
Date	March 3, 2011
To	Greg Angelo – Director of Real Property Management and Development
From	Chip Hazen – ADA Compliance Officer
Subject	ADA Evaluation of Union Station

On February 28, 2011, I completed a quick walk through of Union Station. Observed were the common general public areas such as the tunnels to the track platforms, rest room lobby area, Amtrak lobby area, the two outside patios, and the parking lot. From the observations, the ADA issues fall in three categories: safety, physical accommodations, and signage.

SAFETY

Tunnel

The major safety concern in the tunnel is the carts that transport individuals with disabilities and seniors between the waiting area and the platforms. Often the drivers come up behind someone and then either honk their horn or make sounds. The horn or whistle is sometimes difficult to hear and to make a determination of its location. This is partly because of the noise from the train engines and the overall ambient noise of the tunnel. The use of the horn makes it difficult for persons with hearing and/or vision impairments because it first scares them and then they panic not knowing what to do. Perhaps another way of working with the carts is to chain off a dedicated section for just the carts, which was done in the 90's. Proper signage indicating carts only would also need to be installed. This would put the carts in their own right-of-way instead of sharing a common area with the people who are walking.

Electrical Outlet

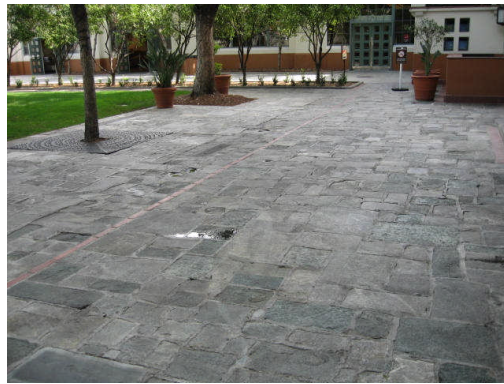
On the ramp leading to Tracks 11 and 12, the cover for the electrical outlet is missing. This could pose a safety hazard for persons with vision impairments, riders in wheelchairs, and small kids.



No cover on electrical outlet on ramp serving Tracks 11 and 12.

Uneven Floors

Various locations of the floors have cracks and are missing material. The outside patio on the north side of the Station has an uneven surface, which makes it difficult for a wheelchair to roll over and poses a tripping hazard for a person with vision impairments. Many of these tripping hazards are deeper than the one-half inch allowable under the ADAAG requirements. Many have been patched over the past six months with some of the patches coming loose.



Tripping hazard on the south side walkway Uneven floor in the patio

Installation of Temporary Obstructions

The restaurant, Taxis, uses a temporary barrier to outline its service area. ADAAG requires that two straps be provided with the lower strap at or below 27". This allows a cane to hit the strap instead of the individual hitting the strap.



Barrier outlining the dinning tables with only one strap instead of two, as required.

PHYSICAL ACCOMMODATIONS

North Ramps to Train Platforms

The ramps to the tracks on the north side of the tunnel have slopes ranging from 7.3% to 7.6%, which is within the ADA required slope maximum of 8.33%. However, there are no resting areas along the ramp (the ADAAG requires one every 30' to 40'), and the handrails do not comply with the ADAAG requirements.



North ramps are within the 8.33% slope.



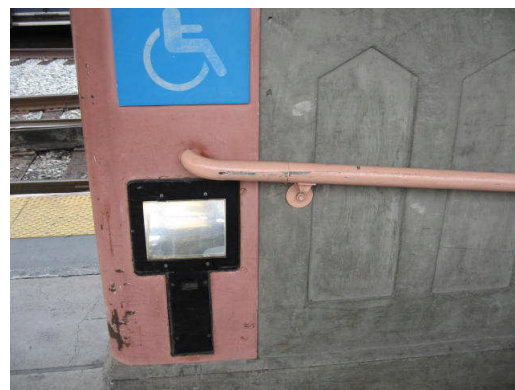
Handrails do not extend beyond the top of the ramp and does not extend at the bottom of the ramp.

South Ramps to Train Platforms

Ramps on the south side of the tunnel are within the ADAAG requirements for slope percentage ranging from 4.6% to 6.1%. However, the hand rails at the top of the ramp do not extend a minimum of one foot beyond the end of the ramp and the length of the landings are 53" instead of the required 60".



