

*A Guide to the Implementation of
Polling Place Accessibility
in Oklahoma*



**Provided by the Oklahoma State Election Board
Based on recommendations of the
State Accessibility Task Force**

1990

**ACCESSIBILITY TASK FORCE
MEMBERSHIP**

Doug Sanderson
Chairman
Logan County Election Board Secretary

Marti Hayes
Oklahoma County Election Board Secretary

Dorothy Gorre Jones
Garfield County Election Board Secretary

June Kreiger
Stephens County Election Board Secretary

Peggy McLemore
Grady County Election Board Secretary

Juanita Pollard
McCurtain County Election Board Secretary

Barbara Rossetti
Tulsa County Election Board Assistant Secretary

Special thanks to:

Fran Roach
Director
Support Services Division
State Election Board

Bev Graham
Training Coordinator
Support Services Division
State Election Board

Sherry Willson
Logan County Election Board

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | <u>Page</u> |
|---|-------------|
| I. INTRODUCTION | 2 |
| II. INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS | 2 |
| III. DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS | 3 |
| CATEGORY I PARKING | 3 |
| CATEGORY II WALKWAYS OR PATHWAYS TO THE BUILDING | 7 |
| CATEGORY III RAMPS AND ELEVATORS ENTERING OR IN- SIDE THE BUILDING | 12 |
| CATEGORY IV OTHER ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES | 14 |
| CATEGORY V FEATURES WITHIN THE VOTING AREA | 17 |
| IV. ADOPT A PRECINCT PROGRAM | 21 |
| V. APPENDIX A: SAMPLE FORMS | 28 |
| VI. APPENDIX B: PRESS RELEASES | 32 |
| VII. APPENDIX C: SAMPLE LETTERS | 36 |
| VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY | 39 |

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this manual is to provide guidance and practical suggestions for making polling locations throughout your county accessible to elderly and disabled voters.

How you reach accessibility in your county is, in the final analysis, up to you as County Election Board Secretary. You are in the best position to know the resources of your county and how best to utilize them. What this manual can do for you is provide options, suggestions and helpful hints as you address accessibility issues in your county.

Accessibility is at the same time a great challenge and a great opportunity for the election system in Oklahoma to be of assistance to a segment of your community with special needs. The project will be what you make it.

Much progress has already been made, but much is yet to be done. It is hoped that this manual will provide guidance and suggestions enabling you to more easily implement accessibility requirements in your county. The Federal Election Commission has set a goal of 90% polling location accessibility nationwide for 1990. With some initiative and determination Oklahoma can lead the nation in polling location accessibility!

INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

If you feel somewhat bewildered by the whole issue of accessibility, remember that other counties throughout the nation are going through the same process. The difference is that we as Oklahomans can make use of the benefits of an integrated and closely knit family of fellow election board administrators. You are not alone in this endeavor; we will succeed in this task together.

While you, no doubt, have already given accessibility a great deal of thought, be sure not to overlook the obvious.

1. Know your precincts. Before you can hope to understand what accessibility improvements are needed, you must know your precincts. In addition to the polling place accessibility survey forms for each precinct that detail accessibility compliance, there are other considerations to address. How you approach making improvements may depend on whether your polling location is a privately or publicly owned building, and whether there are limitations because of the nature of the location. Different circumstances may exist because your polling location is a church, school, library, municipal building, private residence, or some other type of location. Know the opportunities and limitations associated with each site.

2. Determine whether to stay or relocate. This manual contemplates making existing polling locations accessible. However, while it may be possible to make a location accessible, it may not be feasible because of other circumstances. Determine whether circumstances will allow the polling location to be modified for accessibility before expending

resources on it. Once you are determined to improve a location, decide whether the circumstances allow for permanent or temporary changes to the facility.

Remember, if you choose to relocate a polling site within a precinct, a 30-day notice must be given. Consult Section 3 of your Secretary's Digest for more information.

3. Gather your resources. Using manpower, funding, and equipment resources discussed in this manual, organize and coordinate your efforts. Some resources can be channeled to all polling locations, others to just a few or only one location.

4. Have a plan for implementation. Set up a step-by-step process and timetable for accessibility activities such as obtaining assistance, gathering supplies, and making improvements to the polling site.

If you do not have a plan of action, it will be discouraging to those whose assistance you seek. Know where you are going and why. Otherwise, it will be hard to encourage others to give their time and efforts. Have a plan and be prepared!

Several forms have been collected from counties as examples of how to track and coordinate your efforts. See Appendix A for examples of these forms.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

A thorough understanding of accessibility requirements is crucial to having an effective plan of action. This section of the manual breaks down each of the five categories of accessibility requirements. It discusses design considerations, hints and suggestions, and equipment resources for each category. Items marked "Recommended" are not required to meet Federal standards. Illustrations and design information are from the following sources:

National Organization on Disability. Disabled Citizens at the Polls: A Guide for Election Officials. Chicago: National Easter Seal Society, 1986.

Bacon, Suzette. Access For All. Riley, North Carolina: North Carolina Special Office for the Handicapped, 1976.

CATEGORY I: PARKING

According to the 1988 Polling Place Accessibility Survey, this category has the greatest number of problems of the five compliance categories. Statewide, only twenty-six percent of the precincts currently have adequate parking. Don't be discouraged, progress can be made with a little ingenuity.

ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR PARKING:

1. An off-street parking space which is:
 - (A) paved or surfaced in concrete, asphalt or macadam, etc., and free of loose gravel;
 - (B) at least thirteen (13) feet wide;
 - (C) on level ground with a slope no greater than a rise of one (1) foot in twenty (20) feet;
 - (D) designated for the handicapped by above-ground signs bearing the symbol of accessibility either permanently designed for the handicapped or temporarily designed for the handicapped;
 - (E) with a curb cut connecting it to an accessible walk or to the building entrance;
 - (F) within a reasonable travel distance of two hundred (200) feet from the building. RECOMMENDED
2. A relatively level passenger drop-off zone at least five (5) feet wide with a curb cut connecting it to an accessible walk or to the building entrance.

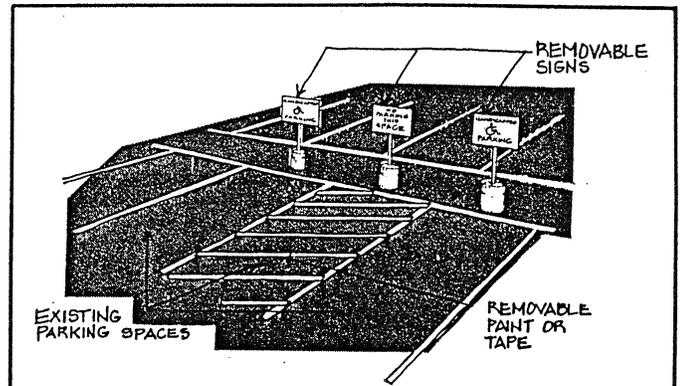
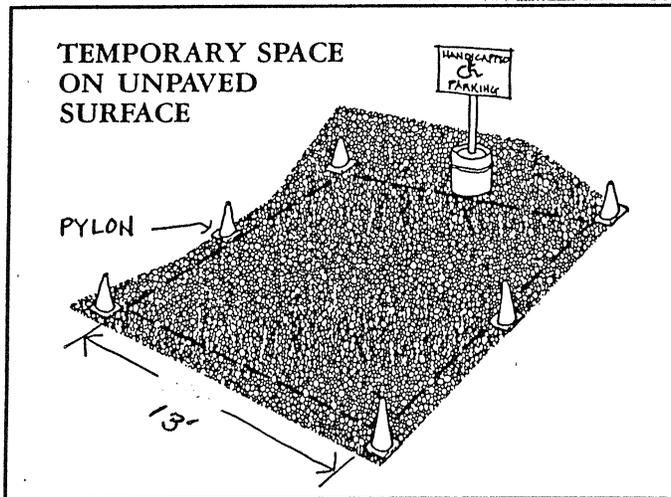
DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

The first consideration in determining the desirability of the parking space is that it be off-street so that a disabled person can safely get out of a vehicle away from the main flow of traffic.

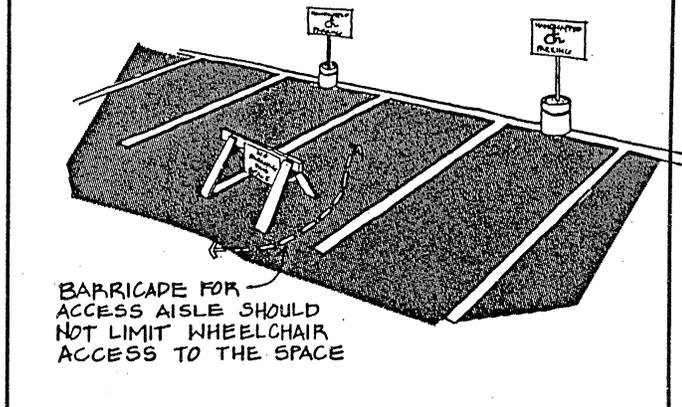
All parking spaces are required to be surfaced in concrete, asphalt or macadam, etc., and free of loose gravel. If parking spaces are unpaved it will be necessary to pave them, but in the interim, hard-packed gravel which is free of stones is a second but less desirable cover. Use of a parking area with a predominantly clay surface should be avoided because the clay will be very slippery when it rains.

