



PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS SCOPING GUIDELINES

1.0 GENERAL GUIDELINES

2.0 PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS

2.1 Introduction

The following “Scoping Guideline” is provided to clarify the intent of assigned Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects for “Program Accessibility” and accessibility in existing buildings for Capacity Projects where a New Building is being added to an existing one. The guideline will cover the investigation and scoping of the work, as well as the work required to be done in the existing building. This guideline shall pertain to all projects with Program Accessibility work in existing buildings unless otherwise noted.

2.2 Project Definition

2.2.1 Program Accessibility Projects (CIP)

2.2.1.1 Plan Nodes

“Program Accessibility” projects (CIP) typically have one LLW number and one Node. Program Accessibility projects are funded, designed and constructed with the specific purpose of undertaking alterations to a school building to enable people with disabilities to access and participate in all regular and unique programs in the facility.

The Capital Plan aims to provide the appropriate amount of work required for the listed nodes. Additional components should not be added as enhancements unless requested by the DOE Office of Accessibility Planning (OAP). The CIP project assignments specify the components of work to be scoped. Unlike ‘Resolution A’ projects where the school has some latitude to choose, CIP projects are limited to assigned or approved nodes.

2.2.1.2 Budget

The LLW “budget” for each Program Accessibility project included in the Five-Year Capital Plan is based on values that Capital Plan Management assigns to the various components; this value is not a calculated cost estimate for the scope of work and should not be used as such. The goal is to provide the correct scope of work in response to the CIP node while being cost efficient.

2.2.2 Capacity Projects

In Capacity projects where a New Building is being added to an existing one and full Code (ADAAG or Chapter 11) compliance is not mandated for the existing building, these guidelines will provide Program Accessibility in the overall facility (existing and new portions) in a cost-effective manner.

2.3 Background and Approach

2.3.1 General

Title II of The Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) and Chapter 11 of The New York City Building Code require new construction, alterations and additions to comply with accessibility standards. When existing spaces or elements are altered, each altered space or element must comply with the requirements set forth in both the ADA



and the NYC Building Code. Where the requirements differ, the provision that provides the greater level of accessibility shall prevail. These guidelines will assist designers in complying with the standards in Program Accessibility projects and in the existing building portion of Capacity projects.

2.3.2 Background

The DOE is committed to ensuring that its programs, services and activities are accessible to staff, members of the school community, students and family members with disabilities. (See more on the NYC DOE website - <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/space-and-facilities/building-accessibility>). School buildings designated as accessible are required to ensure that students with disabilities can access and participate in the full range of educational programs offered. Providing access for all students to both typical and unique programmatic spaces is essential and aligns with the DOE's accessibility commitment. Though this may not provide accessibility to every existing space, it will provide functional accessibility to the overall facility. For example, in the existing building, not all typical classrooms will be accessible, but some classrooms on every floor will be accessible, in addition to unique specialty classrooms and common spaces.

2.3.3 Approach

- The designer must exercise good judgement in determining the appropriate amount of work needed to provide such access. Considerations may include functionality, maintainability, and cost effectiveness.
- In Capacity projects, accessibility will be viewed on a building-wide basis, including both new and existing buildings. When in doubt, the designer is to consult the Design & Construction Innovation Management (DCIM) Accessibility Unit (AU).
- Refer to Exhibit A, Program Accessibility Process, for further detailed information on the scoping and design process.

2.4 Accessibility Guidelines for Existing Buildings

2.4.1 Accessible Routes

An accessible route must be provided to all accessible spaces and elements as follows:

2.4.1.1 Entrance

An accessible route must be provided from the sidewalk to the main entrance lobby.

2.4.1.1.1 Main Entrance

- In Program Accessibility projects, the accessible entrance shall be the main entrance. **One door shall be provided with a low-energy power-operated door as per Section BC 1105.1.8 of the 2022 NYC Building Code if none exist.**
- In Capacity Addition projects, an accessible route to the accessible main entrance will typically be provided at the New Building primary entrance. Accessibility may be provided at the existing building's main entrance only if it will continue to be used as the primary entry for the facility, or if it is critical for functionality (to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by A&E and AU).



