

FINAL REPORT TO THE St. Charles Park District

Conclusions and Recommendations

October 29, 2012

All Site Conclusions and Recommendations

Background

A step-by-step approach will help the St. Charles Park District address the deficits in the specific site reports. We recommend the following to accomplish the goal of making District programs in District facilities more accessible to people with disabilities.

A Guide to this Section

There are 3,329 access deficits identified in the 61 site reports. That is what is required by the ADA, the identification of every access deficit at every site and facility. And, for every deficit, a solution must be identified.

However, this section is all about the big picture. As discussed in the cover letter with this report, the District does ***not necessarily have to make every site accessible***. It ***does*** have to make every program it conducts within its sites accessible.

We have attempted to identify some broad solutions, such as the refreshing of all accessible parking, as a way to address issues identified in the earlier 61 site reports, and as a way for the District to better manage compliance. This approach also gives the District flexibility within its compliance efforts to move resources so that they are applied with optimal impact.

This is also about accountability. The adjustments to door closers, eliminating changes in level, and other recommended actions are ineffective if not maintained over time by District employees. We recommend the following to facilitate review:

First, read the final report cover letter to Laura Rudow. It describes the concepts and requirements invoked throughout the report.

Second, read this Conclusion section. As mentioned above, this is a big picture review of the issues and solutions we recommend.

Third, read the 61 site reports. Use your computer and you'll have instant access to the report for that site, the photo gallery, and the checklists.

Fourth, use your knowledge of sites and of your staffs' expertise. You know St. Charles Park District sites better than we do, and you certainly know the staff better than we do. Blend in what you know with what we recommend in the report. There is always another way to solve an access problem...perhaps you'll be the one to see that solution.

Common Issues

In our evaluation, some common issues arose. These included the way maintenance affects accessibility to playground surfaces used.

The common issues are also "big picture" items for the District and incorporate many of the specific site recommendations.

Maintenance

The District uses a conscientious staff to maintain its facilities and sites. However, over time, every facility and site yields to wear and tear. The recommendations below describe ways in which attention to maintenance can specifically address some access deficits.

1. **Provide training** to maintenance staffs regarding the features of an accessible route and how to ensure that it remains unobstructed and that park amenities (such as garbage cans or signs) are placed adjacent to the accessible route.
2. **Provide training** to recreation staffs regarding the features of an accessible route and how to ensure that it remains unobstructed.
3. **Purchase some new tools.** The District should have enough battery-powered digital levels, and tools to measure pounds of force for doors, to equip some staff for occasional spot-checks. A great website for gauges is:

<http://www.technologylk.com/crl-door-pressure-gauge-lk-HMC035.htm?src=froogle>.

Changes in Level and Gaps

The routes and sidewalks that make up the District's network of accessible routes are in fair condition. Wear and tear, settling, weather, and other factors combine to cause changes in level and gaps along portions of those accessible routes, making that portion noncompliant and a barrier to many customers with physical and sensory disabilities.

Removing changes in level and gaps has a significant universal design benefit too, as more people with all types of conditions can more easily use District routes...staff pushing carts of supplies, parents with kids in strollers, and people using an assistive device such as a wheelchair, Segway, or walker.

4. **Eliminate changes in level** in 2013 or 2014. Using the rationale that the most severe changes in level are the greatest barriers to access, make changes in level of greater than .75" the highest priority.

Make changes in level of between .5" and .75" the second priority. Make beveling of changes in level of .25" to .5" the third priority.

5. **Add** change in level of more than .25", and gap checks of greater than .5", **to park maintenance safety checklists** in 2012. This will help identify and correct these problems before they expand. Make or buy pre-measured shims and distribute to employees for their use and ease of measurement.
6. **Add inspections for gaps** of greater than .5" **to park maintenance safety checklists**. Identify and fill these gaps before they expand. **In the alternative, consider a resurfacing of segments of asphalt route** which have deteriorated.

7. **Adopt** a policy about the use of other Other Power Driven Mobility Devices in District facilities and at District sites, and promote that policy to the general public. Every day, more people with limited physical mobility start to use a Segway or similar machines.

Pursuant to the new ADA title II regulation published September 14, 2010, this policy was to have been in place by March 15, 2011.

These assistive devices provide great benefits to people with disabilities and the sooner the District has a policy in regard to their use the better. The policy could, at a minimum, address times of allowed use (dawn to dusk), speed limits, off-limits areas, status of the user as a person with a disability, and minimum age.

It is important to note that a power driven mobility device is not a wheelchair. That device has a separate definition and is already allowed in facilities and parks.

