

Accessible Streets

NYC DOT's Proposed
Five-Year
Accessibility Plan



Eric Adams
Mayor



Ydanis Rodriguez
Commissioner

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General Information

Accessibility Statement

NYC DOT Initiatives for People with Disabilities:

Accessibility is a key pillar of NYC DOT's commitment to equity. The agency strives to make our streets, programs, and services accessible to all New Yorkers with disabilities.

NYC DOT's policy is to comply with all applicable laws, including but not limited to, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act, and the New York State and City Human Rights Laws.

Contact

Please submit your request using [this online form](#) if you need assistance accessing our programs or services. You may also reach out to the agency's ADA Coordinator/ Disability Service Facilitator:

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Prepared by: NYC DOT Policy Unit

NYC DOT does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the operation of its programs, services, and activities.

[Learn about our Grievance Procedure \(pdf\)](#)

[Website Accessibility Statement](#)



Commissioner's Letter

I am pleased to announce the release of *Accessible Streets: The New York City Department of Transportation's Five-Year Accessibility Plan*. At the heart of the mission of this agency and the Adams Administration lies a dedication to guaranteeing that all people—residents and visitors alike—can safely and efficiently navigate our city streets regardless of disability status.

Within this report, you will find a detailed and comprehensive overview of the significant advances we have made in increasing the accessibility of our streets, programs, and services, and the steps we plan to take in the next five years to further enhance accessibility throughout New York City. Our focus remains on ensuring that each person, regardless of ability, has access to the myriad employment opportunities, services, public spaces, and amenities our city offers.

We have reached significant milestones in our accessibility efforts: as of the end of 2023, NYC DOT has outfitted 2,200 signalized intersections with Accessible Pedestrian Signals and constructed over 6,600 pedestrian ramps across the city. We are also looking to the future and actively preparing for new federal accessibility standards for streets and public spaces.

One of the best examples of our commitment to accessible design is our ambitious expansion of raised crosswalks, which increase the safety and visibility of the pedestrians with disabilities by slowing drivers at intersections. Prior to the Adams Administration, New York City had only a handful of raised crosswalks. We are now adding dozens each year.

Our commitment is not just about upgrading our physical infrastructure; we are also creating an inclusive agency and engaging in an on-going dialogue with people with disabilities. The agency is identifying opportunities to increase our recruitment efforts and provide the support new and existing employees with disabilities need to thrive at NYC DOT. I am also meeting regularly with representatives of the disability community to discuss the issues that they care about most.

Equity is at the center of everything I do as NYC DOT Commissioner. Every day is an opportunity to foster a more just city that meets the needs of everyone. Accessibility is a key part of that commitment. I invite you to explore this report, see our progress, and join us in our continuing journey toward a more accessible and equitable New York City.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Y. Rodriguez', written in a cursive style.

Ydanis Rodriguez
Commissioner
New York City Department of Transportation

Executive Summary

Accessibility is a key pillar of New York City Department of Transportation's (NYC DOT) commitment to equity. An accessible transportation network enables people with disabilities to get to work and school, to access essential services, to visit family and friends, and to partake in all New York City has to offer. The agency strives to make our streets and sidewalks and agency programs and services accessible to all New Yorkers with disabilities.

The challenge to creating a truly accessible transportation network is sizeable and will require years of work, the efforts of government partners like the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and on-going engagement with the disability community. NYC DOT's responsibility spans a broad range of infrastructure—from bridges and sidewalks to streets and public plazas—much of which was first built over a century ago before accessibility was an essential component of street design.

Despite the scope of the work ahead, the agency has already made substantial progress. NYC DOT has integrated accessibility standards into its capital and in-house projects and committed several billion dollars to accessibility upgrades of its sidewalks and signals. This report further outlines the agency's comprehensive efforts to promote inclusivity, accessibility, and equal opportunity for people with disabilities. This plan reflects our commitment to enhancing accessibility on our streets, creating a more equitable and diverse workforce, and providing resources and services that are universally accessible. Our key objectives include:

- **Physical Access:** NYC DOT is dedicated to improving physical accessibility on city streets and in public spaces, ensuring that people with disabilities can more easily navigate the pedestrian network.
- **Accessible Services:** NYC DOT is committed to providing accessible services, including on the Staten Island Ferry, and accessible public digital platforms, to ensure that people with disabilities can easily access our programs.
- **Workforce Inclusivity:** NYC DOT strives to be a truly inclusive workplace. The agency will continue to actively recruit candidates with disabilities, support employees with disabilities, and foster a respectful workplace culture.
- **Accessible Communication:** NYC DOT aims to deliver information in a wide range of accessible formats and languages, to meet the diverse needs of our community, including people with sensory or cognitive disabilities.

NYC DOT's Accessibility Plan is a testament to the agency's dedication to making a difference in the lives of people with disabilities, encouraging a more inclusive community, and upholding the principles of equality and accessibility for all.

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Introduction

Accessibility is a key pillar of New York City Department of Transportation's (NYC DOT) commitment to equity. The aim of the agency is to transform our streets, sidewalks, and services, empowering New Yorkers with disabilities and creating a city where everyone can engage in all that New York has to offer. In this accessibility plan, we present a comprehensive overview of NYC DOT's efforts to achieve universal accessibility.

The challenge to creating a truly accessible street network is sizeable and will require years of work and large investments to achieve. NYC DOT's responsibility spans a broad range of infrastructure—from bridges and sidewalks to streets and public plazas—much of which was first built over a century ago before accessibility was an essential component of street design. The agency is in the process of transforming our streets, services, and programs through a mix of short-term strategies and medium to long-term capital projects. We are also working collaboratively with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), which operates the city's rail, bus, and paratransit services, to support their efforts to make public transit more accessible.

The approach outlined in this plan signifies a shift from a reactive to proactive accessibility strategy. The agency is working to aggressively complete its court-mandated investments in enhanced pedestrian ramps and signals and has integrated accessibility into our design standards. Looking to the future, the agency is actively preparing for new federal design requirements for accessible streets (see more in the box on the next page). Central to our strategy is robust engagement with the disability community, exemplified by regular meetings between Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez and advocates for the disability community.

This plan fulfills the requirements laid out in Local Law 12 of 2023, requiring all city agencies to articulate a five-year accessibility plan. Divided into five core areas—Physical Access, Programmatic Access, Effective Communications, Digital Access, and Workplace Inclusion—the plan reviews specific challenges within our programs and services. Here, we outline the concrete steps already implemented or planned to proactively address these challenges, emphasizing our commitment to a more accessible and inclusive city for everyone.

Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines

The U.S. Access Board's Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) provide design standards for accessibility in public spaces, specifically focusing on elements within the public right of way. PROWAG standards cover features such as curb ramps, sidewalks, pedestrian signals, crosswalks, street parking and other components that are crucial for the mobility of people with disabilities. These historic guidelines, the first ever official federal standards for public streets, were adopted by the U.S. Access Board in September of 2023. The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) and the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ) are expected to promulgate rules to integrate these standards into each agency's policies and programs. NYC DOT is actively preparing for PROWAG by meeting with its federal partner agencies, providing training to design and engineering staff, and beginning the process of integrating these new requirements into our design standards.

34th Avenue Open Street, Queens



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Physical Access

In addressing physical access, NYC DOT is working to improve the accessibility of all the components of our street network, including sidewalks, intersections, bridge pedestrian paths, plazas, and bus stops, as well as our municipal parking garages and lots. The accessibility of each element is paramount for the network to function seamlessly for people with disabilities. This section details the agency's efforts to improve each of these critical elements.

Much progress has already been made. Our agency's design standards for in-house and capital projects already include accessibility, ensuring that all new projects are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For example, NYC DOT in conjunction with Department of Design and Construction are constructing a capital project along the Grand Concourse in the Bronx. This project showcases a pedestrian-friendly design, incorporating shortened crossings, upgraded sidewalks with new pedestrian ramps, and raised crosswalks.

When launching new designs, our approach involves consulting with the disability community, actively identifying issues, and collaboratively developing solutions. For example, NYC DOT, drawing on the latest [U.S. Access Board guidance for EV charging stations](#), held a focus group with members of the disability community to discuss how to best design curbside electric vehicle chargers to serve motorists using wheelchairs.

NYC DOT is also taking on the crucial task of maintaining our existing infrastructure. To navigate our streets, people with mobility disabilities need a clear path, with smooth surfaces. In support of this effort, our Roadway Repair and Maintenance Division works diligently to maintain our streets and repaved 1,161 lane miles in 2023. This work complements the agency's efforts around sidewalks, curb ramps, and pedestrian signals, discussed in greater detail in this chapter. The agency also collaborates closely with the MTA, supporting their efforts to install elevators at subway and commuter rail stations within the city.

Sidewalks

Issue

Defective conditions on sidewalks can create hazards for pedestrians, including those with disabilities.

Action

Replace over one million square feet of sidewalk annually on city-owned property and in residential neighborhoods.

The sidewalk program's goal is to enhance safety and accessibility by repairing defective conditions throughout the city's network of over 12,000 miles of sidewalk. These defects, including cracks, holes, uneven surfaces, improper slopes, or collapsed concrete, may pose hazards to pedestrians and people with disabilities. The program operates on a complaint-driven basis, where received complaints prompt staff to inspect sidewalks and issue Notices of Sidewalk Violation to property owners who are responsible for necessary repairs. In the event timely repairs are not made by the property owner, the agency may hire private construction firms to make the repairs. When this happens, NYC DOT bills the property owner for the cost of the repairs. The agency replaces over one million square feet of sidewalk annually, with a focus on city-owned property and residential neighborhoods.



Left: Example of uneven surfaces along a sidewalk. **Right:** Sidewalk improvements remove obstacles for people with disabilities.

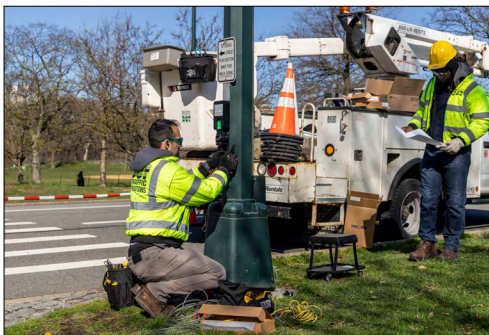


Accessible Pedestrian Signals

Issue:
Traditional pedestrian signals that communicate exclusively through visual cues are not accessible to those who are blind or have low vision.

Action:
Install accessible pedestrian signals at all signalized intersections by the end of 2036

The Accessible Pedestrian Signals Program is a city-wide initiative to equip the over 13,000 signalized intersections with Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS). Typical pedestrian signals rely on visual cues to communicate when the walk sign is on. This method is insufficient for those who are blind or have low vision. The program seeks to rectify this issue by making pedestrian signal information accessible to all pedestrians, including those with a sensory disability. APS devices communicate when the walk signal is displayed in non-visual formats, using tones or speech messages and vibrating surfaces. In 2021, the United States District Court, Southern District of New York mandated the City of New York to install APS at 10,000 intersections by the end of 2031. NYC DOT employs electricians and outside contractors to install APS at signals citywide, and this work includes installing underground cables, pouring pole foundations, installing traffic signal poles, and wiring APS pushbuttons. NYC DOT also holds semi-annual public APS townhall meetings and quarterly APS advisory committee meetings to actively involve the community and gather input for guiding the program. These forums address not only new installations but also emphasize improvements in reporting non-functional APS and identifying common maintenance issues to enhance overall program effectiveness. To date, the APS Program has outfitted over 2,200 signalized intersections with APS. NYC DOT aims for full APS implementation at all signalized intersections by the end of 2036.



Above: A DOT employee installs an APS pushbutton. **Right:** A person who is blind uses an APS pushbutton before entering a crosswalk.



Pedestrian Ramps

Issue

Street corners that do not comply with the ADA create challenges for those with vision and mobility disabilities to enter and exit the sidewalk safely.

Action

Upgrade and construct ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps at intersections citywide.

The agency's Pedestrian Ramp Unit performs the important work of upgrading the city's pedestrian ramps to create safe and accessible pathways to our sidewalk network. Common issues include obstructions, poor location, and non-compliance with accessibility standards. With a wide-ranging scope that includes the assessment of corners, medians, and mid-block crossings, the unit manages the planning, budgeting, and granting approvals for pedestrian ramp installations and makes upgrades in compliance with the ADA. A 2019 settlement mandated NYC DOT to survey and repair pedestrian ramps in need of accessibility upgrades across all five boroughs. All new and upgraded pedestrian ramps adhere to the latest ADA standards, featuring detectable warning surfaces designed with contrasting colors to assist people who are blind or have low vision. From July 2022 through June 2023, the pedestrian ramp unit successfully constructed over 6,600 pedestrian ramps, further enhancing accessibility and inclusivity throughout our city. Hundreds more ramps are upgraded each year through street reconstruction projects. Over the next five years, the program will continue to install many new and upgraded accessible pedestrian ramps across the city to make pathways along our sidewalk network more accessible for people with disabilities.



