

David Whitaker, Esq.
Director

Irvin Corley, Jr.
Executive Policy Manager

Marcell R. Todd, Jr.
Deputy Director and
Senior City Planner

Janese Chapman
Deputy Director

John Alexander
LaKisha Barclift, Esq.
M. Rory Bolger, Ph.D., AICP
Elizabeth Cabot, Esq.
Tasha Cowan
Richard Drumb
George Etheridge
Deborah Goldstein


City of Detroit

CITY COUNCIL

LEGISLATIVE POLICY DIVISION
208 Coleman A. Young Municipal Center
Detroit, Michigan 48226
Phone: (313) 224-4946 Fax: (313) 224-4336

Christopher Gulock, AICP
Derrick Headd
Marcel Hurt, Esq.
Kimani Jeffrey
Anne Marie Langan
Jamie Murphy
Carolyn Nelson
Kim Newby
Analine Powers, Ph.D.
Jennifer Reinhardt
Sabrina Shockley
Thomas Stephens, Esq.
David Teeter
Theresa Thomas
Kathryn Lynch Underwood
Ashley A. Wilson

TO: Honorable Detroit City Council

FROM: David D. Whitaker 
Legislative Policy Division Staff

DATE: November 15, 2019

RE: **RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH THE OFFICE OF DISABILITY
AFFAIRS**

On November 6, 2019, the Honorable Council President Brenda Jones requested that the Legislative Policy Division draft a resolution to establish the Office of Disability Affairs. Attached, please find our draft of the resolution.

Please contact us if we can be of any further assistance.

BY HONORABLE COUNCIL PRESIDENT BRENDA JONES

RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH THE OFFICE OF DISABILITY AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, The mission of the Detroit City Council is to promote the economic, cultural and physical welfare of Detroit's citizens through Charter-mandated legislative functions; and

WHEREAS, The City of Detroit is changing. Within the last few years the city's landscape has changed to include numerous large and small scale economic developments along with both private and public initiatives designed to incite not only energy but also to increase the population density within the neighborhoods across the City; and

WHEREAS, Curiously, however, the unique needs of the disabled community are not fully addressed with the needs of the general population. It is imperative that this fact be acknowledged so that the rights and needs of the disabled community can be fully integrated into our revitalizing efforts across the city; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations estimates that by 2050 the disabled community worldwide will reach 940 million people, or 15% of what will be roughly 6.25 billion total urban dwellers; lending an urgency for municipalities to address the needs of the disabled community in all facets of civic life; and

WHEREAS, Although the vision of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is to improve the rights and access of its targets, the reality on the ground can be very different. For the physically disabled, barriers can range from blocked wheelchair ramps, buildings without lifts, inaccessible toilets, shops without step-free access. And for learning disabled people or those on the autistic spectrum, the urban environment can be a sensory minefield; and

WHEREAS, The creation of an adequately funded City of Detroit's Office of Disability Affairs will increase attention in service delivery to this community by creating a singularly focused city department; which would work with the Department of Public Work and other departments, as appropriate, to concentrate on the unique needs of the disabled community; and

WHEREAS, The Office of Disability Affairs would monitor state compliance with the Americans with Disability Act and to advise the Mayor, Michigan legislature and Governor on the needs of individuals with disabilities in Detroit. The Office of Disability Affairs will also be charged with assisting the State of Michigan Disability Resources department with the resolution of state disabilities issues and provide education, communication, and networking services concerning disability issues and needs for Detroit residents. **NOW THEREFORE, BE IT**

RESOLVED, That the Detroit City Council strongly urges the Mayor to create and appropriately fund the Office of Disability Affairs.