

design with disabled people now



#ASLA2021

Sunday, November 21, 2021
9:00 - 10:00 a.m. CDT

Justice, Equity, Diversity,
& Inclusion Track

1.00 PDH, LA CES/HSW,
AIA/HSW, AICP, FL, NY/HSW

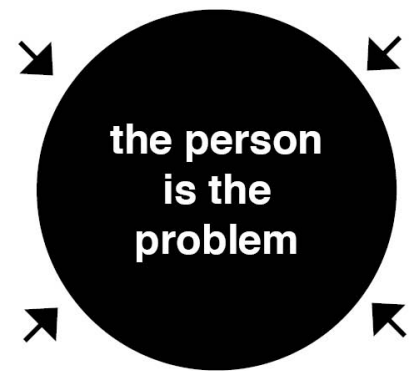
including disabled people in the design process

overview:

There are over 1 billion disabled people globally, yet we rarely include the disabled community in the design process. Through this session, we will learn directly from three disabled-identifying experts to become more inclusive designers, with & beyond the ADA Standards, to create a more equitable & accessible public realm.

learning objectives:

- 1 Learn how to challenge the dominant worldview of the medical model of disability, & switch to a social model view of disability & the built environment.
- 2 Learn how to include disabled people in the design process by learning from disabled experts, come to an understanding of the ADA Standards & Universal Design, & discover more resources.
- 3 Learn how to include disabled people in community engagements & stakeholder meetings by making events more accessible & by trusting in & learning from lived experiences over assumptions.
- 4 Learn how to include disabled people in access audits of the built environment & consciously make the switch from inaccurate “sensitivity studies” (or disability simulations) that do not include disabled people.



the medical model



the social model

speakers



Alexa Vaughn-Brainard, Associate ASLA *she/her*

Landscape Designer & Access Specialist, MIG; 2020-2021 LAF Fellow

Alexa Vaughn-Brainard is a Deaf landscape designer and accessibility specialist at MIG, and a 2020 Landscape Architecture Foundation Olmsted Fellow. Her research began with a focus on designing for the Deaf community and she continues to research methods to include the broader disabled community as stakeholders and experts; recently she released a toolkit of resources (DesignWithDisabledPeopleNow.com) for the creation of a more inclusive design process and accessible public realm. Her original work, “DeafScape: Applying DeafSpace to Landscape,” published in *Ground Up Journal*, has been widely featured and she is an active writer and guest lecturer in academia and professional practice.



Karen L. Braitmayer, FAIA *she/her*

Principal, Studio Pacifica, Ltd.

Karen Braitmayer is the founder and managing principal of Studio Pacifica, an accessibility consulting firm in Seattle. She and her team provide consulting services to local governments, architects, engineers, companies and individuals concerned with complying with Federal laws and State codes, as well as creating spaces that work for the unique needs of individual users. Karen also leads presentations and workshops nationally to further educate professionals about codes, standards, and inclusion. She received the AIA’s 2019 Whitney M. Young Jr. award in recognition of her leadership in civil rights for people with disabilities, public policy and universal design.



Aimi Hamraie, PhD. *they/them*

Associate Professor of Medicine, Health, & Society, Vanderbilt University

Aimi Hamraie is an accessibility researcher and designer. They are associate professor of Medicine, Health, & Society at Vanderbilt University, where they direct the Critical Design Lab. Their projects include community-based accessibility mapping and campus accessibility master planning. They are author of the book *Building Access: Universal Design and the Politics of Disability* (University of Minnesota Press, 2017) and a forthcoming book on livable cities.

takeaways



Disabled Community & History

The Disabled Community has collectively fought for the right to access public space, since well before the ADA was signed into law. There are over 1 billion people with some sort of disability, globally and about 1/4 of US citizens with some sort of disability. Disability is a very broad spectrum, ranging from physical, sensory, and neurocognitive disabilities. Language and terminology for referring to members of the Disabled Community has changed over time. In this photo, a protest during the Disability Rights movement takes place in Berkeley, CA in the 1970s.

ADA Standards for Accessible Design

The Americans with Disabilities Act was passed in 1990 and the Standards for Accessible Design was released the year after. Its most recent version was released 11 years ago (in 2010) and it is treated as a catchall for nation-wide accessibility laws, but only represents bare minimum requirements for achieving access for wheelchair users and Blind and Low vision folks, with little to no mention of other disabilities. Universal Design and Human-Centered Design can go beyond the ADA to increase access for underrepresented groups. This is an image of ADA graphic standards.

