

Created By:

**NEXUS**  
STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

# ADA Transition Plan

**FEB  
2025**

Compiled for

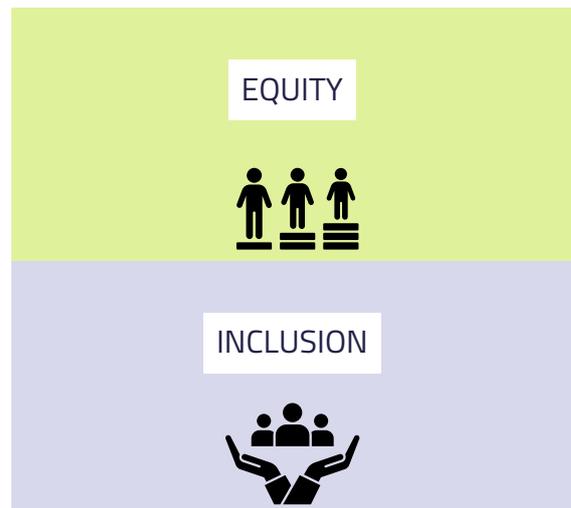
- Miller Beach Arts & Creative District
- The Nelson Algren Society of Miller Beach

# Table of Contents

3	Introduction
4	ADA
5	Glossary of Terms
9	5 Titles of the ADA
10	5 Year Strategic Plan for Universal Access
17	Balancing History and Accessibility
19	Budgeting
20	Resources
21	Potential Funding Sources

# Introduction

The Miller Beach Arts & Creative District (MBACD) and The Nelson Algren Society of Miller Beach are committed to fostering an inclusive, accessible, and welcoming environment for all members of our community.



This ADA Transition Plan outlines a phased approach to achieving full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ensuring that your prospective building meets the highest standards of accessibility and inclusivity. Rooted in equity and inclusion, this plan addresses physical, operational, and programmatic barriers that may hinder individuals with disabilities from fully engaging with both your organizations' offerings. The plan is structured in three phases over five years, with clear goals and actionable steps for each phase. From immediate fixes such as portable ramps and ADA-compliant signage to long-term investments like elevator installations and universal design upgrades, this strategy ensures a steady progression toward complete accessibility.

The plan also highlights potential funding sources, partnerships with local and regional experts, and budget considerations to guide implementation. By investing in these critical upgrades, your organizations will not only comply with ADA regulations but also affirm their commitments to community leadership, cultural equity, and the empowerment of all visitors, artists, and stakeholders.

This transition plan is not just a roadmap for compliance but a vision for creating an arts district on a historic street where everyone, regardless of ability, can experience, create, and connect in meaningful ways. It is a step towards ensuring that Miller Beach is a place where access, creativity, and inclusion thrive together.

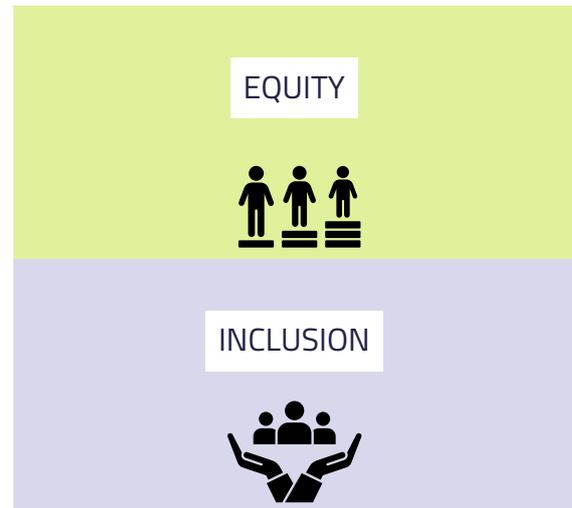
# ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a law enacted by the U.S. Congress in 1990. It was signed into law on July 26, 1990, and later amended with changed effective January 1, 2009. This civil rights law prohibits discrimination based on disability.

