


PROWAG Updates: The Good, The Bad & The Ugly

Scott Booth, PE, PTOE, RSP₁
Breanne Alsobrook, EIT, RAS



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What Happened?

August 8, 2023

- US Access Board published Final Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (Final PROWAG) in the Federal Register

September 7, 2023

- Final PROWAG went into effect for the US Access Board

Maybe April 2024

- DOT will adopt PROWAG into its regulations

What this means

- Until adopted by DOT and DOJ, not enforceable, yet establishes minimum guidelines

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Grades of **Good, Bad, and Ugly** are just our opinions and are from the viewpoint of a designer or public entity. Not from the perspective of a user.

Good – Makes it easier to comply or understand regulations

Bad – May complicate design or process

Ugly – Potential for significant cost, design changes, etc.

Housekeeping



LJA

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LJA Alteration and Existing Constraints Updates

THE GOOD

- Provided definition for “Developed”
 - Means “Containing buildings, pedestrian facilities, roadways, utilities, or elements”
- Added the term “developed” to the definition of “Alteration or altered”
 - Clarifies distinction between new construction vs alterations
 - Has an impact on when infeasibility constraints apply

Photos from the US Access Board

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Alteration and Existing Constraints Updates

THE BAD

- R202.3.1 Existing Physical Constraints – “make it impractical” changed to “make compliance with applicable requirements technically infeasible”

THE UGLY

- R202.3.1 Existing Physical Constraints – removed right-of-way availability as an allowed infeasibility constraint



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Pedestrian Circulation Path Connection

THE GOOD

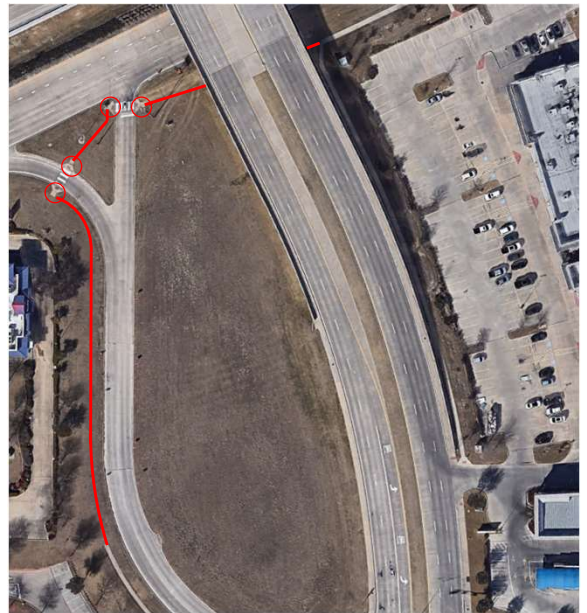
- Transitional segments can be used
- Closing gaps in the system

THE BAD

- Altered pedestrian facilities need to connect to existing pedestrian circulation routes (R202.2)

THE UGLY

- The above rule also extends to boarding and alighting areas and platforms (R309.1.3.2)



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Pedestrian Access Routes (PAR)

THE GOOD

- Clarified curb width is not part of clear width (R302.2)
- Slopes now stated in ratio and percentages and the allowable 2% became 2.1% (1:48)
- Portion of PAR in street that connects accessible parking spot (on street) to end of block or midblock crossing can have cross slope > 2.1% (R302.5.1)

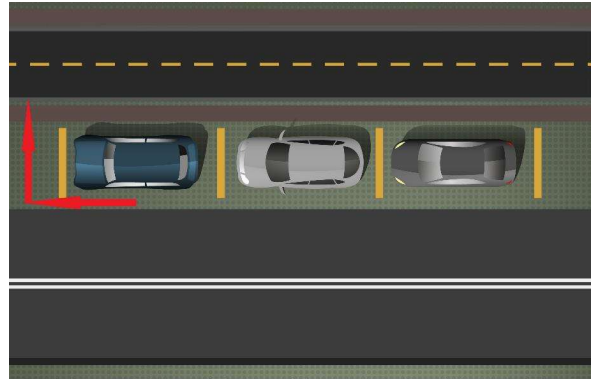


Photo from the US Access Board

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Pedestrian Access Routes (PAR)

THE BAD

- At any intersection where pedestrians are not meant to cross, separation with landscaping or non prepared surface of at least 24 inches or vertical edge treatment must be provided (R203.6.1.1)



Photos from the US Access Board

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Alternate Pedestrian Access Routes (PAR)

