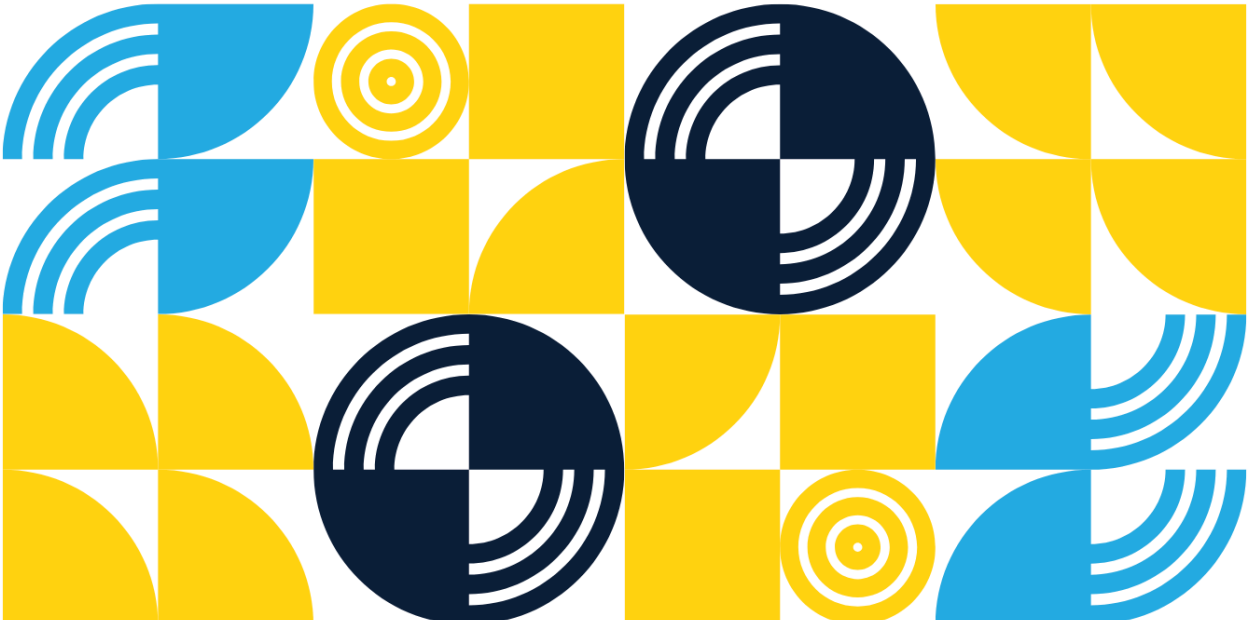


Council for Community Accessibility

2025 Annual Report

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Message from the Chair



Thank you for your interest in learning more about the Council for Community Accessibility!

As a volunteer commission, we welcome anyone with an interest in disability accessibility to join us at our monthly meetings and take part in our advocacy work to make Bloomington more accessible, welcoming, and inclusive.

In 2025, we remained focused on projects and programming that support our mission.

We offered new trainings on disability awareness to several City departments, hosted two successful community events, took our meetings out into the community, showed off the CCA as a model for community involvement in accessibility issues at the quarterly meeting of Indiana ADA Coordinators, and tabled at a variety of other events. At our monthly meetings, we strengthened relationships with community partners and welcomed new community participants to the Council. We also promoted our Snow Buddies program to reach more people in the community who are unable to shovel snow due to their age or disability.

The Accessibility Committee continued working with surveying software to check whether local businesses, facilities, and polling places align with ADA standards, while the Transportation and Mobility Committee developed an additional focus on accessible housing. You can find more information about our programming in the pages that follow.

In 2026, we will continue to work toward our **Strategic Goals** (page 11). We aim to help make Bloomington more accessible each year by increasing disability awareness and reducing barriers for everyone in our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Lesley E. Davis

Lesley Davis, Chair

Council's Purpose

The Council for Community Accessibility (CCA) is a volunteer commission that advocates for the interests of people with disabilities.

