



Commission on Disability

## INFORMATION CALENDAR

July 13, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Commission on Disability  
 Submitted by: Shira Leeder Chairperson, Commission on Disability  
 Subject: Commission on Disability Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Work Plan

### INTRODUCTION

Below is the workplan for fiscal year 2021-2022 for the Commission on Disability.

### CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

#### Commission on Disability - Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Workplan

#### **1. COVID Management and Recovery**

Track developments and impacts from the Covid-19 pandemic, including but not limited to: disproportionate health impacts for people disabilities; consequences for health care providers; disruptions in disability supports (e.g. reduction in small businesses providing necessary products and services); increase in Berkeley residents with long-term disabilities due to post-Covid complications; and reduction in city budgets for services and infrastructure improvements (e.g. sidewalk repair efforts). Engage relevant city departments, request presentations and gather community feedback. Ensure equitable and accessible opportunities to participate in city efforts, programs, meetings and initiatives.

#### **2. Improved Transportation and Mobility**

Continue efforts related to the “navigable cities” framework for safe, accessible pedestrian pathways and other transportation infrastructure, including appropriate street layouts in redesigned transportation corridors. Also ensure universal accessibility of relevant applications, kiosks, ride-sharing services, Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), bikes and scooters (including shared mobility), and “emerging technology” such as automated vehicles (ATVs). Address public transportation concerns and safety, including budgets and onboard safety related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Ensure equitable and accessible opportunities to participate in city efforts, programs, meetings and initiatives.

#### **3. Public Input and Public Outreach for COD**

Implement communication channels with other city Commissions; pursue “cross-membership” with other commissions, where COD members request to be appointed to other commissions with vacancies; prioritize commissions whose coverage affects

people with disabilities (e.g. peace & justice, zero waste, planning, homelessness, etc.). Raise awareness of COD within the disability community and relevant stakeholders (e.g. neighborhood and business associations) and invite community members and stakeholders to attend COD meetings. Outreach should include opportunities for community members to request accessibility modifications, including for remote meetings (e.g. captioning on Zoom). Develop a consistent process and timeframe for community engagement. Ensure equitable and accessible opportunities to participate in city efforts, programs, meetings and initiatives.

#### **4. Engagement and Advisory Role for City Processes**

Increase outreach and requests for timely presentations and information from City of Berkeley staff and other relevant officials (e.g. at the county or regional levels). Utilize the Commission on Disability as a public forum and oversight body, especially in the face of unprecedented challenges during the continuing Covid-19 pandemic and recovery therefrom. Utilize COD as an advisory & monitoring body to increase accessibility & accountability in city efforts and other areas of influence. Partner with other commissions; advocate for new sub-committees and cross-membership for relevant goals. Commissioners commit to actively and regularly engage with appointing Council members. Ensure that COD review city policies to avoid direct decisions by Council, City Manager, and other city entities without disability input. Ensure equitable and accessible opportunities to participate in city efforts, programs, meetings and initiatives.

#### **5. Accessible and Affordable Housing**

Explore the expansion and improved availability of accessible housing for people with disabilities, including going beyond baseline ADA access requirements in new construction (e.g. adding automatic door openers, units with roll-in showers and other universal access features, etc.). Recognize a likely slowdown in new construction and increase efforts at encouraging accessibility retrofits of existing buildings, whether single-family homes or multi-unit apartments/condominiums. Address affordability as a key factor for housing, especially given the disconnect between affordability and accessibility (given newer buildings are more accessible but also tend to have higher rents). Partner with senior community and advocates for mutual areas of interest. Ensure equitable and accessible opportunities to participate in city efforts, programs, meetings and initiatives.

#### **6. Homeless people with Disabilities**

Support Berkeley's population of homeless residents with disabilities. Collaborate with local service providers to address disability-related needs, such as access to healthcare or repairs of medical equipment (wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, etc.). Address timely issues, such as pandemic safety, extreme heat events and air quality (including wildfire smoke). Access to electricity and energy resources. Advocate for permanent accessible housing, including creative solutions (e.g. tiny homes). Ensure equitable and accessible opportunities to participate in city efforts, programs, meetings and initiatives.

**7. Emergency/Disaster Preparedness**

Receive information and ongoing updates, participate and make recommendations as appropriate about Berkeley's BEACON and CERT programs. Address increasing frequency of Red Flag Warning events, wildfire danger, Public Safety Power Shutoffs, poor air quality days, and extreme heat vents. Maintain oversight and efforts around earthquake safety. Increase training opportunities for disability awareness & management, including FAST trainings. Advertise disaster resources for PWDs (e.g. information, backup supplies, organizations and designated accessible shelters), including lists of trained staff and volunteers. Ensure equitable and accessible opportunities to participate in city efforts, programs, meetings and initiatives.

**8. Student Life and Disability Awareness**

Improve communication and collaboration with Berkeley's many students with disabilities, providing community engagement and leadership opportunities and supports for independent living. Address all populations including students with disabilities in elementary through high school, Berkeley City College, UC Berkeley, and private entities. Advocate for city-supported services and resources for youth, young adults and other students w/ disabilities. Increase affordability of and access to education, training, recreation and life resources (e.g. housing and transportation) for students. Ensure equitable and accessible opportunities to participate in city efforts, programs, meetings and initiatives.

**9. Accessibility in City Events, Meetings, Communications & Information Technology**

Work with city staff, commissions, and other relevant partners to guarantee inclusion and accessibility of events, meetings and communications. Guarantee access to multiple media, taking into account a diversity of disabilities and the overall digital divide (i.e. disproportionate access to Information Technology and related services); this can include printed (paper) communications and information items, as well as those items in accessible (e.g. Braille or large-print) format. Ensure that all meetings and events are accessible through the Internet for those who cannot attend; this is especially important considering health and wellness in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and its ongoing effects. Emphasize plain language and multiple media in city resources and initiatives to reach the widest audience possible. Utilize free media (i.e. city websites, newspapers, PSAs, Berkeley TV, social media, etc.) and partnerships (e.g. with nonprofits, community organizations, and faith-based organizations) to engage as many people as possible. Ensure equitable and accessible opportunities to participate in city efforts, programs, meetings and initiatives.

The Commission on Disability Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Work Plan supports the Strategic Plan goal to champion and demonstrate social and racial equity.

BACKGROUND

The Work Plan was approved by the Commission on February 25, 2021 Motion: Leeder, Second: Freeman Ghenis: Aye, Singer: Absent, Walsh: Aye.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

There are no identifiable environmental effects, climate impacts, or sustainability opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Unknown.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Unknown.

CONTACT PERSON

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