South Burlington Parks Access Improvements Study

Prepared for:
The City of South Burlington and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

Prepared by:
Stantec Consulting Services Inc.

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APPENDIX A LOCATION AND BASE MAPS ........................................................................... A.1
As requested by the City of South Burlington and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, South Burlington’s public parks were examined to determine improvements that can be made to make each park more accessible for all users. The parks investigated during this study were:

- Community Dog Park
- Farrell Park
- Jaycee Park
- Red Rocks Park
- Szymanski Park
- Veterans Memorial Park (formerly Dorset Park)
- Homestead Wheeler Nature Park

A map showing the location of each park is included in Appendix A. Maps of the individual parks are also included there, in the above order.

To begin the study, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) resources were gathered. The ADA Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal proved especially useful. While this document contains many checklist items that pertain to access to goods and services, the section that deals with Approach & Entrance features many relevant potential issues to investigate. Additionally, the United States Access Board’s Standards for Outdoor Developed Areas was used to cover some aspects not included in the ADA Checklist.

Using the ADA Checklist and the Standards for Outdoor Developed Areas, a worksheet was created for each of the parks to be studied. The parks were surveyed using the worksheets and both deficiencies and items of compliance were noted. Each park is summarized in this memo along with imbedded pictures and attached base maps. The findings are categorized under parking, approach and entrance and park features (including playgrounds, ball fields, picnic areas, etc.).

It should be noted that the improvements recommended in this memo are not required as the parks are existing facilities.
2.0 COMMUNITY DOG PARK

Overall, Community Dog Park is a simple open space and does not contain many of the features found in the City’s other parks. The site is quite flat and does not have many areas that qualify as barriers. As a result, only parking and the entrance gates were checked for accessibility. A base map of Community Dog Park is included in Appendix A.

2.1 PARKING

The parking lot has 18 available spaces, one of which is marked as accessible. This meets the ADA ratio of 1 accessible space for 25 parking spaces.

The Reserved Parking for Persons with Disabilities Sign is about 39 inches in height and should be raised to 60 inches.

2.2 APPROACH AND ENTRANCE

While the area between the parking lot and the dog park entrance is quite flat and does not have any barriers that need to be removed, there is not a slip resistant accessible path. Further, there is not an accessible path leading to the park from the street as Kirby Road does not have sidewalk. In addition to the lack of path, the area near the fence opening suffers from poor drainage. This causes the gate area to become flooded after heavy rain and creates the potential for icing during the winter months. Ice at the entrance is a barrier that should be addressed. Possible solutions include either regrading the existing entrance and adjusting the fence accordingly or moving the gate to the eastern end of the parking area as this area is at a slightly higher elevation and does not pond water. If the gate is moved, the Reserved Parking Space sign should be relocated adjacent to the new gate location. While not impacting accessibility issues, it should be noted that moving the gate may affect the layout of the park as the current gate location serves both the small and large dog enclosures.

The current gate configuration does meet ADA guidelines in terms of fence opening width (32” min) and height of gate latches (34-48”). The two-door configuration also does allow ample maneuvering space between the gates.
3.0 FARRELL PARK

Farrell Park, located on Swift Street, features two distinct areas: the lower playground and ball field area and the upper ball field. The parking lot is also divided into two areas. The primary parking area is adjacent to the playground while the secondary lot is located at the entrance to the park. A base map of Farrell Park can be seen in Appendix A.

3.1 PARKING

The primary parking lot is gravel and is approximately 150’ by 120’. Using 9 by 18.5 feet per parking stalls and 40 feet between stall rows, the primary lot is big enough for about 39 parking spaces. The secondary parking area is also gravel and is about 120’ long which leaves space for about an additional 13 vehicles. According to ADA, 3 accessible spaces are required for a lot with 51-75 total spaces. Of these three spaces, one must be van accessible (three extra feet of parking space or aisle space required). Currently, there are no spaces marked as accessible.
During meetings with the City, a parking issue was raised. Access to the upper ball field might be challenging to a person with a disability due to the long path from the parking lot. A maintenance access road exists at the northeastern corner of the primary parking lot. The road is currently gated but could be opened and an accessible parking space could be added at the top of the road and adjacent to the upper ball field. This road is quite steep and is in poor condition though and may prove to be difficult for a passenger vehicle to safely negotiate. If this option were to be pursued, the access road should be resurfaced with fine graded gravel.