2.4.1.1.2 Secondary Entrance

- **In Program Accessibility projects** when there are multiple schools in one building that may use different entrances, secondary entrance accessibility in the existing building shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with A&E and AU. If secondary entrance will be made accessible, provide doorbell and intercom to connect to the main entrance security desk.
- **In Capacity Addition projects**, provide a **secondary entrance** only if the existing school is very large and the secondary entrance is deemed critical for functionality, or if required by Section **BC 1009.1** (Accessible Means of Egress). Consult with AU.

2.4.1.2 Ramps

Existing ramps shall be evaluated for compliance. If a ramp is non-compliant and is critical to an accessible route, determination for correction shall be made on a case-by-case basis by A&E and AU.

2.4.1.3 Circulation Path

An accessible circulation path shall be provided to all accessible spaces and elements.

2.4.1.3.1 Protruding Objects

Remove or modify protruding objects that project more than 4" into the circulation path. Alternatively, if replacement is not possible, a cane detectable object shall be added.

2.4.1.3.2 Thresholds

Compliant thresholds are required in accessible rooms (i.e.: bathrooms, classrooms, specialty rooms, art rooms, science, PA spaces, etc.)

2.4.1.3.3 Elevation Change

Elevation change along circulation path shall be verified for compliance. If not compliant, modify path to be compliant.

2.4.1.4 Elevators and Lifts

- An elevator must be provided to access all levels in multi-story buildings, unless a portion of the existing building is not required to be made accessible. Where the elevator cannot provide access to portions of the building, then a ramp, (and in the existing building only, a LULA or vertical platform lift -in that order of preference) shall be used. An inclined platform lift should only be used as a last resort.
- **In Program Accessibility projects**, existing elevators shall be evaluated for accessibility compliance and documented in the scope report. If existing elevator is non-compliant, determination for correction shall be made on a case-by-case basis by the AU in consultation with OAP. If no elevators exist, a new elevator shall be provided.
- **In Capacity Addition projects**, if there are accessible elevators in the existing building, new elevators may not need to be provided as part of the new **addition** building. Determination shall be evaluated on a



case-by-case basis by A&E and AU. The goal is to have two accessible elevators in the overall facility.

- Elevator additions many times require a zoning waiver. During the Scoping Phase, the designer is to determine if a waiver will be required and indicate such in the Scope Report. If a waiver is required, at the start of the design coordinate with the DPM, who will start the zoning waiver process with the legal/real estate department.

2.4.2 Plumbing Elements

2.4.2.1 Classroom and Specialty Room Sinks

Provide accessible sinks as needed in rooms or spaces that are designated to be accessible (i.e., accessible classrooms, specialty rooms, art rooms, cafeteria, science, etc.).

2.4.2.2 Drinking Fountains

Accessible drinking fountains shall be provided along the accessible route.

- In Program Accessibility projects,
 - Existing non-compliant drinking fountains along the accessible route shall be replaced with accessible units. Where drinking fountains exist at multiple locations on the accessible route on the same floor, only one set of drinking fountains shall be replaced with accessible units.
 - **Existing non-compliant drinking fountains that serve public assembly spaces shall be made accessible.**
 - **When accessible drinking fountains are proposed for a PS building, 3 different heights shall be provided as per DR 1.3.1.6 and DR 1.3.1.16.**
 - If drinking fountains don't exist in the public hallway or PA spaces, consult with school if it's needed. Provide accessible drinking fountains accordingly.
- In Capacity Addition projects, accessible drinking fountains in the New Building shall serve each floor; the existing drinking fountains may remain, with the exception of those for the PA spaces.

