

# Transition Plan for Physical and Facilities Accessibility

Developed in compliance with the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA.)

This plan is the 2024 Transition Plan update by the ADA Facilities Advisory Committee.

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## 100.00 Executive Summary

The first transition plan, a document outlining MSU's transition from physically inaccessible buildings and spaces to accessible buildings and spaces, was published in January of 1992, after the Americans with Disabilities act was passed by the federal government in 1990.

At that time, many buildings were identified as inaccessible. The plan outlined how program accessibility could be achieved by construction or alternate means.

This 2024 plan outlines itemized progress made on each of these buildings, other progress made toward accessible programs, and where we still need work.

### 110.00 The transition plan has 5 main components

1. Priority buildings
2. New construction accessibility requirements
3. Ensuring accessibility to programs
4. Ensuring access to accessible buildings
5. Responding to ongoing needs

This 2024 plan references the older issued plans in each of these areas.

### 120.00 The 1996 plan also references University job applicants

These ongoing responsibilities are being met through programs implemented by Human Resources and have been since the 1996 report. This plan will not address those as the responsibilities continue to be met.

## 200.00 Priority buildings

### 201.00 Planning and Process

In order to address the deficiencies noted for facilities in section 210.00 MSU has a variety of planning tools in place which we utilize to inform processes from the Board of Regents and Montana State Legislature to request funding and the authority to execute funding on projects.

The University performs Facility Condition Assessments (FCA's) on all our buildings as part of a cyclical review process to identify and record what building issues exist and need to be addressed. After completing that assessment, the identified items are placed into a university-wide Capital Needs Inventory, this inventory serves as the master list of all work which needs to occur and can be used to fill out the university's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

The CIP is a fiscally constrained list which helps identify which projects may be completed each year within the university's financial constraints. The CIP also serves as a tool to help inform the university's submittals for the State Long Range Building Program (LRBP).

The LRBP is the legislative process which occurs every two years by which MSU can request funding from the State Legislature for projects on our various campuses. These requests are combined with all state agencies for consideration and historically have only received funding for a small portion of the university's need.

There are a variety of other steps to execute these projects including review and approval by the Board of Regents and the State Architecture and Engineering Division which all factor into the University completing these projects.

## 210.00 Priority buildings from 1996 plan

### 211.00 Visual Communications Building (VCB)

After significant renovations and updates since 1994, this building is now accessible.

The Grant Street pedestrian improvements project, expected to start summer 2024, will maintain or improve ADA routes to building.

A planned addition to the building for Montana PBS is in design and will adhere to current ADA standards.

**212.00 Reid Hall**

Floors 2 through 4 are currently inaccessible due to an elevator malfunction. A project to replace and improve the elevator went out to bid in the Spring of 2024 and is slated for replacement starting in the Summer of 2024.

Some classrooms in Reid Hall have already been modernized, the remaining classrooms in Reid Hall will be updated in upcoming summers following upgrades to fire alarm and fire suppression systems as required by the City of Bozeman before further renovations can commence. Phase 1 improvements to the fire systems have started construction in May 2024.

**213.00 Renne Library**

After significant renovations and updates since 1996, this building is now accessible.

**214.00 Leon Johnson Hall**

Bathrooms do not meet current standards on all but the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the building. Funding options for improvements to these facilities are being evaluated.

The design is underway for the auditorium in room 346 to upgrade and adhere to current ADA standards.

**215.00 Strand Union Building (SUB)**

After significant renovations and updates since 1996, this building is now accessible.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> floor bathroom needs accessibility improvements which will be considered with any building project that occurs on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.

Associated Students of Montana State University (ASMSU), the student government, has begun assessing the entire SUB, how it could be utilized differently and provide better access to services.

**216.00 Roberts/Cobleigh Hall**

These buildings still have ADA issues which need to be addressed, and this building continues to be a priority for ADA improvement and renovation.

Ramps between Roberts and Cobleigh do not meet modern standards, MSU has installed lifts in some locations and will continue to assess and make improvements to this condition when possible.

Reviews of the bathroom facilities and routes to those facilities are in progress.

ASMSU passed a resolution to prioritize the other first floor classrooms for ADA improvements.