### 3.2 APPROACH AND ENTRANCE

The parking lot itself, along with the path leading from the lot to the playground and upper ball park, are currently free of obstacles $\frac{1}{2}$" or greater in height. The path along the western side of the playground is relatively flat along its running slope and has a cross slope of less than 1:48 and therefore meets ADA.

At 1:15 along its running slope, the path leading to the upper field is a bit steeper than the 1:20 that the guidelines call for. This can be considered acceptable in this case as reducing the grade on this slope would not be practical. The cross slope and path width on this section of path do meet the guidelines.

There is currently no stabilized approach from the main path to the playground. While the grassed area between the path and playground is relatively flat, it would be preferable to provide a better defined approach. This could be done using either bituminous pavement,
concrete or fine-graded gravel. The wood edging surrounding the playground creates a 2-3” drop and is considered an obstacle according to ADA guidelines.

There should also be an accessible path inside the playground. There are competing ASTM standards that dictate different properties for the playground surface. On one hand, the surface must be firm and slip resistant to provide an accessible route but on the other, it needs to be soft enough to reduce the impact of a fall from the playground features. This can be accomplished using one material within the use zone, the area directly under and surrounding elevated play components, and another material to access the transfer station. The transfer station is a platform designed to transfer someone from a mobility device to the playground structure. Another option would be to use one surface that meets both ADA requirements and ASTM standards for impact attenuation. Shredded rubber, engineered wood fiber and rubber tiles are examples of surfaces that meet both requirements.

### 3.3 PARK FEATURES

Farrell Park’s playground approach does not meet ADA standards in terms of having an accessible route. The playground equipment is not compliant with ADA 2010 Chapter 10 standards as it is missing accessible routes to ground level play elements and to the transfer station within the play area. The park also has a picnic and grill area. The tables and the grills do meet ADA standards and are considered barrier free.
4.0 JAYCEE PARK:

Jaycee Park, located on Patchen Road just north of the intersection with White Street, is one of South Burlington’s larger parks in terms of the number of park features. Jaycee has a lighted softball field, two basketball courts, playground equipment, meeting house, pavilion and grilling and picnic areas. A base map of Jaycee Park is included in Appendix A.

4.1 PARKING

The parking lot at Jaycee has a total of 40 spaces with two marked as accessible. Four spaces, including the two accessible spaces, are located in front of the meeting house. The other 36 spaces are farther inside the park. ADA calls for two accessible, including one van accessible, spaces for lots with 26 to 50 parking spaces. While the two spaces currently marked as accessible do have signs and pavement markings, only one has an access aisle. Without this access aisle, the other space does not meet the requirement of having a five foot minimum loading and unloading area directly adjacent to the parking space. The existing space that qualifies as accessible is also van accessible as the access aisle is eight feet in width.

It is recommended that the eastern most parking space have its sign and pavement markings removed. The other existing space contains a painted access aisle and meets the requirements without modification. The second space now required could either be added immediately west of the existing eight foot access aisle or be relocated to the main parking area in the southeastern most corner of the main parking area as shown on the attached base map.
4.2 APPROACH AND ENTRANCE

Presently, there is no defined route between the parking lot and the playground, courts, pavilion, ball field, and picnic areas. As with Farrell Park, the surface is relatively flat but the lack of path would make traversing the park in a wheelchair or other mobility device more challenging.