The components of a policy are noted below. ***The District is welcome to use some, all, or none of this, but a policy must be in place. We recommend at least the following statements:***

Definition: *Other power-driven mobility device* (OPDMD) means any mobility device powered by batteries, fuel, or other engines—whether or not designed primarily for use by individuals with mobility disabilities—that is used by individuals with mobility disabilities for the purpose of locomotion, including golf cars, electronic personal assistance mobility devices (EPAMDs), such as the Segway® PT, or any mobility device designed to operate in areas without defined pedestrian routes, but that is not a wheelchair within the meaning of this policy.

Definition: *An electronic personal assistive mobility device* (EPAMD) is a device used by a person with a mobility impairment for ambulation. This definition does **not** include gasoline powered devices, golf cars, or riding lawn mowers.

Permission: The St. Charles Park District authorizes persons with mobility impairments to use OPDMDs and EPAMDs in District facilities and sites subject to the following restrictions:

1. The operator of the device must be a person with a mobility impairment, and upon request by District officials, shall produce proof of such within 72 hours.
2. The device, if used in a facility or in a park, is allowed in any area of the facility or park in which the general public is allowed, with the exception of employee only spaces, stairways, and identified hazardous areas.
3. The device, if used in a facility, must be controlled by the operator. It:
 - A. may not exceed 4 mph;
 - B. shall be driven on the right side of the circulation route;

- C. is prohibited from carrying another person on the frame, or any object on the frame that may make the device less stable; and
 - D. must not be operated in a dangerous or reckless manner that jeopardizes the safety of the operator, District employees, or District participants.
4. The device, if used in a park or outside, must be controlled by the operator. It:
- A. may not be operated between dusk and dawn unless equipped with headlights that are visible at 300’;
 - B. may not exceed 6 mph;
 - C. shall not be driven into wet or ecologically sensitive areas which are posted as such;
 - D. shall be driven on the right side of the circulation route;
 - E. is prohibited from carrying another person on the frame, or any object on the frame that may make the device less stable;
 - F. must not be operated in a dangerous or reckless manner that jeopardizes operator safety, District employees, or District participants.
5. The District accepts no responsibility for storage of the device.
6. The District accepts no liability for damage to the device, or injury to the operator, whether caused by the operator, another visitor to a District facility or site, or any other circumstance.
7. The District accepts no liability for damage caused by the operator of the device, or injury to others caused by the operator of the device.
8. The District reserves the right to suspend the use of facilities or sites by the operator if doing so is in the best interests of the District and its participants.
9. The District reserves the right to change, modify, or amend this policy at any time, as it would any other policy.

Obstructed Accessible Routes

Employees **may** see an accessible route as an empty 36” wide space in which a potted plant or garbage can is a perfect fit. However, that blocks or obstructs the accessible route

8. ***Provide training to park maintenance, recreation, and administration staffs*** regarding maintenance of accessible routes in parks and in recreation facilities.

Employee Work Areas

The District employs many well-qualified and skilled people on a full time basis, making parks and recreation services available to St. Charles Park District residents. It also employs many more on a part-time or seasonal basis.

The District likely already has employees with disabilities and in the future, will have **more** employees with disabilities, in all categories...full time, seasonal, and regular part time.

It is important to address access to work areas, and both the title II regulation and the work of the Access Board do so. In section 203.9 of the 2010 Standards for Accessible Design, the treatment of employee areas is made clear.

Generally, a person with a disability should be able to **approach**, **enter**, and **exit** the work area. This is addressed by requirements for accessible routes and accessible means of egress. Other factors are door width, and threshold changes in level.

Excluded from this exception are several types of common spaces in employee areas. Spaces such as the ones below must meet the access guidelines as they are excluded from the definition of employee-only areas:

- corridors;
- toilet rooms;
- kitchenettes for employee dining use; and
- break rooms.

In short, the key issues are the accessible route, changes in level, doors and entries, and maneuvering space once within the work area. This approach is effective so long as when the District hires an employee with disabilities, or a current employee acquires a disability, it will remove architectural barriers in work areas or make other accommodations.

The two recommendations below are important for all employees at all District sites.

9. **Address accessibility in the District personnel policies**, and note that, upon request by an employee, the District will make reasonable accommodations, which **may** include the removal of architectural barriers in work spaces.
10. **Require new construction, and alterations or additions** that include employee work areas to be designed and constructed so they are compliant with the 2010 Standards for Accessible Design and the Illinois Accessibility Code.

