



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council Members

**FROM:** Brion Oaks, Chief Equity Officer

**DATE:** December 18, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Equity Assessment Tool 2<sup>nd</sup> Pilot Completion

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The purpose of this memo is to provide an overview of the Equity Assessment Tool 2<sup>nd</sup> Pilot Report that was prepared in partnership between the Equity Office and the Center for Community-Driven Initiatives at the University of Texas Dell Medical School. The full report is attached for your review, and is available in [Spanish](#), [Simple Chinese](#), and [Vietnamese](#) upon request. Along with the first cohort, this marks half of all City departments who have gone through the Assessment Tool.

### Background

In an effort to address racial inequity in Austin, City Council passed Resolution No. 20150507-027 in May 2015, which directed the City Manager to evaluate the impact of existing City policies and practices on racial equity and develop and Equity Assessment Tool that can be used across City departments. The goal is to utilize the Tool to highlight areas for policy intervention to address inequities that impact the quality of life for communities of color in Austin.

The first pilot of the Equity Assessment Tool was completed in May 2018 with Public Health, Library, Parks and Recreation, Water, Human Resources, Economic Development, Public Works, and Transportation. These eight departments are now in the process of implementing policy interventions designed to address the Assessment Tool's findings.

In 2019, the Open Government Partnership gave the Tool their most prestigious designation of "Star" commitment. In particular, the City's Equity Assessment Tool was recognized for innovative design and transformative potential impact.

### Overview

The Equity Office is excited to provide an update on the second cohort of City departments to complete the Equity Assessment Tool. Eleven departments participated in a process of training and equity capacity building to facilitate the completion of the Tool. The second cohort included the following eleven departments:

- Budget Office/Chief Financial Office

- Office of the City Auditor
- Austin Fire Department
- Watershed Protection Department
- Communications and Technology Management
- Planning and Zoning Department
- Neighborhood Housing and Community Development
- Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs
- Austin Energy-Consumer Energy Solutions Division
- Innovation Office
- Sustainability Office

The results of these Assessment Tools were taken to the Center for Community-Driven Initiatives at the University of Texas Dell Medical School for an independent third-party evaluation. The Center performed an analysis on each department, identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (also known as a SWOT Analysis) as it relates to advancing equity.

A SWOT Analysis is used as a means of analysis on two spectrums, positive vs. negative impact and internal vs. external control. Strengths and Weaknesses are characteristics within departments, here used to mean policies, procedures, and practices which either promote (Strengths), or impede (Weaknesses) equity. Opportunities and Threats are external to the organization and are measured to be positive (Opportunities) or negative (Threats).

### **Main Takeaways**

In this SWOT analysis, we consider Strengths to be policies or practices which are working to advance equity. It is encouraging that our evaluators identified many strengths within the departments. In particular, “Department Collaboration” was found to be a consistent highlight. One department was even partnering with 15 other departments to leverage their internal expertise, resources and department plans to achieve collective impact on racial equity.

Evaluators also identified many areas for improvement within the Weaknesses sections. As with the last report, lack of data collection stood out. Departments are not collecting racial demographic data describing customers, engagement and satisfaction of survey participants. This is reflected in a recent budget recommendation from the Joint Inclusion Committee, the joint committee comprised of the City’s nine commissions directed to advise the City on population-specific concerns.

These commissions work to represent Austin’s Black, Asian, LatinX, LGBTQIA+, senior, women, immigrant, and people with disabilities populations. Collectively, the Joint Inclusion Committee and each of the above commissions separately requested the City Manager require all departments to begin collecting disaggregated customer data. Without this data, departments and the community are unable to evaluate the effectiveness or impact of internal and external efforts to impact equity.

Further, only two of the evaluated departments had performed trainings specifically on equity and institutional racism. In those instances, the trainings were only provided to specified staff or during a particular process. Only one department included information on the racial history of the City of Austin in their onboarding process for new employees.

Opportunities are pieces external to the department which, if leveraged correctly, can work to advance

equity. In this report, the evaluator highlighted the responses to the parts of the Tool which pushed departments to be creative and innovative. For example, very few departments have explicit, measurable equity priorities, but when pressed to imagine what that would look like, staff came up with very strong ideas. These priorities have a huge potential for impact, as they set the expectation for improvement and standard of work across a department's entire body of work. This can mean improving every phase of work, from community engagement to program implementation.

On the other hand, Threats have the potential to impede each piece of a department's work if not understood and addressed. A primary example is in workforce diversity. A few departments understood that their workforce did not reflect the larger Austin community, but felt limited by technical qualifications imposed by outside entities such as education requirements or hiring assessments. These barriers challenge departments to be more intentional and creative in developing ways to grow and bring communities of color along in the hiring process.

### **Next Steps**

As departments complete the first round of their Assessment Tools, the Equity Office is working with them to understand their major barriers and possibilities for advancing equity; how policies, procedures, and practices can support equity or create inequities; and how community engagement can inform their work towards equity. This allows for monitoring of progress over time, as they continue in future Assessment processes.

Immediately, the Equity Office will begin working with departments on Equity Action Plans, a series of interventions designed to address items highlighted within their SWOT analyses. This, in partnership with the Assessment Tool, will establish a cycle of continuous improvement as the City works to achieve equitable outcomes.

Staff and community interested in staying up to date as materials from the process become available can do so [on this dashboard](#). The department names in the sidebar on the right link to department-specific equity dashboards, including assessment response, SWOT analysis, and Action Plan as they become available.

If you have questions, please contact me at [Brion.Oaks@austintexas.gov](mailto:Brion.Oaks@austintexas.gov) or (512) 974-7979.

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager  
CMO Executive Team

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# CITY OF AUSTIN EQUITY OFFICE EQUITY ASSESSMENT 2018

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Analysis of Department Responses to the Equity Assessment Tool

March 4, 2019

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THE CENTER FOR PLACE-BASED INITIATIVES, DELL MEDICAL SCHOOL, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN



The University of Texas at Austin  
Center for Place-Based Initiatives  
*Dell Medical School*

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## **Background**

The Equity Assessment Tool is a new strategy used by the City of Austin to identify and remedy inequitable policies, practices and procedures. It was developed through a collaborative process led by the City of Austin's Equity Office and the Equity Action Team, comprised of community advocates, leaders and city staff from other departments who were interested in promoting equity in the City of Austin. The tool has four sections assessing institutional department culture and policy, community engagement, resource allocation, and alignment with Austin City Council priorities. The assessment tool that departments completed in 2018 is included as Appendix A.

The Equity Office began piloting the tool in the summer of 2017 with 8 City departments who had staff representation on the Equity Action Team. The second round of assessments occurred in the spring and summer of 2018 with 12 additional departments. One department did not submit the assessment within the submission window. This report includes an evaluation of the 11 remaining departments.

The equity assessment tool is the first step in a cycle of continuous improvement. Completing the Assessment develops a measure of equity for City departments, specifically gaging staff understanding of key equity issues and identifying policies and processes that support equity or create inequities. The first time departments go through the Assessment, they develop a baseline with which to monitor their progress across time through future assessments. Based on the results and analysis of the Assessments included in this report, they will work with the Equity Office to complete an Action Plan that supports equitable policies and procedures. Therefore, the Equity Assessment cycle has great potential to improve and standardize decision making across all City of Austin departments, to fulfill the broader aim of building and maintaining a culture of equity in the City of Austin.

## **Purpose**

The Equity Office is interested in learning about each department's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in working to advance racial equity. Each department's responses are compiled into a SWOT diagram and each of these is analyzed and summarized. In addition, information gathered from the 11 departments is aggregated and compiled into a cross-department SWOT analysis to gain a better understanding of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats City-wide. The Equity Office will use this information to address challenges, help to fill gaps, offer support and take advantage of opportunities within participating departments and across the City of Austin.

## **Methods**

Participating departments received background on the assessment tool and a glossary of related definitions prior to completing the assessment. Departments had 5 months to complete the assessment, and all but one department was able to meet that timeframe. After the Equity Office received the responses, the Equity Action Team performed a quality check to address responses that did not answer the question asked or needed to be further fleshed out, with the goal of getting complete assessments from all participating departments. Depending on the timing of the submissions, not all departments received the same level of quality checks as others. Those that submitted later tended to have less thorough responses, responses that did not answer the question or had missing information. Therefore, each department is evaluated individually, rather than compared to one another .

Because of the qualitative nature of responses, two qualitative methods were used to complete the evaluation of department responses: key-informant interviews and document review.

The first method of data analysis is document review, which entails evaluating the responses to the questions on the assessment at face value and analyzing them without reading into what respondents may have meant or intended to say. Responses were taken into consideration along with their respective department interviews to minimize researcher bias or misinterpretation and to address some of the gaps in the responses.

Participants in the key informant interviews were identified by the Equity Office from the individuals within each department who led efforts to complete the Equity Assessment Tool. Department staff were contacted by the evaluator via email to identify at least one representative from each department to participate in a short 15-20 minute phone interview. The interview provided an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the department's responses in the assessment, to identify what insights they gained from participating in the Assessment, and what changes they would be most willing to take on. The participants in the interviews have been kept confidential. The interview questions are included as Appendix B.

### **Analysis**

A SWOT diagram is an analysis framework consisting of four sections – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats - divided by two sides: internal and external. The first side examines areas that the organization has control over and are internal to the organization – these are the strengths and weaknesses. In the case of analyzing departments from an equity lens, we are looking at policies and practices that improve equity and are exemplary (strengths) and policies and practices that stem the advancement of equity or create inequities (weaknesses). On the other side of the SWOT diagram are those areas that are external to the organization and that influence the organization, but the organization does not have complete or direct control over. In this case, we are looking at circumstances that are outside of the control of departments that either negatively impact the department's ability to improve, create or enhance policies and practices to make them more equitable (threats), or situations that present opportunities that can be capitalized on to improve, create, or enhance equitable policies and practices (opportunities). A blank SWOT diagram summarizing each section is included as Appendix C.

In this report, we first identify trends that highlight systemic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats across all 11 departments for a cohort summary, then have included a separate analysis for each of the 11 departments. Through the SWOT analysis, we accomplish the following:

- Identify the weaknesses that can be addressed by department staff to remedy inequities.
- Catalog strengths, where city policies and procedures support and advance equity.
- Identify opportunities that departments can take advantage of with some tweaks to their current processes and outside collaboration.
- Identify threats, those policies and procedures that produce inequitable results and cannot be addressed alone, internally at the departmental staff level.

The SWOT highlights areas where the Equity Office can offer consultation and guidance to Department staff on improving policies and practices, capitalizing on opportunities as well as instituting changes at a larger scale through City-wide efforts.

While departments are all under the umbrella of City government, each is actually quite unique -- they have existed for different periods of time, have different numbers of staff, and serve different clients. Policies, programs, practices and processes will vary considerably between departments and are therefore evaluated separately in the department-level SWOT analyses (Appendix D). In addition to identifying strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats, each department SWOT includes a department profile consisting of publicly available data on the department's client base, the programs and services they offer, their mission, total FY18 budget, staff size, and when known, the date the department was established. The department profiles and SWOT analyses will aid the Equity Office in helping City department set realistic expectations and goals based on each departments unique circumstances.

## **Results**

### Strengths

In the SWOT method, strengths are most often defined as an advantage or asset that an organization has. For the purposes of evaluating the results of the equity assessment, we define strengths as:

*“Any policy, strategy or practice that is currently taking place within the City Department that could improve or create equity at the present time, within its scope of control to change.”*

Strengths are internal, rather than external, and within the department's locus of control. We focus on what is happening within departments at the present time to create or advance equity, rather than what might happen in the future. Based on the items measured in the Tool, most departments had strengths in these areas: collaboration with other departments, community engagement, and alignment with City Council priorities. These areas are elaborated further below.

#### *Department Collaboration*

Almost every department is collaborating with some other department on initiatives that advance racial equity. Several departments are partnering with an upwards of 7, 9, and even 15 other departments to leverage their internal expertise, resources and department plans to accomplish more working together than they could individually. Often, externally facing staff have overlapping missions, goals and similar target populations. For example, Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs is collaborating with other departments to provide education and training to community members, reaching more people than they could working alone. Collaborating is beneficial to the entire community as it allows the strength of one department to be shared across other departments. For example, the Police Department and the Fire Department are helping each other diversify their applicant pool by sharing applicants and making referrals. In other instances, externally-facing departments with limited staff, funding, and other resources, partner with other departments to implement large-scale projects. For internally facing departments, collaboration with other departments is inherent in all of their work and can have far-reaching impacts across the city.

#### *Community Engagement*

The Assessment makes a distinction between community outreach and community engagement. Community outreach can be solely for the purpose of information sharing or passively collecting feedback, while community engagement implies that there are mechanisms in place to intentionally engage in a dialogue with community members to inform decisions. Further, engagement implies a feedback loop whereby those who participated would know how their input was utilized. Due to the wording of questions in the Tool, and the variability in the amount of information provided by each department, it is not always clear where departments fall along the spectrum of community outreach to community engagement. Even so, every department has participated in some sort of community outreach or engagement in the past year, and some much more than others.

In addition to public comment opportunities for budget and policy changes, departments had other formal processes in place to gather community input on their programs and plans, including participating in Boards and Commissions, advisory committees and stakeholder groups, and others. A few departments had written standards to ensure when and how to conduct community engagement. Having these standards is a strength to justify community engagement in department process and ensure the community is engaged on a regular, consistent basis as an expectation of the department. However, care should be taken that the standards don't limit how much departments are willing to do. Departments also took the initiative to develop their own engagement strategies, even when there were no formal standards, which often varied by project type, such as using surveys, focus groups and interviews, holding public meetings and home meetings, and through community leaders, organizations and Commissions. Adapting the strategy based on the community and the need provides for meaningful engagement.

The majority of departments (7/11) offered translation in multiple languages in the past year and offered some accommodations for the visually and hearing impaired such as audio recording and ASL. Almost half of departments (5/11) verified the reading level of written materials at the 8th grade reading level using a variety of tools such as applications and websites. Departments formalized the provision of these services by including them in a Language Access Plan. For example, Austin Energy's Language Access Plan includes a 4-factor analysis for determining when to provide language services for individuals and communities with Limited English Proficiency and considers local demographic trends to identify need.

In addition to translation, departments offered several accommodations to make it easier for community members to actively participate in meetings. In particular providing food, an accessible meeting location, multiple opportunities for engagement and meetings held on evenings and weekends, were the most common. A few departments offered additional accommodations that exceeded the standard responses in the Assessment. The Office of Sustainability offered financial incentives to encourage participation and Planning and Zoning increased participation by using online engagement sessions for residents that could not attend the meeting in person.

### *City Council Priorities*

Almost every department is working on most or all six City Council priority outcome areas, identified in the Strategic Direction 2023. For the most part departments had cross-cutting initiatives that overlapped multiple priorities. The City Auditor assigns each one of its projects to a Council priority to ensure that the priorities are at the forefront of all the work that they do. The most common types of projects that fell within at least one City Council Priority and advanced racial equity had to do with

improved data collection, homelessness, transportation, and housing affordability. (While at the surface, homelessness is not a racial equity issue, communities of color are disproportionately represented in the homeless population in Austin). Many departments also developed metrics and performance goals to gauge the effectiveness of their efforts over time.

### Weaknesses

In SWOT a Weakness is commonly used to describe blind spots and areas where failures can occur if not addressed. In this evaluation, we define a weakness as:

*“Any policy, strategy or practice that is currently taking place within the City Department that could hinder or challenge equity at the present time, within its scope of control to change.”*

Similar to Strengths, Weaknesses are also internal rather than external and within the department’s locus of control. We focus on what is happening within departments at the present time that inhibits rather than facilitates equity, not focusing on what could happen in the future. Based on the items measured in the tool, departments most commonly had weaknesses in these areas: Staff diversity, Training, and Data collection. These areas are elaborated further below.

#### *Staff Diversity*

Based on data from the American Community Survey, in 2017 a little over 70% of Austin residents were white, about 7.5% were Black and 7.5% Asian. Of those, one third of Austin residents were Hispanic or Latino (see graphs below). In the Assessment Tool, the racial and ethnic composition of department staff are compared to the City of Austin composition to determine how racially and ethnically diverse departments are. The racial and ethnic composition of department staff is included in the department profiles in Appendix D. Very few departments had racially or ethnically representative staff compared to residents of the City of Austin. This could even be considered a blind spot for some departments who believed their staff was representative, while at least one racial or ethnic group was not well represented. For the most part, there were more White staff and less Hispanic staff in departments compared to the City of Austin, a major oversight considering the large Hispanic/Latino population. Departments were more representative with Black or Asian staff at least in part because the City has a relatively small Black and Asian population. Some staff pointed out that even though their department appears diverse overall, that diversity is not well reflected in upper management and other higher paying positions. Responses to the assessment also pointed to another misunderstanding of staff diversity. Several internally facing departments felt like their staff should be representative of the City employees whom they directly serve, rather than Austin residents who all departments ultimately serve. Ironically, the majority of departments had recruitment and hiring plans to encourage diverse applicants. After going through the assessment many departments realized their efforts to improve workforce diversity needed improvement if they were to truly be representative of the Austin community.

