

Larger, Taller Clients Appreciate Space of Full-Size Vans

Space and dimensions are extremely important when making a vehicle accessible. There are several key dimensions to consider: Is the entrance tall enough for the person to enter when seated in his wheelchair? What kind of headroom will the person have once inside the vehicle? How many and what kind of seats can be used while the wheelchair is secured in the vehicle? If the wheelchair user is driving, what is their field of vision while seated?

Accessibility modifications have been made to full-size vans for years. To allow for maximum entry height and headroom, these vans most often have lowered floors and raised roofs.

Doors are raised in conjunction with the roof to enable a wheelchair user to enter the vehicle without having to bend over or tilt back. This additional height provides 56" to 64" of clear entry.

Floors are lowered for the same reasons. The difference here is that you can often pick up the additional height without having to raise the roof or doors. Lowered floors work great in



situations where you would like to garage the vehicle and a raised roof would make the vehicle too high. In comparison to Chrysler's most popular mini-van conversion, lowered floors in the Ford E-series vans add up to *four more inches* of interior headroom. Also, a lowered floor can be used in conjunction with a raised roof and doors for a very tall individual.

Weight-carrying capacity is also another distinct benefit to full-size vans. A modified full-size Ford can carry nearly three times the weight of a converted minivan. Consider equipment . . . passengers . . . the weight of your wheelchair . . . it all adds up.

The Ford full-sized E-Van is the most extensively converted full-size van in the industry. Lifts can either be installed in the rear or the side of the vehicle, and are either stowed inside the van or underneath the van. Nor-Cal Vans can provide a lowered floor in the mid-passenger, front passenger and driver areas. Lowered floors measuring anywhere from 6" to 9" (a Nor-Cal Vans specialty) are possible.

For larger or taller clients and those seeking more weight-carrying capacity, greater interior room for both people and cargo and better ground clearance from their accessible vehicle, a full-size van is the only way to go.