



Annual Internal Review

This report covers the time period of 7/1/2016 to 6/30/2017

Asian American Quality of Life (AAQoL) Advisory Commission



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

The Commission shall advise the City Council on issues related to the Asian American Resource Center and will provide on-going guidance and support for the City's Asian American quality of life initiatives.

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.

2016-17 Accomplishments

Working Groups

The AAQoL Advisory Commission accomplishes a large portion of its work through its working groups. The following section highlights working group activity over the past year.

Asian American Resource Center (AARC) Oversight Working Group

Members: Debasree DasGupta (Lead), Nu Chanpheng, Vince Cobalis
Other members: Taja Beekley, Sonya Alexander-Harris, Thuy Nguyen, Aditi Joshi, Gopal Guthikonda

The AARC Oversight Working Group reviews and provides advice on AARC programming, strategic plans, staffing, info gathering and cultural events. A major function of the Workgroup is to assess budget needs at the AARC and make recommendations to the Commission and City Council.

Key 2016-17 Accomplishments

- A major initiative during this period was the kitchen renovation to a commercial kitchen. This will improve the capacity for the Senior Meal program and provide support for ballroom events. The project manager reported to the workgroup monthly to address issues and stay on target. Renovation was completed in April 2017.
- Purchase of a transportation van was approved in the 2016-17 budget, but it has not been received during this reporting period
- Other one-time funding was provided for a Public Event Leader and Shuttle driver, but FTE's were not authorized and funding may end in September. There were significant accomplishments with the one-time funding and we are urging that funding isn't lost in 2018.
 - Senior Meal Program was expanded from 3 to 4 days
 - The facility was able to open Mon/Tues evenings, increasing participation by 2,082 (thru July 18, 2017)
 - Additional one-time uses are being identified for FY2017 (exercise/play equipment, Pickfair open house)
 - Overall utilization of AARC increased
- A Human Resources Department is providing an Employment Specialist once a week with limited success
- AARC Nonprofit began providing Health Navigation services with some office hours at AARC
- Tax assistance and ESL classes continue with increasing demand
- Other activities: Approved Commercial Kitchen policy; Interest from Nepalese Community; Summer Camp "Counselors in Training" Program

Human Resources Diversity Issue Working Group

Members: Janki DePalma (Lead), Vince Cobalis

Other Members (new): HR Representative, Julia Joseph, Jessica Wang, and Chris Chen (AAEN)

The Human Resources (HR) Diversity Issues Working Group seeks to increase parity in City of Austin hiring and focuses on finding ways to increase the number of Asian Americans in executive and lower-salary positions. The group works very closely with the Human Resources Department.

Key 2016-17 Accomplishments

- Employment Specialist from the HRD works 8 hrs/week at the Asian American Resource Center. This staff member spends the entire day, once a week, at the resource center and provides job-counseling advice regarding jobs with the City of Austin.
- Translation of key outreach materials in Asian Languages, including announcements for the career fair help by the City
- Frequent collaboration with HRD staff on how to maximize the outreach to the local Asian-American community, including participation in Job Fairs, CelebrAsia, and APA Heritage Month
 - Co-hosted community resource/job fair on June 2
 - Employment Specialist participated in community meetings to understand specific employment concerns in the Asian-American community

Health Working Group

Members: Kavita Radhakrishnan (Lead), Vince Cobalis, Catherina Conte

The purpose of the Health Workgroup is to (1) identify the critical health needs of Asian Americans in Austin and explore strategies to address these health needs, (2) address health priority needs of Asian Americans in Austin by planning and implementing action items, and (3) connect with existing health resources in the city and sensitize them to the unique needs of Asian-Americans in Austin.