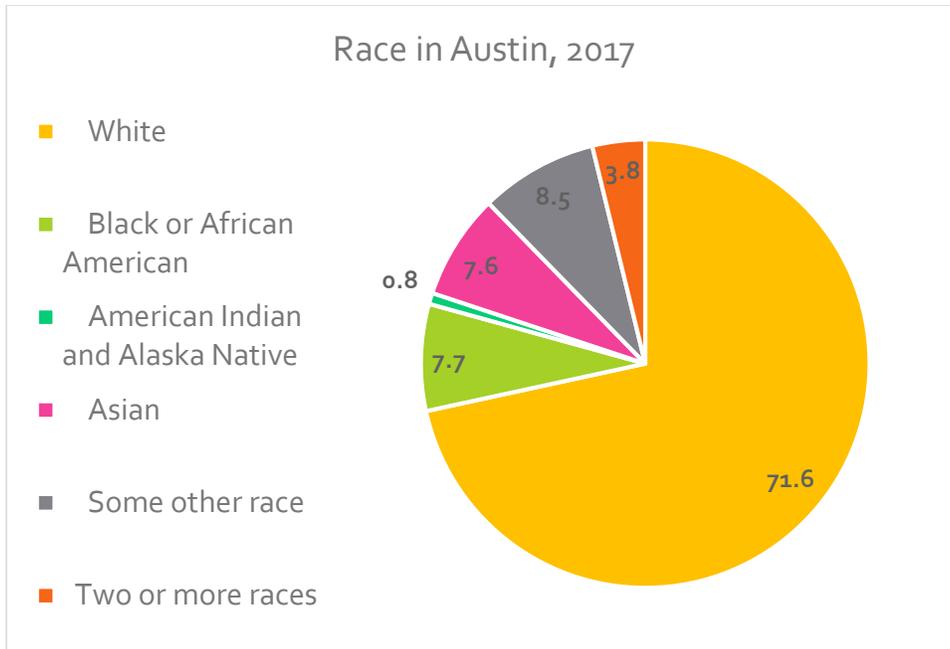


Figure 1 Source: American Community Survey 2017 Profile, Office of the City Demographer

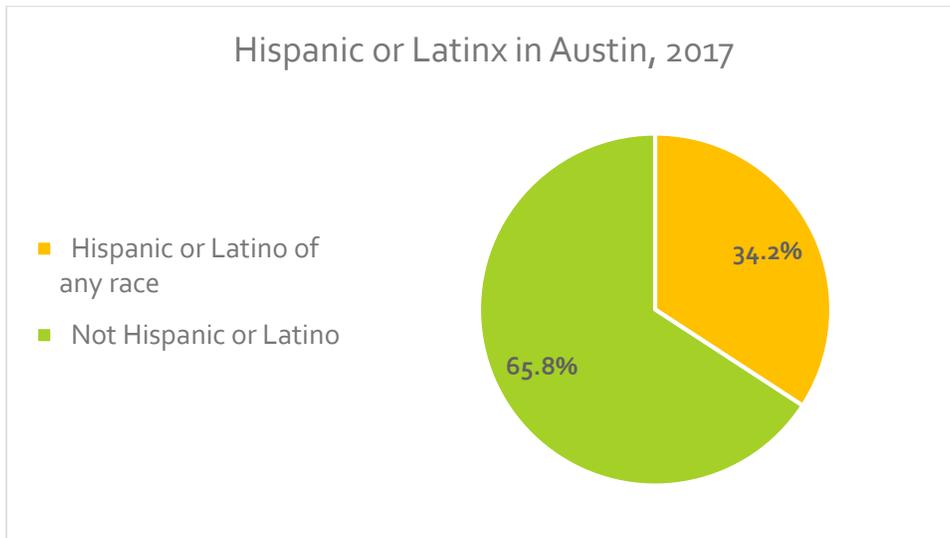


Figure 2 Source: American Community Survey 2017 Profile, Office of the City Demographer

### Staff Training

Many departments (9/11) lacked trainings that specifically address institutional racism, equity, discrimination or similar topics. When departments did offer these trainings, it was usually for just a few staff, for example those completing the Assessment or executive staff only. In addition, equity-based trainings were rarely used to on-board or orient new employees. Out of the 11 departments assessed, the Innovation Office was the only one that included information about history of racism in Austin and

an equity framework in their onboarding for all staff. Finally, even for the few departments that offer trainings none measured the effectiveness of the trainings.

### *Collecting Demographic Data*

No departments had a perfect data collection strategy. While some excelled in one area, they completely missed other opportunities to collect data on the population they serve or the programs and services they offer. Over half of the departments included in the assessment cycle did not collect race/ethnicity of the clients they serve, and only a few collected data on disparities among their clients. Many departments collected client satisfaction data, but missed the opportunity to collect demographic information at the same time. Similarly, while several departments collected data on individuals in the community for outreach and engagement efforts, few included the demographic makeup of those groups in their data. Standards or measures to gauge the effectiveness of trainings and community engagement activities were often missing.

Some departments expressed reservations about collecting demographic data or mentioned that an oversight office had told them not to collect it because it would be a deterrent to participation. Those departments felt that they needed clearance from the City's Legal or Human Resources department in order to collect the data. This presents a learning opportunity, not only to assure departments that it is okay to collect demographic data, but also that it is vitally important to ensuring that programs and services are provided equitably. After all, how will they know whether they are serving Austin residents equitably if they don't know who they are serving? Collecting demographic data is also the best way for departments to know whether their efforts in implementing their Equity Action Plan have been successful.

### Opportunities

In a SWOT analysis, Opportunities are situations that present themselves to an organization that, if capitalized upon, would become a strength. In the context of evaluating equity, we define opportunities as:

*"Potential positive forces in the environment in which the City Department operates, outside of its ability to control or change on its own."*

In contrast to Strengths and Weaknesses, Opportunities are not necessarily internal to the department and they will need to depend on outside forces in order to make the change, or do the work well. These are changes that the department would have difficulty accomplishing on their own. We focus on what could happen that might facilitate equitable policies and practices in the future. Based on the items measured in the tool, departments mentioned potential opportunities in several areas: equity priorities; ideas to advance racial equity; and changes to the budget. These areas are elaborated further below.

### *Equity Priorities*

At the beginning of the Assessment, the departments list or identify their greatest equity priorities. (See Appendix A, Department Analysis Section, Question 6). Few departments had already developed strong equity priorities. Some pre-established equity priorities were not specific enough to be actionable and measurable, such as: inclusion, accessibility or transparency. These would need to be a bit more fleshed out to be meaningful enough to guide the work of the department. Most developed at least a few new

priorities that could potentially be adopted by their whole department. Priorities varied across departments, but for the most part they had been identified by answering the questions in the Assessment. For example, several departments chose as priorities: diversity in the workforce, training staff, intentional community engagement, data collection and resource allocation to improve equity. While staff would not have the ability to make many of these changes on their own, they could organize within their departments to build support for the changes as Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs has done. Department staff presented recommendations to their leadership, explaining why they chose the priorities that they did and how it would benefit both the department and the City if they were enacted.

### *Ideas to Advance Equity*

Along with revealing weaknesses, questions in the Assessment tool also invited department staff to think about what could be done to address the weakness. When completed as a thought exercise, what resulted from the responses was a myriad of ideas to ensure diversity, avoid adverse impact and advance racial equity. Ideas generally fell into these categories: improving the diversity of the workforce, enhancing training opportunities for staff, identifying policy changes that could advance racial equity and measuring the effectiveness of efforts to advance racial equity. Some specific examples include: changing the employee onboarding process to include training on undoing racism; using internal resources to provide translation of documents online; and creating pipelines to job entry and full-time employment. While some departments had just begun thinking about these changes, others had developed plans that they intended to execute in the next fiscal year. This presents an opportunity for the the Equity Office to share examples from departments that have excelled in developing plans and ideas to advance equity, encouraging other Departments to include similar changes in their own Action Plans

### *Budget Changes*

Another opportunity to generate ideas for improvement came on the heels of weaknesses and threats in the budgeting process. Departments, in general, do not have specific budget line items to carry out the work of advancing equity. (See more about these budgeting challenges below under *Threats*). As a response, the Tool asks departments what they would do if they had more funding or if they could reallocate the funding they currently have to advance racial equity (see Appendix A, Budget Section, questions 8, 9, 11).

One change that departments said they could make is to have more effective outreach by changing the way they notify the community about engagement opportunities and host and attend more community events. Watershed Protection offered to review their program plans using an equity lens and then redistribute non-earmarked funds accordingly. A few departments mentioned that they could use resources to make materials more accessible and translate them to multiple languages. The Fire Department even decided to reallocate some of their funding from West to East Austin so that services are distributed more equitably. While new funding may not always be possible because of the multi-layered decision making process it entails, departments will have more flexibility in redistributing or reallocating existing resources.

### Threats

In a typical SWOT analysis, threats are external forces that exist in the environment or present themselves to an organization that if not addressed, would become a weakness or cause failures. In the context of evaluating equity, we define threats as:

*“Potential negative forces in the environment in which the City Department operates, and outside of its ability to control or change on its own.”*

Like opportunities, threats are not necessarily internal to the department and often come from outside forces that the department may have little to no control over. We focus on what could happen in the future that could restrict or harm equitable policies and practices. Based on the items measured in the Tool, threats were discovered in several areas: workforce diversity; budgeting for equity; and disproportionality. When weaknesses are common across departments and outside of the department’s control to change, they may be considered as a systemic barrier, particularly when the threat comes from within the City of Austin itself.

### *Recruitment and Hiring*

There are some barriers to increasing diversity of the workforce that fall outside of the departments’ ability to change. Some departments were guided in their hiring policies by outside entities such as the federal government or unions. Some departments hire for very technical positions and are mandated by other organizations for certain qualifications and hiring processes, such as passing tests. These requirements can have the unintended consequence of limiting opportunities for communities that do not have the same access to resources such as training, education or standardized testing. For other departments, there is just not a lot of diversity in the applicant pool and few candidates of color within their field. Departments that face these sorts of threats from the external environment have to be creative in identifying strategies that fall within the policies their Department is beholden to, and work with the existing policies to improve the hiring process. For example, the Fire Department thought it would be helpful to offer swim training to help cadets have a more even playing field on swim testing. Communications and Technology Management has decided to allow experience to substitute for education to encourage more applicants.

### *Budgeting for Equity*

The most common threat across all departments is a lack of line items in the budget for efforts that would improve racial equity. While some departments had a few line items, for example, grant funding or money for translation services, no departments had all items supporting equity in their budget (See Appendix A, Budget Section, Question 6 for the complete list of equity related budget items). Several departments made the point that while there is no funding listed in their budget, items such as community engagement are built into the work that they do. Similarly, they accounted for equity related work as a percent of staff time, even when there were no dedicated staff for equity related initiatives in the budget. An important reason that lack of budgeting for equity is a problem is that there is no guaranteed resources or staff to support the initiatives required to make policies, practices and programs more equitable. For example, if there is no funding for hiring interpreters for community events, or using media outlets to share engagement opportunities or targeted recruiting, how can the department ensure that these changes will be prioritized and their efforts sustainable?

### *Disproportionality*

A benefit of going through the equity assessments is that City staff begin to shift their thinking about serving residents of Austin equitably instead of equally. Well-meaning departments asserted that they serve all residents equally because the same service is available for all, or they don't discriminate, or their processes are blind. While at the surface level it appears that everyone has the same opportunity to access services, after closer inspection it became clear that some services departments provide may unintentionally benefit, harm or marginalize certain community members over others. One example of this is when departments rely on community members to initiate requests for interpretation, accommodations or reports in other languages when they may not know that they can ask for these services, or where to go with their request. Individuals with visual or hearing impairments or Limited English Proficiency would have to do substantially more to receive the same kind of services as other community members. Similarly, many departments have passive request processes, relying on community members to initiate a service request or call a certain number to report an incident, without being sure that all community members know how to navigate those channels to get what they need, or what to include in their request so that it is prioritized appropriately.

There were also several examples of disproportional benefit and burden geographically, with more investment being made in areas of the City that already have a lot of resources and have a majority White population. The Watershed Protection department suggested using geographic data from the City Demographer to help determine areas of improvement, which would be a step in the right direction. Finally, departments identified policies that inadvertently advantage those with higher resources, such as the way that rates are set, or who gets selected for small grant programs. The exposure of these issues is key for departments going through the assessment process as it reveals systemic limitations that are difficult to change, but cannot be easily ignored. The Equity Office has expressed a commitment to identifying and helping departments minimize the effects of policies and practices with unintentionally negative consequences.

### **Insights**

Demonstrating the power of participating in the Assessment process, common themes emerged from interviews with department staff that went beyond simply generating another list of things to do. The first was that going through the Assessment Tool had a profound effect on the way staff thought and interacted. Second, department staff often have to answer to a chain of command of some sort, including entities outside of their own office that dictate the work that they do. Third, inward and outward facing departments will not only respond differently to questions on the Assessment, but will also produce very different Action Plans. Lastly, even before beginning the action planning step, departments are easily able to identify some changes that they can make immediately just from having responded to the questions in the tool.

### *Eyes Wide Open*

The Assessment Tool helps develop a baseline, identify changes to make, and measure progress, but it also does more than that. It has a mirroring effect as well, in that going through the tool is an intervention in itself. Department staff talked about how the experience was "eye-opening" for them. Some had never before thought about equity in terms of the work that they do. Even those that had already been thinking about equity admitted that they had not taken into account all of the ways equity could touch their work until they went through the Assessment. Several departments recognized that while they thought they had been doing well, after going through the Assessment they realized they

were not doing enough. In short, the tool helped City staff who participated in the process to become more savvy at applying an equity lens to all of their work.

Another effect the Assessment Tool reportedly had was improved communication about equity in the workplace. Staff responsible for completing the Tool gathered information from various sources within the department. These conversations may not have happened if staff had not gone through the Assessment process. Other staff in the office or department began taking equity into consideration or thinking about it differently, even if they did not fully participate in the process. Finally, some staff had a strong desire to know what other departments were doing. They wanted to learn about others' experience going through the Assessment, what they were doing well that could be replicated and what they were including in their Action Plans.

### *Who's on First?*

One thing that almost every department mentioned in their interviews is that they cannot affect change in certain areas without direction from some other entity. Many departments said that certain decisions had to be made by City Council, such as, budgeting and policy changes, or that City Council directives guided their work. Similarly, departments received direction about their work from the City Manager, a Strategic Plan, or other departments with oversight functions. This dependence was perceived as having less independence in making certain decisions that could have an equity impact. Some departments also answered to state or federal government policies, civil organizations or Unions, which dictated things such as data collection, hiring practices and community engagement – all of which can have a large impact on advancing racial equity.

Another common concern was that those who completed the assessment had a different understanding and passion for making changes than executives and other leaders with influence and decision-making authority. They pointed out that to make some of these changes needed to advance equity would require buy-in, or at the very least, some direction from their leadership. While these chains of command were commonly perceived as limitations, they don't have to be. Departments still have much opportunity to go beyond minimum standards and creatively develop solutions to make progress toward racial equity. Neighborhood Housing and Community Development adheres to community engagement standards set by the federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) office. They go beyond these requirements to engage the community in decision making for action plans and large-scale projects on a regular basis.

### *Sweeping Changes*

City of Austin Departments that completed the Assessment are either externally facing, internally-facing, or a mix of both. Externally facing departments primarily providing direct services to the community, while internally facing departments primarily serve other city departments and offices. Internally-facing departments struggled with some of the questions regarding client base and community engagement, since that is not a major component of the work they do. However, they have a strategic advantage because they serve other departments and changes they implement will impact not just them, but also have the potential to impact every other department they work in or with. For example, Communications and Technology Management provides technology services for City staff and is working to make all City of Austin websites more accessible using community input through website re-design. This project has the potential to improve accessibility across the entire City since every department has

an online presence. Taking into consideration these differences across departments may necessitate creating a different version of the Tool for internally-facing departments that places less emphasis on community engagement and more emphasis on identifying sweeping cross-departmental changes.

### *Quick Fixes and Easy Wins*

Once departments have a chance to review their individual SWOT analyses based on the results of their Assessments, they will work with the Equity Office to develop Equity Action Plans. When departments were asked what changes they could see be implemented immediately, they generally answered in one or more of these three categories: 1) Hiring and recruiting, 2) Community engagement, 3) Data and measurement.

One of the most-common and eye-opening observations is that most departments do not have the same composition as the communities they are serving. Many were overrepresented by White staff, especially in higher levels of the department, and typically underrepresented by Hispanic, Black and Asian staff. Not only was this a common weakness for almost all departments, it was also one that departments felt like they could tackle immediately and had the locus of control to do so quickly. For example, they could begin targeting various organizations and widely sharing job opportunities. The Equity Office and Human Resources Department could share successful strategies for attracting diverse applicants to ensure that changes that are implemented will result in a diverse applicant pool.

Another category that departments were willing to tackle right away was community engagement. Most realized that their efforts fell short of the standard and weren't reaching the right audiences at the right time with the right message. Some came to understand the difference between community engagement for information sharing and engagement for decision making and realized they needed to move from the former to the latter. While departments felt that they needed to push change in this area, they struggled with how to go about doing it with limited resources (staff, funds, data). The Equity Office and the Public Information Office could work together to develop best practices for community engagement, drawing from departments that have successfully included residents in decision-making.

Finally, because of the types of questions asked in the Tool, many Departments could easily see from their responses that they were not collecting the data needed to evaluate their work from an equity lens. Many departments were not collecting demographic information, or client satisfaction, or simply did not have the data they needed to understand the population they serve enough do targeted outreach. Some were hopeful that another department or office could provide the information they needed, or at the very least help to provide guidance on where to begin. The Equity Office could work with the City Demographer and the City of Austin's Open Data team to identify existing demographic data that can help inform department practices and provide guidance on collecting demographic data.

### **Limitations**

The responses analyzed using the SWOT method are only as complete as what the Department provided to the Equity Office. Several questions were missing responses from some departments or the responses were not thorough enough to analyze.. In other instances, staff from different departments clearly had a different understanding of what the questions meant and provided answers that could not be compared to one another. Standardized and detailed training for departments and staff who participate in completion of the Assessment, along with executive buy-in would ensure less variability between

responses and in turn, more comparable results. Also, adhering to a strict time frame for completion of the Tool would ensure adequate and equal time to conduct quality checks on responses for completeness and understanding.

In addition to differences in responses across departments, there were also differences within departments. Some department staff pointed out that not all staff working on completing the Tool agreed on how to respond to certain questions and the review chain also impacted the final result that was submitted to the Equity Office. Reasons provided were interpretation of terms and concepts, different understanding on how to complete the Assessment, and not wanting to put the department in a bad light. At present, the Tool doesn't account for such differences within departments. However, the Equity Office can share with departments that are completing the Tool that these are issues that may arise and can be addressed within their department before the assessment process begins.

Another related issue that presented itself in several department interviews was the idea to “put your best face forward.” Often when individuals or groups are assessed or evaluated, they become concerned about looking bad. This is yet another reason why departments should not be compared to one another – they didn't all have the same space to provide honest or critical response for fear of what would happen if they did. That is one of the main reasons why the Equity Assessment Tool was developed without a grading system. The nature of the tool as a “self-evaluation” naturally introduces response bias, which skews the responses to be more favorable than had they been assessed by an outside entity. This would be even worse if departments thought there was some sort of punishment for admitting that they weren't doing well in an area. This points to a need for executive leadership in the City to intentionally work to cultivate a culture that values honesty about what isn't working, continues improvement, and transparency to the public.

