

**A**n expressed goal of the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission is to offer facilities, programs, and services that are accessible to all persons regardless of their level of ability. Meeting this goal requires close examination of not only physical barriers to participation but also the attitudes and philosophy of the agency itself. The Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission has adopted the following statement of philosophy:

***The Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission intends to fully comply in spirit and intent with the Americans with Disabilities Act. We will provide reasonable accommodation to provide an opportunity for all to participate in an inclusive environment to provide quality leisure experiences.***

Considerable legislation exists to ensure the rights of people with disabilities to participate in recreation opportunities. Most significant is "The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990" (ADA) which was enacted "to provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities." Since that time standards and guidelines have been published by the Department of Justice and the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) to regulate and guide new and renovated facilities.

Current enforceable standards have been incorporated in the Department of Justice 2010 Standards for Accessible Design. These standards provide clear direction for the development of accessible parking, buildings and many other types of facilities. Standards for additional recreational site elements (published in the Federal Register on September 14, 2010 and to go into effect on March 15, 2012) such as playgrounds, amusement parks, fitness equipment, sports facilities, golf, recreational boating and fishing facilities are also included in the 2010 standards. Guidelines for other recreational facilities including trails, picnic areas, overlooks and viewing areas, beach access routes, and camping facilities are addressed in a separate final draft Guideline for Outdoor Developed Areas report produced by the Access Board and made available to the public in 2009. Although not enforceable, these guidelines provide the best available approach to meet the general requirement of the ADA to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities.

Evaluation of Ottawa County park facilities in this chapter utilizes both the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (the standards) and the Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas (the guidelines).

#### **APPLICATION OF THE STANDARDS & GUIDELINES**

The Parks Commission has made tremendous strides in eliminating barriers in the County Park system. Extensive renovations at Tunnel, Kirk, North Beach, Grose, and Hager parks as well as new facilities at Hemlock Crossing/Pine Bend Park, Rosy Mound Natural Area, the Upper

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Macatawa Natural Area, and Historic Ottawa Beach were completed with strict attention to the ADA Standards and Guidelines. In addition to these large projects, many other smaller modifications have been completed throughout the park system that have significantly improved accessibility.

As a public agency, Ottawa County Parks is required to meet the “Program Access Test” for accessible facilities and to produce a “Transition Plan” that defines the improvements needed and timeframe to bring the park system into compliance with applicable regulations. The program access test is based on the determination that a public entity may not deny the benefits of its programs, activities, and services to individuals with disabilities because its

**Table 7.1 ADA Program Access Test Chart**

PROGRAM ACCESS TEST CHART	PARKING	WALKWAYS & TRAILS	OVERLOOKS	PICNIC TABLES	PICNIC SHELTER	PICNIC BUILDING	RESTROOMS	CONCESSION	PLAYGROUND	SWIMMING BEACH	LAUNCH RAMP	KAYAK LAUNCH	FISHING DOCK/PIER	SEATING	BALLFIELD	HORSESHOES	SAND VOLLEYBALL	TRAILHEAD
Park Name (Developed Parks Only)																		
Adams Street Landing	N	S										N	S					
Crockery Creek Natural Area	N	N																N
Deer Creek Park	N	N		N			P				N							
Eastmanville Farm	N	N		N			A											N
Grand River Park	A	S	N	S		A	A		P		A		P					P
Grose Park	A	S	S	S	A (2)		A		P	A			A	S	N	N	N	P
Hager Park	A	S		S	A	A	A	A	P					S		N		
Hemlock Crossing	A	S	S	S	A (2)		A					S		S				P
Historic Ottawa Beach Parks	A	S	NF	A						A			A	A				A
Kirk Park	A	S	S	S	A		S	A	N	N				S		N		P
North Beach Park	A	S	NF	S	A		S	A	P	A				S			S	
North Ottawa Dunes	A	S	NF	A			A							S				P
Pigeon Creek Park	N	S		S		A	A	A						S				P
Pine Bend	N	S					A							S				P
Riley Trails	N	S	A				A							S				P
Riverside Park	A	S		S	A		A				A		A	S				P
Rosy Mound Natural Area	A	S	NF	S			A							S				A
Spring Grove Park	A	S	A	S	A	A	A		P						N	N		
Tunnel Park	A	S	S	S	A (2)		A	A	P	N						N	N	
Upper Macatawa Natural Area	S	S	A	S			A							A				P
Accessibility Ratio	13/20	17/20	7/8	14/16	11/11	4/4	16/17	5/5	6/7	3/5	2/3	1/2	3/4	14/14	0/2	0/5	1/3	12/14
A - All/Completely accessible																		
S - Meets Standards, improvements may be desired																		
P - Partially accessible - some improvements needed to meet current standards																		
N - Not currently accessible																		
NF - Element provided but compliance is Not Feasible																		

facilities are inaccessible. This does not mean that each and every nonconforming facility must be made accessible, but that all services, programs, or activities, when viewed in their entirety (i.e., system-wide) must be readily accessible to all potential users. A recognized acceptable level of effort to meet this test is that elements or facilities must be modified to meet the standards so that a minimum of one out of three of each type of element conforms to the standard. So, for example, if the county has six playgrounds in its system, two of them should meet the required standards. **Table 7.1** summarizes the results of the program access test for developed parks in Ottawa County based on comprehensive site reviews of each site found later in this chapter.

Although the chart indicates that Ottawa County has fulfilled the requirements of the program access test for most elements and activities, it is clear that basic improvements such as barrier-free parking must be provided at each site to meet both the letter and the spirit of the law. In addition, many accessibility improvements, although not required by current legislation, would be desirable additions to the park system. **Table 7.2** at the end of this chapter lists all recommended actions needed to meet regulatory requirements and those recognized as desirable but not necessarily required. This list serves as the current transition plan. Items that are required are given time frames for implementation while other desirable items will likely be pursued as opportunities become available such as nearby construction or renovation.

## **ASSESSMENT OF FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS**

The first comprehensive analysis of accessibility in the County Park System was conducted in 1993 by Park Staff. In the 1995 Ottawa County Parks Plan, a transition plan for compliance with the ADA was presented. The transition plan outlined recommendations with specific projects, costs and time frames for removing barriers from County Park facilities. Using the 1993 assessment as a reference, updated assessments and transition plans for existing facilities were completed in 1999 and again in 2004. This 2011 plan again updates the recommended improvements and transition plan based on current standards and existing park conditions.

### **Review by Park/Facility**

The following section consists of an assessment of developed park facilities to date. Parks are listed alphabetically. Barriers to accessibility are identified and summarized for each park and by activity type. While it is unlikely that every barrier to participation by disabled persons has been identified, it is hoped that this assessment can serve as a foundation leading to the development of a maximally accessible park system.

