PLAN FOR ACCESSIBLE STREETS AND SIDEWALKS

ELGIN

PLAN PARA CALLES Y BANQUETAS ACCESIBLES

Executive Summary

Adopted April 22, 2026
Resolution 26-72







Executive summary

Introduction & Purpose

Elgin's Plan for Accessible Streets and Sidewalks addresses the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The plan is specific to Title II of the ADA, which requires all public entities with 50 or more employees to identify accessibility barriers.

The information below summarizes the Title II administrative requirements addressed through this plan. In addition, it highlights additional requirements for a self-evaluation and transition plan for the city's streets and sidewalks. Ideas generated through public input, stakeholder interviews, and steering committee meetings are incorporated into the plan's recommendations. Elgin is recommended to complete a similar self-evaluation and transition plan for its public buildings and parks.

There are two sets of federally adopted standards and guidelines that are used in accessibility plans.

- **Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines** (PROWAG) are the federally adopted set of design considerations for accessible public rights-of-way, including streets and sidewalks. These guidelines are used to evaluate Elgin's streets.
- **ADA Standards**, a separate set of rules for other facilities and functions, address policy– and program-related initiatives that impact street accessibility.

ADA Title II administrative requirements

- **Grievance Procedure -** Adopted April 2023.
- **ADA Coordinator -** Human Resources Director, designated 2023. Currently Tim Bennett.
- **ADA Notice -** Adopted April 2023.
- **Self-evaluation for streets and sidewalks -** Adopted April, 22, 2026.
- **Transition plan and schedule for streets and sidewalks -** Adopted April, 22, 2026.

Title II policies and reports should be posted to the city website and made available by request.



The self-evaluation found Elgin's street system to be largely accessible, particularly with modern curb ramps or curb cuts in almost all required locations. The current conditions stem from a robust street maintenance and resurfacing program that, over several years, has resulted in upgraded curb ramps along many of the city's major streets, as well as within neighborhoods. Therefore, the majority of the needs identified to remove barriers to accessibility pertain to repairs or maintenance of curb ramps and sidewalks, addressing locations where sidewalks cross driveways, and upgrading traffic signals to include Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS).

The plan is funded and supported by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the regional planning agency for northeastern Illinois. The effort started in January 2025 and took 13 months to complete.

The People of Elgin

This effort achieves several goals established through numerous city planning efforts over the past decade. The city's 2025 Strategic Plan established a goal to "Improve street and transportation options" through completion of "an Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Transition Plan for Public Rights of Way." Further, the 2018 Comprehensive Plan includes a goal to "ensure that residents can safely walk or bike through their neighborhoods and have convenient access to local commercial areas, parks, and community facilities."

The recommendations contained in this plan, when implemented, will help the city achieve goals established in its 2023 Parks and Recreation Master Plan update to "ensure parks and services are physically accessible to all." Access to parks from neighborhoods and nearby streets was a factor in determining the priority streets in the transition plan.

The figure on the right summarizes key demographic data for Elgin. There are more than 11,000 people who report having a disability, with the types of disabilities shown as:

- Nearly 5,000 people have ambulatory difficulty and use wheelchairs, canes, walkers, or other mobility devices.
- Roughly 4,100 people report having cognitive difficulties.
- More than 3,900 people experience difficulties with independent living.
- Nearly 2,800 people have vision difficulty, including blindness or low vision.

The highest concentration of people with disabilities is located primarily in areas of the city that are west of the river and north of Wing Street. Neighborhoods east of Liberty Street also have relatively high rates of residents with disabilities. These are shown in the map on page 4 (next page).

The people of Elgin

114,106
residents

38,846
households

11,075
residents with a disability (10%)

▶ 5,075
residents with more than one disability (4%)

▶ 3,945
residents aged 65 and over with a disability (3%)