Fortunately not every department fell victim to the culture of fear. Some departments rather honestly and transparently assessed where they were at in terms of equity. Those departments will likely get the most out of the exercise, even if they did not fair the best. They understood that the purpose of the Assessment was not having the most strengths and least weaknesses, but critically considering where they can do better. Care should be taken when introducing the assessment to departments to explain that the tool is not meant to be punitive and provide examples of how honest responses can actually be the most helpful for the department. An accurate Assessment can yield greater improvements that benefit the department and the City of Austin as a whole.

## **Recommendations**

The Equity Office will use the information provided in the department level SWOT analyses to help departments develop Equity Action Plans to expand strengths, correct weaknesses, leverage opportunities, and minimize threats. Where there are commonalities in weaknesses across departments, the Equity Office could consider developing recommendations, policy templates or tools for cross-departmental use.

After the first Equity Assessment Tool Pilot in 2017, the Equity Office began to encourage departments to focus on collecting demographic data. While this is still a concern for many departments, there are other quick wins and opportunities to address racial equity across departments. For example, the Equity Office could provide or recommend resources for onboarding, orientation and/or training on equity across departments. They could also provide template language that could be included in Department

Language Access Plans to make websites more accessible by providing information about when to translate documents in multiple languages, reading level tools, and making on-line materials screen-reader friendly. Finally, most departments did not have processes in place to measure the effectiveness of their work to improve racial equity. The Equity Office could champion those activities and provide examples of what good measurement looks like – whether doing clients surveys or collecting feedback at community events.

Strengths could be highlighted and shared by the departments that are executing recommended practices well. This could help provide realistic examples of new initiatives or the modification of existing initiatives that other departments could relate to. This would be a great opportunity for departments to share what changes they have made to improve equity since they participated in assessing their department. The Equity Office can help turn these strengths into a compendium of best practices and create implementation tools that can be used in any department.

Several opportunities were time sensitive projects that were beginning within the year, or in the next fiscal year. This would be a great place for departments to begin working with the Equity Office on department policies, practices, programs and procedures as they are in development. In addition, as departments completed thought exercises throughout the Tool they identified ideas for remedying some of their weaknesses. These are both good places for departments to start in thinking about developing Equity Action Plans. Of note, is that some departments had ideas for improvement but weren't sure if they were on target - they felt like they just needed to do something. These departments could lean on the expertise of staff in the Equity Office for support to ensure that the changes that they make really do improve equity or minimize disparities and that they are the most opportune to pursue.

Threats are mostly systemic issues within the City of Austin as a whole that fall outside of the ability of one department alone to change. Others were issues in the field in which the department operates, such as state and federal regulations and the job market. Without making an effort to minimize these threats, they will continue to negatively impact the department's ability to serve the public equitably. The Equity Office can work with departments to shift the perspective to view threats as opportunities for developing creative solutions. They can encourage departments to work around existing policies and go beyond minimum standards.

Finally, internally-facing departments have a lot of pull in influencing the work of many other departments. Such was the case when the Budget Office worked with the Equity office to include an equity component in the budgeting process. This impacted every department submitting budget proposal in Fiscal Year 18-19. Identifying similar strategies that impact multiple departments will help advance the goals of the Equity Office more quickly and broadly than departments sticking to internal changes or trying to make strategies for externally facing departments fit their own.

## **Conclusion**

In sum, the Equity Assessment Tool is a self-reflective exercise aimed at continuous improvement, while recognizing a system inherited with the influence of historical racism in the City of Austin. When approached with this understanding, the tool can be eye opening helping City staff consider equity in all of their work, even in places where it may have been unintentionally overlooked. The tool serves as a great opportunity for the entire City to look forward to what can be done to ensure that discrimination, racism, and inequality are truly a thing of the past.

# Equity Assessment Tool

City of Austin



## SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

The vision of the City of Austin is to make Austin the most livable city in the country. The mission of the City of Austin Equity Office is to provide leadership, guidance, and insight on equity to improve the quality of life for *all* Austinites. In order to achieve this vision, institutions need formal tools to closely examine policies, practices, budget allocations, and programs that perpetuate institutional racism and systemic inequities. The Equity Assessment Tool is a thought exercise to guide city departments in the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, practices, budget allocations, and programs to begin to address their impacts on equity.

***Racial equity is the condition when race no longer predicts a person's quality of life outcomes in our community.***

The City recognizes that race is the primary determinant of social equity and therefore we begin the journey toward social equity with this definition. The City of Austin recognizes historical and structural disparities and a need for alleviation of these wrongs by critically transforming its institutions and creating a culture of equity.

The Equity Assessment Tool leads with race, as it is the primary predictor of access, outcomes, and opportunities for all quality of life indicators. By focusing on racial equity, this tool introduces a framework that can be applied to additional marginalized social identities which intersect with racial identity including age, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ability. The Equity Assessment Tool systematically integrates purposeful consideration to ensure budget and planning decisions reduce disparities, promote service level equity, and improve community engagement.

## SECTION TWO: BACKGROUND

Austin has a long history of systemic racism and racial inequity that continues today. From the city's origins, African Americans and other communities of color were excluded, marginalized and discriminated against as a result of city policies and practices. This history was reinforced by segregationist policies throughout the 20th century affecting a range of Austin venues, including schools, public parks, and commercial businesses, among others. One of the most disheartening chapters of this legacy was the City of Austin's Master Plan of 1928, which divided the City along racial lines by moving community services for African American and Hispanic/Latinx residents to East Austin. African-American and Hispanic Austinites who tried to settle in areas outside of the designated district were often denied services such as utilities and access to public schools. People of color were told that if they wanted access to essential services, they had to live in the designated areas. Despite these challenges, communities of color in Austin thrived and developed strong, close knit, and vibrant communities.

While Austin was recognized in 2017 by US News and World Report as "The Best Place to Live in the U.S.," the City consistently makes national lists as a city with severe inequality. In 1950, Austin was fourth in the country for the most income inequality. In 2015, the Martin Prosperity Institute listed Austin as the most economically segregated city in the country. Legacies of displacement by wealthier white Austinites and lack of access to opportunity for people of color have marked the city with continued racial disparities.

In an effort to address racial inequity in Austin, City Council passed Resolution No. 20150507-027 in May of 2015, which directed the City Manager to evaluate the impact of existing city policies and practices on racial equity and develop an Equity Assessment Tool that can be used across City departments during the budget process. The Council's goal is to utilize the Equity Assessment Tool and implement new policies, practices, and programs to help identify and address the inequities that impact the quality of life for low-income communities in Austin, which are disproportionately communities of color.

When fully implemented, the Equity Assessment Tool will aid City of Austin departments in:

- Focusing on human centered design and building institutional empathy;
- Engaging-residents in decision-making processes, prioritizing those adversely affected by current conditions;
- Bringing conscious attention to racial inequities and unintended consequences before decisions are made;
- Advancing opportunities for the improvement of outcomes for historically marginalized communities;
- Removing barriers to the improvement of outcomes for historically marginalized communities; and
- Affirming our commitment to equity, inclusion, and diversity.

### SECTION THREE: INSTRUCTIONS

This tool should be completed annually by department leadership and financial staff as you craft your budget proposals and business plans for the following fiscal year.

Refer to the following seven steps for building racial equity, provided by GARE, as you complete this tool:

1. **Know the History:** Consider historical events that have negatively impacted communities of color. Acknowledge them and create space for communities to share as to not repeat the same mistakes.
2. **Develop the Proposal:** What is the policy, program, practice or budget decision under consideration? What are the desired results and outcomes?
3. **Monitor Data:** What are the data? What do the data tell us? Are they disaggregated by race?
4. **Engage the Community:** How have communities been engaged? Are there opportunities to expand engagement?
5. **Analysis and strategies:** Who will benefit from or be burdened by your proposal? What are your strategies for advancing racial equity or mitigating unintended consequences?
6. **Implementation:** What is your plan for implementation?
7. **Accountability and Communication:** How will you ensure accountability, communicate, and evaluate results?

### SECTION FOUR: DEPARTMENTAL ANALYSIS

Review and complete the information in the table below to answer the following questions.

	Department Staff		Consultants & Contractors		Clients	
Race/Ethnicity	#	%	#	%	#	%
White						
Black						
Asian						
Hispanic/Latino						
Native American/Alaska Native						
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander						
Other						
<b>TOTAL</b>						

1. Consider the identities that intersect with race/identity, including age, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, and veteran status. List or link to any and all demographic information for these identities your department collects for staff, consultants, and clients.
2. What comes to mind when you compare the racial/ethnic breakdown of your staff by level, contractors and consultants to the population your department serves and the City of Austin overall?
3. Does your department have strategies in place for ensuring racial/ethnic diversity of staff in recruitment and hiring processes? Yes  No 
  - a. If YES, provide those strategies and if applicable, include the venues and organizations where outreach occurs.
  - b. If NO, think about and provide a few ideas for how your department can ensure racial/ethnic diversity of staff.
4. Does your department, on-board, orient or train staff on critical issues related to equity and institutional racism? Yes  No  (If NO, proceed to the next question)
  - a. If YES, list those training opportunities and how often they are provided.
5. How does your department measure the effectiveness of its trainings on equity and institutional racism?

Equity Priorities and Strategies

6. What are your department's greatest equity priorities? If they have not yet been formally established, take time now to think about and identify what equity priorities are most important to your department and include them here. *Refer to your department's executive leadership team.*
7. How does your department ensure departmental policies, practices, and programs do not adversely impact communities of color?
8. Does your department measure the effectiveness of its efforts to improve racial equity? Yes  No 
  - a. If YES, describe the methods of measurement used (e.g. surveys) and provide a few examples of measures you track (e.g. Increase outreach to X community by X%)
  - b. If NO, think of a few ways you could measure the effectiveness of your efforts to improve racial equity and provide them here.
9. How is your department collaborating with other City departments to advance racial equity in Austin? Include WHO you are collaborating with and HOW those efforts advance racial equity.

**SECTION TWO: ENGAGEMENT**

Accessible Materials

1. How does your department determine when to provide translation of public documents, policies, applications, notices, and at public meetings and hearings for persons with limited English proficiency? *Attach a copy of your department's Language Access Plan, if one exists.*
2. How does your department determine when to make documents and meetings accessible for persons with visual or hearing impairments?

3. Check from the list below of the most common languages spoken in Austin (other than English) and list all other languages that were translated from English for persons with limited English proficiency and accommodations for individuals with visual or hearing impairments that were provided in the previous fiscal year. Be sure to list each language separately, rather than lumping groups together (such as African or Asian languages).
  - American Sign Language for public meetings and hearings
  - Documents in braille, websites with audio or other accommodations for the visually impaired
  - Spanish
  - Chinese (including Cantonese, Mandarin or other Chinese Languages)
  - Vietnamese
  - Hindi
  - Korean
  - French
  - [list other language if applicable]
4. Describe the process your department uses to verify the reading level of written materials and information on websites (public documents, policies, applications, notices, flyers, etc.).

Decision Making Processes

5. How does your department determine when to engage the community in its decision making processes, for example for the purpose of fact-finding, receiving public comments, and conducting inquiries?
6. What strategies does your department use to engage community members in its decision making processes?
7. How does your department notify the community about engagement opportunities?
8. Check from the list below the accommodations your department uses to ensure meaningful participation from community members. For each item checked, describe how those accommodations are made so that community members may meaningfully participate in public meetings.
  - Food is provided
  - Evening and/or weekend options are available
  - Multiple engagement opportunities for the same issue are provided
  - Supervised children's activities are provided
  - American Sign Language (ASL) is provided
  - Translation or interpretation provided
  - Transportation is made available for community members with mobility issues
  - Location selected is accessible to target community(ies)
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Community Engagement Activities

9. List and briefly describe your department's community engagement events and activities in the previous fiscal year. Include all opportunities your department offered community members to provide input on programs, policies, and/or plans. In the column labeled "Target Audience" describe who the event was targeted to reach.

Date	Description and Purpose	Target Audience

10. Does your department capture client satisfaction with programs and services? Yes  No  (if NO, proceed to the next question)
- If YES, is client satisfaction data broken down demographically (race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, religion, age, national origin, income level, zip code, etc)? Yes  No
  - Describe how that client satisfaction is collected and provide an attachment of your most recent client satisfaction report, including demographic data, if available.
11. Does your department measure participation at these activities and events? Yes  No  (If NO, proceed to the next question)
- If YES, how many community members does your department engage annually?
  - If YES, What are the demographics of the community members you engage (including age, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, veteran status each intersected with race/ ethnicity)?
12. What other strategies does your department employ to ensure accountability to communities of color in its planning process? Check all that apply.
- Improved leadership opportunities
  - Advisory committees
  - Commissions
  - Targeted community meetings
  - Stakeholder groups
  - Focus groups
  - Increased or targeted outreach
  - Providing stipends (compensation) for participation
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
13. Does your department collect feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of community engagement efforts? Yes  No  (If NO, proceed to the next question)
- If YES, how?
14. What other opportunities does your department offer or encourage staff to participate in to understand the lived experiences of members of marginalized communities?
- Applying for your department's services
  - Participating in simulated training experience
  - Focus groups with clients
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION THREE: BUDGET

1. What is your department's total budget for the current fiscal year? Provide a copy of your budget.
2. What is your department's total budget (dollar amount) for the current fiscal year?
3. What percentage (%) is your department's budget in relation to the City's general fund budget?
4. Does your department receive grant funding that supports programs or services designed to advance racial equity? Yes  No  (If NO, proceed to the next question)
  - a. If YES, in a few sentences describe your grant and how it advances racial equity.

5. Does your budget include funding for any of the following items? Include cost of overhead, staff time and accommodations. If there is no specific line item, calculate the amount and percentage. The column "Referenced Question" provides the question number that includes the description of this budget item.
6. Does your budget include funding for any of the following items? Yes  No  (If No, proceed to the next question)

*If YES, Include the dollar amount, percentage (%), and Staff (temporary and FTE) for each item.*

- Capturing resident/client satisfaction with programs and/or services
- Expanding racial/ethnic diversity among staff hired in your department
- Training on equity and institutional racism
- Grant funding for programs or services that advance equity for communities of color
- Translation of public documents for persons with limited English proficiency
- Translation and interpretation services for persons with limited English proficiency at public meetings
- Services and accommodations for persons with visual or hearing impairments
- Making public documents the appropriate reading level for the intended audience
- Holding public meetings for the purpose to engage the community in the department's decision making processes
- Increasing the involvement of marginalized communities in your department's budget process

7. Does your department receive grant funding that supports programs or services designed to advance racial equity? Yes  No  (If NO, proceed to the next question)
  - a. If YES, in a few sentences describe your grant and how it advances racial equity.
8. Considering your response to question 8 regarding your department's equity priorities, how is the pursuit of racial equity reflected in your department's budget?
9. Think about and identify ways in which your department's budget may disproportionately benefit some communities over others.
10. Think about and identify ways your department's current base budget could be adjusted or realigned to advance racial equity in the next fiscal year.
11. How has your department involved internal and external stakeholders, including marginalized communities of color, in your department's budget process the previous fiscal year? Yes  No  (If NO, proceed to the Section Four)
  - a. If NO, think of a few ways you could introduce the perspectives and lived experiences of communities of color in your department's budget office in the coming fiscal year.
  - a. If NO, think about and identify ways in which your department's budget may disproportionately burden or marginalize some communities over others.
  - b. If NO, think about and describe an unmet need within your budget that inhibits your department's achievement of its greatest equity priorities.

**SECTION FOUR: ALIGNMENT (with Council’s Six Proposed Priority Outcomes)**

Austin City Council has proposed the following six priority outcomes to guide the City:

- **Economic Opportunity and Affordability:** Having economic opportunities and resources that enable us to thrive in our community.
- **Mobility:** Getting us where we want to go, when we want to get there, safely and cost-effectively.
- **Safety:** Being safe in our home, at work, and in our community.
- **Health & Environment:** Enjoying a sustainable environment and a healthy life, physically and mentally.
- **Culture and Lifelong Learning:** Being enriched by Austin’s unique civic, cultural, ethnic, and learning opportunities.
- **Government that Works:** Believing that city government works effectively and collaboratively for all of us— that it is equitable, ethical and innovative.

1. Take some time to think about these priorities from a racial equity lens and fill in the following table.

Council Priority	Currently addressing	Plan to Address in the future	Do not plan to address
<b>Economic opportunity and affordability</b>			
<b>Mobility</b>			
<b>Safety</b>			
<b>Health</b>			
<b>Cultural learning opportunities</b>			
<b>Government that works</b>			

2. List/ describe any indicators, metrics, or strategies your department is addressing in any of the 6 outcome areas.
3. Provide one example of how your department is addressing, or plans to address, racial equity within the priority areas listed.
4. Describe where you see an unmet need in budgeting or planning, which if addressed, could allow your department to focus on improving racial equity in at least one of the priority areas listed.
5. Provide a list of the department policies or practices you have identified after completing this assessment, which may unintentionally benefit, burden, or marginalize some racial/ethnic groups over others.

## Appendix A: History

To know where we are going, we must first know where we have been. Learning about past inequities and social justice issues in our community can prevent repeating the same mistakes.

### Learn More about Austin’s Racial History:

- [Austin- A “Family-Friendly” City: Perspectives and Solutions from Mothers in the City. \(2015\)](#)
- [Link to full Master Plan of 1928](#) (the “Koch Proposal”) which formally and legally segregated the City by only providing essential city services (utilities, education, paved roads) to people of color in areas east of what is now I-35.
- [“How East Austin Became a Negro district”](#) (East End Cultural Heritage District)
- [East Austin Gentrification Overview](#) (East End Cultural Heritage District)
- [“Austin: A Liberal Oasis?”](#), a slide presentation by Undoing White Supremacy Austin, presenting a brief overview of the history of institutional racism in Austin ([document format](#))
- [Shadows of a Sunbelt City \(Dr. Eliot Tretter, 2016, University of Georgia Press\)](#) Planning for displacement. The partnership between UTA, the state and federal governments, and the real estate industry and its dominance over City planning and economic development. In particular, Chapter 6 (“The Past is Prologue”) describes how the City’s legal and administrative policies, in conjunction with private zoning deed restrictions, codified institutional racism. [Interview with Dr. Tretter](#)
- [Austin Restricted: Progressivism, Zoning, Private Racial Covenants, and the Making of a Segregated City](#) (Tretter, Sounny-Slitine, Final Report to the Institute for Urban Policy Research and Analysis, 2012)
- [Austin Gentrification Maps](#) (making visible one of the effects of COA policy and practice)
- [Inheriting Inequality](#) (maps of the history of the racial divide in Austin)
- [Crossing Over: Sustainability, New Urbanism, and Gentrification in Austin, Texas](#) (the downside of the “new urbanist” movement)

Appendix B: City Council Priorities Infographic



# 6 Austin City Council Priority Outcomes and Existing Disparities

- 1 Economic opportunity and affordability**



**27%** Poverty rates for Asian (17%), Black (22%) and Hispanic (27%) Travis County residents are much higher than that of Whites (9%).
- 2 Mobility**



**19 %** Residents in the two districts with the lowest median household income (Districts 3 & 4) spend 19% of their annual income on transportation.