Because many disabled drivers use wheelchairs or walkers, they need parking spaces which are at least thirteen (13) feet wide. The 13 feet space includes a 5 ft. access aisle. This access aisle could be shared between two parking spaces. The extra space provides room to open vehicle doors wide and to maneuver between cars.

If the polling location does not have a permanently designated parking space for the disabled, then both a temporary space and a temporary sign should be provided. Pylons or taped lines designating the thirteen (13) foot parking space will sufficiently mark the space. Pylons should be placed at the corners of the parking space and along the sides, but adequate space should be left for wheelchairs to move between them.



TEMPORARY ACCESSIBLE PARKING



In addition to designating the thirteen (13) foot parking space it is important that a sign designate the space as reserved for the handicapped. The signs can be hand-painted as long as the sign bears the symbol of accessibility. Remember that the reserved parking sign must be above ground. A sign painted on the pavement does not meet the requirements.

SIGNS

Signs located at the accessible parking spaces should be above ground and should be clearly visible to drivers. Signs for permanent accessible parking spaces should be mounted on a post or building. Signs for temporary spaces can be mounted in a weighted base (such as a five gallon pail filled with sand or gravel) and placed in front of the parking space. Several lightweight handicapped parking signs are on the market and can be purchased at reasonable prices. Signs can also be prepared by the election board using lumber or pylons. Lastly, be conscious of the requirements for curb cuts and the nearness of the space to the building. Curb cuts or curb ramps are essential. It is also obvious that handicapped parking spaces should be located as close as possible to accessible building entrances.



HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- * Make use of manpower resources listed for both construction and posting of signs.

- * Check with your county commissioners; they may have excess pipe on which to attach signs. Also, they may be able to place permanent parking signs, depending on the precinct location.
- * Check with your county commissioners to see if they will loan or give the election board extra pylons for use in marking temporary handicapped parking spaces.
- * Obtain old realtor signs and repaint them for handicapped signs.
- * Ask high school shop classes to make portable stands for handicapped parking.
- * Ask county commissioners to provide excess asphalt to build paved parking areas on public property.
- * Ask lumber yards or construction companies to donate scrap lumber to build signs.

EQUIPMENT RESOURCES:

HANDICAPPED PARKING SIGNS

- * Handicapped parking signs are available from most sign companies.

Brookline Industries
6800 South Chicago Ave.
Chicago, IL 60637

Seton Name Plate Corporation
P.O. Box Drawer FD-1331
New Haven, CT 06505

DGS Corporation
222 West Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60610

Sign Language
323 E. Main
Norman, OK
360-7500

Jack Spratt Screen Ad Co.
409 NE 40
Oklahoma City, OK
524-5551

Signco, Inc.
5900 Mosteller Drive
Oklahoma City, OK
840-4653

James Thompson Sign Co.
1320 N. Eastern
Oklahoma City, OK
427-7897

Signs By Fice
5614 NW Expressway
Oklahoma City, OK
721-4128

Luther Sign Company
4425 SW 34
Oklahoma City, OK
681-6535

Sign & Go
3320 S. Broadway
Edmond, OK
348-8646

Mac Signs
4208 S. May
Oklahoma City, OK
685-7723

Signs Now
1008 NW 63
Oklahoma City, OK
848-1352

Oklahoma State Industries
1-800-522-3565

On-Line Graphix
8100 Classen Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK
840-1151

Pro-Signs
340 S. Vermont
Oklahoma City, OK
943-4461

Scott Plastics Co.
P.O. Box 2958
Sarasota, FL 33578

Sooner Sign Company
1237 NW 2
Oklahoma City, OK
239-2801

Superior Neon Signs Inc.
2515 N. Oklahoma
Oklahoma City, OK
528-5515

Truxes Adhesives & Chemical Co.
514 West Fifth Avenue
Naperville, IL 60540

PYLONS

Seton Name Plate Corporation
P.O. Box MB-1331
New Haven, CT 06505
203-488-8059

TAPE STRIPPING

Seton Name Plate Corporation
P.O. Box MB-1331
New Haven, CT 06505
203-488-8059

CATEGORY II: WALKWAYS OR PATHWAYS TO THE BUILDING

Walkways are very important in your accessibility design because they form a continuous link from the accessible parking space to the voting booth. Remember that steps, curbs, stairs, soft sand or loose gravel are undesirable and should not be part of an accessible route.

ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

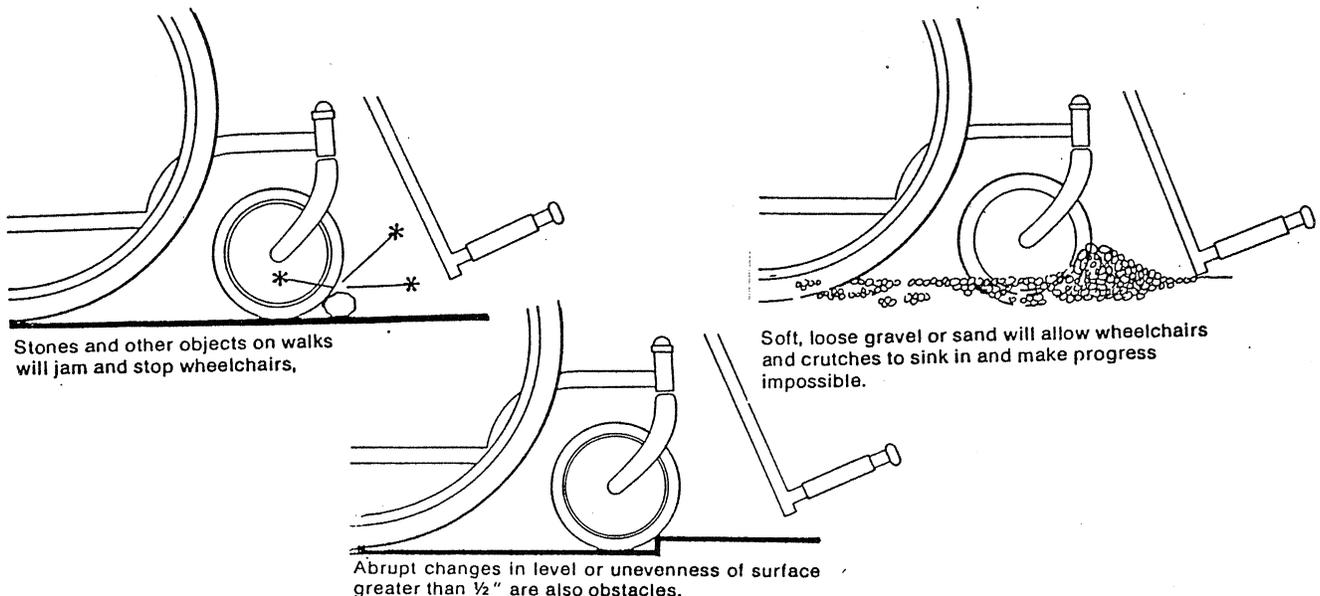
1. A paved (concrete, asphalt, macadam, etc.) walkway or pathway to the building entrance which is:
 - (A) at least thirty-six (36) inches wide,
 - (B) free of protrusions (such as fire hydrants, tree trunks, or other obstacles) which narrow the passage to less than thirty-six (36) inches wide,
 - (C) free of any abrupt edges or breaks in the surface where the difference is over one-half (1/2) inch in height (such as where it crosses a driveway, parking lot, or another walkway, etc),
RECOMMENDED
 - (D) free of any grating with openings over one-half (1/2) inch wide, RECOMMENDED
 - (E) free of any slopes or inclines greater than a one (1) foot rise in twenty (20) feet,

- (F) free of any overhanging objects (such as tree branches, signs, etc.) which hang lower than eighty (80) inches,
 - (G) well lit, RECOMMENDED
 - (H) free of such hazards as ice, snow, leaves, or other debris on the day of the election. RECOMMENDED
2. Cut or ramped curbs along the pathway to the building which have:
 - (A) at least a three (3) foot clear width,
 - (B) a slope of no more than a one (1) inch in ten (10) inches.
 3. Stairs or steps along the walkway or pathway to the building which have:
 - (A) either been ramped with a slope of no more than one (1) foot rise in twelve (12) feet, or provided with a suitable alternative means of access.
 - (B) stairway steps along the walkway or pathway to the building with nonslip surfaces and handrails. RECOMMENDED
 4. Signs which identify the accessible route of travel if the route is different from the primary route of travel to the building.

