



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 3/2/2021

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): General Services, Human Resources, Information Systems, County Administrator, County Counsel, Regional Parks, Transportations & Public Works

Staff Name and Phone Number: Caroline Judy, 565-8058; Victoria Willard, 565-2955

Vote Requirement: Informational Only

Supervisory District(s): All

Title:

Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Program and Transition Plan Update

Recommended Action:

Receive a Status Report on the County's Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Program and Self-Evaluation Transition Plan to highlight the ongoing priority for accessibility of all County programs, facilities, and services.

Executive Summary:

The Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the American's with Disabilities Act of 1990 mandate the government's responsibility for providing equal access to public buildings, programs, and services, including implementation of a Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan (SETP). Other accessibility requirements are also set forth in California law. In order to ensure that the County continues the commitment and requirement to equal access, the County's American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) Steering Committee remains actively engaged in monitoring these efforts. The ADA Steering Committee had been providing regular updates to the Board, but have most recently been postponed in the last few years due the focus on natural disasters; however, the important work itself has continued. This item is an update to the Board of Supervisors on the Steering Committee's work and the status of implementation of the County's Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan.

Discussion:

Background:

On July 26, 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act ensuring the civil rights of people with disabilities by establishing a clear and comprehensive national mandate to eliminate discrimination against individuals with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public facilities, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications. This sweeping legislation was vital to providing more human rights to those with disabilities.

Most specifically, the County of Sonoma must comply with Title I and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Title I protects disabled individuals from discrimination in employment, and Title II applies to government entities and protects qualified individuals rights to services, programs, facilities, and activities. The focus of this report is on Title II's requirements.

The Board of Supervisors established the County's original Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Program and Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan in 1992. The Transition Plan was updated in 2009 continues to be the current plan. The Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan provides the analysis and roadmap of the improvements needed to ensure compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act Title II and articulates the County's commitment to improve access to County programs and services and provide accommodation to individuals with disabilities. The County of Sonoma has been and continues to be committed to providing equal access to buildings, programs, and services.

The Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan can be found on the County's internet page at <http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=2147488037>

In addition to the Transition Plan, other components of the County's Title II program include:

- Countywide Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator
- Steering Committee

Housed within Human Resources Department is the County's Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator. The Coordinator's role is to help facilitate and maintain compliance efforts and mitigate potential risk through coordination with various County department in regards to the County's Americans with Disabilities Program. The Coordinator is the central point of contact for all Americans with Disabilities Title II complaints and facilitates resolving any complaints that are received. The Coordinator provides program management by collaborating with County departments on ensuring equal access to services by providing accommodations to the public, and assisting departments in the interactive process when a member of the public requests an accommodation.

The County's Steering Committee is comprised of Human Resources, General Services, Information Systems, County Administrator, County Counsel, Regional Parks, Transportations & Public Works, and Permit Sonoma leadership. The Steering Committee's role is to collaborate amongst the various departments to ensure Transition plan work is moving forward.

The Board established dedicated funding for the implementation of capital projects outlined in the Transition Plan beginning in Fiscal Year 2010-11. The Board funds \$2 million each fiscal year for Americans with Disabilities Act remediation work and related program costs. The \$2 million

includes \$1.6 million towards capital remediation projects and \$400,000 towards personnel costs to manage the program.

ADA Update:

General Services:

The County has completed 125 projects originally identified in the 2009 ADA Transition Plan, with several others nearing completion this fiscal year. The Board of Supervisors has authorized a total of \$20,870,480 in funding to date for ADA projects in the Transition Plan. An additional \$616,641 was contributed from the Fairgrounds and through Community Development Block Grants. Of the \$19.2 million committed to projects, over \$17.89 million has been spent to date, over \$2.0 million are in active projects not yet completed, and over \$1.2 million is planned for future projects.

The original intent of the County's Americans with Disabilities Act 2009 Self Evaluation Transition Plan was to remove all barriers at County owned facilities in twenty years. The number of barriers and the cost of barrier removal continues to increase which makes the original twenty year time frame challenging.

Barrier removal at County Administrative Center is nearing completion with the exception of the Main Adult Detention Facility and the Hall of Justice. The Fair and Exposition site still has a significant number of path of travel barriers to remove. Providing an acceptable path of travel to all the Fair building front doors and public areas is challenging given the surface drainage at the site.

Work remains at the County facilities described above and within certain unincorporated areas to improve path of travel. Changes in the building codes routinely shift otherwise compliant properties into non-compliant status and therefore create new accessibility projects beyond those currently described in the Transition Plan.

Technology Improvements:

Training and awareness are key elements in offering a successful Americans with Disabilities Act Program. Each year Information Systems offers classes on standards and compliance, electronic document design, accessible web site development, and related topics to all County departments. Information is also shared through personalized trainings, periodic updates through ISD's "SoCo Tech Talk" program, and the County's own online accessibility resource center.

