



Project:	Vilas Park Master Plan	Location:	Virtual Meeting - Skype
MSA Project No.:	15885004	Date:	May 22, 2020
Meeting Purpose:	Accessibility Concept Plan Review	Time:	3:00 pm
Meeting Organizer:	Dan Williams		

Attendees:

	Name	Affiliation
	Community Partners Advisory Group/Accessibility Focus Group	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keith Wanta	Access for Independence
	Project Team	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dan Williams Dan Schmitt	MSA
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kate Kane Ann Freiwald	Parks Div., City of Madison

Action Items:

1. Concept Presentation Overview
 - A. **Concepts**
 - i. Existing Conditions (for reference)
 - ii. A
 - iii. B
 - iv. C
 - v. Note: Concepts are presented as individual plans to provide context for proposed improvement. However, concepts should be considered a menu of potential improvements to be combined into a favored plan rather than fixed options.

2. Discussion
 - A. Priorities for park features, existing and proposed, and how they fit into the Vilas Park Master Plan. Focus of discussion is on preferred locations/layout of park features.
 - i. Are there missing features?
 - ii. Combine elements from different concepts or add new?
 - iii. Note: Detailed design discussions (materials, colors, etc.) are not the scope of the Master Plan and will be discussed during project implementation/construction.
 - B. Do any of the options provide better accommodation for accessibility? Specific concerns?
 - C. While the master plan will not specifically address detailed design of wayfinding signage or accommodations, are there locations where these features could be placed to be most effective?
 - D. Are there other groups that should be contacted to provide feedback?

3. Adjourn Meeting

4. Next Steps
 - A. Receive Public/Stakeholder Comments
 - B. Community Information Meeting (#2) – Date TBD, Likely mid-June
 - C. RRG/CPAG Meeting #4 – Draft Plan Review

Vilas Park Master Plan

Accessibility Focus Group Questions: 5 Participants

12/10/19

1. How do you use Vilas Park today?

- a. I have a disability and I have a daughter that doesn't have a disability
- b. My input is from my mother's perspective who has a disability
- c. I came to Vilas ton when my kids were little
 - i. Used the playground equipment, had picnics and gatherings, and used Vilas beach
 - ii. The park is only enjoyable if you are with someone who can help now that I have mobility issues
- d. I have used the pavilion on the other side of the bridge
- e. I have gone to the zoo a dozen times or so near the park

2. What would make using Vilas Park more enjoyable overall?

- a. Installing loop system so that people who are hard of hearing and that have a T-coil hearing aid can plug into the system can still be able to hear
- b. Everyone needs to be able to participate to the full extent
- c. Playground with accessible swings and surfaces
- d. Create different areas of the playground that have different textures, like a "large tic tac toe game" (xs and os were raised, you can feel them and they are easy to spin)
- e. There needs to be more benches close to the playground area
- f. Equipment in the playground area needs to be accessible
 - i. Add more sensory features
 - ii. Add a kind of map or sign that explains what the park looks like and where each type of play equipment is located
 - iii. Add more play equipment
- g. The trail that goes along the edge of the park is not well-marked at all. People do not know where they are. The same goes with the paths by island. These need to be labeled with accessible labels
- h. If there are bathrooms sometimes there is a brick wall privacy buffer to get to the stall and sink which is difficult for the visually impaired
- i. Bathroom doors are heavy and it's taunting work. I have a cane in one hand and have to use my body weight to open the doors
- j. The City of Madison should have a site online that says that the park is accessible. And they should include all parks that are accessible within the city
- k. Signage should be accessible: large print, braille, use the "way around app" – user puts on their phone but provider has a QR code that can be scanned to read the sign.
- l. County of Milwaukee has partnership with "AIRA" – glasses that link to a live agent that can describe things to you. Eg. "foot path to right" "sign says this" <https://aira.io/>
 - i. Can use for free for up to 5 minutes
- m. Think about transitions between between different types of terrain and surfaces
 - i. Uneven payments
- n. Make sure everyone knows all of the things they can participate in
- o. Trolley within the park – accommodate wheelchairs – help orient to space

