



MEMORANDUM

Date: July 27, 2015

To: Mayor Balducci and City Councilmembers

From: Patrick Foran, Director
Jennifer Mechem, ADA/Title VI Civil Rights Program Administrator

Subject: Americans with Disabilities Act 25th Anniversary Celebration

The City of Bellevue joins many other organizations, including the City of Seattle and the State of Washington, in issuing a proclamation to recognize the 25th Anniversary of the ADA. The City is one of several sponsors for this regional event:

July 22, 2015: 25th ADA Celebration and Rally, "Looking to our Past to See Our Future"
On Wednesday, July 22 from 4 pm to 6 pm at Westlake Park/Center in Seattle, the community will celebrate with a rally and live music. Speakers include State Senator Cyrus Habib and Senator Patty Murray (on video).

On July 26, 1990, as he signed the ADA into law, President George H.W. Bush, declared, "Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down." The moment was a culmination of years of organizing and protests by people with disabilities, in one of America's least-known civil rights movements. Disabled activists marched on the Capitol, abandoned their wheelchairs and crawled up the Capitol steps to literally and symbolically highlight the lack of access. Under a banner with the words of Martin Luther King, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," people spoke of being denied jobs, housing, and access to transportation, of being excluded from schools and universities, of being unable to shop in stores or told to sit in the back room of a restaurant, and of how stairs and curbs made it impossible to get around their hometowns. They spoke also of the attitudes and stereotypes that too often pushed disabled people to the margins and made them objects of pity and charity.

The City of Bellevue has a long history of being inclusive and accessible. The City developed an innovative survey method that has been copied by other cities to survey sidewalks and ramps. Recreation and community services provide accommodations for all, and adaptive recreation programs have served thousands of children and adults for over 30 years. With increased funding and a new ADA Coordinator as part of the Diversity Advantage Program, current projects include upgrading assisted listening systems throughout the City, updating the ADA self-evaluation and transition plan, improving website access, and expanding facility assessments and barrier removal activities.

CITY OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON

PROCLAMATION

Whereas: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990, to ensure the civil rights of people with disabilities and establish a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities; and

Whereas: The ADA has expanded opportunities for Americans with disabilities by reducing barriers, changing perceptions, and increasing full participation in community life; and

Whereas: The City of Bellevue has consistently and diligently worked to make all its, programs, services and facilities accessible to people with disabilities; and

Whereas: The City of Bellevue has for over 30 years provided adaptive recreation programs as well as accommodations and access to general recreation; and

Whereas: The City of Bellevue developed an innovative and efficient survey method for its award-winning September 2009 ADA Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Self-Evaluation report; and

Whereas: The City of Bellevue hired a dedicated ADA Coordinator in May 2015 and increased funding for access as part of its Diversity Advantage Program; and

Whereas: On the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Bellevue will celebrate and recognize the progress that has been made by reaffirming the principles of equity, inclusion and access, and renewing our efforts to reach full ADA compliance.

Now, therefore, I, Claudia Balducci, Mayor of the City of Bellevue, Washington, on behalf of the City Council, do hereby proclaim the week of July 20-26, 2015 as:

ADA Anniversary Celebration Week

and urge all residents of Bellevue to continue to recognize and value the contributions of people with disabilities to our city and community.

Claudia Balducci
Mayor