Above: A DOT employee installs a new pedestrian ramp. **Right:** A person in a wheelchair enters a sidewalk via a pedestrian ramp.



Raised Crosswalks

Issue

Intersections are often the site of pedestrian crashes and are especially dangerous for people with disabilities. Driver speeds and pedestrian visibility create safety challenges, particularly for those with vision and ambulatory disabilities.

Action

Expand NYC DOT's raised crosswalk program to slow drivers, increase pedestrian visibility, and encourage drivers to yield to pedestrians at intersections

Raised crosswalks are similar to speed humps, but with a flat top and a marked crosswalk. The treatment slows drivers and encourages them to yield to pedestrians as they move through a crosswalk. By raising the crosswalk to the height of the curb, this treatment also increases pedestrian visibility and enhances accessibility by providing a level crossing path through the intersection. NYC DOT started its raised crosswalk program in 2016, building a small number of locations each year, focused on areas with a high number of residents with ambulatory disabilities and low-income residents. In 2022, the Adams Administration prioritized raised crosswalks and greatly expanded the program's capacity and reach. Since that time NYC DOT has constructed a total of 80 raised crosswalks throughout the five boroughs using both our in-house crews and as part of capital projects, such as the reconstruction of the Grand Concourse in the Bronx. Furthermore, NYC DOT is working with the Department of Design and Construction (DDC) on a large scale raised crosswalk capital contract that will build raised crosswalks city wide, prioritizing locations with a history of pedestrian injuries.

E 5th Street and Fort Hamilton Parkway, Brooklyn



Bus Stop Accessibility

Issue

Some bus stops lack continuous accessible surfaces to support wheelchair lifts or other accessibility needs. At other locations, structural columns obstruct bus stop access under elevated subway lines posing safety risks and accessibility issues for bus riders who are elderly or have disabilities.

Action

Identify and upgrade bus stops that require accessibility improvements. Construct bus boarding islands or curb extensions at bus stops under elevated structures.

New York City has approximately 15,000 bus stops, the vast majority of which meet ADA guidelines. However, given the large number of stops, some locations require improvements to ensure full accessibility. Non-compliance issues include the absence of a five foot by eight-foot accessible surface for wheelchair lifts to deploy, as well as gaps in the sidewalk leading to or at the bus stop, obstructing accessible access. The agency's division of Transportation Planning and Management identifies bus stops that require accessibility improvements and typically provides locations and designs to the Sidewalk Inspection and Management (SIM) team. SIM utilizes in-house concrete crews to repair or install necessary sidewalk sections for enhanced accessibility. Other projects may be capitolly constructed by DDC, the MTA, or other agencies. Since 2019, NYC DOT successfully upgraded 84 bus stops with accessibility improvements. Moving forward, the agency anticipates upgrading a minimum of 25 bus stops per year, including those planned for 2024.

The Bus Stops Under the EI (BSUE) program addresses the unique challenges experienced on streets under elevated subway structures. Subway columns can obstruct bus access to the curb, forcing bus riders to board and exit in the middle of the street, posing safety risks and

Accessible bus stops offer seating and space for riders to board.



creating accessibility challenges for the elderly and passengers with disabilities who rely on bus ramps and lifts. The BSUE initiative focuses on enhancing bus stop locations under elevated trains by constructing bus boarding islands or bus bulbs. These improvements offer bus riders a safe waiting space, allowing them to board and alight without entering the traffic lane. Furthermore, they enhance bus operations by improving visibility, streamlining pick-up and drop-off, and facilitating bus drivers' navigation around subway columns. To date, the agency has upgraded 43 locations through both in-house and capital projects. Currently, fewer than 50 noncompliant locations remain, with several in-house projects in the planning stage, roughly 20 locations integrated into capital projects in the planning or design phase, and additional locations under review for future projects. Capital projects in planning and design are currently scheduled for construction by fiscal year 2028, and NYC DOT plans to continue construction on locations as part of in-house Street Improvement Projects in the coming years.

Coordination with the MTA

In addition to these bus stop efforts NYC DOT works closely with the MTA to advance the accessibility of its services.

Access-A-Ride Stops

NYC DOT creates designated Access-A-Ride bus stops citywide to improve the boarding process for passengers.

Accessible subway stations

The Land Use unit at NYC DOT oversees the comment and design review process for projects on city-owned property in the right of way, primarily focusing on Accessible subway stations.



Pedestrian Bridges and Bridge Pedestrian Paths

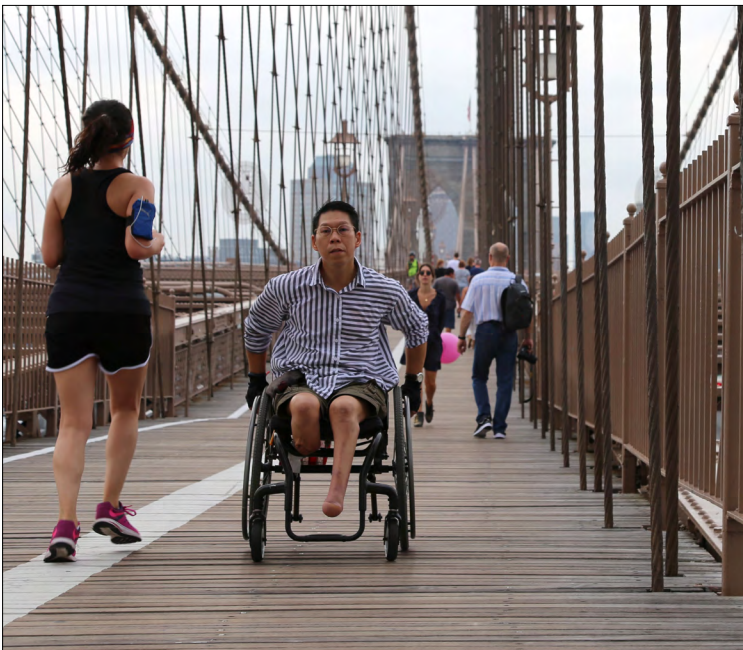
Issue

Some of NYC DOT's pedestrian bridges and bridge pedestrian paths do not meet modern accessibility standards.

