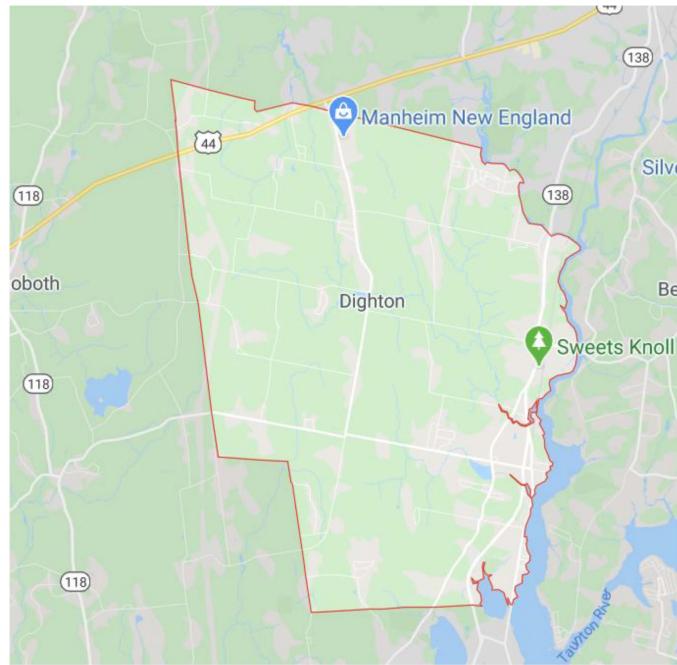


DIGHTON, MA

ADA/504 SELF-EVALUATION & TRANSITION PLAN



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June 26, 2020

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SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Dighton has retained KMA, LLC to assist in the development of an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Self-Evaluation & Transition Plan (SETP). The Town is making progress in ensuring its programs and services are accessible; it has developed a grievance policy, has appointed an ADA Coordinator, is redesigning its website to be usable by individuals who have limited vision or are blind, and has developed non-discrimination policies and shared them with Town personnel. Its facilities, policies, and programs are becoming more accessible.

The Self-Evaluation process did identify some areas where improvement could be made in the delivery of accessible programs and services. Recommendations to address these areas include:

- Develop town-wide protocols for providing materials in alternate formats, providing auxiliary aids/services, and evaluating requests for reasonable accommodations.
- Ensure the website redesign fully conforms with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and W3C-WAI's WCAG 2.0.
- Develop enhanced communication regarding requesting modifications, accommodations, alternative formats, auxiliary aids and services and architectural accessibility on the Town's website, social media, print materials, and in buildings and announcements.
- Develop and disseminate protocols to ensure meetings (including Boards and Commissions), hearings, workshops, and conferences conform with the guidelines for accessible meetings.
- Provide ADA training for appropriate staff.
- Develop a Service Animal policy.
- Ensure that the Emergency Preparedness Plan specifically addresses the unique needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Engage in targeted architectural barrier removal at facilities. KMA has identified the following facilities as the highest priority for barrier removal:
 - Library
 - Town Hall
 - Prime Time Adult Center
 - Athletic Facilities
 - Playgrounds

This Self-Evaluation & Transition Plan will assist the Town in its ongoing effort to ensure equitable access for all its citizens. Recommendations contained in Section 4 reflect the regulatory obligations established in 28 CFR Part 35 as well as public input.

SECTION 2: REGULATORY CONTEXT

The Town of Dighton is located at the geographic center of Bristol County. It shares a border with the City of Taunton and the Taunton River. It is located approximately 12 miles north of Fall River and 18 miles east of Providence, Rhode Island. Its territory is traversed by two highways: Route 44 and Route 138. The estimated population of Dighton is 8,000.

Like all municipalities, the Town has a regulatory obligation to ensure that it does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities in the provision of municipal programs and services. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not necessarily require that all the Town's facilities are fully accessible. Rather it requires that all the Town's programs and services, "when viewed in their entirety" are accessible. The Town is required to perform a Self-Evaluation to determine what barriers exist to their programs and services, and to develop and implement a plan to remove those barriers.

The ADA defines individuals with disabilities as those who fall into one of the following three categories:

- Individuals who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- Individuals with a record of such an impairment; and
- Individuals regarded as having such an impairment.

The broad prohibition against disability-based discrimination requires that all Town programs and services be accessible to individuals with disabilities. The ADA requires a public entity to take five administrative action steps:

- Designate an employee responsible for carrying out compliance activities.
- Provide notice to the public of its rights and protections under the ADA and how the entity complies with those obligations.
- Establish a grievance procedure.
- Conduct a Self-Evaluation, a comprehensive review of policies and procedures.
- Develop an ADA Transition Plan.

Thus, the Town must assess specific services, policies, and practices, and address the removal of physical barriers and/or the revision of policies and procedures, to ensure compliance with the applicable ADA and Section 504 regulations, and with all provisions of the Massachusetts Code of Regulations (521 CMR). Massachusetts State law further requires that the Town apply the more stringent of the above standards to achieve accessibility.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

There are four federal and state requirements for architectural barrier removal from existing buildings and in alterations to existing buildings. These are:

- PL101-336: 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This is the federal civil rights statute whose first purpose is:
...To provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. (42 USC 12101. Sec.2(b))
- 28 CFR Part 35, Title II: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services (as amended by the final rule published on September 15, 2010). These are the U.S. Department of Justice's regulations implementing the ADA, as required in 42 USC 12101, Sec.204(a))
- 29 USC 794: Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act (504)
- 521 CMR: The Rules and Regulations of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board. (1977, 1987, 1990, 1992, 1996, 1998, 2006)

ADA AND 504 BARRIER REMOVAL REQUIREMENTS

There are two requirements under Title II of the ADA that require a public entity such as the Town to remove existing barriers to bring an end to and to prevent discrimination against a person or people with disabilities. These two requirements are:

1. Program Access: requires that individuals with disabilities be provided an equally effective opportunity to participate in or benefit from a public entity's programs and services. The ADA requires that public entities provide physical and communication access to each program service or activity. The Town must identify and correct policies and practices that have the effect of discriminating against individuals with disabilities.
2. Alterations: Any alterations that are performed must conform to the 2010 ADA Standards.¹ Alterations may trigger an obligation to perform additional barrier removal outside the planned scope of work. The ADA accessible path of travel requirement states: "When alterations are made to a primary function area that affect the usability of that area, alterations to provide an accessible path of travel to the altered area must also be made unless the cost is disproportionate." Further, the Town is required to maintain its existing facilities to ensure continued, unfettered, and uninterrupted access to persons with disabilities.

¹ And 521 CMR: *The Rules and Regulations of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board* (MAAB).

PROGRAM ACCESS

The Town's fundamental obligation is to ensure that individuals with disabilities are afforded an equally effective opportunity to participate in, or benefit from, all its programs and services, subject only to the limitations of fundamental alteration and/or undue burden. Therefore, the Town must implement policy changes, if necessary, so that persons with disabilities can have full access. Further, the Town must continue to make changes to prevent discrimination and continually work to increase accessibility.

The ADA's Section 202 Discrimination states:

... no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity.

The ADA's Section 204 required that the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) promulgate implementing regulations by 26 July 1991, one year after enactment of the legislation. These regulations are 28 CFR 28, published on July 26, 1991.

28 CFR 35.149 states:

... no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, because a public entity's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any public entity.

28 CFR 35.150 states:

A public entity shall operate each service, program, or activity so that the service, program, or activity, when viewed in its entirety, is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

This statutory and regulatory language above describes what is known as "program access" – a situation in which all programs are readily accessible to, and usable by, qualified persons with disabilities. In addition, qualified students with disabilities must be provided with equal services in as integrated a setting as possible, and the setting that is most appropriate to encourage interaction among all users. The determination of what is an equal and integrated setting is made on a case-by-case basis. What is appropriate for one person with a specific impairment may not be useful or appropriate for another person with the same impairment.

Failure to provide "program access" is an illegal act of discrimination under Title II of the ADA. The Town must identify and correct policies and practices that have the effect of discriminating against individuals with disabilities. The law provides public entities with some flexibility in how this standard can be met. Both structural and nonstructural methods of providing "program access" can be used.

METHODS OF PROVIDING PROGRAM ACCESS

28 CFR 35.150 details the methods that a public entity such as the Town may use to provide program access. These include:

- Reassignment of services to accessible buildings;
- Delivery of services at alternate accessible sites;
- Alteration of existing facilities and construction of new facilities; or
- Any other methods that result in making its services, programs, or activities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

From an architectural standpoint, this requirement does not mean that every building must be accessible. However, every program must be accessible. When choosing a method of providing program access, the Town is required to give priority to the one which results in the most integrated setting possible and is most appropriate to encourage interaction among all users.

LIMITATIONS ON OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE PROGRAM ACCESS

The ADA's regulations specify certain clear limitations on a public entity's obligation to provide program access. An entity is not required to perform an action that poses an undue financial or administrative burden or constitutes a fundamental alteration. The decision that compliance would result in such alteration or burdens must be made by the head of the public entity or his or her designee and must be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion. The threshold for an action constituting an undue burden is a high one for state and local government entities. If it is determined that barrier removal will result in such an alteration or burdens, the Town must still, "take any other action that would not result in such an alteration or such burdens but would nevertheless ensure that individuals with disabilities receive the benefits or services provided by the public entity."

SCHEDULE FOR PROGRAM ACCESS COMPLIANCE

Both 504 and Title II of the ADA presume that people with disabilities will be using the programs and services of public entities. In anticipation, they both mandate proactive steps to prevent discrimination by removing existing barriers. They do not permit public entities to wait until a person with a disability arrives before beginning to make accommodations. 504 and Title II mandate proactive barrier removal so that when a student with a disability arrives at school, the programs and services are substantially accessible. Minor accommodations may be needed, but the significant assessment and barrier removal should be complete.

SECTION 3: PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The Town of Dighton retained the services of KMA to perform an accessibility assessment of its programs, services, and facilities. To date, KMA has performed the following tasks:

1. A virtual kick-off meeting and training was held with representatives from town departments on March 30, 2020 to discuss project goals and methodology. At the meeting, KMA introduced the broad non-discrimination provisions of the ADA and the ADA Self-Evaluation process, and subsequently distributed three surveys for the Town to complete:
 - a. Administrative Survey addressing Town-wide policies and procedures
 - b. Department Surveys
 - c. Employment Survey
2. KMA completed program access audits of 24 Town buildings, athletic fields, playgrounds, recreation facilities, and polling locations. A DRAFT of the audit findings was submitted to the Town on 5.15.2020. Additional audits were conducted in June based on initial feedback from the Town. Audit findings are included in the Appendix of this report.
3. An online accessibility survey was created to gather public input.
4. A review of the completed surveys, other policy documents received from the Town, and the Town's website was performed. KMA contacted several departments to seek further clarification. [See Section 5]
5. KMA developed a DRAFT ADA Self Evaluation & Transition Plan to be reviewed by the Town and posted on the Town's website to solicit public review and input. The DRAFT report was developed to summarize the ADA Title II requirements and KMA's primary findings and recommendations. It was submitted to the Town on 5.22.2020.
6. KMA incorporated the comments we received from the DRAFT reports into a final version that was submitted to the Town on 6.26.2020.

