



## Access Recreation Group, LLC

Cindy Burkhour, MA, CTRS, CPRP

2454 Lamplighter Drive, Jenison, MI 49428-9127

Phone (616)669-9109 Mobile (616)560-2378

[AccessRecreationGroup@juno.com](mailto:AccessRecreationGroup@juno.com)

# Launch Site Accessibility Evaluation & Design Recommendations

Location: New Buffalo City Boat Launch  
Date/Time: August 12, 2015 / 9:00am  
Contact: Pat Donnelly  
Phone: 269-469-3574  
Email: [recreation@cityofnewbuffalo.org](mailto:recreation@cityofnewbuffalo.org)

## Access Recreation Group Volunteers:

Rod Ritchison

Gina Lago

Jim Lago

## Additional Site Evaluation Notes:

### **Universal design concepts to guide the development of site amenities...**

By defining spaces & directing human behavior we protect the environment and enhance accessibility for everyone!

Accessible route surfaces must be firm & stable...concrete, asphalt, boardwalk, well compacted crushed aggregate/fines (NOT woodchips or grass)

Accessible routes should be at least 10' - 12' wide to accommodate two person/two vessel carries

Accessible routes should have less than 5% running slope with less than 2% cross slope

Accessible routes should surround all amenities & be at least 4' wide surrounding the entire element

Accessible routes should be smooth with no changes of level at edges and connections to entry/exits & into/onto site elements/amenities



Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	EZ Launch	<p>One way left side launch tucked up in a newly created slip (up river to lot line) and connected to the shore anchor via gangway at shore end of the new slip (similar linear spacing to the other boat slip piers)</p> <p>This would require a new sea wall at the lot line and removal of the concrete pier and leveling of the hillside to the lot line and may require some retaining wall work at the lot line.</p>
Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	Water trail flags	<p>Place the water trail flag out on the end of the pier so it is viewable for paddlers approaching from either direction from upstream on the Galien River or coming in from Lake Michigan.</p> <p>Water trail flags also need to be placed</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. at the harbor opening,</li> <li>2. about halfway in near the observation deck with the picnic table near the exit of the beach parking lot</li> <li>3. at the river's exit into the harbor on the bridge</li> <li>4. after the bridge to the left directing people up river (not into the boat slips to the right)</li> </ol>


Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
 The first photo shows a paved launch area with a small boat on a trailer and several people walking. The second photo shows a group of people standing on a grassy area next to a paved path. The third photo shows a paved parking lot with a white line marking and people walking in the background.	<p>Accessible routes from launch to existing parking</p> <p>From accessible parking to toilets &amp; potable water</p>	<p>Create an accessible routes 10' - 12' wide (this accommodates two person/two vessel carry down) with slopes less than 5% from the launch to the kayak/canoe storage lockbox, paddlers plaza with universally accessible picnic table, information kiosk, parking and on to connect all other park amenities.</p>





Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	<p>Kayak/canoe storage lockbox</p>	<p>The kayak/canoe storage lockbox will be about 8' wide &amp; 22' long. The paddler should be able to carry their vessel and slide it into the box without making a sharp turn, in other words parallel to the accessible route from the launch.</p>
Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	<p>Information kiosk at the end of the accessible route past the kayak/canoe storage lock box on paddlers welcome plaza</p>	<p>Locate the kiosk near the top of the accessible route from the launch (where Harry's standing) just beyond the kayak/canoe storage lockbox. Locate on the paddles welcome plaza off the accessible route so those viewing the kiosk information are not in the accessible route. Place kiosk on accessible surface and include water trail information on one half and trail town information on the other. Make sure surface extends around all viewable sides of the kiosk so someone can roll up for very close viewing, at least 4' wide accessible route on all viewable sides.</p> <p>Alternate idea...if there is a retaining wall along the lot line use this as one border of the plaza area and place information on the wall...</p>





Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	<p>Toilets</p> <p>Connect via accessible route to the launch, parking, welcome plaza &amp; information kiosk</p>	<p>Replace the existing inaccessible portable toilet with an accessible design and face opening to the accessible route.</p> <p>Consider replacing with the self-composting Clevis Multrum universally accessible toilet...</p> <p>Include directional signage to the accessible route to the modern toilet/shower facility, include a cross walk from accessible parking to the accessible walkway to the toilet building.</p>
	<p>Existing toilets</p>	<p>Remodel existing modern toilets to both be uni-sex universally accessible toilet/shower rooms.</p>




Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	<p>Potable water source &amp; power</p>	<p>Add information on the trail town side of the kiosk directing users to potable water source at modern toilet facility.</p> <p>Add a universally accessible water fountain with touchless bottle filler</p> <p>Consider adding a solar powered charging station!</p>
Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	<p>Accessible car/boat trailer parking</p>	<p>There are two accessible car/boat trailer parking spaces at this time near the launch site but both are in need of proper access aisles.</p>

Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	<p>Picnic tables &amp; grills</p>	<p>There are not accessible picnic tables or grills at the launch site.</p> <p>Create a paddlers welcome plaza on the accessible route beyond the kayak/canoe storage lockbox and add two universally accessible picnic tables and an accessible design grill (if grilling is allowed). Locate all on accessible surface including an accessible route around the perimeter of the tables and grill at least 4' wide. The information kiosk will be at this same location.</p> <p>Consider adding some type of shade/shelter structures for inclement weather</p>





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# Launch Site Accessibility Evaluation & Design Recommendations

Location: New Buffalo Twp. Red Arrow Hwy DNR Boat Launch  
Date/Time: August 12, 2015 / 11:00am  
Contact: Scott Nykamp  
Phone: 269-426-1600  
Email: [PKDIR@newbuffalotownship.org](mailto:PKDIR@newbuffalotownship.org)

## Access Recreation Group Volunteers:

Rod Ritchison  
Gina Lago  
Jim Lago

## Additional Site Evaluation Notes:

### **Universal design concepts to guide the development of site amenities...**

By defining spaces & directing human behavior we protect the environment and enhance accessibility for everyone!

Accessible route surfaces must be firm & stable...concrete, asphalt, boardwalk, well compacted crushed aggregate/fines (NOT woodchips or grass)

Accessible routes should be at least 10' - 12' wide to accommodate two person/two vessel carries

Accessible routes should have less than 5% running slope with less than 2% cross slope

Accessible routes should surround all amenities & be at least 4' wide surrounding the entire element

Accessible routes should be smooth with no changes of level at edges and connections to entry/exits & into/onto site elements/amenities



Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	<p>EZ Launch</p> <p>Option #1 At the current shore launching location to help protect the shore line degradation that is currently happening &amp; it puts launching vessels downstream from drive in boat launching</p> <p>Option #2 On the "up-river" point next to the drive down boat launch</p>	<p>EZ Launch two way pull through with large deck due to the large amount of potential users. This is a river application on the Galien River. Tuck launch as close to the shore as possible to keep river corridor wide enough for vessels coming up river to take out at the drive-in launch.</p> <p>In either option #1 or #2 location, I would also recommend a very large staging platform made from EZ Trail which will float &amp; remain level during high water times while protecting the shoreline from further degradation. (see drawing)</p>
Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	<p>Water trail flag</p>	<p>Located on the launch viewable from both up-river and down-river.</p>




Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
  	<p>Currently there are no accessible routes on the entire site.</p> <p>Accessible routes to accessible launch site (option #1 or #2), accessible parking and accessible toilet.</p>	<p>Create an accessible route 10' - 12' wide (this accommodates two person/two vessel carry down) with slopes less than 5% from the launch to the kayak/canoe storage lockbox, information kiosk, accessible parking and on to connect to existing other launch site amenities.</p>





Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	Accessible parking None at this time	Add at least one car/van accessible parking space and one car/boat trailer parking space, locate both nearest the accessible route to the EZ Launch.
Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	Toilets Accessible design but...not on accessible route and change of level at door	Add accessible route to existing accessible design toilet. Eliminate the change of level at the entrance with a transition plate.
Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
none	Picnic tables & grills	None on site & really no space to add either
Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
none	Potable water source / power	None on site & really no space to add either Consider adding a solar powered charging station.



Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	<p>Kayak/canoe storage lockbox</p>	<p>The kayak/canoe storage lockbox will be about 8' wide &amp; 22' long. The paddler should be able to carry their vessel and slide it into the box without making a sharp turn, in other words parallel to the accessible route from the launch.</p> <p>(see drawing for suggested location for option #1 or #2)</p>
Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	<p>Information kiosk on the water trail exists but is not on an accessible route. Add trail town information.</p>	<p>Locate the kiosk near the top of the accessible route from the launch, near the kayak/canoe storage lockbox.</p> <p>Place kiosk on accessible surface, connected to the accessible route and include water trail information on one half and trail town information on the other.</p> <p>Make sure surface extends under the kiosk so someone can roll up for very close viewing without their front wheels dropping off the concrete.</p>





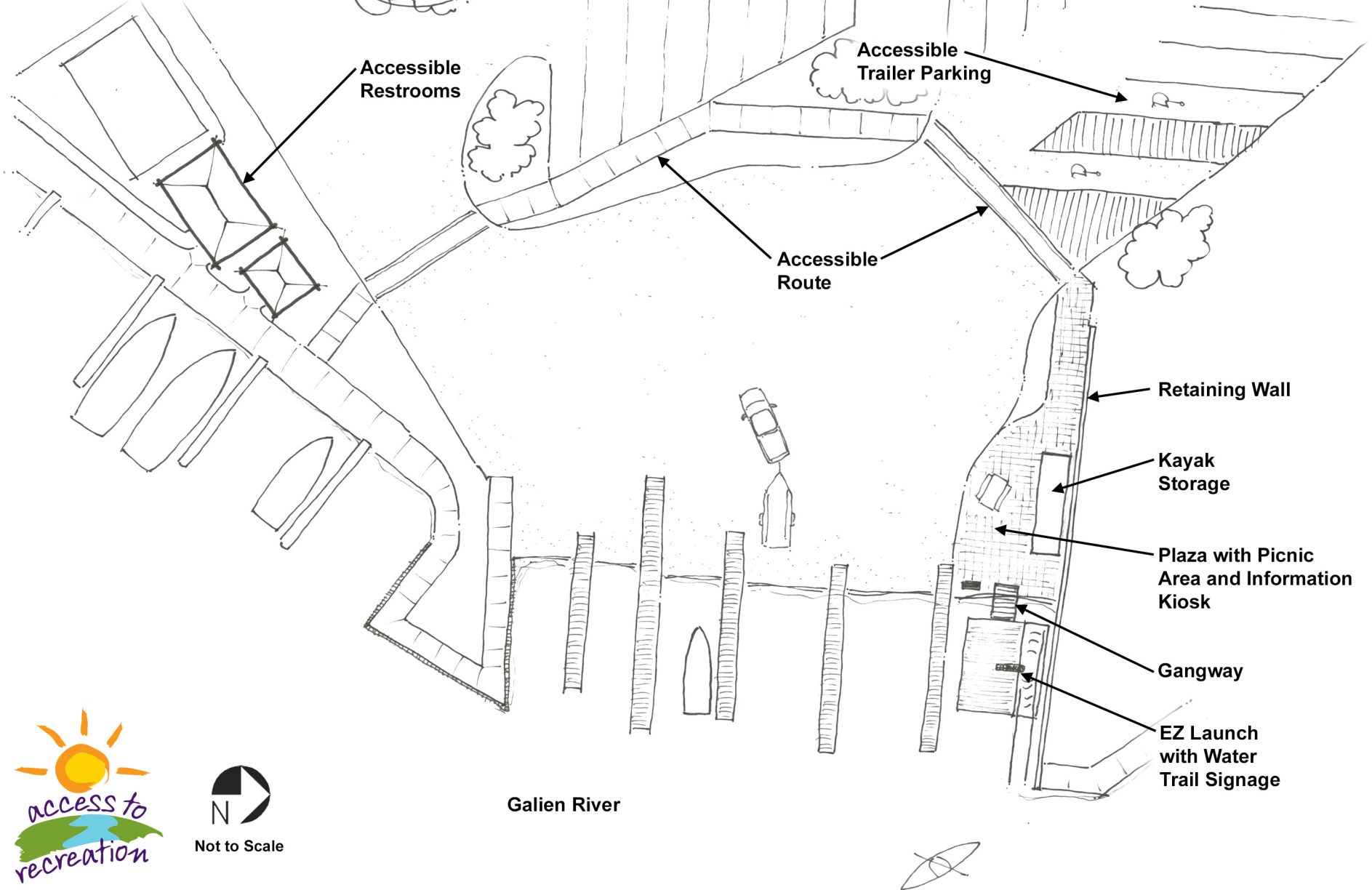
Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	Current vendor launch space/activity	<p>Vendors should be required to make their services accessible to guests with disabilities. This should be a requirement of the contract with the launch owner.</p>
	Not accessible operation...	<p>I suggest a conversation with the vendor regarding the shoreline degradation environmental issues being caused by the shore launching process. Maybe the vendor should provide some match funding for the addition of the accessible staging area &amp; EZ Launch as these features would enhance the users experience, protect the shoreline environment and make the vendors operation accessible to guests with disabilities...</p>
	Major shore degradation...	