Title III of the ADA (Private Entities in Places of Public Programming): The 1990 ADA regulations required nonprofits to do a self evaluation of their facilities and programming. This title prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by private entities in places of public accommodation. Examples include: hotels, restaurants, golf courses, private schools, day care centers, health centers, community center, museums etc.

The ADA also has specific requirements for entities that are open to the public. For example, as a nonprofit, you must:

- Communicate with people with disabilities as effectively as you communicate with others. (Make reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures where needed.)
- To make sure that a person with a disability can access the businesses' goods or services.
- Allow service animals to be with their person even if you have a no pets policy.
- Follow specific standards for physical accessibility when building or altering a building or facility.
- Follow specific requirements for ticket sales accommodations.
- Remove architectural barriers in buildings when it is readily achievable to do so.
- What are architectural barriers?
- Architectural barriers are physical elements of a building that prevent movement or access for people with disabilities. For example, a business that is only accessible by stairs creates a barrier for wheelchair users.



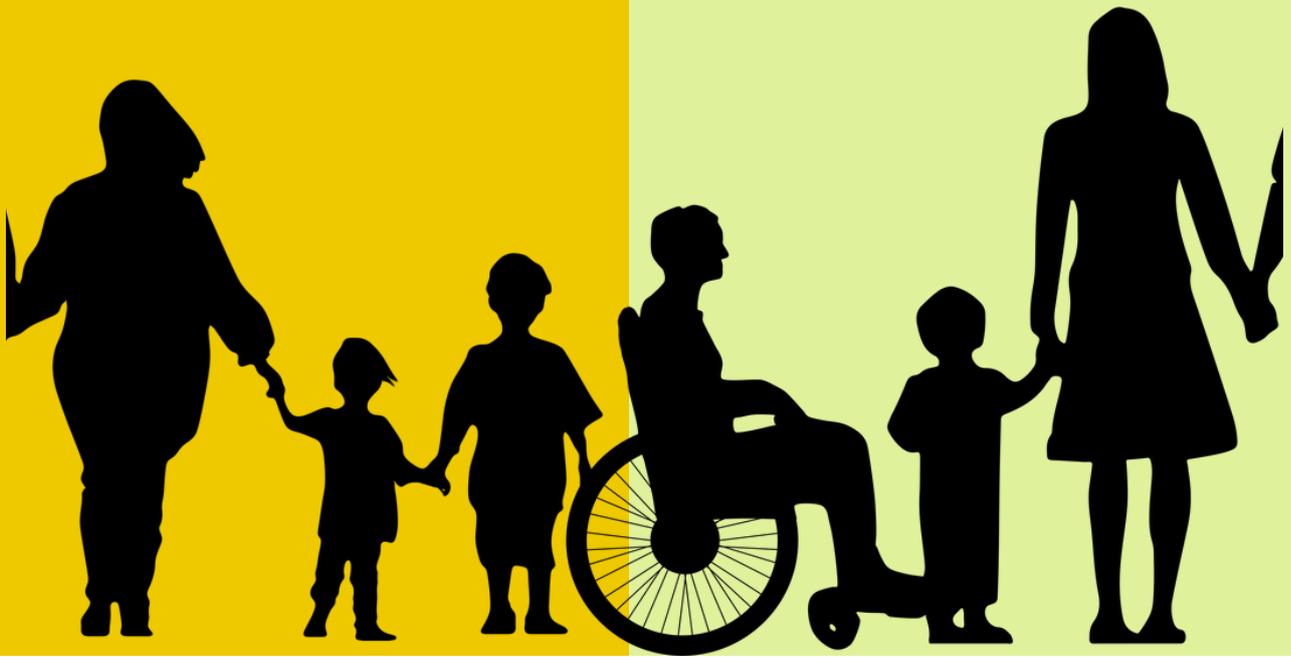
**Tip: The Americans with Disabilities Act has 5 titles.**



