

Transition Plan for Physical and Facilities Accessibility

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

This plan is the 2025 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.

In 2024, MSU created a workgroup and created an updated version of the plan including progress on all of the buildings mentioned previously, and elaborating on the progress made expanding MSU's accessible space.

This 2025 plan continues the work of the 2024 plan, outlining 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. Building Planning and Process
2. New Construction Accessibility Requirements
3. Ensuring Accessibility to Programs
4. Ensuring Access to Accessible Buildings
5. Responding to Ongoing Needs

200.00 Building 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 the 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 that 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 Buildings Assessments

210.01 Visual Communications Building (VCB)

An addition and renovation to the building supporting Montana PBS is in design at the time of this draft and will adhere to current ADA standards along with improving existing conditions within the building.

210.02 Reid Hall

In order to address longstanding elevator issues in Reid Hall a new elevator was installed in time for the spring term of 2025.

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 were completed in May 2024, with Phase 2 scheduled for Summer 2025.

Restrooms within the building are being renovated in a phased approach. The 1st floor is complete, the 2nd floor is in progress, and the 3rd and 4th floors are planned for future years.

210.03 Leon Johnson Hall

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

Construction will occur in the summer of 2025 for the small auditorium in room 346 including upgrades and to current ADA standards.

210.04 Strand Union Building (SUB)

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

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

The design and funding proposal was put to a vote by student referendum and did not pass, placing the project on hold at this time.

210.05 Roberts/Cobleigh Hall

These buildings still have ADA issues that need to be addressed, and the buildings continue 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.

Roberts 101 ADA improvements will be constructed during the summer and fall of 2025. This will include full access to the room and upgrading the bathroom to provide a single-occupant bathroom which is fully accessible.

210.06 Johnstone Center including Culbertson, Colter, Mullan, Pryor, and Harrison

Culbertson's first floor is only partly accessible, including 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 Pryor: These residence halls are not ADA accessible, but other rooms on campus are ADA accessible and 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.

210.07 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 that is too steep in the center of the building and may restrict access to restrooms from the lower level. MSU has completed an initial review of this facility and is investigating funding opportunities.

In Howard Hall, Reynolds Recital Hall has accessible seating only at the back of the room, limiting equitable access.

210.08 Wilson Hall

The 2nd floor bridge is currently not accessible.

210.09 Lewis Hall

Lewis Hall has limited accessibility due to its age and lack of modern features. MSU has prioritized a complete building renovation for the past 2 Legislative Sessions but has not received funding from the State. Due to the large number of labs in the building, it is particularly problematic for the university as they are more difficult to move.

Improving accessibility in Lewis Hall without a complete renovation has also been pursued by MSU, and initial funding to make ADA and elevator improvements was secured in House Bill 5 after a request to the 2023, 68th Legislative Session as part of the Long-Range Building Program (LRBP). After the design, that funding proved to be insufficient and MSU requested and received additional funding in the LRBP in the 2025, 69th Legislative Session. Those improvements can now proceed to final design and proceed to construction. In the meantime, MSU continues to provide program accessibility by relocating programs to the lower level, which is accessible, or other buildings as necessary to meet specific accommodation requests.

210.10 Sherrick Hall – College of Nursing

The main floor of the facility's east portion is accessible to 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 the construction of a new nursing building, Jones Hall, which is currently under construction.

The Mark & Robyn Jones College of Nursing also operates out of leased space in Billings, Great Falls, Kalispell, and Missoula, each with its accessibility challenges of various degrees. These challenges will be resolved through the construction of a new nursing building in each location, each currently under construction.

210.11 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 that 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.

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

210.12 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.

210.13 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.