2.4.2.3 Bathrooms

2.4.2.3.1 Student Bathrooms

- Accessible student bathrooms shall be provided for each sex, on each floor of the school along the accessible route.
- Existing non-accessible toilets located within existing classrooms that are not designated to be accessible can remain.
- If modification of ganged toilets is impractical, provide accessible single-user bathrooms in close proximity to the gang toilet room and/or near grouped accessible spaces and as directed by A&E and AU.

2.4.2.3.2 Staff Bathrooms

- In Program Accessibility projects, provide accessible staff bathroom(s) on the main floor level and then on alternate floors.



- In Capacity Addition projects, accessible staff bathrooms shall be provided in the new building on every floor.

2.4.2.3.3 Bathrooms proximate to Public Assembly spaces

- Where there are no proximate accessible adult bathrooms available for use near to PA spaces, consideration must be given to providing accessible toilet facilities nearby. Discuss with A&E and AU.

2.4.3 Communication

2.4.3.1 Signage

- Provide accessible directional signage at existing non-accessible bathrooms (student and staff) indicating the route to accessible bathrooms. At any non-accessible entrance, provide accessible directional signage indicating the route to the accessible entrance as per BC 1101.3.3.
- Provide accessible signage in the existing building to all spaces including stairs.

2.4.3.2 Visual Alarms

Existing fire alarm system shall remain as-is, except when a system replacement is required. In some cases with newer systems, modifications may be possible. Consult with A&E management.

2.4.3.3 Assistive Listening System

All PA spaces must include an assistive listening system.

- Provide a phased array “induction loop” Assistive Listening System in one of the PA spaces as per Local law 51 of 2017 for all projects filed after January 1, 2018. Refer to DR 7.3.8.
- Provide a “micro-loop” assistive listening system at the main reception desk as per Local law 51.
- All other PA spaces shall have an assistive listening system, either Induction loop or FM system.

2.4.4 General Building Elements

2.4.4.1 Stairs

- Unless otherwise required to be altered, existing non-compliant interior stair treads, risers and handrails shall remain in place.
- For primary schools, provide an additional lower handrail to accommodate children, if feasible. Consult with AU.

2.4.4.2 Doors and Hardware

All accessible rooms and spaces shall have accessible door width, maneuvering clearances and hardware. Power operated openers should be avoided and used only after consulting with A&E and AU. In case power-operated openers are used, provide rechargeable battery back-up power.

2.4.4.3 Switches and Receptacles

Existing switches and receptacles shall remain. If altered, they shall be made accessible.



2.4.4.4 Windows

If a window replacement project includes Approved Holding Room(s), evacuation windows shall be replaced in kind. Consult with A&E management on a case-by-case basis.

2.4.5 Rooms and Spaces

2.4.5.1 Kindergarten, 3-K and Pre-K (if included in the school organization)

- In Program Accessibility projects, at least two each of 3-K, Pre-K and Kindergarten classroom, if provided, shall be accessible.
- In Capacity addition projects, ensure that the overall facility (either new or existing building) includes at least two accessible Kindergarten and two accessible Pre-K rooms. Using the new building rooms (or rooms that are being converted) for this purpose is preferable. If this is not feasible, consult with A&E and AU for direction.

2.4.5.2 Typical Classrooms

- In Program Accessibility projects,
 - At least 2 of all typical classrooms on each floor level shall be accessible when the total number of typical classrooms on the given floor is equal or less than 10; Otherwise, 25% of all typical classrooms on each floor shall be accessible.
 - All D75 classrooms shall be documented in draft scope. AU will consult with OAP for final allocation and included in the final scope report.
- In Capacity addition projects:
 - For PS buildings, at least one typical classroom at each grade level in the overall facility shall be accessible. Using the new buildings rooms (or rooms that are being converted) for this purpose is preferable. If this is not reasonable, consult with SCA A&E for direction.
 - For IS and HS buildings, at least 2 but not less than 25% of all typical classrooms on each floor level shall be accessible.

2.4.5.2 Specialty Rooms

- At least one of each programmatically unique room type (e.g. science lab/demo, art room, music, library, black box theaters, dance rooms, etc.) shall be accessible.
- If there is more than one specialty room having the same features in the overall facility, only one will need to be accessible.

