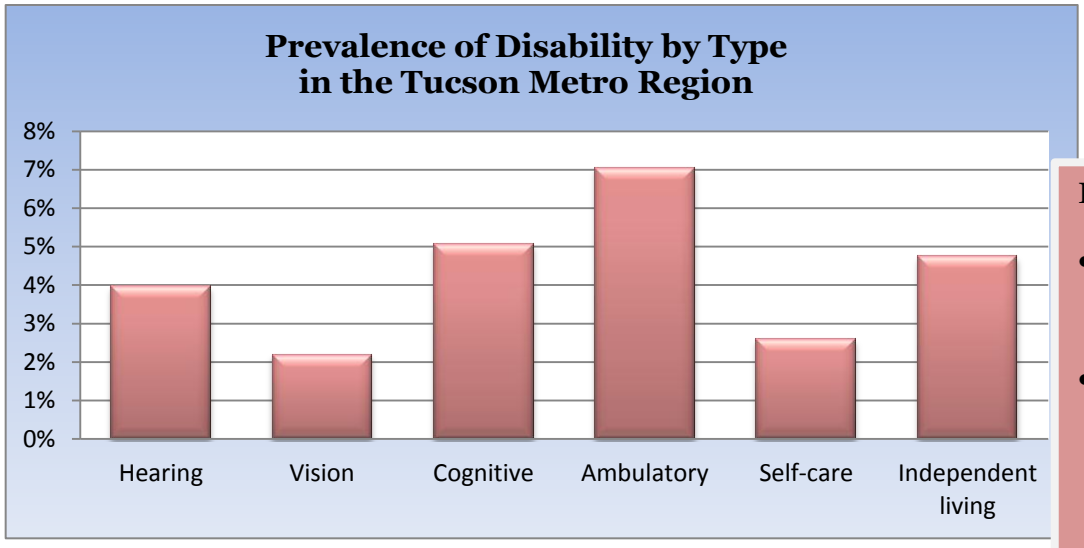
Council Representation: Emily Lopex, Persons with Disabilities

Tucson's pedestrian infrastructure serves persons of all ages and abilities. The disability community is diverse in their pedestrian needs, and infrastructure must consider varying abilities in agility, balance, cognition, coordination, endurance, flexibility, hearing, problem solving, strength, vision, and walking speed.

Representation of residents who belong to Tucson's disability community is important as they often are disenfranchised individuals who have limited voting power because of legal, physical and attitudinal barriers. Generally, this constituency is also disproportionately of lower socioeconomic status due to limited job opportunities with competitive wages and reliance on federal benefits. Because of economic constraints and/or physical impairments, persons with disabilities rely heavily on public transportation, which also means that they are often pedestrians.



Source: PAG Existing Conditions Report 2013; U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey 2009-2011 3-year estimates

In the City of Tucson:

- Nearly 14% of Tucson residents report having a disability
- Of those who have a disability, 37% are age 65 or older. This number is expected to increase with the growing aging community in Tucson.

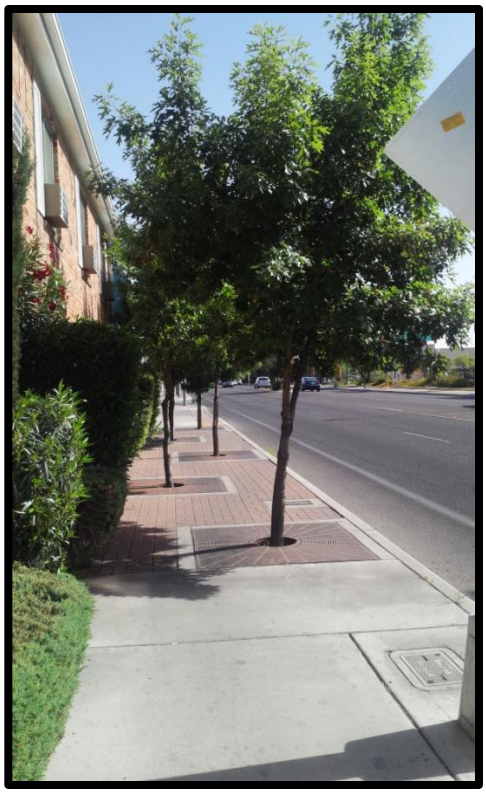
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Whether it's the audible crossing signal that is difficult to hear because of noisy traffic or the silent hybrid cars which more people drive, walking in Tucson can be challenging for a blind person. Good travel training is key, but pedestrian friendly infrastructure is fundamental.

-Sami Hamed, National Federation of the Blind

Vibrawalk push button includes a locator tone. The arrow vibrates during the WALK interval and WALK indication is provided from speaker mounted on the pedhead

PAC
Pedestrian Advisory Committee



The guidelines of ADA accessibility to public rights-of-way consider:

- Curb cuts and ramps
- Sidewalk connectivity
- Bus shelter accessibility
- Adequate lighting
- Accessible pedestrian signals

Trees line Stone Ave. near University. Landscape and shade make walking pleasant; however, being mindful of sidewalk accessibility is important too.

Maintaining the historic dignity of neighborhoods like West University which is lined with WPA- era curbs can be a challenge when the infrastructure is not ideal for a pedestrian with a disability.

We teach our students to cross clockwise at in an intersection to avoid right turning cars. So you may have to cross an intersection up to 3 times to get where you need to go! The ideal would be to have universal design, with consistent patterns in engineering so the blind can read exactly what their pedestrian options are.

-Ed Gervsoni, Mobility Specialist at the Arizona School for the Deaf & Blind

Sidewalks: To comply with Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines, newly constructed sidewalks must be accessible to people with disabilities. Best practice considers:

- Surface materials
- Changes in level
- Firmness, stability, and slip resistance
- Dimensions of gaps, grates and openings
- Visual consistency