CITY OF TEMPE

TASK FORCE ON DISABILITY ISSUES

FINAL REPORT - DECEMBER 2004

Creating a model community of accessibility

Tempe Community Council
Connecting those in need with those who care

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The Task Force on Disability Issues Report is dedicated to the memory of Task Force Member and Mayor's Commission on Disability Concerns Commissioner

Michael W. Franjevic

Because of Mike's steadfast dedication and activism on behalf of people with disabilities, Tempe is a more accessible community today. His influence will be felt well into the future by all of Tempe's citizens.

Executive Summary

Members of the Task Force on Disability Issues spent several months studying the current and projected needs of people with disabilities in Tempe. Disability issues will ultimately touch everyone at some point in their lives. Whether through illness, birth defects, aging or accidents (including war related injuries), all of us either know someone, live with someone or will be someone who has a disability. Yet, people with disabilities continue to face economic, social and physical barriers that prevent them from fully integrating into mainstream work and social life.

Throughout the work of the Task Force, one conclusion became clear--consumer participation is critical. Even though all parties may have the best intention of creating environments that are accessible and that allow for full inclusion for ALL residents in everyday life, consumer participation is imperative to truly understand the needs of people with disabilities and to create an environment that is universally accessible.

We do things well in Tempe, but as was apparent throughout the Task Force process, we can improve. Tempe has an opportunity to be a model of accessibility that other cities will strive to emulate.

In this report, many recommendations are proposed on ways Tempe can improve the quality of life, not only for residents with disabilities, but for all of Tempe's citizens. To organize the work of the Task Force, the recommendations, set forth in greater detail in this report, are grouped into the following categories:

- ADA Compliance and Enforcement
- City infrastructure and Capital Maintenance
- Recreation, Public Art and Culture
- Opportunities for Children with Disabilities
- Housing
- Transportation
- Employment and Training
- Information Exchange and Coordination

Two proposals, however, emerged as short-term, high priority recommendations, not because they are considered more important, but because their implementation would help facilitate the completion of the others. These recommendations are to:

1.) ***Establish a Full Time Accessibility Specialist Position for Tempe.*** An Accessibility Specialist will provide a single point of contact for disability-related issues and be primarily responsible for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). He or she will respond to public input; promote an upgrade and repair program for streets, sidewalks, curb cuts, and City facilities; strengthen the City's public awareness, education and information programs and proactively address other disability related issues. This person should be the liaison between City departments and the public.

2.) ***Require the use of Universal Design and "Best Practices" for all new construction in Tempe.*** Tempe's General Plan (GP) 2030 includes an accessibility element that was adopted by the City Council and subsequently ratified by Tempe voters in May, 2004. It states: "*The goal of the Accessibility Element is to create a city that has design potential to meet community needs through universal design which provides access and benefit through accessible public and private facilities, services and programs.*" This recommendation will codify the goals already endorsed by Tempe citizens and will demonstrate Tempe's desire to be a fully inclusive community.

Additional key recommendations are listed below.

Make "risk mitigation" improvements a capital improvement priority (replacing unsafe and/or noncompliant sidewalks, curb cuts, and ramps on city property). To do this, Task Force members encourage Tempe to:

- conduct a comprehensive audit of existing City facilities to determine where repairs or retrofitting is needed
- fast-track all upgrades using “best practices” and universal design guidelines
- establish a program to encourage citizen reporting of needed curb cut and sidewalk maintenance

Increase transportation options for people unable to reach a public bus to go to doctor’s appointments, grocery shopping and other necessary outings. The Task Force recommends the following:

- strive to improve Dial-A-Ride
- establish a taxicab voucher program
- expand service and improve the neighborhood circulator bus routes
- provide a “peer training” volunteer program to help people with disabilities learn to use public transportation
- establish a “travel companion” volunteer program for accompanying people with disabilities to doctors’ appointments, shopping and other necessary outings
- establish a volunteer program to enforce disabled parking regulations
- develop an “Emergency Transportation Program” to provide 24/7 fee-for-service transportation

Increase accessible and affordable housing options in Tempe. To increase housing that is accessible for all, the Task Force recommends that Tempe:

- adopt an Inclusive Home Design Ordinance that provides for basic universal design standards and requires at least one accessible entrance
- establish a voucher system to encourage landlords to provide affordable housing
- increase the promotion of programs that provide assistance for home modifications
- encourage the development of home-based personal assistance volunteer programs

Promote disability education and awareness. Education is the key to greater understanding of issues faced by people with disabilities. To that end, Tempe should:

- declare a City-wide Disabilities Awareness Day
- establish a disability educational program for responding emergency personnel to deal appropriately with persons who may have a “hidden” disability
- maintain a list of addresses (only by a homeowner’s request) that identifies residences of those with a “hidden disability” and provide the address information to 911 operators or emergency responders
- create a Disability Concerns Web Page
- establish a “Disabilities Resource Room” at the Tempe Public Library
- educate citizens about obstructions created by trash cans, parked cars, landscapers, cable and utility trucks and any other barriers to sidewalk access
- develop a disability issues sensitivity training and awareness education course for City employees
- post available resources on Tempe’s Cable Channel 11

Facilitate, promote, and support collaborations and partnerships among the various sectors and levels of government, the private sector, and disability-related organizations. The Task Force recommends Tempe act as a catalyst to support and encourage collaborations. To accomplish this, Tempe should:

- host conferences that allow various organizations that provide services for people with disabilities to showcase their services
- include people with disabilities as a population supported by the Diversity Office and the Human Relations Commission and recognize their contributions to the diverse fabric of the City of Tempe
- designate a representative from the City Commission on Disability Concerns to sit on the Council Subcommittee that deals with diversity issues
- work with the National League of Cities and Towns to create an accessibility "Best Practices" brochure for use by municipalities
- develop intergovernmental and interagency partnerships to advocate for accessible transportation options (including light rail)

Support and encourage the development of employment resources and opportunities for people with disabilities. To be an example of proactive hiring practices, Tempe should:

- sponsor job fairs and provide employee and employer training
- develop preferences for city contracts for employers who proactively hire people with disabilities
- provide incentives for companies who hire people with disabilities to locate in Tempe
- offer internships with the City of Tempe to people with disabilities to allow individuals to develop professional work experience

Establish an on-going advisory group for obtaining parent and other stakeholder participation in the planning of recreational activities and cultural programs and events.
To develop appropriate and accessible recreation and cultural options and obtain stakeholder input regarding City program offerings, Tempe should:

- establish an on-going planning committee, to include parent representatives and other stakeholders, to help plan age-appropriate adapted recreation activities
- increase recreation offerings for preschool age children through age 12
- establish a designated, consistent location for accessible parking at all Town Lake and downtown area events
- provide opportunities for access, use and interpretation of historic, cultural and art structures while retaining historic integrity
- increase coordination with other agencies, such as Special Olympics and school districts
- provide venues for showcasing the art of people with disabilities (performance and static)

1. INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE

Many of us, at some point in our lives, will be faced with some type of a disability. According to the 2000 Decennial Census, nearly one in five people (19.3%) have a disability, making this group the largest minority population in the country**. *In Tempe, 22,308 people over the age of 5 live with at least one disability.*** This is an issue that touches, or will touch, most of us in some way.

Recognizing this fact, the Tempe Community Council, in conjunction with the City of Tempe, determined that a comprehensive review of the needs and available services for people with disabilities should be included as part of Tempe's Comprehensive People Improvement Plan (PIP). The purpose of the PIP is to *guide the City in a more strategic and long-range approach in addressing the quality of life needs for Tempe residents.*

This report, identifying recommendations relating to Disability Issues in Tempe, follows two previous reports. The first, on homeless issues, was completed in 2000 and resulted in the hiring of a City Homeless Coordinator and the establishment of the Tumbleweed Day Resource Center for Youth. Additional efforts to implement the Task Force recommendations are on-going.

The second, identifying the needs of Tempe's aging citizens, was completed in 2002, and the recommendations are currently being implemented as part of the planning for Tempe's forthcoming Northside Multigenerational Center, and the "Life Options" and "Communities for All Ages" initiatives.

The charge of each of these task forces is to assess current service levels, examine current and future service needs based on demographic and community input, and make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council based on the assessment.

This report details the primary issues and needs of Tempe's disabled population and outlines a course of action for creating an environment that reduces or eliminates external barriers to full inclusion in the community.

> *"...society's accumulated myths and fears about disability and disease are as handicapping as are the physical limitations..."*
>
> **William J Brennan, Associate Justice, US Supreme Court**

2. COMPOSITION OF THE TEMPE TASK FORCE ON DISABILITY ISSUES

Members

To ensure impartiality, the membership of the Tempe Task Force on Disability Issues consists of lay citizens who are not employees of the City of Tempe, nor employees of organizations that provide services to people with disabilities.

Task Force Members

Linda Spears,
Former City Council member (**Co-chair)**

Scott Greeves,
Community Volunteer (**Co-chair)**

Morris Anderson,
Accessible Housing Specialists

Marcia Barry,
Community Volunteer

Paul Bennewitz,
Tempe Commission on Disability Concerns

Paul Bennewitz,
ARC of Tempe

Linda Bergevin,
Community Volunteer

Karen Betancourt,
Community Volunteer

Nancy Black,
Tempe Convention and Visitors Bureau

Roger Boylan,
Retired physician, Internal Medicine

Lee Burge,
Tempe Sister Cities Wheelchairs for Peace

Raissa Devereux,
Community Volunteer

Mary Beth Dresser
Valley of the Sun United Way

Jo Ann Eilers,
Community Volunteer

Michael Franjevic,
Tempe Commission on Disability Concerns

Kathleen Green,
Tempe Commission on Disability Concerns

Bonnie Guzelf,
Community Volunteer

Joseph Harris,
Professor Emeritus, ASU

Mary Jo Jerde,
SHPS, Community Volunteer

Richard Nolan,
Tempe Commission on Disability Concerns

Mary O'Connor,
Community Volunteer

Jacque Olsen,
Phoenix Commission on Disability Concerns

Nancy Puffer,
Journalist, Community Volunteer

Darrell Shandrow
Community Volunteer

Arloa Siers,
Community Volunteer

Margaret Taylor Webb,
Community Volunteer

Diane Wagemann
Community Volunteer

Karen Walters
Community Volunteer

Linda Weinberg,
Community Volunteer

Ex-officio Members

Tempe Mayor and City Council

Staff

Kate Hanley; Martha Cronin, lead staff; Steve Wise; Amanda Baldwin, TCC staff
Marnie Green, Consultant

Resource Persons

Additional input was sought from various persons and organizations that have expertise, knowledge, and interest in the field of disability issues. These people included City of Tempe employees, and those who work for nonprofits and governmental agencies that provide services for people with disabilities.

