

8 Ways to Design for Disabled Joy

Learning Objectives, Slides, Slide Descriptions, and Transcript

AIA Learning Objectives

1.0 AIA LU|HSW

About this Course

According to the CDC, around 26% of adult Americans have a disability. What does it mean to make spaces that go beyond basic access? As a society and a design profession, we are long overdue for updated design practices that help us meet the spatial needs of our neurodiverse and physically disabled community members, not just so they can participate in work, but so that they can experience JOY. We all deserve access to cafes, restaurants, bars, shops, entertainment venues, parks, and other spaces that are essential for our personal and community health.

In this one hour asynchronous video course, we'll highlight our top 8 practices that help designers take a space "above and beyond ADA." This course was developed by a disabled designer, in partnership with the Community Vision Assistive Technology Lab, a non-profit that helps connect disabled people with awesome accessibility and communication tools. All of our recommendations are based off outreach with diverse disabled people. We'll share snippets of responses to our survey, and hear directly from our disabled interviewees via video and audio clips.

HSW Justification:

The Americans with Disabilities Act provides a foundation of nondiscrimination. This course addresses what we can do beyond that to ensure that every space is welcoming to people with a whole spectrum of access needs.

Learning Objective 1:

Summarize how a culture of exclusion and the design legacies of a homogenous profession have contributed to shaping a built environment that does not fully meet the needs of the 26% of adult Americans who identify as disabled.

Learning Objective 2:

Elevate and interpret the spatial concerns of diverse disabled stakeholders who would like to experience more access in a spectrum of building types.

Learning Objective 3:

Recount 8 design strategies beyond ADA basics that make any built space more inclusive of people with physical and cognitive disabilities.

Learning Objective 4:

Define personal and professional "next practices" (advocacy steps + design decisions) appropriate to the individual's role, spheres of influence, skills, and interests in the design industry.

Introduction

SLIDE 1: Title Slide



"8 Ways to Design for Disabled Joy" and "NOMA PDX" and "1.0 AIA LU|HSW" is overlaid on a faint image of three diversely disabled people moving down the block, laughing together.

Hannah: Hi everyone! We are so excited to get to share this training 8 Ways to Design for Disabled Joy with you and hope that you can enjoy it at your own pace, when it works best for you.

This training has a lot to do with bodies and how we shape space and experiences to meet the many needs we have – so before we get started, we recommend you find a comfortable way to view this – maybe even laying down!

Before we jump into our content, think about why you're viewing this training. How does disability or accessibility impact you? If you are an architect or another person who shapes the built environment, you have a lot of power to help make a more inclusive world! Think about what your roles are and what type of work you do. How can learning more about accessibility help you advance your work?

This is a topic we are super passionate about. We could talk about this for hours and hours. If you watch this 1 hour training and find that you could talk some more, pay attention at the end of the training when we share how you can reach out to us to continue the conversation!

Our cover slide features a lovely photo of diversely disabled, joyful folks from the open source group Affect the Verb. The series is called Disabled and Here.

SLIDE 2: Hannah's Introduction



On the left, Hannah is wearing a black sleeveless shirt and green glasses, smiling happily, pointing to a rainbow-painted wall. On the right, a woman with dark curls is wearing a black shirt and similarly pointing. Text states, "Hannah Silver, Inclusive Design Facilitator, Holst, Adjunct Instructor of Urban Design, Portland State University."

Hannah: I'm Hannah, Inclusive Design Facilitator at Holst Architecture, which is proudly a woman-owned and queer-led firm devoted to creating meaningful architecture that people love. I use she/her pronouns. I've got pink glasses, a brown bob with bangs, and a prominent Jewish nose with a little mole on it.

My background is in both architecture and urban planning. I have always been most interested in figuring out what specific things we can do in design to be more equitable.

SLIDE 3: Hannah's Disability Experience



An accessible playground with joyful green and blue soft landscaping and organic forms is fully of playing children. In the foreground, Hannah walks her eager husky Bjarke. Behind the playground is a large apartment building in gray tones. Text states "Nick Fish Apartments & Harper's Playground at Gateway Discovery Park, Holst Architecture, Portland, OR."

Hannah: This is a Holst project that we're really proud of: the Nick Fish Apartments, which is mixed affordability, and has this wonderful Harper's Playground, an accessible playground at the Gateway Discovery Park. I use the slide to point out a little bit about positionality. Sometimes my experience is like this: I'm upright and moving quickly. But for the last 16 years, I've also spent a LOT of time laying down with ice packs on my body because of chronic back pain.

This is my frame of reference. I have one disability experience, called "invisible disability," because I mostly show up as able-bodied. My experience has also varied a lot over time – we refer to this as dynamic disability – and we will talk more about that later.

SLIDE 4: Monse's Introduction



Illuminated orange plexiglass is off to the left side, curved in a unique form. Monse is kneeling on the floor on the right side at the front of a group of 7 other happy Holst colleagues. She wears a dark purple long-sleeve shirt, dark blue eyeglasses, and a cream-colored hat. Black text stated, "Monse Fonseca, Designer, Holst."

Monse: Hi, I am Monse, and my name in ASL is *M* [double-swiped at the chin indicated a short bob haircut], and my pronouns are she/her. I am wearing a dark purple long sleeve shirt and navy-blue eyeglasses with shoulder-length hair and dimples. I am capital D Deaf! I am a designer at Holst Architecture who focuses on inclusive design. I am an advocate of and for the Deaf community and communities of people with disabilities and do so by incorporating design principles such as Deafspace and Deafscape.

SLIDE 5: Monse's Deaf Experience



Hannah and Monse are sitting on a white, curved concrete bench while signing the word “forget” in American Sign Language. Text states “One North, Holst Architecture, Portland, OR,” over the image of the urban plaza.

Monse: I went to an audiologist when I was 3 years old when my parents noticed something was different about me. I wish every audiologist could say, “Congratulations, your child is deaf! and we have plenty of resources for you and your child,” but instead they said, “Your daughter failed the hearing test”.

I am Deaf with a capital letter D because it is a big part of my identity, and I’m proud to be Deaf. My language is beautiful, and I celebrate it. But there are often a lot of barriers for people like me because of design.

SLIDE 6: Fat-Friendly Design with AllGo

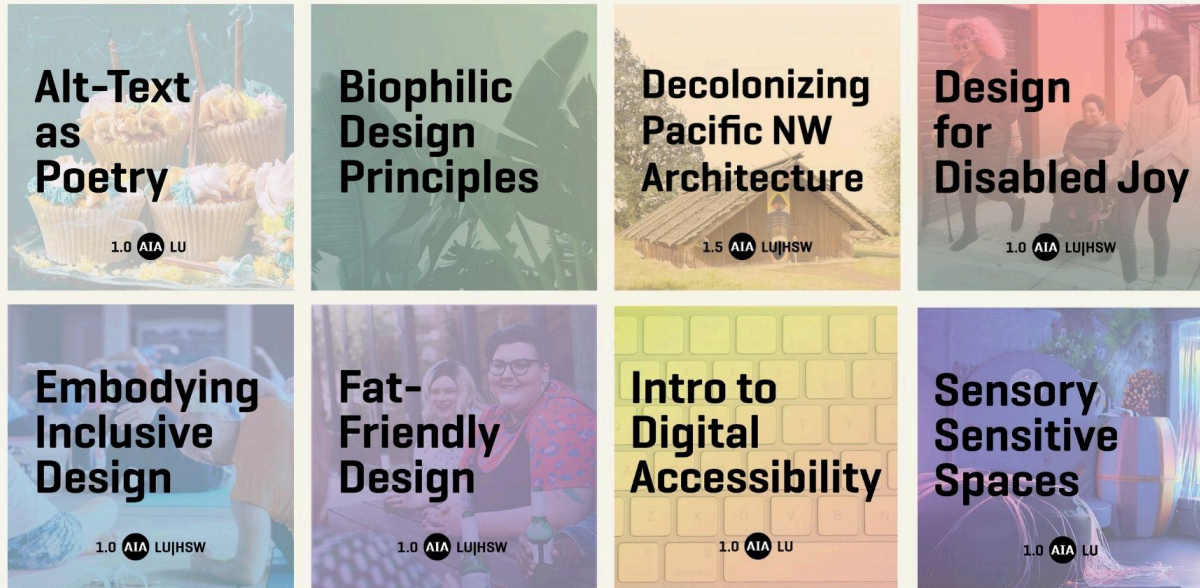


On the left, a blonde woman wearing a bright yellow sweater interviews in front of a video camera. On the right, two people sit on a gray couch, with graphic wallpaper behind them. One of them is showing with their hand how they like a seat to slant. Text reads: "Fat-Friendly Design with AllGo."

Hannah: We don't represent everybody's perspective. There's so much variation in the way that people experience space and physical and spatial needs. That's why in 2019 I started to reach out and talk to many more people about their spatial needs and accessibility. I felt like, a lot of the time on architecture projects, we work just at an individual building scale. We do some outreach. We maybe do a disability focus group to find out what we can do in that space. But then you might lose that information when the project ends. And then we're asking the same questions of people over and over again. This happens in community engagement often. I wanted to develop best practices by looking at access broadly, so I started doing my own outreach projects.

My first project was Fat-Friendly Design, a collaboration with my friend who started an awesome app called [AllGo](#). It's for plus size people to rate their comfort in public settings. On this slide you can see that we did interviews and got people's feedback on a bunch of different chairs to develop the course using their direct commentary on what they wanted. [There's a free course you can do online!](#)

SLIDE 7: Holst's Inclusive Design Courses



Eight square images representing course offerings with text reading: “Alt-Text as Poetry,” “Biophilic Design Principles,” “Decolonizing Pacific NW Architecture,” “Design for Disabled Joy,” “Embodiment Inclusive Design,” “Fat-Friendly Design,” “Intro to Digital Accessibility,” and “Sensory Sensitive Spaces.”

Hannah: One major question I ask is: How do we go above and beyond the design codes and requirements like the Americans with Disabilities Act? The ADA is only a very low baseline of non-discrimination.

Since joining Holst, we’ve been working on more education topics. Reach out if you want to know more – we like to say that “inclusive design shouldn’t be exclusive.”

Inclusive Design

SLIDE 8: Capitol Crawl, 1990



A crowd of people watches a young child and adolescent, both with long blonde hair, climb up the steps of the U.S. Capitol building. Text reads "Capitol Crawl, March 12, 1990."

Hannah: Let's start our Disabled Joy lesson with some history. Have you seen this image before? Or are you already familiar with the Capitol Crawl? This photo was taken in 1990, just before the ADA was passed. We really did not have much of a foundation for accessible spaces until then! What happened was all of these disabled activists showed up at the capitol steps in Washington D.C. They set aside their mobility devices, and they crawled up the stairs to make a point about buildings and access!

Think for a moment - what does the grand staircase of the big political building SAY to you? What is the message that's been encoded in that design?

There's this idea of politics being elevated above all else, there's something about it being monumental. The design implies that to participate, a person has to be able to climb these steps, or that certain peoples' needs simply are not important. That means that many people are left out; i.e. they are not really welcome to participate in key facets of society.

Of course, NOW there is an accessible entrance, probably around the back. You can take an elevator to get up to where everyone else is... but that experience is not equal. So what it points out here is that the way that we build things are embedded with the values of who has built it. Design is NOT NEUTRAL.

For many of us, 1990 is within our lifetime. Right? You may have been in school, and all of a sudden kids with disabilities were showing up, because previously they just couldn't go to school if they couldn't physically use it.

This image is so powerful – people made a real impact through this and other important activism, which we should be very grateful for today!

SLIDE 9: Why Disabled Joy?



Diverse, cheerful people holding their beers while standing and sitting at an indoor bar. One person is clearly seated in an electric wheelchair. Text reads, "Disabled Joy!"

Monse: The ADA is awesome! We need it. But it is only a baseline. We can always do more to achieve access. Access is a verb - a continuous journey. We need to constantly be doing better and we are learning so much more every day.

A lot of the ADA is oriented around rehabilitation, or the idea that we must get people back into the economy to be productive cogs in the capitalist machine.

Here you see people enjoying themselves at a bar. To me, this image is what accessibility should be oriented around. It is disabled joy! Everyone deserves to go to a coffee shop, run into a neighbor and get to know them, regardless of whether they are able bodied or not. Everyone should have the opportunity to go to music venues, art galleries, parks, and experience beautiful natural landscapes.

The unfortunate truth is, however, there are a lot of barriers for people with disabilities to get to those places for many reasons.

SLIDE 10: “When Disabled People Get Free, We All Get Free”



**When disabled
people get free,
we all get free.**

- Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha

The quote “When disabled people get free, we all get free.” by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha is overlaid on an orange-green gradient.

Monse: The only way to do better is to turn to those who are being left out and ask them: What would you like to do? Where do you like to go? If we can participate more, we all win!

Positive framing is essential in the effort to be more inclusive.

In Deaf culture, we talk about “Deaf Gain.” Society does not realize how much we have AND continue to contribute to the world's innovations such as closed captioning and text to speech. These technologies help so many people. Another perk - or Deaf Gain - is that environmental noise does not bother me at all.

My Deaf Gain is that my language is so unique! It has a rich visual-storytelling tradition! It has its own grammatical rules, structure, syntax, and incorporates embodied movement and facial expressions. Did you know we can communicate through a glass window or even while swimming underwater!?

Deafspace and Deafscape are focused on how we can shape spaces to support Deaf people while also helping others in the process. Wide corridors allow increased visibility for signing and become a great bonus for wheelchair users! Round tables in conference rooms allow

everyone to see each others' beautiful faces. Lighting on a walking path not only helps Deaf people converse in the dark but also increases safety for all.

SLIDE 11: Sunrise Meditation



A darkly shadowed mountain range with a brilliant sunset, with the sky changing from light orange to nearly teal.

Hannah: Disability and accessible design are very related to bodies. Bodies show up in so many different ways. We all have our own physical experience. If you are a designer, you bring that experience, whether you mean to or not, to the work that you do. Again – design is NOT neutral. So if you're not super familiar with people who are much larger or smaller than you or people whose physical needs include use of mobility devices, or they are low vision, or blind or D/deaf, etc, then it's harder for us to understand what those body's needs are and therefore how to design for them. We can unintentionally default to our norm. So it's important for us to do the work to understand what that spectrum is that's out there.

But to understand the spectrum – we have to understand our own bodies first. We're going to focus on this for a second. You can either look at this peaceful sunset image, or you can close your eyes, and take a second to settle into your own body.

Take a big inhale, let your ribs fill up, let your belly fill up with air as you exhale, really fully empty the air out. Notice how your body is meeting the chair or the floor.

Continue to take nice deep breaths. You can turn your palms up and observe the temperature and the movement of the air on your hands. Clue into noises close to you, and then further away. Come back to your inhale, and exhale. As you open your eyes or otherwise come back to the webinar... reflect on if you noticed anything about your comfort or discomfort there? Is there anything you can do to adjust? Lay down. Stand up, do a stretch, put on a sweater. Whatever feels good.

SLIDE 12: Better Inclusive Designers



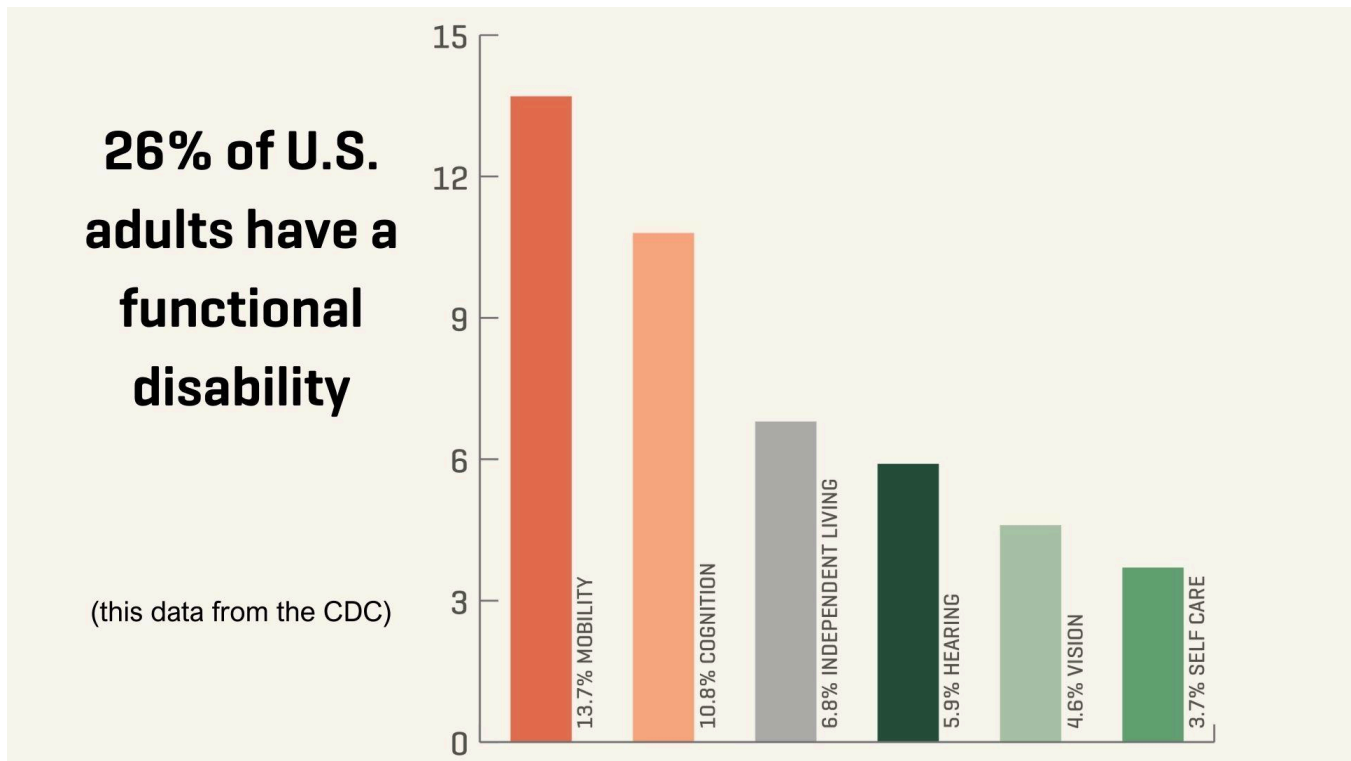
Happy elderly folks are eating their dinner and drinking some white wine in the light-filled room with lots of greenery outside the many windows.