Photo	Location Description	Accessibility Feature Design Recommendations
	<p>Dead Ash trees...</p>	<p>There are a number of large dead Ash trees on site that pose a potential safety issue and should be removed before they fall on a parked car, into the river or onto a paddler...</p> <p>They are also potentially in the way of the accessible routes that need to be developed.</p>

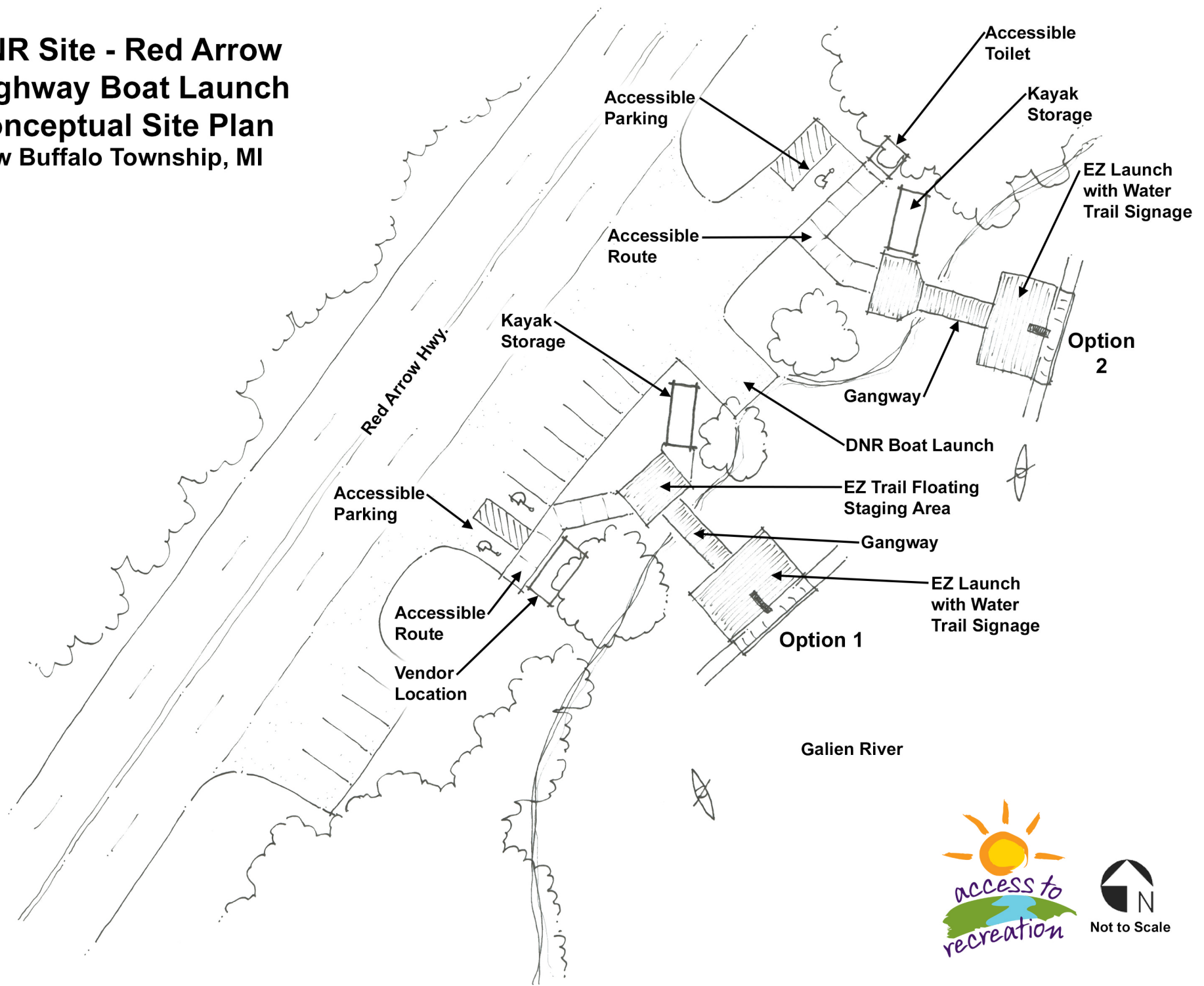
# City Boat Launch Conceptual Site Plan New Buffalo, MI



