



Civil Rights, Inclusion, and Opportunity Department

The Office of Disability Affairs

Three-Year Strategic Plan for the Disability Community
2021-2023

*Transforming Detroit into a More
Welcoming, Inclusive, and Universally Accessible City*

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Foreword from the Director of the Office of Disability Affairs

Greetings from the Motor City, the birthplace of the modern automobile, Motown Records, and thriving art, music, sports, and nightlife scene.

For many years, Detroiters have invested in the growth of this city they called home. There are opportunities for everyone, including starting a business, learning different culture and embracing diversity, raising families, and enjoying great food and beautiful parks. However, not everyone were able to reach their potential or participate fully in the community because of barriers they face.

For the past decade, disability advocates have hosted town halls, educated their peers about people with disabilities, and pushed for policy reforms that will ensure a more accessible world. A group of community organizations and advocates rallied to improve accessibility, equity, inclusion, and representation of people with disabilities. In January 2020, the City Council unanimously passed a resolution for the creation of the Office of Disability Affairs and then on February 11, 2021, Mayor Michael E. Duggan formally announced the launch of the Office of Disability Affairs.

According to the 2019 American Community Survey, Detroit has approximately 117,000 residents with disabilities, making up 17.6% of the city population. As a Deaf member of the community, I am no stranger to the obstacles and accessibility challenges that many of my peers face regularly. Now, I am proud to serve as the first Deaf Director of the Office of Disability Affairs for the City of Detroit. I will use this opportunity to ensure that we will be doing everything we can to influence policy changes toward accessibility and universal participation.

Thank you to all those who attended meetings, championed for reforms, and worked tirelessly toward this creation of the Office of Disability Affairs. It a step forward to greater things to come. The City of Detroit is committed to the three-year strategic plan for the disability community. Each year we will increase public engagement & community partnerships, strengthen constituent services, raise disability awareness, ensure that the City complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and increase accessibility so that all people can enjoy everything that Detroit has to offer.

With your support, we will work together to advance Detroit to the next level, in an active and collaborative way with the disability community. I am confident that we can make a world of difference. Thank you.

Christopher Samp

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About the Office of Disability Affairs

Established on February 11, 2021, the Office of Disability Affairs is under the Civil Rights, Inclusion, and Opportunity Department. It serves over 117,000 residents with disabilities in the City of Detroit.

Vision Statement

To transform Detroit into a more welcoming, inclusive and universally accessible city.

Mission Statement

The mission of the office is to increase independence, opportunities, community participation, safety and wellness for persons with disabilities in the City of Detroit, and to ensure inclusion, representation, and equity for persons with disabilities as it relates to City employment, programs and services.

Accessibility as a Core Value

The City believes accessibility is essential to an inclusive environment and universal participation is a proactive approach to ensuring that everyone has equitable opportunity in the City of Detroit.

In collaboration with community partners, constituents, and the City government, the Office of Disability Affairs will increase independence, opportunities, community participation, safety and wellness for persons with disabilities through three focus areas:

- **Public Engagement & Community Partnerships:** The goal is that our community stakeholders and constituents feel valued, and want to work, live, and do business in Detroit.
- **Constituent Services:** The goal is that our programs and services are of exceptional quality and delivered in a timely manner.
- **Disability Awareness & ADA Compliance:** The goal is for everyone to go to the Office of Disability Affairs as a one-stop shop for information, for resolving complaints, and for receiving technical assistance.

The Three-Year Strategic Objectives

Prior to the launch of the Office of Disability Affairs, the Civil Rights, Inclusion, and Opportunity Department (CRIO) collected community feedback from the disability community about the challenges they faced in the City of Detroit. After the launch, the development of the three-year strategic plan has involved valued input from a wide range of individuals, groups and organizations. The advice and assistance from the following contributors is particularly acknowledged:

- Mayor Michael E. Duggan and his administration
- The City Council, including the Disability Task Force
- The former director of CRIO, Charity Dean
- Current director of CRIO, Kimberly Rustem and deputy director, Erica Hill
- CRIO staff, especially the Civil Rights team: Lesa Kent, Tara Brin, and Tracey Brown
- Jaime Junior, Community Coordinator for the Office of Disability Affairs
- Disability advocates and organizations that worked tirelessly for the past 10 years for the creation of the Office, including Blast Detroit; Collective for Disability Justice; Warriors on Wheels; Detroit Disability Power; Disability Network Wayne County Detroit; Michigan Disability Rights Coalition; MI Democratic Party Disability Caucus; Michigan Deaf Association; Detroit Black Deaf Advocates; Deaf Community Advocacy Network; The Association of the Advancement of Deaf and Hard of Hearing; Michigan Hands and Voice; National Federation of the Blind – Detroit Chapter; Advocates for Baba Baxter; Detroit Association of the Deaf; Greater Detroit Agency for the Blind and Visually Impaired; Detroit Public School Speech and Hearing Center; Hearing Loss Association of America – Michigan; ARC Detroit; MI Arts Access; Gigi's Playhouse; Friendship Circle; Disability Network Oakland and Macomb; Living and Learning Enrichment Center; and I Love You, Lead On

The three-year strategic plan are in three phases:

Phase 1 – Capacity Building: In 2021, the City will define the role of the Office of Disability Affairs, obtain resources for its general operations and programs, and increase public engagement and community partnerships.

