

CITY OF OAKLAND



1 FRANK H. OGAWA PLAZA OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA
Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities
Anwar Baroudi, Chair

94612

Date: May 13th, 2025

To: *Chair Carroll Fife, Life Enrichment Committee*
Interim Mayor Kevin Jenkins
Jestin D. Johnson, City Administrator

From: Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities (MCPD)

Re: Highlights of Activities of 2024-25 and Goals

This informational report provides the Life Enrichment Committee with a listing of the many projects and activities carried out by the MCPD. Along with the ADA Programs Division, these two groups form the basis of a comprehensive government program for inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWD). Few other city governments nationally can claim this level of commitment to disability civil rights implementation. Oakland is recognized as a model city for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and many of our policies and programs are emulated by other cities. Moreover, the progressive work of this small division and all-volunteer commission effectively reduces the City's exposure to disability discrimination claims and provides a mechanism for amicable and cost-effective resolution of complaints that do arise.

The MCPD

The MCPD was established by City ordinance in 1980 to represent and address issues of people with disabilities. The commission has at least 51 percent representation by people with disabilities and the rest have either professional or personal experience working with people with disabilities. The MCPD serves the following key roles in Oakland government:

- Advising the Mayor and City Council on matters affecting the disability community;
- Acting as the City's designated advisory body for ADA compliance;
- Providing advice and assistance to other City boards and commissions; and
- Participating at the local, state and national levels in the advancement of disability rights.

MCPD MEMBERSHIP

Commissioners are representative of the diversity of Oakland and of the disability

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community. There are eleven seats on the MCPD and at least six members must be present to constitute a quorum, as per the enabling ordinance. Historically, there has been a high degree of turnover of Commissioners, but thanks to the tireless efforts of our Access Coordinator and staff, along with our commissioners reaching out to their communities, we have been at or near fully seated for the the entirety of the past year.

MCPD RECENT ACTIVITIES

In the past year, the MCPD has made significant contributions to the development and operation of City activities that affect persons with disabilities and has facilitated numerous opportunities for Oakland to connect with its citizens with disabilities despite the City's continuing financial challenges. The following highlights both information received by the Commission as well as guidance and outcomes the Commission has provided to the City and the community.

MCPD PRESENTATIONS AND COLLABORATIONS IN 2024-25

- Ceasefire Implementation update with Department of Violence Prevention
- Presentation on the Bay Area Affordable Housing Bond Measure by the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority
- Realign presentation, feedback collection, and update with AC Transit
- Presentation on the Link21 Initiative by Lisa Marie Alley
- Presentation and discussion on Prop 1 impacts with Katie Wolf
- Presentation and discussion of San Francisco's implementation of CARE Courts with Melanie Kushnir-Pappalardo
- Presentation on Speed Camera Pilots with OakDOT
- Presentation of services and discussion with Oakland Tenants Union
- Presentation on High-speed Injury Network with OakDOT
- Presentation from Oakland Paratransit for the Elderly and Disabled
- Presentation on Oakland's website accessibility
- Presentation on services from Regional Center of the East Bay
- Presentation from State Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Presentation and feedback collection on Phase 2 of the General Plan with the Planning and Building Department
- New Strategic Planning Sessions with OakDOT's Jasmine Pomar
- Presentation and feedback collection on the Pedestrian Plan with OakDOT
- OakDOT Crash Analysis presentation
- MTC Coordinated plan presentation and discussion
- Update on ADA sidewalks class-action settlement with OakDOT
- Presentation from the CIL

MCPD CORRESPONDENCE IN 2024-2025

- Chair Baroudi delivered comments and feedback on a then-underdeveloped plan from AC Transit for handling changes in paratransit service related to Realign, leading to a delay and more due diligence done.
- Former Commissioners Smith and Cloyd spoke at council and supported the development and passage of our recent Elevator Ordinance (13811 C.M.S.) to

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improve repair times and ensure accommodations are available to those who rely on elevators for access to their homes.

- Commissioner Creswell, Co-Vice Chair Bartu, and former Commissioner Cloyd organized and attended an OPD LD37 and CIT training, which goes over policing and crisis intervention involving people with disabilities.
- Commissioner Wilson made contact with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission and may continue to build a relationship with them.
- Chair Baroudi shared the Week Without Driving initiative, and invited City Council and department staff and leadership to participate.
- Commissioner Roh spearheaded the production, analysis, and—with support from staff and community—distribution of a needs survey for people with disability, discussed further below.
- MCPD wrote a grant letter supporting the ADA Transition plan and efforts to do supporting data collection
- Co-Vice Chair Bartu, former Commissioner Cloyd and staff member Mark Romoser organized and conducted a visit to Alameda County's CARES Facility, and delivered important accessibility feedback both in person and later through a letter.
- Commissioners met with OakDOT staff and leadership at various levels on various topics, from follow-ups to presentations such as the Pedestrian Plan, to matters related to staffing

MCPD-RUN COMMUNITY NEEDS SURVEY

- Commissioner Roh and Co-Vice-Chair Bartu assembled a community needs survey that was distributed this past year, with responses from 93 persons with disabilities and their family members and highlighting the needs of community members.
- Notably, the respondents to the survey were disproportionately seniors (72%), but the results were quite clear; the biggest concerns communicated were on housing, public safety, and transportation.
- Additionally, respondents observed a glaring lack of access to and awareness of existing public service programs; in many cases, including with the above listed concerns, what was most urgently needed was an increase in community member awareness of how to access city services. We hope to include information about some of these services in our next community needs survey.

