

**Putting Things into  
Perspective:  
One Community's  
Journey to the ADA**

# **M.O.B.I.L.**

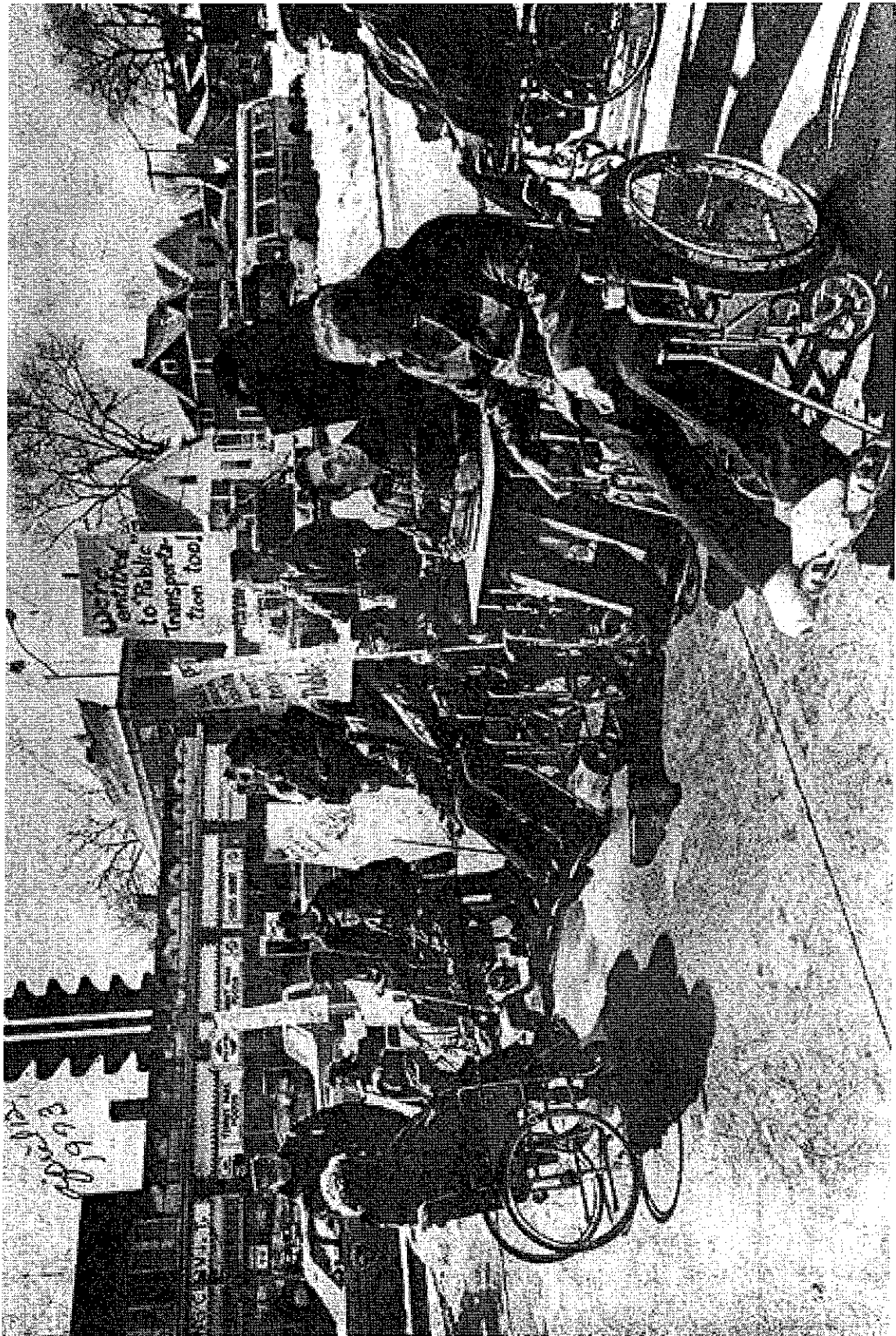
- September 1971
- First meeting of the Madison Organization Behind Independent Living (MOBIL,) called by Fayth Kail and Kayleen Steinhaus
- Consisted of six Madison-area citizens with disabilities

# **M.O.B.I.L.**

- It started over the unfairness of a friend being forced to live in a nursing home because there were no wheelchair accessible apartments
- MOBIL's preamble read" In order to foster the educational, social, material, and psychological welfare of persons with disabilities living in the area of Madison..."

# **M.O.B.I.L.**

- **First act was to conduct a survey of all Madison restaurants, office buildings, theaters, motels, and public transportation to determine facilities available to the handicapped**
- **Published resource guide “Wisconsin Capital with Ease” in 1973**



# **M.O.B.I.L.**

- To call attention to the challenges of wheelchair movement members and supporters of M.O.B.I.L. gather in a busy neighborhood.
- This demonstration was conducted with support from the City Transportation Department and the Madison Police.

