

Outdoor Insights

Quarry Cove Offers More than Access for All

by David M. Orens

Accessibility is frequently conceived as a problem of physical barriers, but social and psychological barriers play an equally significant role in some of the fundamental problems underlying the entire concept of accessible design. This is particularly true in a society where the able population believes it represents the "norm" and individuals with disabilities represent some sort of deviation from that norm. Universal design attempts to bridge the gap between these two populations to promote design which is accessible to the broadest range of individuals without separating any one group for special treatment. A project based on principles of universal design should provide anyone, regardless of age or ability, the opportunity to participate in the experience of a place without feeling like a separate sub-class of society, or some other type of person who isn't "average."

See Outdoor Insights, page 4



By Daniel Hunter

Quarry Cove, a view from the parking area.

The "New Look" of ADAAG

by Lawrence G. Perry, AIA

Editor's note: This is the third in a series of articles reviewing subcommittee recommendations of the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) Review Federal Advisory Committee, the group that was tasked with suggesting revisions to ADAAG.

The Editorial and Format Subcommittee was charged with developing a new framework for the guidelines. This effort involved laying out the "ground rules" for the technical subcommittees at the start of the review process, and rewriting and reformatting the final technical recommendations at the end of the process.

The first recommendation of the subcommittee was to clearly separate scoping provisions (which tell when something must comply, or how many of multiple elements must comply), from technical provisions (which specify how to make an element accessible), and explanatory, advisory, or non-mandatory provisions. The final committee report reflects this recommendation, and is presented as a complete new set of guidelines written in mandatory, enforceable language, much like a building code or standard. Explanatory, advisory, and non-mandatory provisions (including examples, preferences, or recommendations) have been

See ADAAG's New Look, page 10

CONTENTS

1	Outdoor Insights	
1	The "New Look" of ADAAG	
5	City Takes Innovative Approach to Accessibility	
6	Accessible Justice	
11	Modular Kitchen System Works for All Users	
	FedWatch	3
	■ Access Board to Consider Changes to ADAAG in Jan. '98	
	■ Reports Due on Access Board Research Projects	
	■ Access Board Research Priorities for FY '97	
	New Media	7
	Design Tips	8
	New Products	9
	Calendar	12



Going to Extremes Gets Us Nowhere

Throughout my 20 years of effort in working to achieve universal design and accessibility, I have routinely encountered two approaches in the disability rights movement with regard to being "proactive" in achieving physical accessibility.

One camp typically starts with an extreme and often unprecedented position and hopes to achieve a reasonable compromise through a lengthy process of argument and negotiation. The other camp establishes a reasonable and defensible position from the outset and sticks to that position until they reach agreement.

A common problem with initially extreme positions is that undefensible positions damage the credibility of the proponent. When a proposed design detail has no defensible position (no strong reason for its need), the flaws in the proposal eventually become obvious and invariably cause credibility problems for those who are trying to support that position. When a proponent's only support for a position is, "That's the way we've always done it," or "That's what the rules say," there is invariably resistance, frustration and anger. In the end, the drawn out battle for a specific accessibility element may have been won, but the war against attitudinal barriers is lost.

On the contrary, when a defensible position is proposed and the background reasons clearly explained, both sides typically can come to an agreement. When a justifiable reason is presented, most people are willing, and often eager, to change the status quo and make things work for everyone. They begin to see the beneficial nature of the defensible position. I have consistently seen attitudinal barriers come tumbling down when a person (whether the proponent or the defendant) begins to realize the reasons behind the design details.

When specific rules have no defensible position or proven solution, they bring the entire set of standards into question. For example, some advocates have suggested that wheelchair viewing positions in assembly occupancies be both integrated and have unobstructed lines of sight over the heads of occasionally standing spectators. This position is contradictory and undefensible. Unobstructed sight lines

are a great idea, it's just that no one has ever demonstrated how a design can provide them in an integrated setting. How can people who use wheelchairs be reasonably integrated with patrons seated in front of them if those patrons must be seated so low that when they stand they do not block the view of the people in wheelchairs? It seems to me that if we intend to achieve the civil rights objective intended in the Americans with Disabilities Act, we cannot disregard integration in providing better sight lines for people who use wheelchairs.

I strongly believe that there are defensible positions and solutions for most accessibility requirements. In establishing these defensible positions, we simultaneously eliminate both physical and attitudinal barriers. In taking extreme positions that are neither logical nor defensible, we incur the antagonism of others and slow our progress toward a universally designed world.

IDEA

The Center for Inclusive Design & Environmental Access

IDEA is dedicated to improving the design of environments and products by making them more usable, safer and appealing to people with a wide range of abilities and through the life span. The Center is active in basic and applied research, design development, community service and education.

Its programs include: research on home modifications, home assessment software, and product design.

