



## **Annual Internal Review**

**This report covers the time period of 1/1/2013 to 12/31/2013**

### **AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMISSION**

To advise the city council on issues relating to the quality of life for the city's African American community and shall recommend programs designed to alleviate any inequities that may confront African Americans in social, economic and vocational pursuits, including: health care; housing, including affordable housing, home ownership and homelessness; entertainment opportunities for professionals and students; employment; and cultural venues, including museums, theaters, art galleries and music venues.

**The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) is:**

- 1. Describe the board's actions supporting their mission during the previous calendar year. Address all elements of the board's mission statement as provided in the relevant sections of the City Code.**

Due to the broad purview of the Commission's mission statement they are not able to act on all aspects each year.

The Commission sent Recommendations to the City Council on the following:

- An increase in annual funding through HHSD for the African American Youth Harvest Foundation so that they could initiate new programs and services;
- Continuation of funding for MEEELJ (Minorities for Equality in Employment, Education, Liberty, and Justice, Inc.) so that they could continue their programs for formerly incarcerated individuals and their families;
- To support the Affordable Housing Bond election;
- To provide funding for a media campaign and RFP for a non-profit to conduct outreach to increase awareness and overcome barriers for treatment for

individuals with mental health and behavioral issues including self-medication; and

- To provide funding for designation of key city-owned vacant properties specifically along E. 11<sup>th</sup> St. & E. 12<sup>th</sup> St. as critical to the African American Cultural Heritage District (AACHD); review of sale of City-owned properties in the AACHD by the Commission; offer financial incentives and technical support for African American businesses in the AACHD; and work with the AACHD Board and the Capital City African American Chamber of Commerce (NKA Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce) to identify viable ways to attract, nurture, and maintain African American businesses within the AACHD.

The Commission created Working Groups to address major areas of concern within the community such as:

- Parking issues on E. 11<sup>th</sup> St. & E. 12<sup>th</sup> St.,
- Selection of an artist to create a permanent piece of artwork for the African American Cultural & Heritage Facility which opened in 2013 and photographs of individuals important to the community which were included in the artwork,
- Health and mental health issues in the community, and
- Public safety.

The Commission received presentations from City staff and outside entities on a wide range of topics including: the impact of HIV/AIDS on the African American community, the impact of the \$55 million Affordable Housing bonds, African American Cultural Heritage District Board, public safety issues, the Colony Park Sustainable Community Initiative, Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant Initiative for Rosewood Court, renovations at Bartholomew Pool, Reconnect Austin-Rebuilding Interstate 35 through Downtown Austin, transportation issues in NE Austin concerning Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and the Austin Independent School District bond election.

**2. Determine if the board's actions throughout the year comply with the mission statement.**

All actions of the Commission comply with the mission statement.

**3. List the board's goals and objectives for the new calendar year.**

The Commission has established the following goals and objectives for 2014:

- Continue to support the education of African American Youth by:
  - Support of Summer Youth Programming
  - Non-traditional education programs
  - Job training
  - Support of county and private youth employment programs
  - Dialogue with and support of an increase in programming and operating hours for the Millennium Youth Center
  - Support for child care programs
- Continue to engage officials and make recommendations on public safety by:
  - Addressing continued use of deadly force against African Americans by APD
  - Revisit public safety issues addressed by the Final Report of the African American Quality of Life Initiative in 2008, reviewing current practices against recommended practices
  - Continue to nurture the relationship between the African American Resource Advisory Commission and the Public Safety Commission
- Continue the dialogue with the Austin Transportation Department and the community to address parking issues in the E. 11<sup>th</sup> & E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street districts and expand to cover all of the AACHD by:
  - Engaging a broader swath of community stakeholders

The Commission will also continue work on various areas of health concerns in the community; establish a process to support the addition of two individuals per year to the mural at the African American Cultural & Heritage Facility and an event to honor those individuals; continue to establish working relationships/partnerships with the African American Cultural Heritage District Board, Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce, other City Boards & Commissions and stakeholder groups; and continue to be engaged in the Rosewood Master Planning process.