



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS ACCESSIBILITY IN BOSTON CITY HALL

WHEREAS: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) enshrines and protects the rights of people with disabilities throughout the country. Signed in 1990, it protects people with disabilities from discrimination in many areas of public life, including employment, public accommodations, transportation, access to state and local programs and services, parking, voting, etc; *and*

WHEREAS: The Boston Disabilities Commission supports and facilitates full and equal participation in all aspects of life by persons with disabilities. Their work includes reducing architectural, procedural, attitudinal, and communication barriers for persons with disabilities; promoting equity in housing, education, employment, transportation for them, and civic activities; and ensuring compliance with Title II of the ADA; *and*

WHEREAS: Over the years, Boston City Hall has made improvements to ensure compliance with the ADA and improve accessibility for people with disabilities. The latest include a new accessible entrance on the second floor and a sloping promenade in the City Hall Plaza renovation in 2022, and the installation of a vertical lift at City Hall's third floor entrance to the mezzanine area; *and*

WHEREAS: However, there is more work to be done to improve accessibility inside the building. Aging infrastructure continues to limit accessibility in certain areas of the building, such as the broken escalators connecting the second and third floors in City Hall. These escalators have been down for over a year, and it is important to review access within other parts of the building to ensure those with disabilities can fully access all floors, departments, and meeting rooms; *and*

WHEREAS: In addition, the verticality of the main stairs connecting the third floor onto the mezzanine often require caution to use given the short length of the brick and the reflective shine which makes it difficult for people to see, especially when going downwards. While the current guardrails help, the safety of these stairs need to be enhanced to prevent people from tripping and falling; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:

That the appropriate Committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to discuss accessibility in Boston City Hall. Representatives from the Disabilities Commission, Property Management Department and Landmarks Commission are invited to attend.

Filed in Council: January 15, 2025