There is currently a five foot wide concrete path leading to the meeting house. At the entrance to the building, there is a wooden ramp from the sidewalk into the building itself. The ramp is the required minimum of 36” and at 1:17 in slope, is flatter than the maximum allowed under ADAAG. The handrails, however, do not meet the standards. Currently, the handrails are lengths of 2x6 lumber attached at the posts. Guidelines require that the rails be either round and 1 ¼” to 2” in diameter or, if they are not round, the longest cross-sectional length must not exceed 2 ½”. Additionally, the rails must be free of obstructions along their entire length and have no more than 20% of their bottom surfaces obstructed. This means that attaching the rails directly to the posts is unacceptable as it will cause breaks along both the top and bottom surfaces. The handrails should be modified to meet ADA standards. Once modified, a sign should be placed at the front of the building indicating that the rear entrance is accessible.

There is currently no stabilized approach from the main path to any of the park’s features beyond the meeting house. There are also not any stabilized paths between any of the other features. While the grassed area between the path and playground is relatively flat, it would be preferable to provide a better defined approach. This could be done using either bituminous pavement or fine-graded gravel. The wood edging surrounding the playground creates a 2-3” drop and is considered an obstacle according to ADA.

If an approach path to the playground is added, some of the wood edging should be removed and a ramp to the playground surface created. The wood chip surface should also be removed and separated from a path leading to the transfer station.
Both the pavilion and basketball court surfaces are raised above the grade of the grass and the lip created is considered an obstacle. Whether or not new connecting paths are added, ramps should be added to the court and pavilion to eliminate these obstacles.

### 4.3 PARK FEATURES

Jaycee Park’s playground equipment does not meet 2010 ADA standards for several reasons including step height, transfer station height and turning space. It is also missing accessible routes to ground level play elements and the transfer station within the play area. In addition to the playground, the park has a picnic and grill area. The tables do not meet ADA standards for toe clearance and knee clearance. The grills do meet ADA standards and are considered barrier free. As discussed in the previous section, the pavilion and basketball courts are not currently accessible due to the obstacles caused by grade differences.

For the purpose of this study, and considering the building’s primary purpose as a place of meeting, the kitchen features were not considered. Additionally, the lack of access to the upper story is also ignored in this study as the main floor offers the meeting space.

The building’s bathroom, however, has several shortcomings that should be addressed if it is decided to make Jaycee Park compliant with ADA. There is insufficient maneuvering space within the bathroom and around the toilet and the sink, vanity and paper towel dispensers are all mounted too high off the ground and the grab bar is not mounted in the correct location to name a few. The complete ADA Checklist for bathrooms can be found at ADAChecklist.org.
Red Rocks Park has two distinct phases of parking depending on the time of year. During the fall, winter and spring, the park’s main gate is closed and parking is available in an area along Central Avenue between the main gate and Queen City Park Road. The surface is gravel and unmarked and there is room for about 46 cars. During the summer, the park’s main gate is open and parking is prohibited outside the park. During this phase, the park has four parking areas with a total of about 58 parking spaces. To meet ADA requirements, there should be two accessible spaces during the times when the park is closed and three accessible spaces within the park when it is open. One of the spaces in each phase of operation should be van accessible. Currently, there are no spaces marked as accessible. The base map for Red Rocks Park can be seen in Appendix A.
5.2 APPROACH AND ENTRANCE

The interior of the park contains several trails branching from a main trail that connects each of the four parking areas with other trails and ultimately the beach. The main trail is firmly packed gravel and is a stable and slip-resistant surface. The cross slope of the main trail consistently less than 1:48 as required.

The running slope is steeper than ADA requirements in two locations. The first is the segment that connects the interior parking areas. At an average of approximately 1:16 for about 400’, this segment is longer than the 50’ limit set for running slopes of 1:20 – 1:12. Additionally, one of the parking areas features a steep upslope to access the main trail. Gravel ramps with running slopes of 1:12 or less can be installed in this location shown on the attached base map.

