

# Corporate Center Pasadena

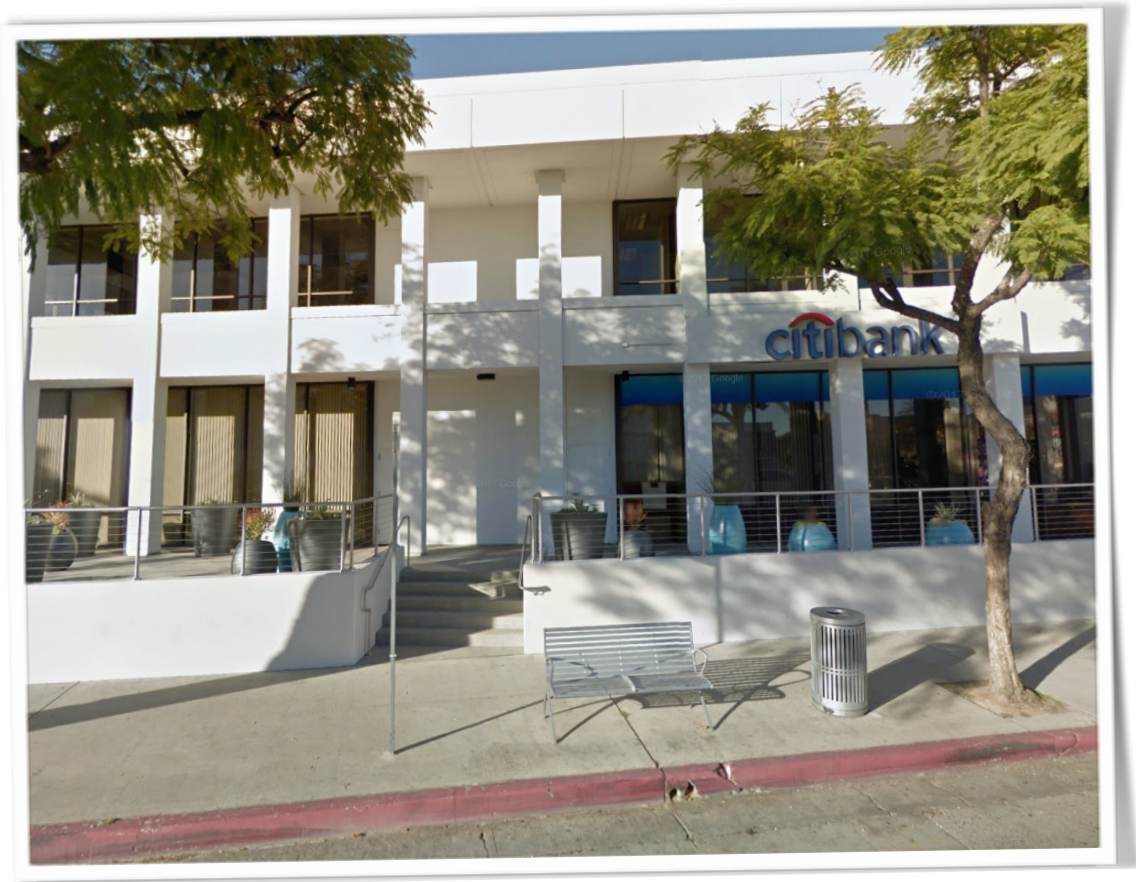
South Lake Ave. and East Del Mar Blvd.



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## Final Narrative Report on Exterior Accessible Path of Travel



### **Access to Corporate Center Pasadena**

No matter how you arrive at Corporate Center Pasadena, at the intersection of South Lake Avenue and East Del Mar Boulevard, accessible access to the patio level of this facility is extremely limited.

To get from the accessible parking to the facility you must exit the parking structure and find your way to a ramp by way of the public sidewalk. There is only one ramp about a half block from the parking structure, and it is approximately 150 feet away from the central entry stair on South Lake Avenue. The only other non-stair access is a slightly sloped entry at the far end of the Urban Plates location that only reaches the edge of the patio and is therefore not part of an accessible path of travel.

However, the good news is, that if one parks in the parking garage, arrives by bus, or crosses from any direction at the corner of South Lake and East Del Mar Blvd, access to the remainder of the complex is possible because the ramp is a accessible from those specific locations.