Each year in the spring, ISD hosts "eADA Week". This annual event has continued to grow in popularity since its introduction four years ago with participants demonstrating significant

interest and a strong commitment to the County's ADA program. Offerings include classroom training, hands-on workshops, technology demonstrations, and presentations on how to make electronic documents more accessible. Trainers include County subject matter experts and outside authorities in the field, including instructors from Utah State University's Center for Persons with Disabilities.

Since our last update in 2017, the County has experienced a series of emergencies that have emphasized the importance of providing more government services online and improving community engagement. Modernization of the County's website is currently underway with completion scheduled by the Fall of 2021. This project includes a new Web Content Management System (WCMS) that meets the latest requirements established in Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The new software also supports the County's Strategic Plan, aligning with the Racial Equity and Social Justice pillar as it incorporates features for improving access to multilingual content.

On release, all web sites created by Information System's Web Team will meet Section 508 standards to improve access for users with disabilities. However, web sites require regular maintenance to ensure compliance as new browsers and devices are introduced. All WCMS sites are monitored by an independent service that alerts developers to ADA compliance issues and suggests changes to improve the quality of web content. The Web Team regularly spends time improving and correcting content to address evolving remediation issues and changes in regulations.

Caring for and improving technology to meet ADA standards is a never ending, iterative process. Each year Information Systems works with County departments and agencies to introduce new tools and technologies to better meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. Key among these is an annual cycle of projects funded through Human Resources to work on specific targeted efforts that evaluate enterprise compliance and remediate issues that have been identified.

Regional Parks:

The Transition Plan identified barriers to the programs and services provided at forty of our existing parks. The total cost of barrier removal for the forty surveyed parks at the time of the adoption of the Transition Plan by the Board of Supervisors in December of 2009 was estimated to be \$4.3 million dollars.

The criteria established in the Transition Plan for prioritizing program and facility barrier removals has been utilized to identify and resolve critical elements to accessibility at our highly visited parks. Since the last Transition Plan Board update in March of 2017, Regional Parks has completed 6 barrier removal projects and currently has another 4 projects funded by the

Transition Plan and Community Development Block Grants in the design, environmental review, and regulatory permitting stage.

As of FY2017/18, approximately \$622,485 of the \$1,010,000 of Transition Plan funding committed to barrier removal projects through FY20/21 has been spent. These improvement projects include Helen Putnam Regional Park parking, path of travel and restroom, Spud Point Marina parking and path of travel, Graton section of the West County Trail pavement and signage work, Doran Park boat launch facility barrier removals, and Doran Park accessible campsite and new restroom. These projects received \$100,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding for the Helen Putnam Regional Park project, and a \$990,000 grant from the State of California Division of Boating and Waterways for the Doran Park boat launch improvements.

The remaining \$387,515 of allocated funding is committed to barrier removal projects at Gualala Point Regional Park day-use and campground improvements, Steelhead Beach parking, path of travel, and picnic sites, Maxwell Farms Regional Park parking, path of travel, and restroom, and the Spring Lake Park campground path of travel and restroom barrier removals. Three of these projects are partially funded by \$315,000 in Community Development Block Grants and are currently in the environmental review stage. Spring Lake Park campground improvements are in the initial scoping and design stage.

Transportation & Public Works:

Among the many new and retrofit projects completed by the Department there are access ramps, upgrades to intersections, sidewalks, accessible pedestrian signals and push-buttons.

Upgrades have been completed at the following intersections: Northeast and southeast curb returns of the Petaluma Boulevard North and Corona Avenue intersection in Petaluma; at Petaluma Hill Road and East Cotati Avenue; at Mark West Springs Road and Ursuline Road and Old Redwood Highway and Lavell Road in Larkfield; and Old Redwood Highway and Airport Boulevard. The pedestrian push buttons have been upgraded at the Old Redwood Highway – Petaluma Hill Road intersection in Penngrove; River Road and Fulton Road intersection in Fulton.

New improvements have been constructed at the Sonoma County Airport; the Community of Occidental; Highway 12 within Agua Caliente and Fetters Hot Springs; and various crossings along the SMART railroad.

Conclusion:

Today we are recognizing the significant progress the County continues to make by reaffirming our commitment to the principles of equality and inclusion. We also want to recognize that the opportunity to decrease ADA barriers for all County programs, facilities, and services is ongoing and will extend into the future for many years. It is important that our ADA program continues to be robust so that we can provide the public access to our important County programs, facilities and services.

Prior Board Actions:

Since FY 2010-11, capital improvement budget includes \$1.6 million Americans with Disabilities Act Implementation Plan; 06/10 - Board adopted Web Site Accessibility Policy; 12/2009 - Board adopted the Americans with Disabilities Act Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan Update; 03/17 – Board received update on Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Program and Self-Evaluation Transition Plan.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 20-21 Adopted	FY21-22 Projected	FY 22-23 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

This item is informational only and there is no financial impact.

Staffing Impacts:

Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None

Attachments:

None

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None