IDEA, School of Architecture and Planning-University at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY 14214-3087; (716)829-3485 ext. 329; fax (716)829-3861; idea@arch.buffalo.edu <http://www.arch.buffalo.edu/~idea>

Copyright 1997 UD&C - Authorization to photocopy items for the internal or personal use of specific subscribers is granted by **Universal Design Newsletter**. Any other reproduction in any form is prohibited without express permission from the Publisher. **Universal Design Newsletter** is published quarterly by Universal Designers & Consultants, Inc., 1700 Rockville Pike, Suite 110, Rockville, MD, 20852 301.770.7890 (V/TTY) 301.770.4338 (fax). John P.S. Salmen, AIA - Publisher & Managing Editor; Denise Hofstedt - Editor; James DiLuigi and Elaine Ostroff - Consulting Editors.

Mail subscription rates: One year \$75.00 (US). Second Class Postage paid at Rockville, MD. Postmaster send address changes to **Universal Design Newsletter**, 1700 Rockville Pike, Suite 110, Rockville, MD. 20852. For information on advertising rates or obtaining alternative accessible formats, please call or write the **Universal Design Newsletter** Editor.

Letters to the Editor

Universal Design Newsletter welcomes letters to the editor. All letters must be previously unpublished, signed and typewritten on company letterhead, if appropriate. Unsolicited manuscripts and letters become the property of *Universal Design Newsletter* and cannot be returned. The editor reserves the right to edit all letters for length, style, clarity, spelling and punctuation. Please address correspondence to: Editor, *Universal Design Newsletter*, 1700 Rockville Pike, Suite 110, Rockville, MD 20852; fax 301.770.4338

Access Board to Consider Changes to ADAAG in Jan. '98

The U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (the Access Board) recently announced that it will vote on the proposed revision to the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) at its January 1998 meeting.

Prior to that meeting the Access Board will be thoroughly reviewing the recommendations from ADAAG Review Committee and input from the public on the proposed changes to the ADAAG, according to Ola, spokesperson for the Access Board.

The document will be open for public comment after review by the Department of Justice, the Department of Transportation and the Office of Management and Budget.

At a minimum, this process is expected to take several months, said Ola.

Reports Due on Access Board Research Projects

The U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (the Access Board) research engines continue to crank out results. As this fiscal year's projects get underway, final reports from several projects that were funded in the last fiscal year are either just completed or are expected soon. Among those due are:

Public Rights of Way Video: Outreach and Training. Videotakes is developing two videotapes on access to public rights-of-way for people with walking impairments and for people with low vision. Completion: February 1997

A Digitized Accessibility Slide Collection. KRW Inc. is digitizing the Access Board's slide collection and will make it available on CD ROM. Completion: February 1997.

Exterior Accessible Surfaces. Beneficial Designs Inc. of Santa Cruz, Calif. is conducting an 18-month project to study the characteristics of accessible surfaces in outdoor environments, including parks, playgrounds, and pedestrian paths. In the first phase, it is developing a test method to measure surface "firmness" and "stability" in relation to material, texture and surfacing. An optional second phase will include subject testing of the developed test method. Completion: March 1997 (phase 1); schedule for phase 2 to be determined.

Access to Toilet and Bathing Facilities. The Department of Veterans Affairs, Research and Development Center is conducting a nine-month project that will lay the groundwork for research on toilet and bathing facilities by obtaining information to evaluate current ADAAG specifications, compare alternative grab bar products and designs, and identify where further research is needed.

In the first task, the research center will review literature relevant to the independent use of toilets by people with mobility impairments. In addition to the field of architecture and disability, this search will explore recent or current research in the fields of rehabilitation, occupational and physical therapy, and related fields of adapted physical activity.

In the second task, the research center will conduct a survey of people with disabilities on the preferred means of independent transfer to and from toilets including those located in stalls, shower stalls and from tubs. This survey will be structured to identify optimum and acceptable design factors according to transfer techniques. Opinion will also be sought on other issues or concerns users may have that are relevant to room/stall or fixture design but not necessarily related to transfer.

In the third task, the research center will prepare a report that summarizes the results of the literature review and user survey and analyzes them in relation to ADAAG specifications, and identifies where further research is needed.

Completion: July 1997.

Anthropometrics Research. In a 12-month study, Anthropology Research Project Inc. is searching for information on current anthropometric data useful in evaluating or supplementing ADAAG measurements for adults seated in wheelchairs. The search will explore data developed within fields and disciplines not typically included in traditional reviews of literature on disability or architecture. This information will identify where further study is needed. Completion: October 1997

Access Board Research Priorities for FY '97

Among the topics the U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (the Access Board) will be researching in 1997 are:

- Interactive Transaction Machines;
- Assistive Listening Systems;
- Public Rights-of-Way: Outreach and Training; and
- Access to Toilet and Bathing Facilities. 

... (the Access Board) recently announced that it will vote on the proposed revision to the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) at its January 1998 meeting.