SECTION 4: FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Note: KMA strongly recommends working closely with the Town's ADA Coordinator to implement the recommendations in this section. KMA has also been informed that the Town has recently accepted the provisions for an ADA Commission at Town Meeting (October 2019), which will be tasked with implementing and prioritizing these projects. The proper implementation of the recommendations in this section will require a thorough understanding of federal and state accessibility requirements.

A. PROGRAMS, SERVICES, and OPERATIONS

Based on the information from the Town's website, completed survey responses, and discussions with staff, KMA finds that the Town has made progress in meeting its ADA obligations not to discriminate based on disability. Following are specific findings and recommendations.

According to the town's website, Dighton provides municipal programs and services through the following departments:

Accounting	ADA Coordinator	Administrator
Agricultural Commission	Animal Control	Assessing
Building	Clerk	Council on Aging
Fire	Harbormaster	Health
Highway	Parks & Recreation	Planning
Police	Sewer	Transfer Station
Treasurer/ Collector	Veteran's Services	Zoning Board of Appeals

KMA reviewed the worksheets submitted by the following departments:

Administrator	Agricultural Commission	Animal Control
Board of Selectmen	Building	Clerk
Council on Aging	Fire	Harbormaster
Highway	Parks & Recreation	Planning
Police	Sewer	Transfer Station
Treasurer/ Collector	Veteran's Services	Zoning Board of Appeals

ADA Coordinator

According to the Town's website, it is the responsibility of the ADA Coordinator to work with the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator, and all other municipal agencies, offices and committees independently, or as directed by the Town Administrator or Board of Selectmen to ensure that the Town of Dighton is making its best effort to, over time, become fully compliant with the state and federal requirements of the ADA. The Town has appointed Jonathan Gale as their ADA Coordinator, who has extensive experience working with Federal and state accessibility requirements. The ADA Coordinator works primarily out of Town Hall. Survey responses indicate that the ADA Coordinator has concerns regarding both the physical and programmatic accessibility of the Town. They have received complaints about the schools including vertical rises, accessible parking locations, narrow doors, and steep ramps. They have also received complaints about meetings not advertising CART services or other auxiliary aids. Survey responses indicate that the ADA Coordinator has received training in most areas, however they have not received training in protocols for responding to requests for reasonable accommodations or auxiliary aids and services.

Administrator

According to the Town's website, the Town Administrator is the chief administrative officer of the town who performs high level administrative, technical, and professional work in directing the activities of the Town's departments, commissions, boards, and offices under the jurisdiction of the Board of Selectmen, and other town departments and organizations as directed. The Town has appointed Mallory Aronstein as the Town Administrator. The Town Administrator's Office is

located at Town Hall. Survey responses indicate that the Town is currently working on developing several ADA policies and procedures.

Agricultural Commission

The Agricultural Commission educates the public about farming, advocates for the farmer, and mediates problems between the public and farmers. They work primarily out of Town Hall. A majority of the survey responses were left blank. KMA recommends reviewing the Town's accessibility policies and procedures with this department.

Animal Control

The Animal Control Department provides a safe place for lost animals, hold rabies clinics, and facilitates adoptions. The Department also noted that it will be holding future wellness and children's programs for the town. The Animal Control Department is located at the Animal Shelter. Survey responses indicate that while the Animal Control Department personnel have received training in the Town's policy of nondiscrimination, they are not aware nor have they received training in the Town's policies/ procedures for responding to reasonable accommodation or auxiliary aid requests, communicating with people with disabilities, or providing outreach in a manner that is accessible.

Board of Selectmen

According to the Town's Website, the Board of Selectmen issues warrants for town meetings, initiates legislative policy by inserting articles in town meeting warrants, and implements the votes subsequently adopted. They adopt town administrative policies, appoint members of various official boards and commissions, hold public hearings on important town issues, and enforce town bylaws and regulations. The Selectmen also serve as the licensing board responsible for issuing licenses in more than 15 categories. The Board of Selectmen meet at Town Hall. Survey responses indicate that the Board has received training in the Town's policy of nondiscrimination, it has the resources necessary to provide print materials in alternative formats, and it has an emergency preparedness plan that addresses the needs of individuals with disabilities. However, the survey responses also indicate that the Board of Selectmen is not aware of the Town's policies/ procedures for responding to reasonable accommodation or auxiliary aid requests, communicating with people with disabilities, or providing outreach in a manner that is accessible. The Board of Selectmen also notes that the ramp to the Town Hall is difficult for some users.

Building Department

The Building Department oversees permitting and inspectional services. Their services are located online and on the lower level of Old Town Hall. Survey responses indicate that while the Building Department personnel have received training in the Town's policy of nondiscrimination, they are not aware of the Town's policies/ procedures for responding to reasonable accommodation or auxiliary aid requests, communicating with people with disabilities, or providing outreach in a manner that is accessible. The Building Department does indicate that it is aware of how to request auxiliary aids and services and does have an emergency preparedness plan that addresses the needs of people with disabilities.

Clerk

The Town Clerk's office provides all vital records (birth, death and marriages), facilitates elections, keeps public records, records town meetings, collects census information, documents school residency, and performs many other administrative services relative to Town record keeping. The Town Clerk also provides licensing, business certificates, marriage licenses, notarization services, Justice of the Peace services, raffle permits, and fuel storage tank registration. The Town Clerk is located at Dighton Town Hall and Dighton Elementary School (for elections). Survey responses indicate that the Town Clerk is well aware of and has had training in the Town's ADA policies/procedures. However, the responses also indicate fully accessible elections that include accessible parking. The parking KMA observed at the Elementary School was not fully compliant. The Town Clerk also notes that the ramp to the Town Hall is difficult for some users.

Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission implements the regulations set forth in the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act and the Dighton Wetlands Protection Bylaw. It provides permits and conditions for proposed construction within or adjacent to wetland resource areas. The Conservation Commission is located throughout the Town of Dighton, but its primary meeting location is at the Old Town Hall Meeting room. Survey responses indicate that the Conservation Commission is familiar with the Town's policy of non-discrimination, has received training in the policies/procedure relative to reasonable accommodations and auxiliary aids, and has an accessible emergency preparedness plan. However, the Commission is not aware of how to request materials in alternative formats or auxiliary aids.

Council on Aging

The Council on Aging promotes, evaluates, and encourages new and existing programs of elders living in the Town of Dighton. It provides information and referral services, wellness clinics, vision clinics, card games, arts and crafts, exercise, tai chi, yoga, File of Life program, a SHINE program, a nutrition program, and the Prime Time Adult Supportive Program. The Council on Aging is located at 1059 Somerset Avenue and the Prime Time Adult Center. They charge donation-based user fees and do not have any separate services for people with disabilities. Council on Aging survey responses indicate that personnel have received training in the Town's policy of non-discrimination, provide information on how to request auxiliary aids/ services on their methods of outreach, have the resources necessary to provide auxiliary aids and alternative formats, and have an emergency preparedness plan that addresses the needs for people with disabilities. However, they have not received training on the Town's policies/ procedures relative to auxiliary aids/ services or reasonable accommodations. They also do not provide a notice of non-discrimination on their program materials.

Fire Department

The Fire Department provides ambulance services, fire prevention, fire suppression, and fire education to the community. Their programs include permits of all types, SAFE Education, Senior SAFE Education, Child Seat Installations, and a Junior Firefighter Program. The Junior Firefighter Program is provided at Station 2, the SAFE Programs are done at specific sites, and all other

programs are at Station 1. They have received a complaint regarding opening the door to the public access area at Station 1, which we also noted in our audit report. Survey responses indicate that while the Fire Department personnel have received training in the Town's policy of nondiscrimination, they are not aware of the Town's policies/ procedures for responding to reasonable accommodation or auxiliary aid requests, communicating with people with disabilities, or providing outreach in a manner that is accessible.

Harbor Master

The Harbor Master provides on water law enforcement and maritime safety for the Town of Dighton. They provide 10A Dock Permits and mooring assignments. The permits they offer are located online and by mail. Survey responses indicate that while the Harbormaster Department personnel have received training in the Town's policy of nondiscrimination, they are not aware nor have they received training in the Town's policies/ procedures for responding to reasonable accommodation or auxiliary aid requests, communicating with people with disabilities, or providing outreach in a manner that is accessible.

Highway

The Highway Department serves the Town in not just road repairs and maintenance, but also through Town-wide landscaping and mowing in open areas and some cemeteries. They handle public building repairs and maintenance as well as snow and ice removal on roadways and at town buildings. They respond to other storm related problems throughout the year, for example tree problems and flooding. Additionally, the Highway Department runs an annual bulky item curbside pickup for residents. The programs they offer are located online and by mail. Survey responses indicate that the Highway Department personnel have not received training in the Town's policy of nondiscrimination and they are not aware of the Town's policies/ procedures for responding to reasonable accommodation or auxiliary aid requests, communicating with people with disabilities, or providing outreach in a manner that is accessible. The survey responses also indicate that the Highway Department does offer separate programs for individuals with disabilities, but it does not specify what these programs are.

Library

The Library supports information services, entertainment & recreation, literacy activities, and community building and engagement. Services include loaning both physical and digital library materials; providing informational, educational, and recreational programming for all ages; and providing resources for information, reference help, passport services, and support for school. The Library is located at 395 Main Street. Survey responses indicate significant architectural barriers at the Library and that there have been complaints about the inaccessible children's room on the lower level. Survey responses indicate that Library personnel have received training in how to respond to requests for reasonable modifications. However, personnel have not received training in the Town's policy of nondiscrimination and they are not aware of the Town's policies/ procedures for responding to reasonable accommodation or auxiliary aid requests, communicating with people with disabilities, or providing outreach in a manner that is accessible.

Parks and Recreation

The Town's Parks and Recreation Department provides passive and sports activities for town residents through walking, fishing, boating, baseball, basketball, street hockey, tennis, and playground activities. They do not sponsor any league activities. Locations for their programs include the School Street playground with a baseball field and a basketball court, the Community playground with a walking track and multiuser ball field, the School Lane area, the Palmer Street playground with a baseball field and basketball court, the courts at the Old Police Station, and Lane Field with a baseball field and playground. Survey responses indicate that some of these areas provide accessible play features and parking. However, KMA did not observe accessible recreation areas in the site audits. The Parks and Recreation Department responses note that the fields and the track behind Town Hall are not accessible. Survey responses note that personnel have received training in the Town's nondiscrimination policy and how to respond to reasonable modifications. They also indicate that personnel do have the resources necessary to provide print materials in alternative formats. However, the Parks and Recreation Department has not received training in providing auxiliary aids/ services or how to communicate with people with disabilities. Their methods of outreach do not contain a statement of nondiscrimination and they do not have an emergency response plan that responds to the needs of people with disabilities.

Planning Department

The Planning Department administers subdivision control law and various zoning bylaws to ensure the public safety, interest, and welfare of the residents of Dighton. The Department provides notarization services, special permits, Form A's, findings, and decisions. They are located at Town Hall in the Planning Office and the lower level conference room. Survey responses note that personnel have received training in the Town's nondiscrimination policy and how to respond to reasonable modifications. They also indicate that personnel do have the resources necessary to provide print materials in alternative formats. However, the Planning Department has not received training in providing auxiliary aids/ services or how to communicate with people with disabilities. Their methods of outreach do not contain a statement of nondiscrimination and they do not have an emergency response plan that responds to the needs of people with disabilities.

