



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Ray Baray, Chief of Staff

DATE: January 20, 2015

SUBJECT: Outreach and Interpretation Updates for January 22nd Council Forum

Following up on this morning's discussion regarding Thursday evening's Special-Called Meeting, I wanted to provide you with some relevant details regarding translation, interpretation and outreach.

Telephone Town Hall

- There were some questions about the district demographics of the telephone town hall. Because this is a randomized call-out, and the ultimate audience is self-selecting (they must elect to stay on the call), we cannot predict the exact demographics of the final audience. We are promoting a call-in number for anyone who wishes to participate by phone as an additional measure to allow for involvement, regardless of whether they receive an outbound call from the City of Austin. We will inquire about any post-event reporting the vendor may be able to provide.
- Our vendor will have Spanish-language speakers available during the call-out to ensure participation.

Interpretation Services

- We intend to have Spanish-language interpreters at the meeting (at a cost of \$800-1000) and sign-language interpreters.
- Some of you inquired about available interpretation services for Asian languages. We are currently exploring options for this, but may be limited by the availability of qualified interpreters and the number of Asian languages required. The most common Asian languages spoken in Austin are Chinese (1.3%), Vietnamese (0.8%), Korean (0.5%) and Hindi (0.5%). We have distributed information through our contacts with the Asian-American Resource Center, the Asian-American Chamber of Commerce and the Asian-American Quality of Life Advisory Commission to help with outreach to these groups in advance of the meeting.

Translation/Interpretation Policy

- Councilmember Tovo referenced the City's policy development around translation and interpretation services. We are happy to provide an update on that policy at an upcoming meeting, but wanted to provide our progress thus far:
 - City staff has worked with the Community Action Network (CAN) and several other partners to develop a needs assessment survey of community organizations, which staff anticipates will be going out later this month. This will be used to guide feedback in our discussions in developing a shared translation/interpretation resource in the community.
 - The Communications and Public Information Office (CPIO) is presently working with the Purchasing Office to develop a "pre-certification" process for translation services, which will ensure baseline cultural competence in Spanish-language translation. Eventually, this will be applied to other languages. Our goal is to develop a list of pre-certified individuals and companies as a resource to departments in need of services.
 - The CPIO has partnered with the Austin Police Department (APD) to purchase and deploy interpretation equipment, which is available citywide for those who may require it. This equipment will be used during Thursday's meeting.

We will continue our best efforts to ensure that Thursday's meeting is as well-publicized and accessible as time and resources allow. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Chief Communications Officer Doug Matthews at Douglas.Matthews@austintexas.gov or 512-974-2231.

cc: Marc A. Ott, City Manager
Doug Matthews, Chief Communications Officer