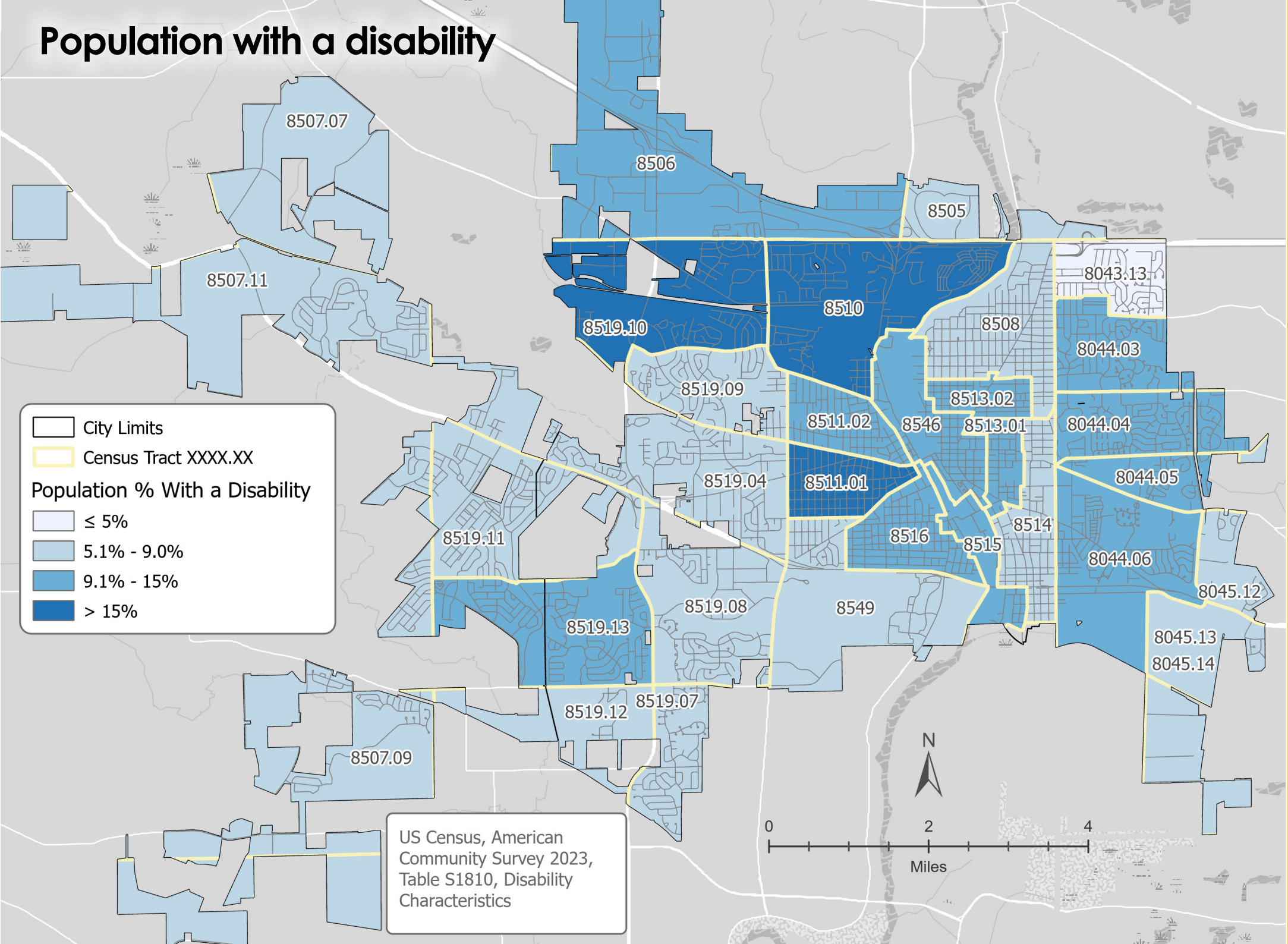
Residents, by disability type

- ▶ 4,945 - ambulatory difficulty
- ▶ 4,133 - cognitive difficulty
- ▶ 3,906 - independent living difficulty
- ▶ 2,774 - vision difficulty
- ▶ 2,390 - hearing difficulty
- ▶ 2,066 - self-care difficulty

▶ 13,620
households with access to no vehicle or one vehicle

▶ 8,385
work from home, take transit, and walk or bike to work

Population with a disability



What we heard

More than 1,100 connections were made with individuals or organizations during the public and stakeholder input efforts for this plan. The surveys were available in English and Spanish. Interpreters were available at all public input events for Spanish-speaking residents. A summary of the public input methods and number of connections made via each method is shown on the right.

These comments emphasized desires for improved access to parks and public buildings, including the main Borden Library. Access to transit stops and train stations was also part of many comments. Residents also reported a need for continued maintenance of sidewalks and improved snow management practices to keep sidewalks accessible in winter.

Priority Projects

It is estimated to cost nearly $95 million to upgrade Elgin's existing sidewalks and curb ramps to ensure they are fully accessible. Many upgrades occur alongside street resurfacing projects. These projects are required by law to upgrade curb ramps to meet current design standards. The city conducts other sidewalk and driveway upgrades as the budget allows.

