



January 23, 2024

Board of Supervisors  
County of Ventura  
800 South Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, California 93009

**Subject: Approval of the 2024-2027 County Disability Access Strategic Plan specific to the Office of Disability Access, and Direction to the Disability Access Manager to Return in Eighteen Months with a Report on the Office's Progress Towards these Priorities; and as Necessary Recommend Any Updates to the Plan.**

**Recommendations:**

1. Approve the 2024-2027 County Disability Access Strategic Plan specific to the Office of Disability Access.
2. Direct the Disability Access Manager to Return in Eighteen Months with a Report on the Office's Progress Towards these Priorities; and as Necessary Recommend Any Updates to the Plan.

**Background:**

In September 2022, the County hired its first ever Disability Access Manager to strengthen our approach to existing and emerging issues specific to the disability population. Since then, the focus has been on creating connections on many topics including relationship building, process establishment, and informal landscape analysis.

Using what was learned, the Disability Access Manager produced strategic priorities and goals for the Office of Disability Access presented in the proposed Plan.

The proposed Plan has been thoughtfully built with our disability community in mind focusing on priorities that will serve their best interests and the County's commitment to foster a sense of inclusivity, access, and belonging within our community.

**Discussion:**

**Summary of the Office of Disability Access's Strategic Plan**

The proposed Plan serves as a framework to focus on policies, programs, collaboration, and initiatives in four key areas with associated goals as follows:

### **Accessible, Mobile, and Reliable Foundation**

- Advocate for increased accessible County-wide transportation options
- Ensure Digital Accessibility is at the forefront
- Coordinate with County Counsel regarding a privileged and confidential large scale multi-tier assessment of the enhancement of physical access of County facilities and rights-of-way, with opportunities for public input as may be required by law
- Coordination and emphasis on community relationships and engagement focused on Access and Functional Needs in County emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts
- Support local businesses and organizations to understand and embrace accessibility and inclusion of customers with disabilities

### **Environment Focused on Disability Community Incorporation**

- Provision of disability culture, etiquette, communication, etc. trainings
- Consistent hosting of internal and external events focusing on disability topics
- Creation of a community resource group
- Hosting of a bi-annual speaker series bringing leaders and change makers from the disability community to our County

### **Emphasize Employment Strategies Supporting Model Employer Excellence and Economic Vitality**

- Utilization and growth of community partnerships to provide applicant readiness support for successful employment outcomes
- Internship Programming specific to qualified employees with disabilities looking to enter the County workforce
- Emphasize employer education within the County government
- Formation of a Disability specific employee resource group
- Active engagement with County learning and training departments to revitalize accessibility and cultural courses
- Creation of a confidential self-identification survey to provide data regarding the diversity of disability found within the County workforce.
- Encourage increased opportunities for economic security and vitality by utilizing a disability lens in policy and programmatic efforts

### **Youth Leadership and Independence Stimulus**

- Engagement with local schools at all levels offering disability history, culture, and awareness education
- Statewide and regional participation in efforts to lift-up youth with disabilities
- Creation of a county-wide advisory committee of students with disabilities
- Creation of a County-wide cross-disability youth leadership event

**Guiding Principles:**

The Plan utilizes the County of Ventura's mission and values and brings in unique guiding principles related to the specialized work of the office.

- Innovative and Growth Provoking Goals
- Delivery of Culturally Minded Initiatives
- Consistent Source of Opportunities
- Advocacy and Community Involvement
- Strategic Consideration to Increase Access

**Conclusion:**

The County Disability Access Strategic Plan represents a comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to fostering a more inclusive and accessible community. With a focus on Accessible, Mobile, and Reliable Foundation, the plan outlines key goals that advocate for increased transportation options, ensuring digital accessibility, enhancing physical access to facilities, and prioritizing community relationships in emergency preparedness.

The commitment to an Environment Focused on Disability Community Incorporation is evident through the provision of training, events, community resource groups, and a speaker series, all aimed at promoting disability culture and awareness. Moreover, the plan emphasizes Employment Strategies that help Model Employer Excellence, highlighting initiatives like community partnerships, internship programs, employee resource groups, and educational efforts to enhance accessibility and cultural understanding.

The Youth Leadership and Independence Stimulus component underscores the importance of education and engagement at all levels, with initiatives ranging from disability history education in schools to the creation of advisory committees and leadership events. Approving this strategic plan is an investment in a more inclusive, accessible, and vibrant future for our County, where every member of our community can thrive.

We are, therefore, recommending your Board approve the 2024-2027 County Disability Access Strategic Plan specific to the Office of Disability Access, and Direct the Disability Access Manager to Return in Eighteen Months with a Report on the Office's Progress Towards these Priorities; and as Necessary Recommend Any Updates to the Plan.

This letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office and County Counsel. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Dani Anderson, Disability Access Manager at (820) 732-8725.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sevet Johnson", written in a cursive style.

Sevet Johnson, PsyD  
County Executive Officer

Exhibit 1: County of Ventura Office of Disability Access 2024-2027 Strategic Plan