Outdoor Insights, from page 1

Unfortunately, as our society gradually becomes accessible to a broader range of people, we are frequently faced with situations in which designers continue to create accessible accommodations separate from everything else. They argue that integrating accessible accommodations is economically demanding and difficult.

At the core, however, integration of accessibility is a social problem that won't be addressed through design issues. So long as accessibility is thought of as something for a separate group of people, separate but equal accommodations will continue to exist. When we realize the vast diversity within our society, the idea of separate accessible accommodations becomes problematic and exceedingly complex. Some advocates of universal design suggest that rather than attempting to provide equal experiences for everyone, we need to provide the potential for a broad range of experiences. One recent project illustrates how universal design can accommodate a diverse population while providing few visibly separate accessible accommodations.

The Quarry Cove project by landscape architect Andy Rice is a man-made intertidal landscape converted from an abandoned stone quarry. Visitors get to see, smell and touch tidal pool basins and the great variety of life therein. Located at the base of the Yaquina Head Natural Area near the town of Newport, Ore., it addresses issues of accessibility in an environment which is far from completely safe and secure for anyone. With the exception of a separate parking area that provides individuals with disabilities

closer access to the floor of the cove, accessibility is seen not as an additional set of specific accommodations, but as part of the overall design. Meandering through the floor of the cove, concrete pathways provide access, and protect the site from damage which could be caused by visitors. Shallow slopes eliminate the need for handrails throughout much of the site, while raised curbs provide a definitive edge to the pathways. Although the paths provide access throughout the site, water and sand cover the pathways at times, creating an occasional obstacle for anyone. The presence of these obstacles become important aspects of the experience of the place and should not be automatically dis-

counted as a detriment to universal design.

Universal design is not only about accommodating the needs of wheelchair users. The sites, sounds and smells of this environment are all part of the experience of the place and provide a multi-sensory experience for visitors with all levels of ability. In the context of such a site, any constructed element would contrast with the natural environment, and within the cove itself, materials and construction practices were designed to mediate between the built and natural environments. The coloring of the concrete contrasts with the surrounding ground surface, thus providing a clear visual distinction for individuals with visual impairments, while also matching the

tone of many of the natural elements of the site. Instead of the precast concrete benches used within the upper portion of the site, stone benches provide opportunities for visitors to sit and rest while within the cove. Raised pools of water are worked into the slopes of the site to provide an opportunity for up close viewing the natural plants, animals, and processes of the environment. Water plays an integral role throughout the site, and as mentioned above, frequently cover portions of the path system. While safety issues were addressed, those measures designed to ensure a greater level of safety, such as grooved pathways, shallow slopes and the mitigation of water surges, are completely integrated into the design of the site.

Projects such as Quarry Cove represent the idea that designs should seek to provide access and experiences for a diverse range of individuals. Yet one would be hard pressed to isolate many accessible accommodations there. With the exception of the separate parking area and overlook, there is almost no provision of special accessible features. The entire site has been designed to allow users to experience it based on their level of ability and to make their own choices about how they experience the site.

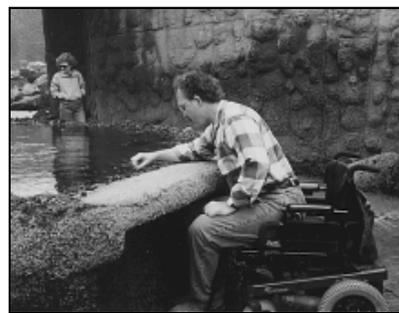
The restricted access to the separate parking area

See Outdoor Insights, page 5

"The project takes an important step forward in accessible design by fundamentally viewing the population as a singular diverse group, as opposed to two distinctly separate ones."



Raised pools provide access for all.



Another example of an accessible raised pool.

By Larry Hunter

City Takes Innovative Approach to Accessibility

Fayetteville, Ark. Requirements Promote Education and Awareness

by David Michael Lieb

A group in Arkansas found an innovative approach to bringing down barriers to accessibility. Made up of representatives from the disability community, the city council and city staff, a task force was formed by the mayor of Fayetteville, Arkansas and charged with examining accessibility issues in the community.

The members of the task force not only searched for answers to barrier reductions of buildings, but also discussed how disability awareness was equally important. Without first examining societal myths and stigmas and realistic statistics of Americans with disabilities, the work of the task force would have simply been applying the "band-aid" methodology.

Spurred by a request from the local disability community, in December 1995 Mayor Fred Hanna convened the task force to examine inaccessibility and non-compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Fair Housing Act Amendments of 1988 within the city of Fayetteville.

In February 1996, the city council unanimously passed a task force-initiated resolution acknowledging the city's recognition of non-compliance issues in commercial buildings and stating the city's commitment to goals outlined by the ADA. The resolution also included a provision calling for the

certification of construction plans by architects.

Following a challenge by the Northwest Arkansas Chapter of the American Institute of Architects concerning uninsured exposure to claims, the resolution was later amended to state that certification plans meet ANSI 117.1 Standards.