Hannah: Why do we do this? Ultimately, we will be better inclusive designers if we recognize that the needs of our body and others' bodies are important!

We can be more in touch with our needs by taking moments to check in with ourselves. It is very common in our culture to ignore our internal cues, like holding our pee instead of going to the bathroom when we need to, or listening to external feedback on how often we should exercise instead of asking ourselves what our body needs.

We can be better accessible designers by noticing what about our experience relates to others' access needs. I'm not low vision, but I wear glasses which are assistive technology. If I'm not wearing my glasses while I'm in the shower, I can't tell which is the shampoo bottle or the conditioner bottle unless they are indicated very clearly through color selection, texture, or giant text. By being in touch with my own vision needs, I can learn from that experience to understand better how to design for people whose vision needs are greater than mine.

SLIDE 13: Disability Statistics



Text states: "26% of US adults have a functional disability," and "This data from the CDC." From left to right a bar graph indicates, "13.7% Mobility, 10.8% Cognition, 6.8% Independent Living, 5.9% Hearing, 4.6% Vision, and 3.7% Self Care."

Monse: The statistics are super helpful to understand, too. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 26% of US adults have some sort of functional disability. Is that number higher or lower than you would have expected?

People say this number is actually higher because of the catch-22 that if it is hard for you to go out, you do not go out much and you won't be counted; the disability is not as visible. Moreover, disability can be invisible. If you were not seeing me signing right now or if you could not see my hearing aid you might not know I am Deaf, right?

So here are the numbers:

- Mobility disability comes in at 13.7%,
- cognition at 10.8%,
- independent living or difficulty doing errands alone at 6.8%,
- deafness or difficulty hearing at 5.9%,
- blindness or difficulty seeing at 4.6%,

- and then self-care, which includes needing help with tasks like dressing or bathing at 3.7%.

You might be thinking: "Those numbers do not add up to 26%!" That's because there is overlap between the categories.

What might this data be EXCLUDING? Think about experiences that relate to design needs. Go ahead and pause your video now.

One thing that's not captured in these numbers is neurodiversity. Neurodiversity is the idea that there is a spectrum of how people's brains work. And they are all good! But they can all be very different too. For folks who are on the autism spectrum, they might not qualify for the criteria labeled as "Serious difficulty concentrating, with memory, making decisions," but they still might be significantly impacted by the space around them and need a sensory retreat at times.

Chronic illnesses are another lived-experience which often gets left out. For example, bladder or bowel-related illnesses could mean more frequent use of a bathroom than is the "norm," and that can really impact your experience in a space if you are unable to predict what the bathrooms are like.

Hannah: There's also the idea of dynamic disability to consider – that access needs could change day to day. For me, with variable chronic back pain, my comfort and needs change often. I probably would not have been included in this mobility statistic. So that just means there are MANY more people for whom accessible design is beneficial!

Besides varying abilities, people's size matters when it comes to comfort in space: height AND weight. My brother is 6'7". In my old 1920s apartment, his entire head was fully above the height of the bathroom mirror. He's very uncomfortable in a lot of spaces that are not built for him - physically constrained. You know, entertainment venues and airplanes, etc. Also short people. Also plus size people. But of course, these aren't considered disabilities – we are just thinking through how space impacts peoples' experience based on their bodies.

SLIDE 14: One North Courtyard



Text on six colorful circles read “Sensory sensitive options,” “Indigenous cultural connection,” “Rollable places,” “Fat-friendly furniture,” “Deafscape design,” “Queer-friendly spaces,” and “One North, Holst Architecture, Portland, OR” over an image of a green, landscaped plaza. Many people are engaging with the space: walking on crutches, rolling a bike, talking to each other, and listening to music.

Hannah: On the slide is a photo of One North, a Holst design with a public courtyard at the center of a city block. We’re highlighting a couple accessibility-focused design features here, but of course, this all just a part of the bigger picture of INCLUSIVE design, which also includes cultural welcome and connection, support of queer folks, people of all ages, and more.

Design for Disabled Joy Project

SLIDE 15: Seven Corners Roofdeck



Six diversely disabled folks are smiling, laughing, and sitting on a rooftop in sunny weather. One is seated in a green wheelchair, one holds a cane, one has a prosthetic leg, and all of them appear to be having a great time. A residential neighborhood can be seen below them. Text states "Image from Disabled & Here," and "Seven Corners Collaborative Building, Waterleaf Architects, Portland, OR."

Hannah: That said, there are simply lots of peoples' needs we can do better at meeting! I found an awesome partner organization, Community Vision, based in Southeast Portland. They've got this amazing building, featured in this image from Disabled and Here. Community Vision staff were instrumental in supporting my outreach and connecting with their email lists to be able to share an accessible design survey and to do interviews with disabled folks.

Intersectionality is important in this conversation. People who are "multiply marginalized," i.e. folks who are BIPOC and disabled, or single parents and disabled, etc, encounter more physical and social barriers. We love this image that represents the diverse experiences of disability, because oftentimes disability is portrayed as very white.

SLIDE 16: Assistive Technology Lab at Community Vision



A person's hands hold out a colorful adaptive keyboard. Text states, "Assistive Technology at Community Vision."

Hannah: In CV's super fun Accessible Technology Lab, they've got tons of items that you can check out... toddler wheelchairs that are little cars, adaptive switches for your appliances, this adaptive keyboard, swings, lights and all sorts of things. So people can take them home and see if they work for them, because it's really expensive to buy a lot of adaptive technology! It is hard for disabled people to find work accommodations, so people are less likely to work and therefore have lower incomes. We strongly encourage you to donate to the AT Lab through the Community Vision website as appreciation for their huge contributions to creating this course!

SLIDE 17: Survey Respondents' Experiences



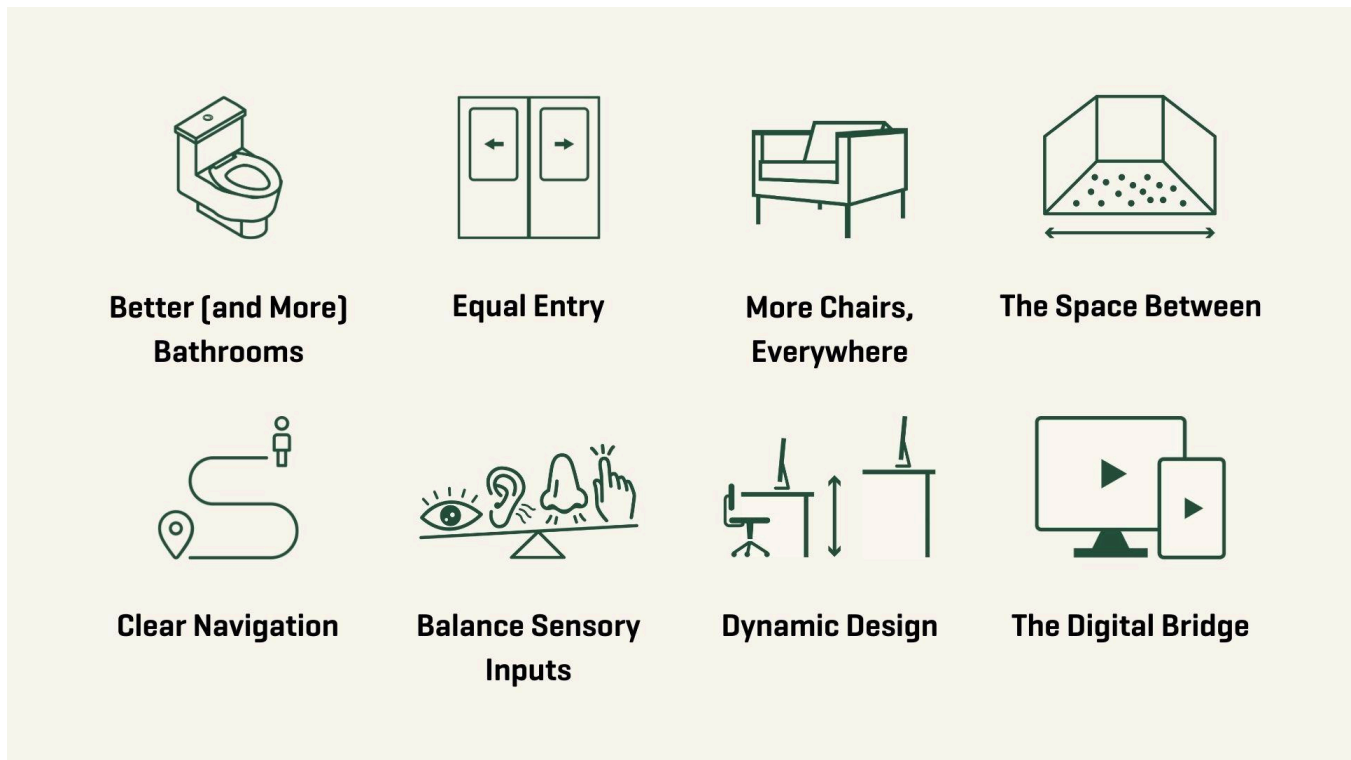
Colorful bubbles of cream, light green, light orange, and dark orange on a dark green background read: "I was born blind," "Parent of a disabled child," "I have chronic pain and fatigue," "Paraplegic," "I use a walker, wheelchair, or crutches to move," "I identify as disabled. I have CRPS and epilepsy which effect me deeply every day," "My sister has a traumatic brain injury," "I have fibromyalgia," "I am hard of hearing and struggle to understand people in loud environments," "I am deaf," "I have light sensitivity," "I have a skin disorder that affects mobility," "My disability is an unknown neuro-muscular disorder that presents most like a stroke," "I have agoraphobia, ADHD, CPTSD, bipolar, and a sleep disorder," and "Some mobility impairment, superfat, and mental illness."

Hannah: On this slide are some of the experiences represented by the survey responses I received. It's incredibly diverse: everything from being born blind to having a skin disorder that affects mobility. People mention light sensitivity or multiple layers of mental challenges like ADHD and PTSD. All of these experiences impact comfort in any given space.

The ADA mostly addresses access for wheelchair users and low vision and blind folks' needs. There are some details for supporting Deaf people, but mostly when it comes to emergency precautions. There's really so much more to consider to meet people's needs!

Design Strategies

SLIDE 18: 8 Ways to Design for Disabled Joy



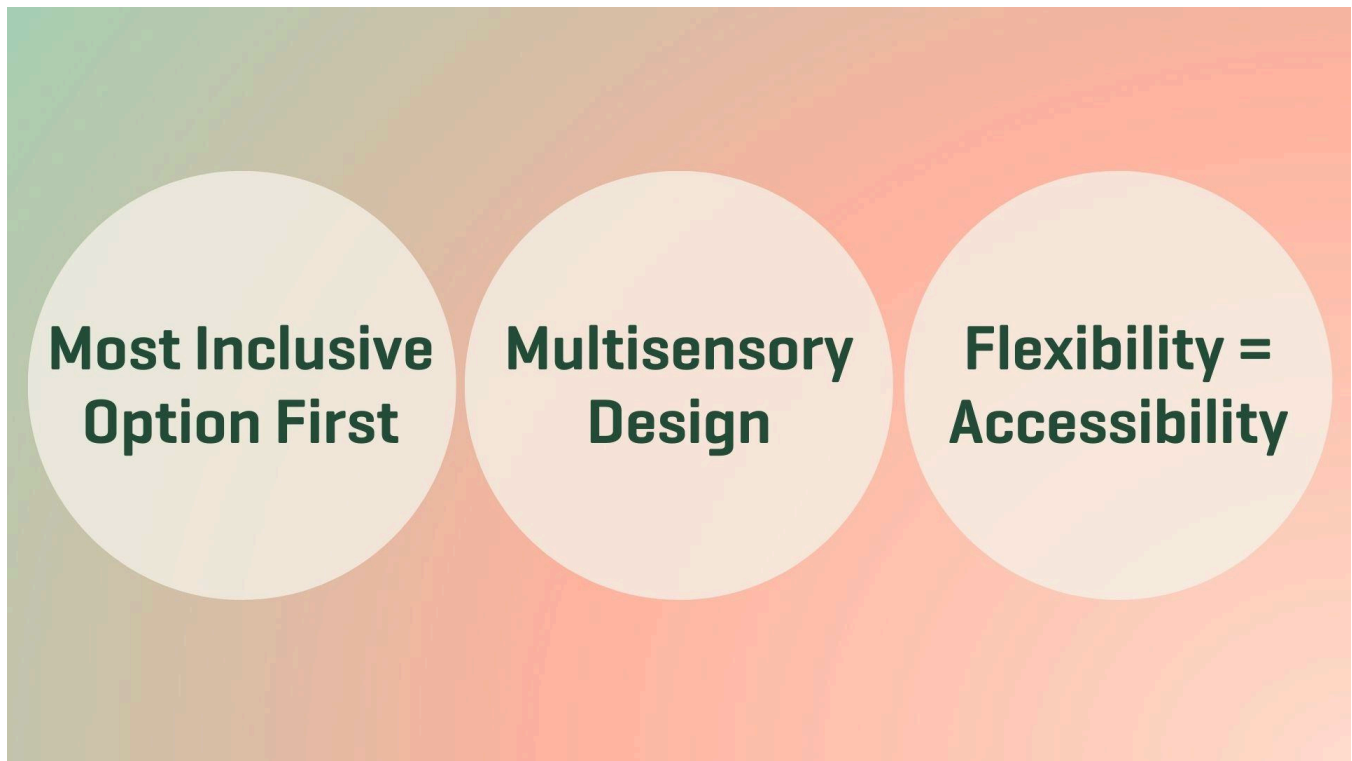
Eight green icons representing the 8 Ways to Design for Disabled Joy. "Better (and More) Bathrooms," "Equal Entry," "More Chairs, Everywhere," "The Space Between," "Clear Navigation," "Balance Sensory Inputs," "Dynamic Design," and "The Digital Bridge."

Monse: Hannah summarized her survey results and feedback from the interviews into 8 design takeaways. They are not surprising!

1. Isn't it interesting how the number one thing is simply having better and more bathrooms?!
2. The second most reported need was about equal experience: equal entry into a space, moving through the space and between building levels.
3. Seating selection and placement is also huge.
4. The space between: if we maintain enough room, people of all abilities can move around comfortably.
5. Clear navigation was also on that list because peoples' understanding of how to navigate through space is so diverse.
6. Balancing sensory inputs challenges us to think of architecture as more than just the design of visual spaces.

7. Dynamic design allows for flexibility.
8. And lastly: a need for a digital bridge that is beyond physical spaces where we can intentionally engineer how we provide people with information so they can predict what is going to happen when they enter those spaces.

SLIDE 19: Three Takeaways Part I

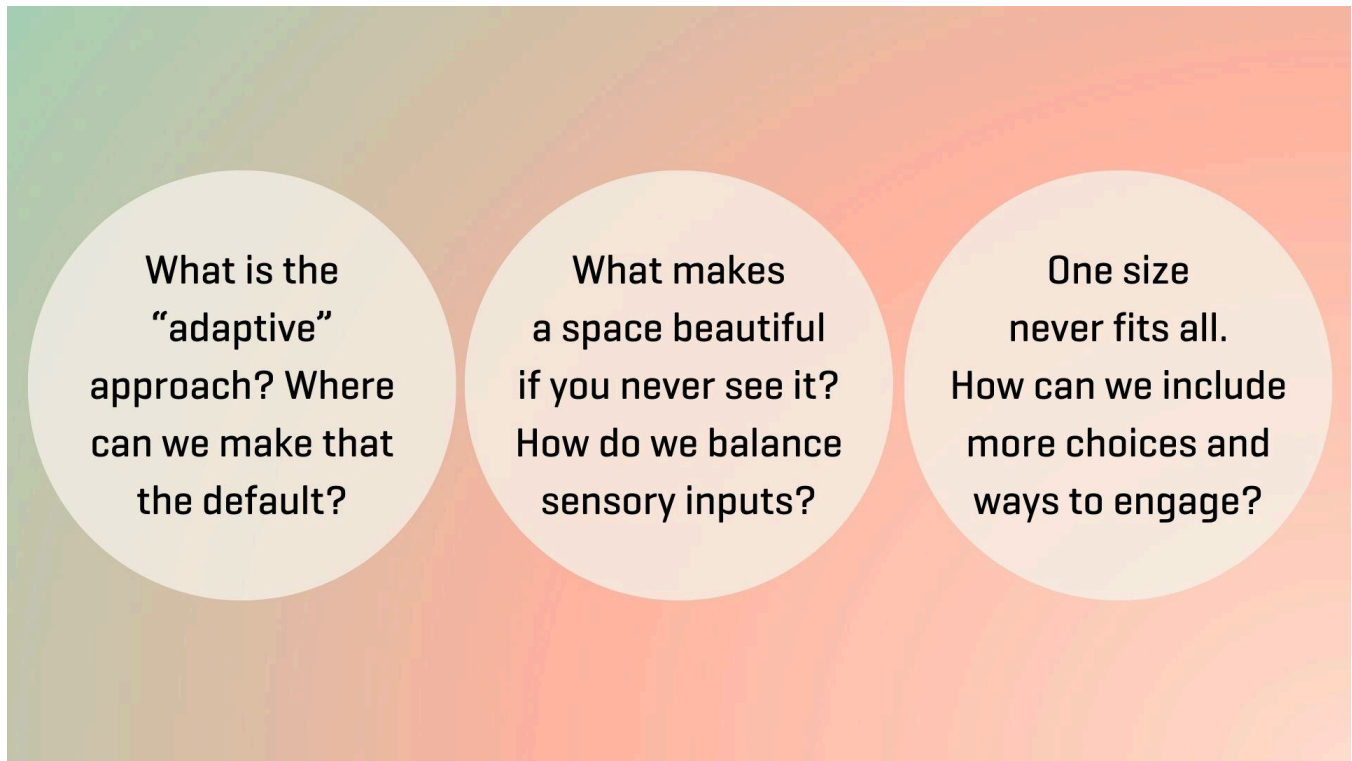


Three white bubbles with text reading: "Most Inclusive Option First," "Multisensory Design," and "Flexibility = Accessibility." The background is an orange and green gradient.

