department Background

The Anniston City Clerk’s office has 1 to 10 employees and operates with a budget of less than \$500,000 dollars annually. This office does not issue licenses or certifications. Members of the public utilize this office for a variety of issues - records request, general questions, Council Meetings, etc.

II. General Public Contact

The office provides service for under 1,000 citizens, of which it is estimated fewer than 10% have disabilities. General information is provided through newspaper and bulletin advertisements and its website. No transportation is provided by this office. The office does not have an automated phone menu to access staff and/or information on services, nor does it provide TTY/TDD phone services. People with disabilities are not portrayed in any of the materials used by this office. The office does not advertise its architectural accessibility to the public. The department does not provide information through videos, movies, or television broadcasts, nor does it utilize exhibits and/or interpretive displays. The office holds public events at meeting and recreational centers, but does not notify the public about whether or not the locations of the events are architecturally accessible. There is currently no procedure to request a modification to office practices to accommodate a disability. Access to this office does not require individuals to wait in line, and there are no general restrictions on service animals. There is no procedure for an individual to file an ADA compliance grievance. The office has an emergency evacuation procedure, however the procedure is not documented in written form, and does not specifically make provisions for disabled people. The building where this office is located is equipped with visual emergency alarms in addition to audio alarms.

III. Intensive “Client” Contact

N/A

IV. Contracting

N/A

V. Purchasing

N/A

VI. Staff Training & Technical Assistance

Staff members receive general information pertaining to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), but are not trained in auxiliary aids and services. The office does not have an ADA coordinator.

VII. Recommendations

- a. Adopt and post a citywide procedure for filing an ADA compliance grievance
- b. Detailed training on developing policies, legal requirements and accommodating disabled persons
- c. Develop method for the public to request auxiliary formats of department material
- d. Develop written policies and make them publicly available for accommodating disabled persons
- e. Expand alternative formats for department materials and employ auxiliary aids to improve access to department information
- f. Incorporate the evacuation of disabled persons into the existing emergency evacuation plan
- g. Integrate disabled persons in public materials
- h. Provide ability to accommodate disabled persons
- i. Provide detailed ADA training for all staff that works with the public.
- j. TTY/TDD capabilities

Fire Department

I. Department Background

The Anniston City Fire Department has over 50 employees and operates with a budget of over \$1,000,000 dollars annually. The Fire Department does issue licenses or certifications.

II. General Public Contact

The department provides fire and EMS emergency services, public fire education, business inspections, arson investigation, and training. The department provides services for over 10,000 citizens, of which it is estimated < 10% have disabilities. The office currently informs members of the public about its services via verbal outreach, newspaper and bulletin advertisements, website, and social media. No transportation is provided by the department. The department has an automated phone menu to access staff and/or information on services, which features a 1-step way for a caller to bypass the menu and speak directly with a department representative. The department does not offer TTY/TDD phone services. People with disabilities are not portrayed in any of the materials used by this department. The office does not advertise its building accessibility to the public. The department utilizes exhibits and/or interpretive displays, and makes this content available for people with disabilities in the following formats: computer disc, website and email. The department has no procedure for requesting the alternative formats. The department holds public meetings at its main location, but does not notify the public about whether or not the location is architecturally accessible. There is currently no procedure to request a modification to department policies, procedures, or practices to accommodate a disability. The department has no general restrictions on service animals. There is no procedure for an individual to file an ADA compliance grievance. The department does not have an emergency evacuation procedure, nor is the building where this department is located equipped with visual emergency alarms or audio alarms.

III. Intensive "Client" Contact

The department has eligibility requirements which currently may not be modified to accommodate individuals with disabilities. The application for this department is available at Civil Service/City Hall. A member of the public may also apply in person at the Fire Department, by mail, or through the website. Staff is not available to help those individuals who may require assistance in completing an application. This department does not have requirements or service termination criteria to continue to receive its services.

IV. Contracting

N/A

V. Purchasing

The department purchases computer equipment or applications for use by the public, but does not pursue products that may provide greater accessibility to people with disabilities. The department does put equipment or large system purchases out to bid, but the RFP/Q does not have a standard component about accessibility features.

VI. Staff Training & Technical Assistance

The Fire Department does not have an ADA coordinator, and would benefit from training and/or technical assistance in providing departmental and communication access.

