



Dear Friends,

From MyrnaLee Mania to Mobility Mania, a movement is upon us to make Itasca County the most wheelchair accessible county in the state. Our group has been working hard to better the lives of the “differently-abled,” and we are very grateful for this opportunity to share an update on our campaign, “Accessibility For All.” Thank you so much for your time and support!

- 1. Awareness Campaign:** What does it mean to be an accessible community? Mobility Mania has produced a 5 minute video and PowerPoint to answer that very question, as well provide tricks and tips you can do to help to make your home and community accessible. To view these, please visit our website www.mobilitymania.org.
- 2. New construction and renovation:** We recently presented our “Accessibility for All” mission to the Grand Rapids City Council where we received unanimous support in our request that all new commercial construction or renovation projects consider having an accessibility collaboration with Mobility Mania. We believe we have knowledge we can share with developers and architects on how to make buildings not only code compliant, but more accessible as well. Congratulations to MDI who is the first to invite us to collaborate as they take on a 5 million dollar renovation at their Hibbing location. We are so grateful to MDI for their support, progressive thinking and commitment to accessibility!
- 3. Handicapped parking violations:** We recently partnered with a company called Parking Mobility, which is a phone app to turn in handicapped parking violators. For the next 3 months, we will be collecting data to determine the true number of handicapped parking violations in Itasca County. If you would like to help us, all you have to do is download the Parking Mobility app on your phone, and when you see a violation, complete some basic information and take 3 pictures of the parking violation. It’s super simple, so give it a try! The cities of Duluth and Minneapolis have partnered with this company to help stop handicapped parking violations in their communities. Wouldn’t it be great if we could do the same thing here?
- 4. Wheelchair accessible swing and picnic tables:** Mobility Mania has been fortunate to obtain a \$500 grant for a wheelchair accessible swing. At the same time, Boy Scout Troop 4041 has volunteered to make wheelchair accessible picnic tables to be put in parks throughout Itasca County. If you would like to help, we are in desperate need of financial and lumber donations to complete this collaboration. We are seeking donations of treated 2x4’s & 2x6’s, and trying to raise \$1500 to complete both projects. We are extremely grateful for the grant we have received, however, it does not cover all of the expenses. If you know anyone that would like to help us and the Boy Scouts with this project to improve our local parks for people in wheelchairs, we sure would appreciate it!

- 5. Transportation:** Mobility Mania recently hosted a presentation by MNDOT on transportation funding and services in Itasca County. We have since partnered with ElderCircle, Care Cab North, Grand Itasca Clinic and Hospital, First Call for Help and the Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation to explore private funding sources to help fill the gap when public transportation is not available for people in wheelchairs. Our leader Myrna Peterson is also part of a Self Driving Task Force exploring driverless vehicles and buses. This is the wave of the future, and it is our hope is that Grand Rapids will be used as pilot city for this new technology.

- 6. Low interest loans:** Our biggest goal is to collaborate with the City of Grand Rapids to create a low interest loan program to help businesses in our community become more wheelchair accessible. It is our hope to support this initiative by securing grant funding, so please keep your fingers crossed for us. Wouldn't it be wonderful if a person in a wheelchair could have the same opportunities as everyone else to enter any business of their choosing? We truly believe the more we help businesses, the more we help our community.

- 7. Support Group:** Mobility Mania has a support group that meets monthly at one of our local restaurants to share conversation and a meal. All are welcome! Just give us a call or contact us through our website if you would like to join, as we would love to have you!

- 8. Steering Committee:** We are constantly looking for new people to join our group. We meet the 3rd Thursday of every month at the Blandin Foundation from 1:30-3pm. If you would like to join, we sure would love to have you!

- 9. Tall Timber Days Parade:** Once again we will be rolling in the Tall Timber Days Parade on Sunday August 6th. Please help us spread the word and invite anyone you know in a wheelchair to join us and come have some fun. Thank you so much to the Tall Timber Days committee for designating prime seating for people in wheelchairs to watch the parade. It was a great weekend last year, and we hope this year will be the same. For more information, call phone numbers listed below or contact us through our website.

Mobility Mania cannot thank you enough for your support of our mission! We are so fortunate to live in a community that just keeps getting better and better where neighbor helps neighbor. We are very grateful for your time, consideration and support! We would love to hear from you! Feel free to like our Facebook page too. If you are interested in donating lumber or making a financial contribution to our cause, we would be so appreciative.

Please contact any of us listed below or mail a check to:

Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation (GRACF) on behalf of Mobility Mania,
350 NW 1st Ave
Grand Rapids, MN 55744.
All donations are tax deductible.

Myrna 218-301-6028

Lee 218-290-7349

Lisa 218-244-0499

Thank you so very much for taking the "Accessibility For All" challenge!

Don't do it because you have to, do it because you want to.

