

Cities for Life

Planning Inclusive Urban Spaces



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2024 Spring Conference
Orangeburg



Defining Inclusive Planning

When we mention inclusive planning, what comes to mind?

- Diversity and inclusion in the process
- Designing for aging and disabilities
- Planning for cultural diversity in communities



Inclusive Planning

- Planning for a variety disabilities including aging
- Planning for spectrum of users from children to seniors



Ed Yourdon, Flickr



Inclusive Planning

When you include the extremes of everybody, that's to say differently abled people of all sorts, then you produce things that are better for all of us.

- Michael Wolff

When you design for children, you exclude an entire population. When you design for seniors, you include all generations.

Types of Disabilities

Physical / Mobility

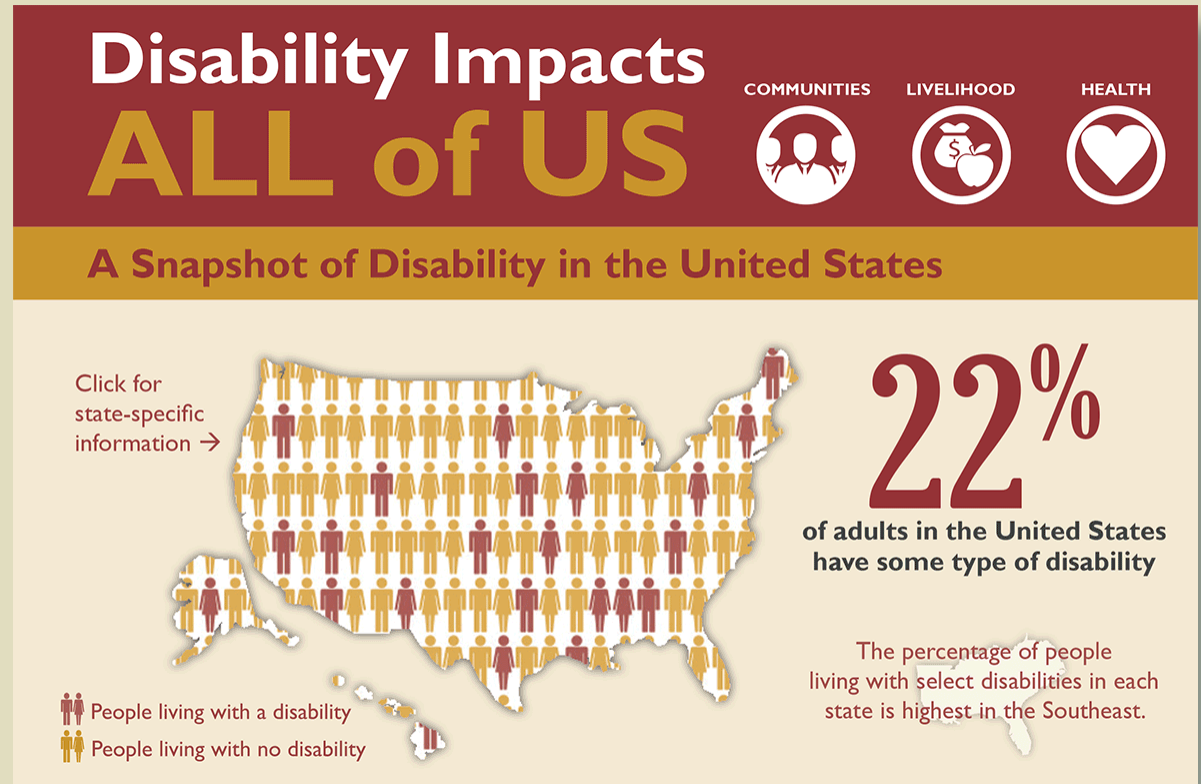
Cognitive

Communication

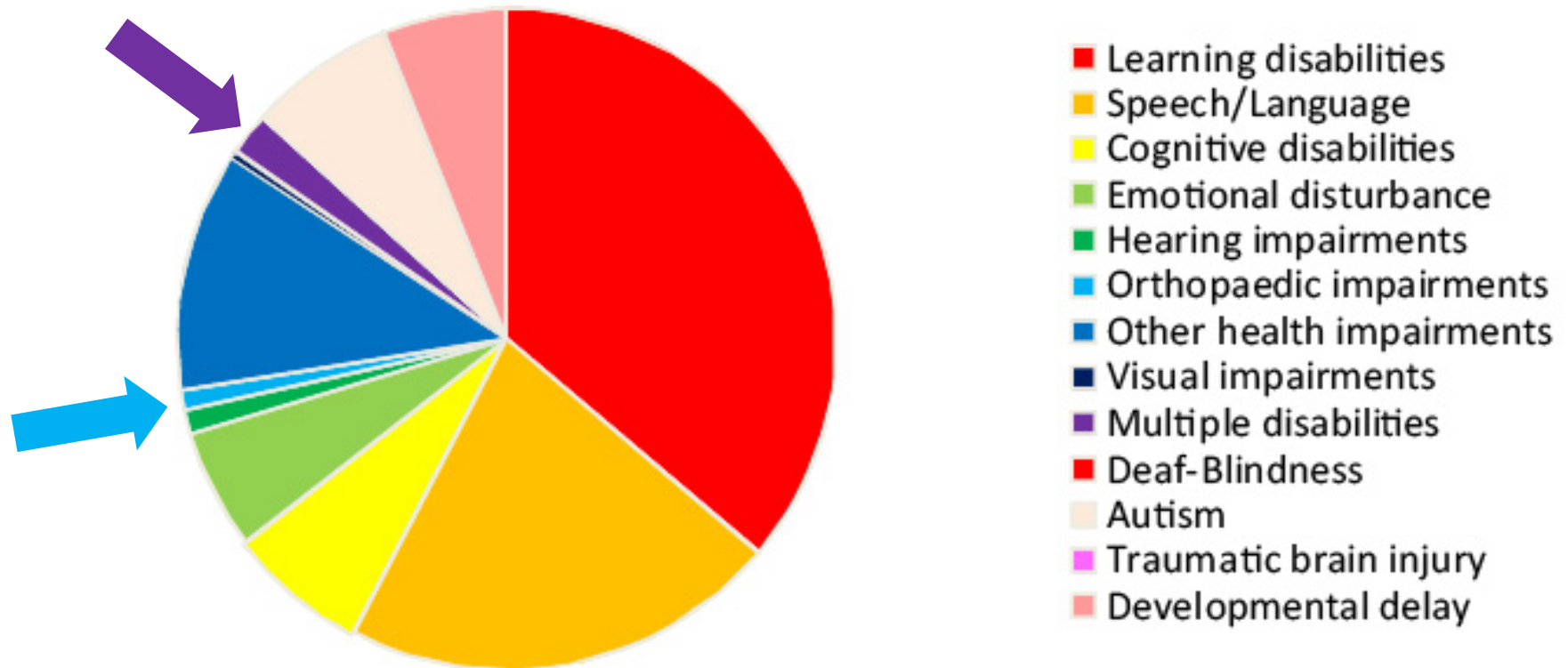
Social / Emotional

Sensory

Acquired



Types of Disabilities



National Center for Education Statistics, 2021



**Currently, 12% of elementary school children
have been diagnosed with a disability**



**It is estimated that 22% of general population
have been diagnosed with a disability**



Why more focus on aging adults and individuals with disabilities?

- Quality of life & improved health
- Promote ease of accessibility
- Stronger social & intergenerational relationships
- To make sure their neighborhood remains their home



Domains of Livability



Open Space & Buildings



Transportation



Housing



Communications & Information



Civic Participation & Employment



Health & Community Services



Social Engagement



Respect & Inclusion

**Create open spaces to engage
the user first! ***

*** it's not about the architecture**

Urban spaces and plazas should not be plinths for the architecture



Boston City Hall



Empire State Plaza

Urban spaces and plazas should not be plinths for the architecture



Spaces should engage the user and allow opportunities to create memories

Pioneer Square



NYC Public Library



Paley Park



Mercer Plaza



Millennials & Gen Xers desire more quality, walkable spaces with alternatives

- Diversity of place
- Transportation options
- Affordability
- Wider walkways
- Traffic calming



Dewita Soeharjono, Flickr



mta.info



etmassociatesllc.com

Understand how disabilities or aging affects our ability to be social.