# DNR Site - Red Arrow Highway Boat Launch

## Conceptual Site Plan

New Buffalo Township, MI



Not to Scale



## New Buffalo

The City of New Buffalo serves as a gateway for both the Lake Michigan Water Trail and the Galien River Marsh Water Trail. After careful consideration, local officials and community stakeholders determined that the City Boat Launch, would serve as the primary trailhead for both water trails. Local officials and stakeholders considered a potential access site closer to the mouth of the Galien River, adjacent to the New Buffalo Public Beach, but ultimately determined that heavy motorboat traffic would cause significant conflicts with paddlers. In addition, the City Boat Launch has adequate space to construct one additional slip with an accessible launch, a paddler's plaza and kayak storage. In addition, the launch site has space to include two to three campsites for transient paddlers. Existing restroom facilities are in need of substantial universal accessibility improvements and new pathway infrastructure will be needed to link the site with sidewalk infrastructure leading to the downtown.



Existing Site





### Trailhead

In an effort to maintain the integrity and use by motorboaters of the existing boat slips, it is recommended that the city construct a new slip, right up against the property line for the accessible launch. This effort would require significant excavation and the construction of a new retaining wall. However, the added space would allow for a paddler's plaza with kayak storage, a kayak staging area and picnic area. Areas near the launch could also be used for camping by transient paddlers.

Before Treatment



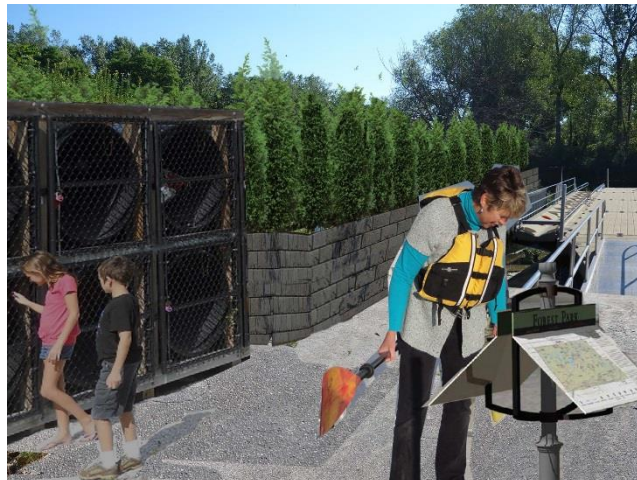
After Treatment



Before Treatment



After Treatment





Before Treatment



After Treatment



### Accessible Routes

An extended pathway through the site will provide a clear and safe connection to restroom facilities, the New Buffalo Beach and sidewalks heading into the downtown.

