

**Story: What did you hear from the community?**

Several disparities around testing and vaccination towards the Latino Community.

Several complaints and conversations have been hosted by our commission, the Austin Latino Coalition, GAVA, Community Resilience Trust, to name a few around health disparities affecting the Latino community.

There continues to be a huge digital divide issue for Latinos to register to get a vaccine.

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

APH needs more staffing support and there needs to be more inclusive practices to better ensure easier access to vaccination.

**Current Funding:**

APH, Biden Administration funding, CARES Act

\$330 Million to Invest in Community Health Workers.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/25/fact-sheet-biden-administration-announces-historic-10-billion-investment-to-expand-access-to-covid-19-vaccines-and-build-vaccine-confidence-in-hardest-hit-and-highest-risk-communities/>

Deadline 5/3/2022 <https://www.cdcfoundation.org/CBO-VaccineConfidence-RFP?inline>

**How does the problem show up in your community? Who is most impacted by the problem?**

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

Implement more walk up vaccination sites where an appointment is not necessary nor a car is necessary to receive a vaccine. Similar to: Walk-up First dose COVID-19 vaccine- DELCO Center

<https://www.facebook.com/events/218392352961897> & Walk In First dose COVID-19 Vaccine-

Mexican Consulate

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=1147117225763797&set=a.107495663059297>

Implement a community health worker framework and invest a budget into hiring and developing a community health worker framework.

The city needs to allocate budget to invest in community based organizations that can help address vaccination issues - outsource RFP contracts to vendors who have the trust of the community to help increase vaccination rates and help tackle vaccine misinformation.

Increase the access points for walk up vaccinations. Ensure it is easy for people to access through CapMetro and transportation. Equitable access points in the eastern crescent.

Provide more assistance to enrollment - calling the hotline. Ensure Language Access during telephone call and on information that's distributed.

Ensure diversity of vendors and staff providing vaccination assistance.

### **Story: What did you hear from the community?**

The Latino community has experienced hardship due to COVID. Several businesses have been impacted, nonprofits that help directly impacted Austinites have seen their demand increase, and there has been an economic impact where people are needing more financial assistance in rent support, direct cash aid, and assistance with bills and emergency expenses. There are also several issues around accessing vaccines and selecting vendors that can meet the needs of a diverse constituent base.

Food access is also a large issue during COVID.

### **Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

- The application for businesses to receive assistance created additional barriers to entry. For example, [Resolution No. 20200604-040](#)
- The portal to receive rental assistance created additional barriers to receive assistance such as documentation required, proof of employment or being laid off, and digital inclusion issues for those that have difficulties accessing/navigating the application.
- Latino constituents experienced issues registering to receive a vaccine.
- Latino businesses are not getting sufficient assistance to stay afloat and are being disproportionately represented in the recipient list of selected businesses that received aid from the city. I.e. PPP program.
- Micro businesses were also neglected in being able to receive financial assistance due to the original parameters on what's established as an eligible business and how large you have to be to receive assistance.
- Nonprofits of color were also disproportionately awarded grants.
- There was not enough communication on how families could receive assistance for their utilities. They were basing this information based off previous documentation, but it was difficult to supply documentation for several families.

### **Current Funding:**

Several avenues of funding. I'd like to call special attention to the Economic Development department.

### **How does the problem show up in your community? Who is most impacted by the problem?**

Businesses that are not aware of city resources or connected to organizations that support small businesses miss out on opportunities to apply for the grants. There needs to be more information on Latino media sites and FAQs/webinars hosted to help answer questions.

Digital Inclusion is a huge issue in the City of Austin and little budget has been spent to resolve for this. More innovative practices need to be implemented to try to reach those that may be facing issues in the digital divide. Language access documentation is important as well as webinars in Spanish.

For vaccine distribution, there needs to be more focus on the community health worker framework and allocate more dollars towards creating drive thru vaccination sites that don't require an appointment to receive a vaccine. There should be a rule waived that if somebody received their first vaccination in another city, they can get their second shot in Austin. Right now, there is a barrier where if someone received a vaccine outside of Austin, they cannot get their shot with APH.

There needs to be more community engagement outreach for nonprofit and small businesses grants. The recent numbers of the last distribution of funds during the CARES act could see improvement.

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

There needs to be a serious conversation around eligibility requirements and how digital inclusion, lack of documentation and awareness, can impact an individual/businesses application.

