

# IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY IN RURAL NEVADA

*Practical Strategies for Inclusive Destinations*

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# SESSION OVERVIEW

**01** Real experiences — you rate the accessibility

**02** Why even great experiences miss the mark

**03** The information gap: getting there, staying, doing

**04** Honest evaluation & the SOP protocol

**05** Your action steps for rural Nevada

# THREE REAL EXPERIENCES

*Before we talk theory — let's talk reality.*



**SLOTH &  
ZIPLINING**



**SURFING**



**SEGWAY**



# POP QUIZ



*How would YOU rate the accessibility?*

1

Not Accessible

2

Minimal

3

Moderate

4

Mostly

5

Fully Accessible

*Use the app provided — select your rating for each experience*

# WHY NONE OF THEM ARE FULLY ACCESSIBLE

*All three were incredible. All three had genuine strengths — and real gaps.*

## INFRASTRUCTURE

Physical access points, pathways, and facilities that don't accommodate everyone — regardless of how good the experience itself is.

## EQUIPMENT

Adaptive gear, assistive devices, and specialized tools are often unavailable, afterthought add-ons, or require advance notice that isn't communicated.

## CHOICE

True accessibility means a disabled guest can make the same decisions as anyone else — not just a modified version of the experience.

# THE INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH — SKIING

*Even the best gets it partially right.*

- Sit-skis and adaptive equipment show genuine investment
- One-on-one instruction can transform the experience
- Terrain selection adapts to the individual — not a fixed route
- The approach acknowledges that disability is not a monolith

**Still missing the mark:**

- Pre-arrival information is inconsistent
- Infrastructure gaps at base lodges and restrooms



*"Information is the most difficult piece."*

A guest can't decide if your destination works for them  
if they don't know what to expect.

▼ Let's break it down

# GETTING THERE SAFELY

*How do I get there? Is accessible transportation even an option?*

## Accessible Rental Vehicle

Does the rental company offer hand controls, ramp-equipped vans, or wheelchair-accessible options? Is inventory clearly marked online?

## Accessible Taxi / Rideshare

Are WAV (Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle) options available in rural areas? What is the advance notice requirement?

## Accessible Bus / Transit

Does your destination have accessible public transit? Are stops usable from the drop-off point to the attraction?

## Accessible Train

If Amtrak serves the area: Are boarding platforms ramped? Are accessible seats near restrooms? Is assistance pre-bookable?

# WHERE TO STAY — WHAT GUESTS ACTUALLY NEED TO KNOW



## **Are accessibility features clearly listed?**

Not just 'accessible room available.' List the specific features — roll-in shower, grab bars, visual fire alarm, lowered bed, etc.



## **Are there measurements?**

Doorway widths, turning radius space, bed height, shower seat dimensions. Wheelchair users need numbers — not reassurances.



## **Are there photos?**

Photos of the bathroom, bed clearance, entrance, and pathways. One image is worth every word of description.



## **Are rooms protected at booking?**

Accessible rooms are often assigned last-minute or taken by non-disabled guests. Blocking at point of booking prevents day-of disasters.

# IS YOUR DESTINATION SELF-CONTAINED?

*If guests need to leave the property — what does that journey look like?*

## **On Foot or Wheels**

- Are sidewalks and pathways paved and maintained?
- Are curb cuts present and clean?
- Is the terrain (gravel, sand, uneven) disclosed?
- Are there rest points along longer routes?
- How far is the nearest accessible restroom?

## **By Car**

- Is accessible parking available at key stops?
- Is there a drop-off zone close to entrances?
- Can guests with ramp vans access the parking area?
- Is signage clear for accessible routes from parking?
- Is this information on your website BEFORE arrival?

# ARE THE ACTIVITIES ACCESSIBLE? DEFINE HOW.



## Horseback Riding



- Is there a mounting block, lift, or side-mounting option for wheelchair users?
- Are accessible restrooms near the stable?
- Can a support person accompany the rider?



## Walking Tours



- What is the pace — can it be modified?
- Are sidewalks smooth with clean curb cuts?
- Are there planned break points throughout?



## Water Activities



- How do guests get to and into the water?
- Are there multiple seating options for guests who need support?
- Is adaptive equipment available?

# DINING ACCESSIBILITY — THE DETAILS MATTER

## Entrance

Is the entrance step-free? Is there a ramp if needed? Is the door wide enough and easy to open?

## Accessible Tables

Are wheelchair-accessible tables available? What is their height? What is the clearance width underneath?

## Pathways

Are all pathways to tables and restrooms clear with enough clearance for a wheelchair or mobility aid?

## Restroom Access

Is the accessible restroom actually accessible? Grab bars, turning radius, door clearance — not just a checkbox.

## Menus & Communication

Are menus available in large print or digital format? Can staff communicate effectively with guests who are deaf or hard of hearing?

## Daily Maintenance

Are accessible features maintained consistently? Blocked pathways, broken lifts, and cluttered ramps happen — who checks?

# STEP ONE: AN HONEST EVALUATION

*Describe what you have openly and honestly — so that people can make a decision about whether it works for them.*

1

Walk your property as if you've never been there. Look at every entrance, path, restroom, and seating area with fresh eyes.

2

Document what you find — measurements, photos, and gaps. Not what you want it to be. What it actually is.

3

Publish your findings clearly. A destination that discloses its limitations earns more trust than one that overpromises.

4

Use feedback from guests with disabilities. They are your most accurate audit tool.

# THE SOP PROTOCOL — FRONTLINE READY

*No extensive training required. Just a clear, easy-to-follow checklist.*

**S**

See

A guest arrives with a visible or disclosed disability. Frontline staff acknowledge — calmly and naturally — without assumptions.

**O**

Orient

Using your pre-prepared checklist, orient the guest to the relevant accessibility features for their specific needs. No guessing.

**P**

Prepare

Before the visit ends or between interactions: confirm needs are met, note what worked and what didn't, and pass information to next staff.

*Implementation tip: Post the SOP checklist at every guest-facing station. Review quarterly.*

# YOUR NEXT STEP

*Pick one thing. One entrance. One pathway.  
One activity description. And make it honest.*

That is where accessibility in rural Nevada begins.

## **Questions? Let's talk.**

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