# **M.O.B.I.L.**

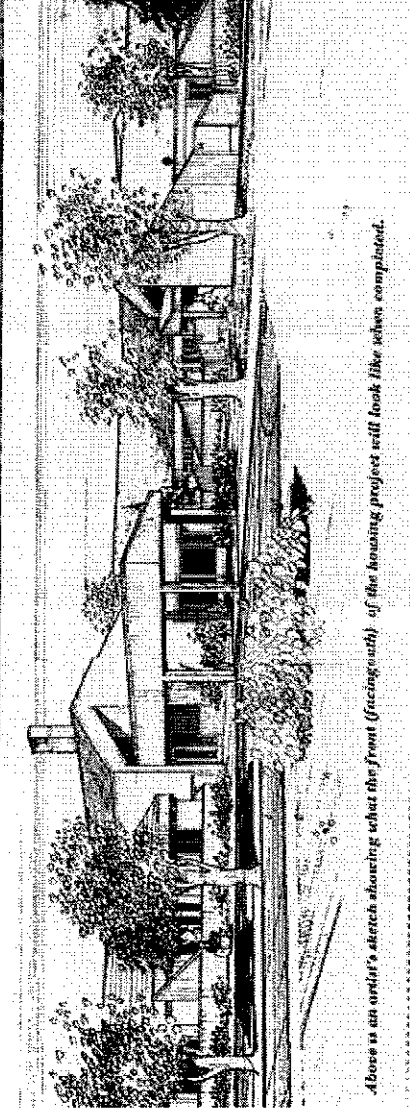
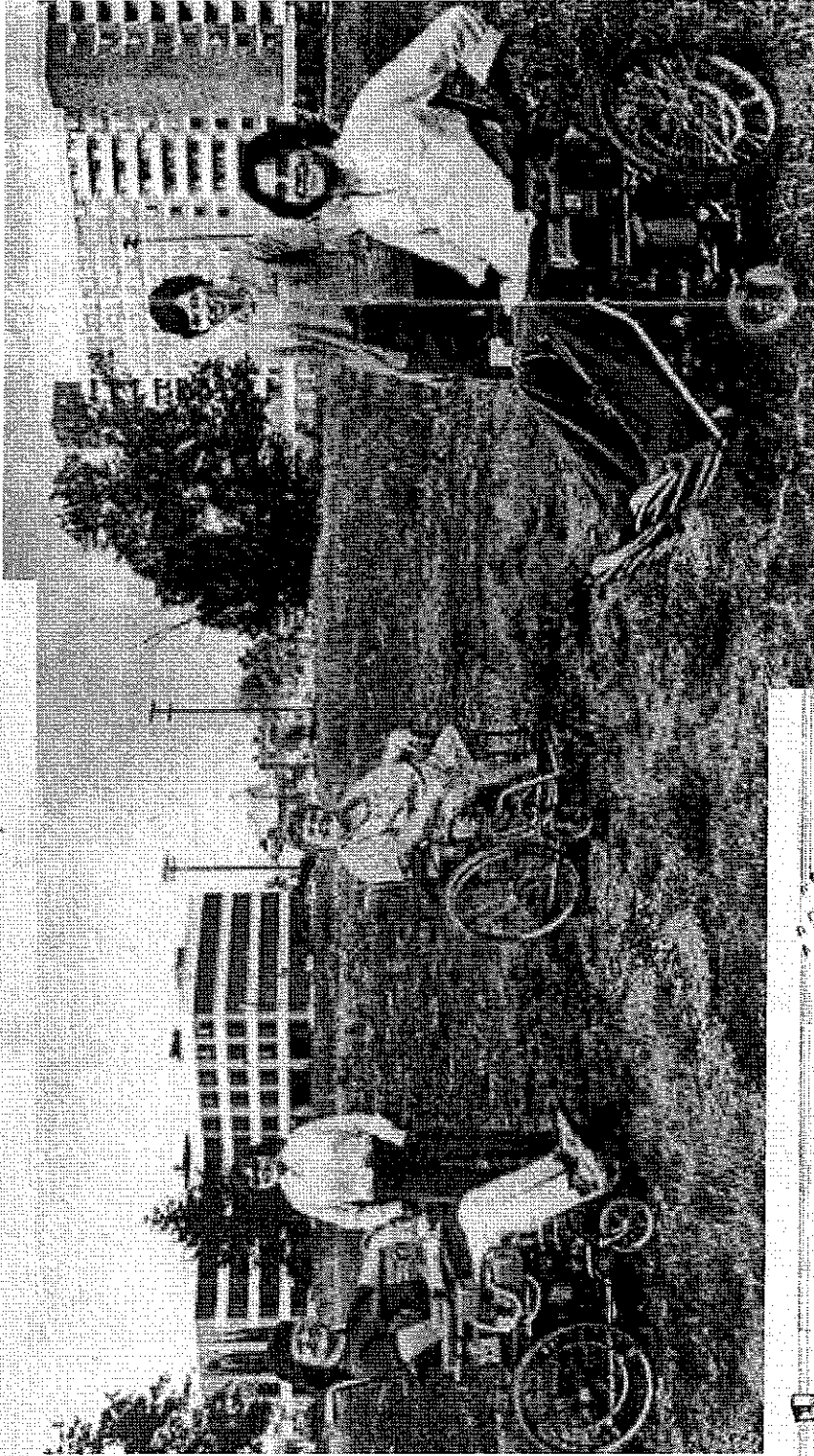
- “We just want a chance to live independently and transport ourselves around the city independently – in working, shopping, and playing,” said MOBIL’s first president Kayleen Steinhaus.