2.4.5.3 PA Spaces

All PA spaces (auditorium, cafeteria, gym, multi-purpose room, etc.) are required to be accessible. If multiple PA spaces of the same use exist, only one of the spaces shall be made accessible. **For each accessible PA space, provide 2 accessible exit doorways remote from each other. If providing 2 accessible exit doorways is infeasible to achieve due to existing condition, consult with A&E and AU.**



2.4.5.3.1 Auditorium

- The sloped auditorium floor shall remain as is and provided with a non-slip surface if such surface does not exist.
- Accessible handrail(s) where ramp slope exceeds 1:20 shall be provided. **For PS grade buildings, a lower set of handrails accommodate young children shall also be provided when feasible.** If providing a handrail(s) will remove a substantial number of seats or will violate egress, A&E and AU shall be notified for a determination **to be made.**
- A ramp or vertical platform lift to access the stage/**platform** is required. Platform lift shall be provided with standby power or with self-rechargeable battery power that allows all platform lift functions for a min. of 5 upward and downward trips.
- Stage/**platform** edge protection is required.
- Dispersed designated wheelchair spaces, companion seating and designated aisle seating are required.
- Ensure **the** auditorium entry door width is accessible.

2.4.5.3.2 Gymnasium

- Ensure gymnasium entry door width is accessible.
- If locker rooms or shower area are used by **the** school to serve a Gymnasium, these spaces shall be made accessible. **At least 1 shower for each sex shall be accessible; at least 1 accessible changing bench shall be provided for each changing room. If lockers exist, at least 5% shall be made accessible. The scope shall be discussed with AU on consultation with OAP in cases that these spaces are not currently used as locker rooms or shower spaces.**

2.4.5.3.3 Cafeteria

- Ensure cafeteria entry door width is accessible.
- Accessible sink shall be provided.
- Existing Servery line shall be accessible.

2.4.5.3.4 Multi-purpose Rooms

- Ensure multi-purpose room doors are accessible.
- Ensure flooring is accessible.

2.4.5.4 Offices

All offices that a child may need to get to (e.g., general office, principal's office, assistant principal office, guidance office, medical suite, OT/PT, etc.) must be accessible and on an accessible route.

2.4.5.5 Security Desk

The Security Desk shall be accessible.

2.4.5.6 Play Roof(s)

Accessibility is required to all play roofs.



2.4.5.7 Play Yard(s)

The route to the school play yard shall be accessible and shall be within the school property, unless the school and play yard are located on different blocks.

2.4.5.8 Recuse Areas (Areas of Rescue Assistance, Horizontal Exits and Fire Rescue Areas) and Holding Rooms

Students and staff with disabilities shall be able to safely egress out a school building during an emergency. Where exit is not accessible (including the floor levels that are partially accessible to street grade), rescue areas or holding area rooms shall be provided. Refer to DR 1.3.3.1.

2.4.5.9 Circulation

Provide adequate space for compliant circulation in all accessible rooms and spaces.

2.4.5.10 Accessible Furniture

Appropriate accessible furniture shall be provided in all accessible rooms and spaces. Cafeteria shall have at least **10%** wheelchair spaces provided and dispersed; each accessible classroom shall have at least 1 accessible desk; science lab, media center, library shall have accessible work surface for students, etc.

2.4.6 Sprinkler System

If the building's basement or cellar level includes program spaces that a student with disability needs to access, the entire basement or cellar level shall be sprinklered per FDNY Rule 3 RCNY §34-02. Otherwise, a waiver shall be obtained from FDNY.

2.4.7 Miscellaneous

Elements that are requested by OAP to be made accessible.

2.4.8 Others

Refer to the SCA's latest accessibility related details and D.R. 1.3.1.16 for the design of accessible elements.

3.0 Exhibits

A. Program Accessibility Process

End of Program Accessibility for Existing Buildings Scoping Guidelines