Police Department

The Police Department aims to make the Town of Dighton a better and safer place for all of the people who live, work, or visit. The Dighton Police Officers work with citizens, businesses, the media, and other public agencies to improve the quality of life in Dighton and surrounding areas. Some of the services they provide include typical police functions, issuing License to carry/FID cards to residents, and offering a prescription drug drop off box in the lobby. The Police Department is located at 1458 Somerset Avenue. The Police Department has a community room available upon request for groups/ clubs and organizations to use. Survey responses and discussions with the Town Administrator indicate that Police Department personnel have received training in working with people with disabilities. They receive training as part of the Police Academy and are required to participate in a training on working with people with disabilities at least twice a year. However, survey responses indicate that the Police Department personnel are

not aware nor have they received training in the Town's policies/ procedures for responding to reasonable accommodation or auxiliary aid requests, communicating with people with disabilities, or providing outreach in a manner that is accessible. Survey responses indicate that the Police Department does have an emergency preparedness plan that addresses the needs of people with disabilities, however it was not submitted for review.

Sewer Department

The Sewer Department oversees 6 pumping stations and maintains the entire sewer system for approximately 600 residents and non-residents in the Town of Dighton. It operates on funds collected from sewer users and does not receive funds from the Town of Dighton. Programs include new connection permits for residents. Their office is located in Town Hall and services are available on-line. Survey responses indicate that the Sewer Department personnel have received training in auxiliary aids/ services and how to use the Massachusetts Relay Service. They also indicate that personnel include a statement of nondiscrimination on all literature and they have the resources to provide print materials in alternative formats. A review of some of their documents on the Town's website illustrates that the notice of nondiscrimination is not provided. Additionally, survey responses indicate that Sewer Department personnel have not received training in the Town's policy of nondiscrimination, the Town's policies/ procedures for responding to reasonable accommodation requests, the process for communicating with people with disabilities, or how to provide outreach in a manner that is accessible.

Transfer Station

The Transfer Station is run by the Highway Department and provided for residents to dispose of any unwanted household items. Residents may also bring recycling, mattresses, brush, grass clippings, old batteries, and other disposable items to the Transfer Station. In order to use the Transfer Station, residents must purchase a yearly sticker. The Transfer Station is located on Tremont Street in Dighton. It was not on the list of areas to be audited in the RFP for this project, however KMA did reach out to Timothy Rhines for more information about the property set up and use. Survey responses indicate that the personnel at the Transfer Station have received training in the Town's policy of nondiscrimination, the Town's policies/ procedures for responding to reasonable accommodation requests, the available resources for providing auxiliary aids, and how to communicate with people with disabilities. However, the responses also indicate that they have not received training in providing auxiliary aids/ services and several answers were left blank. After our discussion with Mr. Rhines, KMA understands that the Transfer Station programs/ services can be made accessible, however it lacks a clear set of policies/ procedures to do so.

Treasurer/ Collector Department

The Treasurer/ Collector Department processes all payments for real estate and personal property taxes as well as payroll. They accept all money from every department to be recorded and deposited in the bank. Services include taking tax payments, signing off on building permits, and processing Municipal Lien Certificates. They are located at Town Hall. A majority of the survey responses were left blank. KMA recommends reviewing the Town's accessibility policies and procedures with this department.

Veterans' Services

The Veterans' Services Department processes applications for (chap 115) local aid, transports vets to VA medical appts, and assists vets and widows with filing VA disability claims. Services include notarization, transportation, and a food bank. They are located at Town Hall and Old Town Hall. Survey responses indicate that they do not offer separate programs for people with disabilities, however assisting with disability claims would be one of these services. Survey responses also indicate that personnel are familiar with most of the ADA requirements except providing a notice of nondiscrimination on literature and how to provide print materials in other formats.

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals receives applications, holds public hearings, and makes decisions on variances and special permits from the Town's Zoning Bylaws, as well as appeals of decisions of the Building Commissioner. Notably, the ZBA also hears and decides cases for M.G.L. 40B Comprehensive Permits for affordable housing developments and is the primary approval authority for these developments. The ZBA grants variances, special permits, appeals, comprehensive permits, and answers general inquiries about zoning and affordable housing in Town. The ZBA shares an office with the Planning Board in the Lower Level of Town Hall. On occasion as needed the ZBA may hold meetings at other locations if a large audience is expected or there is a meeting room time conflict. Alternative meeting locations of the ZBA could include the Board of Selectman meeting room, Old Town Hall upper level meeting room, and Dighton Middle School Cafeteria. Survey responses indicate that the Zoning Board of Appeals has not received training in the Town's ADA policies/ procedures.

Finding 1: ADA Coordinator. The Town has appointed Jonathan Gale to fulfill the responsibility of an ADA Coordinator. The ADA Coordinator has received extensive training in the requirements of Title II of the ADA.

Recommendation 1a: Jonathan Gale should complete additional ADA training offered by the National Association of ADA Coordinators: <https://www.adacoordinator.org/page/Training>

Recommendation 1b: KMA has been informed that the Town has recently accepted the provisions for an ADA Commission at Town Meeting (October 2019). KMA recommends that the ADA Coordinator works closely with the Commission to ensure the SETP is properly implemented.

Finding 2: Grievance Policy & Procedure. The Town has adopted a Grievance Policy and Procedure to resolve disability related complaints (see Appendix.)

Recommendation 2:

- The Grievance Policy should be posted in conspicuous locations in all Town buildings and distributed to all department heads.
- The Grievance Policy notes that "the Town will make their best effort to secure at cost to

the Town a licensed sign language interpreter via the Massachusetts Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and/or provide a licensed interpreter in the language of the complainant if one can be located.” KMA recommends expanding this statement to include information on how the Town will make an effort to secure other auxiliary aids and services (braille, large print, telephone amplifying systems, etc.).

Finding 3: Surcharges. In the response to the Administrative Survey, the Town notes that where “exorbitant costs to go above and beyond,” they would leave the option for the person requesting to cover the over and above costs.

Recommendation 3: Ensure that the Town does not impose surcharges to recover the cost of accommodations, effective communications services, or accessibility features. If a request with an exorbitant cost is made, KMA recommends seeking legal counsel to ensure the Town is meeting the request in a manner that coincides with the intent of a reasonable accommodation. Generally, the request should be met unless undue hardship can be proven or the request is unreasonable.

Finding 4: Meetings at Accessible Locations. Informal procedures are established to assure meetings, hearings, workshops, and conferences are held in accessible locations, as required by Open Meeting Law.

Recommendation 4: The Town should develop written protocols for accessible meetings and distribute to all departments, boards and commissions. See:
<https://blog.mass.gov/mod/access/5-ways-to-improve-event-accessibility/> and
<https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2016/07/uy/planning-for-accessible-events.pdf>

Finding 5: Licensing/ Certification: Town licenses or certifications (liquor, restaurant, etc.) have not had the application process thoroughly reviewed to ensure qualified persons with disabilities are not screened out.

Recommendation 5: Provide department training to ensure all Town licenses/ certifications provide equal access to persons with disabilities.

Finding 6: Service Animal Policy. The Town does not have a written policy regarding service animals in municipal facilities.

Recommendation 6: Develop a written Service Animal policy and post it in Town facilities and on the website.

Finding 7: Public Notice. The Town has a Public Notice of ADA Compliance. (see sample in Appendix). The Notice is posted at building entrances/ lobbies and will be included in the employee handbooks.

Recommendation 7:

- The Notice should include information on how to request reasonable modifications to programs and state that the Town has grievance procedure
- Ensure the Notice is visibly posted in public spaces of municipal facilities, in publications and digital media, including:

- a. Home page of the Town's website and other pages where information about disability services, public events and facility accessibility is displayed
- b. Event posters, flyers, program brochures, and announcements.

Finding 8: Staff Training on Town's policy of nondiscrimination is accomplished through an antiharassment training through an EAP program that occurs annually. However, some of the survey responses indicate that departments have not received training on the Town's policy of nondiscrimination.

Recommendation 8: Ensure all departments are included in the antiharassment training and that the Town's policy of nondiscrimination is emphasized in the training.

Findings 9: Reasonable Modifications of Policies. Town staff will accommodate requests for modifications according to the ADA policy but lack criteria for determining whether requests are "reasonable." Additionally, responses to the department self-evaluation surveys indicate that all personnel do not have a clear understanding of the Town's ADA policy.

Recommendation 9: Develop and provide guidance on requests for reasonable modifications for all Town departments and new hires to ensure that everyone is aware of how to appropriately respond to requests. This policy should include criteria for determining whether a modification would fundamentally alter the nature of the program or a protocol, and it should ensure that all requests are reviewed by the Town Administrator. See

<https://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/accommodation.html>

Finding 10: Auxiliary Aids and Services. Responses to the surveys indicate the need to establish the capacity across all Town departments to provide auxiliary aids and services and then to disseminate information about their availability.

Recommendation 10:

- Assess the needs of the community for auxiliary aids and services. Based on the assessment, establish the appropriate vendors and contractual agreements so that aids and services can be provided in a timely manner, for example:
 - TTY or telephone relay service
 - ASL interpreters
 - Assistive listening systems
- Informing appropriate departments of their obligations to inform the public regarding the availability of Auxiliary Aids for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and people who are blind or have limited sight.
- Establish department wide guidance regarding the specific Town communications requiring notice of the availability of Auxiliary Aids (e.g. meeting announcements, events, conferences, etc.) see <https://nationaldisabilitynavigator.org/ndnrc-materials/disability-guide/auxiliary-aids-and-services/>

Finding 11: Alternative formats. Where Town documents are provided, notification is not provided that documents can be requested in alternative formats. For examples, see the policy documents at <https://www.dighton-ma.gov/government/policies.php>

Recommendation 11: Assess the needs of the community for alternative formats. Based on the assessment, establish the appropriate vendors or protocols so that documents in alternative formats can be provided in a timely manner, for example: Taped texts, audio recordings, Braille materials and large print materials. Include notification regarding the availability of alternative formats on the Town website.

Finding 12: Contact Information. Where phone numbers are provided as a means of contacting the municipality, an alternative means of communication (e.g. TTY number or email) is consistently provided. However, there are a few instances where an alternative means of communication have not been provided. For example: https://www.dighton-ma.gov/department/transfer_station.php

Recommendation 12. Where telephone numbers are provided as a means of contact also include email addresses or link to MA Relay. Include alternate means of communication on all directories, pamphlets, brochures, etc. This can include email addresses or numbers of telephone relay numbers.

Finding 13: Training. Submitted department worksheets indicated a need for training of front-line Town personnel in several aspects of accessible program delivery.

Recommendation 13. Provide training to appropriate personnel in the following:

- How to respond to telephone calls made through Video Relay Services and Telecommunication Relay Services so that the calls are responded to in the same manner as other telephone calls.
- How to respond to requests for reasonable modifications, auxiliary aids and services and documents in alternative formats.

