

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

Introduction

Gillespie County is committed to providing equal access to all citizens and ensuring its programs, services, and facilities comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As a local government (county seat: Fredericksburg, TX) with over 50 employees, the County must adhere to Title II of the ADA, which prohibits disability-based discrimination in all county services. A key requirement is to develop a comprehensive ADA Transition Plan to address any physical barriers in county facilities that limit accessibility. This Transition Plan outlines the County's strategy for improving accessibility across all government facilities and programs. It incorporates the unique context of Gillespie County's historic public buildings – notably the Pioneer Memorial Library and the 1939 County Courthouse, both of which are part of the Texas Historical Commission's courthouse preservation program – as well as other facilities like the county airport. The plan is based on an ADA self-evaluation of current facilities and practices and is intended to be a living document that will guide phased improvements, training, and policy updates to achieve full ADA compliance over time.

ADA Coordination and Policy

Gillespie County has designated an ADA Coordinator, David Favreau, responsible for overseeing ADA compliance efforts. Office address is 101 W. Main St. room B106 Fredericksburg, TX 78624, phone number 830-307-6192 and email address dfavreau@gillespiecounty.gov. The ADA Coordinator's duties include handling accommodation requests, addressing ADA questions/complaints, and coordinating the implementation of this Transition Plan. The County's public Notice of Non-Discrimination and Accessibility affirms that no person shall be denied access to county programs or facilities on the basis of disability. This policy is posted on the County website and at public facilities to ensure citizens are aware of their rights. In accordance with ADA Title II regulations, Gillespie County has made information available in accessible formats upon request and provides auxiliary aids/services (such as hearing assistive devices and large print documents) when needed so that individuals with disabilities can participate fully in public meetings, court proceedings, and other county services. On all public meeting announcements there is a disability accommodations request statement. It states that "The meeting location is wheelchair accessible. The meeting location can provide assistive listening devices. Please contact the County Judge's office prior to the meeting at 830-997-7502 to make any reasonable accommodation requests." The County also emphasizes web accessibility: its official website complies with ADA Title II and Section 508 standards by following Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA. Citizens encountering any accessibility issues on the website or with county services are encouraged to contact the ADA Coordinator for assistance.

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

Grievance Procedure

To ensure accountability and prompt resolution of accessibility issues, Gillespie County has adopted a formal ADA grievance procedure. As required for public entities with 50+ employees, this procedure allows any person who believes they have been discriminated against due to disability to submit a complaint. The County provides an ADA Grievance Form on its website and in county offices. The procedure outlines steps for investigating and resolving complaints in a timely and equitable manner.

Complainants may submit issues such as physical barriers encountered, ineffective communication, or denial of accommodations. Upon receipt of a grievance, the ADA Coordinator will investigate the issue, seek a resolution (e.g. by removing a barrier or providing an aid/service), and respond to the complainant. If the complainant is dissatisfied, an appeal can be made to a designated senior official (the County Judge). All grievances and resolutions will be documented. By publicizing this process, the County ensures that any ADA concerns can be addressed locally without requiring federal intervention. Copies of the grievance policy and form are available on the County's webpage and at the County Judge's office.

Self-Evaluation Summary

Gillespie County conducted a thorough ADA self-evaluation of its services, policies, and facilities to identify barriers to accessibility. This walk through was conducted by the facilities director, Jeff McHalek, and the ADA Coordinator David Favreau. This review covered all departments and programs – from the courts, law enforcement, and elections to the library and airport – as well as the physical condition of county-owned buildings. Data from previous architect and engineer assessments were also examined and included as applicable. Key findings from the self-evaluation include:

- **Policies & Communication:** Overall, county policies support inclusion, but some improvements were identified. For example, the need for more regular staff training on ADA requirements was noted so employees know how to arrange interpreters, assistive listening devices, or other accommodations when requested. The County will institute periodic ADA training for front-line staff (e.g. courthouse clerks, library staff, deputies) to ensure they understand how to provide reasonable modifications to policies or procedures if needed to avoid discriminating against a person with a disability. Additionally, while the County already provides public notices in accessible formats upon request, the self-evaluation recommended proactively offering important information (like emergency alerts or public health notices) in multiple formats (large print, audio, etc.) without requiring a special request. These recommendations have been incorporated into the plan.
- **Web and Digital Services:** The County's website underwent an accessibility audit. As noted, the site strives to meet WCAG 2.0 AA standards, and the self-evaluation confirmed that common pages (commissioners court agendas, public notices, online forms) are largely compliant. Some PDF documents on the site lacked proper tagging for screen readers; the County IT Department is

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

addressing this by converting or replacing non-accessible PDFs and ensuring all new content is accessible. A statement inviting feedback on website accessibility is posted online, and an email contact is provided for users to report any issues. This feedback mechanism is part of the County's ongoing self-evaluation in the digital realm.

