

ANNUAL WORK PLAN

RALEIGH MAYOR'S COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

FY 2025

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INTRODUCTION

The Raleigh Mayor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities addresses the needs of people with disabilities and their families in the City of Raleigh. The Committee communicates the needs of the disability community to local leaders, promotes the employment of people with disabilities, and sponsors activities benefiting people with disabilities and their families. At least 25 percent of North Carolina's population has some type of physical, mental, intellectual, developmental, or other disability (see <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/impacts/north-carolina.html>), and the Committee informs the City Council and City of Raleigh agencies and staff on the needs of this growing population and how certain policies and procedures may impact this population.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Raleigh Mayor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities, hereafter referred to as the Committee works to address the needs of people with disabilities and their families. The Committee has been in existence for more than four decades. Since the mid 1980's, the leadership of the City of Raleigh has provided the Committee with financial support and partnership with City departments to ensure that issues and concerns confronting the disability community are addressed.

ISSUES AND GOALS FOR FY 2025

Plans for FY 2025 include working with the City of Raleigh's Transportation Department to ensure that the ADA paratransit system's transition to a new software will go as smoothly as possible. Other issues that concern the Committee are affordable, accessible housing for people with disabilities; opportunities for competitive, integrated employment for people with disabilities; and ensuring that crosswalks, community parks, and other public spaces are accessible to everyone.

Events

List or describe events that will be hosted by the board or commission

- Employer Resource Day event, July 2024, Goal: To assist employers in better understanding strategies and best practices in hiring, accommodating, and retaining employees with disabilities
- GoRaleigh ACCESS Meeting, August 2024, Goal: To foster a dialogue between citizens with disabilities who use ADA paratransit services and City of Raleigh Transportation Department staff address any ongoing concerns one year after the rollout of the new ADA paratransit system and to help Transportation Department staff understand how to implement effective improvements
- Awards Banquet, October 2024: Goal: to recognize individuals, organizations, and businesses that foster an inclusive and accessible City of Raleigh that provides opportunities for people of all abilities to participate in the economic and social life of Raleigh

Education and Outreach

- Employer Resource Day event: To educate employers about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and strategies and best practices for hiring, accommodating, and retaining employees with disabilities.
- GoRaleigh ACCESS event: To foster a dialogue between citizens with disabilities who use ADA paratransit services and City of Raleigh Transportation Department staff address any ongoing concerns with the rollout of the new ADA paratransit system and to help Transportation Department staff understand how to continue to implement effective improvements.
- Developmental Disabilities Awareness event: To educate City of Raleigh employees and the wider community about people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD) during the month of March, which is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. Consider partnering with the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCCDD) to host this event virtually.
- Disability Pride event: To educate the community about the Raleigh Mayor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities and people with disabilities in general during the City of Raleigh's annual Pride event in June.

Education programs:

- Provide education and training to City of Raleigh Transportation Department staff, including the Call Center and Dispatch, and also to ADA paratransit drivers on properly serving and accommodating people with disabilities.
- Provide feedback to the City of Raleigh Communications Department and Information Technology (I.T.) staff on ensuring that the City of Raleigh’s website is accessible to and usable by people with disabilities.

Community Outreach:

Participate in the Raleigh Neighborhood Exchange to educate participants about the Raleigh Mayor’s Committee for Persons with Disabilities and its mission and to recruit new members to the Committee.

Strategies and Evaluation in Community Engagement

Employer Resource Day event: Host a free breakfast to attract a wide number of employers. Have a person with a disability speak or a panel of people with disabilities speak to educate employers on how to effectively hire, accommodate, and retain employees with disabilities.