VII. Recommendations

- a. Adopt and post a citywide procedure for filing an ADA compliance grievance
- b. Detailed training on developing policies, legal requirements and accommodating disabled persons
- c. Develop a program specifically for disabled persons
- d. Develop a standard component addressing accessibility in all RFP/Qs for publicly used equipment
- e. Develop method for the public to request auxiliary formats of department material
- f. Develop written policies and make them publicly available for accommodating disabled persons
- g. Expand alternative formats for department materials and employ auxiliary aids to improve access to department information
- h. Incorporate the evacuation of disabled persons into the existing emergency evacuation plan
- i. Integrate disabled persons in public materials
- j. Provide ability to accommodate disabled persons
- k. Provide detailed ADA training for all staff that works with the public.
- l. Provide wheelchair accessibility in transportation
- m. TTY/TDD capabilities

Police Department

I. Department Background

The Anniston Police Department has over 50 employees and operates with a budget over \$1,000,000 dollars annually and is not responsible for issuing any licenses or certifications. People come to the department to file reports, obtain reports, and attend municipal court.

II. General Public Contact

The department provides service for over 10,000 citizens, of which an estimated that less than 10% have disabilities. General department information is provided directly by the Police Department.

Transportation is not provided by the department. The department does have safety standards for applicants, which are determined through testing and background checks. The department does not have programs specifically for disabled persons. The department does have an automated phone menu, but it cannot be bypassed for direct human interaction, nor does it provide TTY/TDD phone services. A standard phone is provided for arranging transportation and tracking down required documents. The department does not portray disabled persons in its public materials and it does not advertise building accessibility to the public. The department does not provide videos, movies, television broadcasts, exhibits or interpretive displays, and the department has no alternative formats or auxiliary aids for making information accessible to disabled persons. There is no method for the public to request auxiliary formats of department material. The police department holds public meetings at the Police department facility, but accessibility to this location is not advertised. No alternative or auxiliary methods are used to make public hearings accessible to disabled persons. There is no procedure for individuals to request modification to department policies to accommodate disabilities. The department does require applicants to wait in line, but seating is available in the lobby, and any staff member can help with an alternative solution. There is no restriction on service or companion animals. There is a written procedure for an applicant to file an ADA compliance grievance by documenting the complaint and forwarding it to the City Manager's office, and this procedure is advertised, including the address for registering a complaint in person. An applicant would have to ask about it at the service window, and no modification exists for individuals whose disabilities prevent them from meeting the requirements of this procedure. No ADA compliance grievances have ever been filed, however staff members who would make decisions on grievances receive training in the requirements of federal and state disability rights law by a Training Lieutenant during orientation. The department buildings have documented emergency evacuation procedures, which make provisions for disabled persons. If someone is incarcerated in jail, they are the jailer's main priority. The Department buildings have visual and audio alarms.

III. Intensive "Client" Contact

The department has eligibility requirements which currently may not be modified to accommodate individuals with disabilities. A member of the public may apply in person at the Police Department or by mail. The department requires documentation in order for an individual to participate or receive services, however staff is not available to help those individuals who may require assistance in completing an application. This department prohibits service to individuals based on their illegal use of drugs, which is determined by self-identification by individual, testing, records check, and polygraph test. This department does not have drop-in hours for potential applicants or department participants who may not have an appointment. This department has a waiting room, and people who are waiting are notified of their turn by verbal announcement by a receptionist or other staff. This department has requirements that a person must meet in order to remain in the department/continue to receive service, and the department is currently unable to modify these requirements to accommodate individuals with disabilities. This department has service termination criteria based on a broad list of criteria, but they do not currently include an effort to determine whether the cause for termination is related to a disability. Individuals are notified in person and in advance that their participation in department services will be terminated before actual termination, and there is a process for appealing

service termination, which is explained in the termination notice. The notice includes an address at which to register an appeal in person and a form to complete.

IV. Contracting

N/A

V. Purchasing

N/A

VI. Staff Training & Technical Assistance

All staff receive general information at orientation pertaining to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). During annual in-service training, all staff also receive training on psychiatric disabilities, mobility impairments, and immune system disorders. There is not an ADA coordinator and the staff is not trained in auxiliary aids and services.