- **Program Accessibility:** The self-evaluation reviewed how county programs are delivered to ensure program accessibility even when facilities have physical limitations. In general, most services can be relocated or provided in alternative ways if a specific location is not accessible. For example, if an office located upstairs in a building with no elevator is needed by someone using a wheelchair, staff are prepared to meet the individual on a ground floor or at another accessible site. However, the goal of this Transition Plan is to eliminate the need for such workarounds by removing physical barriers wherever feasible. The County's emergency management and public safety programs were also reviewed for accessibility – e.g., ensuring emergency alerts reach people with hearing or vision impairments and that shelters would be physically accessible. The County will continue to involve individuals with disabilities in evaluating program accessibility and soliciting comments on this Transition Plan, as encouraged by ADA regulations.
- **Facility Barriers:** A major focus of self-evaluation was inspecting county buildings and public rights-of-way for ADA compliance. Gillespie County has a mix of newer facilities (like the Jail, built 2015) and very old historic buildings (the Pioneer Memorial Library from 1882 and the Courthouse from 1939). Not surprisingly, many older buildings were found not to meet current ADA standards in certain respects. Common issues identified include lack of elevators or ramps for multi-story access, narrow doorways or doorknobs that are not accessible, restrooms that do not meet ADA dimensions, insufficient number of accessible parking spaces, and missing tactile signage or visual alarms. Specific findings regarding major facilities are detailed in the next section, along with planned modifications to address each issue.

The self-evaluation findings have guided the priorities in this Transition Plan. Where immediate fixes were possible (such as installing compliant door hardware or adding accessible parking signage), the County has already begun addressing them. Remaining barriers that require more extensive capital projects are slated for removal according to the schedules described below. The County acknowledges that ADA compliance is an ongoing commitment; therefore, this Plan will be updated as projects are completed or if new barriers are identified (for instance, if the County acquires new facilities or if standards change).

Key Facilities and Accessibility Improvements

Below is an overview of the County's major facilities, the accessibility barriers identified at each, and the methods and timeline for barrier removal. In developing these solutions, Gillespie County has considered the historical significance of certain buildings. Both the Pioneer Memorial Library and the current Courthouse are enrolled in

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program for renovation, which means upgrades will be made in a historically sensitive manner with guidance from the Texas Historical Commission. Importantly, these restoration projects will include ADA accessibility work to ensure the buildings can function for employees and visitors of all abilities. The Transition Plan coordinates with those efforts and also covers other facilities (like annexes and the airport) not in the state program.

1. Gillespie County Courthouse (1939)

Current Use: Houses county offices and courts (the main hub of county government). It is a two-story Modern-style building constructed in 1939, with significant original features.

Barriers Identified: Many aspects of the courthouse do not meet ADA Standards due to the building's age and design. Noted issues include restrooms that are too small and lack accessibility features, entrances with stairs and heavy doors (the primary front entrance has multiple steps with no ramp), narrow interior doorways and doorknobs that are not ADA-compliant and missing tactile signage for room numbers and exits. Additionally, parking near the courthouse was insufficiently accessible (prior to this plan and since corrected, there were limited marked ADA parking spaces, and some lacked an unobstructed route to the entrance). During crowded public events or court days, the lack of accessible restrooms and seating has been a challenge for attendees with disabilities. These deficiencies were acknowledged in the County's facilities assessment, which noted the courthouse needs major upgrades to building systems and that "many aspects of the facility are not compliant with accessibility standards including restrooms and vertical transportation (elevators)". A compliant elevator has been installed since the original master plan was submitted.

