



Annual Internal Review

This report covers the period of 7/1/2020 to 6/30/2021

COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) is: § 2-1-107 - COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.

(A) The Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission membership should be broadly representative of community interests. A commissioner should have resided continuously within the City for not less than 180 days.

(B) In this section:

(1) Information and communications technology includes digital devices, networks, and software that allow people to create, access, store, transmit, and manipulate information.

(2) Community technology includes information, communications technology training, and access that promotes civic and cultural participation, employment, and life-long learning.

(3) Telecommunications services include all transmission of voice, data, or video by means of permanent facilities installed in the City's rights-of-way or by means of radio transmission.

(C) The commission shall advise the city council regarding issues that include:

(1) Community technology;

(2) Telecommunications services;

(3) New sources of funding for access television projects;

(4) New sources of funding for community technology projects;

(5) Allocation of annual financial support;

(6) The evaluation of the performance of access television contractors and other community technology contractors, including development of criteria to be used for evaluations; and

(7) Information and communications technology facilities and services that are operated by the City for public use, including the City web site, Internet services and open government technologies.

(D) The commission shall conduct public hearings regarding issues that include:

(1) The performance of access television contractors and other community technology contractors; and

(2) The identification of community cable, telecommunications, and technology

needs.

(E) The commission shall promote access to telecommunications services and community technologies by methods including:

- (1) Public awareness, use, and viewership of access television programming and other community media;
- (2) Identifying community technology needs and problems in the City and defining innovative programming approaches to those needs and problems; and
- (3) Public awareness of telecommunications policy and community technology issues.

(F) The commission shall serve as a coordinating forum for issues relating to the provision of every different type of telecommunications services and community technologies, by receiving reports and recommendations from other City boards and commissions and from City departments, and forwarding these to the city council.

(G) The commission does not possess any sovereign authority regarding any cable television or cable related telecommunications issue, and the commission serves in an advisory capacity only.

(H) The Commission may create a Grant Review Committee consisting of up to seven members to review grant applications, conduct interviews, and evaluate applications for the purpose of providing recommendations to the Commission for grant awards under the City's Grant for Technology Opportunities program. The Commission may appoint persons to the Grant Review Committee who are not members of the Commission, but must appoint one member of the Commission to the Grant Review Committee who shall serve as ex-officio chair of the Grant Review Committee. All members of the Grant Review Committee are subject to Article 4 of [Chapter 2-7](#) of the Code (*Code of Ethics*).

Source: Ord. 20071129-011; Ord. 20080618-030; Ord. 20111208-073; [Ord. No. 20141211-204, Pt. 11, 7-1-15.](#)

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.

(Reference all reports, recommendations, letters or resolutions presented to the City Council on mission-specific issues. If some of the elements of the mission statement were not acted on by the board in the past year, the report should explain why no action was taken.)

Reflecting adoption by our 2020-2021 Commissioners and the topical focus of prior standing Commissions, the following first describes the agreed-upon challenges facing the Commission in service of our mission as "CTTC Challenge Statements", before separately listing "CTTC Annual Review Actions" or the key presentations and actions taken to address them during the previous calendar year. Although representative of the Commission as a whole, the presentations before the Commission described above and the representative Commission actions are grouped by the Working Group for the purposes of this Annual Review.

Previous Year Challenge Statements, Working Group Related

Presentations, and Actions

Items in italics represent agenda items or representative Commission actions.

2020-2021 CTTC Challenge Statements

1. How can the Commission best support sustained Community technology devices and internet access for all Austin residents amid extreme disruptions to normal COA service operations, such as Library, School, and COA property closures?
2. How might the Commission encourage and monitor the development, adoption, and deployment of small cell and other advanced carrier technology on a City-wide basis, with particular focus on extending such services beyond the downtown area?
3. How might the Commission accommodate citizen oversight and insight sharing for COA Smart City and open government efforts?
4. How might the Commission work with other Commissions and across all City departments to identify opportunities for insight, knowledge sharing, and collaboration on matters impacting community technology and telecommunications strategy, budget, implementation, and service delivery?
5. How might the Commission use city technology to promote civic participation, transparency, open data, and equitable access to services by citizens?
6. How might the Commission encourage City-wide and equitable geographic implementation by all carriers, including possibly providing city incentives to carriers to deliver equitable access?