Key 2016-17 Accomplishments

- Provided feedback on the AAQOL survey initiative

- Obtained data and presentation from Austin Public Health (APH), previously HHSD, on prevalence of chronic disease, substance abuse and other mental issues among the Asian Americans in Austin / Travis county with a breakdown by specific sub-population. The presentation by APH identified challenges in assembling such data on Asian Americans from state-level or national-level surveys due to the proportionately small number of Asian Americans sampled in such surveys.
- APH also provided data on the percentage of Asian Americans served by contracts such as the Health Equity or General Fund Social Services. Finally, APH provided details about their initiative to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate materials and their progress in providing such translated materials to the Asian American community.
- Worked with APH regarding the number of Asian-American staff. Currently, the Health Equity Unit has two Asian-American staff, which is making a positive impact on health interests of Asian Americans in Austin.
- Monitored progress of the initiatives recommended for city funding by the AAQOL commission by inviting reports on their progress
- The fiscal support to CPIO for language access advocated by the AAQOL commission has been very useful for agencies like APH who are one of the primary users of translation of public health documents and interpretation for public health services to the Asian American community
- Identified budget priorities for FY 2017 – 18 related to health needs of Asian Americans in Austin, including continued financial support of the AARC non-profit's Community Health Navigator program and the CPIO translation efforts

Arts and Culture Working Group

Members: Pramod Patil (Lead), Shubhada Saxena, Janki DePalma

The mission of the Arts and Culture Workgroup is to work together with folks from various ethnic backgrounds by sharing and celebrating different cultures. High-level goals include:

- Encouraging Asian Americans in the expression of their culture

- Promoting cultural sharing activities within the Asian-American community and the larger Austin community
- Increase awareness of opportunities for the City to participate in Asian American cultural activities

Key 2016-17 Accomplishments

- Active Participation in AISD Diversity Day on May 22, 2017
 - Workgroup actively participated in planning and execution of AISD Diversity Day celebration
 - Diversity Day aligned with workgroup mission of cross-cultural promotion
 - Commissioner Patil led cross-cultural segment presentation and Commissioner Saxena took lead on the photo identity booth
- Active Participation in the City of Austin Cultural Map project
 - Participated by attending meetings at different districts
 - Shared details about Asian American cultural assets and bring awareness to Asian cultural landmarks in Austin
- Active involvement in the Blanton Museum's exhibit on Indian Painting
 - Involved in initial planning for the exhibits
 - Members of this work group also connected the community artists/leaders with museum staff and provided support for the exhibit
 - Epic stories of Ramayana and Mahabharatha are being depicted in the paintings at the exhibition

Community Stakeholder Commissioner Nomination Working Group

Members: TBD

The Community Stakeholder Commissioner Nomination Working Group was formed to nominate candidates for the four Community Stakeholder Commissioner positions. The group invited all current Commissioners to nominate candidates from the applicant pool and designed a qualities matrix for the purposes of scoring candidates. Each working group

member was tasked with scoring each candidate independently. After the chair tallied the scores, the top scoring candidates were forwarded to the full Commission for approval. **The group was inactive in 2016-17 but will be reactivated in 2017-18.**

Community Outreach Working Group

Members: Kirk Yoshida (lead), Shubhada Saxena, Catherina Conte, Nu Chanpheng, Pooja Sethi

Other Members: Marion Sanchez

*Note: The Community Assessment and Education Working Groups, included in last year's report, have been consolidated under the Community Outreach Working Group.

The purpose of the Community Outreach Working Group is to reach out to communities that are not currently connected with or represented on the AAQoL Advisory Commission by inviting members to speak to the Commission about their communities, join the working group, and attend Commission meetings. The ultimate goal is to bring forward new leadership for their communities. The Working Group works to provide support and guidance on K-12 issues affecting Asian-American communities, particularly with the Austin Independent School District. The Working Group is also charged with assisting city staff in finalizing the work of the Asian American Quality of Life Initiative as well as promoting the Initiative and its four reports to the Austin community and beyond.

Key 2016-17 Accomplishments

- Provided several rounds of edits for the Asian American Quality of Life Initiative Executive Report
- Met with staff and toured AISD's International High School
- Assisted with coordination of AISD's inaugural Diversity Day
- Attended multiple community events representing the Commission
- Provided outreach at events such as CelebrAsia, the North Austin Muslim Community Center Open House, and the Network of Asian American Organization (NAAO) board meeting
- Developed a list of community leaders and organizations for outreach efforts
- Developed ideas for a public event to publicize the Asian American Quality of Life Initiative Executive Summary, reports, and findings

- Worked with Dr. Yuri Jang regarding the qualitative study data and what it would take to clean and de-identify data before releasing for public use
- Provided feedback to Marion Sanchez (CPIO) regarding the plan to receive feedback from the public on the four Initiative reports
- Continued efforts to recruit community members to the Community Outreach Working Group and other Commission working groups.

