

**Background:**

During the February Public Policy Committee meeting, the Committee discussed Future Projects/State Plan Implementation related to Goal 3. For your reference, Goal 3 states:

Conduct ongoing educational campaigns in collaboration with community leaders, organizations, and businesses to enable them to better support, include, and/or provide culturally responsive services to people with developmental disabilities by 9/30/2016.

The Committee asked staff to further research the topic of accessible parking to determine if any public awareness campaigns have transpired and/or if there are any planned. The attached Executive Summary summarizes the information gathered.

**Public Policy Committee**

**Agenda Item 9.**

**Expected Action:**

The Committee will review proposed activities and may choose to make recommendations to the Council.

**Council**

**Agenda Item 6. E.**

**Expected Action:**

The Council will take action on Committee recommendations.

## **Executive Summary**

### **Goal 3: Accessible Parking Campaign Research**

During the February Public Policy Committee meeting, the Committee discussed Future Projects/State Plan Implementation related to Goal 3. For your reference, Goal 3 states:

Conduct ongoing educational campaigns in collaboration with community leaders, organizations, and businesses to enable them to better support, include, and/or provide culturally responsive services to people with developmental disabilities by 9/30/2016.

After discussion around topics including van accessible parking, disability awareness at the Capitol and disability awareness with employers, the Committee requested additional information regarding accessible parking.

Public Information staff gathered information from many resources, including but not limited to organizations such as the Governor's Committee for People with Disabilities, Disability Rights Texas, The Arc of Texas, DADS, DARS and The City of Austin. Following is a summary of information.

#### **Research Highlights**

- According to the United States Access Board, the "van-accessible" designation is intended to be informative, not restrictive, in identifying those spaces that are better suited for van use. It should not be interpreted as restricting the use of spaces to vans only (<http://www.access-board.gov/adaag/about/bulletins/parking.htm>). Travis County Constable Precinct 5's office states that van-accessible spaces are sometimes appropriate for cars or smaller vehicles, especially as technology has allowed lifts to be installed in smaller cars; because caregivers often need the extra room to assist with loading and unloading; and because sometimes people need to be able to fully open their car door for loading and unloading.
- According to the City of Austin and Travis County Constable Precinct Five offices, neither the city nor county has adopted the Parking Mobility program (<http://www.parkingmobility.com/>). They are considering the program but no decision has been made. Members heard about Parking Mobility when a program representative provided public comment in February during both Committee of the Whole and the Public Policy Committee meetings.
- City of Austin/Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities
  - In 1993, the Austin City Council authorized the appointing of qualified and trained persons, acting under the title of disabled-parking enforcement volunteers, to enforce the disabled parking laws in Austin and to issue citations for violations of the law. The program continues today.
    - PSAs
      - Illegal Parking in Accessible Parking (August 2011)  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5D0c6\\_6E-Cq](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5D0c6_6E-Cq) (The City of Austin was recognized by the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities with a 2012 Barbara Jordan Media Award)
      - Accessible Parking (July 2010)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ABO3hGnRRGM>

- Travis County (Austin area)
  - Constable Precinct 5 Disabled Parking Enforcement Program (<http://constable5.com/info/parking.shtml>)
    - Established 1995; staff and citizen volunteer ticket writing program that requires 4-hours of state-mandated training
    - “As this program begins its 15th year of existence, handicap-parking violations remain as prevalent as ever. It is still common to come across violators who do not have handicap parking license plates or hang-tags, use other peoples’ plates or tags, park on the diagonally striped areas for van unloading and block access ramps. Even though fines for these offenses are \$500 and up, the Constable’s staff and citizen volunteers will still write 1,000 or more tickets this year.”
  
- Future efforts
  - Representatives from the City of Austin, Austin Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities and the Travis County Precinct 5 Constable’s office recently began meeting to discuss a new educational campaign.
  - The group shares a common goal of no accessible parking abuse.
  - The group is evaluating past efforts and how new tools like the Parking Mobility program may fit in with future efforts.
  - The group is considering expanding efforts to provide educational information in high school driver’s education classes and defensive driving course curriculum, and working with the Texas Department of Transportation to create an educational information packet for drivers.
  - The group welcomes collaborators.