2020-2021 CTTC Annual Review Actions

Related Agenda Items, Budget Recommendations, & Council Agenda Item Requests

October 2019

- Sustainable Transit Strategies (Susan Engelking, Executive Director, Institute for Community MicroMobility)
- Small Cell Permitting Process (John Guinan, Project Manager, City of Austin)
- Adoption of the 2020 schedule and meeting locations

November 2019

- Smart Mobility and Innovation at CapMetro (Charlie Jackson, Director of Transit Technology Systems, Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority)

- Selection of the GTOPs 2020 Grant Review Panel and update on the Letters of Interest received for the GTOPs 2020 application process (Jesse Rodriguez, Business Process Specialist, City of Austin)

December 2019

- GTOPs 2020 Process Update (Jesse Rodriguez, Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs)
- Potential Strategic Technology & Telecom Policy Impact Working Group merger with Digital Inclusion & Civic Engagement Working Group (Chair Nehemiah Pitts)
- CTTC Working Group Conference Call Calendaring (Chair Nehemiah Pitts)

January 2020

- Communications & Technology Management Department Update (Stephen Elkins, Communications and Technology Management)
- Improving the resident experience with City forms (Daniel Honker, Soolin Withrow, and Andrew Do, Communications and Technology Management)

February 2020

- 2020 Census (John Lawler, Travis County Census Program Manager)
- Digital Inclusion Ecosystem - Austin Urban Technology Movement (Michael Ward, Jr., President of AUTM)
- City Website Upgrade (Yasmin Wagner, Corporate Public Information & Marketing Manager, Communications & Public Information Office)
- Commission discussion and action on the FY21 Budget Recommendations including City Council Vote Tabulation, Police Video Processing, Remote Meeting Participation
- Commission discussion and action on GTOPs 2020 Award Recommendations

April 2020

- Commission discussion and action on the Digital Inclusion Stakeholder Summit
- Commission discussion and action on the FY21 Budget Recommendations including City Council Vote Tabulation, Digital Inclusion Stakeholder Summit, Police Video Processing, Remote Meeting Participation, Grant for Technology Opportunities Program Marketing, and Residential Technology Study

May 2020

- Commission discussion and action on the FY21 Budget Recommendations including Police Video Processing, APL Wi-Fi Lending Program, and the Austin Public Health Department website.
- DECA & Digital Inclusion Office information and resource distribution amid COVID-19

July 2020

- Commission Discussion on Annual Priorities for the Annual Work Plan

September 2020

- Briefing on COVID-19 Response to Digital Inclusion Programs (John Speirs, Program Manager – Telecom & Regulatory Affairs)
- TARA Office Briefing (John Speirs, Program Manager – Telecom & Regulatory Affairs)
- Discussion and action on Grant for Technology Opportunities Program 2021 Cycle Recommendations (Jesse Rodriguez, Business Process Specialist – Telecom & Regulatory Affairs)

October 2020

- Briefing on Digital Inclusion Week 2020 & Special Conversation on Digital Equity Introduction (Commission Chair, Nehemiah Pitts III)
- Digital Equity Discussion & Presentations - Digital Empowerment Community of Austin (DECA) Entities, Community Members, Civic Organizations, and Leaders
- Presentation on the City of Austin Communications and Technology Management Department (CTM), digital equity and infrastructure (Chris Stewart, Interim Chief Information Officer)
- Presentation on Affordable Internet Options in Austin and Lived Experience with the Digital Divide (Catherine Crago - Head of Strategic Initiatives - Housing Authority of the City of Austin & Austin Pathways and Alexis Henderson, Rosewood Council Head)
- Presentation on achieving digital equity in Austin and Texas (Michael Ward Jr., Austin Urban Technology Movement)