# **M.O.B.I.L.**

- 1974 The Madison City Council forms “Citizen’s Advisory Commission on Physical Disabilities” by unanimous vote.
- Many members of M.O.B.I.L. are appointed to this commission.
- Commission members join other departmental and governmental committees (embedded activists)



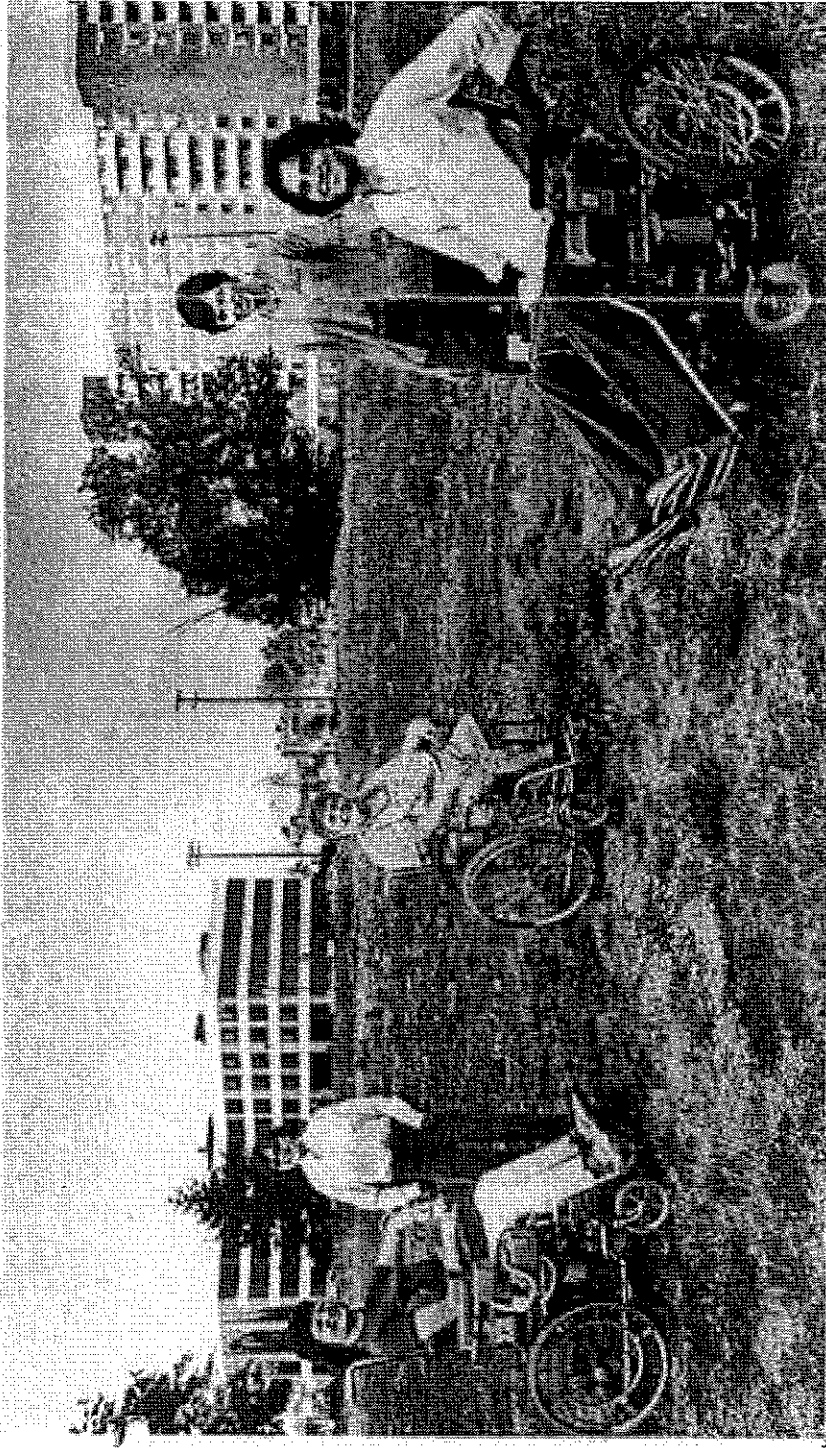
# This housing means freedom for disabled



Above is an artist's sketch showing what the front (facing south) of the housing project will look like when completed.