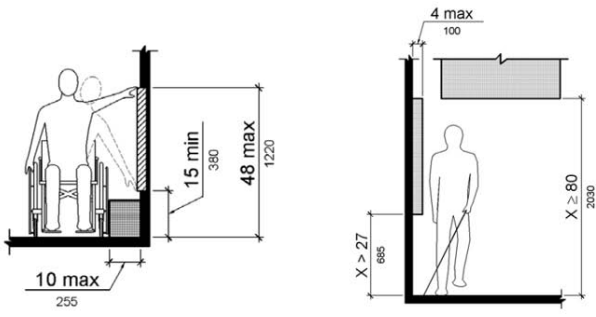
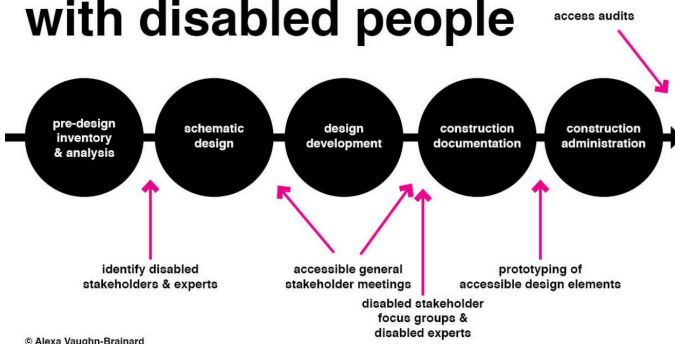


Figure 308.3.1
Unobstructed Side Reach

Figure 307.2
Limits of Protruding Objects

the design process with disabled people



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The Design Process

We need to rethink our design process in a way that brings disabled community members to the table from the very beginning. Including disabled folks in the process increases accessibility and inclusion in our projects and allows us to rely on lived experience rather than our assumptions (which may just be incorrect!). This is a graphic made by Alexa of a more accessible and inclusive approach to the design process, which includes disabled people from the start, process all the way through finished product and beyond.

takeaways



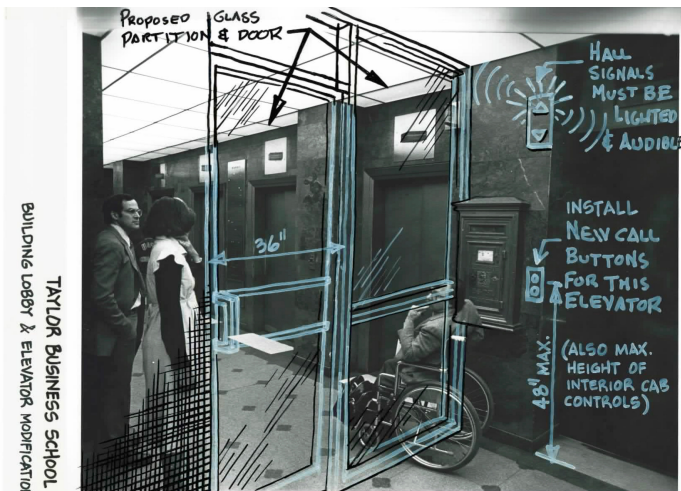
Accessible Community Engagements & Disabled Stakeholder Focus Groups

Our general community engagement meetings need to be more accessible and we should host disabled stakeholder focus groups to increase our understandings of what is and isn't accessible in our projects. Treating disabled community members' lived experiences as expertise will enhance accessibility in our designs and will allow us to go far beyond bare-minimum ADA compliance, to show commitment to disabled stakeholders. This is an image of a disabled stakeholder meeting in Eugene, Oregon, with OLIN and Cameron McCarthy.



Disabled Expertise & Consulting

Including disabled designers and consultants in the design process provides a rich combination of lived experience and design expertise to ensure a truly inclusive and full approach to access, which we lack when relying solely on non-disabled assumptions. In this photo, Peggy Martinez of Studio Pacifica is out in the field and tests the Braille and tactile elements on a sign for a shuttle stop. She also spent time assessing the sidewalks with her tactile cane.



Accessibility Audits

The design process does not end at construction administration and we need to continue to test our designs for accessibility, before and after they are completed. We should conduct accessibility audits, which rely on knowledge of the ADA and other accessible design principles, as well as the knowledge of disabled stakeholders and experts. In this photo, Ronald Mace (disabled architect and wheelchair user) critiques the Taylor Business School lobby and proposes changes (marked in blue) to make the space more accessible.

resources

Books, Guides, & Online Resources

ADA Standards for Accessible Design

2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. Department of Justice, 2010.

Building Access: Universal Design and the Politics of Disability

Hamraie, Aimi. *Building Access: Universal Design and the Politics of Disability*. University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

Critical Design Lab (Vanderbilt University)

Hamraie, Aimi. Critical Design Lab, www.mapping-access.com/.

Design With Disabled People Now (website & toolkits)

Vaughn-Brainard, Alexa. *Design with Disabled People Now*, 2021.
www.designwithdisabledpeoplenow.com/.

Enlivened City: Public Bodies, Healthy Spaces, Livable Worlds

Hamraie, Aimi. University of Minnesota Press, forthcoming.

Principles of Universal Design

Center for Universal Design, The. "The Principles of Universal Design." North Carolina State University, 1997.

Universal Design Guide (ASLA)

American Society of Landscape Architects. *Universal Design Guide - Resource Guide*, 2019.
www.asla.org/universaldesign.aspx

Articles

Vaughn-Brainard, Alexa. "The Insensitivity of Sensitivity Studies." *Ground Up Journal*, Issue 10, 2021.

Vaughn-Brainard, Alexa. "DeafScape: Applying DeafSpace to Landscape." *Ground Up Journal*, Issue 07, 2019.

Services

Studio Pacifica - Accessibility Consultants & Education for Inclusion

www.studiopacificaseattle.com

MIG - Accessibility Specialist Team

www.migcom.com/access-ada

