



Accessibility Handbook & Guidelines

Brown University



BROWN

Updated March 2022



The purpose of this document is to provide accessibility guidelines for campus elements that are unique to Brown University. All projects and campus modifications should be assessed individually while using these guidelines for decision making.

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Introduction

This document is to serve as a guide to facilitate decisions and processes regarding accessibility and universal design at Brown University.

Accessibility on Campus

The Brown University campus is comprised of approximately 220 buildings, 170 of which were built before 1968 and are over 50 years old dating back to 1770. Of these historic structures, 82 (37%) of Brown's building inventory were originally built as residences and now serve a diverse set of uses across campus including classrooms, departments, centers, and offices. Given their history many of these structures lack accessibility that meet today's standards.

The University is located on Providence's College Hill, a challenging topography inherent in its name. Due to the historic nature of the campus, the significant number of residential structures, and the physical location on College Hill, there are many locations across campus that present accessibility challenges.

Brown's rich fabric of buildings, landscapes, and streetscapes comprise the campus which is viewed holistically in its planning and programming. This campus approach allows each building to be conceived as not having a traditional "front" and "back" but instead have varying points of access both from the street side and campus side.

Goals

Accessibility at Brown includes ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) compliance, International and State Building Code compliance, accessible paths and entrances, access to public spaces (receptions, classrooms, meeting rooms, and assembly spaces) and access to compliant single-user gender-inclusive restrooms. See section on Compliance for more information.

Campus accessibility goals:

1. All new construction and significant renovations should be fully compliant with the current building code and with ADAAG. These projects shall also utilize these guidelines for holistic campus accessibility in order to exceed code requirements.
2. When major renovations are not planned for a specific building, increase accessibility in existing buildings when possible, but also as needed by request of students, faculty, and staff who use a particular building.
3. Prioritize accessibility projects that affect the largest group of people.

Facilities Management works with Student Accessibility Services (SAS), University Human Resources, and the Campus Access Advisory Committee (CAAC) to meet these goals in projects across campus. These groups work in a partnership to achieve the CAAC vision statement that reads:

“All members and guests of the Brown Community have equitable physical and technological access, enabling them to fully engage and participate with all the campus has to offer.”

Compliance

Designers, Architects, and Engineers working with the University should reference the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. New construction should comply with these guidelines and a building code review shall be performed. Project scope for renovations will outline accessibility upgrades; all new areas of work should be compliant with the 2010 guidelines and adopted building codes.

Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)

In 2016 Brown University finalized a detailed action plan to create a more diverse and inclusive academic community and to address issues of racism and various forms of discrimination. The University has committed to transforming the policies, structures and practices that have led to the exclusion—rather than the meaningful inclusion—of some members of the community.

The detailed plans can be found at

brown.edu/about/administration/institutional-diversity/action-plans

Facility Design and Construction Standards

Brown's intent is to build high-quality, durable, and sustainable buildings and infrastructure that are cost-effective to maintain, while providing latitude for innovation. All design consultants and contractors are required to meet or exceed these standards, and review these standards as part of their services to Brown University.

The Facility Design and Construction Standards are incorporated by reference and can be found at:

brown.edu/facilities/design-standards

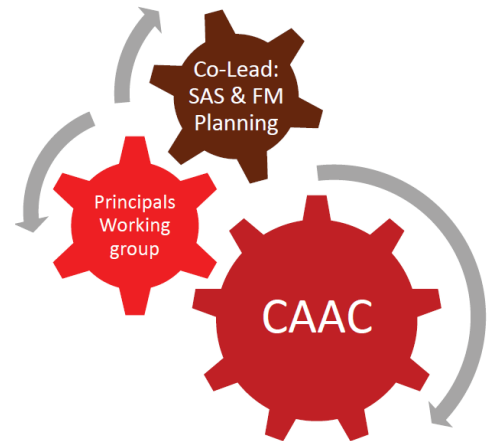
Campus Access Advisory Committee

The Campus Access Advisory Committee (CAAC) is co-led by representatives from Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and the Office of Planning to identify and prioritize accessibility needs, advocate for resources, maximize, sustain, and expand accessibility and inclusivity at Brown.