# **M.O.B.I.L.**

- In 1976, there were about a dozen housing projects for the disabled in the United States and none in Wisconsin.
- Designed as transitional housing for individuals 18 to 35



The site of the Karabin Apartments in the Triangle, a project these people are earnestly involved in. They are left to right, JaAnn Uffendahl, 409 Drexel Ave.; Nancy McEmurry, Kayleen

Bertrien, Wauwacker; Phoebe O'Connell and Andrew Yablidzch, 115 W. Washington Ave.

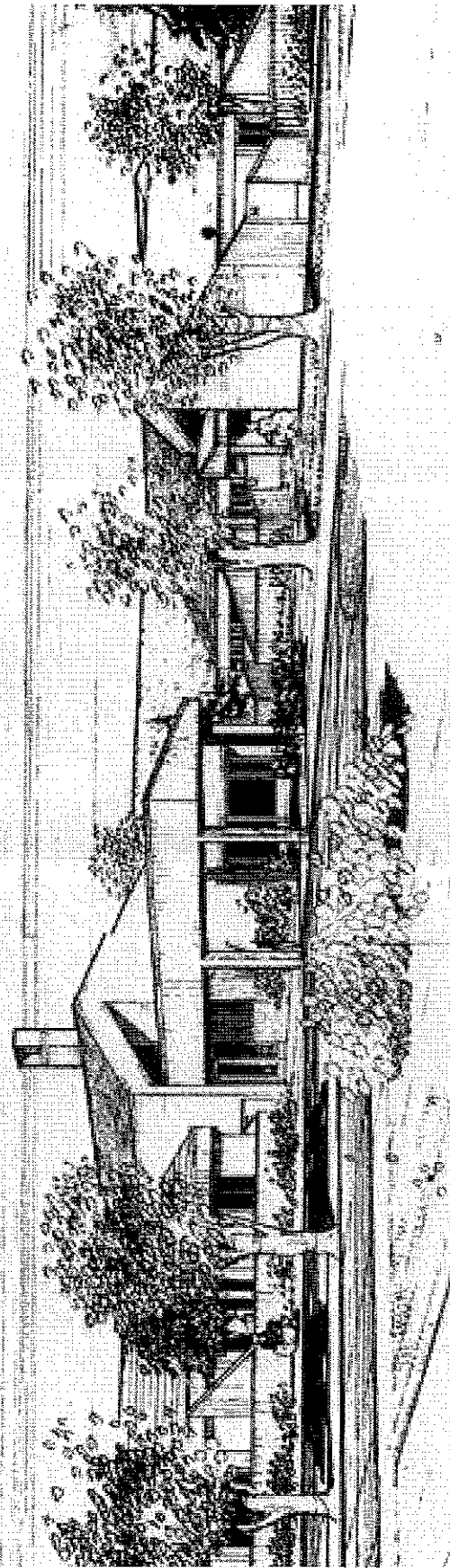
—State Journal photo by I. Roger Turner

# Apartments dream of disabled

# **M.O.B.I.L.**

- They set up a full-scale floor model of an apartment, so that persons in wheelchairs could come in and test how easily they could get around in the rooms.
- One discovery was that a bathroom required a five foot area for a wheelchair to turn around in, and doors and hallways needed to be wider.