### **ADAMS STREET LANDING**

- **PARKING:** Gravel surface parking includes 16 spaces. A barrier-free parking sign needs to be added to designate one barrier-free space. The space should also be resurfaced to meet barrier-free requirements.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** An accessible crushed-stone path leads from the parking area to the river access point. A paved bike path is located along the street and traverses along the entire length of the site and connects to a paved path that goes under the Adams Street bridge over the Macatawa River on the southeast corner of the site. Long

term plans call for a paved trail to traverse the site and connect to the bridge underpass; however, it would be desirable to add a barrier-free walk connection to the paved portions of the path in the near future.

- **RIVER ACCESS:** A set of wood timber stairs leads from the end of the crushed stone path to the edge of the river. A more accessible route is not feasible due to the steepness of the river bank.
- **SEATING:** A backed bench is located along a barrier-free path.

### **CROCKERY CREEK NATURAL AREA**

- **PARKING:** Roadside parking is available on the end of the Wren Drive cul-de-sac. The surface is gravel and there is no designated barrier-free parking space. Master planning for this site has not been completed. Off-street and barrier-free parking issues will be addressed at that time.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** Natural surface trails lead from Wren Drive on to two trail loops that traverse a portion of the park. Barrier-free provisions will be addressed in the master planning process.
- **TRAILHEAD:** A kiosk with park trail information is located near the start of the trail loops. The sign should be updated to show accessibility information.

### **DEER CREEK PARK**

Deer Creek Park is a small 2-acre park in Polkton Township. Accessibility improvements have been made in the park, although significant limitations exist for disabled users. It was hoped to remedy several of these conditions in conjunction with a project to connect Deer Creek Park with the newly expanded Ripps Bayou project via a bridge over the Deer Creek. This project was determined to be prohibitively expensive and was delayed. Improvements in the shorter term should be considered.

- **PARKING:** The total capacity of the parking area is six cars and eight car/trailer spaces. One of the six car spaces is designated as an accessible space, although the surface of the entire parking area is gravel, which is not an acceptable accessible surface.
- **RESTROOMS:** Two pit toilets are provided which are constructed to meet accessibility guidelines. The path leading to the restrooms is a dirt and wood chip path which, although well compacted, does not meet accessibility guidelines.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** No hard surface pathways exist in the park to connect the parking lot to the principal use areas. Because the park is in a floodplain area, it was necessary to construct the restrooms on higher ground near the park entrance to comply with floodplain ordinances. Restroom users must traverse the gravel entrance drive to access the restrooms from the main use portion of the park.

- **PICNIC AREAS/STRUCTURES:** Several picnic tables are distributed throughout the park, none of which are located on hard surfaces. The transition plan for the park includes accessible pathways to the restroom with adjacent picnic areas.
- **BOAT LAUNCH FACILITY:** A small boat launch exists for access to Deer Creek and the Grand River. No dock is provided at this location and no particular facilities to aid the disabled are present. Signage should be added direct disabled users to accessible facilities at nearby Riverside Park.
- **FISHING AREAS:** Fishing is a popular activity along the banks of Deer Creek. Although the banks are relatively level, they are grass covered, and no hard-surface walkways or dock structures provide access to the water's edge.

### **EASTMANVILLE FARM**

- **PARKING:** Gravel surface parking is provided for both equestrians with vehicles and trailers and regular park visitors. Barrier-free spaces need to be added.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** Existing paths are grass surfaced. It would be desirable to add a hard-surfaced path to provide a barrier-free route to more areas of the site.
- **RESTROOMS:** A barrier-free pit toilet is provided. It is accessed via a crushed stone path from the equestrian parking area.
- **PICNIC AREAS:** Several picnic tables are distributed throughout the park, none of which are located on hard surfaces. Accessible routes should be added.
- **TRAILHEAD:** A kiosk with park trail and information is located in the equestrian parking area. Additional trail signage is located near the barn. Both areas of signage should be updated to show accessibility information.

### **GRAND RIVER PARK**

After being acquired from Georgetown Township in 1999, several modifications were made to the park facilities through an in-house construction project.

- **PARKING:** Total capacity is 86 spaces with seven signed accessible spaces. One space is van-accessible. Another parking area is located at the boat launch near the river. There are approximately five spaces for vehicle parking and approximately three spaces for vehicle/trailer parking.
- **RESTROOMS:** The restrooms are located at the south end of the picnic building and are accessible to persons with disabilities.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** The primary routes of travel to the picnic building, restrooms, drinking fountain, play area, fishing dock, trailhead, and limited trails are accessible to persons with disabilities via hard-surfaced paths. The majority of the trails

used for hiking and skiing are not considered to be within accessibility guidelines due to trail surfacing and terrain. However, there is about one half mile of hard-surfaced accessible trail located within the park, which allows visitors to experience portions of the park's natural area as well as primary destination points.

- **DRINKING FOUNTAINS:** There is a barrier-free drinking fountain on the south side of the picnic building.
- **TELEPHONE:** There is no public pay phone in the park.
- **PICNIC AREAS/STRUCTURES:** One picnic shelter exists which is accessible from barrier-free parking via a concrete walkway. The shelter is used by groups for picnics and other types of outings. Banquet-style tables are available which are accessible.

The majority of the picnic tables located in the park have accessible features. Two tables with concrete pads and accessible routes were added in 2009.

- **BOAT LAUNCH FACILITY:** The boat launch is a hard-surface area with ramps sloping down to and below the surface of the river. One dock is provided to assist boaters. The dock meets accessibility standards in width and has a ramp providing smooth access for wheelchairs and other mobility-impaired users.
- **PLAY EQUIPMENT:** Two play areas exist at Grand River Park. The older is a small play area located west of the picnic building which features a limited variety of equipment. Although this play area has safety surfacing which is considered accessible, the route of travel to this play area is over lawn, which is not considered accessible to persons with disabilities.

A barrier-free play area installed in 1999 features a play structure with a transfer station and swings. This play area is located along an accessible concrete walkway and has a concrete ramp from the walkway to the surfacing. This playground needs further evaluation to determine if it meets the latest standards.

- **FISHING AREAS:** Fishing is a popular activity along the shores of the lake and on the boardwalk, which goes over the lake. Although the boardwalk provides access to the water for persons with disabilities, the rail height limits accessibility. Modifications to the boardwalk railing for accessible fishing are included in the park's transition plan.
- **VIEW AREAS:** There is a deck near the boat launch that overlooks the Grand River which is accessible to persons with disabilities. Two viewing platforms overlooking wetlands within the park are not considered accessible, due to stairs leading to the raised decks.
- **TRAILHEAD:** A kiosk with park trail information is located adjacent to the parking area and is fully accessible. Information needs to be added describing trail widths, surface types, slopes and other accessibility features.

## **GROSE PARK**

A large park improvement project was completed in 2001 which addressed significant barriers that existed to disabled persons in the park prior to this project.

