

City of Austin Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Initiative



Community Forum Results
and Recommendations
August 27, 2009

Background

- May 8, 2008 – City Council approved Resolution No. 20080508-050
 - Conduct facilitated community discussions
 - Develop strategies to address findings
 - Report back recommendations
- Formed City Staff Core Team
- Hired consultant firm Adelante Solutions

Community Forums & Survey

■ Community Forums:

- February 24th - Education
- March 24th - Economic Development/Housing
- April 7th - Cultural Arts, History, Enrichment
- April 28th - Healthcare

■ Public Participation:

- 1,000 attendees
- 650 survey responses

Survey Results

- 650 citizens completed the survey
 - 83% English
 - 17% Spanish
- Demographic profile
 - 55% of the respondents ranged in age from 30 to 49
 - 54% have a household income between \$35,000 - \$100,000
 - 33% have lived in Austin for more than 25 years compared to 19% having lived here for five years or less
 - 60% had Bachelor's or Graduate degree
 - 50% primarily speak English at home; 30% speak both English and Spanish; and 17% primarily Spanish
 - Majority of the survey respondents represented Central, East, South and Southeast Austin (69 zip codes recorded)

Survey Results

- Rate Austin's quality of life for Hispanics/Latinos
 - 34% responded good to very good
 - 37% adequate
 - 29% poor to very poor
- Top three most pressing issues for improving quality of life for Hispanics/Latinos
 - 56% responded public education
 - 43% employment opportunities
 - 35% accessible & affordable healthcare

Education Forum & Recommendations

- Break-out Sessions:
 - Academic Excellence; High School Retention; Pre-K; and Bilingual Education
- Issue 1. Lack of opportunity for high school students transitioning to college
 - **Recommendation:** Partner with AISD, colleges, nonprofits, and businesses to develop and implement strategies that bridge the gap.
- Issue 2. Lack of information in Spanish
 - **Recommendation:** Consolidate resources with AISD for overall improved bilingual communication.

Education Forum & Recommendations

- Issue 3. Lack of language assistance for first generation immigrants
 - **Recommendation:** Develop programs that promote and support bilingual education for work and school.
- Issue 4. Lack of coordinated information on after school, summer youth and other educational programs
 - **Recommendation:** Collaborate with AISD neighborhoods and community organizations to create a centralized and managed database of existing programs (Bilingual).

Education Forum & Recommendations

- Issue 5. Lack of accessibility to technology is an obstacle for student success
 - **Recommendation:** Partner with Businesses to increase computer labs and expand Wi-Fi connections in City facilities in neighborhoods.
- Issue 6. Lack of joint regional planning and incongruent policies by City and AISD for new development and placement of schools
 - **Recommendation:** Work with AISD to maximize underutilized campuses and mitigate the negative impact of development in neighborhoods.

Economic Development Forum & Recommendations

■ Break-out Sessions:

- Affordable Housing; Resource Development for Small Minority-Owned Businesses; Workforce Development; and Building Wealth for Families

■ Issue 1. Lack of information on City's current programs and services

- **Recommendation:** Coordinate information across departments and maintain regular communication. Schedule an annual City summit. Participate in various business network group activities and solicit opportunities to present information at meetings, committees, and luncheons.

Economic Development Forum & Recommendations

- Issue 2. Lack of affordable housing
 - **Recommendation:** Develop policies to encourage developers to provide additional affordable housing opportunities and evolve traditional housing to meet the needs of multi-generational families. Increase information sharing on current affordable housing programs and services.
- Issue 3. Hispanic/Latino community is not taking advantage of financial mechanisms
 - **Recommendation:** Create a coordinated campaign with businesses and nonprofits on the transference of wealth to future generations and its importance.

Cultural Arts Forum & Recommendations

- Break-out Sessions:
 - Creating a Sustainable Future; Leadership Development and Advocacy; Cultural Arts Education; and History/Enrichment
- Issue 1. Lack of affordable and permanent space for Hispanic/Latino arts organizations
 - **Recommendation:** Create an inventory of appropriate City-owned spaces. Develop a program to match groups with spaces to generate revenue.

Cultural Arts Forum & Recommendations

- Issue 2. Need for Hispanic/Latino artists to showcase their work to increase patronage
 - **Recommendation:** Fund the completion of the Mexican American Cultural Center to accommodate practice and performance space to sustain Hispanic/Latino artists.
- Issue 3. Lack of equitable funding
 - **Recommendation:** Review cultural funding program and process taking into consideration the growing Hispanic/Latino arts community and provide regular reports. Use the current M/WBE program as a model for setting goals for cultural arts funding.

Health Forum & Recommendations

- Break-out Sessions:
 - Healthcare Affordability; Public Health Service & Prevention; Clinical Services; and Understanding the Healthcare System
- Issue 1. Misunderstanding about the City's role in the delivery of healthcare services
 - **Recommendation:** Coordinate a comprehensive bilingual public awareness campaign. Provide convenient and accessible information on the transition of City clinics and associated services to the Healthcare District. Use the City website, helpful links, and 211/311 operators to disseminate up-to-date information.

Health Forum & Recommendations

- Issue 2. Demand surpasses current healthcare capacity
 - **Recommendation:** Assist Travis County Healthcare District and CommUnity Care address financial needs and locate resources.
- Issue 3. Lack of bilingual communication
 - **Recommendation:** The City and Travis County Healthcare District should collaborate efforts and resources on effective communication strategies; partner with other healthcare advocates to maximize outreach efforts.

General Recommendations

- Ensure the Hispanic Quality of Life Community Oversight Team represents the various sub-cultures of the Hispanic/Latino community.
- Re-evaluate the Commission on Immigrant Affairs with a vision to create a Hispanic/Latino Affairs Commission.
- Review alternative means of electing City representation.
- Ensure inclusion and diversity for all City Boards & Commissions.

General Recommendations

- Develop a City-wide bilingual outreach and communication plan for public programs and services.
- Ensure the City's workforce acknowledges the culture and value system of the growing Hispanic/Latino community.
- Reconvene the Task Force on Education and Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students (initiative of the Joint Subcommittee of City Council and AISD Board of Trustees) to provide a status report on the implementation of their recommendations and associated impact of the Hispanic Quality of Life.

Next Steps

- Create Community Oversight Team to review Consultant Report and hold at least one additional public forum for feedback
- City Staff Core Team to analyze Consultant and Community Oversight Team Reports to create a Final Recommendations Report and Action Plan
- Final Presentation to City Council

City of Austin Hispanic/Latino Quality Of Life Initiative

Questions?