# Glossary of Terms

## Keywords and Phrases

<p>ADA</p>	<p>Americans with Disabilities Act: A comprehensive, federal civil rights law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disabilities in employment, state, and local government programs, activities, services, public accommodations, transportation and telecommunications.</p>
<p>Accessible</p>	<p>A facility that provides access to individuals with disabilities using the design requirements of the ADA.</p>
<p>Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)</p>	<p>The ADAAG contains scoping and technical requirements for accessibility to buildings and public facilities by individuals with disabilities under the ADA.</p>
<p>Safe Harbor</p>	<p>The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) sets facility standards for entities covered by Title II and Title III, other than transportation facilities, which are subject to standards set by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). DOJ updated their ADA Standards for Accessible Design in 2010 but carved out a “safe harbor” for facilities, spaces, and elements that already comply with the older (1991) ADA Standards. Changes that may be needed to comply with the new Standards are not required until these compliant facilities undergo planned alterations.</p>



# Glossary of Terms

## Keywords and Phrases

Disability	With respect to an individual: A physical or mental impairment substantially limiting one or more of the major life activities of such individual; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment.
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. It was the first civil rights law to protect people with disabilities from discrimination.
Public Right-of-Way	ADA-related facilities in the public right-of-way are defined as a network of streets, sidewalks, and trails creating public pedestrian access within the Town of Normal. Some examples of public rights-of-way include: curb ramps, sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signals and parking.
Public Rights of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG)	Draft guidelines currently published by the United States Access Board that address access to sidewalks and streets, crosswalks, curb ramps, pedestrian signals, on-street parking, and other components of public rights-of-way.



# Glossary of Terms

## Keywords and Phrases

Self-evaluation	An assessment of the Town's current policies and practices to identify which ones are inconsistent with title II's requirements.
Transition Plan	Addresses physical barriers which can limit the accessibility of a Town's programs, activities and services to individuals with disabilities.
U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ):	Federal agency responsible for enforcing titles II and III of the ADA.



# Glossary of Terms

## Keywords and Phrases

### Reasonable Accommodations Policies and Procedures

Your nonprofit or business, like all others, has formal and informal policies, practices, and procedures that keep it running smoothly. However, sometimes your policies or procedures can inadvertently make it difficult or impossible for a customer with a disability to access your goods and services. That is why the ADA requires businesses to make “reasonable modifications” to their usual ways of doing things when serving people with disabilities. Most modifications involve only minor adjustments in policies. For example, a day care center that has two scheduled snack times must modify this policy to allow a child with diabetes to bring food for an extra snack if necessary. A clothing store must modify a policy of permitting only one person at a time in a dressing room for a person with a disability who is shopping with a companion and needs the companion’s assistance to try on clothes. Anything that would result in a fundamental alteration – a change in the essential nature of your business – is not required. For example, a clothing store is not required to provide dressing assistance for a customer with a disability if this is not a service provided to other customers.

# Five Titles of the ADA

What exactly are the titles?



**Title I – Equal Employment Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities** This title prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of disability. As long as the individual is qualified for an employment opportunity, s/he cannot be denied that opportunity simply because s/he has a disability and must therefore be given the same consideration for employment that individuals without disabilities are given.

**Title II – Non-discrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services.** This title prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all services, programs and activities provided or made available by local or state governments and their affiliate agencies.

**Title III – Non-discrimination on the Basis of Disability by Public Accommodations and in Commercial Facilities** This title prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by private entities in places of public accommodation. Examples include hotels, restaurants, golf courses, private schools, day care centers, health centers, etc.

**Title IV – Telecommunications** This title requires telephone companies provide telecommunication relay services. The relay services must provide speech-impaired or hearing – impaired individuals opportunities for communication that are equivalent to those provided to other customers. Also covered under this title are television closed-captioning regulations.

**Title V – Miscellaneous Provisions** This title contains supplemental regulations not explicitly covered in other parts of the ADA.

(Sourced from [ada.gov](http://ada.gov))

# 5 Year Strategic Plan for Universal Access

In your commitment to make your facility fully accessible and inclusive for everyone.

