

CITY OF RINGGOLD, GEORGIA
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT TRANSITION PLAN
(October 2018)

In 1990, the Federal Government enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Title II of the ADA requires public entities that employ 50 or more people to develop a transition plan, which outlines the steps and schedule for making facilities accessible to individuals. As a result of this, and the expansion of City owned property, the City of Ringgold is submitting this transition plan.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Plan is to ensure that the citizens of Ringgold are provided full access to the City's programs, services, and activities in as timely a fashion as is reasonably possible. The City's elected officials and staff believe the ability to accommodate disabled people is essential to good customer service, the quality of life Ringgold residents seek to enjoy and to effective governance.

This Plan has been prepared after careful study of all of the City's programs, services, and activities. A survey was conducted by the city in order to ascertain if any changes and/or expansion of the ADA could be improved. The survey was posted on the city's webpage, www.cityofringgoldga.gov and also copies were left in the public information section. Using both feedback from the survey and the checklists of existing facilities, we have determined what areas we need to provide improvements to. Please refer to Exhibit "A" for areas we will focus on expanding.

Title II of the ADA requires that each of the City's services, programs, and activities, when viewed in their entirety, be readily accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities.

This Plan identifies two forms of barriers: physical barriers and programmatic barriers.

Physical Barriers include physical features such as the following:

1. Parking
2. Paths of entry/travel
3. Doorway
4. Restrooms
5. Service counters
6. Stairways
7. Curb ramps

Programmatic Barriers include the following:

1. Building signage
2. Customer communications and interaction
3. Access to public telephones
4. Emergency notifications, alarms, and visible signals
5. Communications (via Internet, public meetings, telephone)
6. Participation opportunities for events sponsored by the City

City facilities, programs, services, policies, practices and procedures will continue to be surveyed on an on-going basis and the Plan may be revised from time to time to account for changes to City activities. An accessibility inventory of sidewalks and curb ramps on streets and near City facilities has been completed, and an approach put in place to ensure that all public ramps to sidewalks are handicap accessible. Any individual may submit comments on the accessibility of City programs and facilities by contacting the City Manager or his/her designee by phone at (706) 935-3061.

I. PHYSICAL BARRIERS

The City owns a very limited number of properties and accordingly does not have many options on locations from which it can offer programs, activities, and services without incurring significant financial cost. Please refer to **Exhibit "A"** for the City facilities.

Areas of concern and possible solutions have been listed.

A self-evaluation/assessment of each of the City's physical facilities has been conducted in conjunction with the preparation of this Plan. Summaries of these evaluations are included as Exhibit "A" attached hereto and by this reference incorporated herein. Deficiencies in the physical features of facilities that diminish the ability of disabled persons to benefit from the City's programs, services and activities are identified. A correction plan or other course of action is noted for each deficiency, along with a schedule for completion of the correction.

A. BASELINE CONDITIONS

Each of the City's facilities was reviewed in light of several "baseline" conditions, including:

1. Access to parking and entry into facilities themselves
2. Access to programs and services themselves
3. Access to public areas and restrooms
4. Access to related amenities

B. CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING EXISTENCE OF IMPEDIMENT

Criteria were established to determine whether corrective action needs to be taken at a particular facility. The criteria include, but are not limited to:

1. The nature of unique programs or services. Some facilities and sites are the only location that a particular program or service may be provided
2. Facilities already in compliance with ADA accessibility guidelines. Some of the city's facilities were constructed or underwent major renovations after the effective date of the ADA
3. Ability to relocate programs from one facility to another accessible facility. Because the City offers 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
4. Current state of accessibility: The current condition of each facility in terms of barriers already removed, or planned to be removed, as identified by City administration
5. Cost: The cost of alternatives to physical barrier removal versus the cost of an alternative corrective action plan
6. Public use: The population served by a particular program or service and whether the public can obtain service from an alternative City location

C. CITY SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks - The City of Ringgold contains approx. 11.45 miles of sidewalk.

- A. Historic Downtown – Business/Government
 - B. Historic – Older Neighborhoods
 - C. Pre- 1998 Sidewalks
 - D. Post-1998 Sidewalks
1. Per the City of Ringgold Municipal Code, all new commercial and residential construction shall require 60" wide sidewalks. Any development in the two above zones where the development abuts the public right-of-way must adhere to this requirement.
 2. Sidewalk Repairs- the City of Ringgold bases repair on the population of the street, traffic count, and the number of businesses along that particular corridor. The City of Ringgold has established budget for Sidewalk Repair. The Public Works Department

also evaluates the citizens input in the work orders. Please see iWorq work order as example of the City's already established work order system.

3. Sidewalks and Curb Ramps – 28 CFR SS 35.150 requires the City of Ringgold to provide curb ramp or other sloped areas where pedestrian walks cross curbs.