A letter was sent to the "resource persons," and they were encouraged to participate in the Task Force process by either providing written information to the Task Force members and/or participating in a panel presentation.

A form was mailed to the groups asking them the following questions:

- What is the purpose/mission of your organization?
- What services does your organization provide to people with disabilities? And, do you have a significant presence in Tempe? Please include numbers and service statistics.
- What are the unmet needs you are aware of related to disability services in Tempe?
- What recommendations would you like the Task Force to consider making to the City of Tempe? The Task Force is seeking innovative, practical recommendations.

All of the comments from the completed forms were sent to the Task Force members and were taken into consideration when recommendations were formulated by the Task Force.

Additionally, several representatives from organizations and interested community members attended the Task Force meetings on a regular basis.

> *"What do we live for, if it is not to make life less difficult for each other?"*
>
> **George Elliot**

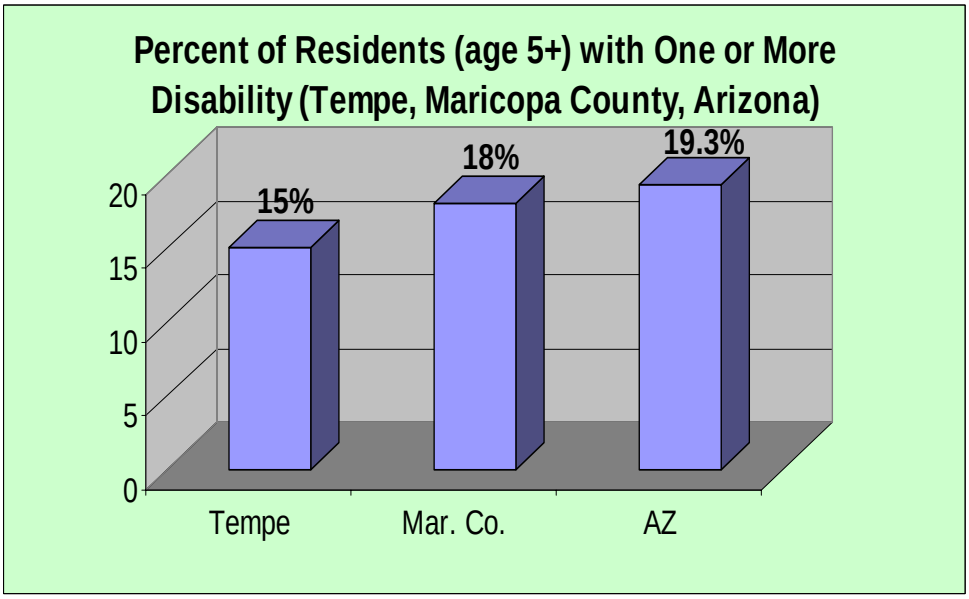
4. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The 2000 decennial census was the first year in which comprehensive information was included in the questionnaire regarding disability issues. The 2000 U.S. Census defined a disability as a *long-lasting physical, mental, or emotional condition that interferes with an individual's ability to perform daily tasks*.

22,308 Tempe residents, representing 15 percent of Tempe's population age 5 and over, have at least one disability.

The Census further broke-down the information into six types of disabilities, including: sensory (hearing and vision); physical (walking, climbing stairs, reaching and lifting); mental (learning, remembering or concentrating); self-care (dressing, bathing or getting around inside the home); going outside the home (ability to shop or visit a friend alone); and employment (ability to perform or hold a job). However, the question relating to going outside of the home was only asked of individuals ages 16 years and over; the employment disability question was only asked of people ages 16 to 64.

How many people with disabilities live in Tempe?



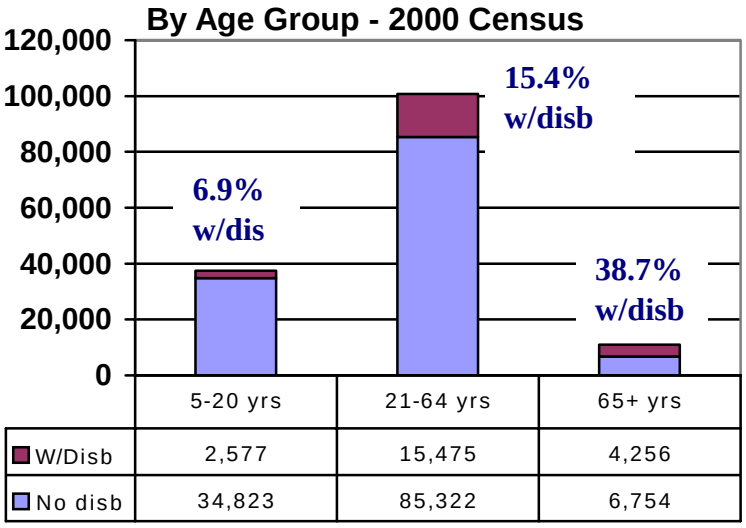
According to the 2000 census, 22,308 Tempe residents have at least one disability. This number represents 15 percent of Tempe's population age 5 and over.

As is indicated by the chart to the right, as a percentage of the population, fewer people with disabilities live in Tempe than in Maricopa County (18%). Arizona as a whole has an even greater ratio of people with disabilities, 19.3%. Arizona's percentage is equivalent to the proportion of people with disabilities in the United States.

Tempe has a similarly lower percentage of residents over the age of 60 (10%) as compared with Maricopa County (15%) and the state as a whole (17%). Because the likelihood of a person having a disability increases with age, the fact that Tempe has fewer older residents may partially explain the lower numbers of people with disabilities. However, as was discussed in the "*Tempe Task Force on Aging Report," December 2002*, Tempe is no exception to the nationwide trend of the aging of the population. Therefore, as the proportion of Tempe residents over the age of 60 increases, so will the numbers of people with disabilities.

How does age relate to the incidence of disabilities among people in Tempe?

The table to the right illustrates the increasing rate of disabilities as people age. As is indicated, only 6.9% of Tempe's population between the ages of 5 and 20 have a disability; that proportion increases to 15.4% of those ages 21 to 64, and jumps substantially to 38.7% of the population for those age 65 and over.



	5-20 yrs	21-64 yrs	65+ yrs
W/Disb	2,577	15,475	4,256
No disb	34,823	85,322	6,754

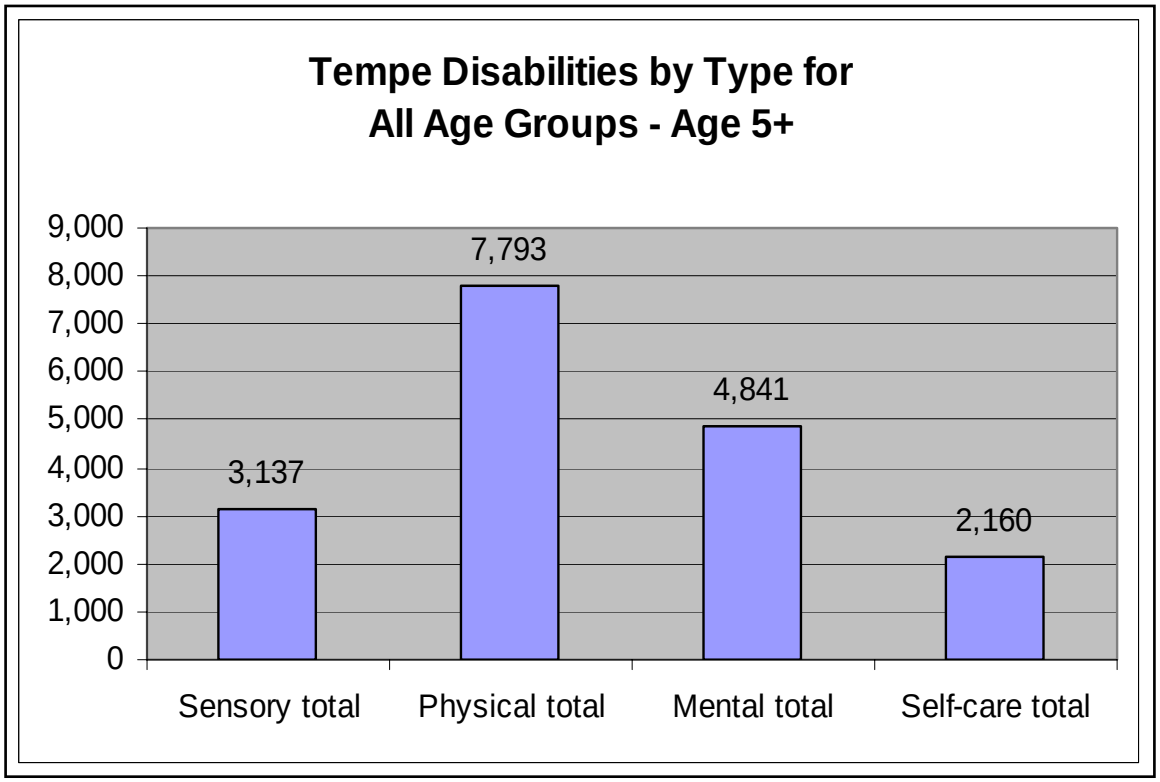
Arizona State University Students with Disabilities

Because of the transient nature of students and the fact that their permanent addresses are often located in another community, the census does not accurately capture the local student population. It is known, however, that ASU is one of the most accessible university campuses in the country. ASU offers a broad range of support services through its Disability Resource Center. In addition to proactive efforts made over many years to make ASU a welcoming environment for people with disabilities, Tempe's mild climate and flat landscape make ASU a natural choice for students with disabilities.