- **PARKING:** Parking improvements included a new barrier-free walk that makes it possible for people with disabilities to use the lower lot. Because of this, five barrier-free parking spaces are provided in this area. Three of these spaces will be van-accessible. A second lot is also barrier-free with 30 spaces and 2 spaces that are barrier free.
- **RESTROOMS:** A barrier-free restroom building took the place of the old inaccessible restroom building in the 2001 project. The restroom is located on a hard-surfaced pathway.
- **TELEPHONE:** There is no public phone at Grose Park.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** A complete barrier-free pedestrian circulation pathway connects to the majority of the park facilities. This includes access from parking locations to the restrooms, playground, picnic shelters, to the lower beach and sunbathing area and to a fully accessible fishing platform.

There is approximately one mile of unmarked pathways that wind through woodlands within Grose Park. The trail surfaces are dirt and no improvements exist for trail users in terms of surface preparation. There is access to natural areas (including a stream overlook deck) via hard surface paths.

- **DRINKING FOUNTAINS:** There is a wall-mounted barrier-free drinking fountain located near the entrance of the restroom building.
- **PICNIC AREAS/STRUCTURES:** There are two picnic shelters located in the park with barrier-free accessible routes. At the eight picnic tables located in the Lake Shelter, four accessible seating locations and a barrier-free grill are provided. Under the Forest Shelter, there are 15 permanent picnic tables with four accessible seats and one large accessible grill.

There are three accessible picnic areas adjacent to hard surface paths in the park, one of which has a grill. Barrier-free pathways enable disabled users greater access to the miscellaneous picnic areas throughout the park.

- **PLAY EQUIPMENT:** There are two barrier-free play areas in the park, which includes separated play areas for ages two to five and six to twelve. Both of these play areas are accessible from hard-surfaced walkways and have accessible surfacing. These areas need further evaluation to determine if they meet the latest standards.
- **SWIMMING AREA/SUNBATHING:** The swimming beach is a major destination within the park and is accessed from a hard-surfaced path that leads to a concrete patio bordering the beach. The sand beach has ramp access from the concrete patio.

- **GAME AND SPORTS AREAS:** Two horseshoe pits and one ball field are available within the park. Both types of facilities are located in grass areas and are not accessible by hard-surfaced pathways. However, both are located in relatively flat areas presenting few other access problems. There are two sand volleyball courts located near the Forest Shelter. Neither the ball field or volleyball courts are accessible due to their surfacing material. A hard-surfaced walk will provide access near the ball field and volleyball courts, which will enable viewing from an accessible surface.
- **VIEW AREAS:** The bluff overlooking the beach and Crockery Lake is an attractive viewing area. A hard-surfaced path leads to a deck that overlooks the lake from the existing bluff. This overlook deck provides an opportunity for persons with disabilities to view the lake from an accessible surface.
- **TRAILHEAD:** A kiosk with park trail information is located along a paved pedestrian path which is accessible; however, information about accessibility should be added.
- **SEATING:** Benches and other seating areas are located throughout the park along accessible routes.

## **HAGER PARK**

Hager Park is a heavily used facility which received improvements in 2004 to address accessibility issues.

- **PARKING:** Numerous parking lots exist throughout the park with a total of 198 parking spaces prior to the 2004 project. ADA requirements are met with six accessible parking spaces and all are signed and marked to conform to the ADA guidelines. In 2004, additional parking was provided at the Visitor Center in anticipation of additional reservable use. Nineteen spaces were added with one of them barrier-free. Also added were five new spaces (one barrier-free) in conjunction with a new restroom building near the Age of Discovery play area.
- **RESTROOMS:** Hager Park has four restroom facilities, two in the Visitor Center, one at the Picnic Building and a new restroom building built in 2004 near the Age of Discovery play area. This has become the park's primary restroom and meets all ADA requirements.

The restrooms located within the VanderLaan Room at the Visitor Center lack the size required to permit wheelchair access. Users of the VanderLaan Room have the option to use these restrooms or the accessible restrooms in the Visitor Center lobby.

A barrier-free unisex toilet was added to the Picnic Building that is accessible from hard-surfaced walkways to all users of the picnic building and surrounding areas.

- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** The existing hard-surfaced pathway system within Hager Park has been complimented in 2004 by an 8-foot wide bituminous path, creating a continuous loop from the northeast neighborhood to the Age of Discovery, past the picnic building and then over to the southeast neighborhood. With the Visitor Center as the focal point, park users can access the Age of Discovery Playground, the Park's most popular



destination, via a concrete walkway. The walkway connects to a ramp leading to the playground. From the Visitor Center, users can also access a quarter mile long accessible chips-and-fines pathway leading through the northern half of the park. Additional pathways through the north side are grass trails that do not meet accessibility standards. The woodland trail systems consists of dirt trails with numerous footbridges over streams within the park. Two of the bridges were replaced in 2004 to be barrier-free. Other bridges on the trails are not accessible and should eventually be replaced. With its dirt trails and inaccessible footbridges, the woodland trail system at Hager Park offers difficult access to disabled users.

- **DRINKING FOUNTAINS:** There are eight drinking fountains in Hager Park. One fountain is a wall-mounted unit located within the Visitor Center lobby. This fountain is accessible to wheelchair users using the side approach. The height of the fountain controls are 34" instead of the required 32" maximum. The second drinking fountain is located adjacent to the Age of Discovery Playground. This fountain is a cantilevered freestanding fountain designed to meet ADA guidelines; however, the surface surrounding the fountain exceeds slope requirements and therefore offers barriers to accessibility. In addition, due to the slope in front of the fountain, the height of the fountain is less than the 27" required from the ground to the underside of the fountain to provide knee space for wheelchair users. Because modifications were considered infeasible, a new cantilevered drinking fountain was installed immediately nearby to meet accessibility guidelines. This fountain is located on a flat surface adjacent to the walkway running along the parking lot. A wall-mounted fountain meeting ADA requirements was included on the restroom building built in 2004. Two drinking fountains are located on the south side of the park in grass areas which are not accessible by a hard-surface pathway. Both are pedestal style fountains which are accessible using the side approach by wheelchair users. However, both fountains are 1 1/2" higher than ADA guidelines. The sixth fountain is located within the picnic building and is a wall-mounted fountain. This fountain is at the correct height for wheelchair users employing the side approach. An additional fountain installed on the patio of the picnic building is the cantilevered type and is located on concrete surface and is fully accessible.
- **TELEPHONE:** Two public pay phones are available in the park. Both meet accessibility requirements. One is in the Visitor Center lobby and the other is on the new restroom building.
- **PICNIC AREAS/STRUCTURES:** Picnicking is a primary activity at Hager Park and extensive picnic facilities exist. One picnic shelter, the Maples Shelter, is located on the north side of the park. A hard-surfaced pathway connects the nearby accessible parking with the shelter. At the nine picnic tables in the shelter, four accessible seating locations are provided. One large group grill is accessible at the shelter on a hard surface but needs to be reoriented to allowed better access to wheelchair users. The gazebo at the Age of Discovery play area was replaced in 2004 with a new fully accessible shelter with two picnic tables, each including one wheelchair spot.

The Picnic Building has 16 picnic tables with eight accessible seating locations.