THE GOOD

- More clarification on detectable edging for when channelizing devices are used for an alternate PAR (R303.6)

THE BAD

- The alternate PAR surface must be no less accessible than the closed one (R303.3)
- If alternate route not feasible, must offer an alternate means of access (R204.1)

THE UGLY

- Require both visual and actuated audible signs identifying the alternate route (R303.2)
- Alternate PAR width must be at least as wide as the temporarily closed if using an existing PAR, otherwise at least 48" (R303.4)
- If temporary pedestrian heads are provided, pushbuttons or a passive system must be provided and comply as if permanent. (R303.7)

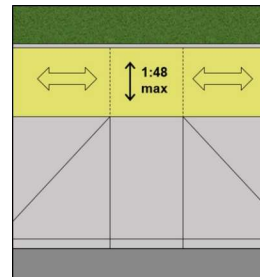
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Ramps and Blended Transitions

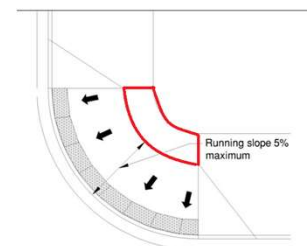
THE GOOD

- For perpendicular curb ramps, a top landing is only needed when a change in direction is required to access the ramp from a PAR (R304.2.5)
- 48" min x 48" min clear space at bottom of ramp, only required for perpendicular ramps, not parallel (previously both) (R304.2.4)



THE BAD

- A PAR must be provided as a bypass in a blended transition if slope is $>2.1\%$ and serves multiple PAR (R304.4.3)



Photos from the IIS Access Board

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Crosswalks

THE GOOD

- Midblock and Roundabout Crossing cross slope can be up to the street grade (R302.5.3)

THE BAD

- 1 curb ramp or blended transition/crosswalk with 1 ramp on each end of the crosswalk (R203.6.1)
 - If alteration, can use a single ramp at the apex of the corner
 - Can use a single blended transition that covers the entire corner



Photo from Bolton & Menk

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Crosswalks

THE UGLY

- For multi-lane roundabout legs or multi-lane channelized turns, you need a traffic control signal with a pedestrian head, a pedestrian hybrid beacon, a pedestrian actuated RRFB, or a raised crossing (306.4.2 & 306.5)



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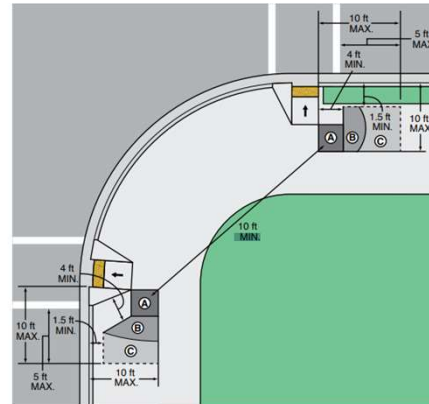


Pedestrian Signal Heads and Push Buttons

THE GOOD

- No longer sent to reference the MUTCD, technical requirements are in the code
- Pedestrian Push Button clear floor space can be the slope of the adjacent PAR if the PAR is compliant with R302.4 Grade. (R404.2)
- Pedestrian Push Button location now matches the MUTCD dimensions (307.4)

Figure 4I-2. Preferred Push Button Location Area



- Notes:
1. The push button detector should be located 5 feet or less from the outside edge of the marked crosswalk farthest from the intersection.
 2. The push button detector should be located no farther from the crosswalk than the stop line, if one is present.
 3. A 4-foot minimum unobstructed pedestrian access route should be maintained.
 4. The maximum (MAX.) and minimum (MIN.) dimensions shown in this figure are recommendations.
 5. Two pedestrian push buttons on the same corner should be separated by at least 10 feet. The 10-foot dimension shown in this figure is in reference to the placement of the push buttons within their respective areas.
 6. Figure 4I-3 shows typical push button locations.
 7. This figure is not drawn to scale.