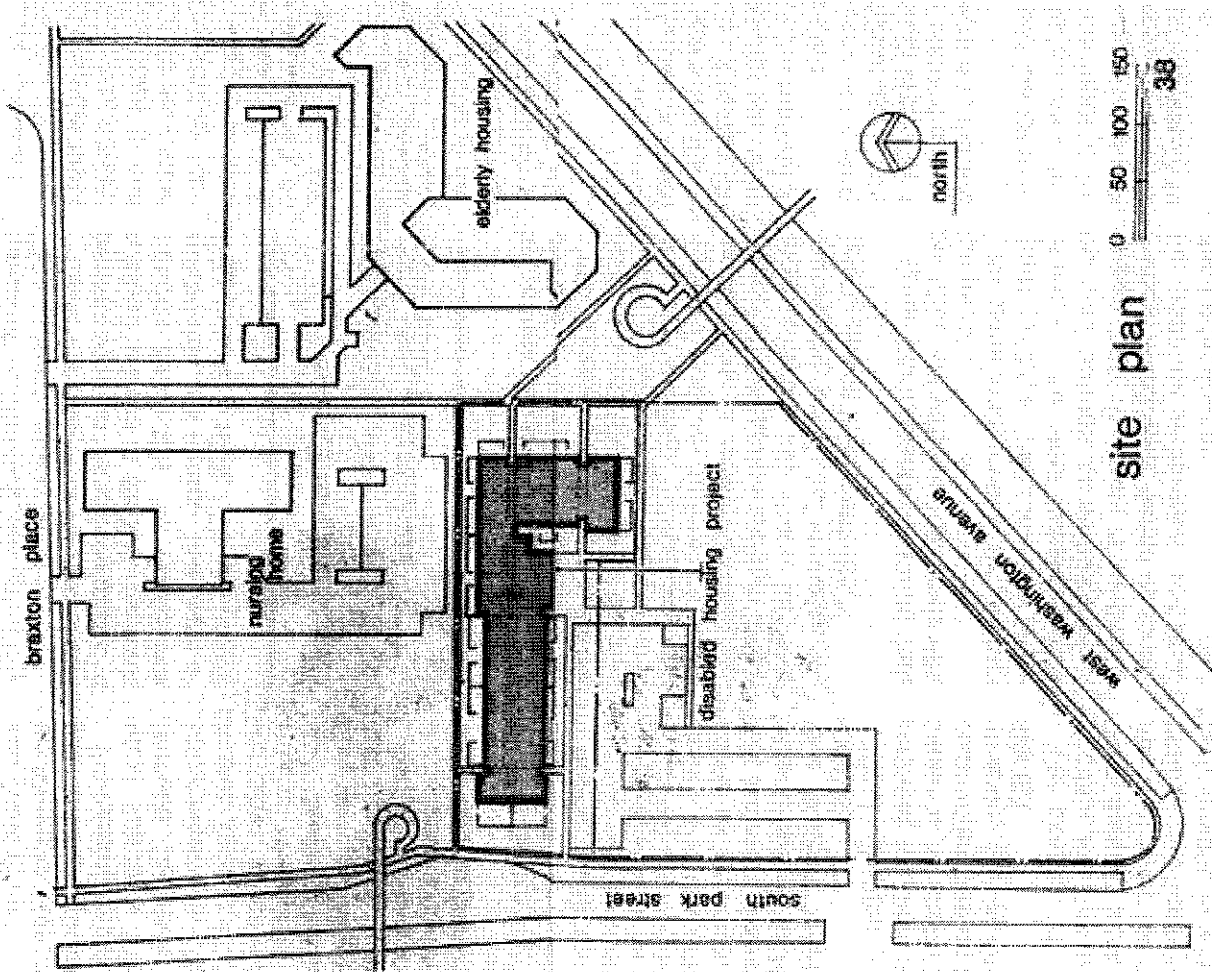
# This housing means freedom for disabled



Below is an artist's sketch showing what the front (facing south) of the housing project will look like when completed.

# **M.O.B.I.L./ATI**

- With Support from M.O.B.I.L., Access to Independence is incorporated
- Initial goal is to raise money for the development of Karabis Apartments
- This fully accessible apartment complex is named in memory of Truman (Terry) Karabis, a M.O.B.I.L. member who dies in 1975 at age 27.