Hannah: But if 8 things sound like a lot to remember – here are just THREE takeaways.

1. Most Inclusive Option First
2. Multisensory Design
3. Flexibility/Options = Accessibility

SLIDE 20: Three Takeaways Part II



Three white bubbles read: “What is the “adaptive” approach? Where can we make that the default?” “What makes a space beautiful if you never see it?” and “One size never fits all. How can we include more choices and ways to engage?” The background is an orange and green gradient.

Hannah: What does it mean?

1. There are more adaptive options that we haven't made our default yet. Let's start there.
2. Remember that people are navigating space with and without certain senses. Sometimes they are not using vision or not using sound. Or not using both, right? So let's think about how we can use cues in our environment beyond signage, AND how we balance those cues.
3. And then flexibility or options = accessibility. Options help EVERYBODY. If a conference room is designed with a one-size-fits all approach, somebody is going to be left out. Someone's gonna be too tall or too small or plus size and not fit in those chairs. It is definitely possible to have options AND cohesion of design.

SLIDE 21: 3D Printed Adaptive Tools Part I



Five gray, 3D printed plastic adaptive tools are lying on a wooden table with number labels on green bubbles adjacent to each. 1 has a handle and a thinner component like an oversized needle eye attached to it. 2 resembles a nutcracker. 3 has a grip-like indent and hooks. 4 has a nearly rectangular handhold and flat component. 5 has a pointed end and long handle.

Hannah: Let's do a quick exercise to talk about adaptive approaches. So you've got 5 adaptive tools that are 3D printed on this screen. Pause your video and try to guess what each of these are!

SLIDE 22: 3D Printed Adaptive Tools Part II



The same five white 3D-printed adaptive tools from the previous slide are lying on a wooden table, now with identifying labels. 1. Button hook. 2. Bottle Opener. 3. Plastic Bag Handle. 4. Key Handle. 5. Soda Can Opener.

Hannah: #1 is a button hook – you would thread it through a button hole to hook the button and pull it through if you have limited finger mobility. #2 is a bottle opener for twist tops. #3 is a plastic bag handle. #4 is a key handle – it gives you a larger object to hold on to. #5 is a soda can opener to pop the metallic top.

3D printing has been amazing for assistive technology. We can look at these examples and question why we haven't designed a more inclusive bottle top yet – we should find inspiration in these designs! Disabled people have been figuring out how to hack the world around them for forever. As architects, we can learn from how people shape their own spaces!

I love to share this because I think it paints a picture of how very specific people's needs can be. Sometimes we think universal design will save us all! Accessible design helps everybody! But some needs are very specific. And if you build to meet those needs, only some specific people are going to be added into the mix of who can use that space. But those people need it the most because they've been left out the most. Our bathroom examples really illustrate this.

1. Better (and More) Bathrooms

SLIDE 23: Chapter Slide for Better (And More) Bathrooms



On a green background, a white toilet icon and white text that says "Better (and More) Bathrooms."

Monse: Let's dive into this. Bathrooms are the number one design feature across the board that people want to improve. Let's find out what Jan thinks about this.

SLIDE 24: Interview with Jan

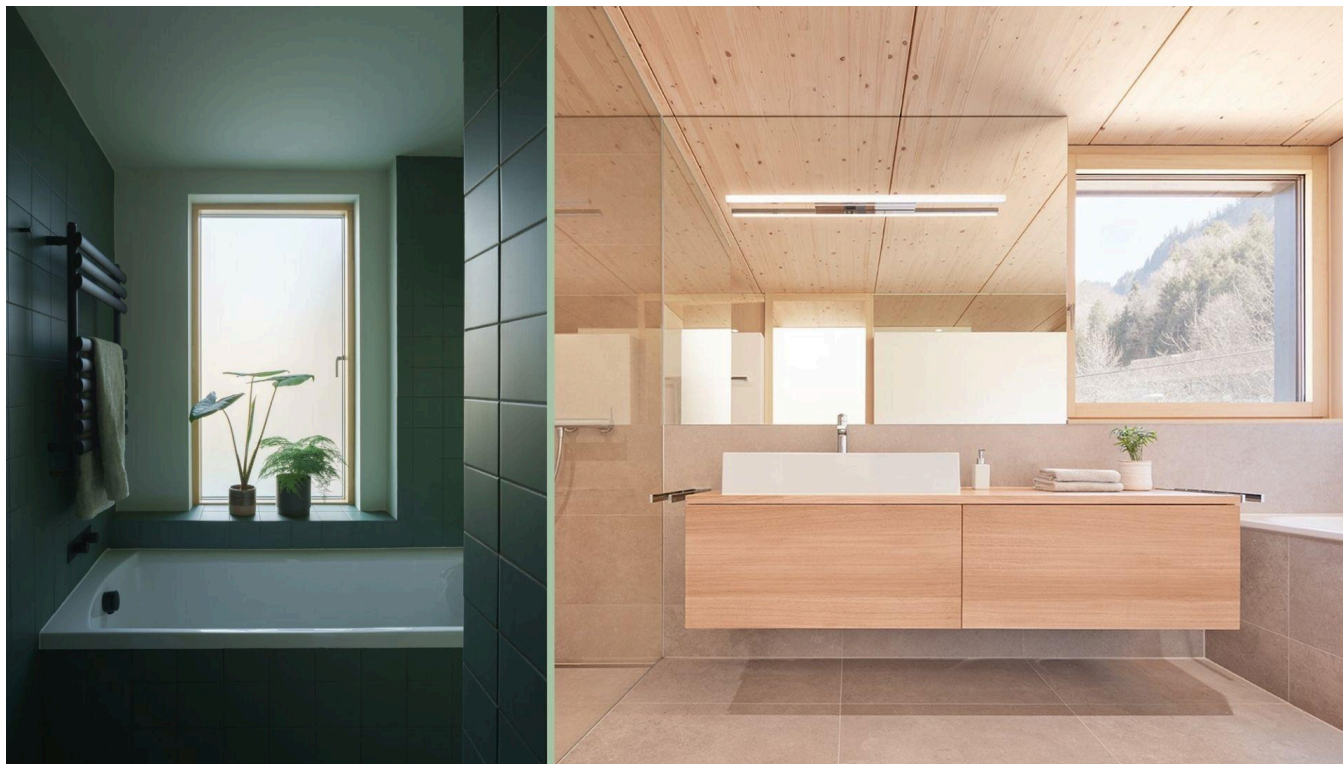


"Jan" is labeled in her interview clip. Jan is an older woman wearing a blue sweater with a black shirt underneath. She has blondish-brown short hair with bangs. Her wheelchair is just barely visible behind her.

Jan: So my name is Jan Campbell. And she/her, and I've been in a wheelchair, I'll just say over 60 years. I was paralyzed with a virus. It's like spinal meningitis. and so I haven't been in my wheelchair all my life. When people see me they think I have. But just getting older... I used to walk just a little, and then went into a manual chair and so I have blondish brown hair that's light, and dimples, and I wear it to my shoulder length, and then again I use a motorized wheelchair.

I love my wine. People will know Jan likes to have fun, and so I usually go to newer places because it's really hard knowing on the, on older places. So I have to look for newer... newer bars, etc., that I know—hopefully—know that they're going to have access as well as the restrooms are going to be to the larger, not the smaller, stalls in the older buildings.

SLIDE 25: Curated Bathrooms



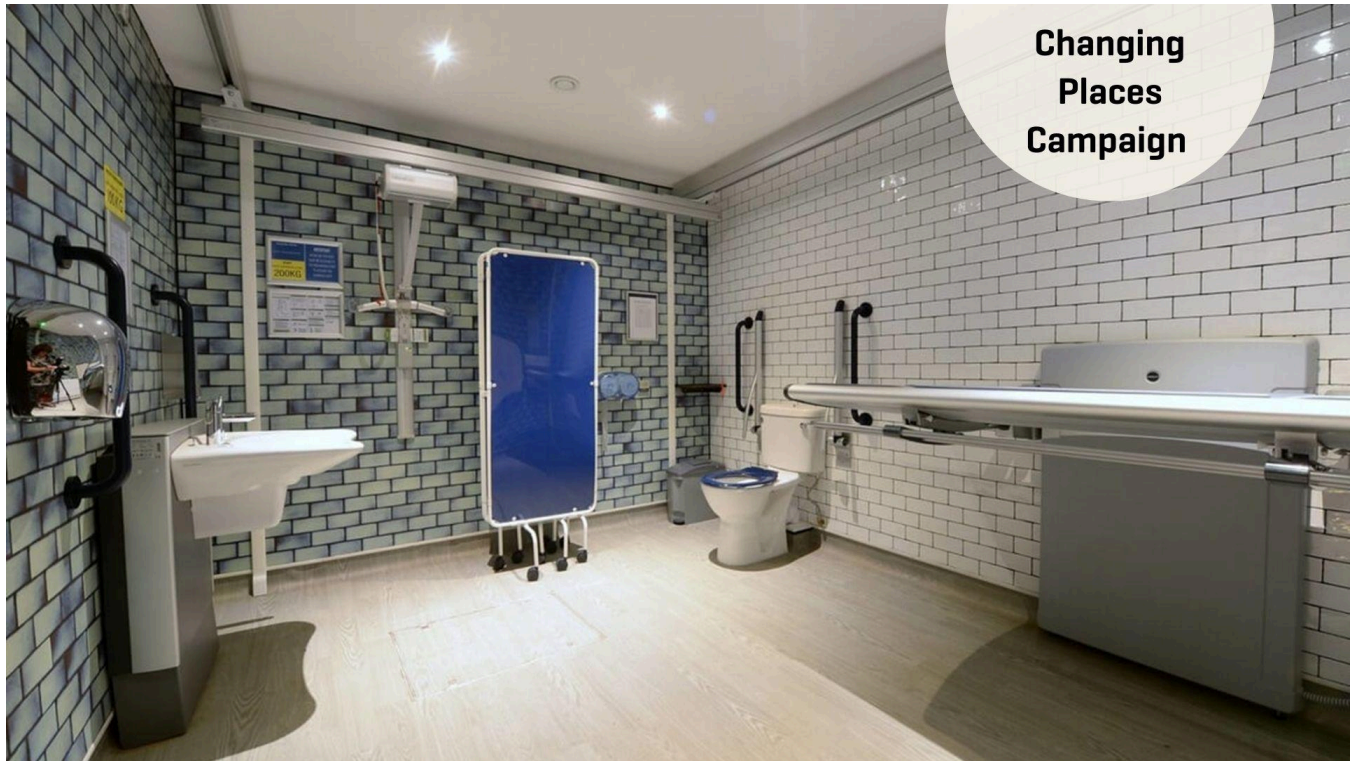
On the left, a towel hanging on a towel warmer on the wall above a large white bathtub in a cozy, muted green bathroom. A bright window with two healthy plants is in the center. On the right, a brighter bathroom with a wall-mounted sink and cabinet in light wood and muted cream tones.

Monse: Jan points out that historic buildings can often circumvent ADA requirements because of their age. For folks who are disabled, this might cause mobility challenges. It's hard to predict if a building will have an updated restroom unless it was built after 1990.

On this slide you see a peaceful bathroom experience. My bathroom does not look like this. Does yours? Bathrooms are personal spaces, right? It is where you get ready, where you go to the bathroom, you bathe, etc., and in people's own homes, they can curate it precisely to their needs. However, when you go out it can be a very different story: will they have what you need?

You can thank us for not including a photo of a dive bar bathroom, but you can probably imagine what this looks like: a very tiny space with no changing table and no grab bars that is totally inaccessible to disabled people!

SLIDE 26: Changing Places Bathroom



Text reading “Changing Places Campaign” is overlaid on spacious accessible restroom. On the left wall is an adjustable-height sink with two black vertical grab bars adjacent. A blue privacy screen is pushed up against the wall next to a permanently installed hoist with a ceiling track that leads toward the toilet. On the right wall is a toilet with two black vertical grab bars and fold-down bars. The toilet has a “peninsular” installation, with space on both sides of the toilet for easy access by the user and caregivers. There is an adjustable-height, adult-sized changing table. The walls and floor are in contrast with each other for clarity of space.

Monse: This is a splendid example of an accessible restroom which was designed by Changing Places, a project based in the UK. It is expanding more worldwide to make sure that in high trafficked public places such as a college campus or a large entertainment venue, libraries, etc., bathrooms have everything that we need for people to be able to use them.

Take a look at this image and see what you notice about this bathroom that is different from your standard accessible restroom. (Go ahead and PAUSE your video now.)

What are you able to find?

There is a blue privacy screen. A caregiver could move it, situate you on the toilet and then give you privacy to go to the bathroom.

There are a lot of grab bars to hold when transitioning from standing to a seat and vice versa.

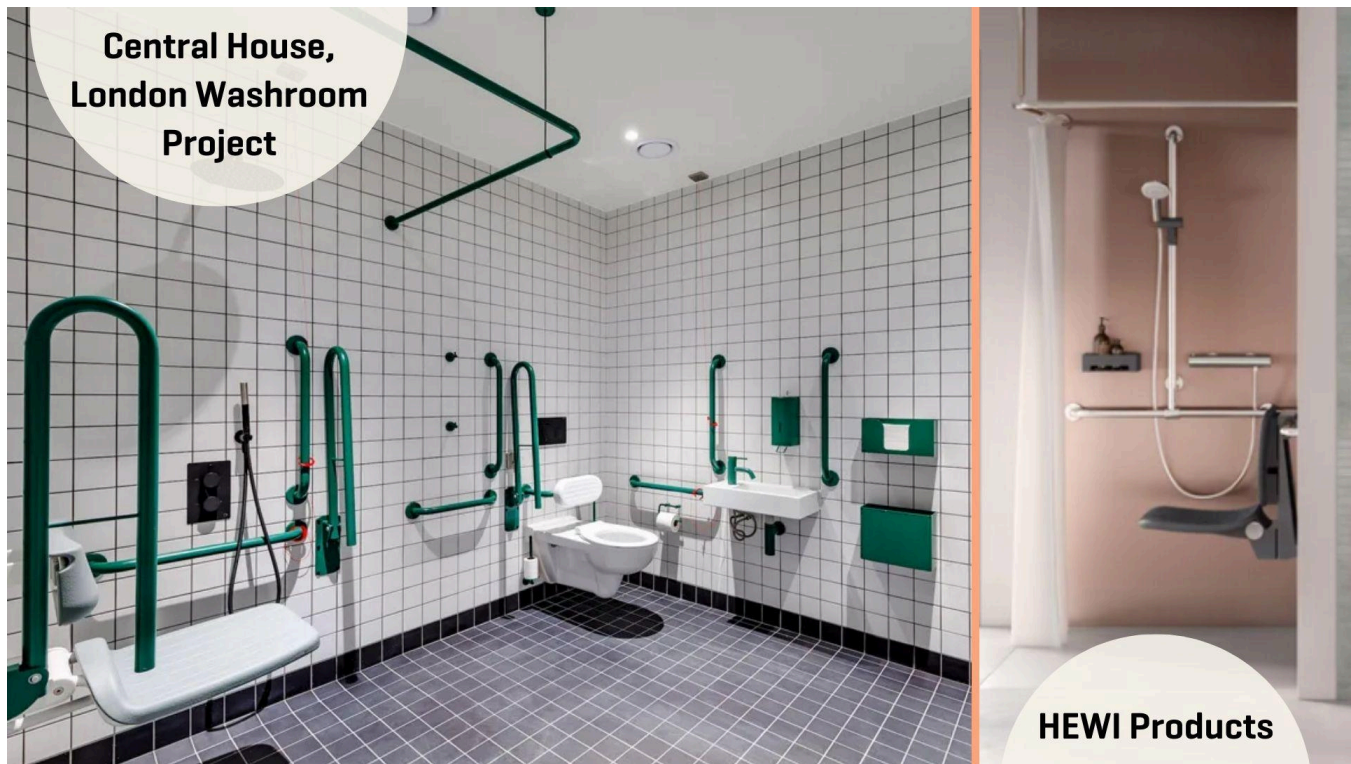
Also, there is a roll-under sink, and it is adjustable.

This is a lot more space to turn!

Hannah is working with the Multnomah County Library and adult sized changing tables are part of their new standard because they are important for people with complex disabilities. For instance, someone who is quadriplegic may have a caregiver who changes them. And what happens is, if there is not an adult size changing table, and you may very well be changed on the floor of a filthy restroom and that is just inhumane. We can do better than that!

There is a lot more we can do. This is also called a peninsular toilet installation, which means there is space on both sides, which I do not think would meet the ADA because you must be able to reach your toilet paper. There are special exemptions happening here to make it a different kind of accessible. It means there are 2 people who could be supporting you on each side as you are using a toilet.

