

Executive Summary

Colorado Avenue Ramp Replacement *Category J – Small Projects*



Nestled within one of Colorado's most iconic and historic mountain communities, the Colorado Avenue Ramp Replacement project transformed accessibility throughout the heart of downtown Telluride. What began as the replacement of aging pedestrian ramps evolved into a community accessibility initiative that improved safety, mobility, and inclusion while respecting the character of a nationally recognized historic district.

Colorado Avenue serves as Telluride's primary downtown corridor and economic center. Existing pedestrian ramps along the corridor no longer met current accessibility standards and presented challenges for residents and visitors navigating the downtown environment. The Town of Telluride recognized the need to improve accessibility but faced significant constraints common to historic mountain communities, including limited public right-of-way, existing underground utilities, established streetscape features, and the need to preserve the visual character that defines the community.

KLJ Engineering (KLJ) partnered with the Town to develop and deliver a comprehensive accessibility solution for 20 pedestrian ramps along Colorado Avenue between Aspen Street and Alder Street. The project included detailed field surveys, engineering analysis, design calculations, construction documents, and recommendations for utility and infrastructure modifications necessary to accommodate the new ramps. Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) standard ramp designs were incorporated

throughout the corridor to provide a safer, more accessible pedestrian experience.

The project's success stemmed from balancing modern accessibility requirements with the realities of constructing improvements within a highly constrained historic downtown. Each ramp location required careful evaluation to fit within existing conditions while maintaining pedestrian circulation, preserving access to local businesses, and accommodating existing utility infrastructure. By approaching the corridor holistically rather than as a series of isolated ramp replacements, the design team created a seamless and intuitive pedestrian network that serves users of all abilities.

The project delivers benefits that extend far beyond regulatory compliance. Residents, visitors, seniors, individuals with mobility limitations, families with strollers, and people using wheeled devices now experience improved access throughout Telluride's downtown business district. The project enhances safety, strengthens connectivity between destinations, supports local economic activity, and demonstrates the Town's commitment to creating a community that is welcoming and accessible to all.

The Colorado Avenue Ramp Replacement represents a model for how thoughtful engineering can improve quality of life within complex urban environments. Rather than simply replacing pedestrian ramps, the project transformed accessibility throughout downtown Telluride and established a more inclusive, connected, and resilient community for future generations.