I believe that the major problem concerns Urban Plates. Secondary to the Urban Plates problem is that the accessible path from the accessible parking or the other entrance points to the major destinations is not immediately obvious, and is not simple to identify with signs. Right now, there is no accessible path of travel from the parking garage or the ramp leading from the public

sidewalk to the main entrance of Urban Plates whether you go through the building lobby or travel around the building. That is because the entire area on South Lake Avenue in front of Urban Plates is occupied by tables, chairs and stools for outdoor dining.



There is a pony wall and gate dividing Urban Plates' exterior eating area from Dunkin', but the gate opens outward and there is no space on the latch side for a wheelchair user to get to

one side so they can open the gate.



Once through the gate, the path of travel through the patio eating area is too narrow. I measured 23 inches from the backs of the high stools at the tables arranged along the inner wall, to the backs of the chairs pulled up at the built-in counter along the street side. Urban



Plates would be forced to remove quite a bit of seating area on the patio to create an accessible path of travel from that direction. (There is also question as to whether there is any accessible seating on the patio area, but that is a question for Urban Plates.)



There is a short accessible walkway leading from the public sidewalk along South Lake Avenue up to the Urban Plates patio. That provides the best possibility for Urban Plates to have an accessible path of travel to the food ordering area inside from the public way. However, it does not provide an accessible path of travel to Urban Plates through the Corporate Center itself. To be fully accessible, there must be an accessible path of travel to Urban Plates from other areas of the Corporate Center.



The restaurant needs to clear an accessible path from the walkway through the outdoor eating tables in order for someone using mobility equipment to get to the main entrance to order food if they enter the patio from the walkway. Even if that is done, they must also remove the gate at the other end of the patio, and clear the path from the gate to the entrance of the restaurant interior as well.

I am aware that the City of Pasadena “signed off” on the facility, including for accessibility. Their clearance, unfortunately does not protect either the owner or the tenants like Urban Plates from lawsuits or legal complaints. It is up to the restaurant owner to make sure, assuming that the patio did originally when constructed offer access to the front entry, that the access is maintained. If it is filled later with moveable tables and chairs, that is not the responsibility of

the City of Pasadena. In this report, we are attempting to make some suggestions that might assist people with disabilities in navigating through this challenging and confusing facility to other areas of the Corporate Center, and thus might forestall complaints they might have against those businesses.

The standards themselves do not attempt to go into every possible wayfinding aid, because every building is unique. Yes, it's true that following the bare minimum is "legal," but it is not always what will aid persons with disabilities to find their way. What counts many times with people with disabilities is not that the standards have been followed down to the last inch or centimeter, but that they can find their destination and reach it as independently as possible. That is what we are attempting to achieve with our recommendations, some of which do go beyond the basic standards for sure, but in our experience might go far in informing people using mobility aids how to get to various destinations.

**Let's take the possible paths of travel in order:**

**From the Parking Garage** - If you park in the parking garage in one of the accessible spaces, you must exit the garage by the double doors, turn left, and travel the public sidewalk to the ramp. We recommend an actual diagrammatic map of the facility showing the accessible paths of travel from the garage to the various destinations. Of course the clearest directions in a complex venue like this are almost always accomplished most easily with a simple plan of the area with the



accessible path of travel clearly marked and major destinations labeled.

Mounting such a plan at the parking garage exit and on the column near

the end of the ramp as it exits onto the patio, should be helpful and



may prevent complaints about accessibility. The double doors are immediately around the corner from the accessible parking so will be difficult to miss.



When you emerge from the parking garage, you can see the ramp entry to your left. It will be marked with a large ISA and a left arrow. The ramp is the only safe and accessible path to the Conference Facility, Citibank, Kaplan and Dunkin'.



The general public can walk across from the garage and enter the patio area by way of a level walkway. Anyone who does that is rewarded with an excellent sign pointing directly to the lobby and the main destinations. It is unfortunate that the slope is too steep for accessible

parking at this point, since it would save steps and be much easier for people to access than the ramp. In order to get to the ramp, you have to be able to see the sign that will be mounted on the fencing above the ramp and then walk a half block



to actually reach the ramp. The distance through the building lobby or around the building is about equal, but the path through the lobby is much more direct and has ample width, unlike the path around the building, which requires maneuvering between the columns when the regular path becomes narrower as it turns the corner of the building. However, it does appear that path of travel is accessible, although some planters and





tables probably have to be moved. We recommend mounting a copy of our recommended site plan near the ramp to inform people of the destinations reached with each of the accessible paths of travel. It should satisfy the complaint that has been received about the difficulty in finding Dunkin' for someone who uses a mobility device.