SLIDE 27: Grab Bars



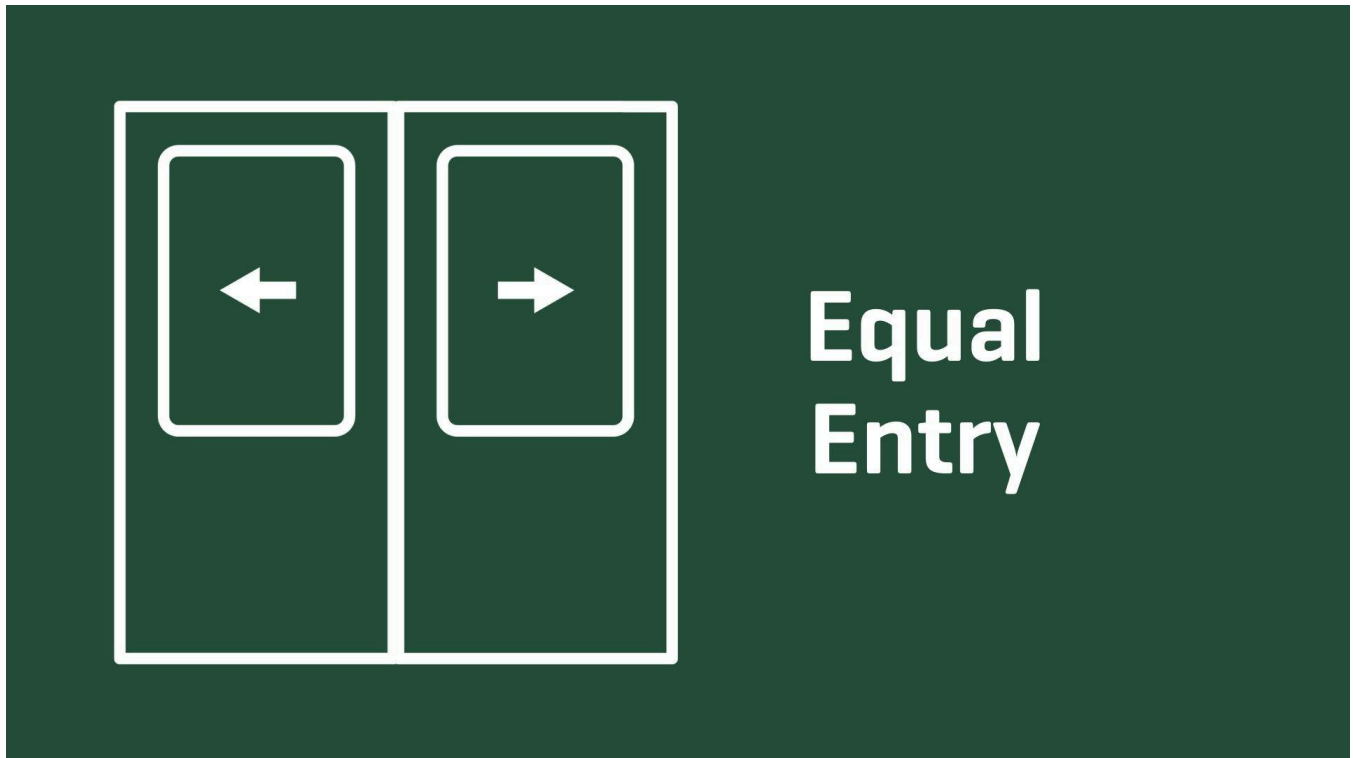
Two accessible bathroom images. On the left, “Central House, London Washroom Project” is overlaid on a room with white tiles on the walls and dark gray tiles on the floor. Bright green grab bars are aligned with a toilet, sink, and shower seating. On the right, “HEWI Products” is overlaid on a light pink shower with gray seating and several strategic grab bars.

Monse: There is so much to learn! We are just astounded that we do not do a better job with grab bars in general. Sometimes when I am in a public restroom at a coffee shop, there are no grab bars at all. How do they get away with this?

This is an image showcasing different color grab bars; you can get them in tons of colors and sizes! Remember – we are focusing on JOY.

2. Equal Entry

SLIDE 28: Chapter Slide for Equal Entry



"Equal Entry" chapter page with a white sliding door icon on a dark green background.

Hannah: So the second most common issue is about equal entry, and just the idea of having an equal experience, both entering the building, and as you move throughout it. Beq will explain more about this.

SLIDE 29: Interview with Beq



A young, bearded person with bright orange-yellow braids and bangs is wearing a black band shirt and speaking to the camera, seated against a beige backdrop.

Beq: Yes, so I'm Beq. I use they/them and he/him pronouns. I like to define myself as a multiply disabled, chronically ill, neurodiverse, wheelchair user... combinations of descriptors but I think that they fit me pretty well, and my disabilities are very foregrounded in the work that I do. I'm on the student body government at my college, and I sort of work to try to make things more accessible for disabled students there. For me, the most important thing for me to feel included in a space is to be able to enter with everybody. That's something that I experienced a lot, especially on sort of a newly-ADA-friendly college campus where they've had to put in ramps different places where they weren't before. A lot of times the main entrances to buildings can be with stairs, and then there's a side entrance, that the cripples get to use. And for me that sort of right at the beginning tells me that I am not welcome in this space, or this space has to be modified for me, and that's a really weird feeling, and I really don't like it.

And so, for me it's really important to be able to enter with everybody and to be able to use the same doorways as everybody and to be able to go, like, with the flow of people, and to not have to separate myself from that. That's really important for me.

SLIDE 30: Ed Roberts Campus



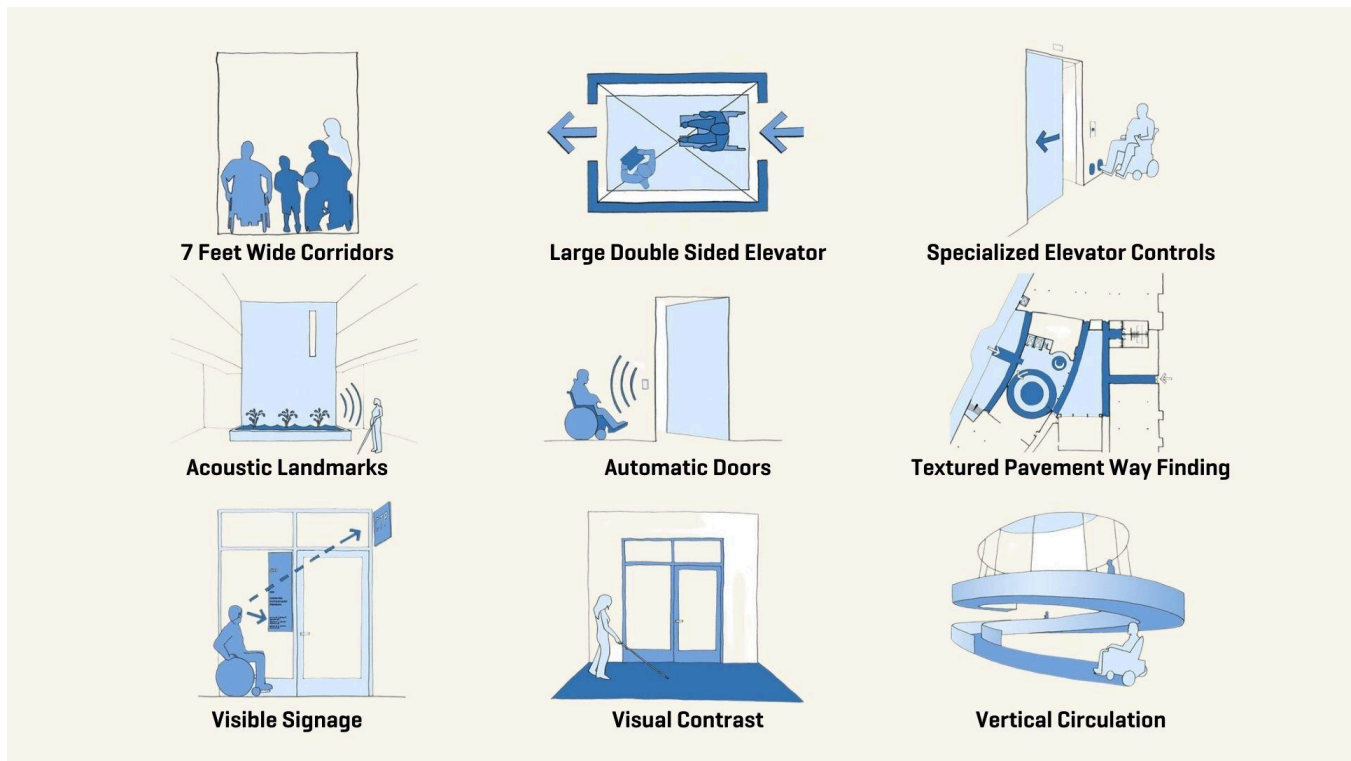
Ed Roberts Campus

Leddy Maytum Stacy
Architects
Berkeley, CA

Two people are heading downward on a bright red, curved ramp with a metal railing. The wall and underside of the ramp are a crisp white. Black text says, "Ed Roberts Campus, Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects, Berkeley, CA."

Hannah: I love to point out the Ed Roberts campus. This is in the Bay area by Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects. They have this incredible circular ramp. The premise is pretty simple: not everybody can use stairs, but pretty much everybody can use a ramp. So why do you need to have both of them?

SLIDE 31: Ed Roberts Accessibility Features



Nine blue illustrations and text representing different design strategies in the Ed Roberts building that make it particularly accessible. From top to bottom, "7 Feet Wide Corridors," "Large Double Sided Elevator," "Specialized Elevator Controls" showing foot-height buttons, "Acoustic Landmarks" showing soundwaves coming off of an indoor landscaping feature, "Automatic Doors," "Textured Pavement Way Finding," "Visible Signage," "Visual Contrast," and "Vertical Circulation" showing the circular feature ramp.

Hannah: These are some other features that are in that building, these images are from the LMS project team. It's pretty amazing. They have double-sided elevators, because if you roll in, it really can be awkward to turn around and roll back out. Automatic doors help not only mobility device users but also Deaf people because you do not have to interrupt your conversation to press a button.

We highly recommend looking at this project because they did a great job.

3. More Chairs, Everywhere

SLIDE 32: Chapter Slide for More Chairs, Everywhere



Chapter slide reading "More Chairs, Everywhere" with a white armchair icon on a dark green background.

Monse: This is a pretty simple one. We just need more places to sit down! More chairs, everywhere!

SLIDE 33: Finnegan Shannon Bench



A blue wooden bench in an art gallery is painted with white letters that say, "This exhibition has asked me to stand for too long. Sit if you agree." Black text reads, "Do you want us here or not, Shannon Finnegan" [note: artist changed name recently].

Monse: We love this blue bench by [Finnegan Shannon](#), who is a disabled artist. The bench says, "This exhibition has asked me to stand for too long. Sit if you agree." Just think of how few seats you find in most art galleries!

This artist also started an "Anti-Stairs Club" at the Vessel in New York City – a public art space that is basically just a lot of staircases interconnected. People gathered in protest to say "As long as I live I will never go up a single step of the Vessel" and were comprised of people who use wheelchairs and their allies.

But seating isn't just about leg fatigue or back pain. You might have a heart condition or a lung condition that requires you to rest often. Earlier Hannah shared her experience of going to the pharmacy to get her prescriptions and having to stand in line with all these other ill people. Many people are elderly, and the chairs are in a completely different area of the store. This means you must stay standing in order to not lose your place. That doesn't make sense!

Thinking about the public realm – buildings can contribute by including spaces to sit down mid-block. This would be so helpful for those people for whom walking one block is a challenge. Hannah's experienced that and has used a cane for support.

SLIDE 34: Interview with Jen



A woman with the name title “Jen” is in a windowpane plaid dress with white lines on blue-navy. She is speaking to a camera in front of a blurred out wall graphic of a flower.

Monse: This is Jen. This is from the Fat-Friendly Design course – you can learn a LOT more about how to choose fat-friendly furniture in the online course! To our knowledge Jen doesn’t identify as disabled, but she will talk a little bit about seating.

Jen: Whether you’re tall or short, or wide or small, bodies are different, so chairs should be different. And there should be different options in different commercial spaces. So everyone sort of feels welcome.

SLIDE 35: Bar Palomar

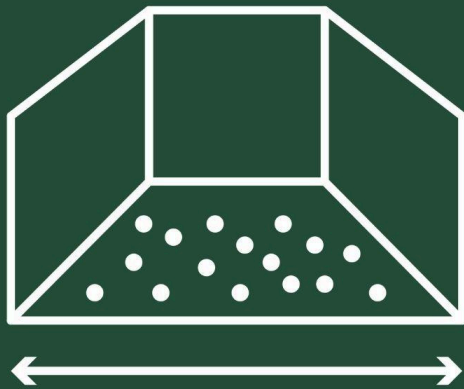


Two images of “Palomar, Ricky Gomez, Portland, OR”: on the left, a bartender is pouring a drink. Three bright yellow bar stools with back support are arrayed at a slight angle. In the background, people are sitting on dark green padded chairs without arms and on a bench at the back wall. On the right, four pink bar stools without back support are casting long shadows in front of a large window, and white flower-like tiles cover the floor.

Monse: This image of Palomar looks amazing! Look at all those different chairs! You can choose where you want to sit the moment you enter. The chairs are sturdy, but they are also padded. You have standard height seating, bench seating, bar height seating with and without back support. The chairs are armless so as to not squeeze plus size folks. Note here that **OPTIONS** make all the difference!

4. The Space Between

SLIDE 36: Chapter Slide for The Space Between

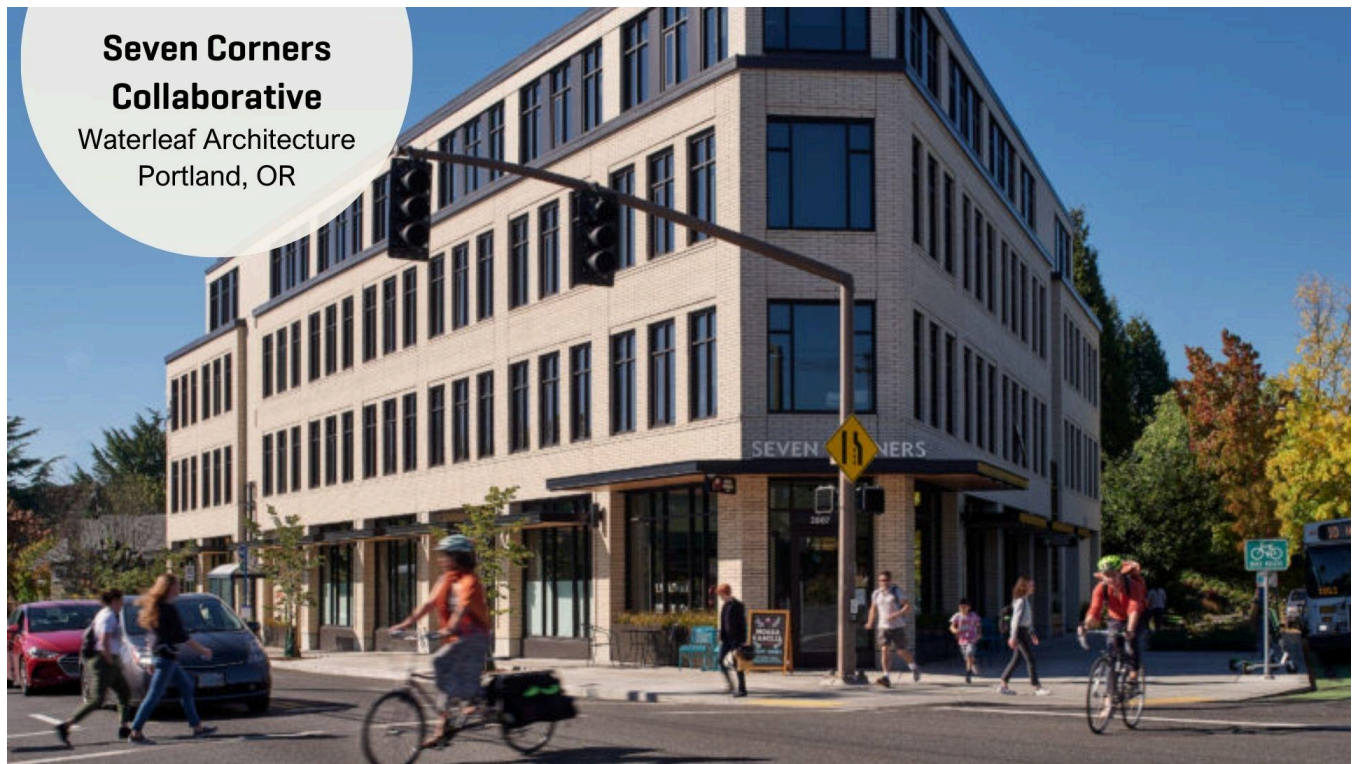


The Space Between

"The Space Between" is written in white next to an icon of a room with an arrow pointing from side to side.

Hannah: It is common to try to have as many tables and chairs as possible in a restaurant and as many desks as possible in an office, because you're maximizing what you can use your space for. But people need space. Architects can encourage their clients to give more space to people.

SLIDE 37: Seven Corners Collaborative



Many people are walking and biking across the street on a sunny day in front of a “flatiron” style beige building. It is four stories tall with many windows, and there are trees of various colors adjacent. Text reads, “Seven Corners Collaborative, Waterleaf Architecture, Portland, OR.”

Hannah: This is the exterior of the building Seven Corners Collaborative Building.

SLIDE 38: Inclusive Coffee Shop



A light-filled, windowed space with seating arranged against the wall, a large space between seating and the coffee bar, and several people standing and sitting in the shop. Text reads, "Nossa Familia at Seven Corners Collaborative Building, Portland, OR."

Hannah: So this is the Nossa Familia (coffee shop) that's in the bottom of that Community Vision building, and it's very intentionally designed to be very accessible because there are a bunch of disability services in the building. We don't typically apply the ADA to stand-alone furniture. You can see there's an extra wide space here. So multiple wheelchairs can pass each other, plus sized folks can navigate comfortably without bumping into other people, and Deaf people have enough space to sign to each other. They've also got adjustable height tables and lots of seating options. It's great.

