Increasing Accessibility at the Botanical Gardens

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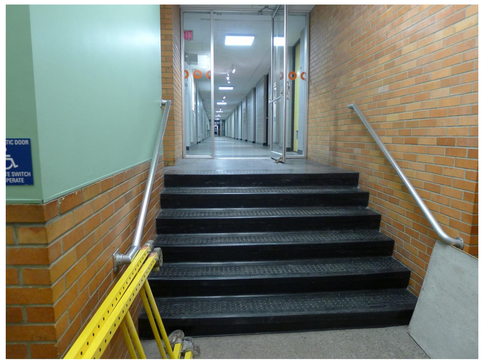
MATTHAEI BOTANICAL GARDENS AND NICHOLS ARBORETUM
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Accessible Ramp in Lobby

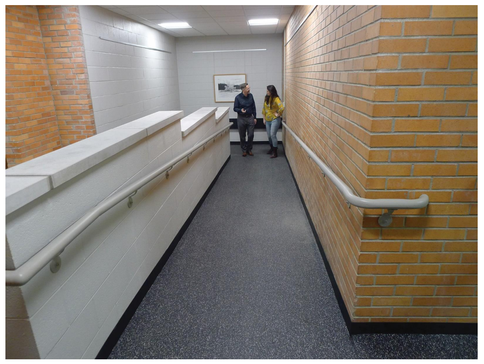
- We converted a staircase that connected our lobby, classrooms and offices into an accessible ramp. Those with limited mobility, carts, or strollers previously had to exit the building and travel along a dark, cold path to get from one area of the building to another.
- **Faculty, staff, students, guests and volunteers can now move freely about for classes, work, meetings and public programs!**

Ramp- Before and After

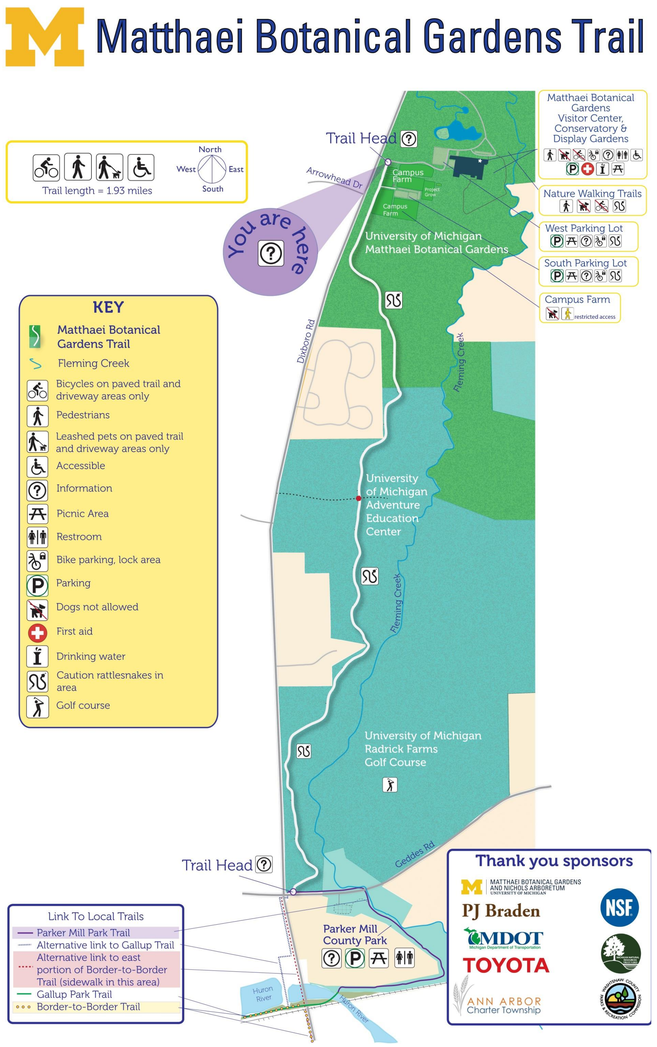
Before- Stairs separated our Front Lobby and Conservatory from the classrooms and offices.



After- Everyone is able to move freely throughout the entire building!



Shared Use Public Trail



- This summer, we built a shared use public trail that connects the Botanical Gardens to all Campuses, the B2B recreation trail, and local communities.
- Physical access to the Gardens has been reported as a significant barrier for people to enjoy our classes, landscapes, and educational programs.
- Students, people with low income and those who don't drive were affected the most due to a lack of public transit to our site.
- **Now people can safely get here on foot, bicycle, scooters, and more!**
- We hope that new visitors who are here to exercise and enjoy this recreational trail will become engaged in our organization.

Future Goals

•Work with Campus Leaders to begin a U-M Blue Bus to the Botanical Gardens opening access to our programs and landscapes to all students, faculty and staff.

•Creating Bi-/Multi-Lingual Brochures, newsletters and wayfinding signs.

Accessible Features on the Trail

Observations so far

- Since the trail opened this October, we have already noticed an increase in people at the Botanical Gardens!
- Our Visitor Engagement team is reporting many first time visitors.
- There are clues this new audience has been attracted here by the trail (bike helmets, verbal accounts, etc.)
- People on electric scooters have been spotted enjoying the beauty of our landscape from this paved trail.
- Students, permanent employees and our volunteers have started riding their bikes or walking to work and appreciate this safe travel option.
- People are out even in bad weather!