Because students with disabilities are not required to report their disability to the University, there is no accurate count of the exact number of students with disabilities currently enrolled at ASU. The only available specific count is of the number of students supported by the ASU Disability Resource Center. During the 03/04 academic year, a total of 1,484 unduplicated students received services through the Center. Estimates suggest, however, that the actual number of students with disabilities enrolled at ASU is significantly greater than those who receive services through the Disability Resource Center.

What types of disabilities are the most common in the Tempe population?

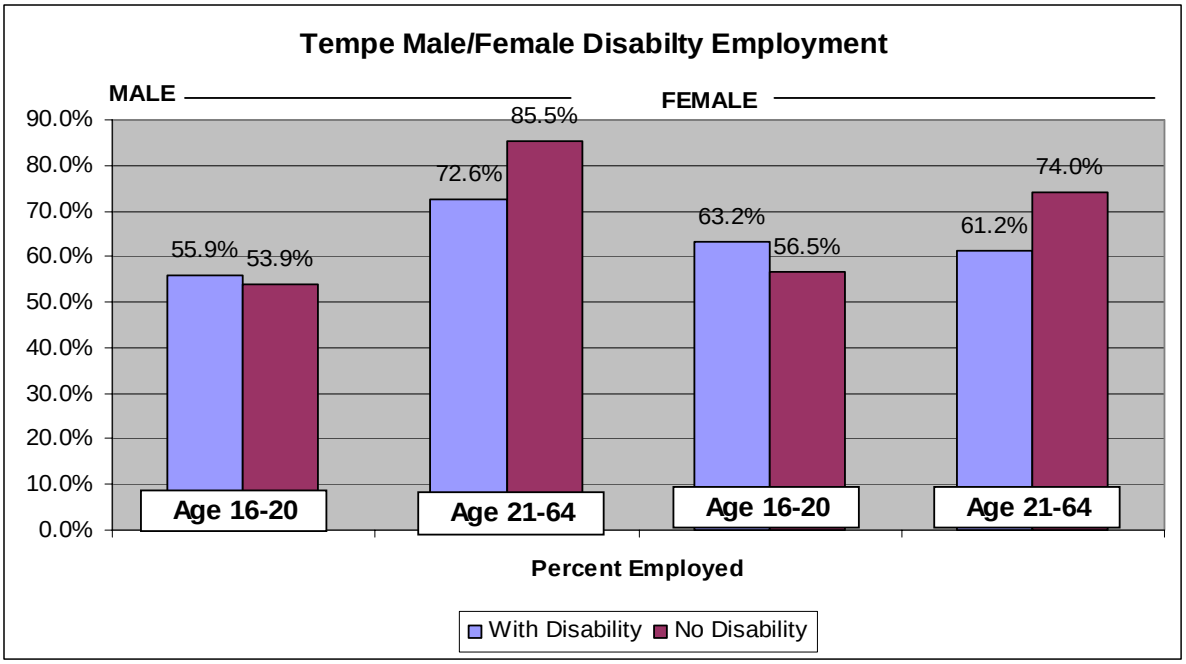
According to the 2000 Census, the most common types of disabilities in Tempe are physical. Please note that the chart below represents the number of disabilities and not the number of individuals. In other words, if an individual has multiple disabilities, those disabilities are each tallied under separate categories. Self-care disabilities were reported the least often, with 2,160 reported. When the types of disabilities are tallied for isolated age groups, the numbers are somewhat different. For the 5 to 15 age group, mental disabilities are by far the most common. Although the question of whether one has an employment disability was only asked of those ages 16 to 64, this is the most common type of disability reported for that age group, with 11,884 Tempe residents reporting they have an employment disability.



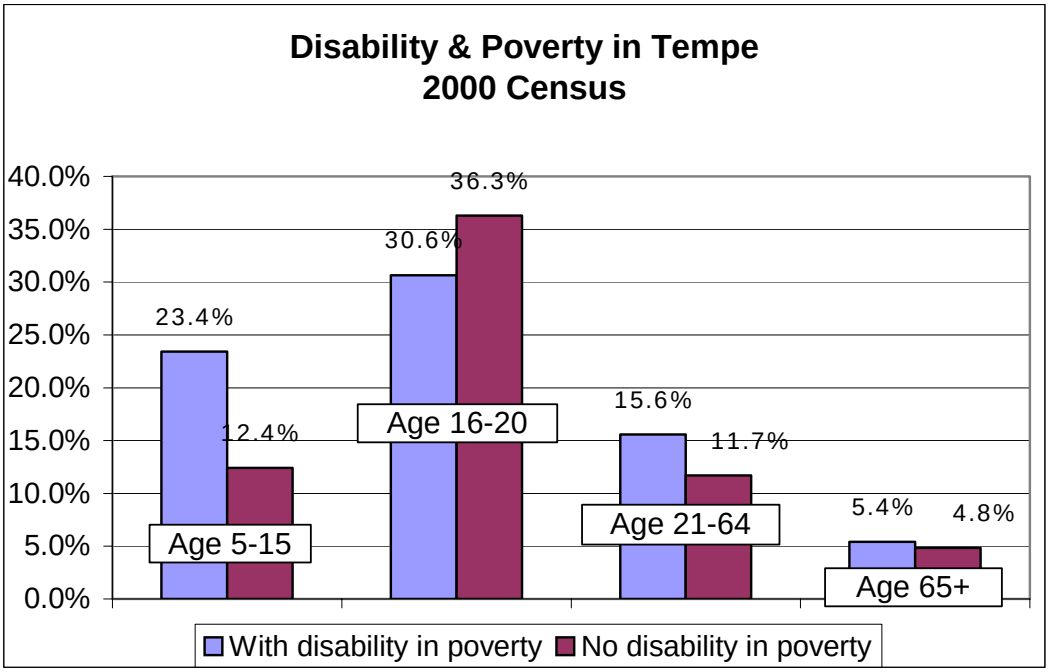
Disabilities & Employment 2000 Census		
	Number Employed	**Percent Employed**
Tempe Population Age 16-64 No Disability	85,322	80.1
Tempe Population Age 16-64 With Disability	15,475	67.3

What portion of the Tempe population with disabilities is employed?

For the majority of the population, an individual with a disability is less likely to be employed than a non-disabled individual, with 67.3 percent of people of working age with disabilities employed. This is almost 13 percentage points below the percent employed among the non-disabled population. Interestingly, there is a higher percentage of people with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 20 who are employed than there are people without disabilities who are employed. This may be due in part to the fact that there is a supported employment program in the Tempe Union High School District—the Workbridge Program—that actively seeks employment opportunities for students with developmental disabilities. While Tempe Centers for Habilitation (TCH) provides excellent supported employment opportunities for adults with emotional and developmental disabilities, the adult population with disabilities is significantly diverse, and requires multiple services with multiple levels of employment support and opportunities.



What portion of the Tempe population with disabilities lives in poverty?



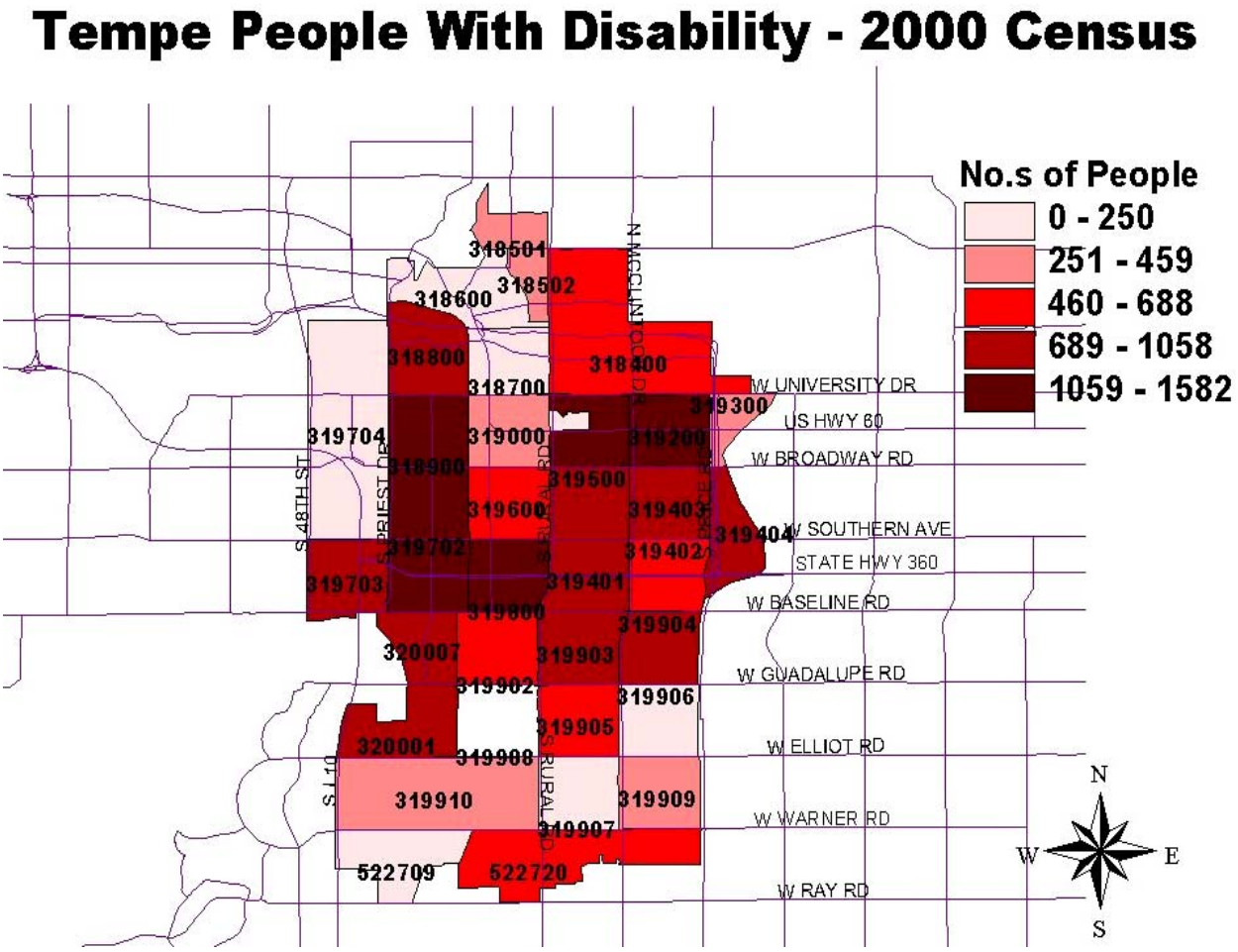
In most age groups, individuals with disabilities are more likely than the general population to be in poverty. The only exception is the 16 to 20 age group, where the poverty rate for individuals with disabilities is 30.6 percent, nearly 6 percentage points lower than the non-disabled population. Even so, the poverty rates for both people with disabilities and those without disabilities are extremely high for individuals in this particular age range. However, among people with disabilities, the poverty rate is not greatly above that of the general population (age 5 and over) in Tempe. Overall, Tempe's poverty rate (for those with and without disabilities alike) is quite high, as compared with surrounding communities.

