

Town of Arlington

FINAL REPORT

ADA Self-Evaluation (as basis for Transition Plan)

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December 15, 2014



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Water-Based Sports

The Arlington Reservoir Beach programs are, at this time, largely inaccessible due to structural accessibility barriers within program areas. Programs include seasonal beach tags for families and individuals; and certified (American Red Cross) swimming lessons. The Beach programs are site specific and this location is also an important place for local social gatherings and neighborhood bonding. Families and small groups can rent program areas for seasonal birthday party rentals.⁴ Families and individuals can purchase a beach tag to enjoy community gatherings, such as a Moonlight Beach Party Benefit co-sponsored by the Arlington Recreation Department and the Arlington Parks Alliance.⁵ The Beach is also used for the Summer Exploration Club swims (ages 10 - 14).

At this time, the Department has already been gathering feedback to inform the scoping of capital improvements at Reservoir Beach. IHCD would like to commend the inclusion of an accessible route from the parking facility along Lowell to the beach; other improvements are also included that will improve the quality of structural accessibility conditions at beach programs. Part B uses the Reservoir Beach as a case study for recommendations on how to use site management procedures to prevent non-complying alterations.

⁴ http://www.arlingtonma.gov/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_Recreation/birthdays/resbirthdays ⁵ "The Arlington Parks Alliance is made up of representatives from the community and local Friends groups that work collaboratively to assist the Park and Recreation Commission's efforts to preserve, protect, restore and enhance the 27 parks and playgrounds in Arlington. *For more information about the Arlington Parks Alliance (APA), contact www.arlingtonparks.org."*
http://www.arlingtonrec.com/info/activities/program_details.aspx?ProgramID=29060 ⁶ The U.S. Access Board has a number of online guides available, see: <http://www.accessboard.gov/attachments/article/589/boating.pdf> AND <https://www.dnr.sc.gov/marine/NERR/present/accessibility/RecreationalBoatingFacilitiesFishingPiersPlatforms.pdf>
Where public information is disseminated about this program, an accurate description of the accessibility conditions at these programs should be included in public information as a standard operating procedure.

Walking Trails

Within this inventory, at least nine facilities include walking trails that were re-graded and paved within the past decade, resulting in excellent programmatic additions to the Department's unique offerings. These include access to natural beauty and quiet places off the beaten path and close to water's edge at ponds, brooks, marshy and woody areas, large open grassy fields and beaches. Where there is no accessible pathway off the interior walkways leading to these programs, we find picnic tables, gardens, benches, and play areas out of accessible reach, because ground surfaces are grassy rather than smooth, or contain surface materials which do not maintain stable grades and consistent firm, level and slip-free surfaces. Specific to walking surfaces, the U.S. Department of Interior National Park Services Office of Civil Rights finds pea gravel and other small particle surfaces to not meet the requirements for firm, stable and slip-resistant surfaces.¹

¹ See recent U.S. DOI Civil Rights Directive: Policy for Implementing a Public Civil Rights Program, June 25, 2009. This is online at: <http://www.doi.gov/pmb/eeo/directives/upload/PCR-CR-2009-01.pdf> ⁸

As the Recreation Department and Park and Recreation Commission continue to manage Capital Improvement projects in collaboration with other Commissions and engaged resident stakeholders, some of these beautiful and large parks will continue to be developed with secondary and additional paths. The Department is advised to become familiar with the Federal standards for Outdoor Developed Areas, which address access to trails, picnic and camping areas, viewing areas, beach access routes and other components of outdoor developed areas. While these requirements are not yet requirements for Title II entities, there is continuing movement in that direction. More information regarding The U.S. Access Board standards for Outdoor Developed Areas is included in Part D – Appendices.⁸ There are also excellent guidance resources on Recreational Trail Program development from the Federal Highway and Department of Transportation’s accessibility pages.⁹ Please see further discussion on outdoor facilities (passive recreational facilities, walking trails) in Part A - Executive Summary, findings by program type in Part B, and the element-by-element surveys and recommendations in Part C - Evaluation of Facilities.

Where public information is disseminated about this program, a best practice recommendation is to include links to information rating trail difficulties, and providing trail measurements and accessibility conditions, where such information has been compiled as part of the site management, development of shared-use paths, and existing conditions evaluations completed during the design phase of trail and shared-use path improvements. The Department is encouraged to evaluate existing conditions as a standard operating procedure during the planning and scoping phase of Capital Project management practices.²

Community Gardens

There is also the Wildlife habitat garden area between the Reservoir Trail and the back entry to Hurd Field. Although the intent was to make the Habitat garden accessible, the effort has not yet succeeded. This excellent effort involved a Town Department working with local stakeholders and resulted in two re-graded areas – the Meadow and the Shade Gardens. As stakeholders continue developing this community and environmental educational asset, there should be considerations for bringing the signage closer to a level graded area; and planning for at least one least steep pathway, perhaps with a natural materials fence or half-wall to enable a larger involvement of residents with disabilities who are gardeners and may be gifted and interested in environmental stewardship of the natural assets around the Arlington Reservoir.

The Learning Garden, Wildlife Habitat and Community Garden programs hold the potential to exploit the wind and water along with the land as they continue to be designed and developed. Where public information is disseminated about this program, an accurate description of the accessibility conditions at these programs should be included in public information as a standard operating procedure.

Off-Leash Dog Recreation Programs

<http://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/recreation-facilities/outdoor-developed-areas> ⁹
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/guidance/accessibility_guidance/

² This practice can also inform the Department's collaboration with the State when reviewing and improving the Town's asset management of Arlington's Minuteman Trail links. For resources please see <https://www.imba.com/resources/maps/trail-difficulty-ratings>

In the Spring of 2010, the Town residents approved a by-law to allow off-leash dog walking at certain parks. Thirteen facilities in the survey have off leash walking hours in the early morning. Since then, an Off-Leash Recreation Area (OLRA) was developed adjacent to Thorndike Field.

Program accessibility issues involve information, communications and physical access. Signage along paved walkways is not uniformly at an accessible height and not consistently approachable along an accessible route. Communications issues also involve the need to provide information for how to request OLRA and Off-Leash Dog Walking hours in alternate formats. In conversations with the Department Director and Park and Recreation Commission members, it is clear that consideration for how to better enable individuals using Service Dogs to take advantage of this excellent recreational opportunity is an emerging focus issue. Other recommendations include providing a smooth ground surface for the interior walkway in the Thorndike OLRA; this will solve issues regarding ease of maneuvering these paths, and help eliminate tripping and tumbling risks associated with small particle ground surface materials. The Thorndike OLRA requires accessible walking surfaces and other components of accessible routes to be provided as a crucial part of the mitigation plan for these programs; these physical condition standards apply to the routes from public transit, nearby streets and sidewalks, and municipal parking facilities that support the implementation of these public programs. In addition, details such as the provision of clear, level space and seating locations for individuals using wheeled mobility devices, canes, etc. will ensure that integrated seating amenities and social opportunities are provided around park trees and at bench locations.

Parking Facilities

The survey also included off-street parking facilities supporting the programs and functions at 16 facilities. Most parking facilities provide an adequate number of accessible parking spaces and access aisles (stripped areas alongside accessible parking spaces) with compliant widths and lengths; however, slopes of parking space access aisles and adjoining crosswalk areas are excessive. Accessible route connections between accessible parking spaces and the points of entry to the facility they serve have excessive cross and run slopes, inaccessible curb ramps and sidewalks, uneven ground surface issues; and, in some cases were missing. Recommendations for parking facilities by program type are grouped in Part A - Executive Summary of Facilities, Structural Accessibility section. ; Detailed facility survey reports along with overall facility recommendations for these sites are provided in Part C - Evaluation of Facilities.

Playgrounds

Many playgrounds were constructed or altered since the ADA Architectural Standards became effective with the 1990 ADA Standards in January 26, 1992. In particular, the Locke School Park and Playground renovations, completed around 2004, achieved excellent consistency with program accessibility objectives and this facility now requires only minor modifications to continue being a lovely and intimate neighborhood place that offers inclusive leisure and play opportunities combined with pleasantly landscaped shady and sunny areas.

The majority of playgrounds had the following two issues at one or more play areas:

1. A border fully encloses the play area which creates a change in level between inside and outside the play area. Therefore, there is no independent accessible entry/exit opening or accessible route between play areas and the rest of the facility areas, elements and amenities.
2. Play areas have inaccessible ground surfaces, including uneven slopes, lack of accessible cross slopes, holes, protrusions, and depressions. In general, this is found where loose fill surface materials are utilized. These materials have been found to require high maintenance and frequent replenishment to maintain accessible slopes. In addition, studies have proven that loose fill materials are not easy for wheeled mobility users to move around in.

Those repeated issues apply to the following 14 playground locations:

- Bishop Field: two play areas;
- Buzzell Field: one play area;
- Crosby School / Tennis Courts: one large play area;
- Cutter School / Reinhart Park: one play area;
- Gibbs Gym: two play areas adjacent to school and open to public after school hours;
- Reservoir Beach: three play areas;
- Magnolia Park: one play area;
- Menotomy Rocks Park: one play area;
- Parallel Park: one play area;
- Parmenter: one play area;
- Pheasant Avenue Park / Greeley Playground: one play area;
- Poet's Corner: one play area;
- Robbins Farm: two play areas plus Long Slide (entry to Slide is not accessible);
- Spy Pond Park: one play area;
- Waldo Park: two play areas.

Recommendations, without much difficulty or expense:

- 1) Add an accessible entry/exit to each recessed or sandy play area within facility by installing a ramped entry or a level entry to both recessed playground. Project completion objectives should include:

Each play area will be connected to at least one accessible walkway that connects with other park and playground programs and amenities, including benches, picnic areas, other sports activities, and at-grade entrances to facility.