Planned Improvements: Gillespie County will undertake a full renovation of the Courthouse as a priority project in the Transition Plan. This project is tied into the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program funding cycle, which not only restores historical architecture but also modernizes building infrastructure. As part of the renovation, the following accessibility improvements are planned:

- **Restrooms:** All public restrooms in the courthouse will be fully renovated to ADA standards. This includes reconfiguring layouts to provide sufficient wheelchair turning space, installing grab bars, accessible sinks and toilets at proper heights, as well as replacing door hardware. The existing restrooms are small and likely will be expanded or combined to male and female restrooms that are ADA-compliant. There is one unisex ADA compliant restroom in the basement level of the courthouse. Fixtures like faucets, dispensers, and mirrors will be mounted at accessible heights. These upgrades will eliminate the current barrier where restrooms "need renovation" as noted in assessments .
- **Interior Access and Signage:** Throughout the courthouse, doorways will be widened where structurally feasible, and round doorknobs will be replaced with lever-style handles for easier use. Hallways and any level changes will be

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

evaluated to ensure an accessible path of travel (e.g., thresholds will be beveled or eliminated). Furthermore, the County will install ADA-compliant signage courtrooms, offices, restrooms will have signage with Braille and raised lettering, and directional signs will guide the public to accessible routes and exits. Emergency alarms in the building will be upgraded to include visual (strobe) alarms in addition to audible signals, to alert individuals with hearing impairments.

- **Courtroom Accessibility:** The main courtroom(s) will be modified to improve accessibility. This means providing wheelchair spaces in the audience seating area (by removing some benches or chairs and ensuring sight lines), adding a ramp or lift to the judge's bench, witness stand, or jury box if those are raised platforms, or otherwise providing accommodations so that jurors, attorneys, or judges with disabilities can fulfill those roles. The renovation will also include improved acoustics and an assistive listening system in the courtroom, which benefits all users and is often part of modern courtroom design (this is technically a program access feature, but implemented during renovation).

By addressing these items, the restored Gillespie County Courthouse will meet ADA requirements while preserving its historic character. The Texas Historical Commission supports such outcomes, noting that accessibility work (like adding ramps, elevators, and accessible parking) results in a "safer, more functional building for county employees and visitors". The schedule for the courthouse project is to complete design and secure funding by 2027, commence construction in 2028, and finish the major renovations by 2029 (contingent on grant awards). In the interim (2025–2026), minor readily-achievable improvements (such as signage and some door hardware changes) will be done immediately so that partial progress is made even before the full overhaul. There is a feasibility study being conducted now to determine where current staff in the courthouse can relocate during renovation.

2. Pioneer Memorial Library (Old Courthouse, 1882)

Current Use: County public library, occupying a two-story historic limestone building (the former courthouse built in 1882, designed by architect Alfred Giles). The library is a popular public resource located on Fredericksburg's Main Street. Its historic nature and layout (with both floors holding library collections and reading areas) present unique accessibility challenges.

Barriers Identified: The Pioneer Memorial Library building, while cherished for its historic architecture, has significant accessibility limitations given its 19th-century design. Primary issues include: no ADA compliant elevator (current elevator was installed in 1988) or lift to the second floor (making the upstairs book stacks, study areas, and historical archives difficult to access for patrons using wheelchairs). The lift car's dimensions are 53 inches deep by 67 inches wide. The width falls one inch short of standards. The opening is exactly 36 inches wide. The area in front of the elevator doors does not have 60 in by 60 in clearance in front of the doors. The libraries main entrance involves stepping up from ground level at several locations. From main street

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

there are two ADA parking spaces and a curb ramp to the sidewalk. There are three other entrances to the building that are level. From the sidewalk that parallels Main Street there is a step up to the sidewalk leading to the library main entrance. At the main entrance door there is another step up. There is an ADA accessible door on the southeast side of the building with clear signage and four ADA parking spaces available. There is no clear signage from Main Street directing to the southeast ADA entrance. The interior space also has heavy wooden doors and high service counters originally designed for aesthetics rather than accessibility. The restrooms in the library are not ADA-compliant – as noted in facility assessments, the restrooms “need renovation”, being too small and lacking grab bars or accessible fixtures. Additionally, aisle space between some bookshelves is narrow. Because this building was converted into a library in the 1960s, it has some modifications, but overall, it falls short of current standards for full public accessibility. The County’s long-range facilities plan rated the library building as “fair condition” but highlighted that major system upgrades were needed and that many building systems are original – which implicitly includes accessibility as a system needing upgrade.