The other segment of trail that is too steep is the length between the picnic area and the beach. This 200’ long segment is quite steep at approximately 1:7 and exceeds the ADA maximum of 1:10 for 30’. There is no practical way to reduce these slopes without completely rebuilding the trail using switchbacks as there is a large elevation difference between the picnic area and the beach and the two parking areas.

An alternative access to the beach may be considered. Currently, there is a fence and gate near the structure at the beach. This gate is kept locked but can be opened to allow emergency vehicles to enter the park. This gate could be reconfigured to allow an accessible parking space to be added. The gate would need to have an opening of no less than 32” and an accessible path leading from the parking space, through the gate and into the beach area. If parking is added to this location, a sign directing visitors to this additional accessible space should be added to the park’s main entrance area.

One additional trail was investigated. Running in a loop along the northern edge of the park, the trail is firmly packed and slip resistant along its entire length. There are some exposed tree roots along the...
trail in several locations that are greater than ½” in height and are considered obstacles. These could be covered with small diameter stone fill for a low cost. As long as the stone fill is tapered far enough along the path to not exceed 1:12 in slope, this could be a way to bring the trail to standards.

5.3 PARK FEATURES

The picnic area is relatively flat and open and does not feature any obstacles. There are several clusters of tables and grills, with only one location being located rather far off the main path. Excluding this table and grill, the picnic area is considered accessible and meets the requirements.

The approach ramp to the beach structure is too steep at 1:10 and should be flattened to 1:12. There is also a lip at the top of the ramp that exceeds the ½” allowable maximum. The corridors to both the men’s and women’s rooms are accessible but the bathrooms themselves do not meet standards based on several criteria. The mirrors and coat hooks are hung too high, the toilets are not at the correct height and the accessible stalls are too small. Additionally, the drinking fountain is too high and is too close to the wall. The Complete ADA Checklists for bathrooms and drinking fountains are can be found at ADAChecklist.org.

6.0 SZYMANSKI PARK:

Szymanski Park is located on Andrews Avenue just beyond the eastern end of the road. The park features two tennis courts, a basketball court and a small playground. A base map of Szymanski Park is included in Appendix A.

6.1 PARKING

The parking lot is paved and provides space for up to six vehicles. There are currently no spaces marked as accessible. One space should be provided for a lot this size.
6.2 APPROACH AND ENTRANCE

The park is connected to the parking lot with ten foot wide shared use path. The path is asphalt and is firm and slip resistant. Both the cross and running slopes comply with ADA standards.

There are currently no stabilized approaches from the main path to the basketball court or playground. The existing grass surface is relatively firm and flat but defined paths are preferred. This could be done using either bituminous pavement, concrete or fine-graded gravel. The wood edging surrounding the playground creates a 2-3” drop and is considered an obstacle according to ADA. If an approach path is added, some of the wood edging should be removed and a ramp to the playground surface created. The wood chip surface should also be removed and separated from a path leading to the transfer station.

There is a bituminous path leading to the tennis court. At 45” wide, the entrance gate to the court is well above the minimum and being free of a threshold lip, is considered compliant with ADA.

6.3 PARK FEATURES

The playground equipment is not compliant with ADA 2010 Chapter 10 standards as it is missing accessible routes to ground level play elements and the transfer station within the play area.

Additionally, the basketball court does not have an accessible route. The grass space between the shared use path and the court is flat so adding a path would be a simple project.
7.0 **VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK (FORMERLY DORSET STREET PARK)**

Located on Dorset Street at the intersection with Swift Street, Veterans Memorial Park is one of the City’s largest parks. The park features an ice rink, a roller hockey rink, three baseball fields, basketball courts, soccer fields, pavilion, clamshell outdoor performance area, indoor restrooms and a large playground. For the purpose of this study, the inside of the hockey arena was not considered as it is not operated by the City. The base map for Veterans Memorial Park is attached in Appendix A.

