

Slide 1: Baltimore City ADA Transition Plan

Good afternoon.

My name is Valorie LaCour. I am a middle-aged white person and tonight I am wearing a pink jacket. My pronouns are she and her. I am the Chief of the ADA Compliance Division at the Department of Transportation and the ADA Coordinator for the Agency.

This is a hybrid meeting tonight, meaning that we have some people attending in person here at the Zeta Center and we have some people attending virtually via Webex. Whether you are here in person or attending virtually, we appreciate your participation in tonight's meeting.

Today, we will discuss the continued development of the Baltimore City ADA Transition Plan. Our focus for this evening is the Methods of Compliance. Knowing how the city plans to remediate and construct compliant pedestrian infrastructure is necessary to bring the city into full compliance with the ADA.

Slide 2: Agenda

Briefly, the agenda for this afternoon's meeting will include:

- Introductions

- Rules for a successful meeting

Status on the City's ADA Transition Plan development

A status update on the development of the Transition Plan

What we heard at prior public meetings

Methods of Compliance

Feedback and next steps for the ADA Transition Plan development

Slide 3: Introductions

Joining me tonight from the Department of Transportation is our Meeting facilitator Eric James who will monitor the Webex chat and summarize questions for discussion.

Even if we don't get to all the questions, the questions will be forwarded to the project team for consideration.

Welcome to each of you attending this afternoon.

Sign language interpreters will be assisting tonight both in-person and virtually on Webex.

And thank you to the Zeta Center for providing this location for the meeting.

Slide 4: Rules for a Successful Virtual meeting

For those that are attending virtually via webex,

- Please mute your microphone
- Please turn off your video
- Please use the chat function for questions

For those attending in-person

- Silence your cell phone
- Please hold your questions until the end of the presentation

For everyone, please note that the meeting materials were uploaded to the Baltimore City Department of Transportation website and are available for your review.

Slide 5: ADA Transition Plan Schedule

We have completed the designation of the ADA Coordinator under Title II of the ADA.

We have completed the prioritization methodology and process.

We are continuing to engage with the public on the development of the ADA Transition Plan.

The updated self-assessment of city pedestrian infrastructure is in progress.

And the final transition plan elements are schedule and funding commitments.

Slide 6: Prioritization Process

Generally speaking, prioritization is the process of ranking something by a relative level of importance. In terms of the City's ADA Transition Plan, prioritization is the process of determining where ADA upgrades would provide the most benefit to the public. The result of prioritization is a tool that can help guide the implementation of specific projects. We presented the proposed prioritization process at the public meeting in October, and more information on prioritization can be found on the boards in the back of the room.

Slide 7: Key Themes we heard from the public

We have received a lot of public feedback on the City ADA Transition plan. We heard that access to destinations such as work, medical facilities, post offices, banks, grocery stores, and election polling locations is critical to daily life.

We heard that there must be connectivity within and between neighborhoods, and that neighborhoods must be connected to transit.

We heard that we need better pedestrian signals with features including audible countdowns, especially at complex intersections.

And we heard that pedestrian safety and lighting needs to be improved, especially near transit stops.

Slide 8: Methods of Compliance

Methods of compliance includes how residents in Baltimore City can communicate the needs for accessibility.

Processes for the public to alert the City about specific issues and concerns include:

- 3-1-1 service requests
- Accommodation Requests
- Complaints
- Formal Grievances

It also includes construction standards and details required for construction of pedestrian facilities throughout the city by both private property owners and city agencies.

Slide 9: Examples of Requests

3-1-1 services requests are a way for residents to ask for general services. An example would be “The curb ramp at the corner of main Avenue and First Street should be fixed.”

An accommodation request is an individual specific request needed to access City programs, services, events, or activities. An example may be “I need a ramp in front of my house to get from the sidewalk into the street to access my car.”

Slide 10: Examples of Requests Continued

A Complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction regarding services or repairs communicated to the city. An example may be “I filed a service request, and it is taking too long for the City to respond.”

A Grievance is an official statement of unfair treatment, discrimination, or violation of civil rights.” An example may be “The City is discriminating against me on the basis of my civil rights.”

Slide 11: Contacting the City for Service Requests

There are a variety of ways to communicate a service request to the city. The 3-1-1 system is set up to allow residents to request routine services. Each request

receives a Service Request Number that the resident can track and check on the status of the request.