- 2) Provide an accessible Route within play area using one or both of the following methods:

- a) Using high-frequency maintenance programs as a method of achieving program access. If only loose fill ground surface materials are used, implement a high-frequency maintenance program to ensure accessibility of ground surface materials through all seasons.
- b) Using replacement of ground surface materials as a method of achieving program access. If ground surface materials will be replaced: consider adding unitary surface materials within the playground areas to provide accessible routes and clear ground spaces to all entry/exit points of ground play elements, including swingsets, play structure transfer station, and ground play elements.

Regardless of which method is used, Play Area Accessible Route Project completion objectives should include:

Each accessible play element and composite play structure element will be connected to all other accessible entry and exit points within the play areas; and will be linked with all other program areas, elements and amenities (including benches, picnic areas, portable toilets, drinking fountains, spectator areas, team playing areas, team meeting areas) in addition to the facility's at-grade entrances.

Parking Facilities

Most parking facilities provide an adequate number of accessible parking spaces and access aisles with compliant widths and lengths; however, cross slopes of parking space access aisles and adjoining crosswalk areas are excessive. Accessible route connections between accessible parking spaces and the entry points of the facility they serve were found to have excessive cross and run slopes, inaccessible curb cuts and sidewalks, uneven ground surface issues which results in unusable and inaccessible facilities.

Findings:

The following parking facilities did not include marked accessible spaces and access aisles, where at least one accessible space with access aisle is required at a location as near as is practicably possible to the facility programs:

- Buck Field / Hill's Hill (Sports Complex);
- Pheasant Avenue Park / Greeley Playground;
- Reservoir Beach;
- Summer Street Park.

Recommendations, without much difficulty or expense:

- Install the required parking signs;
- Provide at least one van-accessible space closest to the combined facility entrance;

Recommendations, Capital Project:

- Construct an accessible route, including curb ramp, joining accessible parking spaces to the sidewalk route leading to the ballfield bleachers, team clubhouse, and dugout areas.
- Connect all programs, such as the playground and picnic areas, perimeter of field playing areas, bleachers inside the facility, and all field gates inside facility with the exterior accessible route from accessible parking space(s) to the combined facility entrance;
- Re-grade parking area to not exceed 1:48 cross slope in all directions.

Prioritizing Accessibility Modifications – Recommended Order of Considerations:

This ADA Compliance Study was contracted by the Town's Recreation Department and Park and Recreation Commission in order to prepare a Self-Evaluation that will be the basis of an ADA Transition Plan in order for the Department and Commission to create a planning and budgeting strategy to comply with the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), including modifications made by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008; and incorporating the scoping and technical requirements as set forth in the 2010 ADA Standards for non-compliant existing facilities that will be altered and for new construction.

The Department of Justice provides a non-exhaustive list of considerations for determining program access priorities where a similar program may be offered at multiple sites. Such factors include: The size of the public entity, the particular program features offered at each site, the geographical distance between sites, the travel times to the sites, the number of sites, and availability of public transportation to the sites. Additional factors specific to existing accessibility conditions include²¹:

- Availability of accessible pedestrian routes to the playgrounds;
- Ready availability of accessible transportation;
- Comparable amenities and services in and surrounding the play areas;
- Size of the playgrounds;
- Sufficient variety in accessible play components within the playgrounds.

Recommended priority considerations are tailored to assist the Recreation Department and Park and Recreation Commission in developing large and smaller capital improvement projects in order for the Department and the Town to achieve its program accessibility objectives under Title II of the ADA. The development of this plan is part of the Town and Department's ADA administrative mandates²². Specifically, the Department is required to complete an ADA Self Evaluation (this report) as a prerequisite to developing what is known as the ADA Transition Plan. The ADA transition plan must include a schedule for providing access features, including curb ramps for walkways.²³ The transition plan will accomplish the following four tasks:

- Identify physical obstacles in the public agency's facilities that limit the accessibility of its programs or activities to individuals with disabilities;
- Describe in detail the specific corrective action that will be used to make the facilities accessible;

- Specify the schedule for taking the steps necessary to upgrade pedestrian access to meet accessibility requirements in each year following the transition plan;
- Indicate the official responsible for implementation of the plan by name.

²¹ These factors were suggested by individuals with disabilities who provided user-expert comments to the Department of Justice after reviewing the draft regulations and prior to their adoption.

²²²²

Please see Part B- Evaluation of Program Policies, Practices and Procedures for further discussion of the Department's 5 administrative mandates, including the ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan ²³ 28 CFR §35.150(d)(2) Also see Part A, Legal Requirements-- Joint Requirements, DOJ and DOT, Street & Road Resurfacing. Using the results from this ADA Self-Evaluation as a foundation, the Department and Commission must develop the Transition Plan through an iterative process involving public meetings and in concert with all associated stakeholders.

Programs must be offered in a manner that is congruent with the principles of Title II of the ADA. The ADA's program accessibility requirement is to make each of the programs, *services, and activities, when viewed in their entirety*, readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. *Each of the programs, services, and activities when viewed in their entirety* is the phrase that qualifies the analysis of program accessibility requirements.

In achieving program accessibility compliance, the Recreation Department is obligated to conduct the inspection of facilities in order to assess to what extent the structural and communications accessibility standards are being met to ensure the achievement of program accessibility standards.

Suggested order of Priorities

Under those overarching Title II requirements, the program³ analysis can be categorized and combined in various ways, depending on the Department's overall needs and objectives against the backdrop of the Department's and Commission's legal obligations and responsibilities. IHCD analyzed the Department's programs as a whole, then the programs being offered at each facility as a whole, and then the separate programs being offered at each facility within the context of transportation and neighborhood. This analysis yielded the following six categories in order of suggested priorities:

- 1) Unique Programs which are associated with revenue and registration;
- 2) Unique Programs which may or may not be associated with fees, but are public programs not duplicated elsewhere within the Department's facility portfolio;
- 3) Facilities which include programs managed and overseen by the Recreation Department in collaboration with other Town Departments;

³ For purposes of simplicity, the term "programs" will be used in this section to cover the Department's ADA program obligations pertaining to programs, services, activities, events, opportunities, benefits, aids, and assistance that are named in Departmental information as being provided to the public by Arlington Recreation. The information that was reviewed included the publicly disseminated seasonal brochures, the Town of Arlington Recreation Department website at <http://www.arlingtonma.gov>, and the Arlington Recreation Activities information at <http://www.arlingtonrec.com>

- 4) Programs which offer unique location-specific elements that are not duplicated at other similar programs;
- 5) Programs that are provided at locations that also offer multi-modal transportation options;
- 6) Programs within areas of Town that would be underserved with regards to that particular program if the residents were not provided proximate availability of that program.

Prioritized facilities listed below require mitigation of program barriers; have programs that are site specific (i.e., cannot be relocated without altering the fundamental nature of the programs being provided on that site); can solve some or all of these issues with minor or major accessibility renovations; and also include portions that are considered noncomplying elements because they were constructed or altered not in accordance with the Federal and/or State standards in effect at the time of construction.:

1) Unique programs which are associated with revenue and registration

The following facilities provide fee-based and rental opportunity programs; and the Department collects applicant and registration information from individual participants and non-municipal agencies, organizations, and teams. Along with the necessary structural and communications modifications to ensure that these programs are provided in a minimally accessible manner, the Department must also ensure that accurate information regarding accessibility features (or not) is provided up front so that participants and rental organizations can determine if these programs are currently *readily available*:

- Ed Burns Arena and Sports Complex (includes Summer Street Park / Buck Field / Hill's Hill);
- Gibbs Gym;
- Spy Pond Park;
- **Reservoir Beach.**

2) Facilities that include programs managed and overseen by the Recreation Department in collaboration with other Town Departments

Outdoor Facilities:

- W.A. Peirce Fields: Baseball, Football, Field Hockey, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Outdoor Track, Cross Country;
- **Reservoir: Cross Country;**
- Buzzell Field: Softball;
- Crosby School / Tennis Courts: Tennis (Boys, Girls)
- Wellington Park: Tennis (Boys, Girls)
- Dallin School Field: Lacrosse;
- Lussiano Field: Baseball, Softball;

- Spy Pond Field: Baseball, Soccer;
- Thorndike Park & Magnolia Field – Soccer (Boys, Girls), Lacrosse;
- Summer Street Park – Baseball, Field Hockey.

3) Programs that offer unique location-specific elements that are not duplicated at other similar programs

- Florence Park: model accessible playground, zip line, accessible game table;
- **Hurd Field**: parking facility outdoors lights, **connection with trails and beach**;
- Summer Street Park: intergenerational play area, fitness route;
- Wellington Park.

4) Programs within areas of Town that would be underserved with regards to that particular program if the residents were not provided proximate availability of that program.

Examples of such proximity issues include areas where subsidized housing is offered to distinct types of underserved populations, including low-income older residents, and individuals with disabilities. For example, Cusack Terrace, a housing development specifically for older and disabled residents, is located near Buzzell Field and facilities along the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway trails. The Drake Village Complex is another such example, and is located near **Hurd Field / Reservoir** and the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway trails.

The analysis of suggested priorities 6) and 7) are also based upon neighborhood proximity. For example, when choosing which playground to renovate next, the Department may look at the portfolio while considering which neighborhoods are not currently being served by accessible playgrounds.

Facilities in Arlington Heights (9 total):

- McClennen Park;
- Peirce School Park;
- **Reservoir Beach**;
- Hurd / Reservoir;
- Locke School Playground;
- Ottoson Field / Crusher Lot;
- Florence Avenue Park;
- Hibbert Street Park;
- Poet's Corner.