Findings 14: Title III Entities Using Town Facilities. The Town's Policy on Reservation and Use of Town Facilities does not include information on the obligation of the Title III Entity (i.e. sports leagues, theater groups, fundraisers) to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities.

Recommendation 14: Develop language to be included in Town rental agreements that ensure Title III entities of their obligations to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities.

Findings 15: Use of Contractors. The Administration Survey responses indicates that additional steps are necessary to ensure Town contractors are fully aware of the obligations under the ADA.

Recommendation 15: Develop language to be included in Town contracts that alerts contractors of their obligations to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities in programs and activities the contractor operates on behalf of Dighton. The Town should also develop materials for contractors explaining the Title II obligations they inherit when contracting with the Town.

Finding 16: Transportation. The Town does not currently provide or contract for transportation services.

Recommendation 16: None.

Finding 17: Documents & Publication. Town documents/ announcements do not appear to use stigmatizing language (e.g. "handicapped").

Recommendation 17: Ensure the Town's policy on nondiscrimination includes information on patronizing or stigmatizing language and/or images. "People-first" or "person-first" language is a way of describing disability that involves putting the word "person" or "people" before the word "disability" or the name of a disability, rather than placing the disability first and using it as an adjective. Some examples of people-first language might include saying "person with a disability," "woman with cerebral palsy," and "man with an intellectual disability." The purpose of people-first language is to promote the idea that someone's disability label is just a disability label—not the defining characteristic of the entire individual. Many guides on disability language and etiquette may likely emphasize using person-first language, except, perhaps, when discussing certain disability cultural groups that explicitly describe themselves with disability-first language. Thus, while it is generally a safe bet to use people-first language, there are members of certain disability groups in the US who prefer *not* to use it, such as the American Deaf community and a number of Autistic people/ Autistics. The basic reason behind members of these groups' dislike for the application of people-first language to themselves is that they consider their disabilities to be inseparable parts of who they are. Using person-first language, some also argue, makes the disability into something negative, which can and should be separated from the person.

Finding 18: Website. The Town's website and websites run by Town Departments do not fully conform with Section 508 technical design accessibility standards and there is little information on the websites regarding access to programs and services for people with disabilities. See Appendix for more in depth technical analysis.

The Town has a redesign of the website scheduled in the next year. Recommendations flagged below should be coordinated with that redesign.

Recommendation 18:

- Redesign the website to fully conform with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and W3C-WAI's WCAG 2.0. This should also include independent websites run by Town departments (i.e. the police department).
- Include an accessibility page that includes more information regarding access to programs and services for people with disabilities. Information on the accessibility of facilities, information on the Town's accessibility policies (nondiscrimination, service animal, grievance procedure) communication materials, and the process for requesting accommodations or auxiliary aids/services would be helpful.
- Include how to request an accommodation in all meeting announcements posted to

the Town's website.

Finding 19: Emergency Preparedness. A formal emergency preparedness plan was not provided for review. However, a review of the Town's police, fire, and Emergency Preparedness Committee web pages indicates the Town is making an effort to ensure people with disabilities are considered in their emergency response protocols. For example, on the Police Department website there is a Disability Indicator Form (<https://4dmuh72cufjp4bo2b1mk0j3f-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/203/2020/01/Disability-Indicator-Form.pdf>) and the Emergency Preparedness Committee provides a link of resources for emergency preparedness for individuals with disabilities (<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/emergency-preparedness-for-individuals-with-disabilities-and-access-and-functional>).

Additionally, KMA has been informed that the police department receive training in communicating with individuals with disabilities as part of the Academy. Then twice per year members of the department participate in a course about working with people with disabilities.

Recommendation 19A.

Ensure a formal emergency preparedness plan is developed that includes:

- Training for first responders in effective communication with people with disabilities.
- Provisions to ensure that equal access to safe egress is provided for any visitor, member of the community or employee, including additional assistance if required to effectively evacuate and/or shelter them during an emergency.
- The plan included protocols and signage for such issues as:
 - Fire exits signage and maneuvering space;
 - Safe wait areas;
 - Evacuation Maps;
 - Locations of fire exits and safe wait areas serving each municipal space; and
 - Public and employee orientation to the Town 's emergency evacuation procedures.

Recommendation 19B. The link to the Police Department's Disability Indicator Form does not include information on how to request the form in an alternative format.

Finding 20: Employment. The Town has made significant progress to ensure people with disabilities are not discriminated against through their employment practices. A review of the Employment Survey responses indicates that the Town has reviewed most of their employment practices, procedures, and personnel and is in the process of developing a Personnel Manual.

Recommendation 20.

- Ensure all staff who conduct interviews have received ADA training.
- Develop formal policies/procedures relative to requests for reasonable accommodations.

- Ensure the Town's Personnel Manual will be available in alternate formats and will include information on how to request reasonable modifications.
- Develop a procedure for responding to requests for a reasonable accommodation by an applicant or employee. KMA recommends including a copy of the Grievance Procedure in the Personnel Manual and on the Town's employment web page.

STRUCTURAL

KMA audited the following buildings:

Animal Shelter	Library
Dighton Elementary School*	Old Police Station
Dighton Middle School*	Old Town Hall
Dighton-Rehoboth High School*	Police Station
Fire Station 1	Prime Time Senior Center
Fire Station 2	Segregansett School
Highway Department Garage	Town Hall

* = only areas open to the public for Town events (i.e. voting and/or meetings)

KMA audited the following exterior areas:

Broad Cove Nature Trail	Lions Club Pavilion
Central Playground	North Dighton Field
Courts by Old Police Station	Palmer Street Playground
G. Lopes Complex	School Street Playground
Karl Spratt Jr. Memorial Field	Tricentennial Park
Lane Field	

The Town has made progress removing structural barriers to programs in its facilities. Below is a table identifying the principal architectural barriers identified, recommended mitigations, and a draft implementation schedule. The information below is ordered chronologically by priority. For example, in the Buildings section the Library is listed first as it appears to be a highly visible and highly trafficked building. The issues listed in the Principal Barriers section for the Library are also listed with the highest priority items at the top.

Finding 1: Buildings.

Building	Principal Barrier(s)	Recommendation(s)	Schedule
Library	<p>The accessible parking spaces lack access aisles and have slopes >2%.</p> <p>The route to the ramp has slopes >5%.</p> <p>The ramp has slopes >8.3% and lacks the required handrails.</p> <p>An accessible toilet room is not provided in the building.</p> <p>An accessible route between the two levels of the building is not provided.</p> <p>Work stations lack the required knee clearance below.</p>	<p>Due to the high traffic of the Library, KMA recommends mitigating all the barriers identified in the audit report.</p> <p>KMA recommends prioritizing the exterior parking and accessible routes due to their high visibility.</p> <p>In the more immediate future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • modify the main level toilet room to be accessible. • designate an alternative accessible meeting area on the main floor. Ensure all programs offered on the lower level are capable of being provided in this space (i.e. the children's room). If an alternative location is used, information on its location and the process for requesting its use must be disseminated. 	2 Years 1 Year 6 Months
Town Hall	<p>The upper level accessible parking spaces have slopes >2% and the signage is mounted too low.</p> <p>The signage at the accessible parking is not mounted in the correct location.</p> <p>The entry ramp has slopes >8.3%.</p> <p>The walkways leading to the entry door have slopes >5%.</p> <p>The entry doors lack level maneuvering clearances on the exterior side and the thresholds are too high.</p> <p>An accessible route between the two levels of the building is not provided.</p> <p>Tactile/ braille signage is not provided.</p> <p>Door hardware requires tight</p>	<p>Due to the high traffic of Town Hall, KMA recommends mitigating all the barriers identified in the audit report.</p> <p>KMA recommends prioritizing the exterior parking and accessible routes due to their high visibility.</p> <p>In the more immediate future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop a policy that ensures the public is not required to travel between the two floors. This can be done by establishing an alternative accessible meeting area on each floor. If alternative locations are used, information on their locations and the process for requesting their use must be disseminated. • Install tactile/ braille signage 	2 Years 1 Year 6 Months

	<p>grasping to operate.</p> <p>The service counters are mounted too high and obstruct the clear width of the office entry doors.</p> <p>Hand sanitizer dispenser protrude into the circulation space.</p> <p>The door to the accessible toilet room on the main level is not wide enough.</p> <p>Toilet room doors lack maneuvering clearances.</p> <p>Accessible features in the toilet rooms are not mounted in the correct locations.</p> <p>A utilities box protrudes into the circulation space at one of the toilet rooms on the lower level.</p> <p>The drinking fountain protrudes into the circulation space and a 'hi' drinking fountain is not provided.</p> <p>The doors to the selectmen's meeting room lack maneuvering clearances.</p> <p>A television protrudes into the circulation space of the lower level conference room.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace the door hardware • Modify the service counters • Relocate the hand sanitizer dispensers • designate the toilet rooms as unisex and modify at least one per floor to be fully accessible. • provide paper cups adjacent to the drinking fountain so that it can be utilized by standing users. • develop a policy to have maintenance staff open the selectmen's meeting room doors for all Town events. • provide a cane detectible object below the television in the conference room. 	
Dighton Elementary School	<p>The accessible parking spaces lack access aisles, lack the required signage, and have slopes >2%.</p> <p>The route from the accessible parking has changes in level and cross slopes >2%.</p> <p>Accessible features in the toilet rooms are not mounted in the correct locations.</p> <p>Furniture obstructs one of the accessible toilet stalls.</p> <p>Emergency exits are not on an accessible route.</p>	<p>Due to the high traffic at the Dighton Elementary School for Town voting and the fact that this building also serves the student population of the Town, KMA recommends mitigating all the barriers identified in the audit report.</p> <p>In the more immediate future, remove the furniture from the accessible toilet stall.</p>	<p>3 Years</p> <p>6 Months</p>

Prime Time Adult Center	<p>The access aisle at the designated accessible parking is not wide enough, the accessible parking has slopes >2%, and the space lacks signage.</p> <p>The ramp has slopes >8.3% and lacks the required handrails.</p> <p>An accessible toilet room is not provided in the building.</p> <p>The service counter is not wide enough.</p> <p>The tables lack accessible seating spaces.</p>	<p>Due to the high traffic of the Prime Time Adult Center and the age of it's intended users, KMA recommends mitigating all the barriers identified in the audit report.</p> <p>KMA recommends prioritizing the exterior parking and accessible routes due to their high visibility.</p> <p>In the more immediate future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • designate the toilet rooms as unisex and modify at least one to be fully accessible. • Modify the service counter • Provide an accessible table 	<p>3 Years</p> <p>1 Year</p> <p>1 Year</p>
Old Town Hall	<p>The access aisles at the designated accessible parking spaces (both upper and lower) are not wide enough and the spaces lack signage.</p> <p>The lower level accessible parking has slopes >2%.</p> <p>The main entry lacks directional signage to the accessible entrance.</p> <p>The secondary entry door lacks maneuvering clearance.</p> <p>The lower level entry door lacks maneuvering clearance and the threshold is too high.</p> <p>Some lower level doors lack the required minimum 10" AFF of smooth surface at the bottom of the push side.</p> <p>Accessible features in the toilet rooms are not mounted in the correct locations.</p> <p>The route to the toilet rooms on the upper floor is not wide enough at the cased opening.</p> <p>The lower level toilet room door lacks the required maneuvering</p>	<p>Due to the moderate traffic of the Old Town Hall and the fact that it was recently renovated, KMA recommends mitigating all the barriers identified in the audit report.</p> <p>In the more immediate future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide directional signage at the main entry • provide paper cups adjacent to the drinking fountain so that it can be utilized by standing users. • Designate an alternative accessible meeting area and employee break room on each floor. Ensure all programs offered on each level are capable of being provided in these spaces (i.e. department offices and employee common use spaces). If alternative locations are used, information on their location and the process for requesting their use must be disseminated. KMA 	<p>4 Years</p> <p>6 Months</p>