The city is recommended to establish an annual transition plan implementation fund of $500,000 to address the priority projects identified in this plan. Some of these funds are already used for accessibility upgrades when streets are resurfaced.

A set of 20 priority streets was identified through the technical evaluation and public input to plan for the use of these funds. These projects are on the map on the next page (page 6).

It is feasible that the city can fully address these priority routes within its allocated funding. The improvements primarily consist of upgrading existing sidewalks and curb ramps to enhance accessibility. Some routes were recently upgraded with curb ramps and may only require sidewalk improvements.

The city may consider upgrading driveways, bus stops, and pedestrian crossings when making other street improvements, especially along priority routes.

The city's Active Mobility Plan is under development at the time of adoption of the Accessible Streets and Sidewalks Plan. It includes a broader examination of streets that may lack sidewalks altogether. While the absence of a sidewalk does not constitute an ADA compliance issue, the city may determine that adding sidewalks along some routes provides greater accessibility benefits to Elgin's residents than reconstructing existing sidewalks.

Public input & connections



1,120 Total Connections

725 Website views

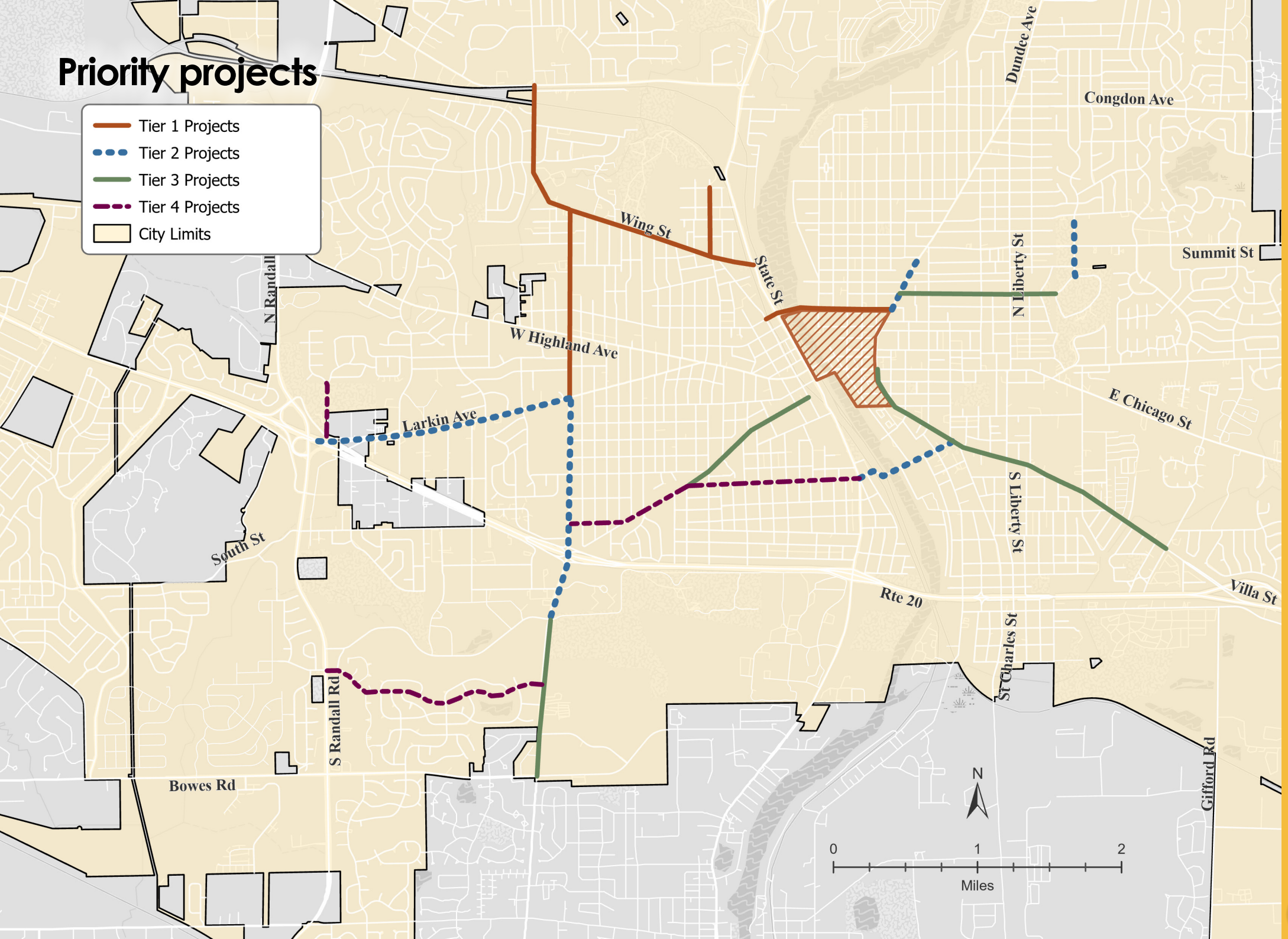
316 Surveys completed

48 Public meeting attendees

25 Online map pins

6 Organization/agency interviews

Priority projects



If that occurs, the city is recommended to document the reasons why new facilities provide a greater benefit than upgrading existing facilities. The city must address ADA requirements to upgrade curb ramps when streets are resurfaced, regardless of priority to other funding priorities.

- **Tier 1** projects are the highest priorities and recommended for implementation. These five projects have an estimated combined cost of roughly $1.8 million.
- **Tier 2** consists of six projects with an estimated combined cost of $1.8 million and may be addressed once Tier 1 projects are complete.
- **Tiers 3 and 4** consist of nine projects and may be implemented after Tiers 1 and 2 are complete. Their combined estimated cost is roughly $1.75 million. The city will likely update its transition plan before these projects are considered, which may alter their priority.

Schedule & Next Steps

ADA Title II requires the city to develop a schedule outlining its timeline for removing accessibility barriers. The illustration below highlights key features of the more detailed schedule included in the full plan.

It includes policy and program recommendations, along with a timeline for implementing priority projects. The city can track progress on the plan's implementation through a progress report.

The city is required to update this progress report at least every 5 years, but it is recommended that it be updated more frequently.

The progress report should include a list of completed projects and their total costs, as well as accessibility upgrades made to the city's street system through its policies regulating property redevelopment.

The progress report should include any changes made to the list of priority projects. It can include reasons for project delays or design modifications.