Business Plan Working Group

Members: Kirk Yoshida (Lead), Vince Cobalis, Kavita Radhakrishnan

The Business Plan Working Group is tasked with coordinating the Commission's budget recommendation process. The group meets with city department staff, city council members, and community organizations to prioritize areas of interest and initiatives and develops funding requests for full commission approval. Throughout the year, the working group meets with department staff to ensure that funded initiatives progress in a manner that meets the Commission's intent.

Key 2016-17 Accomplishments

- Developed two detailed budget recommendation spreadsheets and accompanying budget presentations to the full Commission
- Submitted budget recommendations memo to the city manager for inclusion of FY 2016-17 funded items in the base budget
- Submitted a budget recommendations memo to the mayor and city council, upon approval by the full Commission
- Met with CPIO staff regarding the funding provided in the FY 2016-17 budget for language translation and interpretation
- Met with PARD staff regarding FY 2016-17 funded initiatives as well as unmet needs desired by the Asian American community
- Met with multiple city council members regarding the FY 2017-18 budget process
- Invited CPIO, EDD, APH and PARD staff to update the Commission on the status of FY 2016-17 funded initiatives
- Met with community organizations to develop funding initiatives for consideration in the Commission's FY 2017-18 funding request

- Advised PARD staff, CIP staff, city council members, and Mayor's Office staff on the need for the pedestrian bridge at the Asian American Resource Center

Commission Actions Summary

- Provided continued guidance on the Asian American Quality of Life (AAQoL) Initiative study and report (Ongoing monthly)
- The AAQoL Initiative has been well received by public and received two awards
- Monthly reports from Workgroups (Ongoing)
- Monthly oversight of AARC Kitchen Renovations
- Participated in Joint Inclusion Committee Special called meeting July 2016
- Created and approved the Commission's FY 2017 Budget Recommendations spreadsheet and companion presentation for submission to the City Manager's Office
- Identified common budget recommendations with the Hispanic-Latino Quality of Life Advisory Commission
- Supported Hispanic Quality of Life 2017 Budget recommendations
- Support for transportation bond (November 2016)
- Support Commission on Seniors – Age Friendly Action Community Action Plan
- Reviewed Commission Annual Internal Report
- Participated in AARC Community Engagement (November 2016)
- Supported HHSD Social Services Agreements with two Asian American organizations based on budget recommendations
- Action on 2018 Commission Budget recommendations

Briefings/Presentations to the Commission

- HHSD FY 17 Budget presentation
- Monthly Workgroup briefings
- Taiwanese presentation to modify the UT Quality of Life Survey report
- Human Resources presentation on Workforce Trends and diversity
- HHSD overview, ethnicity statistics and diversity initiatives
- HHSD Presentation of Social Services RCA's for Asian American organizations
- Austin Public Health (APH) response to Commission questions about employment and social services for Asian Americans (The Health & Human Services Department. (HHSD) transitioned to Austin Public Health (APH) during this period).
- Briefing from new Chief Equity Officer, Brion Oaks, November 2016
- Briefing about AARC kitchen renovation plans with monthly updates until completed
- Economic Development Department briefing (Dusty McCormick) on status of one-time contract increase for Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce (December 2016)
- Corporate Public Information Office briefing on response to City Auditor Language Access Audit and one-time \$250K Language and Interpretation funding. Shared May 2017 progress report to Council.
- AARC Strategic Plan (February 2017), including Consultant's report
- Austin Public Health (APH) presentation about Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and difficulty tracking AAPI with plan to develop a five-year data analysis
- APH response to questions about Social Services provided to AAPI
- Budget Office presentation of 2017-18 budget process
- APH update on BRFSS multi-year data collection
- CPIO briefing on Language Interpretation RFQ
- Asian American Cultural Center senior housing proposal (Amy Wong Mok)
- PARD 2018 Budget presentation and discussion with Director

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

The AAQoL Advisory Commission did not conduct any actions during the year that did not comply with its mission statement.

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

2017-18 Goals and Objectives

Equity

Work to address structural inequities that are reflected in City staffing and budget allocation.

