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City of Maple Plain  
5050 Independence Street  
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October 2, 2025

**Re: Park Safety and ADA Loss Control Survey Conducted on 10/01/2025**

Kevin,

At your request, Marc Dunker and I met with you to conduct a park safety and ADA compliance survey at Veterans, Rainbow, Bryantwood, and “Tot-Lot” city parks. This was in conjunction with your participation in the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust (LMCIT) Insurance program.

**Purpose of Visit**

The purpose of our visit was to conduct a non-certified park and playground safety and ADA compliance inspection. As a result of this visit, we created a priority list of needs for the city to consider.

**Statement of Findings**

Our inspection took us to four locations. Overall, the locations show average or better condition with average or better maintenance and repair. Most park structures were in safe condition with only a few serious concerns which will be detailed below. The city has a park system that shows pride and care for users. Correcting deficiencies and making slight improvements to maintenance will extend the life of playground equipment, while providing a positive and safe experience for users.

One significant issue was noted in all parks, and that is the lack of accessible play features for people with disabilities. This is a complicated subject and rather than make specific examples, I encourage you to read and understand the guides and documents I have provided as attachments.

No park is perfect, and we found some deficiencies which will be covered below. Several of the concerns identified repeated themselves throughout the inspection, so rather than provide repeat suggestions please understand that the recommendations apply to any occurrence of said issue. These will be identified with an asterisk \*. Not all suggestions or recommendations are represented in the attached photo template.

**Veteran’s Park – See photo template for photos of some conditions.**

- \*There are no handicapped parking spaces at this park. Federal law has specific requirements for parking spaces. In parking lots of 0-25 spaces the minimum ADA parking space requirement is one. If no parking lot is provided, consider street parking with designated ADA space(s).
- \*Park signage is minimal. While it meets the standard for signage, better options may include pictograms rather than all words, along with certain safety requirements.
- Maintain adequate ADA picnic tables in all parks

- If there are 1 or 2 picnic tables all/both must be ADA compliant
- More than 2 tables, 20% of the total number must be ADA compliant
- See attached quick card for details and ideas for retrofit as well as specific design requirements
- The park lacks ADA play features for children with disabilities. Please see the attached document that provides a ratio of compliant play features in parks.
- On the ADA child's swing seat, the strap is missing – this should be replaced
- \*According to ASTM F1292 Impact Attenuating Surface Systems should be installed and maintained.
  - Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) is a good fall attenuation product if installed to the proper depth.
  - We discussed Poured in Place (PIP) surfaces, and while it offers slightly better head injury protection than EWF, it does not provide protection against long-bone injuries such as ulna, radius, tibia, and fibula fractures.
  - All parks are in the same condition, the EWF is inadequate due to decomposition and displacement. It may be necessary in high use parks to perform daily inspections and maintenance to prevent deficiencies. High traffic areas such as below swings and at slide chute exits are especially vulnerable to “kick-out” and should be cared for accordingly.
  - Some cities have incorporated EWF along with heavy duty rubber mats in high traffic areas.
- The ADA ramp to the bandshell should have a railing along the outside edge to assist people ascending this ramp. It also helps prevent wheelchairs or mobility devices from falling off the edge.
- There are several outlets around the bandshell that are missing weather covers.
  - The city should self-inspect any and all locations (not only parks) where outlets are provided and be sure these devices are GFCI protected as well as properly housed inside weather resistant covers.
- The bathrooms at the park meet minimal ADA requirements, however the door on the men's room is damaged such that it is not easy to open. This door should be repaired to allow easy access for all users.

**Rainbow Park – See photo template for photos of some conditions.**

- \*Park lacks ADA inclusive play features see bullet point #4 under Veterans Park.
- \*As mentioned above, handicap parking and accessibility is important. Both need improvement at this park. We discussed creating a cut out in the edging materials around the play area to allow access. Additionally, handicapped parking stalls are suggested.
- \*Playground signage – see bullet point #2 under Veterans Park.
- \*Picnic Tables – See bullet point #3 under Veterans Park.
- \*EWF fall attenuation materials is insufficient see bullet point #6 under Veterans Park
- According to ASTM and the Consumer Products Safety Commission, (CPSC) swing sets should have no more than 2 swings per bay. When the structure is in good condition consider removing the center swing and chains and hardware and relocating the outer swings toward center to allow greater distance between swing seats and swing set legs.
- Teeter totter at this park has peeling paint. Scrape and re-finish.
- The swing set has a damaged leg that may compromise stability of this play feature. Due to this and other structural issues with this swing, **it is recommended that the swing set be removed from service and destroyed.**

*Recommendations and comments are provided for loss control and risk exposure improvement purposes only. They are not made for the purpose of complying with the requirements of any law, rule or regulation. We do not infer or imply in the making of these recommendations and comments that all sites were reviewed or that all possible hazards were noted. The final responsibility for conducting loss control and risk management programs rests with the member.*

- Handles on the climber are broken and have significant potential for serious injury including strangulation. We verbally discussed the urgency of this repair and discussed strategies for taking the feature out of service until repairs can be made. **This is a high priority issue.**
- ***We discussed this but I wish to remind you that it is recommended that all replacement parts, including nuts, bolts, chains, and all parts be purchased directly from the manufacturer. This assures the city of proper quality and fit.***
- Park shelters and other buildings may have accessibility issues. Be sure that access to these buildings are unobstructed with “firm and stable” access paths and no significant change in ground level height that would impede access in a wheelchair or other mobility device.
- Bathroom building is not ADA compliant – the city could consider renting a handicapped accessible portable toilet from a vendor. If/when major renovations are undertaken at this park, the toilet buildings should be modified to be ADA compliant.
- Electrical outlets in the park shelter lack GFCI technology. GFCI outlets are a code requirement in all damp weather locations.