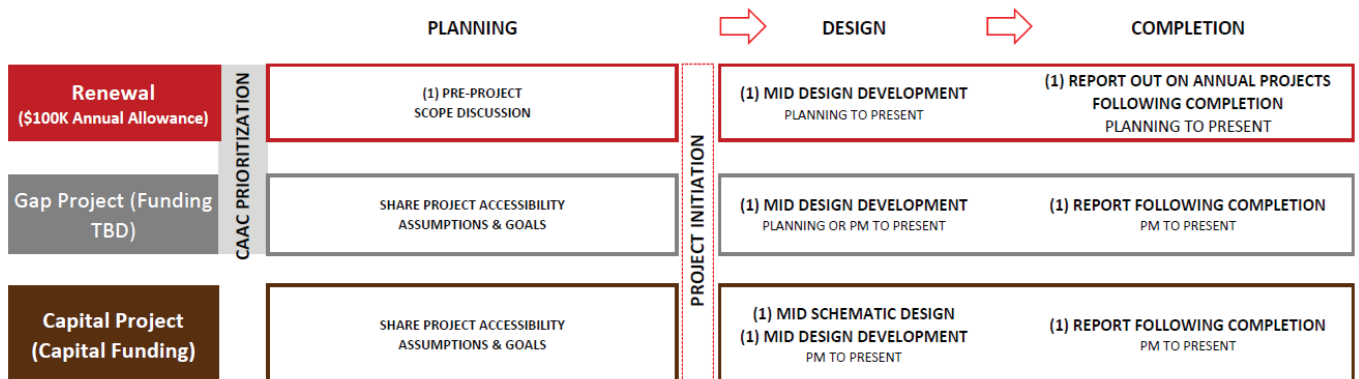
Engagement Meetings

The goal of these meetings is to communicate between the CAAC and the Department of Planning, Design, and Construction in order to capture accessibility improvements for active projects during the planning, design, and construction phases. Engagement meetings occur at regularly scheduled CAAC meetings throughout the year.

The diagram below describes the engagement process and has been adopted and implemented by Planning, Design and Construction and the CAAC Working Group.



Engagement Process Diagram



Scope and Design Review for Accessibility Projects

Scope

One of the tasks of the CAAC is to engage in an annual process to prioritize needs for accessibility improvements across campus. The accessibility project scope is developed by planning and project management, and is approved by the Accessibility Working Group.

Review

Where applicable, the project manager will review accessibility scope with the University Architect as part of the design review process. The Planners and Project Managers will also share accessibility assumptions and goals with the CAAC at engagement meetings.

Process

The table below documents the process through which an accessibility need is requested, reviewed, approved, and implemented. Funding method is dependent on scope and budget of the request.

Accessibility Request Process

INVESTMENT THRESHOLD		CAAC PRIORITIZATION	PLANNING SCOPE & BUDGET DEFINITION	FUNDING APPROVAL	APPROVAL TO PROCEED	DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION	UA REVIEW IF REQUIRED
Renewal (\$100K Annual Allowance)	< \$20K < \$40K		FM PLANNING/SEAS RENEWAL PRINCIPALS ACCESSIBILITY PRINCIPALS*	ACCESSIBILITY PRINCIPALS & RENEWAL PRINCIPALS		FM PLANNING OR FM PROJECTS FM PROJECTS	
Gap Project (Funding TBD)	> \$60K		CPWG / RENEWAL PRINCIPALS / SPACE COMMITTEE	CPWG / SPACE COMMITTEE / RENEWAL PRINCIPALS		FM PROJECTS	
Capital Project (Capital Funding)			CPWG & CORPORATION	CPWG & CORPORATION		FM PROJECTS	

CAMPUS ACCESSIBILITY MAP

Accessibility Map

All campus buildings are designated by the rating system below to indicate the level of accessibility.

The ratings are updated annually and can be found on the Accessibility Map at brown.edu/facilities/campus-maps

For ease of reference, building rating system is as follows:

- 4 The facility is mostly accessible to a user or person with mobility challenges.
- 3 A wheelchair user or person with mobility challenges can enter the facility, access the primary function within that facility, and access the restroom facility.
- 2 A wheelchair user or person with mobility challenges can enter the facility and access the primary function within that facility.
- 1 A wheelchair user or person with mobility challenges can enter the facility.
- 0 A physical barrier exists that would prevent a wheelchair user from entering the facility.



Legend

- 4 The facility is mostly accessible to a wheelchair user or person with mobility challenges.
- 3 A wheelchair user or person with mobility challenges can enter the facility, access the primary function within that facility and access the restroom facility.
- 2 A wheelchair user or person with mobility challenges can enter the facility and access the primary function within that facility.
- 1 A wheelchair user or person with mobility challenges can enter the facility.
- 0 A physical barrier exists that would prevent a wheelchair user from entering the facility.

