

## **Bend of the Road Beach<sup>1</sup>**

### Update on Progress on Implementation of the March 2024 Recommendations and Compliance with Accessibility Standards<sup>2</sup>

(March 2024 Recommendations in standard back font. Updated observations *in red italics*.)<sup>3</sup>

1. Replace current wooden walkway at entrance 1. The current one is in disrepair and does not go all the way to the beach and to the high-water mark. It could be replaced with another wooden walkway with material that better withstands the elements and/or a beach mat. A combination could be used whereby a wooden walkway would be installed on the pathway to the beginning of the beach followed by a beach mat to the high-water mark. The rise at the beginning and end of the wooden walkway should be no higher than a 1/4" from the surface, so beveling may be required.

*Some progress and improvements have been made at this path/route. While the above referenced wooden walkway remains in disrepair and narrowed by overgrowth, it appears an extension was added, specifically 7.5 feet of new wooden walkway (4 feet wide) followed by a beach mat, about 44 feet long X 5 feet wide. And at the end of mat, another mat was added running perpendicular forming a "T", a very nice element. To afford full accessibility, addressing both the pre-existing walkway and other needs, the following still needs to be completed or considered:*

*A. Replacing the walkway in disrepair with a new one at least 4-5 feet wide. (Current one appears to be 4.5 wide but as noted is narrowed by overgrowth.). It should begin at the pavement to eliminate the current gap of about 3 feet of sand and be installed and maintained so that there are no more than 1/2" rises at the beginning and throughout to include the transition to the extensions.*

*B. An extension is also needed to reach the highwater mark.*

*C. As to the existing accessible parking spots, a new sign is needed as the current one is faded. The new one should be two-sided or facing the road. The area directly in front of the beginning of the pathway/route and about two feet to either side should be marked to prohibit vehicles from parking directly in front of the pathway/route. Ideally,*

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<sup>1</sup> Our understanding is that while Edgartown has operational control over the Bend of the Road section of "State Beach" and the County has control over the rest of the beach, the roadway and the parking and road signs are under the jurisdiction of the State. We therefore understand that the State will have to be contacted to make some of the roadway, parking and road sign improvements and some County involvement may be necessary.

<sup>2</sup> For standards specifications/dimensions for beaches, see the USDA's Forest Service *Accessibility Guidebook for Outdoor Recreation and Trails*, 8/2012 <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/Accessibility-Guide-Book.pdf>. This update was based on a 9/3/24 site visit.

<sup>3</sup> The original recommendations were furnished in March 2024 and were based principally on June 2023 beach operators' self-surveys and September and October 2023 follow up on-site visits by Dukes County Assoc. Commissioner for Disabilities.

*there should be one designated parking space on each side of the pathway/route, as opposed to the current configuration where both are on one side.*

*D. Strongly consider moving the cross walk from the adjacent pathway to this entrance. While there is a yellow pedestrian walk traffic sign by the current cross walk, consider installing a pedestrian-controlled stoplight at the cross walk (e.g Hawk system DOT-recommended.)*

*E. A sign indicating that this is an accessible entrance should be installed with appropriate accessibility signage at other entrances pointing to this accessible entrance.<sup>4</sup>*

*F. A maintenance plan should be implemented to ensure that the walkways/mats remain free of excess sand, a compliant grade is maintained, and to prevent overgrowth reducing the width of the route.*

2. In making improvements along the route, USDA Forest Service Guidance publication or the attached resource sheet should be used as guidance regarding dimensions, grade etc. A mild or moderate reduction in the grade just before the beach opening would be desirable, if not required. The current grade should be measured.

3. At least one beach wheelchair and floating wheelchair should be moved to this location, *or if kept at the lifeguard station, a sign should be posted at the pathway entrance or upon entering the beach signifying that a beach and floating chair is available at the lifeguard station providing a phone number to alert lifeguards to bring one over.*

4. Maintenance will be important to prevent the degrading that has occurred to the current walkway. *See 1(F) above.*

5. Appropriate accessibility signage at the main entrance and other entrances should be installed pointing to the accessible entrance. *See 1(E) above.*

6. See also accompanying Recommendations Applicable to all Beaches. For an update on the progress made on the cross-cutting recommendations with respect to this beach and Edgartown's other beaches, see accompanying Progress report on those recommendations.

Richard Cohen, Dukes County Associate Commissioner for Disabilities  
September 30, 2024

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<sup>4</sup> *It should be noted that the beach has at least three other pathways with wooden walkways closer to the lifeguard station leading to the beach. While these are not ADA/wheelchair compliant and could not easily be made so due to the steep grade, they do make it easier for beachgoers to access the beach over that grade in that area, including elderly or individuals with more mild physical disabilities. This would be an area(s) where one or two signs should be placed pointing to the fully accessible pathway. Other areas for such signage would be as at strategic points/entrances along the beach north of the fully accessible pathway.*