Initially formed in 1990, the group's first goal was to advise the City of Bloomington on accessibility improvements ahead of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Today, the CCA works to promote community awareness of disabilities, develop accessibility solutions, and partner with local organizations who share our goals. The Council works in the areas of **accessibility**, **advice**, **advocacy**, **affinity**, **assessment**, and **awareness**.

While they come from diverse backgrounds, CCA members share a personal interest in accessibility issues and bring a range of leadership experiences to their work. Many members have disabilities themselves or are family members of those with disabilities.

Organizational Overview

Unlike other councils or commissions, the CCA is an open group. Any member of the public may attend and participate in meetings, which are held on the last Monday of every month from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. in City Hall.

The current Chair of the CCA is Lesley Davis, and the current secretary is Linda Crawford. Within the City of Bloomington, Michael Shermis serves as the Staff Liaison, and Annabelle Vosmeier serves as Administrative Assistant.

The **Accessibility Committee**, led by Chris Jackson, runs the AccessAbility Decal Program. Volunteers survey businesses and award window decals to those who achieve accessibility criteria.

The **Activities and Events Committee** plans programs and events throughout the year to foster community awareness of disabilities.

The **Transportation, Mobility, and Housing Committee**, led by Deborah Myerson, examines and acts on ways for people with disabilities to move and live in Bloomington more comfortably and efficiently.

Achievements and Impact

Promoting Accessibility in the City of Bloomington…

Accessibility Trainings for City Departments

In 2025, the CCA offered new disability awareness and accessibility trainings to the Bloomington Fire Department, the Planning and Transportation Department, and the Parks and Recreation Department. These trainings were presented by CCA members and were tailored to each City department's work.

Advising On Current City Facilities and Programs

CCA staff and members have continued to answer questions and provide advice on City facilities and programs. This included reviewing documentation for a new bus stop, advising on the accessibility of a public-facing form, seeking input from people who are blind about tactile directional indicators with the Engineering Department, discussing the incline of a new trail and the height of new outdoor toilets with the Parks and Rec Department, and meeting with the Planning and Transportation Department about a possible community safety and accessibility grant, among many other topics.

…and Within the Community

Events and Outreach

The CCA held two annual events last year, welcoming hundreds of community members to the ADA Anniversary Celebration, held on the Fernandez Plaza by the Farmer's Market on August 2, and discussing employment for people with disabilities with an expert panel at Gather 'round the Table on October 27. We also tabled at events like the 55+ Expo and experimented with pop-up meetings at Stone Belt and Endwright East to reach new audiences.

Snow Buddies

This year, CCA's Snow Buddies program expanded, connecting dozens of volunteers with neighbors who are unable to shovel snow because of their disability or age. The overwhelming response to this program continues to highlight an important need in our community.

2025 Financial Ledger

Item	Revenues	Expenses
Beginning Balance: $137		
Gather ‘round the Table Donations	$2,800	
ADA Anniversary Celebration Catering		$144
The ADA Anniversary Celebration Catering was covered by the General Fund (Community and Family Resources)	$144	
Gather ‘round the Table Catering and Supplies		$1,055
Gather ‘round the Table Event Space		$400
Gather ‘round the Table ASL Interpretation		$366
Total Revenues/Expenses	**$2,944**	**$1,965**
Final Balance: $1,116		

Supporters

Thank you to those who financially supported Gather ‘round the Table 2025!

Gold Sponsors

- City of Bloomington Community and Family Resources
- CFC Properties
- Cook Group
- Old National Bank

Silver Sponsors

- Stone Belt
- IU Credit Union

Bronze Sponsor

- DSI/LifeDesigns

Individual Donors

- Carol J. Parks
- Kathryn T. Anderson
- Janet B. James

Events and Programming

Events

In 2025, the CCA hosted two of our signature events, the ADA Anniversary Celebration and Gather ‘round the Table.

ADA Anniversary Celebration



The anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is marked each year on July 26. To celebrate the occasion, the Council for Community Accessibility brings together local community organizations and disability advocacy groups to table on the Fernandez Plaza outside City Hall. In 2025, more than 250 people visited tables from City departments and commissions, Stone Belt, Mobility Aids Lending Library, Special Olympics Monroe County, Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, and SICIL.