Legal Overview

The Town of Arlington is obligated by both Federal and State laws and codes concerning the rights of people with disabilities in the daily provision of programs, services, and activities. This 'Legal Overview' offers a brief explanation of Federal and State Obligations:

Federal Obligation: American with Disabilities Act

Based on the 1964 Civil Rights Act and expanding upon the obligations of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, the ADA prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. The ADA provides civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those afforded to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. The cornerstone of Title II of the ADA, which applies to state and local governments, is clear: no qualified person with a disability may be excluded from participating in, or denied the benefits of, the programs, services, and activities provided by state and local governments because of a disability. The ADA defines a disability as⁴:

- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (i.e. working, talking, hearing, seeing, caring for one's self);
- Having a record of a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- Being regarded by others as having an impairment such as individuals with severe facial scarring.

Following the passage of the ADA, the Department of Justice issued the 1991 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (ADA Accessibility Guidelines – ADAAG) to address physical access to facilities and transportation. These standards were based almost exclusively on the US Access Board's guidelines. In 1994, slight technical amendments were made. Then in 2004, after years of public comment, the US Access Board issued new guidelines that were promptly adopted by US Department of Transportation and other federal agencies. But only in 2010 did the Department of Justice issue a revised and updated ADA Standard called the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (2010 ADA Standards) that would apply to all Title II and Title III entities. These standards revised requirements for policies such as ticketing and service animals, and for physical elements such as assembly seating, established construction tolerances for certain elements and formalized long-standing guidelines for docks, fields, pools, and other recreational facilities.

While the Recreation Department did not provide IHCD with information about the dates of alterations, it is clear that the Town has undertaken renovations to facilities after the passage and enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1991. Newly constructed or altered facilities or elements that were constructed or altered before March 15, 2012 and that do not comply with the 1991 Standards or with UFAS shall on or after March 15, 2012, be made accessible in accordance with the 2010 Standards.⁵ Further, it is important to note that those elements in existing Town facilities that are subject to supplemental requirements of the 2010 ADA Standards (i.e., elements for which there are neither technical nor scoping specifications in the 1991 Standards) such as (C) Recreational boating facilities; (D) Exercise machines and equipment; (E) Fishing piers and platforms; (H) Play areas; (J) Swimming pools, wading pools, and spas; and (L) Miscellaneous - (1) Team or player seating and (3)

⁴ To learn more qualified individuals with disabilities or to read the full text of the ADA, please visit <http://www.ada.gov/> or <http://www.disability.gov/>.

⁵ As described in 28 CFR 35.151(c) – Accessibility Standards and Compliance Date

Accessible route in court sports facilities, need to be brought into compliance with 2010 ADA Standards if there are alterations or new facilities undertaken.⁶

Though IHCD used the 2010 ADA Standards in surveying facilities, it is not expected that the facilities will meet or be brought up to all of these standards absent significant or total renovation. State and local governments must ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from services, programs, and activities because facilities are inaccessible. This means Title II entities need not remove physical barriers, as long as they make their programs accessible to individuals who are unable to use an inaccessible existing facility.

Municipalities also have an Effective Communication mandate with people who have hearing, vision, or speech disabilities. And they are required to make reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures where necessary to ensure program accessibility and the equal participation of people with disabilities.

Other Federal Obligations: Rehabilitation Act

While the ADA is perhaps best known of disability civil rights laws, the Town of Arlington has other ongoing Federal obligations concerning accessibility. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs conducted by Federal agencies, in programs receiving Federal financial assistance, in Federal employment, and in the employment practices of Federal contractors. The standards for determining employment discrimination under the Rehabilitation Act are the same as those used in title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

State Obligations: Massachusetts Architectural Access Board

The Architectural Access Board (AAB) is a regulatory agency whose mandate is to develop and enforce regulations that are part of the Massachusetts Building Code designed to make public buildings accessible to, functional for and safe for use by persons with disabilities – see 521 C.M.R. In addition to writing regulations, the Board decides on variance requests, provides training on its regulations, issues advisory opinions and makes decisions on complaints. Local building inspectors are responsible for enforcing the regulations which are a specialized section of the Massachusetts Building Code – see 780 C.M.R.

The construction, reconstruction, remodeling, alteration, or change of use of a building or facility that is open to the public triggers the authority of the AAB. New construction must fully comply. For renovation, remodeling, or alteration:

- The work being done must comply with the regulations;
- If the work done in any 36-month period is greater than \$100,000, the “work being performed” is required to comply. In addition, an accessible entrance and an accessible toilet room,

⁶ As described in 28 CFR 35.150(b)(2)(i)

telephone and drinking fountain (if toilets, telephones and drinking fountains are provided) shall also be provided;

- If the work done in a 36-month period is more than 30% of the “full and fair cash value” of the building, the entire building must come into compliance.

Enforcement: Anyone can file a complaint with the Board. The Board has the authority to issue variances and/or impose fines of up to \$1000 per violation per day of noncompliance with its order.

PART B - Evaluation of Non-discriminatory Policies and Practices in Programs, Services, and Activities

Introduction

The Town of Arlington's Recreation Department operates and manages the **Reservoir Beach**, Gibbs Gym at Gibbs Center, Ed Burns Arena, North Union Spray Pool, and the Off-Leash Dog Area at Thorndike Park. In addition, the Recreation Department oversees the operations, capital improvements, scheduling and permitting to all the parks and playgrounds in the Town of Arlington under the Park and Recreation Commission's jurisdiction.¹ The Department also collaborates with the Conservation Committee and other Town Commissions to be excellent stewards of these Town assets.

Recreation program facility management and maintenance is organized into two divisions: the recreation facilities and the Ed Burns Arena at the Veterans Memorial Sports Complex.² The Town's Department of Public Works maintains the recreation facilities and the Recreation Department's rink staff (facilities supervisor and building maintenance craftsman) manages and maintains the Stateowned Arena.

The Recreation Department's programs are intended to be self-sustaining. This is being accomplished through user fees, program fees, facility rental opportunities, additional programming, fundraising and specialized marketing opportunities at the rink.³ Programs are continually being added, improved, and changed to accommodate the needs of the public. New programs offered in 2013 included: Archery, Saturday Night Lights Flag Football, Lego Classes, Toddler Art Classes, SHINE Special Needs Soccer Classes, Volleyball Clinic, Expanded Adult Tennis Lessons, Fit Doggie and Me Training, and the iCan Shine Learn to Bike program for youth with special needs.⁴ The Department is expanding its Statelicensed Kid Care after-school program and has started a new Fun School pre-school program.

In collaboration with other Town organizations, groups, and with the guidance of the Park and Recreation Commission, the Recreation Department approves, supports, and manages a vibrant schedule of Town-wide special events. For example, the Department sponsors the September Walter V. Moynihan Town Day Run in collaboration with the Boys & Girls Club and Fidelity House. In 2013, such Town-wide special events included a Daddy Daughter Dance, Egg Hunt, Halloween, and Special

¹ This summary of Department Programs and services is found in the Arlington FY15 Enterprise Fund description at http://www.arlingtonma.gov/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_Financial/budget/2015/EnterpriseFund.pdf, p. 160.

² The division of responsibilities reflects the fact that the skating rink is owned by the Commonwealth and managed by the Arlington Recreation Department. The facility is referred to by various names. This report uses the name provided by the Recreation Department in the Town's Annual Reports. In the Enterprise Fund report, the Recreation summary refers to the Ed Burns Arena/Sports Center Enterprise Fund. The Arlington Master Plan Working Paper Series, 2014 refers to this facility as the Arlington Sports Center and Veterans Memorial Skating Rink. ³ This list based on a review of the Department's Annual Report summaries, 2005-2013, plus the Recreation Department FY15 Budget Statement in the Enterprise Fund report, at http://www.arlingtonma.gov/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_Financial/budget/2015/EnterpriseFund.pdf.

⁴ 2013 Recreation Department Summary, Arlington Annual reports, p. 63.

Winter Public Skate.⁵ The Department has shared responsibilities with the School Athletic Department and District to review and manage programs and activities held at facilities with shared maintenance and scheduling tasks, such as the field permit programs and policies, and a full schedule of Summer Day programs.

Department staffing includes seasonal employees for the Recreation programs, and Seasonal Employees for the Rink and the Recreation programs held at the Ed Burns Arena/Sports Center.⁶

Regular free programs managed by the Department include the North Union Spray Park, neighborhood pocket parks and playgrounds, large parks with nature trails and picnic/seating areas, an off-leash dog park, and an off-leash dog walking program at certain parks.

Each of the programs, services, and activities that are organized, developed, implemented and managed by the Recreation Department, and subsequently provided to the public, contain background policies, practices and procedures that may impact the Department's capacity to achieve the objectives of the Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act that are folded into the department's overall responsibilities as a representative of the Town, a public entity.

IHCD applauds the Department's proactive stance in updating its ADA Self-Evaluation at this time. This is an important administrative step to ensure that the requirements of the Title II of the ADA are being met. Additionally, a Title II entity is required to:

- a) Designate a Responsible Employee (ADA Title II - 28 CFR Part 35.107 (a)) to coordinate compliance with the ADA. The purpose of having a responsible employee – ADA Coordinator - is to ensure that when the public deals with a Town department, the public is able to identify a person who is knowledgeable with the requirements of the ADA.
- b) Adopt and distribute a public Notice (ADA Title II - 28 CFR Part 35.106) of the provisions of the ADA to members of the public who may participate in the Town's programs, services and activities. The effective notice should state the Town's obligations under the ADA and include the complete contact information of the ADA coordinator.
- c) Develop and distribute Grievance Procedures (ADA Title II - 28 CFR Part 35.107 (b)) for prompt resolution of any complaint regarding disability discrimination.

Below is a discussion of how the Department's background programs, services, resources, operations, and management practices can be utilized to further develop the capacity to meet the objectives of the Title II while adopting standard operating procedures that increase the quality of the programs, services, and activities in recreation facilities for all:

⁵ 2013 Recreation Department Summary, Arlington Annual reports, p.63

⁶ http://www.arlingtonma.gov/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_Financial/budget/2015/EnterpriseFund.pdf, p. 163.