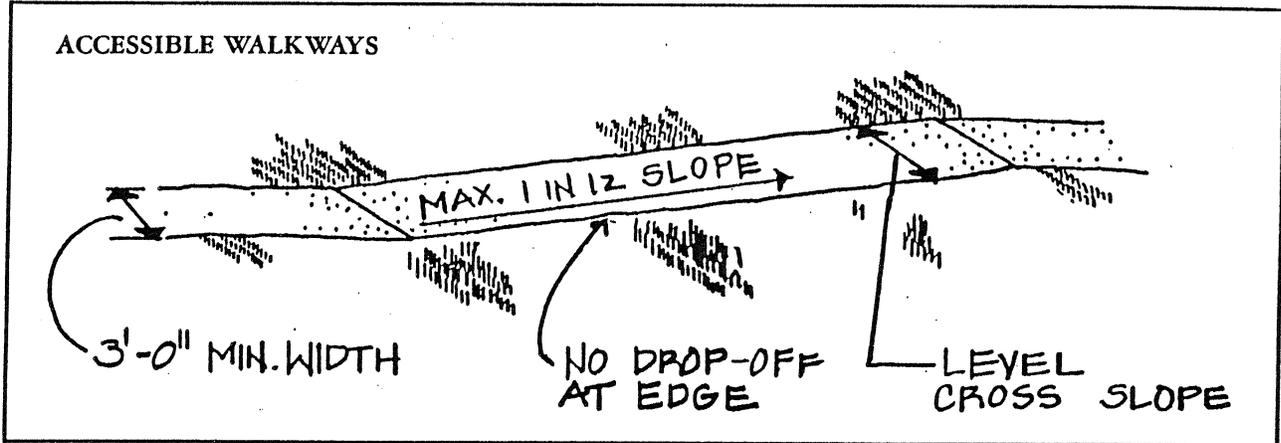
DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

Walkways or Pathways

Any vertical change in level can prevent some disabled people from using the walk. Wheelchair footrests, for example, are necessarily mounted very close to the ground, and the slightest obstructions or a change in slope can stop a wheelchair abruptly.



Small changes in level can be overcome by applying asphalt patch material in a manner that blends the levels. Changes in angles should be gradual, not abrupt.



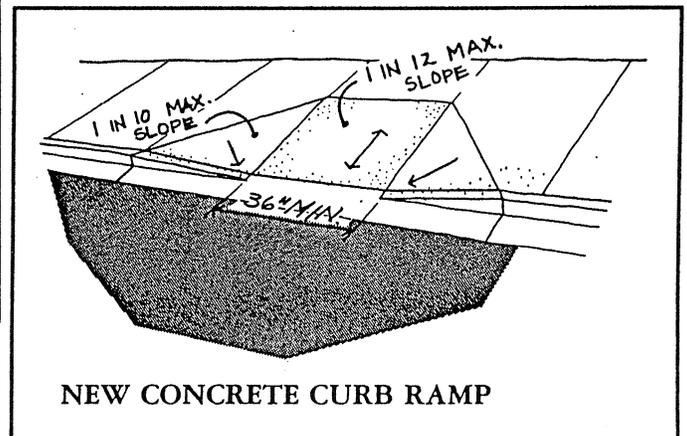
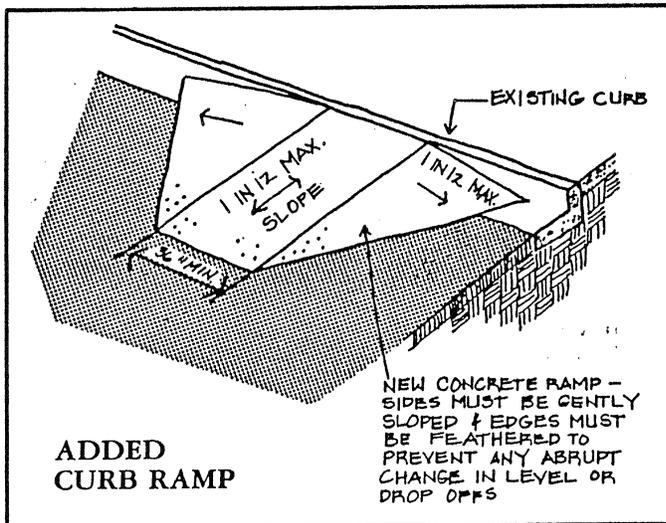
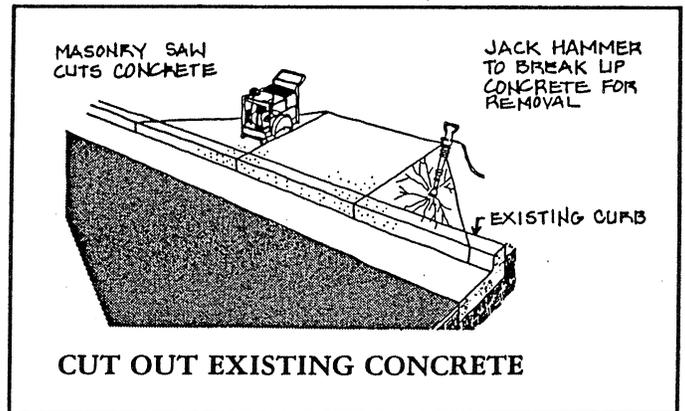
CURBS

Curbs are not a problem in most of our rural polling locations but can be of concern in metropolitan areas. Curbs, like steps, are hazardous or impossible for people who walk with difficulty or who use wheelchairs. If curbs exist along a potentially accessible route, a curb ramp or curb cut should be installed.

1. Permanent Curb Exits and Ramps

Existing curbs can be removed and new concrete poured for curb ramps. Maximum slope should be no more than a one (1) inch rise in ten (10) inches.

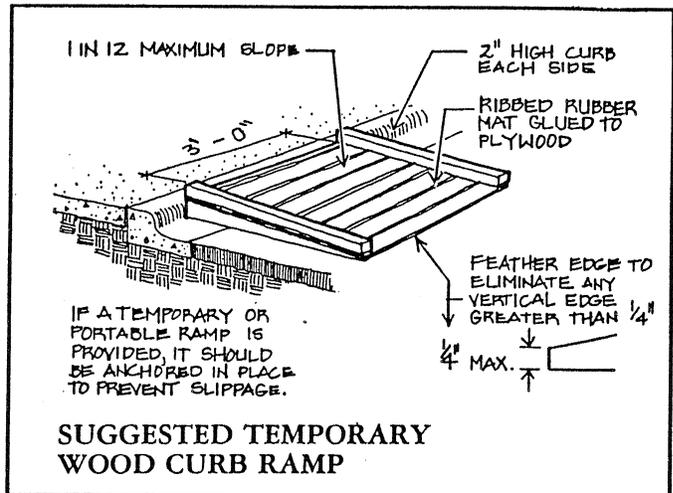
The least expensive permanent curb ramp possible is formed by pouring concrete or asphalt in the gutter.



Such ramps are less desirable because they extend out into the street and can interfere with traffic and block water flow in the gutter. These ramps should be used only where there is little or no traffic flow and where the slope of the street eliminates the need for a continuous gutter. Curb cuts and ramps should blend smoothly, with the two levels connected. Many engineers have preferred a lip at the bottom of curb ramps to control water flow in the gutter. These lips are dangerous and, where combined with the angle of a street crown, they can cause accidents. All lips must be omitted at curb cuts and a smooth gradual transformation made between the curb ramp and the street pavement.

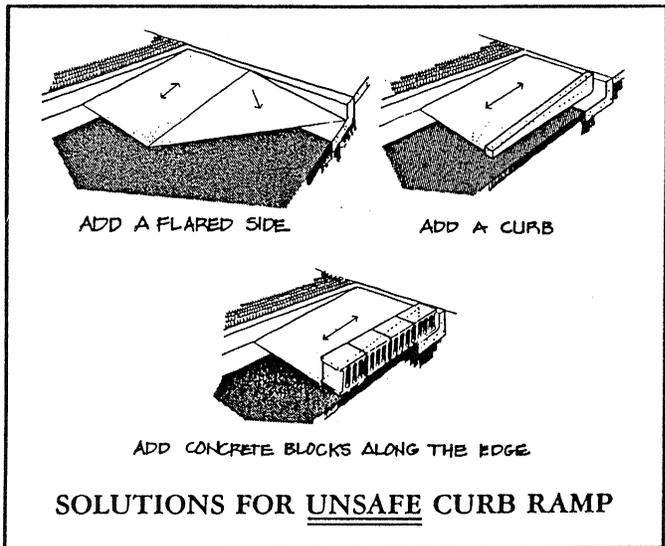
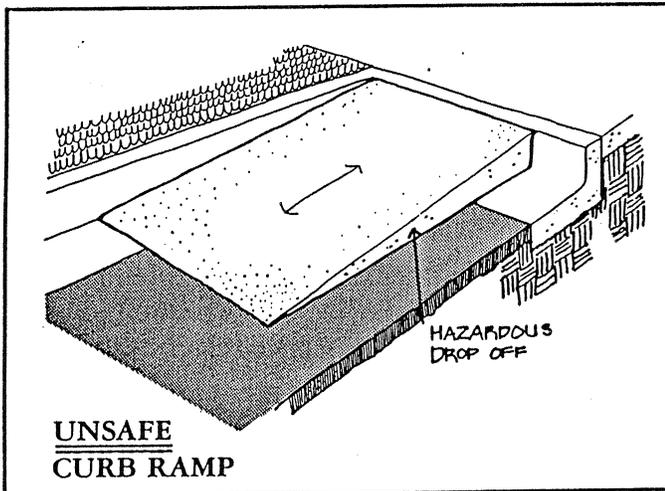
2. Temporary Curb Ramps

If curbs exist at accessible parking areas or along the accessible route to the polling place and a permanent ramp cannot be installed, then a temporary ramp should be provided. Temporary ramps of varying lengths can be purchased or rented. See below for a listing of supply resources.



3. Existing Hazardous Curb Ramps

Existing curb ramps having a drop-off on one or both sides are hazardous because people can easily step or roll off the edge.



To reduce the danger of someone rolling or walking over the edge of a permanent curb ramp, flared sides of a curb should be added. If a permanent solution is not possible, then place concrete blocks or other material along the sides adjacent to the ramped surface to form side barriers.