7.1 **PARKING**

There are four parking areas within the Veterans Memorial Park totaling 294 spaces. Three of the lots are paved and the fourth is gravel. Currently, a total of four spaces are labeled as, and meet the requirements of, van accessible spaces. ADA calls for a lot of this size to have 6 accessible parking spaces with one being van accessible.

7.2 **APPROACH AND ENTRANCE**

The park has a five-foot wide concrete sidewalk running along most of the eastern side of the park’s access road. This sidewalk does not directly connect to any of the parking areas. There is a well-defined grass path along the eastern side of the parking lot that is adjacent to the ball fields. This path, however, is not firm and slip resistant as defined by ADA. There is a spur of this grass path that goes toward the playground but as with the City’s other playgrounds, wood edging separates the grade of the approach from the inside of the playground’s surface. There is a path leading from the parking lot to the bathrooms/pavilion, and the clamshell performance area but there is no path leading from the accessible parking spaces to these paths. There are no paths leading to the basketball courts, ball fields, soccer fields or roller hockey rink. All these areas are reachable by flat grassy areas but gravel, asphalt or concrete paths would better define the approaches to the park’s features and make traversing from the parking lot much easier to persons with disabilities and general park guests alike.

7.3 **PARK FEATURES**

The playground does not have an accessible entrance. The wood edging surrounding the interior material, and the material itself, are considered obstacles. The playground equipment is not compliant with ADA 2010 Chapter 10 standards as it is missing accessible routes to ground level play elements and the transfer stations within the play area.
The bathrooms at the pavilion meet several of the requirements of the ADA Checklist but are not compliant with all items. The exterior door closes a bit too fast and has too high of a threshold. Inside the bathroom, the paper towel dispensers and coat hooks are hung too high. Also the grab bars in the accessible stalls do not extend the required 54” from the back wall. The door handle to the accessible stall should be changed to one that can be closed with one hand without tight grasping, pinching or twisting of the wrist.

The drinking fountain meets all ADA requirements.

There are picnic tables in several areas in the park with most under the roof of the pavilion. Only one table meets requirements of vertical clearance from the ground to the bottom of the table. As these tables are replaced, one space every 24 feet (two tables) should be accessible.

The paths leading to the memorial and the clamshell meet the requirements of ADA and are considered accessible.
8.0 THE HOMESTEAD AT WHEELER NATURE PARK

Located on Dorset Street, just south of the intersection with Swift Street, Wheeler Nature Park features community gardens, an indoor meeting space and hiking trails. A base map for the Homestead at Wheeler Nature Park can be seen in Appendix A.

8.1 PARKING

The parking lot is gravel and has room for 24 cars. One space is currently marked as accessible parking. This meets the requirement of one accessible space for lots that hold 1-24 cars.

8.2 APPROACH AND ENTRANCE

The path within the community gardens is generally acceptable as it is relatively flat, firm and slip resistant. The picnic area and the pavilion do have lips between the path and interior surfaces that are considered obstacles. Ramps with running slopes of 1:12 or flatter should be added to both of these features.

The hiking trails are not accessible. They are too steep and too narrow in several locations and do not have gravel or other firm material as a surface. Additionally, there are a few plank bridges that are not wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair. Making these trails accessible is not practicable and should not be considered.

8.3 PARK FEATURES

As discussed in the approach and entrance section, the picnic area and pavilion do need modifications to meet ADA. In addition to these features, the park also has a building that functions as a meeting place. The ramp to the building meets ADA requirements. The door’s threshold is too high and should be lowered to a maximum height of ¾”. The closer on the storm door is too fast and the door should take at least 5 seconds to close from a 90 degree open angle. Inside the building, most doorways are at least 32” wide but some are narrower. There is still an accessible pathway that could allow a wheelchair to navigate the interior of the building.
Some of the bathroom’s features do not meet ADA standards. The toilet is slightly further from the wall than required and the toilet paper dispenser is a bit too far from the toilet. Finally, the grab bar along the side of the toilet does not extend the required 54 inches. The sink is about half an inch short of the requirement in terms of how far it protrudes from the wall. Additionally, the mirror is hung too high.