**Bryantwood Park – See photo template for photos of some conditions.**

- There is a sinkhole developing near a drain grate. **This hidden danger should be addressed immediately.** The markers used to indicate the hazard only draw attention and they do not prevent injury. Fill in the hole or cordon off the area until repairs can be made.
- \*Park lacks ADA inclusive play features see bullet point #4 under Veterans Park.
- \*As mentioned above, handicap parking and accessibility is important. Both need improvement at this park. We discussed creating a cut out in the edging materials around the play area to allow access. Additionally, handicapped parking stalls are suggested.
- \*Playground signage – see bullet point #2 under Veterans Park.
- \*Picnic Tables – See bullet point #3 under Veterans Park.
- \*EWF fall attenuation materials are insufficient see bullet point #6 under Veterans Park
- According to ASTM and the Consumer Products Safety Commission, (CPSC) swing sets should have no more than 2 swings per bay. When the structure is in good condition consider removing the center swing and chains and hardware and relocating the outer swings toward center to allow greater distance between swing seats and swing set lets.
- There is an older climbing and slide feature at this park prominently featuring a stainless-steel slide and other features. **Due to the age of the equipment and the evolution of playground code requirements, the city may find it advantageous to remove this feature permanently from the park. There are so many deficiencies that are beyond repair. A few are listed here.**
  - Fire pole with inadequate head clearance
  - Gaps and entanglement hazards at top of slide
  - **Surface of the stainless-steel slide was in excess of 160 degrees Fahrenheit on the day of inspection posing a serious burn potential for users**
  - Graffiti including lewd remarks and profanity are written on the underside of the feature
- There is a yellow slide on the smaller children’s playground that has a gap between the platform and slide that could pose an entanglement hazard.
- Same slide has inadequate distance between slide exit and wooden barriers. Minimum 72”
- There is a swing set with bucket seats for small children that lacks proper fall zones in front of swing.

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- A horizontal ladder (monkey bars) has upward facing protrusions and bolts that could pose entanglement/strangulation hazards.
  - This equipment is of an age and quality that the city may just consider removal.
- There is an ADA child swing with a broken clip – replace strap/clip
- There are park benches in the play zone. Generally, this is discouraged as it creates unnecessary hazards. However, since these are well maintained and currently far enough away from play zones, I will not suggest removal. However, providing seating that is not ADA accessible could be a liability concern for the city. Consider adding a concrete pad for parking a wheelchair near the park bench. However, I implore you be mindful of allowing adequate fall zones for installed play equipment.
- There are a couple of trees on the west end of this park, a pine tree and a box elder that have dead limbs. If these are on city property, the city should consider following their tree maintenance program and removing dead or dangerous trees and branches.

Tree safety – while this may not fit exactly into any priority list, the city should understand that it holds some responsibility for safety as it pertains to trees. Obviously damaged or diseased trees should be removed or trimmed as needed. While storm damage may cause a tree to fall, and we would like to think that is outside our ability to control, if in fact the tree has prior damage or even hidden disease that may contribute to it falling (and causing damage or injury) liability may land on the city. Consider hiring an arborist or qualified tree service contractor to visually inspect trees on city property (boulevards, parks, etc.) and follow their recommendations.

**“Tot-Lot” Park – See photo template for photos of some conditions.**

- \*Park lacks ADA inclusive play features see bullet point #4 under Veterans Park.
- \*As mentioned above, handicapped parking and accessibility is important, handicapped parking stalls are suggested.
- \*Playground signage – see bullet point #2 under Veterans Park.
- \*EWF fall attenuation materials is insufficient see bullet point #6 under Veterans Park

In addition to the items listed above, the parks generally lack shaded play areas for children. While this is not an urgent issue, future planning and modifications should include natural or man-made shade structures to provide relief for users, protection against harmful sun rays, and to help cool play surfaces which can reduce burn injuries.

As you approach the topics discussed, budget will also become one of those topics. Below are a few grant ideas the city may consider for funding. Some of these may be closed but have been viable options in the past.

<https://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/grants-rfps/disability-innovation-grants/>

<https://www.disability.state.mn.us/technical-assistance/access-for-businesses/>

<https://usafundingapplications.org/v9/c/>

[https://leadcenter.org/state\\_policies/disability-services-innovation-grants-2/](https://leadcenter.org/state_policies/disability-services-innovation-grants-2/)

Thanks again for the time and courtesy extended to Marc and me during our visit. Please reach out to me for additional assistance with today’s discussion.

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If you have safety or loss control related questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

*Olivia Bontems*

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**Attachments:**

- Accessibility Guide for Small Towns
- Accessible Play Areas
- ADA – Play Surfaces
- ADA Quick Reference Guide
- ADA Ramps and Landings
- ADA Transition Plan Template
- ADA.GOV Parking Info
- Outdoor Park and Trail Accessibility
- Playground Requirements and Best Practices

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