



---

---

# Ωmega Church Consultants, Inc.

---

---

architectural • financial • consulting  
construction management

## **Accessibility – More on the ADA**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is subject to interpretation and enforcement by your local building permit authorities. It is prudent to consider how this code will be interpreted when planning for renovation or new construction. If you are building an addition to your existing church, the permit department may require the old facility to comply with all current codes. If the facility was built prior to 1990, extensive work and expense may be required to meet the ADA codes.

Some jurisdictions are requiring ramps or lifts to the platform, choir and baptismal areas from inside the building. Access to a raised platform from an outside entrance may not be approved in some areas. The maximum slope of ramps is 1” in 12” with a rest landing every 30 feet. A platform 36 inches high would require a 39’ long ramp. The ramp should also have a handrail. An elevator is usually required for access to upper floors and basements; with a possible exception for a second-floor that contains only balcony seating.

Every restroom should have at least one handicap accessible toilet and sink. The restroom should have a 5’ diameter clear area for turning a wheelchair. All doors should be at least 36” wide and corridors should be at least 5’ wide, with 16” of wall area adjacent to the door handle. A sanctuary seating 500 should have six designated areas for wheelchairs plus one additional wheelchair space for each additional 100 seats.

Jeff Thomas is Vice President of Omega Church Consultants, Inc., Church Designers and Builders, located in Indianapolis. You may contact him at [jeff@omegachurchdesign.com](mailto:jeff@omegachurchdesign.com) or (317) 359-6248 or visit the Omega website at <http://www.omegachurchdesign.com>.  
Copyright 2002 All Rights Reserved.