MCPD NEW STRATEGIC PLAN 2025

- Starting in December 2024, OakDOT's Head of Race and Equity and Acting Chief of Staff Jasmine Pomar generously donated her time to moderate and support the creation of a new Strategic Plan. The process of doing so was encapsulated in our recorded meetings in December, January, and February, and encompassed the priorities and feedback of commissioners and audience members alike. The detailed goal areas are listed in a later section, and the full plan is attached separately from this report, or can be found at [MCPD's website](#)

MCPD COOPERATION WITH OTHER CITY COMMISSIONS

- As the Mayor's Commission on Aging (MCOA) has a large overlap in constituents and interests, our two commissions have expanded our intentional and strategic

cooperation. The Chairs of both commissions regularly attend the other's meetings and present updates in the form of public comments on each others' activities and upcoming items.

- As the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC)'s mission and interest in pedestrian safety aligns closely with our own, we find a lot of value in working together, sharing feedback and attending each other's meetings. We have a liaison, Patricia Schader, who keeps track of our meetings, and Commissioner Baroudi regularly attends theirs.
- The Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) advises on policy and operations over many of our public spaces and recreational activities, Commissioners Wilson and Baroudi have attended a meeting of theirs and keep bereft of their agendas, with potential for more cooperation to come.

MCPD CHALLENGES

During this reporting period, MCPD has encountered challenges that have hindered its ability to operate at full capacity. Chief among these is the ongoing understaffing of the ADA Programs Division. This strain not only impacts the Division's ability to meet growing citywide accessibility needs, but also places an unsustainable burden on existing staff. Without a clear and committed plan to address these staffing gaps, the City risks falling short of its responsibilities to residents with disabilities who rely on equitable access to public programs and services.

- The ADA Programs Division has been chronically understaffed since 2017. In 2016, a staffing gap analysis conducted by Michael Baker International recommended that the Division be staffed with at least four (4) full-time equivalent (FTE) positions to provide an appropriate level of service. Despite this recommendation, the Division has never maintained that staffing level consistently.
- In 2017, the Division briefly reached four FTEs. However, two long-time staff members abruptly departed, and only one of those vacancies was prioritized for replacement. One position was eliminated, and the other remained unfilled. By January 2020, staffing had dropped to a single employee—the Division manager—following the departure of the program analyst. A second analyst was not hired until April 2021.
- During a brief period when ADA Programs Division was down to only one staff, MCPD meetings were canceled due to limited staff resources to support MCPD activities. MCPD requested city staff to provide staffing resource to ADA Programs Division for MCPD meetings to resume. OakDOT temporarily loaned staff support for MCPD to continue meeting and to comply with all sunshine and PEC requirements.
- For a period in 2023 we were back to only our coordinator as the sole FTE serving the Division.
- The ADA Programs Division is critically understaffed, with only two full-time employees responsible for ensuring ADA compliance across all City programs, services, and activities. This limited capacity also includes staffing the Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities. Without additional resources, the Division cannot adequately meet growing citywide demands or fulfill its legal and operational responsibilities.
- At the recommendation of this commission, the ADA Programs Division was moved out of OakDOT and into the City Administrator's Office to better align with its citywide scope. However, the transition has not been fully executed. Funding and hiring

authority for critical, unfilled positions remain with OakDOT, limiting the Division's ability to operate independently and effectively. While coordination with OakDOT continues, the ADA Programs Division is tasked with responsibilities that extend beyond the transportation realm. A full transfer of staffing and resources is urgently needed to complete this transition and ensure the Division can meet its obligations under the ADA.

- While the ADA staff have been instrumental to the activities of the commission, we may face limits on what we can do by the nature of the limited capacity of an understaffed division.

ADA PROGRAMS DIVISION COLLABORATIONS AND ACTIVITIES IN 2024-25

The ADA Programs Division promotes equity and inclusion for individuals with disabilities by coordinating and overseeing compliance with physical and programmatic access requirements across all City programs, services, and activities. The following accomplishments highlight some of the Division's contributions to advancing accessibility citywide:

- Elevator maintenance ordinance passed 7/30/24
 - <https://oakland.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=M&ID=1213609&GUID=151A0C5A-AF05-4815-9C25-34AC2D05C61B> .
- Reusable foodware ordinance passed with carveout for straws 12/19/23
 - <https://oakland.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=M&ID=1137882&GUID=00B2C147-F8ED-4716-A24B-41906B1136BD>
- MCPD membership increased from 6 to 10/11
- Report presented to Life Enrichment Committee and City Council 6/11/24
- City forms converted from PDF to OpenForms to be more accessible
- StaceyFest held on Frank Ogawa Plaza 7/20/24
 - Helped the organizer with logistics
 - ADA staff tabled and arranged a table for OakDOT
- Distributed several accessible meeting toolkits
 - West Oakland branch library 7/10/24
 - EMSD 3/6/24
 - CAO 2/27/24
 - Oakland Youth Commission 1/22/24
- ADA Staff arranged for MCPD co-vice chair Bartu to make a presentation to MCOA 3/5/25 about MCPD community survey report
- City of Oakland Electric Vehicle Charging Cord Guidance for Crossing the Public-Right-of-Way 2025 ([Here's the direct link to the document](#))
- New employee orientation trainings monthly and supervisory academy trainings - - - quarterly
- Participated in Golden Eagle emergency exercise 6/26/24
- Sponsored a State Council on Developmental Disabilities regional meeting at City Hall 9/25/24
- Researched bathroom access bill AB1632 for city facilities 3/10/25
- Coordinated with MCPD and assisted them in adopting MCPD 2025 strategic plan
- Staffing the Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities (MCPD)
- Scheduling meetings between commissioners and city staff/stakeholders in pursuit - of our various Strategic Plan Goal Areas

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- Managing the logistics of MCPD regular meetings and corresponding with potential presenters.
- Attending and collaborating with monthly OakDOT's At-Risk Users Working Group
- Working with AC Transit to provide feedback on their new Supportive Design - - - guidelines—regarding paratransit and bus boarding island design (2024-2025).
- Provide technical assistance and project review ranging from transportation safety, capital improvements, to emergency preparedness.

MCPD 2025 STRATEGIC PLANNING AREAS

The following provides an overview of the four major goal areas and the corresponding actions outlined in the MCPD Strategic Work Plan. The full document ([link here](#)) includes detailed action steps and identifies the commissioners responsible for leading each area. This is a living document that will be updated over time to reflect evolving priorities and community needs.

City Operations (Goal Area 1)

This Goal Area includes plans to support the City of Oakland's operations becoming as accessible as possible. These efforts seek to make the City's communications more accessible to the public, to make the City a more accessible workplace for its thousands of staff, and to make the administration of City business more equitable for persons with disabilities living in Oakland.

ACTIONS FROM THIS GOAL INCLUDE:

- Clean Air Refuge Investigation
- Website Accessibility Audit
- City Staff Workplace Accommodations
- Police/PWD Interaction Report

SERVICE NAVIGATION (Goal Area 2)

This Goal Area includes plans to connect more Oaklanders, with and without disabilities, to services that are already available. These services may be provided by the City of Oakland, other governmental agencies, or community organizations. Making the public aware of services available to them and helping people understand what services they qualify for are both important parts of this goal.

ACTIONS FROM THIS GOAL INCLUDE:

- Community Needs Survey
- Service Provider Open Call
- Targeted Service Research
- Resource Guide Development
- Outreach and Publicity

HOUSING (Goal Area 3)

This Goal Area includes plans to make housing in Oakland more accessible and affordable. Its actions take steps to support affordable housing across Oakland as well as investigate how supportive the Oakland housing market is for people who

need ADA compliant accommodation across all affordability levels.

ACTIONS FROM THIS GOAL INCLUDE:

- Affordable Housing Application Streamlining
- Oakland Elevator Ordinance Enforcement
- Intersection of Affordable and Accessible Housing
- Investigating Tenants Rights
- Connect Housing Resources to Communities

TRANSPORTATION (Goal Area 4): Ensure ADA-compliant housing stock

This Goal Area includes plans to make the streets and sidewalks of Oakland safer and more accessible for everyone, particularly persons with disabilities. It also includes plans to advocate for consistency and reliability in the transit methods that persons with disabilities use most.

ACTIONS FROM THIS GOAL INCLUDE:

- ADA Transition Funding Advocacy
- OakDOT Design Guidelines
- OakDOT Project Review
- Pedestrian Plan Review
- Transit/Mobility Usership Review

MCPD Chair Recommendations:

1. The Life Enrichment Committee (LEC) is encouraged to support MCPD's efforts in achieving its strategic planning goals for the current year. Key areas where LEC support would be especially valuable include: allocating time for MCPD to engage in dialogue with City Council, facilitating introductions and collaboration with relevant City staff, and assisting with public outreach efforts—particularly in promoting community needs surveys. These actions are essential to ensuring MCPD has the access and visibility needed to carry out its mission effectively.
2. The Life Enrichment Committee (LEC) should prioritize and advocate for the allocation of resources necessary to implement the staffing recommendations outlined in Michael Baker International's 2016 ADA Program gap analysis report, which called for a minimum of four full-time equivalent (FTE) positions to adequately support citywide ADA compliance.
3. The Life Enrichment Committee (LEC) should take immediate action to support the financial stability of the ADA Programs Division by advocating for a shared funding model across all City departments. Relying solely on OakDOT for funding is unsustainable and misaligned with the Division's citywide responsibilities. Additionally, continued dependence on the volatile General Fund risks undermining the Division's long-term effectiveness and compliance with federal/state/local mandates.

Our commissioners remain passionate about making a difference in Oakland, and we look forward to your continued support in this endeavor.

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Sincerely,

Anwar Baroudi

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