

## APPENDIX H: ADA Self-Evaluation Report of Outdoor Recreational Facilities

### Part 1 – Administrative Requirements

#### I. ADA Coordinator Information

##### a. Name and Contact Information

Sharon Dubois  
Grants and Economic Development Manager  
Community Development Department  
City of Gloucester  
9 Dale Avenue  
Gloucester MA 01930

Phone: 978-281-9700

E-mail: sdubois@gloucester-ma.gov

##### b. Designation Letter from Mayor Kirk (see attached)

#### II. Grievance Procedure - City of Gloucester – for the General Public

### EQUAL ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

#### STEP 1:

The Grants and Economic Development Manager will be available to meet with citizens and employees during business hours.

When a complaint, grievance, request for program interpretation or clarification is received either in writing or through a meeting or telephone call, every effort will be made to create a record regarding the name, home address, telephone number and e-mail address of the person making the complaint, grievance, program policy interpretation or clarification. If the person desires to remain anonymous, he or she may.

A complaint, grievance, request for program policy interpretation or clarification will be responded to within ten working days (if the person making the complaint is identified) in a format that is sensitive the needs of the recipient (i.e. verbally, enlarged type face etc.)

Copies of the complaint, grievance, request for program policy interpretation or clarification and response will be forwarded to the appropriate town agency (i.e. department of public works, conservation commission etc.). If the grievance is not resolved at this level it will be progressed to the next level.

#### STEP 2:

A written grievance will be submitted to the Director of Public Works with a copy to the Community Development Director. Assistance in writing the grievance will be available to all individuals. All written grievances will be responded to within ten working days by the Director of Public Works, in consultation with the Community Development Director, in a

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format that is sensitive to the needs of the recipient. If the grievance is not resolved at this level it will progress to the next level.

### STEP 3:

If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved by the Department of Public Works Director working in conjunction with the Community Development Director, the written grievance will be forwarded to the Mayor for resolution.

### STEP 4:

If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved by the Mayor, the grievance will be forwarded by the Mayor to the City Council with a recommendation for addressing the grievance. The citizens initiating the grievance will be informed of the opportunity to meet with and speak to the City Council, with whom local authority for final grievance resolution lies.

### III. Public Notice of Non-Discrimination

- a. See Attached Notice – To be Kept posted at City Hall, Stage Fort Park, Good Harbor Beach and Wingersheek Beach and on the Open Space website.

### IV. Documentation of Involvement of People with Disabilities

The Community Development Department pro-actively sought input from groups that include significant numbers of people with disabilities including the Gloucester Council on Aging, the Independent Living Center, North Shore ARC and the Disabled Veterans. Staff spoke directly with each of these groups, discussed the Open Space and Recreation Plan and the preliminary results of the ADA self-evaluation and then asked for input on obstacles and desirable facilities.

Comments included:

- a. Stage Fort Park: the Council on Aging and the Senior Day Care program have found it difficult to take groups of seniors to Stage Fort Park picnics in part due to the difficult access to the bathrooms in the basement of the senior center. These switchback ramps prove to be difficult for some seniors to use though they may meet ADA requirements. One suggestion was to use better temporary bathrooms or to build permanent bathrooms near the picnic area on the lower level of the park near the “Cupboard” snack shop.

The Disabled Veterans hold an annual picnic at Stage Fort Park with other veterans groups such as the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

- b. Indoor walking space: Senior citizens would like an indoor walking area especially for use in the winter.
- c. The Council on Aging plans to develop walking programs with “walk leaders” who will do some state training.
- d. Burnham’s Field sits near many senior apartments and appears to be neglected. Seniors would be interested in gardening there.

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- e. Beaches: The Independent Living Center (ILC) representatives commented that its important to allow a good beach experience such as getting onto the sand. Getting into the water was of secondary importance. Seagull Beach on Cape Cod is a good model for beach access. A firm, biodegradable walkway material is used across the sand to allow beach access. Beach wheelchairs are used.

Roomy bath houses and bathrooms are important at any facility. Correct placement and heights for bathroom grab bars are very important.