	<p>clearances.</p> <p>The drinking fountain is mounted too low, it is a protruding object, and a 'hi' fountain is not provided.</p> <p>The exterior ramp lacks handrail extensions.</p> <p>An accessible route is not provided to the stage.</p> <p>The electric vehicle charging station has controls that are not within an accessible reach range or on an accessible route.</p> <p>The department service counters are too high.</p> <p>The Veteran's Office entry door maneuvering clearance is obstructed by furniture.</p> <p>The conference room lacks the required clearances and an accessible seating space.</p> <p>The employee break room is not on an accessible route and the sink is too high.</p>	<p>recommends prioritizing the spaces used by the public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a clear policy is in place to on how and when to use the lowered accessible counter. 	
Lions Club Pavilion	<p>The walkways have running slopes >5%.</p> <p>The pavilion lacks accessible seating.</p> <p>The BBQ area lacks an adjacent clear floor space at the controls.</p>	<p>Due to the high traffic at the Lions Club Pavilion and the ability to rent out the facility, KMA recommends mitigating all the</p>	4 Years
Dighton-Rehoboth Regional High School	<p>The access aisle at the designated accessible parking is not wide enough, the accessible parking spaces have slopes >2%, and the signage is mounted too low.</p> <p>Bollards obstruct the entry door maneuvering clearance.</p> <p>The auditorium lacks the required number of accessible seating spaces, has slopes along the accessible route >5%, lacks an accessible route to the stage, and</p>	<p>Due to the high traffic at the Dighton-Rehoboth Regional High School for Town events and the fact that this building also serves the student population of the Town, KMA recommends mitigating all the barriers identified in the audit report.</p>	4 Years

	<p>lacks handrails at the stairs.</p> <p>Service counters are mounted too high.</p> <p>The breakroom sink is mounted too high and the breakroom lacks accessible seating.</p>		
Dighton Middle School	<p>The access aisle at the designated accessible parking is not wide enough and the signage is either missing or in the wrong location.</p> <p>The passenger loading zone is not accessible (it lacks an access aisle).</p> <p>The curb ramps are too steep.</p> <p>Accessible features in the toilet rooms are not mounted in the correct locations.</p> <p>The stage is not on an accessible route.</p> <p>Some threshold are too high.</p> <p>The gym lacks accessible seating.</p> <p>The drinking fountains in the gym are mounted too high.</p>	<p>Due to the high traffic at the Dighton Middle School for Town events and the fact that this building also serves the student population of the Town, KMA recommends mitigating all the barriers identified in the audit report.</p>	4 Years
Police Station	<p>One of the accessible parking spaces has slopes >2% and the signage is mounted too low.</p> <p>The mirror in the toilet room is too high.</p> <p>Objects protrude into the circulation space in the conference room.</p> <p>The jail cell toilet/ sink configuration is located too far from the wall and the flush valve is not mounted on the open side.</p>	<p>The public may need to access the jail cell, providing at least one fully accessible jail cell is essential. Reconfigure the toilet in the accessible jail cell. Ensure information on the accessible jail cell is properly disseminated.</p> <p>Since the mitigations noted in the audit report for the areas accessed by the public are relatively small (parking, protruding objects) KMA recommends mitigating them in the more immediate future.</p>	5 Years 1 Year

Animal Shelter	<p>The ramp leading into the building is not wide enough and is too steep.</p> <p>The accessible parking space lacks striping, has slopes >2%, and the signage is mounted too low.</p> <p>The entry door threshold is too high.</p> <p>Accessible features in the toilet room are not mounted in the correct locations.</p> <p>The door hardware requires tight grasping to operate.</p> <p>The kennels are not on an accessible route.</p>	<p>Due to the moderate traffic at the Animal Shelter, KMA recommends mitigating all the barriers in the public areas identified in the audit report.</p> <p>KMA recommends prioritizing the exterior parking and accessible routes due to their high visibility.</p> <p>Since the kennels are only accessed by employees, KMA recommends mitigating the accessible route to them as part of routine maintenance, planned alterations or in response to a specific request and as Town budget permits.</p>	<p>6 Years</p> <p>1 Year</p> <p>10 Years</p>
Fire Station 1	<p>The entry door lacks maneuvering clearance and the threshold is too high.</p> <p>The service counter is too high.</p> <p>Accessible employee parking is not provided.</p>	<p>Due to the moderate traffic at the Fire Station, KMA recommends mitigating all the barriers identified in the audit report.</p> <p>KMA recommends prioritizing the areas open to the public.</p>	7 Years
Highway Department Garage	<p>Accessible employee parking is not provided.</p> <p>The employee toilet room is not accessible.</p> <p>The doors along the route to the employee toilet room are not wide enough and one has a step.</p>	<p>Due to the relatively low traffic of this building and no public access, KMA recommends mitigating barriers identified in the audit report as part of routine maintenance, planned alterations or in response to a specific request and as Town budget permits.</p>	8 Years
Old Police Station	<p>Accessible employee parking is not provided.</p> <p>The route to the entry door has a step.</p> <p>The entry door threshold is too high.</p>	<p>Due to the relatively low traffic of this building and no public access, KMA recommends mitigating barriers identified in the audit report as part of routine maintenance, planned alterations or in response to a specific request and as Town budget permits.</p>	10 Years

Segregansett School	The entry is not on an accessible route due to the steps.	Due to the relatively low traffic of this building and no public access, KMA recommends mitigating barriers identified in the audit report as part of routine maintenance, planned alterations or in response to a specific request and as Town budget permits. If the building is going to be repurposed for use by the public, ensure all alterations and any programs provided within the building are fully accessible.	10 Years
Fire Station 2	KMA was informed by the town that the facility is not currently in use or open to the public.	N/A	N/A

Finding 2: Athletic Facilities. KMA did not observe any fully accessible athletic facilities in the Town of Dighton. KMA reviewed the courts at the Old Police Station, the G. Lopes Little League Complex, Karl Spratt Jr. Memorial Field, Lane Field, North Dighton Field, the basketball court at Palmer Street Playground, and School Street Playground. Athletic facilities lacked accessible routes, accessible parking, accessible seating, and accessible toilets.

Recommendation 2A: Due to the intensive use of the Dighton athletic facilities, KMA recommends providing accessible athletic facilities within the next 5 years. At least one of each type of athletic facility (e.g. baseball field, tennis court, basketball court, track etc.) should be made accessible, with priority going to those with the highest use. Associated press boxes and/ or concession stands, should also be modified either through physical architectural barrier removal or by implementing a policy change.

Recommendation 2B: Prior to the next season opening, at least one bathroom serving each athletic facility should be designated as unisex and made fully accessible. This can be achieved by providing an accessible portable toilet at each location where bathrooms are provided. Ensure the accessible portable toilet is located on an accessible route.

Recommendation 2C: KMA has been informed that the track is a program frequently used by members of the public and the surface is not accessible. This is a concern that was also brought up in the public comments. KMA recommends providing an accessible track as part of routine maintenance, planned alterations, or in response to a specific request and as Town budget permits.

Finding 3: Play Areas. KMA did not observe any fully accessible play areas in the Town of Dighton. KMA reviewed Central Playground, the playground at Lane Field, and Palmer Street Playground. The play areas lacked an accessible route, an accessible play surface, accessible play features, accessible seating, and accessible parking spaces.

Recommendation 3: KMA understands that the Dighton Parks and Recreation Department is currently working with the Community Preservation Committee to install an accessible playground in North Dighton. The project is just beginning.

Ensure any modifications to existing play areas are done in compliance with the 2010 ADA Standards. Information regarding the accessible playgrounds should be disseminated to residents and available on the Town website. For information on accessible play area requirements please see: <https://www.access-board.gov/attachments/article/1369/play-guide.pdf>

Finding 4: Trails. KMA did not observe any fully accessible trails in the Town of Dighton. KMA reviewed the Broad Cove Trail and it lacked accessible parking spaces and an accessible route to the trailhead.

Recommendation 4: Since this is the only trail operated by the Town, KMA recommends mitigating all the barriers identified in the audit report within the next 5 years.

Finding 5: Parks. KMA observed a representative park in the Town of Dighton, Tricentennial Park. It lacked accessible parking, an accessible route to the benches, picnic tables, and description placard, and accessible seating.

Recommendation 5: KMA recommends mitigating all the barriers identified in the audit report within the next 5 years at Tricentennial Park.

Finding 6: EV Charging Stations. KMA observed two EV charging stations in the Town of Dighton, one at Karl Spratt Jr. Memorial Field and one at Old Town Hall. Both charging stations had controls that were not within an accessible reach range and not located on an accessible route.

Recommendation 6: Provide at least one fully accessible EV charging station within the next 2 years. Information regarding the accessible charging station should be disseminated to residents and available on the Town website.

Finding 7: Sidewalks. KMA did not observe sidewalks as part of the scope of this project. However, there were several public comments expressing concerns for sidewalks within Town.

Recommendation 7: KMA has been informed that Complete Streets work is starting this summer to begin installing more sidewalks throughout town and increase accessibility. The Town also received a grant for two intersections. KMA recommends careful monitoring during the construction of the new sidewalks and intersections to ensure they fully conform to the requirements of the 2010 ADA Standards.

SECTION 5: SUMMARY OF PUBLIC SURVEY RESPONSES

KMA developed an online public comment survey to get input from citizens of the Town of Dighton regarding their ideas and concerns about the accessibility of the Town programs and facilities. The survey was made up of five questions that ranged from asking about the ease of use of Town facilities/buildings to whether residents understand where to go to request an accommodation. The survey was distributed on the Town's email, website, and social media pages. KMA received 120 online responses. The focus of the responses was on the physical/structural accessibility of the Town. The principal issues raised in the survey responses include:

1. Comments to the survey acknowledge a general need for the Town to make accessibility improvements.
2. Town Hall and the Library are brought up several times for their inaccessible features.
3. Many of the respondents do not know how to request Town materials in an alternate format or how to request an accommodation.
4. Dighton playgrounds are not accessible.
5. The Town lacks sidewalks.
6. Some residents have had difficulty getting information on a Town service, program, or event.

