

# American with Disabilities Act Transition Plan

## Interim Report

King County Parks (Parks) is required to prepare an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan to address existing barriers to accessibility. Parks led community listening sessions to raise awareness of the ADA Transition Plan, identify key barriers and recommendations to remove them, and encourage participation from those most directly impacted.

While the timeline is for the entirety of the ADA Transition Plan efforts, we felt it important to summarize the current findings to include in the upcoming 2026-2031 Parks, Trails, and Open Space Levy planning efforts.

### Project Timeline

Data collection	Q3 2023 – Q3 2024
Community engagement	Q3 2023 – Q2 2024
Data analysis	Q2 2023 – Q1 2025
Draft recommendations	Q1 2025 – Q4 2025

### What We've Done

	<b>2 Online Surveys</b>	Summer 2023 Survey 6 Participants 7 Write-in comments	Spring 2024 Survey 87 Participants 169 Write-in comments
		<b>4 Focus Group Sessions</b> 37 Participants 4 Community-based organizations	<b>1 ESJ Charette</b> with Parks Staff 19 Participants

### What We've Heard: Focus Groups

In March 2024, the engagement team held individual focus groups with four community-based organizations. Repeated comments centered around the following themes:

#### Common barriers to accessing parks:

- Lack of adaptive amenities and facilities.
- Shortage of physical accessibility and access points.
- Minimal information regarding accessibility for planning visits.

#### Suggested strategies to improve accessibility:

- Make structural improvements that improve accessibility
- Expand programming for all ages and abilities.
- Expand ways for people to receive information and for Parks to update it.

#### Priorities for improving accessibility:

- Make improvements with universal design\* in mind. All elements of a park should be accessible, not just the main feature (like a playground), but also the parking, entrances, and sidewalks.
- Remove barriers that limit social connection across abilities.
- Improve quantity and quality of accessible amenities.
- Strive for consistency across facilities and King County departments.
- Engage the community. People with disabilities should be involved throughout the decision-making processes.

\* Universal design (UD) is the process of designing products, buildings, and environments to be accessible and usable by people of all ages, abilities, and disabilities.

## 2024 Spring Survey

The spring 2024 online community survey was open from Feb. 6 to April 12 and included questions about Parks in general, the King County Aquatics Facility, and regional and backcountry trails.

### Parks Overall & Regional and Backcountry Trails

Respondents identified the following as the top priorities when asked: which of the following would be most helpful for your ability to use and participate in King County Park...

facilities and program

trail and trail-related activities

- Accessible trails, walkways, and paths
- More accessible amenities (restrooms, picnic areas, pools, etc.)
- Accessible parking
- Updated park information (example: park hours, trail steepness, wheelchair access points, etc.) into more accessible formats for online and print materials



**75%** of respondents shared they would visit more often if Parks were more adaptive to their needs.

### Aquatic Facility

Only seven respondents said they have visited the aquatic center in Federal Way. Respondents noted that the following improvements would be helpful to their ability to use the center.

- Targeted swim times and programs tailored to neurodivergent individuals
- More accessible amenities (restrooms, locker rooms, showers, benches, spectator areas, etc.)
- Better language support
- Added safety/security features
- Better train customer service staff in how to best assist
- Accessible entry to pools

## ADA Self Evaluation Status Update

King County Parks is currently also undergoing self-evaluation for ADA compliance at public park facilities throughout King County. Self-evaluation includes an accessibility assessment of pedestrian and public facilities.

**Where we are currently in the on-the-ground inventory (percent of whole)**

Current on-the-ground data collection efforts is split into two categories: vertical assets associated with buildings and horizontal assets associated with pedestrian pathways. Overall collection of features in the vertical asset category is currently at about 13%. Overall collection of features in the horizontal asset category is currently about 44% collected.

**High-level examples of improvements to accessibility in parks/facilities**

Preliminary findings for the collection of vertical assets include:

- Route from the public right-of-way
- Parking spaces
- Restrooms
- Wheelchair tables
- Bleachers and dugouts
- Pool lifts or ramps into the water
- Shower areas
- Public garden plot