- f. Spectator access: ILC representatives supported efforts to make the spectator areas of recreational fields and courts more accessible and also pointed out that providing access to those areas would also allow access to the recreational fields and courts for use by disabled participants as well. Lighting and ADA parking are important as well.
- g. Picnic Tables: these should have ½ benches or table extensions that allow wheelchair access up to the table.
- h. Water access: ILC representatives appreciated the efforts to include ramps to boating facilities. They understood that slope of ramps may exceed ADA recommended maximums due to the 9-foot high tide in Gloucester Harbor and limit on the length of ramps in order to provide unobstructed navigation channels. They suggested that tide charts could be used to highlight time windows where the ramp slopes will not exceed ADA maximums.

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### Part 2 – Program Accessibility

#### Objective

ADA requirements seek to create or adapt sites, buildings and facilities so that they can be approached, entered, and used by persons with disabilities. This includes recreational facilities. The Massachusetts Architectural Access Board oversees the implementation of ADA requirements in Massachusetts and has adopted regulation that specifically describe how to provide access.

The ADA requirements for recreational facilities in Massachusetts are set forth at 521 CMR 19.00 **RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**.

#### ***19.1 GENERAL***

*Recreational facilities shall comply with 521 CMR, except as specified or modified in 521 CMR 19.00. Recreational facilities shall include but not be limited to courts, rinks, swimming pools, gymnasiums, stadiums, health and sports clubs, radio control facilities, whirlpools, jacuzzis, gyms, weightlifting areas, playgrounds, zoos, fairgrounds, beaches, piers, docks, bandstands, gazebos, parks, bowling alleys, picnic areas, video arcades and campsites. All areas open to and used by the public, including but not limited to locker rooms, shower facilities, saunas, steam rooms, sun-tanning rooms, weight rooms, aerobics and dance rooms, tennis.*

The Division of Conservation Service's Open Space and Recreation Plan Workbook provides additional guidance to communities regarding ADA access for recreational facilities. The Workbook emphasizes that the objective is to provide an accessible system of recreational facilities rather than to have every individual facility be accessible.

#### I. Facility Inventory

##### a. Overview

In July and August of 2010, Community Development Department staff conducted site assessments of outdoor recreational facilities through out the City. This assessment covered 16 playgrounds, 16 ballfields and 10 beaches. The assessment covered 7 tennis courts and 5 basketball courts.

##### b. Table of Results / Physical Obstacles Identified

- i. Water Facilities: the City does not own or operate outdoor water facilities covered by 521 CMR 19.00 such as swimming pools and Jacuzzis
- ii. Bowling Alleys: Not Applicable
- iii. Locker Rooms: No public locker rooms exist at the City's outdoor recreational facilities
- iv. Campsite: Gloucester does not operate public campsites

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- v. Picnic Areas: An extensive picnic area is provided at Stage Fort Park while many other facilities offer picnic tables.

1. Stage Fort Park: the picnic facilities at Stage Fort Park include 4 tables with extended table tops that meet ADA requirements for wheelchair access. These tables are located next to concrete walkways that provide access from the accessible parking spaces nearby.



2. Beaches: Good Harbor Beach and Wingersheek Beaches feature snack shops that have outdoor picnic tables. These tables do not have the necessary clearances for wheelchair access. The areas around the snack shops are paved.
3. Neighborhood Parks: Ben Smith Playground off of East Main Street has a concrete picnic table with a view overlooking the inner harbor. This table was not accessible. Other neighborhood playgrounds do not have tables.
4. School Playgrounds: The five elementary school playgrounds include tables. Tables at the West Parish Science Park Playground are accessible. Tables at Beeman, East Gloucester and Plum Cove School as well as Mattos Field (adjoining Veterans School) do not have sufficient clearances for wheel chair access and some could be situated closer to access routes.

vi. Playgrounds

1. Stage Fort Park: the playground installed with the support of the Gloucester Rotary club has an accessible path around the play area pit. The pit has wood chips that allow a wheelchair to roll to the play equipment. The climbing equipment has a landing and rails that would allow a wheel-chair bound child to lift themselves onto the structure. A swing has a low-entry that would allow access from a wheelchair.
2. Neighborhood Playgrounds: 10 neighborhood playgrounds were assessed. As play structures have been updated over the past ten years the new equipment has included stairs with lower steps that include a landing and rail that a child in a wheelchair could use to gain access to the equipment. Almost all the swings are either infant swings or rubber belt-type swings. Chair swings that could provide a swing experience for wheelchair-using children were not observed.

