

Accessibility and Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan

Chiricahua National Monument

Arizona

July 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chiricahua National Monument staff are dedicated to serving all park visitors to help them find meaning in the resources of the park and its stories. Recently, park staff embarked on a journey to ensure that key experiences are available to all visitors, regardless of race, nationality, socioeconomic status, or ability. Park staff conducted an accessibility self-evaluation of park facilities, services, activities, and programs and drafted a transition plan that identifies opportunities for improvement and outlines critical steps towards implementing responsive solutions parkwide.

This accessibility self-evaluation and transition plan (SETP) resulted from the work of a National Park Service (NPS) interdisciplinary team, including planning, design, and construction professionals and interpretive, resource, visitor safety, maintenance, and accessibility specialists. The team developed site plans identifying the location of accessibility barriers and opportunities for each assessed park area and crafted an implementation strategy to assist park staff in scheduling and performing required actions and documenting completed work. The team also assessed park policies, practices, communication, and training needs to improve access to elements of the park that lie outside of direct physical and programmatic access. The goals of the SETP are to (1) document existing park barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities; (2) provide an effective approach for upgrading facilities, services, activities, and programs; and (3) instill a culture around creating universal access.

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

Chiricahua National Monument staff have focused on accessibility in recently completed and upcoming projects at the visitor center, the Bonita Canyon Campground, and other areas in the park. These projects include rehabilitating and improving the accessibility of comfort stations. The Bonita Creek Trail area includes a paved trail with gentle slopes, firm and stable surfaces, and clearly marked routes that provide visitors with unique views of Chiricahua's natural rocky landscapes and the Bonita Creek habitat. Park staff are committed to implementing the minor improvements identified for amenities, such as picnic tables, trash and recycling receptacles, and interpretive waysides, to make Bonita Creek Trail an even more accessible visitor experience.

Recurring findings related to physical accessibility were identified for parking areas, including accessible paths of travel, outdoor recreation routes, hiking trails, and visitor information areas, such as kiosks, bulletin boards, interpretive panels, and waysides. Many facilities, some of which were developed in the 1930s and 1960s, did not meet accessibility standards. For example, the surfaces in some areas were not firm and stable, slopes exceeded allowable standards, and items were out of reach range or were difficult or heavy to operate. Restroom amenities did not meet required standards, and amenities offered for picnicking and camping, such as picnic tables and water spigots, did not always meet appropriate access route and clearance standards. Some signage was also missing, had illegible content, or had insufficient or misplaced information.

Park staff have opportunities to improve access to unique experiences in the park, such as the Faraway Ranch Historic District and the Massai Exhibits Building and Overlook. Opportunities exist for improved access to the park's stories and historical context at the Faraway Ranch House, which is currently closed to the public and undergoing renovations. Additionally, developing an accessible overlook and viewing area at Massai Point would substantially enhance the opportunity to improve the park's wilderness character and backcountry from a vantage point at Massai.

PROGRAMMATIC ACCESSIBILITY

Chiricahua National Monument staff are currently planning for new and improved tactile opportunities for signage and exhibits across the park. These improvements will provide more visitors with the opportunity to engage with the unique natural and historical stories found in this park. At the visitor center, the existing park introductory video provides visitors with open captions, enhancing overall accessibility and the visitor experience.

Recurring findings related to program accessibility were identified for interpretive waysides, exhibits, and programs. Interpretive waysides and informational signage were consistently deficient in meeting accessible standards for signage height, font, and visual materials. Lowering signage heights and increasing font sizes and contrast in visual aides were consistently noted as opportunities for improvement in programmatic accessibility. Assistive listening devices and audio descriptions of exhibits were generally not available parkwide.

Parkwide, there are opportunities for improved descriptive information about trail conditions. These improvements would enable visitors to make individualized informed decisions about trail use. Opportunities exist for expanding accessibility for visitors by developing virtual tours and providing photo collages of key park features. Further developing descriptive information on the park's website and creating a downloadable accessibility guide would enhance overall programmatic accessibility and the visitor experience throughout the park.

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INTRODUCTION

Since 1916, the National Park Service has preserved, unimpaired, the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system, while also providing for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of current and future generations.

Many national parks were founded because of their stunning views, extreme and unique geography, challenging and sensitive natural environments, and historic and fragile structures. Chiricahua National Monument and other parks exist because of their history and resources. The NPS mission balances protection of resources (natural and cultural) with visitation. Facilities, services, and programs were designed and built in parks to accommodate visitors and help them better understand each park purpose and significance.

Created in 1924, most facilities in Chiricahua National Monument were constructed before the passage of laws and policies requiring the National Park Service to provide access to the widest cross section of the public and to ensure compliance with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The accessibility of commercial services in national parks is also governed by applicable federal laws. After 100 years of operation, the National Park Service continues to work towards a more inclusive environment.

Visitors today have unique needs and expectations, and the agency must adapt to meet changing demands. Modern scientific research and visitor trend analysis provide new insights into accessibility opportunities and challenges in the national park system. According to 2020 Center for Disease Control data, there are approximately 61 million people with disabilities in the United States, and this number is expected to rise in the coming years as more people reach retirement age (65 and older). This information helps the National Park Service understand changing visitation patterns, the nexus between resource stewardship and accessibility, and the impacts of managing visitors, resources, and infrastructure with the reality of unpredictable funding. Planning can help identify solutions to challenges and provide a trajectory full of opportunity for current and future visitors. The National Park Service is committed to making park facilities, services, programs, and employment opportunities accessible to all people, including those with disabilities.

Chiricahua National Monument's existing general management planning documents continue to provide relevant guidance, which may be supplemented through development of additional planning documents such as this one. The accessibility SETP is a component of the park's planning portfolio and supports the facility investment plan. This plan documents park barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities and provides an effective approach for upgrading park facilities, services, and programs. In addition, the plan helps inform management decisions regarding project prioritization, funding, and compliance.

ACCESSIBILITY SELF-EVALUATION AND TRANSITION PLAN

The creation of a transition plan is mandated by regulations under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as they apply to the US Department of the Interior, which states that “No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance.” The act requires parks to document architectural barriers and identify solutions, time frames, and responsible parties to improve and increase accessibility.

This plan was prepared to provide Chiricahua National Monument staff with a tool for addressing overall needs associated with making the park accessible when viewed in its entirety. The plan is based on an understanding of key park experiences and establishes a methodical process that identifies, prioritizes, and outlines improvements to park accessibility. The plan proposes strategies for implementation over time and in a manner consistent with park requirements and protocols.

ACCESSIBILITY SELF-EVALUATION AND TRANSITION PLAN PROCESS

The process for creating a SETP involves seven steps:



1. **Identify Key Park Experiences and Park Areas** – The interdisciplinary team began by identifying the key experiences available to visitors at the park. Key park experiences, which help determine the park areas to assess in step 2, are iconic and important experiences for visitors to understand the purpose and significance of the park. Park legislation is foundation for key park experiences, which are identified through park purpose, significance, interpretive themes, and programs (available in the park's foundation document at <https://npshistory.com/publications/foundation-documents/chir-fd-2016.pdf>). Key park experiences ensure that planned improvements are prioritized to best increase overall access to park experiences.

The key park experiences identified for Chiricahua National Monument include the following:

- a. Experience the distinctive Rhyolite geological formations known as “The Pinnacles.”
- b. Experience the native flora and fauna of the Madrean Sky Island ecosystems.
- c. Appreciate the park’s wilderness character through the many opportunities for hiking, viewing, scenic driving, horseback riding, and camping.
- d. Appreciate the scenic views and air quality at overlooks, trails, and scenic drive pullouts.
- e. Learn about the rich cultural history at the Faraway Ranch Historic District that led to the development of Chiricahua National Monument.

- f. Experience the unique historic structures built by the Civilian Conservation Core.
- g. Appreciate and learn about the park's rich archeological and ethnographic resources.

To prepare for step 2, the team then listed all developed areas of the park in which visitors have access.

