

The Built Environment?

Transportation, Housing, Museums, Libraries, and Architecture

05-499/899 Fall 2024

Celebrating Accessibility

<https://cmu-05-499.github.io>

Andrew Begel and Patrick Carrington

Administrivia and Today's Plan

- HW4 due Tuesday 11:59pm
- Check in with your groups (10 minutes)
- Updates on your progress? (5 minutes)

Readings Discussion

- [Human rights and the city: Including marginalized communities in urban development and smart cities](#)
- ["We should all feel welcome to the park": Intergenerational Public Space and Universal Design in Disinvested Communities](#)
- [New York City's Inaccessible Transit System](#)

Legal Framework

- Americans with Disabilities Act
 - Title I, Employment
 - Title II, Public Services → prohibits discrimination in public services, including government services and public transportation
 - Includes public housing authorities (accessible facilities, non-discriminatory practices)
 - Title III, Public Accommodations → Requires restaurants, hotels, theaters, etc., to be accessible (covers physical and communication barriers)
 - Title IV, Telecommunications
 - Title V, Misc (including implementation and protections against retaliation and coercion)
- Fair Housing Act → prohibits discrimination by race, national origin, religion, disability, etc.

ADA: What is NOT covered

- Religious organizations, private clubs, historical buildings
- “Undue burden” or “technical infeasibility”
 - If compliance imposes a significant financial or administrative burden
 - If structural changes are technically infeasible
- Cities must demonstrate a “good-faith” effort to make improvements over time to become ADA compliant
 - Example: Immediate retrofitting compliance often *not* required
 - *However*, alterations may trigger compliance

ADA: Immediate Action Required?

- A public library's entrance is only accessible *via* stairs
- A narrow sidewalk in a residential area, built in 1980, has no curb ramps and has not been altered, but is inaccessible for wheelchair users
- A sidewalk near a school is being repaved, but there are no curb ramps at intersections
- A downtown park has restrooms with doors that are too narrow for wheelchairs

ADA: Immediate Action Required?

- A public library's entrance is only accessible *via* stairs
 - **YES** → public libraries must provide access under Title II of the ADA
- A narrow sidewalk in a residential area, built in 1980, has no curb ramps and has not been altered, but is inaccessible for wheelchair users
 - **NO** → Unaltered sidewalks built before 1990 are not automatically required to comply unless access to programs is impeded
- A sidewalk near a school is being repaved, but there are no curb ramps at intersections
 - **YES** → alterations to sidewalks (like repaving) require compliance with curb ramp requirements
- A downtown park has restrooms with doors that are too narrow for wheelchairs
 - **YES** → Public parks must provide accessible restrooms under Title II