Source: City Auditor Affordability Review, December 2016
- 3 Safety**



**21 %** Blacks account for ~21% of jail bookings but comprise only 8% of the population.

Source: Travis County Sheriff's Office and the ACS 1-Yr population estimates
- 4 Health**



**42%** In Travis County, 42% of Black adults are obese compared with 26% among Hispanics and 17% among White adults.

Source: 2011-2014, Austin Public Health
- 5 Cultural and Learning Opportunities**



**25%** Less than 25% of Black and Hispanic adults in Travis County over 25 have a Bachelor's Degree or Higher as compared to almost 60% of Whites and 70% of Asians.
- 6 Trustworthy Government**



**60%** Almost 60% of White Travis County residents participated in the 2012 Presidential election, as compared to roughly 40% of Blacks, 35% of Asians, and 30% of Hispanics.

Data Source: American Community Survey, 1 Year Estimates unless noted otherwise

## Appendix C: Glossary of Terms

SOURCE: <http://racialequitytools.org/glossary>

Discrimination - The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion and other categories.

Diversity - Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender — the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used — but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values.

Ethnicity - A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.

Equity- ***Racial equity is the condition when race no longer predicts a person's quality of life outcomes in our community.*** The City recognizes that race is the primary determinant of social equity and therefore we begin the journey toward social equity with this definition. The City of Austin recognizes historical and structural disparities and a need for alleviation of these wrongs by critically transforming its institutions and creating a culture of equity.

Implicit bias - Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals' attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves. Notably, implicit biases have been shown to trump individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess. The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is often used to measure implicit biases with regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, and other topics.

Inclusion - Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

Institutional racism - Institutional racism refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color.

Intersectionality - An approach largely advanced by women of color, arguing that classifications such as gender, race, class, and others cannot be examined in isolation from one another; they interact and intersect in individuals' lives, in society, in social systems, and are mutually constitutive.

Latinx- A word for those of Latin American descent who do not identify as being of the male or female gender or who simply don't want to be identified by gender.

Oppression - Systemic devaluing, undermining, marginalizing, and disadvantaging of certain social identities in contrast to the privileged norm; when some people are denied something of value, while others have ready access.

Power - Power is unequally distributed globally and in U.S. society; some individuals or groups wield greater power than others, thereby allowing them greater access and control over resources. Wealth, whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms through which power operates. Although power is often conceptualized as power over other individuals or groups, other variations are power with (used in the context of building collective strength) and power within (which references an individual's internal strength). Learning to "see" and understand relations of power is vital to organizing for progressive social change.

Prejudice - A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics.

Privilege - Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. white privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because we're taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.

Race - A political construction created to concentrate power with white people and legitimize dominance over non-white people.

Racial and ethnic identity - An individual's awareness and experience of being a member of a racial and ethnic group; the racial and ethnic categories that an individual chooses to describe him or herself based on such factors as biological heritage, physical appearance, cultural affiliation, early socialization, and personal experience.

Racism - For purposes of this site, we want users to know we are using the term "racism" specifically to refer to individual, cultural, institutional and systemic ways by which differential consequences are created for groups historically or currently defined as white being advantaged, and groups historically or currently defined as non-white (African, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, etc.) as disadvantaged.

Structural racism - The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal – that routinely advantage Whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. Structural racism encompasses the entire system of White domination, diffused and infused in all aspects of society including its history, culture, politics, economics and entire social fabric. Structural racism is more difficult to locate in a particular institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually reproducing old and producing new forms of racism. Structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of racism – all other forms of racism emerge from structural racism.

White privilege - Refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because they are white. Generally white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it.

## **Appendix B: Department Interview Questions**

1. Tell me briefly about your department and what you see as its primary role or function?
2. How does the work of your department impact City of Austin residents?
3. What do you think are your biggest strengths as an office when it comes to equity?
4. Where would you like to see more improvement in regards to equity?
5. Were there any other insights that you gained from completing this process?
6. How do you think the equity assessment will affect the work that your department does going forward?
7. Anything else you would like to share with me before we end this call?

### Appendix C: SWOT ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

	Supportive/Beneficial +	Unsupportive/Detrimental -
<p>Internal Control, Current reality</p> <p style="text-align: center;">()</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p><i>Any policy, strategy or practice that is currently taking place within the City Department that could improve or create equity at the present time, within its scope of control to change.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are our unique resources or strategies?</li> <li>Where do we excel in creating equity?</li> <li>What are our best practices?</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p><i>Any policy, strategy or practice that is currently taking place within the City Department that could hinder or challenge equity at the present time, within its scope of control to change.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where do we need the most improvement?</li> <li>Where do we lack resources?</li> <li>What are our liabilities?</li> </ul>
<p>External Environment, Future potential</p> <p style="text-align: center;">X</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p><i>Potential positive forces in the environment in which the City Department operates, outside of its ability to control or change on its own.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What changes are on the horizon that the department could take advantage of?</li> <li>What policies, strategies or practices could be improved with assistance from outside the department?</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>THREATS</b></p> <p><i>Potential negative forces in the environment in which the City Department operates, outside of its ability to control or change on its own.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What policies, practices or structures within the City of Austin hinder changes the department would like to make to improve equity?</li> <li>What obstacles could get in the way of progress?</li> </ul>

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
OFFICE OF THE CITY AUDITOR**

<b>Department</b>	<b>OFFICE OF THE CITY AUDITOR</b>
<b>Website(s)</b>	<a href="http://www.austintexas.gov/department/auditor">http://www.austintexas.gov/department/auditor</a>
<b>Staff Size</b>	25
<b>Staff Composition</b>	48% White/ 12% Black/ 8% Asian/ 16% Hispanic or Latino/ 0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander/ 4% Native American or Alaskan Native/ 12% other
<b>FY18 Budget</b>	\$3,991,000
<b>Mission</b>	<i>The Austin City Charter created the Office of the City Auditor to assist the Austin City Council, citizens, and City management in establishing accountability, transparency, and a culture of continuous improvement in City operations and service delivery.</i>
<b>Programs and Services</b>	<i>Audit, Investigations</i>
<b>Clientele</b>	<i>City of Austin employees &amp; residents.</i>

**Strengths**

- Currently has one clear/strong equity priority, accessibility, in relation to information produced by the office. (Q21)
- Works to ensure policies/practices and programs do not impact communities of color. Through performance audits, investigations and special projects across City of Austin departments and offices, the Auditor's Office prioritizes work that impacts communities of color and disadvantaged populations. To that end, 41% of their reports in the past three years have included findings that impact these groups covering topics such as police complaints, homelessness, neighborhood planning, gentrification and historic preservation. (Q22)
- Works collaboratively with other City departments to advance racial equity through the auditing process, via interviews, focus groups, and analysis of departmental records. Results of those analyses often have an impact on equity as they analyze City functions that assist communities of color and disadvantaged communities. (Q26)
- Has process for determining when to make documents and meetings accessible for the visual and hearing-impaired. The Office has engaged the deaf community to identify their needs. Audit finance committee meetings are audio and video recorded. (Q28)
- Offers accommodations for visually impaired, including audio accommodations. (Q29)
- Has process for verifying reading level for public information. Uses the Flesch-Kincaid Readability Assessment to ensure that documents are at an 8th grade reading level. In addition, they have a quality control process to ensure that reports are easier to read by checking grammar, vocabulary and syntax. (Q30)
- Process for determining when to engage the community in decision-making. Through audits and investigations, frequently solicit input from community members on City services. (Q31)
- Strategies to engage the community in decision-making include: formal public meetings, online platforms, and in-person meetings, has participated in town halls in two council districts and hosted "meet the Auditor" events. Community members can also reach the auditor through the phone, in-person, online, or through Council members. Additional outreach through bottom-up, grassroots channels could improve community engagement and equity. (Q32)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
OFFICE OF THE CITY AUDITOR**

- Accommodations are offered to encourage participation of community members: evenings/weekends, multiple opportunities, translation/interpretation, and accessible location. Interpretation services are provided on request by employees that speak multiple languages. (Q34)
- Captures client satisfaction data on programs and services from those City Departments and Offices being audited and City Council Members (Q37,39)
- Offers some opportunities to understand lived experience, including focus groups with clients. The Office also participates in learning lunches with education and training provided by staff from other departments and city leaders that sometimes provide insight into lived experience. (Q46)
- Has staff dedicated to advancing racial equity included in the Office's budget (Q55)
- Is currently addressing all 6 City council priorities. Each audit project is always assigned to one of the council priority areas. One example provided is an audit on improving the effectiveness of City policies and services for the homeless population, which disproportionately includes people of color. Data collection and analysis is conducted for each project, and the measures and methods vary project to project. For example, they have used surveys, interviews, focus groups and analysis of department records. (Q64,65, 66)

**Weaknesses**

- Does not measure race/ethnicity of clients served in the community. The Auditor's Office and the Human Resources Department collect race/ethnicity data on City and Department staff. They do not collect any demographic data on clients, apart from City staff. (Q8)
- Does not collect data on disparities among target population (Q11)
- Staff are representative of the City of Austin population for most races and ethnicities, except for the Hispanic population, which is under-represented in the staff of the Auditor's office. (Q14)
- Does not take demographics into consideration in the recruitment and hiring process. (Q15, 16, 17)
- No onboarding/orientation/training on equity and racism (Q18,19)
- Does not translate public documents for limited English proficiency into multiple languages (Q29)
- Does not measure participation at community events (Q40)
- Employs few strategies to ensure accountability to communities of color in the planning process. The strategies it uses to ensure accountability include focus groups with staff from other departments during the audit process and participating in an independent 3rd party review of the Office's processes. Indirectly, the 3rd party review addresses equity by assessing the Offices quality control process. (Q43)
- Does not collect feedback on community engagement efforts. (Q44,45)
- Does not involve stakeholders, particularly communities of color, in the budgeting process (Q59)

**Opportunities**

- The Office works in response to complaints made through a hotline. At the time of the submission of their equity assessment, they were writing a report to identify complaints that resulted in investigations by demographic data of reporter. The Office could analyze this information along with geography to ensure that the complaint and investigation process is fair and equitable (Q8,11,13)
- Does not currently engage in recruiting and would like to reinstate recruiting in the upcoming Fiscal Year to focus on external applicants and hard to reach communities. (Q17)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
OFFICE OF THE CITY AUDITOR**

- The Office has one current equity priority and identified two additional priorities that could be adopted Department-wide: internal communication, and external outreach. (Q21)
- Is working to improve racial equity, but does not measure the effectiveness of those efforts (Q23,24)
- The Office is considering translating all audit reports into Spanish, which would be a good opportunity to make their public information more accessible, in line with their current equity priority. (Q27)
- They are planning to make their online audit documents screen reader friendly in FY19. (Q28)
- The Office has staff that speak multiple languages. These employees could be used to assist with translating documents into the languages that are most commonly spoken in Austin, as a start. (Q35)
- Captures client satisfaction data, but does not include demographic breakdown of the data (Q38)
- The Auditor has client satisfaction surveys for City Departments and Offices being audited and City Council Members, however, they do not collect feedback from community members. The Office could extend their existing satisfaction survey processes to follow up with community members providing reports to the Auditor's office and conduct surveys at community events where the Office has provided information or a presentation. (Q39)
- With shifts in current funding, the Office believes it can make the following changes in FY19 to advance racial equity: hold more town halls to engage the community; participate in more recruitment fairs serving communities of color; and distribute information more widely about how to submit an idea to the Office. (Q58)
- Unmet need in budgeting or planning that could advance racial equity. In the City Council priority, Government That Works: Increased transparency through enhancing accessibility of audit reports, and holding community meetings in all City Council Member districts. (Q67)

**Threats**

- The Office has no strategies to ensure diversity in recruitment and hiring processes. They stopped actively recruiting because they have a high-volume of qualified applicants. ( Q15, 16, 17)
- In order to obtain audit reports in their own language, community members must request them through the city clerk's office. This indirect route could be overly burdensome for those who don't speak English. (Q27)
- Budget structures prevent tracking of investments that promote equity and inclusion, including (Q52-54):
  - Capturing resident/client satisfaction with programming and services
  - Expanding racial/ethnic diversity of staff hired
  - Training funds for issues related to equity or institutional racism
  - Grant funding for programs and services that advance racial equity
  - Translation of documents into other languages for folks with limited English proficiency
  - Translation or interpretation services for individuals with limited English proficiency at public meetings
  - Services and accommodations for individuals with visual or hearing impairments
  - Making public documents the appropriate reading level
  - Holding public meetings for the purpose of Involving internal and external stakeholders in the department's budget process

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis**  
**OFFICE OF THE CITY AUDITOR**

- Increasing involvement of marginalized community members input in the budgeting process.
- The budget does not include any funding for community related work. The majority of the budget is for personnel, and the Office indicated that staff hours are dedicated to advancing racial equity, although it is not broken out in the budget. (Q52-56)

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
THE BUDGET OFFICE AND OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

<b>Department</b>	<b><i>THE BUDGET OFFICE AND OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER</i></b>
<b>Website(s)</b>	<a href="http://www.austintexas.gov/department/budget-office">http://www.austintexas.gov/department/budget-office</a> <a href="https://www.austintexas.gov/financeonline/finance/">https://www.austintexas.gov/financeonline/finance/</a>
<b>Staff Size</b>	32
<b>Staff Composition</b>	<i>78% White/ 3% Black/ 3% Asian/ 13% Hispanic or Latino/ 0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander/ 0% Native American or Alaskan Native/ 3% other</i>
<b>FY18 Budget</b>	<i>\$5,223,682</i>
<b>Mission</b>	<i>The Budget Office is responsible for monitoring the financial performance for all City departments.</i>
<b>Programs and Services</b>	<i>The Financial Services Division provides financial planning and budgeting for the City of Austin Law Department, including business planning, purchasing and outside counsel/consultant contracting. The Administrative Division handles the day-to-day administrative matters for the department, including human resources, library management, reception, invoice processing, office space, maintenance and information technology functions as well as providing technical and managerial support to the City of Austin Law Department.</i>
<b>Clientele</b>	<i>City of Austin Employees</i>

**Strengths**

- Measures race and ethnicity of clients served (Q8)
- Collects some other demographic data on clients, namely gender (Q13)
- Have identified equity priorities (Q21)
- The Offices have worked with the Equity Office to ensure policies, practices and programs do not negatively impact communities of color by incorporating an equity component to the budget and bond process and are committed to providing equitable public engagement opportunities. (Q22)
- Works with other City departments to advance racial equity. Have worked with the Equity Office to include equity in making budgeting decisions. Also, increased community participation in the budget and bond development process through engaging the Quality of Life Commissions. (Q26)
- Although there is no formal process or policy for translating documents into languages other than English, the offices have a history of translating online public engagement materials and materials for public events in Spanish. They have also translated some public engagement materials in Arabic, Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean. (Q27)
- Has some processes for determining when to make documents and meetings accessible for visual and hearing-impaired with room for improvement. City council presentations are recorded and close captioned. ASL will be provided upon request at public meetings. Some budget documents are available online in a screen-reader compatible version. The department could do more to ensure that all public documents online are compatible with screen readers. (Q28)
- Offers translation services for limited English proficiency for multiple languages and accommodations for visual or hearing impaired, including: ASL, Braille or Audio accommodations for people with visual impairments, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, and Korean. (Q29)
- Has a comprehensive and robust process for notifying the community about engagement opportunities, including: using social media, online ad buys, local media outlets (tv, newspaper,

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis**  
**THE BUDGET OFFICE AND OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

radio including outlets representing communities of color), distributing flyers, phone calls to local churches and neighborhood associations and through City Council Member offices (Q33)

- All types of accommodations are offered to encourage participation of community members: food, evenings/weekends, multiple opportunities, children’s activities, ASL, translation/interpretation, transportation, accessible location. In addition, the Offices engage with communities where they are already gathering, such as attending City Council Members’ district events. (Q34, 35)
- Captures client satisfaction data on programs and services including demographic data for most online and in-person engagement activities that are led by the Office through the use of client satisfaction surveys (Q37,38, 39)
- Measures participation at community events (Q40, 41)
- Measures demographics for online engagement activities during budget development (Q42)
- Employs several strategies to include communities of color in planning processes: advisory committees, boards and commissions, targeted community meetings, stakeholder groups, focus groups, and increased or targeted outreach (Q43)
- Has involved stakeholders in the department’s budgeting process (Q59)
- Is currently addressing one City Council priority – Government that Works – through stakeholder engagement and transparency and has developed strong metrics to measure success in accountability to the community (Q64,65, 66)

**Weaknesses**

- Does not collect data on disparities among target population (Q11)
- The Budget Office and the Office of the CFO have a higher percentage of white employees compared to the population it serves (other City departments). While they are more closely aligned with City demographics, they lack strong representativeness of Hispanic, Asian and Black staff. (Q14)
- Strategies to ensure diversity in recruitment and hiring processes. The department has informally implemented a few strategies to improve ethnic and racial diversity, such as recruitment from universities and student groups and using diverse hiring panels. The offices acknowledge there is no official policy for improving staff diversity, they do not actively recruit to fill most positions and past efforts to diversify have not been effective. (Q15, 16).
- No onboarding/orientation/training on equity and racism (Q18,19)
- The Offices do not have a process for determining when to translate public documents for community members with limited English proficiency and do not have a language access plan. They do not translate the budget document that includes all financial policies. (Q27)
- It is unclear if client satisfaction data collection includes satisfaction with the processes and services of the Budget Office, or only the budget itself. (Q39) Similarly, it is unclear if client satisfaction surveys collect feedback of the quality and effectiveness of community engagement efforts. (Q44, 45)
- Does not offer opportunities for staff to understand lived experience of community members it serves (Q46)
- Does not have grant funds to address issues that disproportionately impact communities of color (Q50,51)
- Does not have staff specifically dedicated to advance racial equity (Q55)

