



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Commission on Immigrant Affairs

Recommendation Number: 20220307-2d1: Development of Immigrant Affairs Office

WHEREAS, we heard from the community an appreciation that the Immigrant Affairs position was created, and a recognition that one person cannot handle all of the work that will be required; and

WHEREAS, an immigrant affairs office would help ensure the needs of the immigrant community in Austin are met; and

WHEREAS, Austin has a large and diverse immigrant community, with varying needs and varying degrees of involvement in city government. Those most impacted are largely unseen, whether because of language barriers, cultural concerns, or concerns related to immigration status. This office will be able to reach out to the community so that their voices can be heard; and

WHEREAS, immigrant communities have been most affected by the pandemic and the ongoing energy and utility crises, and having an immigrant affairs office helps ensure the communities are not only reached but best served, which helps the community as a whole; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin funded one full time position within the Equity Office to work in immigrant affairs; and

WHEREAS, there is a large, diverse immigrant community in Austin, and our commission's hope is that the immigrant affairs office can go out into the community to learn their concerns, see where there are gaps in services, and assess the City's ability to address their concerns; and

WHEREAS, many cities that are Austin's peers have established immigrant affairs offices, including Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio; and

WHEREAS, a report by the LBJ School of the University of Texas at Austin found that an immigrant affairs office is necessary and recommended¹.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission on Immigrant Affairs recommends the expansion of the Immigrant Affairs office, since one person cannot take on everything that is required of this office.

¹ "Advancing Immigrant Incorporation in Austin," Ruth Ellen Wassem et al, University of Texas LBJ School for Public Affairs, July 2021, <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/handle/2152/86821>

Date of Approval: March 7, 2022

Record of the vote: Unanimous on a 9-0 vote with Glenn Rosales absent

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. M.', with a large loop on the left and a smaller loop on the right.

Attest:

Staff Liaison