Stairs or steps along the accessible route are not acceptable. Permanent or temporary ramps must be used to provide accessibility.

Signs should be used to identify the accessible route of travel if that route is different from the primary route of travel to the building.

HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- * Ask local FFA or Vo-Tech groups to build temporary ramps. Also see the manpower resource suggestions elsewhere in this manual.
- * Ask disabled groups in your area to test polling locations for walkway accessibility.
- * Ask local lumber yards and plywood mills to donate curb ramps made at polling locations.
- * Make sure maintenance officials at polling locations are aware of the necessity to keep walkways and pathways free of obstacles.
- * Ask officials in charge of polling location buildings to make needed alterations such as curb cuts.
- * Ask high school welding classes to construct ramps with handrails.
- * Borrow portable metal curb ramps from moving companies for election day. Use caution to make sure they can be secured and are proper for the situation.
- * Make alternate route signs.

EQUIPMENT RESOURCES:

RAMPS

Copperloy Corporation
8901 E. Pleasant Valley Road
Independence, OH 44131

Interkal Incorporated Factory
5981 E. Cork Street
Comstock, MI 49003-2107

Quick Deck
P.O. Box 607
Livermore, CA 94550
Phone: 415-449-8686

Stadiums Unlimited
Box 627
Grinnell, IA

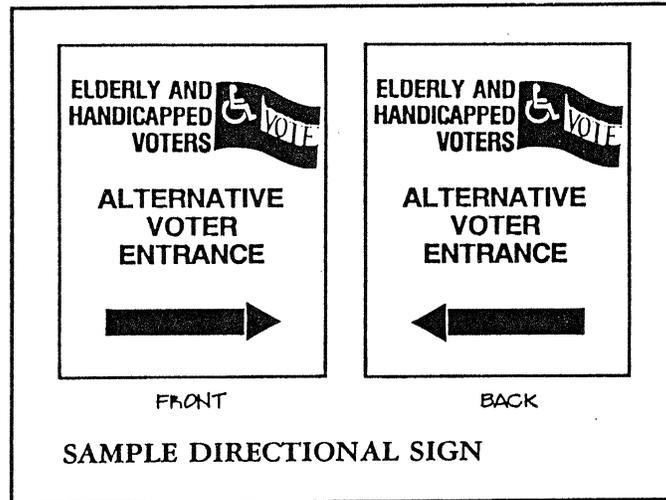
Interkal Incorporated
P.O. Box 2107
Kalamazoo, MI 49003-2107

J.H. Industries, Inc.
8901 E. Pleasant Valley Road
Cleveland, OH 44131
Phone 1-800-321-4968

Young Enterprises
Porta-Ramp Division
Anaheim, CA 92807

SIGNS

See equipment resource listing for signs in the previous category.



CATEGORY III: RAMPS AND ELEVATORS ENTERING OR INSIDE THE BUILDING

This category includes stairs, steps and elevators attached to or inside the building.

ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Building stairs or steps either at the entrance or between the entrance and the voting area which are over three-fourths (3/4) inches high, must be:
 - (A) provided with a ramp which has:
 - (1) a slope no greater than a rise of one (1) foot in twelve (12) feet,
 - (2) a nonslip surface,
 - (3) a handrail if the ramp rises more than six (6) inches or is longer than seventy-two (72) inches, RECOMMENDED
 - (a) the handrail must be at least thirty-two (32) inches above the ramp surface, RECOMMENDED
 - (b) the handrail can be gripped, RECOMMENDED
 - (4) at least a two (2) inch curb at the side to prevent slipping off the ramp, and
 - (5) if there is a door at the top of the ramp, a level space of at least five (5) feet by five (5) feet where a wheelchair can rest while the door is opened, with at least a two (2) inch curb at the side if this landing area has a drop-off.

OR

(B) provided with an elevator which has:

- (1) a close proximity to the entrance of the building, RECOMMENDED
- (2) elevator doors with at least thirty-six (36) inches of clear width,
- (3) an elevator cab which has a width of at least five and two-thirds ($5 \frac{2}{3}$) feet by four and one-half ($4 \frac{1}{2}$) feet,
- (4) elevator controls less than fifty-four (54) inches high, RECOMMENDED
- (5) elevator control panels marked with raised lettering.

OR

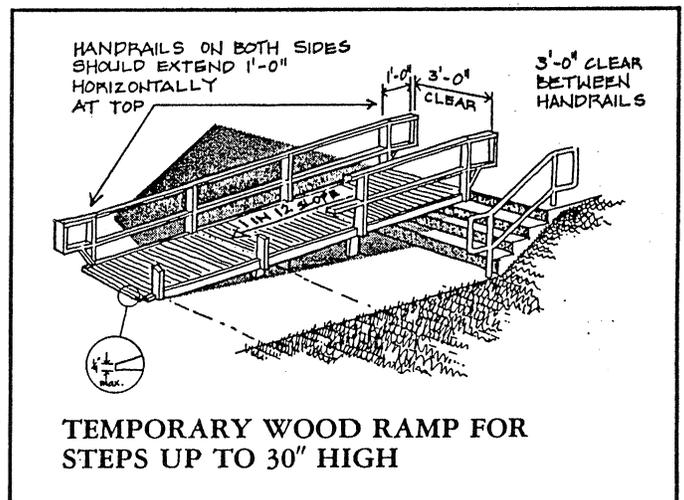
(C) provided with an alternative means of unassisted passage (such as a chair lift or an alternative route of travel).

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

The discussion of ramps in Category II covered many of the concerns for ramps attached to a building, but additional considerations exist. Although not specifically mentioned in the accessibility requirements, the ramp width should preferably be at least thirty-six (36) inches, the same width as the walkways and pathways. Additionally, the ramps should have nonslip surfaces, and handrails are recommended.

Both permanent and temporary ramps are sufficient. Homemade ramps which fit the dimensions of a particular location are acceptable.

If steps have a total rise of no more than thirty (30) inches, a temporary wood ramp can be built to accommodate disabled people. Exterior plywood and treated lumber should be used. A rubber mat surface, fully glued to the plywood, is recommended. It is recommended that ramps that rise more than six (6) inches have handrails.

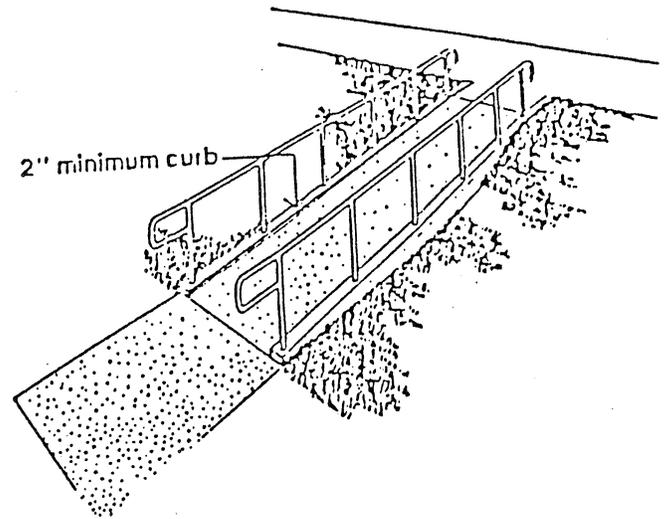


Ramps can, of course, be built over steps more than thirty (30) inches in height, but since they must be twelve (12) feet long for each one (1) foot rise, they become impractical as temporary facilities.

Ramps and landing area surfaces require edge protection to prevent slipping off the ramp or landing area.

Also remember that if there is a door at the top of the ramp, a level space of five (5) feet by five (5) feet must be provided so that a wheelchair can rest while the door is opened.

In the unlikely event a polling location has elevators, they should meet the previously mentioned elevator specifications. If the elevator is located in a public building, it should meet federally established guidelines. If not, consult the appropriate governmental entity for assistance in making needed improvements.



HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

* For helpful hints and suggestions, consult the previous section.

EQUIPMENT RESOURCES:

RAMPS

For information on ramp manufacturers, consult the previous section.

CATEGORY IV: OTHER ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Doors and corridors provide formidable accessibility barriers to the disabled. Fortunately, inexpensive design modifications can correct the situation with little time and effort.

ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Doors along the route of travel should:

- (A) be equipped with either arch or lever-type handles, pushplates, or automatic openers (so that twisting a doorknob is not required), RECOMMENDED
- (B) have an opening which is at least thirty-two (32) inches wide,
- (C) have a threshold less than one-half (1/2) inch high,
- (D) be marked with safety seals if the doors are glass, RECOMMENDED

- (E) remain open at least three (3) seconds if automatic doors.
RECOMMENDED
2. Corridors along the route of travel should:
- (A) be at least thirty-six (36) inches wide,
 - (B) be free of obstacles or protrusions (such as boxes, water fountains, etc.) which extend more than four (4) inches from the wall, RECOMMENDED
 - (C) have sufficient lighting at all points along the route,
 - (D) have a nonslip surface, RECOMMENDED
 - (E) have all rugs and mats securely fastened, RECOMMENDED
 - (F) have a seating or rest area in any corridor longer than one hundred (100) feet in length. RECOMMENDED
3. If stairs or steps along the route of travel are over three-fourths (3/4) inches high, an alternate means of travel must be provided. But if there are existing stairs, they should:
- (A) be less than eight (8) inches in height,
 - (B) have tread areas at least eleven (11) inches deep,
 - (C) have risers (the little vertical walls at the back of each step),
 - (D) have a nonslip surface, RECOMMENDED
 - (E) be adequately lit,
 - (F) be free of obstacles,
 - (G) have handrails at least thirty (30) inches above step level that can be gripped. RECOMMENDED

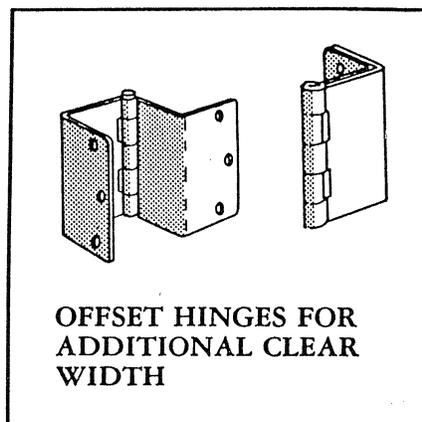
DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

DOORS

Many people who use walkers, crutches, or wheelchairs have difficulty with or cannot pass through doors which are less than thirty-two (32) inches wide. Some narrow doors can be made wider without expensive remodeling. In certain situations where the door opening for a single door is nearly wide enough to be accessible, it is possible to remove the standard door hinges and replace them with special offset hinges that provide greater clearance when the door swings open.

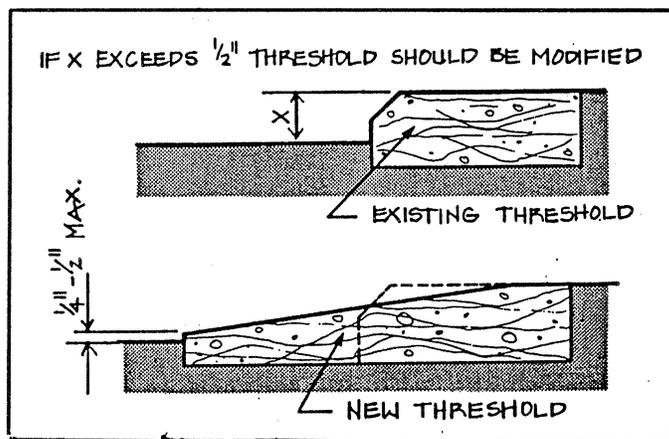
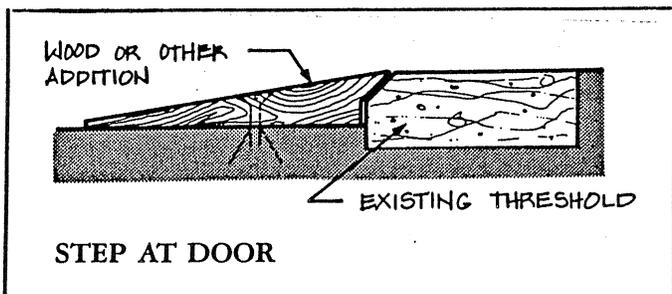
Sometimes if weather, privacy or fire codes do not prohibit it, doors can be temporarily removed from their hinges to gain a few more inches of clearance.

Replacing narrow doors with wide ones requires renovations to walls, which is not a viable solution at most polling locations. All other options should be considered before a door is replaced.

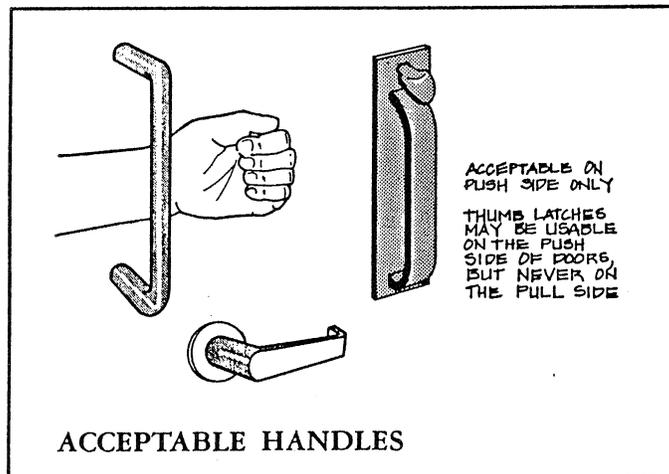
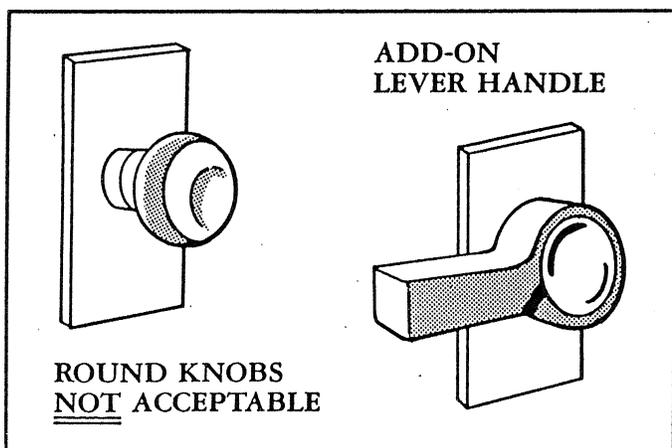


Where double doors are used and a center post is installed between the doors, the post can sometimes be removed temporarily, and the doors propped open to increase the doorway width.

Door thresholds also present challenges for polling location accessibility. Any door threshold higher than one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) inch should be modified. Modifications include replacing the existing threshold with a new one that is tapered to avoid abrupt changes in level or installing a temporary ramped section next to the threshold.



Doorknob and handle modifications, while not mandatory, are recommended where doors are difficult to open.



Many people who have limited use of their hands or no hands cannot grasp and turn smooth round doorknobs. Replacement of round doorknobs with lever handle door hardware is helpful. In most cases this requires replacing the entire round lock set and installing a new lever handle lock set. Some manufacturers of lock sets have developed substitutes to levers. For a less expensive, temporary solution, attach an add-on lever handle to the round doorknob. These handles are usually metal, plastic, or nylon and can be installed without damaging the existing lock sets.

CORRIDORS

Design considerations for corridors are uncomplicated. Be sure corridors along the route of travel are at least thirty-six (36) inches wide.

HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- * Place tape over door latches on election day so they will be easy to open.
- * Shop around. Prices for door knob adapters may vary greatly.

EQUIPMENT RESOURCES:

DOOR HINGES

A local hardware store should be able to provide offset hinges for additional clearance.

DOOR THRESHOLD RAMPS

Most ramp suppliers listed elsewhere in this manual also carry door threshold ramps.

DOORKNOBS AND HANDLES

Jerry Sell
5601 N.W. 72nd, Suite 135
Oklahoma City, OK 73132
405-721-7168

Extend Incorporated
Box 864
Moorhead, MN 56560
218-236-9686

Local hardware stores

CATEGORY V: FEATURES WITHIN THE VOTING AREA

Congratulations! Design problems in this category have been corrected in all but seventy-seven precincts statewide.

ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Instructions for voting should be printed in fourteen (14) point or larger type in simple language, and plainly displayed.

2. Magnifying devices should be available for those who request them.
RECOMMENDED
3. All necessary parts of the voting equipment should be reachable by a person seated in a chair, or if not, alternative means of casting a ballot should be provided.
4. The voting area should:
 - (A) be sufficiently unobstructed for the reasonable movement of voters in wheelchairs,
 - (B) have seating available for elderly or handicapped voters awaiting their turn to vote, RECOMMENDED
 - (C) have adequate lighting.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

The State Election Board makes sure that instructions for voting are printed in fourteen (14) point or larger type and in simple language, so secretaries need only insure that the materials are plainly displayed.

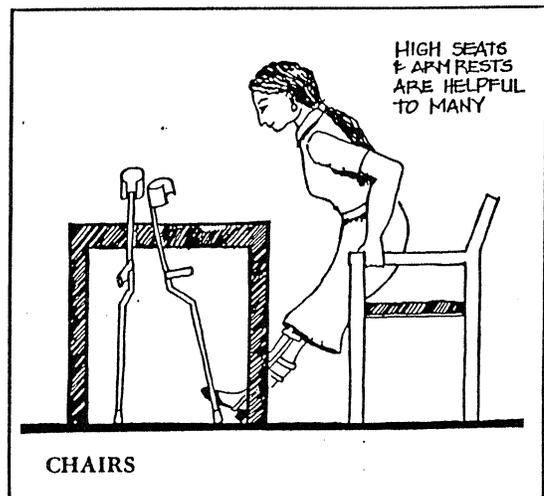
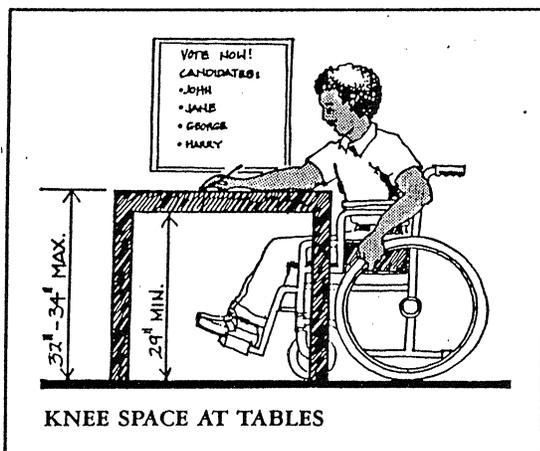
Magnifying devices are valuable devices to the visually impaired. Inexpensive sheet magnifiers can be ordered through most office supply catalogs. While not required, this is an inexpensive item that will receive a great deal of use if visually impaired persons know it is available at polling locations.