2. **Determine Park Areas to Assess** – In some instances, not all park areas can be assessed during this process due to time and funding constraints. Therefore, the interdisciplinary team determined which park areas to assess based on the number of key park experiences, visitation level, diversity of activities and programs, distribution, and unique characteristics. The areas selected for assessment provide the best opportunities for the public to access all key park experiences. Areas not assessed will be considered for future facility alterations or as components of a future planned construction project.
3. **Identify Facilities, Services, and Programs in Each Park Area** – The team identified all facilities, services, and programs in each park area to ensure that all physical and programmatic visitor amenities in each park area were reviewed for accessibility. The comprehensive lists of facilities, services, and programs were the basis for conducting assessments and documenting barriers.
4. **Conduct Accessibility Assessment** – On-site, the interdisciplinary assessment team assessed each park area and identified physical and programmatic barriers to accessibility. The team then reviewed possible solutions and explored options to provide universal access. In some cases, programmatic alternatives needed to be examined because eliminating physical barriers is not always possible due to historic designations, environmental concerns, topography, or sensitive cultural and natural resources. Therefore, a range of programmatic alternatives was considered to provide access to key park experiences for as many visitors as possible.
5. **Draft Transition Plan** – Following the assessment, the team added field results to an implementation strategy table and drafted conceptual site plans to display the locations of barriers and proposed improvements. An implementation strategy can be complex because of a large range of coordination efforts associated with scheduling accessibility improvements. Improvement efforts need to consider park activities and operational requirements to determine how and when to implement a solution. While some changes can be done quickly at little or no cost, others may be integrated into existing projects or planned as separate projects, and more complex solutions may require advanced planning and requests for funding. Based on these considerations, the team identified an implementation time frame and a responsible park staff member for each barrier and solution. Implementation time frames are based on NPS staff's ability to complete the improvements within the normal scheduling of park operations and planned projects and are as follows:

- a. Immediate (0–1 year)
 - b. Short term (1–3 years)
 - c. Mid-term (3–7 years)
 - d. Long term (longer than 7 years)
6. **Conduct Public Involvement** – Public involvement occurs at the draft stage of the transition plan; however, it is recommended that at the beginning of the SETP process, park staff initiate public outreach efforts with organizations representing people with disabilities. The draft plan will be released for a 30-day period to solicit input from the public, including people with disabilities and organizations that represent people with disabilities, to provide comments and thoughts on whether the document represents a reasonable review of the park’s barriers and a feasible and appropriate strategy for overcoming the barriers.
7. **Finalize Transition Plan** – After the comment period has closed, park staff will analyze all comments to determine if any revisions to the plan are necessary. Those revisions will be made before the implementation strategy is finalized. Once finalized, a notification will be sent to the public to announce the plan’s availability.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

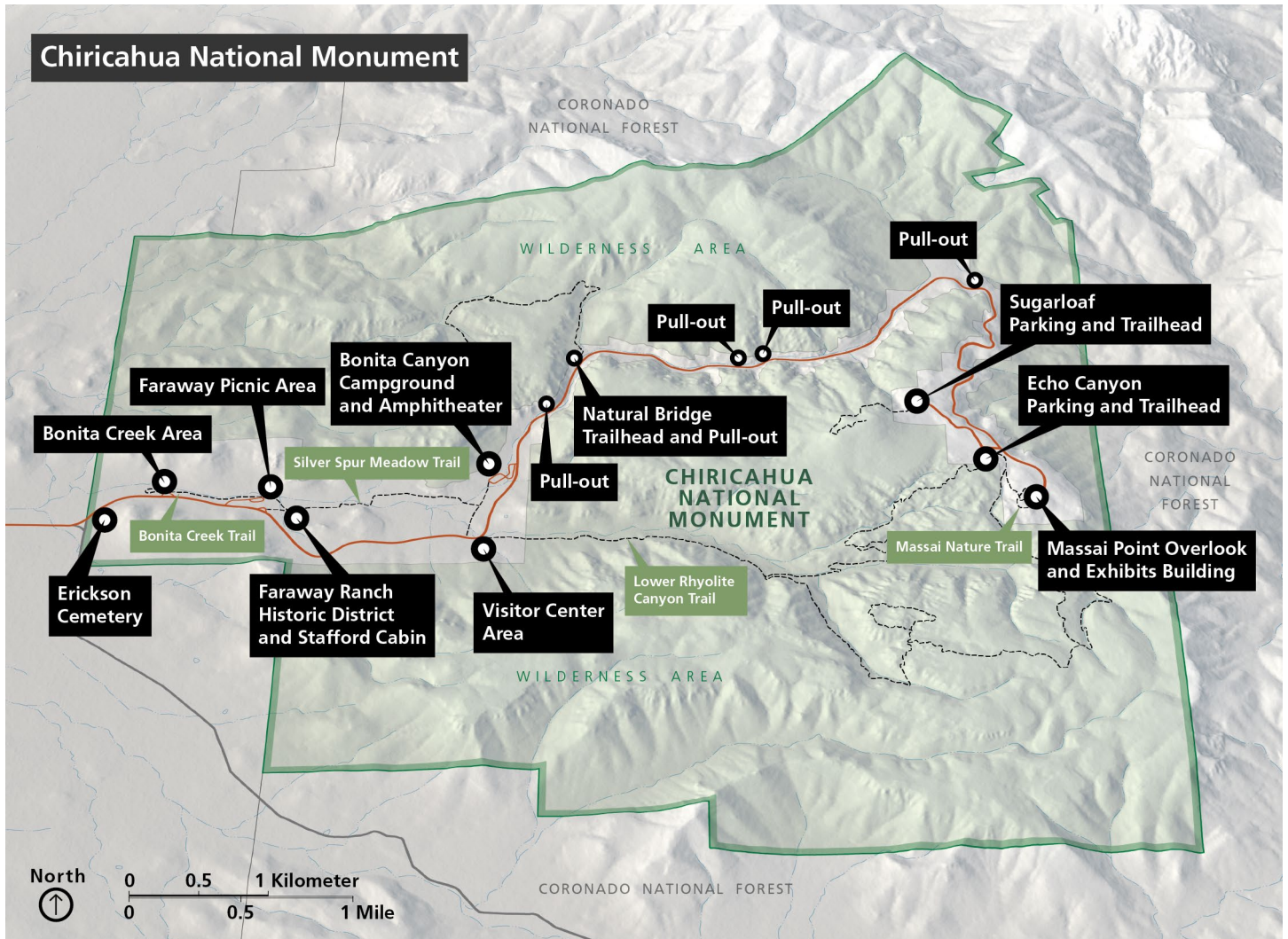
The park superintendent is responsible for implementing and integrating the accessibility self-evaluation and transition plan, and the accessibility coordinator assists the superintendent by documenting improvements, keeping the plan updated, and communicating to park employees. It’s recommended that park staff employ trained consultants and involve the disability community to assist with addressing accessibility improvements to ensure that design and implementation meet the needs of visitors with disabilities. Creating parkwide accessibility requires staff awareness, understanding, and appropriate action. Because of fiscal constraints and limited park resources, staff will need to determine which improvements will benefit the greatest number of visitors with disabilities. Suggested implementation time frames and relative costs need to be factored into all accessibility investment decisions.

CONCEPTUAL SITE PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHIRICAHUA NATIONAL MONUMENT

PARK AREAS ASSESSED

The interdisciplinary team assessed the following park areas for accessibility during the planning effort.

- Erickson Cemetery
- Bonita Creek Area
- Faraway Picnic Area
- Faraway Ranch Historic District and Stafford Cabin
- Visitor Center Area
- Bonita Canyon Campground and Amphitheater
- Natural Bridge Trailhead and Pullouts
- Echo Canyon and Sugarloaf Parking and Trailheads
- Massai Point Overlook and Exhibits Building



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR PARK AREAS ASSESSED

The Architectural Barrier Act requires that any building or facility designed, constructed, altered, or leased with federal funds be accessible and usable by any individuals with disabilities. The Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards and the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards (ABAAS) were adopted for federal facilities in 1984 and 2006, respectively. Subsequently, in 2011, standards for recreational facilities were incorporated into ABAAS as chapter 10. In 2023, Policy Memorandum 23-01 implemented the most current International Code Council (ICC) and American National Standards Institute (ANSI) building codes to supersede ABAAS for building standards. The Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards will continue to provide scoping and technical requirements for outdoor developed areas.

Depending on the date of a building's construction or alteration, different design standards apply. The interdisciplinary team used checklists that include ABAAS, ICC, and ANSI Standards to conduct the transition plan facility assessments. Although a barrier may be identified by the current assessment for improvement, facilities are only required to follow the standard in place at the time of construction and/or alteration. Therefore, barriers may not be in violation of accessibility standards. However, any renovation or upgrade of that building is required to meet the most current standard at the time of work. In addition, Harpers Ferry Center Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for National Park Service Interpretive Media were followed for facility and program assessments.

This document does not include strategies for transitioning employee workspaces to be accessible. In the event that an employee with a disability is hired by Chiricahua National Monument, the supervisor and employee will discuss the employee's needs. The supervisor will then determine what accommodations are reasonable in the given work environment and determine a plan of action to meet those needs.

For each park area, this document provides an overview of findings and recommended solutions in a brief narrative and bulleted list and provides corresponding conceptual site plan(s) that illustrate proposed conditions. For details on each barrier, solution, and time frame, see the companion implementation strategy table at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectId=122523>. It is important to understand that the site plans and recommendations are conceptual and will require further design development and historic and environmental compliance before construction. SETPs are not to be used as a section 106 compliance review submittal. Consult with cultural and natural resource staff before proceeding with recommended actions. During the implementation phase, the interdisciplinary team must reassess the project site conditions; refer to ICC, ANSI, and ABAAS, as relevant; and consult with the local disability community to ensure that specific design and programmatic solutions are correctly addressed.



ERICKSON CEMETERY

The Erickson Cemetery is located just past the Chiricahua National Monument entrance on the right. A small, paved parking area accommodates 10 to 12 vehicles, with no striped parking spaces or designated accessible parking. Along the front of the cemetery, visitors use an asphalt pedestrian path to view the cemetery headstones. This path has uneven surfacing caused by tree root upheaval. A wayside provides visitors with a brief history of the Erickson Family, Swedish immigrants who established the Faraway Ranch homestead in the late 1800s. Their homesteading endeavors and appreciation of this “wonderland of rocks” environment ultimately led to the designation of Chiricahua National Monument in 1924. Members of the Erickson family are buried in this cemetery.