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 department 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

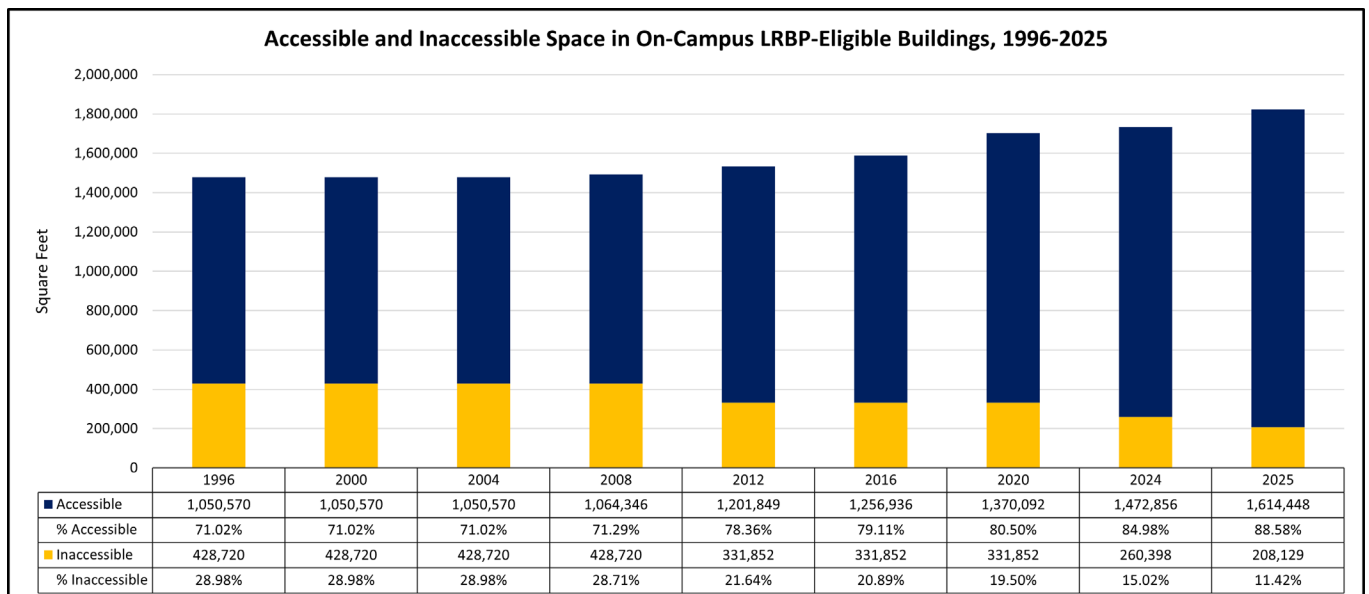
All construction and renovation projects are overseen by a project manager who makes regular trips to the project to ensure construction is being completed in accordance with the plans and specifications outlined during the design process.

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 550,000 square feet in academic buildings, along with decreasing the amount of inaccessible space in academic buildings by over 200,000 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 also 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 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, and Stadium parking lot paving, will add accessible parking to campus. MSU has also implemented a campus shuttle service, which improves access around campus, particularly to perimeter parking areas and west campus facilities. The shuttle also provides support for major campus events. 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 that any new classrooms or classroom renovations have appropriate accessible furniture and technology.

600.00 Responding to Ongoing Needs

Disability Services (ODS) may approve qualifying students for accessible classroom accommodations upon appropriate notification of a mobility impairment, including temporary injuries or medical conditions.

Disability Services also maintains the Buildings and Accessibility List, which keeps track of classrooms that have potential physical accessibility barriers. These barriers are generally related to elevator access to upper floors of buildings and accessible restroom-related issues. Individual class locations are reviewed before the start of each semester by ODS based on students' specific needs and relocated by the Course Scheduling team in the Registrar's office when necessary.

During the 2024-2025 academic year, the total number of students with approved Accessible Classroom accommodation was 64 students. This figure represents students across all grade levels and programs, and students with temporary and permanent accommodation approval. Temporary approval may be granted for one semester due to a temporary medical condition or insufficient documentation for a permanent medical condition.