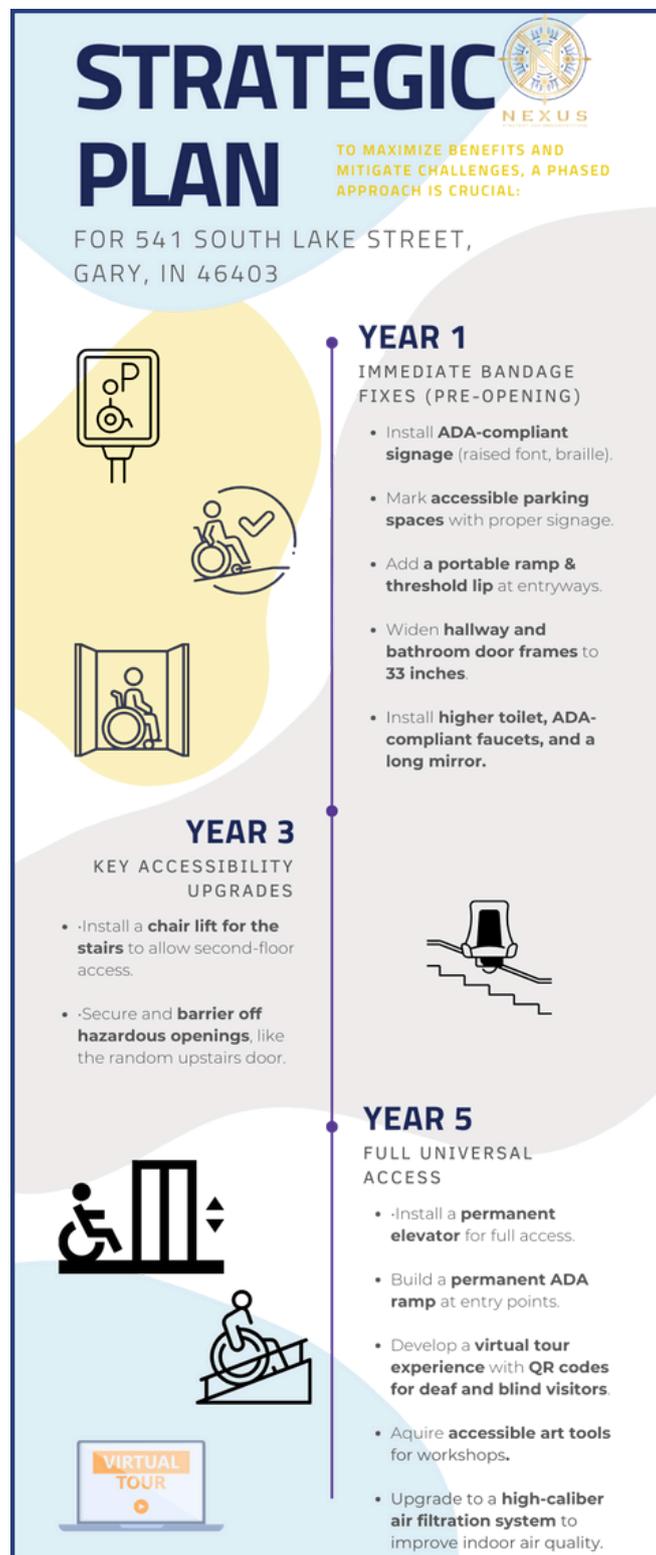
To achieve this goal, our strategic ADA plan outlines key upgrades and improvements scheduled across different phases.

Each phase addresses specific needs identified during our accessibility review.

Over the next few pages we will discuss in detail each item categorized by year and ADA applicable recommendation.

With each phase, you will move closer to creating a space where everyone feels welcome and included.

Implementing these changes can ensure your facility meets the highest standards of accessibility and inclusivity.



# Year 1 - Foundation for Access

**Year 1** focuses on immediate accessibility improvements to address critical barriers for our visitors. These pre-opening fixes ensure a baseline level of accessibility, making the space safer and more welcoming.