Potential accessibility improvements at the Erickson Cemetery include the following:

- **Parking:** Provide a van-accessible parking space and access aisle with signage.
- **Route:** Provide a curb ramp with level landing, and improve the route surface by reducing gaps and openings and vertical changes in level.
- **Interpretive Wayside:** Reduce the slopes of clear ground space at the wayside.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames are available in the implementation strategy table.

Erickson Cemetery Conceptual Site Plan of Potential Improvements





BONITA CREEK AREA

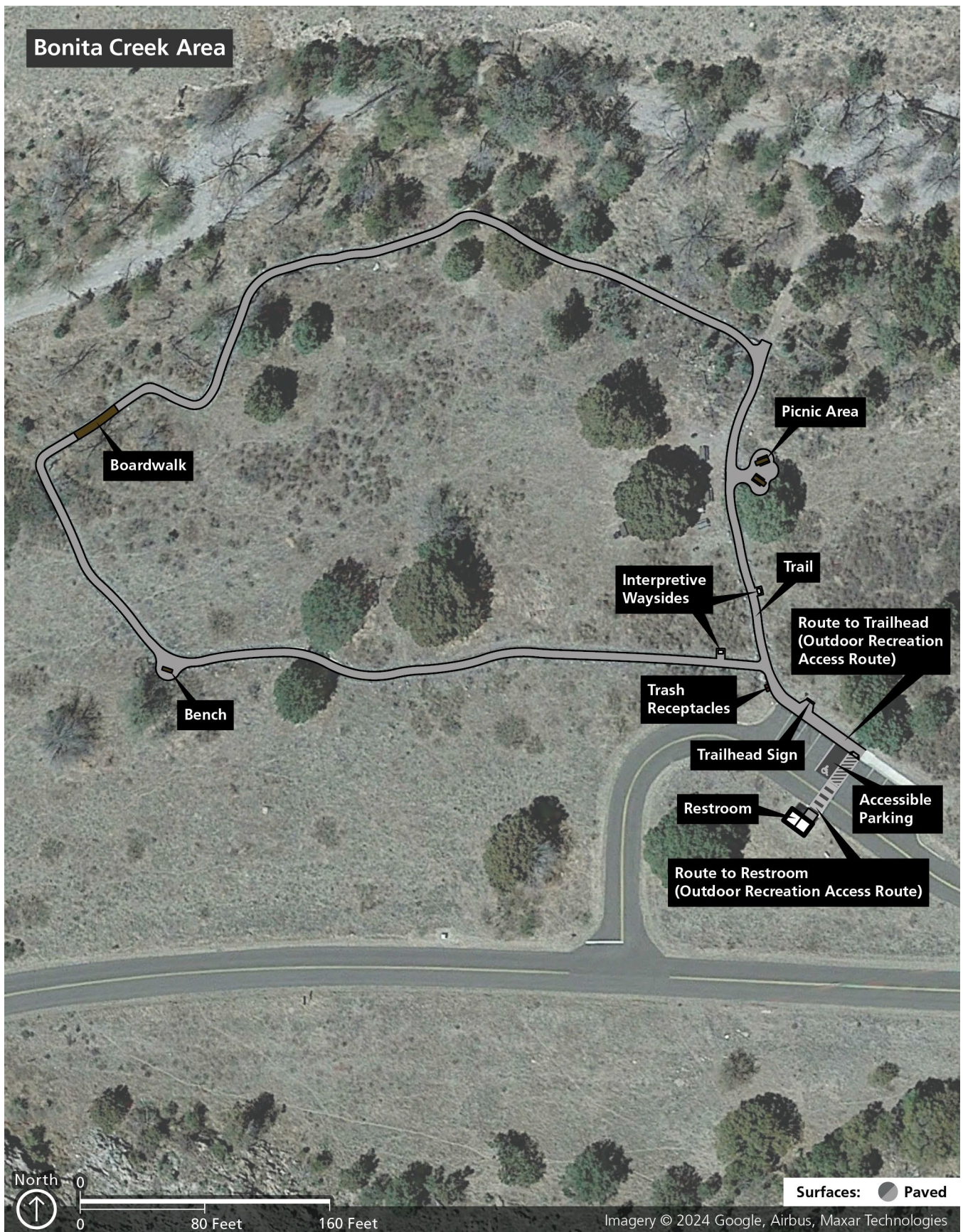
The Bonita Creek Area includes a designated accessible trail, the Bonita Creek Loop. This trail is the first hiking trail visitors can explore after entering the park. The surrounding landscape includes Bonita Creek and panoramic views of the park's mountains. This trail is known for its riparian plant life, wildlife viewing, and birding opportunities. In general, this paved trail has gentle slopes with a firm and stable surface. A wooden boardwalk crosses over the creek partway along the loop trail. Increased information about the accessibility of this trail on the park's website would support visitor preparations and experience.

Potential accessibility improvements at Bonita Creek Area include the following:

- **Parking:** Reduce the slopes of the access aisle, and restripe and sign the accessible parking space and access aisle to be van accessible.
- **Routes:** Reduce slopes, and improve surfaces to have smaller gaps and openings.
- **Trailhead Sign:** Provide a larger clear ground space, and provide trail conditions.
- **Trash Receptacles:** Improve the slopes of clear ground space and operable parts.
- **Trail:** Reduce gaps in trail surface, and prune trees to improve overhead clearance.
- **Interpretive Waysides:** Increase the amount of clear ground space at the wayside.
- **Picnic Area:** Increase the amount of clear ground space around picnic tables.
- **Boardwalk:** Improve the boardwalk to be firm and stable with smaller gaps.
- **Restroom:** Improve the placement of the toilet and toilet paper dispenser.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Bonita Creek Area Conceptual Site Plan of Potential Improvements





FARAWAY PICNIC AREA

The Faraway Picnic Area is a designated picnicking area located west of the Faraway Historic District. Located near the parking, the area has several picnic tables, a covered pavilion, drinking fountain, and restroom facility. While picnicking, visitors can enjoy the expansive views of the park's mountains and native flora. Visitors to this area can also enjoy outdoor activities, such as birding, hiking, and horseback riding, with access to the Bonita Creek and Silver Spur Meadow Trails. A large, paved parking area has 26 parking spaces, including 2 accessible parking spaces and 4 trailer spaces. The accessible route is generally flat and clearly delineated, with some areas of short steep transitions at the curb ramps.

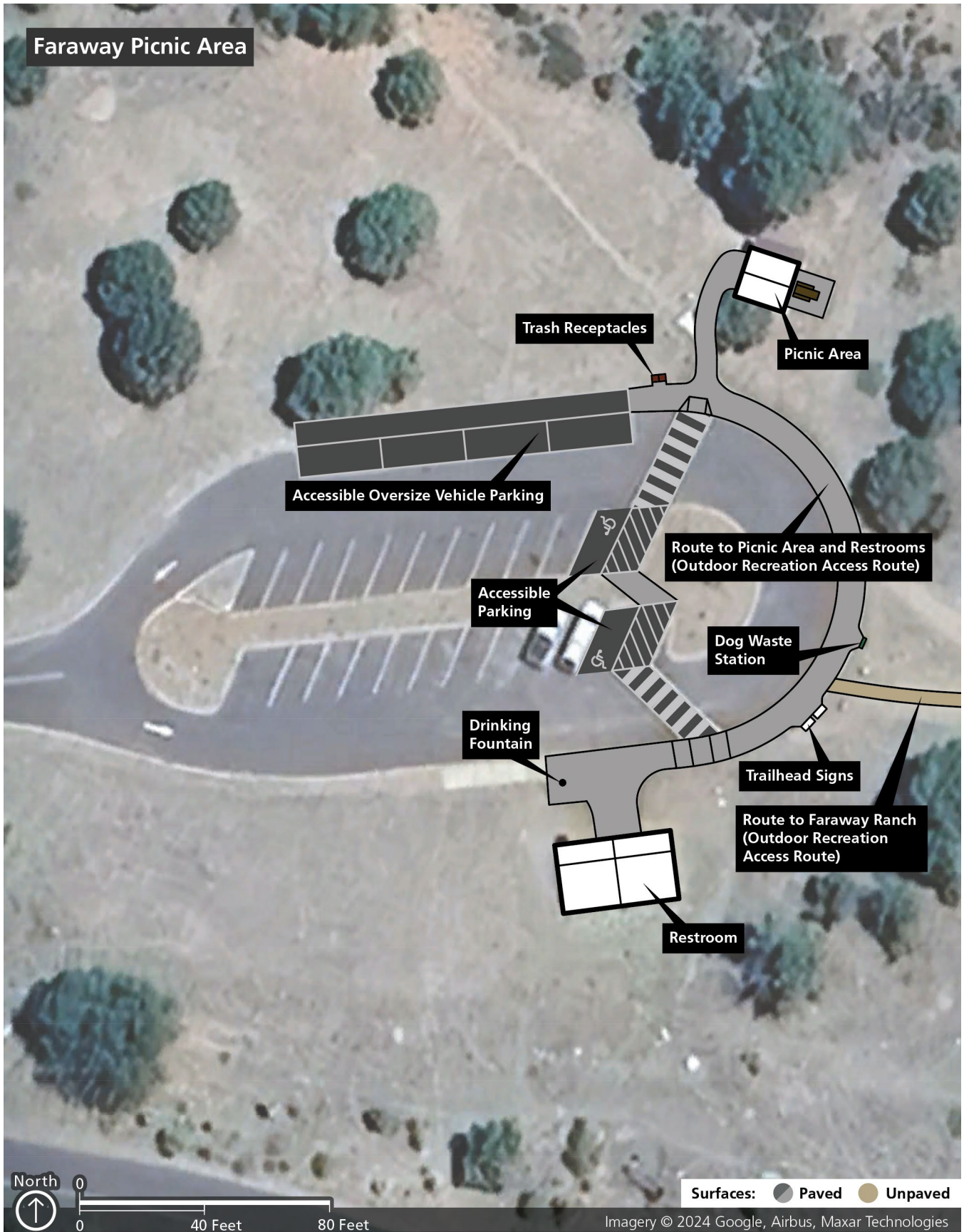
Potential accessibility improvements at Faraway Picnic Area include the following:

- **Parking:** Restripe and sign the accessible parking space and access aisle to be van accessible. Connect the access aisles with an accessible route.
- **Accessible Oversize Vehicle Parking:** Provide a minimum of one accessible oversize vehicle parking space.
- **Routes:** Improve the curb ramps on the route to picnic area and restroom.
- **Picnic Area:** Improve the amount of clear ground space at the picnic tables, and consider adding more shade structures.
- **Trash Receptacles:** Improve the amount of clear ground space and operable parts.
- **Dog Waste Station:** Improve the amount of clear ground space at the dog waste station.
- **Drinking Fountain:** Provide a dual-height fountain with level, clear ground space. Add concrete surface around the drinking fountain area.

- **Restroom:** Provide tactile signage, and improve the placement of grab bars, door pulls, coat hooks, mirrors, dispensers, and flushers.
- **Trailhead Signs:** Improve the amount of clear ground space, and provide trail condition information.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames are available in the implementation strategy table.

Faraway Picnic Area Conceptual Site Plan of Potential Improvements





FARAWAY RANCH HISTORIC DISTRICT AND STAFFORD CABIN

Swedish immigrants Neil and Emma Erickson settled in southern Arizona in 1887 on a 160-acre homestead. By the mid-1920s, Lillian, the Ericksons' eldest daughter, and her husband Ed Riggs managed the family business, a guest ranch called Faraway Ranch. Today, visitors come to enjoy the scenic views and unique geological formations, to explore the ranch, and learn what it was like living in the area in the 1900s. In general, natural surface routes surrounding the historic district may have intermittent barriers such as stones and exposed tree roots. The primary route to access this area is from the Faraway Picnic Area. The trail leading to the Stafford Cabin has a loose, sandy soil surface. Buildings in the historic district are over 100 years old, including the main Ranch House, the Exhibits Building, and Stafford Cabin, are not currently open to the public; however, park staff are in the process of making improvements to these structures. Once renovations are complete, this visitor attraction will reopen to the public and provide educational and interpretive programs that will greatly improve the visitor experience.

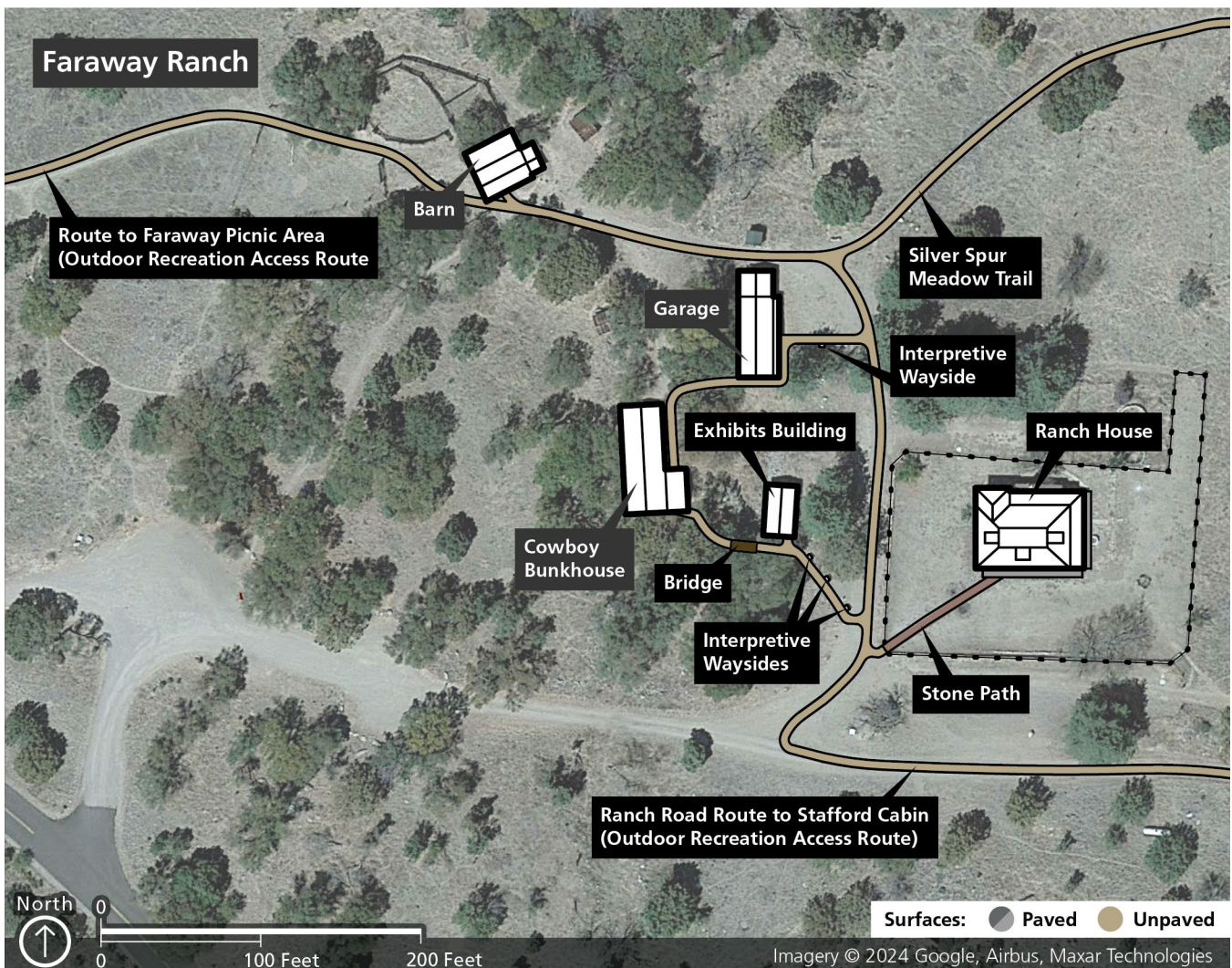
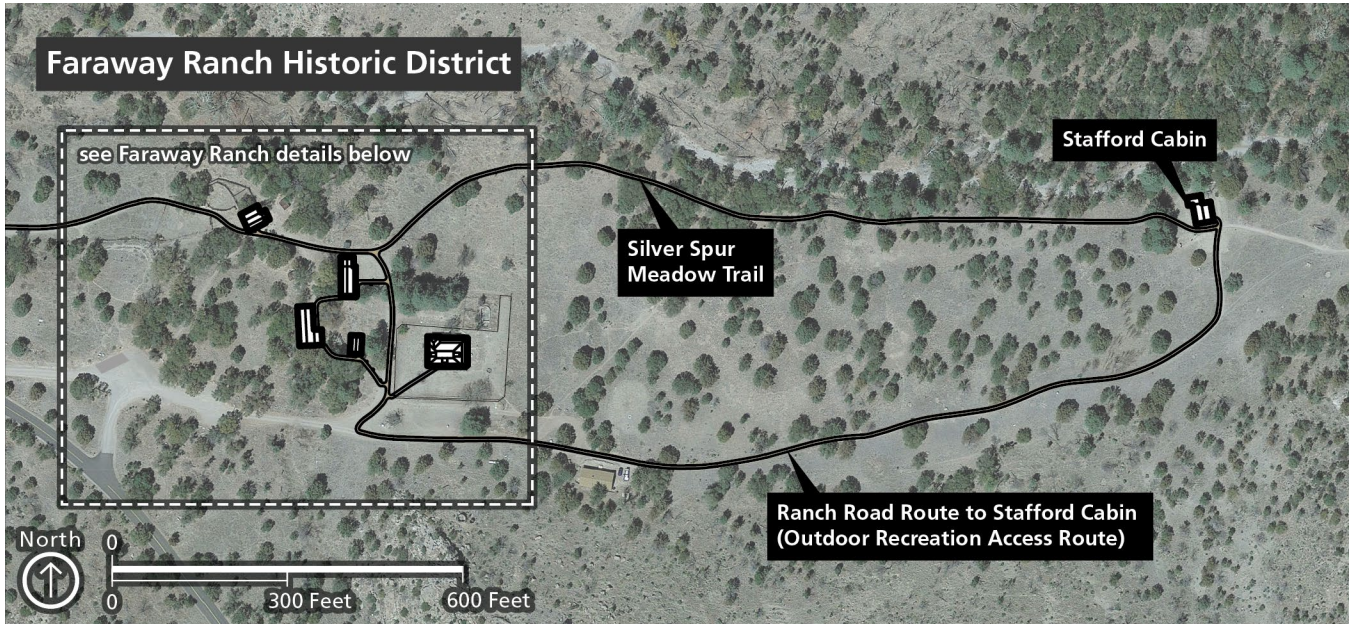
Potential accessibility improvements at the Faraway Ranch Historic District and Stafford Cabin include the following:

- **Routes and Trails:** Increase the clear width, reduce slopes, remove obstacles like rocks and roots, and improve surfaces to be firm and stable.
- **Interpretive Waysides:** Improve the amount of clear ground space at waysides.
- **Benches:** Improve benches to provide armrests, backrests, and companion space.
- **Exhibit Building (Neil's Den):** Provide an accessible route into the building, and assess ways to increase the door width and clear floor space at the doorway of this historic building.
- **Bridge:** Reduce vertical changes in the level at the bridge.