5. Clear Navigation

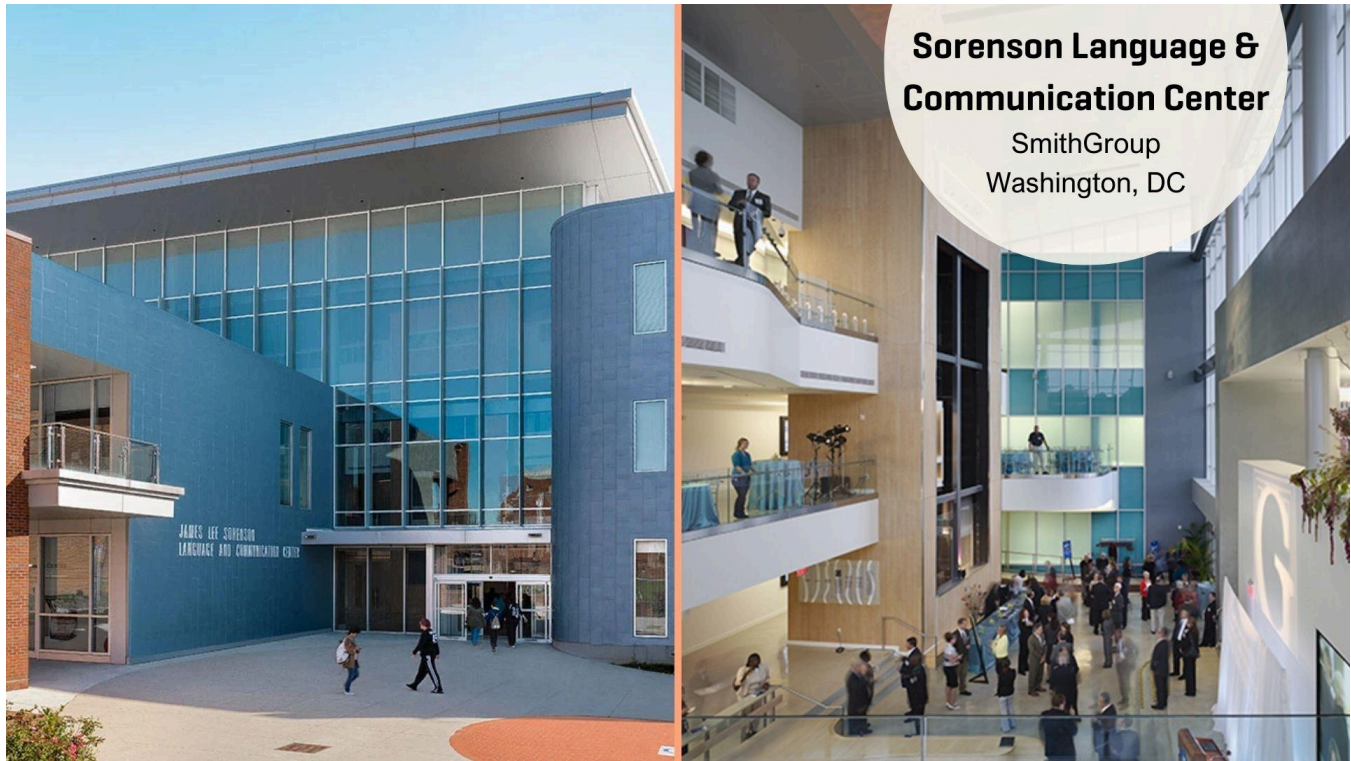
SLIDE 39: Chapter Slide for Clear Navigation



The title “Clear Navigation” is in white on a dark green background. Adjacent, an icon showing a “you are here” map symbol with a curved line leading from a human figure.

Monse: Navigation can be tricky because there is so much to think about. How can we help travelers by giving them helpful cues? The obvious answer is signage, which we will talk about, but there are other ways to make spaces easier to navigate!

SLIDE 40: Sorenson Language and Communication Center



On the left, people walk into a huge building with many windows. On the right, the interior of the building, which has three stories with glass railings and people gathering on the ground level in a large open atrium. Text reads, "Sorenson Language & Communication Center."

Monse: This is a building on the Gallaudet campus which is a Deaf University in Washington DC. Gallaudet is where the idea of Deafspace originated – basically a design approach that supports the needs of D/deaf and Hard of Hearing people. Pause your video and see if you can find anything here that is intentionally designed to support deaf folks and their navigation of space. (pause)

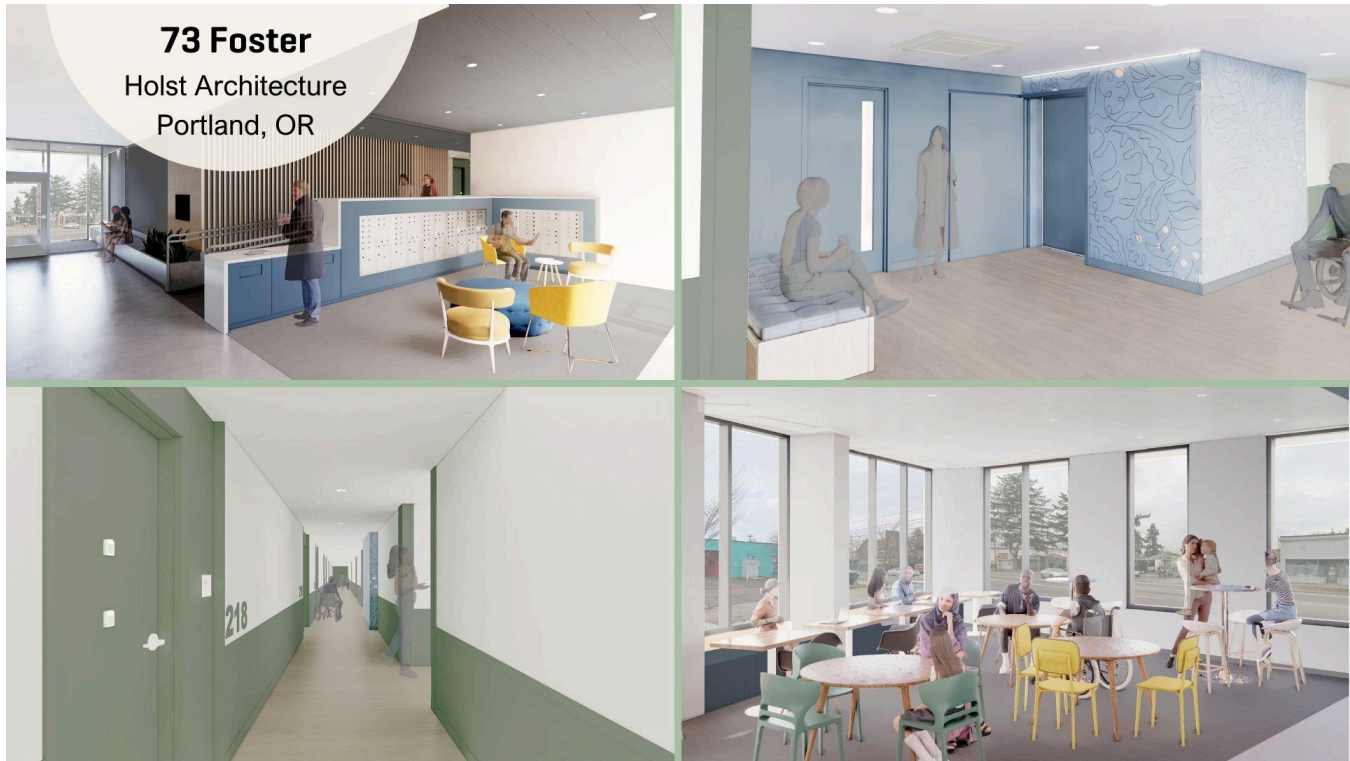
You may have noticed the distinct levels with glass railings, a big open atrium, and wide corridors. The transparency and even mirrors help people who are Deaf to understand what is happening in other spaces and around corners.

It's important to note that sometimes the needs of different people will be in conflict! For someone who is low vision or blind, this space might be a nightmare to navigate because it is large, open, and hard to understand.

When we encounter issues like this, we need to prioritize safety. One example is that curb cuts with truncated domes can be uncomfortable for people in wheelchairs to roll across. However, the safety of Blind travelers must be prioritized there.

But in this case, this is a Deaf campus, and they are oriented around D/deaf folks' needs. We do of course need to think about Deafblind peoples' needs, too, which can be complex!

SLIDE 41: 73 Foster By Holst



Four different renderings with the title “73Foster, Holst Architecture, Portland, OR.” to follow from the top on the left to the bottom on the right. In the upper left, a person sits on a yellow upholstered chair in the main lobby area, and a person is standing at a mail counter while two others move down a ramp toward the front entry. Next, people are sitting and standing near a light blue elevator bay. Below, people walk through a corridor with light green wainscoting on the bottom and cream on the upper wall. The final image shows adults and children sitting in a community room with lots of windows and a mix of different seating types.

Hannah: This is a project from Holst. We are working with Community Vision and Reach CDC to make a residential building that is WAY more accessible than normal, knowing that disabled folks will live here. We referenced the [Kelsey Guidelines](#), which are being renamed - you should look up this resource for accessible housing!

You can see in the lobby space there is a change of texture in the floor to help indicate when you enter a new space, that can help low vision or blind people. Clear thresholds are also helpful for autistic folks and those with cognitive disabilities.

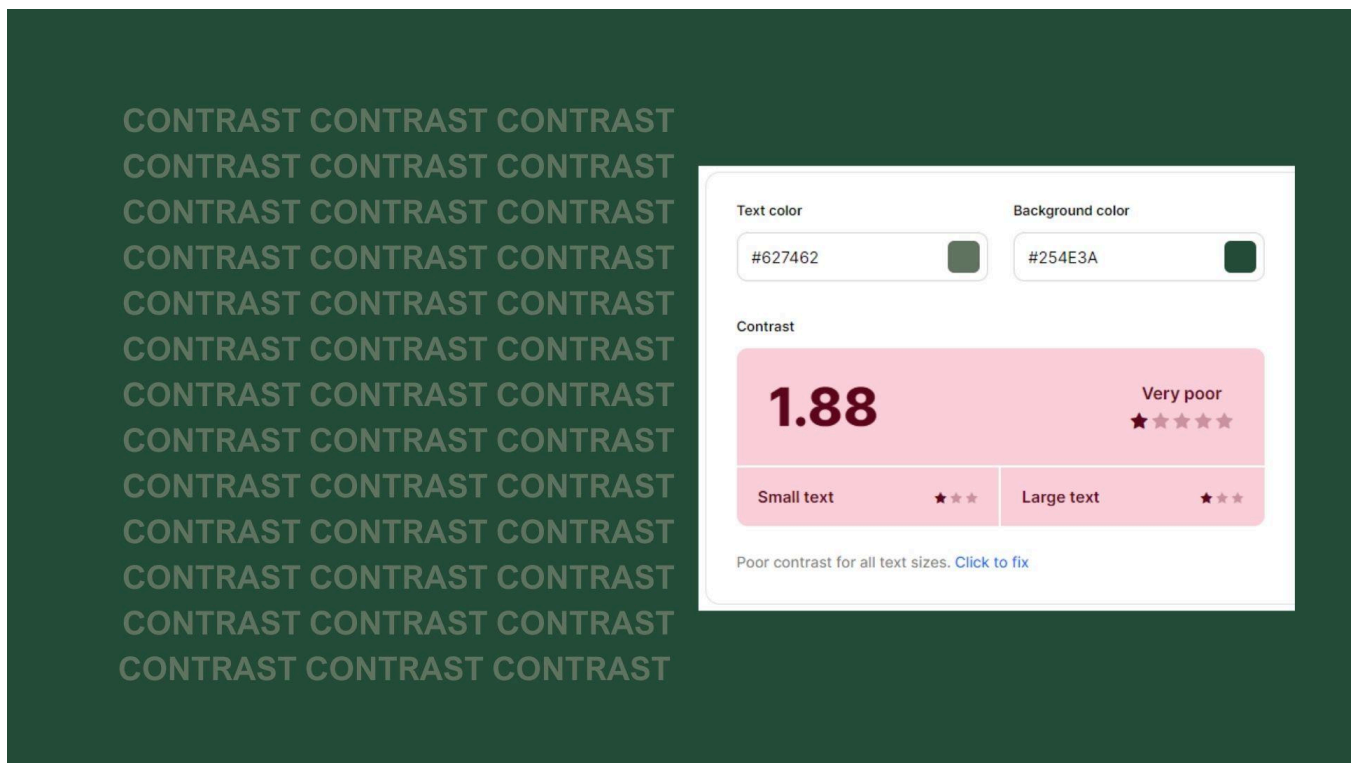
We took out 3 steps [that accounted for site level changes] since we had to have a ramp anyway, and that helped us make more space for lounging and meeting neighbors.

We have a glass door into the community room to help people with cognitive disabilities understand what is happening in the space.

We use color and pattern as distinction around elevator bays for consistency of navigation.

We have included wainscoting, as a tactile element that you can follow down the hallway as well.

SLIDE 42: Poor Contrast Text Example



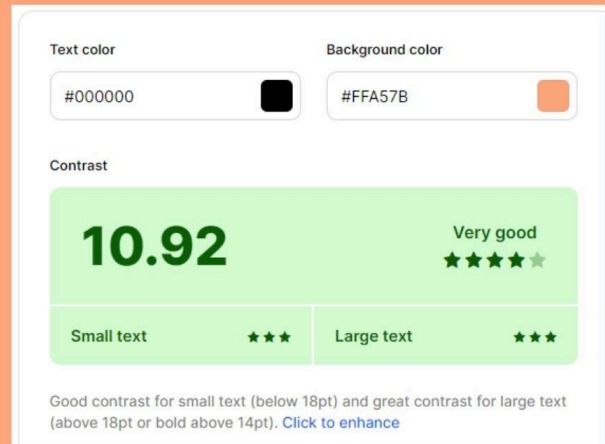
Light green text on a dark green background with a score from the Colors contrast tool: 1.88 or Very poor, 1 out of 3 stars for Small text and 1 out of 3 stars for Large text.

Monse: Let's talk about signage! Can you read this light green text on a dark green background?

Contrast is important when it comes to navigation for low vision folks.

SLIDE 43: Pretty Good Contrast Text Example

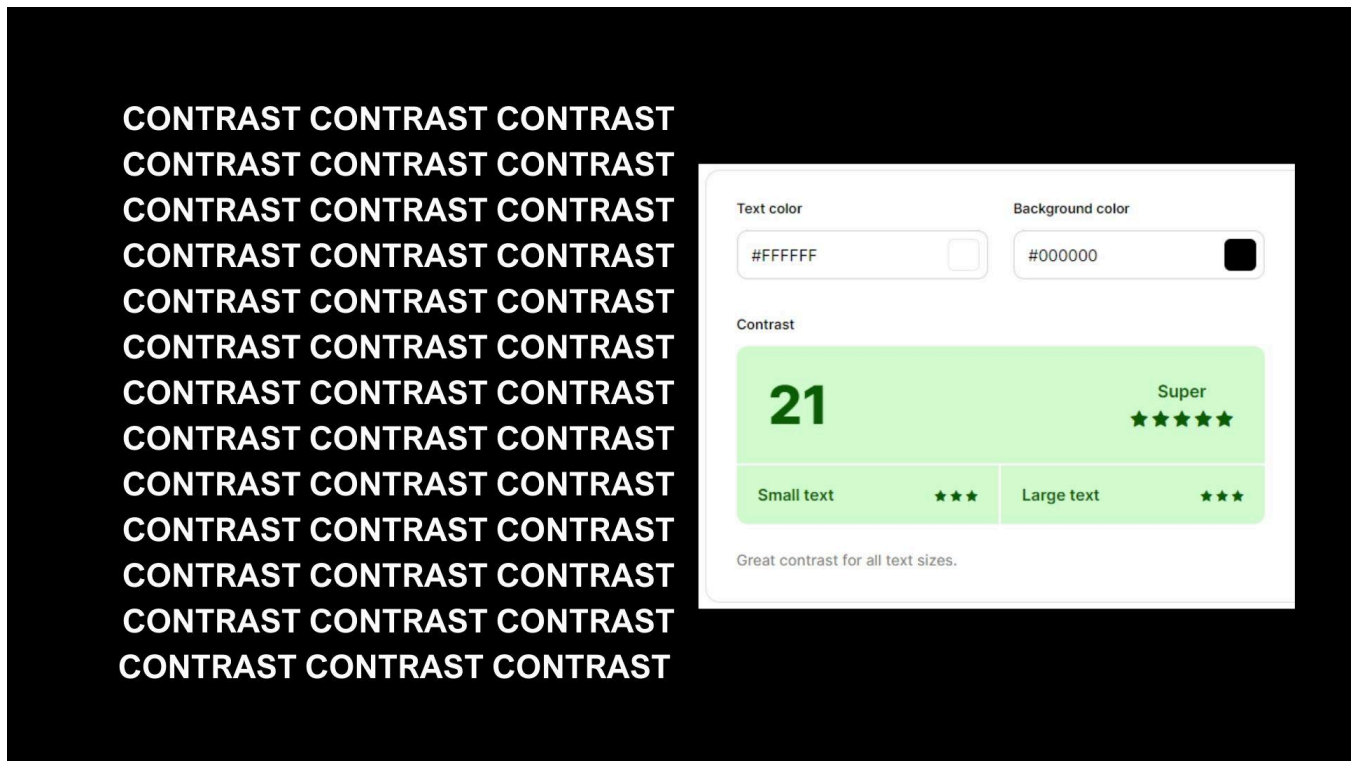
CONTRAST CONTRAST CONTRAST
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Black text on an orange background with a score from the Colors contrast tool: 10.92 or Very good (4 out of 5 stars overall), 3 out of 3 stars for Small text and 3 out of 3 stars for Large text.