Roberts 101 ADA improvements are currently being designed. This will include access to the room and upgrading the bathroom to provide a single occupant bathroom which is fully accessible. This will address many of the needs expressed in the ASMSU Resolution. The construction of Norm Asbjornson Hall has helped create additional accessible space designed for the College of Engineering, providing more robust infrastructure to make accommodations for functions in Roberts and Cobleigh Halls.

### **217.00 Johnstone Center including Culbertson, Colter, Mullan, Pryor, and Harrison**

Culbertson has ADA access to the Post Office and one classroom inside the front door facing Harrison Street. The rest of the building is not ADA accessible. The existing ramp is too steep, and the elevator is a freight elevator which is not ADA compliant. Design has been completed to upgrade the elevator pending funding.

Colter, Mullan and Prior: These residence halls are not ADA accessible, but other rooms on campus which are ADA accessible can be used for student accommodations.

Harrison: Three modern classrooms and accessible restrooms were constructed in this space, formerly Harrison Dining Hall, and provide full ADA accessibility.

### **218.00 Fine Arts Complex: now Howard Hall, Cheever Hall, and Haynes Hall**

The 1996 plan cites these 3 halls as the "Fine Arts Complex."

Haynes and Cheever are fully accessible.

Howard has accessibility issues due to a ramp which is too steep in the center of the building and may restrict access to restrooms from the lower level. MSU is currently reviewing this issue for improvement options which now must be cost validated which will allow consideration of funding opportunities.

In Howard Hall, Reynolds Recital Hall has accessible seating only at the back of the room. High noise levels present another challenge for accessibility during events in Reynolds Recital Hall.

### **219.00 Wilson Hall**

Wilson has an elevator and is fully accessible. Building and classroom renovations have improved ADA access throughout the building including updated classroom technology.

The 2nd floor bridge has opportunities for improved accessibility but is currently not accessible.

The American Indian Student Center was formerly in the basement of Wilson Hall and was not accessible. It is now housed in the new American Indian Hall which is fully accessible and provides additional accessible classrooms to campus and houses an ADA hoteling office which the University uses to address temporary ADA office needs.

## 220.00 Additional priority buildings

### **221.00 Lewis Hall**

The lower level of Lewis Hall is accessible to wheelchair users through the west entry of the Animal Resources Center. None of the upper floors of Lewis Hall are accessible by wheelchair users. Restrooms on the first floor have been previously modified but require additional alterations to meet accessibility guidelines. Laboratory and office spaces on the basement level have accessible features but egress from the sidewalk is too steep. Due to the large number of labs in the building this is particularly problematic for the university as they are more difficult to move.

Improving accessibility has been prioritized by MSU and initial funding to make ADA and elevator improvements was secured in House Bill 5 after a request to the 2023, 68<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session as part of the Long-Range Building Program (LRBP). MSU has prioritized a more comprehensive renovation of the facility for submission to the LRBP in the 2025, 69<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session. In the meantime, MSU continues to provide program accessibility by relocating programs to the lower level as necessary to meet specific accommodation requests.

### **222.00 Sherrick Hall – College of Nursing**

The main floor of the facility's east portion is accessible by wheelchairs through the at-grade entry court. Offices and conference rooms on this level are accessible. Restrooms have not been modified to meet accessibility guidelines. The west portion of the first floor could be made accessible by entry modifications. There are challenges with ensuring accessibility to the nursing simulation lab on the second floor with no elevator.

MSU is addressing these access challenges for nursing instruction through construction of a new nursing building, Jones Hall which will start construction in the summer of 2024.

The Mark & Robyn Jones College of Nursing also operates out of leased space in Billings, Great Falls, Kalispell, and Missoula, each with its own accessibility challenges of various

degrees. These challenges will be resolved through construction of a new nursing building in each location, each starting construction in 2024.

### **223.00 Traphagen Hall – Department of Earth Sciences and Department of Psychology**

Wheelchair access is provided at the west entry to the first floor. The upper floors of the facility are served by an elevator which has not been modified to meet current accessibility requirements. Restrooms on two floors of the building have been modified to meet accessibility requirements. Lecture rooms, labs, and offices are accessible. There are some issues with this building. Certain spaces are not accessible. The restrooms may not be accessible.

In the future, MSU may be able to modify the existing elevator to meet accessibility guidelines and update the restrooms for accessibility.