Survey Responses:

1. **Question: Are there Town buildings/facilities (building structures, parks, playgrounds, trails, docks, recycling centers, etc.) that you have had difficulty using?**

Responses: 22 yes/ 98 no

Comments:

- Several ramps to buildings are crumbling or not up to code. There is not full access to many of the town's playgrounds, courts, and recreational facilities. Curb cuts at some of our facilities such as the elementary, middle schools, and other public buildings are crumbling and at a steep grade. Many of our parking spots do not have enough clearly defined H spaces and their [sic] are appropriate rights of way for wheelchairs.
- I personally have not, but I have a friend who has a child in a wheelchair. She had an extremely difficult time going downstairs in the library to where the kids section is.
- Most are hard to access with a wheelchair. We use an off road buggy that has to be pushed but even that is difficult to get to many of the trails or walking around town. Many side walks are very rutty. Town bulidings [sic] are not bad.
- Not enough trails or sidewalks. Very unsafe to travel.
- Because I am disabled, I cannot go or get into any building or area that is not handicap accessible. I need to use a wheelchair outside of my home.
- we need more sidewalk

- If possible it would be nice to get the abandoned railroad tracks along the Taunton river accessible again for walking trails. It's in poor condition
 - I use a cane and have not felt comfortable using any of these activities. I do not feel safe
 - Would like to walk my brother who is wheelchair bound around the track with me. The gravel makes it impossible. Also difficult to get to the high school track.
 - The Dighton Library
 - The town library is very limited mobility wise. A person with some varying disabilities may not be able to freely maneuver on the first level. And the lower level is extremely limited for individuals.
 - Town bldgs.
 - My daughter is 9 and disabled. At the park, I love that there are swings available for her, but we can't wheel over the rocks. She is very heavy to carry, and we have a hard time getting up on other equipment. Town hall is great, however, the library we only visited once considering the children's section was down a narrow staircase.
 - The newly refurbished Old Town Hall has no railings on the main entrance -- it does have a handicapped ramp, but the main entrance is the one predominantly [sic] used and is dangerous for the folks with walking problems and the elderly in general. The ramp is located to the side of the building -- a longer walk from the parking lot.
 - The library has 2 floors with no handicap access and the bathroom is too small. There is no place to change a baby.
 - Not personally but working for the Mass. Rehab. Commission for 45 years I see a lot [sic] of problems. Uneven and in need of repair of walkways, driveways heading towards Prime time. Not enough sidewalks. Need more HP parking around municipal buildings. More HP parking spaces need to be designated when elections need to be allocated.
 - Town hall, playgrounds all could have better handicap accessible ramps, options
 - Town Hall is accessible only with difficulty. The building needs [sic] to be completely redone to make it both use-and worker-friendly as well as disabled accessible.
 - The library is paramount on my list. My child has ASD and needs help toileting and that is completely inappropriate at our current library. Rules at playgrounds should be posted with pictures or a social story too so they are accessible.
 - I have not had [sic] difficulty using, but I have received complaints of the access ramps to the sidewalk at Dighton Middle School being insufficient for those in wheelchairs.
 - Town hall
 - Library - access to children's area in basement.
2. Question: Have you ever had difficulty getting information about a Town program, service, or event?

Responses: 19 yes/ 101 no

Comments:

- Website is difficult to navigate to find correct dept. and event information. Such as the Dighton food bank schedule
- As a town resident, not a lot of information is "pushed" to you. If you want to find out more about a program, service or event, you need to be proactive and "pull" the information.
- Don't have cable TV, no newspaper. Don't hear of events until too late. Social media use is getting a little better
- Portions of the town do a great job with email announcements and social media posts. I do wish more departments used the email announcements. But the town administrator does a good job especially with her newsletter.
- No online details providing information on how to dispose of yard waste, large house waste.
- Town meetings.
- website not informative or easily accessible. more forms need to be online and able to submit online.
- The town website is a bit hard to navigate
- Dates of important matters, elections, meetings etc
- Updates of the covid19 cases
- Many folks do not have or have access to computers -- especially in this time of Covid 19. There is absolutely NO Dighton information in the Taunton Gazette nor the Fall River Herald -- the two local newspapers -- which are also now very expensive in addition to being quite useless to Dightonians. There needs to be some type of by mail newsletter or such -- I don't know what vehicle would be used, but something is definitely needed and has been for some time.
- Some postings seem to be buried on the town page or hard to find on social media
- I do not always receive notice about town events. It is very hit or miss.
- I wish we could get more information from the website over Facebook. Some people prefer not to have a Facebook and it seems like most details and updates are mostly available on facebook
- Don't know the town website address and when someone gets me on it, I don't find it user friendly.
- We need to utilize more technology to make meetings more accessible for the hard of hearing and blind.
- The website has vastly improved but especially events put on by parks and rec aren't prominent and are sometimes buried.
- A resident told me once that their child could not participate in a town meeting due to the sidewalk ramps being insufficient for those in a wheelchair.
- Not easy to access the Town of Dighton website and information.

3. Question: Do you know how to request Town materials in alternate formats (for example, large print or Braille)?

Responses: 32 yes/ 90 no

4. Question: Do you know how to request an accommodation (for example, ASL interpreters or assistive listening systems) for Town services and events?

Responses: 29 yes/ 91 no

5. Question: Any other comments about accessibility?

Comments:

- It is my hope that this detailed assessment of our town's facilities and resources will provide us with a blueprint for moving forward to become fully accessible for all residents and a model for others to follow.
- Sidewalks on Spring st are to narrow in several spots for a walker or wheelchair or even a guide dog and adult
- My family doesn't currently have any accessibility issues, so my views are slanted with that view. FYI.
- Concerns about the ramps and accessibility into town hall and the library.
- I think the town would be more safely accessible to people with disabilities or families with children if there were sidewalks on heavily traveled streets like Main, Center, 138 and Pleasant.
- Help with \$ to build ramps at homes for disabled
- Regarding questions 3 and 4, the need for either accommodations [sic] is not currently a necessity, which is why we have not inquired about them.
- While ADA accommodations are so important to any town, and are intended to covered [sic] a broad spectrum, I hope that this is looked at with an "Accessibility for All" approach. In general, as a mom of two young kids often in tow, I often run into issues with strollers or young walkers navigating surfaces or ramps that separate me from my family. Another place both moms AND dads struggle is with restroom facilities. So many buildings lack adequate space to facilitate a stroller, and many lack changing tables, especially men's rooms.
- The librarians are extremely friendly and very helpful. The building itself could use some much needed work or possible use the old police station with some additional structures to become the new library.
- have the town officials nothing else to concern themselves with? the tax rate is becoming more threatening each year, town government if full of committees and red tape excuses, our selectmen are dominated by one crass, false, and redundant individual who seems to relish in making things more and more muddled with her constant lectures in which she does little to solve anything while expressing a knowledge [sic] of everything. when are the taxpayers going to see some semblance of concern ??????
- Help Dighton reach the 21st century and that includes leadership where needed in town government.
- A committee should go to every town owned property and do an assessment. Anyone

that works or uses any town property should have input. All volunteers that donate time to the town should have input too.

- I think the town needs to ensure that all residents have the same access to facilities, materials, etc.
- As our town grows we will need to grow for physical, emotional and well-being of all residents. I would like to see programs introduced to residents for education on all disabilities visible and invisible.
- I do not need ADA compliant access (yet) but have used baby carriages (which can be used as a test for accessibility) and it is very difficult to go for a walk - safely not on the road. Sidewalks are limited and some are difficult to use.
- Fortunately we've not needed the above but it would be helpful to have the information as we are getting older. Thank you.
- Being able to make online tax payments!!! Crazy that we have to go in person or mail
- Good job Dighton!
- No need at this time
- Sidewalks would be good. But this is not a city this is a farming community. I personally don't know of any physically disabled people that live in this town.
- Nuerodiversity [sic] is important to take into consideration when planning access in town.

APPENDIX

DIGHTON GRIEVANCE POLICY

SAMPLE PUBLIC NOTICE OF ADA COMPLIANCE

SAMPLE EVENT LANGUAGE

WEBSITE ANALYSIS

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Public

COMPLETED SURVEYS

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ACCESS AUDIT REPORTS

DIGHTON GRIEVANCE POLICY

Town of Dighton

POLICY	Grievance Procedure for Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance
Effective Date	September 18, 2019
Revisions	
Board of Selectmen Approval Date	September 18, 2019

PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

The purpose of this policy is to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and provide information to anyone who wishes to file a complaint.

The following Grievance Procedure may be used by anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability in employment practices and policies or the provision of services, activities, programs and benefits by the Town of Dighton.

POLICY

The complaint should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination such as name, address, phone number of complainant and location, date and description of the problem. Reasonable accommodations, such as personal interviews or a tape recording of the complaint, will be made available for persons with disabilities who are unable to submit a written complaint. The complaint should be submitted by the grievant and/or his/her designee as soon as possible but no later than 60 calendar days after the alleged violation to:

Jonathan Gale, ADA Coordinator
979 Somerset Avenue
Dighton, MA 02715
(774)-872-0924
ada_eeo@townofdighton.com

Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the complaint the Town ADA Coordinator will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolution. Within 15 calendar days after the meeting, the Town ADA Coordinator will respond in writing, and where appropriate in a format accessible to the complainant such as audiotape. The

response will explain the position of the Town of Dighton and offer opinions for a substantive resolution of the complaint.

If the response by the Town ADA Coordinator does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complainant and/or his/her designee may appeal the decision of the Town ADA Coordinator within 15 calendar days after receipt of the response to the Town Administrator. Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the complaint the Town Administrator will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolution. Within 15 calendar days after the meeting, the Town Administrator will respond in writing, and where appropriate in a format accessible to the complainant such as audiotape. The response will explain the position of the Town of Dighton and offer opinions for a substantive resolution of the complaint.

If the response by the Town Administrator does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complainant and/or his/her designee may appeal the decision of the Town Administrator within 15 calendar days after receipt of the response to the Board of Selectmen or their designee. Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the appeal, the Board of Selectmen or their designee will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within 15 days after the meeting the Board of Selectmen or their designee will respond in writing, and where appropriate in a format accessible to the complainant such as audiotape, with a final resolution of the complaint. All complaints received by the ADA Officer, Town Administrator, appeals to the Board of Selectmen or their designee, and responses from the Town Administrator and the Board of Selectmen or their designee will be kept by the Town of Dighton for at least three years.

(NOTE) In addition to the Town of Dighton providing any and all responses in writing and or as a recording if requested, the Town of Dighton will make their best effort to secure at cost to the town a licensed sign language interpreter via the Massachusetts Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and/or provide a licensed interpreter in the language of the complainant if one can be located.

A copy of this policy shall be accessible from the Town's official website.

The Board of Selectmen reserves the right to modify or amend the above policy or to adopt such other, additional policies, as said Board may deem necessary.

SIGNATURES


Kenneth J. Pacheco, Chairman


Brett R. Zografos, Ph.D., Clerk


Nancy J. Goulart, Member

SAMPLE PUBLIC NOTICE OF ADA COMPLIANCE

Long

Americans with Disabilities Act

(Name of Public Entity) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its services, programs, or activities.

Employment: (Name of Public Entity) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its hiring or employment practices and complies with the ADA title I employment regulations.

Effective Communication: (Name of Public Entity) will, upon request, provide auxiliary aids and services leading to effective communication for people with disabilities, including qualified sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, documents in Braille, and other ways of making communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision impairments.