1) **Recommendations to increase the Department's capacity to provide the necessary information to the public, as required by the administrative mandates of the Title II:**

- The Town of Arlington provides contact information of the directors of each program at its Recreation Department but there is not information about the ADA Coordinator⁷. Ensure that staff knows who to contact in case of a request from residents and/or visitors for accommodation and/or modifications.
- Adopt a uniform policy regarding the posting of ADA notices in the Towns parks. Provide the information on an ongoing basis whenever necessary. This information should be included in job applications, local newspaper, Town's website, and posted at all facilities where services, programs and activities are provided.
- Ensure that the information on the parks and recreation page of the Town website has a nondiscrimination notice about the Town policies.
- Ensure that information about ADA compliance and availability of accommodations to the public and first-time visitors as well as complete contact information of the ADA Coordinator (name, office location, email address, telephone, fax, etc.) is provided in all publications, admissions materials, events notices, and program announcements distributed by the Department.
- At all public entrances of indoor facilities (Recreation Department Office, Ed Burns Arena, Gibbs Gym) as well as at bulletin boards provided at outdoor facilities, post a Notice of the ADA Compliance including complete contact information of the ADA Coordinator, in addition to the information about the Director of the Recreation Department.
- Provide a copy of the grievance procedure form in all materials distributed by the Recreation Department. The form should include the complete contact information of the ADA Coordinator, in addition to the information about the Director of the Recreation Department.

2) **Recommendations to increase the Department's site management and planning capacity** relative to the operation and management of facilities managed by the Department (Reservoir Beach, Gibbs Gym at Gibbs Center, Ed Burns Arena, North Union Spray Pool, and the Off-Leash

⁷ Title II of the ADA makes clear that a public entity must designate a responsible employee and adopt grievance processes. See 35 CFR Part 35.107 (a). While the Town of Arlington has designated an ADA Coordinator- Jack Jones, who is the Director of Housing and Disability Programs- the Town's online directory of "Assistance Programs" (<http://www.arlingtonma.gov/departments/health-humanservices/assistance-programs>) lists the Arlington ADA office phone number and email contact under the heading "*Disabled Persons Protection Commission.*" This listing does not provide adequate information for interested residents to learn who the Town's ADA Coordinator is; or, what the Town ADA Coordinator's role and responsibilities are; or, how this person can and will assist residents.

Dog Area at Thorndike Park) are developed against the backdrop of the civil rights principles and prohibitions of the ADA:

*No qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any public entity.*⁸

- As facilities are altered, the Department should incorporate the structural accessibility findings from this ADA Self-Evaluation report into the articulation of existing site conditions at each program facility – please refer to Part C - Evaluation of Facilities. For example, the **Reservoir Beach site management plan**⁹ can incorporate the following additional information:
 - **The beach access ramp leading into the water is not maintained as an accessible route with smooth, firm and non-slip floor surface conditions;**
 - **The concrete walkway to the toilet rooms and concessions building has excessive cross slopes;**
 - **The concession counter is inaccessible because it is too high;**
 - **Play areas are not adjoining an accessible route, are surfaced with sand, which is an inaccessible ground surface material, and one play area is separated from surrounding benches and tables by a recessed border;**
 - **Benches and picnic tables are not adjoining an accessible route and lack a clear floor location for integration of users of wheeled mobility devices;**
 - **Accessible parking spaces furnished during the summer season are not connected to the beach area by an accessible route.**
- Site accessibility maintenance and repair issues should be integrated into the "outstanding issues" priorities list and considered in the same manner as other general population access issues. For example, the **Reservoir beach site management plan** mentions the lack of *year round access* and the impact of limited seasonal parking availability as a concern to be addressed in tandem with the landscape remediation plans. Where general public access to facility programs is being expanded, consider flagging any remaining physical and program accessibility needs at the facility into those planning efforts right from the start.
- The Department is constantly juggling different construction projects with different construction companies. Nevertheless, the Department should update or establish a set of Department-wide standards to ensure that construction teams provide accessible pedestrian facilities along construction sites. For example, during the renovation of the seasonal spray pool at Lussiano Field, the existing accessible route to the playground and basketball court was obstructed by the construction zone restricted to the construction staff. Because no alternate pedestrian route was provided to the areas open to the public during the renovation, residents with disabilities do not have an accessible entrance to the facility.

⁸ 28 CFR Part 35. § 35.130 General prohibitions against discrimination.

⁹ The Reservoir Site Management Plan was reviewed within a document dated 9/27/07 and may not be the most updated version: Town of Arlington Open Space and Recreation Plan Update 2007 - 2012 (9/27/07), Appendix J.

- As part of this ADA Self-Evaluation report, several facilities were inspected during inclement weather, including during and immediately after snowstorms in the winter of 2013/2014. The Department must ensure maintenance of accessible features during inclement weather and should create a comprehensive maintenance program and schedule to check and maintain all accessible parking spaces, accessible routes between public transit / sidewalks / parking, points of entry to the facilities, tables, benches and areas adjacent to them, areas adjacent to bulletin boards and other directional or informational signs.
- Management guidelines for each facility should be standardized and scheduled with accessibility issues included as part of the program. For example, at the **Reservoir Beach**, the basic ground maintenance program can include:
 - **Sweeping the beach access ramp leading into the water free of sand;**
 - **Landscaping around bench and picnic tables to maintain accessible firm, level and slip-free paths to approach and use such elements;**
 - **Checking play area ground material cross slopes and raking, replenishing and sifting loose ground surface materials as needed to maintain firm, smooth, and level accessible cross slopes and a surface free of hidden sharp objects at and around play elements.**

Proposed Capital improvement objectives regarding structural accessibility improvements are measurable and can be clearly stated within updates to site management plans as facility management achievements, when complete. An example of measurable objectives might be:

"An accessible route with consistent smooth and firm 60-inch width, cross slope of no more than 2.08% and run slope of no more than 5% will be constructed leading between the parking lot and the beach access route before the start of the FY15 season."

Upon completion of this project, the Recreation Department might be able to accurately report:

"An accessible route was installed between the parking lot and the beach access route prior to the start of the FY15 season. Concurrently, there was an N% increase in the purchase of senior beach tags during the FY15 season."

- 3) During monthly meetings, the Recreation Department and Park and Recreation Commission develop new policies impacting the use of, and generally expanding the availability of, programs that reach an ever-wider group of residents. **Recommendations to increase the Department's inclusive development of policies, practices, and procedures:**

- Ensure that all community meetings and outreach takes place at facilities known to be fully accessible.⁸ Going forward, the Department is already on track in proactively considering site accessibility;
 - Develop an "awareness" checklist of language and issues that may tend to exclude or provide unreliable information to individuals with physical, sensory, cognitive, and environmental disabilities; this checklist will assist the Department in avoiding unintentional language that may tend to exclude individuals with disabilities. Seek input from constituents as appropriate;⁹
 - Where new policies or practices implement physical changes to facilities and programs, ensure that the standards or guidelines for such programs build in accessibility standards from the start, rather than viewing accessibility as an "additional" expense.¹⁰ For example, the portable toilet pilot program began in 2009; and may continue to expand to more facilities. In this program, the Department should ensure that the first portable toilet that is installed at any field is an accessible portable toilet, since "at least one accessible" is the general standard;
 - Where the Department, in concert with the Commission, develops guidelines for built-in elements and physical changes or additions to the physical site, consider instituting a default procedure to check current accessibility standards prior to publishing program guidelines. This will enable the department to provide reliable information about program accessibility issues going forward. Accessibility standards, per the ADA, are specific (even construction tolerances are expressed as within a range of specific measurements); therefore, accomplishment of the standards is a measurable achievement.
- 4) The Department's programs are intended to become self-sustaining. New programs are constantly being developed and added to the Department's portfolio. **Recommendations and considerations for future program development** are developed against the backdrop of the civil rights principles and prohibitions of the ADA, in addition to the supportive architectural accessibility standards, known as the 2010 ADA Standards:

A public entity shall administer services, programs, and activities in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of qualified individuals with disabilities.¹¹

Except as otherwise provided in § 35.150, no qualified individual with a disability shall, because a public entity's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be

⁸ For example, the Green Dog Neighborhood Outreach meetings (Oct. 2007- January 2008) took place at the Selectmen's Meeting Room in Arlington Town Hall, which is currently documented as a partially accessible facility.

⁹ For more information regarding communicating with and about people with disabilities, please refer to <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/comucate.htm> and <http://www.unitedspinal.org/disability-etiquette>.

¹⁰ Disability Commission Minutes, July 21, 2010 show that CDBG funding was used to pay for the "additional cost of the accessible portable toilets."

http://www.arlingtonma.gov/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_DisabilityMin/2010/07-21-2010?textPage=1

¹¹ § 35.130

(d)

*excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any public entity.*¹²

*(a) General. A public entity shall operate each service, program, or activity so that the service, program, or activity, when viewed in its entirety, is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.*¹³

- Using the information from this ADA Self-Evaluation report, and going forward, the Department should consider only siting new and expanded programs in facilities that have been accurately evaluated to be accessible;
- Where accessible elements are not within the general path of travel (such as where older existing facilities include an accessible entrance that is not being used as the primary entrance) this information should be published as part of the program facility descriptions, and provided in all facility descriptions as standard operating practice;
- Effective communications issues should be identified as part of program planning and development, and also as part of any marketing opportunities being developed. This includes having alternate formats of visual information readily available, such as having Large Print and accessible digital files already prepared and ready to provide upon request. Similarly, the Department should ensure that registration procedures that involve phone communications include trained staff available for real-time relay phone conversations; or, with the use of more current and effective communication methods for individuals with disabilities, such as videophones, captioned telephones, voice carryover and hearing carryover phones, and pagers and other computer devices that send text or IM messages as options for communication. In addition, all associated web-based forms and public information should be accessible to individuals using assistive technology prior to publication and launch of program. In coordination with Town's ADA coordinator, the Department should maintain a list of such resources and maintain and update this accessible communications list as a standard operating practice.
- Ensuring that publicly disseminated information regarding the Department's programs and facilities is effectively providing accurate and necessary information, an accurate description of the accessibility conditions at Department facilities should be included in public information as a standard operating procedure.
- Program and facility information should also be reviewed and updated routinely to prevent confusion and omission of details that impact program access and wayfinding. (As an example: the Grove St./ Wellington Park Tennis program activities includes a link to Recreation facility

¹² § 35.149 Discrimination prohibited.

