



Commission on Disability
DRAFT Minutes re October 8, 2025, meeting
North Berkeley Senior Center, Aspen Room
1901 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709

Preliminary Matters

1. Call to Order by Chair Pugh at 5:05pm
2. Land Acknowledgment recognizing Berkeley as the ancestral, unceded home of the Ohlone People
3. Roll Call by Secretary
Commissioners present: Commissioner Walsh, Vice Chair Fischer, Chair Pugh, Commissioner Sun, Commissioner Lewkowicz, Commissioner Mann, Commissioner Nisen, and Commissioner Coleman.
Commissioner on a Leave Of Absence: Commissioner Paz.
Staff present: Thomas Gregory and Guillermo Campos.
Public members present: Kelley Hammargren and Erik Knaresboro.
4. Public Comments
Kelley Hammargren expressed appreciation for CoD and its public meetings.
5. Approval of draft minutes: September 10, 2025 meeting
"...to approve the September minutes as drafted."
Moved by: Commissioner Lewkowicz; seconded by: Commissioner Sun.
Ayes: Commissioners Sun, Lewkowicz, Mann, and Nisen, Chair Pugh, and Vice Chair Fischer.
Nays: none.
Abstentions: Commissioners Walsh and Coleman.
The motion passes.
6. Approval: Order of Agenda
"...to approve tonight's agenda."
Moved by: Vice Chair Fischer; seconded by: Commissioner Nisen.
Ayes: unanimous. The motion passes.

Commissioner Announcements

7. Welcome to new Commissioner Valerie Coleman. Introductions by commissioners present.

Discussion/Action Items

9. Vote on 2026 CoD meeting schedule

- "...to approve CoD's 2026 schedule as reflected in the materials accompanying this meeting (assuming that such schedule does not conflict with any religious or cultural holidays)."
Moved by: Chair Pugh; seconded by: Vice Chair Fischer.

Ayes: unanimous. The motion passes.

10. Update: CoD/City staff WCAG process

Commissioner Sun updated on the CoD's ad hoc committee and City staff's efforts to achieve compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1-AA. There have been two committee/staff sessions so far. A third is scheduled for October 16. The City is gathering a list of its publicly-used, online applications, as well as forms and documents that are essential to a constituent seeking to access City services. This list will help assess and prioritize the scope of work. The CoD committee again reiterated that compliance could not be achieved without dedicated staff/consultant hours and recommends .25 FTE of staff, plus .5 FTE of a WCAG/technology experienced consultant to achieve compliance. Vice Chair Fischer is drafting a description of the proposed responsibilities and tasks of these positions.

The committee is advocating for an HTML-first approach, minimizing the amount of info communicated via PDFs. For WCAG, this benefits users of screen readers. It also benefits the 50% (and growing) share of current City website users who access the site with phones/tablets. Vice Chair Fischer is researching options available for creating HTML-ready docs. To test implementation, Vice Chair Fischer suggested that the CoD pilot the HTML-first approach beginning with its agenda packet for the January 2026 meeting.

"...to request that the City use materials generated by CoD for use at its Jan2026 meeting as an "HTML-first" pilot project by which materials posted online re public meetings be provided in HTML format rather than PDF format and that an update on progress toward the Jan2026 goal be brought to the commission at the November meeting."

Moved by: Vice Chair Fischer; seconded by: Commissioner Walsh.

Ayes: unanimous. The motion passes.

11. Update: CoD/City staff PROWAG process

Vice Chair Fischer updated on the CoD/Public Works meeting group with the goal of reaching an effective approach to implementing and enforcing Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG). The process was at the direction of the City Council's FITES policy committee in an attempt to reconcile the CoD PROWAG recommendation and the City's negative companion report. The secretary noted that Public Works emailed their meeting participants: Transportation Manager Mark Helmbrecht, Assoc. Traffic Engineer Nhat Phan and ADA Program Coordinator Thomas Gregory. A first meeting will be scheduled shortly.

"...to add Commissioner Coleman to CoD's ad hoc committee re PROWAG compliance."

Moved by: Vice Chair Fischer; seconded by: Chair Pugh.

Ayes: unanimous. The motion passes.

12. Recommendations: City meeting accessibility and meeting accessibility statement

The secretary informed CoD of the City's recent instruction to add "For questions or to request an accessibility accommodation, please contact [contact info]" to all new event pages on the

City's website. He noted that this new policy would not include PDF attachments or flyers. Commissioners discussed how making public meetings hybrid would enhance access for many. The secretary stated that the City plans to make all commission meetings hybrid in early-ish 2026. A commissioner noted that a recently enacted state law, SB707, seeks to require cities to offer public meetings in hybrid format.

Vice Chair Fischer indicated that City-sponsored/approved events must be ADA compliant. She noted her experience of Saturday, 9/27/25 when a street fair that closed Oxford Street from Center St. to University Ave. was set-up with half of its booths inaccessible to wheelchair users. While oversight of the Health Code was conducted by a health inspector prior to opening, nothing similar is done to ensure ADA compliance. Since these CoD recommendations intend to cover events, this issue should be considered for inclusion.

13. Work Plan Updates and Developments

a. Review Work Plan draft

Commissioners Coleman and Walsh expressed interest in working on the Work Plan's ADU-related item. Commissioner Coleman volunteered to serve as the CoD's liaison/monitor to the Commission on Aging.

b. Discuss useful presentations to advance the Work Plan.

The commission discussed extending an invitation to a member of Mayor Ishii's staff to present on approaches to advance meeting and event accessibility and ADA compliance.

Staff Updates

14. Log of Access Complaints

Chair Pugh asked that the complaints be listed in reverse chronological order so that the more recent complaints appear first.

15. Email and voicemail sent to the Commission

Adjournment at 7:35pm by unanimous vote.

Minutes approved by CoD vote on: _____

Thomas Gregory, Secretary to Commission