Disabilities & Poverty in Tempe (ages 5+) 2000 Census			
	Number with income under the FPL*	**Total Population**	**Percent of Total Population under the FPL***
Tempe Population Age 5+ No Disability	17,073	126,899	13.5%
Tempe Population Age 5+ With Disability	3,284	22,308	14.7%
Total	20,357	149,207	13.6 %

- **Federal Poverty Level.**

Where do people with disabilities live in Tempe?

As indicated by the map below, greater numbers of people with disabilities live in the northern portion of the City than in the southern part. Most live in the area bounded by University Drive on the North, Guadalupe Road on the South, between Priest Drive on the West and Price Road to the East. Perhaps not surprisingly, higher concentrations of people with disabilities appear to live in areas near Arizona State University, along Mill Avenue and Apache Boulevard, where there are several multi-unit housing complexes.



PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN 2000 CENSUS – SUMMARY

- ✓ Tempe residents with disabilities numbered 22,308 (15%).
- ✓ Higher percentages of older Tempeans have a disability.
- ✓ Over all, physical disabilities are the most common types among people in Tempe.
- ✓ Employment disability is the most frequently reported disability type among those ages 16 to 64.
- ✓ A lower percentage of Tempeans with disabilities are employed than those who do not have a disability (except ages 16-20).
- ✓ Slightly higher percentages of Tempeans with disabilities live in poverty than non-disabled people (except ages 16-20).
- ✓ Most Tempeans with disabilities live in the northern part of the City.

3. TASK FORCE PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Unlike the previous two task forces that were conducted by Tempe Community Council (the Homeless Task Force and the Task Force on Aging), the Task Force on Disability Issues benefited from the work and expertise of the City's existing Commission on Disability Concerns. The Commission on Disability Concerns has a significant level of expertise in this area, so TCC initially gathered input from the Commission to set priority issue areas to focus the work of the Task Force. Members of the Commission on Disability Concerns also suggested resource persons, who were then called on to provide written input and or present to the Task Force.

Through a series of Commission on Disability Concerns meetings, the following issue areas emerged as those that would be given considerable attention during the Task Force study: ADA Compliance and Enforcement; City Infrastructure and Capital Maintenance (e.g., public facilities and right-of-ways); Recreation, Public Art and Culture; Opportunities for Children; Housing (accessible and affordable); Transportation; and Information Exchange and Coordination. Although the Task Force members were not prevented from studying issues that did not fall within these categories, these categories helped focus the process and direction of the Task Force.

The primary work of the Task Force occurred over five months. The first meeting was primarily introductory, the next two meetings were dedicated to obtaining input from experts on disability issues and service providers, and the recommendations were formulated during the final two meetings.

Timeline	Phase	Tasks/Activities
October-December, 2003	Preliminary Planning	Members of the City of Tempe Commission on Disability Concerns
January, 2004	Education	Presentation of census information.
February – March, 2004	Community Input	Presentations to Task Force from resource persons regarding disability needs and issues.
April – May, 2004	Formulate Recommendations	Task Force members divide into break-out groups to brainstorm recommendations. The final meeting of the Spring is a professionally facilitated session.
June – October, 2004	Draft Report	TCC staff formulate a draft report; Task Force members met to review draft report and staff summary; draft report was made public for community input.
November, 2004	Submit Report to City Council	Once the report was finalized and approved by the Task Force members, the Final Report was presented to the City Council for approval.

5. NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

■ ADA Compliance and Enforcement

> *". . . to lift artificial weights from all shoulders; to clear the paths of laudable pursuit; to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life."* **Abraham Lincoln**

The 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a landmark piece of legislation that recognizes that people with disabilities are no different from non-disabled people in their desire to be full participants in every aspect of everyday life, and that the opportunity to contribute to the social and economic life of the nation is a fundamental right.

Significant progress has been made since the ADA was enacted into law. In fact, a survey cited in *Disability Watch* indicated that two-thirds of the disabled adults who responded reported that their "quality of life" has improved since enactment of the ADA.

However, the advancements made through the enactment and implementation of this Act are only of benefit to the degree with which the law is complied with and enforced.

The ADA provides comprehensive civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities in the areas of employment (Title I), public services (Title II), public accommodations (Title III), and telecommunications (Title IV).

Titles II and III of the ADA establish requirements for the new construction and renovation of both private and public facilities. These requirements are known as the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). These guidelines serve as a basis for standards, enforced by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Department of Transportation. In addition to complying with ADAAG, in cases where the state and/or local code contains more stringent access requirements, the more rigorous standard applies.

Because the ADA is a federal civil rights law, its enforcement is not the responsibility of local building code officials. Enforcement is the purview of the federal departments of justice and transportation, generally through court actions when an allegation of discrimination is brought forth. Arizona's access code uses ADAAG as the standard; therefore, if a structure is not in compliance with ADAAG, it is also out of compliance with the State Accessibility Code. In addition to ADAAG, model codes, such as American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A117.1, have coordinated accessibility provisions with state and local building codes, such as the code adopted by Tempe--Chapter 11 of the UBC (Uniform Building Code). Again, the most rigorous code applies. Therefore, even though the ADA is a federal law, local building code officials ensure compliance with the act and with Tempe's local building code.

The laws, codes, standards and regulations associated with ensuring accessible environments can seem like an alphabet soup of acronyms. Truly understanding all the standards and best practices and applying them in all areas – from providing reasonable accommodations for employment to ensuring accessibility features at gas stations – requires a significant amount of expertise and attention to the issues.

There is currently no single point of contact on the City's staff who is primarily responsible for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or for providing information on

disability issues. While efforts are made to ensure ADA Compliance within the City of Tempe, the responsibility for such efforts is divided among several different City staff persons depending on their areas of responsibility. No single person is responsible for monitoring changes in the guidelines, reviewing court cases, keeping abreast of best practices and ensuring those measures are incorporated into City policy. Additionally, if a resident has a complaint or wants to report a facility that is not accessible, he or she must know what department has jurisdiction and then who within the department is the correct person to field the complaint. Finding the correct contact person requires patience, persistence and a willingness to endure multiple telephone transfers.

Members of the Task Force concluded that the addition of a new full-time position, an Accessibility Specialist, should be a City priority to clearly demonstrate the importance placed on access issues and the desire to create a community without barriers, where ALL may live, learn, work and play together. This position will: be the point of contact for disability issues within the City; provide timely and accurate response to public input; ensure implementation of goals and objectives for such items as universal design and an inclusive housing ordinance; strongly promote an ADA upgrade and repair program with regard to streets, sidewalks, and curb cuts; strengthen public awareness, education and information programs and actively address other disability related issues.

■ City Infrastructure and Capital Maintenance

To a person who does not have a disability, a cracked sidewalk is merely a slight annoyance that is quickly forgotten as one continues along the path. For someone with a mobility or sight impairment, this crack might create a tipping hazard or require one to face danger by traveling into the street.

Nearly all of the Task Force members who have disabilities have encountered various hazards while in the process of “just getting around town,” and some have experienced serious injuries resulting from these hazards.

There is a significant need to make **risk mitigation** a capital improvement priority by replacing sidewalks, curb cuts, and ramps on City property that are unsafe or that do not meet ADA and/or Uniform Building Code (UBC) and Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) requirements. Large tracts of the City infrastructure predate knowledge and awareness of accessibility and universal design concepts and require immediate upgrades. For example, there are many intersections where sidewalks do not abut the walk signal buttons, making it virtually impossible for someone using a wheelchair to access the button. Changes of this nature need to be a City priority.

Directly related to this, Tempe should first conduct a comprehensive audit of all City property to determine the areas of greatest need for improvement. The City should make improvements on a rapid construction cycle to reduce the impact on people with disabilities.

Additionally, throughout the work of the Task Force, it became clear that consumer participation is imperative for truly understanding the needs of people with disabilities. Despite the best intention of creating an environment that is universally accessible, without significant knowledge and/or direct experience with a disability, some of life’s everyday barriers go unnoticed. For this

reason, a system should be put in place that solicits the public to identify and report unsafe ramps, curb cuts, sidewalks and other areas that require improvements.

Some of Tempe's neighboring communities use "street cards" as a method for public reporting of needed repairs. Street cards are pre-printed postcard sized forms that require specific information about the location and the nature of the problem being reported. They are available at various public locations and allow citizens to report the need for repairs, provide a written record of the report and provide a method to track the progress of the repairs. Furthermore, Tempe should establish a 24 hour, responsive hotline for citizen reporting of accessibility issues and an easy-to-access, user-friendly, web-based form.

City infrastructure and maintenance issues affect everyone, but not equally. A small issue for some is a very big issue for others. Tempe can demonstrate its dedication to enhancing the quality of life for all residents by acting swiftly on repairs and upgrades that will make this city fully accessible.

■ Recreation, Public Art and Culture

Tempe's Parks and Recreation Division offers a broad range of recreational and cultural activities. Through class sessions in the spring, winter and fall, Tempe offers over 5,000 classes on a variety of topics—everything from pottery to xeryscape landscaping. Also, the City sponsors or hosts 25 events each year, including the Tempe Sister Cities Way Out West Oktoberfest and the Kiwanis Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration.

These classes and events, as well as the City's public art program, help to make Tempe a true community. Through these opportunities, residents socialize, get to know one another and reveal a common pride of place and of values. It is imperative that activities and events offered to Tempe's residents be inclusive of everyone. The unwitting exclusion of some, via a lack of accessibility, can undermine the spirit of the community.