¹³ § 35.150
(a)

descriptions; but neither Grove St. nor Wellington Park are included within that link to Facility listings.¹⁴

- Where school bus transportation, or any transportation, is provided as part of the program (such as in the Club Rec program), the Department should make arrangements for alternate accessible transportation options upon request. These accessible options should be provided as part of that programs description to the public as a standard operating procedure.
- While the Department is not prohibited from *broaden[ing] program offerings for children with special needs*¹⁵, it is important for the Department to clarify the principles that cause separate "special needs" programming to be advanced; and to balance those principles with the general information published in the seasonal brochure, which states "*Participants with special needs are encouraged to attend all of our programs. Staff members are sensitive to their needs and will do everything possible to assist. If you are unsure about program registration, call regarding specifics.*" Above all, the primary principle should establish why such types of programs are most appropriate for the population the Department expects to serve.
- As the Department continues to clarify what types of programs are particularly suitable and appropriate to add to and develop within its portfolio, the following Title II principle should inform these clarifications and considerations:

*A public entity may not deny a qualified individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in services, programs, or activities that are not separate or different, despite the existence of permissibly separate or different programs or activities;*¹⁶

- The Department should ensure that published program information does not tend to *impose or apply eligibility criteria that screen out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability or any class of individuals with disabilities from fully and equally enjoying any service, program, or activity, unless such criteria can be shown to be necessary for the provision of the service, program, or activity being offered;*¹⁷

For example, the Fantastic Gymnastics class at Gibbs Gym has a simple age eligibility requirement: children between 18 months and three years of age must attend with a parent. Added to that is a note that "*children should be good walkers.*"¹⁸ This type of eligibility criteria will tend to screen out

¹⁴

<http://www.arlingtonrec.com/info/facilities>

¹⁵ This is a stated FY2015 Department Objective in the FY2015 Recreation Enterprise Fund publication, p. 160.

¹⁶ § 35.130 (b)
(2)

¹⁷ § 35.130 (b)
(8)

¹⁸ Arlington Recreation Program Brochure, Spring/Summer 2014, p. 6.

families with children who may never be "good walkers." Since participation in this basic gymnastics is not conditioned upon any type of audition, it does not appear that such criteria is necessary for fulfilling the program's objectives and should be eliminated from the description.

As another example, the off-leash dog brochure includes the following rule: "You must be able to see your dog at all times and maintain effective verbal control of your dog." This language may give the unintended impression that visually impaired persons were not expected to participate in the program. A suggested alternate phrase is "you must be in contact with your dog at all times."

Further, the Department should be on the lookout for these kinds of subtle criteria, which can tend to exclude families and children who would otherwise wish to explore such opportunities and to benefit from participation just like the other participants.

- 5) In collaboration with other Town organizations, groups, and recreation centers; and with the guidance of the Park and Recreation Commission, the Department approves supports and manages a vibrant schedule of Town-wide special events. **Recommendations regarding the Department's collaborative services** are provided against the backdrop of the civil rights principles and prohibitions of the ADA, in addition to the supportive architectural accessibility standards, known as the 2010 ADA Standards:

A public entity may not, in determining the site or location of a facility, make selections – (i) That have the effect of excluding individuals with disabilities from, denying them the benefits of, or otherwise subjecting them to discrimination; or (ii) That have the purpose or effect of defeating or substantially impairing the accomplishment of the objectives of the service, program, or activity with respect to individuals with disabilities.

Recommendations regarding collaborations with volunteer groups, sports and team organizations, etc.:

- Using the information from this ADA Self-Evaluation report, and going forward, the Department should condition approval of special event locations to only occur at sites or areas that are reliably known to be accessible by current standards;¹⁹
- Where the proposal is for special and new installations, the department should include the following basic checklist:
 - The installation adjoins an accessible route, which is within the general public path of travel;
 - Integrated seating for users of wheeled mobility devices is built into any installations where seating is provided;

¹⁹ For detailed information about accessible temporary events, please refer to <http://dhs.sd.gov/accessibility/documents/Accessible%20Temporary%20Events%20Planning%20Guide.pdf>

- If the installation includes public contact, all controls must be within reach ranges (generally 15” - 48” above the ground or floor) by a forward or parallel approach; ○ If there are design considerations, these must include accessibility standards where appropriate and universal design principles wherever possible.

An example of a program installation that is a wonderful addition to an already unique facility is the art installation at the Menotomy Rocks Park. However, this novel social program is not currently adjoining an accessible route; and, there is no location around this "Council Ring" for integrated seating of individuals using wheeled mobility devices, canes, walkers, etc. Therefore, at this time, the program is not only inaccessible, but newly so. Relatively minor accessibility adjustments are needed to transform the art installation into an inclusive asset as soon as is practicably possible – please refer to Part C - Evaluation of Facilities for recommendations.

Going forward, the Department can be proactive in enabling inclusive considerations to be part of program and element installation at all facilities under its management; and, in the case of installations that were not developed with these considerations, the Department is responsible for ensuring that program accessibility standards are met as soon as is practicably possible.

6) The Department has shared responsibilities with the School Athletic Department and District.²⁰ The Department is advised to share the recent (2013) Department of Education Guidance provided to ensure that students with disabilities consistently have opportunities to participate in extracurricular athletics equal to those of other students.²³ **These minimal structural accessibility recommendations for the fields- and courts-based programs** are necessary for program accessibility under Title II, regardless of whether the users are agents of the Town and School district, or whether they are sports organizations, non-resident teams, and individuals. Without implementation of these minimal structural improvements, the active sports programs at these shared facilities are not fulfilling minimal Title II program requirements:

- Wherever there are team benches, dugouts and clubhouses, these must adjoin an accessible route and include at least one clear ground space for integrated wheelchair seating. This should be provided at both home and away team dugouts;
- Wherever there are bleachers, spectator seating, or lawn benches anchored into the environment, these must be adjoining an accessible route and provide integrated wheeled mobility seating spaces;
- Wherever there are courts not adjoining an accessible route, install an accessible pathway leading to both sides of the court. If topological constraints make that infeasible, then provide the maximum accessible route that is feasible; and at least an accessible route to one side of the court.

²⁰ Note: School Department programs were not included within this 2013-2014 ADA Self Evaluation. ²³ online at: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201301-504.pdf>

For a complete list of fields and courts requiring these modest improvements, please refer to the Structural Accessibility section under Part A - Executive Summary. An index of findings by type of program, age-level and grade-level is included later in this Part B - Evaluation of Non-discriminatory Policies and practices in Programs, Services, and Activities. There are a number of school-based programs listed within the Department's portfolio that are held at locations that were not within the scope of this ADA Self-Evaluation report. A listing of facilities not within the scope of this evaluation is found at the end of Part A - Executive Summary.

- 7) The Department and Commission also occasionally review or approve streetscape projects, as requested, where they will impact Recreational facilities. **Recommendations about review of crosswalks, curb ramps, and sidewalks are based on the Town and Department's obligations to ensure that, wherever such alterations are made, they are compliant with the current accessibility standards**, which have been codified for the primary purpose of facilitating at least minimal program accessibility in cases where there are structural (physical) barriers. In the case of streetscape projects, the program accessibility mandate under Title II of the ADA ensures that individuals can approach and enter a municipal program via an accessible route provided to all accessible "site arrival points." Here's that regulation:

Site Arrival Points. At least one accessible route shall be provided within the site from accessible parking spaces and accessible passenger loading zones; public streets and sidewalks; and public transportation stops to the accessible building or facility entrance they serve.²¹

This short paragraph includes some of the most essential program accessibility needs for the majority of facilities managed by the Department, with the guidance of the Commission, as it continues to develop and to maintain inclusive high-quality parks and recreation programs.

The necessity for the Department's programs and facilities to be approached and entered by accessible pedestrian routes connected to multiple modes of transportation – including the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway, the many public transit stops within walking distance (within 300 feet) of these facilities, along and between Massachusetts Avenue, Broadway, Park Avenue, and Summer Street; and, from nearby pedestrian public rights of ways along neighborhood streets and sidewalks – is especially highlighted for individuals with disabilities and older residents, who share a disproportionate lack of access to more private motorized modes of travel.

Program accessibility considerations regarding public rights-of-ways (crosswalks, curb ramps, sidewalks) exist alongside the basic architectural accessibility standards, which support program accessibility requirements with a code of minimal architectural standards. The facility surveys encountered approximately 18 facilities within the scope of this ADA Self-Evaluation report which had received relatively recent (within the past decade) streetscape improvements; yet, were not compliant with the architectural accessibility standards in effect at the time of construction.²⁵

²¹ Department of Justice 2010 ADA Standards: Titles II and III. Scoping requirements: Accessible Routes for Site Arrival Points. ²⁵ This discussion is included in Structural Accessibility under Part A - Executive Summary.

In order for the Department and also the Town to ensure effective stewardship of municipal assets, there needs to be coordinated management and oversight of such streets and roadway construction – from the preliminary phase of scoping the limits of the project, to the post-construction phase of surveying the completed construction and mitigating any issues found prior to the completion of the contract.