The application scoring matrix developed by the Economic Development Department is a good start. I think by receiving constituent feedback, the scoring matrix could be improved.

Please reference previous questions that address some problems and solutions embedded as a response.

These changes should be implemented and considered for the recent distribution of funds provided to states/cities by the Biden Administration.

Food access rules should be laxer to assist those who need immediate access to food to be able to receive sooner. Increase emergency funding and capacity support for food banks, partner agencies, feeding kitchens, and food recovery organizations for food, meal preparation, transportation, equipment, staffing, and supplies. Increase emergency funding to farmers for food they can't sell due to market disruptions or provide funding to reimburse farmers for food they donate to emergency food efforts.

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

The City of Austin was the first municipality in Texas to make a commitment to include works of art in construction projects. By ordinance, 2% of eligible capital improvement project budgets are allocated to commission or purchase art for that site. Established by the City in 1985, the Art in Public Places (AIPP) program collaborates with local & nationally-known artists to include the history and values of our community into cultural landmarks that have become cornerstones of Austin's identity. Since its inception this program has not had an impact study.

**Current Funding:**

None

**How does the problem show up in your community? Who is most impacted by the problem?**

Many LatinX artists depend on this sustainable funding, It is important to understand the impact of public art both economically and socially.

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

Provide a one time budget increase of \$75,000 so that AIPP is able to study the impact of public/community art.

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

Historically and currently, Art has been a tool for expressing liberation for the LatinX community. The Austin history center has limited capacity to help preserve the LatinX experience in Austin.

**Current Funding:**

Unknown and capacity is only set to one staff member

**How does the problem show up in your community? Who is most impacted by the problem?**

Many untold stories of the LatinX experience in Austin. Limited capacity in preserving oral stories about the LatinX culture.

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

Increase the budget by \$100,000 for the LatinX Community Archivist to hire or train LatinX community to preserve history. Funding for LatinX/Hispanic art history be recorded auditory and preserved in the form of storytelling.

**Story: What did you hear from the community?**

COVID has raised awareness around the already existing digital inclusion issue. It has also exasperated the need for more resources. The existing Digital Inclusion department has recycled continuous practices that have proven to be ineffective for the Latino community.

- City website experiences language access and accessibility issues.
- City continues to develop and implement systems that are difficult for people with limited digital literacy skills to utilize applications: i.e. APH appointment for vaccine and testing
- There was a limitation of computers/hotspots available.
  - Failed to quickly adapt to utilizing buses or library parking lots as a place to utilize the internet in the interim
- Still a large gap in where individuals can receive access to free internet now during COVID
- Lack of outreach to marginalized communities outside of existing partnerships

Low income apartment complexes have aged industrial apartments where they are able to only receive services from one vendor and/or are unable to receive a reliable signal to the internet.

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

Austin is growing as a large tech city and the city is unable to tap into corporate relationships for the benefit of the local community. Corporate relationships could assist with digital inclusion issues and assistance to access devices.

Continued issue with the development of city websites and processes that are difficult for people with limited english speaking proficiency and people that are visually impaired/hearing impaired to access websites. Lack of subtitles in a lot of the city videos. Lack of alt text utilized in images distributed by department & the city.

Lack of information on where to access free internet.

More training for Spanish speaking parents on how to use the internet are needed. More K-12 STEM programs needed.

### **Current Funding:**

Digital Inclusion Department

### **How does the problem show up in your community? Who is most impacted by the problem?**

People of color are mostly impacted. The city is becoming a smart tech city, yet there are several people in the community who have issues accessing the internet and have digital literacy issues.

### **Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

- Support Latinitas and add partners with new organizations on distributing the information out about city resources available.
- Increase community engagement practices into the Spanish community. Increase community engagement budget and language access, accommodations budget.
- Allocate dollars to **low barrier mini grants** and create an application for vendors to supply an RFP on an outreach campaign or education services to assist with digital inclusion in partnership with the Equity Office.
- For continued budget, partner with different departments i.e. Equity Office on ensuring transparency and more of an opportunity on selected vendors.
- Department to increase strategic partner portfolio. There is an overreliance on existing relationships.
- Allocate more budget to make more library parking spot hot spots.
- Allocate or acquire more hotspots/computers for those in need.
- Provide budget (\$150K) to redo an assessment on the city's current digital divide/digital infrastructure.

