



City of Austin

Communications and Public Information Office

301 W. Second St., Austin, TX 78701

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Doug Matthews, Chief Communications Director

DATE: May 11, 2016

RE: Final Report & Staff Analysis of Task Force Recommendations

The final recommendations of the Task Force on Community Engagement are attached. This is the culmination of nine months of work by a remarkable group of Austin residents. We felt that providing the recommendations document in advance of the Task Force presentation on Tuesday would help ensure a productive discussion at Work Session.

To help in your discussion of these recommendations from the Task Force on Community Engagement, we have reviewed all recommendations and provided some additional context, observations and, where possible, cost estimates. In general, the Communications and Public Information Office (CPIO) agrees with many, if not most, of the recommendations included in the report. In fact, the office has been working to implement a number of these recommendations already – or were working on solutions prior to the convening of the Task Force.

From a staff perspective, there are several key opportunities in the recommendations that could have measurable short- and medium-term impacts if supported and funded. Those with the most potential for transformative impact:

- Natural-language translation of the City website as part of the current redesign effort.
- Development of a more comprehensive and robust community registry/notification system.
- Purchase and/or development of a replacement virtual/online engagement system.
- Resourcing the Community Engagement division to be able to more effectively “close the loop” by providing timely, public feedback and updates on engagement activities.

Many of these items require resourcing to implement, which we are happy to discuss during or after the Task Force presentation on May 17. This is an excellent starting point for discussion and we are extremely thankful for the time, thought and effort the Task Force put in to their work. By



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our observation, each member truly cares about the future of engagement in Austin and was fully committed to the conversations.

We look forward to continued discussion of our future engagement activities, and thank you all for making this dialogue a priority. Please let me know if you have any questions.

CC: Marc A. Ott, City Manager
Ray Baray, Chief of Staff