



## **Annual Internal Review**

### **Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities**

#### **July 2023-June 2024 Annual Report**

**The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) is:**

**The committee is established to encourage, assist, and enable persons with disabilities to participate in the social and economic life of the City, achieve maximum personal independence, become gainfully employed, and use and enjoy fully all public and private facilities available within the community.**

**The committee shall:**

- (1) serve as an advisory body to the city council and city manager regarding problems affecting the persons with disabilities in the Austin area;**
- (2) serve in an advisory and consultative capacity to the Human Resources Department and the city council to ensure effective compliance and enforcement of Chapter 5-6 (Discrimination Against A Person With A Disability)**
- (3) recommend to the mayor, council members, and the city manager measures aimed at improving the ability of various city departments and contractors at providing service and employment opportunities for people with disabilities;**
- (4) annually evaluate the City's efforts to implement Chapter 5-6 (Discrimination Against A Person With A Disability);**
- (5) sponsor educational programs to promote equal treatment, opportunity, and understanding and sponsor meetings, institutes, forums, and courses of instruction to lead to clearer understanding and solution of the issues and concerns of people with disabilities;**
- (6) assist the Human Resources Department in training city employees and contractors regarding persons with disabilities; the needs and concerns of**

**(7) provide services and information to the mayor, city council, city manager and heads of all city departments and agencies to achieve the purposes of Chapter 5-6 (Discrimination against a Person with a Disability);**

**(8) perform additional duties and functions as required by the city council.**

**(9) The council encourages the committee to hold periodic joint meetings with The Commission on Aging.**

**Describe the board's actions supporting their mission during the previous calendar year. Address all elements of the board's mission statement as provided in the relevant sections of the City Code.**

**Below is a detailed list of all presentations, recommendations and activities of this commission between July 2023 and June 2024.**

### **July 2023**

- Presentation by the Public Works Department on the City's transportation plan.
- Discussion on the problems of safety and non reliability of public transportation in Austin, and how it disproportionately affects people with disabilities who cannot drive due to their disability.

**August 2023:** Meeting Canceled due to lack of quorum and Chair unavailable for in person meeting.

### **September 2023**

- Presentation by Cruise Autonomous Rideshare on an upcoming vehicle they are developing. Commissioners gave feedback on considerations related to people with disabilities.
- Update to Joint Inclusion Committee
- Established a workgroup to review music venues in Austin for improvements for people with disabilities.
- Established a workgroup to discuss safety and accessibility in public transportation for people with disabilities:

### **October 2023**

- Update by Joint Inclusion Committee
- Presentation on Weather Trends and Emergency Preparedness: Presentation on the emergency management planning and resources for Austinites with disabilities.

- Discussion with Commission on Aging on common priorities and goals.
- Discussion and update by AARP Walkability Audit. Commissioners shared how a lack of sidewalks makes some areas inaccessible to people with disabilities in the community. There is a plan to improve areas, but due to funding it is slow going.
- Discussion with the Joint Inclusion Committee regarding proclamation on Implicit Bias Awareness Day event.

### **November 2023**

- Update by Joint Inclusion Commission
- Began the discussion of the need for the city to somehow count or identify the number of people with disabilities and their needs. In order for the committee to be able to effectively serve the people we need to know more about the population in the community.

### **December 2023**

- Updates for Joint Inclusion Committee
- Discussion and presentation on affordable housing for people with disabilities.
- Update to Transportation Safety subcommittee
  - Approval of two Town Halls (one in person and one virtual) to offer an open forum to communicate with Austinite e e e es.
  - Approval of Vice Chair Meyer to serve as the representative on the Capital Metro Advisory Committee.

### **January 2024**

- Create a working group to research demographics and a means to determine how many people with disabilities and what types of disabilities are served in Austin.

**February 2024** : No meeting

### **March 2024**

- Presentation on Town Hall for Public Safety report by Office of Police oversight.
- Presentation by the Housing Department on Community Needs Assessment and the Fiscal Year 24-29 Consolidated Plan.
- Update on Community Advisory Committee activities and issues related to ensuring the new Cap Mero police department has quality policies and training on working with people with disabilities.
- Discussion and identification of budget recommendations. We had a special session to approve the following recommendation.
  - Point in time count of people with disabilities: Determine the number and types of people with disabilities in our community.

- Electronic Community Participation and Information Sharing: Develop a website or email list to be able to more effectively share information with and get feedback from Austinites with disabilities.

### **April 2024**

- Presentation on the Equity Based Preservation Plan by the Planning Department.
- Reports on the results of the Town Hall by the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities
- Held officer elections
- Approved a member to represent the committee at the April Community Advancement Network (CAN) meeting

**May 2024:** Canceled due to lack of quorum

### **June 2024**

- Approve Recommendation 20240614-006 regarding unintended safety concerns following Land Development Code changes.
- Discuss organizations and personal connections Commissioners have that may assist the committee in more effectively communicating with the disability community.

## **2. Determine if the board's actions throughout the year comply with the mission statement.**

The Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities held nine meetings between July 2023 and June 2024. The committee had several new members and some vacant seats. The vacancies contributed to an occasional lack of quorum. The lack of experience among new members led to an incohesive understanding of purpose and general lack of direction for the committee. In spite of these limitations the members were able to learn and grow together.

During the course of the year we were able to meet our purpose by creating work groups on public transportation safety, and how to identify the scope of our target population. We made two budget recommendations, and hosted two town halls. We heard and gave feedback on several presentations by city organizations related to issues such as police/public safety, emergency management planning, and housing equity. We have Commissioners from MCPD participating regularly on the Joint Inclusion Committee and Capital Metro Advisory Committee. Additionally we had one collaborative meeting with the Council on Aging and have had Commissioners represent the MCPD in community meetings. Lastly, we made a recommendation to reconsider recent changes in the zoning rules that could have an unintended negative impact on the safety of people living in group home environments.

While we stand behind our work and accomplishments the commission recognizes we did not have any activities related to assisting the Human Resources Department in training city

employees and contractors regarding persons with disabilities. We hope to reach out to that department for a meeting by the end of the year.

### **3. List the board's goals and objectives for the new calendar year.**

- Continue to support the city with issues related to people with disabilities as outlined in the purpose statement.
- Continue representation on the Joint Inclusion Committee and Capital Metro Advisory Committee
- Continue to focus on increasing effective communication between the MCPD and Austinites with Disabilities.
- Continue focusing on issues related to Public Transportation Safety and Access.
- Reach back out regarding recommendations made in the Town Hall Public Safety Report to ensure that recommendations are converted into actual policy and training changes that support the civil rights and safety of Austinites with disabilities.
- Continue collaborating with the Commission on Aging.
- Identify and collaborate with organizations in the community serving Austinites with disabilities and the MCPD.