

# Memo

**To:** Urbana Park District Board of Commissioners

**From:** Kara Dudek, Park Planner

**Copy:** Tim Bartlett, Executive Director  
Derek Liebert, Superintendent of Planning and Operations  
Corky Emberson, Superintendent of Recreation  
Andy Rousseau, Project Manager

**Date:** November 10, 2020

**Re:** 2020 ADA Transition Plan Updates

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## Statement of Situation

As discussed annually, since the 2011 accessibility assessment and creation of the ADA Transition Plan, Urbana Park District staff continue to develop a greater understanding of accessibility standards and ways to address them. This remains essential as compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as the Architectural Barriers Act, is a civil rights issue regulated by the Department of Justice. The ADA Transition Plan outlines 745 total barriers to address, and this year the total completed raised from 44.5% of all barriers to 47.4%. This equals 353 barriers addressed to date. The park district makes a continuous effort to include the most up to date ADA standards in all new projects and updates to existing infrastructure. Consequently, not only are the specific barriers to accessibility from the Transition Plan addressed, but all new construction is designed with accessibility as a priority. As discussed later in this memo, the park district is also considering contracting with an accessibility consultant to create a new ADA Transition Plan.

## Statement of Work

2020 ADA upgrades occurred at two parks and facilities—The Anita Purves Nature Center and Crystal Lake Park. As noted in past years, often barriers to accessibility take continual maintenance, and are not a one-time fix. Staff ensured that every playground’s safety surfacing met accessibility standards, ADA picnic tables were 20% of those in each park, and there was adequate brush and limb clearance near all paths and prominent features in parks and leading to facilities. 2020 has been an unpredictable year with COVID-19 necessitating staff work from home, change how they work, or completely changing job duties. Even with the unpredictability, 18 barriers to accessibility in the ADA Transition Plan were addressed, many as part of the design and construction of the Crystal Lake Rehabilitation Project in summer and fall of this year.

## Annual ADA Maintenance

Action Taken
Playground safety surface is checked once every month, and a log is kept by Facilities Maintenance Supervisor for previous 12 months at all 12 parks. (AMBUCS, Blair, Carle, Crestview, Crystal Lake, King, Larson, Meadowbrook, Phillips, South Ridge, Sunnycrest Tot Lot, Victory). The Nature Playscape also receives safety and accessibility checks daily, but differently than traditional playgrounds because of the natural materials.
All picnic tables are periodically checked in order to ensure that 20% of picnic tables are ADA accessible models.
Staff have been trained in proper trimming protocols. Brush and limb clearance is addressed on a yearly basis to ensure continuous growth has not affected accessibility or clearance minimums. Other immediate issues are additionally addressed by the Grounds Maintenance Supervisor.

## 2020 ADA Transition Plan Updates

Park or Facility	Barrier	Action Taken
Anita Purves Nature Center	Inadequate maneuvering space in gift shop. Counter top too high in gift shop.	As part of the gift shop remodel in early 2020, both the obstacles restricting maneuvering space and the service counter were removed. (2 deficiencies addressed)
Crystal Lake Park	The previous playground entrance lacked a path and ramp with appropriate cross slope and running slope. The change in level to the playground ramp was also too great.	Playground replacement in progress as part of OSLAD Grant and Lake Rehabilitation work in summer-fall 2020. (10 deficiencies addressed)
	The playground lacked entry to ground level play equipment, transfer systems, appropriate landing space, and signage for appropriate age groups/ intended users.	
	The sand/dirt volleyball court near the large pavilion lacked an accessible route.	This sand volleyball court has been removed as part of the OSLAD Grant and Lake Rehabilitation work. It is now the site of the new playground. (1 deficiency addressed)
	Make-up water fountain is not made for wheelchair use, but is along accessible route.	While the fountain near the sediment basin which provides make-up water for Crystal Lake was never intended to be entered as a play feature, it has now been removed as part of the 2020 Lake Rehabilitation Project. (1 deficiency addressed)
	The ramp down to the boat dock was deficient in slopes and width.	Ramp down to boat dock has been completely redesigned to accessible standards as part of the Lake Rehabilitation Project. (3 deficiencies addressed)

	Boat storage bins lacked an accessible route, and the fishing pier off the lake house parking lot had railings which were too high.	Both have been removed as part of the Lake Rehabilitation Project. (1 deficiency addressed)
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**Looking to the Future**

Three parks will likely see the biggest number of ADA improvements in 2021:

- With help from the \$400,000 OSLAD Grant received for the **Blair Park** Revitalization Project, the park will see new amenities up to ADA standards, and much greater connectivity both around the perimeter of the park and within.
- Once the Crystal Lake Rehabilitation Project work is done, resurfacing and improvements to the **Crystal Lake Road** will commence. As part of this work, some of the parking lots and deficiencies in ADA parking spots will be addressed. Additionally, the surface of the vehicle bridge will be changed and improved for the one-way road system where sidewalks on and leading up to the bridge will be upgraded.
- Lastly, initial discussions around improving the entrance to the **Dog Park** are beginning, since it currently lacks an accessible route to drinking fountain, a few amenities (such as dog waste bag dispensers) are mounted too high, and none of the benches are currently accessible.

**The Next ADA Transition Plan**

The existing ADA Transition Plan was created in 2011, and Urbana Park District staff are currently planning to contract with a consultant to create a new Transition Plan. As UPD strives to add new and diverse amenities, programs, and opportunities available to all, it is time to consider a fresh look at all parks, facilities, policies, and staff trainings. For example, the Crystal Lake Park Family Aquatic Center and Planning and Operations Facility have been constructed since the last assessment and plan, as well as a handful of new playgrounds, including the Nature Playscape. “You Belong Here” has become more ingrained in UPD culture since the last plan also. Contracting with an accessibility consultant presents opportunities for staff education on creating more welcoming spaces for the community. To date, reference checks have been completed on a new accessibility firm, with glowing reviews.