

<http://www.access-board.gov/adaag/html/adaag.htm>. Standard design guideline graphics may be found at <http://www.access-board.gov/adaag/html/Adfig.html>.

While many of the design conventions of ADA have become commonplace, site designers may want to consider forming a preliminary analysis of the accessibility issues that may be encountered on sites. ADA issues in open space, recreational facilities, historic landscapes, or steep sites may present particular design challenges. The site analysis stage is not too early to be thinking about these issues and their impact on the design.

### **Community standards and expectations**

Community standards and expectations are usually unwritten and often ambiguous, but sometimes they are very important considerations in the site analysis. Site designers may intuitively be able to assess the expectations of a community by observing what has been accepted as acceptable in the past: What does the community and neighborhood around the site look like? Standards for plantings, architectural elements, styles, materials, treatment of pedestrians and vehicles in existing design are all standards and expectations that often exceed written ordinances. A community interest that might be impacted by the project such as a loss of locally used open space or a loss of access to other land might engender resistance to a proposal. Anticipating and addressing these expectations in the early phases of design may contribute significantly to the project's acceptance by the community.

### **Environmental Conditions**

Site analysis has necessarily expanded to include at least a cursory assessment of the environmental conditions evidenced on a site. "Environmental" in this sense refers to the narrow considerations of impacts caused by past industrial or commercial activities. An analyst should be aware of conditions that may indicate environmental contamination.

Another environmental aspect of growing concern to site designers is the impact of environmental trends such as global climate changes and its anticipated impacts and the growing demand to incorporate sustainability into site development. In particular, site designers working in coastal areas, areas subject to tidal influence, areas with important hydrologic characteristics such as wetlands or cold-water fisheries may wish to consider the anticipated impacts. Designers may need to incorporate the impacts into their selection of plant types, for example.

### **Environmental site assessment**

The negative legacy of our past industrial waste disposal practices and experiences, such as the case in Love Canal, New York, prompted lawmakers to pass environmental laws to protect the public and to compel landowners to pay for the cleanup of their property. Today prudent real estate buyers and nearly all lenders