- p. Accessible boat launch – kayaking
 - q. Playground tactile so that you that areas are changing – similar to streets
 - r. Make sure if somebody can get into the restrooms – automatic openers. People going in and out at the same time, I have trouble opening the doors
 - s. Someone should be assigned, like an ambassador from the park itself (custodian, manager, park ranger). Make sure that they have a CNA, CPR training license if there is a need for someone that needs help. Maybe have one person on staff that does that sort of thing and can assist.
 - t. Good Samaritan law, go up to someone randomly for help and they are okay to help
- 3. What are the biggest challenges of the park today? What could be expanded or improved?**
- Added or changed?**
- a. Have better wayfinding, put up a sign with map on it and make it tactile for people that would help legibility
 - b. Make sure that paths aren't slippery, in winter they get icy
 - c. Would be nice to have a spot where you can put in money and rent a scooter because it is hard to get around – we've had people borrow wheelchairs because they cant walk around the park
 - d. People don't go there because there is no path and getting yourself around a big area can be a hard task
 - e. Concern of mine is having been around kids and seeing them not be able to participate. I've also seen people having to push others over the grass because of the lack of paths and they are saturated with water
 - f. There are no paved walkways so you have to walk in ruts created by other people which is difficult for someone using a mobility cane
 - g. One area to focus on would be the sidewalk with big gauges in it. Wheelchairs bump over the crevice and run over everything with their wheels. Have park be consistent about resurfacing sidewalks if bad shape. Also stones and rocks can pop wheels. I actually ran one over popped my tire.
 - h. Fix the path that goes around the park. I remember being at the park a day or two after it rained, and I had to push through deep water (which is especially bad in a manual wheelchair). These paths are usually flooded!!
- 4. What would help Vilas Park best serve our whole community as Madison grows and changes?**
- a. Place a button near playground for assistance
 - i. If a kid falls you cannot carry kid back to the car because it is a long way to the sidewalk, you should have volunteers that know first aid and cpr and have them available around the park
 - b. Make sure there are no places that are easy to hit your head if you have impairments
 - c. Make sure bathrooms are easily maneuverable with a wheelchair
 - d. Accessible boat launch
 - e. Have the option to lock up wheelchairs
 - f. Promote parks and how they are inclusive – public awareness is important otherwise people think its nested in a more affluent neighborhood and why would I go there?
 - g. Disability pride festivals
 - h. If there are no bus stops near the park, create some
- 5. Is there anything else that the City should consider as it moves forward?**

- a. The Arboretum should have a hard surface and make sure that they are leveled out for wheelchairs and people with low-vision
- b. Look at path by Nakoma for example accessible path
- c. There are a lot of school kids that use Wingra and Vilas so it would be nice to have more educational signs.
- d. National parks have interactive signs that pair with your phone that tells you what you're seeing.
- e. Should have a Madison parks app. (the birds, animals, ecosystems, mounds, etc.) should be included on the app
- f. I find the shelter at Tenney Park is nice, I have had light sensitivity
- g. Tenney park shelter redesign is great
 - i. Flat walkway into the shelter
 - ii. Big enough that you can see people but not echoing which is hard for people with visual impairment
 - iii. Lighting is excellent in tenney park for anyone with vision impairment; no dark corners
- h. Bus should go through Vilas Park because it is too far away
- i. It is really hard to get to the beach because there is no curb cut out so if you have mobility issues it is impossible. There is not a nice entrance for wheelchairs.
- j. It is difficult to get to other places from the park, such as the Arboretum, especially if you have accessibility issues
- k. There is a lack of seating for wheelchairs. For instance, they make picnic tables where you can only sit on the end. There should be more picnic tables where you can pull up to the middle with a wheelchair so that I am also able to enjoy the park

Key Takeaways:

1. Concerns:

- a. Non-accessible playground equipment
- b. Lack of signage for paths and maps that are universal
- c. Poor wayfinding
- d. Lack of adequate paths (slippery, flooded, full of holes, not wide enough, improper slope)
- e. Information about equal opportunities in park activities
- f. Lack of public transit
- g. Lack of accessible seating
- h. No easy access to all areas of the park

2. Suggestions:

- a. If there are bathrooms, make them ADA friendly
- b. Install hearing aid loop system for maps
- c. Build playground
 - i. Accessible swings and surfaces
 - ii. Different textures, sensory features, and activities

- d. More benches
- e. Online web page showcasing the accessible parks
- f. Universal signage with scannable QR code or partnership with AIRA for wayfinding that also feature educational facts
- g. Accessible boat launch
- h. Assigned trained park ambassador that can be called (via button or phone) to aid those in need
- i. Repave paths and sidewalks to meet standards fixing issues mentioned above
- j. Bus stops for public transit access
- k. Create Madison Parks App

3. Examples:

- a. Nakoma Park has nice accessible pathways
- b. National parks have signs that pair with phones to guide and inform you
- c. Tenney Park is well lit and has a nice shelter with a flat walkway for wheelchairs and is an open space for those with visual impairments
- d. Milwaukee County has a partnership with AIRA for wayfinding