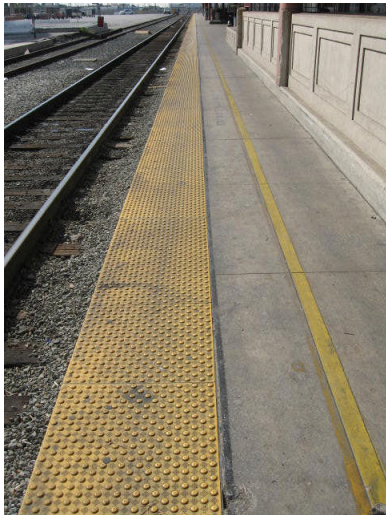
Measurement indicating that the resting landing is less than the required 60".



Handrails are required to extend a minimum of twelve inches (12") past the end of the slope and parallel with the ground.

Train Platform Edges

All of the platforms have a similar width. Some platforms have islands with equipment in the middle; but, all platforms have the minimum travel pathway of 36" (as required by the FTA Rules and Regulations) along the edge of the platform that is free of obstacles. The platform used by Amtrak, Tracks 11 and 12, have truncated domes all the way to the edge of the platform as required; however, the truncated domes are not maintained. All are dirty and the yellow domes could blend into the edge of the platform for persons with vision impairments.

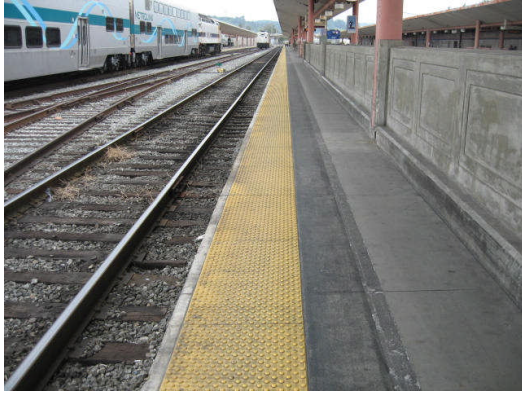


Truncated domes in places do not offer the required 70% contrast between the domes and the edge of the platform.

The other platforms, which are used by Metrolink, have a two inch gap between the truncated domes and the edge of the platform. The ADA requires the following:

810.5.2 Detectable Warnings. Platform boarding edges not protected by platform screens or guards shall have detectable warnings complying with 705 along the full length of the public use area of the platform.

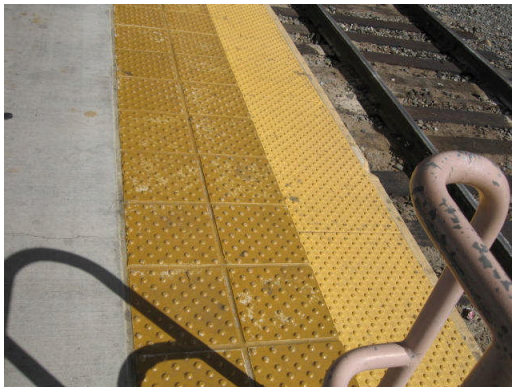
705.2 Platform Edges. Detectable warning surfaces at platform boarding edges shall be 24 inches (610 mm) wide and shall extend the full length of the public use areas of the platform.



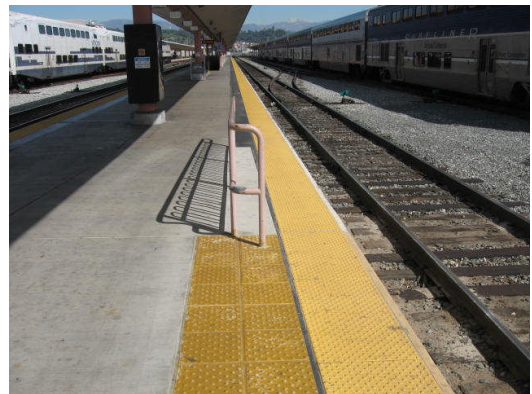
Platform with 2” gap between the truncated domes and the “edge” of the platform.

Truncated Dome Color Requirement

The color of the truncated domes is a State of California requirement. The color that all California transportation agencies must conform to is Federal Color No. 33538 of Standard No. 595B. The high platform loading area uses a different color truncated dome than is the standard. The contrast between the two colors can be seen in the following pictures.