At this time, the Department is advised to oversee the planning of street and roadway projects adjacent to facilities with the following recommendations:

- When streetscape alterations are reviewed before the Department and Commission, ensure that the scope of the work includes at least one accessible route, upon completion, from the nearest public transit stop to the accessible entrance of site;
- When working with the Town and DPW to prepare contracts for services by architects, engineers, and contractors involved in building and altering highways, streets, roads, sidewalks, other walkways, transportation stops, and curb ramps, consider including a provision specifically requiring compliance with Title II of the ADA, including compliance with the ADA 2010 Standards;
- Where completed work has resulted in non-complying elements – as those included within Part C - Evaluation of Facilities – the Department should include such corrective work not fully within the Department's jurisdiction as part of a series of Town budget requests over the next five to ten years;
- Where completed work has resulted in gaps of connection between site arrival points and the nearest public transit stop, off-street parking facilities, streets and sidewalks, any passenger drop-off and pick-up zones, and/or access links to the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway and associated shared-use trails, the Department and Commission should develop facility-based capital improvement projects to mitigate those gaps;
- Streetscape projects should intersect with the necessary structural accessibility improvements at such facilities wherever feasible, so that interruptions in program service at those sites are as minimal as possible; and so that, when sites are re-opened following improvements, accessible streetscape infrastructure is provided right when the sites open again.

An additional recommendation relevant to site arrival points is provided based on the fact that, in at least one (school-related) off-street parking facility, the access aisles were being used as parking spots rather than as components of the accessible parking spaces, despite clear cross-hatch markings at the access aisles and signage in front of the spaces, This can have the effect of a program barrier, because access aisles are a structural accommodation that allows individuals using wheeled mobility devices to accommodate transfers between vehicle and pedestrian travel:

- Provide public information on website and in public brochures informing the general public about the need for access aisles to remain clear of vehicles. The Cambridge Commission inspires this recommendation for Persons with Disabilities' video Public Service Announcement, called ***Not even for a minute.***²²

IHCD would like to note that the Department and Commission have already shown awareness and proactive stewardship in its Capital Project management; the recommendations mentioned above are supportive of the Department's demonstrated capacities to manage capital improvements projects to successful conclusions.

Where non-complying structural issues are found, they are detailed as part of each facility's structural accessibility recommendations provided in Part C - Evaluation of Facilities. As the Department continues to identify solutions to program accessibility barriers, these non-complying architectural elements must be corrected to comply with the 2010 ADA Standards.²³

Programmatic accessibility problems are often solved most efficaciously through the design and renovation projects. The Department may also consider alternate methods to accomplish its Title II objectives, as long as integration is a primary consideration.

Indexed Analysis of Programs

Program Accessibility Findings were analyzed, as a whole, by type of program (active, passive, summer), and by age and grade eligibility. These findings are based on the information produced within the Recreation Department's web-based resources, at the Town of Arlington's Website²⁴ and at the Recreation Department's information and registration website²⁵. There are a number of program findings that are inconclusive, because similar programs are offered at facilities that were not included within the scope of this ADA Self-Evaluation report.

In the Program Analysis Index below, policies, information and communication practices and procedures are noted where there are questions and concerns about whether the information provided is sufficient to enable individuals with disabilities to confidently pursue the registration process.

²² Link to this short video, ***Not even for a minute*** is at:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/DHSP/programsforadults/ccpd.aspx>

²³ *Non-complying new construction and alterations constructed or altered after the effective date of the applicable ADA requirements and before March 15, 2012, shall, on or after March 15, 2012 be made accessible in accordance with the 2010 ADA Standards.* See Guidance on the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, published September 15, 2010, § 35.151(b)(4)(ii)(C) Path of travel--safe harbor; § 35.151(c) Accessibility standards for new construction and alterations; and § 36.403 Alterations: Path of Travel. Also see: § 36.406 Standards for New Construction and Alterations.

²⁴ http://www.arlingtonma.gov/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_Recreation/index

²⁵

<http://www.arlingtonrec.com/info/>

The following programs, services and activities were analyzed, as a whole, within the Department's portfolio, and findings were indexed according to type of program, free or fee-based, and further indexed according to age and grade eligibility, as described in the Department's public information:

Active Sports:

- Badminton;
- Baseball;
- Basketball;
- Biking;
- **Boating;**
- Fencing;
- **Fishing;**
- Fitness;
- Karate, Little Dragons, Ninjas;
- Indoor Skating;
- Soccer;
- **Swimming;**
- Tennis;
- **Volleyball.**

Passive/Social Recreation:

- Arts;
- **Community Gardens;**
- **Off-Leash Dog Program;**
- **Paved Walking Trails;**
- **Picnic Areas;**
- **Scenic Resources and Unique Environments³⁰;**
- **Water Based Trails, Natural Surface;**
- **Wildlife Corridors.**

Active Sports

Swimming Fee-based:

- Chlorinated and filtered outdoor natural swim area at **Reservoir Beach**: Swimming Lessons for Parent/Child (ages 2 -3), Water Adjustment (ages 4 – 5), and Level Swimming American Red Cross (ages 6 - 8) between June and August.

Finding: When viewed as a whole, this program is currently not programmatically accessible due to architectural barriers at Reservoir Beach.

Passive/Social Recreation

Community Gardens

Fee-based:

- Magnolia Field;
- Robbins Farm.

Finding: When viewed as a whole, this program is currently not programmatically accessible due to architectural barriers at the facilities mentioned above. The Department's applications as well as information about rules and regulations²⁶ need to specify that, at this time, these programs are currently not accessible to individuals living with mobility disabilities.

Free:

- **Hurd / Reservoir Trail: Wildlife Habitat Gardens**,²⁷
- Spy Pond and Hurd Field: Rain Gardens.²⁸

Finding: This program was intended to be accessible; however, at this time, both Wildlife Habitat and Rain Gardens are currently not programmatically accessible due to architectural barriers at the facilities mentioned above.

Off-Leash Dog Program²⁹ Free:

- Buzzell Field;
- Cutter School / Reinhart Park;
- Hill's Hill;
- Hurd / Reservoir Fields;
- Menotomy Rocks Park;
- McClennen Park;
- Poet's Corner;
- **Reservoir Beach**;
- Robbins Farm;
- Spy Pond Field;
- Spy Pond Park;
- Summer Street Park;
- Thorndike OLRA;
- Wellington Park.

Finding: When viewed as a whole, this program is currently not programmatically accessible due to architectural and policy-based barriers at the facilities mentioned above.

²⁶ http://www.arlingtonma.gov/public_documents/arlingtonma_recreation/communitygardens/gardenrulesregs.pdf

²⁷ Arlington Reservoir Committee, "Wildlife Habitat Garden,"
http://www.arlington2020.org/reservoir/Habitat_Garden.htm

²⁸ Arlington Master Plan Working Paper Series: Natural Resources and Open Space, 7-8.
http://www.arlingtonma.gov/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_Planning/masterplan/workingpapers/NaturalResWkgPaper0516.pdf

²⁹ Green Dog proposed locations, 2007
http://www.arlingtonma.gov/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_WebDocs/greendogpilot2007.pdf

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Paved Walking Trails (added since 2004)

Free:

- **Hurd/Reservoir Trail;**
- McClennen Park;
- Menotomy Rocks Park;
- Robbins Farm;
- Spy Pond Field: SE field paved walking path;
- Spy Pond Park: shoreline trail between North and South beaches;
- Thorndike Park;
- Waldo Park.

Finding: When viewed as a whole, this program is currently not programmatically accessible, mainly due to lack of connection between walking trails and other facility program areas, elements, and amenities at the facilities mentioned above.

Picnic Areas Free:

- Most facilities.

Finding: When viewed as a whole, this program is currently not programmatically accessible due to architectural barriers at most facilities.

Fee-based:

- Most facilities:

Finding: A 'Picnic Area Request' form must be filled out for birthday parties and small gatherings under 100 people. The Department's application form needs to specify that, at this time, this program is currently not accessible to individuals living with mobility disabilities.

Scenic Resources and Unique Environments³⁸ Free:

- Buzzell Field: link to Bikeway scenic assets;
- Hill's Hill: link to Bikeway scenic assets;
- Hurd / Reservoir Fields: Mill Brook, **Reservoir**, Wetlands, link to Bikeway;
- Menotomy Rocks Park: glacial rock formations and woodlands;
- **Reservoir Trail: Mill Brook, Reservoir, Wetlands;**
- Robbins Farm: Boston Skyline Viewing Oval;
- Spy Pond Park: Walking paths, Wetlands, link to Bikeway;
- Summer Street Park: link to Bikeway scenic assets.

Finding: Although the programs offered in the facilities mentioned above do not currently need to comply with enforceable requirements for accessible outdoor areas, awareness of standards for accessible outdoor trails is in evidence in the additional trails added within the past decade at the Menotomy Rocks Park, Reservoir Trail, and Spy Pond Park.

Water Based Trails, Natural Surface Free:

- McClennen Park;
- Menotomy Rocks Park;
- **Reservoir: shoreline trail;**
- Spy Pond Park: North;
- Spy Pond Park: South.

Finding: When viewed as a whole, this program is currently not programmatically accessible due to architectural barriers at the facilities mentioned above.

³⁸

from Town of Arlington Open Space and Recreation Plan Update 2007 - 2012, pp. 66 - 68

http://www.town.arlington.ma.us/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_BComm/openspace/OSPlans/2007_2014/OSR_P_2007_3.pdf

Wetlands info from Arlington Master Plan Working Paper Series: Natural Resources and Open Space, 7-7:

http://www.arlingtonma.gov/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_Planning/masterplan/workingpapers/NaturalResWkg_Paper0516.pdf

Wildlife Corridors³⁰

Free:

- Linkages to Minuteman Bikeway;
- Spy Pond Park;
- McClennen Park;
- **Reservoir.**

Finding: Although the Town's wildlife programs do not currently need to comply with enforceable requirements for accessible outdoor areas, awareness of standards for accessible outdoor areas is in evidence and increasing.