Planned Improvements: The County intends to modernize the Pioneer Memorial Library for accessibility while respecting its historical significance. The library will remain in this building for the foreseeable future, with upgrades planned within the next five-year period. Key improvements include:

- **Accessible Entrance:** The library will ensure the entrance door has an automatic opener or is staffed to assist patrons as needed. Clear signage will direct visitors to the accessible entrance from the street and parking areas. Additional ADA parking will be proposed for the northeast entrance to the building. These spaces would be created along South Nimitz Street, and a curb ramp would need to be installed.
- **Vertical Circulation:** To address the lack of a compliant elevator, the County plans to investigate a larger elevator. This is admittedly challenging in an 1882 structure, but other Texas counties have successfully added elevators in historic courthouses as part of preservation projects. An architectural study will be undertaken (likely with guidance from the Texas Historical Commission’s preservation architects) to find a solution that might involve converting an existing shaft or corner of the building for a small elevator or attaching an external lift tower that connects to the second floor. If an elevator cannot be immediately installed due to structural constraints or cost, the interim measure will be a service accommodation: library staff will retrieve books or materials from the second floor upon request and bring them to patrons downstairs, and public programs originally held upstairs will be moved to an accessible location (either downstairs or another facility) until a permanent fix is in place. However, the goal per this Transition Plan is to have a functional ADA compliant elevator or lift in the library no later than 2030. Achieving this will likely coincide with a major renovation funded through grants or a county capital project, since the facility needs other system upgrades (HVAC, plumbing, etc.) which can be combined with installing the elevator for efficiency.

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

- **Interior Modifications:** The library's interior will be modified to improve maneuverability and access to services. Bookshelves and furniture will be arranged to provide at least 36 inches of clearance on main aisles for wheelchair users. The circulation desk or service counters will be adjusted or supplemented to have a section at ADA-compliant height (no more than 36 inches high) for patrons in wheelchairs. Public computer stations, if any, will include at least one accessible station (with appropriate table height and knee clearance). The historic doorknobs and hardware will be evaluated; where doors are not strictly part of the historic fabric that must remain unchanged, they will be fitted with lever handles or automated mechanisms to ease operation. Signage with Braille will mark different sections (e.g., restrooms, exits, elevator when added) to assist visually impaired visitors.
- **Restroom Renovation:** A top priority is to renovate the library restrooms for accessibility. The current restrooms will be reconfigured or expanded (space permitting) to create at least one fully accessible restroom. Changes will include widening the door, installing grab bars, replacing the sink and toilet to meet height/reach requirements, and ensuring there is adequate turning space for a wheelchair. If space constraints in the historic layout prevent the existing restrooms from being made compliant, the County will explore adding a unisex single-user ADA restroom in a location that can be worked into the building (for instance, converting a portion of an office or storage area on the ground floor). As part of the plumbing upgrades planned in the next five years, these new accessible fixtures will be installed.

These improvements for the Pioneer Memorial Library will likely be phased over the next few years. The County aims to apply for preservation grants or budget allocations by 2026 to address the entrance and restroom modifications first (relatively low-cost, high-impact changes). The more extensive work (like installing an elevator) may follow as part of a larger restoration project by 2028–2030. By executing these changes, Gillespie County will ensure that this beloved historic library is welcoming and usable for community members with disabilities, while also prolonging the life and relevance of the historic structure. All modifications will be reviewed for compliance with ADA Standards as well as Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS) – the state building code for accessibility – to ensure no requirement is overlooked. The Texas Historical Commission's program emphasizes that making historic courthouses (and by extension, former courthouses like this library) accessible not only benefits those with disabilities but "will result in a safer, more functional building for...visitors" overall.