Types of Disabilities

Physical / Mobility

Effects on Social Interactions

Restricted movements or moving items
May affect communication

Cognitive

Difficulty in higher level conversation
May need to learn or relearn skills
May explore more than participate

Communication

Difficulty entering / initiating conversation

Social / Emotional

Interferes with engagement / Limits invitations
Fear of new people / Unwilling to explore

Sensory

Hearing affects language and speech skills
May not respond to initiation by others

Acquired

May limit time or ways to socialize

**Understand how different
people use spaces to be social.**

Allow flexibility in social interactions

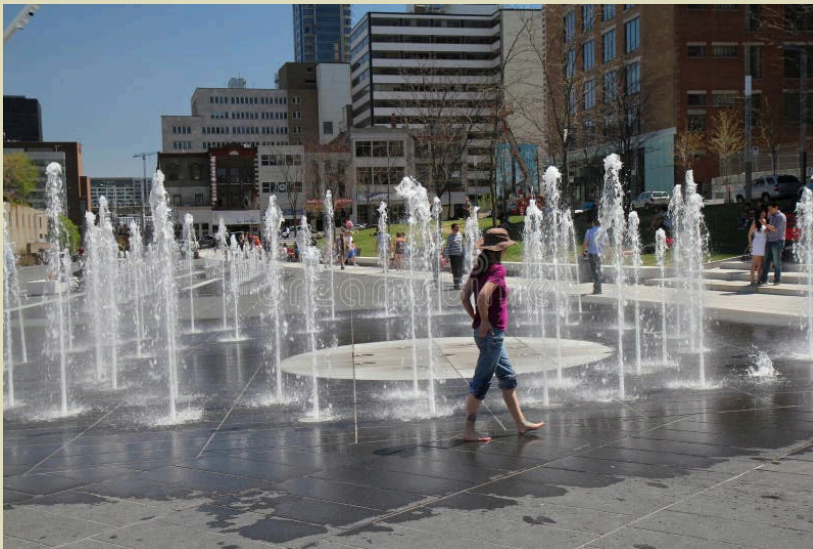


Provide a variety of furnishings for different uses and users

- Movable pieces
- Large common tables
- Exercise equipment
- Game areas



Develop and install visual cues.



Create thoughtfully crafted and managed environments



bldsf.com



Andrew Irvin, Flickr

Consider site furnishings early and talk directly to manufacturers.

**Build on your urban identity
and image.**

Provide a variety of furnishings for different uses and users

- Vary bench & seat wall heights
- Benches with arms
- Variety & lots of seating areas
- Restrooms nearby



Build on your urban identity and image

- Follow the “Rule of Ten”
- Create seasonal strategies

Bethesda Row



1 PHOENIX PARK
where you can...

- 1 Visit the Downtown Farmers Market
- 2 Read on a rock
- 3 Walk the Planet Walk
- 4 Launch a tube, kayak, or canoe
- 5 See public sculptures
- 6 Bike or walk the Chippewa River Trail
- 7 Walk down the by the river
- 8 Catch a concert
- 9 Read the history engravings
- 10 Go fishing

2 HAYMARKET PLAZA
where you could maybe...

- 1 Eat lunch or play games at tables
- 2 Play in a splash pad fountain
- 3 Work or surf using public WiFi
- 4 See a concert, speaker, or play
- 5 Enjoy interactive art installations
- 6 Grab food or coffee from a food cart
- 7 Rent a rowboat or canoe
- 8 Warm up around a fire pit
- 9 Go ice skating or other winter fun
- 10 Simply enjoy the views and trails

3 OWEN PARK
where you can...

- 1 Play tennis
- 2 Bike or walk the Chippewa River Trail
- 3 Play on the playground
- 4 Catch a show at the band shell
- 5 Eat lunch at a picnic table
- 6 Play frisbee in the open space
- 7 Read about the park's history
- 8 Sit and talk on the benches
- 9 Do yoga in the open green spaces
- 10 Simply lay and enjoy the old trees

