



**City of Oakland**  
 Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities (MCPD)  
 Monday, November 15th, 2021 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

**Minutes**

**NOTE:** Approved minutes and video recordings are posted at <https://www.oaklandca.gov/boards-commissions/mayors-commission-on-persons-with-disabilities/meetings>

**Commissioners:** Noah Smith (Chair), Thomas Gregory (Vice Chair), Cathy Eberhardt, Marjorie Lynne, Karen Nakamura, Frank Sperling, and Howard Tevelson, Ayanna Keeton, Leonard Moore

**Commission staff:** Anh Nguyen, ADA Programs Division Manager; Karen Denicore, ADA Program Analyst

**Presenters:** Josie Ahrens, Sarah Fine, Charlie Ream, Joanna Winter, Jacque Larrainzar

**Other attendees (from webinar Attendee list):**, Ofurhe Igbinedion, Helen Walsh, Sheela Gunn-Cushman, Robert Prinz / Bike East Bay, Patricia S, Kevin Dalley, Jessie Wang, Dave Campbell / Bike East Bay, Si Lau, Emily Ehlers, Mary Havlicek

Meeting called to order by Chair Smith at 5:33 PM. At roll call, quorum was established with six of Nine commissioners present (x).

Commissioners	Present (x)
Noah Smith (Chair)	x
Thomas Gregory (Vice-Chair)	x
Cathy Eberhardt	x
Marjorie Lynne	excused
Karen Nakamura	absent
Frank Sperling	x
Howard Tevelson	x
Ayanna Keeton	absent
Leonard Moore	x

Open Forum did not have any speakers.

Agenda was adopted as published with a motion from Commissioner Gregory and a second from Commissioner Sperling.

October 2021 Special Meeting Minutes unanimously adopted as published with a motion from Commissioner Gregory and a second from Commissioner Sperling

October 2021 Minutes unanimously adopted as published with a motion from Commissioner Gregory and a second from Commissioner Eberhardt.

The 2021 Virtual Meeting Resolution was re-adopted with a motion from Commissioner Sperling, a second from Commissioner Gregory and a yes vote from all 6 commissioners present.

<b>Commissioners</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Noah Smith (Chair)	x		
Thomas Gregory (Vice-Chair)	x		
Cathy Eberhardt	x		
Marjorie Lynne	excused		
Karen Nakamura	absent		
Frank Sperling	x		
Ayanna Keeton	absent		
Leonard Moore	x		
Howard Tevelson	x		

### Commissioner's Announcements and Strategic Plan Updates

**Action items: Commissioners, please respond to Leonard Moore request for interviews for podcast via email sent out previously**

- Commissioner Sperling asked PG&E for assistance when he was notified of a planned power shut off and was told that they do not provide that assistance and that their accommodation is to notify people in advance. He needed a back up battery or generator to keep his medication refrigerated. The agency that

provides that service during wildfires and PSPS did not respond to a request for assistance.

- Commissioner Gregory reports no updates on the part of city staff and elected officials on the funding situation for rental rehab updates (access improvement program) after losing track of \$500,000. Recommends that MCPD continue to advocate for additional funding going in to 2022. He will be resigning his holdover status at the end of 2021.
- Commissioner Moore is interested in interviewing Commissioners for his podcast and encourages them to reach out to him to discuss a phone interview.

### **City of Oakland, OakDOT Multi Year Paving Plan**

Josie Ahrens, OakDOT Transportation Planner, provided an update on the 3 year plan and presented the proposed 2022 5-Year Paving Plan, which is planned to bring to Council for adoption in December.

**Action Items: Sarah Fine wants to work directly with interested commissioners on how to better address the needs of pwds.**

**Josie Ahrens will provide Sheela Gunn-Cushman with a written narrative of the presentation and the streets involved and Sheela offered to help Josie write it up in the most helpful way. Josie provided her email address to get in contact.**

**Anh and Sarah will look into options for identifying ADA accessibility issues via 311.**

- Commissioner Sperling wanted to know how specifically they prioritize the needs of people with disabilities in their planning.
- Using census and American Community Survey data is how they integrate the number of pwds into the funding formulas. Curb ramps are also included in all major projects.
- What about all the complaints lodged with ADA programs about all the various issues pwds have with the roads, are they taken

into consideration by location in the planning efforts? How does the City of Oakland take into consideration the voice of people with disabilities with regard to their challenges with the roads in the city of Oakland?

- This plan is a CIP (Capital Improvement Project) and there are programs that work more specifically on a complaint basis to address issues. If they are systemic, then they may become a CIP.
- Commissioner Sperling expressed that in the past few years, he has not seen any work that has been done to better address the needs of pwds. (Sarah Fine would like to work with commissioners on that)
- Sheela Gunn-Cushman recommends that call ins to 311 with infrastructure issues should identify ADA accessibility issues when they call in. She would like a written narrative of the presentation and the streets as she was not able to see or follow the presentation. (Josie expressed a willingness to provide this and the agenda report before it goes to city council)
- Sheela offered to help Josie with how to write it up in the most helpful way and Josie provided her email as [paving@oaklandca.gov](mailto:paving@oaklandca.gov)
- Helen Walsh expressed the importance of collecting and using data for data driven decision making and is tired of diverse communities of pwds being seen as problems as they are the solution.
- Anh Nguyen expressed the importance of identifying ADA related complaints and self as a pwd when contacting 311.
- There is not a specific ADA identifier to use on 311 but it can be included in the text descriptions. Chair Smith suggests a way to specifically identify an ADA access issue complaint. (Anh and Sarah will look into 311 options to identify ADA)

## **OakDOT Protected Bike Lane Projects**

Charlie Ream, OakDOT Transportation Planner, presented an overview of protected bike lane projects and various design options under consideration for use in the City of Oakland.