A more stringent "Important Notice" provision was also adopted. It requires that a notice be signed by property owners at the time application is made for a commercial building permit in the city's Inspection Division. The notice informs prospective property owners, builders, and developers that they must comply with the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), and that failure to do so may result in action by the federal government or local citizens. It advises applicants that the city enforces Chapter 11 (accessibility standards) of the 1994 Southern Standard Building Code and that failure to abide by the guidelines may result in the denial of a Certificate of Occupancy.

A clause requiring a notice for new multi-family dwelling units was also implemented. This notice outlines the consequences for non-compliance with the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988. The notice is distributed through the city's Planning Office at the time application is made for re-zonings for residential development typically covered under the Fair Housing Act or when submitting a large scale housing development plan. The housing notice must then be signed when applying for a building permit through the Inspection Division.

The notices increase the awareness of the property owner and elicit a more responsible awareness of accessibility from the architectural community. The requirement calling for a building permit's petitioner to sign the notice has also provided any potential plaintiff with a very strong case if a place of public accommodation or multi-family dwelling unit does not comply with federal civil rights laws.

The construction community welcomed the new measures. Owners and contractors are taking more affable stances toward compliance with the ADA even in instances where the architectural plans have been incorrect. There have been instances where



David Michael Lieb

Without first examining societal myths and stigmas and realistic statistics of Americans with disabilities, the work of the task force would have simply been applying the "band-aid" methodology.

Outdoor Insights, from page 4

is unfortunate, and is perhaps indicative of the distance which universal design still needs to progress. Until access is available across the board, some separate accommodations will continue to be necessary. Quarry Cove shows that integrated accessibility need not detract from a design. The project takes an important step forward in universal design by fundamentally viewing the population as a singular diverse group, as opposed to two distinctly separate ones. Universal design has the potential not only to bring about a better designed environment for everyone, but more importantly to illustrate that accessibility is not an issue of us and them, but something which is important for our entire society. 

David M. Orens is a graduate student of landscape architecture at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Va. He holds an undergraduate degree in architecture. Orens will be graduating in May and plans to pursue employment in the Boston area.

See Innovative Approach, page 8

Accessible Justice

Trends in courtroom accessibility

by Tony Waller

Even in its interim form, the Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Accessibility Guidelines covering state and local government facilities, is setting new trends in how courtrooms are being designed and altered. The interim final rule for Title II was published in the Federal Register on June 20, 1994 but has not been adopted yet by the U.S. Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board or the Department of Justice.

While the feds are working on finalizing Title II, many states have modified building codes to incorporate accessibility into the courtroom.

The bench

In Florida and Michigan, guidelines call for accessibility to be provided by lift or ramp to the judge's bench. In the interim, the judge's bench and

the clerk of the court's work station would be adaptable by including the necessary space for a lift or ramp.

Witness stands and jury boxes

A variety of designs have evolved to meet the federal requirements for accessible witness stands and jury boxes. Some courtroom designs include a pull out ramp or a ramp that can be slid into place



The Justice Building's federal courtroom in Eagle County, CO

upon need for witness stands and jury boxes. The challenge here is that these sliding or temporary ramps could prove to be a tripping hazard for wandering attorneys.

Still other designs have jurors enter the jury box and courtroom from the jury deliberation room. In this instance, the ramp would be inside the juror room, eliminating it from inside the courtroom. This suggestion allows wheelchair users to sit in the second row of jurors. Most courtroom personnel prefer this design because it provides better viewing of all the jurors' faces.

To avoid the ramp issue altogether, some courtroom designers are making elevated jury boxes a thing of the past. They are developing designs that place the first row of jurors at floor level. Able-bodied jurors can step up one level and sit in the second row. The first row is available for any juror who cannot maneuver a step.

Spectator seating

The federal regulations currently call for wheelchair locations to be provided in the spectator seating area of the courtroom. This can be accomplished by installing a couple of short benches. As a general rule, wheelchair locations would be required in alternate locations. For example, one or two wheelchair locations would be in the front of the courtroom

The challenge here is that these sliding or temporary ramps could prove to be a tripping hazard for wandering attorneys.

DOJ Reaches Agreement in Case of Hearing Impaired Juror

The U.S. Justice Department reached agreement in February with two Mississippi county courts to ensure that deaf individuals can fully participate in jury activities.

The agreements resolve complaints lodged under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by a Mississippi man who is deaf and uses sign language to communicate. Under the agreements, Harrison and Hancock counties are required to:

- establish a written policy to ensure that persons with hearing impairments have an equal opportunity to benefit from the services of the courts, including participating as jurors, parties, witnesses, and spectators;
- secure the services of a qualified interpreter whenever necessary to ensure effective communication for deaf persons;
- reimburse the complainant for the interpreting expenses he incurred when he appeared as a potential juror in the circuit courts of the counties;
- publicize the policy through public notices in local newspapers;
- inform and instruct all appropriate district court officials responsible for conducting proceedings to comply with the policy; and
- train the administrators of each county court on the application of the ADA in jury trials and other court proceedings.

