

NOTE: This document is intended as a collection of information. If any discrepancies exist, the most recent version of the referenced document(s) shall prevail.

Last updated - March 29, 2024. If you have any questions about this guide, or have a question you feel should be added, please contact a PBOT ADA Technical Advisor.

Question	Answer	Notes/Explanation	Reference	Source Link
What is considered a legal crossing, and what parts of the ramps need to be within it?	See City Engineer Directive ST 003 for a detailed description. Locate the entire ramp throat within the legal crosswalk or work with your ADA TA to obtain a variance.		City Engineer Directive ST 003	https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/690524
Is yellow tactile warning the only option?	Yes. City of Portland requires all tactile warning panels to be Federal Yellow. See drawings P-547 thru P-550, note 5. "Detectable warnings shall be federal yellow."		City of Portland Standard Drawings P-548 thru P-550, note 5	https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/634488
Why can't I do a curb return on a midblock ramp when it is shown as "optional" on the standard drawing?	Curb returns are only allowed when adjacent to a vegetated furnishing zone, or if pedestrian passage is blocked by a utility pole, signal box, handrail, or similar object. Otherwise, they pose a tripping hazard. See drawing P-548, note 8.		City of Portland Standard Drawing P-548, note 8	https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/634488
If the ramp is in both ODOT and City jurisdiction, which ADA standards (City vs ODOT) should I use?	See City Engineer Directive ST 002 for a detailed answer.		City Engineer Directive ST 002	https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/642948
What type of work will trigger a non-compliant (or non-existent) ADA ramp to be rebuilt?	Triggers include permanent alterations to the pedestrian crossing such as islands, paving (with or without grinding), rebuilding signals, alterations to the curb line, all new construction. Any utility work that disturbs the curb line in a legal crossing or damages part of an existing ramp will trigger bringing the entire ramp up to current standards.	When determining project limits, attempting to avoid ADA by intent is NOT acceptable. Example of what not to do: Paving up to an intersection and then beginning paving again on the other side so that ADA ramps don't have to be replaced.	FHWA list of actions that are maintenance or not: 2013 Joint Technical Assistance document, PBOT slideshow discussing "Big 4"	https://www.ada.gov/dot-fhwa-ta.htm https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/727385
What upgrades can be made that will NOT trigger an ADA ramp?	Typically, single maintenance actions such as replacing signs, changing striping configuration, chip sealing, fog sealing, replacing light bulbs or fixtures, or patching potholes will not trigger an ADA ramp. Paving to cover a utility trench that is just a portion of the pavement will not trigger ADA, even if some of the trench is within a crosswalk.	In no case is a lower level of accessibility allowed compared to previous conditions. Note that doing more than one of the actions on this list may trigger ADA ramps, see FHWA Joint Technical Assistance document for more info. See City Engineer Directive ST 001 for additional information on requirements for traffic signal improvements.	FHWA list of actions that are maintenance or not: 2013 Joint Technical Assistance document, PBOT slideshow discussing "Big 4"	https://www.ada.gov/dot-fhwa-ta.htm https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/727385
If a project constructs or reconstructs a ramp on one corner of an intersection, under what conditions do the rest of the corners need to be reconstructed?	Rebuilding one corner alone (no signal upgrades or paving through the crosswalk) does not automatically trigger any of the other corners. However, we cannot leave a wheelchair user stranded in the street. If a curb ramp is constructed and there is no curb cut (curb ramp) on the receiving side, a new ADA compliant curb ramp must be constructed on the receiving side.	Work that triggers one corner (such as paving or signal rebuild) will often trigger every corner in an intersection, since the signal and paving upgrades must be accessible to all users.		
What are the requirements for a landing, specifically in the street?	A landing area is required any time a user of the accessible path will change directions. At the bottom of a ramp (in the street) this is most often found at a single ramp that serves two crosswalks. These 'street' landings are required to meet the same size and slope requirements as any other landing. In addition, street landings are also required to fall completely outside of the path of travel for vehicles and bicycles.	See Landing Area sizing and slopes in ADA Design Values sheet	ADA Design Values document	https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/728156
What are the allowable tolerances for a ramp entirely within legal crosswalk?	Ideally, all ramp components would be located within the legal crosswalk. At a minimum, 100% of the ramp throat (where it meets the curb line) must be within the legal crossing. The rest of the ramp slope, wings, and upper landing are not required to be within the legal crosswalk.	If site conditions prevent the ramp throat from being placed in the current legal crossing, other options need to be explored such as acquiring additional ROW or asking a Traffic engineer if the crosswalk can be striped in a different location. See City Engineer Directive ST 003 for additional discussion of this issue.	City Engineer Directive ST 003	https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/691505
What options do we have for achieving the ramp landing in the street (outside of the traveled way) for single diagonal ramps? Asphalt is very difficult to grade to 2% maximum. Especially if there are a lot of ramps, or if there are steeper grades to transition into.	One option is to use concrete. Successful designs have included elements such as "stretching" a gutter pan so that it is 4' at the throat of the ramp, with tapers to a standard size pan on either side.	See PBOT standard drawing P-550 for a depiction of this concrete landing.	City of Portland Standard Drawing P-550	
When do I need double ramps (one for each crossing)? When can I use a single diagonal ramp on a corner (covering both directions)?	A ramp for each crossing is required at every corner, unless a variance is obtained. Single diagonal ramps are only allowed with a variance, per City Engineer Directive ST 002.	If a corner requires a single diagonal ramp, note this on the Curb Ramp Design Form and an ADA Technical Advisor can approve it.	City Engineer Directive ST 002	https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/642948
If dual ramps can't work due to grading challenges and we install single ramp, why do I need to submit a ramp report?	All curb ramp designs require ADA Curb Ramp Reports, see City Engineer Directive ST 002. Single diagonal ramps are only allowed with a variance, and Ramp Reports are required as part of the process of obtaining a variance.		City Engineer Directive ST 002	https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/642948

