



SWA TASKED ON ONTARIO'S ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM

SWA's Accessibility Compliance and Consulting group has been selected to participate in [Certified For Access](#), an independent third party process launched by the Government of Ontario, Canada to develop a groundbreaking certification program to motivate businesses to incorporate accessibility into their operations and service delivery. The voluntary accessibility certification program will be available to businesses seeking to exceed the accessibility requirements established by current government standards.

The certification program will encourage businesses to exceed the accessibility requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) by promoting increased revenue and marketing opportunities that will result from improved access for people with disabilities. The goals of the Certified For Access program are to reduce attitudinal barriers and promote the value of accessibility; lead organizations to better understand how to increase accessibility and how accessibility can benefit organizations; improve access to goods and services; and support a gradual cultural shift toward embracing accessibility.

The certification program is currently in Phase II of development, which brings together working groups consisting of individuals and organizations, as well as experts in the field of accessibility. SWA has been selected to participate in three of the working groups to provide recommendations on the objectives, design, feasibility, and implementation of an accessibility certification model, with an focus on the following topics:

- **Incentives for Business:** Provide recommendations on what will most effectively incentivize businesses of different types and sizes to seek certification.
- **Model Scope and Design:** Provide recommendations on how the certification model is structured and how it should apply to different sectors and businesses.
- **Governance and Leadership:** Provide recommendations on who leads the certification model and the structures to keep the leadership and the model accountable.

"We are thrilled to be a part of Ontario's efforts to develop a certification program that will facilitate access to more businesses and their services for people with disabilities," said Peter Stratton, Senior Vice President, Director of Accessibility Compliance and Consulting with SWA. "Certified For Access is an innovative model on how to strategically engage and incentivize business owners to achieve an enhanced level of accessibility."

In addition to the selected working groups, Certified For Access is seeking online feedback from accessibility advocates, persons with disabilities, business owners, and subject matter experts. Your feedback as experts on the built environment is vital. Please [visit the Certified For Access website](#) to provide your input on this important initiative.



EVENTS

- Tuesday, February 23
Washington, DC
6:30 pm - 7:30 pm
District Architecture Center
[AIA|DC COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE DESIGN](#)
- March 8-10
Boston, MA
Seaport World Trade Center
[BUILDING ENERGY BOSTON CONFERENCE 2016](#)
- Monday, March 14
Washington, DC
8:00 am - 1:00 pm
Walter E. Washington Convention Center
[BUILD IT IN DC: GENERAL & HOME IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTOR FORUM](#)

AIA|DC COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE DESIGN

The Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA|DC) has recently launched the *AIA|DC Committee on Accessible Design*. The committee, co-chaired by SWA's Victoria Lanteigne, Senior Accessibility Consultant, seeks to enhance the accessibility of the built environment for people of all ages and abilities.

The committee will strive to promote awareness of design initiatives that enhance accessibility of the built environment; convey innovative design solutions to enhance accessibility; and unify strategies which promote accessible design.

The first Committee meeting will be held **Tuesday, February 23, 2016 from 6:30pm-7:30pm** at the **District Architecture Center**, with subsequent meetings to follow each fourth Tuesday of the month. For more information, please visit the [committee's webpage](#) or email Vlanteigne@swinter.com.

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EQUAL ACCESS TO HOSPITALS

The recent uptick in the number of hospitals cited for noncompliance with design and construction requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has revealed that many of the critical benefits of our healthcare services are unavailable to people with disabilities. These cases have resulted in extremely expensive and widespread remediation obligations. SWA's Accessibility Consultants have worked with a number of hospitals to help bring them into compliance with accessibility requirements. Below are some common issues of noncompliance that SWA's Consultants have identified during site inspections of existing hospitals.

- Signage designating rooms and spaces often does not include the required tactile characters and Braille designations and is often not properly positioned in the required location.
- Many hospital toilet rooms, restrooms, and bathing rooms lack the necessary space required to accommodate maneuverability for a person using a wheelchair. Non compliant grab bars, flush controls, seat height, fixture clearance, lavatories, mirrors, and dispensers are also common.
- Waiting areas and patient lounges include protruding objects that are hazardous to people with visual disabilities, such as magazine racks, drinking fountains, and display cases. These areas also lack room for wheelchair positioning in seating areas.
- Many patient, treatment, and exam rooms had significant issues of noncompliance, such as lack of maneuvering clearance at doors, lack of clear floor space at exam tables, and headroom obstructions, among other findings. Inaccessible patient changing rooms are not large enough to accommodate maneuvering clearance, turning space, and clear floor space within the room.

SWA's Consultants will continue to provide assistance to hospitals to ensure that healthcare facilities are accessible and usable by all.

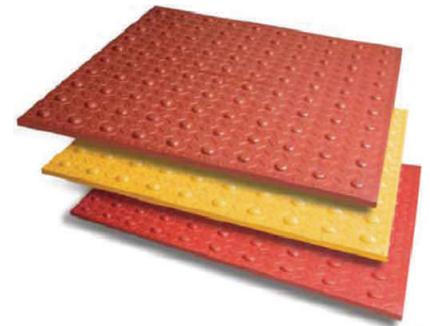


Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, Omaha, Nebraska to be completed in 2016. Picture cited from Michael Graves Architecture & Design.

TECH NOTES

NYC: Detectable Warnings at Pools

The New York City Buildings Department recently released [Buildings Bulletin 2015-30](#) clarifying the requirements for detectable warnings at pools. Section 1109.9.3 of the New York City Building Code states that, "the edges of pools shall be provided with detectable warnings." For the purpose of this section, the Department interprets "pools" to include reflecting pools or similar decorative-type pools without physical barriers to separate them from the adjacent circulation path. Swimming pools with clearly defined edges are not required to include detectable warnings. Detectable warnings serve to delineate the transition between the water and the adjacent circulation path; without them, people with low vision or those who are blind may have difficulty negotiating a circulation path that transitions smoothly into a reflecting pool or similar decorative-type pool.



Q&A CORNER

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Q: What accessibility requirements apply to outdoor kitchens and barbeque grills in residential projects?

A: Outdoor kitchens provided as an amenity for residents of multifamily projects are subject to the same criteria that apply to interior kitchens included in a resident community room. When the ANSI A117.1 criteria apply, outdoor kitchens that include a grilling station (treated like a common-use kitchen with a range) must include a 30-inch wide work surface and a front approach below the sink if a sink is provided. Additionally all operable parts, such as the grill controls, sink faucet controls, outlets, switches, etc. are required to be accessible (e.g., must be operable with a closed fist or with one finger and must not exceed 5 pounds of operating force). Counter height at outdoor kitchen work surfaces and sinks must be mounted no higher than 34 inches.