At right, Hannah Lencheck from Stone Belt quizzes young attendees on an ADA trivia question, with prizes to be won!

Gather ‘round the Table

On October 27, 2025, CCA members, community partners, and others met at The Mill to discuss barriers to employment for people with disabilities and ways to accommodate accessibility in the workplace.

The event began with a panel discussion before moving to small group conversations. Thank you to our panelists:

- Carlos Taylor (Fehribach Center)
- Breanne Siniard (Stone Belt)
- Mike Nevins (Center on Community Living and Careers)
- Lisa Butcher (Cook)
- Adria Nassim (Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, Bloom Magazine)

Panelists discussed applying and interviewing for jobs, requesting reasonable accommodations, and dealing with common barriers like transportation.

A few highlights from the discussion included

- It's up to you to decide when in the application process to disclose a disability. If you disclose it early and the employer doesn't respond well, then you know that the workplace won't be inclusive. But you may choose to wait until you've been hired before requesting accommodations, if you're worried about being discriminated against during the hiring process.
- It's better to have paid experience on your resume if you can, rather than only volunteer experience. There are organizations that can connect you with paid internships. Know your worth!
- If you request a reasonable accommodation and it isn't granted, you have the right to request a formal letter of denial from your employer explaining why they are not granting the accommodation. In some cases, this may inspire them to find a way to accommodate you!

Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make Gather 2025 a success!



CCA Programs and Partners

Accessibility Trainings for City Departments

In 2025, the CCA offered several new trainings to City departments. These trainings were presented by CCA members, discussed relevant hypothetical situations and lived experiences, and focused their content on each department's day-to-day work.

The first training was offered to the Bloomington Fire Department, including the Mobile Integrated Health Unit, in June 2025. Later in the year, the CCA did trainings with the Planning and Transportation Department and the Parks and Recreation Department.

Below at left, CCA members Karin Willison and Casey Guarino present to several crews from the Bloomington Fire Department. Below at right, CCA member MarChé Daughtry demonstrates cane technique for someone who is blind to members of the city's Planning and Transportation Department.





Snow Buddies

Last year, the CCA launched the Snow Buddies program, which pairs a volunteer with a neighbor who is unable to shovel snow because of their disability or age. Volunteers are assigned to a resident for the winter and come by each time it snows to clear their sidewalk and a pathway to their front door. The program pilot was a great success and highlighted that this program meets an important need.

During the 2025-2026 winter, we expanded the program, connecting volunteers to even more households. Snow Buddies also inspired a similar effort in Indianapolis and Marion County, just as we were initially inspired by a Montana program.

AccessAbility Decal Program

The AccessAbility Decal Program recognizes local businesses that meet minimum standards of accessibility, such as accessible parking spaces, entrances without steps, wider aisles, and wheelchair-accessible restrooms. Qualifying businesses are presented with a decal to display on their storefront. In 2025, we began using BlueDAG, an accessibility software, to improve the consistency and accuracy of our surveys. Next year, we will collaborate with Monroe County to survey polling places for accessibility.



The CCA, through the Accessibility Committee, provides these surveys free of charge. To learn more, visit bloomington.in.gov/accessability.

MALL

In 2025, the CCA continued our partnership with the Mobility Aids Lending Library (MALL), a nonprofit which connects donated mobility aids, such as rollators, manual wheelchairs, and power wheelchairs, with those in our community who can use them. Visit mobilityaidslendinglibrary.org to request a mobility aid, donate a mobility aid, or learn more.

Strategic Goals

In January 2026, CCA members revisited the strategic goals the Council had established in 2025.

Transportation

- Expansion of BT Access or other publicly funded accessible transit options to include routes outside of Bloomington (to appointments in Indianapolis, for example) (5 years)
- Incentivize accessible Ubers or taxis in Bloomington (available any time, including late at night) (1-5 years)
- The CCA will continue to work toward these goals, but will not prioritize them in 2026. Bloomington Transit's new microtransit option is accessible.