VII. Recommendations

- a. Adopt and post a citywide procedure for filing an ADA compliance grievance
- b. Detailed training on developing policies, legal requirements and accommodating disabled persons
- c. Develop a program specifically for disabled persons
- d. Develop method for the public to request auxiliary formats of department material
- e. Develop written policies and make them publicly available for accommodating disabled persons
- f. Expand alternative formats for department materials and employ auxiliary aids to improve access to department information
- g. Incorporate the evacuation of disabled persons into the existing emergency evacuation plan
- h. Integrate disabled persons in public materials
- i. Provide ability to accommodate disabled persons
- j. Provide detailed ADA training for all staff that works with the public.
- k. Provide wheelchair accessibility in transportation
- l. TTY/TDD capabilities

Planning and Development Services

II. Department Background

The Anniston City Planning and Development Services has 1 to 10 employees and operates with a budget under \$500,000 annually. The department is responsible for building and development permitting, and meets with developers, architects, engineers for plan review and permitting.

III. General Public Contact

The department provides service for 1,000 to 5,000 citizens, out of which an estimated 10% to 25% are disabled. General department information is provided through verbal outreach, brochures, flyer notice in community and its website. Transportation is not provided. The department does not have programs specifically for disabled persons. The department does use an automated phone menu that can be bypassed to talk directly to a person. The department does not provide TTY/TDD phone services. Standard phones are provided for arranging transportation or tracking down required documents. The

department does not portray disabled persons in its public materials nor does it notify the public about whether its office is architecturally accessible. The department does not provide the public information through videos, movies or television broadcasts, but there are exhibits or interpretive displays, and the department uses computer disks, website and e-mail as alternative formats. The public may request these alternative formats but the procedure for doing so is not documented or publicized. The department does hold public meetings in off-site locations with meeting room facilities, but it does not inform the public of the accessibility of the meeting location. There is no procedure to request modification to department policies to accommodate disabilities, however the department receives a few requests of this nature annually. The department does require applicants to wait in line, however window service can be offered as an alternative by request. There is no restriction on service or companion animals. There is no procedure for an applicant to file an ADA compliance grievance. The emergency evacuation procedure for the department is limited to marked exits and identified shelters.

IV. Intensive “Client” Contact

The department has eligibility requirements which currently may not be modified to accommodate individuals with disabilities. A member of the public may apply by authorized representative. Staff is not available to help those individuals who may require assistance in completing an application. This department prohibits service to individuals based on their illegal use of drugs, which is handled through the city’s Human Resources Department. This department does not have a waiting room.

V. Contracting

This department’s Request for Proposal/Qualification process includes criteria on the potential contractor’s history of providing service to people with disabilities, training of staff in serving people with disabilities, ability to modify service to accommodate people with disabilities, ability to provide transportation to people with disabilities, and use of a grievance procedure. Department Officers/Contract Monitors are not trained in recognizing departmental and communication access problems, but they do monitor whether contractor notifies the public about how to request modifications or accommodations, and whether the contractor has a waiting list, and a written grievance procedure. How frequently monitoring occurs depends on the project/grant and project duration.

VI. Purchasing

N/A

VII. Staff Training & Technical Assistance

This department does not have an ADA Coordinator. Staff members do not receive training in how to use auxiliary aids and services, and would staff benefit from training and/or technical assistance in providing departmental and communication access. In particular, training in how to work with people with disabilities, providing accommodations, and resources for alternative formats and auxiliary aids would be helpful.

VIII. Recommendations

- a. Adopt and post a citywide procedure for filing an ADA compliance grievance
- b. Detailed training on developing policies, legal requirements and accommodating disabled persons

- c. Develop a standard component addressing accessibility in all RFP/Qs for publicly used equipment
- d. Develop method for the public to request auxiliary formats of department material
- e. Develop written policies and make them publicly available for accommodating disabled persons
- f. Expand alternative formats for department materials and employ auxiliary aids to improve access to department information
- g. Incorporate the evacuation of disabled persons into the existing emergency evacuation plan
- h. Integrate disabled persons in public materials
- i. Provide ability to accommodate disabled persons
- j. Provide detailed ADA training for all staff that works with the public.
- k. Provide wheelchair accessibility in transportation
- l. TTY/TDD capabilities

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APPENDIX D

BUILDING ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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