Phase 2 – City Impact Year: In 2022, the Office of Disability Affairs will work with City departments to increase accessibility and opportunities for the disability community, and impact policy and procedures.

Phase 3 – Community Impact Year: In 2023, the Office of Disability Affairs will work with community partners to further develop Detroit into a more welcoming, inclusive and accessible city.

Note: The Office of Disability Affairs may achieve some of the objectives earlier than planned as the Office builds its capacity, along with the support of community partners.

Each strategic objective has three components:

Intended Results: The collaborators will develop each objective to achieve its intended results.

Metrics: Each objective has several metrics to assess its effectiveness and progress.

Collaborators: Under the leadership of and coordination by the Civil Rights, Inclusion and Opportunity Department and the Office of Disability Affairs, we have identified core collaborators to commit to the development and implementation of each strategic objectives, along with opportunities for community partners to provide input.

PHASE 1: CAPACITY BUILDING

Objective 2021-1:

Increase Public Engagement and Community Partnerships

Intended Results: Members of the disability community feel represented, included, and are engaged in opportunities that are developing Detroit into a more welcoming, inclusive and accessible city.

Metrics:

- The number of community partners engaged
- The number of constituents engaged in events, programs, and community surveys

Collaborators: Mayor's Office, Department of Neighborhoods, City Council Task Forces, City Commissions, Planning & Development Department, and Community Partners

Objective 2021-2:

Establish a Departmental Disability Affairs Liaison Policy

Intended Results: Each department has a dedicated and trained staff member to monitor departmental activities to be ADA compliant, to assist with resolving ADA complaints, and to assist with fostering inclusive and positive environment for disabled individuals.

Metrics:

- The number of disability affairs liaisons
- The number of disability affairs liaisons that participated in a specialized ADA training coordinated by the Office of Disability Affairs
- The number of disability affairs liaisons that completed the ADA Coordinator Training Certification Program.

Collaborators: All City Departments

Objective 2021-3:

Develop General Operations and Office Procedures

Intended Results: The Office of Disability Affairs has a process for resolving complaints, providing technical assistance, and assisting city employees on policies and procedures. Constituents and Community Partners understand how to resolve issues efficiently and effectively.

Metrics:

- The number of public inquiries and/or casework received and closed.
- The number of constituents, community partners, and city employees that received services from the Office of Disability Affairs.

Collaborators: Department of Innovation and Technology, and Disability Affairs Liaisons

Objective 2021-4:

Improve Accommodations and Reduce ADA-related Complaints

Intended Results: The City addressed and resolved ADA-related complaints in timely manner, and disabled residents and visitors receive resolution on their case.

Metrics:

- The number of ADA complaints received
- The average number of processing time to investigate and resolve an ADA complaint
- The number of accommodation requests received and fulfilled
- Service evaluation forms

Collaborators: City departments, community partners, and constituents

Objective 2021-5:

Increase Funding for Programs and General Operations

Intended Results: The Office of Disability Affairs has the funding to support its general operations and programs as necessary to support the disability community.

Metrics:

- City fund, event sponsorship, community development block grant, Federal and State grants

Collaborators: Mayor's Office and the Office of Development and Grants

Objective 2021-6:

Develop an ADA Self-Evaluation & Transition Plan

Intended Results: Detroit has a formal document available to the public outlining City's compliance with the ADA, including a plan toward a more inclusive and universally accessible city.

Metrics:

- Number of community stakeholders engaged and community inputs on the annual plan
- Meeting or exceeding each of the goals as outlined in the plan

Collaborators: Detroit Building Authority, General Service Department, Detroit-Wayne Joint Building Authority, Water and Sewerage Department, Greater Detroit Resource & Recovery Authority, Detroit Public Lighting Authority, and Land Bank Authority

PHASE 2: CITY IMPACT YEAR

Objective 2022-1:

Evaluate Office Performance and Improve

Intended Results: The Office of Disability Affairs is meeting and/or exceeding its performance goals.

Metrics:

- Evaluate progress on each objective as outlined in the 3 year strategic plan
- Evaluate office's standard operating procedures
- Monitor performance dashboard

Collaborators: Inputs from stakeholders

Objective 2022-2:

Improve Disability Awareness and City's Knowledge of the Americans with Disabilities Act

Intended Results: The City employees understand the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act, understand how to work with the disability community, and proactively implement best practices for accessibility and inclusive environment.