3. County Annex Buildings and Other Offices

Gillespie County operates several annex buildings and office facilities in Fredericksburg that house various administrative functions (e.g. Justice of the Peace courts, the County Attorney, Elections, Veterans Services, AgriLife Extension, etc.). Notable ones include Annex 1 (the "Old Post Office Building" from 1941), Annex 2 (the "Old Clinic Building" from 1979), and Annex 3 (newer location for Elections & Veterans Services). There are also specialized facilities like the Law Enforcement Center (LEC) at 1601 E Main (which

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

includes the Sheriff's Office and some public safety admin functions) and the County Jail at 104 Industrial Loop, plus rural precinct facilities (road yard shops). The self-evaluation looked at each for ADA compliance:

- Annex 1 (125 W Main St) – A two-story building with a courtroom for the Justices of the Peace and some offices. Identified barriers: ADA parking stalls could use a paint refresh in the near future. Security and other systems were also minimal, but for ADA our focus is on physical access. If functions in Annex 1 are moved to the new Government Center in the future (as per long-term plans), the County may repurpose this building. But as long as it serves the public, basic ADA access will be ensured. The building entrance at Annex 1 has a ramp and railing. The four restrooms are of acceptable size and have handrails installed. They all have lever style door handles and signage that includes braille.
- Annex 2 (102 E San Antonio St) – A larger office building from 1979 where several departments used to reside is now only used for storage. Barriers: Annex 2 is in “generally poor condition” and has restrooms and door hardware that need upgrading. It has multiple floors or sections that are not fully accessible. There is no elevator or lift in Annex two. There is a narrow stairway that leads to the second floor. The plan for Annex 2 is somewhat unique: the County's 2018 master plan recommended no further major investments in Annex 2 and potentially selling that property once a new Government Center is built. Therefore, the ADA Transition Plan will not focus on any interim measures.
- Annex 3 (95 Frederick Rd) – This is a relatively newer facility (one-story) housing Elections and Veterans Services. Being newer, it presumably was built to ADA standards, but the self-evaluation checked for any issues like accessible parking and entry. Minor adjustments like adding tactile exit signs or lowering a service counter (if needed for voters with disabilities) will be implemented. During elections, this site is used for early voting; the County ensures it meets all ADA requirements for polling places (including temporary measures such as propping doors open, providing curbside voting options as required by state law.). No major structural barriers were noted at Annex 3, but the County will monitor it, especially if any future remodels occur.
- Law Enforcement Center (LEC) – This facility at 1601 E Main is fairly modern (the Sheriff's Office and related operations). The LEC was noted to be in “fair condition” in assessments, with some needs like restroom and door hardware updates. For ADA, that translates to ensuring the public entry to the Sheriff's Office has an accessible path (it does, as it's a single-story on ground level), that lobby restrooms are accessible, and that any public service windows (e.g., for paying fees or obtaining reports) are at accessible height or have alternatives. The “restrooms and door hardware” in the LEC needing updates will be addressed by 2026: replacing any non-compliant doorknobs and adding grab bars or clear floor space adjustments in restrooms. Since the Jail and LEC are connected, it's worth noting the County Jail (built 2015) was constructed under modern code and is fully ADA-compliant for inmates and visitors by design. The jail has accessible cells and visiting areas as required by Texas Jail Standards and ADA regulations for detention facilities. No major issues were found at the

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

jail, but the County will maintain those standards and provide reasonable accommodations to inmates or the public (for example, ensuring effective communication for deaf inmates via relay services, etc.).

- Other Offices (AgriLife Extension, County Yard, etc.): The AgriLife Extension Office (38 Business Court) is a public-facing office, often serving the agricultural community. It is a one-story building with smooth transitions, and three accessible parking spots close to the front access. Two of them are van accessible. If any interior counters (for soil sample drop-offs, etc.) are too high, a simple solution is to provide a side table or clipboard at a lower height. The County Yard facilities (in Fredericksburg and Harper) are worksites not generally visited by the public, but if a member of the public needs to go there (say, for a delivery or an inquiry), the County will accommodate as needed (e.g., meet them outside if the building is not accessible). Future upgrades to those yard offices will consider adding a ramp or at least one accessible entry if a major renovation happens.

