



Annual Internal Review

This report covers the time period of 7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018

CITY OF AUSTIN COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) is: to serve as an advisory body to the City Council and the City Manager concerning the needs and problems of women in the Austin area and shall recommend programs designed to alleviate any inequalities that may confront women in social, economic and vocational pursuits. The Commission shall develop goals and coordinate research for planning, programming, and action relating to opportunities, needs, problems, and contributions of women in the city.

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.**
 - a. *Equity Resolution | Receive COA Equity Pay Study and Listening to the Workforce. Identify pay wage gaps, gender disparities, current policies within the COA and jointly submit recommendations with Human Rights Commission*
 - i. A working group met regularly in Fall 2018 with a Human Rights Commission working group per City Council recommendation re: equity. In addition, representatives from the Human Resources Department, Small & Minority Business Resources and Austin Public Health presented to the Commission on equity.
 - ii. From this collaboration the Commission for Women passed three recommendations:
 1. [20171011-5a](#): The Commission recommends inserting criteria for the naming of new public symbols to require gender and racial equity and actions to remediate existing naming inequities.

2. [20171011-5b](#): The Commission recommends halting practices that institute or amplify gender pay imbalance at the City of Austin.
 3. [20171108-04b](#): Seven-point recommendation in response to Council Resolution 20170323-054.
- iii.* The commission, related to its work looking at street naming practices, also passed Recommendation [20170831-002A](#), recommending renaming Robert E. Lee Road to Bertha Means, in honor of Austin Women's Hall of Fame honoree Bertha Means.
 - iv.* In February 2018, the Commission learned that 20171011-05b was being implemented, as prior salary question was being removed from City applications.
 - v.* The Commission was also interested in the current sexual harassment training for City employees and continuing researching into the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and how it could be implemented in Austin. CEDAW will be a long-term item that the Commission will continue to revisit.
 - vi.* Last recommendation items regarding domestic violence, caretaker status, lactation, and family leave will be discussed in future meetings.
 - vii.* In addition, in August 2017, the Commission heard from Erika Kelly, of the Austin Locker Room Project, which has been advocating for the retrofitting of older fire stations with women's locker rooms. At the time, 6 stations have only one locker room/restroom. In October 2017, the COA Economic Development Office spoke to the commission about recruiting strategies to attract MBE and WBE businesses. In April 2018, the Commission began discussing the renaming of the Capital Corridor after a woman; Krithika Shamanna, senior at Westwood High School, gave a presentation on the lack of feminine hygiene products available to students at her school, and how that affected school truancy rates and absences. She started the LaunchPad Initiative with classmates to work with sponsors and organizations to stock feminine hygiene products in the bathrooms. She sought support, assistance, and advice in building a network to expand this initiative to all bathrooms in public spaces state-wide through policy change and implementation. In June 2018, Brion Oaks, Equity Officer, attended the Commission meeting to discuss the equity tool, re: Commission's recommendation to modify the Equity Tool used by his office.
- b. Sexual Assault Survivor Treatment | Continue to examine DNA lab operations, rape kit backlog, and hold APD accountable to resolving

backlog and sexual assault victim treatment (Working group established: Amanda and Ana)