Accessible Parking

The District maintains approximately 2,841 standard parking spaces at facilities, and 94 more that are designated as accessible stalls. Illinois requirements here are more stringent than

federal requirements. In correcting or refreshing its accessible stalls, the District should address all of them at once to eliminate inconsistencies and come into compliance.

11. **Create a parking stall template.** A suggested template is below.

Parking Stall Dimensions

Stalls are a minimum of 8' wide. An adjacent access aisle must also be a minimum of 8' wide. An acceptable **alternative** design is an 11' stall with an adjacent 5' access aisle. The access aisle must be diagonally striped with **high quality yellow paint**.

Signs must be mounted on posts not farther than 5' from the head of the stall. The collection of signs must include the US Department of Transportation R7-8 standard sign (the blue icon in a wheelchair). Below that must be the fine sign. The statewide fine is \$250. Unless the City of St. Charles has adopted a higher fine by ordinance, the sign must note the \$250 fine.

Federal settlement agreements in Illinois require a third sign, on at least one stall, that says VAN ACCESSIBLE. The Illinois Accessibility Code does not include this requirement but we believe it is required. This belief was reinforced recently by a US Department of Justice settlement with St. Clair County in Illinois. The settlement required the addition of "van accessible" signs.

Finally, the bottom edge of the lowest sign is a minimum of 60" above the finished grade so it cannot be obstructed by a parked vehicle.

We suggest that the signpost be located at the head of the accessible stall and that the curb cut and detectable warning run the distance of the access aisle.

Perhaps the most common error we see in accessible parking stalls and access aisles is the slope. The Illinois Accessibility Code limits the slope to **not more than 2% in any direction**.

This is a challenging requirement that can take considerable effort to meet.

Connection to the Accessible Route

The access aisles should connect to an accessible route. The maximum running slope for the accessible route is 5%, and to account for heaving and settling, we recommend 4%.

The maximum cross slope is 2%. Do be certain to use compliant detectable warnings, now available in a template with a colored background and raised, truncated domes.

Passenger Loading Zone

The loading zone must have an access aisle adjacent and parallel to vehicle pull-up space. The loading zone access aisle must be a minimum of 60" wide and 20' long.

Confirm this template with the City of St. Charles, and the Illinois Attorney General's Office, to ensure that stalls will be compliant.

12. In 2013, 2014, or 2015 **implement a plan to correct or refresh every accessible stall** at every District facility. Incorporate this task into other plans that require parking lot restriping or resurfacing.

Running Slope and Cross Slope

We saw running slopes steeper than permitted. At some sites this was a minimal issue, but at other sites it was a significant variance. This condition naturally occurs when concrete settles, or when connections between new and old routes are off by fractions of an inch. Cross slope is equally important, as it serves drainage as well as access purposes.

13. **Adopt a policy** that in new construction and alterations the ramp slope shall not exceed 1:13, or 7.7%, as opposed to 1:12, or 8.33%. This allows room for error in the field. It also makes ramps easier to use for everyone, not just people with disabilities. This universal design approach is also a risk management tool.
14. **Adopt a policy** that in new construction or alterations the cross slope shall be an integral part of the project and shall not exceed 2% or 1:50.

Detectable Warnings

The US Access Board suspended the detectable warning requirement in the late 90's, for a period of several years. It was restored in 2002. However, in the 2010 Standards, it is not included. It is still a part of the IAC so we recommend at the very least as a smart practice the District meet these requirements.

It is typical to see noncompliant detectable warnings in every community. The detectable warnings at curbs **that are not compliant** are often a cross-cut of concrete, or a grid laid on wet concrete to create a diamond-shaped indentation. Over time these should be replaced.

15. As with parking, **develop a template for detectable warnings**. Confirm the template with the City of St. Charles and the Illinois Attorney General's Office.
16. In the same year that parking is refreshed, **implement a plan to correct or refresh every detectable warning** at every curb or crossing at District facilities. If necessary, phase this out over a two or three year period.

Door Opening Force Requirements

In District buildings and facilities, there are approximately 397 doors. Many have closer mechanisms. Some of these need adjustment to bring the pounds of force (lbf) necessary into compliance (5 lbf for interior doors and 8.5 lbf for exterior doors).

However some of the closers are just old. The wear and tear of 20 or more years erodes the closer effectiveness.

17. **Evaluate and determine the age of door closers.**
18. **Add door closer maintenance checks** to safety checklists for employees and for closers with 10 years of service or less, aggressively maintain them for effectiveness.
19. **Purchase and install new door closers** for all exterior doors (with closers 20 years old or more) and 50% of interior doors in 2013 or as soon as is possible.
20. **Purchase and install** new door closers for all remaining interior doors (with closers 20 years old or more) in 2014 or as soon as is possible.