VOTING EQUIPMENT

Many disabled and elderly people may not be able to stand in voting booths or at voting devices. A choice of voting methods may therefore be necessary.

One choice is to purchase specifically designed voting booths that enable a voter to remain seated while voting. If your budget will not allow this expenditure, you may want to consider requesting that various civic groups, etc., purchase booths for the election board.

Another alternative would be to have booths made to your specifications by high school shop classes, or other groups.

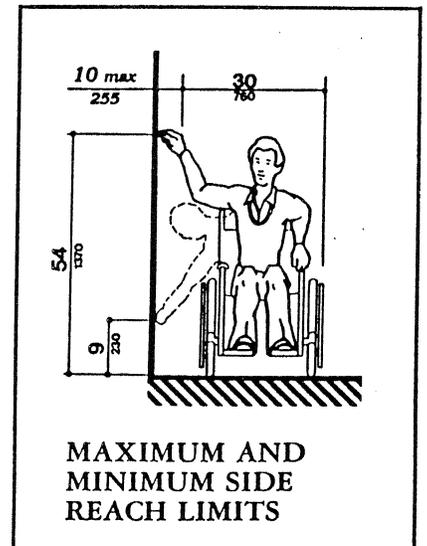
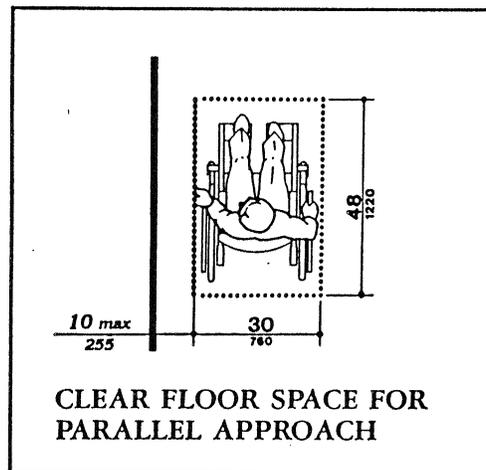
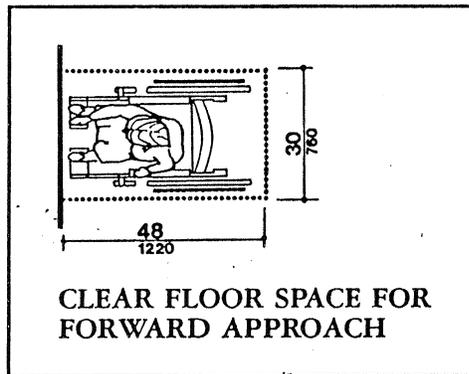
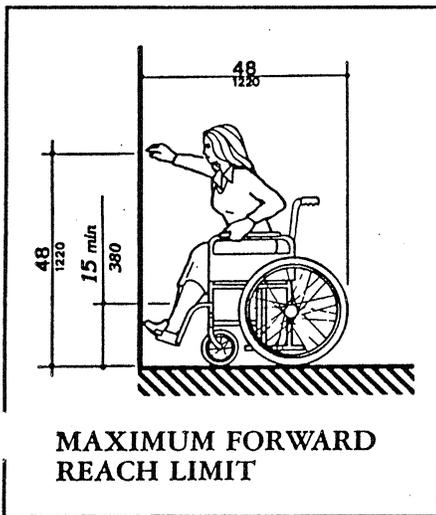


Yet another option would be to have a table with good wheelchair clearance and a chair with a high seat and arm rests for use in voting. The voter could sit at the table and fill out the ballots. Remember to provide these voters with the same degree of privacy as those who use the other voting booths. This can be accomplished with a curtain or screen.

Manufacturers of handicapped voting booths are listed on the following page.

MOVEMENT WITHIN THE VOTING AREA

Reasonable movement within the voting area for persons on crutches and in wheelchairs must be assured.



Make your precinct Inspectors aware of handicapped mobility requirements so they will be conscious of these special needs on election day.

HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- * See the following pages for dimensions for homemade table-top voting booths.

EQUIPMENT RESOURCES:

SHEET MAGNIFIERS

W.T. Rogers Company
1401 West Badger Road
Madison, WI 53711
Item #14355

HANDICAPPED VOTING BOOTHS

Business Records Corp.
328 Jefferson
Chicago, IL 60606
1-800-621-1181 to order
(312) 454-1475 other calls

Douglas Election Equipment
P.O. Box 187
Crete, N.C. 68333-0187
(405) 826-5164

Election Data Direct
1164 Sierra Linda Drive
Escondido, CA 92025

Hartgraphics
8000 Shoal Creek
Austin, TX 78758
1-800-252-9643

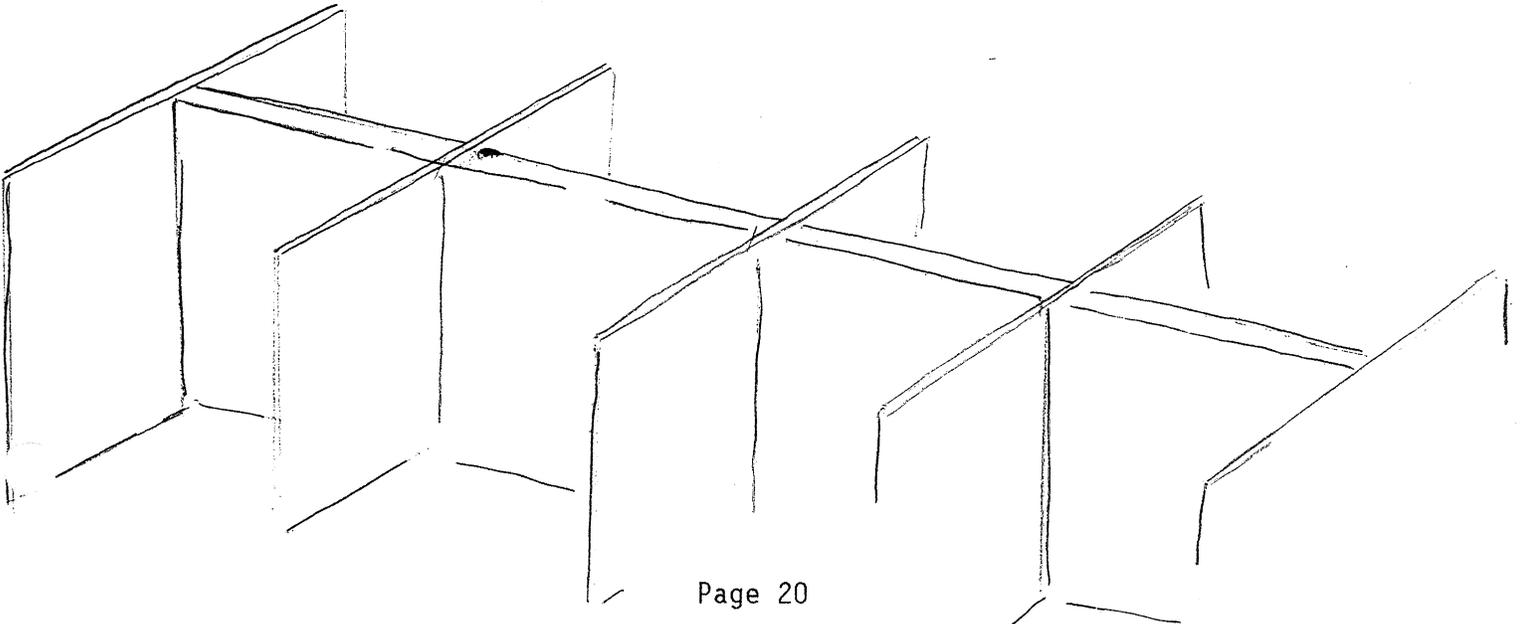
Some counties have made their own table top voting booths. The dimensions listed below will make eight table top dividers.

1 each --- 2x4x6 ft. with groove 5/8" down center 1/2" deep. Then 2" from each end 5/8" across 2x4 then every 22" apart.

10 each --- 2x4x13" grooved 5/8" down center.

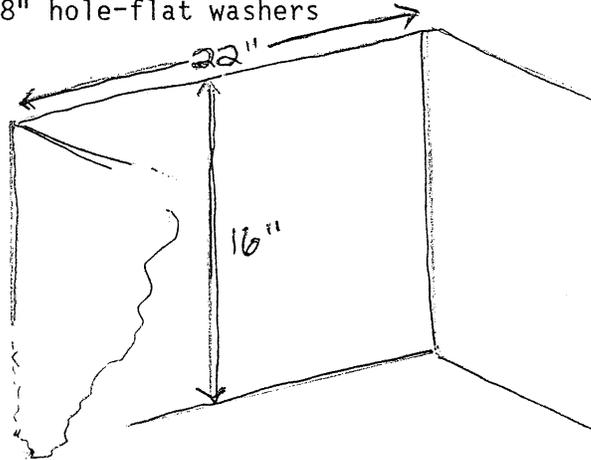
5 cuts --- 6 ft. x 2 ft. tempered masonite with 5/8" cut 13" deep.
2" from each end and every 22".

