



City of St. Petersburg
Committee to Advocate For Persons with Impairments
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Community Affairs Division
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2012 - 2013 Bi-Annual Report

City of St. Petersburg
Committee to Advocate for Persons with Impairments (CAPI)
Human Resources Department • Community Affairs Department





March 1, 2014

Community Affairs Division, H. R. Department
City of St. Petersburg
P. O. Box 2842
St. Petersburg, FL 33731

Dear Mayor Kriseman and Honorable City Council Members:

On behalf of the members of the Committee to Advocate for Persons with Impairments (CAPI) it is my honor to present the combined 2012-2013 Annual Report. Through CAPI's advocacy and leadership role in the disability community, the City of St. Petersburg has continued to demonstrate its strong commitment to ensuring equal access for individuals with disabilities.

As the report will demonstrate, our recent focus has been toward building awareness about the breadth of resources and accessibility features already offered throughout the City and also to build partnerships to continuously improve access to the full experience of St. Petersburg. Once again, CAPI continued to provide important educational opportunities through our disability awareness and sensitivity training as provided to city departments and staff, including the trolley drivers. For efficiency of distribution, we have also turned to on-line training courses on the latest topics concerning the ADA and Access Codes. CAPI also has an on-going video and multi-media project to support our awareness campaign.

We have been proud to continue our support through funding of Captioning services for all City Council meetings, thus allowing persons with hearing disabilities to participate fully in the meeting broadcasts. The presence of Sign Language interpreters at Tropicana Field is a welcomed addition and CAPI continues to advocate for better communication accessibility at all Tampa Bay Rays games and events.

St. Petersburg has been proudly showcased in the national spotlight during the annual Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg. Over the years, CAPI has nourished a partnership with the event organizers to ensure that this event is accessible and enjoyable for its citizens and visitors with disabilities. The Mobi Mats, funded by CAPI, used on uneven terrain, grass, or sand, make the surface accessible for persons using mobility devices. The Grand Prix of St. Petersburg has been an example of how we can work together to offer safe and accessible mobile events.

In addition, St. Petersburg hosts a wide variety of co-sponsored events through the waterfront parks and recreational areas. These events attract thousands of citizens and visitors to our City. Allowing accessibility to important components, CAPI developed an improved slide show to help educate event organizers about key accessibility issue and how to avoid mishaps in the future. This resource is now distributed to all event organizers of co-sponsored events.

Aside from events, St. Petersburg's beautiful waterways, parks and recreation programs are major attractions for both residents and visitors. Not one but two new beach wheelchairs are now available for public use; increasing access to our beautiful beaches. As such, CAPI's strong commitment to accessibility for recreational endeavors continues with the review of and the advisement toward renovations for parks and playgrounds throughout the City. CAPI has worked with the Parks Department to enhance the accessible play components along with their renovation schedule. Campbell Park will be the first playground in the

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CAPI Letter, continued

regular renovation cycle to offer additional accessible play components. The Parks Department has also been opening Fitness Zones throughout the City in conjunction with the Trust for Public Land. In October 2012, the first accessible Fitness Zone opened in Azalea Park now allowing those with mobility disabilities to exercise along side their peers. It is key to note that three natives of St. Petersburg trained in accessible recreational facilities offered in the City and brought home medals from the 2012 Paralympics Games in London.

CAPI continues to provide a leadership role in supporting the community-at-large by helping to guide and advise on matters where accessibility and equal opportunities are needed for all. The committee has extensively reviewed and advised the City on such issues as the Sign Ordinance, reporting of accessible parking violations and renovation projects such as Rio Vista Park, the Sunshine Fitness Center, Lake Vista Park and the New Pier.

CAPI members recognize that the City of St. Petersburg's website is often the first point of contact for many who are seeking information about St. Petersburg's programs, activities and opportunities. As such, CAPI members with the assistance of the City's Webmaster keep the information current with periodic review and updates to the CAPI webpage to make it more meaningful for residents and visitors. A major addition to our outreach and education is the creation of the CAPI video. With the assistance of the Marketing and Communication Department, CAPI now has a digital video that may be used on a variety of media formats.

Volunteer Road Patrol members are extraordinary in their commitment to helping our community by ensuring that vehicles parked in the spaces designated for individuals with disabilities have the appropriate State issued placard or plate to legally do so. In addition, TASC0 is an extraordinary program; which has provided volunteers to assist with various CAPI events throughout the year. Annually, CAPI recognizes their efforts at a City Council Meeting. CAPI applauds these volunteers and appreciates their hard work, unselfish giving of their time and commitment to our citizens with disabilities.

Finally, it has been my honor and privilege to serve as Chairperson for CAPI during the period 2012-2013. I am extremely proud of the vast work and scope of accomplishments from this group of dedicated volunteer citizens. It must be stated that our work could not be done without the unending support from City Staff members who are equally as committed to ensuring the City of St. Petersburg's facilities, programs, and events are accessible and enjoyable by all persons, regardless of disability or ability.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer S. French, Chairperson
Committee to Advocate for Persons with Impairments
City of St. Petersburg

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Mission Statement

*The purpose of the **Committee to Advocate for Persons with Impairments** (CAPI or the Committee) is to advocate, advise, and formulate positions on issues facing persons with impairments and to provide the City Council, the Office of the Mayor, other departments, committees and offices there under and, whenever possible, private entities with advice and guidance relative to the affairs, concerns, rights, special needs and dignity of persons with impairments to ensure their full participation in and enjoyment of the City's facilities, programs and services. (Resolution 95-197 and CAPI Bylaws, Section 1, Article I).*



City Hall Accessible Lectern



CAPI meeting

Historical Overview

CAPI was originally established by City Council in 1972 as primarily an advisory body without the significant financial resources that it currently enjoys. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA or Act), which was signed into law on July 26, 1990, signaled a new era in advocacy for persons with disabilities as well as the role that the City would play in creating an accessible community. The ADA is a civil rights law that offers protection to persons with disabilities from discrimination in the areas of employment, transportation, and access to public facilities, services and programs.