Metrics:

- The number of training opportunities provided to City employees
- The number of City employees trained
- The number of commitment statement signed, along with action plans to improve equity, inclusion, representation, and accessibility for the disability community

Collaborators: The Human Resources Department, and the Office of Talent and Performance Management

Objective 2022-3:

Improve Sidewalk Conditions, Increase Accessible Parking Spaces, and Improve Public Transportation

Intended Results: People with disabilities are able to navigate throughout the City and reach their destination easily without any difficulties.

Metrics:

- The number of sidewalk repairs (including bus stops)

- The number of curb ramps
- The number of accessible parking spaces available at City buildings (short-term, long-term; for employees and for visitors)
- The number of transit operators received disability training
- The number of disability-related complaints received and resolved

Collaborators: Department of Transportation, Department of Public Works, and Planning & Development Department.

Objective 2022-4:

City of Detroit as Employer, Increase Outreach to the Disability Community for Employment Opportunities

Intended Results: We see an increase in the number of individuals with disabilities working for the City of Detroit, and they feel valued by knowing they are contributing to the economy and to the betterment of Detroit.

Metrics:

- The number of disability focused publications and organizations used to promote employment opportunities
- The number of employees that self-identify as individuals with disabilities working for the City of Detroit
- The number of hiring managers that received Disability Awareness and ADA training
- Tracking changes made to the hiring process that will increase disability employment

Collaborators: The Human Resources Department, the Office of Talent Acquisition, Department of Innovation and Technology, and the Procurement Office

Objective 2022-5:

Increase Accessible Digital Content

Intended Results: City meetings and public information are accessible to the disability community, and are available in different formats (e.g., ASL interpretation, captioning, transcript, text description, PDFs and images converted accurately for screen readers).

Metrics:

- The number of training provided to City employees on how to produce accessible digital contents
- The number of City of Detroit government meetings interpreted and/or captioned

Collaborators: Media Services Department, Department of Innovation and Technology, and Communications Team

Objective 2022-6:

Increase Disability Awareness of the Current Emergency Preparedness Plan

Intended Results: Disabled residents understand what to do in emergencies, and they have confidence that the City will protect and bring them to safety.

Metrics:

- The number of disabled residents educated on the emergency preparedness plan (on what to do in specific emergency situation)
- The number of City employees trained on how to respond to and care for disabled individuals
- The number of emergency training materials produced and provided

Collaborators: Mayor's Office, Police Department, Fire Department, and Homeland Security & Emergency Management

Objective 2022-7:

Increase Accessible Housing

Intended Results: Disabled individuals are able to find accessible housing in Detroit, that are also affordable and in a location that is convenient for them. Disabled renters are also able to enjoy what Detroit has to offer by living in an accessible housing unit.

Metrics:

- The number of accessible housing units available to individuals with disabilities
- The number of BSEED certified landlords and building inspectors that received accessibility training
- Funding for affordable, accessible housing program to disabled renters and disabled homeowners

Collaborators: The Housing and Revitalization Department, Equity Council, and Buildings, Safety Engineering and Environmental Department

PHASE 3: COMMUNITY IMPACT YEAR

Objective 2023-1:

Evaluate Office Performance and Improve

Intended Results: The Office of Disability Affairs is meeting and/or exceeding its performance goals.

Metrics:

- Evaluate progress on each objective as outlined in the 3 year strategic plan
- Evaluate office's standard operating procedures
- Monitor performance dashboard

Collaborators: Inputs from stakeholders

Objective 2023-2:

Improve Law Enforcement Officers' and Emergency Responders' Interaction with People with Disabilities

Intended Results: First responders utilized specific interaction strategies that helped them recognize non-visible disabilities and to respond appropriately.

Metrics:

- The number of emergency responders trained
- The number of cultural sensitivity training provided

Collaborators: Mayor's Office, Police Department, Fire Department, and Homeland Security & Emergency Management

Objective 2023-3:

Community Impact: Increase Disability Employment Rate in Detroit

Intended Results: Individuals with disabilities have opportunities to prepare for employment and to work in Detroit. Local companies are committed to hiring people with disabilities.

Metrics:

- The number of disabled individuals employed in Detroit (through the Department of Labor Bureau Statistics)
- The number of community training provided and the number of business committed to the employment of disabled individuals

Collaborators: Mayor's Workforce Development Board, Human Resources Department, Equity Council, and companies doing business in Detroit

Objective 2023-4:

Improve Access to Health Care

Intended Results: An increase awareness of health inequities will lead to policy reform and equitable access to health care for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

Metrics:

- The effectiveness of the existing and new equitable access plans as implemented by the Health Department

Collaborators: The Health Department and community partners