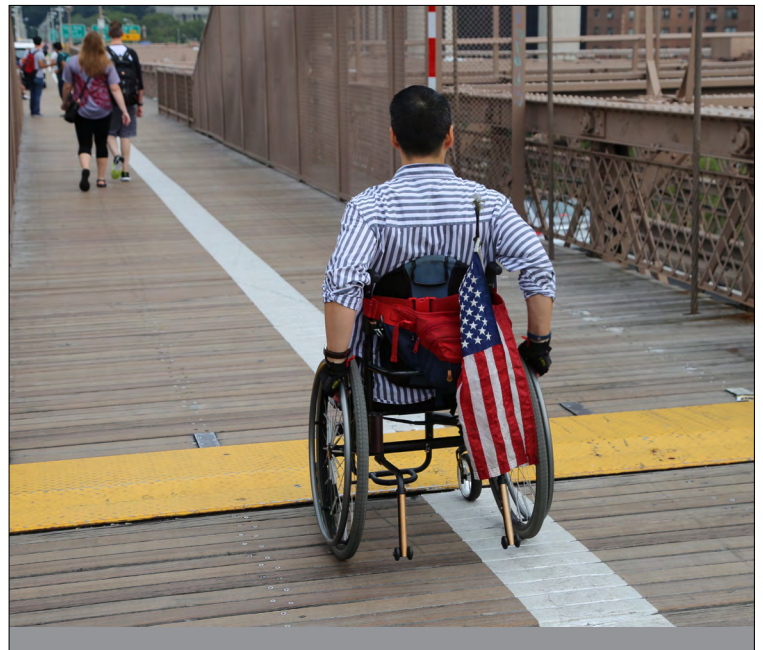
Action

Upgrade pedestrian bridges and bridge pedestrian paths to meet ADA standards as the agency rehabilitates these bridges through its capital program.

The agency's Bridges Division is responsible for the maintenance and repair of over 800 bridges across the five boroughs, including 132 pedestrian bridges, as well numerous vehicular bridges with pedestrian paths. This inventory includes iconic spans like the 140-year-old Brooklyn Bridge, with its busy pedestrian walkway, and more modest structures, such as the 120th Street pedestrian bridge over the FDR Drive. Of the pedestrian bridges, an assessment in 2021 found that 68 likely do not meet modern accessibility standards. As part of the agency's ten-year \$14.7 billion program to maintain our bridge inventory in a state of good repair, NYC DOT is upgrading these facilities to modern ADA standard as it progresses its capital program. For example, construction is underway on the 17th and 27th Avenue pedestrian bridges in Brooklyn over the Belt Parkway, which will bring these structures into full ADA compliance.



Brooklyn Bridge pedestrian path



Public Seating

Issue

Publicly available seating in the city is growing but remains scarce on many major corridors. As a result, people with disabilities and the elderly have limited opportunities to rest while navigating our streets.

Action

Expand the network of public benches and leaning bars along city sidewalks and bus stops.

NYC DOT manages over 2,100 benches and leaning bars through its Street Furniture Unit. NYC DOT provides public seating in plazas, along sidewalks, and at local bus stops to offer a place of rest for pedestrians and transit riders. Many transit riders require a comfortable place to sit and wait for buses or trains, especially during long commutes. Publicly available seating is often scarce, and not all outdoor seating options are accessible to the public. In many instances, seating may be restricted to tenants of specific buildings or reserved for patrons of businesses, limiting the available options for those in need of a rest. People with mobility disabilities rely on opportunities to rest during their journeys and seating empowers these travelers to confidently undertake longer trips. NYC DOT sites benches and leaning bars in predictable locations in the furnishing zone of sidewalks and at bus stops and access-a-ride stops, making them easy to locate for people who are blind or have low vision. In 2023, the Street Furniture Unit successfully installed 375 benches and leaning bars, with plans to further install 550 benches and leaning bars in 2024. NYC DOT collects public feedback online to identify new locations as the network of public seating continues to expand.

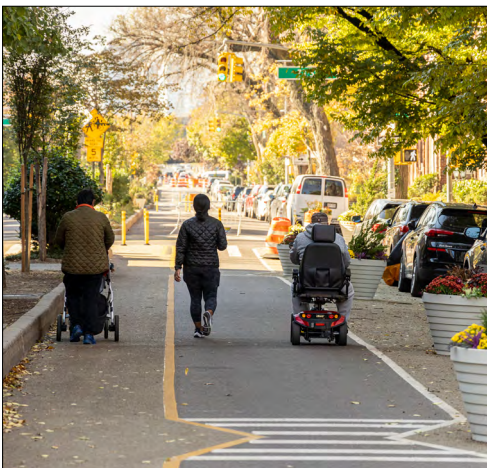


Street Activations: Open Streets

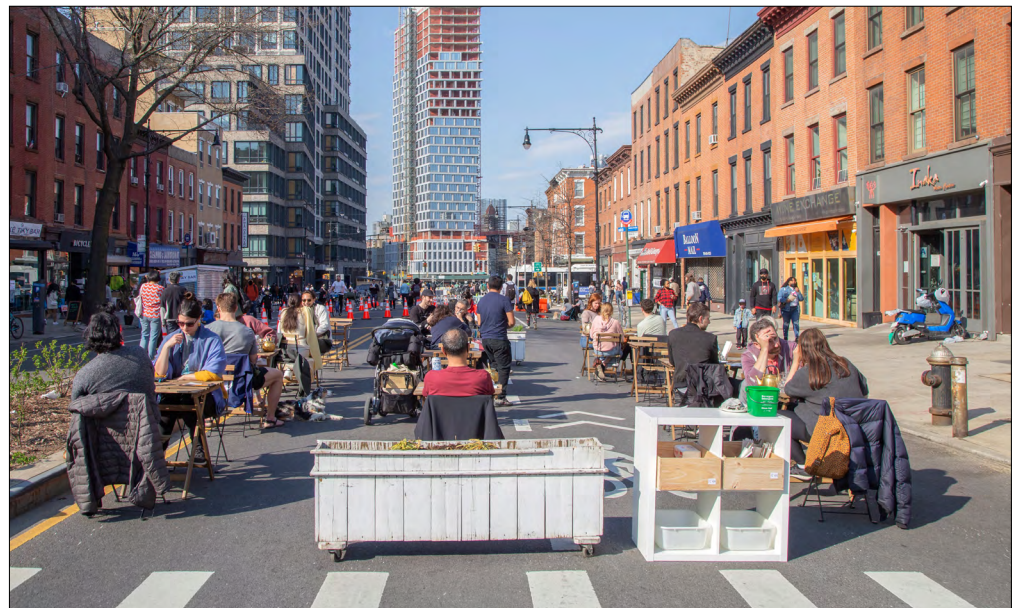
Issue
Ensuring the accessibility of the Open Streets program.

Action
Apply design tools and stakeholder input to enhance accessibility and functionality of Open Streets.