In 1992 Charles Carver was called for jury duty in Hancock. According to his complaint, when he arrived at the court accompanied by an interpreter, the judge after noting the presence of the interpreter, indicated that deaf people could not serve as jurors.

The complaint also referred to a second incident, in Harrison County where another judge noted an interpreter signing to Carver. After the interpreter explained that Carver was deaf and she was his interpreter, the judge excused him from jury duty, despite Carver's protests. The judge noted that the case was too technical for a deaf juror and that the interpreter would distract the other jurors. At Carver's insistence, he remained, but when his time came to be questioned, he was skipped.

Access to the Information Superhighway

This report includes presentations and discussions from a conference held last year at Hofstra University. The report includes addresses by keynote speakers on Web Access for People with Disabilities and excerpts from the Federal Communications Commission's July 29, 1996 report on captioning and video description. A discussion of the key disability-related provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 is included, as are summaries of panel discussions on topics such as: telecommunications services, conference sponsor NYNEX offerings, and training programs for people who are interested in learning more about the information superhighway.

The report also includes a compilation of resources concerning the information superhighway. The report is available by request on a 3.5" diskette with IBM readable ASCII versions. Send a blank diskette to: Professor Frank Bowe, CRSR, 124 Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY 11550-1090.

Religious Books Series

That All May Worship - An Interfaith Welcome To People With Disabilities

Developed as a "coaching manual," this publication focuses on breaking down physical and attitudinal barriers for worshipers with disabilities. This handbook, published by the National Organization on Disability (NOD) acknowledges that people with disabilities have both the need as well as the right to worship where and how they choose. The authors recognize that this fact is too often overlooked during construction of places of worship.

The book uses an interfaith approach to address important issues like religious education, transportation to religious services and ceremonies, and the special needs of people not able to leave their homes. Moreover, special consideration is given to different segments of the disability community including: mobility impairment, visual impairment, hearing impairment, mental illness, developmental disability, learning disability and chronic illness.

For more information on this or other NOD publications, contact the NOD Religion and Disability Program at: 910 16th St. NW Suite 600, Washington, DC 20006; 202.293.5960 (v), 202.293.5968 (tty); 202.293.7999 (fax); 800.248.2253.

From Barriers to Bridges - A Community Action Guide for Congregations and People With Disabilities

Another publication from the National Organization on Disability (NOD), this book discusses ways to better integrate the disability community with the religious community. A companion publication to *That All May Worship*, this guide encourages discussion among people with disabilities, their family members, religious leadership, and the larger community. It describes the importance of coming together to achieve a common goal.

The authors compare a 1986 survey and a 1994 survey to assess the experiences of people with disabilities. The surveys show that the amount of participation in society among this population has not changed significantly despite passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990. This was particularly evident in the areas of employment and income. However, the gap in education was smaller. Also, 68 percent of those surveyed considered religion "very important."

For more information, contact the NOD at: 910 16th St. NW Suite 600, Washington, DC 20006; 202.293.5960(v), 202.293.5968 (tty); 202.293.7999 (fax); 800.248.2253.

Loving Justice - The ADA and the Religious Community

The third in the series from NOD, this is an Americans with Disabilities Act reference manual. The author maintains that the goal of the legislation, to prevent discrimination against people with disabilities and is consistent with the social justice teachings of the "world's great religions."

The manual summarizes each section or title of the law and relates the sections back to their applications to religious institutions and organizations. For example the publication explains that a religious entity must comply with the employment provisions of the ADA if it employs more than 15 people. It also notes that religious organizations may have to comply with Title II - Public Services if they participate in a state or local government program which provides services to the public.

For more information, contact NOD at: 910 16th St. NW Suite 600, Washington, DC 20006; 202.293.5960(v), 202.293.5968 (tty); 202.293.7999 (fax); 800.248.2253. 

Developed as a "coaching manual," this publication focuses on breaking down physical and attitudinal barriers for worshipers with disabilities.

? **Problem:** How does an existing facility or campus of facilities built before visual fire alarms were required, cost effectively install a system that will notify an employee or student with a hearing impairment of emergency situations?

TIP: Visual alarms can be installed in the individual's workplace and vibrating pagers tied to the emergency warning system of the campus can be issued to the individual for the times when they are not in a location with visual alarms.

? **Problem:** Drinking fountains mounted at heights accessible to people who use wheelchairs may be protruding hazards to people with visual impairments.

TIP: The Rose Garden Arena in Portland, Or. installed warning barriers that create a detectable warning for people who use the long cane technique to find their way in the environment.



Images of Excellence

Winners of the first Search for Excellence in Universal Design have been documented in the a new slide show, **Images of Excellence**.