- Front line staff and management should reflect the diversity on the population
- Limited English speaking populations need translated documents and language interpretation to fully participate in government
- Advocate for continuing support, fiscal and otherwise, of the CPIO's translation/interpretation of Asian American languages, and obtain periodic reports on their progress, outcomes and sustainability including how public departments will be funded to meet language access needs in the future
 - Support community non-profit access to the vendors and pricing for translation & interpretation services identified through the City RFQ processes

AAQoL Initiative

One of the AAQoL Advisory Commission's primary goals for the upcoming year will be assist CPIO staff to finalize the Initiative Executive Report and publicize all of the Initiative reports to the Austin community and beyond. Based on the findings of the AAQoL Initiative, the Commission will recommend improvements and new services along with suggested implementation timelines. The Commission will also work in conjunction with city staff to ensure that the data related to the quantitative report is converted to a format that may be released for public use.

Health

The Commission will continue to support safety net services that address the needs of Asian Americans by:

- Advocating and increasing awareness on unmet mental health needs of Asian Americans, sensitizing available mental health resources in the city such as ATCIC and MCOT to the unique mental health needs of Asian Americans
- Assuring that existing agencies serving Asian Americans, refugees, and immigrants (AFSSA, AARC Nonprofit, American Gateways, GAACC, etc.) receive funding to serve our expanding population and improve their access to ATCIC, MCOT and EMS to address unmet mental health needs
- Advocating for social services for Asian Americans proportional to the population through the current provider network or through redistribution of funding
- Providing advocacy for continuing support, fiscal and otherwise, of the AARC non-profit's Community Health Navigator program, and obtaining periodic reports on their progress, outcomes and sustainability
- Identifying and consolidating information and resources on free and low cost health clinics and fairs relevant to Asian Americans and identifying ways to disseminate that information in the public domain

Collaboration

The AAQoL Advisory Commission will seek to strengthen its ties with other city and community organizations by:

- Increasing participation in joint committees and collaboration with other minority Commissions
- Increasing support of and collaboration with Austin Independent School District on language programs and the International Welcome Center (IWC)
- Increasing collaboration with Austin Public Health (APH) for health-related functions at the AARC
- Expand workgroup membership and participation to include individuals from the community as well as and subject experts. Ideas for the upcoming year include:
 - Health – include representatives of APH, ATCIC, People's Community Clinic
 - Review UT Survey process and available data to determine additional analysis needs

- Address shortage of culturally competent Certified Nurses' Aides
- Address children's health needs in the AISD system
- Human Resources – Include HR Department, Asian American Employee Network (AAEN) and non-City HR advisor
 - Work with City HR to increase effective outreach (in addition to AARC office hours)
 - Work to create other events at the AARC that focus on employment with the City (resume writing, interview skills)
 - Translate key outreach documents and have interpreters available
 - Work with AAEN and HR to identify ways to help increase the number of City of Austin executives
- AARC Oversight – include AARC staff, NAAO representative and AARC Nonprofit representative
 - Food permit waiver for senior meal vendors to use kitchen
 - Temp employment specialist thru September
 - Increase collaborations with NAAO and AARC Nonprofit
 - Expand participation from other communities
 - Support AARC Strategic Plan
 - Funding for Master Plan for Phase 2 and 3
 - Re-evaluate and re-purpose HR role
 - Intergenerational exercise equipment in Great Lawn
 - Increase AARC staffing to meet demand
- Community Outreach – include community leaders, especially those ethnicities not represented on the current Commission
 - Finalize list of community organizations, leaders, and events to target for outreach efforts
 - Attend additional events and meetings to promote interest in the Commission and its efforts

- Develop a one-pager describing the work of the Commission and the Community Outreach Workgroup for distribution to community organization members
- Publicize the AAQoL Initiative and its findings to the community
- Strengthen ties with AISD

Our Communities

In addition to the goal and objectives presented above, the AAQoL Advisory Commission will work to support our communities by:

- Providing outreach to better understand and support refugee, new Asian Immigrants, and other underserved populations
- Continuing to support the Austin American Resource Center (AARC)
- Providing more language access for Asians at the AARC and other city services
- Continuing to develop diverse programming at the AARC