### **224.00 Linfield Hall – College of Agriculture**

The first, second, and third floors of Linfield Hall are accessible to wheelchairs through the southeast entry on the new portion and the north entry on the old portion of the building. Restrooms on the first floor have been modified to meet accessibility guidelines. No accessibility has been provided to labs on the basement floor that currently houses Landscape Design or to the small upper floor that includes office space and one classroom.

### **225.00 Herrick Hall – Department of Health and Human Development**

Wheelchair access to the first floor of Herrick Hall is provided through the east entry and an interior ramp. Restroom facilities have not been modified. The upper floors of the building are not accessible by wheelchair.

MSU continues to provide program accessibility by relocating programs to the first floor to accommodate specific requests.

## 300.00 New construction accessibility requirements

Processes are in place within the Planning, Design and Construction unit to ensure new construction and alterations meet all physical accessibility requirements.

## 310.00 Current accessibility requirements at MSU

All construction and renovation undertaken at all MSU Facilities complies with the current applicable State of Montana Adopted building codes which include accessibility requirements.

## 320.00 Design Process

All construction and renovation projects have multiple review checkpoints throughout the design process to ensure university standards and building code requirements are being met. Additionally, design teams have numerous meetings with stakeholders throughout the design process including the Office of Disability Services.

## 330.00 Build Process

All construction and renovation projects are overseen by a project manager who makes regular trips to the project to ensure construction is being completed consistent with the plans and specifications outlined during the design process.