November 2020

- Good Systems – A UT Grand Challenge (Sara Smith, IT Business Systems Analyst)
- Presentation on the City of Austin Information Security Office Projects (Shirley Erp – Chief Information Security Officer)
- Update on Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs (TARA) Legislative Summary (John Speirs, TARA)
- The long reach of Artificial Intelligence (Commission Discussion and Action)
- Remote participation at commission meetings (Commission Discussion and Action)
- Review and adoption of the proposed 2021 commission Schedule (Commission Discussion and Action)
- DECA Poster Competition Award Announcement (Commission discussion and Action; Nehemiah Pitts III, Chair Commissioner; Jesse Rodriguez, Business Process Specialist)
- Commission Special Report on Digital Equity (Commission Discussion and Action)

December 2020

- Good Systems – A UT Grand Challenge (Chris Stewart, Sara Smith, Ted Lehr, and Charles Purma)
- Update on Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs (TARA) Solicitations and Contracts (John Speirs, TARA)
- The long reach of Artificial Intelligence (Commission Discussion and Action)
- Remote participation at commission meetings (Commission Discussion and Action)
- Commission Special Report on Digital Equity (Commission Discussion and Action)

January 2021

- Presentation on ConnectionText ATX (City of Austin: John Speirs and Anilya Krishnan; SpeedUpAmerica: Alexandra Corvello and Matt Sayre)

- TARA Office Briefing (John Speirs, Program Manager – Telecom & Regulatory Affairs)
- Grant for Technology Opportunities Program – Letters of Interest Received and Action on Grant Review Panel (Commission Discussion and Action, Jesse Rodriguez, Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs)

February 2021

- TARA Office Briefing on GTOPs Grant Reviewers, Increasing Broadband Access, and GTOPs Mini (John Speirs, Program Manager – Telecom & Regulatory Affairs)
- Grant for Technology Opportunities Program – Selection of the Grant Review Panel (Commission Discussion and Action, Jesse Rodriguez, Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs)
- FY 22 Budget Recommendations (Commission Discussion and Possible Action)

March 2021

- TARA Office Legislative Briefing (John Speirs, Program Manager – Telecom & Regulatory Affairs)
- Grant for Technology Opportunities Program – Brief update on applications submitted (Jesse Rodriguez, Business Process Specialist – Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs)
- FY 22 Budget Recommendations (Commission Discussion and Possible Action)

April 2021

- Remote Participation at Commission Meetings (Discussion and Possible Action)
- Council Vote Tablature (Discussion and Possible Action)
- Web Conference Availability at Public Facilities (Discussion and Possible Action)

May 2021

- Emergency Broadband Benefit Program Briefing from Participating Austin Internet Service Providers. (Erin Burget, AT&T)
- Grant for Technology Opportunities Program – 2021 Award Recommendations and Vote for Approval (Discussion and Possible Action)
- Council Vote Tablature (Discussion and Possible Action)
- Election of Officers (Discussion and Possible Action)
- Council Committee Agenda Request for Council Vote Tablature (Discussion and Possible Action)
- ATXN Staffing Support (Discussion and Possible Action)
- Commission Work Plan Retreat – Setting Commission Priorities for the Next Year (Discussion and Possible Action)

Boards & Commissions Council Committee Agenda Item Requests

2021

- [Council Committee Agenda Request](#) - 20210512-2a: on Council Vote Tabulation (317KB)

2020

- [Council Committee Agenda Request](#) - 20201209-3B: Recommendation in support of testing permanent availability of remote participation at board and commission meetings. (250KB)

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Budget Recommendations

2021

The CTTC recommends \$10,000 in support for equipment purchases for ATXN in order to continue the current level of support for remote participation at City Commission meetings. This recommendation would allow ATXN to initiate and manage a hybrid in-person and remote meeting style in support of flexible participation models, as current capabilities can only handle fully remote or fully in-person.

Additionally, the CTTC supports the request of the Clerk's Office for three FTE positions in as much as these positions allow the continuation of remote participation for all City commissions and support the rollout and expansion of this piloted hybrid model.