In summary, the County's annex and miscellaneous facilities will either be brought into ADA compliance through targeted fixes (restroom remodels, hardware and signage updates, ramp installations) or their functions will be relocated to accessible facilities as part of broader county facility plans. The County's Long Range Facilities Master Plan envisions constructing a new Government Center to consolidate many offices. When that occurs, it will inherently solve many accessibility issues by providing a modern, fully accessible building for public business. Per the master plan, once the new Government Center is complete and departments move out of the old Courthouse and annexes, those older buildings can be renovated or repurposed with less urgency. However, this ADA Transition Plan ensures that in the meantime, no person with a disability is excluded from county services. Temporary measures (like meeting in alternative locations) will supplement physical improvements so that program access is always available. The schedule for Annex-related improvements is within 1 year (by end of 2026) complete the easy fixes (signage, parking markings, door handles), and within 2-3 years (by 2026–27) complete at least one accessible restroom in each facility that will remain in use. These schedules may be adjusted if the timeline for a new Government Center is finalized, but compliance with ADA's requirement of effective access will be continuously maintained either through structural changes or accommodations.

4. Gillespie County Airport (T82)

Overview: The Gillespie County Airport, identifier T82, is a public general aviation airport located about 2–3 miles southwest of Fredericksburg . It is an uncontrolled airport, meaning it has no control tower – typical for a small GA airport. The airport features a 1940s era ambiance with a main runway, taxiways, aircraft hangars, a fixed-base operator (FBO), and a public terminal or office building. It serves pilots, tourists (the Hangar Hotel and a restaurant are on the field), and hosts events like fly-ins. Ensuring the airport's facilities are accessible is an important part of the County's ADA plan, especially since it's a public-use facility often visited by veterans, pilots, and community members, some of whom may have disabilities.

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

Barriers Identified: The self-evaluation of T82 found a few areas to improve. The main airport office/terminal building, which contains a lobby, restrooms, and a conference room, was checked for compliance. Currently, there are two entrances at ground level with smooth entry transitions. The parking lot at the airport terminal has two clearly marked ADA van accessible parking spaces close to the terminal. Also, the restrooms are fully accessible – each, of the two, bathrooms have a large accessible stall with grab bars. Another consideration is the path from the terminal to the aircraft apron: while not typically required to make runways or taxiways accessible (as those are specialized areas), the County does want to ensure that someone with limited mobility can get from the parking area to watch planes or meet a flight arriving. The airport's new improvements are mostly focused on aviation infrastructure; nevertheless, any construction will follow Texas Department of Transportation's accessibility requirements (TxDOT, which helps fund municipal airports, mandates ADA compliance in any project they sponsor). So as the county upgrades physical infrastructure, it will concurrently eliminate any accessibility deficiencies.

Planned Improvements: The ADA Transition Plan addresses the airport as follows:

- **Parking and Entrance:** The County will maintain at least 2 designated accessible parking spaces in the main parking area near the terminal/FBO office (or a number appropriate to lot capacity per ADA parking ratios). These spaces will be monitored for fading paint and refreshed as needed. The entrance door to the terminal will be checked: if it's heavier than ADA allows, the County will install an automatic door opener or replace the hardware with a lever handle. Maintaining a smooth threshold (1/2 inch or less) at the door is also part of the plan.
- **Terminal Building Interior:** The public lobby and future pilot's lounge inside will be arranged to accommodate wheelchairs. For example, if there are fixed seating areas or displays, a clear path will be maintained. Service counters (where one might sign in or get keys) will have a section no higher than 36", or staff will come around the counter to assist a wheelchair user – however, a physical adjustment is preferred. Important signage (restrooms or exits) will be added in Braille and high-contrast lettering.
- **Access to Airfield:** While the ADA does not mandate making every aspect of air operations accessible (e.g., one cannot make a small private airplane accessible in the same way as a building), the County will improve access to spectator or participant areas. During events (like an airshow or fly-in breakfast), portable temporary accommodations (like an ADA portable toilet, if permanent restrooms are limited) will be provided. The airport already has an Airport Emergency Plan and other procedures; these will be reviewed to include provisions for assisting persons with disabilities in an emergency at the airport (e.g., if an alarm sounds or evacuation is needed, making sure staff check restrooms or areas where someone with a disability might need help exiting).
- **New Construction Compliance:** The County's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the airport includes projects like ramp rehabs and possibly future terminal building additions. The Transition Plan mandates that all new construction or alterations at the airport will comply fully with the ADA Standards and Texas

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

Accessibility Standards from the design stage. For instance, if a new terminal or admin building is built in the future, it will have features such as an accessible counter, hearing loop at the service desk (for people with hearing aids), and well-designed accessible restrooms from the start. Coordination with TxDOT's Aviation Division will ensure funding includes these elements. Essentially, no new barriers will be introduced in the course of improving the airport; rather, each project is an opportunity to enhance accessibility.

