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## CITY OF SAN ANTONIO DISABILITY ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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**DATE:** FEBRUARY 8, 2021  
**TO:** MAYOR RON NIRENBERG AND CITY OF SAN ANTONIO COUNCIL MEMBERS  
**CC:** ERIK WALSH, CITY MANAGER; MEMBERS OF THE BEXAR COUNTY TECHNICAL COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (TACPD)  
**FROM:** CITY OF SAN ANTONIO DISABILITY ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DAAC)  
**SUBJECT:** DAAC 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Dear Executive Leadership,

On behalf of the Disability Access Advisory Committee (DAAC), I am pleased to send you the report on the activities of this committee for calendar year 2020. We hope this report provides an occasion for you to share our pride in the accomplishments of the committee.

The purpose and vision of the DAAC is to lead the community towards universal access for all people, regardless of ability, in City programs, services and facilities. As we act on your authority and by your appointment, the committee strives to help San Antonio become a model city of accessibility, equity and inclusion.

COVID-19 has highlighted the disparities in the community and our committee continues to advocate for increased equity and access for people with disabilities in San Antonio. While we understand 2021 will bring new challenges, we appreciate your continued support and look forward to continued collaboration in the new year.

Sincerely,

Cesar Cantor, Chair  
Disability Access Advisory Committee

### **2020 Disability Access Advisory Committee Members**

Athalie Malone: Mayor's Office  
Anne Larme: District 1  
Christopher Salas: District 2  
VACANT: District 3  
VACANT: District 4

Maggie Cromeens: District 5  
Bonnie Weed: District 6  
Melanie Cawthon: District 7  
Cesar Cantor, District 8  
Jose Martinez: District 9  
Barbara Thabet: District 10

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
DISABILITY ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DAAC)  
ANNUAL REPORT 2020

**History:** The Disability Access Advisory Committee was established by the City Council in April 1979 as the Handicapped Access Advisory Committee; the name was official changed to the Disability Access Advisory Committee in March 1992.

**Objective:** The purpose of the committee is to work closely with the Disability Access Office (DAO) as part of San Antonio's efforts to provide accessible services and facilities for residents with disabilities.

**Membership:** The advisory committee consists of individuals with disabilities, providers of services to people with disabilities and interested San Antonio residents. The DAAC is comprised of 11 members appointed by each council member and the Mayor. Committee members do not need to live in the District that they represent. In 2020, one new member was appointed to represent District 10. There are currently two vacant districts, 3 and 4; these district seats have been vacant for an extended period of time.

**DAAC Officers:** In 2020, Member Cesar Cantor (District 8) serviced as Chair and Member Jose Martinez (District 9) serves a Vice Chair.

**Disability Access Office (DAO):** The DAO facilitates the meetings of the DAAC and works closely with the members to provide accessible services, programs and facilities for residents with disabilities. Staff liaisons work closely with the Chair to coordinate presentations, create agendas and communicate with other City departments. The DAO staff liaisons are Deborah Scharven, Accessibility Compliance Manager and Olivia Gaitan, Accessibility Compliance Specialist.

**Meeting Structure:** Meetings are held on a monthly basis, on the second Monday of the month at 3:00 PM. As of June 2020, meetings were held via WebEx virtual platform. Additional work sessions are scheduled as needed or requested. All meetings include an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter and captioning services.

**Attendance:** The following is an attendance report for members during the calendar year 2020. Members are listed by the district that they represent. Meetings were not held in April or May due to the COVID-19 pandemic. June, July, August and September were joint meetings held with the Bexar County Technical Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities (TACPD).

Meeting Date	Present	Not Present
January 13, 2020	Mayor, D1, D5, D6, D7, D8, D9, D10	D2
February 10, 2020	D1, D2, D5, D7, D8, D9	Mayor, D6, D10
March 9, 2020	Mayor, D1, D2, D6, D7, D10	D5, D8, D9
April 13, 2020	Meeting not held	
May 11, 2020	Meeting not held	
June 29, 2020	Mayor, D1, D2, D6, D7, D8, D9, D10*	D2, D5
July 13, 2020	Mayor, D1, D5, D6, D7, D8, D9, D10	D2
August 10, 2020	Mayor, D1, D2, D6, D7, D8, D9, D10	D5
September 14, 2020	Mayor, D1, D2, D6, D7, D9, D10	D5, D8
October 12, 2020	Mayor, D1, D2, D5, D6, D7, D8, D9, D10	----
November 9, 2020	Mayor, D1, D2, D7, D8, D9, D10	D5, D6, D8
December 14, 2020	Mayor, D1, D2, D6, D7, D8, D10	D5, D9

\*June was the first meeting for the new D10 member.