Signage

District signs serve several valuable purposes. First, signs assist wayfinding in buildings, such as the Pottawatomie Community Center. Second, signs identify important permanent elements of facilities, such as restrooms. Third, signs facilitate access by people with vision and physical limitations. Aside from consistent use of the District logo, we did not note a signage template.

The Access Board requires different treatment for 2 types of signs. Signs for permanent spaces, such as a bathroom, must be in both Grade 2 Braille and raised lettering. For directional or informational signage though, only raised lettering is required. Be certain to incorporate these approaches into signs in buildings and sites operated by the District.

21. **Develop a sign template** in 2012 that describes where and in what facilities signs will be used. The template could include size of sign, mounting height, mounting location, size of characters, space between characters, contrast between characters and background, icons or symbols used in the signs, District information in the signs (name of facility? phone number? main office number?), and more.
22. **Implement signage template and correct or refresh** District facility and site signage in 2013 or 2014.

Bathrooms

Bathrooms are an essential part of a visit to a St. Charles Park District facility. Exercise, food and beverage, social activities, and more all rely on one of the oldest designs known to us. Making those facilities accessible is tremendously important.

Additionally, **portable toilets** placed temporarily at sports fields and event venues **must** be accessible and **must be served by an accessible route**. These are considered as new construction when placed.

23. **Develop a bathroom template in 2012.** Confirm it with the City of St. Charles and the Illinois Attorney General. **Be sure to include temporary facilities such as portable toilets in the template.**

The template should address the toilet itself, grab bars, items in the stall such as toilet paper and hooks, the stall itself, operating mechanisms, mirrors, sinks, hand towels, hand dryers, and more.

24. **Include bathroom renovations** at facilities in the District's Capital Acquisition and Replacement Plan.
25. **Consider the use of automatic flush controls.** These have environmental benefits and are also a great way to eliminate some accessibility problems.
26. **In the interim, implement non-structural modifications recommended in each section of this report,** such as lowering mirrors, remounting grab bars, changing the height of toilets and urinals, installing compliant stall hardware, and so forth.

These less costly changes on a site-by-site basis will serve your customers well until resources are available to renovate restrooms on a comprehensive scale.

27. **Make one portable toilet,** if one is provided at a site, accessible. This includes a portable toilet placed at a picnic shelter or adjacent to sports fields. These must be accessible and must be served by **an accessible route.**

The District has several sites with portable toilets and this is critical to address. Follow our single-user toilet specifications in our site checklists, and require accessible toilets from District vendors.

Lockers and Locker Rooms

Research shows that people with disabilities will refrain from using public facilities if they fear that sites are not accessible or they'll be embarrassed in their attempt to use sites. We all know the benefits of recreation participation. If a person with a physical disability comes to a facility that requires changing of clothes, there must be accessible lockers.

28. **Implement the locker room changes for Otter Cove Aquatic Park, Pottawatomie Community Center and Swanson Swimming Pool.**
29. **Promote availability of accessible locker rooms once completed.** Announce these changes to the community and see more participation by people with disabilities.

Alarms

In existing facilities where an aural or audible fire alarm system is provided, a visual alarm is not required unless the building was constructed after January 26, 1992 or has been upgraded since that same date.

If an alarm in an existing facility is audible only, it need not be modified to include a visual alarm unless it is replaced or upgraded in the future.

30. **Determine in 2012** if systems have been upgraded or replaced since 1992.

31. **Develop a plan in 2012** for the installation of aural and visual alarms in renovations.
32. **Retrofit construction that has occurred since 1992** to include aural and visual alarms by the end of 2014.

Brochures

The park grid in the District brochures is an important tool for Park District residents and can now be used to communicate about accessibility. Revise it to incorporate the access work District staff completes and indicate in your grid where, for example, the accessible picnic areas are, or where the accessible playgrounds are.

33. **Update parks and facilities grid** to reflect decisions made by the District regarding our recommendations, and note which sites are accessible or will be made accessible.

Website

The title II regulation requires that all types of public communication used by the District be available to people with disabilities. Many people with vision impairments use websites every day with the aid of technical equipment. The District is required to evaluate its website and make necessary changes so that the website can be read by that type of equipment.

A link at the US Department of Justice website offers guidance on this. The District IT staff should become familiar with this issue. Go to <http://www.ada.gov/websites2.htm>.