- **Route to Ranch House:** Improve the stone path and exterior route to the Ranch House to have reduced slopes and changes in level.
- **Ranch House:** Provide an accessible route into the Ranch House, and reduce the height of thresholds at the entrance and consider other interior improvements.
- **Stafford Cabin:** Provide an accessible route to the cabin.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames are available in the implementation strategy table.

Faraway Ranch Historic District and Stafford Cabin Conceptual Site Plan of Potential Improvements





VISITOR CENTER AREA

The Chiricahua National Monument Visitor Center Area is located approximately 2 miles from the entrance station along a scenic drive that winds through the central area of the park. Visitors arrive to a parking lot that provides two accessible parking spaces, a freestanding restroom facility, and pedestrian path to the visitor center entrance. Built by the Civilian Conservation Corp stone masons in the late 1930s, the visitor center is an example of the NPS rustic style architecture, which blends in with the surrounding landscape. An addition was built during the 1960s to expand the bookstore and exhibit areas inside. While here, visitors can orient themselves to park amenities and learn about the park through an introductory video and exhibitions on the park's geology, natural history, archeology, and cultural history. A gift shop is available for purchasing park merchandise, books, and artisan gifts. Two trailheads are located at the visitor center: Lower Rhyolite Trail and Silver Spur Meadow Trail. Lower Rhyolite Trail is directly accessed at the east end of the parking lot and contains two picnic tables at the trailhead. The trail is gently sloped for the first approximately 600 feet and then transitions to steeper slopes with intermittent boulders in the trail corridor and sets of natural boulder steps. Silver Spur Meadow Trailhead is located on the west side of the visitor center across E. Bonita Canyon Drive. Currently, no accessible route connects the accessible parking spaces to the trailheads.

Potential accessibility improvements at the Visitor Center Area include the following:

- **Parking:** Restripe and sign the accessible parking spaces and access aisles to provide a van-accessible space.
- **Drinking Fountain:** Provide a dual-height fountain with level clear ground space.
- **Route to Restrooms:** Reduce slopes and vertical changes in level on the route.

- **Restrooms:** Relocate the tactile signage at the restroom entrances and increase the size of accessible toilet compartments. At the sinks, cover pipes and lower mirrors. Improve the placement and operability of components, including grab bars, toilet paper dispensers, coat hooks, doorstops, door pulls, baby changing stations, and hand sanitizer dispensers.
- **Kiosk and Trash Receptacles:** Relocate the kiosk and trash receptacles to provide a level, clear ground space at both. Improve the operable parts of the trash receptacle.
- **Route to Visitor Center:** Provide a level landing atop the ramp, and prune the tree overhanging the route. Improve the stairs to have uniform riser heights.
- **Visitor Center:** Improve the clear width of the circulation space throughout the gift shop and exhibition spaces. Provide a wheelchair-accessible space and a companion seating space in the theater area. Improve the exhibits and bookstore items to ensure they are within an accessible reach range. Provide sufficient clear floor space and knee clearance at counters. Consider adding armrests, backrests, and a companion seating space at the outside benches.
- **Routes to Picnic Area and Trailheads:** Provide routes between the accessible parking and the picnic area and the trailheads.
- **Trailhead Signs:** Provide signs with detailed trail condition information.
- **Picnic Area:** Provide two accessible picnic tables with level, clear ground space.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames are available in the implementation strategy table.

Visitor Center Area Conceptual Site Plan of Potential Improvements





BONITA CANYON CAMPGROUND AND AMPHITHEATER

The Bonita Canyon Campground is centrally located in Chiricahua National Monument approximately a half mile from the Visitor Center. Extensive tree canopy provides shade over this campground, which is open year-round and includes one designated accessible campsite. Campground amenities include potable water, picnic tables, tent pads, grills, trash receptacles, a restroom facility with flush toilets, and an amphitheater for ranger-led programs. The overall terrain in the campground is rolling. The natural surface of campsites is relatively flat with some exposed roots and boulders. The campground amphitheater provides a space for campers to experience the natural rock formations and night sky and learn about local wildlife and environment. The amphitheater accommodates 75 visitors with bench-style seating.

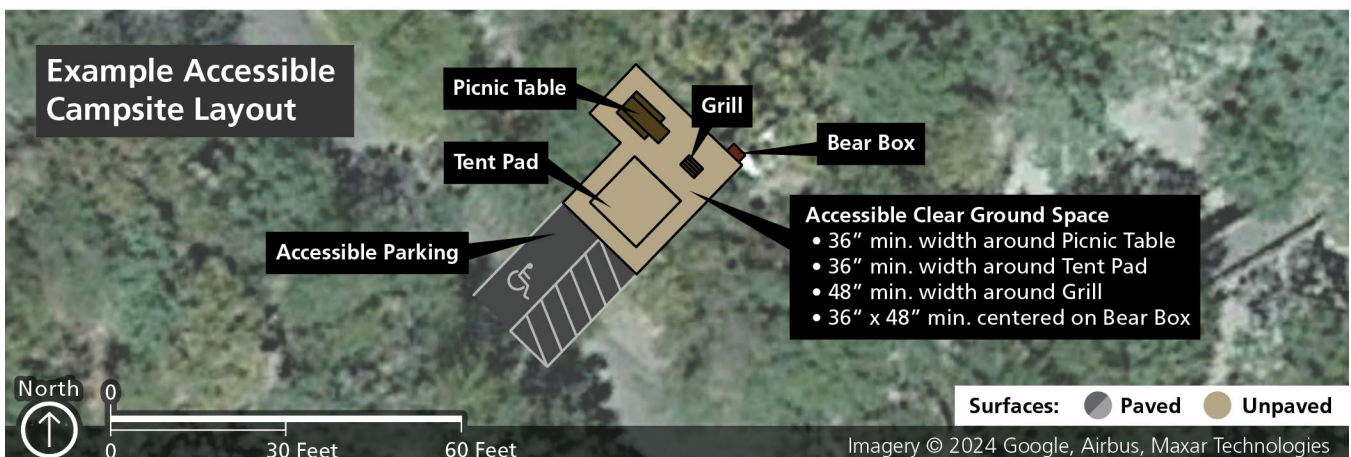
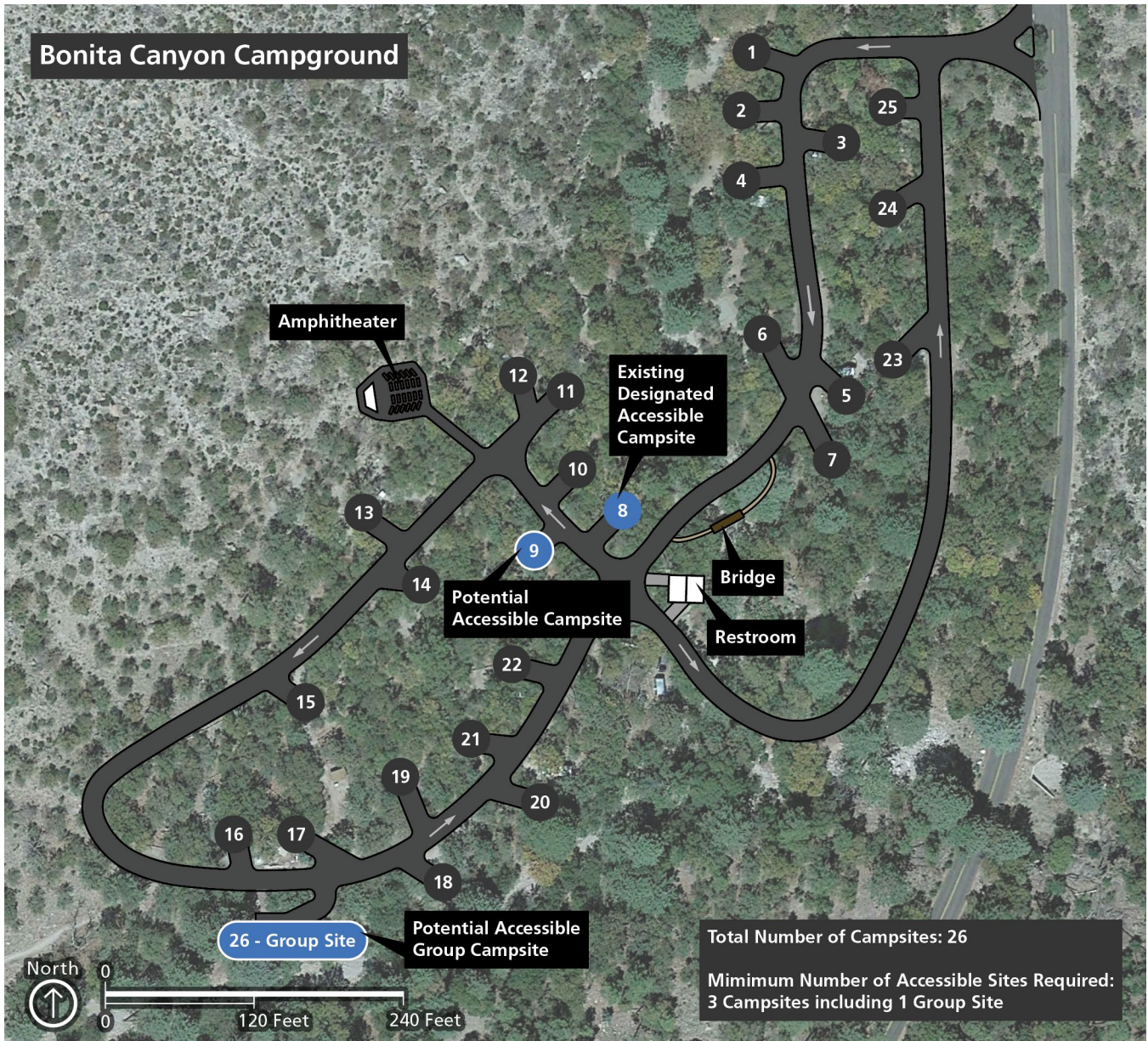
Potential accessibility improvements at Bonita Canyon Campground and Amphitheater include the following:

- **Campsites:** Improve two existing accessible campsites, including one accessible group site. Improve the slopes of ground surfaces in the existing accessible campsite.
- **Campsite Furnishings:** Improve the amount of clear ground space and operable parts of campsite furnishings, including bear boxes, accessible fire rings/grills, picnic tables, access to nearby trash receptacles, and water hydrants.
- **Routes:** Reduce the slopes of routes to restrooms and the amphitheater and reduce changes in level at the bridge.
- **Amphitheater:** Provide a minimum of four accessible wheelchair and companion seating spaces. Reduce the slopes of aisles throughout the amphitheater and

provide an accessible route onto the stage. Determine whether space exists for accessible parking nearby.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Bonita Canyon Campground and Amphitheater Conceptual Site Plan of Potential Improvements





NATURAL BRIDGE TRAILHEAD AND PULLOUTS

Along the Bonita Canyon Scenic Drive are several vehicle pullouts where visitors can enjoy unique viewsheds and learn about the geologic formations, local landscape, history and culture, or environmental processes at Chiricahua National Monument. The pullouts do not have designated striped parking spaces and are situated along an active roadway. The pullouts have a limited footprint but are large enough to accommodate two to three parked cars. Interpretive waysides provide information on the unique feature highlighted at the pullout. The Natural Bridge Trailhead pullout also provides trailhead access to a 4.8-mile round-trip trail leading to the Natural Bridge Viewing Area. The trailhead begins with a trail sign at the transition point between the pullout's asphalt surface to natural loose, sandy soils, dropping down via rough, natural steps to a dry creek bed with vegetation and large boulders.

Potential accessibility improvements at Natural Bridge Trailhead and Pullouts include the following:

- **Parking:** Determine whether one van-accessible parking space at each pullout is feasible.
- **Trailhead Signs:** Improve the language on trailhead signs to better describe trail conditions and to clarify that service animals are allowed on trails.
- **Interpretive Waysides:** Improve clear ground space at waysides to be firm, stable, level, and free of vegetation and obstacles.
- **Trash Receptacles:** Improve the amount of clear ground space and operable parts.
- **Routes:** Reduce changes in level on routes between parking and waysides.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames are available in the implementation strategy table.

Natural Bridge Trailhead and Pullouts Conceptual Site Plan of Potential Improvements





ECHO CANYON AND SUGARLOAF PARKING AND TRAILHEADS

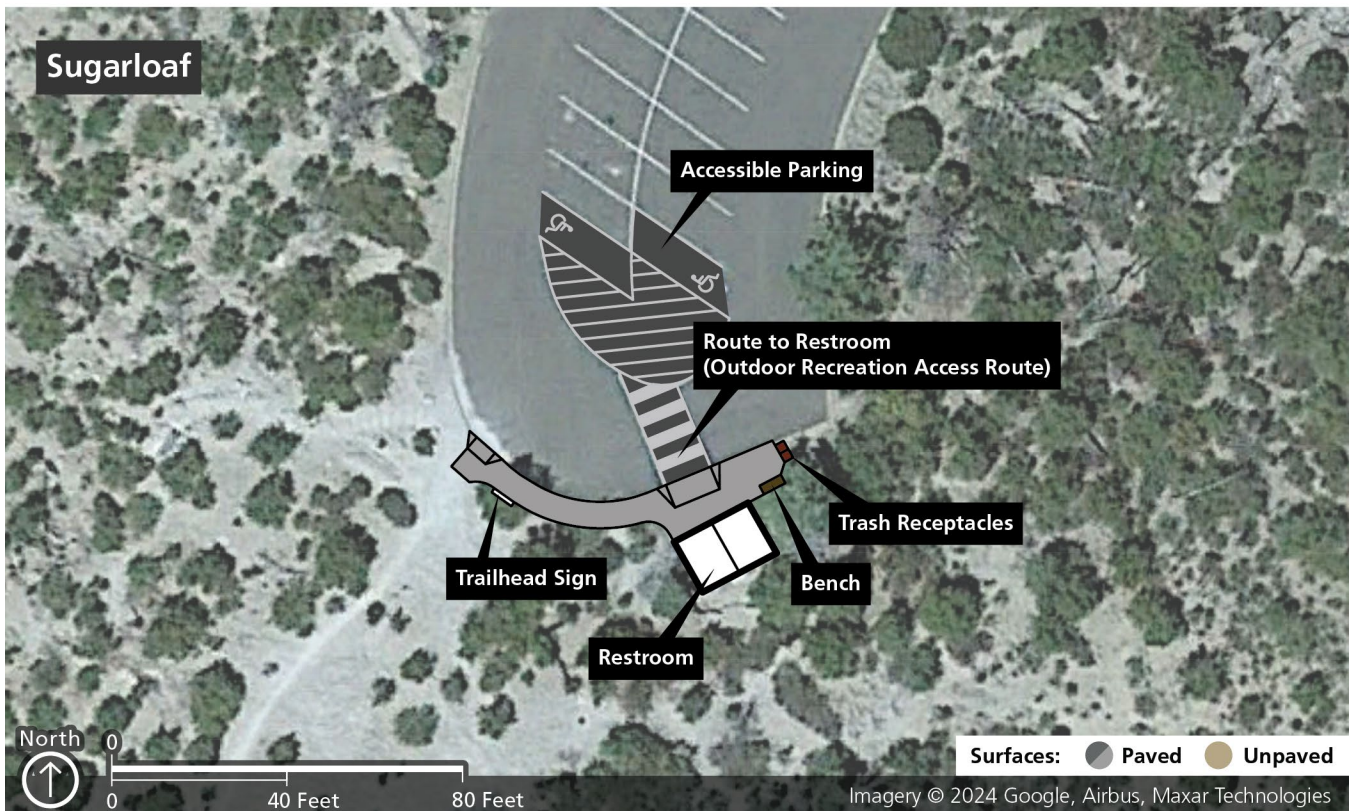
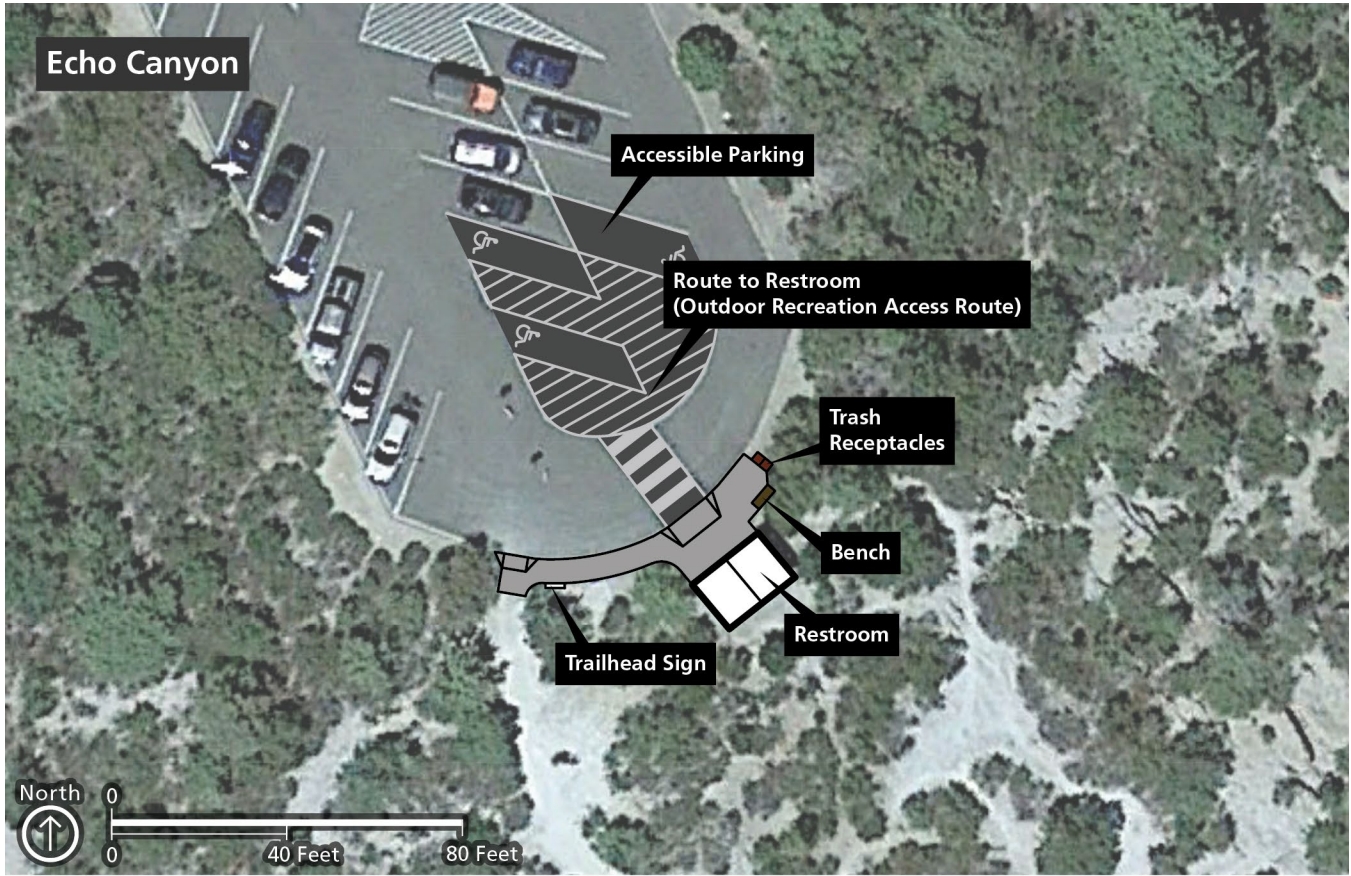
The Echo Canyon and Sugarloaf Parking and Trailheads are located along the scenic Bonita Canyon Drive on the way up to Massai Point Overlook. Both these areas provide expansive views of the surrounding mountains, canyons, and southern Arizona landscape. Both locations provide visitors with parking, a restroom facility, picnic tables, and trailhead waysides. In general, the parking lots had clearly designated accessible spaces and accessible routes to the restroom facilities. Opportunities exist for restriping parking spaces to ensure that a van-accessible space is provided at each parking lot.