Summer Programs

Fee-Based:

- Dallin Elementary School: Club Rec Full Day, Kids Corner (ages 3 - 5);
- Ottoson Middle School: Super Sports;
- Spy Pond Field: Spy Ponder Baseball Clinic (ages 8 - 10);
- Summer Street Park (multi-purpose field): Thundercat Sports (ages 2 - 12);
- Multiple Locations (including high adventure course at Wellington Park, **swimming pool at Reservoir Beach**): Summer Exploration Club (ages 10 - 14).

Finding: When viewed in part, the programs offered at Spy Pond Field, Summer Street Park, and Reservoir Beach are currently not programmatically accessible due to architectural barriers at these facilities. Additionally, information regarding school bus transportation for Club Rec (to and from the

³⁰ from Town of Arlington Open Space and Recreation Plan Update 2007 - 2012, p. 64

http://www.town.arlington.ma.us/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_BComm/openspace/OSPlans/2007_2014/OSR_P_2007_3.pdf

Reservoir Beach) in Winter and Spring/Summer 2014 brochures did not include information about accessible transportation options.

There is not enough information to complete the review of these programs because Dallin Elementary School and Ottoson Middle School were not included by the Recreation Department in the list of facilities to be assessed.

Age-Based Programs

Ages 18 - 99

- **Reservoir Beach: Beach tags;**
- Gibbs Gym: Fencing, Zumba for Adults;
- Thorndike Park (dog park): Fit Doggie and Me;
- Wellington Park (tennis courts): Summer Adult Tennis Programs.

Finding: The following programs are not programmatically accessible due to architectural barriers at the facilities mentioned above.

Resource List

- 1) January 25, 2013: (Press Release) ("Dear Colleague" Letter) (January 25, 2013) from Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Seth Galanter, addressing equal access to extracurricular athletics for students with disabilities. The Dear Colleague letter provides an overview of the obligations of public elementary and secondary schools under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), and the Department's Section 504 regulations; cautions against making decisions based on presumptions and stereotypes; details the specific Section 504 regulations that require students with disabilities to have an equal opportunity for participation in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities; and discusses the provision of separate or different athletic opportunities.
- 2) See: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201301-504.pdf>
- 3) American Foundation for the Blind, Recreation and Leisure for People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired: <http://www.visionaware.org/info/everyday-living/recreation-and-leisure/12>
- 4) CDC Report: Aerobic Inactivity Linked to Increased Incidence of Chronic Disease in Adults with Disabilities, May 2014: <http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2014/p0506-disability-activity.html>
- 5) Benefits and Barriers To Fitness For Children With Disabilities: <http://www.nchpad.org/173/1308/Benefits~and~Barriers~To~Fitness~For~Children~With~Disabilities>

PART C – Evaluation of Facilities

Introduction

This ADA Self-Evaluation report includes a summary of architectural barriers and proposed barrier removal solutions for 33 Town-owned and Department-operated facilities:³¹

- Recreation Department Office
- Bishop Field
- Buck Field
- Buzzell Field
- Crosby School / Tennis Courts
- Cutter School Park
- Ed Burns Arena
- Florence Avenue Park
- Gibbs Gym
- Hill's Hill
- **Hurd / Reservoir**
- Locke School Playground
- Lussiano Field
- Magnolia Field
- McClennen Park
- Menotomy Rocks Park
- Ottoson Field / Crusher Lot
- Parallel Park
- Parmenter
- Peirce School Park
- Pheasant Avenue / Greeley Playground
- Poet's Corner
- **Reservoir Beach**
- Robbins Farm
- Scannell Field
- Sports Complex- Site Arrival Points³²
- Spy Pond Field & Tennis Courts
- Spy Pond Park
- Summer Street Park
- Thorndike Park
- W.A. Peirce Fields
- Waldo Park
- Wellington Park

³¹ The Town of Arlington has provided IHCD with the list of facilities to be assessed. IHCD is not contractually responsible for any additional facilities that are not included in the list above.



Hurd Field / Reservoir Trail

Hurd Field and the Reservoir Trail are beautiful natural assets and a multi-use unique facility. Thoughtful re-grading of the Trail provides an accessible route around some of the Reservoir, and the accessible trail continues past the Wildlife Habitat Gardens, which was intended to be accessible.³³

Readily achievable barrier removal issues include the provision of accessible connecting pathways at and through Hurd Field to connect the accessible parking lot to the perimeters of field playing areas, team seating, bleachers, and other amenities.

The major facility interior need is to provide an accessible connection between the back of Hurd Field and the Spillway/Trail area. This will connect the Reservoir trail to the Fields; and provide improved viewing access to the lovely Wildlife Habitat Garden signage and plantings.

Location: Drake Road, Arlington Reservoir

³³ see 2006 minutes of Reservoir Committee
http://www.arlington2020.org/reservoir/Habitat_Garden.htm

³⁴ info retrieved from
<http://www.arlington2020.org/reservoir/ResHistory.html> ²⁰ info retrieved from

Year Built:

Reservoir built in 1890's

Known Renovations since 1991:

1988 renovations: bridge renovation to Hurd Field, expanded parking, granite benches every 1/4 mile, map³⁴.

1997: unspecified accessibility improvements.²⁰

2004: Dam Restoration Project included new smooth-deck bridge, new graded pathway covered in pea stone.

2011: Installation of Wildlife Habitat Garden

2012: Hurd Field/Drake parking lot- Parking lot resurfaced and restriped as part of EPA Porous Pavement Project.³⁵³⁶

Primary Function Areas Surveyed:

- 2 Parking lots
- 2 Softball/little league fields
- Large field suitable for soccer and lacrosse
- Team dugout areas
- Bleacher area
- Reservoir Trail
- Wildlife Habitat Meadow & Shade Gardens
- Spillway and smooth-top bridge
- Viewing settings

Public Programs: Open 5 a.m. to 9 p.m.

- Sports fields with nighttime lighting
- Environmental monitoring of EPA Porous Pavement Project
- Passive recreation

<http://www.arlington2020.org/reservoir/ResHistory.html>

³⁵ See

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/0/DE2F00>

³⁶ FC5FC55E85257ABD004FA332

Issues

Approach & Entrance

Pedestrian Crosswalk Area

A two-way crosswalk area located at the intersection of Lowell St. and Westmoreland requires maintenance.

Curb Ramps

Curb ramp at signed crosswalk leads to inaccessible pedestrian entry point at parking lot fence opening of facility. (Photo 1)



Photo 1

Sidewalk along Westmoreland perimeter fence needs maintenance. The pedestrian zone is not blended to level and smooth at parking lot

Apex curb ramps at Lowell St. crosswalk are not wholly contained within crosswalk and lack detectable warnings.

Curb ramp at crosswalk leading to Beach parking lot fence opening leads to highly inaccessible entry walkway. (Photo 2)



Photo 2

Sidewalks

At least one accessible route is needed from public streets/sidewalks to entry points of facility entry point. Sidewalk has excessive cross slopes. (Photo 3)

All of the above issues negatively impact pedestrian access from nearby public transit stops. Crosswalks at Massachusetts Ave. @ Paul Revere Road (routes 62, 62/76, near Drake Rd.); are also not supported with accessible pedestrian infrastructure.

Photo 3



Parking

Two parking facilities are provided at two locations within this multi-use facility.

The seasonal public parking lot on Lowell Street is not striped, does not include accessible parking spaces or an accessible pedestrian surface. Water pooling and cross slope issues were found. (Photo 4)

The Drake Road Parking lot is well maintained, and has approximately 62 spaces, with at least 4 accessible spaces.



Photo 4



Photo 5

Point of Entry

The pedestrian entry point at the Lowell/Westmoreland parking facility does not include a level, smooth path to the Reservoir Trail entry. This entry point is marked by off limit boulders, which are not spaced in a manner that provides adequate accessible width, slope and ground surface materials for rolling pedestrian approach and entrance.

(Photo 6)



Neither of these entry points provide a continuous, level-graded, smooth, firm and slipfree route connected to park facilities.

The two pedestrian entry points at the Hurd Field entrance are from the Drake parking lot and from the back of the field, near the spillway bridge.



Access to Facility Areas

Interior Walkways

A stone gravel and dust walking trail was added as part of the 2006 Dam restoration project. While well graded, this path does not yet provide a continuously smooth, level approach and use route to all the facility areas at this multi-use facility.

Secondary trails branching off the trail to Wildlife Garden and in the direction of Hurd Field are excessively steep and are not usable until they can be re-graded to minimal slopes with additional natural wall (or handrail) supports.



Photo 8

The informal trail between the back of Hurd Field and the Reservoir Trail at the spillway bridge is particularly hazardous and does not provide an accessible connection between the two sections of this multi-use facility. (Photo 9)



Photo 9



Signage

While the trails are still not through-accessible, a best practice recommendation is to install signage cautioning users about areas where graded trail is steep and presents uneven surface conditions.

The sign explaining the EPA Porous Pavement project at the Drake parking lot; and the Map installation at the Lowell St. Trail entry point do not provide accessible clear ground approach and viewing conditions due to mounting heights

Bulletin Boards

The Bulletin Board at the Trail beginning near the Lowell Parking lot needs to include a clear ground surface approach path.

Recommendations

Recommendations, Capital Projects

Approach & Entrance

Crosswalk and Curb Ramps

At Westmoreland Ave, add an accessible crosswalk with perpendicular ramps crossing Lowell St. near the "A" entrance or at West Court Terrace.

At Drake Rd/ Mass. Ave intersection, add crosswalk and compliant ramps to cross Massachusetts Ave from nearby public transit stop (Massachusetts Ave. @ Paul Revere Road).

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes for Accessible Routes and Curb Ramps.

Sidewalk

Lowell St: Replace sidewalk panels that have gaps, uneven terrain and cross slopes exceeding 2.08% along the sidewalk adjacent to Lowell St. pedestrian entry points.

