

April 2025 Tech Tuesday Q&A

Q1: At what point does a project become cost prohibitive? We don't have unlimited funds to spend on concrete improvements.

A1: The ADA Law requires that what is made useable for some is made accessible for all. They don't dictate material usage, just compliance. It's to the owner to decide what materials are used and to ensure the facility is compliant at the time of acceptance. Following acceptance of a facility, compliance is required to be maintained throughout the life of the asset, else a separate project would be required at a later date to bring a facility back to compliance. Cost is always a challenge for asset owners, however, from the compliance standpoint, we all bear the requirement to upgrade our facilities to the fullest extent feasible (each agency can decide and document what that phrase means to them). This is where the Transition Plan comes into play, which allows us to complete the compliance upgrade in a way that works for our individual communities.

Q2: Are diagonal curb ramps now allowed?

A2: It's important to first understand what a diagonal ramp is. From what I've been told by the Access Board in prior conversations, it doesn't get its name from ramp orientation to the intersection (i.e. diagonal in direction) – it is defined as a single ramp serving two crosswalks. When the ramp opening is made wide enough to serve both crosswalks (8' min to allow for two wheelchairs to exit the road at the same time), that is compliant, even if its orientation is diagonal. The goal in not allowing diagonal ramps in new construction (still allowed in rehabilitation to my knowledge) is that we don't want two crosswalks that feed into one small 4' opening, whereby only allowing one to exit the street at a time.

Q3: Does MUTCD now require that all pedestrian crossings must be painted?

A3: No, the 2023 MUTCD does **not** require all pedestrian crossings to be painted. At signalized intersections, crosswalks are recommended ("should" be marked), but they can be omitted if engineering judgment finds them unnecessary. The MUTCD allows flexibility and does not mandate crosswalk markings at every location.

Q4: Can you clarify under what circumstances the use of wooden ramps are permitted?

A4: Wooden ramps are permitted for temporary use if they meet key safety standards. They must have a 12:1 slope (8.33%) or flatter, a slip-resistant surface, and a landing area of at least 48" x 48" with a 2% or flatter cross-slope. The MUTCD requires slip resistance, but does not limit the material used. Wood is acceptable if it is properly treated and textured to prevent slipping. Surfaces like dirt or loose gravel are not allowed, as they don't provide safe, stable footing.