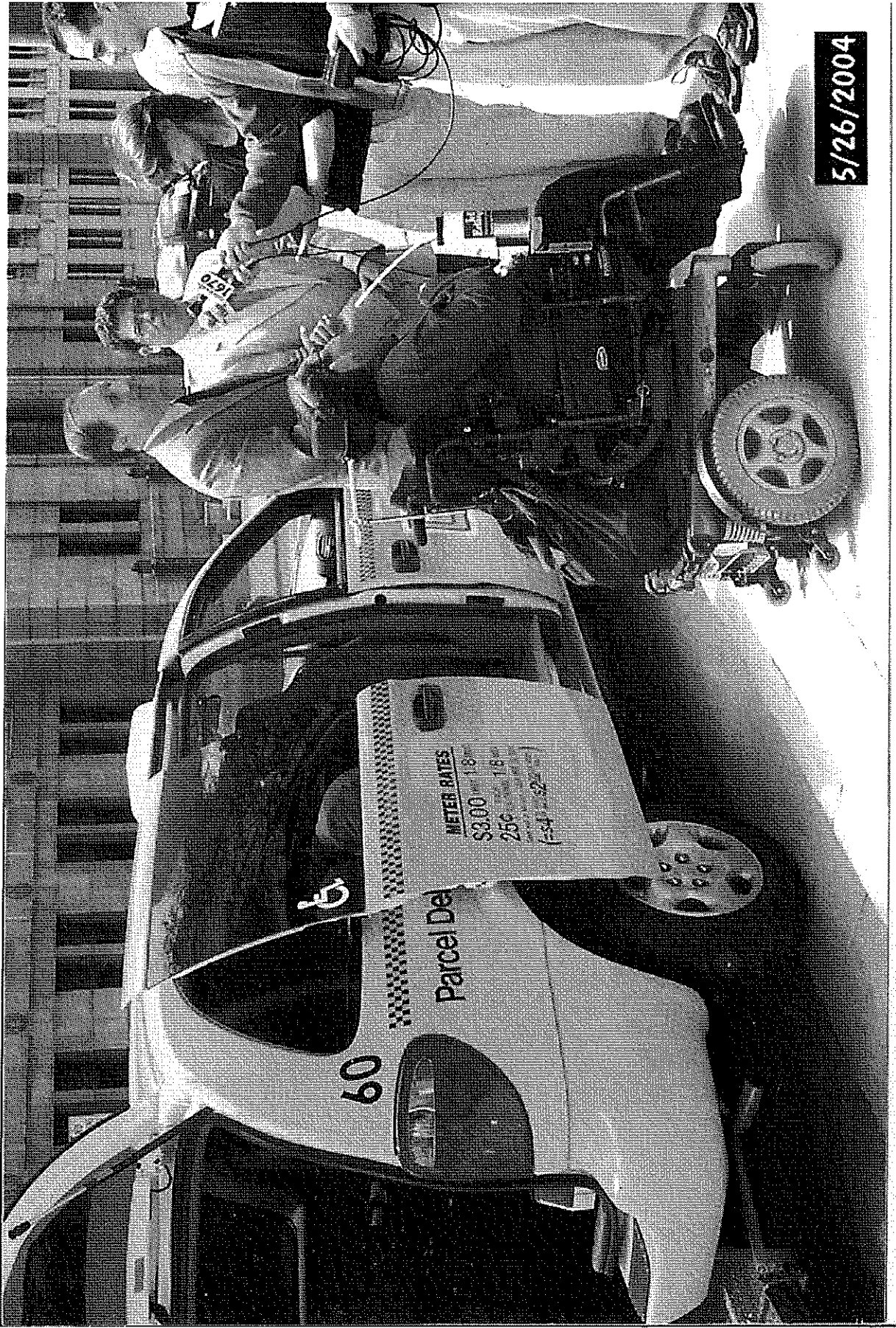


*The site plan for the soon-to-be constructed disabled housing project is shown above (shaded area).*

# **Accessible Transportation**

- 1976 M.O.B.I.L.L. begins meetings with Department of Transportation and Transit Utility Committee for accessible buses
- 1977 with support from Mayor Paul Soglin and Federal & State funds three buses with wheelchair lifts arrive in Madison
- 2004 Jeff Erlanger, president of the Commission on People with Disabilities and Mayor Dave welcomes the Accessible Taxi to Madison





5/26/2004

60



Parcel Delivery

METER RATES

\$3.00 18

25c 18

1-54 52

# Access to Independence

- 1977: “It became obvious that support services should be offered to residents, and also that a number of disabled people wouldn’t be helped by Karabis ... we became aware of the whole range of obstacles facing the disabled.
- I began to envision a separate agency to offer support services.” Eileen Berkley, Access’ first Director, (formerly of the Madison Housing Authority.)

# Access to Independence

- 1978: Access to Independence (ATI) is established as a social-service agency
- 1980: ATI receives its first Federal grant
- 1981: ATI establishes a “Free University” taught by people with disabilities, and an apprenticeship program for people with disabilities wanting to gain work experience.
- 1983: A comprehensive needs survey is conducted: the lack of adequate financial resources is stated most frequently as the biggest problem facing disabled people in Dane County.

# Access to Independence

- 1984: produces a calendar showcasing the work of artists with disabilities
- A \$45,000, 2-year grant to make local cultural and recreational activities more accessible. The Access to Recreation, Theater, and the Arts (ARTA) program is an outgrowth.
- Establishes DATA (Disabled Access to Technological Advances) program to help people with disabilities find employment in computer fields.
- 1986: ATI hosts a 2-day conference on Media and Disability, with presenters from across the country. A core group continues to meet to work on improving perceptions people with disabilities and educating the media about disability and accessibility issues in the Madison area.