Potential accessibility improvements at the Echo Canyon and Sugarloaf Parking and Trailheads include the following:

- **Parking:** Reduce slopes, and restripe and sign the accessible parking spaces and access aisles to provide van-accessible spaces. Consider reconfiguring existing parking spaces to maximize parking capacity with the current footprint.
- **Routes:** Reduce changes in level, and provide level landings and detectable warning surfaces at the curb ramps.
- **Restrooms:** Improve the placement and operability of restroom features, including grab bars, toilet paper dispensers, coat hooks, and doorstops.
- **Benches:** Provide benches near the restrooms.
- **Trash Receptacles:** Improve amount of clear ground space and operable parts.
- **Trailhead Signs:** Improve the amount of clear ground space and trail condition information.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames are available in the implementation strategy table.

Echo Canyon and Sugarloaf Parking and Trailheads Conceptual Site Plan of Potential Improvements





MASSAI POINT OVERLOOK AND EXHIBITS BUILDING

At an elevation of 6,870 feet, Massai Point Overlook, with its expansive 360-degree views of the rhyolite rock pinnacles of Rhyolite Canyon, adjacent valleys, and surrounding mountain peaks, is a location for iconic images of Chiricahua National Monument. Located at the end of the 8-mile Bonita Canyon scenic drive, this area includes parking, a picnic area, restrooms, and a paved route to the Massai Exhibits Building. The Massai Exhibits Building was designed as an “Orientation Station” in 1939 by Cecil Doty. Local rough-hewn rhyolite blocks were mortared in place to form a 16-foot diameter hexagon structure in the NPS rustic architectural style. In general, the paved route to the exhibits building has an even, firm, and stable surface. The assessment team evaluated opportunities to provide a new accessible parking area and overlook on the south end of the site near the trailheads, improving accessibility and the overall experience for all visitors.

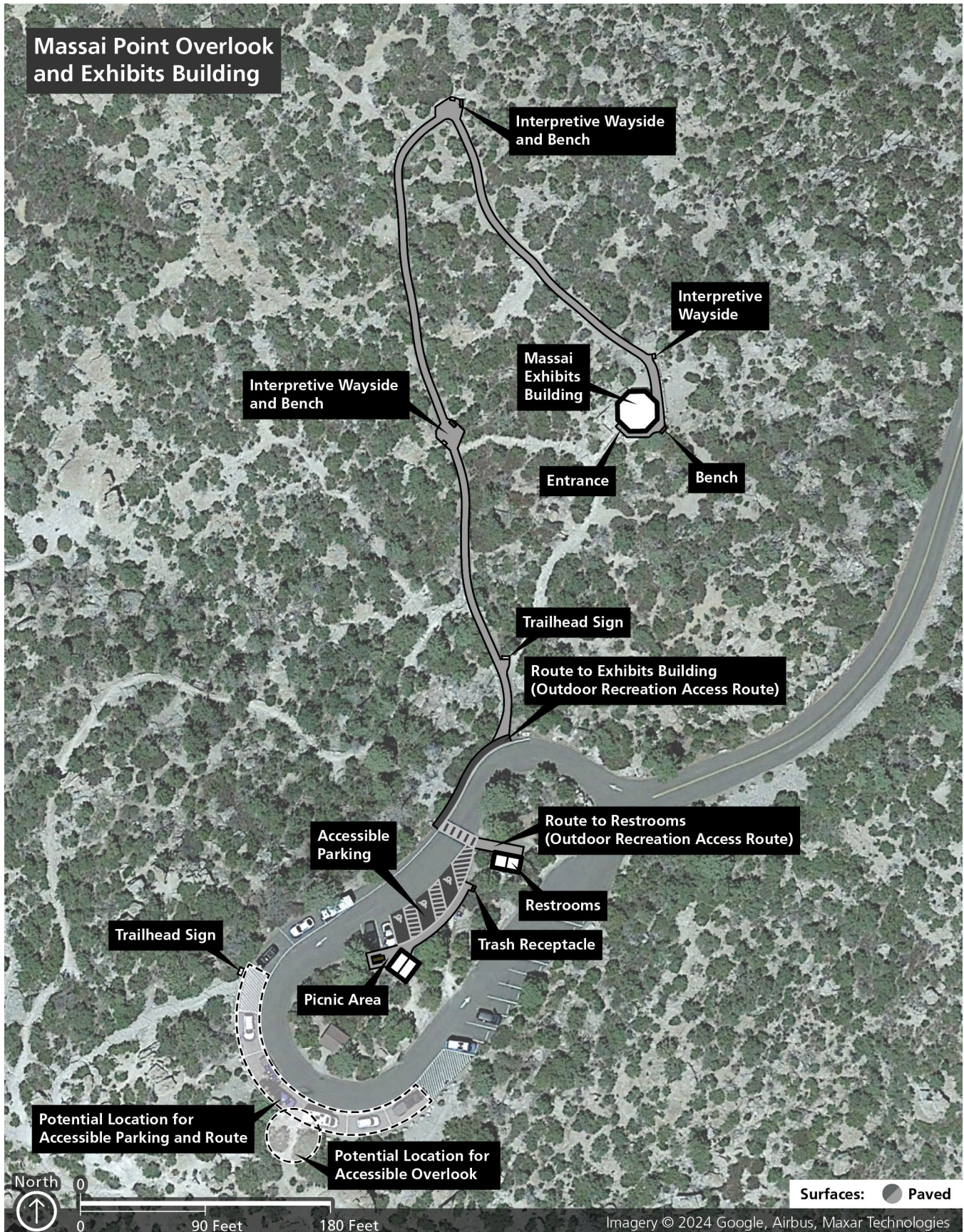
Potential accessibility improvements at Massai Point Overlook and Exhibits Building include the following:

- **Parking:** Reduce the slopes of the existing accessible parking spaces, and restripe and sign a van-accessible parking space. Consider reconfiguring existing parking spaces to maximize parking capacity with the current footprint.
- **Trash Receptacle:** Increase the amount of clear ground space and operable parts.
- **Route to Restrooms:** Reduce slopes, changes in level, and gaps in the surface.
- **Restrooms:** Improve the placement and operability of restroom features, including grab bars, toilet paper dispensers, coat hooks, and doorstops.
- **Route to Exhibits Building:** Reduce slopes, surface openings, and changes in level.