4 BARSTOW STREET
where you can...

- 1 Go shopping, or simply window shop
- 2 Eat at restaurants (inside or out)
- 3 Grab some coffee or a stiff drink
- 4 Walk the Eau Claire Sculpture Tour
- 5 See a movie or catch some theatre
- 6 Hear live music, or street muzak
- 7 Celebrate at downtown festivals
- 8 Check out the Children's Museum
- 9 Enjoy some historic architecture
- 10 Stay in a revitalized hotel



Great ~~inclusive~~ spaces must

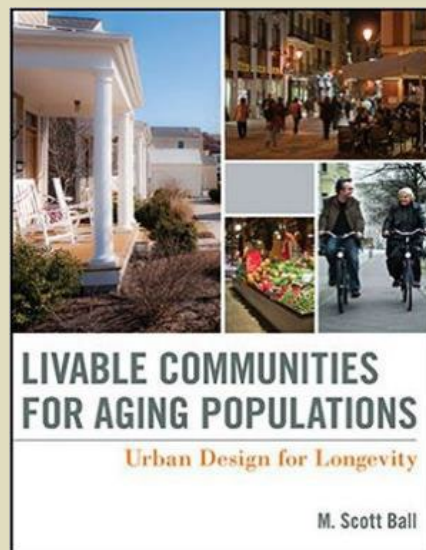
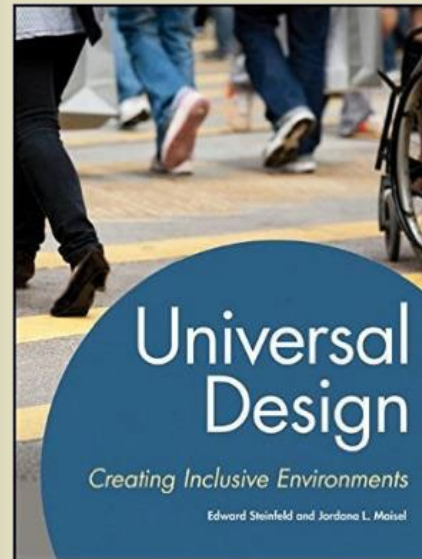
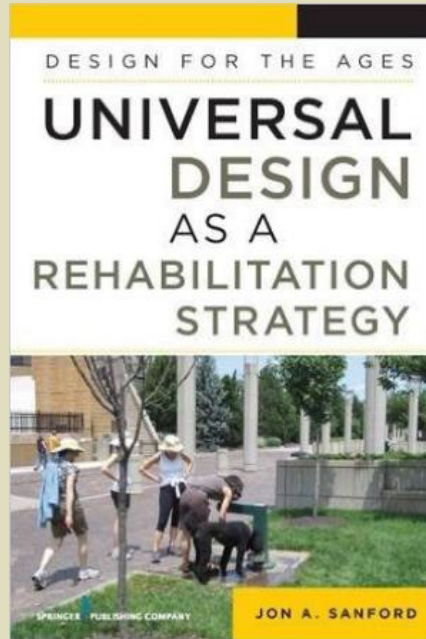
- Be simple and uncomplicated
- Provide unpredictability; be flexible in use
- Include movable pieces and parts
- Provide chances to socialize; be welcoming
- Provide mental interest
- Be universally accessible without undue effort or fuss
- Must provide restrooms nearby
- Transform during time of day, season and use
- Provide quiet / recovery spaces



Five Priorities for Planning and Design Professionals

1. Understand and consider multiple types of disabilities
2. Engage specialists throughout a project
3. Evaluate details and designs early to make changes that are more inclusive
4. Exceed regulatory and best practices;
Do more than expected
5. Advocate for **ALL** of your population

Resources



Final thoughts...

The best examples on inclusive urban spaces don't shout "inclusive"! They are simply **thoughtfully designed and well used** spaces.

It's not about the number of people you can accommodate, it's about the number of people who feel better about their city just knowing that we, and our family, can live our lives there.

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