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Executive Director

June 30, 2016

Attn: Joan Easler
ADA Coordinator
One Government Center, Suite #1900
Toledo, Ohio 43604

Re: Comments on the City of Toledo Americans with Disabilities Act Self Evaluation and Transition Plan

Dear Ms. Easler,

Thank you for all of your hard work in creating an ADA transition plan for the City of Toledo. As you are aware, the Ability Center of Greater Toledo is a Center for Independent Living (CIL) serving seven counties in northwest Ohio that seeks to assist people with disabilities to live, work, and socialize within a fully accessible community through our core services and programming.

On behalf of the people we serve, we would like to provide comments on the current draft of the Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan ADA Transition Plan put together by the City of Toledo. Our comments are as follows:

ADA Notice and Grievance Procedure: (Page 8)

We are excited that the City of Toledo has adopted a notice of rights and grievance procedure and has appointed an ADA coordinator. Federal regulations state that, "The public entity shall make available to all interested individuals the name, office, address, and telephone number," of the ADA coordinator. 28 C.F.R. 35.107. However, in the City of Toledo Community survey, 60% of respondents did not know who to contact regarding reasonable accommodations. (Page 42)

The City of Toledo needs to better publicize the name, office, address, and telephone number of the ADA coordinator and ADA grievance procedure for public access. Namely, the name and contact information for the ADA coordinator and grievance procedure should be accessible on the front page of the city's website and on all city notices. In that way, if a person with a disability needs to request an accommodation or file a grievance regarding accessibility, they know who to contact.

D. Filing a Grievance (Page 9-10)

The City should ensure that a person with a disability can go through the ADA grievance procedure even if they are not able to submit a grievance in writing. While the grievance procedure in the appendix (appendix D) states that



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grievances can be made in alternate formats than writing, the grievance procedure on pages 9-10 does not note that there is an alternate way to file a grievance.

We also recommend having an (optional) accessible form that can be used to file a grievance in order to make filing a grievance easier and ensure that people provide all needed information for the grievance. The form should be made available online with a copy of the procedure. The form should also have a number to contact if the grievance needs to be filed in an alternate format.

Requests for Accommodation (p10-11)

The City should ensure that the procedure for requesting an accommodation is widely publicized. The Transition Plan states that instructions on how to request accommodations and alternate formats are available online and in all city notices, but they are not yet publicized in that way. The City should ensure that that portion of the plan is carried out.

If the City requires specific information in order to make a reasonable accommodation request (page 10), we recommend having an (optional) form available to use in making a request and a method for persons to make requests over the phone and electronically.

Communication with persons with disabilities (p12)

We recommend that the city add a “live chat” option for any call lines open to the public.

Additionally, the Transition Plan does not mention how videos or television programs offered by the City of Toledo will be made accessible. Any video/television must have closed captions and audio descriptions.

Parks, Trails, and Sports Facilities (p 17)

The Transition Plan states that the Division of Parks, Recreation, & Forestry has adopted a reasonable accommodation policy. That policy should be posted and advertised in both paper and electronic formats. Any notices going out from the Division of Parks, Recreation, & Forestry should state the way a person can request an accommodation.

Training

The City should include a place in the Transition Plan for staff training. All staff, especially staff that interact with the public, should undergo regular training in ADA compliance and should be made aware of the City’s procedures to allow reasonable accommodations and ADA grievances. City staff should be aware of who the ADA coordinator is, how to contact that person, how to arrange reasonable accommodations, and where to refer people for a grievance. Staff



THE ABILITY CENTER

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Partnering to Build Communities
that Work for Everyone

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should also be aware of their obligations under the ADA to make programs and activities accessible to those with disabilities.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit comment on the City of Toledo Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan. We have enjoyed working with the City on this matter and look forward to continuing our relationship in making the City of Toledo more accessible for persons with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Katie Hunt Thomas
Disability Rights Attorney

Cc: Calvin Brown

OAN
The Ohio Abilities Network
Creating Communities
that Work for Everyone



OUR MISSION: To assist people with disabilities to live, work and socialize within a fully accessible community.