Color difference



Different perspective showing the color difference

Benches/Seats

None of the benches on the platform that serves Tracks 11 and 12 or the seating inside of the Union Station waiting area complies with the ADA requirement for benches. Five percent of seating, if it is provided, must meet the ADA requirements. Since seating is provided, at least one seat on the platform and two or three seats in the waiting area must meet the ADA requirements. The requirement is as follows:

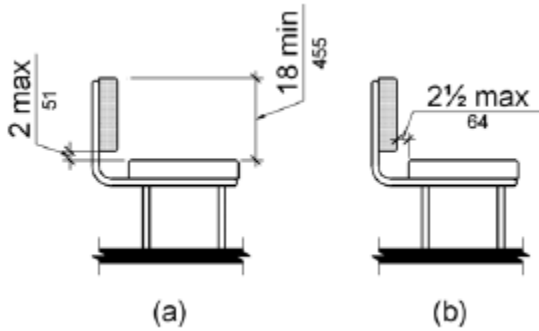
903.3 Size. Benches shall have seats that are 42 inches (1065 mm) long minimum and 20 inches (510 mm) deep minimum and 24 inches (610 mm) deep maximum.

903.4 Back Support. The bench shall provide for back support or shall be affixed to a wall. Back support shall be 42 inches (1065 mm) long minimum and shall extend from a point 2 inches (51 mm) maximum above the seat surface to a point 18 inches (455 mm) minimum

above the seat surface. Back support shall be 2 1/2 inches (64 mm) maximum from the rear edge of the seat measured horizontally.

Advisory 903.4 Back Support. To assist in transferring to the bench, consider providing grab bars on a wall adjacent to the bench, but not on the seat back. If provided, grab bars cannot obstruct transfer to the bench.

Figure 903.4 Bench Back Support



903.5 Height. The top of the bench seat surface shall be 17 inches (430 mm) minimum and 19 inches (485 mm) maximum above the finish floor or ground.



Bench on platform that does not meet the ADAAG requirements.



Seats in Union Station that do not meet the ADAAG requirements.

Signage

Signage is a major issue at Union Station. Since the signs were installed in the 90's, the requirements have changed, but the signs have not been changed. The picture below meets the tactile requirement for signs, but the Braille is to be 3/8" under the letters. The sign is also too low for someone to read the Braille. The sign is required to be at 60" to the top of the highest tactile letter, this sign is below waist high level.



Platform sign at the top of the ramp with Braille too far below the sign and the sign posted too low.

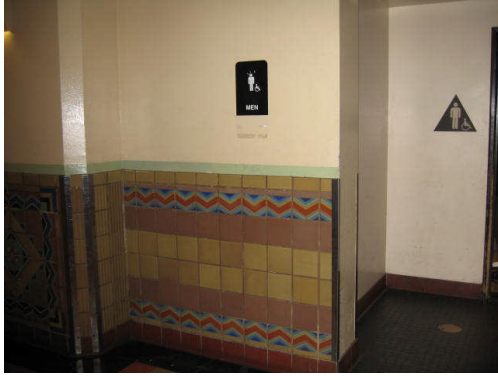
Another signage issue is Metro's lack of a Braille/Tactile station identification sign at the entrance to the Subway. Metro has attempted to install a sign at this entrance, but the owners have rejected all requests stating that there was no sign in the 1930's; therefore, a sign cannot be put at this location.



Lack of signage on the right side of the entrance to Subway.

Rest Room Signs

Signage at rest rooms are higher than allowable. The rest room sign was recently installed following renovation of the rest rooms. The sign is two inches higher than allowed under the ADAAG requirements.



The inside sign is compliant, but the outside sign is two inches higher than allowed.

The counters at the car rental booths are too high for someone in a wheelchair. The required height for the counter is 36" with space under the counter for the legs of a person who uses a wheelchair.



Counters are too high at the car rental booths.

Parking Lot

The parking lot has three disabled spaces with one space designated for vans, as required by both state and federal standards. However, one of the parking stalls (number 49) is 8' wide, both state and federal requirements call for the space to be 9' wide. Additionally, a warning rail was installed, but the curb on the ramp could be a tripping hazard for someone crossing the roadway at this non-designated location. Lastly, the sidewalk is required to be concrete, not asphalt. Asphalt does not allow groves that are required as a warning to persons with vision impairments and can be slippery when wet. Concrete requires a certain level of slip resistant that cannot be maintained in asphalt. Lastly, the sidewalk from vehicles to the facility has many obstacles, which can be seen in the pictures on the next page.