The District can also check the accessibility of its website at a free service. Link to Cynthia Says at www.contentquality.com/ and test your website.

34. **Evaluate the District website** and make changes so that the information on the site is accessible to people with disabilities.

Historic Sites: Primrose Farm

The **minimum required** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” or opportunities at historic sites be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” described in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35). Additional guidance is provided for historic sites.

The District **may choose** not to retrofit access improvements when doing so will “threaten or destroy” the historical significance of a site. This is a test that varies from site to site. For The Primrose Farm it may be access to the milking barn.

The District is urged to consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) regarding whether corrective work threatens or destroys the historic significance. We urge the District to in general do as much as it can, per the SHPO. Where corrective work cannot occur, the District should use technology to create ways people with disabilities can enjoy the history of the Historical Trout Farm.

35. ***Make corrections to Primrose Farm*** after consulting with the SHPO to determine that changes do not threaten or destroy the historic significance of these sites.
36. ***Develop alternative means of*** experiencing this site where site or structure changes would threaten or destroy the historic significance of the site or facility.

Swimming

The ***minimum required*** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of swimming be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” described in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

The District has two outdoor pools; one at Otter Cove and the other at Swanson. We recommend that changes occur at both pools due to the unique nature of each.

37. ***Make corrections to Otter Cove Aquatic Park and Swanson Swimming Pool by*** implementing all of the recommendations in those site reports.

Golf Course

The ***minimum required*** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of golf be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” described in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

The District has one golf course. We recommend that this site be made accessible.

38. ***Make corrections to Pottawatomie Golf Course by*** implementing the recommendations in that site report.

River View Miniature Golf Course

The ***minimum required*** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of miniature golf be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” described in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

The District has one miniature golf course. We recommend that this site be made accessible.

39. ***Make corrections to River View Mini-Golf Course by*** implementing the recommendations in that site report.

Maintenance Buildings

In other site reports we address the Maintenance Buildings. As noted earlier, the District can apply a different standard to spaces used only as employee work areas.

Park maintenance staff should receive training in regard to the application of the ***approach, enter, and exit*** strategy so that they understand the reason for the various requirements.

40. **Train maintenance staff supervisors** in accessibility concepts that are applicable to the maintenance building.
41. **Implement recommendations regarding parking, accessible route, changes in level, gaps, doors, and alarm systems** at the Pottawatomie Maintenance buildings.
42. **Leave Denny Ryan Service Center as is** until it is later altered for purposes other than access.

Playgrounds for Children 2 to 5

The **minimum required** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of playgrounds be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” described in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar multiple sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing 2 to 5 playgrounds should be made accessible. Again, a good practice is to treat this as a planning exercise and aim for 1 of 3 playgrounds being made accessible. Our evaluation included 8 playgrounds. Of these, 6 are accessible. **We recommend no new access.**

The Program Access Chart, along with the St. Charles Playground Map at the end of this section, illustrates the areas where work is recommended so that every resident of St. Charles is close to an accessible 2 to 5 playground. [[St. Charles 2-5 Playground Map](#)]

43. **Make corrections** cited in the reports so the playgrounds below **remain** accessible:
 - **Artesian Springs Park**
 - **Baker Field Park**
 - **Majestic Oaks Playground**
 - **Mt. St. Mary Park**
 - **Renaux Manor Park**
 - **River Bend Community Park**
44. **Leave as is** the other playgrounds for children aged 2 to 5 at the parks named below, and if future alterations or renovations occur at those sites, make them accessible.
 - **Cambridge Park**
 - **East Side Sports Complex**
45. **Advertise the accessible 2 to 5 playgrounds** in the District website and publications.

Playgrounds for Children 5 to 12

The **minimum required** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of playgrounds be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” described in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar multiple sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing 5 to 12 playgrounds should be made accessible. Again, a good practice is to treat this as a planning exercise and aim for 1 of 3 playgrounds being made accessible.

Our evaluation included 31 playgrounds. Of these, 4 are accessible and **we recommend access to 7 more.**

The Program Access Chart, along with the St. Charles Playground Map at the end of this section, illustrates the areas where work is recommended so that every resident of St. Charles is close to an accessible 5 to 12 playground. [[St. Charles 5-12 Playground Map](#)]

46. **Make corrections** cited in the reports so the playgrounds below **remain** accessible:

- **East Side Sports Complex (pond)**
- **Fox Chase Park (parking)**
- **Mt. St. Mary Park**
- **Renaux Manor Park**

47. **Make corrections** cited in the reports so the 5 to 12 play areas below **become** accessible:

- **Charlemagne, Kingswood Park**
- **Ferson Creek Park**
- **James O. Breen Community Park**
- **Primrose Farm Park**
- **Red Gate Park**
- **River Bend Community Park**
- **River's Edge, Reserve Park**

48. **Leave as is** the other playgrounds at the parks named below, and if future alterations or renovations occur at those sites, make them accessible:

- **Baker Field Park**
- **Cranston Meadow Park**
- **Delnor Woods Park**
- **East Side Sports Complex (south)**
- **Fairview Park**
- **Fox Chase Park (other)**
- **Harvest Hills Park**
- **Hazeltine Park**
- **Hunt Club Park**
- **Kehoe Park**
- **Langum Park**
- **Lincoln Park**
- **Majestic Oaks Playground**
- **Moody Park**
- **Pottawattamie Park (2)**

- **River Bend Playground**
- **Rotary Park**
- **Surrey Hill Park**
- **Taly Park**

49. **Advertise the accessible 5-12 playgrounds** in the District website and publications.

Baseball Fields

The **minimum required** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of baseball be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” found in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar multiple sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing baseball fields should be accessible. We recommend that a minimum of one field of every three be accessible. We saw 13 sites with 28 total ball fields. Of these, 9 fields are accessible. **We recommend implementing changes to an additional 2 fields in order to make them accessible.**

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, along with the St. Charles Baseball Map, illustrates the areas where work is recommended so that every resident of the Park District is close to an accessible baseball field. [[St. Charles Baseball Map](#)]

50. **Make corrections** cited below so ball fields at these parks **remain** accessible.

- **East Side Sports Complex (8)**
- **Langum Park (1)**

51. **Make corrections** cited in the reports so the ball fields below **become** accessible:

- **Primrose Farm Park (1)**
- **River Bend Community Park (1)**

52. **Leave as is** the ball fields at the parks named below, and if future alterations or renovations occur at those sites, make them accessible:

- **Baker Field Park**
- **Cambridge Park**
- **Charlemagne, Kingswood Park**
- **Cranston Meadows Park**
- **Davis Park (4)**
- **Harvest Hills Park**
- **Langum Park (1)**
- **Majestic Oaks Playground**
- **Primrose Farm Park (3)**
- **Renaux Manor Park**
- **River Bend Community Park (1)**
- **Rotary Park**

53. **Advertise the accessible baseball fields** in the District website and publications.

Basketball Courts

The **minimum required** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of basketball be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” described in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar multiple sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing basketball courts should be accessible. Because of the nature of basketball, a hard court, access is easier.

The District has 11 sites with 19 courts. **Of those, 16 are accessible, and we recommend no new access.**

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, along with the St. Charles Basketball Map, illustrates the areas where work is recommended so that every resident of the District is close to an accessible basketball court. [[St. Charles Basketball Map](#)]

54. **Make corrections** needed to maintain access to the basketball courts at:

- **Baker Field Park**
- **Davis Park (2)**
- **East Side Sports Complex (2)**
- **James O. Breen Community Park (4)**
- **Mount St. Mary Park (2)**
- **Renaux Manor Park**
- **River Bend Community Park**
- **River's Edge Reserve Park**
- **Timber Trails Park (2)**

55. **Leave as is** the basketball courts at the parks named below, and if future alterations or renovations occur at those sites, make them accessible:

- **Pottawatomie Park**
- **Primrose Farm Park (2)**

56. **Advertise the accessible basketball courts** in the District website and publications.

Athletic Fields

The **minimum required** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of athletic fields be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” found in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar multiple sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing athletic fields should be accessible. We recommend that at least one of every three be accessible. **There are 12 sites with 43 fields and none are accessible. We recommend access to 14 of the 43.**

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, along with the St. Charles Athletic Field Map, illustrates the areas where work is recommended so that every resident of the Park District is close to an accessible athletic field. [[St. Charles Athletic Field Map](#)]

57. **Make the corrections** so the athletic fields at sites below **become** accessible:

- **East Side Sports Complex (6)**
- **James O. Breen Community Park (6)**
- **Primrose Farm Park (2)**

58. **Leave as is** the athletic fields at the parks named below, and if future alterations or renovations occur at those sites, make them accessible:

- **Cranston Meadows Park**
- **Delnor Woods Park**
- **East Side Sports Complex (5)**
- **Fox Chase Park**
- **Harvest Hills Park**
- **James O. Breen Community Park (12)**
- **Langum Park**
- **Moody Park**
- **Primrose Farm Park (2)**
- **River's Edge, Reserve Park**
- **Rotary Park**
- **Taly Park**
- **Timber Trails Park**

59. **Advertise the accessible athletic fields** in the District website and publications.