Question	Answer	Notes/Explanation	Reference	Source Link
What are your requirements for AC ramps connecting new sidewalk to the existing roadway?	All ADA ramp requirements must be met including slopes, dimensions, and truncated domes. AC may be used for a temporary ramp until a concrete ramp is built.	There are no exceptions in the ADA law for this situation, so all requirements must be met.		
What are the requirements for temporary AC at ramps before final paving is completed?	All requirements for an ADA ramp must be met before it is opened to the public. If temporary AC is used until the final paving comes through, then it must meet the same ADA requirements.	Two common areas of concern for temporary AC are the maximum 11% grade break, and the requirement for joints/seams to be flush (no lip).		
Can I adjust the curb radius to make dual ramps work?	Yes, but only with the approval of a PBOT traffic engineer.	This option should be explored before using a single diagonal ramp.		
Do we still depress inlets near ADA ramps?	It depends on how close the inlet is. See 'Inlet and Ramp proximity' in ADA Design Values.		ADA Design Values document	https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/728156
Do I have to have 6ft wings?	No. See 'Length of Ramp Wings' in ADA Design Values for requirements.	Constraints on wings are the maximum relative slope and the curb height that needs to be achieved. Depending on the situation, compliant wings may be as short as 3' or may need to be longer than 6'.	ADA Design Values document	https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/728156
In a dual ramp scenario, can the interior wings be less than 3ft wide?	Generally no, unless the street is steep enough that 3" of curb exposure can be attained with less than 3' wings and maximum slope requirements are still met. See 'Length of Ramp Wings' and 'Relative slope on ramp wings' in ADA Design Values for requirements.		ADA Design Values document	https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/728156
Can utility lids or valve boxes be in ADA wings?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This should be avoided. C 2. Contact Utility Permits - it may be allowable for smaller lids under certain conditions. 	It is better to avoid putting utility boxes near ramps when possible, because it introduces design challenges and additional points of failure		