



# Clinton County's Motz Park Project: Accessible Waterfront Recreation

Clinton County is home to one of the youngest county park systems in Michigan. Established in December 2000, the **Clinton County Parks and Green Space Commission** acquired its first park property in February 2007 with the assistance of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grant. In April 2007, the County applied for a second Trust Fund grant for recreational development of the park. The grant was subsequently approved and came with a surprise.

The proposed Clinton County project was unique in the fact that its outdoor recreation facilities would be accessible for all residents and visitors, regardless of age or ability. This enabled the **Motz County Park** project to receive several grants, including a combination MNRTF / W. K. Kellogg Foundation Access to Recreation grant.

Clinton County Parks and Green Space Coordinator, **Jerry Jaloszynski** gives quick credit to the Universal Access (UA) Committee within the Clinton County Commission for the innovative design features of the project. The UA Committee is comprised of private citizens and representatives of non-profit organizations and public agencies serving the County's disabled residents.

"The Universal Access Committee is a wonderful planning resource. The members never fail to surprise me with their common sense and cost-effective ideas for making park and recreation facilities user friendly, simple, and enjoyable for everyone regardless of one's personal life conditions and abilities," said Jaloszynski. "The **Motz County Park** project represents their efforts well."

Jaloszynski also acknowledges the support and guidance provided by the **Michigan Department of Natural Resources** staff who manage the MNRTF program, as well as **Cindy Burkhour**, Inclusive Recreation Consultant with the Access Recreation Group, who represented the interests of the Kellogg Foundation for the project. "Many people have contributed their ideas to create a recreational development that is universally accessible, user friendly, and one that the Clinton County government can rightfully be proud of," Jaloszynski stated.

Upon notification of the grant awards, Clinton County contracted with Lansing-based engineering and architectural firm **C2AE**.

Upon entry into the park, a new entrance drive and a hot mix asphalt (HMA) parking surface was designed for a

capacity of 104 vehicles, which also includes a 45' area in front of the beach house reserved as a drop off location for public transportation and service agency busses and vans.

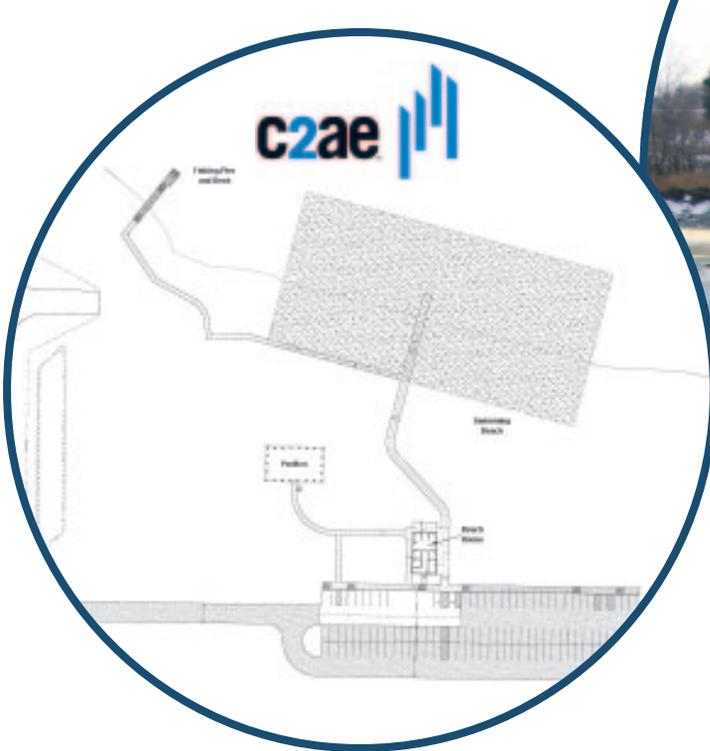
Pedestrian pathways connect the parking area with all recreational facility components within the park. All pathways are paved with concrete to eliminate heat gain, improve user comfort, and eliminate the possibility of burns to bare feet.

