



# Challenges and Opportunities for Accessible Tourism

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# Methodology

- Phase I
  - **Accessibility visits** (assessments and surveys) – thirty tourism businesses in the five counties of Southern Oregon, USA
    - Museums, restaurants, hotels, outdoor outfitters, etc.
- Phase II
  - **Focus groups** in Southern Oregon with tourism business representatives, city officials, Destination Management Organizations (DMOs)
- **Phase III**
  - **Stakeholder meetings to share findings and collect more insights**
- Phase IV
  - develop resource base and guidelines

# Research Highlights



# Challenges

- Making **historic buildings** accessible
- Uneven **sidewalks** (cobblestones)
- **Outdoor spaces** extremely difficult to make accessible (at least for physical or mobility reasons)
- **Limited transportation options**
  - Limited parking (especially accessible parking)
- **Funding issues and lack of time** to develop accessibility materials
- **Lack of formal staff training** on disability awareness
  - Experts needed
- **Lack of information** - many companies have the money but don't know where to start...



# Opportunities (Part I)

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- **Grants** collaborations
- **Collaborations** with assisted living facilities and retirement homes - for advice on accessibility and as a tourism opportunity
- Partnering with local businesses to **share resources** – e.g., shared ramps or let customers use an accessible bathroom in another business
- **Blog posts** about accessibility in [name of town]



# Opportunities (Part II)

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- **Updating websites** - information is a bigger barrier than physical barriers!
- Awareness and advocacy for **invisible/silent disabilities** and a general increase in awareness of the broad scope of disabilities
- **Research** on the market of disabled people
- Make **accessibility an agenda item...**more than once a year
- **Industry-newsletter** that includes tips and resources for businesses in regards to accessibility



# Opportunities (Part III)

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- Monthly “**Lunch and Learn**” to provide education to the community/business owners
- Build an **itinerary around accessible businesses**
- ***Ten places to visit in [name of town/region] in a wheelchair***
- **A centralized place (for businesses) to get information**
- **Progress over Perfection!**





# Thank you!



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