Of the picnic areas located throughout the park, only two tables are located on a hard surface and designed with adequate legroom for wheelchair users. These tables are located

along the walkway adjacent to the Age of Discovery Playground. Additional concrete was added to enlarge the existing concrete pads to meet accessibility guidelines for turning space. Of the nearly 100 additional picnic tables scattered throughout the park, none are located on hard surfaces, although many have accessible features to accommodate wheelchair users.

The VanderLaan and DeVries Rooms located within the Visitor Center are also used by large groups for picnics and other types of outings. Banquet-style tables are available which are accessible. The VanderLaan Room also features an accessible patio with two circular outdoor tables that are not accessible.

- **PLAY EQUIPMENT:** Two play areas exist at Hager Park. The oldest is a small play area located on the south side of the park, which features a limited variety of equipment located in a grass area with the ground cover being primarily wood chips. This play area offers few opportunities for participation by disabled users and is not accessible via a hard-surfaced pathway from the parking area.

The Age of Discovery Playground, constructed in 1992, is a large play area designed specifically to provide opportunities for persons of all abilities. Approximately 75% of the play structure surface is either boardwalk or a special engineered wood fiber (e.g., "Fibar") which is accessible by wheelchair users. The major limitation noted to the Age of Discovery Playground was the inaccessibility of the sand area which covers approximately 25% of the play area surface. Swings located here are not available elsewhere within the play area which limits opportunities to disabled users. Steps were identified in several areas within the playground which exceed the ADA riser height parameters of 4 to 7 inches.

The large terrain map of the United States, located to the north of the playground complex and considered a part of it, lacks accessible features due to its grass surface and crushed limestone border. No hard surface pathway exists to improve accessibility to this feature.

- **GAME AND SPORTS AREAS:** There are no developed sports areas within Hager Park.
- **SEATING:** Accessible benches are located in several areas of the park.

### **HEMLOCK CROSSING PARK**

This park in Port Sheldon Township was completed in 2004 and was designed to be barrier-free in every respect possible.

- **PARKING:** The parking lot at the restroom building has 75 parking spaces, of which four are barrier free and van accessible. There is a second small parking lot near the kayak launch in the park with ten parking spaces, two of which are barrier free and van accessible.
- **RESTROOMS:** The restroom building is located at the west end of the parking lot and is constructed with one barrier-free stall in each of the men and women's restroom. All other facilities meet ADA requirements. There is also an accessible vault toilet at the east end of the parking lot.

- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** There is a bituminous pathway that is approximately one mile long. It begins at the restroom building and winds through the woods and meadow in the park. It varies in width from 6 to 8 feet and offers an accessible route to a number of river overlooks and to the Hemlock Crossing boardwalk and bridge. Beyond the bridge, the trail reverts to an earthen surface with some wood-chip sections, and is not considered accessible. There is an 8-foot-wide concrete walk around three sides of the parking lot with ramps at the barrier-free parking locations. The walk provides an accessible route to the restrooms and picnic shelters. There is also an 8-foot-wide bituminous path that connects the main parking area, picnic shelters and restrooms to the kayak launch. The crushed stone path to the kayak launch is designed to be barrier free. The balance of the paths in the park are natural earth hiking and cross-county ski trails dotted with boardwalks and overlook decks. These trails are not constructed to be barrier free.
- **DRINKING FOUNTAIN AND TELEPHONE:** There is a double drinking fountain and a pay phone attached at ADA-specified heights on the front of the restroom building.
- **PICNIC AREAS/STRUCTURES:** There are two small picnic shelters accessed by a concrete path. Each shelter has two barrier-free picnic tables and one grill with appropriate accessibility space around it.
- **NATURE EDUCATION CENTER:** An 8000-square-foot building was constructed in 2009 to house nature interpretation, promote the park system, and other activities. The building is fully accessible.
- **SEATING:** Accessible benches are located in several areas of the park.
- **TRAILHEAD:** A kiosk is located along an accessible path. Signage should be updated describing trail widths, surface types, slopes and other accessibility details.

### **HISTORIC OTTAWA BEACH PARKS**

Several improvements have been completed in recent years at different locations within the Ottawa Beach Area. All improvements recognized accessible standards and were designed accordingly.

- **BLACK LAKE BOARDWALK:** Parking, walkways, picnic tables, benches, overlooks and a fishing pier are all fully accessible.
- **OTTAWA BEACH BIKE PATH:** A new separated paved path was constructed in 2008. Most areas of the path were designed to barrier-free standards, except for two locations where existing conditions related to adjacent properties and therefore could not be modified. Recently, through cooperation with the adjacent property owners, modifications to the path were completed, bringing the path slopes into compliance with barrier-free standards.
- **MT. PISGAH DUNE PROTECTION:** As with other dune properties with steep terrain, strict conformance to the standards was not feasible, however, maximum accessibility has been provided. The massive stairway leading to the dune top was constructed following barrier-

free design with low risers and wide treads. Accessible paths are provided where possible, and extensive signage directs patrons to alternative routes to access the overlooks and interpretive displays at the top of the dune. Signage in an accessible location displays pictures and interprets inaccessible portions of the site, including dune-top views.

- **HOLLAND HARBOR FISHING ACCESS:** Currently under construction, this project provides accessible parking and walkways to an extensive system of fully accessible boardwalks and fishing piers.
- **TRAILHEAD:** The trailhead at Mt. Pisgah is fully accessible and provides information describing access to various portions of the site.

### **KIRK PARK**

The assessment of Kirk Park has identified areas where accessibility improvements are needed. A basic limitation of this park relates to exceptionally steep terrain which limits accessibility to undeveloped areas.

- **PARKING:** Total capacity is 312 cars, which requires eight accessible spaces with one to be van accessible. Eight accessible spaces currently exist, but several are located on a slight slope, which is not fully acceptable under ADA guidelines. Two van accessible spaces are presently provided.

The Kirk Park Lodge was constructed prior to the ADA and therefore has accessibility limitations including door widths, restroom stall widths, and lack of a barrier-free access route. Although the ADA pertains primarily to new construction, it also applies to alterations of existing facilities and it is the Park Commission's philosophy to make its facilities as accessible as reasonably possible.

- **RESTROOMS:** Although the main park restrooms are generally accessible, a number of modifications are necessary. The width of the handicapped stall in both restrooms is too narrow to meet current ADA requirements, but it meets previous standards. The changing stalls are too narrow for wheelchair access and lack handrails.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** Hard surface pathways in the core of the park provide good accessibility to many of the key use areas. Signs are lacking, however, to direct disabled users to the most accessible routes. For example, two paved paths to the beach are provided, but one has a flight of stairs which is not evident at the beginning of the trail. Park users need to be made aware of these limitations at the trailhead.