**Story: What did you hear from the community?**

Young children must be valued within the context of their families, cultures, communities, and society. The earliest years of life are full of rapid changes and transitions. Infants and toddlers generally acquire developmental milestones in a typical sequence, but no two develop at exactly the same rate or following the same patterns. Caregivers often wonder how to tell the difference between a child's unique timetable and a developmental problem. Parents report difficulty finding early childhood services in the family's primary language. Parents struggle to afford high quality early childhood education and services. Sometimes it is more financially responsible to have one parent stay home to care for the children instead of paying for childcare. Childcare sometimes costs more than a parent's salary.

Personally, as a school psychologist who completed all the bilingual Spanish early childhood special education evaluations for 5 years in Pflugerville ISD, the majority of the families I saw were Spanish speaking Austin residents. Some children were receiving Early Childhood Interventions; however, at times, the family did not speak the same language as the case manager or service provider (speech therapist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, etc.). The case managers are overworked and underpaid. I worked with several case managers throughout my time, and the turnover was high. Case managers did not always have time to provide the level of support a family might need. However, the families in AVANCE or Todos Juntos typically received more services, individual support, and community support in their preferred language. I also noticed that whenever I completed evaluations for monolingual English children, their parents were privileged to have good health insurance that covered therapy for their child. Many of the parents I worked with had Medicare. They experienced numerous issues with Medicare, which caused interruption of services.

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

There is not adequate funding for high quality Spanish and bilingual (Spanish and English) early childhood education and services that also includes case management, parenting education, literacy and educational programming for parents, and community support.

Children experiencing delays may or may not be eligible for services under Part C of the Individuals with Disability Act (IDEA). In either case, the parent may need help navigating early childhood providers. If the child qualifies for services, by law, the state must provide the child interventions; however, the Early Childhood Intervention provider may not always provide services in the family's primary language. These children and families are not provided the same level of service as monolingual English speaking families.

**Current Funding:**

From Austin Finance Online:

- Child Inc. - Authorize negotiation and execution of a 12-month social services contract with Child, Inc. to fund and administer the Early Head Start Child Care Program in an amount not to exceed \$78,398. The Early Head Start (EHS) program serves infants and toddlers (up to the age



of three) in very low-income families who reside within the City. EHS provides an educational child development program that includes access to wrap-around services such as dental, medical, and nutrition services for the children and counseling, social services, and parent education and involvement for the parents. Under the contract, Child, Inc. will provide childcare services to at least 58 clients. The contract term will be from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021.

- **Easter Seals - Early Childhood Intervention (ECD Strategy:** Provide therapy, case management, and developmental services to children ages 0-3 in the child's home or natural environment. Services are provided primarily in English and Spanish, though there are also clients who speak a variety of languages including Arabic and Vietnamese so services are offered in those languages as well.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Agreement Change Amount</b>	<b>Total Agreement Amount</b>
Basic Term: (Sept. 1, 2015 – Sept. 30, 2018)	n/a	\$ 1,002,735
Amendment No. 1: Add funds to Agreement and modify Exhibits	\$ 60,162	\$ 1,062,897
Amendment No. 2: Add funds to Agreement and modify Exhibits	\$ 16,298	\$ 1,079,195
Amendment No. 3: Add funds to Agreement and modify Exhibits	\$ 9,061	\$ 1,088,256
Amendment No. 4: Exercise Extension Option #1 (Oct. 1, 2018 – Sept. 30, 2019)	\$371,509	\$ 1,459,765
Amendment No. 5: Exercise Extension Option #2 (Oct. 1, 2019 – Sept. 30, 2020)	\$371,509	\$ 1,831,274

- **Any BabyCan -**

<b>Term</b>	<b>Agreement Change Amount</b>	<b>Total Agreement Amount</b>
Basic Term: (Sept. 1, 2015 – Sept. 30, 2018)	n/a	\$ 4,459,737
Amendment No. 1: Add funds to Agreement and modify Exhibits	\$ 267,582	\$ 4,727,319
Amendment No. 2: Add funds to Agreement and modify Exhibits	\$ 72,486	\$ 4,799,805
Amendment No. 3: Add funds to Agreement and modify Exhibits	\$ 40,300	\$ 4,840,105
Amendment No. 4: Exercise Extension Option #1 (Oct. 1, 2018 – Sept. 30, 2019)	\$ 1,652,316	\$ 6,492,421
Amendment No. 5: Exercise Extension Option #2 (Oct. 1, 2019 – Sept. 30, 2020)	\$ 1,652,316	\$ 8,144,737