Supported by the **National Endowment for the Arts** and the **National Building Museum**, the project highlights 38 projects showing excellence in universal design in the fields of architecture, graphic design, industrial design, interior design and landscape architecture. The detailed script makes this an excellent teaching tool.

For more information, contact:
Universal Designers & Consultants Inc.
1700 Rockville Pike, Suite 110
Rockville, MD 20852
301.770.7890 (v/tty); 301.770.4338 (fax).

Innovative Approach, from page 5

millwork drawings from the contractors identified inconsistencies with accessible heights and reaches on counters and cabinets. The drawings to reflect this made the architect aware during review of submittals of potential non-compliance.

According to the Mayor's Office staff and the Inspection Division, requests for technical materials has drastically increased with the implementation of the notices. The heightened education of owners and developers on accessibility and a greater awareness and willful understanding of the disability community has subsequently trickled down to the design community with more emphasis being placed on accessibility than ever before.

The design community, as represented by the Northwest Arkansas Chapter of AIA has taken a cautious approach to professional accountability for universal design under the ADAAG, citing increased susceptibility to potential litigation arising from buildings that do not comply with federal law. In the past, the design community has failed to educate the clients of either party's responsibilities as they pertain to accessibility, leaving the client to assume that they are receiving accessible design as part of standard architectural services.

The disability community has been equally satisfied with the outcome of the task force's work.

Task force member Mike Tramill has suggested that a permanent board be formed that would allow city staff and citizen representatives to continue monitoring the progress of barrier reduction within the city.

All ignorance within the community has not been erased with two notices. However, the task force took critical steps toward removing barriers. It acknowledged the problem and declared a resolution which stated its understanding. It implemented educational and forewarning measures which neither overburdened an already understaffed Inspection Division nor opened the city to unwarranted civil rights litigation. Instead, responsibility and accountability were placed at the feet of the owner or developer as stipulated in the ADA and Fair Housing Act. And lastly, the task force proved that by working together with the people involved, problems can be discussed and productive solutions can be developed. 

David Michael Lieb is an architectural designer and artist living in Fayetteville, Ark. He was appointed to the task force and served as a representative of the community-at-large.

*Universal Design
Newsletter provides
a one-year free
subscription for any
tip which we
publish. We look
forward to receiving
and publishing your
tips.*

Accessible Justice, from page 6

and a couple toward the back.

Lecterns and counsel tables

The impact of the interim final rule is also being felt at courtroom lecterns and counsel tables. The federal regulations will probably require a lectern for individuals of all heights as well as for those who use a wheelchair. A lectern that can be adjusted to accommodate the range from a wheelchair user to a full-standing position with a single quick motion is needed. Only a few companies supply a "special needs series" lectern. One manufacturer also provides a lectern control panel with Braille identification. Counsel tables will also be required to accommodate wheelchair users. The challenge is in selecting a table with the proper surface height and knee/toe clearance for wheelchairs.

Hearing impairment issues

The interim final rule also has designers taking a new look at issues related to hearing impairment. Many jurors are still being excused from duty because of hearing loss. With the right assistive listening system in place, many people with hearing impairments can follow the proceedings. An assistive listening device can also assist jurors in the deliberation room.

The challenge is in finding a system that does not allow confidential information to be received outside the courtroom and deliberation room. Systems, such as radio FM systems, use radio waves that penetrate walls and are subject to interference from outside sources such as police and fire communications systems. Infra-red systems do not have this drawback.

Sign language interpretation is also being considered. Many courtroom designers are recommending larger witness boxes that can hold the witness and an interpreter. These larger witness boxes could also accommodate interpreters for individuals whose first language is other than English. In addition, these larger boxes accommodate the required maneuvering clearances of wheelchairs.

Judicial barriers

Judicial education has been one of the greatest challenges to increasing accessibility in courtrooms. Once a judge understands how easy it is to accommodate people with disabilities, he/she usually accepts design solutions that are beneficial for all. ■

Tony Waller is the national program manager for accessibility for the General Services Administration and liaison to the U.S. Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

LULA Elevator

The Horizon, from Concord Elevator Inc., is a hydraulic-drive limited use/limited application (LULA) commercial elevator. Standard features include an optical scanner floor selector control; a slack or broken cable device; an anti-creep releveling device; and a wide variety of emergency features such as battery lowering with automatic recharging; automatic emergency lighting; a stop/alarm button in the cab; and an emergency stop button in the pit. The lift cab has a stainless steel control panel, a stainless steel handrail, a solid ceiling with four stainless steel spot lights, and a digital floor indicator. The lift also offers "car in use" illuminated cab and hall buttons and automatically timed car lighting.

Concord Elevator Inc.

A subsidiary of the Ricon Corporation
107 Alfred Kuehne Blvd.
Brampton, ONT L6T 4K3 Canada
905.791.5555 or
800.661.5112 (U.S.)