The city may consider a more comprehensive schedule and progress report once it completes the self-evaluation and transition plan that is required and recommended for public buildings and parks.

Summary schedule for implementation

Short range (2026 to 2032)

- The Plan was adopted April 22, 2026 via Resolution 26-72.
- Update the city's website to include Title II policies and the Plan for Accessible Streets and Sidewalks.
- Implement Tier 1 priority projects.
- Develop self-evaluation and transition plan for city public buildings and parks
- Adopt PROWAG as the City's official standards.
- Develop annual implementation funding goal.
- Develop progress report to document plan implementation and changes to schedule, projects, etc.
- Document snow management procedures.

Other recommendations

- Update city code to incorporate recommended policy changes (when next update occurs).
- Implement Tier 2 priority projects (2033 through 2037)
- Update self-evaluation and transition plan to identify new priority projects (approximately 10 years after adoption of this plan)
- Re-evaluate Tier 3 and 4 priority projects with update of self-evaluation and transition plan.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the following people and organizations who provided support for this plan through participation on the steering committee, promoting public input, and engaging in stakeholder interviews.

City of Elgin & Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

- Mike Pubentz - City Public Services Director
- John Whalen - City Parks Planner
- Jaemi Jackson - CMAP Principal Planner and Regional ADA Coordinator
- Borja Gonzalez - CMAP Planner and Elgin Project Manager
- Jack Ringness - CMAP ADA Program Consultant

Steering committee members

- Jennifer Fukala - Downtown Neighborhood Association Executive Director
- Brian Pinon - Downtown Neighborhood Association Board President
- John Ashcraft - The Judson Bike Shop
- Gail Cohen - Northeast Neighborhood Association
- Katie Thompson - PADS of Elgin

Stakeholders who participated in project interviews

- Elgin Community College Student Access and Disability Services
- Elgin Hispanic Network
- Elgin Cares
- Downtown Neighborhood Association
- Northern Illinois Special Recreation District
- Pace Suburban Bus

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Accessibility is vital to creating an inclusive and thriving region. Everyone in northeastern Illinois, including people with disabilities, needs to be able to get to work or school, visit family and friends, access the goods and services they need, and enjoy all the region has to offer, such as dining, shopping, arts, sports, and recreation.

Of the 8.6 million people in northeastern Illinois, over 800,000 have a disability. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is working to improve accessibility across the region, not only because it benefits those with disabilities, but because it benefits everyone.

- Accessibility creates opportunity.
- Accessibility creates economic benefits.
- Many people have, or will have, disabilities.
- Everyone benefits from accessibility improvements.

Compliance with ADA is required and ensures the region continues to receive millions of dollars in annual transportation funding.

Project Consultants

Vitruvian Planning

Epstein

cyclomedia