5 each --- 30"x24" tempered masonite with 5/8" cut 13" from top and 5" from side.



Another county had individual table top booths built by the vo-tech at a cost of \$8.34 each. The booths are 22 inches wide and 16 inches in height. Materials required for one of these booths are:

101" Marlite board trim
68"x16"-1/8 tempered Masonite
1 1/2" butt hinges - 4 per unit
27" per unit 1/4" lattice, 1 1/4" wide
3/4" x 1/8" bolts, 3/8" x 1/8" bolts
1/8" nuts and 1/8" hole-flat washers



ADOPT A PRECINCT PROGRAM

One tool to assist you in making accessibility improvements is to establish a formal Adopt a Precinct Program in your county. Such a program encourages community involvement and recognizes contributions to the election system. Even if you do not choose a formal approach in your county, you may find that some of the ideas discussed in this section will be beneficial as you make your improvements.

PUBLICITY AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

Publicity and public awareness are critical steps in the Adopt a Precinct Program. Not only must we inform the public of our efforts towards polling location accessibility through the news media, but we must attract potential sponsors as well.

Community involvement is the backbone of the Adopt a Precinct Program, and everyone must be adequately informed of our purposes and the benefits they can derive by becoming involved in our efforts.

Therefore, our publicity and public awareness will have two objectives:

- (1) Alert the community at large of the program.
- (2) Solicit and encourage potential groups and individuals to become involved by adopting a precinct.

Many civic, church and trade groups look for ways to become involved in community projects. Much of the time they are willing to commit both funds and manpower. In exchange they ask only recognition for their efforts.

Recognition to groups and individuals who assist in our program will be given in two forms:

- (1) Through press releases issued by the County Election Board.
- (2) Through Certificate of Appreciation awards provided by the State Election Board.

PRESS RELEASES

Suggested press releases to publicize the program and give recognition to Adopt a Precinct sponsors are included in this manual. The sample releases can be modified to reflect the particular situation in your county and should serve as a general guideline for press release content.

The sample press releases found in Appendix B cover four special events:

- (1) Announcement of program
- (2) Announcement of sponsor
- (3) Sponsor work in progress
- (4) Sponsor recognition

Again, the sample press releases serve as a guide. There are many other opportunities for local publicity, and you know how best to take advantage of these opportunities in your county.

DIRECT SPONSOR SOLICITATION

Once the Special Events #1 press release has been issued, you cannot simply sit back and hope for a response. Most groups and individuals must receive direct contact and encouragement.

Much of the success of the program relies on the County Election Board initiating direct contact with potential sponsors. This contact will take the form of (1) a letter-writing campaign, (2) public speaking before civic groups and other organizations, (3) direct telephone contact, and (4) direct individual contact.

MANPOWER RESOURCES

The key to success of the Adopt a Precinct Program is the successful solicitation of assistance for accessibility improvements.

Persons providing the manpower for modifications may or may not also provide the funds for improvements. For example, a local FFA chapter may wish to build ramps for a polling place location but may not purchase the materials. On the other hand, a local civic club may both provide manpower and purchase materials. Other groups or individuals may wish only to purchase materials. There are many opportunities for participation. The important thing is to provide as many avenues for participation as possible.

Look first to the owners of the polling location for resources. Contact the governing boards of each church, city, school, or other location where a polling site is located and ask for their assistance. The owner of the polling location will usually be happy to make improvements if you will provide the guidance. Stress the fact that accessibility improvements are not only useful for election purposes, but also benefit the entire community.

Be diplomatic; base your approach on the circumstances of each location. Be positive and excited about the program.

Most communities possess a wealth of manpower resources if you know how to look and how to encourage people to become involved in your program. Most important, be organized before you solicit manpower resources. Have every step towards your goal thoroughly planned ahead of time.

As previously discussed in the Publicity and Public Awareness section, you must initiate the contact with potential sponsors. This direct contact will take four forms primarily:

- (1) A letter-writing campaign
- (2) Public speaking before groups
- (3) Direct telephone contact
- (4) Direct personal contact

Sample letters are provided in Appendix C for your use.

You may also find it desirable to sign an agreement with Adopt a Precinct sponsors, so both parties can have a written understanding of their responsibilities.

MANPOWER HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- * Do not overlook the obvious. Contact the owner of your polling location for manpower resources.
- * Consult with handicapped service organizations when developing accessibility strategy.
- * Set specific tasks, and develop work and completion dates for each task.

- * Use Equal Access For All, a videotape developed by the State Election Board, when presenting accessibility programs to potential manpower sponsors.
- * Assign a regular or part-time employee to be responsible for overseeing polling location accessibility in your county.
- * Contact local FFA, VICA, Vo-Tech and other student organizations to solicit their involvement.
- * Contact your county sheriff about using convict labor to paint signs or do construction at polling locations. Persons who must perform county service as part of their sentences may also be a manpower resource.
- * Contact your county commissioners about using their workers in some of your accessibility projects.
- * Be sure to use your precinct election board officials as manpower resources.

MANPOWER RESOURCES

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Office of Handicapped Concerns
4300 North Lincoln, Suite 200
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105
(405) 521-3756 or 1-800-522-8224

Handicappable of Lawton
P.O. Box 3156
Lawton, Oklahoma 73502
(405) 536-1650

Ability Resources
1724 East 8th
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74104
(918) 592-1235

Northwest Oklahoma Independent
Living Center
705 S. Oakwood Rd. Ste B-1
Enid, Oklahoma 73703
(405) 237-8508

Association for Concerns of
Disabled Collegeans
326 Student Union
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074
(405) 744-7116

Oklahoma Council of the Blind
P.O. Box 1476
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73101
(405) 524-1476
(access for visually impaired)

Caddo County Ind. Living Project
115 N.E. First, Suite 5
Anadarko, Oklahoma 73000
(405) 247-7331

Rehabilitative and Visual Services
2409 North Kelley-Annex
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73111
(405) 424-4311

Central Oklahoma Association
for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired
1330 Classen Blvd., Suite 2020
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73106
(405) 236-5513
(access for hearing impaired)

Paralyzed Veterans of America
5601 N.W. 72nd, Suite 135
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73132
(405) 721-7168

Disabled Student Services
University of Oklahoma
731 Elm, Room 211
Norman, Oklahoma 73019
(405) 325-4006

Progressive Independence
121 North Porter
Norman, Oklahoma 73071
(405) 321-3202

Reli Independent Living
P.O. Box 2295
Bartlesville, Oklahoma 74005

Mike Ward, Director
Oklahoma for Independent Living
305 South Main
McAlester, Oklahoma 74501

Homeward Bound, Inc.
2415 S. Urbana
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 74114
(405) 749-7153

Woodward Handicap Organization
113 E. Cedar
Woodward, Oklahoma 73801
(405) 256-2775

Handicaps Unlimited
Meridian
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73107
(405) 946-0278

Oklahomans for Independent Living
321 South Third, Suite 2
McAlester, Oklahoma 74501
(918) 426-6220

Spinal Cord Injury Assoc. of OK
609 Water Street
Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74464
(918) 456-2982

Tulsa Speech and Hearing Assoc.
3112 South Mingo Road, Suite 100
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74146
(918) 663-9920

OCCD
218 Stanton
Norman, Oklahoma 73071
(405) 366-1796

Oklahoma Council of the Blind
6635 E. 27th Street
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 74129
(405) 584-3703 (Work)
(405) 835-2417 (Home)
(405) 835-2417 (Home)

Oklahoma Association for the Deaf
18538 E. 1st Street
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74108
(918) 266-3641 (TDD)920 N.

Okla. Assoc. of Disabled Students
1406 Asp Ave., Room
Norman, Oklahoma 73019

PROJECT ASSISTANCE

Local civic clubs

Local Church groups

League of Women Voters

Local disabled organizations

Precinct Election Officials

High school shop and welding
classes

Vo-Tech groups

County Homemaker Extension Clubs

Boy Scouts

FUNDING

Most counties do not have sufficient funds to correct accessibility shortcomings. The fact that public funds cannot be used for permanent improvements to privately owned polling locations also makes progress difficult in some situations. Innovative solutions to funding problems do exist. Many times civic and church groups are willing to contribute both manpower and financing to community projects.

Most topics covered in this manual are discretionary with the county, but in the area of project funding, several strict guidelines must be followed uniformly throughout the state.

1. NO FUNDS SHOULD BE RECEIVED BY THE ELECTION BOARD. Persons wishing to contribute to the purchase of needed equipment and supplies must do so by purchasing the items directly. The County Election Board must not handle funds directly or indirectly.
2. If you receive funds through the mail from a contributor who is unaware of your inability to receive funds directly, you must return the funds immediately with an explanation that you cannot receive the funds.
3. Do not set up a special trust or other arrangement to receive funds.

If an expenditure will require the pooling of contributions from several sources, simply have those contributors work together to purchase the items.

FUNDING HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- * Include accessibility improvement requests in your County Election Board budget.
- * Contact local Chamber of Commerce organizations for a list of businesses that may provide support.
- * Use Equal Access For All, a video developed by the State Election Board, to explain funding needs when speaking before potential sponsors.
- * If polling locations are located in public buildings, encourage the appropriate officials to seek community improvement grants to achieve accessibility.
- * Ask local Chamber of Commerce organizations to fund alteration of polling locations in their city or town.
- * Do not overlook possible in-kind contributions of materials and supplies.