Monse: This black text on an orange background is slightly better contrast. In theory this is a lot better than the previous option. We're getting hotter....

SLIDE 44: Great Contrast Text Example

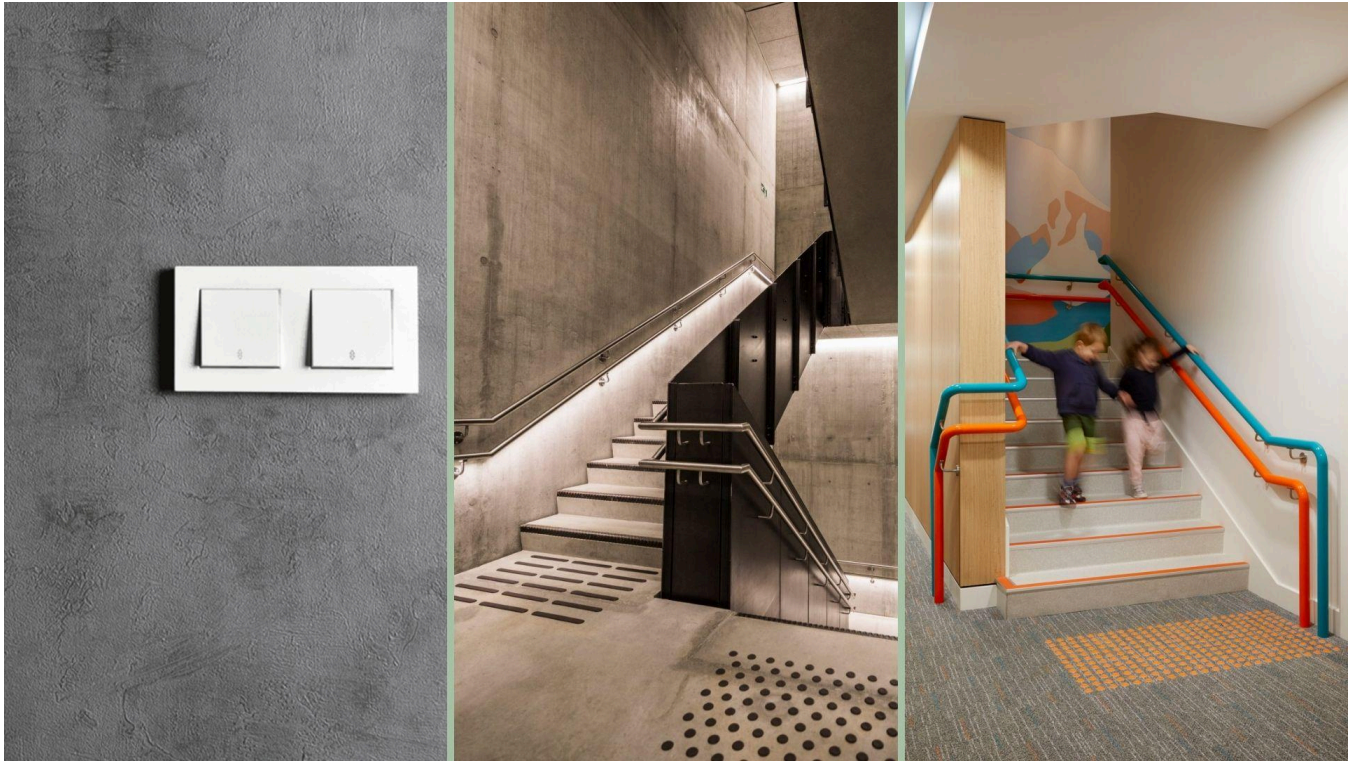


White text on black background with a score from the Colors contrast tool: 21 or Super (5 out of 5 stars overall), 3 out of 3 stars for Small text and 3 out of 3 stars for Large text.

Monse: White on black is the highest contrast! You can use the [“Colors”](#) tool in the resources to test your color contrast!

So far, in these examples you can see the importance of using contrast for wayfinding. This is important not only for buildings, but also for anything that will be shared online or in print like community engagement and marketing materials.

SLIDE 45: Light Switch and Stair Safety



On the left, a white light switch has a nice contrast against a dark gray wall. Center image: black non-slip treads and black tactile indicators contrast well against the light gray cement staircase. On the right, two children are going down a white staircase while holding two colorful railings at different heights.

Monse: Have you ever thought about using contrasting light switches to make them stand out on a wall?

What about stairs? Not all stairs have contrasting or non-slip treads! These are super helpful, you can see examples here.

The bumps that you're seeing here are tactile indicators. They are not required at the top of stairs in the US code! But in other countries they are required at the top and bottom of staircases. Genius!

We also really like that these railings are at two heights for people of different sizes!

SLIDE 46: Design for Low Vision and Blind Folks



Text says, "Lighthouse for the Blind, Mark Cavagnero Associates Architects, San Francisco, CA," overlaid on a photo of a waiting area with lovely warm wood paneling, bright lighting, and windows. On the left side is a reception desk, with people standing and talking to each other. On the right is a lounge area where people wait while sitting on red couches and armchairs. In the center is a pathway to follow toward the large windows and an open staircase.

Hannah: This is a space that's designed for low vision and blind folks. Again, pause your video to see what you can find here that helps people navigate confidently and safely. (pause)

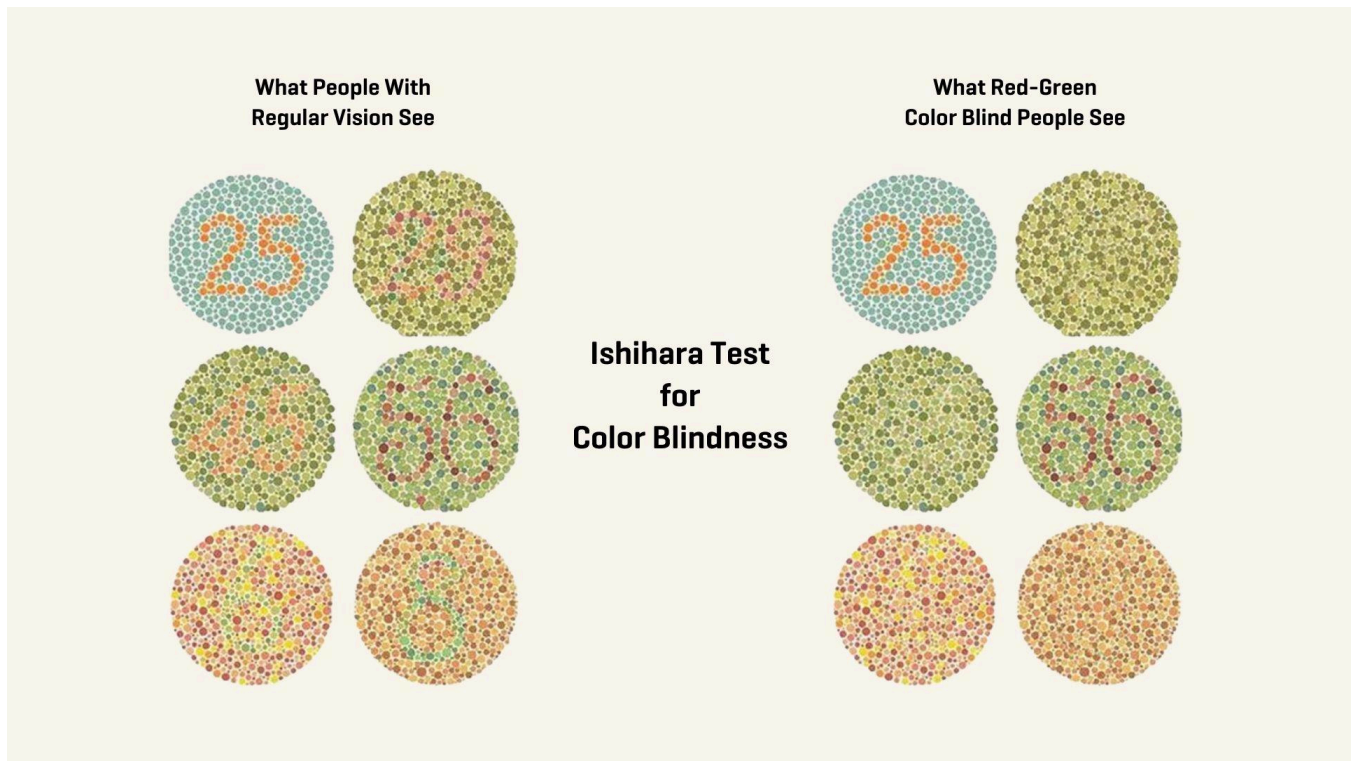
Having different materials on the floor means you can hear someone click-clacking down the cement center area. You can tell when you step into a different zone, it's creating audible cues for folks about people moving through the space. It's very bright and well lit, because a lot of people who are low vision have some form of sight, and they're maybe using light for cues to navigate, etc.

Daylight and options for lighting also help Deaf folks, who can end up with visual fatigue throughout the day because there is so much going on with your eyes and your brain. Monse has told me she gets migraines from using a computer and being overwhelmed by visuals.

There are also soft corners on the furniture. So you have a little bit of a buffer if you are walking near the furniture without visual cues.

Also, raised text for signage since not everyone reads Braille!

SLIDE 47: Color Blindness Test



On the left, "What People with Regular Vision See," with six colorful circles with numbers in a low-contrast different color. In the center, black text says, "Ishihara Test for Color Blindness." On the right side, black text says, "What Red-Green Color Blind People See," showing six circles with the numbers faded into the background.

Hannah: You should also bear in mind about 8% of people assigned male at birth are colorblind. My dad is colorblind. If you can't see the numbers on the left of this slide, you may be colorblind!

To be accessible to colorblind people, choose colors that are in contrast. If you were to turn it into black and white, if you would still be able to read it, then that should be visible to people who are colorblind.

SLIDE 48: Accessible Fonts



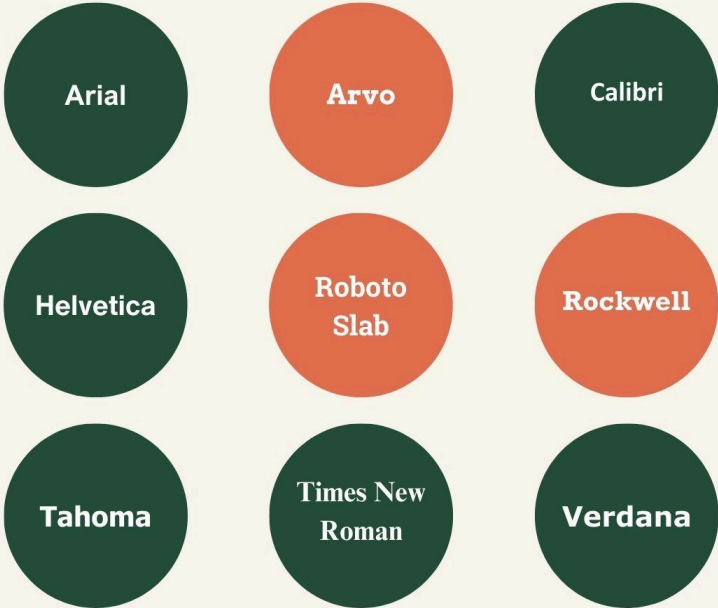
These fonts are considered generally accessible. They are mostly sans serif, though Times New Roman (serif) is pretty accessible.

Remember that font size, line spacing, and boldness makes a difference, too.

Nine dark green circles with different white fonts, showing that they are generally accessible. From top to bottom, "Arial," "Arvo," "Calibri," "Helvetica," "Roboto Slab," "Rockwell," "Tahoma," "Times New Roman," and "Verdana." On the right, text reads: These fonts are considered generally accessible. They are mostly sans serif, though Times New Roman (serif) is pretty accessible. Remember that font size, line spacing, and boldness makes a difference, too.

Monse: Some fonts are more accessible than others. For people who have learning disabilities such as dyslexia certain font types start to look similar or the text can run together.

SLIDE 49: Accessible Fonts 2



Slab serif fonts such as Arvo, Museo, Slab, and Rockwell are also considered to be accessible, but these should mostly used in headings, rather than the main body of text.

The same nine fonts on circles as on the previous slide, but now, three are highlighted as orange: Arvo, Roboto Slab, and Rockwell. Text says, "Slab serif fonts such as Arvo, Museo, Slab, and Rockwell are also considered to be accessible, but these should mostly [be] used in headings, rather than the main body of text."

Monse: Fonts in the sans serif family are most accessible.

SLIDE 50: Inaccessible Fonts

Please do not use serif fonts that aren't as tidy as
Times New Roman.

Harlow and other cursive handwriting fonts are hard to read.

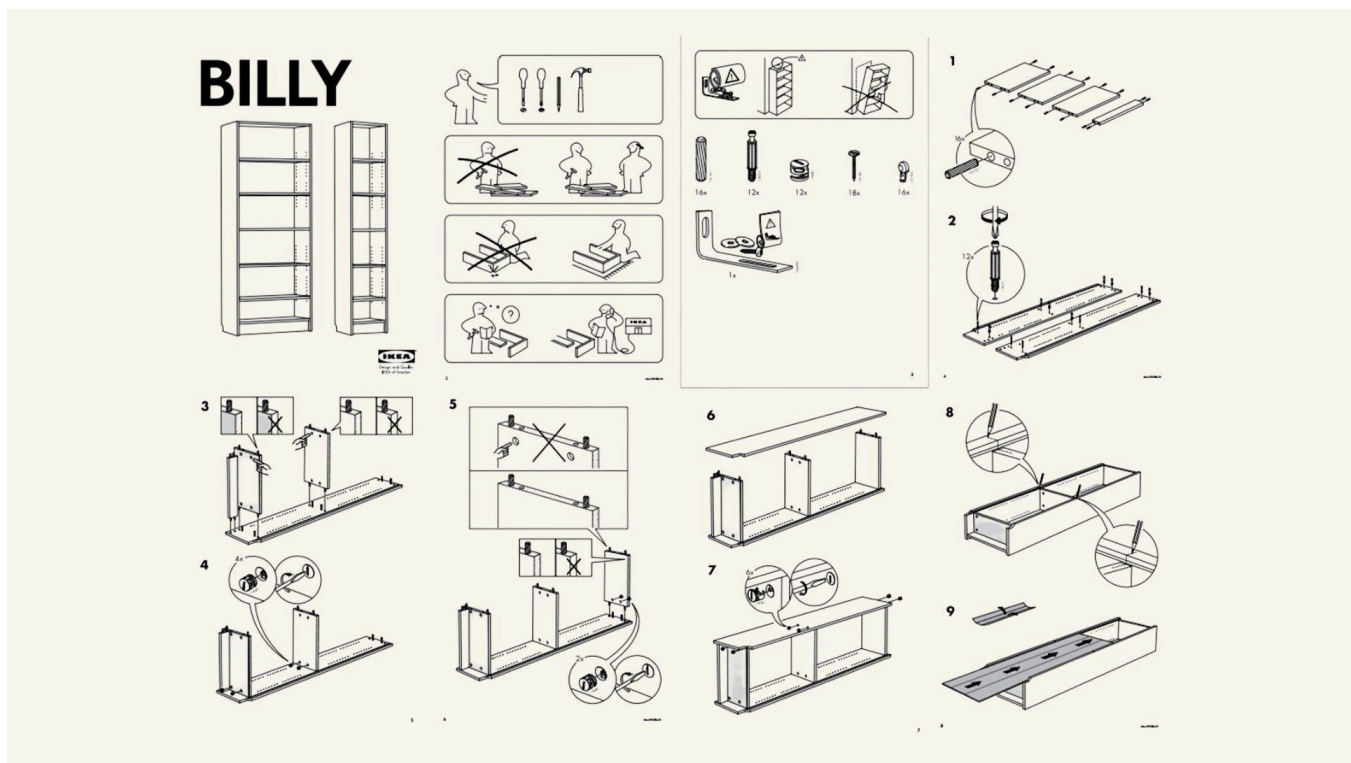
don't use tightly spaced fonts / these are quite illegible.

**SOMETHING LIKE THIS MIGHT RUN
TOGETHER AND MAKE IT HARD TO
DISTINGUISH INDIVIDUAL LETTERS**

Four fairly illegible fonts say "Please do not use serif fonts that aren't as tidy as Times New Roman," "Harlow and other cursive handwriting fonts are hard to read," "Don't use tightly spaced fonts / these are quite illegible," and "Something like this might run together and make it hard to distinguish individual letters."

Monse: These are examples of less legible fonts to use. Remember, you want to stick with the more legible body text.

SLIDE 51: IKEA Example



IKEA's manual instruction for a bookcase to illustrate how to build and assemble following instructions based on visual symbols and icons. Black text stated, "Billy," on the top left.

Monse: We are all familiar with the IKEA instruction manual, right? Talk about visually accessible instructions! Symbols and icons instead of words are helpful for people with cognitive disabilities and can also help people who are not native English speakers, like me.

6. Balance Sensory Inputs

SLIDE 52: Chapter Slide for Balance Sensory Inputs



Balance Sensory Inputs

"Balance Sensory Inputs" title in white on a dark green background. A white icon with an eye, ear, nose, and hand on a scale is to the left.

Hannah: We are thinking about how to design spaces for people who are on the autism spectrum, which is about 1 in 44 kids and 1 in 45 adults.

Additionally, more people have sensory processing disorders. For all these folks, certain smells, sounds, textures, or other aspects of the environment can make them very uncomfortable. We have another training that dives deep into this topic!

This category is ultimately about bringing balance to the way senses are engaged in space.

SLIDE 53: Sensory Room at PDX Airport



“Concourse D Sensory Room, Kulture City, Portland International Airport” is overlaid on a photo of a large, open carpeted sensory room with different light engagement displays and artwork on the wall. Four chairs and bean bags look out through large windows facing the runway.