Drake Road: Evaluate existing sidewalk panels from and replace panels with cross slopes exceeding 2.08%.

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes and Accessible Routes, Site Arrival Points and Accessible Routes for Accessible Routes and Curb Ramps.

Points of Entry

Cut and fill, re-grade and ramp the hilly path between the spillway bridge and the back of Hurd Field to provide a connecting secondary path with minimal run and cross slopes. Consider adding small wall or handrail supports where terrain exceeds 5% run slope.

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes and Accessible Routes, Site Arrival Points and Accessible Routes.

Recommendations, Without Much Difficulty or Expense

Approach & Entry

Parking

Re-grade and restripe Lowell St. lot. Provide at least 2 accessible spaces, 1 should be a vanaccessible space.

Points of Entry

Lowell entry: Modify vehicle off-limits boulder placement to provide a consistently level and smooth approach and entry point onto Reservoir Trail.

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes and Accessible Routes, Site Arrival Points and Accessible Routes for Accessible Routes and Curb Ramps.

Access to Facility Areas

Interior Walkways

from Drake parking lot: Provide an accessible path connection from accessible parking spaces to connect to perimeter of field playing areas, team seating areas at both ball fields, bleachers, fountain and portable restroom. Add a clear level ground space of at least 36 inches width and 48 inches length at seating and bleacher area, and in front of fountain controls.

Long-range: When back of Hurd Field entry point is made accessible, this accessible path connection needs to extend to that entry point.

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes.; and Scoping Requirements: Accessible Routes for within a Site

Access to Elements

Benches/ Passive Recreation

Best Practice Recommendation: At one stone bench viewing point, provide a level, clear approach and seating location with at least a 36 in. width and 60-inch depth additional clear

viewing space. Remove edging from behind stone bench and reroute it to front of viewing area.

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes; and Building Blocks: Clear Floor or Ground Space; and Scoping Requirements: Accessible Routes for within a Site.

Signage, Bulletin Board

Create clear level ground surface connections with at least 36 in. width and within at least 5 feet of all posted and installed information along trail and at entry points to facility.

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes; and Building Blocks: Clear Floor or Ground Space; and Scoping Requirements: Accessible Routes for within a Site.



Reservoir Beach

Located at the Arlington-Lexington line on the North end of town, **Reservoir Beach** features a sandy beach beside a chlorinated and filtered pool built into the Arlington Reservoir. Open during the summertime, this facility also includes one playground with separate zones of play structures and a building with concessions and partially accessible toilet rooms.

An unpaved parking lot off of Lowell Street is located on the South edge of the site. A trail that circles the reservoir connects to the beach on the North edge of the site.

Location:

250 Lowell Street, Arlington Reservoir

Year Built:

Unknown

Known Renovations since 1991:

Unknown

Primary Function Areas Surveyed:

- Beach
- Playground (sand)
- Building with Concessions and Toilet Rooms

Public Programs:

Open 10 a.m. to dusk in June, July, and August



Issues

Approach and Entrance

Crosswalks and Curb Ramps

Along Lowell Street, three pedestrian crosswalks lead to the points of entry to this facility. At the intersection of Lowell Street and Westmoreland Avenue, no curb ramp is provided on the East side of Lowell Street and the curb ramp on the opposite side of the street is not accessible because a level top landing is not provided. Although curb ramps are provided on both ends of two highly visible

crosswalks at the intersection of Lowell Street and West Court Terrace, neither is accessible because level top landings are not provided.



Sidewalks

On the North side of the site, a fire hydrant, vegetation, and a deteriorated driveway obstruct the sidewalk along Lowell Street.

All of the issues described above negatively affect the pedestrian approach to this facility from the nearby public transit stops at Lowell Street.

Parking

This facility has a large unpaved parking lot off of Lowell Street. Although two *ad hoc* spaces designated as accessible are provided near the gated entrance to the beach, they do not meet any of the minimum requirements for accessibility.



Additionally, a small parking lot on the Northeast corner of the site is restricted to residents with a reservation of the playground and picnic table for birthday parties. However, no accessible parking spaces are provided.



Points of Entry

This facility has two points of entry along Lowell St. that are open to the public and lead into the unrestricted public parking lot.

Along Lowell Street, both asphalt driveways that lead into this parking lot are also used for pedestrian access. The asphalt driveway closest to the beach is in poor condition and has excessive slopes (20%).

There is also an at-grade point of entry located off of the trail on the North edge of the site near the playgrounds. This entry point is closed during the summertime while the beach is in operation.



From the public parking lot, there is a gated entry point to the beach. This gate is missing a smooth surface or kickplate hardware on the bottom ten inches of the gate.

An additional point of entry along Lowell Street leads to the restricted parking lot on the Northeast corner of the site.



A sand path is provided along the entire facility. This path is not accessible because it is uneven and unstable, especially near benches and trees. Although a concrete walkway is provided near the water's edge, it is not connected to an accessible route.

Additionally, a concrete walkway adjacent to the building has excessive cross slopes (6%).



Play Areas

One large sandy area contains three separate zones of play structures. Although an accessible route is provided to the large play structure, the transition between stone path and rubber surface is in poor condition. (Photo 7)

No accessible route is provided to the swingset and the small play structure. (Photos 8 and 9)

Access to Elements



Tables

One picnic table is provided near the playground; however, it is not accessible because it does not provide the required knee clearance for people using wheeled mobility devices and is not located along an accessible route.

Benches

Several benches are provided through this facility. They can be found along the sand path and trees, within the grassy knoll near the fence on Lowell Street, within the playground, and near the water's edge. The benches are not accessible because they do not adjoin an accessible route.



Concession Counter

Located in the building near the playground, a concession counter is not accessible because it is too high (42" above the ground). (Photo 12)

Toilet Rooms

One set of multi-user toilet rooms (one for each gender) are also located in the building near the playground. Although there has been an attempt to increase accessibility in these toilet rooms, they are not fully accessible because:

- ADA-compliant signs are not provided outside the toilet rooms;
- Lavatories have unprotected pipes underneath them;
- Accessible toilet stalls are provided; however, self-closing hinges of doors are malfunctioning, coat hooks are too high (68" above the floor), and side grab bars are too low (31" above the floor);
- Changing stations are too high (42" above the floor);
- Changing stalls are provided but none are accessible;
- Fire alarms are not provided;
- Outdoor showers are located adjacent to the toilet rooms but none are accessible.



Recommendations

Recommendations, Capital Projects

Approach & Entrance

Crosswalks and Curb Ramps

Install one curb ramp at the intersection of Lowell Street and Westmoreland Avenue and repair the curb ramps at the intersection of Lowell Street and Westmoreland Avenue and at the intersection of Lowell Street and West Court Terrace (total of 3 curb ramps).

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes for Accessible Routes and Curb Ramps.

Sidewalks

Repair a section of the sidewalk along Lowell Street on the North side of the site (about 25 feet).

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes.

Parking

Confirm the total number of parking spaces and provide the required parking spaces near the entrance to the beach. At a minimum, pave the area of the parking lot where the accessible parking spaces are located as well as the accessible route between the parking spaces and the beach. Additionally, provide at least one van-designated space at the restricted parking lot on the Northeast corner of the site.

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design:

General Site and Building Elements for Parking.

Points of Entry

Convert the steep vehicular driveway closest to the beach into an accessible pedestrian entry point by re-grading it so that running slopes are no greater than 5% and cross slopes are no greater than 2%. Alternatively, pave the entire parking lot and provide an accessible route between the driveway farthest from the beach and the point of entry to the beach.

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes.

Recommendations, Without Much Difficulty or Expense

Approach & Entrance

Points of Entry

Install an ADA-compliant latch and kickplate at the gate at the entrance to the beach.

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes for Accessible Routes.

Access to Facility Areas

Interior Walkways

Provide an accessible route between the parking lot, the building, the ramp at the water's edge, all zones of the playground, and the entry point at the trail (about 775 feet). Rebuild the concrete walkway adjacent to the building so that slopes are no greater than 2%.

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes.

Play Areas

Repair the transition between stone path and rubber surface at the large play structure and install an accessible walkway between points of entry and the swingset and the small play structure. The accessible route to these play areas can adjoin the new accessible walkway through the facility.

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes.

Access to Elements

Tables

Replace the picnic table near the playground with an ADA-compliant amenity and extend the asphalt walkway to it (about 75 feet).

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes.

Benches

Relocate one of each type of bench to an accessible area or install an accessible walkway to them (about 50 feet).

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Accessible Routes.

Although not a requirement under the ADA, consider providing at least 50% with armrests, as benches are replaced (total of 10 benches).

Concession Counter

Lower the concession counter located in the building to 36" above the ground. Alternatively, provide an auxiliary counter with a maximum

height of 36" in close proximity to the concession counter, or provide equivalent facilitation. Equivalent facilitation may be provided in the form of a folding shelf attached to the main counter, an auxiliary table nearby, a clipboard made available to the public, or other means.

Toilet Rooms

Make the following modifications to each multiuser toilet room:

- Install ADA-compliant signs alongside the doors to the toilet rooms;
- Protect the plumbing underneath the at least one of the lavatories in each toilet room;
- Inside each accessible toilet stall, adjust or replace the self-closing hinges of doors, lower the coat hook so that it is no higher than 48" above the floor, and raise the side grab bar so that is aligned with the rear grab bar;
- Lower the changing stations so that they are no higher than 34" above the floor;
- Install audible and visible fire alarms;
- At each outdoor shower, install a slip resistant wood decking so that it is flush with the adjacent concrete surface and retrofit one of the shower controls so that it is no higher than 48" above the ground.

For additional information, please refer to 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Plumbing Elements and Facilities for Toilet and Bathing Rooms.

[Note: no satellite image provided for Reservoir Beach Recommendations.]