RESOURCES:

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Civic and church organizations | Local election board |
| Community improvement grants | Parent Teacher Association |
| Private businesses and individuals | School districts |
| Municipalities | |

CERTIFICATES

Certificates of Appreciation are available from the State Election Board for individuals or groups who assist counties in making polling place improvements.

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE FORM #1

PRECINCT NEEDS LIST

| Precinct | Parking | Walkways and Pathways | Ramps and Elevators | Other Arch. Features | Features in Voting Area |
|----------|---------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

SAMPLE FORM #2

PRECINCT ACCESSIBILITY REPORT

Precinct 20
Rose Hill United Methodist Church
748 N. Louisville
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Report Date: 7-1-90
Location Type: Church

I. PARKING

Parking is not accessible

Regarding off-street parking for the handicapped: Parking spaces must be at least 13 feet wide.

II WALKWAYS OR PATHWAYS TO THE BUILDING

Accessible

III. RAMPS AND ELEVATORS ENTERING OR INSIDE OF THE BUILDING

Not applicable

IV. OTHER ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Not accessible

Regarding doors along the route of travel: Must have an opening which is at least 32 inches wide. All thresholds must be less than 1/2 inch high.

V. FEATURES WITHIN THE VOTING AREA

Accessible

Note: This report could be done in your computer word processing program

SAMPLE FORM #3

ACCESSIBILITY PROJECT REPORT

| Precinct | Project | Sponsor | Completion Date |
|----------|---------|---------|-----------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

SAMPLE FORM #4

PRECINCT ADOPTION LIST

Precinct

Polling Place

Precinct
Sponsor

| Precinct | Polling Place | Precinct Sponsor |
|----------|---------------|---------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

APPENDIX B

Press Release
Adopt a Precinct Program
County Release

Special Events #1
Announcement of
Program

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY, (MONTH, DAY, YEAR)

Adopt a Precinct Program Announced

Polling location accessibility will be a major goal of the (NAME OF COUNTY) County Election Board, Election Board Secretary (NAME OF SECRETARY) announced today.

The Oklahoma State Election Board has developed a program to implement the requirements of the Federal Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act. The Adopt a Precinct Program seeks to improve the accessibility of all polling locations in the state.

"This program will be very much a community effort because of funding and manpower limitations of the Election Board. We will be seeking the assistance of civic, church, school and community groups, businesses and volunteers to make greater accessibility a reality in (NAME OF COUNTY) County. This is a great opportunity to provide a needed service to the disabled, and I know our community will respond with a helping hand," (LAST NAME OF SECRETARY) said.

Civic, church, school and community groups, businesses and volunteers who wish to become involved in the Adopt a Precinct Program are urged to contact the (NAME OF COUNTY) County Election Board located at (LOCATION OF ELECTION BOARD AND TELEPHONE NUMBER). "The State Election Board has developed an award program to recognize participation in the program, and we hope to have many award recipients in (NAME OF COUNTY) County," (LAST NAME OF SECRETARY) added.

Press Release
Adopt a Precinct Program
County Release

Special Events #2
Announcement of Sponsor,
Modify if multiple

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY, (MONTH, DAY, YEAR)

(NAME OF SPONSOR) to Sponsor Accessibility Program

The (NAME OF SPONSOR) has undertaken the responsibility of polling location accessibility for (NAME OF PRECINCT AND LOCATION) in the (NAME OF COUNTY) County Election Board's Adopt a Precinct Program. The announcement was made today by (NAME OF COUNTY) County Election Board Secretary (NAME OF SECRETARY).

"The Adopt a Precinct Program has a goal of increasing accessibility to polling locations for the disabled. This commitment by (NAME OF SPONSOR) will provide a much needed community service, and they are to be commended for their efforts," (LAST NAME OF SECRETARY) said.

Other groups and individuals wishing to adopt a precinct or learn more about how they can become involved are urged to contact the (NAME OF COUNTY) County Election Board at (LOCATION AND/OR TELEPHONE NUMBER).

-30-

Press Release
Adopt a Precinct Program
County Release

Special Events #3
Sponsor Work in Progress
Action Shot - Photo
Location and/or Supplies
Modify as Necessary

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY, (MONTH, DAY, YEAR)

Accessibility Efforts Underway

Efforts are underway at (NAME OF PRECINCT) to improve disabled voter accessibility under the (NAME OF COUNTY) County Election Board's Adopt a Precinct Program. The polling place is located at (LOCATION OF PRECINCT). Shown with (NAME OF COUNTY) County Secretary (FULL NAME OF SECRETARY) are (LIST OF PERSONS IN SHOT), representing (NAME OF SPONSORING GROUP), sponsors of the accessibility improvements in (NAME OF PRECINCT).

(OPTIONAL PARAGRAPH)

To learn more about how to become involved in the Adopt a Precinct Program, contact the (NAME OF COUNTY) County Election Board at (LOCATION AND/OR TELEPHONE NUMBER).

-30-

Press Release
Adopt a Precinct Program
County Release

Special Events #4
Sponsor Recognition
Action Shot - Photo
Modify as Necessary

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY, (MONTH, DAY, YEAR)

(NAME OF SPONSOR) Honored By State

The (NAME OF SPONSOR OR SPONSORS) represented by (NAME OF INDIVIDUALS) is seen here receiving a state award from (NAME OF COUNTY) County Election Board Secretary (NAME OF SECRETARY). The award was presented in recognition of the group's efforts in the (NAME OF COUNTY) County Election Board's "Adopt a Precinct Program."

The (NAME OF SPONSOR OR SPONSORS) (was/were) honored by the State Election Board for their outstanding efforts in improving polling place location accessibility for the disabled. State Election Board Secretary Lance Ward said, "Community involvement was the backbone of improvements in (NAME OF COUNTY) County, and the county sponsors are to be commended for their outstanding community service."

-30-

APPENDIX C

Sample Form Letter #1
Manpower Solicitation
Modify as necessary
Follow up with direct
contact

Dear _____:

The purpose of this letter is to let you know of a new program designed to improve elderly and handicapped accessibility to polling locations on election day.

The (NAME OF COUNTY) County Election Board's "Adopt a Precinct" program has been developed as a method to encourage community support and involvement in making polling location accessibility a reality for all our citizens.

Because of your background in community service it is our desire that you become involved in our program. We would greatly appreciate it if you would consider "adopting" one of our precincts.

Your involvement would be a tremendous boost to our efforts, and I look forward to an opportunity to visit with you in more detail in the near future.

Thank you for your consideration of this request to make polling location accessibility a reality for all of our citizens.

Sincerely,

County Election Board Secretary

Sample Form Letter #2
Thanks for Manpower
Involvement
Modify as necessary

Dear _____:

Thank you so much for your involvement in the (NAME OF COUNTY) County Election Board's "Adopt a Precinct" program.

Your support has contributed to making polling location accessibility for the elderly and handicapped a reality.

On behalf of the (NAME OF COUNTY) County Election Board, I want to express our appreciation. Please accept the enclosed Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of your service to the community.

Sincerely,

County Election Board Secretary

Enclosure: Certificate of Appreciation

Sample Form Letter #3
Site Owner
Modify as necessary
Follow up with direct
contact

Dear _____:

The purpose of this letter is to let you know of a new program designed to improve elderly and handicapped accessibility to polling locations on election day.

The (NAME OF COUNTY) County Election Board's "Adopt a Precinct" program has been developed as a way to encourage county support and involvement in making polling location accessibility a reality for all our citizens.

As owner of the polling place for Precinct (NUMBER OF PRECINCT), you have a special opportunity to provide a community service and make improvements to your property as well. Your involvement would be a tremendous boost to our efforts, and I look forward to an opportunity to visit with you in more detail in the near future.

The Federal government has mandated that all precincts meet certain minimum standards, and I am confident that we will meet our obligations in Precinct (NUMBER OF PRECINCT). As you know, we have already done a survey, and the attached list of improvements will bring the precinct polling location into compliance.

As mentioned, I will be visiting with you about the program in the near future. We look forward to the continued use of (NAME OF LOCATION) as a polling location in (NAME OF COUNTY) County.

Sincerely,

County Election Board Secretary

Enclosure: Precinct Improvements List

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bacon, Suzette. Access for All. Riley, North Carolina: North Carolina Special Office for the Handicapped, 1976.

Duncan, John; Gish, Calasha; Mulholland, Mary Ellen; and Townsend, Alex. Environmental Modifications for the Visually Impaired: A Handbook. New York: Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness, December, 1977.

Mace, Ronald I. Accessibility Modifications. Raleigh, North Carolina: North Carolina Special Office for the Handicapped, 1976.

National Organization on Disability. Disabled Citizens at the Polls: A Guide for Election Officials. Chicago: National Easter Seal Society, 1986.

National Rehabilitation Association. Revised Manual for Accessibility. Alexandria, Virginia: N.R.A., 1988.

Oklahoma Office of Handicapped Concerns. Laws that Protect your Rights as a Disabled Person. Oklahoma City, Oklahoma O.H.C., 1989.

Oklahoma State Department of Education. Suggested Guidelines for Local Education Agency Compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Oklahoma City: State Department of Education Printing Service, 1989.