**The photo on the left shows the pillar where the site plan can be mounted. The other photos are of the less convenient path of travel around the building. Move planters to create 48" path.**



**From the Bus Stop** - If you come by bus, you should be able to see the sign located at the stairway that will point you to the left and the ramp. At the top of the ramp, a copy of the site plan can be mounted on the pillar that can be seen as soon as you emerge from the ramp.

**At the Street Crossings** - Unless you are coming as a pedestrian along Lake from Cordova Street, a long distance, you are probably crossing either East Del Mar Blvd. or South Lake Ave. to get to this facility. At that point, you will encounter a stairway, so a sign will direct you further around the corner to Del Mar and the ramp.







### **At the Lobby Entrance on S. Lake Avenue -**

To the right of the corner stairway, you next encounter the central stairway leading directly into the lobby. You can see the sign indicating the Dunkin' entrance on the right.

Although it's difficult to see, there is also, on the building facade to the left of the entrance, an ATM and a Citibank entrance. At this stairway, an ISA will be mounted with an arrow to the left, directing to the ramp.



**Walking Along Lake Avenue and the Sloped Walkway -** The sloped walkway at the end of this section of the facility which leads up to the far end of the patio for Urban Plates, is accessible. However, if no accessible path of travel is available through the patio itself to the entrance so that wheelchair users can order food, there is not much point in indicating the walkway itself, although it would probably accommodate someone with a walker, a cane or crutches who could manage to get through the rows of tables and chairs.

This presents a real dilemma, since there is not, in terms of legal accessibility, a way to indicate limited access. When you indicate access with an ISA, it is an "all or nothing" situation. It may have been legal at the point of construction, but that has to include the placement of the furniture. Therefore, our recommendation is to omit any signs labeled with the ISA that direct to the walkway. When the City approved the construction, perhaps they did not realize that so many tables and chairs would be located on the patio, and assumed there would be no problem with access. In any case, if access of any kind is indicated, we recommend that it be made clear that it is access



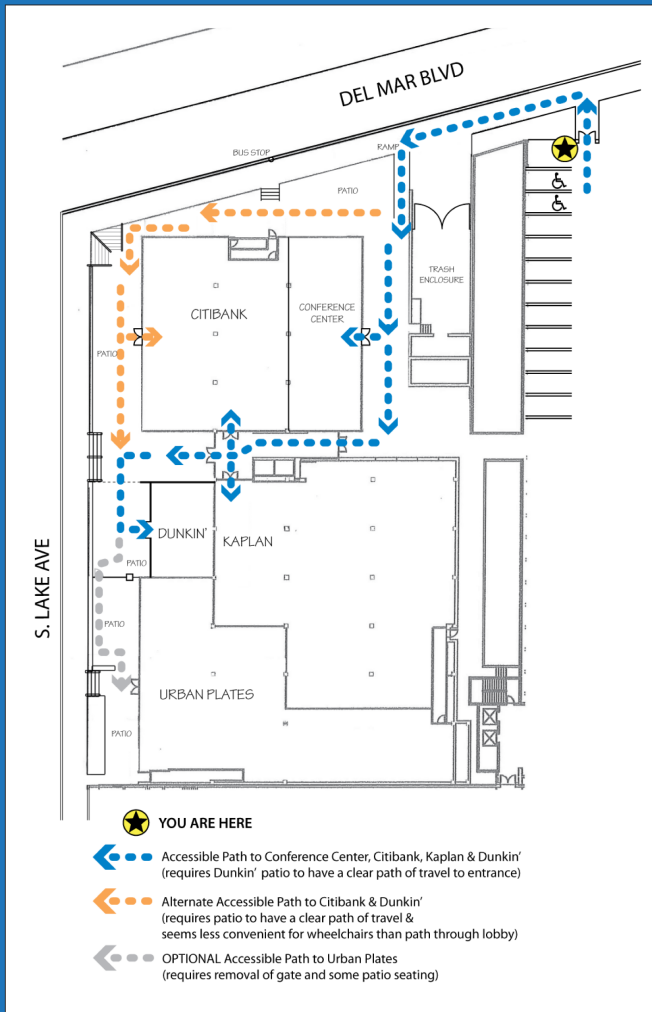
only to Urban Plates, and not to the rest of the patio. Therefore, the only possible sign, in our opinion, would be a directional sign mounted on the wall above the walkway stating merely “Urban Plates” with no ISA included. There is no space at the stairway leading to the Urban Plates entrance where a sign could be legally mounted to direct leftward toward the ramp.