# Access to Independence

- 1988: ATI celebrates its 10th anniversary of providing services in Dane County.
- 1989: Working for passage of the ADA, Justin Dart visits ATI in December of 1989. He says the upcoming decision “will impact the lives of every American and of our fellow humans in every nation for generations to come.” Likening the ADA to the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, Dart says it will create “a unique window of opportunity to significantly expand the horizons of the human potential.”
- 1990: The ADA becomes a reality. “Never have people with disabilities worked so well together to achieve a goal,” writes Maureen Arcand, Advocacy Specialist. ATI expands services to 3 counties in addition to Dane: Columbia, Dodge, and Green Counties and has continued to grow over the years.

North Country Independent Living

Midstate Independent Living Consultants

Options for Independent Living

Independence First

Society's Assets

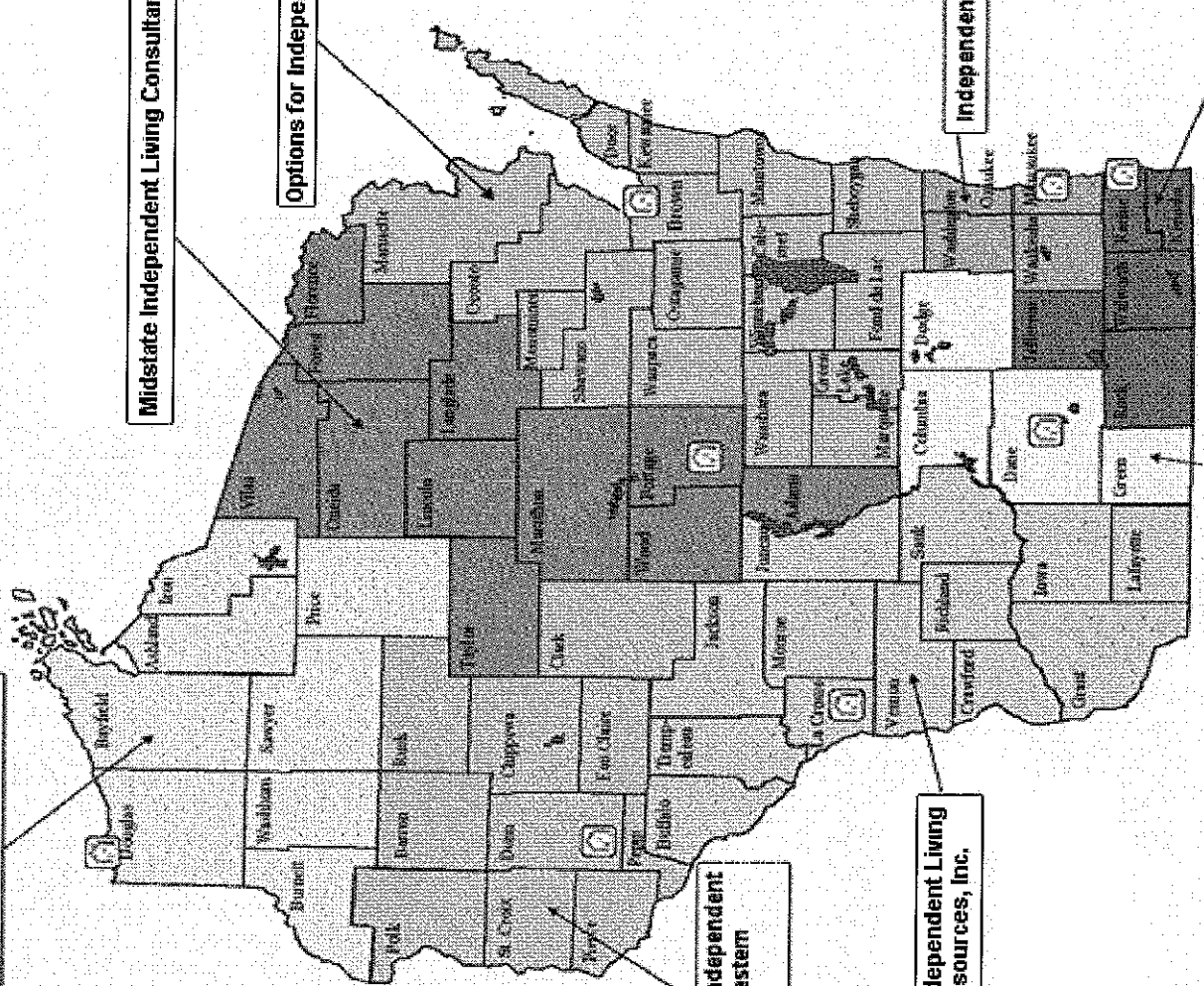
Access to Independence

Center for Independent Living of Western Wisconsin

Independent Living Resources, Inc.