Over two miles of woodchip paths, boardwalks and stairways wind through the rugged dunes in Kirk Park. Although accessibility limitations will always exist in many areas, the trail loop north of the main parking lot could be upgraded with improved surfacing to provide a moderately accessible route for mobility-impaired persons. A barrier-free asphalt walk connects the picnic shelter with the restrooms and separates vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

- **DRINKING FOUNTAINS/FOOTWASHES:** The park contains two drinking fountains. One cantilevered type fountain is located in the picnic area near but is not directly adjacent to an accessible path. An accessible pad still needs to be installed. A barrier-free cantilevered drinking fountain and foot wash were installed alongside the walk leading to the beach from the restrooms.
- **TELEPHONE:** A public pay phone exists in an accessible location and meets accessibility requirements.
- **PICNIC AREAS/STRUCTURES:** One picnic shelter exists which is accessible from the parking lot via an asphalt pathway. At the ten picnic tables in the shelter, four accessible seating locations are provided. One large accessible group grill is provided at the shelter.

The Kirk Park Lodge is used as a picnic building in the summer months. Of the eight picnic tables, two are accessible with two accessible seating locations provided. The slope of the route of travel to the Kirk Lodge exceeds the ADA requirements, and restrooms within the lodge do not meet accessibility guidelines.

Of the picnic areas located throughout the park, one is fully accessible with an accessible table and grill adjacent to barrier-free parking. Other accessible tables/grills are located on grass or other non-accessible surfaces but meet other ADA requirements.

- **PLAY EQUIPMENT:** Two separate play structures exist in the park. The play area located adjacent to the entrance drive is in a low area with steep banks and is therefore not accessible. The play area west of the picnic shelter has an engineered wood chip surface which is considered to be accessible. It is near an accessible path and shelter, however an accessible route into the play area is needed. The play equipment offers limited opportunities for participation by disabled children and should be replaced with a more accessible structure or equipment.
- **SWIMMING AREA/SUNBATHING:** Although accessible walkways lead to a waterfront viewing deck, a steep incline requiring stairs down the foredune prevents barrier-free access to the beach and water's edge. The stairs, combined with the loose sand beach, make access very difficult or impossible for mobility-impaired users. The amount of elevation change makes construction of a ramp impractical. The 1999 Guidelines recognize that often the natural environment will prevent full compliance with certain technical provisions in the Guidelines and allows for departures from the provisions if certain conditions exist. Mobility-impaired visitors seeking a beach experience should be directed with signage to North Beach Park, where accessible beach access is provided.
- **GAME & SPORTS AREAS:** Horseshoe pits are located near a hard-surface pathway. A moderate slope to the pits makes access possible, although the lack of a hard surface immediately surrounding the pits limits accessibility. When beach widths permit, a volleyball court is erected in the sand beach which is not accessible to mobility-impaired users.

- **VIEWING AREAS:** A viewing deck complete with interpretive displays is fully accessible on the Lake Michigan shoreline overlooking the beach. Other view areas are located along the trails in the steep dunes and are not accessible.
- **OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS:** The Kirk Park Lodge is used as an overnight camp facility for organized groups from fall through spring. Twenty-four bunks are installed on a seasonal basis for this purpose. As noted previously, the lodge facility has numerous accessibility limitations including narrow doorways, inaccessible restrooms and steep slopes leading to the building that need to be addressed.
- **SEATING:** Benches and other accessible seating are provided along accessible routes.
- **TRAILHEAD:** A central point for trail information is located at the restroom building. Additional signage to address accessibility issues should be provided.

### **NORTH BEACH PARK**

The primary attraction at this park, the beach, contains a hard-surface walkway, installed on a seasonal basis, providing access to the lower beach area near the water's edge. The trail and walkway to the dune overlook covers steep terrain and is not accessible. However, there is an additional accessible dune overlook deck with an interpretive display and adjacent barrier-free parking.

- **PARKING:** Total capacity is 187 cars which requires six spaces to be accessible with one to be van-accessible. Eight accessible spaces currently exist, two of which are van-accessible.
- **RESTROOMS:** Although generally accessible, a number of problems requiring modification were noted:
  - Signs are lacking to indicate handicap accessibility.
  - Entrance doors exceed resistance limits to open.
  - Accessible stalls are not marked with signs.
  - The width of the handicapped stall in both restrooms is too narrow to meet ADA, but meets previous standards.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** A 10-foot-wide concrete walk along the west side of the parking lot separates vehicles and beach users. The walkway serves as the core pedestrian circulation route connecting primary use areas. A seasonal boardwalk allows barrier-free access to the beach area. A steep walkway/trail up the large dune to the east of the parking lot lacks accessibility due to the steepness of the terrain and the necessity for stairs.
- **DRINKING FOUNTAINS/FOOTWASHES:** The park has two barrier-free drinking fountains and footwashes which are located on accessible surfaces. One of the fountains is located near the entrance of the restroom and is wall mounted. The other is located near the picnic shelter and is a cantilevered model. The footwashes are located near the drinking fountains. Both the drinking fountains and footwashes are fully accessible.

- TELEPHONE: A public pay phone exists in an accessible location and meets ADA requirements.
- PICNIC AREAS/STRUCTURES: One picnic shelter exists which can be accessed from the main park walkway. Of the 18 picnic tables in the shelter, four accessible seating locations are available, which meets current ADA standards. A large group grill serving the shelter is located on an accessible surface with the proper height and circulation for wheelchair users. Two barrier-free picnic sites have been added. These picnic sites include a barrier-free table, grill and trash receptacle and are accessible from the barrier-free walk along the west side of the parking lot.
- PLAY EQUIPMENT: The park has a barrier-free play area that features a rubberized tile surface which is accessible from the barrier-free walk along the west side of the parking lot. Because of sand, the swings are not accessible.
- SWIMMING/SUNBATHING AREAS: The seasonal barrier-free ramp/walkway described above makes it possible for people with disabilities to access the beach area. The ramp has two deck areas located along the ramp/walkway which make it possible to stop out of the main route of travel and to turn around. The ramps and decks are removed during the winter season because of the severe wind erosion which occurs.
- GAME & SPORTS AREAS: One volleyball court is provided in a sand area within close proximity of the park walkway.
- VIEW AREAS: As noted previously, the upper dune overlook is not accessible due to the steep terrain. There is a lower dune viewing area with an interpretive display that is fully accessible. Lake viewing is accessible from the picnic shelter and from the two decks alongside the accessible ramp/walkway.
- SEATING: Benches and other accessible seating area provided along accessible routes.

### **NORTH OTTAWA DUNES**

- PARKING: A parking area serving the North Ottawa Dunes property was developed in the adjacent Coast Guard Park, which is owned by the City of Ferrysburg. The bituminous paved lot contains 19 spaces. Two spaces meeting barrier-free requirements including signage are provided.
- PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL: The parking area is surrounded by barrier-free walkways connecting to picnic tables, the donor recognition plaza, trailhead sign, and nearby restroom.
- PICNIC AREAS/STRUCTURES: The trailhead area includes two picnic table pads which are along an accessible route and are barrier-free.
- SEATING: Benches are provided along accessible routes.

- **TRAILHEAD:** A kiosk is located at the main parking area. Additional signage to address accessibility issues should be provided.