Access to the play equipment was mixed for the neighborhood parks. Rubber barriers are used to surround the play structures and hold in wood chips have openings for wheelchair access. For many play areas the wood chips have decomposed since their installation and City has not allocated sufficient funds to frequently refresh them. Neighbors of Eastern Avenue School Playground and Apple Street Playground came over specifically to mention the lack of wood chips. Even where DPW has refreshed

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the wood chips, areas around swings and the most actively used equipment had already lost much of the wood chip coverage.

Accessible routes varied between the neighborhood parks. The primary routes were on dirt paths or grass. In some instances like Burnham's Field or the Oval Playground, modest improvements to include formal paths would greatly improve access for playgrounds users and spectators.

### 3. School Playgrounds:

- a. Beeman School: The play equipment and swings at Beeman School are at the bottom of a significant slope down from the school building. The play area lacked an accessible opening into the play pit.



- b. East Gloucester School: This school has play equipment installed in 20XX with the help of community partners. The play equipment includes multiple climbing structures and swings. The main play structure has a 2 foot by 2 foot lower step that could be accessed by a student from a wheelchair. The slope of the access path to the play area appears to exceed the 5% maximum set by ADA.
- c. Plum Cove School: The play equipment includes 3 slides, 2 chain ladders and 6 swings. The play structure has a low landing that can be used by students in wheelchairs for access. The play area has paved paths surrounding play pits filled with wood chips.
- d. Veterans School: The playground sits between the school and Mattos Field and includes a mix of both new play equipment designed with ADA access in mind and older equipment such as a metal slide. A low-entry "foot-swing" has been installed that allows kids either to stand or sit and rock back and forth.
- e. West Parish School: West Parish School has two play areas, the unique and popular "Science Park" and another on the opposite side of the school. Science Park includes wide wood ramps and wood chips that provide accessible routes to the custom play equipment that incorporates science learning. The learning stations generally provided wide access routes most of the stations could be used on the first level.

### vii. Public Bathroom and Shower Facilities at Recreational Facilities

1. Stage Fort Park: Men's and Women's Bathrooms are located in the basement of the Visitors Center. Ramps have been constructed to provide from the parking level to the basement. Wheelchair entry is most easily made through the middle door into the lifeguard room and into the adjoining bathrooms.

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The door latches and grab bars in the accessible stall do not meet current ADA standards.

Portable toilets are also located next to the snack shop.

2. Wingersheek Beach: Public bathrooms and a shower room are located next to the snack shop. Bathroom and bathrooms stalls have been upgraded recently to better conform to current ADA standards. The doors into both the men's and women's bathrooms are 31" wide, below the minimum standard of 32". Widening the doorway would require major changes to the cinder block structure of the building.

The shower room has an open door 39" wide that remains open during beach hours. The room is 72" deep. The shower lacks an adjustable nozzle. The seat for the shower was outside. There were no grab bars.

3. Good Harbor Beach: Public bathrooms and a shower room are located next to the snack shop. Bathroom and bathrooms stalls will be upgraded this fall to better conform to current ADA standards. The doors into both the men's and women's bathrooms both have thresholds that rise several inches at the entry way.

The shower room has an open door 39" wide that remains open during beach hours. The room is only 58" deep, less than the 60" required by ADA. The shower lacks an adjustable nozzle. The seat for the shower was outside. There were no grab bars. The entrance ramp into the showers has a steep 5" rise over a two-feet.

4. Niles Beach, Pavilion Beach, Plum Cove Beach: These beaches have standard size portable toilets during the summer.
5. Mattos Field / Other locations: The field building has bathrooms that were locked during the inspection. Additional follow-up is required to determine if other field buildings have bathrooms.
6. Magnolia Woods Field: Standard portable toilet

### viii. Marine facilities and ramps

The Waterways Access Board oversees 25 landings that provide public access to the water. Many of these landings were established in Colonial times so they pre-date the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Waterways Access Board is aware of ADA/AAB requirements for these facilities and applies them to new construction at the existing landings.