Home Office

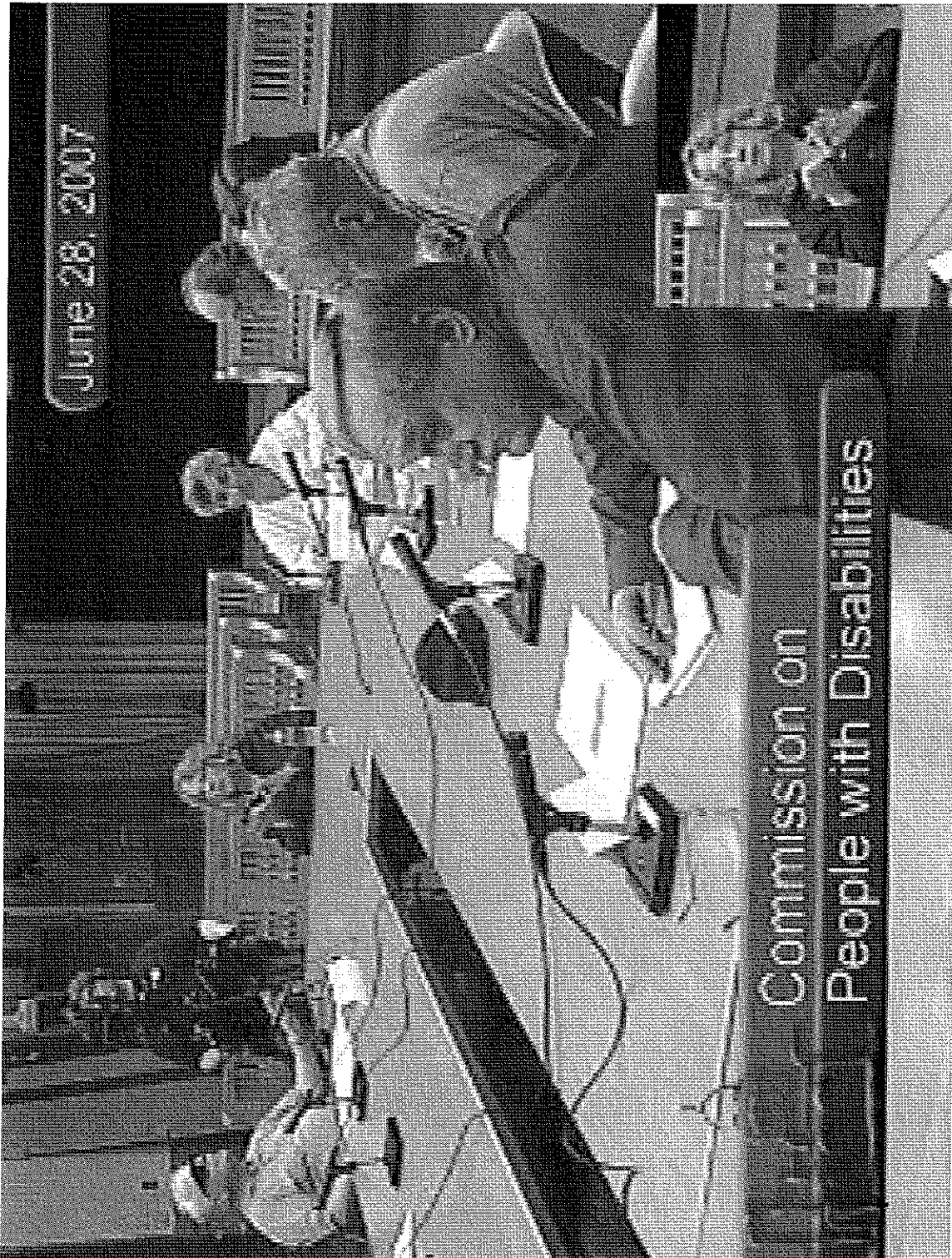


# **3 Key requirements to make accessibility a reality**

- **Legislation**
- **Advocacy/Activism**
- **Enforcement**







June 28, 2007

Commission on  
People with Disabilities

# Hero

- 1. a person of distinguished courage or ability, admired for his brave deeds and noble qualities.
- 2. a person who, in the opinion of others, has heroic qualities or has performed a heroic act and is regarded as a model or ideal: He was a local hero when he saved the drowning child.
- 3. the principal male character in a story, play, film, etc.
- 4. Classical Mythology.
  - a. a being of godlike prowess and beneficence who often came to be honored as a divinity.
  - b. (in the Homeric period) a warrior-chieftain of special strength, courage, or ability. (in later antiquity) an immortal being; demigod.

# Advocate/Activist

- Advocate
  - a person who speaks or writes in support or defense of a person, cause, etc. an advocate of peace.
  - a person who pleads for or in behalf of another; intercessor.
  - a person who pleads the cause of another in a court of law.
- Activist
  - an especially active, vigorous advocate of a cause,.
  - A person who believes in or participates in direct action to make changes in government or social conditions.

**Thank You**