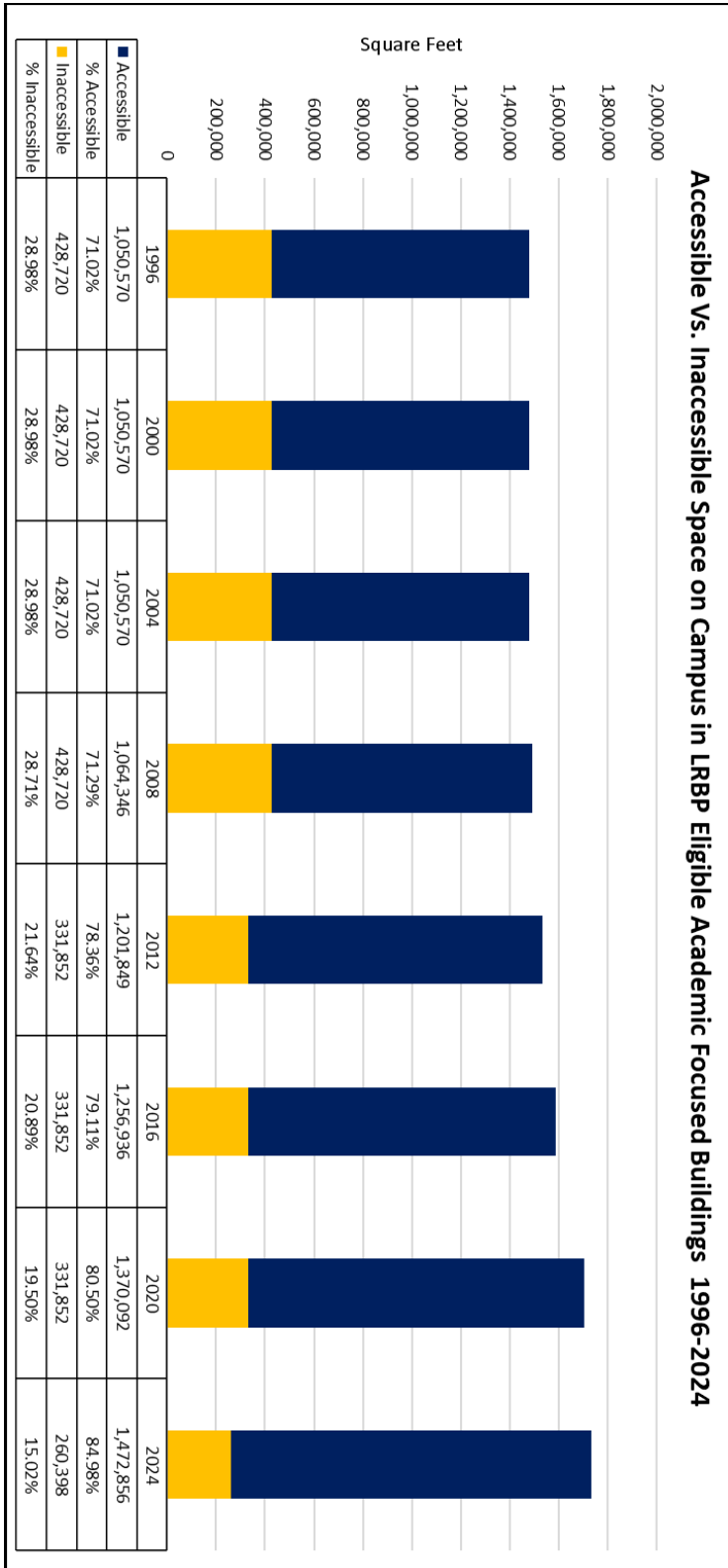
## 400.00 Accessibility to programs

Since 1996, the University has met this obligation by updating program spaces or moving programs to accessible spaces on campus.

## 410.00 Summary of accessible program space

Since 1996, MSU has increased the amount of accessible square footage on campus by over 400,000 square feet in academic buildings, along with decreasing the amount of inaccessible space in academic buildings by over 150,000 square feet. This increase in accessible space along with decrease in inaccessible space is due to MSUs continued growth and addition of new fully accessible buildings around campus, along with renovating previously inaccessible historic buildings such as Romney Hall and Gaines Hall.





500.00 Access to accessible buildings

## 510.00 Sidewalk accessibility

The university has improved sidewalks across campus whenever possible including increased widths, improved slopes, adding truncated domes at crosswalks, and adding additional curb cuts where appropriate.

The University prioritizes snow removal for students with accessibility needs through regularly cleared routes and communicating those routes to students. The University invites requests from students in determining the routes and for other routes to be cleared and allocates resources to clear these paths as appropriate.

## 520.00 Doors and locks

Facilities have standard processes for all new construction regarding door openers, handles and locks. The door openers, handles, and lock hardware have been standardized which has improved access. Additionally, clearances, thresholds, pull weight (or power-assist) and maneuvering spaces are evaluated to ensure or exceed minimum Code standards. When non-accessible doors are identified, repairs, replacements or alternatives are made as soon as possible.

## 530.00 Accessible parking spaces

The university reviews accessible parking each time parking infrastructure is impacted by construction or maintenance and ensures no net loss of accessible parking. The recently completed parking garage and Student Wellness Center increased accessible parking on campus and upcoming projects Jones Hall, Grant Street Pedestrian Improvements, Stadium parking lot paving will add accessible parking to campus. MSU is also in the early stages of study to determine if a campus shuttle service could be added to improve access around campus, particularly to parking areas. Accessible event parking is ensured for patrons through close coordination among Event Services, Parking Services, and other groups.

## 540.00 Signage

Accessibility signage across campus could benefit from significant improvement in consistency and quality.

However, significant progress has been made since 1996. Classroom signs have significantly improved with accessible height, braille and consistency across campus. All new signage is ADA compliant.

## 550.00 Classroom equipment

When classroom equipment accommodations are requested informally or through Disability Services (DS), requests are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and reasonable accommodations are granted with cooperation from Facilities Services, Academic Technology and Outreach, University Information Technology and other involved offices on campus.

University Policy requires any new classrooms or classroom renovations to have appropriate accessible furniture and technology.

## 600.00 Responding to ongoing needs

Disability Services approves students for accessible classroom accommodations when the student notifies the office that they have mobility issues requiring a fully accessible classroom. This includes temporary injuries or medical conditions.

Disability Services also maintains the Buildings and Accessibility List which keeps track of classrooms which have potential physical accessibility barriers. These barriers are generally related to elevator access to floors of buildings that require the use of stairs and accessible restroom related issues. Before each semester, Disability Services examines schedules of students approved for accessible classroom accommodations and works with the Registrar's Office to move classes into accessible classrooms.

Students approved for accessible classroom accommodations receive priority snow removal maps to help facilities prioritize snow removal for students with mobility issues.

In Spring 2024 MSU had 82 Students approved for accessible classroom accommodations.