The City's assessment of pedestrian facilities indicates the following needs related to curb ramps meeting ADA standards:

1. Sidewalks in the Historic Downtown – Business/Government have the highest foot traffic in the city. This would also include the main corridors of Nashville Street and Lafayette Street. This area is the home to many businesses, professional offices, churches, and restaurants. The Catoosa County Courthouse, County Administration, and the Post Office are all in this area.
2. Sidewalks in the Historic Downtown – Business/Government – As a result of a recent downtown improvement, the majority of sidewalks in the Historic Downtown- Business Government area have had curb ramps with the detectable warning mats with truncated domes installed.
3. The Act requires priority be given to installing curb ramps on pedestrian facilities serving covered entities. As a result of this plan, the sidewalks and parking along Lafayette Street that feed to pedestrian cross walks to the rear entrance of the Court House will be given the highest priority of being brought to ADA compliance.
4. The Historic – Older Neighborhoods the majority of pedestrian facilities lacking curb ramps serve single family residential units.
5. An assessment by the Public Works Department will be made for locations that are lacking in ADA compliance.

CURB RAMP REPLACEMENT/MODIFICATION PLAN

In order to meet the requirements of 28 CFR SS 150 for scheduling the installation of curb ramps or other sloped areas where the pedestrian walkway cross curbs, the City of Ringgold has undertaken the following on-going programs:

1. Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities by Request or Identified Need. The City of Ringgold budgets funds for curb ramp access on an annual basis and has established a process for receiving and addressing individual requests. Requests are evaluated by the City Manager and the Public Works Director. High priority is given to requests received from citizens with disabilities who wish to travel to shopping areas, medical facilities, transportation, and other facilities or areas required for their activities of daily living. The evaluation consists of evaluating the requested curb ramps as well as the entire intersection where the ramp is located. The curb ramps are evaluated for usability and safety in order to determine the path of travel through that intersection.
2. Installation and Repair of Curb Ramps in Historic Downtown/Business Government. As noted, City of Ringgold Historic Downtown/Business Government contain sidewalks that serve the highest concentration of entities and facilities covered by the ADA. In addition, these sidewalks are most likely to provide point to point transportation services for the City of Ringgold citizens rather than recreational use. As noted, the City of Ringgold has allocated funds for sidewalk repair on a citywide basis. These and future allocations will be used by the City of Ringgold Public Works Department to address the needs of the Historic Downtown – Business/Government area. This program will build upon previous streetscape improvement projects in the aforementioned area. Priority projects under this program will be those repairing or improving access to State, County, and City of Ringgold buildings, public facilities, and other basic needs such as restaurants and places of worship.
3. Street alteration and repair. The City of Ringgold conducts a worst to first resurfacing program on a bi-annual basis. Where sidewalks are present, curb ramps will be installed or existing ramps repaired. The repair schedule is consistent with the requirements of 28 CFR SS35.151.
4. Please see the City of Ringgold sidewalk inventory:

Sidewalks before 1998

N. Guylar
N.Sparks

Sidewalks after 1998

Lafayette St.
Nashville St. *

N. Cleveland St.
Short St.
Lamar St.
Maple St.
Jail St.
Circle Dr.

Chestnut Ridge
Nightshade Ln
Capstone Dr.
Bluffview Dr.
Gladstone
HunterLn.
Shady Place*
Williams St.*
High St.*
Willowind
Emberson Dr.
Inman St.
Cleburne Alley
Creekview
Canyon Trail
Marilyn Circle*
Whittemore
Gordon St.
Polar Cove*
Church St.*
Gale St.*
Gateway Business Park*
College Park Dr.*
Lodgestone
North St.
S. Guyler*
S.Sparks
S. Cleveland
Holcomb Rd.
Whitten*

*Sidewalks that meet ADA Standards

5. Please see the following City of Ringgold crosswalk information:

<u>Crosswalks</u>	<u>Meets ADA</u>	<u>Does not meet ADA</u>
Sparks @RHS		✓
Nashville & Sparks	✓	
Emberson Dr.		✓
Laf. & Children's Park		✓
Laf & Christian		✓
Nashville & Cleveland	✓	
Nashville & Tennessee	✓	
Nashville & Jail St.		✓
Legion		✓
Lafayette & Jail		✓
Lafayette & Nance		✓
Lafayette & Maple		✓
Tiger Trail		✓
Tennessee & Lodgestone		✓

6. Please see City of Ringgold inventory of ramps

<u>No Ramp or Mat</u>	<u>Ramp no Mat</u>	<u>Has Ramp & Mat</u>
Tenn. & Laf.	Chestnut Ridge	Nashville & Tenn.
Creekview	Nightshade	Nashville & Guyler
Canyon Trail	Nashville & Maple	Nashville & Cleveland
Legion	Tenn. & North	Nashville & Sparks
Emberson/Soccer Field	Short St.	High St. & Williams
Emberson/Pool	Laf. & Clv.	High St. & Shady Pl.
Laf./Post Office	High & Tenn.	High & Lamar
High & Cleveland	Jail & Nashville	Mountain & Tenn.

Capstone

Laf. & Nance

Church St.

Lodgestone

Children's Park

All future Construction will meet ADA Standards. Previous Sidewalks without a Ramp or Truncated Mat will be addressed as soon as possible.

