

ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan: Review

Town of Stoughton

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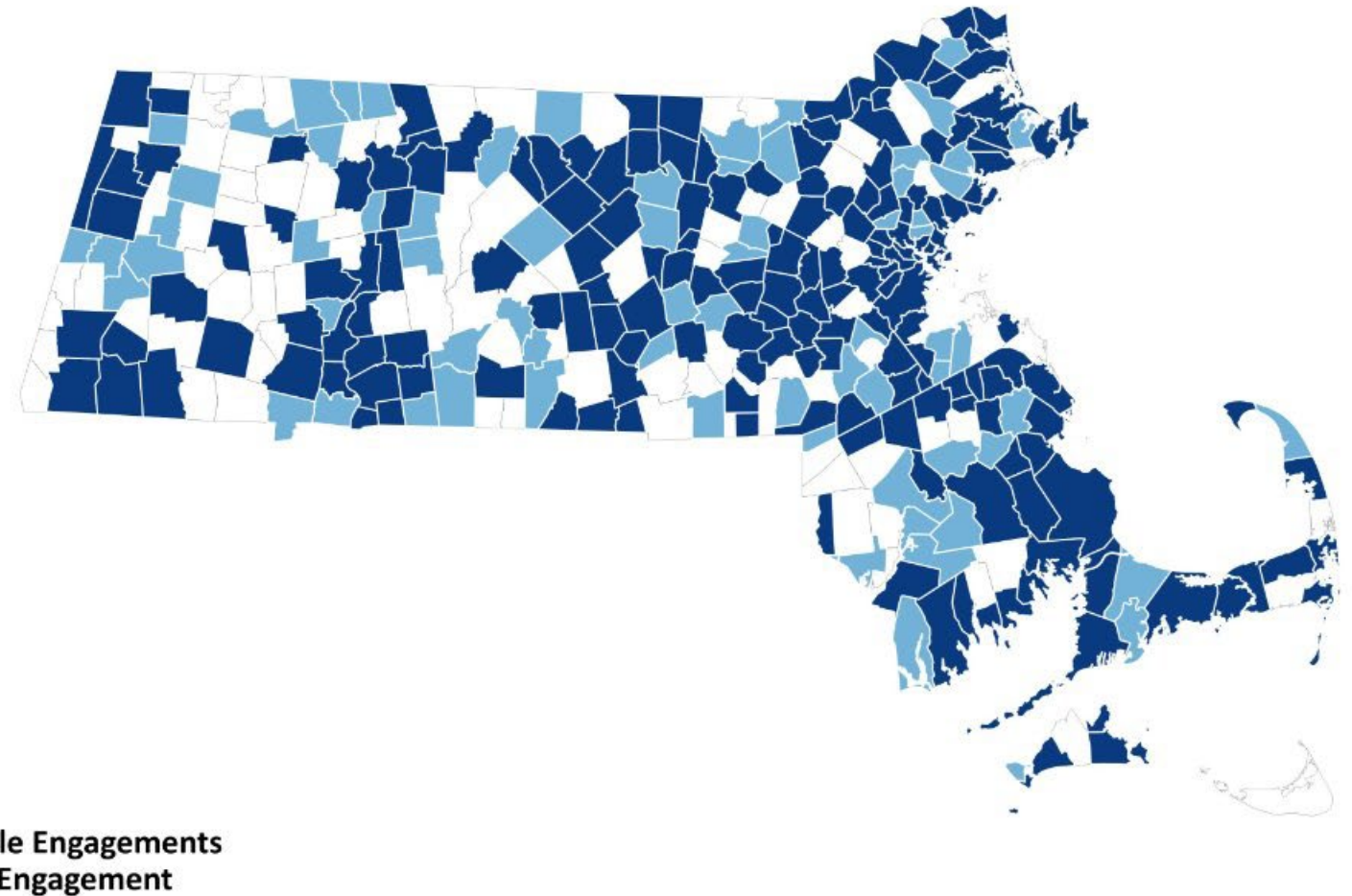


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KMA is a design and consulting practice



singularly engaged in the work of accessibility compliance and inclusive design.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- The ADA does not require that all of a Town's facilities are fully accessible.
- **Instead, it requires that all programs, services, and activities, “when viewed in their entirety,” are accessible.**

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

To ensure this, the ADA requires a Town to take five administrative actions:

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

ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan

The **Self-Evaluation** consists of a comprehensive review of all programs, services, and activities operated by the Town, as well as its physical facilities.

The **Transition Plan** consists of:

- A list of the physical barriers that limit the accessibility of the Town's programs, services, or activities.
- The methods to remove the barriers and make the facilities accessible.
- The schedule to get the work completed.
- The name of the official(s) responsible for the plan's implementation.

“Program Access”

Methods of providing **program access** 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 programs, services, or activities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

SETP Activities Completed

- Review of policies and procedures
 - Evaluated existing policy and procedure documents
 - Held meetings and interviews with key staff
 - Provided surveys to Departments and the public
- Website & Communications Review
- Facility audits

Key Recommendations – Programs & Communication

- Draft, approve, and post Public Notice and Grievance Procedure
- Ensure the ADA Coordinator role is appropriately designated and there is coordination between the ADA Coordinator and the Disability Commission
- Establish a dedicated email address for accessibility-related matters
- Support and fund ongoing training and education on accessibility and providing services to residents with impairments or disabilities to staff and board members
- Fund accessibility improvements such as maintaining or upgrading assistive listening devices or implementing video captioning and transcription services
- Ensure staff develops a roster of American Sign Language (ASL) translators and alternative format vendors

Key Recommendations – Built Environment

- Prioritizing buildings with highest public use, improve accessible parking and accessible routes to entrances
- Find an alternate accessible meeting location for Town functions until accessibility barriers at the High School Auditorium are remediated
- Improve accessibility at outdoor recreation areas such as trails, Bradley Lessa Memorial Playground, at least one of each type of athletic field, the boat launch, and golf course
- Purchase a beach wheelchair for resident use
- Find alternative accessible locations for the offices at the Historical Society and the Animal Control Office
- Include barrier removal recommendations in capital planning – for example, if a project is planned for Town Hall ensure the accessibility improvements identified are included in the scope of work. Towns have also successfully used SETP findings to support planned capital projects.

Strategies for Success – Beyond the Building

1. Include accessibility in future Town-wide goals
2. Ensure staff provide reports to you on the status of Transition Plan action items
3. Think about accessibility EARLY and often – especially at initial capital planning phases
4. Budget for accessibility improvements for both the built environment and programming, and provide continuous staff and board member training opportunities
5. Use the Appendix of the Report – lots of great resources included – including for your own communications with residents
6. Establish protocols for when third party accessibility reviews are required
7. Ensure the Town's architects/ contractors/ inspectors are reviewing for accessibility – it's everyone's responsibility

Q&A/ Resources

- KMA, LLC
- Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management
- Mass Office on Disability
- MAAB
- Federal Access Board
- Fair Housing Accessibility First
- New England ADA Center
- Local Independent Living Centers
- Stoughton Disability Commission