### **PIGEON CREEK PARK**

Existing facilities at the park include the Pigeon Creek Lodge, a group camp area, and over 10 miles of trails used for hiking, skiing, biking, and horseback riding. The majority of the park facilities are accessible to people with disabilities.

- **PARKING:** The parking lot surface is gravel with parking capacity for an estimated 120 cars. The ADA guidelines call for five accessible spaces and four are currently provided. Two of these spaces are designated for van-accessibility. One accessible space should be added and should be signed.
- **RESTROOMS:** There are two accessible pit toilets in the park. One set is near the main parking lot and another is in the group camp area. Accessible restrooms are also available in the Pigeon Creek Lodge.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** Over 10 miles of trails for hiking, cross-country skiing, biking and equestrian use are located at the park. Hard-surfaced (chips and fines) pathways connect main use areas to the parking lots. Main use areas include the lodge building, picnic sites, trailhead, and sledding hills. Because of surfacing and terrain, the majority of the trail system is not fully accessible in terms of meeting all slope and surfacing requirements. However, approximately one mile of trail (constructed with stone chips and fines) is generally within barrier-free standards.
- **DRINKING FOUNTAINS:** A barrier-free drinking fountain is located within the lodge building. Access to this drinking fountain is limited to the hours the lodge is open. The only other water source within the park is a hand pump located on an accessible path which is located near the group camp area.
- **TELEPHONE:** One public pay phone exists near the east entrance to the lodge building which meets accessibility requirements.
- **PICNIC AREAS/STRUCTURES:** Although picnicking is not one of the main uses at the park, accessible facilities do exist for this use. The lodge building is available to reserve for various outings and contains seating for approximately 80 people. The lodge is fully accessible to people with disabilities. Adjacent to the lodge building is a concrete patio which contains four accessible picnic tables. East of the parking lot, there are three picnic areas which are fully accessible. The lodge and picnic areas are accessible from the parking lot with chips-and-fines pathways.
- **GROUP CAMPING:** Pigeon Creek Park has a reservable group camping facility which is accessible to people with disabilities. The group camping area contains barrier-free pit toilets, a hand water pump, a fire circle, picnic areas, and tent pads with transfer stations. There is a gravel parking lot with approximately 25 parking spaces but none of the spaces is currently signed as barrier-free. ADA guidelines require one space to be signed.



- **SEATING:** Benches are provided at various locations along accessible routes.
- **TRAILHEAD:** A kiosk is located near the lodge along a crushed stone path. Additional signage to address accessibility issues should be provided.

### **PINE BEND PARK**

Pine Bend Park is located at the far west end of the same property as Hemlock Crossing Park; this is the location of the historic Weaver House.

- **PARKING:** The parking lot is gravel with a total capacity of 64 cars. There is a 6-foot-wide concrete walk at the edge of the lot with two barrier-free ramps. The barrier-free parking locations will require signs in the future.
- **RESTROOMS:** There is a barrier-free vault toilet near the parking lot accessed from the concrete walk. ADA-compliant restrooms were added to the Weaver House as part of an improvement project completed in 2006.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** The concrete walk leads from the parking lot to a paved interpretive plaza with displays set at an appropriate viewing height. Other than those mentioned above, there are no accessible pathways in the park. The trails that lead to Hemlock Crossing are natural earthen paths for hiking and cross-country skiing. The renovation project for the Weaver House included a barrier-free concrete walk from the parking lot to the house and a wooden ramp to access the interior of the structure.
- **SEATING:** An accessible bench is provided at the interpretive plaza.
- **TRAILHEAD:** A kiosk is located near the parking area and along a concrete path. Additional signage to address accessibility issues should be provided.

### **RILEY TRAILS**

- **PARKING:** Thirty-nine spaces are provided in a gravel parking area. Two barrier-free parking spaces with signs and appropriate surface need to be provided.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** An accessible crushed stone path connects parking to the restrooms and to an accessible bridge over a portion of the nearby pond. The remaining trails on the site are natural surface.
- **RESTROOMS:** Two rustic toilets are provided that meet barrier-free requirements and are on a crushed-stone accessible path.
- **SEATING:** An accessible bench is provided along the crushed-stone path.
- **TRAILHEAD:** A kiosk is located near the parking area. Additional signage to address accessibility issues should be provided.

## **RIVERSIDE PARK**

Additions and renovations in 2008 addressed most barrier-free deficiencies.

- **PARKING:** There are three parking areas within the park: one is located near the entrance serving the western end of the park, a second serves the boat launch facility, and the last is on the far east side of the park serving the picnic shelter and riverfront. The west parking area has 12 paved spaces with an accessible space. The boat launch parking area has 43 car/trailer parking spaces and 16 car-only parking spaces. Three car parking spaces in this parking lot include two van-accessible spaces and one accessible car/trailer space. The eastern lot is newly constructed with 47 spaces, including two barrier-free spaces.
- **RESTROOMS:** Two pit toilets are provided adjacent to the boat launch parking lot. The restrooms are fully accessible. An accessible portable restroom is available seasonally at the east parking area.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** The boat launch area is connected to two of the parking lots and restrooms with asphalt pathways. Although not all of the paths meet slope requirements, fully accessible paths connect the parking areas to the boat launch, picnic tables, restrooms and other park areas. Another hard-surface pathway leads from barrier-free parking on the east end of the paved lot to the accessible fishing docks. An accessible path also connects the east parking area to the adjacent picnic shelter. Other park trails are natural surface and are not accessible.
- **PICNIC AREAS/STRUCTURES:** One picnic shelter is provided which is completely accessible, including a grill and serving table. At the eight picnic tables located under the shelter, four accessible seats are provided.

Two of the four picnic tables provided at the new western parking area are accessible. Several pedestal-based tables meeting accessibility standards are provided in other areas of the park, but they are not connected to hard-surface trails.

- **BOAT LAUNCH FACILITY:** The boat launch is a large, hard-surface area with concrete ramps sloping down to and below the surface of the water. Two docks are provided to assist boaters. Both docks meet accessibility standards in width, and both have ramps providing smooth access for wheelchairs and other mobility-impaired users.
- **FISHING AREAS:** Fishing is a popular activity along the banks of the large pond within Riverside Park and from the banks of the Grand River. Although there are many areas where grass extends to the Grand River water's edge at a gradual slope, no hard-surface walkways or docks provide accessible points for disabled anglers to approach the river.

There is a barrier-free boardwalk and fishing platform on the edge of the large pond within the park. These improvements are accessible to people with disabilities, with a hard-surface path leading from the parking lot where accessible parking exists.

- **VIEW AREAS:** Although no expansive overlooks exist within the park, viewing the Grand River from the riverbank is a popular activity. As noted previously, no hard-surface

pathways aid mobility-impaired users in gaining access to the riverfront. The park master plan illustrates a series of pathways linking elements throughout the park that will be barrier-free when implemented.