Subcontractors:

- AVANCE - 9/1/2015-9/30/2018 - \$390,000 - Parenting and Early Education classes; home-visitation and case management; transportation and food
  - 10/1/2019-9/30/2020 \$155,976 serving 30 clients - parenting and early education classes; home-visitation and case management; transportation and food for clients

- Literacy/Adult Ed: Providing integrated literacy services for the whole family can break the cycle of poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment. Programs such as AVANCE provide literacy and educational programming and support to improve opportunities for entering the workforce and earning a living wage while also providing stimulating childcare environments for children while their parents are pursuing educational and workforce opportunities. Furthermore, these programs provide parenting education components to ensure that parents are aware of their child's development and are creating safe, stable, nurturing and stimulating environments for their children when they are together.
  - Parent-Child Program: AVANCE provides parenting and early childhood instruction, ESL classes, educational toy-making, home visits, case management, supportive services and developmental screenings. Classes are taught in Spanish by bilingual, culturally competent staff. AVANCE's services demonstrably help children succeed in school, prevent child abuse and neglect and break families' trans-generational cycle of poverty. Children become school-ready while parents learn to play an important, proactive roles in counteracting risk factors that later lead to underachievement.
- Communities In Schools - 9/1/2015-9/30/2018 - \$900,000 - Comprehensive dual generation family literacy programming; PAT home visiting; Incredible Years group parenting classes
  - 10/1/2019-9/30/2020 - \$314,572 serving 75 clients - comprehensive dual generation family literacy programming; PAT home visiting; Incredible Years group parenting classes
    - ASPIRE: ASPIRE provides education for families with children 0-7 years old who are in need of ESL and/or GED classes, and live in southeast Austin. Services are provided in the ASPIRE building behind Travis High School, as well as during monthly home visits. ASPIRE serves approximately 100 families per year.
    - Parents as Teachers - Parent educators provide regular home visits that follow the award-winning, evidence-based PAT curriculum, which combines an in-depth knowledge of early childhood development with recent neuroscience research findings on early learning.
- Camp Fire USA Balcones Council play to learn; 2 generation parenting program 9/1/2015-9/30/2018 \$180000
  - 10/1/2019-9/30/2020 - \$67,319 serving 62 clients - Camp Fire Play to Learn; 2 Generation parenting program
- YMCA of Austin - 9/1/2015-9/30/2018 - \$272,496 Play to learn program
  - 10/1/2019-9/30/2020 - \$100,487 serving 65 clients - YMCA of Austin Play to Learn program
- Jeremiah Program - 9/1/2015-9/30/2018 - \$150,000 Early childhood education services; Family support including parenting services
  - 10/1/2019-9/30/2020 - \$52,429 serving 3 clients - early childhood education; residential assistance; career development and life skills training
- Literacy Coalition of Central Texas 9/1/2015-9/30/2018 - \$255,285 Administer the Playing and Learning Strategies (PALS) program in multiple sites and classrooms
  - 10/1/2019-9/30/2020 - \$94,581 serving 105 clients - Playing and Learning Strategies (PALS) program
- Capital of Texas Public Telecommunications Council KLRU 9/1/2015-9/30/2018 - \$196,956 Play to Learn Workshop series

- 10/1/2019-9/30/2020 - \$63,378 serving 120 clients - Play to Learn workshop series
- o Austin Children's Services 9/1/2015-9/30/2018 - \$225,000 Evidence-based home visitation services coupled with therapeutic early childhood classes for children
- o The SAFE Alliance - 10/1/2019-9/30/2020 - \$83,362 serving 27 clients - Early childhood services and family support; parent education; crisis intervention; mental health and other support services

**How does the problem show up in your community? Who is most impacted by the problem?**

High quality early childhood education and services is a basic human right. Spanish speaking families do not receive the same level of support as their monolingual English speaking peers. Spanish speaking children are not provided the same opportunities as monolingual peers. Current funding is inadequate to meet the needs of the Hispanic/Latino community. Very few of the programs currently funded directly state they serve Spanish speaking clients.

Nowadays, children entering school for the first time are expected to have some level of knowledge regarding academic skills. Students who receive high quality early childhood care start off ahead of their peers. Limited access to high quality early childhood education and services helps keep the racial achievement gap alive. In the long run, we see this inequity perpetuate long standing economic inequities.