**At the Pony Wall on the Patio:** Although it will not, by itself, create an accessible path of travel through the patios, it would be helpful to remove the gate at the pony wall. Since there is no way for someone using a wheelchair or a walker to pull to the side and open the gate on the Dunkin' side, it becomes a barrier. At least for those who could make their way through the area, such as someone with a walker or using crutches or a cane, not having a gate between the two areas would provide some access, although not fully legal access.

If a decision is made that it is vital to include Urban Plates in the accessible path of travel, and certainly that is a decision that provides everyone with the best defense against lawsuits, then not only must the gate be removed, but a clear path of legal width must be created from the gate to the restaurant entrance, and it must be kept free of chairs and other obstructions. I believe that could possibly be accomplished by removing the built in dining counter on the street side, and thus enlarging the clear pathway to the front entrance.

**Interior Signs -** Although the building interior is not part of this project or report, accessible signs, including tactile exit signs and tactile signs identifying any rooms or spaces that are identified, is a required part of the accessible path of travel in California. I can survey the project for required signs if desired.

# Access Plan



## Recap With Proposed Signs

### Parking Garage:

(Sign 1) The two accessible spaces are just a few feet from the pedestrian entrance. Exit the building through double doors and turn left to walk to the ramp. We recommend a site plan with a clearly marked accessible path of travel be mounted on the wall at the side of the double exit doors. Simplify the plans with as few extra details as possible.

**Site Plan 1:** This is a rough idea of what such a plan might look like, with three paths of travel marked, depending on what is resolved with the access to Urban Plates, and whether Management will move some planters and furniture. The Conference Facility can be included, or if there is no independent access, it can be omitted. The text on the plan should make it clear that the paths shown are the accessible paths of travel to the various destinations. If no changes are made to the Urban Plates patio area, remove the pale gray\* extension of the path of travel. If the planters are not moved, remove the orange path.



Sign 2

**Ramp:** The ramp entry is off East Del Mar Blvd. and to the left of the bus stop. Proceeding up the ramp, you arrive at the patio level. From there you can enter the Conference Facility or walk into the building through double doors in order to visit the bank, or walk through the doors at the other end to reach Dunkin'.



Sign 3

You can, facing the rear of the building, proceed to the right and go around to the front facade of the building as well. That will lead to the Citibank ATM and entrance, and across the central patio to Dunkin'.

There will be two signs located at the ramp entrance at the public sidewalk, one facing the ramp itself (Sign 2) so it can be seen from the garage entrance, and the other on the street side so it can be easily seen from the bus stop (Sign 3).

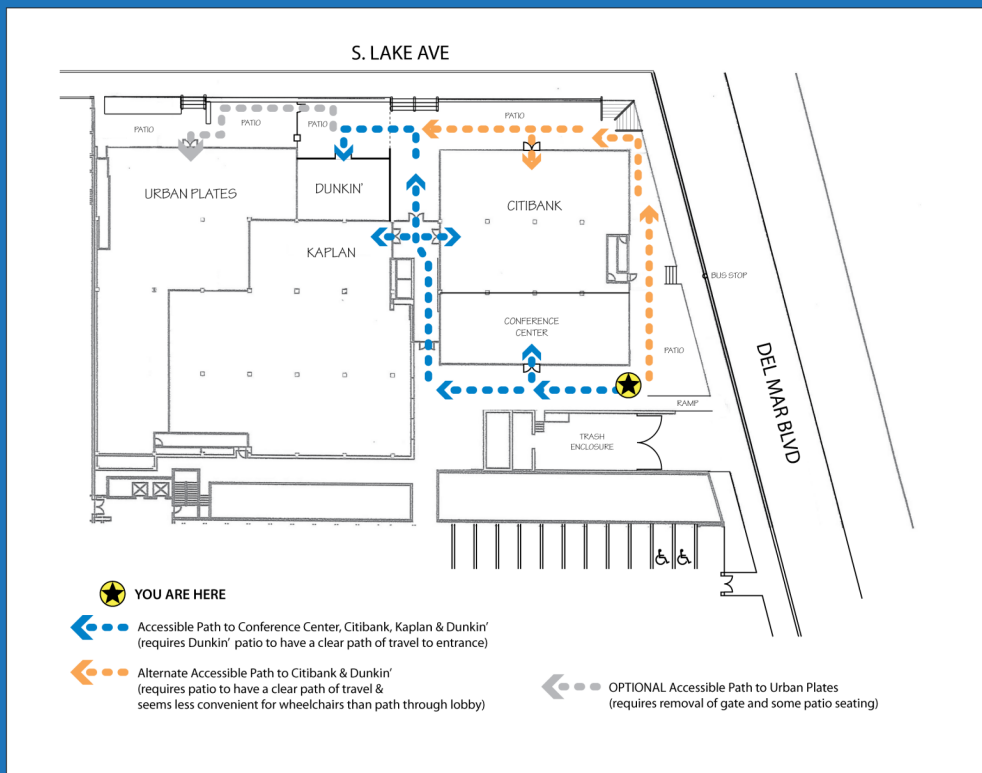
**Site Plan 2:** We recommend that a version of the Site Plan (Sign 4) be mounted prominently on the column visible from the ramp. That will direct you to the left to the Conference Facility, through the building or around the building to the right depending on your destination. (Rough drawing for Sign 4 located on following page).