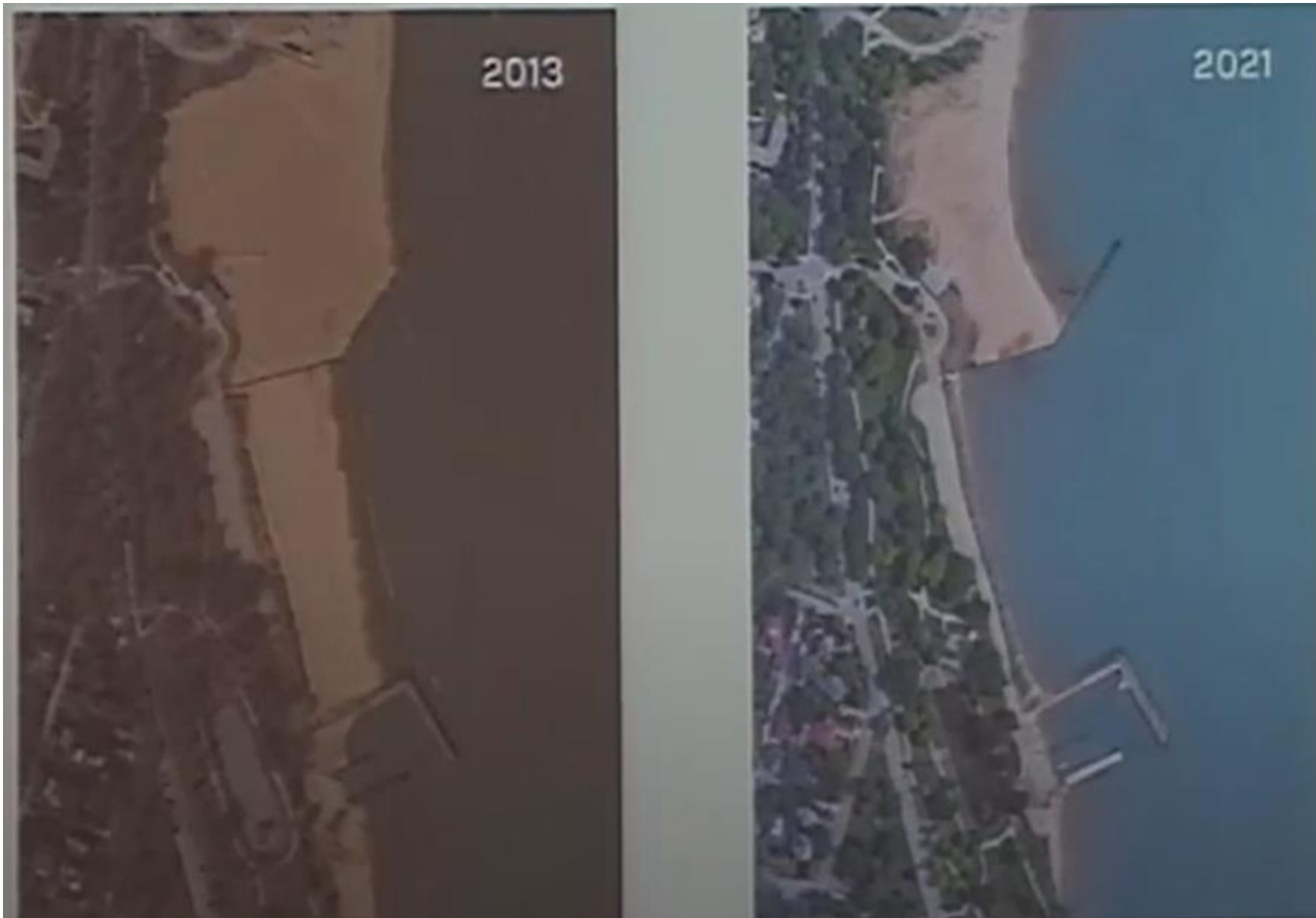
CASE STUDY

Dog Beach
Evanston, IL

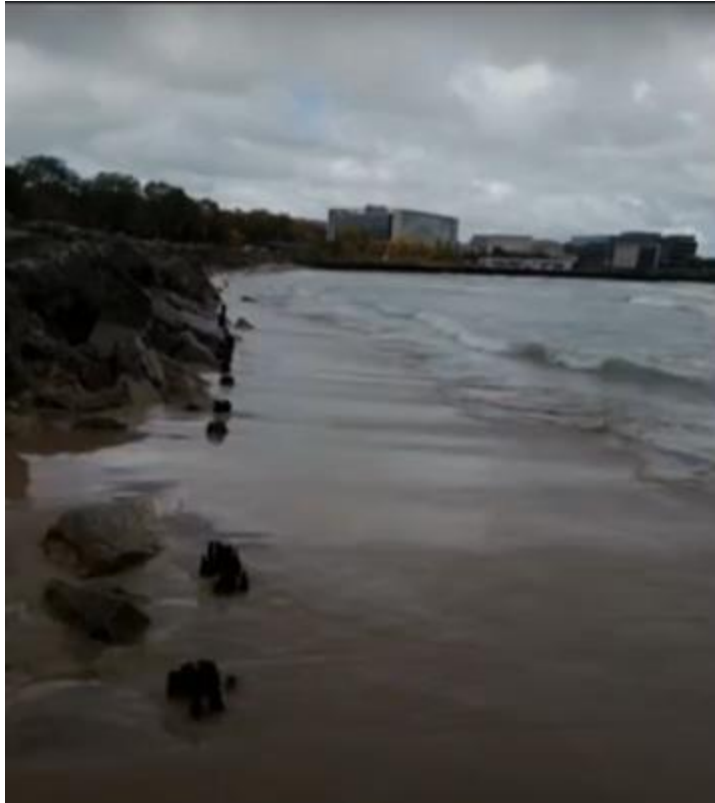


History of the Dog Beach

- 2013 → Lake Michigan reaches record low water levels, rising thereafter
- 2016 → High water levels erode beaches; due to location, this is most evident at the dog beach. Expensive attempts to replace sand only offer temporary relief
- 2018 → Dog beach is closed indefinitely
- 2019 → High water levels cause damage to other beaches; city increases efforts to stabilize the lakefront
- 2020 → Lake levels reach record high levels, decreasing thereafter
- 2021 → City earmarks ~200K for a dog park
- 2022 → City receives hundreds of calls, emails, and public comments re: reopening the dog beach
- Oct 2022 → City assesses whether dog beach can be reopened



Water levels, Oct 6th and 7th, 2024



ADA Compliance Trigger

- Just “open the gate”
- Don’t enforce rules re: checks on vaccinations, ADA compliance, etc., while we “figure it out”
- Do disabled people even need a dog beach?