Additionally, some children that do not receive high quality early childhood education and services may enter school developmentally behind. They may display behaviors that are seen as inappropriate. For example, a young child with a severe speech delay may throw items as a form of communication since they may not yet have the vocabulary to state their frustrations; however, others may view this behavior as being defiant. The effects of implicit bias are seen as early as the preschool years, with Black students being suspended at much higher rates than White preschool students. Students of color, and students with disabilities, are disproportionately represented in exclusionary discipline consequences, such as suspension, expulsion, and referral to law enforcement. Such discipline in turn is associated with student dropout and entry into the prison system.

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

The Commission recommends allocating funding to two-generation Spanish and bilingual (Spanish and English) early childhood programs that provide case management services, parenting classes, literacy and educational programming, and community support.

Additionally, the Commission recommends allocating additional funding for bilingual Early Childhood Intervention case managers.

This recommendation is aligned with following SD2023 Outcomes: Economic Opportunity & Affordability; and Health & Environment.

**Story: What did you hear from the community?**

An additional focus needs to be given when creating the land development code, Project Connect, and when voting in new housing projects in areas where it might be considered high flooding zones. Referencing [Resolution 20150604-044](#), the city needs to focus more attention and resources towards flooding mitigation plans and prioritize community outreach.

We are in support of Council Member Vannessa Fuentes recent resolution for flood mitigation. District 1, 2, 4 and 5 need special attention and more in depth community outreach efforts regarding flood mitigation plans.

The buyout process is a slow and intimidating process and is very overwhelming for people.

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

District 1-5 have been neglected in developing sustainable flood mitigation plans.

Those who have suffered flooding for a myriad of reasons include overloaded storm drainage systems, poorly managed drainage systems, increased impervious cover from development and poor drainage designs from decades past. Our constituents are oftentimes frustrated and stressed with the city due to the lack of planning around flooding.

**Current Funding:**

Watershed Dept.

**How does the problem show up in your community? Who is most impacted by the problem?**

Texas leads the nation in flood-related deaths most every year.

The buyout process is overwhelming for families and is lengthy. Generally a bad experience for families.

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

To resolve for this, the city should put in place strict regulations for localized flooding such as preventing increased impervious cover in neighborhood areas or in any redevelopment efforts.

The city needs to prioritize flood mitigation through climate resilience in conjunction with the Chief Resilience Officer. This should be one of the responsibilities of the Chief Resilience Officer in partnership with the Watershed Protection department and the Office of Sustainability. Budget should be supplied to assist with in depth community outreach efforts for these departments to work collectively to receive sufficient feedback from directly impacted communities.

City Council should adopt a city-wide flood mitigation prioritization policy based on loss of life, general health and safety, and property damage. All subsequent city council policy and budget decisions should be made through this framework. We support the Flood Mitigation Task Force on this recommendation.

The Watershed Protection Department's Operations and Maintenance budget should be funded to a sufficient level so as to provide necessary resources for maintenance, including regular clearing and cleaning of creeks and streams PLUS providing necessary personnel and resources during flood events that arise; We support the Flood Mitigation Task Force on this recommendation.

The City should not grant variances for development that may lead to future flooding or annex property that may already be a flood concern. We support the Flood Mitigation Task Force on this recommendation.

**Story: What did you hear from the community?**

Families are needing more access to food due to COVID financial hardships and increased cost in purchasing food.

Families felt neglected from the city in receiving access to food during the Winter Austin Storm (SNOVID).

Farmers are needing support due to their crops being damaged due to SNOVID and there needs to be an infrastructure in place to assist black, hispanic, and indigenous farmers in the city of austin.

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

The food insecurity population grew by 26.3% in Austin's 5 county MSA from 12.4% preCOVID to 15.7% during COVID, and the child food insecurity population grew by 37% from 16.9% preCOVID to 23.2% during COVID.

41% of food insecure people in Travis County do not qualify for Federal Assistance (SNAP, WIC, School Meal Programs)

The city is ill equipped to support the large number of communities needing access to food.

There was not a well prepared disaster management plan to help create food distribution sites and to distribute food to those that needed it during COVID and SNOVID. There was an overreliance on non-profit organizations to carry the burden of creating mutual aid campaigns to help feed those in need. The city was largely silent in assisting communities. Communities organizing efforts were not reimbursed from their efforts. The Emergency Services department failed the community during this time.