## YEAR 1 - AT A GLANCE

The year 1 plan ensures immediate compliance with ADA standards, focusing on critical improvements to remove barriers and enhance inclusivity.

These highlights reflect the core principles of the ADA, emphasizing equity, safety, and accessibility.

## KEY INITIATIVES

- ADA Compliant Signage
- Accessible Parking Signage
- Portable Ramp Access
- Widen Door Frames
- ADA Bathroom Upgrades

### STRATEGIC PLAN

Year 1

FOR 541 SOUTH LAKE STREET,  
GARY, IN 46403

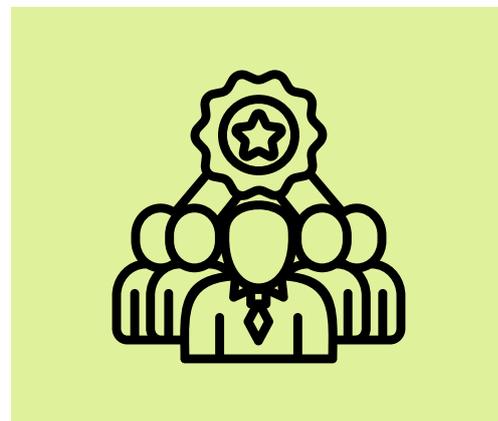
**IMMEDIATE BANDAGE FIXES (PRE-OPENING)**

- 1. ADA Compliant Signage**  
• Lower front outdoor sign add all info plus braille, make sure font is raised, or carved  
• Place exterior sign for accommodations on the back.
- 2. Accessible Parking Signage**  
Mark accessible striped parking and install parking signage.
- 3. Portable Ramp Access**  
Add a portable ramp and portable threshold lip for downstairs entrance.
- 4. Widen Door Frames**  
Widen 1st Floor - Lower Level museum door toward hallway and bathroom door frames to 33 inches.
- 5. ADA Bathroom Upgrades**  
Install higher toilet, ADA-compliant faucets, and hang a long mirror.

# Year 1 - Foundation for Access

The Year 1 plan focuses on addressing immediate accessibility needs to ensure your space is welcoming, safe, and functional for all visitors.

This phase sets the stage for future upgrades by prioritizing actions that are achievable within a short timeframe and limited budget.



## KEY INSIGHTS

### **Accessible Communication (Title III):**

Clear and ADA-compliant signage, including braille and raised lettering, supports effective communication for individuals with visual impairments.

### **Barrier Removal (ADA Standards for Accessible Design):**

Portable ramps and widened door frames address architectural barriers, ensuring smoother mobility access to key areas.

### **Accessible Facilities (Title III):**

Bathroom upgrades, such as higher toilets and ADA-compliant faucets, enhance usability for individuals with mobility challenges.

### **Parking Accommodations:**

Properly marked and striped accessible parking spaces meet ADA requirements for public accommodations.