The following will be put before the Ringgold Planning and Zoning Commission at the next available meeting to ensure that the below amendments be a legal part of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Ringgold:

6.7.10. Curb Ramp Design Standards

In order to comply with the curb ramp design standards established by the Americans with Disabilities Act, all new construction funded by the City of Ringgold shall require installation of curb ramps. All new private commercial development, multi-family development, and residential subdivision development shall require curb ramp installation. When existing sidewalks or intersections are disturbed by utility repair or installation curb ramps shall be installed, and existing curb ramps shall be repaired.

II. 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.

A. COMMUNICATIONS

As to communications the City does handle, including web site communications, communications relating to City administration and open public meetings, and other communications regarding the City's programs, services and activities, the City is in the process of:

1. identifying local resources for auxiliary aids and services
2. identifying ways of producing documents in Braille or acquiring other aids or services, including software that can convert text into speech

The City is taking the following additional specific actions to improve communications:

1. Web site communication

The City has also posted, and will continue to post, 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 software upgrades with its web site operator to ensure handicap accessibility. Importantly, the City is considering the addition of text equivalents for every image on the web site, as well as using alternative document formats (HTML and Rich Text Formats) to the portable document format, which is incompatible with certain screen reader functions. The City has also requested that forms and tables be modified to include descriptive HTML tags.

2. Participation in/accessibility to public meetings

The City has, as discussed above, already taken substantial efforts toward ensuring public meetings are held in ADA-accessible facilities. The City conducts all public meetings in ADA-accessible facilities, and will make specific accommodations, where necessary, to ensure that meetings among residents and City staff can be held within ADA-accessible facilities.

B. ADA GRIEVANCE COORDINATION/ADMINISTRATION

The City has established an ADA Grievance Policy and Procedures, including a grievance form, attached as **Exhibit "B"**. The City has affixed ADA grievance policy signs to City facilities, and has appointed the City Manager as the ADA Grievance Officer. That individual will, on a case by case basis, forward ADA grievances to the Governing Body of the City. The Grievance Officer will provide a forum for affected people to bring about direct communication with the City in the event of potential ADA violations. It is the City's hope that good communication will ensure that the City provides a forum in which individuals can raise issues related to access.

C. ACCOMMODATION OF DISABLED IN MUNICIPALLY SPONSORED PROGRAMS

The City is committed to allowing people with disabilities to participate in municipally sponsored programs. The City will achieve this goal by integrating all of the steps outlined above into these programs, including providing for effective communications and ensuring meetings and events are, to the extent possible, held in ADA-accessible facilities

City of Ringgold
ADA Grievance Policy and Procedures

This Grievance Procedure is established to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"). It may be used by anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability in the provision of services, activities, programs, or benefits by the City of Ringgold. The City's Personnel Policy governs employment related complaints of disability discrimination.

The complaint should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination such as name, address, phone number of complaint and location, date, and description of the problem. Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or a tape recording of the complaint will be made available for people with disabilities upon request.

The complaint should be submitted by the grievant and/or his/her designee as soon as possible but not later than 60 calendar days after the alleged violation to:

City Manager
150 Tennessee Street
Ringgold, Georgia 30736

Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the complaint, the City Manager or his/her designee will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and the possible resolutions. Within 15 calendar days of the meeting, the City Manager or his/her designee will respond in writing, and where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, such a large print, Braille, or audio tape. The response will explain the position of the City and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint.

If the response of the City Manager still does not satisfactorily resolve the complaint, the complainant shall, within 10 calendar days, submit a written notice of appeal to the Governing Body. Upon receipt of the notice, each member of the Governing Body will immediately receive notice with all documentation related to the complaint. At the City Council's next regularly scheduled meeting; provided that the meeting falls on a day that is no less than 7 calendar days after the date that the complaint documentation is provided to the Governing Body, but in no event at a regular or special meeting more than 35 days from the date of the written notice, the complainant shall present his/her complaint to the Governing Body for its consideration. The complainant may designate individuals to make presentations to the Governing Body related to the complaint and any actions proposed by the City to satisfactorily resolve the complaint. If deemed appropriate, the Governing Body may continue the discussion of the complaint to a subsequent regular City Council meeting or a special City Council meeting; provided that, unless the complainant agrees, the Governing Body shall conclude its consideration within 31 days of the initial hearing by the Governing Body on the complaint. Within 10 days of the conclusion of the hearing on the complaint, the Governing Body shall provide the complainant with a written statement of the City's position and any proposed solution or accommodation determined to be appropriate. The decision of the Governing Body shall be final decision of the City.

All written complaints and appeals received, appeals to, and responses from this office will be retained by the City for at least three years.

Exhibit "B"
City of Ringgold ADA Grievance Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Location of problem: _____

Date Noticed: _____

Description of the 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 60 calendar days after the alleged violation to:

City Manager
150 Tennessee Street
Ringgold, GA 30736


ADA Transition Plan

Adopted this 12th day of November 2018 by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Ringgold.



Nick Millwood, Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk