

Austin Area Arts Accessibility Plan

ORGANIZATIONAL POLICY

The intent of this plan is to insure that **all individuals** are provided with full and equal enjoyment of the programs, events, services, and activities provided by Austin Area Arts.

Austin Area Arts specifically is committed to providing equal opportunity to each individual without regard to that individual's race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity, age, religion, sexual orientation, language or disability including, but not limited to, vision impairments, hearing impairments, cognitive disabilities, learning disabilities, or mobility impairments.

Austin Area Arts recognizes that individuals have experienced exclusion based on these and other characteristics in our community. Austin Area Arts takes responsibility to be aware of past discrimination, to continually assess operations for access barriers, to engage with individuals facing barriers and to implement solutions that fulfill our commitment to providing all individuals with access.

Austin Area Arts recognizes a legal and ethical duty to provide access and inclusion to all individuals. In addition, Austin Area Arts recognizes the benefits to our community's quality of life, creativity and civic engagement when all are included. Providing equal access is not a duty, but a choice consistent with Austin Area Arts' values and commitment to a vibrant arts community.

ADA ACCESSIBILITY PLAN PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to document

- Austin Area Arts' assessment of accessibility for individuals with disabilities
- Austin Area Arts' current actions to eliminate or mitigate barriers to access for individuals with disabilities
- Austin Area Arts' long range plans to eliminate or mitigate barriers to access for individuals with disabilities

COMPLIANCE COORDINATOR

Austin Area Arts designated the Executive Director as the coordinator to facilitate compliance with the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

ASSESSMENT BY FACILITY

Assessment completed by Compliance Coordinator on an annual basis.

Austin ArtWorks Center - 300 North Main Street

Built in 1896, major renovation in 2007

Programming: adult and youth art education, gallery exhibits, retail space, live music

Vision impairments: Site policy to keep walkways clear of materials or debris that could be a hazard. Site policy to allow service animals full access to the premises. Staff/volunteer training to offer preferential seating or adjustment to light when aware of an individual with impaired vision. Audio/visual emergency alarms. No braille documents available.

Hearing impairments: Use of microphone at appropriate group events. Audio/visual emergency alarms. No hearing assistive devices. No closed captioning technology. No sign language interpreters.

Cognitive disabilities: Respite area for individuals on the Autism spectrum. Staff/volunteer training on awareness of Autism spectrum disorder.

Learning disabilities: No special site accommodations noted.

Mobility impairments: Ground-level entry, ramped access, and elevators available. Integrated and dispersed wheelchair seating in gallery and clay cavern areas. Elevator access to all three floors. Designated accessible parking spaces with adjoining curb cuts, and an accessible route from parking to entrance in the rear of the building. Full ADA accessible restroom on each floor. Wheelchair access to check out counter. Signage at inaccessible entrances with directions to accessible entrances.

Recommended next steps:

- Purchase hearing assistive devices and implement for classes and events.
 - Post offer for sign language interpreting upon request.
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Austin ArtWorks Festival

Outdoors on the 4th Ave NE greenspace and surrounding parking lots and streets.

Programming: Two-day outdoor festival with live music, art demonstrations, artist exhibit booths and family art activities.

Vision impairments: Site policy to keep walkways clear of materials or debris that could be a hazard. Site policy to allow service animals full access to the premises. Staff/volunteer training to offer preferential seating when aware of an individual with impaired vision.

Hearing impairments: Use of microphone at appropriate group events. No hearing assistive devices. No closed captioning technology. No sign language interpreters.

Cognitive disabilities: Respite area for individuals on the Autism spectrum. Staff/volunteer training on awareness of Autism spectrum disorder.

Learning disabilities: No special site accommodations noted.

Mobility impairments: Ground-level entry to the venue. Integrated and dispersed wheelchair seating in outdoor stage, family arts activities, authors stage. Festival grounds, including the outdoor stage, are wheelchair accessible. Designated accessible parking spaces with adjoining curb cuts, and an accessible route from parking to the grounds.

Recommended next steps:

- Purchase hearing assistive devices and implement
 - Add sign language interpreting to outdoor stage and/or Saturday night concert
 - Add accessible walk ways to grass area for improved access by wheelchairs and other devices
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Paramount Theatre

125 4th Ave NE

Built 1929, no subsequent remodeling projects

Programming: Performing arts and movies

Vision impairments: Site policy to keep walkways clear of materials or debris that could be a hazard. Site policy to allow service animals full access to the premises. Staff/volunteer training to offer preferential seating when aware of an individual with impaired vision. Audio/visual emergency alarms.

Hearing impairments: Audio/visual emergency alarms. Closed captioning technology used for movies. Hearing assistive devices available for patron check out. System enhances hearing for hearing impaired people whether or not hearing aids are used. No sign language interpreters.

Cognitive disabilities: Respite area for individuals on the Autism spectrum. Staff/volunteer training on awareness of Autism spectrum disorder.

Learning disabilities: No special site accommodations noted.

Mobility impairments: Concessions area and box office meet ADA standards. No ADA accessible restrooms are available. No access to balcony seating. No access to dressing rooms. No access to the stage. ADA accessible seating is not integrated and dispersed. ADA accessible area near the stage does not have an accessible fire exit. No designated accessible parking spaces. Floor in the auditorium area is at a steep pitch.

Recommended next steps:

As soon as practical:

- Post offer for sign language interpreting upon request

As part of planned building renovation, date TBD:

- Add ADA compliant restrooms
- Integrated and dispersed wheelchair seating in theatre floor and balcony
- Add elevator to access all 3 floors
- Add accessible ramps to stage
- Add accessible dressing rooms
- Upgrade all emergency exits to be accessible

- Designated accessible parking spaces with adjoining curb cuts, and an accessible route from parking to the venue entrance
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ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

- AAA web site encourages participation and lists contact for accommodation requests.
- Currently offering programming to Life Mower County (formerly known as Association for Retarded Citizens) with developmental disabilities.
- Currently offering programming to Austin High School students with developmental disabilities.
- Named “Autism Friendly” by the Hormel Historic Home’s Autism Friendly Austin initiative.

Recommended next steps:

- Continue to develop accessibility messaging and include it on media releases and marketing materials.
- Engage a consultant to conduct a professional assessment of facilities and organization and recommend improvements.
- Continued staff/volunteer training in awareness, accessibility and accommodation.
- Form an Access Committee that includes people with various disabilities to advise on access issues.