Overall, the Gillespie County Airport will be made user-friendly for disabled pilots and visitors alike – whether it's a veteran attending an event or a person with mobility limitations coming for a scenic flight. The County will also keep information about airport accessibility (such as the availability of accessible restrooms or services) up to date on the airport's website or directory listings, so that pilots planning to fly in are aware of the facilities. Since the airport is a gateway to the community, making it accessible reflects Gillespie County's commitment to welcoming all individuals.

Transition Plan Implementation Schedule

This section summarizes the schedule and priorities for removing barriers identified, as required by ADA regulations. Gillespie County has prioritized barriers that have the greatest impact on the public and those that can be fixed at relatively lower cost first ("low-hanging fruit"), while also planning for larger capital projects that may take several years.

- Immediately (Ongoing in 2025): The County has already taken steps to address simple modifications. For example, installation of ADA signage (Braille/tactile signs) at all county buildings is underway in 2025. Accessible parking spaces have been freshly marked or added at facilities like the Courthouse, Annexes, and the airport with proper signage. Door hardware replacement (switching out round knobs to lever handles) has begun in offices where such changes don't require major renovation. Also, the County updated its website with the ADA notice and made forms accessible online. These quick fixes are expected to be mostly completed by the end of 2025, significantly improving usability.
- Short-Term (2026–2027): The focus will be on medium-sized renovations that can be accomplished via maintenance budgets or small grants. By 2027, at least one ADA-compliant restroom will be available in each key public building (Library). Renovation work on restrooms and minor interior remodeling will be scheduled during this period. In 2026 and 2027, Gillespie County will also finalize design plans and secure funding for the Courthouse full restoration project (including major ADA upgrades) – since that is a larger endeavor, the design and bidding might occur in this window, even if construction happens later. Similarly, if the library requires significant work like an elevator, the planning for that (architectural drawings, historical approvals) will be done in this timeframe so that the project is "shovel-ready" when funding is identified. For the Annex buildings, if the timeline for a new Government Center is still uncertain by 2027, the County will decide on any additional interim upgrades needed to keep them accessible.

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

- **Mid-Term (2028–2030):** This is the horizon for completing major projects. By 2030, the County expects the Courthouse renovation to be well underway or completed, given that it has been accepted into the state preservation program (often these projects kick off within a few years of grant approval). The installation of the new ADA-compliant restrooms, and all other accessibility features will be done as part of that construction. Likewise, the Pioneer Memorial Library elevator (or alternative second-floor access solution) is targeted for completion around 2029–2030, potentially in tandem with a broader modernization of that building's systems. Should the County move forward with constructing a New Government Center in this timeframe, that facility will be built to full ADA compliance from the ground up, featuring accessible design throughout. Once operational, the new center will allow relocation of many offices from Annex 1 and Annex 3. At that point (2028 or beyond), the County can decide the fate of Annex 2 (most likely decommission and sale, as mentioned) and repurpose Annex 1 (maybe for limited use or as overflow meeting space). Any repurpose will include either ensuring ADA compliance or limiting public access such that ADA obligations are managed (for example, if a building becomes storage only, it's not a public facility subject to Title II in the same way). The Airport in the 2028–2030 range might pursue additional facility enhancements (like a new terminal building or added hangars); all such projects will adhere to ADA/TAS from inception, so they are not so much "retrofits" as they are new compliant construction in line with the Transition Plan's goals.
- **Long-Term (Beyond 2030):** Gillespie County acknowledges that ADA compliance is not a one-time task but an ongoing responsibility. Post-2030, the County will continue to maintain accessibility in all facilities and retrofit or renovate remaining older structures as needed. For instance, if by 2030 the Old Courthouse (1939) is fully restored and a new Government Center is running, the County might then look to enhance any facilities not yet addressed (perhaps the Former Law Enforcement Building, if it finds public use). Also, any new programs or services started in the future will be planned with accessibility in mind from the start, eliminating barriers preemptively. The Transition Plan will be updated at that time to reflect new priorities or completed items.