New York City's Open Streets program transforms streets into public space open to all. These transformations allow for a range of activities that promote economic development, support schools, facilitate pedestrian and bike mobility, and provide new ways for New Yorkers to enjoy cultural programming and build community. There are three types of Open Streets: limited local access, full closure, and full closure: schools. Recognizing the need for design upgrades to enhance operations and accessibility for those with disabilities, a primary program focus for NYC DOT is reimagining streets as public space. The agency is committing to enhancing walking, biking, and public transit on New York City Open Street corridors, including adding accessibility upgrades and considerations. NYC DOT has a large transportation and design tool kit that allows the agency to deliver on this vision for Open Streets. NYC DOT will conduct observational analyses, user surveys, traffic counts, and engage with stakeholders to enhance the accessibility of Open Streets.



Above: 34th Avenue, Queens
Right: Vanderbilt Avenue, Brooklyn



Issue
Improving accessibility for people with disabilities in parking facilities managed by NYC DOT

Action
Prioritize parking accessibility by adhering to US Access Board guidelines, providing ADA spaces, and upgrading facilities with accessible features.

NYC DOT's Parking Management, Facilities, and Capital Projects units are responsible for ensuring that the agency's current and future parking facilities are accessible. Currently, over 4% of off-street spaces at NYC DOT parking facilities are designated as ADA accessible, with most strategically placed near entrances or parking meters to minimize user travel distance. In parking garages, the agency sites ADA spaces on the ground floor or near to elevators on other levels. Special projects, such as the Gowanus parking lot expansion and Queens Village parking lot enhancements, involve the installation of ramps to ensure accessible pathways. NYC DOT is currently conducting an occupancy study of ADA accessible spaces to inform further facility improvements based on the evolving needs of the diverse user base, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to inclusivity and user convenience.



EV Fast Charging Stations

Issue:

Electric vehicle design varies by model, making it difficult for people with mobility disabilities who need to maneuver around the vehicle to charge at standard EV charging stations.

Action

Install accessible EV charging stations designed with access aisles in municipal parking lots and garages.

Charging electric vehicles (EVs) in New York City can be challenging, particularly for those who park on the street and lack home chargers. In response, NYC DOT collaborates with partners to improve public EV charging accessibility across the city's five boroughs. EV charging presents unique challenges for drivers with mobility disabilities, as it requires them to exit their vehicles to access the charger. EVs also lack standardized outlet placement, making maneuverability around the entire vehicle essential to complete the charging process. To address these concerns, accessible EV charging stations include access aisles, providing the space necessary for EV owners with disabilities to connect their vehicle to the charger. Through NYC DOT's Electric Vehicle Charging Program, the city operates three fast charging hubs at city-owned public parking facilities. Each municipal facility offers ADA-compliant accessible chargers. The program plans to expand to 21 facilities across the city, which will all adhere to accessibility guidelines for EV charging stations set by the U.S. Access Board.

EV charging station at Queens Boulevard, Queens



3

Programmatic Access

Beyond its infrastructure, NYC DOT is also committed to ensuring that all of its programs and services are accessible. The agency is a major transit provider through the Staten Island Ferry (SIF), which carries roughly 70,000 passengers a day, is the busiest single ferry route in the nation, and is fully accessible. All vessels in the SIF fleet accommodate passengers in wheelchairs or who use other mobility devices. Additionally, both terminals have accessible entrances and elevators. In terms of passenger communications, SIF facilities feature braille signs, and all service announcements are made audibly and presented on visual displays.

In the past 15 years the agency also created new programs to expand mobility choices for New Yorkers, including our Citi Bike bikeshare program, e-scooter share program, and curbside carshare program. The agency recognizes the importance of ensuring that these services are accessible and do not compromise the mobility of people with disabilities. Finally, NYC DOT operates services explicitly for people with disabilities, including the Parking Permit for People with Disabilities (PPPD) program and Mobility Management, discussed further below.

Permanent Outdoor Dining Program: Dining Out NYC

Issue

The emergency outdoor dining program executed during the height of the pandemic lacked standardized design requirements to ensure ADA compliance of dining setups.

Action

Created design requirements for the permanent outdoor dining program that maintain physical accessibility for curbside structures.

Amid the challenges posed by the pandemic, the temporary outdoor dining program played a crucial role in expanding dining opportunities, allowing small businesses to remain open during the shutdown. The temporary program expanded outdoor dining participation by approximately tenfold over the pre-pandemic participation rate and allowed outdoor dining citywide for the first time. Building on lessons learned from the temporary program, NYC DOT is strengthening accessibility and safety requirements to address quality of life concerns. The proposed rules for the permanent program include key accessibility measures that ensure all setups will meet ADA and NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) requirements. For instance, ADA accessible ramps will be required for roadway setups that are not flush with the curb. Both sidewalk and roadway setups require at least one accessible seat and must maintain a clear path on the sidewalk beyond the 36-inch minimum. The permanent program is expected to launch in January 2024 ushering in more accessible, safer setups for the 2024 outdoor dining season.



Above: Amsterdam Avenue, Manhattan
Right: John Street, Manhattan



Issue

In the past, public-facing materials created for project information and engagement did not consistently adhere to accessible formats.

Action

Conducted agency-wide training programs to increase employee knowledge on how to create accessible materials.

The Mobility Management Program (MMP) works to enhance mobility and accessibility for a diverse range of populations in New York City, including people with disabilities. The program accomplishes this mission through a multifaceted approach encompassing capacity building, data, research, and community outreach. Several teams at NYC DOT use the agency's website to share information about ongoing and future projects, policy initiatives, and public engagement materials. However, in the past some of the content posted on the website was not created in an accessible format, potentially hindering its usability for people with disabilities. To address this, MMP offers a comprehensive training program designed to bolster capacity in accessibility, equity, and inclusion. Notably, their quarterly accessible document training provides agency-wide education on creating accessible documents in Microsoft Office Suite and PDF formats. This year more than 265 individuals from over 20 teams at NYC DOT took part in these training sessions, demonstrating the resources' broad appeal and engagement throughout the agency.



Services: NYC Parking Permit for People with Disabilities (PPPD)

Issue

The current process for requesting a disability parking permit is cumbersome, as applicants must submit applications by mail and undergo a lengthy review process.

Action

Develop a web-based Advanced Permit Application (APA) system to expedite the application process.