Although attempts are made to ensure accessibility, there are times when efforts fall short. Accessible parking has been a persistent problem during big events. Task Force members suggest that a designated, consistent location for accessible parking be established, with clear signage and strong enforcement.

The creative arts are important to provide youth and adults with an artistic means of self-expression, communication, and independence. Programs should be made available to ensure people with disabilities may participate in and/or enjoy as audience members the art exhibits, plays and other cultural activities available in Tempe. The City should provide opportunities for access, use and interpretation of historic, cultural and art structures while retaining historic integrity. Museums should offer more tactile exhibits, recorded head set guides and written materials to allow people with disabilities to fully experience the exhibits and program offerings.

The Tempe Cultural Services Division is a member of ARTability. ARTability serves to promote accessible arts events to people with disabilities and provides technical assistance to arts organizations for developing accessible programs and spaces. We are fortunate to have this resource available to our community and must strive to make Tempe's arts and cultural experiences available and accessible to everyone.

■ Opportunities for Children with Disabilities

In response to a recommendation from the Commission on Disability Concerns, the City of Tempe hired a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Therapist in the Fall of 2001. This person was charged with establishing an Adapted Recreation Program to develop and coordinate recreation activities for children and adults with disabilities. The City now offers a broad range of recreation activities for people with disabilities. Through this program, approximately 200 to 250 Tempe residents take part in various activities, such as Special Olympic sports, bowling, summer day camps, dances and instructional classes.

Although significant progress has been made in recent years, suggestions were made by Task Force members to create an on-going planning committee with representation from parents, people with disabilities and other stakeholders to help determine program offerings. This group will liaison with Tempe schools to promote recreation offerings, so those programs that are available are well publicized among the parents of children with disabilities.
Additionally, while there are a wide variety of activities available for older children and adults, recreation offerings for young children, from preschool to age 8, are lacking.

■ Housing

Housing is of fundamental importance in almost every aspect of people's lives. While finding a house that falls within acceptable location and cost parameters is often difficult for all of us, these challenges are exacerbated when the needs for accessibility (both the physical layout of the environment, transportation and other community resources) are factored in.

Affordable Housing
As a landlocked community with limited housing stock, affordability is an increasing concern in Tempe. According to findings from the *Arizona Affordable Housing Profile* report prepared by Elliott D. Pollack and Company for the Governor's Office of Housing Development and the Arizona Housing Commission, Tempe has an "affordability gap" of 13.6%, which is considerably greater than the Maricopa County average of 10.5% of households. A housing affordability gap is the difference between the number of households within specified income ranges and the number of housing units available that are affordable to those households. Typically, this gap occurs at the lower end of the income range where there are more households than affordable units, which means that these people must pay more than 28% of their income for housing.

As stated previously, 14.7% of Tempe's residents with disabilities who are age 5 and over live below the federal poverty level. Therefore, the challenges of finding acceptable housing in Tempe for people with disabilities are two-fold--affordability and accessibility are of primary concern.

In recent years, Tempe, together with NewTowN CDC, has been proactive in working to increase the supply of affordable housing through the establishment of a Community Land Trust and a first-time buyer mortgage assistance program.

Task Force members encourage the development of a homeownership voucher program to assist first-time homeowners with their monthly homeownership expenses. To qualify, typically the home must pass an initial housing quality standards inspection before approval of the purchase. Tempe should explore the possibility of allowing the establishment of preferences for income-eligible people with disabilities and accessibility should be included as a requirement for passing the initial inspection.

Accessible Housing

Tempe partners with the Arizona Bridge to Independent Living (ABIL) to provide homeowners or renters with accessibility modifications, such as, ramps, widening doors, grab bars, and modifications to showers, sinks and toilets. Those who receive such modifications are expected to pay 10% of the cost through in-kind contributions. This may be fulfilled by providing labor, materials or by volunteering. Unfortunately, this program is not well publicized and is underutilized. Tempe and ABIL should actively promote this program, so Tempe homeowners and renters are informed that home modification assistance is available to them.

With its moderate climate and relatively flat landscape, Arizona naturally provides a very attractive environment for people with disabilities. Recognizing the opportunity that this provides, Arizona communities are taking steps to ensure the built environment is as friendly as the climate.

Pima County is the first jurisdiction in the nation to adopt an "Inclusive Home Design Ordinance." The ordinance, passed in February 2002, requires all new houses built in the unincorporated areas of the county around Tucson to include the following accessible features: (1) at least one entrance with no step; (2) doors at least 32 inches wide; (3) lever door handles; (4) reinforced walls in ground-floor bathrooms to allow for the installation of grab bars; (5) switches no higher than 48 inches; and (6) 36 inch-wide hallways throughout the main floor. This ordinance has survived a court challenge from the Southern Arizona Home Builders Association. The Phoenix Mayor's Commission on Disability Issues has proposed a similar ordinance be adopted in Phoenix.

Tempe should explore adopting such an ordinance as well. Tempe has shown its dedication to land use policy that is sensitive to the needs of people with disabilities by including an "accessibility element" in the General Plan 2030. GP 2030 was adopted by the City Council and subsequently ratified by the Tempe voters in May, 2004. It states: ***"The goal of the Accessibility Element is to create a city that has design potential to meet community needs through universal design which provides access and benefit through accessible public and private facilities, services and programs."***

The passage of an ordinance that requires universal design features be incorporated in all new homes in Tempe will codify the goals already endorsed by Tempe citizens through GP 2030 and will demonstrate Tempe's desire to be an inclusive community in which all citizens are valued.

■ Transportation

There remains a crucial need for additional transportation options for people with disabilities who live alone or live a significant distance from available public transportation routes. Transportation is a key to independence. Without freedom of travel and movement, employment, community and political involvement, even meeting basic needs, such as purchasing groceries and getting to doctors' appointments is hindered, if not impossible. Improving the ability of all Tempe residents to travel freely will require improving and increasing current transportation options, as well as educating the public about currently available systems and the importance of being sensitive to the needs of individuals with disabilities.

According to the *National Organization on Disability / Harris 2000 Survey of Americans with Disabilities*, the accessibility and availability of transportation remains an obstacle for people with disabilities to fully engage in community life. Perhaps not surprisingly, people with "somewhat severe" or "very severe" disabilities are more than three times as likely to think transportation is a problem (34% and 36% respectively) than people without disabilities (10%) and twice as likely as people with "slight" disabilities (17%). Clearly, finding transportation that is reasonably priced and convenient remains a challenge to those most in need.

What Tempe Has Accomplished

Tempe has a strong record of making the needs of people with disabilities a high priority in all aspects of transit planning and development. In fact, since 1996 when voters approved a sales tax to improve transit service, the City of Tempe ordered new buses to create a fully accessible (low-floor) fleet and implemented a disability awareness training and secret rider program to gain user input.

Curb Cuts

Tempe has also significantly improved bus stops and curb cuts for accessibility. In fact, 98% of Tempe's bus stops are in compliance with ADAAG (10.2.1). This is the highest rate of compliance in the Valley.

Buses

The neighborhood circulator, known as FLASH (**F**ree **L**ocal **A**rea **SH**uttle), is another transportation option implemented as an alternative for short trips. The shuttle service connects Escalante, Victory Acres, Alegre Community and University Heights neighborhoods with the Riverside/Sunset and Lindon Park neighborhoods through Arizona State University and downtown Tempe. It travels every 15 minutes, Monday through Sunday from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Light Rail

Tempe has historically been a leader in the effort to develop the Central Phoenix/East Valley Light Rail Transit Program. Universal accessibility has been identified as a primary goal in the design of the forthcoming light rail system. Through the efforts of citizen-based committees, as well as nationally recognized accessibility consultants, it is anticipated that the light rail system will be a model of accessibility.

Suggested Improvements

Tempe is to be applauded for the significant efforts mentioned above, and they should not be undervalued. As proactive and successful as Tempe has been in establishing an accessible transit system, Task Force members emphasize the need for the availability of additional options to meet all potential travel needs and fill existing service gaps.

Taxicab Vouchers

For example, taxicab voucher programs have been successful in Mesa and Scottsdale and could be effectively implemented in Tempe. The City of Mesa funds a voucher program, administered by Mesa Senior Services, called Coupons for Cabs. To be eligible residents must have a disability and be between the ages of 18 and 65. Senior adults who do not have disabilities are also eligible. Mesa clients can apply for up to six coupon books per month (each coupon book contains 10 one dollar coupons) to be applied toward the fares of participating taxi companies. Each book costs the resident $2.50. A list of taxi cabs that accept the coupons is provided with the approval package. The City of Scottsdale's taxicab voucher program is called Cab Connection and offers 20 vouchers per month per user. The city subsidizes the vouchers at the rate of 80% up to a maximum of $10.00.

Dial-A-Ride

Presently, people with disabilities in Tempe rely on Dial-A-Ride when the use of a fixed bus route is not feasible. While Dial-A-Ride is an important service in the continuum of transportation options, it is a shared ride service that means the driver may pick up or drop off multiple passengers before taking a rider to his or her destination. This often requires a high degree of flexibility on the part of the client that is sometimes not possible when having to get to and from fixed appointments, such as a visit to the doctor. A taxicab voucher program would help fill the need for door to door direct transportation service.

East Valley Dial-A-Ride provides services to senior citizens age 65 and older, people with disabilities and people who meet American Disabilities Act (ADA) eligibility. The ADA requires public transportation agencies to provide paratransit service, and Dial-A-Ride programs have been the chosen means for fulfilling this requirement. Dial-A-Ride programs are continually the focus of much criticism and East Valley Dial-A-Ride, serving Tempe residents, is no exception. The most common complaints include long ride and wait times; taking circuitous routes to get to a passenger's destination; the high cost of service, which is estimated to be $26 per passenger (however, this varies by city); and confusion resulting from differences in Dial-A-Ride services from one city to the next, because this service is not administered regionally. Over the years, many efforts have been made to improve this service. One such improvement is the installation of Vehicle Locator Systems (VLS) in vans to assist dispatchers in scheduling rides. This should create greater efficiencies in service. Task Force members emphasized the need for the City to be continually involved in efforts to improve the system and to be a constant advocate for quality service.