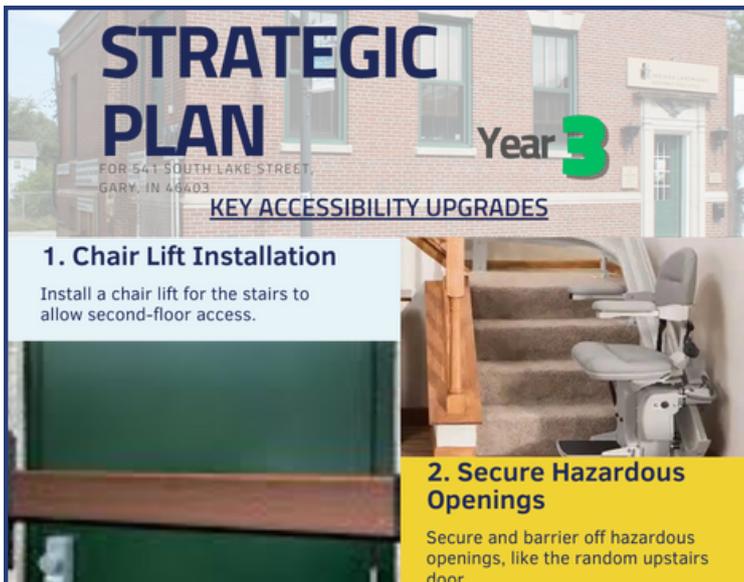
### **Cost Effective Compliance:**

Immediate, affordable solutions like portable ramps and signage allow for incremental progress toward full ADA compliance while leveraging potential in-kind donations.

# Year 3 - Building Momentum

Building on the foundation established in Year 1, the Year 3 plan focuses on expanding accessibility through structural and programmatic enhancements.

This phase addresses more complex barriers to ensure a seamless experience for all visitors.



## YEAR 3 - AT A GLANCE

Year 3 focuses on building momentum toward full ADA compliance by implementing essential structural upgrades and expanding inclusive programming.

This phase addresses key accessibility barriers that require more permanent solutions, ensuring a seamless and welcoming experience for all visitors.

## KEY INITIATIVES

- Chair Lift Installation
- Securing Hazardous Openings

# Year 3 - Building Momentum

Year 3 advances our commitment to ADA compliance by focusing on mobility access and safety enhancements.

These improvements address structural barriers and hazards, ensuring compliance with ADA standards and creating a safer environment for all visitors



## KEY INSIGHTS

### **Mobility Access (ADA Title III – Barrier Removal):**

The installation of a chair lift provides accessible vertical mobility, ensuring individuals with disabilities can safely and conveniently access the second floor.

### **Safety Enhancements (ADA Standards for Accessible Design):**

Securing hazardous openings, such as unsecured doors or stairwells, mitigates risks and ensures compliance with safety requirements outlined in the ADA.

### **Equity in Access:**

These upgrades align with the ADA's goal of equal access, providing solutions that enable individuals with mobility challenges to fully experience the building.

### **Inclusive Environment:**

By addressing mobility and safety, Year 3 demonstrates our ongoing efforts to create a space where visitors of all abilities feel welcomed and supported.

These actions ensure compliance with key ADA principles while reinforcing our dedication to accessibility and safety. Year 3 represents a pivotal step toward fostering an inclusive and equitable arts district.

# Year 5 - Full Universal Access

Year 5 emphasizes achieving full universal access by completing major accessibility upgrades.

This phase focuses on installing an elevator for vertical mobility, building permanent ADA-compliant ramps, and enhancing digital inclusion with an accessible virtual tour.

## YEAR 5 - AT A GLANCE

Year 5 represents the final phase of the ADA Transition Plan, focusing on comprehensive upgrades to achieve full universal access and inclusivity.

Year 5 solidifies the vision of an accessible and inclusive space, ensuring that all visitors can fully enjoy and engage with the facility.

## KEY INITIATIVES

- Elevator Installation
- Permanent ADA Ramp
- Accessible Virtual Tour
- Accessible Art Tools
- Enhanced Air Filtration

**STRATEGIC PLAN** Year 5  
FOR 541 SOUTH LAKE STREET,  
GARY, IN 46403  
**FULL UNIVERSAL ACCESS**

**1. Elevator Installation**  
Install an elevator for full access at the rear of the building.

**2. Permanent ADA Ramp**  
Build a permanent ADA ramp at entry points.

**3. Accessible Virtual Tour**  
Add virtual tour to the museum (include QR codes for video to be linked for the deaf, as well as descriptive videos for the blind.)

**4. Accessible Art Tools**  
Acquire accessible art tools for workshops

**5. Enhanced Air Filtration**  
Upgrade to a high-caliber air filtration system to improve indoor air quality.

# Year 5 - Full Universal Access

This phase represents the culmination of your ADA plan with a focus on achieving full universal access.

This phase includes high-impact projects to enhance visitor experience and align with modern accessibility standards.