Upcoming Projects

List or describe upcoming or planned projects for the board or commission

Project	Goal	Target Date
Employer Resource Day event	Employer Resource Day breakfast event to celebrate the Americans with Disabilities Act’s anniversary every July, to recognize scholarship recipients, and to educate employers on how to accommodate employees with disabilities	July 2024
Awards Banquet	To recognize individuals, organizations, and businesses that foster an inclusive and accessible City of Raleigh that provides opportunities for people of all abilities to participate in the economic and social life of Raleigh	October 2024

Make Pedestrian Crossings More Accessible	Participate in bi-monthly meetings with Transportation Department staff, particularly Traffic Engineer Jed Niffenegger, to improve accessible pedestrian crossings in Raleigh.	Bi-monthly (every other month)
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Proposed Budget

\$3,000	Scholarships: Three undergraduate scholarships for individuals with disabilities who live in Raleigh at \$1,000 each and one graduate scholarship for an individual with a disability who lives in Raleigh at \$1,000. The Committee will meet to clarify eligibility criteria.
\$4,000	Employer Resource Day breakfast event to celebrate the Americans with Disabilities Act's anniversary every July, to recognize scholarship recipients, and to educate employers on how to accommodate employees with disabilities
\$7,000	Awards Banquet to recognize people, organizations, and businesses that have enhanced accessibility in Raleigh
\$3,000	ADA accommodation services (American Sign Language interpreters, captioning, Braille, large print, etc.)
\$1,000	Recreation such as supporting children with disabilities to attend Camp Friendly
Total: \$18,000	

Issue: The City of Raleigh's ADA paratransit system needs to perform more efficiently to meet the needs of riders with disabilities in Raleigh.

Goal: Create a transportation system that serves people with disabilities equitably, helps them get around the city to their workplace and appointments on time, and provides the same level of access that people without disabilities enjoy when using various modes of transportation.

Strategy: Engage in listening sessions and Town Hall meetings with City of Raleigh Transportation Department staff to give them the opportunity to hear from citizens with disabilities and engage in a dialogue. Participate in providing training to City of Raleigh Transportation Department staff and ADA paratransit drivers so that they understand how to properly serve and accommodate riders with disabilities.

Education and Outreach:

1. Reach out to City of Raleigh Transportation Department staff.
2. Provide training or assist in recommending people who can help train transportation vendors or properly serving and accommodating people with disabilities.
3. Inform the City Council and the Mayor of progress in implementing improvements to the ADA paratransit system to better serve riders with disabilities.

Issue: People with disabilities lack opportunities for competitive, integrated employment.

Goal: Assist the City of Raleigh in hiring more people with disabilities, accommodating employees with disabilities, and retaining employees with disabilities.

Strategy: Establish a permanent Management Fellow program for individuals with disabilities with a goal of hiring at least three individuals with disabilities (including one who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing and one with blindness or visual impairment to the extent practicable) with the resulting effect of enhancing diversity, equity and inclusion of persons with disabilities in its labor force. Host an Employer Resource event to help City of Raleigh Human Resources and management staff better understand effective practices in recruiting, hiring, accommodating, and retaining employees with disabilities.

Budget: \$4,000 to provide breakfast and accommodations at the Employer Resource Day event

Education and Outreach: Market this event to employers in Raleigh and the surrounding communities so that management and Human Resources professionals will attend and learn best strategies for providing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Issue: The City of Raleigh’s website is not fully accessible to people with disabilities.

Goal: Ensure that the City of Raleigh’s website will be fully accessible to people with all types of disabilities.

Strategy: Engage with I.T. staff and request that the Communications Department and/or I.T. send someone to the monthly Mayor’s Committee meeting to hear about issues that impact people with disabilities in Raleigh and to forge a closer connection between the Mayor’s Committee and the City of Raleigh’s Communications Department / I.T.

Budget: None required, but the City of Raleigh may need to invest in certain I.T. infrastructure to ensure that its website and communications will be fully accessible to people with disabilities

Education and Outreach: Having a member of the City of Raleigh’s Communications Department and/or I.T. Department will educate the staff in these departments about issues impacting people with disabilities, including communications and website accessibility.

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