Night Rescue Program

Additionally, the establishment of a "Night Rescue Program" would ensure that no wheelchair user will be stranded after the last bus has run. The City of Phoenix has such a program that operates as a collaborative effort among the Fire Department, Super Shuttle and Easter Seals.

Travel Training Program

As stated above, Tempe has concentrated a great deal of effort and resources in ensuring the accessibility of existing bus services. Public transportation services are preferred as they benefit all Tempe residents and are significantly more cost effective than services such as Dial-A-Ride. Sometimes, the greatest barrier to using public transportation is fear and lack of understanding in how to use the system. In an effort to combat this fear, Easter Seals operates a Peer Travel Training Program to educate people with disabilities on how to use the bus. This program "empowers older adults and people with disabilities to participate more fully in community life and enables people with disabilities and older adults to pass on their travel skills to others." Tempe should work in cooperation with Easter Seals to promote this program and encourage bus use.

Disabled Parking Enforcement
Along with expanding and improving transportation options, implementing a campaign similar to the City of Phoenix's "Save Our Spaces" program will demonstrate Tempe's dedication to supporting individuals with disabilities. The Phoenix Mayor's Commission on Disability Issues and the City of Phoenix Equal Opportunity Department created a campaign to "remind the public about the importance of saving accessible parking spaces for the people who really need them." Police-trained ACE (Accessibility Compliance Enforcement) volunteers issue citations for accessible parking violations. Phoenix also raised the fine for illegal use of accessible parking spaces to $140. Currently, the fine for a similar violation in Tempe is $126.

■ Employment and Training

According to the *Harris 2000 Survey of Americans with Disabilities* cited above, only 32 percent of Americans with disabilities of working age (ages 18 to 64) are employed. Among individuals *without* disabilities in the same age group, 81 percent are working. This is a striking difference, especially because more than two out of three people with disabilities who are not working indicated that they would like to work. As discussed in the *Demographics* section of this report, Tempe has a significantly higher percentage of people with disabilities in the workforce than is reported at the national level. However, the disparity, as compared with the rate of those employed who do not have disabilities, is still considerable.

Barriers to Employment
Although it has been nearly 15 years since the passage of the ADA, many barriers remain to employment for people with disabilities. Some common barriers are: (1) employer attitudes; (2) physical barriers; (3) lower levels of education, skills and experience often caused by prior discrimination and (4) societal attitudes. In addition to the obvious benefits of employment to the economy, such as a larger tax base and a reduced need for social welfare expenditures, a career is an important element of one's identity. The day to day interactions, sense of purpose and social aspects of being in the workforce are important to maintaining a healthy vitality in one's life. This opportunity should not be denied to people with disabilities because of prejudice or a lack of understanding by employers and others.

City of Tempe Support of Employing People with Disabilities
The City of Tempe has taken a leadership role over the years to promote employment of people with disabilities. In fact, the Commission on Disability Concerns was first established in 1980 as the Mayor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, to promote business and citizen involvement in employment of those with disabilities. This committee initiated the Mayor's Disability Awards that have been presented annually to honor both successful employees with disabilities and their employers. The awards also honor student employees who are involved with the Tempe Union High School District's Workbridge Program.

The Centers for Habilitation
Tempe is fortunate to be the home of The Centers for Habilitation (TCH). Since 1967, TCH has been dedicated to providing a continuum of services that promote personal well-being, self-

determination and societal integration for persons with disabilities. Through their supported employment programs, TCH provides job training, work adjustment, on-site support and job coaches to enable many of Tempe's citizens with limited cognitive skills to earn real wages, develop important social and life skills and gain self-confidence. Employment programs at TCH are a great asset both to Tempe and all of Arizona in enabling individuals with disabilities to integrate more fully into society. The City of Tempe has provided funding to TCH consistently over the years. The 2003/2004 City allocation was over $20,000.

The City of Tempe Can Do More

While the City has been proactive in supporting and encouraging others to break down persistent barriers to employment, now is the time for Tempe to become an example of proactive hiring practices and training opportunities. Tempe can lead the way by holding disability awareness classes, sensitivity trainings, and by hosting job fairs to match employers with employees. In addition to promoting the hiring of people with disabilities, the City could offer incentives, such as bidder preferences for City contracts, to those contractors and businesses who hire people with disabilities.

Task Force members emphasized the need for professional level employment programs, training, internships and incentives for hiring people with disabilities. Although people with disabilities are often considered a unified subgroup of the population, the term applies to a group of people as varied as the population as a whole. Task Force members stated that people with disabilities are often directed toward employment programs that emphasize vocational and remedial job skills, while vital job information and support in the professional arena is lacking.

Tempe should explore the possibility of offering professional-level internships to people with disabilities to provide experience and job training. The City of Phoenix sponsors an internship program with support from the Arizona Rehabilitation Service Administration. This program, known as *Clear Path*, is offered to young men and women age 17 and over who have disabilities. In this 200-hour program, 160 hours are spent on the job in a paid internship as a City employee. Four hours of each week are spent in an employee excellence training class. Participants are also assigned to a city employee who serves as a mentor throughout the course of the internship. This program has been successful in helping young adults build confidence, develop new skills, establish contacts and build strong résumés. After successful completion of the internship program, *Clear Path* administrators work with the interns to help them find permanent employment.

■ Information Exchange and Coordination

A theme that emerged frequently throughout the work of the Task Force is the need for greater coordination and collaborations between the various sectors and levels of government, and organizations that serve people with disabilities. Again and again, the need for both inter-departmental information exchange and inter-governmental and agency communication and coordination were expressed through personal anecdotes and experiences indicating a lack of communication within the City organization and among service providers.

In fact, when social service agencies were surveyed to determine what they felt were the greatest needs, the response given most frequently was the need for greater collaboration and communication. Some of the responses are as follows:

- *"Partnerships with community members to meet needs that government does not have resources or the mandate to address."*
- *"Collaborations and partnerships between the various branches of government and the private sector to meet needs."*
- *"Tempe Community Council and/or the City working as a catalyst to promote and support collaborative efforts and partnerships between disability-related organizations in order to better maximize limited resources and create synergy of mission within the City's human service providers"*
- *"Lack of coordinated services between various agencies in Tempe and surrounding areas."*
- *"Program collaboration – realizing all social service agencies are lacking in preparations for the 'boomers' we need to work together to ensure the service in Tempe moves to the forefront."*

The City of Tempe, through the agency review process, has provided monetary support to several agencies that serve people with disabilities, including: Advocates for the Disabled, ARC of Tempe, Arizona Bridge to Independent Living (ABIL), The Centers for Habilitation, the Foundation for Senior Living and Tempe Adult Day Health Care, Tempe Community Action Agency (TCAA) and Valley Center for the Deaf.

Clearly, the desire exists among those who provide services to develop partnerships to better meet the comprehensive needs of people with disabilities. In addition to providing monetary support, the City can be the catalyst necessary to bring all parties to the table in a cooperative way. As discussed previously, Task Force members emphasize the need for the addition of a City staff person, an Accessibility Specialist, to be the primary point of contact regarding disability issues. This person will be able to work with others in the field, both governmental and private organizations, to ensure that all are working cooperatively toward the same goal of ensuring all people have the support required to live productive lives and be a part of the Tempe community.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations represent the culmination of the work of the Task Force. The final two meetings were dedicated to developing these recommendations, taking into careful consideration the presentations made by community representatives and other experts (or "resource persons") in the field of disability services.

Task Force members respectfully submit these recommendations to the City Council with the belief that these practical steps will make significant contributions towards addressing the needs of Tempe's population with disabilities and enhance the quality of life for all of Tempe's citizens.

Although the recommendations are organized and were developed with the eight priority areas as a guiding _____, some of the recommendations cross

Short Term Priorities

That the City keep the proposed City Staff Accessibility Services (AS) Specialist position on a "fast track" through the budgetary process and candidate solicitation and selection. The AS Specialist will fill a disability decision-maker void that has existed within the City's staff and will primarily be responsible for compliance with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). He or she also will be a point of contact for disability issues within the City staff, provide timely and accurate response to public input; ensure implementation of goals and objectives for such items as universal design and possibly an inclusive housing ordinance; strongly promote a funded ADA upgrade and repair program with regards to streets, sidewalks, curb cuts, etc.; strengthen the City's public awareness, education and information programs; and aggressively address other disability related issues.

■ ADA Compliance and Enforcement

Require the use of "Best Practices" and Universal Design for all new construction in Tempe.

- Create adaptive environments that can meet current and future needs of the community and works toward code and ordinance compliance, especially of pre-existing facilities that do not meet ADA and/or Uniform Building Code (UBC) and Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) requirements.
- Make proactive efforts to establish universal design concepts as the standard in the development and maintenance of city infrastructure.

Create an environment that gives primacy to the needs of the disabled by:

- encouraging private property owners to implement best practices
- educating citizens about obstructions created by trash cans, parked cars, landscapers, etc.
- creating best practices for accessible ramps, sidewalks, entries, etc.

- creating a citizen "audit" committee to ensure compliance with ADA
-_creating a reporting system (or “hotline”) for reporting violations, trouble spots, recommendations (e.g. postcards, email).

That the City creates adaptive environments that can meet current and future needs of the community and works toward code and ordinance compliance, especially of pre-existing facilities that do not meet ADA and/or Uniform Building Code (UBC) and Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) requirements.

That the City approves a funded monitoring program to include ADA upgrades where needed, and a repair program with regard to streets, sidewalks, curb cuts, etc.

That the City implements a program of ongoing monitoring/assessment of accessibility features within the City such as, creating multi-user access that does not separate portions of the public, prioritizing problem areas and making necessary and timely repairs and improvements as funds are available.

That the City dedicate staff and resources to an internal audit of existing City facilities and review of proposed City facilities, as well as dedicate staff and resources to an external assessment of private facilities used by the public, and review of proposed developments.

That the City create a map of areas that have access issues/problems. Prioritizes the issues/problems and also the capital improvements to mitigate the issues/problems.