Residents and non-residents of the City of New York with a permanent disability that impairs mobility and requires the use of a private vehicle may request a disability parking permit through the NYC DOT PPPD unit. Currently, applicants must submit all applications by mail and wait for a complete review and approval of their submissions. The entire review process can take up to 90 business days to be completed. NYC DOT is actively developing a web-based Advanced Permit Application (APA) that will enable users to electronically submit requests for new parking permits. This new tool will streamline and shorten the entire application process. Additionally, NYC DOT administers the State's blue hang tag disability permit on behalf of the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles. Both City and State permit programs are set to be fully operational within the APA system by November 2024.

PROWAG and On-Street Parking Requirements

NYC DOT's current approach to accessible curbside parking is centered on the PPPD program. Originally created for veterans with disabilities after World War II and later expanded, the PPPD provides the permit holder with access to a large number of spaces that are otherwise not available to passenger vehicles, such as no parking and truck loading zones. The PPPD is particularly useful for finding parking in the busiest areas of the city, where curbside parking is often scarce.

PROWAG now requires designated accessible parking spaces at curbs where the existing spaces are marked or metered. NYC DOT is reviewing these new standards, engaging with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other stakeholders, and preparing a plan to proactively comply with the new PROWAG standards. The agency will continue to operate the PPPD program alongside any new accessible parking program.

Shared Mobility: Carshare

Issue

In the process of developing its carshare parking program, NYC DOT had concerns regarding the accessibility of the service.

Action

Collaborated with participating carshare companies to offer vehicle modifications upon request.

NYC DOT's Carshare Program offers convenient, on-demand access to vehicles for short-term use, benefiting both the environment and residents. Launched as a pilot in 2018, the program designated over 280 parking spaces for carshare vehicles in municipal lots and at the curb in select neighborhoods. Its success led to a permanent program in 2022. While it serves as a valuable resource for many, people with disabilities could face challenges operating standard fleet vehicles. To address this, Carshare collaborates with its three participating companies—Zipcar, Getaround, and Truqit—to offer vehicle modifications upon request. Modified vehicles come equipped with hand controls that enable drivers to break and accelerate without using their feet. In accordance with the Carshare program rules, all participating companies must provide modifications within 48 hours of a request. Looking ahead, the Carshare program aims to strengthen its outreach efforts to create greater awareness of its services within the disability community as the service expands.



Left: Designated parking spot reserved for carshare

Above: Hand control inside a carshare fleet vehicle

Shared Mobility: Citi Bike

Issue

Prior to launch, NYC DOT carefully examined the potential challenges regarding space constraints between bike share stations and the pedestrian pathway, as well as the limited options available for individuals with mobility disabilities to access the service.

Action

Developed siting guidelines that preserve pedestrian space around the station footprint and incorporated additional programming to offer adaptive cycling equipment to people with disabilities.

Launched in 2013, Citi Bike stands as a successful private–public partnership between NYC DOT and current owner–operator Lyft. Citi Bike's station–based system requires careful consideration of factors like hydrants, utilities, and ADA clearances during the siting of stations. Citi Bike stations, consistent with ADA requirements, maintain a minimum of six feet of pedestrian clear path when located on sidewalks, allowing for a clear passage for people using wheelchairs. To enhance the program's accessibility, Lyft collaborated with Achilles International to provide the Adaptive Cycling Program for New York City. This initiative allows people with disabilities to reserve a free handcycle or tandem bicycle for recreational use. Operating from May through early November in four boroughs—Brooklyn, Bronx, Manhattan, and Queens—the program reflects a commitment to making cycling accessible and enjoyable for everyone.



Achilles participants using handcycles at the park. Photo by Achilles/Citi Bike

Shared Mobility: E-Scooter Share

Issue

While establishing the East Bronx e-scooter share pilot, NYC DOT actively explored options to make the program more accessible for all users.

Action

Collaborated with participating e-scooter operators to offer wheelchair-accessible scooters upon request.

Pursuant to Local Law 74 of 2020, the NYC DOT E-scooter pilot program was established. Recognizing the importance of accessibility, the pilot mandated that all participating scooter companies provide wheelchair-accessible scooters. Traditional shared e-scooters in the fleet may not be suitable for people with ambulatory or other disabilities. To address this accessibility concern, NYC DOT requires operators to offer on-demand, wheelchair-accessible scooters. Those in need of such accommodations send a request to the operator, resulting in the delivery of a wheelchair-accessible scooter to their residence or another community facility. They can then use the vehicle for a set period before the operator retrieves it. Throughout the pilot program, NYC DOT, e-scooter operators, and advocates within the disability community met regularly to address access-related issues. Operators began offering wheelchair-accessible scooters from the pilot's outset in August 2021 and continued this service when the pilot ended and a new, long-term program began in August 2023.



Accessible and standard e-scooter models available through the e-scooter share program.

Issue

There is a lack of accessible shared mobility vehicle types in the micromobility market.

Action

Develop a shared mobility device designed for people with disabilities.

NYC DOT is committed to developing innovative, accessible solutions for complex transportation challenges. Acknowledging the lack of a shared mobility vehicle tailored to people with disabilities in the market, the agency recognized a critical need for a fully accessible option that can be deployed on the street. With 11% of the NYC population identifying as a person with a disability, the need for an accessible micromobility solution is evident. NYC DOT partnered with industry stakeholders to develop a vehicle concept specifically designed for people with disabilities. The concept would use advanced technology and purposeful design to meet the mobility needs of users with differing disabilities. The enclosed vehicle includes several features such as a roll-in design for wheelchair users, flexible seating, easy ingress/egress, storage, pedestrian alerts, and bike-lane operability. In the future, NYC DOT aims to work with stakeholders to develop a prototype vehicle and subsequently conduct a pilot test in New York City.

4

Effective Communication

In this section, we delve into the proactive measures taken by NYC DOT to overcome communication barriers faced by people with disabilities who interact with our agency. Recognizing these challenges, the NYC DOT's Language Access unit operates in alignment with Local Law 30 and NYC Executive Order 120 to ensure equitable access to NYC DOT information and services. A key initiative involves the Language Access Database (LAD), which provides American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation and language translation services, fostering inclusivity and effective communication within the community. Additionally, the agency's ADA Coordinator collaborates with the Learning Development Center and Mobility Management teams to address the need for enhanced training on disability etiquette and accessible design standards agency-wide.

Lastly, the Street Ambassadors, a crucial outreach team, distribute accessible materials to ensure that public feedback initiatives are adaptable to the needs of all community members, including those with disabilities.

Issue
Navigating NYC DOT's services can be challenging for people with disabilities.

Action
Created the role of ADA Coordinator/ Disability Service Facilitator to provide a dedicated contact for people with disabilities, to promote coordination on accessibility within the agency, and to act as a resource on disabilities issues for other agency employees.