Language access was a barrier. The information distributed by the city was oftentimes not translated.

There is not sufficient support for Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic farmers to get access to land or grants to help grow food in areas that struggle with food access.

**Current Funding:**

N/A - several departments.

**How does the problem show up in your community? Who is most impacted by the problem?**

People with limited english speaking proficiency and with lack of access to transportation were disproportionately impacted.

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

A comprehensive Austin/Travis County Food System Plan is needed that centers on equity and aligns with the City and Travis County economic, social, and environmental priorities. We support the recommendations provided by the Food Policy board in addition to the recommendations below.

Food Policy Board Recommendations: <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=357564>

- Increase emergency funding and capacity support for food banks, partner agencies, feeding kitchens, and food recovery organizations for food, meal preparation, transportation, equipment, staffing, and supplies.
- Increase emergency funding to farmers for food they can't sell due to market disruptions or provide funding to reimburse farmers for food they donate to emergency food efforts.
- Increase funding for language access.
- Add food access as a responsibility under the Chief Resilience Officer. This should be a main priority and a plan should be enacted on hosting listening sessions with constituents on how to improve food access. A report should be created on an updated disaster management plan that includes food access prioritizing directly impacted communities.

**Story: What did you hear from the community?**

We need to update our Hispanic QOL report. It is outdated and as the city has grown and priorities have shifted, we need to update our report. We need to update this document to better represent the needs of our constituent base.

[http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/City\\_Manager/HispanicReport-ver\\_6-0901\\_13.pdf](http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/City_Manager/HispanicReport-ver_6-0901_13.pdf)

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

We do not have budget for this project. Our priorities as a commission are outdated.

**Current Funding:**

Not existent. Budget has been denied previously for this request.

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

Allocate \$100 K for updating the Hispanic QOL budget. The \$100K can assist with community outreach efforts and creating a 5 year strategy that will highlight and improve the LatinX experience in Austin.

**Story: What did you hear from the community?**

Individuals in the community continue to voice concerns regarding underfunding of immigration legal services, especially under a new administration. Individuals are concerned funding will decrease although it is expected that the need for immigrant legal services will expand (DACA, Temporary Protected Status, possible immigration reform). The need for these services continues to be high.

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

Only a small number of individuals are served with the way funding currently stands. There are very few organizations in Austin that have the ability to provide legal services to our immigrant communities pro bono. Need for legal services will only expand under the new administration. We must support the immigrant community so that they can access the full range of services offered by the city.

**Current Funding:**

Austin Public Health

- American Gateways - Currently in year four of a five-year contract with the City of Austin, receiving \$210,000 per year.
- Catholic Charities - On March 25, 2021, Council approved to increase funding in an amount not to exceed \$105,000 to the term April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022 and add two 12-month extension options each in an amount not to exceed \$209,858, for a revised total agreement amount not to exceed \$1,346,448.

**How does the problem show up in your community? Who is most impacted by the problem?**



Immigrants without legal status face increased risk due to increased law enforcement and anti-immigrant sentiment. Immigrants without legal status may not have access to educational opportunities and community services. Additionally, we see immigrants fleeing violence and being detained in the United States. COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted the immigrant community, including those in detention centers. Immigrants are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine; however, some individuals have been denied the vaccine. The immigrant community has also been weary of obtaining COVID-19 medical services due to fear of detention and/or deportation.

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

The Commission recommends increased funding for pro bono and low bono immigration legal services. It is expected that the need for immigrant legal services will expand (DACA, Temporary Protected Status, possible immigration reform).

This recommendation aligns with the following SD 2023 Outcome: Safety.

**Story: What did you hear from the community?**

Not enough funding or assistance available for those needing legal services for eviction suits or tenants rights advocacy.

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

COVID has exasperated the disparity in people losing their jobs and being evicted.

There are several families living in terrible living conditions in affordable housing units who take advantage of the low rent prices to not supply their tenants with livable situations.

**Current Funding:**

Limited. Should be increased.

**How does the problem show up in your community? Who is most impacted by the problem?**

BASTA has done a great job in highlighting the need for a more established and supported legal services budget.

Mt. Carmel and several HUD funded properties have shown extreme neglect to their constituents.

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

Increase funding for tenants protection services.

Provide more resources for language support and implement a goal/KPI in the negotiations procurement contract around tenant organizing. Provide a budget for FTEs or grant recipients to help with tenant organizing. Tenant organizing means that the grant recipient or FTE is responsible for mobilizing tenants to create groups and teach them how to advocate for themselves and understand their rights.