TTY Answering Machine

The TTY INFOCENTER, from TeleSonic, is a computerized system designed to enable individuals with hearing or other communication disabilities to read the menu options offered by automated phone attendants using a computer or TTY. This multi-line system automatically detects whether an incoming call is placed by a computer modem or a standard TTY, allowing one phone number to be used for both types of calls. Messages can be customized for each type of call. The system also offers user-friendly data input screens for system administration and detailed report logs of caller activities. The complete

plug-and-play system includes a color monitor, CPU, keyboard, mouse, and the complete software package installed. Also included are two telephone ports, a built-in modem and software for remote diagnostics, and complete documentation. A variety of options are also available, including additional telephone ports, a printer and cable, first-year maintenance, script writing, and custom call flow design. ■



The New Products column was provided by the ABLEDATA project, a computerized database of information on assistive equipment which is funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research and is administered by Macro International, Inc., Silver Spring, MD.

The “New Look” of ADAAG, from page 1

removed from the body of the document. The committee felt that while this type of information is valuable commentary for users of the document, it must be distinguished from the mandatory provisions in order to reduce interpretation and enforcement questions. The committee did not attempt to write a new commentary, but recommended that the U.S. Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) develop a comprehensive commentary to be used in conjunction with the guidelines. It is recommended that the commentary be presented “in close proximity” to the related mandatory provision.

Scoping provisions have been separated from technical provisions by placing them in a separate chapter. While the current ADAAG has separate scoping sections for sites and buildings, the committee report combined these separate sections, creating one series of scoping provisions. This eliminates the need to repeat scoping provisions (for example, parking may be provided on a site or in a building), and prevents potential misapplication of the scoping provisions. In addition, special scoping sections for alterations, additions, and historic preservation have been streamlined to address only the changes in application from new construction requirements. Any exceptions or modifications to general scoping or technical provisions applying to work in existing

buildings are addressed with the appropriate element.

The remainder of the recommended guidelines have been organized into logical chapters, grouping related elements to make it easier for users to find specific sections. The new chapter organization is as follows:

1. Application and Administration
2. Scoping Requirements
3. Building Blocks
4. Accessible Routes and Accessible Means of Egress
5. General Site and Building Elements
6. Plumbing Elements and Facilities
7. Communication El-

ements and Features

8. Special Rooms and Spaces

9. Built-In Furnishings and Equipment

10. Transportation Facilities

While most of the chapter titles are self-explanatory, “Building Blocks” may appear puzzling. This chapter reflects a “say it once, say it right” approach to the new format. There are a handful of fundamental criteria that are applied throughout ADAAG, such as clear floor space, protruding objects, and reach ranges. Rather than re-state the same provisions, they have been grouped in a single chapter and are referenced as needed. This eliminates the current questions that arise by having similar provisions stated repeatedly using slightly different wording.

Also noticeable from the new chapter format is the lack of “special occupancy sections.” The unique scoping and technical provisions for restaurants and cafeterias, medical care facilities, business and mercantile, libraries, and transient lodging, have been absorbed into the general portions of the document. The unique features of transportation facilities were retained in a separate chapter (Chapter 10), as most of the provisions are unlikely to occur in other occupancies.

Other notable editorial and format recommendations include:

- Defined terms are presented in italics throughout the report, highlighting the fact that the term has a specific meaning.
- A new numbering system, utilizing a decimal system similar to that used in the model codes. (No more parentheses!)
- Subsections are indented to clarify their relationship to main sections.
- No requirements are conveyed only by figure. Text has been added to specifically address the numerous provisions in current ADAAG where requirements are conveyed by the statement “see figure....” The figures have been relegated to commentary status, as they simply clarify or provide examples of the specific provision.

While the final committee report may initially appear overwhelming and confusing to those who have grown accustomed to quoting current ADAAG provisions by memory, it provides a more logical, more consistent, and more usable framework for both the technical and the “casual” user. The recommended new ADAAG will better serve the needs of all those affected by it. ■

Lawrence G. Perry is a code consultant for the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) International. He served as chairman of the Editorial and Format Subcommittee.

While the final committee report may initially appear overwhelming... it provides a more logical, more consistent, and more usable framework for both the technical and the “casual”

user.

Larry Perry,
BOMA

A Related Note

The ANSI A117 Committee has approved the same general format for the 1997 edition of the A117.1 Standard. At the completion of the current revision cycle, the standard will be reformatted in a manner consistent with the ADAAG. The most obvious difference between the two documents will be the scoping provisions. While ADAAG contains complete scoping criteria, the A117.1 Standard contains only technical provisions, with scoping criteria generally contained in the model building codes or local regulations. Chapter 2 in the reformatted A117.1 Standard will likely contain only guidance to the adopting authority that, in addition to the standard, scoping provisions need to be adopted. Another major difference between the two documents is that A117.1 contains criteria for dwelling units; ADAAG currently does not. Dwelling units are addressed in the current Uniform Federal Accessibility Guidelines for federal facilities, and were addressed in the proposed Title II Guidelines. Dwelling unit provisions are expected to be added to ADAAG in the future.

