



GARLAND

MINUTES

The All Abilities Committee of the City of Garland convened in regular session at 6:00 PM on March 4, 2026, in Community Room 122 at the Garland Central Library, 625 North Austin Street, Garland, Texas, with the following members present:

Present: Amanda Esquivel, Chair
Leigh Calmes, Vice Chair
Tommy Zapata, Committee Member
Jennifer Reeder, Committee Member
Elizabeth Sherly Graham, Committee Member
Graint Laird Jr., Committee Member
Susan Behrens, Committee Member
Jana Veit, Committee Member

Absent: Heather Miller, Committee Member

Staff Present: Matt Watson, Assistant City Manager
Amy Rosenthal, Cultural Arts Director
Antonia Garcia, Special Events Manager
Courtney Vanover, Deputy City Secretary

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Consider Approval of the Minutes for the February 4, 2026 Meeting

Motion was made by Committee Member Reeder and seconded by Committee Member Zapata to approve the February 4, 2026 meeting minutes. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Persons who desire to address the Committee on any item on the agenda are allowed three minutes to speak.

There were no speakers on this item.

3. ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION

a. Omnium Circus

Amy Rosenthal, Cultural Arts Director, will provide a discussion regarding Omnium: A Bold New Circus and potential collaboration opportunities.

Ms. Rosenthal presented information regarding *Omnium: A Bold New Circus*, an inclusive performance to be held March 16–17, 2026, at the Granville Arts Center. The performance incorporates various accessibility features. The Committee discussed opportunities to promote the event through community outreach and partnerships.

b. Special Event Accommodations

Staff will provide an update regarding inclusive special event accommodations.

Staff provided an update on accessibility accommodations at City events.

Current accommodations include:

- Accessible parking in the City Hall garage.
- Golf cart transportation.
- Wheelchair-accessible pathway mats.
- Sensory-friendly programming (e.g., Sensory Christmas).

Committee discussion included recommendations to:

- Provide interpreters and captioning for events.
- Establish ADA drop-off zones closer to entrances.
- Improve communication of accommodations in event marketing.
- Consider an All Abilities information table at events.

c. Best Practices from Other Cities

Staff will provide an update regarding best practices from other cities.

Mr. Watson presented an overview of best practices from other municipalities with disability advisory committees. Ms. Garcia, assisted with the presentation by responding to questions from the Committee.

Focus areas included:

- Infrastructure accessibility
- Inclusive programming
- Communication and technology
- Emergency preparedness
- Staff training and hiring practices

The Committee emphasized the importance of moving beyond minimum ADA compliance to create long-term, inclusive improvements. Staff presented an overview of best practices from other municipalities with disability advisory committees.

Focus areas included:

- Infrastructure accessibility

- Inclusive programming
- Communication and technology
- Emergency preparedness
- Staff training and hiring practices

The Committee emphasized the importance of moving beyond minimum ADA compliance to create long-term, inclusive improvements.

d. Technology at City Facilities

Staff will provide an update regarding technology at City facilities.

Mr. Watson provided updates on accessibility-related technology initiatives, including:

- Expansion of Teams room technology with captioning capabilities.
- Evaluation of accessibility applications.
- Review of website accessibility standards (WCAG 2.1).
- Exploration of assistive technology for meetings and events.

Committee members discussed:

- The importance of inclusive communication and outreach.
- Opportunities for community partnerships.
- Accessibility considerations in City planning documents, including:
 - ADA Transition Plan.
 - Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
 - Library Master Plan.
 - Aquatics and Cultural Arts Plans.

4. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The Committee identified the following topics for future meetings:

- Garland ISD collaboration.
- Buddy League Program.

- Website accessibility improvements.
- Library accessibility programs.
- Braille accessibility for City communications.
- Accessibility at City events.
- Pedestrian crossing signal accessibility.
- Social media outreach.
- Virtual meeting participation options.
- Aquatics accessibility programs.

5. ADJOURN

Chair Esquivel adjourned the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Submitted By:

/s/ Amanda Esquivel, Chair

/s/ Courtney Vanover, Deputy City Secretary