**Alternate Path Around the Building**



# Access Plan



## **Layout for Site Plan 2 (for mounting on column at top of ramp).**

(Sign 4) This site plan is provided for those coming up the ramp from the bus stop, or along South Lake Ave. They did not have access to the plan mounted in the parking garage. Include the gray path\* only if a clear path is provided through Urban Plates. The orange path is included if the planters are not obstructing the clear width.

\*Note on color of paths of travel: If the path shown by the gray extension is created by removing patio seating and the gate, the color should match the remainder of that path of travel.

Although other versions of a site plan could be mounted in locations like the entrances to the building lobby, in our opinion that should not be necessary if people are coming from an accessible entrance. They all have come through the lobby from the ramp, so backtracking after a visit to one of the destinations should not be difficult.



Sign 5

**Stairway at Bus Stop:** (Sign 5) Behind the bus stop on East Del Mar Blvd. there is a stairway to the patio level. At that location a sign with an ISA and an arrow to the left will indicate the ramp for anyone using a mobility device. All signs need to be mounted on the railing above the wall at least 40 inches from the ground level.



Sign 6

**Stairway at Street Corner:** (Sign 6) This is the corner stairway that fronts on both East Del Mar Blvd. and South Lake Ave. The sign will be mounted to the left of the stair, and there will be a slanted left arrow, below the ISA, directing around the corner to the ramp on East Del Mar Blvd.



Sign 7

**Stairway to Lobby Entrance:** (Sign 7) This double stairway leads up to the doors that enter the lobby for Citibank, Kaplan and the elevator for other levels. An ISA and a left arrow will direct to the ramp.



Sign 8

**Sloped Walkway** (Sign 8) Since there is no connected path of travel from the sloped pathway to the remainder of the Corporate Center at this time, the sign located at the walkway on the wall directly facing Lake should have a left arrow, directing those in wheelchairs past the walkway all the way around the corner to Del Mar, and eventually to the ramp.

If Urban Plates wants to indicate that the walkway provides regular (not accessible) access to the restaurant, any directional sign provided on the wall above the walkway should use a color and style completely different from the directional signs indicating disabled access.

**Conclusion:** This recap brings us full circle back through the lobby to the rear patio, down the ramp and to the parking garage.