Modifications to Policies and Procedures: (Name of Public Entity) will make reasonable modifications to policies and procedures to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy programs, services, and activities. For example, people with service animals are welcomed in (Name of Public Entity) offices, even where pets and other animals are prohibited.

Requests: To request an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures contact (ADA Coordinator name and contact information) as soon as possible, preferably XX days before the activity or event.

Complaints: Send complaints to (ADA Coordinator name and contact information).

Short

Americans with Disabilities Act

The (Name of Public Entity) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its programs, services, activities and employment practices.

If you need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication (such as a sign language interpreter, an assistive listening device or print material in digital format) or reasonable modification to programs, services or activities contact the ADA Coordinator as soon as possible, preferably XX days before the activity or event.

A grievance procedure is available to resolve complaints.

Upon request, this notice is available in alternative formats such as large print or Braille.

(ADA Coordinator name and contact information)

SAMPLE EVENT LANGUAGE

For additional information or to request accommodations to participate in this meeting (event) contact (###) ###-#### or MA Relay 711 or email AppropriatePerson@address.org. Meeting materials in alternate formats can be made available upon request. Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will allow the Town to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. Note, the (meeting location) is an accessible facility.

WEBSITE ANALYSIS

KMA, LLC conducted a cursory review of the Town of Dighton's website (dighton-ma.gov) in order to help identify any significant and recurring accessibility and usability problems. The basis for the review was the guidance from Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and W3C-WAI's WCAG 2.0.

KMA utilized WebAim's WAVE Toolbar, The Paciello Group's Colour Contrast Analyzer (CCA) and ARC Toolkit, and NVDA screen reader to review the Town's web site. Generally, the Town of Dighton's website is usable and can be made accessible with modifications.

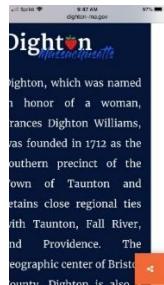
The main issues are:

- Unable to retain website formatting when increasing size on mobile,
- Lack of ability to bypass repetitive content,
- Low color contrast,
- Lack of accessible PDFs documents,
- Empty links,
- Lack of form labels, and
- Missing first level headers.

Due to the amount of information presented on the website, the addition of consistent headers would allow users of screen readers and other assistive technology to navigate web pages by structure.

ZOOM FEATURE

Error: Zooming is disabled on the Town of Dighton's website.



Why it matters: “Users with partial vision and low vision often choose to enlarge the fonts on their browser to make text on the web easier to read. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines calls for developers to design pages so that they support resize up to 200%.”²

Reference: WCAG 1.4.4 Resize Text: Except for captions and images of text, text can be resized without assistive technology up to 200 percent without loss of content or functionality.³

Recommendation: Enable zooming

NO BYPASS AVAILABLE

Error: No method provided to bypass blocks of content.

Why it matters: Bypass blocks permit users who navigate sequentially through content a method to bypass repeated content and access the primary content on a webpage.

Reference: WCAG 2.4.1 Bypass Blocks: A mechanism is available to bypass blocks of content that are repeated on multiple Web pages.⁴

Recommendation: Add bypass methods such as skip link, headings or landmarks.

PSEUDO CONTENT

Error: Pseudo content found on text element, not in Private Use Area.

Why it matters: On the Town of Dighton’s website, the specific icons that are problematic are the “Search” magnifying glass, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, “Menu”, and “Share” icons. The screen readers read these icons as “link” with no additional information.

Reference: F87: Failure of Success Criterion WCAG 1.3.1 due to inserting non-decorative content by using :before and :after pseudo-elements and the 'content' property in CSS.⁵

Recommendation: If the '.' character is used for formatting, use '' (space) instead. Otherwise, add the pseudo content to its own span with aria-hidden='true'. Also, add a text alternative when appropriate.

NON-LAYOUT TABLE HAS NESTED TABLE

Error: Table nested in non-layout table

Why it matters: Nesting tables can make the sequence of content less readable for screen readers.

Reference: F49: Failure of Success Criterion WCAG 1.3.2 due to using an HTML layout table that does not make sense when linearized.⁶

Recommendation: use role='presentation' on parent table or do not use nested tables

² For more information see: <https://dequeuniversity.com/rules/axe/3.3/meta-viewport>

³ For more information see: <https://www.w3.org/TR/UNDERSTANDING-WCAG20/visual-audio-contrast-scale.html>

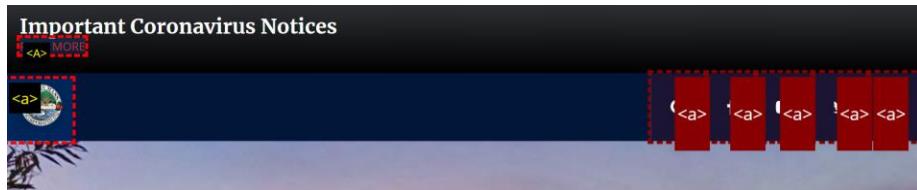
⁴ For more information see: <https://www.w3.org/TR/UNDERSTANDING-WCAG20/navigation-mechanisms-skip.html>

⁵ For more information see: <https://www.w3.org/TR/2016/NOTE-WCAG20-TECHS-20161007/F87>

⁶ For more information see: <https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20-TECHS/F49.html>

noLINK TEXT

Error: No link text.



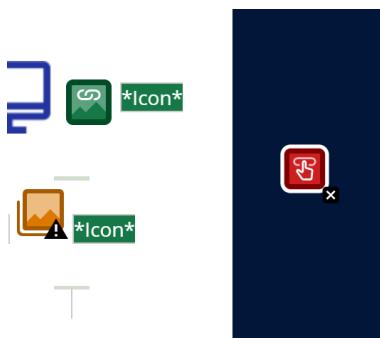
Why it matters: If a link contains no text, the function or purpose of the link will not be presented to the user. This can introduce confusion for keyboard and screen reader users.

Reference: Success Criterion WCAG 2.4.4 Link Purpose (In Context): The purpose of each link can be determined from the link text alone or from the link text together with its programmatically determined link context, except where the purpose of the link would be ambiguous to users in general.⁷

Recommendation: Remove the empty link or provide text within the link that describes the functionality and/or target of that link.

noButtonText

Error: A button is empty or has no value text.



Why it matters: Without descriptive text screen readers will no be able to indicate the function of the button.

Reference: "Success Criterion WCAG 4.1.2 Name, Role, Value (Level A): For all user interface components (including but not limited to: form elements, links and components generated by scripts), the name and role can be programmatically determined; states, properties, and values that can be set by the user can be programmatically set; and notification of changes to these items is available to user agents, including assistive technologies."⁸

Recommendation: Add text to button

⁷ For more information see: <https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG21/Understanding/link-purpose-in-context.html>

⁸ For more information see: <https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG21/Understanding/name-role-value.html>

LOW COLOR CONTRAST

Error: insufficient color contrast between foreground text and the background



Why it matters: Dighton's website lacks sufficient color contrast between text and background on its webpages. W3C observes that in addition to low vision and legally blind users, low color contrast may be an issue for older residents with low contrast sensitivity and residents with color blindness (1 in 4 men and 1 in 200 women).

Reference: Success Criterion WCAG 1.4.3 Contrast (Minimum) The visual presentation of text and images of text has a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1, except for the following:

- Large Text: Large-scale text and images of large-scale text have a contrast ratio of at least 3:1;
- Incidental: Text or images of text that are part of an inactive user interface component, that are pure decoration, that are not visible to anyone, or that are part of a picture that contains significant other visual content, have no contrast requirement.
- Logotypes: Text that is part of a logo or brand name has no contrast requirement.⁹

Recommendation: ensure text has a minimum contrast ratio of 4.5:1

LINKS TO PDFS AND WORD DOCUMENTS

Error: Dighton has numerous pdfs documents on its website. There is no indication on the webpages that a link opens a pdf or Word document.

Example: *Important Information for Voters -*

<http://cms3.revize.com/revize/dighton/Information%20-%20Annual%20Town%20Election%20-%20June%206,%202020.pdf>

Why it matters: PDFs posted on the Town's website are frequently scanned copies of original documents and inaccessible to screen readers. This is especially problematic when scanned PDFs are meeting notices that include contact information, time/date, and location or required forms for permits. Unless authored with accessibility in mind, PDF documents often have accessibility issues.

Reference: Section 508 – “504.2 Content Creation or Editing. Authoring tools shall provide a mode of operation to create or edit content that conforms to Level A and Level AA Success Criteria and Conformance Requirements in WCAG 2.0 (incorporated by reference, see 702.10.1) for

⁹ For more information see: <https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/#contrast-minimum>

all supported features and, as applicable, to file formats supported by the authoring tool. Authoring tools shall permit authors the option of overriding information required for accessibility.”¹⁰

Recommendation: Ensure that PDF and Word documents are accessible. Additionally, inform the user that the link will open a PDF or Word document either with text inside the link (*pdf or *doc) or an icon with appropriate alt text ( ).

FORM LABELS

Error: A form label is present but does not contain any content.

Example: “search field”

Why it matters: If a form control does not have a properly associated text label, the function or purpose of that form control may not be presented to screen reader users.

Reference: WCAG 3.3.2 Labels or Instructions: Labels or instructions are provided when content requires user input. (Level A).¹¹

Recommendation: Label forms.

MISSING HEADERS

Error: A page does not have a first level heading

Why it matters: Headings facilitate page navigation for users of many assistive technologies.

Reference: Success Criterion 1.3.1 Info and Relationships - Information, structure, and relationships conveyed through presentation can be programmatically determined or are available in text.¹²

Recommendation: Update headers across website.

¹⁰ For more information see: <https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/communications-and-it/about-the-ict-refresh/final-rule/text-of-the-standards-and-guidelines>

¹¹ For more information see: <https://www.w3.org/TR/UNDERSTANDING-WCAG20/minimize-error-cues.html>

¹² For more information see: <https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/#info-and-relationships>

FUNDING RESOURCES

Municipal Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Improvement grant

The Massachusetts Office of Disability (MOD) offers a project grant, the [Municipal Americans with Disability Act \(ADA\) Improvement grant](#), for cities and municipalities that have an SETP in place; this grant can be used for the removal of architectural barriers or barriers to communication.

Project examples include but are not limited to increasing both physical access and programmatic access through the addition of features such as: ramps, elevators, power lifts and Limited Use/Limited Application (LULAs), signage, communication access devices, curb cuts, and/or any other features that are designed to improve architectural access/or programmatic access.

Note: Municipalities must be members, or willing to become members, of the State's [Community Compact Cabinet](#) (CCC) to apply for project grants. Municipalities that have selected the “[Public Accessibility Best Practice](#)” option will increase their grant score. By selecting the “Public Accessibility Best practice” option, municipalities commit to completing an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Self-Evaluation and Develop a Transition Plan or to strive for the [Universal Participation](#) (UP) designation from the Mass Cultural Council, which aims to increase accessibility at cultural facilities.