Participation Activity

- Do disabled people need access to the dog beach? Is it required under ADA?
- If you don’t know, what information do you need to answer this question?

October 2022

- Parks & Rec advises City Council that a reopened dog beach needs to be ADA compliant
 - “New service”
- ALL council members promote “opening the gate” and not enforcing rules until they “figure it out”
- Directs Park & Rec to obtain pricing to make ADA accessible
 - Look for cheap options (that Parks & Rec have already advised would “wash away”)

February 2023

OPTION 1 – LAYOUT AND COST ESTIMATE

*ALL SPOT ELEVATIONS ARE REFLECTIVE OF CITY OF EVANSTON DATUM



OPTION 2 – LAYOUT AND COST ESTIMATE

*ALL SPOT ELEVATIONS ARE REFLECTIVE OF CITY OF EVANSTON DATUM



How to get from the ramp to the water? Mobi-Mats

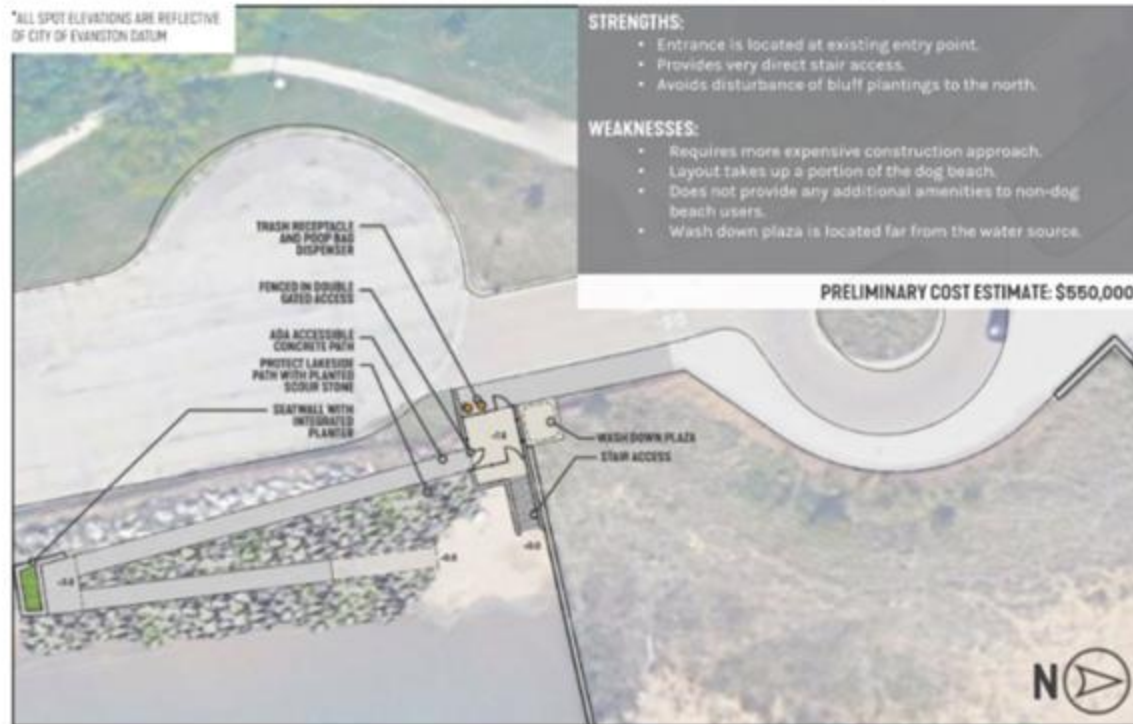
- Semi-rigid
- Can be used with “regular” wheelchairs and other mobility aids
- [wheelchair pictured on the right is a sand-friendly chair (doesn't require a mobi-mat, but requires a “pusher”), also available at the beaches]



