



## Knox County ADA Transition Plan Improvements



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### **Knox County Accomplishments 2021-2024**

#### **Engineering / PROW**

1. County Commission approved a contract with Barge solutions to design Peters Road / Ebenezer Road sidewalks to meet ADA Requirements. Design costs totaled \$250,000.00. The design was completed in September of 2022. The project will include 7.34 miles of sidewalks, 87 driveways, 20 unsignalized intersections and 6 signalized intersections for ADA improvements. The goal is for this project to begin in fiscal year 2026 and will be estimated to cost \$2.3 million.
2. County Commission approved a contract in January of 2020, with SL King and Associates to design Cedar Bluff Road sidewalks to meet ADA requirements for \$67,000. Design was completed in 2021. The project included 1.45 miles of sidewalks, 31 driveways and 25 unsignalized intersections.
3. Cedar Bluff Road ADA sidewalk improvement project was implemented and completed in 2022. The cost of the project totaled \$900,000.

(Refer to Appendix A and B -Cedar Bluff sidewalk improvements and map)

#### **Carter Park, Senior Center, and Library**

In August of 2023, construction began on an ADA improvement project for Carter Park, senior center, and library. The project is ongoing and encompasses five phases of construction. The project should be complete by spring of 2025 (FY 2026). Estimated cost of the improvements is \$3.5 million. See link attached to PBA.org schedule for more information:

<https://pbastatus.squarespace.com/carter-park-ada-improvements>

#### **Carter Park Improvements included but not limited to:**

- Sidewalks
- Dugouts
- Playground
- Concession stands
- Bathrooms
- Lighting (funded under Knox County Parks)

#### **Carter Senior Center Improvements included but not limited to:**

- Bathroom renovations
- Kitchen renovations

- Automatic door installation in restrooms and large meeting room
- Accessible Parking improvements
- Exercise equipment rearrangement in the workout room
- Sidewalk improvements around the building
- Sidewalk addition to the back of the building

**Carter Library Improvements included but not limited to:**

- Accessible Parking Improvements
- Sidewalk improvements around the building
- Restroom renovations
- Library shelving reconfiguration
- Library Drop Box renovations

(Refer to Appendix C for details of the multi phased Carter Project)

**Parks and Recreation**

- In addition to new park installations and renovations the following barriers have been addressed:
- Seven playground upgrades on surfacing replacing mulch with pour-in-place surface materials:
  - French Memorial Park
  - Gibbs Ruritan Park
  - Maloney Road Park
  - Mascot Park
  - Melton Hill Park
  - Northwest Sports Complex
  - Thomas Tank Strickland Park
  - Concord Park
- Three new inclusive playground installations: Carter, Melton Hill, Hardin Valley.
- Three new inclusive adult fitness area installations along Powell Greenway and within Powell Station and Alcoaway Optimist.
- Completion of adjustments to grab bars within all restroom facilities (See Appendix C).
- Parks Department and Golf personnel were trained in 2023 on ADA awareness and etiquette
- Knox County ADA coordinator meets regularly with parks personnel to discuss and mitigate ADA concerns, program opportunities, or project improvements.
- Knox County Parks director and the Knox County ADA coordinator attended an ADA training facilitated by the Tennessee Bureau of Environment and Conservation
- Dog Park additions: Beverly, Plum Creek, New Harvest, Angora, I.C. King expansion dog park (oct. 2019)
- Aubrey’s launch, Roy Arthur launch – Accessible Kayak Launches in Powell Community
- New parks – McBee Ferry, Collier preserve, Angora Frog Farm, Plum Creek, Corryton
- In coordination with the ADA coordinator, libraries, and parks installed four accessible storybook trails; one at Collier Park Oct. 2022, Ijams Nov. 2022, Westview Sept. 2022, and Beverly Nov. 2023

- Beverly inclusive intergenerational park was installed November 2023
- An option for requesting accommodations was added to all program registrations on the Parks website
- Parks ordered 150 feet of Mobi Mats to be utilized for programs where terrain may prohibit access.
- With contracted services through Appalachian Mountain Bike club, the following trails underwent improvements that allowed for accessible mountain bike programming; Farragut Ballfield trails of Around the Horn 2759 linear feet; Full Count 4,347 linear feet; Lago 3,117 linear Feet–
- The following trails are adaptive trail specific; Strike zone 1375, warning track 1220, batter up 1168, greenway trail wall ride 1237, Calloway Ridge loop 1.0 mile
- I.C. King dog park loop 2943 linear feet, Easy Peasy 1.34 miles

(Refer to Appendix D – Parks ADA Maintenance Log)

### **Programs and Services**

- In 2022, Knox County revised and edited the team member handbook to include updated information on accommodations and accessibility.
- In 2022, the Knox County Website was updated adding improved website accessibility including a content widget.
- The Knox County grievance procedure was updated to include a fillable PDF as well as fillable online format.
- The Knox County website was updated to include an online fillable accommodation request form for team members as well as members of the public. The website also allows for a downloadable PDF format.
- In 2024 a non-discrimination policy / updated ADA policy was completed and added to the website
- Eleven team members from the Human resources and benefits department participated in disability awareness training in 2023.

