

College modifies architectural barriers

Editor's note: This article is second in a series of three concerning issues and problems facing handicapped students at the College

Architectural barriers for handicapped students at the College are becoming a dilemma of the past.

A three-phase process of removing architectural barriers on campus began last January when Don Fisher, facility development and planning officer, and Len Monroe, dean of student services, presented a first priority recommendation to the CCC Board of Education.



By Cyndi Bacon
Of The Print

The recommendation asked that the board appropriate \$10,000 to update the restrooms in the Community Center, Orchard Center and Clairmont Hall; update and add handicapped parking spaces in designated areas on campus; and add an additional entrance for handicapped persons in the cafeteria, besides the existing turnstile.

"The state codes do not make you go back to existing structures and redo them," Fisher said, "but the restrooms that we did remodel were so outdated that you couldn't even get a wheelchair in them."

"As we expand and build structures we must go by the state barrier codes," he said.

In February, Fisher and Monroe recommended to the board that \$54,975 be appropriated for further removal of architectural barriers.

Exterior asphalt ramps and curb cuts in six major buildings; exterior wood ramps to trailers; non skid surface interior ramps in Barlow Hall; updating of existing restrooms in McLoughlin, Randall and Barlow halls; automatic door openers in five major buildings (entrance and restrooms); and the removal of the turnstile in the bookstore were major achievements of the second priority list.

Lockers will soon be provided for handicapped persons in McLoughlin, Barlow and Clairmont halls.

"The lockers have been ordered," Fisher said, "They shipped us the wrong ones at the beginning of the school year, so we had to send them back."

The door signs in the Community Center, McLoughlin Hall, Randall Hall and Barlow Hall have been re-done to meet state regulations, according to Fisher.

The letters are raised, Braille has been added to the bottom right-hand corner of each sign, and, in accordance with state regulations, signs are no more than 60 inches and no less than 54 inches from the floor, he said.

Campus map handouts, showing locations of handicapped parking spaces; curb cuts and ramps; special entrances for handicapped; and elevators on campus have also been distributed.

A transportation vehicle for handicapped students to get from the main building complex to either Orchard Center or Clairmont Hall is still not available.

"We have not found a vehicle yet," Fisher said. "We have not had a real need for it."

The third priority is not yet in effect. It would include more handicapped parking spaces, automatic door openers in other entrances of main buildings, updated exterior wood ramps at trailers A through G and door closers to meet codes in the Orchard Center, trailers and the Art Center. Total cost of this package would be \$17,500.

"State codes require a door to have eight pounds of pull or less," Fisher said.

"Most of our doors have a 12-pound pull."

"We're in pretty good shape," he said. "We did have a few areas that were outdated."

"The art center does have a few architectural barriers," he said. "There is no way to get to the second floor. An elevator for

that building would cost about \$8,000. \$10,000 and the building itself is valued at \$50,000. I guess if we had enough demand for it, we'd go ahead and do it."

Most of the handicapped people on campus are easy to get along with when architectural barrier problems arise.

"We haven't had too much of a problem," Fisher said.

"Last spring term a veteran in a wheelchair was enrolled in a class in the trailer at Orchard. They moved the class instead of putting up a ramp," he said. "You have an alternative, but we could not deny him to take that class."

"We rate pretty high in removing architectural barriers," Fisher said. "Much better than what I've seen in other community colleges."

"We made them to code when we changed them," he said. "We didn't just go half way."

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