- Moderate Obstruction
- Inaccessible Obstruction
- Ramp
- Accessible Path: Slope < 5%
- Moderate Path: Slope 5-7%
- Inaccessible Path: Slope > 7%
- Accessible Curb
- Moderate Curb
- Inaccessible Curb

- Drop Off Location
- Accessible Entry
- Elevator Location
- Lift Location
- Brown Accessible Parking
- City Accessible Parking
- Hearing Loop
- Assistive Listening Devices
- Under Construction

For Continuation to Jewelry District
please see reverse side of brochure

200' 0' 200' 400'

Contact Information:
Student and Employee Accessibility Services: 401-863-9588 or
seas@brown.edu

SEAS Shuttle: 401-225-9572 -provides on-campus rides for
visitors and Brown community members with mobility concerns

Department of Public Safety: 401-863-3322 (non-emergency line)
provides assistance with lifts and accessible entrances

For information regarding accessibility and parking, please refer to
the campus accessibility map at: brown.edu/go/accessibility-map
or call SEAS at 401-863-9588.

Campus Exterior Elements

The campus circulation systems – thresholds, paths, paving, streetscapes, greenspace, and transportation networks – are key organizing elements of Brown University. The systems reach across campus, connecting buildings, open spaces, and districts, linking College Hill to the Jewelry District effectively consolidating all of Brown University.

Pathways & Thresholds

Access to new and existing buildings and landscapes should be considered holistically with a campus approach such that accessible circulation systems and pathways are maintained not only on the project site, but on the broader campus vicinity. Where feasible, exterior pathways that provide access to main entrances are to utilize accessible sloped walks. Exterior lifts are to be avoided. Any modifications to campus pathways such as landscape, art, and site features, are to be reviewed by the University Architect.

While designing accessible routes consider site connectivity, SAS shuttle drop off locations, and accessible parking.

Wayfinding

It is important that campus circulation systems maintain a level of accessibility, and accessible routes are effectively communicated as the campus continues to evolve. The University has employed an online accessibility map to communicate accessibility features on campus. The map can be found at brown.edu/facilities/campus-maps

In addition, three physical campus directory maps are reviewed and maintained on an annual basis. These directories are located at key location on campus: Faunce Arch, Wayland Arch, and the Power Street Parking Garage.



Campus Exterior Elements

Signage

All signs should comply with building signage standards found in the Facility Design and Construction Standards. Exterior Signage to comply with The Brown University Visual Identity Policy and Strategy found at: brown.edu/university-identity/university-identity/visual-identity

In addition to above criteria, when an accessible entrance differs from the main building entrance, a sign should be provided to direct visitors to the accessible entrance. This sign should include the universal symbol for accessibility, a directional arrow or additional information to direct visitors.



Exterior Ramps

Ramps that require handrails are to be employed only where sloped walks are not feasible. Ramp design is to be integrated into the landscape and complement building and landscape materiality. Exterior ramps are to be reviewed by the University Architect.

Topography

Brown University's location on College Hill presents challenges for campus and existing building accessibility. Consider building access that enhances pedestrian connectivity and experience for all users and strengthens campus and site connections. Building access may include accessible sloped walkways, ramps, courtyards, and connectors. Access via sloped walkways is strongly preferred. Exterior lifts are to be avoided.



Building Entrances

The nature of a campus is such that buildings have multiple and varied points of entry. The main building entrance shall be the main accessible entrance unless it is not feasible and approved by the University Architect. Because the Brown campus is viewed holistically in its planning and programming, the campus approach allows each building to be conceived as not having a traditional “front” and “back” but instead may have varying points of access both from the street side and campus side. Consider shared entrances to provide access to multiple buildings where feasible.

Power Assist

Provide power-assist door openers at main accessible building entrances as required by ADAAG and building codes. Use of wall mounted or post mounted activation pads should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Prox Readers

Prox readers are preferred to card readers where feasible. Where prox readers/swipe access are provided in locations with power-assist door openers, the device shall operate the door opener. Review and coordinate with access control.

Lifts

Utilize interior lifts only when no other means is feasible to negotiate elevation change. Exterior lifts are to be avoided due to complex operations and maintenance. Stair lifts shall not be specified unless reviewed with the University Architect. Controls for interior lifts installed in public areas shall permit operation of the lift without use of key or special access card and without the need to apply continuous pressure to operate the lift. The size of lifts shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in order to best serve the primary use of the lift.

Elevators

Provide audible annunciators where mezzanines or complex building levels are featured and as required by code.

Stage Access

Stages to be accessible to all persons.