- **SEATING:** Benches are located in various locations along the riverfront. Accommodations should be made to add some accessible benches.
- **TRAILHEAD:** A kiosk is located near the picnic shelter parking area. Additional signage to address accessibility issues should be provided.

### **ROSY MOUND NATURAL AREA**

Completed in 2004, improvements to the Rosy Mound Natural Area presented unique opportunities and challenges from an accessibility standpoint. The Rosy Mound Natural Area is a 160-acre site featuring 3,400 feet of Lake Michigan shoreline and rugged and pristine coastal barrier dunes. Much of the site is regulated by Michigan's Sand Dune Protection and Management Act which regulates development in legally designated Critical Dune Areas.

When developing plans for the park, accessibility and compliance with the ADA was determined to be essential to the project, with recognition of the challenges created by the steep slopes and rugged natural terrain. Other challenges are created by the lack of approved ADA standards for outdoor recreation facilities. Recognizing these challenges, the *Accessibility Guidelines for Recreation Facilities & Outdoor Recreation Areas (1999)*, (1999 Guidelines) published by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) were utilized, and an Inclusive Recreation Consultant was hired to advise and assist with the project.

The unique characteristics of the barrier dunes between the parking area and Lake Michigan make it impracticable to make all of the trails fully accessible. The constructed elements east of the barrier dunes, however, comply with the ADA. Trails through the barrier dunes to the beach are not fully accessible due to the existence of stairs, but comply with the 1999 Guidelines. Stairs are constructed using ADA design standards, and all trail sections between stairs are fully accessible.

- **PARKING:** The parking lot at the restroom building and trailhead has a capacity of 49 vehicles. Two of the spaces are barrier-free: one located at the restrooms and one van-accessible space at the trailhead.
- **RESTROOMS:** The restroom building is located on the north side of the parking lot and is constructed with one barrier-free stall in each of the men and women's restrooms. All other facilities meet ADA requirements. There is also an accessible vault toilet on the west side of the restroom building for off-season use.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** The 1999 Guidelines recognize that often the natural environment will prevent full compliance with certain technical provisions of the recommendations and allow for departures from the provisions if certain conditions exist. The pathways east of the primary dune were designed to meet the 1999 Guidelines and are fully accessible. Because the surface is crushed stone, there is, however, a greater difficulty

factor than a paved trail such as that at Hemlock Crossing Park. As the trail leads to the beach, there comes a point where departures from the provisions were necessary due to the very steep existing grade and impact to the natural resources. The running slope of the trail gets steep and there are areas of wooden stairs. Whenever possible, the trail returns to meet the recommended technical provisions.

- **DRINKING FOUNTAINS AND TELEPHONE:** There is a drinking fountain on the west side of the restroom building that is fully compliant with the ADA. Currently there is no telephone at the park.
- **PICNIC AREAS:** There are three separate picnic areas surrounding the parking lot. None of the picnic nodes have shelter. All meet the circulation and height requirements of the ADA and all of the tables are approachable by wheelchairs at either end. The first picnic node has one table and no grill. The second has two tables and one grill and the last area has three tables and one grill.
- **SEATING:** Benches are provided along the crushed stone path.
- **TRAILHEAD:** A kiosk is located near the parking area. It is along a paved path and provides information about trail accessibility.

### **SPRING GROVE PARK**

Due to park improvements in 2000, Spring Grove Park has become much more user-friendly for those with disabilities.

- **PARKING:** The total capacity of Spring Grove Park is 90 spaces. ADA requirements are met with four accessible spaces, one of which is van-accessible.
- **RESTROOMS:** The park restrooms are located adjoining the picnic building and are fully accessible.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** A hard-surface pathway connects the parking lot to the picnic building, which is the primary destination within the park. Barrier-free bituminous paths connect the parking lot and picnic building to the wedding trellis and spring in the lower part of the park. This walk also provides access to the new barrier-free play area.

Destinations that lack accessible pathways include the extensive picnic areas located west of the picnic building, and older play equipment located on the south edge of the park. Another facility lacking access by hard-surface pathways is the ball field located on the park's far eastern end. Users are required to walk through the low area with the stream and spring to reach the ball field, requiring descending stairs and climbing a moderately steep slope.

- **DRINKING FOUNTAINS:** There is one drinking fountain located on a hard surface near the picnic building that meets accessibility requirements.

- **PICNIC AREAS/STRUCTURES:** As noted previously, the park contains a large picnic building that is accessible from the parking lot by a hard-surface pathway. At the 16 picnic tables within the picnic building, four accessible seating locations are provided. A new patio area on the east side of the picnic building provides additional barrier-free picnic opportunities for disabled persons.

As part of a previous transition plan, an outdoor picnic area with accessible surfacing was constructed in 2009.

- **PLAY EQUIPMENT:** A barrier-free play area is located along an accessible route of travel west of the Picnic Building and uses engineered wood fiber safety surfacing which meets barrier-free standards. The other, older play equipment located in the park offers few opportunities for disabled users and is not accessible via a hard-surface path.
- **GAME AND SPORTS AREAS:** Horseshoe pits are provided in a grass/dirt area which is not served by a hard-surface pathway. The ball field mentioned previously is not accessible via a pathway. The ball field contains a grass or dirt surface with no accommodations for disabled users.
- **OTHER:** A trellis that can be used for weddings or other activities was constructed in 2000 along with other improvements to the spring area that make the lower part of the park accessible.

## **TUNNEL PARK**

Tunnel Park has undergone many accessibility improvements since 1989. The assessment highlights those areas where additional improvements are required. Overall, the park is fairly accessible with the exception of the beach. As with other Lake Michigan beaches, the steep slopes associated with waterfront dune formations limit accessibility.

- **PARKING:** Total parking capacity, not including the overflow area, is 270 cars; this capacity requires seven accessible spaces with one to be van accessible. Seven accessible spaces currently exist, including two at each picnic shelter and three at the restroom/concession area. Two van-accessible spaces are presently provided.
- **RESTROOMS:** A major renovation to the restroom building in 2007 provided for full barrier-free features including a new family restroom and changing areas.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** Hard-surface pathways in the core of the park provide barrier-free access to most of the key use areas. Exceptions are the dune top, which is accessible only by long stairways, and the beach, where steep slopes and sand limit accessibility. It should be noted that old wood stairways were recently replaced. The new stairs meet ADA tread and riser ratios and have appropriate railings to maximize access.
- **DRINKING FOUNTAINS/FOOT WASHES:** Tunnel Park contains two pedestal-type drinking fountains. One is located on the patio in front of the restroom building. The second fountain is located on a hard-surface path near the playground.

Tunnel Park also has two barrier-free foot washes, which are located near the restrooms along the walk that leads to the beach.

- **TELEPHONE:** A public pay phone exists in an accessible location and meets accessibility requirements.
- **PICNIC AREAS/STRUCTURES:** Two picnic shelters in the park are both fully accessible by asphalt pathways. Of the nine picnic tables provided in each facility, four accessible seating locations are provided. One large group grill is provided on a hard surface adjacent to each shelter with the proper height and circulation requirements for use by a person in a wheelchair.

