Public Assembly and Entertainment Facilities

Public assembly and entertainment facilities are places where people congregate in large numbers to attend events. Examples of these types of facilities include professional sports stadiums and arenas, exhibition and convention centers, assembly halls and auditoriums, movie theaters and live performance venues.

Site Design

Public assembly and entertainment facilities service large crowds of people and, therefore, must be easy to access from parking lots, drop-off areas, public transit, and pedestrian pathways without disrupting the surrounding flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Guidelines:

- The main entrance to the building should be located near the major points of public access.
- Provide drop-off and pick-up areas for large groups to load and unload from vehicles without impeding the flow of traffic. These areas should protect visitors from inclement weather.

Figure 4.2b.1. All users – whether walking or using a personal mobility device – should be able to approach and enter at any entry location.
Parking should be located within close proximity to the building and reachable by a clear path of travel.

### Entrances and Exits

At public assembly and entertainment facilities, people typically enter and exit around the same time. The main point of entry is unique in that it usually involves a ticketing or controlled access area through which everyone must pass. This provides a level of security and allows the facility to monitor the number of people in attendance.

**Guidelines:**

- The main entrance should lead to a lobby that provides waiting areas close to yet out of the flow of traffic. These waiting areas should provide accessible seating areas for those who may want to rest.
- Entrances should employ alternatives to conventional turnstiles or other devices that are not usable by everyone.
- Entrances that do have turnstiles should provide an adjacent gate or door for people who otherwise would not be able to enter.
- Entrances that are not accessible should have signs to direct users to the entrance that is usable by everyone.
- Everyone should be able to pass through any security checkpoint in the same manner.
- Provide enough doorways to enable timely mass exiting by all users, whether standing or sitting, at peak demand times (e.g., after performances).
- If coatrooms are available, they should be located near the main entry and have adequate space to accommodate large...
numbers of people, including both standing and sitting, before and after performances.

All people should be able to detect, access and use emergency exits in a safe and timely manner from all locations in the building.

For people who cannot access or safely use the emergency exits, secure and appropriately sized areas must be provided where they can wait for rescue.

Spatial Organization

In places of public assembly and entertainment, final destinations will not be the same for all people. Once people arrive at the facility they must find their section and seat. The larger the facility, the more difficult and challenging this can be.

Guidelines:

- The main entrance should be easily distinguishable from other entrances so that those approaching the facility can reach their intended destination.
- Amenities such as restrooms, drinking fountains, and telephones should be grouped together along a clear path of travel that is usable by everyone.
- A directional system should be provided that can direct all users from the lobby to their seats.
- If ushers are present, they should be trained to provide information, directions and assistance in a variety of forms.
- Different areas (e.g., levels of seating) should be coded (e.g., color, symbols, etc.) to ensure timely wayfinding.
- Both audible and visual alarms should be provided for crowd control during emergency conditions to enable effective communication with and ensure the safety of everyone.
Services and Concessions

Two products are usually offered in public assembly and entertainment facilities: (1) the performance itself and (2) items sold at concessions. If those in attendance do not have access to both, the overall experience of the event is diminished.

Guidelines:

1. The ticket booth or will call window should have a section of the counter that is lower and has adequate knee clearance to enable anyone to purchase tickets or view seating charts.

2. Concessions, including souvenir stands and food service areas, should have counters at comfortable heights for use by both standing and sitting patrons.

3. Condiments and self-serve items should be provided within reach of all people whether standing or sitting.

4. Areas around concessions should be spaced to accommodate wider patterns of use (e.g., people using wheeled mobility devices, adults pushing children in strollers, etc.). They should also be large enough to prevent traffic congestion.

5. Lowered counters at cash registers will be usable by everyone.

6. An information booth should be provided in a centralized location for those who need assistance. Maps and wayfinding material should be made available in alternative media.

7. If audible communications are integral to the performance or event, assistive listening systems (ALS) or captioned text should be made available. ALS receivers should be located throughout the facility and spectators should be notified of their availability in a variety of media. Captioned text helps everyone during periods with intense crowd noise.
If large scoreboards are used, means of communicating essential information in alternative forms should be provided (e.g., audio receivers).

All printed program materials for performances should be available in alternative forms.

Accessible seating areas should be dispersed throughout the performance area to ensure that all people have comparable choices of admission prices/locations and that companion seating is available.

People who are sitting should be ensured an experience of the event comparable to the experience of those who stand.

Routes of travel to performance spaces, arena or stadium floors, dressing or locker rooms, and other areas used by performers should be usable by all.

Public Amenities

Public assembly and entertainment facilities typically serve a large number of people during short periods of time. During intermissions, people leave their seats and use telephones, restrooms and concessions. It is important to plan adequately for these peak demand times.

Guidelines:

Public restrooms should be dispersed throughout the facility. Since most people will use the facilities during intermissions, restrooms should be sized and designed to accommodate large numbers of users with varying abilities at the same time. In communal restrooms, doors should be eliminated by using a maze entry to enable easy entering and exiting by everyone. Single user restrooms (e.g., those placed in boxes and suites) should be accessible to all users.
should still provide enough clearance for more than one person to enter (e.g., a companion or child needing assistance).

Public telephones should be dispersed so they can be reached from all locations within the building and provided in numbers appropriate to the seating capacity of the facility.

Public telephones should provide an acoustic barrier in areas where excessive crowd noise is predictable.