**Opportunities**

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis**  
**THE BUDGET OFFICE AND OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- The Offices have identified some priorities that could be adopted Department-wide. They desire to continue to improve diversity of workforce and equity of their public engagement process. They could go further to expand upon and formalize these priorities in an action plan. (Q21)
- Could establish measures within the community engagement feedback process to specifically and intentionally measure the effectiveness of the Offices' work to improve racial equity (Q23,24)
- The Budget Office is making budget materials more accessible through a dynamic online platform, Open Budget ATX, that residents can use to access budget content in multiple languages (Q27)
- Although not a formally adopted process, the Budget Office has recently begun verifying the reading level of new public engagement documents using online tools. They could benefit from guidance on how to make technical documents more readable, and potentially, prioritizing making previously created documents readable. (Q30)
- There is a defined annual time frame, specifically April through June, where the Budget Office intentionally conducts community outreach for input on the City budget. Additional engagement opportunities could be identified or defined, such as preparation for the engagement period and follow-up. Other opportunities to engage the community in decision-making might be available throughout the year but have not been addressed in this assessment. (Q31)
- Measures participation at community events, but does not include demographic measures for in person engagement events. Similar methods that are used to capture demographics for engagement activities online could be used for collecting data at community events. (Q40, 41)
- Unmet needs in budgeting or planning that could advance racial equity include: using existing resources to translate public documents in languages other than Spanish, expanding the equity component to department budget requests (Q58) and improving diversity of staff (Q67)

**Threats**

- Due to high demand, HR does not recruit for entry level budget analyst positions (Q15,16)
- Investments that promote equity and inclusion are not tracked in the department budget (Q52-54):
  - Capturing resident/client satisfaction with programming and services
  - Expand racial/ethnic diversity of staff hired
  - Training funds for issues related to equity or institutional racism
  - Grant funding for programs and services that advance racial equity
  - Translation of documents into other languages for folks with limited English proficiency
  - Translation or interpretation services for individuals with limited English proficiency at public meetings
  - Services and accommodations for individuals with visual or hearing impairments
  - Making public documents the appropriate reading level
  - Holding public meetings for the purpose of Involving internal and external stakeholders in the department's budget process
  - Increasing involvement of marginalized community members input in the budgeting process.
- Although activities promoting equity and inclusion are part of the community engagement efforts of the Budget Office and CFO, the pursuit of racial equity is not reflected in their budgets. There are no line items for those activities or dedicated funding for staff supporting these activities. (Q53-56)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis**  
**THE BUDGET OFFICE AND OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- The department did not see how budget decisions could disproportionately benefit some communities over others, since they provide a service to internal departments who are outward/public facing. However, as a support office they have a responsibility to provide equity across multiple departments. This points out another blind spot – for a third of the year they participate in outward facing community engagement activities which impact the City budget. The Offices will miss out on opportunities to make advancements to improve racial equity if they fail to recognize this function of their work and acknowledge the residents of Austin as clients (Q57, 61)
- Rather than Department policies, the Budget Office and the Office of the CFO have Citywide financial policies, which have been approved by Council ordinance designed to keep the City in compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. The lack of department policies poses a threat to the development of equity policies to guide their work. Further, they were not able to identify how the offices might play a role in unintentional benefit, burden or marginalization of some racial/ethnic groups over others, because the offices don't consider themselves outward facing. This is a blind spot that can hinder the development of comprehensive equity priorities and planning (Q68)
- Do not plan to address most (5/6) City council priorities (Q64)

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT**

<b>Department</b>	<b>COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT</b>
<b>Website(s)</b>	<a href="http://www.austintexas.gov/department/information-technology">http://www.austintexas.gov/department/information-technology</a>
<b>Staff Size</b>	330
<b>Staff Composition</b>	52% White/ 13% Black/ 8% Asian/ 21% Hispanic or Latino/ 0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander/ 0% Native American or Alaskan Native/ 6% other
<b>FY18 Budget</b>	\$102,701,035
<b>Mission</b>	<i>Our IT Governance framework establishes a transparent, informed, and effective decision-making process for managing the demand and supply of best-managed IT services while encouraging sponsor and stakeholder engagement. Our key IT strategy is to lower the cost of services by leveraging inter-organizational collaboration and efficiencies.</i>
<b>Programs and Services</b>	<i>Asset management, Business intelligence management, case management, citizen engagement, communications management, engineering management, financial management, geospatial information management, human capital management, information management, IT infrastructure management, mobile operations management, public safety management.</i>
<b>Clientele</b>	<i>City of Austin employees</i>

**Strengths**

- Comprehensive strategies are used to recruit and hire diverse staff. The department posts openings through professional networks, local colleges, including Huston-Tillotson and Austin Community College, secondary and collegiate schools, and through attending job fairs. The Department also allows for experience to be used in place of a degree. (Q15,16)
- Works to ensure policies, practices and programs do not adversely impact communities of color. Is conducting usability testing for the City-wide website redesign project utilizing feedback from demographically representative and diverse communities. (Q22)
- Works with 7 other City departments in their role providing technology support to advance racial equity on various projects related to affordable housing, improving diversity in hiring and recruiting efforts, serving underserved communities, and website accessibility. (Q26)
- Has provided translation for limited English proficiency for multiple languages and accommodations for the visually-impaired, including: Audio accommodations for people with visual impairments, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, and Korean. (Q29)
- Has a process for verifying reading level for public information by running the language through online applications and using citizen tests groups. (Q30)
- Has a process for determining when to engage the community in decision-making. The Department’s Innovation research fellows conduct interviews with community members and test prototypes at the beginning of projects. (Q31)
- Has a process for notifying the community about engagement opportunities. Utilize Austin Public Library, local non-profits, the Equity Office, the Digital Empowerment Community and the department’s community engagement specialist to reach community members for usability testing and research. (Q33)
- Accommodations are offered to encourage participation of community members: food, multiple opportunities, translation/interpretation, transportation, accessible location and compensation is provided (Q34)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis**  
**COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT**

- Captures client satisfaction data on programs and services on an annual basis from other City of Austin departments and offices, whom it considers its primary client base and customer (Q37,39)
- Is currently addressing one City Council priority, Government that works, through the development of a Language Access Plan that will take City demographics into account (Q64,65, 66)

**Weaknesses**

- Does not collect any demographic data on clients served (Q8,13)
- Does not collect data on disparities among target population (Q11)
- Comparing the Department's responses to questions about staff composition to the City of Austin population reveals that they have a much higher percentage of White staff and a lower percentage of Hispanic staff. (Q14)
- No onboarding/orientation/training on equity and racism (Q18,19)
- Does not measure participation at community events (Q40)
- Does not ensure accountability to communities of color in Department planning processes (Q43)
- Does not offer opportunities for staff to understand lived experience of community members it serves (Q46)
- Does not have grant funds to address issues that disproportionately impact communities of color (Q50,51)
- Does not have staff dedicated to advance racial equity (Q55)
- Does not involve stakeholders in budgeting process (Q59)

**Opportunities**

- The Department has not previously developed equity priorities, but have identified "hiring and recruiting" as a potential department-wide priority. They are also interested in making technology more accessible and user friendly and using an equity lens to assess projects. (Q21)
- Is working to improve racial equity, but does not measure the effectiveness of those efforts (Q23,24)
- The Department has a Language Access Plan which can be used to house processes for determining when to translate public documents for individuals with Limited English Proficiency (Q27)
- While the Department does not have a specific strategy to engage the community in decision-making, it does have limited engagement opportunities related to gaining community input on projects. These opportunities could be expanded so that community input is collected more often and for more projects and initiatives. (Q32)
- Captures client satisfaction data, but does not include a demographic breakdown (Q38)
- Budget alignments to advance racial equity. The department could review disaster plans to improve racial equity for technology solutions, which would reallocate funds for training or purchasing software. (Q58)
- Plans to address four out of the six City council priorities (Q64,65, 66)
- The department has identified several unmet needs in budgeting or planning that could advance racial equity, including: include the equity assessment at the beginning of the next Fiscal Year budget planning, provide funding for community engagement, develop process to ensure that programs are meeting the needs of the end user. (Q67)

**Threats**

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT**

- The Department’s posted positions require at least a Bachelor’s level education, which can limit the diversity of the applicant pool. Although the department allows for experience to be used in place of a degree to address this, City policies dictate that candidates without degrees receive lower salaries than the more educated counterpart, for the same job. This is true even with both candidates have the same level of experience or the candidate without the degree has even more experience. This City-wide policy affecting salaries is likely beyond the scope of the Department to change. (Q15,16)
- Budget does not include any investments that promote equity and inclusion (Q52-54):
  - Capturing resident/client satisfaction with programming and services
  - Expand racial/ethnic diversity of staff hired
  - Training funds for issues related to equity or institutional racism
  - Grant funding for programs and services that advance racial equity
  - Translation of documents into other languages for folks with limited English proficiency
  - Translation or interpretation services for individuals with limited English proficiency at public meetings
  - Services and accommodations for individuals with visual or hearing impairments
  - Making public documents the appropriate reading level
  - Holding public meetings for the purpose of Involving internal and external stakeholders in the department’s budget process
  - Increasing involvement of marginalized community members input in the budgeting process.
- The pursuit of racial equity is not reflected in the Department’s budget (Q56)
- Does not plan to address one of the City council priorities (Q64)
- Have identified some Department policies and practices that may unintentionally benefit, burden or marginalize others: training, recruitment strategies, web-redesign, language access plan, geo-spatial services and Smart City roadmap, to name a few. (Q68)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
AUSTIN ENERGY**

<b>Department</b>	<i>AUSTIN ENERGY, Consumer Energy Solutions*</i>
<b>Website(s)</b>	<a href="https://austinenergy.com/ae/">https://austinenergy.com/ae/</a>
<b>Established</b>	1895
<b>Staff Size</b>	114
<b>Staff Composition</b>	67.55% White/ 8.77% Black/ 3.52% Asian/ 16.65% Hispanic or Latino/ 0.88% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander/ 0% Native American or Alaskan Native/ 2.63% other
<b>FY18 Budget</b>	\$44.4M
<b>Mission</b>	To safely deliver clean, affordable, reliable energy and excellent customer service.
<b>Programs and Services</b>	<i>Facility tours, Solar site visits, Austin energy power plant tours, Austin energy district cooling facility tours, Capital Improvements Program (CIP), CAP Discounts, Financial Support Plus 1, Payment Arrangement, Services for the Medically Vulnerable, Weatherization Assistance</i>
<b>Clientele</b>	<i>City of Austin residents and surrounding communities.</i>

\* Due to its large size, Austin Energy decided to complete the Assessment on a division level rather than for the whole department at one time. This report only covers the Consumer Energy Solutions division.

**Strengths**

- Measures race/ethnicity of clients served (Q8)
- Department collects other demographic data on clients for some of its programs including: race, ethnicity, age, gender, education and income levels. (Q13)
- Is working with 9 other city departments and offices on issues that advance racial equity, such as housing affordability, reducing energy costs and improving access to transportation options. (Q26)
- Austin Energy has a language access plan that includes a 4-factor analysis for determining when to provide language services for individuals and communities with Limited English Proficiency. Considers local demographic trends to identify need for language services and makes services available upon request. (Q27)
- Offers ASL and Audio accommodations at public meetings for the visual and hearing impaired (Q29)
- The Department's style guide specifies that written materials should be at an 8th grade reading level and uses a website to verify reading level for public information. (Q30)
- The department has used a few different strategies to engage the community in decision-making, including: surveys, reached out to local organizations and commissions, attended health and resource fairs, and have had opportunities for public discussion at City Council meetings for changes with a budget impact. They also held "Summer Savings" campaign meetings throughout the community in the summer of 2018. (Q32)
- Has process for notifying community about engagement opportunities. Has done media campaigns including: local newspaper, radio, television and website, and have targeted Spanish outlets. Have also engaged with special interest groups, neighborhood associations and non-profits (Q33)
- All accommodations have been offered to encourage participation of community members in the past year, including: food, evenings/weekends, multiple opportunities, children's activities, ASL, translation/interpretation, transportation, and accessible location. (Q34)
- Captures client satisfaction data on programs and services through the "Voice of the Customer" survey. (Q37,39)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
AUSTIN ENERGY**

- Satisfaction data includes demographic breakdown by gender, age, race and ethnicity, education and income. (Q38)
- Measures participation at community events (Q40)
- Employs several strategies to include communities of color in planning processes: advisory committees, boards and commissions, targeted community meetings, stakeholder groups, focus groups, increased or targeted outreach (Q43)
- Offers an opportunity for staff to understand lived experience of community members it serves, through customer experience activities. (It is not clear from the assessment what that entails). (Q46)
- Department has received grant funds to address an issue that disproportionately affects communities of color. They received 100k to work on providing affordable transportation options as an alternative to vehicle ownership for low-income communities. (Q50,51)
- Involves stakeholders in budgeting process (Q59)
- Currently addressing all 6 City Council Priorities. One example is that the office is working with Cap Metro to electrify busses, making transportation cleaner for the environment and more affordable. (Q64,65, 66)

**Weaknesses**

- Does not collect data on disparities among target population (Q11)
- Comparison of staff composition to client base revealed that the Department is not representative of the population it serves because there are disproportionately less Hispanic employees. (Q14)
- No onboarding/orientation/training on equity and racism (Q18,19)
- Have not identified clear, strong equity priorities. The Department has identified vague equity priorities that need to be further developed in order to be actionable. (Q21)
- The Department's Language Access Plan includes policies that do not prioritize translation for social media and community outreach, and instead those are optional services. (Q27)
- It is not clear what language and accessibility services are provided at public events and if public documents are made accessible for the visually impaired. The Department could improve the existing policies to better specify when services should be provided (rather than on a case by case basis). One action that could also be taken is replacing the hundreds of PDFs on their website with screen-reader friendly documents to improve accessibility for the visually impaired. (Q28)
- Does not translate public documents for individuals with Limited English Proficiency into multiple languages, only Spanish(Q29)
- There is no consistent or formal process for collecting feedback on community engagement efforts. The Department collects feedback from participants at some events using surveys. Could expand and formalize this process so that feedback surveys are provided at every event, where appropriate. (Q44,45)
- Does not have staff dedicated to advance racial equity (Q55)

**Opportunities**

- Has some strategies in place to recruit and hire diverse staff, including: using diverse interview panels during the hiring process and recruited from a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) for the 2018 intern program to increase diversity among applicants. While this is a start, the department would like to improve upon these strategies. They plan to continue HBCU recruitment

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

## **APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis AUSTIN ENERGY**

and begin targeted Hispanic and Female recruitment in FY19. The department needs assistance identifying diverse candidates for technical positions. (Q15,16)

- The department has a limited and informal process for soliciting input from the community to ensure that policies, practices and programs do not adversely impact communities of color. They hold community events for changes that would have a geographic impact, which helps to inform decisions about services. These efforts could be improved by formalizing the process for community engagement including specifying what audiences they need to reach and when. (Q22)
- Is working to improve racial equity, but does not measure the effectiveness of those efforts. They are interested in using surveys as a way to measure effectiveness of efforts, and potentially could build upon their “Voice of the Customer” survey. (Q23,24, 25)
- While there are no formal processes for community engagement activities, there have been extensive public input processes for new rates, new energy code, the Generation Resource plan, and the Green Building and Energy Efficiency programs. The department could formalize these processes and expand them to ensure that the community is participating in the Department’s decision-making processes in a consistent manner and at an appropriate level. (Q31)
- While the department has used a variety of strategies to engage the community, more could be done to ensure that they are reaching the right audiences at the right times. (Q32)
- Measures participation at community events, but does include demographic measures (Q40, 41)
- Budget alignments that could advance racial equity include: expand existing or create new programs that address affordability; provide program information in multiple languages and outreach to small business in Spanish, which are under-represented in their business leadership program. (Q58)
- Unmet need in budgeting or planning that could advance racial equity. The department believes that funding for training in human centered design and other trainings that take demographics into consideration when providing customer service would improve racial equity. (Q62, 67)
- The Department provided measures to gage progress in each of the 6 City Council priority areas. The measures could be more specific and targeted so that they are measurable. (Q65)

### **Threats**

- Budget structures prevent tracking of investments that promote equity and inclusion (Q52-54):
  - Capturing resident/client satisfaction with programming and services
  - Expand racial/ethnic diversity of staff hired
  - Training funds for issues related to equity or institutional racism
  - Grant funding for programs and services that advance racial equity
  - Translation of documents into other languages for folks with limited English proficiency
  - Translation or interpretation services for individuals with limited English proficiency at public meetings
  - Services and accommodations for individuals with visual or hearing impairments
  - Making public documents the appropriate reading level
  - Holding public meetings for the purpose of Involving internal and external stakeholders in the department’s budget process
  - Increasing involvement of marginalized community members input in the budgeting process.