Accessibility/ADA Standards

- Work with city and county government and business communities to incentivize stricter, better-than-ADA standards within Bloomington city limits for new constructions of hotels, restaurants, the new convention center, etc. (Ongoing, increasing over 1-5 years)
- The CCA will prioritize this goal in 2026, maintaining the momentum developed in conversations about the Hopewell development. A new priority will be discussing amendments to Bloomington's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to implement more effective accessibility requirements.
- Work with BMV, City, IU and police department to educate drivers about accessible parking etiquette and develop methods for enforcing while educating offenders. (5 years)
- Work with City and subcontractors on effective snow removal procedures to remove access barriers to paths of travel for people with disabilities. (now and ongoing)
- The CCA will not prioritize these issues in 2026. In 2025, the CCA opened conversations with relevant City departments and personnel about snow removal procedures.

Community Connections

- Increase community engagement and outreach by meeting people where they are with "Traveling CCA Meetings" (similar to Meet the Mayor) hosted by the CCA once a quarter at Stone Belt, Endwright, or other locations. (now and ongoing)
- Increase diversity of perspectives by connecting with other social service organizations that work with people with disabilities, such as the Monroe County Public Library,, Beacon, HealthNet, and Middle Way House. (1-5 years)

- Host informal social meetings to connect with potential members (within the year)
- Offer Disability Awareness/Etiquette trainings (starting this summer)
- The CCA will continue to look for new connections and collaboration possibilities in 2026. We will especially prioritize offering trainings, which were successfully launched in 2025.

Employment

- Creation of a peer-to-peer support program around employment (1-5 years)
- Collaborate with organizations to reach out to hiring managers at major employers to offer training on hiring people with disabilities (1-5 years)
- Connect local consultants (e.g., CCA members) with businesses and organizations looking for assistance with accessibility questions (now and increasing within 1-5 years)
- The CCA will backburner these efforts for 2026 after hosting a successful Gather ‘round the Table on the theme of employment.

Housing

- Become more involved in efforts to increase local stock of affordable and accessible housing, reaching out to HAND, the City Council, and CoDesign Commons (1-5 years)
- The CCA will continue to work on the issue of housing, potentially through adding it as a new focus for the existing Transportation and Mobility Committee.

Advocacy

- Continue to be a voice in local and state-wide efforts to defend the rights of people with disabilities in the face of current threats to Medicaid, Education, and Section 504, and any new threats on the horizon. (now and ongoing)
- The CCA will respond to new threats to people with disabilities in 2026, particularly by recommending effective individual actions to CCA members.

Join Us!

Commission meetings are held on the last Monday of the month. Anyone may attend a meeting or become a member of the CCA. You are warmly invited to join us.

Meetings take place in the Allison Room (City Hall, 401 N. Morton St.) at 4:00 p.m. Virtual attendance via Zoom is also available by request (email cca@bloomington.in.gov).

In 2026, the CCA is scheduled to meet on:

- Monday, January 26, 2026, at 4:00 p.m., in the Allison Room (City Hall).
- Monday, February 23, 2026, at 4:00 p.m., in the Allison Room (City Hall).
- Monday, March 30, 2026, at 4:00 p.m., in the Allison Room (City Hall).
- Monday, April 27, 2026, at 4:00 p.m., in the Allison Room (City Hall).
- **No May Meeting - Breaking down the Barriers Event**
- Monday, June 29, 2026, at 4:00 p.m., in the Allison Room (City Hall).
- **No July Meeting - ADA Anniversary Event**
- Monday, August 31, 2026, at 4:00 p.m., in the Allison Room (City Hall).
- Monday, September 28, 2026, at 4:00 p.m., in the Allison Room (City Hall).
- **No October Meeting - Gather 'round the Table Event**
- Monday, November 30, 2026, at 4:00 p.m., in the Allison Room (City Hall).
- **No December Meeting - Happy Holidays!**

For more information about the CCA, visit or contact us at:

- **Website:** bloomington.in.gov/cca
- **Facebook:** facebook.com/CouncilforCommunityAccessibility
- **Newsletter Signup:** lp.constantcontactpages.com/sl/vQW2BdX
- **Email:** cca@bloomington.in.gov
- **Phone:** 812-349-3471

To learn more about accessibility at the City of Bloomington, visit bloomington.in.gov/accessible.