The County will document progress each year and adjust timelines as necessary, striving to balance feasibility and funding with the imperative to remove barriers quickly. Budget considerations play a role – some actions depend on grants (like the courthouse and library major renovations). If funding is delayed, Gillespie County will evaluate interim solutions (for example, installing a stair lift as a stopgap if an elevator project is slow to fund, etc.). Nonetheless, the County's policy is that program access must be ensured at all times, even if structural fixes take longer. This means that even before a barrier is removed, the County will provide an alternative method for individuals to access the service (as earlier noted, e.g., meeting in accessible locations, staff assistance, etc.). This two-pronged approach – interim accommodations plus long-term barrier removal – meets the ADA's requirements for both prompt action and thorough planning.

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Public Involvement

Implementing the ADA Transition Plan is a continuous process. Gillespie County will establish an ADA Transition Plan Monitoring Committee (or assign this role to an existing team, such as the ADA Coordinator with a few department liaisons) to track progress. This committee will meet periodically (at least annually) to review the status of scheduled improvements, address any new issues, and update the plan document. They will use a checklist to verify completed actions – for example, confirming that each facility's planned modifications were done and inspecting them for compliance.

Public input is a valuable part of this plan. The ADA requires that people with disabilities have an opportunity to comment on transition plans. Gillespie County will make this Transition Plan available on its website and in print at the County Clerk's office and library. A notice will invite feedback from the community. Any grievances filed (as per the procedure mentioned earlier) will also inform updates to the plan – for instance, if a complaint highlights a barrier that was overlooked, it will be added to the plan's scope.

The County will also coordinate with the City of Fredericksburg and other entities as needed when addressing accessibility of shared infrastructure. For example, if adding a curb ramp on a city sidewalk in front of the Courthouse is needed, the County will work with the city government to get that installed. In the same vein, the County's ADA Coordinator will stay abreast of state and federal ADA developments. If regulations or new ADA guidelines (such as updated accessibility standards) come out, the Transition Plan will be adjusted accordingly. Training and continued education for county staff will ensure that not only the physical environment but also policies (like emergency evacuation procedures or communication methods) remain inclusive.

Success Metrics: The County will know it has succeeded when all residents and visitors – including those with mobility impairments, vision or hearing loss, cognitive disabilities, or other conditions – can use county facilities independently and with ease. Tangible metrics include: all customer service counters have an accessible section, all public meetings are held in accessible rooms with necessary aids (and indeed, a survey will be done to confirm this each year), and required accessible features (parking, routes, restrooms, signage) are present at every public building. Less tangibly but importantly, success means fewer complaints – if the grievance log shows a reduction or elimination of ADA-related complaints over time, that indicates the barriers are being effectively removed.

Gillespie County is dedicated to not only legal compliance but also the spirit of accessibility – creating a community where everyone can participate fully. By investing in upgrades to historic buildings like the Courthouse and Library, the County is demonstrating that preservation and accessibility go hand in hand: restored courthouses and public buildings can retain their historical charm while meeting modern needs, serving as proud symbols that are open and welcoming to all. Moving forward, the County will maintain the ADA Transition Plan as a living guide, update it as projects are completed or new needs arise, and continue engaging the public in its

ADA Transition Plan for Gillespie County, Texas

implementation. In doing so, Gillespie County will fulfill its obligations under the ADA and improve the quality of life for its citizens, ensuring that no one is left behind due to a disability. This plan is approved by the undersigned officials as of the date indicated below.

Sources

- Gillespie County, Public Notice of Non-Discrimination and Accessibility (ADA policy statement)
- Gillespie County, Long Range Facilities Master Plan (2018), facility assessments and recommendations
- Texas Historical Commission, Courthouse Preservation Program Highlights – accessibility improvements are integral to courthouse restorations
- ADA Title II Action Guide – requirements for ADA transition plans and grievance procedures for public entities
- Gillespie County Official Website – ADA Coordinator info and web accessibility commitment (WCAG 2.0 AA) .
- Fredericksburg Standard-Radio Post, Airport will get \$4M in upgrades (Nov. 29, 2023) – context on planned capital improvements at Gillespie County Airport . (Accessible facilities will be included in upgrades.)



Daniel J. Jones, County Judge

Date: 11-06-2025



David L. Favreau Jr., ADA Coordinator

Date: 10-04-2025