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
AUSTIN ENERGY**

- While the department has funding for activities, programs and services that advance racial equity, there are not any line items in the budget reflecting those efforts. These are the related efforts that are funded: outreach, alternate transportation, consumer advocacy in the rate-making process, energy efficiency and affordability and client satisfaction surveys. Providing that granularity of detailed funding amounts per item is a next step, but there may be limitations as to why that hasn't been or can't be done. (Q56)
- The Customer Benefit Charge, a tax based on the amount of energy used, may disproportionately benefit some over others because it is somewhat dependent on housing and the program mix it supports, which are not equally utilized in the City. There are legal limits to the cross-subsidization that can take place through the rates and recovery program and the Department legally cannot use programs to target specific groups. (Q57)
- Policies, practices that may unintentionally benefit, burden or marginalize others. Programs designed to meet City goals, such as for energy efficiency and electric technology, affect customers but do not go beyond customer base. Programs would need to be expanded to have a wider reach and greater benefit to the City. Cost of services and taxes included may burden some because people pay the same rates regardless of income, which results in a higher energy cost burden for those with lower incomes. (Q68)

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

<b>Department</b>	<b>FIRE DEPARTMENT</b>
<b>Website(s)</b>	<a href="http://www.austintexas.gov/department/fire">http://www.austintexas.gov/department/fire</a>
<b>Established</b>	1841
<b>Staff Size</b>	1059
<b>Staff Composition</b>	73.7% White/ 5.2% Black/ 1.8% Asian/ 18.4% Hispanic or Latino/ 0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander/ 0.5% Native American or Alaskan Native/ 0.2% other
<b>FY18 Budget</b>	\$202,969,945
<b>Mission</b>	<i>A leader in the fire service, the Austin Fire Department protects lives and property through extensive fire prevention and safety education efforts, in addition to a quick and effective response to emergencies.</i>
<b>Programs and Services</b>	<i>AFD Patch, Car Seat Installation, Children's Safety and Fire Education (SAFE), Find a Fire Station, Fire Department Speakers Bureau, Fire Hydrant, Fire Inspection, Fire Safety House Appearance, Fire Station Visit, Fireworks Permit, Free Smoke Alarms, Home Fire Inspections and Smoke Alarm Installations, Request a Fire Incident Report, AFD Permits, Candidate Physical Ability Test, Fire and Life Safety Tips, Fire Building Code, Fire Cadet Employment, Local Emergency Planning Committee - Tier II, Red Angels Program (RAP).</i>
<b>Clientele</b>	<i>City of Austin residents and visitors.</i>

**Strengths**

- Collects other demographic data on clients, specifically gender and veteran status (Q13)
- Comparison of staff composition to client base: AFD is aware of city and department demography, and desires for department to match city demography. Currently the department is closely representative of the City population for Black firefighters and Black and Hispanic staff. In comparison, Hispanic Firefighters have lower representativeness. (Q14)
- Strategies to recruit and hire diverse staff include reviewing the hiring plan on a cyclical basis and targeted Black and Hispanic recruiting. They are implementing DOJ suggested strategies to recruit underrepresented personnel at events (such as Black colleges and military fairs). Race and gender are taken into consideration during the hiring process. (Q15,16)
- Works to ensure that hiring policies, practices and programs do not have adverse impact for communities of color by conducting statistical analysis of hiring exam scores. (Q22)
- Measures effectiveness of efforts to improve racial equity. They follow the demographic breakdown of applicants at each step in the hiring process to identify potential steps that are inequitable. (Q23,24)
- Has worked with APD to identify potential recruits that are interested in careers in public safety to advance racial equity in the hiring process. (Q26)
- Has process for determining when to translate public documents for limited English proficiency. Has designated translators who receive a stipend to translate written materials and communicate in Spanish while in the field. Spanish is the only language translated orally during community meetings, but the department does make information accessible in any language if requested. Public documents are commonly translated into Spanish and to other languages on occasion. (Q27)
- Makes meetings accessible for hearing impaired when services are requested. (Q28)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

- Offers translation services for limited English proficiency for multiple languages and accommodations for visual or hearing impaired, including: ASL, Audio accommodations for people with visual impairments, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean. (Q29)
- Offers a variety of accommodations to encourage participation of community members: food, evenings/weekends, multiple opportunities, children’s activities, ASL, translation/interpretation, and accessible location (Q34,35)
- Captures client satisfaction data on programs and services, although not sure of the quality of the content. (Was unable to see the report via the link provided). (Q37,39)
- Satisfaction data includes demographic breakdown (Q38)
- Measures participation at community events (Q40)
- Uses some strategies to include communities of color in planning processes: advisory committees, boards and commissions, and increased or targeted outreach. (Q43)
- Collects feedback on some community engagement efforts via surveys (Q44,45)
- Offers opportunities to understand lived experience through canvassing after house fires (Q46)
- AFD has some budget line items and staff dedicated to advancing racial equity, specifically dedicated to translation and interpretation and expanding racial/ethnic diversity of staff (Q52, 53, 54, 55, 56)
- Is currently addressing three City council priorities through targeted recruiting and better data collection at community events and when responding to fires. Data can be used to ensure services are delivered equitably (Q64,65, 66)

**Weaknesses**

- Does not collect demographic data on clients served (Q8)
- Does not collect data on disparities among target population (Q11)
- No onboarding/orientation/training on equity and racism (Q18,19)
- Has only identified one strong equity priority. While focusing on improving weaknesses is good, the department could be missing out on other opportunities because of this singular focus. (Q21).
- Does not have a process for determining when to make documents accessible for visually impaired (Q28)
- Does not have a process for verifying reading level for public information (Q30)
- Does not have a process for determining when to engage the community in decision making (Q31)
- Current Strategies to engage the community in decision making are limited. They had a Fire Community Advisory Board (F-CAB) who ADF engaged for 3 years, but recently disbanded. Community engagement in response to hotline requests appears to be educational and one-way (See response to questions 31 and 36). The department limits engagement activities rather than attempting to respond to the high number of requests. (See response to Q33) (Q32)
- The process for notifying community about engagement opportunities is via media press releases. This process drastically limits the reach and number of individuals that will participate. (Q33)
- Does not have grant funds to address issues that disproportionately impact communities of color (Q50,51)
- Does not involve stakeholders in budgeting process (Q59)

**Opportunities**

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis**  
**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

- Ideas for ensuring racial/ethnic diversity of staff is the Department's greatest equity priority and they are actively pursuing this. Desires to establish formal equity hiring process to lift the 2014 DoJ consent decree. (Q17,21)
- Undoing racism training was provided to some staff and could be expanded to reach more staff. (See response to question 61) (Q18,19)
- Uses statistical analysis in the hiring process to assess adverse impact, but could also use statistical analysis to assess other data to see if programs adversely impact communities of color. (Q22)
- In addition to analyzing demographic data at each step in the hiring process, the Department could go further to investigate what elements of the exams Black and Hispanic candidates perform poorly on, and provide additional resources, such as training, to improve test scores or compensate for the deficit in that area of performance. (Q23,24)
- Has only identified one example of work with another department by sharing applications of potential candidates to improve racial equity in policies and programs. Could use a similar approach of applicant sharing with EMS. Could also work with additional departments, thinking beyond addressing inequities in the hiring process alone (Q26)
- AFD is changing engagement strategies from having a community advisory board to community engagement for decision-making. This is an opportunity to thoughtfully design a comprehensive Department-wide community engagement strategy. AFD employs a Public Information and Marketing Manager and has an Outreach section. The department could better leverage these staff to prioritize and plan for the high demand of requests for engagement. (See response to Q33). (Q32)
- Surveys used to collect feedback are limited to one department or are completed by staff. An opportunity lies in expanding the use of the surveys to as many community outreach events as possible with the goal of obtaining feedback directly from the participants. (Q45)
- Department canvases communities after every major house fire, which could serve not only as an educational opportunity, but also an opportunity to get input from the community. Engagement could potentially be accomplished with minimal added cost since there are resources already dedicated for canvassing. (Q46)
- Budget alignments to advance racial equity. The department has decided to re-allocate a portion of funds for fire mitigation and education from West Austin to East Austin. (Q58).
- Ideas for involving stakeholders in budgeting process. Has plans to build five new fire stations over the next six years and involve the community in the decision making process. Will use this opportunity to take into consideration the perspectives and experiences of communities of color near old and new stations. In addition, the department plans to involve the community in the expansion of short CPR courses delivered across the City. (Q60)
- Unmet needs in budgeting or planning that could advance racial equity. AFD could advance racial equity with additional funding for recruitment and hiring, such as software, tools and consultants, and training for firefighters in cultural competency. (Q62, 67)
- Plans to address two City council priorities regarding providing education about wildfires and installing smoke detectors. Can combine geo data with demographic data to identify and address areas of inequity in program delivery. Is currently recruiting fire cadets and having weekly meetings to discuss progress and brainstorming ideas to improve recruiting strategies, such as using social media. This is a timely opportunity to improve staff diversity. (Q64,65, 66)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

- The department is offering swim training as a way to level the playing field for candidates that may not have had access to opportunities to learn how to swim skillfully at a young age. The department could do more to work with other departments to invest in swim programs for youth of color to expand opportunities to learn this skill at an earlier age. (Q68)

**Threats**

- Limitations on the number of candidates that can be screened for a position may be preventing qualified candidates of color to go through the entire hiring process. There may also be other required steps in the hiring process that contribute to inequities, such as written exams and financial background checks. (Q24)
- Budget structures prevent tracking of some investments that promote equity and inclusion (Q52-54):
  - Capturing resident/client satisfaction with programming and services
  - Training funds for issues related to equity or institutional racism
  - Grant funding for programs and services that advance racial equity
  - Translation of documents into other languages for folks with limited English proficiency
  - Services and accommodations for individuals with visual or hearing impairments
  - Making public documents the appropriate reading level
  - Holding public meetings for the purpose of Involving internal and external stakeholders in the department's budget process
  - Increasing involvement of marginalized community members input in the budgeting process.
- Disproportional benefit, burden or marginalization in budget. There is more funding dedicated to wildfire education and mitigation in West Austin where the terrain is more prone to wild fires, and has a majority white population. Less funding is dedicated to mitigate brush fires that are more common in East Austin with a higher Black and Hispanic population. (Q57, 61)
- Policies and practices that may unintentionally benefit, burden or marginalize others include disqualifying candidates with prior arrest records and the swim training portion of the hiring process. (Q68)

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
INNOVATION**

<b>Department</b>	<b>INNOVATION</b>
<b>Website(s)</b>	<a href="http://www.austintexas.gov/department/innovation-office-programs">http://www.austintexas.gov/department/innovation-office-programs</a> <a href="https://cityofaustin.github.io/innovation/">https://cityofaustin.github.io/innovation/</a>
<b>Established</b>	2014
<b>Staff Size</b>	8-13
<b>Staff Composition</b>	69% White / 0% Black / 15% Asian / 15% Hispanic or Latino/0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander/ 0% Native American or Alaskan Native/ 0% other
<b>FY18 Budget</b>	\$732,538
<b>Mission</b>	<i>The Innovation Office is an incubator for solving complex challenges that Austin faces, using design thinking approaches and agile thinking. The Office works with other City departments to research, design, and prototype early-stage concepts and solutions that make progress toward Austin’s strategic goals</i>
<b>Programs and Services</b>	<i>Consulting and Workshops, Bloomberg iTeam, Innovation Communities of Practice, Fellowship Program, Open Government, Idea Accelerator</i>
<b>Clientele</b>	<i>City of Austin Employees</i>

**Strengths**

- Onboarding of new staff includes background on the history of racism in Austin and the equity framework developed by the Equity Office. (Q18,19)
- Has developed a few strong equity priorities, including acknowledging historical racism and including those effected in the design process. More could be done to identify additional priorities, therefore this is also listed as an opportunity. (Q21)
- Works with other City departments to advance racial equity. The Innovation Office was set up to work with other city departments so collaboration is inherent in the work that they do. They use a co-creation approach, bringing in the perspectives of populations impacted into the design of the intervention. They also approach projects from an equity lens. Using both approaches advances racial equity in the other Departments they work with. One example is helping departments collect demographic data on populations served to include this information when measuring impact of services. (Q26)
- Verifies reading level for public information using online tools to ensure reading level is no higher than 8<sup>th</sup> grade. (Q30)
- Has clearly defined processes for obtaining community input. They use a co-creation process and they also create transparency through feedback loops. (Q32)
- Although they do not have many community events, when they do, they make an effort to offer accommodations to encourage participation of community members, such as: food, evenings and weekends, multiple opportunities, ASL, translation and interpretation, and accessible location. (Q34)
- Employs several strategies to include communities of color in the planning processes (Q43)
- Collects feedback on community engagement efforts (Q44,45)
- Offers opportunities to understand lived experience through focus groups (Q46)
- Department grant funds address issues that disproportionately impact communities of color. They have received a grant to work on homelessness. Although homelessness impacts all races and ethnicities, Black residents are disproportionately represented among the homeless population. (Q50,51)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

## **APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis INNOVATION**

- The homelessness project is a good example of how the Innovation Office is addressing racial equity through City council priorities (Q64,65, 66)

### **Weaknesses**

- Does not collect demographic data on clients served (Q8)
- Does not collect data on disparities among target population (Q11)
- Comparison of staff composition to client base: Lack of Black staff, no Native Americans due to poor recruiting efforts to these populations. (Q14)
- Captures client satisfaction data, but does not include demographic breakdown. Clients are defined as collaborators from other departments so no data is actually collected from the end user. (Q38)
- Does not measure participation at community events (Q40)
- Does not have staff dedicated to advance racial equity (Q55)
- Has not involved stakeholders in budgeting process and have not provided ideas for how to make that process more inclusive (Q59, 60).

### **Opportunities**

- Strategies used to recruit and hire diverse staff have been effective in some areas, but have not ensured diversity or representativeness across the department. The Office has showed interest in ramping up its efforts to recruit Black professionals, but needs assistance. (Q15,16)
- Ideas for ensuring racial/ethnic diversity of staff: leverage more of the Equity Office's work and make training in anti-racism and community organizing a formal part of onboarding in the Innovation Office. (Q16,17)
- Has onboarding on equity and racism but does not measure its effectiveness, only measures satisfaction (Q20)
- Has identified inclusion as a strong, overarching equity priority for the Office. Other priorities listed are not specific to equity. Could work with the equity office to develop additional equity-related priorities. (Q21)
- Is working to improve racial equity, but does not measure the effectiveness of those efforts, which is a good next step. Adverse impact is minimized through the co-creation process, however, the effectiveness of this practice on avoiding adverse impact has not been measured and there are not specific programs or policies addressing adverse impact. (Q23,24)
- The Innovation Office has not measured effectiveness of its efforts to improve racial equity. They work with other City programs that do implementation, therefore the impact on racial equity is mostly indirect. They have developed several ideas for how to measure effectiveness of their efforts and the Equity Office could support the development, refinement and prioritization of those efforts. (Q25).
- The Innovation Office has been instrumental in making public websites accessible and understandable across City of Austin departments. They have translated websites into several languages other than English (Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese) and have documented their processes to help others do the same. Staff have also helped the City of Austin websites be more accessible by designing them to work with screen readers for the visually impaired. Their work on webpage accessibility is a low hanging fruit that could be adopted City-wide. (Q27,28,29)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

## **APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis INNOVATION**

- Because their primary audience is other departments, they do not hold public meetings regularly, and when they have done so, they have missed opportunities to offer translation and accommodation services. They have documented lessons learned that can be applied to make improvements in this area. (Q27,28,29)
- They are thinking strategically about how to engage the community - what platform to use and when. However, they could be bringing community on even earlier - helping to identify and define the problems. (Q31)
- Uses several approaches to engage the community, such as in-person meetings, social media and list serves. Needs more grassroots outreach and less focus on technology-dependent strategies. (Q33)
- Budget alignments to advance racial equity. The majority of the budget is personnel, so the departments envisions the biggest change happening through directing investments in recruiting a diverse workforce. (Q58)
- An unmet need in the budgeting or planning that could advance racial equity is expanding the co-creating process they use to other departments, potentially through trainings and workshops. (Q62, 67)

### **Threats**

- There is poor representation of Black professionals in the Technology, Design and Innovation industries, threatening its ability to recruit a diverse workforce. The Department would have to go beyond standard practice to employ creative, intentional strategies to reach those under-represented in their field. (Q14)
- Disproportional burden or marginalization in budget is reflected through lack of targeted funds to recruit diverse staff. (Q61,64)
- Their budget does not reflect their approach to equity and budget structures prevent tracking of the following investments that promote equity and inclusion (Q52-54):
  - Capturing resident/client satisfaction with programming and services
  - Expand racial/ethnic diversity of staff hired
  - Training funds for issues related to equity or institutional racism
  - Translation of documents into other languages for folks with limited English proficiency
  - Translation or interpretation services for individuals with limited English proficiency at public meetings
  - Making public documents the appropriate reading level
  - Holding public meetings for the purpose of Involving internal and external stakeholders in the department's budget process
- City and state purchasing guidelines may be a barrier to entry for small and minority businesses wishing to contract with the City. (Q68)

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

<b>Department</b>	<b>NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</b>
<b>Website(s)</b>	<a href="http://www.austintexas.gov/department/housing">http://www.austintexas.gov/department/housing</a>
<b>Staff Size</b>	53
<b>Staff Composition</b>	39% White/ 21% Black/ 5% Asian/ 23% Hispanic or Latino/ 0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander/ 2% Native American or Alaskan Native/ 10% other
<b>FY18 Budget</b>	\$20,795,507
<b>Mission</b>	<i>The mission of NHCD is to provide housing and community development services to benefit eligible residents, so they can have access to livable neighborhoods and increase their opportunities for self-sufficiency.</i>
<b>Programs and Services</b>	<i>Affordable homes, Down payment assistance, Homebuyer Education, Homeowner Assistance, Austin Strategic Housing Blueprint, Colony Park Sustainable Community Initiative, Fair Housing &amp; Fair Lending, Housing Developer Assistance, Housing Trust Fund, Long-Term Affordable Housing, Mortgage Fraud Protection, Neighborhood and Commercial Revitalization, Permanent Supportive Housing, Policy and Planning, Resources for Contractors, Resources for Homebuyers, Resources for Homeowners, Resources for Renters, Section 3, Small Business Assistance, Special Projects and Community Programs</i>
<b>Clientele</b>	<i>Low income and very low income community members of Austin</i>

**Strengths**

- Measures race/ethnicity of clients served by programs funded out of federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD)(Q8)
- Has identified clear/strong equity priorities through theThe Fair Housing Action Plan (FHAP), which includes 32 priorities that directly impact communities of color. The plan was developed using a collaborative process with community member input and specifically addresses reducing inequities. However the FHAP covers just one sector of their work and there are no official equity priorities that are department-wide . (Q21)
- NHCD is leveraging the FHAP and strategic housing blueprint working with 15 other departments and offices to provide affordable housing in East Austin and to communities of color. (Q26)
- Offers translation services for limited English proficiency for multiple languages and accommodations for visual or hearing impaired including: ASL, Braille or Audio accommodations for people with visual impairments, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic and Korean. (Q29)
- Uses several methods for notifying the community about engagement opportunities, including: press releases via radio, tv, print and digital news outlets; communication via list-serve to community members and community organizations; publication to community forums, bulletin boards and apps; notification on department website and other departments sites; and to a lesser extent, publication on social media and through targeted distribution of flyers. (Q33)
- Accommodations are offered to encourage participation of community members: food, evenings/weekends, multiple opportunities, translation/interpretation, and accessible location. All accommodations are not provided for every engagement opportunity but rather depend on the engagement strategy used. (Q34)
- Employs several strategies to include communities of color in planning processes: advisory committees, boards and commissions, targeted community meetings, stakeholder groups, focus groups, increased or targeted outreach, and compensation for participation. (Q43)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