Before Treatment



After Treatment





Before Treatment



After Treatment



Before Treatment



After Treatment



**Trailhead**

A second existing access site for the Galien River, off of Red Arrow Highway, was also identified by local officials and stakeholders for improvements. Third Coast Surf Shop rents kayaks, canoes and paddleboards during the summer months at the access site. However, heavy use has caused serious degradation and erosion of the shore line. In addition, the small access site has very limited parking. During the summer months, dozens of cars park along the side of Red Arrow, causing blind spots for drivers leaving the access site as well as drivers along the highway. Although the site is fairly small, it could accommodate an accessible kayak launch and formal staging area. These features would help improve and restore portions of the riverbank. Two alternative locations for the kayak launch are provided below.

Option One. Before Treatment



Option One. After Treatment





Option Two. Before Treatment



Option Two. After Treatment



Option Two. Before Treatment



Option Two. After Treatment





## Wayfinding

In an effort to direct trail tourists to the proposed trailheads, the city should place the trailhead on all local wayfinding signs.

Before Treatment



After Treatment



## Pedestrian Connections

If the city moves forward with plans to widen the sidewalks along the bridge over the Galien River, additional consideration should be given to creating a formal bicycle lane and/or “share the road” signs.

Before Treatment



After Treatment



### Gateway

In an effort to welcome paddlers into New Buffalo, the city should place welcome signs and downtown wayfinding maps (kiosks) at the intersection of Whittaker Street and Water Street.

Before Treatment



After Treatment



Before Treatment



After Treatment





**Enhancing and Maintaining Pedestrian Amenities and Building Form**

Providing for pedestrian amenities within the downtown is important in creating a friendly pedestrian and trail-tourist environment. Designing the downtown for pedestrians also increases the viability of the downtown retail market. The City of New Buffalo has discussed and considered formal streetscaping and redevelopment plans for the downtown for many years. This project did involve lengthy conversations with local officials and downtown business owners about the design and redevelopment options most suitable for New Buffalo. It should be noted that many of the building form guidelines and best practices discussed earlier in this document have been utilized and implemented in other project communities (e.g., South Haven) to great success. The following renderings are only meant to show how additional pedestrian amenities (e.g., wider sidewalks, mid-block crossings) and infill development might look like in New Buffalo.

Before Treatment



After Treatment





Before Treatment



After Treatment - Infill



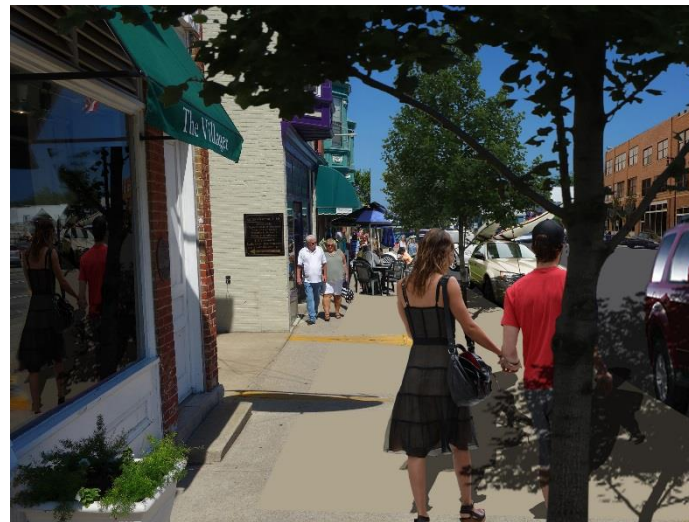
After Treatment - Public Space



Before Treatment



After Treatment





Before Treatment



After Treatment



Before Treatment



After Treatment