Two picnic areas away from the shelters have a barrier-free table and grill on an accessible surface. In addition, numerous pedestal-base accessible picnic tables are located in grass areas near accessible parking.

- **PLAY EQUIPMENT:** A large children's playground and adjoining dune climb are located along a hard-surface pathway. A barrier-free area with rubberized surfacing makes the play structure accessible to people with disabilities. Other play equipment located in the playground is not accessible due to the sand surfacing. A steep slope and sand also make the dune climb inaccessible to persons with disabilities.
- **SWIMMING AREA/SUNBATHING:** Although accessible walkways lead to viewing areas of the beach, as with the other dune parks, the steep incline requires stairs to access the beach/waterfront, which presents a significant barrier to disabled users.
- **GAME AND SPORTS AREAS:** Four volleyball courts are located in a grass area on the north side of the park. No hard-surface pathways provide access to the courts for spectators or users. They are sand courts, which have limitations for use by persons with disabilities.
- **VIEW AREAS:** A viewing deck is fully accessible on the Lake Michigan shoreline overlooking the beach. The other prime view area, located on the dune top, is not accessible due to steep stairways.

### **UPPER MACATAWA NATURAL AREA**

- **PARKING:** Two crushed stone parking areas are provided, serving the southwestern portion of the site off from 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the northwestern portion of the site from 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Each lot contains 34 spaces and provides two marked barrier-free spaces with ramps to the accessible paths.
- **PATHWAYS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL:** Paved accessible paths lead from the 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue parking area to the nearby wetland overlooks and to the bridge over Dutchman's Creek. From the 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue lot, a half-mile paved bicycle and pedestrian path leads to a seating and overlook area on top of a bluff overlooking the Macatawa River valley. Although the elevation change is significant, this trail was carefully designed to meet barrier-free standards for trail slopes. The remaining trails in the park are natural surface.

- **PICNIC TABLES:** Three permanent picnic tables are provided at the 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue entrance, one of which is accessible and along an accessible route. Similarly, one of three tables at the 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue entrance is accessible.
- **OVERLOOKS:** As mentioned above, barrier-free overlooks are provided which are accessible from both parking areas.
- **TRAILHEAD:** Kiosks are provided along accessible paths at both parking locations. Additional signage to address accessibility issues should be provided.
- **SEATING:** Accessible benches are provided in various locations along the paved paths.

## **PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS**

As noted previously in this document, the Parks and Recreation Commission offers a variety of programs and special events within the park system. In addition to physical access, program accessibility is an important part of responding to ADA and other accessibility requirements.

A basic consideration in the provision of programs is the physical location for the activity and the accessibility of that particular area or facility. Whenever possible, accessible County facilities are used for program locations. Equally important are the methods of advertising, registration procedures and adaptive aides or techniques used to accommodate people with various disabilities. Adequate staff training is needed to become familiar with the ways of accommodating different disabilities.

The Parks and Recreation Commission should review its program advertising and registration procedures to ensure that they do not discriminate against persons with disabilities. Training should be provided to educate staff regarding ways to accommodate various disabilities. As the Commission's program offerings are expanded, additional staff education should be provided to ensure that new program offerings are designed to be accessible to all people.

## **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS & COSTS**

**Table 7.2** details modifications required throughout the County Park System to meet compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition, cost estimates have been added for each modification required.

Table 7.2 only covers costs associated with facility modifications, and does not identify costs associated with staff training and related costs required to meet ADA program and administrative compliance. These costs will be absorbed in the Parks Commission's annual operating budget which includes funds for employee training and conferences.

As stated previously, final guidelines for ADA accessibility relating to outdoor recreation areas and facilities have not yet been approved and adopted. The recommendations and costs outlined in this report are intended to bring the County Park System into compliance with known ADA requirements. Additional review will be required following the release of new guidelines which may identify further modifications and additional costs.

**Table 7.2 ADA Transition Plan/ Facility Modifications List**

ACCESSIBILITY PROJECT LIST					
Park Name (Developed Parks Only)	IMPROVEMENT PROJECT	REQUIRED	DESIRED	Year	Cost/Comments
Adams Street Landing	Add barrier-free parking surface and sign	X		2011	\$500
	Add barrier-free walk connection to paved trail		X		
Crockery Creek Natural Area	Add barrier-free parking surface and sign		X		After Master Plan
	Add barrier-free trail segment		X		After Master Plan
	Add accessibility information to trailhead	X		2012	\$200
Deer Creek Park	Add barrier-free parking surface	X		2011	\$500
	Add information about alternate launch site	X		2011	\$100
	Add barrier-free walk to picnic tables	X		2012	\$750
	Add barrier-free walk to restroom		X		With future improvements
Eastmanville Farm	Add barrier-free parking surface and signs	X		2011	\$1,200
	Add barrier-free picnic tables	X		2013	\$750
	Add barrier-free trail segment		X		With future improvements
	Add accessibility information to trailhead	X		2012	\$200
Grand River Park	Modify boardwalk railing for fishing	X		2011	\$1,000
	Upgrade playground		X		
	Add accessibility information to trailhead	X		2012	\$200
Grose Park	Add barrier-free walks to sports activities	X		2013	\$2,000
	Upgrade playground to add accessible features		X		
	Add accessibility information to trailhead	X		2012	\$200
Hemlock Crossing/Pine Bend	Add accessibility information to trailhead	X		2012	\$200
Historic Ottawa Beach Parks	Continue to follow ADA design				No projects required
Kirk Park	Add signage to direct users to accessible beach route	X		2011	\$100
	Add accessible pad for drinking fountain	X		2011	\$500
	Add accessibility information to trailhead	X		2012	\$200
	Add barrier-free trail segment in backdune		X		
	Upgrade playground including accessible route	X		2014	\$35,000
	Upgrade Lodge including accessible route		X		
North Beach Park	Upgrade restroom stalls and signage		X		
North Ottawa Dunes	Add barrier-free trail segment		X		
	Add accessibility information to trailhead	X		2012	\$200
Pigeon Creek Park	Add barrier-free parking surface and sign	X		2011	\$600
	Add accessibility information to trailhead	X		2012	\$200
Pine Bend	Add barrier-free parking surface	X		2011	\$500
	Add accessibility information to trailhead	X		2012	\$200
Riley Trails	Add barrier-free parking surface and signs	X		2011	\$600
	Add accessibility information to trailhead	X		2012	\$200
Riverside Park	Add barrier-free walkway along riverfront		X		
	Add accessible benches		X		
	Add accessibility information to trailhead	X		2012	\$200
Rosy Mound Natural Area	Modify barrier-free trail surface				No projects required
Spring Grove Park	Add barrier-free walks to horseshoes, ball field		X		With Phase II Improvements
Tunnel Park	Upgrade playground		X		Scheduled for 2011
	Add barrier-free walks to volleyball, horseshoes	X		2013	\$1,500
Upper Macatawa Natural Area					No projects required