## KEY INSIGHTS

### **Universal Mobility (ADA Title III – Barrier Removal):**

The installation of an elevator eliminates vertical mobility barriers, ensuring equitable access to all levels of the building for individuals with physical disabilities.

### **Sustainable Access:**

Permanent ADA-compliant ramps provide long-term solutions to entryway barriers, reducing maintenance and enhancing durability.

### **Digital Accessibility:**

Virtual tours with inclusive features:

- Captions for Deaf visitors ensure effective communication.
- Descriptive videos for Blind visitors provide a rich, inclusive experience.

### **Inclusive Participation:**

Accessible art tools empower individuals with disabilities to engage in creative programs, fostering equity in artistic expression.

### **Health and Comfort:**

Enhanced air filtration improves indoor air quality, benefiting all visitors, especially those with respiratory or environmental sensitivities.

# Balancing History & Accessibility

## Pros and Cons - Historic Indiana Landmarks Building

### Overview



The Historic Indiana Landmarks Building, located at 541 South Lake Street, Gary, Indiana, carries significant architectural and cultural value as the former 1928 Illinois Bell Telephone Building.

This property has the potential to serve as a cornerstone for community revitalization and economic development while preserving local history. However, it also presents unique challenges due to its historic designation and aging infrastructure.

### POINTS TO CONSIDER

This building stands out for its unique design, craftsmanship, and cultural significance, making it a prime candidate for historic preservation and community engagement.

The property offers opportunities for federal and state tax credits, grants, and appreciation in property value. However, its historic nature introduces high restoration costs, ADA compliance challenges, and regulatory hurdles.

Careful consideration is necessary to balance preservation with modernization and accessibility.

# Pros and Cons of Claiming Historic Designation

## Pros and Cons - Historic Indiana Landmarks Building

### Pros and Cons of Owning the Historic Indiana Landmarks Building

541 South Lake Street, Gary, Indiana 46403  
(Former 1928 Illinois Bell Telephone Building in Miller Beach)

#### ✓ PROS

- Architecture & Cultural Significance
  - Unique Design and Craftsmanship
  - Preserving Local History
  - Historic Tourism
- Potential Financial Incentives
  - Federal and State Tax Credits (May qualify for 20% Fed Tax)
  - Preservation Grants & Funding
  - Property Value Appreciation
- Community and Economic Impact
  - Business & Nonprofit Use
  - Event & Workshop Hosting
  - Local Revitalization Efforts
- Historic District Prestige
  - Designation Brings Recognition

#### ⊗ CONS

- High Maintenance & Restoration Cost
  - Expensive Repairs
  - Ongoing Preservation Needs
  - Older Infrastructure Challenges
- ADA Compliance & Accessibility Challenges
  - Limited Accessibility - needs modifications to meet ADA
  - Strict Regulations for Modifications
- Bureaucratic & Regulatory Challenges
  - Zoning Restrictions
  - Permit and Compliance Issues
  - Approval process for renovations
- Potential for Unexpected Issues
  - Possible Environmental Hazards such as outdated wiring, or asbestos
  - Unforeseen Repairs

#### PROS

- Architecture & Cultural Significance: Unique design, preserving local history, and attracting historic tourism.
- Financial Incentives: Eligibility for federal and state tax credits, grants, and funding.
- Community Impact: Potential for use by businesses and nonprofits, event hosting, and local revitalization.
- Prestige: Historic district designation brings recognition and status.

#### CONS

- High Costs: Expensive restoration and ongoing maintenance needs.
- ADA Compliance: Limited accessibility and costly modifications to meet standards.
- Regulatory Challenges: Strict zoning, permits, and approval processes for renovations.
- Potential Risks: Environmental hazards (e.g., asbestos), outdated wiring, and unforeseen repairs.

# Budgeting

How much could this all cost?



Our research states that there is a wide range of possible costs, (upwards of \$75,000 depending on the equipment). Marquette Park UMC implemented their ADA transition plan 15 years ago and it cost roughly \$50,000. (They had driveway put in and paved, a cement ramp created, all doors redone, an indoor elevator put in and an upstairs bathroom put in that was accessible.