The beach house offers seven unisex restrooms and two additional rooms specifically provided and equipped to serve the developmentally disabled. There are several advantages to the design of the beach house, all of which meet or exceed ADA accessible floor area and design standards:

- ✔ The Special Needs room is twice the size of the other restrooms and includes a medical exam table which can be electronically raised or lowered to facilitate wheelchair transfers. This room is provided for use by service agencies and families who care for individuals with specific needs.
- ✔ The Wheelchair Storage Room can store up to two non-motorized all-terrain wheelchairs for use by visitors who wish to leave the pedestrian pathways, or enter the lake at the swimming beach.
- ✔ In addition, the design of the beach house allows for a reduction in janitorial operations and costs. Depending upon peak visitation hours and/or days, only those rooms needed would be open for use. Additionally, janitorial operations no longer require the complete closure of toilet facilities.

All picnic tables are wheelchair accessible, with a combination side and end entrance tables. The end entrance tables are of a new "universal access" design, and the side entrance tables serve non-wheelchair uses such as a child's stroller or a personal chair.

A large pavilion is designed to accommodate one large group of up to 200 people or two smaller groups up to 75 people each. A central food service area creates a visual division of the pavilion for small group use, but also allows the social connectivity for a community event, employee picnic, or other large group function. The top of food service counters are 28" above the floor to accommodate wheelchair access, and a combination of end and side access tables provide accessibility for 16 wheelchair pavilion users.



The Motz County Park Site Plan Elevation drawings of the Motz County Park beach house. Photos courtesy of C2AE

The 50' x 30' beach house during construction, December 2009. Photo courtesy of Jerry Jaloszynski and the Clinton County Parks and Green Space Commission

With the grant from the Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority's Risk Avoidance Program (RAP grant), C2AE designed a safety engineered swimming beach to mitigate hidden hazards generally associated with gravel pit lakes, such as sudden drop-offs and uneven bottoms into a 300' wide swimming beach. This required the 15-acre lake to be de-watered, which was achieved by pumping the lake water into an adjoining county drain. Rocks were removed and a consistent underwater gradient of 6% was established out to a distance of 125' from the shoreline. The distance takes in account seasonal changes in the lake's surface elevation, where regardless of high or low water periods, drop-offs would not exist until after an individual is already swimming by choice. Washed sand covering the lake bottom and sun beach allows for sand play by children and lessens the mixing of the sand with the underlying clay soils. A 10'x10' concrete pad is located on the swimming beach shoreline for use by wheelchair visitors for observation and/or transfer into and out of the water.

From the swimming beach, the pathway leads to an 80' long fishing pier. Suspended on steel helical anchors that are

screwed into the lake bottom, the pier provides access to waters with a depth of up to 10'. Railings on the fishing pier are 34" above the deck making the total deck accessible, providing those using a wheelchair or other mobility device the opportunity to fish.

The swimming beach and lake components have been completed. The construction of the beach house, pavilion, utilities, pathways, and parking area are in progress. The project is scheduled for final completion by May 2010.

The new Motz County Park will be open for public use beginning on Memorial Day weekend. An official ribbon-cutting ceremony and community party is scheduled for Saturday, June 12, 2010 at 10:00 am.

**MRPA interviewed Clinton County Parks and Greenspace Coordinator Jerry Jaloszynski to hear his top tips for creating a Universal Accessibility Committee. Visit the Professional Quarterly section of [www.mrpaonline.org](http://www.mrpaonline.org) to hear his advice and proven techniques!**

This photo of the completed beach and swimming area was taken in June 2009. The pathway, concrete pad, and fishing pier installation will be completed by May 2010. Photo courtesy of C2AE

To learn more about the Clinton County Parks and Green Space Commission, visit [www.clinton-county.org/greenspace/greenspace.htm](http://www.clinton-county.org/greenspace/greenspace.htm)

Information about the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and MNRTF grants can be found at [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr) under the 'Commissions, Boards and Committees' tab.

For information regarding the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Access to Recreation initiative, visit [www.accesstorecreation.org](http://www.accesstorecreation.org)

To learn more about C2AE, visit [www.c2ae.com](http://www.c2ae.com) or check out their ad on page 20.