The ADA Coordinator can be contacted directly regarding a service request. Once the details are discussed, the ADA Coordinator will provide information on how the request will be handled.

The City has community liaisons within the various city agencies who can be contacted regarding a service request and will provide information on how the service request will be handled. Today, we have several of the Department of Transportation community liaisons here assisting with this public engagement meeting.

The Mayor's Office of Equity and Civil Rights is available to receive service requests and can help resolve service requests.

Elected Officials including the Mayor and City Council are available to residents throughout the city to address service requests.

Slide 12: Accommodation Requests

Under Title II of the ADA, The City is required to consider accommodation requests for access in the right-of-way in a timely manner. Residents need to have assurance that their requests will be considered, and when appropriate, accommodations designed and implemented.

The ADA Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that all accommodation requests are evaluated and implemented by the appropriate City Agency, tracked, reported, and communicated to the public.

The process starts when the accommodation request is received by the ADA Coordinator. The ADA Coordinator will communicate directly with the resident to understand the need for the accommodation. Then the location is visited to analyze options for an accommodation. When needed, the ADA Coordinator will coordinate the design of the accommodation, construction, and when completed will communicate the resolution with the resident.

Slide 13: Example of Accommodation

A resident has an existing curb ramp in front of their house which is needed to get a family member into a vehicle so that they can travel to destinations in the city. The resident called the ADA Coordinator regarding the broken ramp. The ADA Coordinator first coordinated a temporary fix to make the ramp safe as pictured on the left. The final resolution was to reconstruct the curb ramp that is pictured on the right.

Slide 14: Complaint Process

Complaints can be submitted directly to the ADA Coordinator. Complaints can also be submitted to the Office of Equity and Civil Rights. Once the complaint is received by the ADA Coordinator, the resident is contacted to understand the complaint and provide a response. If the response does not resolve the issue, the resident can request a review by the Office of Equity and Civil Rights.

Slide 15: Grievance Procedure

Grievances can be filed by anyone who alleges discrimination based on a disability in the provision of services, activities, and programs by the city.

Grievances may be submitted to the ADA Coordinator, the Office of Equity and Civil Rights, or the Department of Justice.

When a grievance is regarding pedestrian access in the right-of-way, it is accepted by the ADA Coordinator and forwarded to the Federal Highway Administration and the Maryland State highway Administration. The formal grievance is investigated by SHA and/or FHWA with resolution communicated to the resident.

The Title II ADA Coordinator is Valorie LaCour.

Slide 16: Design Standards

Now, let's talk about Design Standards for constructing pedestrian infrastructure in the right-of-way. The most familiar infrastructure is sidewalks, curb ramps, and pedestrian signals.

Design standards tell contractors, property owners, and city agencies how to construct infrastructure in the city.

The city updated the ADA design standards for construction. The standards are consistent with the State of Maryland ADA design standards.

These updated standard details will be uploaded to the BCDOT website April 16, 2024, and there is a 30-day comment period.

Slide 17: Next Steps

Continued public input is needed to continue advancing the City ADA Transition Plan. Our goal is to develop a draft Transition Plan by the end of 2024.

Slide 18: Contact DOT

The meeting materials presented tonight are on the DOT website for your review and reference. There are several ways to communicate your comments on the proposed prioritization to DOT.

On DOT's website:

<https://Transportation.Baltimorecity.gov/ada-transportation>

By email:

ADACoordinator@baltimorecity.gov

Or

Valorie.lacour@baltimorecity.gov

By mail:

Baltimore City

Department of Transportation

Attn: Valorie LaCour, ADA Coordinator

417 East Fayette Street, 5th floor

Baltimore, MD 21202

Slide 19: Question & Answer Session

We're now going to open it up for a Q&A session. We'll take our first question from someone that's attending in-person and will then alternate back and forth between our in-person attendees and those attending virtually using the chat feature to ask their questions.

[Q&A Session]

Slide 20: Closing

On behalf of the City ADA Transition Plan team, we thank you for spending your afternoon with us to learn about the progress on the ADA transition Plan.

Remember there is plenty of time to provide DOT with your thoughts and ideas. DOT has an open public comment period starting tomorrow and through the end of May. Once we compile the comments received during the comment period, we will review how they can be incorporated into the City ADA Transition Plan and make those adjustments as necessary. We anticipate having another public meeting to update you on the project status in the Fall

Thanks again and have a good evening.