- **Interpretive Waysides:** Improve the amount of clear ground space to be larger and level.
- **Benches:** Provide companion seating spaces at benches.
- **Massai Exhibits Building:** Provide an accessible ramp at the entrance.
- **Picnic Area:** Provide a minimum of two accessible picnic tables in sun and shade.
- **Trailhead Signs:** Provide descriptive information about trail conditions.
- **Overlook:** Consider an accessible overlook area, including a van-accessible parking space and a route to equivalent views and interpretive waysides.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames are available in the implementation strategy table.

Massai Point Overlook and Exhibits Building Conceptual Site Plan of Potential Improvements





CHIRICAHUA NATIONAL MONUMENT PROGRAMS

Chiricahua National Monument showed strengths in its breadth of relevant wayside and interpretive signage content, from cultural and historical stories to the unique flora and fauna in the park. The park does not currently offer detailed descriptions of trail and tour conditions on waysides and the website. Unique opportunities exist for park staff to offer audio descriptions of exhibits and virtual hikes and tours on the website to engage staff and further support visitors with disabilities. Chiricahua National Monument staff are aware of these areas for improvement and are committed to addressing them.

Potential accessibility improvements to parkwide programs include the following:

- **Publications:** Add parkwide and site-specific alternative format publications.
- **Audiovisuals:** Add tactile exhibits. Add audio descriptions of exhibits and provide open captions, assistive listening, and text labels describing ambient sounds. Work with disability partners, organizations, and Harpers Ferry Center to determine how best to provide closed captions and audio descriptions for park videos.
- **Website and Social Media:** Add detailed descriptions for trails and tour conditions. Add virtual tours and hikes to the park website.
- **Walks, Talks, Tours, and Special Events:** Add assistive listening devices and provide ASL services for tours, talks, walks, and special events.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames are available in the implementation strategy table.



CHIRICAHUA NATIONAL MONUMENT POLICIES, PRACTICES, COMMUNICATION, AND TRAINING

Chiricahua National Monument showed strengths in its wheelchair accommodations and guidance on the use of power-driven mobility devices. The park does not currently offer guidance regarding service animals. Unique opportunities exist to offer staff training and inclusive outreach strategies to local groups representing people with disabilities to engage staff and further support visitors with disabilities. Chiricahua National Monument staff are aware of these areas for improvement and are committed to addressing them.

Potential accessibility improvements to policies, practices, communication, and training include the following:

- **Staff Training and Park Protocols:** Provide ongoing accessibility training to all staff, and develop standard operating procedures for setting up accessible meeting spaces, offices, and other areas and for assisting people with disabilities during emergencies.
- **Communications and Partnerships:** Develop a communication strategy to regularly communicate with groups representing people with disabilities. Develop and distribute standard operating procedures for park partners, lessees, and concessioners regarding park accessibility services.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames are available in the implementation strategy table.

CONCLUSION

Chiricahua National Monument staff are committed to providing all visitors with the opportunity to connect with and learn about the park's unique natural, cultural, and recreational resources. Accessibility improvements identified in the Chiricahua National Monument SETP will make it easier for individuals with cognitive, hearing, vision, and mobility disabilities to discover, understand, and enjoy the range of experiences available at the park. Park staff will continue to work toward accommodating all visitors while sustaining the park legacy to preserve and protect the distinctive rhyolite rock formations known as "the Pinnacles," designated wilderness, and features of vital historical and scientific interest for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations.

The primary goal of the plan is to consider universal design strategies and document modifications needed to provide access to park facilities, services, activities, and programs for all visitors. As park staff work towards implementing the plan, physical access to and within assessed park areas will be improved, and park information and programs will be enhanced or created for all visitors across the breadth of key experiences at Chiricahua National Monument. Improvements to the physical and programmatic accessibility of the Faraway Ranch Historic District, Massai Point Overlook, parkwide trail conditions, and interpretive signage will provide visitors greater opportunities to engage and learn about the park's history, cultural resources, native flora and fauna, and unique ecosystems, enhancing overall enjoyment and visitor experience.

The Chiricahua National Monument SETP is a living document intended to be used as a guiding reference for the park as park staff implement accessibility upgrades and documents accessibility accomplishments. As barriers to accessibility are removed and/or improved, changes will be updated in the implementation strategy table. Park staff will conduct periodic reviews to evaluate and update conditions to reflect accomplishments and document new programs or other changes that occur over time. Revisions to the plan may include conducting additional assessments for areas not originally conducted as a part of this plan.

Over time, the results of this collective effort at Chiricahua National Monument will enhance the experience of all visitors and provide equal opportunity to access the places, resources, stories, and experiences at the park.

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APPENDIX A: ACCESSIBILITY LAWS, STANDARDS, GUIDELINES, AND NPS POLICIES APPLICABLE TO CHIRICAHUA NATIONAL MONUMENT

As a national park, Chiricahua National Monument is required to comply with specific federal laws that mandate that discriminatory barriers be removed to provide equal opportunities to persons with disabilities. The following laws, design guidelines, and director's orders pertain to Chiricahua National Monument.

LAWS

- Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 – <https://www.access-board.gov/aba/guides>
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – <http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/43/17.550>
- Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – <http://www.section508.gov>
- Effective Communication – <http://www.ada.gov/effective-comm.htm>
- Reasonable Accommodations – <http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/disability-employment/reasonable-accommodations>
- Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices – <https://www.ada.gov/opdmd.htm>
- Service Animals – https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm
- 43 CFR, Section 17.549 Program Accessibility: Discrimination Prohibited – <http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/43/17.549>
- 43 CFR, Section 17.550 Program Accessibility: Existing Facilities – <http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/43/17.550>
- 43 CFR, Section 17.551 Program Accessibility: New Construction and Alterations – <http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/43/17.551>

NPS DIRECTOR'S ORDERS AND MANAGEMENT POLICIES

- Director's Order 16A – https://www.nps.gov/subjects/policy/upload/DO_16A_5-4-1999.pdf
- Director's Order 42 – https://www.nps.gov/subjects/policy/upload/DO_42_11-3-2000.pdf
- National Park Service *Management Policies 2006*, Section 1.9.3 Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities – <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1548/upload/ManagementPolicies2006.pdf>

GUIDELINES

- Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines – <https://www.access-board.gov/prowag/>
- Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for National Park Service Interpretive Media – <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/hfc/accessibility.htm>

APPENDIX B: RESOURCES

Many of the resources listed below for trainings, accessibility assessments, project development, and implementation are currently located on the Pacific West Region Accessibility Self-Evaluation and Transition Planning SharePoint site (<https://doimspp.sharepoint.com/sites/nps-PWR-AccessibilitySETP?CT=1649343052705&OR=OWA-NT&CID=204c2563-b913-0894-1cae-52bc8f021fcf>). In the near future, this information will be available to all NPS staff and will be uploaded to the Park Facility Management Division's "Accessibility for Visitors and Employees with Disabilities" web page (<https://doimspp.sharepoint.com/sites/nps-pfmd/SitePages/Access-for-Visitors-and-Employees-with-Disabilities.aspx>). This information includes specific accessibility resources for concessions, facilities and maintenance, interpretation and education, and law enforcement staff. Resources include the following:

- A glossary of accessibility terms
- Reference information and links to laws and policies
- Accessibility assessment checklists and videos
- Accessibility training links and materials
- Templates that help track and document accessibility actions and an accessibility guide
- Guidance for making historic sites accessible
- Guidance for service animals in parks, accessible publications and programs, signage, and audio description
- Disability dialogue information and trainings
- Guidance for preparing PMIS packages for accessibility improvements
- Trail assessment protocols and summary sheets

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APPENDIX C: CONTRIBUTORS

CHIRICAHUA NATIONAL MONUMENT

Matthew D. Carroll, Superintendent

Sam Bell, Facilities Manager

JoAnn Blalack, Integrated Resources Manager

Marin Karraker, Administrative Officer

Tiffany J. Powers, Interpretation and Education Program Lead / Accessibility Coordinator

Carl J. Stetter, Trail Foreman

INTERIOR REGIONS 6, 7, AND 8

Michael Whiteman-Jones, (former) Regional Accessibility Coordinator

DENVER SERVICE CENTER

Suzanne Digre, Senior Editor (contractor)

Danielle Hernandez, Visual Information Specialist (contractor)

Marc Kochheiser, Landscape Architect Project Specialist

Shannon Sawyer, Project Manger

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CHIRICAHUA NATIONAL MONUMENT ACCESSIBILITY SELF-EVALUATION AND TRANSITION PLAN JULY 2024

This accessibility self-evaluation and transition plan has been prepared as a collaborative effort between Chiricahua National Monument staff, Regional Office staff serving Interior Regions 6, 7, and 8, and Denver Service Center staff and is recommended for approval by the superintendent.

Approved

Date

Matthew D. Carroll, Superintendent, Chiricahua National Monument



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historic places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

Chiricahua National Monument [eTIC number ###/#####]

July 2024

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