- i. In August 2017, the commission passed Budget Request [20170809-003b](#): Request by the Commission for Women regarding survivors of sexual assault. The request included:
 1. Recommendation for additional APD Victims Services counselors from the community who would be willing to counsel sexual assault survivors.
 2. Request \$50,000 from the APD budget to train therapists through a program such as EMDR in counseling trauma victims.
 - ii. In November 2017, Margaret Moore, Mindy Montford, Beverly Matthews, and Darla Gay of the Travis County District Attorney's office presented additional information on statistics regarding prosecution of sexual assaults in Travis County. While the number of prosecutions appears at first read to be low, the published numbers do not reflect the full story, such as cases prosecuted on related charges rather than sexual assault in order to provide a clearer and swifter path to conviction.
 - iii. In February 2018, the commission passed another resolution ([20180214-04c](#)) calling for five full-time Victim services counselors to the Victims' Services division of the Austin Police Department.
 - iv. In April 2018, the commission was notified that the rape kit backlog has reached zero count. The Commission will continue to follow-up, discuss, and make a recommendation regarding survivor services.
- c. Women's Hall of Fame 2018 | Ceremony and recipient management (Working group established: Flannery, Julia, Kasha, and Rossana)
- i. Recognition of women's achievement in the Austin community through the induction into the City of Austin Women's Hall of Fame
 1. The 2018 Women's Hall of Fame event marked the sixth annual honorary ceremony that serves to recognize women of leadership and outstanding achievement in the Austin area. Nominations were sought between October 2017 and January 2018, and the nominees were selected at the February 2018 board meeting. The recipients were honored on March 9, 2018 at City Hall with Mayor Steve Adler and Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo and 2017 honoree Patsy Woods Martin addressing the inductees and guests at the event. The 2018 inductees reflect the mission of the Commission in that they each represented women breaking through barriers for women; working to better

the lives women and girls; and for outstanding public or community service.

2. The following applicants were selected to be inducted into the Women's Hall of Fame: Gigi Edwards Bryant, Jeanne Goka, Celia Israel, and Dr. Sarah Weddington.
 - ii. The Commission, via the working group, is exploring changing the event for 2019, including the event's language to incorporate the idea of "women who support women," and adding categories and finalists.
- d. Child/Women Sex Trafficking | Commission to consider possible action on this topic based on community needs (Working group established: Amanda and Kasha)
 - i. In January 2018, Rachel Alvarez of Refugee Services of Texas gave a presentation on the state of human trafficking in Central Texas. Alvarez reports that a coalition of organizations focused on prevention and victims' services is strengthening and forming working groups to combine efforts and resources. Support of the Governor's Office in educating State workers is appreciated and helping build awareness.
 - ii. The commission wants to reach out to someone in the Governor's office about programs related child sex trafficking, such as Kim Grabert, Texas' Director of Human Trafficking Prevention. Andrea Sparks, Director, Governor Abbott's Child Sex Trafficking Team, has attended a commission meeting previously.
 - iii. In May 2018, the commission agreed to reach out to Project SAFE to see if they can send someone to a future meeting.
- e. Stay as involved as possible in the hiring of the City Manager and APD Chief in correspondence with the Commission's Recommendation regarding the position requirements
 - i. The Commission continued to follow the hiring process for the City Manager, who was hired in late 2017. The commission also continued to follow the hiring of the new APD Chief in 2018.
 - ii. In February 2018, the commission passed Recommendation [20180214-04b](#): The Commission for Women recommends that community engagement be a critical function of the vetting of City of Austin police chief candidates relative to addressing women-specific issues.

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

The Commission for Women remains in compliance with the mission and maintains the agenda of focusing on matter that are in compliance with the mission statement.

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

TOP INITIATIVES OF 2018-19

In order to articulate our top initiatives and ensure that we achieve our goals by next April 2019, the Commission for Women has identified these primary focal points to address:

- Equity | Identify pay wage gaps, gender disparities, groups in need, current policies and other issues related to equity within the COA and Austin. Continue to investigate adopting CEDAW. (Working group established: Becky, Flannery, Rossana, Tonya and Sarah)
- Sexual Assault Survivor Treatment | Continue to examine DNA lab operations, rape kit backlog, and hold APD accountable to resolving backlog and sexual assault victim treatment (Working group established: Amanda and Ana)
- Women's Hall of Fame 2018 | Ceremony and recipient management (Working group established: Flannery, Julia, Kasha, and Rossana)
- Child/Women Sex Trafficking | Commission to consider possible action on this topic based on community needs (Working group established: Amanda and Kasha)
- Stay as involved as possible in the hiring of City Leadership positions in correspondence with the Commission's Recommendation regarding the position requirements