- Offers opportunities to understand lived experience, including: applying for department services, focus groups with clients and participating in a point in time count of the homeless population. (Q46)
- Department grant funds address issues that disproportionately impact communities of color. Uses grant funding to provide housing services to low income and communities of color, disrupt racist policies, and engage in community development in high Hispanic and African American neighborhoods. (Q50,51)
- Involves stakeholders in budgeting process (Q59)

**Weaknesses**

- Does not collect data on disparities among target population (Q11)
- Comparison of staff composition to client base. While staff are more diverse than clients as a whole, executive leadership tends to be mainly White. (Q14)
- Strategies used to recruit and hire diverse staff. Follows Municipal Civil Service rules and Corporate HR requirements, which isn't enough. (Q15,16)
- No onboarding/orientation/training on equity and racism. This is particularly relevant for this department since housing was directly impacted by historical racist policies in Austin (Q18,19)
- Does not measure effectiveness of efforts to improve racial equity. The department tracks activities that align with the FHAP but do not measure progress. (Q23,24)
- Does not have a policy or process for determining when to translate public documents for limited English proficiency. Translation and interpretation services are provided on a case by case basis. (Q27)
- Does not have a process for determining when to make documents and meetings accessible for visual and hearing-impaired. Complies with minimum of City Standards and provides reasonable accommodations upon request. (Q28)
- Does not have a process for verifying reading level for public information (Q30)
- Does not have a standard process for capturing client satisfaction data on programs and services. Have collected surveys for some client services, but have missed opportunities to collect satisfaction data on large-scale projects. (Q37,39)
- Does not measure participation at community events (Q40)
- Does not collect feedback on community engagement efforts (Q44,45)
- Does not have staff dedicated to advance racial equity (Q55)

**Opportunities**

- Collects race/ethnicity data on clients served, but does not collect data on disparities. Presents an opportunity to go beyond HUDs minimum reporting requirements and align with best practices outlined in the Community Engagement Manual and Equitable Outcomes working group. (Q8,11)
- NHCD is working with guidance from CPIO to implement a language access plan to include process to serving individuals with limited English Proficiency. (Q27)
- Process for determining when to engage the community in decision-making. The department is guided by a robust and prescriptive citizen participation plan required by HUD. In addition, community engagement occurs cyclically and for large-scale projects. NHCD could apply the same or

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

similar standards required by HUD to other department programs or leverage the plan to make improvements in its current outreach efforts. (Q31)

- Has used several different strategies to engage the community in decision-making, such as: online and paper surveys, community meetings and presentations to commissions. While these methods do not happen regularly, they do occur on an as-needed basis. One exception is that commission meetings are held on an annual basis to provide input on funding decisions. The department has an opportunity to apply these methods to ongoing community engagement efforts and embed them into their processes for community engagement. (Q32)
- The City's Anti-displacement taskforce was selected to participate in the Anti-displacement Policy Network and have devised several plans and ideas to reduce, prevent or minimize displacement. (Q50,51)
- Using opportunity 360 data to identify housing locations has the potential to mitigate some location-based disproportional benefit. (Q57)
- Budget alignments to advance racial equity. With additional funding the department could employ targeted marketing for its programs and services and focus more time and effort on lessening gentrification. (Q58).
- To address City council priorities, plans to measure engagement opportunities. (Q64,65, 66)

**Threats**

- While the office does offer some affordable housing assistance, it is not enough to combat the strong, multi-factorial threats to affordability that Austin is facing. NHCD provides education to private sector employees to better assist low-income and communities of color build assets, provides free homebuyer classes to lower-middle income families, and provides information and referrals to legal services. These programs should be analyzed to ensure that the Department is reaching the communities most affected by the lack of affordable housing and preventing (or at least not exacerbating) gentrification. (Q22)
- Budget structures prevent tracking of investments that promote equity and inclusion (Q52-54):
  - Capturing resident/client satisfaction with programming and services
  - Expand racial/ethnic diversity of staff hired
  - Training funds for issues related to equity or institutional racism
  - Grant funding for programs and services that advance racial equity
  - Translation of documents into other languages for folks with limited English proficiency
  - Translation or interpretation services for individuals with limited English proficiency at public meetings
  - Services and accommodations for individuals with visual or hearing impairments
  - Making public documents the appropriate reading level
  - Holding public meetings for the purpose of Involving internal and external stakeholders in the department's budget process
  - Increasing involvement of marginalized community members input in the budgeting process.
- The only item included in the budget is funding for recruitment and hiring, but there is no line item. Only a percentage of FTE time is dedicated to advancing racial equity, but not line-itemed in the budget. (Q53-56)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

- Clients must have income at or below 80% MFI, but income may not be the best way to prioritize those needing housing solutions or those directly impacted by displacement and gentrification. (Q57)
- Does not plan to address all City council priorities. (Q64)
- NHCD is addressing some City Council priorities by sanctioning a set percentage of affordable housing units within each council district. which could actually have unintended negative consequences because the need for affordable housing is not the same across the City. In addition, limiting the number of housing units available for rent across Austin, can in effect drive up prices for everyone, making affordability worse. (Q66).
- Funding is needed to focus more on interdepartmental collaboration for fair housing planning and to create a waiting list system for income-restricted housing. Lack of sufficient department coordination could negatively affect implementation of the Fair Housing Plan. Creating a waiting list could have unexpected negative consequences, and if implemented must be adequately researched to prevent adding to the affordability problems and increasing disparities in Austin. (Q67)
- To participate in NHCDs housing ownership programs, Austin residents must be "mortgage ready". Communities of color have faced disparities that reduce their likelihood of being "mortgage-ready" and are therefore less likely to benefit from the program. (Q68).

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
PLANNING AND ZONING**

<b>Department</b>	<b>PLANNING AND ZONING</b>
<b>Website(s)</b>	<a href="http://www.austintexas.gov/department/planning-and-zoning">http://www.austintexas.gov/department/planning-and-zoning</a>
<b>Staff Size</b>	51
<b>Staff Composition</b>	68.6% White/ 1.96% Black/ 3.92% Asian/ 15.7% Hispanic or Latino/ 1.96% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander/ 0% Native American or Alaskan Native/ 7.84 % other
<b>FY18 Budget</b>	\$8,721,772
<b>Mission</b>	<i>The purpose of the Planning and Zoning Department is to provide planning, preservation and design services to make Austin the most livable city in the country.</i>
<b>Programs and Services</b>	<i>Imagine Austin, CodeNEXT, North Shoal Creek, Congress Avenue Urban Design Initiative, South Central Waterfront Initiative</i>
<b>Clientele</b>	<i>Property owners and their agents, neighborhood groups, representatives of neighborhood groups, special interest groups, renters, business owners, and other members of the public.</i>

**Strengths**

- Measures race/ethnicity of clients served. (Q8)
- Collects data on disparities among target population. (Q11)
- Has capitalized on opportunities to collect other demographic data on clients and analyze it. (Q13)
- There has been a lot of interest in equity in the department, and trainings on equity and racism have been offered and information shared department-wide. (Q18,19)
- Works to ensure policies/practices and programs do not impact communities of color. The department makes a real effort to involve the community in planning, working with other departments and using tools and standards to take into consideration aspects of a project that may negatively impact community members. (Q22)
- Works with other City departments to advance racial equity. Collaborates with many departments on large-scale projects, leaning on their public engagement experience and expertise and also helps to coordinate efforts around the equity assessment. (Q26)
- Has processes in place for determining when to translate public documents for limited English proficiency. Is strong in providing translation for Spanish although has worked with other languages as well. This could be an area for improvement. Offers opportunities for participation, hosts events in Spanish and takes demographic data into consideration when providing translation services. (Q27)
- Offers translation services for limited English proficiency for multiple languages and accommodations for visual or hearing impaired: ASL, audio or visual accommodations. (Q29)
- Has processes in place for determining when to engage the community in decision-making. The department uses different methods of engagement depending on the type of activity, varying from public meetings, to public input, to co-creation. Some processes are determined by State level policies and land development code. Long-range planning includes public involvement built into the process from the beginning. (Q31)
- PAZ uses a myriad of strategies to engage community members in decision-making: geographically dispersed and tailored events; wide distribution of surveys to collect feedback; presentations and meetings with community stakeholders; provides summary documents in multiple languages; and to a limited extent pop-up events, focus groups and community-led meetings. (Q32)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
PLANNING AND ZONING**

- Uses a variety of methods to notify the community about engagement opportunities, including: website, social media, email list serve and mail, flyers distributed to community groups, next door neighborhood application. Could offer more in the way of in-person and word of mouth. (Q33)
- All accommodations are offered to encourage participation of community members, depending on the size of the event and if special requests are made: food, evenings/weekends, multiple opportunities, children’s activities, ASL, translation/interpretation, transportation, and accessible location. They offer online engagement opportunities as well. The only accommodation that has only been used once was offering transportation. (Q34)
- Captures client satisfaction data on programs and services. The survey content is good and reflects an attempt to gauge success against participants’ impressions. The survey is delivered online and only for long-range projects. With so many engagement activities there are lots of opportunities to collect feedback, and in multiple ways - for example, in person at events. (Q37,39)
- Measures participation at community events (Q40)
- Employs several strategies to include communities of color in planning processes: advisory committees, targeted community meetings, stakeholder groups, focus groups, and increased or targeted outreach (Q43)
- Department grant funds directly address issues that disproportionately impact communities of color (Q50, 51)
- Has some budget line items that advance racial equity, including for training, grant funding and public meetings. (Q52, 53, 54, 56)
- The department is currently addressing all City Council priorities through cross-cutting initiatives. They provided a good example of plans to address racial equity through shared decision-making. (Q64, 65, 66)

**Weaknesses**

- Comparison of staff composition to client base reveals an over representation of white and older population both in staff and clients when compared to City of Austin and under-representation of Hispanic residents. (Q14)
- Does not have a process for determining when to make documents and meetings accessible for visual and hearing-impaired. Services are provided by request only, but PAZ makes an effort to meet those needs when they arise. (Q28)
- Does not have a process for verifying reading level for public information (Q30)
- Offers some opportunities to understand lived experience, but those are limited to attending community meetings and may not achieve the necessary interaction to understand, empathize with and appreciate community members’ lived experience (Q46)
- Does not have staff specifically dedicated to advance racial equity (Q55)
- Does not involve stakeholders in budgeting process. Suggestions for improvement in this area are limited and lack the thoughtfulness present in other idea generation exercises. (Q59, 60)

**Opportunities**

- Strategies used to recruit and hire diverse staff could be improved. At a minimum, the Department utilizes HR to review diversity of candidate pool and has diverse hiring panels. However, the office

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

## **APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis PLANNING AND ZONING**

has several Ideas for ensuring racial/ethnic diversity that go beyond common City practices. The Department could work with HR to flesh out and execute those ideas. (Q15,16, 17)

- Most participants in equity trainings are managers and executives. There is opportunity to embed the existing trainings into the on-boarding or orientation process and measure the effectiveness of those trainings (Q18,19,20)
- Although they did not have equity priorities, the Department has listed concrete ideas for improving equity. (Q21)
- PAZ has included several feasible ideas for measuring effectiveness of efforts to improve racial equity and invites input on the equity office on how best to do that. The do not measure the effectiveness of those efforts, which would be an appropriate next step. (Q23,24,25)
- Captures client satisfaction data, but does not include demographic breakdown (Q38)
- Measures participation at community events, but does not consistently include demographic measures. Processes for collecting demographic data could be expanded and applied to all outreach events. (Q40, 41)
- Collects client satisfaction and community feedback on a very limited basis, but when done, the content is good. Processes for collecting participant feedback could be expanded. (Q44,45)
- Ideas for revamping budget to advance racial equity: The office has lots of suggestions for the redistribution of funds to begin to implement equity-based activities such as data collection and focus groups. In addition, they plan to request additional resources for FY19 to improve the small area planning program and receive a grant that will boost equity activities in the historic preservation program. (Q58)

### **Threats**

- Processes or policies outside the department pose a threat to collecting client demographic data. Demographic data was not collected during Code Next planning based on guidance from CPIO (Q14)
- Budget structures limit tracking of some investments that promote equity and inclusion (Q52-54):
  - Capturing resident/client satisfaction with programming and services
  - Expand racial/ethnic diversity of staff hired
  - Translation of documents into other languages for folks with limited English proficiency
  - Translation or interpretation services for individuals with limited English proficiency at public meetings
  - Services and accommodations for individuals with visual or hearing impairments
  - Making public documents the appropriate reading level
  - Increasing involvement of marginalized community members input in the budgeting process.
- There is evidence of disproportional benefit, burden or marginalization in the budgeting process: Past audits revealed that city-wide initiatives had been concentrated in the city center and not representative of the City as a whole. Other initiatives are inherently disproportional, namely neighborhood initiatives that spend a lot of energy in just one part of the city. (Q57, 61)
- Lack of funding for making program improvements puts department at risk for continued inequities in the small area planning program and community facing resources (Q62)
- The department has identified some policies and practices that may unintentionally benefit, burden or marginalize others, including: not all staff have received equity training; Communities of color are

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
PLANNING AND ZONING**

not represented in planning processes; and some planning initiatives favor local property owners over residents. (Q68)

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY**

<b>Department</b>	<b>OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY</b>
<b>Website(s)</b>	<a href="http://www.austintexas.gov/department/sustainability">http://www.austintexas.gov/department/sustainability</a>
<b>Established</b>	2010
<b>Staff Size</b>	12
<b>Staff Composition</b>	83% White/ 0% Black/ 0% Asian/ 17% Hispanic or Latino/ 0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander/ 0% Native American or Alaskan Native/ 0% other
<b>FY18 Budget</b>	\$1,815,607
<b>Mission</b>	<p><i>The Office of Sustainability provides leadership, influences positive action through engagement, and creates measurable benefits for Austin by achieving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>net-zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2050</i></li> <li>• <i>a healthy and just local food system</i></li> <li>• <i>resource efficient strategies for municipal operations</i></li> <li>• <i>tangible projects that demonstrate sustainability</i></li> <li>• <i>a resilient and adaptive city</i></li> </ul>
<b>Programs and Services</b>	<i>Austin Green Business Leaders; Austin's Healthy and Equitable Food System: Central Texas School Garden Network, Bright Green Future Grants, Good food purchasing program, Healthy Food Access, Milan Urban Food Policy pact, Food Environment Analysis; Climate Change: Carbon neutrality, net zero greenhouse gasses, climate change resilience; EcoDistricts</i>
<b>Clientele</b>	<i>Austin Green Business Leaders: Austin area businesses. Healthy Food Access: City of Austin residents, local organizations that work on food access issues, public institutions with large food procurement budgets, Austin area schools including faculty, staff, parents, and students, Central Texas farmers market managers. Climate Change: community members who are most vulnerable to climate-related weather events such as people of color, the poor, the aged, the hospitalized, those lacking adequate housing. COA Building operations and fleet staff. EcoDistricts: City of Austin residents</i>

**Strengths**

- Works to ensure policies, practices and programs do not impact communities of color by regularly meeting with community members and relying on stakeholder engagement to inform work (Q22)
- Works with other City departments to advance racial equity. Works directly with Austin Public Health on the Fresh for Less program, which serves communities of color. Provides food access data to several departments to inform policy development and planning. (Q26)
- Has a process in place for verifying reading level for public information. Uses Flesch Reading Ease tool and Flesch-Kincaid Grade Reading Level tool. (Q30)
- Has a process for determining when to engage the community in decision-making. Uses a department-developed questionnaire to determine if and when community engagement is needed for a project, on a case-by-case basis. (Q31)
- The Office has used a variety of different strategies to engage community members in decision-making: focus groups, house meetings, key informant interviews, stakeholder meetings and collaborative partnerships with local organizations. (Q32)
- Has processes for notifying community about engagement opportunities. Sought guidance from community based organizations, commissions and boards on notification strategies. Have used a variety of different methods to notify the community about events they host, including through:

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY**

libraries, rec centers, resource fairs, neighborhood associations, community partners, places of worship, digital newsletters, website and apps. For events hosted by other organizations, the Office promotes events on their Facebook page and newsletter. (Q33)

- Offers many accommodations to encourage participation of community members: food, evenings/weekends, multiple opportunities, children's activities, translation/interpretation, accessible location. They have also provided incentives in the form of HEB gift cards. (Q34)
- Measures participation at community events (Q40)
- Employs several strategies to include communities of color in planning processes: boards and commissions, targeted community meetings, stakeholder groups, focus groups, increased or targeted outreach, compensation for participation (Q43)
- Department grant funds address issues that disproportionately impact communities of color. Has received two grants to support equity: one, to hire an equity and inclusion intern; and the other is to address social determinants of health to improve food access and increase physical activity in an Austin neighborhood with chronic disease disparities. (Q50,51)
- Has line items in budget to advance racial equity including funding from grants and for translation and interpretation. In addition, 10% of the budget is for initiatives directly tied to equity improvements. (Q52, 53, 54, 56)
- Has staff specifically dedicated to advancing racial equity (Q55)
- Works to ensure that programming decisions made by the office have no negative disproportional benefit. The department has several programs that target specific groups or geographies, and those decisions aim to be made based on where the greatest needs are, taking into consideration income and race/ethnicity. (Q57)
- Currently addressing 5/6 City Council priorities. As an example, the community resilience proposal includes goals that overlap with 3 council priorities. They have developed comprehensive performance goals for 3 priorities incorporating and equity lens into many of them. The goals could be made measureable by specifying what methods would be used to measure them and identifying related metrics. (Q64,65, 66)

**Weaknesses**

- The Office does not collect demographic data on clients served. (Q8)
- Does not collect data on disparities among target population. (Q11)
- Comparison of staff composition to client base revealed that the Sustainability Office is disproportionately white in comparison to the city's demographic breakdown. (Q14)
- No onboarding/orientation/training on equity and racism. (Q18,19)
- The office has a goal to translate critical and priority documents and services for those whose primary language is spoken by at least 5% of residents, and makes a reasonable effort to accommodate translation or interpretation services by request. However, a threshold set at 5% ensures that Spanish would be the only other language translated since other languages, particularly those spoken by diverse Asian communities in Austin, which account for less than 2% of the population. The Office has identified several resources they have developed in English only, that create inequity in service provision when not translated. (Q27)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY**