Hannah: Airports can be very overwhelming spaces! We are happy that our very own PDX Airport has added a sensory room in Concourse D. They have put in a lot of great interactive tools and activities to engage with.

People may have sensory needs at ANY age - that's really important to keep in mind. In fact, sensory rooms are great for people with dementia!

SLIDE 54: Purple Sensory Inspiration



New Hope Middle School Sensory Room

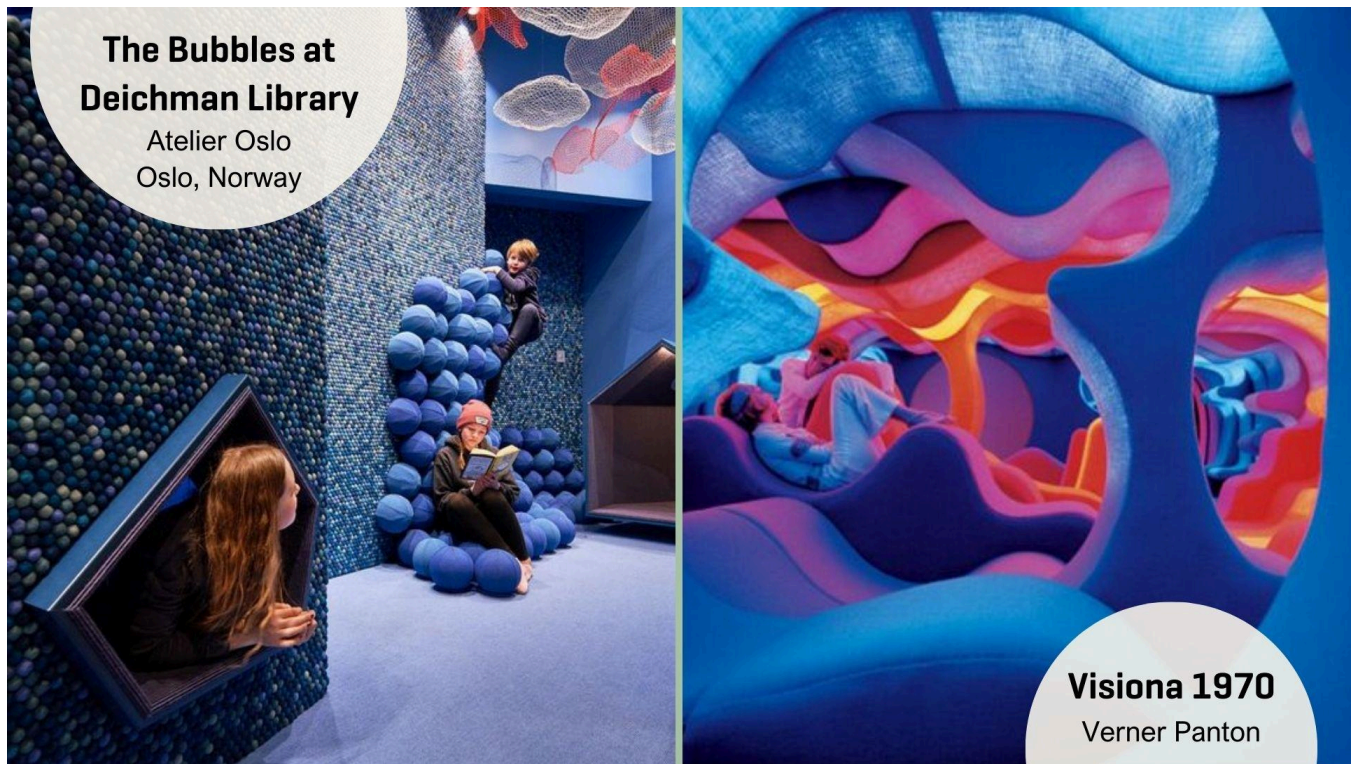
Mohawk Industries
Dalton, Georgia

"New Hope Middle School Sensory Room, Mohawk Industries, Dalton, Georgia," is overlaid on a photo of a dark sensory room in a school that is lit up in blue and purple tones. Bubble-like shapes are projected on the wall in pink light. There are six soft bean bag-like chairs, a swing, floor pads, and light bubble tubes. The floor is carpeted.

Hannah: This is kind of what you see typically, for sensory rooms is like... moody lighting and tactile things to touch and surround yourself with. Lights to engage with.

One main takeaway for this category is that for some people the way that the majority of the building space is designed is uncomfortable. It can be through any sense. I've seen more awareness around having scent-free spaces – so no perfume or intense cleaning supplies. People with autism or post-chemo, or if you're pregnant, you may be sensitive to smells. So we just need to consider that people have different sensory needs. So having a place to retreat is really helpful.

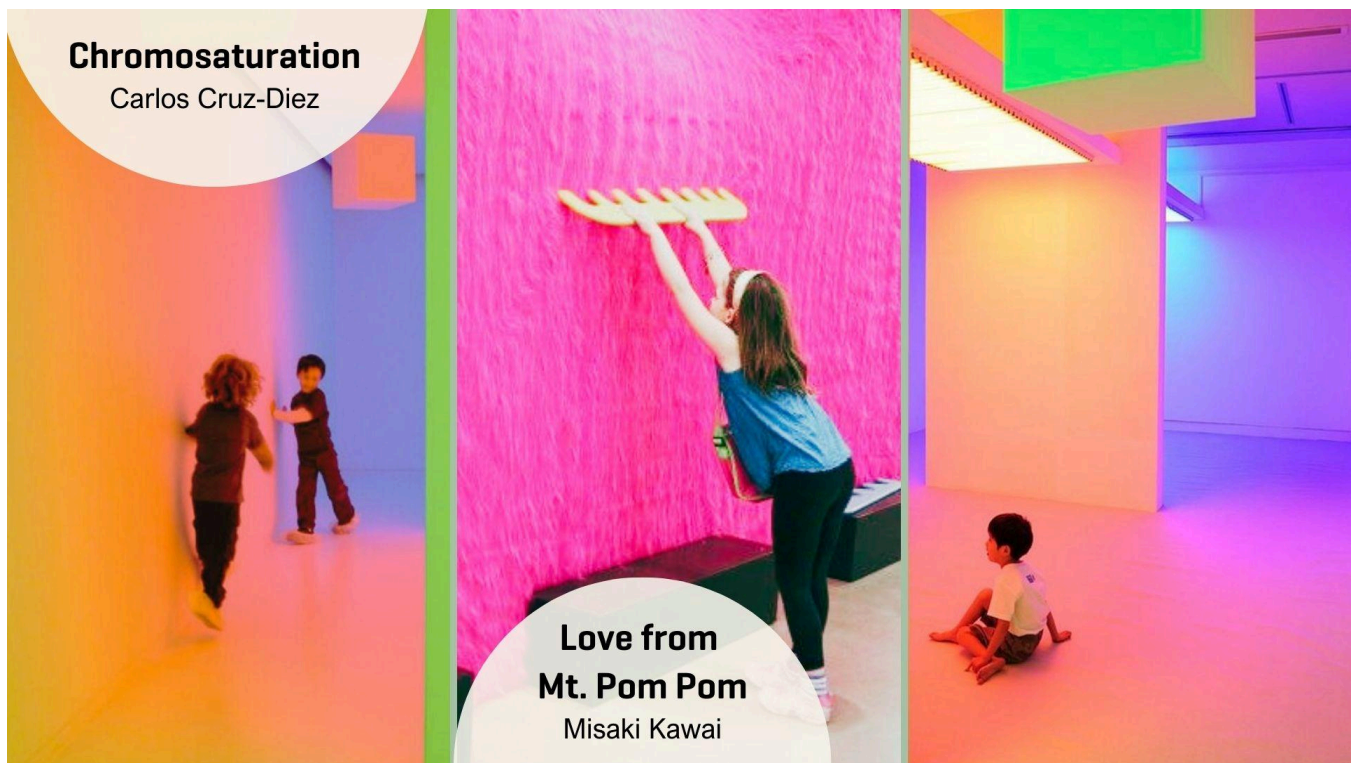
SLIDE 55: Blue Sensory Inspiration



Text over an image of three children in a playful room with blue carpet and walls covered in what look like soft pom-poms reads "The Bubbles at Deichman Library, Atelier Oslo, Oslo, Norway." Adjacent, text reading "Visiona 1970, Verner Panton," is overlaid on a photo of soft organic-shaped furniture that looks more like a mysterious petri dish blown up to human proportions than a room. Orange lighting complements the blueness of the furniture and creates a gradient effect.

Hannah: These are not necessarily sensory rooms, but we want to share these for inspiration! Architects have barely begun to explore the possibilities of creating sensory rooms, so we want to highlight the ways that art, architecture, and sensory needs can intersect!

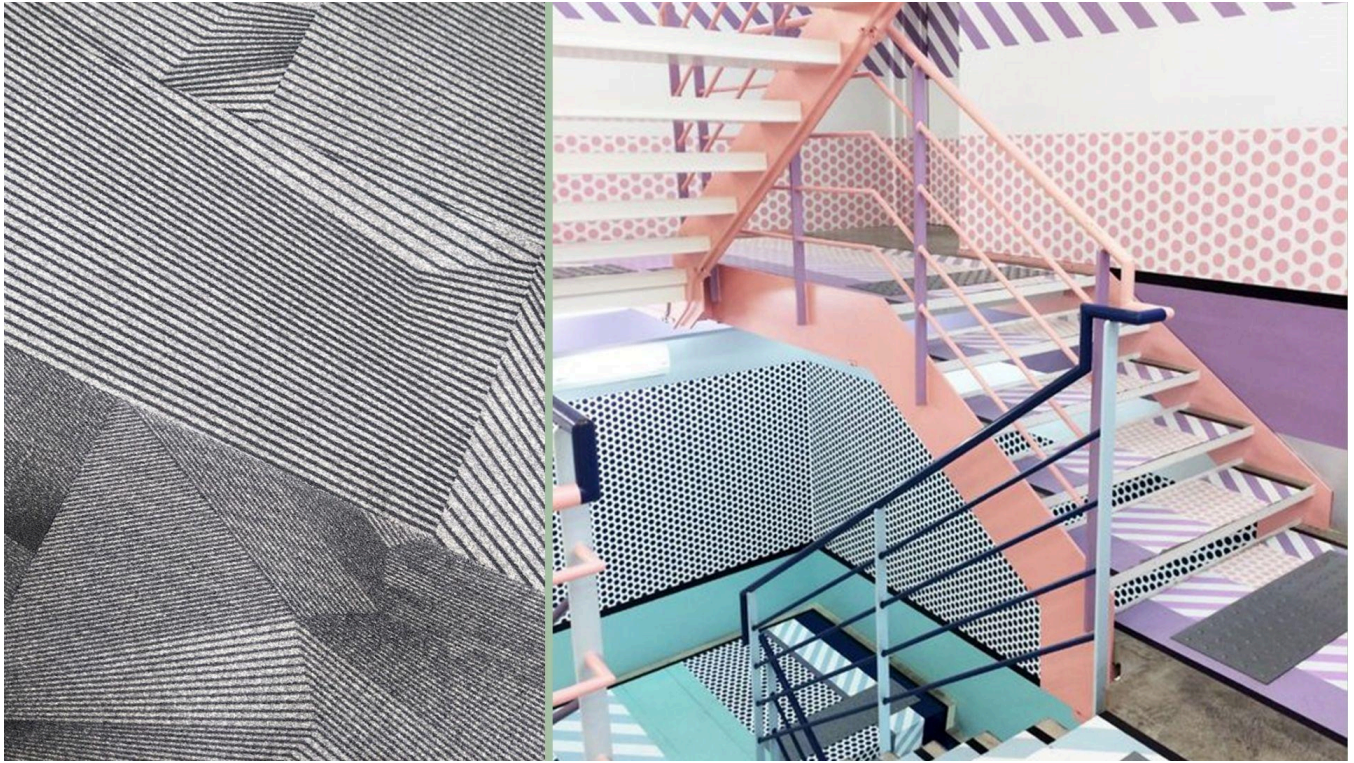
SLIDE 56: Pink Sensory Room Inspiration



Images on the right and left show children playing and sitting in a colorfully lit space mostly comprised of solid white planes. Text reads "Chromosaturaton, Carlos Cruz-Diez." In the center, a child with long hair in a headband is playing with a large comb to brush down on the hot pink furry wall. Text reads "Love from Mt. Pom Pom."

Hannah: Here are just a couple more that lean into light and tactile experience.

SLIDE 57: Visual Overwhelm

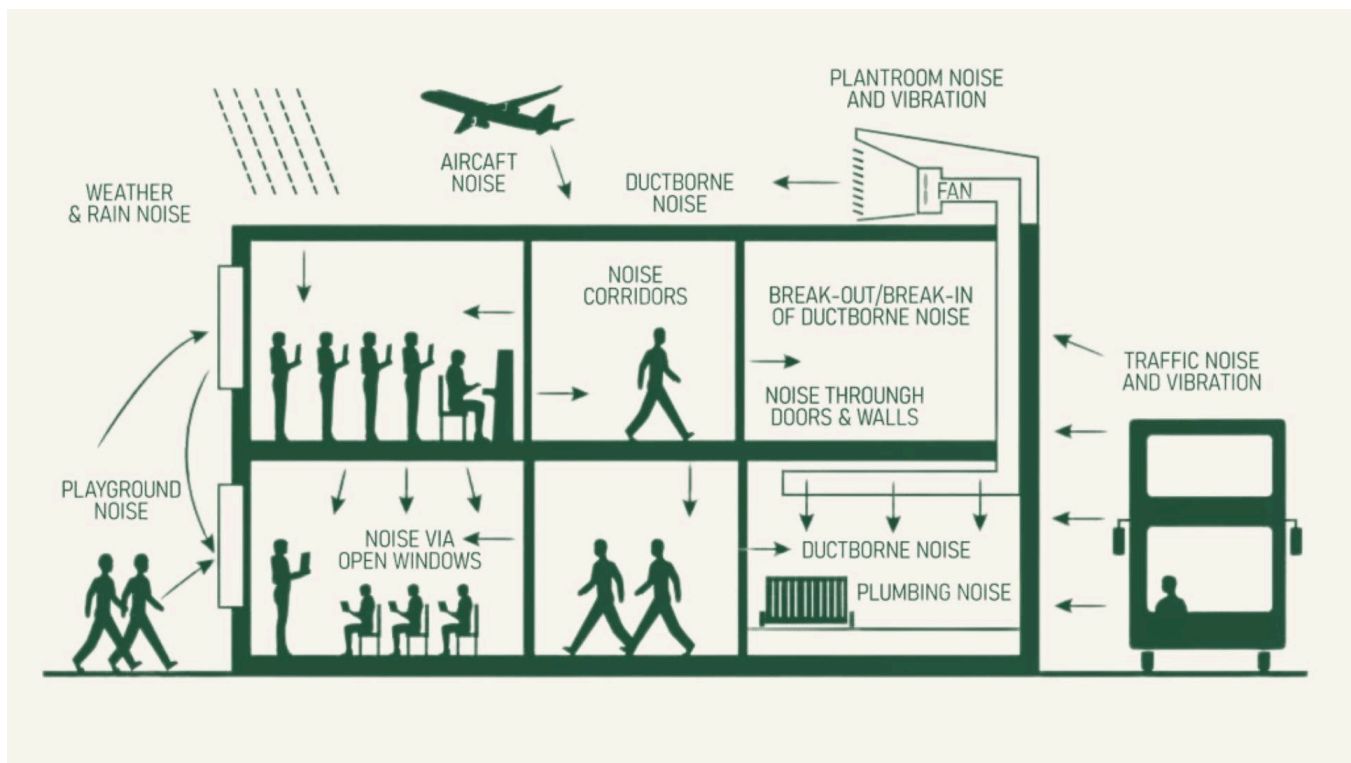


Two images: on the left, a carpet with varied grayscale lines. On the right, a staircase where every plane is covered in different pastel patterns - dots and stripes in all sorts of scales.

Hannah: And these are BAD examples of sensory overwhelm... a carpet I've seen that I don't really love, it makes me feel a little bit of vertigo. And then this really fun staircase I would never recommend for public space.

It might be fun for some of us, but especially older folks and those with traumatic brain injuries can become very disoriented or unstable with this visual chaos. So I don't recommend painting stripes all over the walls of a fire stair. Think if you can creatively use design, but in a way that you aren't forced to look at it. If someone could choose to not have that in their visual field it may be okay.