### **Emergency planning and response**

- In 2021 a committee was formed to assist in the planning for emergency and disaster response. The Committee is called SAFE (Securing Accessibility For Emergencies). The committee has developed a draft emergency action plan annex for the Knoxville / Knox County area specific to responding to and meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities in the event of emergencies.
- A trailer was purchased and outfitted with durable medical equipment for initial emergency response situations to assist individuals with mobility impairments. The Trailer was donated and is now owned and managed by the Tennessee Federation of Fire Chaplains. The trailer is managed by the Fire Chaplains and East Tennessee Healthcare Coalition and is listed as a regional asset. The SAFE Trailer is outfitted with various accessibility aids and durable medical equipment.
- Knox County and City of Knoxville ADA coordinators trained AMR personnel on ADA awareness and etiquette during the AMR continuing ED Days during the years 2023 and 2024.

- 50 Rural Metro firefighters have been trained in ADA etiquette and awareness training in 2023 and 2024.

Members of the SAFE committee have presented at multiple healthcare and emergency management conferences displaying the emergency response durable medical trailer. The trailer is now being used as an example for replication across the state of Tennessee and the southeast in other jurisdictions.

### **Knox County Schools**

- An ADA committee was formed in 2021, and an initial review of the transition plan began. The committee consists of Knox County's ADA Coordinator, Knox County law director, Director of School operations, KCS chief financial officer, Director of special education, KCS safety and risk management director, director of facilities, and maintenance staff.
- Members of the ADA committee evaluated emergency evacuation operations at West High School to set forth an action plan for evacuation of students with mobility impairments from second and third floor areas.
- Knox County schools replaced two existing schools with new schools. These schools were Lonsdale Elementary and Adrian Burnette. By replacing these schools, 27 interior ADA barriers were removed at Adrian Burnette. The surrounding sidewalks encompassing the school were brought into compliance. A new playground at Adrian Burnette offers 13 accessible elevated activities and 23 accessible ground-level activities.
- Lonsdale Elementary's new school eliminated 19 barriers previously listed in the Knox County transition plan. The surrounding sidewalks encompassing the school were brought into compliance.
- An ADA compliant handrail was installed on a staircase at Pond Gap elementary school in spring of 2024.
- The accessible seating platform at Halls High School football stadium was expanded in September of 2024.

(Refer to Appendix E– School ADA Maintenance Logs)

### **Knox county Sheriff's Office**

Knox County ADA coordinator consults with KCSO on a regular basis and provides subject matter support in a variety of capacities such as personnel accommodations, public accommodations / modification requests, and inmate population accommodations and / or requests. Knox County ADA coordinator consults with KCSO legal counsel, chief of the detention facility, and human resources on a regular basis to ensure program compliance.

Since 2021, the Knox County ADA Coordinator has been working with KCSO's training academy to teach Corrections officers ADA awareness and etiquette during each Corrections Officers Training Academy. These academies occur approximately every six weeks.

Two Knox County Sheriff's human resources personnel are currently training to obtain their ADA coordinator certification.

## **Knox County Courts**

Knox county currently works to ensure compliance and meet the program requirements for accessibility throughout all the Knox County Courts. Knox County has a procedure for requesting auxiliary aids and regularly provides American sign language, transcription services, and listening devices throughout the court system.

Knox county receives a large volume of calls relating to requests for accommodations for transport to and from parking areas with mobility devices, parking requests, and requests for legal services from people with disabilities. Accommodations that can be met through providing auxiliary aids, wheelchair or parking assistance is filled through either the ADA office, the court offices, or Public Building Authority security. If requests are made for legal assistance, resources are provided for outside service providers such as East Tennessee Legal Aid, The Knoxville Barr Association, and Disability Rights Tennessee.

## **Accessibility**

Three automatic doors were installed in 2022, in the City County Building to assist employees who require the use of mobility devices.

The Knox County Health Department replaced two exam tables with tables that are height adjustable. The health department also installed an adjustable exam chair in the women's health office.

The Knox County Health department updated and revised the safety evacuation plan to include procedures for individuals with mobility impairments.

Knox County revised and edited the team member handbook to include updated information on accommodations and accessibility.

The Knox County Website was updated adding improved website accessibility including a content widget.

The Knox County grievance and accommodations request procedure were updated to include a fillable PDF as well as fillable online format.

In 2024 a non-discrimination policy / updated ADA policy was completed and added to the website

Team members from the Human resources and benefits department participated in disability awareness training in 2023.

## **Appendix**

Appendix A: Cedar Bluff Sidewalk Improvements

Appendix B: Cedar Bluff Sidewalk Map

Appendix C: Carter Park Improvements

Appendix D: Knox County Parks ADA Maintenance Log

Appendix E: Knox County Schools ADA Maintenance Log