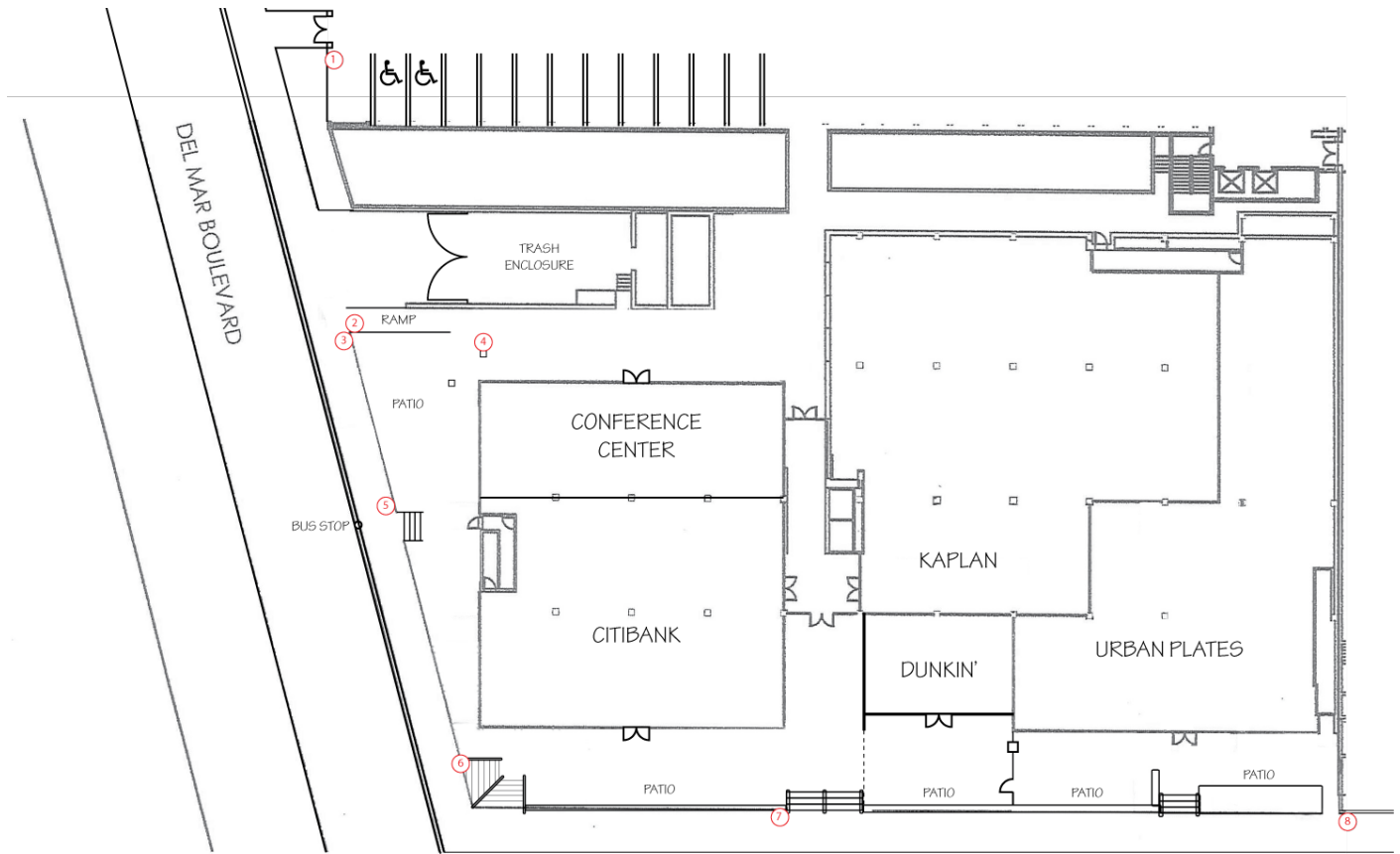
The many changes that were made to the facility over the years do not appear to have been designed with access in mind. Stairways to the patio are frequent and convenient to those with no mobility impairments, but for those who require a ramp, the travel distances are sometimes daunting. The only prominent directional sign, on the green background as you enter the patio from the parking garage, directs to Urban Plates, and that could be misleading to anyone in a wheelchair who sees the sign. It might be considered discriminatory.

The two eating areas have been added to the patio without much thought of access, and clearing an accessible path of travel to Urban Plates, especially now that Dunkin' has been added, requires removal of some of the patio seating, surely not a happy prospect but necessary if full access is to be provided to Urban Plates. The gate would also need to be removed, since it blocks legal access from Dunkin' to Urban Plates.

In my opinion, Management and Urban Plates must make a decision as to whether they are willing to clear a legal path of travel through the Urban Plates dining area. Before doing so, it must be determined by the City or by a full CASp survey if the area is considered an interior or an exterior area, since the requirement for an interior width is only 36 inches, versus an exterior width of 48 inches.

Our recommendations will, I believe, provide as much direction as possible, within legal restraints, to as many areas of the Corporate Center as can be currently reached by wheelchair and other mobility devices. The rest is up to Management and to Urban Plates.

## Site Plan With Marked Sign Locations



- 1. Site Plan 1**
- 2. Ramp Identification**
- 3. Directional Sign to Ramp at Ramp**
- 4. Site Plan 2**
- 5. Directional Sign to Ramp at Bus Stop Stair**
- 6. Directional Sign to Ramp to Corner Stair**
- 7. Directional Sign to Ramp at Central Entry Stair**
- 8. Directional Sign to Ramp at Walkway**