

**May 9, 2024**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

On May 6, 2024, Judge Steven D. Grimberg of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia approved a Consent Decree in the class action suit of *Lawson, et al. v City of Atlanta*. The Decree requires the City of Atlanta to make its sidewalks and other pedestrian rights of way accessible to persons with disabilities, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act.

Under the Consent Decree, the City is required to:

- Conduct a comprehensive self-evaluation of sidewalks throughout the City to identify barriers to access, based on Survey data and public input;
- Develop a Transition Plan based on data from the Self-Evaluation and a series of public hearings. This Plan must set forth concrete steps to bring the City's pedestrian infrastructure into ADA compliance, prioritizing access to employment, public transportation, and government offices;
- Bring all sidewalks and pedestrian rights of way into ADA compliance over a period of time, in accordance with the Transition Plan;
- Appoint a permanent, full-time ADA Coordinator focused on transportation;
- Adopt updated standards for new construction and alterations to ensure ADA compliance going forward;
- Provide funding for an independent monitor to assess and report to the Court on the City's progress towards compliance with the Consent Decree;
- Provide funding for ongoing legal counsel to the class to monitor and ensure compliance with the Consent Decree;
- Upgrade its "3-1-1" system to prioritize reports of lack of ADA access to pedestrian rights of way.

The case was filed by three individuals who use wheelchairs for their day-to-day mobility. These individuals frequently encounter obstacles such as missing curb ramps and broken, uneven, or obstructed sidewalks while moving about Atlanta. Laurel Lawson is an internationally-acclaimed dancer and performance artist; James Curtis is a Community Volunteer at the Shepherd Center, a non-profit hospital focused on care and rehabilitation for persons with spinal and neuromuscular injuries; and James Turner is an Administrative Specialist at disABILITY Link, an organization that advocates for the rights of persons with disabilities.

The Class is represented by James Radford, Georgia Lord and the law firm of Radford Scott LLP (Decatur); and Andrew Coffman and the law firm of Parks Chesin & Walbert, P.C. (Atlanta).

The full consent decree, and additional information, can be found at [www.radfordscott.com/lawson](http://www.radfordscott.com/lawson).

Press photos:



Image description: A group of people smiling for a photo, with an American flag, its stars shaped into a disability access symbol, in the background. On the back row, from left to right, Andrew Coffman, a Caucasian man with curly blond hair and a suit and tie; James Radford, a Caucasian man with a blue jacket and orange tie; and Georgia Lord, an older Caucasian woman with curly red hair. All three are wearing glasses. In the front row, from left to right, James Turner, an African-American man with a bald head and a red t-shirt in a wheelchair, and James Curtis, a Caucasian man in a dark suit and yellow tie in a wheelchair. Photo date: May 9, 2024.



Image Description: Laurel Lawson, a pale white woman with cropped blonde hair and bright performance makeup speaks into a microphone. She is wearing a black tank top with white logo above brilliant copper leggings. The background shows the Hudson River through rain spattered glass. Photo credit:

<https://www.instagram.com/filipwolak/>