Moreover, the CTTC supports the request of CTM for proportional funding to 1) upgrade technology at meeting rooms in City Hall, 2) upgrade software (and support) relating to web streaming and A/V support, and 3) convert contract staff to FTEs -- all in support of continuing remote participation for all City Commissions and rolling out this piloted hybrid model for the currently broadcasted Boards & Commissions in FY2022.

2020

- The additional FTE focused on processing would diffuse the backlog of police video processing.
- To include an allocation for GTOPs of \$400,000, as approved in FY20 unanimously, in the FY21 City of Austin budget.
- To include an allocation of \$75,400 for an IT Application Developer (1-FTE) to be hired and assigned to the City Clerk's Office for development of a digital solution for City Council Vote Tabulation, in the FY21 City of Austin budget.

Commission Special Report of Digital Equity

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

The Commission's actions fully comply with the mission statement.

3. List the board's goals and objectives for the new calendar year. (Make sure the goals and objectives fall within the mission statement of the board/commission.)

Community Technology & Telecommunications Commission 2021-2022 Work Plan (Goals & Objectives)

This Work Plan sets out the areas of focus and corresponding Working Groups for the Commission. Each area of focus has a working group and identified topics to discuss, as agreed upon during prior Commission meetings and working group meetings. Once formally adopted by Chair submission to the City Clerk, the implementation and actions can be amended over the year based on the majority approval.

CTTC Focus Areas & Working Groups

- Technology Infrastructure & Innovation
- Digital Inclusion, Civic Engagement & Strategic Policy Impact
- Knowledge, Information, and Data Stewardship

Strategic Intent

It is the City's intent to use information and communications technology to enhance its livability, workability and sustainability design. The Commission will play a role in ensuring "the use of smart computing technologies to make the critical infrastructure components and services of a city (such as city administration, education, public health and emergency services, public safety, real estate and planning/ development, code enforcement, transportation and utilities) more intelligent, interconnected and efficient."

The Commission's vision is to help improve service delivery and improve quality of life with and for all Austinites, businesses, and visitors through the focus areas listed above. The Commission's goal is to support the City's efforts to become increasingly efficient in solving real problems for real people.

The Commission will develop reports and recommendations to Council through collaboration with relevant City departments and commissions, community partners and stakeholders (including the local technology community).

These reports and recommendations will:

1. Inform City policy decision-making
 2. Identify community technology and telecommunications solutions and initiatives to tackle local challenges and improve city services, and...
 3. Recommend potential public and private opportunities for these initiatives.
- These reports would be generated in the Commission Working Groups and be voted on by the whole Commission.

Community Technology & Telecommunications Commission

Commission Chair and Members:

Chair Nehemiah Pitts III - Mayor Pro Tem, Natasha Harper-Madison, District 1

Sophie Gairo - Mayor Steve Adler

Steven P. Apodaca - Council Member, Vanessa Fuentes, District 2

Malcolm Yeatts - Council Member Sabino "Pio" Renteria, District 3

David Alexander - Council Member Gregorio Casar, District 4

Dave Floyd - Council Member Ann Kitchen, District 5

Iliya Svirsky - Council Member Kelly Mackenzie, District 6

Maxine R. Eiland - Council Member Leslie Pool, District 7

Jennifer N. Ramos - Council Member Paige Ellis, District 8

Nicole Thompson - Council Member Kathie Tovo, District 9

2021 - 2022 Commission Challenge Statements:

The Commission shall address these challenges over the next year:

1. How might the Commission encourage and monitor the development, adoption, and deployment of small cell and other advanced/upcoming technology including possibly extending such services to areas beyond the downtown area?
2. How might the Commission work with the city and the carriers to ensure that the city and the carriers cooperate to enhance the latter's capabilities in alignment with city projects to upgrade its road infrastructure?
3. How might the Commission provide citizen oversight over and insight to smart city and open government efforts?
4. How might the Commission work with our COA Digital Inclusion Fellow, other Commissions and across all City departments to identify opportunities for collaboration?
5. How might this Commission use city technology to promote civic participation, transparency, open data, and partnering with carriers, including possibly providing city incentives to carriers to deliver equitable access to services by citizens?
6. How might this Commission advise the City Council on how to improve access to technology and telecommunications services in underserved areas of Austin, particularly during times of emergency?
7. How might this commission work with the city and Cap Metro to ensure that all transportation infrastructure projects are implemented in a way that they enable / permit simultaneous upgrades to the communication infrastructure?