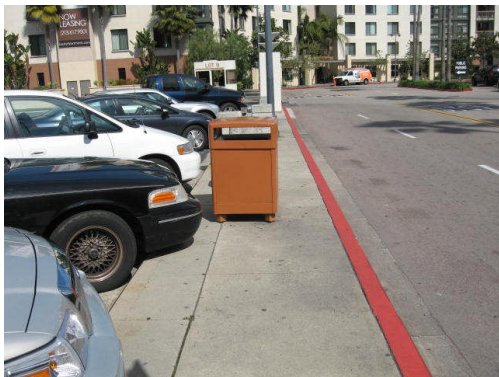
Parking stall is 8' wide; 9' is required



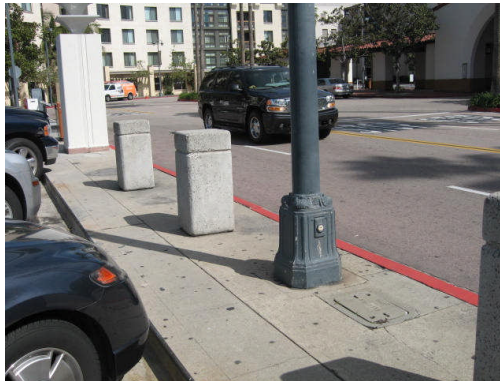
Space 49 is 8' wide.



The ramp to the parking spaces does not meet the ADAAG requirements for a stable surface.



Sidewalk is blocked by trash cans and other obstacles.



Drop-off Location

In 2003 the Federal Transit Administration made a finding that Union Station provided designated drop-off locations for the general public but not for persons with disabilities, as required by both state and federal accessibility requirements. Therefore, Union Station developed an area for dropping off persons with disabilities; however, that area does not conform to the ADA specifications, which are as follows:

503.2 Vehicle Pull-Up Space. Passenger loading zones shall provide a vehicular pull-up space 96 inches (2440 mm) wide minimum and 20 feet (6100 mm) long minimum.

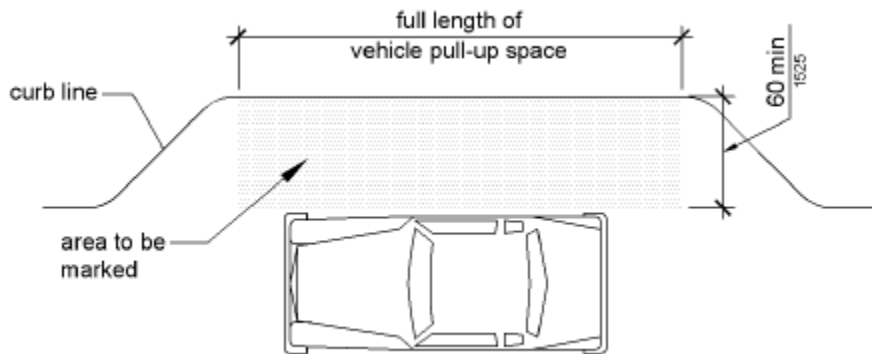
503.3 Access Aisle. Passenger loading zones shall provide access aisles complying with 503 adjacent to the vehicle pull-up space. Access aisles shall adjoin an accessible route and shall not overlap the vehicular way.

503.3.1 Width. Access aisles serving vehicle pull-up spaces shall be 60 inches (1525 mm) wide minimum.

503.3.2 Length. Access aisles shall extend the full length of the vehicle pull-up spaces they serve.

503.3.3 Marking. Access aisles shall be marked so as to discourage parking in them.

Figure 503.3 Passenger Loading Zone Access Aisle



Long shot of disabled drop-off zone



The ramp must be made of concrete, cannot be part of the loading zone, and ramp is not long enough, and there is no space for parallel parking

Union Station Entrance Doors

Doors leading into the Station are too heavy. The pressure to open the doors cannot exceed 5 pounds, as required. These doors require more than 20 pounds of pressure to open from the outside and more pressure from the inside.



Doors are currently blocked open, except when the blocks are removed as is the case for two of the four doors shown in this picture.