The ADA compelled the City, in part, to establish a transition plan and to undertake certain actions which would remove architectural barriers and allow persons with impairments equal access to the City's facilities.

The ADA also mandated that the City examine its programs and services and, where necessary, to make reasonable accommodations that would allow persons with impairments to have equal access to and the enjoyment of the City's programs and services.

A serendipitous result of this examination was a redefining of the mission of CAPI by City Council in 1995 and its transformation to that of being more proactive. In doing so, the City reaffirmed and better defined its commitment to persons with impairments. To its credit, the Council also saw fit to provide access to funding to the Committee from the state mandated reserve which is a set-aside of fines from handicapped parking space violations. CAPI has thus become an integral part of defining the future course of the City of St. Petersburg in ensuring equal access to persons with impairments.



Honda Grand Prix Mobi Mat Useage



Volunteer Road Patrol Recognition

Accomplishments

Florida Statute 316.008(4)(b) provides that a portion of the fines collected for disabled parking violations be used "to provide funds to improve accessibility and equal opportunity to qualified persons who have disabilities in the county or municipality and to provide funds to conduct public awareness programs in the county or municipality concerning persons who have disabilities." As an advisory body, CAPI has made project funding recommendations to the City's Administration, and paid for reoccurring operational expenses such sign language/CART services for each monthly meeting, and the cost of the City's ADA Consultant.

2012 Project Funding Recommendations & Accomplishments

- 1) Funded request for the purchase of a beach wheelchair for Treasure Island Beach (a city facility) for \$2,990.
- 2) Consulted on selection and placement of ADA playground equipment for Fossil Park.
- 3) Consulted on selection of Accessible exercise equipment for Fitness Zone at Azalea Park.

2012 Project Funding Recommendations & Accomplishments continued on page 4



2012 Project Funding Recommendations & Accomplishments continued from page 3

- 4) Review of Sign Ordinance in reference to review of potential adverse impact of Electronic message Centers to persons with traumatic brain injuries.
- 5) Provided on-going funding for Closed Captioning for City Council meetings.
- 6) Sponsored ADA training in conjunction with PSTA for Trolley Drivers and volunteers.
 - Proposed Pier Design
 - Fossil Park Addition
 - New Park located at Rio Vista Elementary School site.
- 8) Funding of Accessible Play Equipment for Campbell Park's playground for \$2,800.
- 9) Recognized the Volunteer Road Patrol volunteers at an annual ceremony during a City Council meeting.
- 10) Assisted with purchase of Accessible Mini Bus for Therapeutic Recreation through donations to the replacement fund for six to eight years.



Campbell Park Play Equipment



Azalea Park Accessible Fitness Equipment

2013 Project Funding Recommendations & Accomplishments

- 1) Completed Production of pdf presentation for ADA Accessibility Training for Co-Sponsored Event Organizers for Special Events held on city property.
- 2) Completed Production of Updated Committee video for distribution to citizens for education of services and accomplishments by CAPI.



Therapeutic Recreation's Adaptive Sailing

- 3) Review of city projects to ensure accessibility and participation at events for persons with impairments.
 - Proposed Pier Design (Continued)
 - Lake Vista Recreation Center
 - Gladden Park Recreation Center
 - Campbell Park Community Center
- 4) Provided on-going funding for Closed Captioning for City Council meetings.
- 5) Participation in Community Events for the purpose of education of resources available through CAPI's Web Pages and Community Affairs Division.
- 6) Continuing education in resources and new information provided by city, state, and federal government offices.
- 7) Provided a PDF Copy of CAPI's brochure to Parent Advocate to build awareness in Pinellas County Schools.
- 8) CAPI assisting Visit St. Pete Clearwater organization for the purpose of updating ADA information on their website.

Ongoing Projects

- 1) Facilitate the removal of architectural barriers throughout the community through installation of curb cuts, parking spaces, leveling sidewalks, and other modifications based upon community and CAPI input.
- 2) Work on projects related to accessibility and usability of City parks and playgrounds within the City.



ADA Sensitivity Training



Accessible Beach Wheelchair

- 3) Advocate for closed captioning of game details at Tropicana Field during Tampa Bay Rays games.
- 4) Advocate for closed captioning of race details at the annual Grand Prix of St. Petersburg.
- 5) Provide ADA training for city employees.
- 6) Assistance from city Grant organizer for research assistance for available grant funding sources.
- 8) ADA Education Training at CAPI meetings.
- 9) Annual review and update of information on CAPI's web page.
- 10) Advocate for accessibility of co-sponsored events working with event organizers to educate about resources and assist with event design while on City properties.'
- 11) Participation in Annual Playground Equipment Review for the purpose of funding by CAPI of accessible play equipment.
- 12) Review consumer complaint logs regarding accessibility issue and take necessary action for resolution."