Knowledge, Information, and Data Stewardship

Members

- **Chair:** David Alexander
- Nehemiah Pitts, III
- Dave Floyd
- Maxine Eiland

Objectives (Order does not reflect prioritization):

1. To help COA communicate city programs, resources etc. to underserved areas and communities without access to the internet. To help citizens engage COA using technology.

2. Collaboration between COA and UT to create SpeedUpAmerica bandwidth map
3. Equitable Broadband Geographical Data Report & Analysis
4. Monitor COA webpage redesign project
5. Council vote database
- 6. Residential Technology Study**
7. UT-COA & CTTC ILA Research Collaboration
8. City-Wide Technology Pilot Audit & Assessment
 - a. Software Applications
 - b. Atlas One APD App
 - c. Community First 3-Printing Homelessness Solutions
 - d. Autonomous Vehicles, Drones, & Smart City Tech

Technology, Infrastructure, and Innovation

Members

- **Co-Chair:** Sumit DasGupta
- **Co-Chair:** Dave Floyd
- Malcolm Yeatts
- Nehemiah Pitts, III

Objectives (Order does not reflect prioritization):

1. Provide partnerships with other organizations or high-tech companies moving into Austin to enable city-wide free wifi hot spots, charging stations, public devices to use etc.
2. Continue to monitor Google Fiber deployment in Austin
3. **GAATN**
 - a. Advocate for the use of the GAATN network to expand resident access to the Internet
 - b. Review plans for technology upgrades to the GAATN network & Fiber
 - c. CoA network sharing, e.g., GATTN and evaluation of means by which city could incentivize carriers to provide upgraded services throughout the city
4. Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) Efficiency & Equity Analysis & Assessment
 - a. Infrastructure for Advance Services (IAS) Program Team, Camp Mabry, Austin Emergency Services, Austin Energy, etc...
5. Rollout of upgrades by carriers to interconnect technology, particularly in areas where the city is upgrading its roads infrastructure
6. 5G and small cell deployment beyond the downtown area
7. Smart Cities progress
8. ATD smart mobility effort and alignment with CapMetro plans and means to align enhancements to communications infrastructure
9. Promote economies of scale via evaluating the ecosystem of technology units in the city and recommending consolidation as appropriate.
10. Removal of barriers to access to broadband / wireless connectivity in marginally-served (low income) areas of the city

Digital Inclusion, Civic Engagement, and Strategic Policy Impact

Membership

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- **Chair:** Nehemiah Pitts, III
- Nicole Thompson-Beavers
- Steven Apodaca
- Maxine Eiland
- Sophie Gairo

Objectives (Order does not reflect prioritization):

1. Investigate ways to enable the homeless population using a digital matching program i.e. job matching, programs etc.
2. Increase CTTC relationships/partnerships with local technology companies (AT&T, Google, etc.) with the goal of identifying opportunities to expand both access and upskilling/education particularly for communities of color.
3. Remote participation at Boards and Commission meetings
4. Advocate for Zoom licenses administered by libraries for civic groups and individual residents
5. Continue to advocate for increased funding for library wireless hub and platform lending programs
6. **Grant for Technology Opportunities Program (GTOPs)**
 - a. Continue to advocate for increased funding for GTOPS
 - b. GTOPs Expansion - Community Needs assessment and/or resource mapping
7. Emergency Broadband Relief Carrier Evaluation
8. State Legislative Tech & Telecommunications Policy Evaluation
9. **ATD Smart Mobility & Project Connect** (see IAS above)
10. Collaboration, Civic Engagement & Lived Experience Sharing w/Tech
 - a. Special Called Meetings (Wide-Scale DI Ecosystem reflective)
 - b. Citizen Participation & Video Conferencing from Public Facilities
11. D.E.C.A. Expansion
 - a. Funding Source Identification
 - b. Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)