**Story: What did you hear from the community?**

Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center (ESB-MACC) offers services through the Academia Cuauhtli, a free Saturday culture and language revitalization academy for elementary school children and their parents and uses a curriculum focused on Indigeneity, social justice, social history, traditional arts, and *danza Mexica*. The program serves a working class, mostly Mexican, immigrant community whose children attend Sanchez-Metz, Zavala, Houston, Perez, Travis Heights, Blazier, and Harris Elementary Schools, in addition to Lively and O'Henry Middle Schools within Austin Independent School District (AISD) and embraces ESB-MACC's mission of collaborative engagement in service to our communities.

ESB-MACC, and Academia Cuauhtli are true incubators for

future artisans, artists, writers, and community activists for culture and the arts and provides a learning and supportive environment for education, social, and economic needs through the expansion of the parental involvement enterprise, including the extensive COVID-related assistance extended to our Latino, East Austin families.

Academia Cuauhtli also fulfills its mission through teacher preparation and mentorship by creating teacher support networks, hosting professional training workshops and conferences and a diverse array of teachers and educators throughout Austin, nationally and internationally, with an average of 200 teachers served annually, all of which raises the visibility of the

ESB-MACC's leadership role in education, Indigeneity, and the arts. Academia Cuauhtli also offers parental education and involvement initiatives to ensure an integrated education program beneficial to the entire Latino community.

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

The lack of places where youth can connect with a rich cultural resource that we have been lucky to inherit. Starting in the 1990's, there has been a significant influx of Latino immigrants which has integrated itself into the Tejano community and helped to shape and build Austin from its inception. These two communities have brought to their community, their city and the central Texas region an incredible diversity of cultural resources. Familial networks stretch all across meso-America tying the central Texas region into a diverse cultural and political economy into which local economies have tapped into – from sharing H-E-B with Mexico to being part of Texas' largest trading partner for the last fifty years.

Locally, Mexican immigrants have literally built the new skyline as the construction labor for these buildings, providing the backbone for an expanded domestic labor market and introducing biliteracy to our community, and by acting as caregivers and bilingual teacher aides to our children. Culturally, Austin has integrated itself into a border cultural network that includes culinary, musical and intellectual traditions that are integrally tied into thousands of years of familial culture, as evidenced by Austin's entry into cumbia rock, Mexican fusion cooking and transnational border theory.

Expanding these services to the Latino community requires funding for the operation of Academia. The request for funding for a new position of Program Manager at \$100,000 will allow to serve Latino families and a professional development site for every teacher in the Austin area.

**Current Funding:**

None

**How does the problem show up in your community?**

**Who is most impacted by the problem?**

Academia Cuauhtli at the MACC has done a great job at providing comprehensive services, culturally relevant to the Hispanic community. Most significantly, we see a high proportion of Hispanic students failing to graduate from high school. Within the schools, a disengagement from education shows up in multiple facets. These facets include high mobility, disparate literacy rates in both languages, family educational satisfaction surveys and the movement between district and charter schools. We will use the example of mobility to give a more in-depth picture of evidence of cultural and academic resource loss, though it is only one example of how Mexican-origin students' cultural resources are not being expanded in Austin's schools.

While economic factors such as gentrification and job-loss impact this mobility, families have been shown to keep their students in the same school despite moving houses so that their children's education is not disrupted. Families who keep their children at the same school discuss how connected they and their children feel to the school and the trust they place in the school in developing their children's future. In other words, if families feel like their children are receiving both academic and cultural benefits from their current schools, they will do what they can to keep them there. It is this feeling of both connection and academic success which plague Mexican-origin students in multiple facts throughout their schooling experience.

Another aspect of building cultural and social cohesion within

our program is by modeling political and economic leadership. We spend a good portion of our program connecting our students and families to the local political system by investing students in our program, teaching them about local politics and providing them examples of Latino leaders. We also ask communities, teachers and families to take leadership roles so that they can act as role models of the kinds of civic leadership we want our students to maintain, based on social and cultural resources and networks.

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve this problem?**

Funding of \$100,000

**Story: What did you hear from the community?**

The community has expressed frustration in Austin's current policing practices. Reference the creation of the ReImagining Public Safety Taskforce that addresses community pressure to improved policing practices.