Legend

- Downward slope
- (A) Preferred location for push button
- (B) Acceptable location for push button
- (C) Acceptable, but less desirable

Photo from the MUTCD 11th Edition

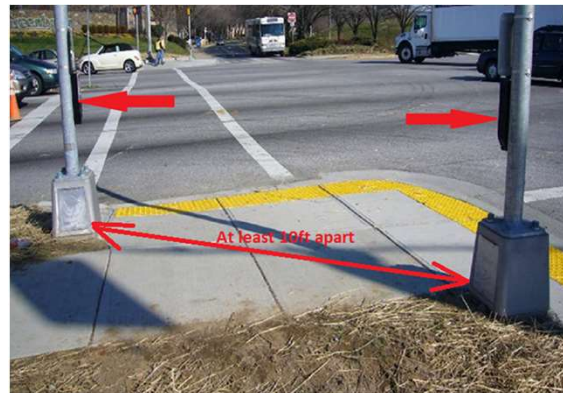
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Pedestrian Signal Heads and Push Buttons

THE BAD

- Pedestrian Push Button must be parallel to the crosswalk (R307.9)
- 10 ft minimum distance between ped poles for new construction (R307.4.1)
- Pedestrian Push Buttons and passive detection must be audible and vibrotactile. (R308.3)
 - If the poles are < 10ft there **must** be a speech message
 - If the poles are > 10ft there **must** be a percussive tone
 - For devices such as RRFB's, speech message is required, but they should not be vibrotactile (R307.7)



Photos from the IIS Access Board

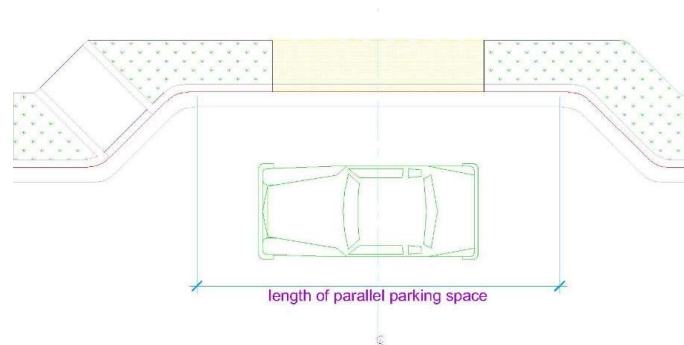
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On Street Parking and Passenger Loading Zones

THE GOOD

- Parallel on-street parking dimensions added (24' L x 13' W) (R310.2.1)
- If alterations are done only to parallel parking (not PAR), then if the accessible space(s) are at the end of a block face or mid-block crossing, they can be the same width as the adjacent spaces (R310.2.1)



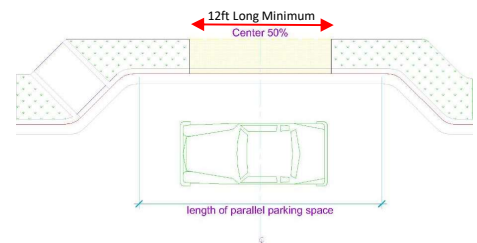
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On Street Parking and Passenger Loading Zones

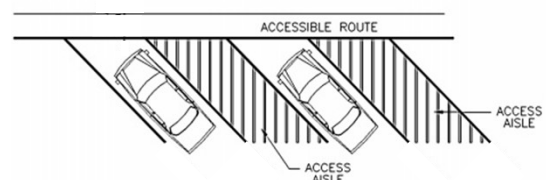
THE BAD

- If available ROW width is $\leq 9\text{ft}$ (measured curb line to ROW line), then the accessible parallel parking space can be the same width as the adjacent spaces (R310.2.1)
- Contiguous accessible parallel spaces need their own connection to the PAR (R310.2.2)
- Center 50% of spaces/zones must be clear of obstructions (R310.2.4)



THE UGLY

- Each accessible on-street angled parking space (132") requires a 60" wide access aisle on the passenger side (1/spot, cannot share access aisle) (R310.4)



Photos from the ICS Access Board and Chicago Building Code

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Other Changes

THE GOOD

- Removed guidelines for what alterations trigger the installation of pedestrian signals

THE BAD

- Driveways that are stop, yield, or signal controlled must have detectable warnings on the pedestrian circulation path where it meets the driveway (R205.7)

THE UGLY

- Stairs require visual contrast on the ledge of every step and the top landing (R408.6)

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Some Considerations

- If your local guidelines differ, use whichever is stricter
- Industry standard for slope measurements for ADA inspectors is a 2ft Smart Level
- The Access Board is there to answer your questions and provide clarification
- PROWAG is also being incorporated into TAS as exceptions
- Reminder – Cities with 50 or more employees are required to have an ADA Transition Plan



U.S. Access Board

(202) 272-0080, Ext. 3

E-mail: ta@access-board.gov
www.access-board.gov

Photos from the U.S. Access Board and Stabila

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