For almost ten years, the agency has employed an ADA Coordinator and Disability Service Facilitator to serve as a single point of contact for accessibility issues at NYC DOT. This employee maintains relationships with disability groups, assists people with disabilities in accessing agency resources and services, investigates accessibility complaints from the public, coordinates compliance with the ADA within the agency, and facilitates training and knowledge sharing among agency employees. Identifying the need for enhanced training on disability etiquette and accessible design standards, the ADA Coordinator plans to collaborate with the Learning Development Center and Mobility Management to arrange for expanded training in 2024.



Detectible warning strips alert people with visual impairments as they approach street crossings.

Language Access Database (LAD)

Issue

People who are deaf/hard of hearing and people with Limited English Proficiency in New York face barriers in accessing NYC DOT information and resources, impacting effective communication strategies.

Action

Continue to provide ASL interpretation and other language translation services to create equitable access to agency resources.

The Language Access unit works to ensure equitable access to NYC DOT information and services for New Yorkers with Limited English proficiency (LEP), in alignment with Local Law 30 and NYC Executive Order 120. This team provides ASL interpretation to NYC DOT employees and at public outreach events, promoting inclusivity and effective communication. The unit offers interpretation services to DOT employees through the Language Access Database (LAD) and oversees the agency's Language Bank Volunteers (LBVs), comprising 40 volunteers who provide translation and interpretation support in their native languages. Additionally, the unit conducts thorough reviews of all NYC DOT documents and forms for plain language usage and identifies essential materials for translation into NYC's top 10 languages. Furthermore, the Language Access unit maintains the agency's Licenses, Permits, and Registrations (LPRs) portal, making over 48 NYC DOT applications accessible in NYC's top 10 languages, and ensuring that LEP customers can easily navigate and utilize NYC DOT services.



Street Ambassadors

Issue

Public outreach initiatives must be adaptable to the needs of the public, including people with disabilities who wish to be informed of the projects in their communities.

Action

Continue to distribute accessible outreach materials that encourage inclusive participation in public feedback.

The Street Ambassadors are a key outreach component within NYC DOT's Transportation Planning and Management division, with a primary mission of expanding public feedback and knowledge of Street Improvement Projects (SIP) at high-traffic community locations. While interacting with the public, Street Ambassadors must be prepared to adapt their outreach techniques to meet the needs of engaged individuals. To do this, the team focuses on accessible communication methods; in any given year the Ambassadors can conduct as many as 4,000 on-street surveys. They also typically engage with over 900 businesses during the course of a year. The team also assigns a dedicated staff member to ensure all outreach plans and materials meet accessibility standards. Additionally, the team promotes accessibility and inclusivity in all communication materials by following the accessibility style guide, using plain language, providing alternative text for images, and requesting ASL interpreters when necessary.

NYC DOT Street Ambassadors in Washington Heights, Manhattan



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Digital Access

NYC DOT works diligently to ensure that its online resources and social media content are not only informative but also accessible to all visitors. To ensure accessibility of its online presence, the agency is undertaking a comprehensive rebuild of its website with an emphasis on accessibility and developed standards for accessible social media posts.

Agency Website

Issue

NYC DOT's website was not fully accessible.

Action

Design a new website that prioritizes accessible functionality and content.

NYC DOT strives to make our agency's website accessible and inclusive to all visitors. In 2021, this agency took steps to align with accessibility standards, addressing color contrast, adding alternative text to images, and offering detailed descriptions and data sources for visual content. NYC DOT continues to assess the accessibility of new content, upload accessible documents, and create new content with plain language standards in mind. Furthermore, NYC DOT is collaborating with the Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI) to design a new website that prioritizes accessibility, with ongoing support from OTI and maintenance by NYC DOT's IT team. The new website's focus is on inclusivity, adherence to accessibility best practices, provision of content in plain language, and the reorganization of content to enhance the user experience.



Accessible Social Media Posts

Issue

In the past the media content submitted for the agency's social media account did not include accessible features.

Action

Modify content to include the features necessary to make social media posts fully accessible.

The Communications and Press team at NYC DOT prioritizes accessibility in all agency-wide social media content. This includes creating alt text for posted images, providing video descriptions for videos without audio descriptions, and equipping all videos with captions. Additionally, the team formats hashtags in an initial case for readability and considers accessibility considerations such as color contrast in graphics.



factors can also cause sidewalk damage a photo shows a row of houses in nyc

Sidewalks in NYC: Conditions & Defects (Audio Described)

NYC DOT
3.02K subscribers

Subscribe

2 Likes

Share

Download

Clip

Save

6

Workplace Inclusion

NYC DOT actively recruits job candidates with disabilities and seeks to foster a diverse and inclusive workplace environment.

DOT Facilities

The Facilities team actively manages the construction, maintenance, and remodeling of 84 NYC DOT facilities across the five boroughs. They handle requests and complaints through the "ServiceNow" system on the agency's SharePoint. The Facilities team prioritizes and addresses non-ADA compliant features, such as adjusting desk heights at workstations and installing accessible features like audible signals, braille, and raised characters on each floor. In 2023, Facilities improved bathroom doors with accessible handles, reduced opening force, and installed automatic door openers at 55 Water Street. The Facilities team addresses all requested accessibility issues, working to align new construction, rehabilitations, and restorations with ADA requirements.



Automatic door opener and accessible bathroom door handle installed at 55 Water Street.

Hiring and Recruitment

Issue
Employees with disabilities are underrepresented at NYC DOT.

Action
Continue to actively recruit candidates with disabilities, ensure the hiring process is accessible, and foster an inclusive workplace culture.

NYC DOT currently employs 17 people under the 55-a program, a New York City program that provides public agencies with greater flexibility when hiring people with disabilities. Every job posting has language encouraging 55-a eligible candidates to apply to the posting even if the candidate is not on the relevant civil service list. The agency also hires multiple people with disabilities from civil service lists. NYC DOT reviews job postings for uniformity and inclusive language, and all postings are publicly available. NYC DOT plans to require Disability Etiquette and Awareness Training for all employees starting in Fall 2023. This training will highlight key aspects of the hiring and recruitment process, covering topics like accessible job postings, scheduling accessible interviews, and filling out accessible applications.



Employee Resource Groups

Issue:
Employees in marginalized groups need access to supportive communities in the workplace.

Action:
Expand Employee Resource Group events to outer boroughs to foster greater inclusivity and engagement across NYC DOT's diverse employee base.