9.0 CONCLUSION

Included in the appendix are base maps highlighting the exterior recommendations for each park. Additionally, conceptual estimates are included in the table on the following page. It should be noted that these estimates assume concrete paths for the entire lengths shown on the base maps. The locations of the paths are approximate and a more detailed ground survey will be required to further develop and optimize the alignments. The estimates also assume that all playground equipment will be replaced and that the entire play surfaces will use tiled rubber to meet both impact and accessibility standards. As a result, the construction cost estimates are conservative and represent the highest levels of accessibility improvements.
# Conceptual Construction Cost Estimates

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Parking Features</th>
<th>Community Dog Park</th>
<th>Farrell Park</th>
<th>Jaycee Park</th>
<th>Red Rocks Park</th>
<th>Szymanski Park</th>
<th>Veterans Memorial Park</th>
<th>The Homestead at Wheeler Nature Park</th>
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* Vtrans Report on Shared-Use Path and Sidewalk Unit Costs, 8/14
Appendix A

LOCATION AND BASE MAPS

- Park Locations
- Community Dog Park
- Farrell Park
- Jaycee Park
- Red Rocks Park
- Szymanski Park
- Veterans Memorial Park
- The Homestead at Wheeler Nature Park
1 - COMMUNITY DOG PARK
2 - FARRELL PARK
3 - JAYCEE PARK
4 - RED ROCKS PARK
5 - SZYMANSKI PARK
6 - VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK
7 - THE HOMESTEAD AT WHEELER NATURE PARK
COMMUNITY DOG PARK

1 - LOCATION OF CURRENT GATE AND DRAINAGE ISSUES.

2 - POTENTIAL NEW LOCATION FOR GATE AND ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACE.

ATTACHMENT DATE - 9/29/2014
1 - PRIMARY PARKING AREA
2 - SECONDARY PARKING AREA
3 - LOCATION FOR NEW ACCESSIBLE PATH TO PLAYGROUND
4 - EXISTING MAINTENANCE ROAD, POSSIBLE LOCATION FOR ACCESSIBLE PARKING FOR EASIER ACCESS TO UPPER FIELD

ATTACHMENT DATE - 9/29/2014
1 - This parking space does not have an adjacent access aisle and is not currently an accessible space.

2 - Move accessible parking space to this location where it will be adjacent to an access aisle.

3 - If access path to park features are added, accessible space with access aisle should be added to this location. Only two accessible spaces are required for this lot so one space in front of the meeting space could be removed.

4 - Possible alignment for new access paths to park features.

5 - Jaycee Park meeting space.
1. Location of "Off Season" Parking Area.
2. Main Entrance
3. Parking areas during summer when the park gate is open.
4. Main Access Trail (approximate location)
5. Northern Loop Trail (approximate location)
6. Location for access ramp to flatten approach from parking lot to main trail.
7. Possible location for new accessible parking space.

Attachment Date - 9/29/2014
1 - PARKING LOT. ONE ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACE SHOULD BE ADDED TO MEET ADAAG.

2 - LOCATIONS FOR ACCESS PATHS TO PARK FEATURES.
1 - POSSIBLE ROUTES FOR ACCESS PATHS TO PARK FEATURES

2 - CURRENT LOCATION OF (4) ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES. A TOTAL OF (6) SPACES ARE REQUIRED.

3 - POSSIBLE LOCATION FOR THE TWO ADDITIONAL REQUIRED PARKING SPACES, ONE ON EITHER SIDE OF THE PROPOSED ACCESS AISLE.
1 - PARKING AREA

2 - ADD/MODIFY RAMPS TO CREATE A SMOOTH TRANSITION INTO THE PAVILLION AND PICNIC AREAS.

THE HOMESTEAD AT WHEELER NATURE PARK

ATTACHMENT DATE - 9/29/2014