Tennis Courts

The **minimum required** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of tennis be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” found in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar multiple sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing tennis courts should be accessible. We recommend that at least one of every three be accessible. There are 8 sites with 13 courts and 12 are accessible. **We recommend no new access.**

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, along with the St. Charles Tennis Map, illustrates the areas where work is recommended so that every resident of the Park District is close to an accessible tennis court. [[St. Charles Tennis Map](#)]

60. **Make the corrections** so the tennis courts at sites below **remain** accessible:

- **Baker Field Park (2)**
- **East Side Sports Complex (2)**

- **Harvest Hills Park (2)**
- **Langum Park (2)**
- **Mount St. Mary Park**
- **Primrose Farm Park (2)**
- **River Bend Community Park**

61. **Leave as is** the tennis courts at the park named below, and if future alterations or renovations occur at those sites, make them accessible:

- **Pottawatomie Park**

62. **Advertise the accessible tennis courts** in the District website and publications.

Volleyball Courts

The **minimum required** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of volleyball be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” found in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar multiple sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing volleyball courts must be accessible. We recommend that at least one of every three be accessible.

There are 3 sites with 7 volleyball courts and none are accessible. **We recommend access to 3 of the 7.**

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, along with the St. Charles Volleyball Map, illustrates the areas where work is recommended so that every resident of the Park District is close to an accessible volleyball court. [[St. Charles Volleyball Map](#)].

63. **Make the corrections** so the volleyball courts at sites below **become** accessible:

- **East Side Sports Complex (2)**
- **Primrose Farm Park (1)**

64. **Leave as is** the volleyball courts at the parks named below, and if future alterations or renovations occur at those sites, make them accessible:

- **East Side Sports Complex (2)**
- **Pottawatomie Park**
- **Primrose Farm Park (1)**

65. **Advertise the accessible volleyball courts** in the District website and publications.

Picnic Shelters

The **minimum required** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of picnic shelters be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” described in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar multiple sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing picnic shelters should be accessible. ***Of the 21 sites with 27 picnic shelters, 20 shelters are accessible, with the addition of tables or minor corrections. We recommend no new access.***

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, with the St. Charles Picnic Shelters Map, illustrates the areas where work is recommended so that every resident of the District is close to an accessible picnic shelter. [[St. Charles Picnic Shelter Map](#)]

66. ***Make corrections*** needed to ***maintain*** access, including adding tables to shelters at:

- ***Artesian Springs Park***
- ***Davis Park***
- ***Delnor Woods Park (2)***
- ***East Side Sports Complex (3)***
- ***Ferson Creek Park***
- ***Harvest Hills Park***
- ***James O. Breen Community Park***
- ***Lincoln Park***
- ***Majestic Oaks Playground***
- ***Mount St. Mary Park***
- ***Primrose Farm Park (2)***
- ***Red Gate Park***
- ***Renaux Manor Park***
- ***Riverbend Community Park***
- ***River's Edge Reserve Park***
- ***Timber Trails Park***

67. ***Leave as is*** the picnic shelters at the park named below, and if future alterations or renovations occur at those sites, make it accessible:

- ***Fox Chase Park***
- ***Hickory Knolls Natural Area***
- ***Hunt Club Park***
- ***Kehoe Park***
- ***Pottawatomie Park (2)***
- ***Primrose Farm Park (1)***

68. ***Advertise the accessible picnic shelters*** in the District website and publications.

Fishing

The ***minimum required*** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” fishing be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” found in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar multiple sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing fishing areas must be accessible. We recommend that at least one of every three be accessible. ***There are 4 sites with fishing areas and all are accessible. We recommend no new access.***

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, along with the St. Charles Fishing Map, illustrates the areas where work is recommended so that every resident of the Park District is close to an accessible fishing area. [[St. Charles Fishing Map](#)]

69. ***Make the corrections*** so the fishing areas at sites below ***remain*** accessible:

- ***Boy Scout Island***
- ***East Side Sports Complex***
- ***Ferson Creek Park***
- ***River Bend Community Park***

70. ***Advertise the accessible fishing areas*** in the District website and publications.