SLIDE 58: Deaf Space

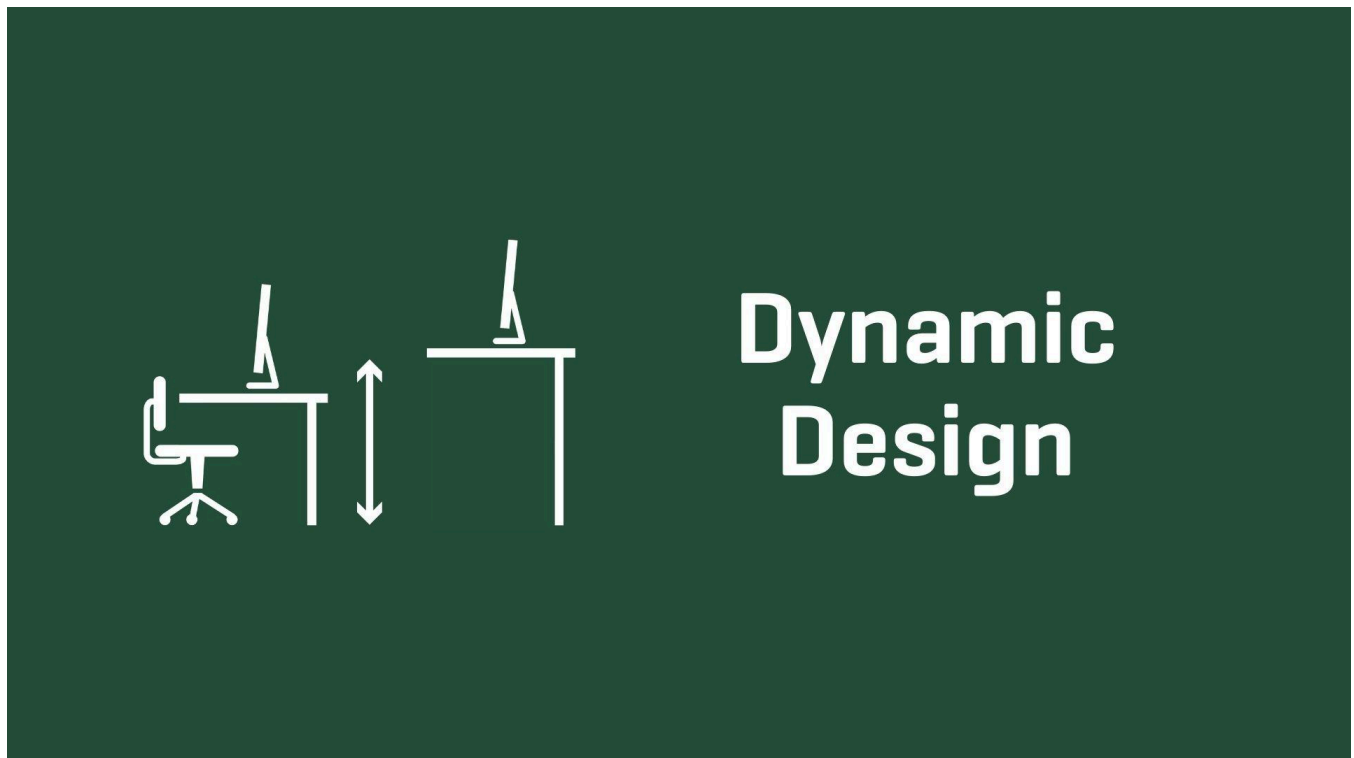


An illustration of a section of a building showing people moving throughout space with arrows pointing out different acoustic challenges. A bus is on the right outside of the building, and an airplane is flying above the building. Green text from the top to bottom points out, "Weather & Rain Noise," "Aircraft Noise," "Ductborne Noise," "Plantroom Noise and Vibration," "Playground Noise," "Noise Via Open Windows," "Ductborne Noise," "Plumbing Noise," and "Traffic Noise."

Monse: This image shows how people who are D/deaf and hard of hearing are impacted by sound. Many deaf people have some level of hearing. With intentional design, we can mitigate environmental sound so people can focus on the things they actually want to hear, like voices.

7. Dynamic Design

SLIDE 59: Chapter Slide for Dynamic Design



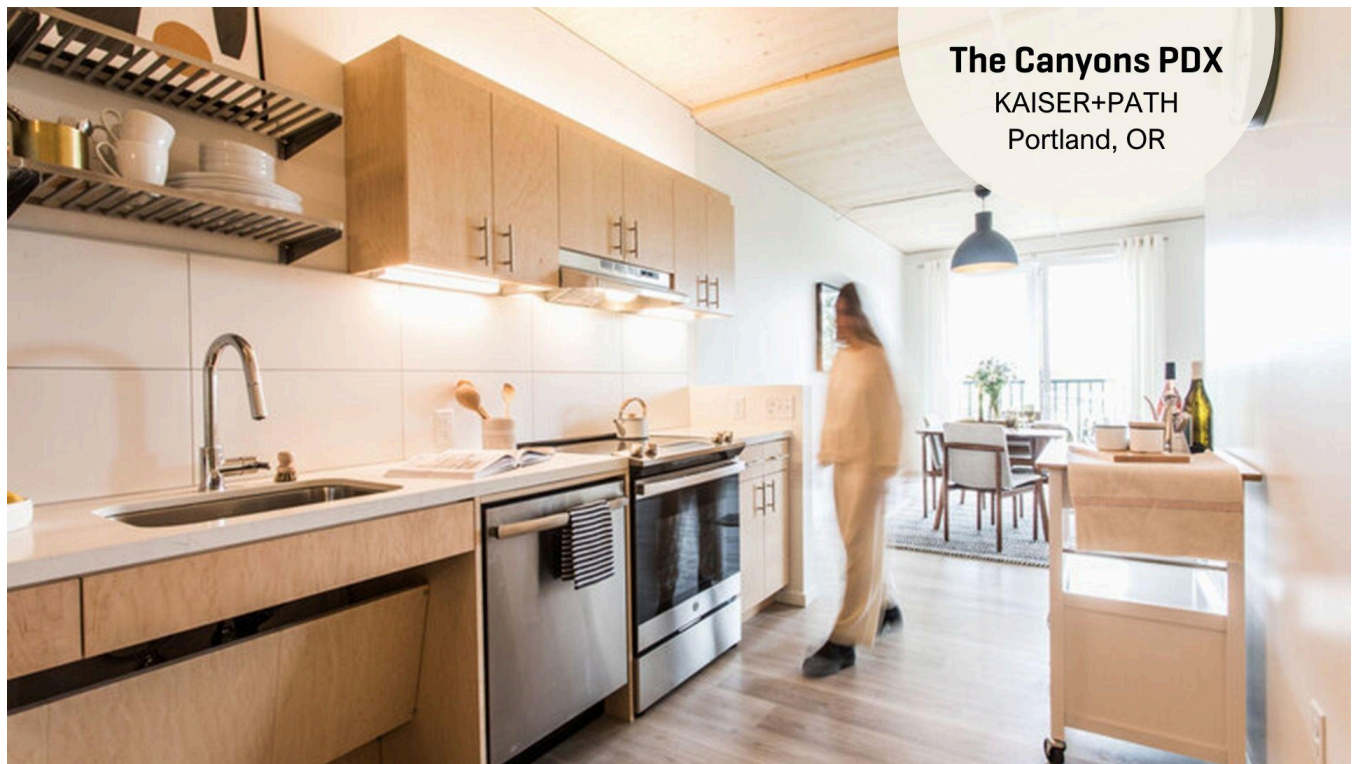
White adjustable desks icon and white text on the green background reading, "Dynamic Design."

Monse: Dynamic design is a response to dynamic disability, which just means that people's access needs can change on a day to day, or year to year basis. Basically, since we can't predict what everybody will need, the best way to design for accessibility is with flexibility!

Remember, flexibility and options increase a person's chance for equitable access.

Some of the most basic ways to have flexible or dynamic design are by adding things like: adjustable height desks, adjustable chairs, operable windows and shades – these all give people agency over their space.

SLIDE 60: Adjustable Height Kitchen Sink



A blurred person walks into a bright, light wood-finished kitchen. The sink looks pretty normal, but has roll under space. Behind the person, there is a dining table and chairs. Text reads, "The Canyons PDX, Kaiser + PATH, Portland, OR."

Monse: This is an apartment at Canyons PDX by Kaiser + PATH in Portland. They have different brackets on the wall for the sink. When a person moves in and is a wheelchair user, they can move the sink down to a lower height, or adjust it back up depending on the need. It is less flexible day to day, but is a great option.

SLIDE 61: Privacy Spaces



Three different types of small private rooms: a cushioned, brightly-colored nook in the wall of what looks like a children's play room, a house-shaped balcony nook with two children that is inset in a hallway, and a phone room. Text associated with the images, from left to right, is "Gradient, Azar Interior Design, Moscow, Russia." "AN Kindergarten, Hibinosekkei + Youji no Shiro, Kanagawa Ward, Japan," and "Holst HQ, Holst Architecture, Portland, OR."

Monse: Open offices can be difficult for many people. Why don't we balance larger gathering spaces with smaller phone rooms, wellness rooms, or small conference rooms... These are great for stretching, closing your eyes, taking your meds, or whatever you need to do.

8. The Digital Bridge

SLIDE 62: Chapter Slide for The Digital Bridge



White computer and phone icons and white text on the green background with text, "The Digital Bridge."

Hannah: I had so many responses in my survey along the lines of, "if I'm gonna go to a new restaurant, I will drive there the day before and sit in my car and look at the place and see if I can get in the front door." There's so much extra work that goes into just going places when you are disabled. That doesn't need to be the case, right? and my friend Rebecca who started AllGo said she got sick of swiping through pictures of ravioli [on Yelp] to find out if the chairs would fit her plus size body.

SLIDE 63: Interview with Jonathan

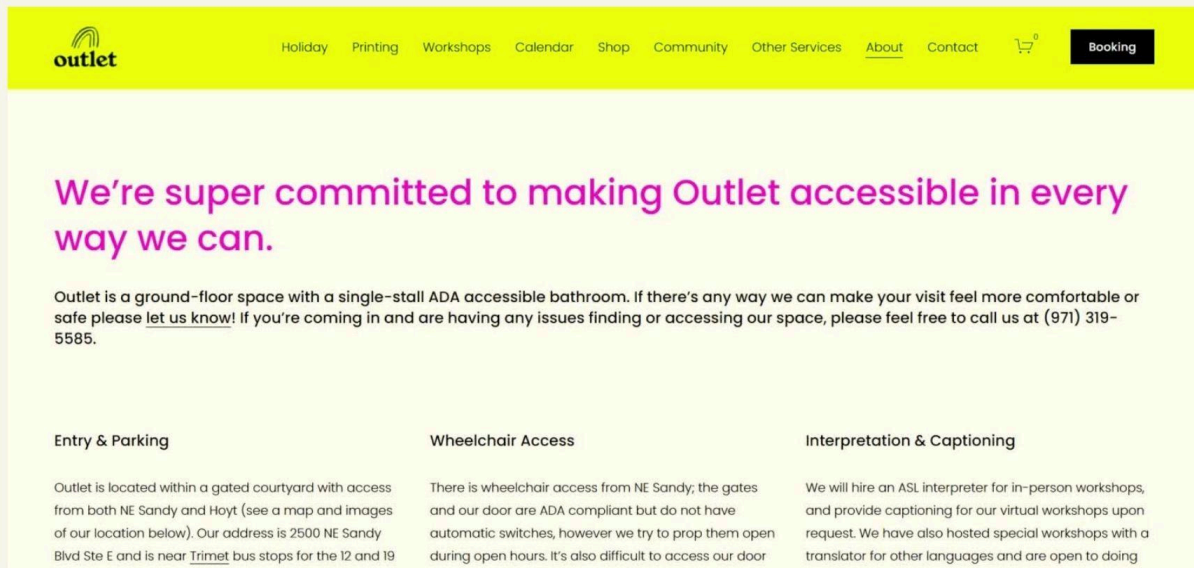


A man in a light blue button down shirt speaks to the camera and is sitting against a beige wall. Black text on a green semicircle reads "Jonathan."

Hannah: We'll give Jonathan the floor here to say more about his experience as a Blind person.

Jonathan: I think that the big corporations can come up with a relatively consistent form of design, right? But I don't always want to give my business to huge corporations. so I think if we could come up with some intentionality and some ways for people to access that information like, if I go to your website and I can see your menu. If I could also see information about your layout, for example, I would go to the business just on principle, because I'd be like, Wow, I've literally never seen that in my life.

SLIDE 64: Outlet PDX Accessibility Page



A screenshot from the Outlet PDX website stating, “We’re super committed to making Outlet accessible in every way we can.” The rest of the page describes “Entry & Parking,” “Wheelchair Access,” “Interpretation & Captioning” and [not shown] includes lots of images and descriptions of what it’s like to visit their print shop.

Hannah: I'm seeing more accessibility info available on Google, but it's mostly about wheelchair access. If you're low vision or blind, just knowing what to expect when you walk in the door is very helpful. Where are the tables? Where is the bathroom? This is an example from [Outlet PDX](#). They're wonderful little zine-making shop.

On their website, they explain how to get there from the bus stop! what the bathrooms are like! And how you can roll in from the front door.

But I think this is the most important part: they say, we will do ANYTHING we can to help you out! And here's a way to connect with a real person to ask specific questions.

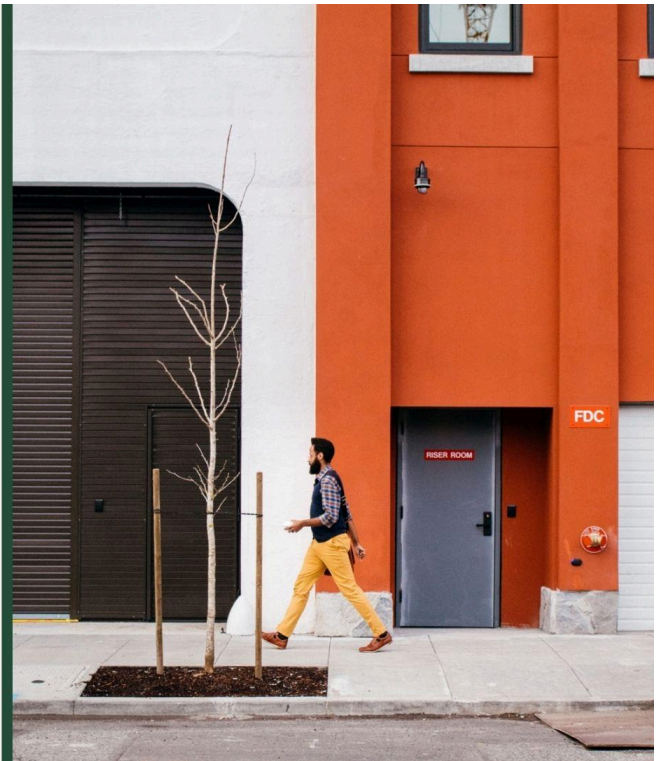
I want to highly encourage businesses to think about what they can do to provide information online in advance. They're less likely to go out if they're guessing, right?

And then beyond that, there's a lot we can do to ensure that events and activities are digitally accessible to folks for whom leaving the house is not always the best option? So remote technology for conferences and classes and all sorts of things fit in this category.

SLIDE 65: Alt Text

Learn to Write Alt Text

1. Write a single sentence to describe the image.
2. Write a sentence about the second most important thing in, or about, the image.
3. Write a sentence about the third most important thing about the image.



Text reads, "Learn to Write Alt Text. 1. Write a single sentence to describe the image. Write a sentence about the second most important thing in, or about, the image. 3. Write a sentence about the third most important thing about the image." On the right, a photo used during Holst's Alt Text workshop shows a person walking down a Portland street in front of a bright orange building.

Hannah: And you can't just put a picture of the plan of your first floor. You need to describe it. And Jonathan was saying, you know you can't have just the PDF menu. You need to have the text that the screen reader can read. So there's a lot that we're still needing to learn about digital accessibility.

And that is the 8th way to design for disabled joy!

What's Next?

SLIDE 66: Alt Text as Poetry Quote



**How do we make spaces
and experiences that
disabled people not only
can access but want to
access?**

- Alt Text as Poetry Workbook

A quote from the [Alt Text as Poetry Workbook](#) on a beige circle reads, "How do we make spaces and experiences that disabled people not only can access but want to access?" The background colors are an orange-green gradient.

Monse: This is not just about how we make it possible for people to go more places. It is about how we make places that people actually want to go to. Everyone deserves the opportunity to follow their passions, be in community, and meet people. They also deserve to have careers if they want to! If you look around in your workplace and do not see a lot of disabled people, something needs to change.

There are barriers out there, we know this, but there are also so many exciting opportunities to do better. IT IS possible!!

SLIDE 67: Dancing, Joyful People



Four people smiling and laughing while dancing to some music being played on a guitar. Behind them are lots of lush plants and a pool.

Monse: We really appreciate you listening and learning with us. We envision a world like the one pictured here! Joyful! Vibrant! Where people of all abilities can participate.

Next Steps

White text on the green background reads, "Next Steps."

Hannah: I always really like to just end on: Who are you? What is your role? What power do you have? What are your passions? And what can you do? What is that small next step?

We would love to hear from you: how is this relevant to your work? What can you do to make the world a more inclusive place? This might be as small as curating your social media to see more from disability justice activists or reading memoirs.

[Check out our resources for lots more information.](#)

SLIDE 69: Get In Touch

**Find lots more resources
and get in touch with us
by scanning this QR code!**



<http://www.holstarc.com/news/disabled-joy>

Text reads, "Find lots more resources and get in touch with us by scanning this QR code!" with a QR code that links to <http://www.holstarc.com/news/disabled-joy>.

Hannah: Use the QR code on this screen to connect to a [webpage that has lots of resources](#), and a way to [reach out to us](#).

SLIDE 70: Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements

This work would not have been possible without all the hard work of our ASL interpreters.

If you can, please donate to the Community Vision Assistive Technology Lab as appreciation for their support: <https://cv-atlab.org/get-involved/donate/>

We are very grateful for the many folks who responded to the Disabled Joy survey in 2021 and the following people who interviewed on camera:

M. Sabine Rear
Jonathan Simeone
Jan Campbell
Beq Yonaka
Rhys Hawes

John Miller
Kristin Bell
Kenya Budd
Jennifer Inaldo (for Fat-Friendly Design)

Text on a simple slide reads, "Acknowledgements: This work would not have been possible without all the hard work of our ASL interpreters. If you can, please donate to the Community Vision Assistive Technology Lab as appreciation for their support: <https://cv-atlab.org/get-involved/donate/>. We are very grateful for the many folks who responded to the Disabled Joy survey in 2021 and the following people who interviewed on camera: M. Sabine Rear, Jonathan Simeone, Jan Campbell, Beq Yonaka, Rhys Hawes, John Miller, Kristin Bell, Kenya Budd, and Jennifer Inaldo (for Fat-Friendly Design)."

Hannah: We could not have done this without the help of many people, listed here. You can pause and read all their names.

SLIDE 71: Closing Slide



A black Holst logo (simple, capital letters, spaced out) on an orange-green gradient.

Hannah: Thank you so much for taking an hour of your time to learn about how to design for everyone. We hope you are feeling ready to shape a beautifully inclusive world! Keep in touch as you apply these new strategies to your work – we would love to hear from you. Bye!