Grant [application](#) (online) opens in August and closes in October. Grants are awarded or denied in December.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Community Block Grants are available to municipalities with fewer than 50,000 residents who do not receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds directly from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Communities can apply for funds to cover a variety of projects that include the removal of architectural barriers to allow access by persons with disabilities. A community that applies for an architectural barrier removal grant must complete a grant application that delineates a SETP or a Memo of Understanding that is co-signed by the Department of Housing and Development and the Department of Justice. The community must also state that it will complete an SETP within five years of the signing.

Grant [application](#) (online) opens in December and closes in March. Applicants must register with the State of Massachusetts CDBG Grant Management System.

[CDBG Technical Assistance Guide for Architectural Barrier Removal](#)

SURVEY FORMS

A. ADMINISTRATION

Town of Dighton MA

ADA Self Evaluation & Transition Plan: Administration Survey

Name of Individual filling out this form:

Position:

Phone:

Email:

Policy/Procedure	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
A. GENERAL PROCEDURES				
1. Has an employee been appointed to coordinate the public entity's ADA obligations - ADA Coordinator? (Required if 50 or more employees.).				Name and title
a. ADA Coordinator has received ADA training.				Please provide date of last training
2. A Grievance Policy and Procedure has been adopted to resolve disability related complaints? The policy includes the name and contact information of the employee responsible for receiving and processing discrimination complaints.				
a. The Grievance Policy is posted in conspicuous locations in all Town buildings.				Name and contact info
b. The Grievance Policy has been distributed to all department heads, boards and commissions.				
3. Surcharges are not imposed to recover the cost of accommodations, effective communications services or accessibility features.				

4. Procedures are established to assure meetings (including Boards and Commissions), hearings, workshops, and conferences, are held in accessible locations.				Please describe
5. List any licenses or certifications issued by the Town (liquor, restaurant, etc.) and indicate whether the application process has been reviewed to ensure that qualified persons with disabilities are not screened out:				
a.				
b.				
c.				
d.				

B. NOTIFICATION

2. Public Notice of ADA compliance has been developed and is visibly posted in public spaces of municipal facilities, in publications and digital media including:				Please attach
a. Building entrances/lobbies, bulletin boards and gathering places				
b. Home page of the Town's website and other pages where information about disability services, public events and facility accessibility is displayed				
c. Employee handbooks and manuals				
d. Event posters, flyers, program brochures and announcements				
e. Program announcements (in abbreviated form)				
3. Appropriate staff have received training regarding:				Please describe how this is accomplished.

a. the Town's policy of nondiscrimination,				
b. how to respond to requests for reasonable modifications,				
c. their roles and responsibilities in providing auxiliary communication aids and services,				
d. the available resources for providing auxiliary aids and services,				
e. effective communication with people with disabilities.				
f. Use of the Massachusetts Relay Service to make and receive calls.				

C. REASONABLE MODIFICATIONS OF POLICIES

1. The Town has a process for responding to requests for modifications to policies or practices if the modification is necessary for a person with a disability to participate?				
a. The process includes criteria for determining whether a modification would fundamentally alter the nature of the program.				

D. SERVICE ANIMALS

1. The Town has a written policy regarding service animals in municipal facilities.				Please attach
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E. USE OF CONTRACTORS

1. The Town has included language in its contracts to ensure that contractors are aware of their obligations to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities in programs and activities the contractor operates on behalf of the Town.				Please attach sample language
2. The Town has developed a procedure to disseminate information about ADA requirements to contractors.				Please describe how this is accomplished.

F. TRANSPORTATION

1. The Town provides or contracts for transportation services. (If the answer is no, skip the rest of this section)				
2. The Town or contractor has procedures for responding to requests from persons with disabilities to provide schedule and route materials in a timely manner in an accessible form.				
3. The Town or contractors have procedures to provide information with no delay nor additional cost to persons with disabilities. _				
4. The Town or contractor provides training and testing to assure employees are fully qualified to serve passengers with disabilities. _				
5. The Town or contractor has a policy that requires regular and frequent checks of lifts, as well as other access-related equipment or vehicles. _				

G. COMMUNICATIONS

1. There is a policy requiring and implementing procedures for making Auxiliary Aids and Services available to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and people who are blind or have limited sight.				
a. All program announcements include information about how to request an auxiliary aid or service.				
b. Sound amplification and assistive listening systems are available and maintained in assembly/meeting spaces and performance areas.				
c. The Town has a procedure to ensure that qualified interpreters are provided in an expeditious manner when requested in advance at meetings, hearings, interviews, conferences or public appearances by Town officials. _				
2. The Town has the resources necessary to provide materials in alternative (to traditional print) formats s including large print, audio and/or scanned material for use with screen readers,				Please describe how this is accomplished.
3. Where phone numbers are provided as a means of contacting the municipality, an alternative means of communication (e.g. TTY number or email) is also provided.				
a. TDD numbers or telephone relay numbers been added to all The Town directories, pamphlets, brochures, letterhead, etc. _				

H. DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATION

1. The Town has reviewed public documents to eliminate patronizing or stigmatizing language and images.				
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I. WEBSITE

2. Is there a policy regarding the accessibility of the Town's webpages, that is, in compliance with the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 or Section 508 Standards?				
3. Are the staff and contractors who are responsible for webpage and content development aware of the policy and knowledgeable about these standards?				
4. Has the website been tested for compliance with either of these standards?				
a. If yes, have people with disabilities who use screen reading software and other assistive technology participated in the evaluation?				

J. EMERGENCY EVACUATION

1. Municipal alerts and emergency warnings are sent in multiple formats?				
2. Emergency evacuation procedures from buildings address the needs of individuals with disabilities?				Please attach a copy of the section of your emergency preparedness plan that addresses individuals with disabilities
3. Emergency personnel are trained in effective communication with people with disabilities.				

If you have any questions, please contact: Katie Denis, kdenis@kmaccess.com

B. DEPARTMENT

Note: this survey was also made available online

Town of Dighton MA

ADA Self Evaluation & Transition Plan: Department Survey

Department Name:

Department Contact Person:

Phone:

Email:

1. Please provide a brief description of your department:
 2. Please provide a list of the programs/ services your department provides to residents of the Town (licensing, permits, youth soccer, notarization, etc.).
 3. Please provide a list of the locations where the programs/ services noted in Question 3 are located.
 4. What, if any, do you think may be barriers (architectural, operational, etc.) for individuals with disabilities to access your programs/services?
 5. Have you ever received feedback that one of your programs was difficult to access by an individual(s) with a disability? If yes, please describe:
 6. Do you charge any user fees related to providing accessibility to your programs? If yes, please describe:
 7. Do you offer any separate services, programs or activities for people with disabilities? If yes, please describe:

Note: if there is insufficient space for your response, please add additional sheets.

Service/ Program	Yes	No	N/A	Comment
8. Have department personnel received training in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the Town's policy of nondiscrimination, b. protocols for responding to requests for reasonable modifications, c. providing auxiliary communication aids and services, d. available resources for providing auxiliary aids and services, e. effective communication with people with disabilities. f. Use of the Massachusetts Relay Service to make and receive calls. 				
9. What methods of outreach do you use to communicate with the people who live in Town and visitors (emails, social media, brochures, print materials, letters, etc.)?				
10. Do your methods of outreach (see #7) alert recipients on how to request auxiliary aids/services and/or materials in alternate formats?				
11. Do materials or literature about your programs and services include a notice about non-discrimination?				
12. If requested, do you have the resources necessary to provide print materials in alternate formats in a timely manner?				
13. If they are requested, do you have access to appropriate auxiliary aids and services (ASL interpreters, assistive listening systems, etc.)?				
14. Does the emergency preparedness plan for your facilities address the needs of individuals with disabilities?				If yes, please describe.

If you have any questions, please contact: Katie Denis, kdenis@kmaccess.com

C. EMPLOYMENT

Town of Dighton MA

ADA Self Evaluation & Transition Plan: Employment Survey

Name of Individual filling out this form:

Position:

Phone:

Email:

EMPLOYMENT				
Policy/ Procedure	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1. The Town has reviewed the following areas to assure that it does not discriminate against persons with disabilities:				Where possible, please attach examples of forms.
• Recruitment advertising				
• Application form.				
• Job descriptions to distinguish between essential functions and marginal functions				
• Leaves of absence, sick leave, or any other leave				
• Medical examinations				
• Protocol is in place to ensure personnel files are managed so that information identifying disability is contained in a separate file.				
• Training programs, both in-house and outside opportunities				
• Performance evaluation forms				
2. Staff who conduct interviews have received ADA training.				

3. Policies/procedures relative to requests for reasonable accommodations have been developed.				
a. Policies/procedures have been communicated to all department heads				
4. The Town's Personnel Manual is available in alternate formats.				
5. The Town's Personnel Manual contains:				
• a Statement of Nondiscrimination or Equal Opportunity				
• Instructions regarding filing a grievance				
• Instructions regarding requesting a reasonable accommodation.				
6. The Town has a procedure for responding to requests for a reasonable accommodation by an applicant or employee.				

If you have any questions, please contact: Katie Denis, kdenis@kmaccess.com

D. PUBLIC

Note: this survey was also made available online

Town of Dighton MA

ADA Self Evaluation & Transition Plan: Public Survey

To ensure all Town programs and services are accessible to residents and visitors who have disabilities, the Town has retained KMA to perform an assessment and develop a strategic accessibility plan. Public input is essential. We would like to hear your ideas and concerns regarding the accessibility of Town programs and facilities. Below are 5 questions:

1. Are there Town buildings/facilities (building structures, parks, playgrounds, trails, docks, recycling centers, etc.) that you have had difficulty using? If yes, please describe.
 2. Have you ever had difficulty getting information about a Town program, service or event? If yes, please describe.
 3. Do you know how to request Town materials in alternate formats (for example, large print or Braille)?
 4. Do you know how to request an accommodation (for example, ASL interpreters or assistive listening systems) for Town services and events?
 5. Any other comments about accessibility?

Note: if there is insufficient space for your response, please add additional sheets.

DEPARTMENT SURVEY RESPONSE TABLE

KMA developed this table based on the Department responses to the survey. See attached *Dighton Department Survey Response Table* document.

ACCESS AUDIT REPORTS

The audit reports have been completed in accordance with the ASTM Standard Guide for Property Condition Assessments: Baseline Property Condition Assessment Process. KMA's audits were not comprehensive. In some cases, a representative sample of certain areas and elements (such as thresholds or other common-use spaces) were audited, and recommendations were developed based on observed patterns of compliance.

For each instance of non-compliance, the Report provides standard recommendation for barrier mitigation. Because the audit does not account for structural and other factors that may have a significant impact on the feasibility of standard mitigation strategies, it is assumed that further design study will be performed to determine a specific approach to mitigation. In most cases, there will be additional, alternative approaches for mitigation from the standard mitigation presented in the report. Construction costs for standard mitigations, including unit costs, are estimated costs provided for budget planning purposes only and do not represent actual construction costs. Factors that will influence actual construction costs include the specific approach to mitigation contemplated, structural and other factors not identified during the audit, and the local market.

See attached:

Dighton SETP_Buildings_06.26.2020

Dighton SETP_Exterior Areas_06.26.2020

COMPLETED SURVEYS

See attached:

Dighton Admin Survey

Dighton Employment Survey

All other survey responses are reflected in the *Dighton Department Survey Response Table* document or Section 5 of the report.