Year 1 depending on if you get the labor donated for threshold between the museum and the downstairs hallway and the threshold to the bathroom, as well as the new toilet installed and new facet handles installed, your costs could be minimal.

The portable ramp cost roughly \$200. The portable threshold floor lip is roughly \$99. The exterior signage could be a possible donation. Striping the parking lot could be spendy because of the reflective paint. (Roughly \$100 a bucket.) Also, wayfinding/ parking signs vary price wise. You might be able to complete the year 1 transition plan for \$5,000-10,000 (or maybe under depending on in-kind donations.)

However, to hit year 3 and year 5's goals, you would need to consult a specialist. There are a few in the Chicagoland area that will give free estimates and serve Gary, Indiana.

## SPECIALISTS

Ramp Now (chairs, ramps, elevators...)

[rampnow.com](http://rampnow.com)

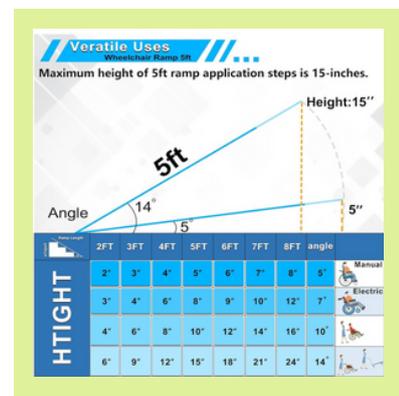
Leaf Home Stair Lift (chairs)

855-793-9449

\*You may want to see if Great Lakes

ADA has anyone to recommend

<https://www.adagreatlakes.org/>



# Resources/ Partnerships

It is crucial to your success to identify key organizations and individuals who can provide valuable support and expertise in achieving ADA compliance and advancing accessibility goals.

These resources offer guidance, funding opportunities, and practical assistance to help address the unique challenges of creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.



Great Lakes ADA | Regional Nonprofit

<https://www.adagreatlakes.org>

The Great Lakes ADA Center's mission is to increase awareness and knowledge with the ultimate goal of achieving voluntary compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.



Tradewinds | Regional Nonprofit

<https://www.tradewindsnwi.org/adult/deaf-services/>

The only nonprofit agency in Northwest Indiana providing a vital link between people who are Deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing.



Roger Hayward | CEO & Founder

<https://garystime.com>

Its Garys Time Inc is a 501c3 Non Profit Organization that teaches folks in recovery life skills and vocational skills. (Participants learn trades and help revitalize their lives/community.)



Jackie Holmes | Cal Township Board/Women of Steel

<https://usw.org/get-involved/women-of-steel>  
(219) 742-2957

Jackie lives in Glen Ryan and is active in many organizations, as well as being a Cal Township Board member. She may have union contacts/ community contacts that could help.

# Potential Funding Sources

## GRANTERS

AARP <https://indianapolisrecorder.com/aarp-community-challenge-grant-applications/>

Ford Foundation

<https://www.fordfoundation.org/work/challenging-inequality/disability-rights/ford-disability-rights-and-inclusion-grantmaking-faqs/>

Christopher & Diana Reeve Foundation <https://www.christopherreeve.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Eligibility-Criteria-and-Funding-Restrictions-1.pdf>

Kellogg Foundation <https://www.wkkf.org/grantseekers/>

Allstate

<https://www.allstatecorporation.com/the-allstate-foundation.aspx>

Adobe

[https://www.adobe.com/content/dam/cc/en/corporate-responsibility/pdfs/ADO115\\_NonprofitResourceInfoSheet.pdf](https://www.adobe.com/content/dam/cc/en/corporate-responsibility/pdfs/ADO115_NonprofitResourceInfoSheet.pdf)

Barnes & Noble

<https://www.barnesandnobleinc.com/about-bn/sponsorships-charitable-donations/>



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