

# **Mt. Pleasant Area**

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## **community foundation<sup>SM</sup>**

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### **MPACF RECEIVES GRANT FOR ACCESS ADVENTURE TRAIL ADDITION**

MT. PLEASANT, MI – The Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation is pleased to announce that, through the efforts of the Access to Recreation Advisory Committee, our community has been awarded \$80,000 to be used for an addition to the city's Access Adventure Trail.

A competitive grant was recently awarded through the Access to Recreation Initiative, which strives to create universal access to recreation for all people, of all abilities. This initiative is funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation via Midwest Community Foundations' Ventures.

The existing Access Adventure Trail was completed in 2010 as part of a \$419,000 grant from the same entity. The trail is 10' wide and spans forested upland areas in Chipp-A-Waters Park. A uniquely designed 8' x 150' pedestrian bridge crosses the Chippewa River, and includes a scenic turnout at midpoint, high above the middle of the river. From here, visitors may enjoy an unobstructed view of both sides of the Chippewa River at wheelchair height through 4' x 4' glass panels integrated into the bridge design. An upland trail loop provides unparalleled access to natural areas appealing to a variety of ages and abilities. The trail features universally accessible scenic turnouts with seating contiguous to the trail for safety and convenience. Fixed viewing scopes at two heights allow visitors to easily view wildlife and other natural resources.

The grant most recently awarded will support the addition of a wetland loop to the southwest of the existing trail. The new section will further explore Chipp-A-Waters Park, exposing users to the sights and sounds of a wooded river wetland area. The wetland loop will feature two additional scenic turnouts, weaving through seasonal wildflowers and hardwood trees located in the river floodplain. A boardwalk 140' in length will extend out to the pond. The boardwalk design assures safety but allows an unobstructed view, further promoting universal access. Users will be able to experience the sounds, sights and smells of being in the river wetland.

Grant monies will also be used to integrate durable, interpretive signage along the trail which will allow users with visual, auditory and cognitive impairments to experience the trail in new ways. The interpretive signage will feature large font, photographs, and textured elements at a height accessible to children and those in wheelchairs. Signs will describe various elements of the surrounding environment, highlighting the history of the Chippewa River basin and the area's natural resources.

The City of Mt. Pleasant Parks and Recreation Department will coordinate trail construction and signage, all before the snow flies. "Completing the southwest portion of the trail and installing additional interpretive signage will improve access to, and educate users on the natural resources found within, our beautiful local parks system," notes Chris Bundy, Director of Parks and Public Spaces for the city and Chair of the Access to Recreation Advisory Committee.