



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 7/22/2025

File #: 25-862

To: Board of Supervisors

From: County Administrative Office

Agenda Section: Departmental

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Humboldt County Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance Project Update

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive and file an update regarding Humboldt County's Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance Project.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The recommended actions support the following areas of the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Plan:

Area of Focus: Core Services/Other

Strategic Plan Category: 9999 - Core Services/Other

DISCUSSION:

July 26, 2025, marks the thirty-fifth (35th) anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), a landmark civil rights law, passed by the United States Congress in 1990 that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life. The ADA provides comprehensive civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities in the areas of employment, public accommodations, State and local government services and telecommunications.

On September 7, 2016, the County of Humboldt entered into a consent decree with the Department of Justice ("DOJ") kicking off Humboldt County's ADA Compliance Project. The consent decree consisted of specified access barriers to be remediated in pre-determined timeframes and then bringing all county programs services and activities into compliance with the ADA.

On March 13, 2020, due to the County of Humboldt's progress in remediating specific access barriers, the consent decree the consent decree expired based on the DOJ's decision not to take further action against the County of Humboldt. The County of Humboldt remains committed to making its programs, services and activities accessible to all.

On June 29, 2021, the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors ("Board") adopted the Humboldt County ADA Compliance Plan. The ADA Compliance Plan assists the County of Humboldt in identifying policies, programs, practices and architectural barriers to accessibility and provides guidance in developing solutions to remove barriers to access. The ADA Compliance Plan was adopted with a 20-year time period for barrier removal at facilities owned and leased facilities by the County of Humboldt and is a fluid document, subject to change based on lease negotiations, relocation of programs and availability of funding. The remediation of barriers may be modified based on community needs, changes in programs, services, or activities. This timeframe also provides the

County of Humboldt with required flexibility in the compliance process and allows for new opportunities to be explored. The ADA Compliance Plan focuses on remediation of approximately thirteen thousand eight hundred eighty-five 13,885 architectural barriers to access in facilities owned and leased by the County of Humboldt, many of which were identified by the County of Humboldt's consultant during the consent decree.

Since the beginning of the ADA Compliance Project, the County of Humboldt has remediated approximately seven thousand two hundred thirteen (7,213) barriers to access, or fifty-two percent (52%) of all barriers identified, and ninety-three percent (93%) of the barriers specifically identified in the consent decree. In fiscal year 2024-2025 these projects include, without limitation, barriers at the Arcata Branch Library, Rohnerville Airport Terminal Building, Juvenile Hall and Ferndale Veterans Building.

As projects move forward, the ADA Compliance Team has changed its project strategy to not only focus on barriers to access but to look at the totality of barriers that exist within a facility. This includes barriers to access for the public areas and employee spaces. Barriers identified to employee areas are typically not included in the barrier counts above. With this approach to access barrier removal, the ADA Compliance Team can focus on additional building improvements and resolving deferred maintenance issues. In fiscal year 2024-2025 the ADA Compliance Team was able to complete the Courthouse Restrooms Project; the District Attorneys Flooring Project, re-design at the co-located space for the Department of Child Support Service and Economic Development, including the Job Market, at the Plaza; design of renovations to the Fortuna Library, in partnership with the City of Fortuna; design and beginning construction in partnership with Public Works Capital Projects at the Ferndale Veterans Building; improvements to the third (3rd) floor office space for the Department of Child Support Services co-location and design for renovations at the Agricultural Building to co-locate Public Works' Natural Resources.

Outdoor public spaces are another aspect of ADA compliance that must be made accessible in accordance with the United States Access Board's Outdoor Developed Areas Guidelines. Barrier remediation counts referenced above include Big Lagoon County Park.

Not included in the barrier counts above are new service locations for County of Humboldt programs, services and activities. Examples of barrier remediation can be found at 515 J Street, Eureka, California and 68 Orchard Lane, Hoopa, California.

In addition to the barrier remediation at County of Humboldt facilities, the Public Works Roads and Engineering Department has been working to install compliant curb ramps throughout Humboldt County to increase the accessibility in public rights of way as identified in the consent decree. There are currently one thousand four hundred eighty-five (1,485) curb ramps identified as the responsibility of the County of Humboldt, of this number, three hundred seventy-three (373) curb ramps have been certified as compliant.