Furniture

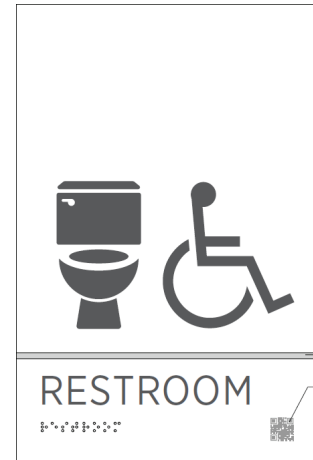
Where furniture is provided, ensure accessible options and accessible seating are provided. Consider classroom furniture that will allow for height adjustment of desks/table tops.

GUIDELINES FOR UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Single User Facilities

Restrooms

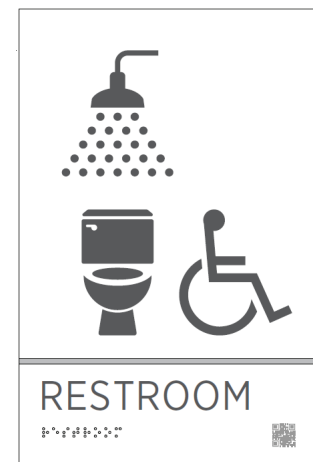
In order to provide accessibility as well as accommodate gender-inclusivity, the designer shall provide at minimum one single-user restroom for new buildings and renovations. Provide signage that indicates accessibility. Room name to be “Restroom” with no indications or symbols of gender. Provide privacy lock. Consider multiple gender inclusive restrooms in high traffic buildings with assembly or classroom programs. It is preferred that the gender inclusive restrooms be centrally located on the first or second floor but may vary on a case-by-case basis. Ensure access to gender inclusive restroom throughout day and evening programming. All signs should comply with building signage standards found in the Facility Design and Construction Standards.



Sign standard for single user accessible restroom. In existing buildings where the restrooms is not accessible, remove accessibility icon.

Locker / Shower Rooms

In order to provide accessibility as well as accommodate gender-inclusivity, the designer shall provide at least one single-user locker/shower room for new buildings and renovations where these facilities are provided.



Sign standard for accessible restroom with shower. In existing buildings where the restrooms is not accessible, remove accessibility icon.

Wellness Rooms

In new construction and major renovations provide a room to accommodate lactation or other personal medical use. Room to be designated “Wellness Room.” Wellness Room is to be fully private with privacy lock and include at minimum a small refrigerator, chair and side table. Incorporation of an accessible sink is encouraged where feasible.

Quantity and location of Wellness Room to be determined on a case-by-case basis. At minimum, provide one Wellness Room per building. If the building or renovation is multi-story, consider one Wellness Room be provided on every other level. A restroom stall or storage area shall not serve as a lactation space or Wellness Room.

More information on policy can be found at:

brown.edu/about/administration/human-resources/benefits/family-resources/lactation-privacy-rooms

Technology

Hearing Loops

In new construction and major renovations that feature auditoriums, large classrooms, or other multipurpose spaces outfitted with A/V system include a built-in hearing loop system. This system should utilize the most current technology to be coordinated and approved by Media Services. Provide appropriate signage adjacent to the room signage indicating the presence of the system and information on how to gain user access.



Displays

Installation of touch-screen displays shall include accommodation for interacting with the system. Proposed displays should be coordinated and approved by Media Services.

Closed Captioning

Incorporate closed captioning systems in new construction and major renovations that feature auditoriums, large classrooms, or other multipurpose spaces outfitted with audio/visual systems. Review and coordinate with Media Services.

Equipment

Refrigerator/Freezer

In kitchen locations where a full-size refrigerator/freezer is included, provide a side-by-side model rather than a top-freezer model to accommodate accessibility to both compartments.

PROJECT MANAGER ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST

Projects in Design & Construction

Signage and Communication

All projects that impact accessibility shall provide a Campus Construction Accessible Routes map that indicates temporary access to sites impacted by construction activities. These maps are updated by FM Projects on a monthly or as needed basis and can be found at brown.edu/facilities/projects

Accessibility Map

The accessibility map represents building accessibility ratings, accessible routes, pathways, building entrances, and parking. All projects that impact accessibility shall coordinate updates to the accessibility map with the CAAC and FM CAD. The map shall be updated on a semi-annual basis or as needed. The accessibility map can be found at brown.edu/facilities/campus-maps .

Project Manager Accessibility Checklist

- CAAC Engagement Meetings (see process defined on page 8)
- Campus Construction Accessible Routes Map (see link above)
- Update Campus Accessibility Map at project completion; coordinate with FM CAD