Modular Kitchen System Works for All Users

A Project from the Search for Excellence in Universal Design

Project: Stor Trac

Designers: Peter Orleans, AIA & Donald Francis, AIA

Discipline: Interior Design

This prefabricated modular kitchen storage system replaces traditional kitchen cabinetry with narrow, adjustable, pull-out drawer shelves equipped with full extension ball bearing hardware.

The design does not disadvantage or stigmatize any group of users, due to the space efficiency of the system for any user. It accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities through several choices of configurations and adjustability of the narrow pull-out "drawer shelves" to accommodate different sizes of canned and packaged goods, cooking utensils, glassware, and other items.

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with minimal fatigue, due to hardware which allows even loaded drawers to be pulled out fully and easily. Space is provided for approach,

reach, manipulation, and use regardless of the user's body size, posture, or mobility with the use of drawers and shelving to provide full access to all stored items.

Contents of the drawer-shelves may be reached from either side. The full extension ball-bearing hardware permits parallel approach by a wheelchair user, eliminating the need for knee space.

Editor's note: This article is the third in a series showing Excellence in Universal Design. Each article highlights a project from the National Endowment for the Arts Search for Excellence in Universal Design Project and the elements which make it exemplary. The 38 winning projects are documented in "Images of Universal Design," a slide show available from Universal Designers & Consultants Inc. For more information about the project, contact UD&C at 301.770.7890 (v/tty).



UNIVERSAL DESIGN NEWSLETTER

Accessibility and the Americans with Disabilities Act

Yes, send me one year (4 issues) of UDN for \$75.00

I prefer two years (8 issues) for \$135.00 (a savings of \$15.00)

Payment enclosed

Please charge my credit card

Renewal

M C VISA

Card No.

Card Expires

Name (please print) _____

Signature _____

Title _____

Company _____

Address _____

Please send me information about other publications and services available.

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____



Printed on recycled paper with vegetable inks.

April 8: American Planning Association, San Diego, CA. A session on accessibility will be conducted by staff members of the US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board). For more information, contact Lois Thibault at 202.272.5434 x 32(v); 202.272.5449 (tty).

April 10: MD Chapter/ National Recreation and Parks Association, Ocean City, MD. A session on accessibility will be conducted by staff members of the US Access Board. For more information, contact Lois Thibault at 202.272.5434 x 32(v); 202.272.5449 (tty).

April 16-18: American Hotel & Motel Association will hold its **annual convention** in Washington, DC and will feature a session on developments in the ADA and their implications for hotel and motel properties. For more information, contact AH&MA at 202.289.3100.

April 30 - May 2: Principles of Access, sponsored by the National Center on Accessibility in Martinsville, IN this seminar that discusses the fundamentals of the needs of people with disabilities in outdoor developed areas and historic sites. For more information, contact NCA at 800.424.1877(v/tty).

May 6: Pacific Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center, Oakland, CA. A session on accessibility will be conducted by staff members of the US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board. For more information, contact Lois Thibault at 202.272.5434 x 32(v); 202.272.5449 (tty).

May 13-14: US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board will meet to discuss and review its research and regulatory activities. The meeting will be held in Washington, DC for more information contact 202.272.5434(v); 202.272.5449 (tty).

May 14-18: American Institute of Architects Annual Convention, New Orleans, LA. A session on accessibility will be conducted by staff members of the US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board. For more information, contact Lois Thibault at 202.272.5434 x 32(v); 202.272.5449 (tty).

June 6: National Council on Independent Living, Washington, DC. A session on accessibility will be conducted by staff members of the Access Board. For more information, contact Lois Thibault at 202.272.5434, x 32(v); 202.272.5449 (tty).

June 12-13: American Institute of Architects will hold an ADA conference in Washington, DC. For more information, contact the AIA at 202.626.7300.

June 15: Self Help for Hard of Hearing People Convention, Phoenix. A session on accessibility will be conducted by staff members of the Access Board. For more information, contact Lois Thibault at 202.272.5434 x 32(v); 202.272.5449 (tty).

June 15-20: Special Session on Classroom Acoustics will be conducted at the 133rd Meeting of the Acoustical Society of America in State College, PA. The session will discuss the acoustical needs and requirements of hearing impaired and other students. For more information, contact David Lubman 714.373.3050.

Jun 22-25: Building Owners and Managers Association 1997 Convention, Minneapolis, MN. A session on accessibility will be conducted by staff members of the US Access Board. For more information, contact Lois Thibault at 202.272.5434 x 32(v); 202.272.5449 (tty). 

Events to be placed in the UDN Calendar must be submitted to the editor two months before the publication date.

Universal Design Newsletter
1700 Rockville Pike
Suite 110
Rockville, MD
20852

BULKRATE
US POSTAGE PAID
ROCKVILLE, MD
PERMIT #4791



Address Correction Requested