-encouraging proactive implementation of basic ADA guidelines on private properties
- Report should strongly emphasize need to prioritized city’s enforcement/compliance role
- See Mike Franjevic’s paper
  - Page 2 recommendations – re: existing and proposed city facilities audit
  - Page 1 and two – Staff person follow up
    - City policy role
    - ADA Transition plan
    - Best practices vs. “Risk Based”
    - Council/Staff understanding
- City awareness, promotion and requirements for program access as well as facilities

■ City Infrastructure and Capital Maintenance

Make "risk mitigation" improvements a capital improvement priority (replacing unsafe and/or noncompliant sidewalks, curb cuts, ramps, etc. on city property).

- Dedicate staff and resources to an internal audit of existing City facilities and review of proposed City facilities, as well as dedicate staff and resources to an external assessment of private facilities used by the public, and review of proposed developments.
- Establish a program to encourage citizen reporting of needed curb cut and sidewalk maintenance and/or repair through "street cards" distributed on all buses, Dial-a-Ride vehicles, doctors’ offices, the library and other public locations.

- Establish a responsive ADA telephone hotline that is always answered during normal office hours, and has message recording capability for non-office hours to inform the public of updates to ADA guidelines.
- Educate citizens about obstructions created by trash cans, parked cars, landscapers, cable and utility trucks and any others that obstruct sidewalk access.

    - Establish "Best Practice" ramp that works for all chair types
    - Proactive efforts to achieve universal design in the development and maintenance of city infrastructure

■ Recreation, Public Art and Culture

- Establish a City-wide Disabilities Awareness Day. The awareness day will prompt schools and other public and private places to dedicate some time and effort to disability awareness and the promotion of disability programs.

Create a planning process to identify the current and changing needs of the diverse community by:

- developing an advisory group representing the diverse community including parents of children with disabilities, disabled citizens and others

- creating opportunities that are age appropriate (young adults, children 5-12, etc.)

- planning group activities that are age appropriate

- making museums accessible for all (more tactile exhibits, head sets, guides, etc.)

- critical considering and responding to suggestions for improvements made by users

- increasing coordination with other agencies like Special Olympics

- providing venues for showcasing the art of the disabled (performance and static)

    - Make museums accessible for all
        - Tactile exhibits
        - Headsets
        - Guides
    - Response by city to suggestions for improvements made by users- city staff has not responded in past

    - Information on needs of disabled persons doesn't filter down to city resource programs

    - Need way to respond to suggestions/give feedback on issues raised at museums

    - "Leisure Education for Life Skills" Program

- Conduct Disability Awareness Day
- Increased outreach and adverting re: available programs for disabled community
- Provide venues for showcasing art of the disabled
  - Performance
  - Static
- Expanding athletic facilities to allow more sporting events for people with disabilities (Accessible to all users)

■ Opportunities for Children with Disabilities

- Plan group activities that are age appropriate
- Create opportunities that are age appropriate
- Develop children's advisory group to represent community
  - Therapeutic recreation
  - Parents of disabled kids
  - Disabled citizens
  - Teens
  - Liaison with schools & Social services
- Increase coordination with other agencies like special Olympics

■ Housing

Increase accessible and affordable housing options in Tempe.

- Adopt an Inclusive Home Design Ordinance that provides for minimal universal design standards and requires at least one accessible entrance (See the Pima County Inclusive Design Ordinance, and the proposed Phoenix ordinance as examples.)
- Establish a voucher system to encourage affordable housing to integrate citizens with special needs into the community rather than isolating them in special environments.
- Develop a list of landlords who will accept vouchers.
- Increase promotion of programs that provide assistance for modifications to existing residences.
- Prepare and make available a brochure of best practices for accessible home modifications.
- Investigate and encourage the promotion and development of home-based personal assistance volunteer programs. (work with ASU social work and nursing programs to develop a network of volunteers for transportation, shopping, and personal assistance)

■ Transportation

Increase transportation options for those unable to get a public bus to go to doctor's appointments, grocery shopping, and other necessary outings.

- Strive to improve Dial-a-Ride.
- Establish a taxicab voucher program (using vehicles equipped to accommodate wheelchairs), similar to the programs available in both Mesa and Scottsdale.
- Expand service and improve the neighborhood circulator bus routes.
- Provide a "peer training" volunteer program where people with disabilities work with others to teach them how to use and navigate around the City using public transportation options. (Refer to the Easter Seals program).
- Establish a "travel companion" volunteer program for accompanying people with disabilities to doctors' appointments, shopping and other necessary outings.
- Establish a program similar to the City of Phoenix program "SOS" (Save our Spaces) volunteer program.
- Develop "Emergency Transportation Program" to provide 24/7 fee-for-service transportation. See "Night Rescue" program as an example.

■ Employment and Training

■ Information Exchange and Coordination

Facilitate, promote, and support collaborations and partnerships among the various sectors and levels of government, the private sector, and disability-related organizations.

- Host conferences that allow various organizations that provide services for people with disabilities to showcase their services.
- Establish the inclusion of people with disabilities as a population supported by the Diversity Office and the Human Relations Commission as contributing to the diverse fabric or the City of Tempe.
- Designate a representative from the City Commission on Disability Concerns to sit on the Council Subcommittee that deals with diversity issues.
- Sponsor job fairs and provide employee and employer training.
- Work with the National League of Cities and Towns to create an accessibility “Best Practices” brochure for use by municipalities.
- Develop intergovernmental and interagency partnerships to advocate for accessible transportation options (including light rail).
- Create a Commission on Disability Concerns Web Page with hot-links to other disability-related information, such as a listing of public and private disability-related resources: organizations, agencies and services; newsletters; meeting announcements and minutes.
- Establish a “Disabilities Resource Room” at the Tempe Library complete with disability related literature, guides/brochures, resource lists.

6. TASK FORCE ON DISABILITY ISSUES RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SHORT-TERM PRIORITIES

These strategies are recommended for immediate implementation. Where the recommendation involves possible City expenditures, consideration for inclusion in the next two-year City budget cycle is requested.

Recommendation	Rationale and Benefits	Specific Actions and Activities
1. Establish a full time Accessibility Specialist Position for Tempe.	The Accessibility Specialist will provide a single point of contact for disability-related issues and will be primarily responsible for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). He or she also will respond to public input; promote an upgrade and repair program with regard to streets, sidewalks, curb cuts, and City facilities; strengthen the City's public awareness, education and information programs; and proactively address other disability related issues. This person will act as a liaison between City departments and work with the public.	• Hire an Accessibility Specialist to be housed in the Diversity Office and supervised by the Diversity Office Director. • Among other things, this person will be largely responsible for implementing the recommendations included in this Task Force report. • The Accessibility Specialist will be the primary staff person for the Commission on Disability Concerns.
2. Require the use of "Best Practices" and Universal Design for all new construction in Tempe.	The City of Tempe General Plan 2030 passed by public vote in May, 2004, was the first and only municipal general plan to include a separate "accessibility element." In the GP 2030, the use of Universal Design to create a fully accessible community is explicitly stated as follows: *"The goal of the Accessibility Element is to create a city that has design potential to meet community needs through universal design which provides access and benefit through accessible public and private facilities, services and programs."*	• Create adaptive environments that can meet the current and future needs of the community and work toward code and ordinance compliance, especially of pre-existing facilities that do not meet ADA and/or Uniform Building Code (UBC), Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) requirements or ANSI standards. • Make proactive efforts to establish universal design concepts as the standard in the development and maintenance of city infrastructure.

II. LONGER-TERM AND ONGOING PRIORITIES

These strategies are recommended for consideration as part of ongoing efforts by the City and the entire Tempe Community. They are not considered less important than the issues listed as "Short-Term" priorities. Rather, implementation of these "Longer-Term" priorities will be facilitated by the establishment, first, of those recommendations included in Part I "Short-Term Priorities."

Recommendation	Rationale and Benefits	Specific Actions and Activities
1. Make "risk mitigation" improvements a capital improvement priority (replacing unsafe and/or noncompliant sidewalks, curb cuts, ramps, etc. on city property).	There are immediate needs in the City to repair or improve City facilities that do not meet ADA, UBC or UFAS requirements. There are City streets, sidewalks and curb cuts that are in disrepair or need an upgrade to ADA standards. The individuals who are most aware of these problem areas are those with disabilities who navigate the sidewalks on a daily basis. There needs to be a system in place to allow for citizen reporting of unsafe and noncompliance areas, with quick response and feedback.	• Dedicate staff and resources to an internal audit of existing City facilities and review of proposed City facilities, as well as dedicate staff and resources to an external assessment of private facilities used by the public and review of proposed developments. • Establish a program to encourage citizen reporting of needed curb cut and sidewalk maintenance and/or repair. This can be accomplished through "street cards" distributed on all buses, Dial-a-Ride vehicles, doctors' offices, the library, other public locations and on the City website. • Establish a responsive ADA telephone hotline that is always answered during normal office hours, and has message recording capability for non-office hours.
2. Increase transportation options for people unable to reach a public bus to go to doctor's appointments, grocery shopping, and other necessary outings.	Many people with disabilities and frail senior citizens live alone and too far from bus stops to enable public transportation to always be a viable option. Multiple transit options need to be available to ensure that individuals may remain active and independent members of the community. Dial-A-Ride is considered by many to be inefficient, often unreliable and requires individuals to plan ahead and endure long waits.	• Strive to improve Dial-a-Ride. • Establish a taxicab voucher program (using vehicles equipped to accommodate wheelchairs), similar to the programs available in both Mesa and Scottsdale. • Expand service and improve the neighborhood circulator bus routes. • Provide a "peer training" volunteer program where people with disabilities work with others to teach them how to use and navigate around the City using public transportation.