At both Cripple Cove and Solomon Jacobs Landings on Gloucester Harbor the Board added access plates to the ramps for easy wheelchair access.

Dun Fudgin' Landing on the Annisquam River was reconstructed in 2002 and meets the ADA/AAB requirements in place at that time.

### ix. Spectator Access

1. Many of the ball fields lacked accessible routes to the prime viewing areas and ADA parking spaces near the field. Consideration should be given to developing accessible

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routes to spectator areas and designating ADA parking locations. This could be done either individually or as a system-wide project at the following fields:

- Burnham's
- The Oval
- O'Maley
- Wilson
- Parisi
- Burke's
- Newell Stadium

### c. Narrative of results

The open space and recreation facilities and activities as a comprehensive system substantially comply with the American with Disabilities Act. The Department of Public Works continues to make access improvements to increase the number of facilities that are accessible and to meet new ADA access standards as facilities are upgraded. The Community Development Department and the Department of Public Works will work together to find funds to continue improve access in the future as described above in this evaluation.

### d. New Techniques / Standards to consider

New standards adopted since the 1998 Open Space and Recreation Plan include:

521 CMR 19.00: **RECREATIONAL FACILITIES** (adopted 1/27/2006)

ADA and ABA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities: Chapter 10: Recreation Facilities. *Published in the Federal Register July 23, 2004 and amended August 5, 2005.*

### e. ID Physical Obstacles to Address

See table that follows for a description of necessary changes, a schedule for implementation of the changes and the identification of the person responsible individual to implement changes.

## II. Employment Practices

### a. Signed Statement that employment practices conform with ADA

See attached memorandum from Mayor Kirk

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City Hall  
Nine Dale Avenue  
Gloucester, MA 01930



TEL 978-281-9700  
FAX 978-281-9738  
ckirk@gloucester-ma.gov

CITY OF GLOUCESTER  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

MEMORANDUM

TOPIC: Designation of Sharon Dubois as ADA Coordinator  
For Purposes of Access to Open Space and Recreational Facilities

Confirmation that Personnel Practices conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act

DATE: February 16, 2011

I hereby designate Sharon Dubois, Grants and Economic Development Manager for the Gloucester Community Development Department, as the American with Disabilities Act Coordinator for the purposes of ensuring equal access to open space and recreation facilities and activities for the City of Gloucester. Ms. Dubois shall be the person designated to receive and consider inquiries and grievances from the General Public under the City's "Grievance Policy Regarding Equal Access to Open Space and Recreational Facilities and Activities"

After consultation with Personnel Director David Bain, I hereby confirm that the employment practices of the City of Gloucester conform with the Americans with Disabilities Act and that appropriate notices related to compliance with the ADA and ADA grievance procedures for City personnel have been appropriately publicized and posted.

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Carolyn Kirk, Mayor

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Date

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List of Proposed Improvements and Schedule

Location	Improvement	Responsible Staff	Timeframe
Burnham's Field	Community Garden with Accessible Beds	Com Development DPW	Spring 2011 Additional beds in 2012 if funding available
Green Street	Accessible Path around Field	DPW Com Development	2011
Schools	Accessible Outdoor Lunch Tables	School Department with support from PTO's, Rotary and others	As Funding is available
Burnham's Field	Improve ADA access to field, playground and gardens	Com Development DPW Private Contractor	2012 or when PARC funds obtained
Ballfields	ADA parking with accessible routes to fields <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burnham's</li> <li>• The Oval</li> <li>• O'Maley</li> <li>• Wilson</li> <li>• Parisi</li> <li>• Burke's</li> <li>• Newell Stadium</li> </ul>	DPW Com Development	2011: Green St 2012: Burnham's* & Newell 2013*: Burke's & the Oval 2014*: O'Maley & Wilson 2015*: Parisi * based as CDBG funds availability
Beeman School	Accessible Route from School Building to fields and playground	DPW Facilities	TBD
Stage Fort Park	More accessible Bathroom near snack shop	DPW/Vendor	TBD