The Latino community expressed disappointment, fear, and frustration from the Mike Ramos incident as well as referencing the Office of Police Oversight Racial Profiling report where we can see how hispanics are disproportionately represented in receiving traffic stops and arrests.  
<http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/pio/document.cfm?id=334984>

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

The City of Austin needs to further commit to implementing policy and cultural change to address the disproportionate impact of police violence on people of color and other affected communities.

**Current budget:**

APD budget.

**How does the problem show up in your community? Who is most impacted by the problem?**

People of color - specifically speaking to the Latino experience. We are repeatedly over represented in traffic and arrest stops and are the majority of the cases for officer involved shootings.

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

Our commission supports ALL the recommendations recommended by the Re-Imagining Public Safety Taskforce.

In addition, we'd like to call special attention from the recommendations to add more dollars/financial support for mental health services and victim services, and remove the mental health diversion program from APD and move into an alternative department.

**Story: What did you hear from the community?**

Austin Climate Equity Plan requires more resources and attention.

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

More Community co-creation projects are needed. Job creation is needed but also a special attention to sustainability and conservation assistance.

**Current Funding:**

N/A

**How does the problem show up in your community? Who is most impacted by the problem?**

People of color are often left out of conversations around sustainability and conservation. More resources should be spent on the Austin Climate Equity Plan that has done a great job in doing community outreach to compile feedback from a diverse group of constituents.

Please reference: Joint Sustainability Committee | 03/24/2021 presentation

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

1. In support of Recommendation 20210324-2D –Joint Sustainability Committee Budget Recommendation
2. Areas to pay special focus to from the Climate Equity Plan:
  - a. Sustainable Buildings: Prioritize investment in local emissions reduction and create equitable workforce development and training opportunities for emerging technologies
  - b. Create an awareness, education and training campaign for local HVAC service providers
  - c. Transportation and land use: Include low-income communities, communities of color and people with disabilities who are directly affected by systemic inequalities in the City's Housing Investment Review Committee activities and when creating anti-displacement programs.
  - d. Create comprehensive, user-friendly resources connecting community members
  - e. with free transportation options.
  - f. Provide access to free or reduced-priced bicycles and basic bicycle training for
  - g. communities of color and train police officers on bicycle laws and racial profiling to improve comfort and safety of people of color riding bicycles.
  - h. Support farmers who want to start regenerative agricultural practices by providing access to land and other necessary resources, specifically prioritizing farmers of color.
  - i. Increase City funding for community tree planting programs focused on low-income communities and communities of color.

**Story: What did you hear from the community?**

There is concern that the focus for transportation will go towards new luxury apartments and that there will be a lack of access to easy to walk to locations in low income parts of town.

Continued frustration in the irregularities of how long it would take for the bus to get to a specific station especially on the East Side (irregular wait times/long wait times).

Inequitable shade in the bus stops. Other parts in town with less usage have better shades in the bus stops compared to parts of town that there is more usage, there is no shade when waiting.

Re-evaluate policy on anti-harassment utilizing Austin city government sponsored government and work closely with seniors and people with disabilities on ensuring transportation efforts are accessible.

**Problem: What is the problem you identify?**

The current system in place faces a lot of disparities especially in the farther areas of town.

**Current Funding:**

Project Connect proposal \$300M + more

**How does the problem show up in your community? Who is most impacted by the problem?**

Those who live in the outskirts of the city face issues with access to reachable transportation or long wait times. As cost of living is increasing, Latinos are moving more towards the outskirts.

A constituent expressed difficulties in accessing transportation in Parmer, FM 734/Parmer LN. Stated its a 3 mile walk for him to get access to a bus stop and there were irregularities in when the bus would arrive. Stated they also experienced issues getting to the Arboretum due to irregular wait times (45 minutes). Please reference: <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=306891>

**Considering all of the information you have or have not collected above, how do we solve for this problem?**

Ensure the Project Connect Working Group hosts several listening sessions and partners with local non-profits to host listening sessions for their recommendations. Continue ensuring diversity of the community working group.

Work towards allocating budget for more community outreach programs in low income neighborhoods, focus groups for frequent bus travelers, and create KPIs on community feedback.



Reference this document and work towards resolving wait times. Allocate budget if required to resolve for this issue. <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=306891>

Allocate a staff member to work on re-evaluating the anti-harassment policy. Ensure Project Connect is accessible to seniors and people with disabilities. Ensure an outreach effort plan for this community.