II. LONGER-TERM AND ONGOING PRIORITIES

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Recommendation	Rationale and Benefits	Specific Actions and Activities
2. continued.		• Establish a "travel companion" volunteer program for accompanying people with disabilities to doctors' appointments, shopping and other necessary outings. • Establish a volunteer program to issue citations for accessible parking violations, similar to the City of Phoenix "SOS" (Save our Spaces) program. • Develop an "Emergency Transportation Program" to provide 24/7 fee-for-service transportation. The City of Phoenix has such a program, "Night Rescue," that operates as a collaborative effort among the Fire Department, Super Shuttle and Easter Seals.
3. Increase accessible and affordable housing options in Tempe.	As a land-locked community, Tempe is in a position to make progressive decisions that will highlight the City as a place with an excellent quality of life for **all** of its residents. This includes an opportunity to become a model city for accessibility by encouraging housing that incorporates universal design features. Although being "built-out" certainly has community benefits, it also has the effect of increasing housing values, so Tempe must be proactive and make efforts to increase affordability, as well as accessibility. As stated previously in this Report, Tempe's	• Adopt an Inclusive Home Design Ordinance that provides for basic universal design standards and requires at least one accessible entrance (See the Pima County Inclusive Design Ordinance, and the proposed Phoenix ordinance as examples). • Establish a voucher system to encourage landlords to provide affordable housing to integrate citizens with special needs into the community. • Develop a list of landlords who will accept vouchers. • Increase promotion of programs that provide assistance for modifications to existing residences. • Prepare and make available a brochure of best practices for

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Recommendation	Rationale and Benefits	Specific Actions and Activities
3. continued.	poverty rate is quite high at 14.3 percent, especially as compared with neighboring communities. The poverty rate among people with disabilities is even higher, so housing affordability is an issue of great concern.	accessible home modifications. • Investigate and encourage the promotion and development of home-based personal assistance volunteer programs. (Coordinate with ASU social work and nursing programs to develop a network of volunteers for transportation, shopping, and personal care assistance).
4. Promote disability education and awareness. **4. continued.**	The Task Force found that progress toward resolving disability issues is often impeded by lack of information and by the persistence of outmoded stereotypes by the public, particularly those who have not had personal experience with disability issues. Public support and understanding will be greatly improved through increased education about disability issues and consequent awareness and sensitivity to needs.	• Establish a City-wide Disabilities Awareness Day. The awareness day will prompt schools, city offices, businesses and other public and private entities to dedicate some time and effort to disability awareness and to the promotion of disability programs. • Establish a disability educational program for responding emergency personnel (police, firefighters, paramedics, 911 operators) to deal appropriately with persons who may have a "hidden" disability (e.g., autism, Asperger Syndrome, developmental disabilities, and schizophrenia). • Maintain a list of addresses (only by a home-owners request) that identifies residences of those with a "hidden disability" and provide the address information to 911 operators or emergency responders. • Create a Commission on Disability Concerns Web Page with hot-links to other disability-related information, such as a listing of public and private disability-related resources: organizations;

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Recommendation	Rationale and Benefits	Specific Actions and Activities
		agencies; services; newsletters; meeting announcements and minutes. • Establish a "Disabilities Resource Room" at the Tempe Public Library, complete with disability related literature, guides/brochures, and resource lists. • Educate citizens about obstructions created by trash cans, parked cars, landscapers, cable TV and utility trucks, and any other barriers to sidewalk access. • Develop a disability issues sensitivity training and awareness education course for City employees. ▪ Post available resources on Tempe's Cable TV Channel 11.

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Recommendation	Rationale and Benefits	Specific Actions and Activities
5. Facilitate, promote, and support collaborations and partnerships among the various sectors and levels of government, the private sector, and disability-related organizations.	Needs are always greater than available resources, so developing cooperative partnerships among various entities and agencies that serve people with disabilities is increasingly important. This will maximize the use of limited resources, reduce unnecessary duplication of services and ensure all parties are aware of and make referrals to other service providers.	▪ Host conferences that allow various organizations that provide services for people with disabilities to showcase their services. • Include people with disabilities as a population supported by the Diversity Office and the Human Relations Commission and recognize their contribution to the diverse fabric of the City of Tempe. • Designate a representative from the City Commission on Disability Concerns to sit on the Council Subcommittee that deals with diversity issues. • Work with the National League of Cities and Towns to create an accessibility "Best Practices" brochure for use by municipalities. • Develop intergovernmental and interagency partnerships to advocate for accessible transportation options (including light rail).

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Recommendation	Rationale and Benefits	Specific Actions and Activities
6. Support and encourage the development of employment resources and opportunities for people with disabilities.	Although people with disabilities are often considered a unified subgroup of the population, the term applies to a group of people as varied as the entire population. While they provide necessary and valuable services, many employment programs available to people with disabilities emphasize only vocational and remedial job assistance; job information and support in the professional arena is lacking. Programs geared toward educating employers are important to dispel misconceptions and erroneous notions: for example, that hiring people with disabilities will require expensive special accommodations.	• Sponsor job fairs and provide employee and employer training. • Develop bidder preferences for city contracts for employers who proactively hire people with disabilities. • Provide incentive for companies who hire people with disabilities to locate in Tempe. • Offer internships in the City of Tempe to people with disabilities to allow individuals to develop professional work experience. • Develop social counseling programs that teach job acquisition skills. • Publicize the AZBLN (Arizona Business Leadership Network) website http://www.azbln.com, and encourage businesses to become members. AZBLN is a web based service of a the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Its mission is to bring potential employees together with employers who are sensitive to disability issues and promote employment of people with disabilities.

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Recommendation	Rationale and Benefits	Specific Actions and Activities
7. Establish an on-going advisory group for obtaining parent and other stakeholder participation in the planning of recreational activities and cultural programs and events.	As emphasized throughout this report, the best way to determine and meet the needs of people with disabilities is to engage people with disabilities or the parents' of children with disabilities directly in planning processes. While this has been done through organizations like ARC of Tempe and the City's therapeutic recreation therapist, parent advisory groups are lacking for those with younger children. A broad range of opportunities for involvement must be made available to ensure appropriate input across all age ranges and disability types and needs.	• Establish an on-going planning committee, to include parent representatives and other stakeholders, to help plan age-appropriate adapted recreation activities. • Increase recreation offerings for preschool age children through age 12. • Establish a designated, consistent location for accessible parking at all Town Lake and downtown area events. • Provide opportunities for access, use and interpretation of historic, cultural and art structures while retaining historic integrity. • Increase coordination with other agencies, such as Special Olympics and school districts. • Provide venues for showcasing the art of people with disabilities (performance and static).

Appendix A: Presentations to the Task Force on Disability Issues

Date of Presentation	Name	Organization
January 21, 2004	Steve Wise, TCC Resource Coordinator	Review of demographic information from the 2000 census
February 18, 2004	Jim Maldonado, Plan Check Engineer	City of Tempe, Development Services Department
February 18, 2004	Gary Davis, Capital Projects Planner	City of Tempe, Public Works Transportation Planning and Transit
February 18, 2004	Linda Cano, CTRS	City of Tempe, Parks & Recreation Adapted Recreation Program
February 18, 2004	Collette Jones, Director	ARC of Tempe
February 18, 2004	Leah Wiebe-Smith, Fine Arts Coordinator	City of Tempe Cultural Services Division
March 17, 2004	Carolyn Hutchens, Southeast Regional Director	Foundation for Senior Living
March 17, 2004	Donna Powers, Transportation Coordinator	Easter Seals Arizona
March 17, 2004	Jim Bruzewski, Executive Director	Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities

Appendix B: Bibliography of Background Information Received by Task Force Members

Coplas, M (January 14, 2004). Phoenix Tops 63 Cities as the Nation's Most Disability Friendly City. Press Release

McCoy, C (December, 1997). 10 Disability Friendly Cities – Where to Live and Why. New Mobility.

"People with Disabilities in Tempe" [PowerPoint Presentation prepared by Steve Wise].

Bus Stop and Curb Ramp Accessibility (February 2004) – City of Tempe Transportation Department Handout

Tempe General Plan 2030 (December 4, 2003) – Accessibility Element. p. 89

Winter 2004 Adapted Recreation Program Brochure – City of Tempe Parks and Recreation

ARC of Tempe Calendar - Handout

Worthington, L. Accessing Tempe Town Lake. [Online] Available: http://www.wunago.com

Freedom's Just Another Word for Independent Living: ABIL – Arizona Bridge to Independent Living (BROCHURE)

Nation's First 'Visibility' Law Withstands Court Challenge. The Center for an Accessible Society Website. [Online] Available: http://www.accessiblesociety.org/topics/housing/pimacoruling.html

Lynch, R. (May 9, 2004). Necessity of Home Convenience is Growing. The Arizona Republic.

Vallejos, S. (May 9, 2004). Inclusive Designs Benefit Everybody. The Arizona Republic.

Easter Seals Arizona. (September 5, 2003). Transportation Information Exchange Meeting Notes.

Appendix C: Glossary

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990	The Americans with Disabilities Act gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, State and local government services, and telecommunications.
American with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)	The Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) set minimum requirements for compliance with Title III of the ADA that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in public accommodations and commercial facilities. Locations include lodging, restaurants, and public gathering places.
The American National Standards Institute (ANSI)	The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) is a private, non-profit organization [501(c)3] that administers and coordinates the U.S. voluntary standardization and conformity assessment system. The Institute's mission is to enhance both the global competitiveness of U.S. business and the U.S. quality of life by promoting and facilitating voluntary consensus standards and conformity assessment systems, and safeguarding their integrity.
ANSI A117.1	The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) is responsible for ICC/ANSI A117.1 standard - "Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities." The 1992 or 1998 editions of the A117.1 standard are referenced in each of the current model building codes. Earlier editions of the A117.1 standard (1980, 1986, and 1992) are referenced in many older codes and by many current State and local codes, regulations, and laws. The 1998 standard will be referenced in the 2000 edition of the International Building Code, the single code that will eventually replace the current set of three regional codes.
Best Practices	A best practice is a technique or methodology that, through experience and research, has proven to reliably lead to a desired result. A commitment to using the best practices in any field is a commitment to using all the knowledge and technology at one's disposal to ensure success.
Curb Ramp	A short ramp cutting through a curb or built up to it.

UBC (Uniform Building Code)	Construction codes in a community are generally referred to as “the building code.” They are enforced to regulate health and safety through the issuance of construction permits and inspections. While some states and jurisdictions have developed their own, most codes currently enforced in the U.S. are based on model codes developed by model code organizations. There are three model codes generally used in the U.S. Tempe uses the following model building code: Uniform Building Code (U.B.C.) 1994 Edition, Volumes I and II, with City of Tempe Amendments to the 1994 U.B.C.
Universal Design	The design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.