The County of Humboldt has made great strides in achieving website accessibility. However, state and local government websites have to now comply with new web accessibility requirements, including, without limitation, conforming to WCAG 2.1 Level AA, by April 24, 2026. Currently the County of Humboldt's website meets seventy-four percent (74%) of the WCAG 2.1 Level AA requirements. This will be a large focus in the coming months in order to meet new website requirements. With the help of the Webmaster, the Information Technology division of the County Administrative Office ("Information Technology Division") routinely monitors the website ADA compliance to ensure that visitors with disabilities can navigate the County of Humboldt's website with ease. To ensure all public documents posted to the County of Humboldt's website and/or social media are posted in an accessible format the ADA Coordinator, Public Information Specialist and the Information Technology Division Webmaster have been working closely with departments to ensure documents and flyers meet these standards.

The County of Humboldt currently has fourteen (14) Certified ADA Coordinators that meet to address issues and share information around the ADA, one (1) of which is the County of Humboldt's ADA Coordinator, Karen Clower, who is housed in the County Administrative Office. Each of the Certified ADA Coordinators play varying roles in the County of Humboldt and have different areas of expertise.

- Title II ADA Compliance Team 2
- Title II Aviation 1
- Title II (website) County Information Technology 1
- Title II Correctional Facility 1
- Title II Department of Health and Human Services 2
- Title I Human Resources 5

- Title I Department of Health and Human Services 1

ADA Compliance Projects in fiscal year 2024-2025 include, without limitation:

- Ferndale Veterans Building
- Fortuna Veterans Building
- Murray Field Airport Terminal
- Fortuna Library
- Building A (929 Koster Street)
- Ag Building
- Big Lagoon
- Economic Development/Child Support Services Tenant Improvement Project
- Courthouse Flooring and Painting (Interior)
- Animal Shelter
- Sheriff Office Administration Remodel

The ADA Compliance Team has seen increased awareness around the ADA and would like to thank the Board and Department Heads for their support as this project continues.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

ADA Internal Service Fund (3552); 2020 Amended Finance Plan; Deferred Maintenance (3464); All County Funds

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Expenditures (3552-152)	FY24-25	FY25-26 Projected*
Budgeted Expenses	\$908,856.00	\$5,709,968.00
Total Expenditures	\$908,856.00	\$5,709,968.00
Funding Sources (3552-152)	FY24-25	FY25-26 Projected*
General Fund	\$0.00	\$814,741.00
2020 Amended Finance Plan	\$569,204.00	\$2,246,377.00
Deferred Maintenance	\$156,029.00	\$566,544.00
Use of Fund Balance	\$183,623.00	\$2,057,306.00
Capital Projects Trust	\$0.00	\$25,000.00
Total Funding Sources	\$908,856.00	\$5,709,968.00

**Projected amounts are estimates and are subject to change.*

In fiscal year 2024-2025, the ADA Compliance Team completed an estimated Nine Hundred Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty-Six Dollars (\$908,856.00) of project work budgeted in ADA Compliance Team budget unit 3552-152. In fiscal year 2024-2025 many projects were in discovery and design phases, while in fiscal year 2025-2026 most projects will be in construction phases and/or project completion. In fiscal year 2025-2026 Five Million Seven Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty-Eight Dollars (\$5,709,968.00) of project work was approved at budget adoption for ADA Compliance Team budget unit 3552-152.

Not included in ADA Compliance Team budget unit 3552-152, are direct billed projects such as: the District Attorney Flooring Project in the amount of Three Hundred Ninety-Six Thousand Four Hundred Forty-Seven Dollars (\$396,447.00) in District Attorney's budget unit 1100-205, 515 J Street Project in the amount of Two Hundred Sixty-One Thousand Five Hundred Ninety-Seven Dollars (\$261,597.00) in Public Defender/Conflict Counsel budget unit 1100-246 and the Orchard Lane Project in the amount of Forty-Two Thousand One Hundred Dollars (\$42,100.00) in Department of Health and Human Services - Social Services budget unit 1160-511.

STAFFING IMPACT:

The recommended action will not impact current staffing levels.

File #: 25-862

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Board discretion.

ATTACHMENTS:

None

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Meeting of: 9/26/2023, 6/29/2021, 10/20/2020

File No.: 23-1025, 21-351, 20-1318