**2020 Meetings/Discussions/Presentations:** The following is a brief overview of the meetings held by DAAC.

*January 13:* Goal setting for 2020, selection of DAAC officers

*February 10:* Approval of memo- Adult Changing Stations

*March 9:* The City Attorney's Office presented the City's proposed Language Access Plan

*April 13:* Meeting cancelled due to COVID

*May 11:* Meeting cancelled due to COVID

*June 29:* Joint meeting with the DAAC and the Bexar County Technical Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities (TACPD) -Deborah Scharven (DAO) updated members on the City's COVID-19 Recovery and Resiliency Plan

*July 13:* DAAC and TACPD created a memo for City/County leadership regarding COVID-19 recovery and resiliency planning.

*August 10:* The Economic Development Department presented The Workforce Development Plan/ COVID-19 Resiliency and Recovery

*September 14:* The City's Office of Health Equity presented *Racism as a Public Health Crisis* and an overview of the office. Approval of the joint City/ County memo regarding workforce development

*October 12:* SAPD Staff discussed the programs within the Police Department that focus on Disability Access

*November 9:* Quorum was not met- no official meeting

*December 7 Work Session:* Finalized draft of memo to Health Equity Office

*December 14:* Discussion of 2021 Goals, approval of memo to Health Equity Office

## **Accomplishments:**

### **1. COVID-19 Response and Recovery**

#### **A. Joint Meetings**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately effecting people with disabilities, the DAAC and TACPD joined together for 3 meetings and the creation of 2 memos for City and County Staff. Both committees stand together to bring awareness to the difficulties, strains and issues people with disabilities face not only at heightened times (such as during the pandemic), but in daily life.

#### **B. COVID-19 Recovery and Resiliency Plan**

Deborah Scharven with the Disability Access Office, presented updates to the members about the City's COVID-19 Recovery and Resiliency Planning. The DAAC along with the Bexar County Technical Committee for Persons with Disabilities (TACPD) created a joint memo to City/County leadership advocating for additional funds in the recovery plan to assist people with disabilities.

#### **C. COVID-19 Workforce Development Programs**

Michael Sindon and David Meadows with the City's Economic Development Department presented to the committee about plans for workforce development programs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The DAAC and TACPD created a joint memo to City/County leadership advocating for additional funds, accommodations and employment/educational opportunities for people with disabilities.

#### **D. Metro Health- Health Equity Office**

Carlos Rodriguez with the Office of Health Equity discussed San Antonio's efforts in equitable health services and programs, including 'Racism as a Public Health Crisis'. The committee created a memo encouraging increased support in health services for people with disabilities and to recognize the unique characteristics of this community as it crosses racial and economic bounds.

### **2. Adult Changing Stations**

Members created a letter of support of the advocacy group, Changing SA's goals of increasing the number of adult changing stations in public facilities. Additionally a list of priority locations for potential adult changing station was provided. This letter of support directly impacted the City to place advocacy of adult changing stations on the San Antonio legislative agenda for the 2021 Texas State Assembly.

### **3. Administration**

- A. A Disability Access Advisory Committee letter head for memos and written correspondence from the committee was created.
- B. Virtual platform training was provided to DAAC members both individually and in a group setting at no charge and will be provided as requested.

**DAAC Goals 2021:** The committee members have selected the following goals for the calendar year 2021:

- Determine process to advocate for increased representation of people with disabilities
  - Promote increased participation and representation of people with disabilities on City boards, committees and working groups
- Enhance equitable representation for people with disabilities
  - Develop a process for follow-up of committee recommendations
  - Increase communications with City departments
- Enhance member knowledge of City processes
  - Receive member training, chosen topics include Equity and Communications
  - Create a new member orientation

#### **Upcoming in 2021:**

- Presentation of the Mental Health Unit by SAPD
- Updates from Jobs SA: COVID-19 Workforce Recovery Program
- Member training on Equity and Communications