**Action Items: Consider and assess interest in the suggestion of in person tours of specific protected designs for a combination of travel training and accessibility assessment for multiple ADA concerns and potential issues.**

**Helen Walsh would like to directly share her experience as a vision impaired person who bikes for transportation either through a survey or via direct email with Charlie Ream (OakDOT)**

- Commissioner Sperling, nice to see OakDOT continuously improving bike lanes to accommodate ADA. What happened with past issues about sharp corners on raised islands and how are proposed designs currently tested? What about pwds who have placards but are in regular parking spots?
- Sharp corners have been tapered off for wider access but there will still be out of direction travel from regular parking spots. Mid-block curb ramps are designed to mitigate the need to travel far in a bike lane. There are 6.5 feet cut outs designed to keep passengers from getting blocked in vehicle. Driver side scenario has access in blue curb spots but still problematic in regular spots.
- Commissioner Sperling suggested education may be needed to help users understand how to best use various blue zone designs.
- Sheela Gunn-Cushman, as a person with blindness, has an issue with corner cutting ramps that do not clearly indicate which direction she should go and that directional ramps are critical.

- Directional curb ramps are a priority and a policy for OakDOT. Ramps that are not directional are designed with 6 inch high barriers to indicate that a direction must be chosen.
- The 6 inch high barriers are a problem for visually impaired persons.
- Diagonal ramps are only used when directional ramps are not an option. Raised islands are usually transit boarding islands with a single ramp exit that has a warning surface and a stopping point where you determine your direction.
- Sheela Gunn-Cushman agrees that education could be helpful. Could tours be done for mobility impaired and vision impaired residents to try out these options?
- Helen Walsh points out that pwds do carpool and that having more blue curbs, or greater accessibility in general, would be beneficial for the whole community.
- Helen Walsh also points out the perspective of a low vision person who bicycles using both a two-wheeler and a three-wheeler. It is difficult to identify islands. There is a lack of contrast between current colors. The ramps do not slow down athletic riders. Widths make it difficult to manipulate a tricycle and for other users to get through. She is happy to take a survey about her use of bike lanes and would like to connect with OakDOT via email.
- Dave Campbell (Advocacy Director Bike East Bay) spoke in support of tours of the protected bike lanes and has done them in Berkeley, Fremont and unincorporated Alameda County. In regard to exiting on the driver's side, the approach has been to make it safer by significantly slowing down traffic but people still express that they feel less safe.

### **Community Engagement Work Groups**

Jacque Larrainzar, Race & Equity Department Program Analyst, and Joanna Winter, a planner with Strategic Planning Division share the City's Community Engagement plan and invite MCPD Commissioners

to participate at their workgroup meetings to discuss the work of the commission and how the workgroup can better work with MCPD to involve the communities they represent.

Motion by Commissioner Sperling and seconded by Commissioner Gregory to extend the meeting by 15 minutes to 7:45 was approved.

**Action Items: Sheela Gunn-Cushman and Helen Walsh offered to assist the group with their expertise in web accessibility and help to develop an ADA compliant survey for the community of pwds. ADA staff will provide them with email contact information.**

- Commissioner Sperling is confused about who the group is and what the goal of the group is. Is there a problem to solve? What will this look like when it is complete? He is unable to give feedback because of this lack of context.
- Commissioner Gregory wants a specific example of the type of the 37 resources generated by the group and recommends that they work with Center for Independent Living (CIL) as a federally designated agency to works with local government entities in their areas.
- Group has identified lists of organizations and found departments with systems to track volunteers and engage community already in place. They want to eliminate duplication and centralize processes.
- Joanna Winter says group started as a grassroots group of staff who do community engagement who felt their efforts were inconsistent. It has received support from the city and developed into an interdepartmental working group of staff that is functioning as an information sharing group. Group does share the questions posed by Commissioner Sperling.
- Sheela Gunn-Cushman recommends Lighthouse for the Blind, Eastbay Center for the Blind in Berkeley, CA Council of the Blind and the National Federation of the Blind. She also wants them to reach out to the hearing impaired community. She

suggests an ADA accessible survey to put out to the community.

- Helen Walsh has expertise in digital media and accessibility and has been a part of W3C WAI (Web Accessibility Initiative) for several years. Digital accessibility foundation provides a [free online course](#) that is a good starting point and she is happy to help. (2 organizations at Ed Roberts Campus) can also help, WID and C4AT)
- Jacque and Joanna will share their emails for Sheela and Helen.

#### Staff Updates and Announcements

**Action Items: Staff will forward information about events described via email list.**

- There is an Electrifying Existing Building workshop on Wednesday November 17<sup>th</sup> from 10 AM to 12 PM.
- There is an event coming up on Friday December 3 titled Alameda County Perspectives: The California Master Plan for Aging

#### December Agenda Items

- 2022 Election for Chair and Vice Chair
- Strategic Plan Review

See MCPD scheduler at [tinyurl.com/MCPD-AgendaPlanner](https://tinyurl.com/MCPD-AgendaPlanner).  
Suggestions for future agenda items are also welcome.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 pm.