Skate Parks

The ***minimum required*** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of skate parks be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” found in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar multiple sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing skate parks must be accessible. We recommend that at least one of every three be accessible. There are 3 sites with skate parks and one is accessible. ***We recommend no new access.***

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, along with the St. Charles Skate Park Map, illustrates the areas where work is recommended so that every resident of the Park District is close to an accessible skate park. [[St. Charles Skate Park Map](#)]

71. ***Make the corrections*** so the skate park at the site below ***remains*** accessible:

- ***Riverbend Community Park***

72. ***Leave as is*** the skate parks at the parks named below, and if future alterations or renovations occur at those sites, make it accessible:

- ***East Side Sports Complex***
- ***Mount St. Mary Park***

73. ***Advertise the accessible skate parks*** in the District website and publications.

Dog Parks

The ***minimum required*** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” of dog parks be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” found in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar multiple sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing dog parks must be accessible. We recommend that at least one of every three be accessible. There are 3 sites with 4 dog parks and two are accessible. **We recommend no new access.**

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, along with the St. Charles Dog Park Map, illustrates the areas where work is recommended so that every resident of the Park District is close to an accessible dog park. [[St. Charles Dog Park Map](#)]

74. **Make the corrections** so the dog parks at the sites below **remain** accessible:

- **East Side Sports Complex**
- **River Bend Playground (1)**

75. **Leave as is** the dog parks at the parks named below, and if future alterations or renovations occur at those sites, make it accessible:

- **James O. Breen Community Park**
- **River Bend Playground (1)**

76. **Advertise the accessible dog parks** in the District website and publications.

Accessible Trails

The **minimum required** of the District by title II of the ADA is that the “program” trails be accessible to residents. This is measured by the “program access test” found in section 35.150 of the title II regulation (see 28 CFR Part 35).

For similar multiple sites, no guidance is given as to how many existing trails must be accessible. We recommend that at least one of every three be accessible. There are 9 sites with 10 trails and 6 are accessible. **We recommend no new access.**

The Program Access Chart at the end of this section, along with the St. Charles Trails Map, illustrates the areas where work is recommended so that every resident of the Park District is close to an accessible trail. [[St. Charles Trail Map](#)]

77. **Make the corrections** so the trails at the sites below **remain** accessible:

- **Otter Creek Bend Wetland Park**
- **Primrose Farm Park**
- **Renaux Manor Park**
- **Riverbank Park**
- **Royal Fox Wetland**
- **Timber Trails Park**

78. **Leave as is** the trails at the parks named below, and if future alterations or renovations occur at those sites, make it accessible:

- *Delnor Woods (2)*
- *Ferson Creek Fen*
- *Hickory Knolls Natural Area*

79. ***Advertise the accessible trails*** in the District website and publications.

Public Feedback

An integral part of the self-evaluation of sites and facilities, and the development of a transition plan, is the involvement of the public. A public forum should be scheduled after the District has had some time to digest this report.

We would be glad to work with the District and FVSRA on this project at no charge, and we would be glad to return to assist in this process.

Transition Plan

The District is required by section 35.150(d) of the title II regulation to have a transition plan. This must identify every barrier, a solution to each, note those that will be corrected, note the responsible employee, and note that date by which correction will occur. We recommend the use of phases instead of fiscal years.

Barriers should be removed as soon as is possible. Phasing the work to be done allows for access to occur and makes the best use of the resources of the St. Charles Park District.

In the view of DOJ, the recreation design requirements were available to the Park District since 2004, if not earlier. Enforcement staff has said at meetings and in conversations that work should have already been underway to identify and remedy access deficits.

Conclusion

The District has a wide variety of recreation facilities and sites. The skilled staff operates facilities and sites the community wants and enjoys. This report identifies some issues that are typical of a mature recreation infrastructure. The District takes steps towards accessibility every year and that undoubtedly helped.

The District should determine to what extent it will act on our recommendations. Staff should, in developing a transition plan, distribute the work into three phases. It is important that access work occur every year during the transition plan.

The message from the Department of Justice is that corrective work to occur should happen as soon as is possible. It is not possible to all the work at once. Therefore, acting in good faith is critical. The District should mesh access work within other District plans, such as playground replacement or capital acquisition and development.

Be certain to understand that the District could be forced to accelerate its pace. Making access work a high priority is very important.

Your strategy should definitely address the common issues identified in this report.

The District should be commended for undertaking this task. Although this access audit and the subsequent transition plan are both mandated tasks, some of your neighbor units of local governments have not completed these steps.

In closing, thanks again to the staff at the St. Charles Park District, especially Laura Rudow and Mike Horton, for their cooperation and spirit. All of the team at our firm enjoyed working with them.

Call me at Recreation Accessibility Consultants at 224/293-6451 if there are any questions. Thanks again for inviting us to work with the District.

Submitted by

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