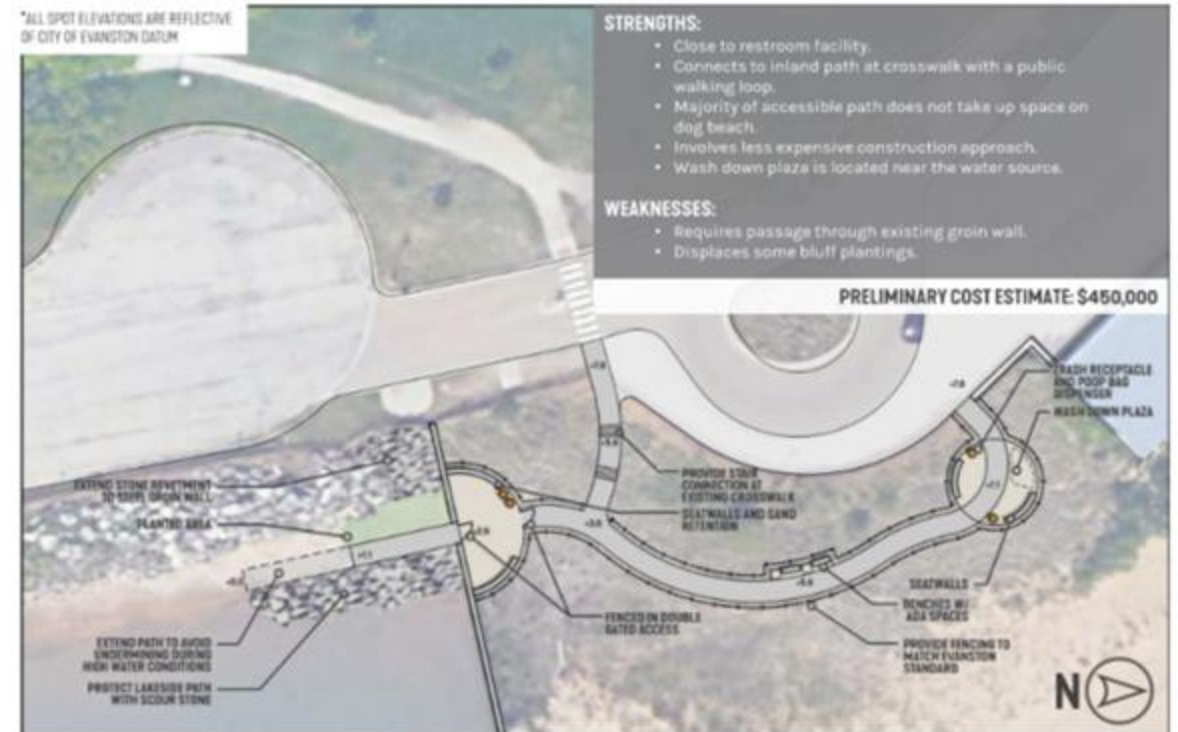
Participation Activity

- Option 1, Option 2, or a temporary ramp?
- If you don't have enough information to make a decision, what information do you need? Where would you get that information from?
- Reminder: Every time a decision is *not* reached, the timeframe for making the beach ADA-accessible is extended

OPTION 1 – LAYOUT AND COST ESTIMATE



OPTION 2 – LAYOUT AND COST ESTIMATE



Option 2... for now.



I am astonished that this project is still even being considered in the present form as described in the RoundTable article. It's my understanding that an ADA Expert said – a perpendicular ramp coming from the existing ramp is the simplest shortest most direct and a cost-effective approach while remaining an ADA compliant ramp.

Why on earth is this community asking our disabled citizens to traverse 450 feet on a Ipe (an endangered species) boardwalk through a nature preserve to get to the dog beach? When the direct approach is less than 100 feet and using readily available municipal quality components, the cost is at least 10 x less than Ms. Biggs grand design... This community is bleeding red ink and I urge you to ask your representatives to consider all of the options brought forth in this process. This plan is a candidate for a Golden Fleece Award!

There are sidewalks in the downtown area that need repair so that wheelchair users can navigate them. The pavers have been pushed up by tree roots while other areas have sunken.

Participation Activity

- Think about an *inclusive* plan that considers needs of *all* disabled people, the needs of the non-disabled community, and addresses competing city needs (*i.e.*, money); think about:
 - What elements can you include to make the beach more accessible to all?
 - ADA Compliance vs. Inclusion → What's the difference?
 - How might you address competing needs WITHIN the disability community?