The Office of EEO, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) oversees the agency's nine Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), which include the African American Career Advancement Network; the Arabic, Turkic, Persian ERG; Asian Pacific Islander Association; DiverseAbilities; Indigenous People's Collective; LGBT@DOT; Organización Latinoamericana, Women Empowering Women In Non-Traditional Work, and Working Parents. These ERGs regularly collaborate with NYC DOT leadership to address issues affecting their members, employees, and the communities they serve. Specifically, EDI closely collaborates with the DiverseAbilities ERG to promote diversity and inclusion for people with diverse abilities within NYC DOT and the City. Additionally, EDI ensures that all ERG events are accessible, incorporating onscreen captioning and telephone call-in options for virtual events while making accommodation requests clear in promotional materials. To boost awareness and inclusivity, EDI organized successful tabling events in Manhattan and Queens, attracting numerous recruits, including those interested in joining DiverseAbilities' executive board. EDI's plans include organizing tabling events in Brooklyn and the Bronx in 2024, along with encouraging ERGs to host events at worksites across all five boroughs.



Left: NYC DOT at the African American Day Parade



Right: NYC DOT employees attending an ERG meeting

Issue:

NYC DOT recognized a need to capture important demographic data, specifically for employees with disabilities and those who identify as LGBTQ+.

Action:

Expanded the Workforce Profile Report to include demographic data identifying LGBTQ+ and employees with disabilities.

Recognizing the importance of inclusivity and diversity, NYC DOT expanded the scope of its annual Workforce Profile Report to include other crucial demographics within the workforce, particularly employees with disabilities and those identifying as LGBTQ+. To collect relevant data, the agency initiated an optional, agency-wide survey. This effort resulted in the inclusion of these populations in the 2022 Workforce Profile Report, with a commitment to their continued presence in future reports. The report serves as a valuable tool for divisions to strategically enhance recruitment practices and identify areas for improved representation across different job titles. The initial survey received over 300 responses. NYC DOT plans to boost survey participation by extending the lead time for survey administration and aims to encompass 10% of the agency in upcoming Workforce Profile Reports, reflecting a dedication to fostering a more diverse and inclusive workplace.



7

Conclusion and Next Steps

NYC DOT's Five-Year Accessibility Plan demonstrates our dedication to improving accessibility on city streets, cultivating a more inclusive workforce, and providing universally accessible resources and services. While this report covers numerous initiatives addressing diverse accessibility challenges, NYC DOT recognizes ongoing challenges faced within the disability community and continues to adapt and expand its efforts. Moving forward, NYC DOT aims to take a proactive strategy of continuous improvement and collaboration. By acknowledging the dynamic nature of accessibility issues and actively engaging with stakeholders, our agency seeks to position itself a catalyst for positive change both in our workplace and the communities we serve.

Methodology

To comprehensively assess programs and services for the Five-Year Accessibility Plan, the NYC DOT Policy team, in coordination with the agency's Legal Office, engaged with every division within the agency to document their accessibility programs, projects, and challenges. Each relevant unit completed a questionnaire covering their programs and services, any accessibility issues, or gaps, and provided a detailed explanation of the work the unit plans to do or has already done to address those issues or gaps. The information collection process spanned three months, involving a thorough review of responses from all units and follow-up meetings when necessary. Once drafted, this report was reviewed by the agency's legal counsel and senior leadership team.

Public Feedback

Upon completion this plan was posted on the agency's website along with a posting of a Notice of Opportunity to Comment, including clear instructions on how the public can comment on the draft plan. NYC DOT will collect public comment through May 3rd, 2024, and during that time will engage with disability organizations to get their vital input. You can provide public input by:

- Visiting [NYC DOT Accessibility website](#)
- Mailing ADA Coordinator at Edmund Asiedu, 55 Water Street, 9th FL, New York, NY 10041
- Contacting the ADA Coordinator at Accessibility@dot.nyc.gov

The feedback from the public, especially New Yorkers with disabilities, will provide valuable insights and help further enhance and refine this plan. NYC DOT will incorporate public comments into a final report and post it to its website by June 7th 2024.

Appendix



Grievance Procedure under the Americans with Disabilities Act

This grievance procedure may be used by any member of the public who wishes to file a grievance alleging discrimination by NYC DOT on the basis of disability.

The grievance should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination such as the name, address, and telephone number of the grievant, as well as the location, date, and description of the complaint or alleged violation of the ADA. Alternative means of filing grievances, such as in-person interviews or an audio recording of the grievance may be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.

The grievance should be submitted as soon as possible, but no later than sixty (60) calendar days after the date of the alleged violation to:

Edmund Asiedu – ADA Coordinator & Disability Service Facilitator
NYC Department of Transportation, 55 Water Street, New York, NY 10041
Tel: 929-441-9658 - Email: accessibility@dot.nyc.gov

Within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the grievance, the ADA Coordinator (or his or her designee) will contact the grievant to discuss the grievance and any possible resolutions. Within fifteen (15) calendar days of this contact with the grievant, the ADA Coordinator or his or her designee will respond in writing or, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the grievant, such as large print, Braille, or audio recording. This response will explain NYC DOT’s position and offer options for substantive resolution of the grievance, where applicable.

The grievant or their designee may appeal the agency’s decision within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the response by mail to:

Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez
NYC Department of Transportation
55 Water Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10041

The appeal should be submitted in writing explaining the disagreement with the agency’s decision. Alternative means of filing an appeal, such as an in-person interview or an audio recording of the grievance may be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.

NYC DOT’s response to the appeal will be provided to the grievant within sixty (60) days following receipt of the request for the appeal.

All responses by NYC DOT will be in writing or, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the grievant. All written grievances, appeals, and responses received in connection with a grievance made to NYC DOT, will be retained for at least three (3) years.

* NYC DOT employees may file employment-related discrimination complaints through the existing EEO complaint procedure.



NYC DOT Website Accessibility Statement

NYC DOT is committed to providing digital content that is accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. We are continually improving the user experience for everyone and applying the relevant accessibility standards.

Conformance Status

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) defines requirements for designers and developers to improve accessibility for people with disabilities. It defines three levels of conformance: Level A, Level AA, and Level AAA. Our digital content is partially conformant with WCAG 2.1 level AA. Partially conformant means that some parts of the content do not fully conform to this accessibility standard.

Feedback

We welcome your feedback on the accessibility of our digital content. Please let us know if you encounter accessibility issues by using the [Website Accessibility Feedback Form](#).

If you need assistance accessing a particular program or service, please reach out to NYC DOT's Disability Services Facilitator at 929-441-9658 or accessibility@dot.nyc.gov.

Assessment Approach

NYC DOT assesses the accessibility of its digital content through self-evaluation.

Date

This statement was created on March 10, 2023.