- In the past fiscal year, the Office has not translated public documents into multiple languages, only Spanish, and has not provided accommodations for people with visual or hearing impairments. (Q29)
- The Office had very few community engagement events in the past fiscal year. (Q36)
- Does not capture client satisfaction data on programs and services. (Q37,39)
- Does not offer opportunities for staff to understand lived experience of community members it serves. (Q46)
- There have been several opportunities to improve racial equity that the Sustainability Office has missed: did not engage community members in planning processes; did not create targeted messaging that resonates with community members; and did not collect demographic data on clients served through programs and initiatives. (Q68)

**Opportunities**

- Strategies used to recruit and hire diverse staff. The Office applied a new recruitment and hiring approach for their latest internship, including outreach to different channels and including questions about experience with communities of color in the hiring process. The approach resulted in increased diversity in the applicant pool and could be applied to recruitment and hiring efforts of staff, especially full time staff, in the future. (Q15,16)
- The Office did not have existing equity priorities but have identified strong priorities that could be adopted. The Office has identified the following new equity priorities to focus on and direct activities and funding for: improved data collection for race/ethnicity; targeted outreach and education for communities of color; apply an equity lens to Council-given directives; prioritize equity driven projects related to food access and community resilience. (Q21)
- Is working to improve racial equity, but does not measure the effectiveness of those efforts. (Q23,24)
- They have identified specific, relevant metrics for several programs that could be implemented to measure the effectiveness of efforts to improve equity. (Q25)
- The Office is developing a funding proposal for a cross-departmental initiative to increase community preparedness for weather-related emergencies and risks. (Q26)
- Process for determining when to make documents and meetings accessible for visual and hearing impaired. Has a language access plan and makes a reasonable effort to provide accommodations for those requesting them. However, the Office could take a more proactive stance on making documents and meetings accessible, for example by offering ASL services and publishing screen-reader friendly documents. (Q28)
- Measures participation at community events, but does not include demographic measures (Q40, 41)
- Collecting feedback to evaluate community engagement. The Office is participating in the Public Engagement Community of Practice. They will use their recommended evaluation template to collect feedback at community events going forward. (Q44,45)
- The effectiveness of efforts to improve equity are not currently measured, but could be without affecting the budget. (Q52,53,54,55)
- Budget alignments to advance racial equity. The Office is planning to request an adjustment to their budget in FY19 to incorporate climate resilience activities. In addition, the Office will make an effort to improve data collection and monitoring and equity into outcome measures. (Q58)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY**

- Unmet need in budgeting or planning that could advance racial equity. Additional funding for community engagement could improve efforts to reach communities of color, provide accommodations and integrate community members into decision making on community-facing initiatives. (Q62, 67)

**Threats**

- Budget structures prevent tracking of some investments that promote equity and inclusion (Q52-54):
  - Capturing resident/client satisfaction with programming and services
  - Expand racial/ethnic diversity of staff hired
  - Training funds for issues related to equity or institutional racism
  - Services and accommodations for individuals with visual or hearing impairments
  - Making public documents the appropriate reading level
  - Holding public meetings for the purpose of Involving internal and external stakeholders in the department's budget process
  - Increasing involvement of marginalized community members input in the budgeting process.
- There is no process for including community members in making budgeting decisions, which happen at the executive level and are often the result of funding initiatives directed by City Council (Q53, 54)
- There are certain policies and practices that may unintentionally benefit, burden or marginalize some communities over others. (Q68)
  - Staff are not racially or ethnically representative of the population served. There are also disparities in pay that could be addressed by policy changes outside of the Office.
  - The Office has relied on data sources that do not adequately represent the population in need, and adequate data may not be available.
  - Staff do not have a clear understanding on the legality of collecting racial and other demographic data and have stated that they need further direction from the legal department before they can proceed with improved data collection on clients served.
  - They do not currently have enough funding to meet their community engagement needs.

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS**

<b>Department</b>	<b>TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS (TARA)</b>
<b>Website(s)</b>	<a href="http://www.austintexas.gov/department/regulatory-affairs">http://www.austintexas.gov/department/regulatory-affairs</a>
<b>Staff Size</b>	16
<b>Staff Composition</b>	69% White/ 6% Black/ 0% Asian/ 25% Hispanic or Latino/ 0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander/ 0% Native American or Alaskan Native/ Unknown % other
<b>FY18 Budget</b>	\$2,313,554
<b>Mission</b>	<i>TARA provides consumer protection, access to technology resources and generates revenues to support City services. (TARA is also responsible for staffing and advising the Community Technology &amp; Telecommunications Commission, which has advisory authority to the Austin City Council in all matters related to community technology, telecommunications and cable television.)</i>
<b>Programs and Services</b>	<i>Claims Payments and Information, Digital Empowerment Community of Austin, Digital Inclusion, Financial Advocacy Resources, Grant for Technology Opportunities Program, Idea Spark, Public Access Television, Regulatory Affairs, Utility Complaint Service, Wireless Telecommunications, Claims Account Balance and Payoff Information, Consumer Utility Complaints</i>
<b>Clientele</b>	<i>External-Utility and telecommunications providers, utility rate payers, credit access businesses, (payday and auto title lenders), corporate entities. Digital inclusion: non-profits, community residents that need access to the internet, public access television producers and viewers, claims customers. Internal: Other city departments.</i>

**Strengths**

- Although TARA does not collect data on all clients, it distributes a city-wide survey every year that provides demographic information from a sample of City residents including: race/ethnicity, income and education. (Q8)
- Collects demographic data on clients for the Grants for Technology Opportunities Program (GTOP) including, race, ethnicity, gender, age and income of clients served by grant recipient. (Q13)
- Works with other City departments to advance racial equity. They are partnering with 7 other city Departments to provide education and training in technology and financial literacy, which positively impacts communities of color. (Q26)
- Strategies to engage the community in decision-making. TARA maintains relationships with special interest groups in the community and leads a community of practice group on digital inclusion. (Q32)
- Some accommodations are offered to encourage participation of community members: food is provided and location is accessible. In addition, the locations and times are checked for ADA accessibility. While these are a good start, more could be done to remove barriers to participation. (Q34, 35)
- Employs several strategies to include communities of color in planning processes: advisory committees, targeted community meetings, and stakeholder groups (Q43)
- Offers at least one opportunity for staff to understand lived experience: participating in a simulated training experience (Q46)
- Have some budget line items to advance racial equity: capturing resident satisfaction with services, and grant funding. In addition, funds are dedicated to ensure equitable access to resources. (Q52, 53, 54, 56)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis**  
**TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS**

- Have staff dedicated to advance racial equity included in their budget (Q55)
- Involves stakeholders in budgeting process (Q59)
- Are currently addressing 4/6 City council priorities, particularly through the GTOPs program (Q64,65, 66)

**Weaknesses**

- Comparing the responses in questions about staff composition to the City of Austin population reveals that TARA has a much higher percentage white staff and a lower percentage of Hispanic and Asian staff. (Q14)
- Does not have strategies to ensure diversity in recruitment and hiring processes. (Q15, 16).
- No onboarding/orientation/training on equity and racism (Q18,19)
- Has not identified clear/strong equity priorities (Q21)
- Does not ensure policies/practices and programs do not negatively impact communities of color. (Q22)
- The equity team within TARA recommended that leadership implement a survey of staff to understand employee engagement, satisfaction, and development needs. While this could improve department culture, it would not directly advance racial equity. (Q25)
- Does not translate public documents for limited English proficiency into multiple languages, only Spanish. (Q29)
- Process for notifying community about engagement opportunities could be improved. They use City of Austin websites, the Public Information Office and a newsletter. These approaches are mostly passive in nature, rather than actively seeking and engaging the community. (Q33)
- Does not capture client satisfaction data on programs and services (Q37,39)
- Does not measure participation at community events (Q40)
- Does not collect feedback on community engagement efforts (Q44,45)

**Opportunities**

- The TARA Equity Team presented five ideas to leadership on how to increase racial/ethnic diversity of staff through recruiting. More support is needed to ensure that these or similar practices are implemented. (Q17)
- The Department did not have equity priorities, but have identified some barriers to establishing equity priorities that could be addressed. As a place to start, the department desires to continue to improve power dynamics and accountability within the organization. Priorities they would like to implement include diffusion of budgeted resources, equity-based trainings for staff (Q21) and working with vulnerable populations to mitigate adverse impacts to communities of color (Q22).
- Provides translation as needed but does not have a written policy or formal process for determining when to translate public documents for individuals with Limited English Proficiency. The department could formalize these efforts to ensure consistency and equity in the information the department provides to the community. (Q27)
- Addresses special request but does not have a process for determining when to make documents and meetings accessible for the visual and hearing impaired. The department could formalize these efforts to ensure consistency and equity in the services the department provides to the community. (Q28)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis**  
**TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS**

- Although the Department does not have a formal process or policy for verifying reading level for public information, they utilize an application to ensure that public documents are at or below an 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level. The department could formalize these efforts to ensure that all documents that are posted or shared publicly are at an appropriate reading level. (Q30)
- Process for determining when to engage the community in decision-making. The Department engages community members through the digital inclusion division, and for political or controversial issues. However, community engagement policies and processes have not been formalized. The department would benefit by developing a protocol that clearly outlines when to engage community members, using existing informal processes as a starting point (Q31)
- The Department is planning to hire a position for Public information, which could positively impact the department's community engagement and notification strategies. (Q32, 33)
- Budget alignments to advance racial equity. The budget could be adjusted to provide more funding for equity training, community outreach and certain programs that positively impact communities of color, such as the Credit Access Business and Financial Literacy programs. (Q58)
- Plans to address two of the six City council priorities (Q64,65, 66)
- Unmet need in budgeting or planning that could advance racial equity. TARA's equity team provided recommendations to leadership that could help the department advance racial equity, if funded, including: All leadership staff attend Undoing Racism training and increasing diversity in the recruiting and hiring process through advertising (Q67)

**Threats**

- Policies prevent sharing certain data on the CAB program which would provide information about who the program benefits, increasing governmental transparency.
- Budget structures prevent tracking of some investments that promote equity and inclusion (Q52-54):
  - Expand racial/ethnic diversity of staff hired
  - Training funds for issues related to equity or institutional racism
  - Translation of documents into other languages for folks with limited English proficiency
  - Translation or interpretation services for individuals with limited English proficiency at public meetings
  - Services and accommodations for individuals with visual or hearing impairments
  - Making public documents the appropriate reading level
  - Holding public meetings for the purpose of Involving internal and external stakeholders in the department's budget process
  - Increasing involvement of marginalized community members input in the budgeting process.
- Disproportional benefits of budget. Funding for the Credit Access Business (CAB) program may disproportionately benefit some communities over others. A map of CAB locations shows that the majority are along the I-35 corridor. Very few businesses are located in East, North East and South East Austin and there is none in West Austin. It is unclear if there are no CAB businesses in these parts of town, or if they are just not participating in the program. (Q57)
- Policies, practices that may unintentionally benefit, burden or marginalize others. The GTOPs program may inadvertently favor large non-profits over smaller ones. (Q68)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
WATERSHED PROTECTION**

<b>Department</b>	<b>WATERSHED PROTECTION</b>
<b>Website(s)</b>	<a href="http://www.austintexas.gov/department/watershed-protection">http://www.austintexas.gov/department/watershed-protection</a>
<b>Established</b>	1991
<b>Staff Size</b>	347
<b>Staff Composition</b>	50% White/ 12% Black/ 4% Asian/ 27% Hispanic or Latino/ 0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander/ 1% Native American or Alaskan Native/ 7% other
<b>FY18 Budget</b>	\$100,425,495
<b>Mission</b>	<i>The Watershed Protection Department was established to manage the City's creeks, drainage systems and water quality programs. Our focus is reducing the impact of flooding, erosion and water pollution.</i>
<b>Programs and Services</b>	<i>Drainage Concerns and Maintenance, Drainage Easement Releases, Flood Protection Information and Assistance, Austin Invasive Plants Management, Austin's Reservoir Resource, Creek Flooding, Environmental Integrity Index, Erosion Control and Stream Restoration, Flood Early Warning System, Groundwater, Local Flooding, Pollution Prevention and Reduction, Regional Stormwater Management Program, Riparian Restoration, Salamanders, Stormwater, Stormwater Management, Watershed Protection Master Plan, Wildfire - Environmental Best Management Practices</i>
<b>Clientele</b>	<i>City of Austin residents, employees, and policy makers</i>

**Strengths**

- Collects other demographic data on clients. Data is collected on sex, age and veteran status. (Q13)
- Field Operations division is the most diverse and has the most direct interface with the community. (Q14)
- Has a process for translating public documents for limited English proficiency using data in decision-making and has a language access plan. (Q27)
- Translates public documents for limited English proficiency into two languages: Spanish and Chinese. Additional languages and accommodations could be considered. (Q29)
- There are pre-determined engagement milestones for large Capital projects that set minimum standards for when to involve the community for decision-making. Some project managers exceed those standards. (Q31)
- Strategies to engage the community in decision making include surveys, public meetings and formal comment processes for policy changes. (See response to Q31). (Q32).
- Depending on the type of project, the department will use a variety of methods to notify the community about engagement opportunities, including: the website, email, advertising (TV, Print, digital), apps, social media, flyers, memos, printed mailers, and distribute information through neighborhood associations and key stakeholders. (See response to Q32) (Q33)
- Accommodations are offered to encourage participation of community members: food, evenings/weekends, multiple opportunities, ASL, translation/interpretation, and accessible location (Q34)
- Captures some client satisfaction data on programs and services. Client satisfaction is only collected for Watershed education programs but uses robust methods for obtaining feedback, including: surveys, pre and post testing, teacher evaluations and program evaluations. (Q37, 39)

*Question numbers in parenthesis (Q1) tie to the question number in the Qualtrics survey.*

## **APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis WATERSHED PROTECTION**

- Has some budget line items to advance racial equity for translation and interpretation services for individuals with limited English proficiency. (Q52, 53, 54, 56)
- Involves stakeholders in budgeting process, although it is unclear who or how they are involved. (Q59)
- Is currently addressing four out of six City Council Priorities and plans to address the other two. Internal performance measures and funding codes are associated with Capitol improvement Planning outcomes and can be tied to City Council priorities. (Q64,65, 66).

### **Weaknesses**

- Does not collect demographic data on clients served (Q8)
- Does not collect data on disparities among target population (Q11)
- Does not have strategies to ensure diversity in recruitment and hiring processes. (Q15,16).
- No current onboarding/orientation/training on equity and racism (Q18,19)
- Does not have processes in place to ensure policies/practices and programs do not negatively impact communities of color (Q22)
- Does not measure effectiveness of efforts to improve equity. (Q23,24)
- Does not work with other departments to advance racial equity (Q26)
- The department relies on staff judgement and available resources for determining when to translate. For example, bilingual staff translate documents. Use of technical language and jargon makes translation difficult. (Q27).
- Does not have a process for determining when to make documents and meetings accessible for visual and hearing-impaired. The website is accessible for the visually impaired, however it is not clear that meetings or public documents are made accessible. (Q28)
- Does not have a standard process for verifying reading level for public information or grade level standard. Staff have used an online tool, but that process has not been adopted across the department. (Q30)
- Accommodations are provided on a case-by-case basis and based on staff judgement rather than established processes. It is unclear how often these services are provided. (Q34)
- Employs few strategies, relying only on increased or targeted outreach to ensure accountability to communities of color in the planning process. (Q43)
- Does not collect feedback on community engagement efforts. (Q44,45)
- Does not offer opportunities for staff to understand lived experience of community members it serves. (Q46)
- Does not have grant funds to address issues that disproportionately impact communities of color. (Q50,51)

### **Opportunities**

- The department is interested in collecting demographic data on clients but is concerned about how that data could be used and would like assistance (from HR or Legal) to ensure it wouldn't be used in a way that could create discrimination. (Q13)
- Racial diversity of staff decreases as management level increases. The Department would like more granular data from HR on position and pay to better understand these and other areas of inequity

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**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis  
WATERSHED PROTECTION**

within the workforce. They would also like to create diversity goals with assistance from the Equity Office and City Demographer. (Q14)

- The Department has included several ideas for overcoming barriers that prevent a diverse applicant pool. Some ideas include: recruiting from universities of color and professional organizations, entry for those with limited experience through apprenticeship and temporary positions with a pipeline to full time employment and advancement; evaluating language in job postings, revisiting policies for providing translation and interpretation in the hiring process. A recent opportunity is the Peleton U program to encourage learning and career advancement. (Q17)
- In the past, the department has done diversity training and cultural competency but would like to improve their efforts, prioritizing executive and management staff, Field Operations and One Center staff. (Q18, 19)
- Equity priorities had not been previously formulated, but the assessment has been used to identify strong priorities that could be adopted Department-wide. Priorities include: data collection and analysis, community engagement for trust building and decision making, revisiting the project selection process with an equity lens, identifying issues of adverse impact in the Capital Improvement Program, and improving engagement of Field Operations in decision making. (Q21)
- The Department has engagement processes in place for large Capital projects to involve the community in decision-making. Similar processes could be developed for smaller scale projects and applied department-wide. (Q31)
- The Department has provided many ideas for intentional community engagement, focusing on communities of color. This presents an opportunity to make a decision about where to begin and how to begin in order to successfully execute their ideas. Some of those opportunities include: relying on field staff who have a direct connection with the community as ambassadors, using automated processes or web tools to obtain feedback, engaging the community during the "preliminary engineering" stages of capital projects, getting community input before scoping a project, relying on the existing framework for the East Austin Environment Initiative and building up that resource, and developing an engagement strategy to build relationships with community leaders. (Q32)
- Client satisfaction data collected for education programs are robust and these methods could be revised to be applied department wide, where appropriate. In addition, data could include a demographic breakdown. (Q38,39)
- Measures participation at some community events, but does not include demographic measures (Q40, 41)
- To address disproportional benefit or burden in budgeting and involve communities of color in the budgeting process, one place to begin is to reach out to the Quality of Life Commissions and encourage their involvement in the budgeting process. Another low hanging fruit is investing in Field Operations staff that already have direct communication with community members. There are also opportunities to use the Strategic Assessment Management Plan process to rethink the prioritization process for investing in making improvements and addressing challenges. (Q57, 60)
- Unmet needs in budget or realignments that could advance racial equity. Funding can be allocated to improve diversity in the hiring process for the almost 30 new positions that have been created in the department. The next 5-year capital budget planning process begins in Fall of 2019 and could include equity-based processes. Equity priorities could be incorporated in to the use of non-

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## **APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis WATERSHED PROTECTION**

earmarked funds for cross-department collaboration. Additional funding could be allocated to fully staff the East Austin Environment Initiative. (Q58, 62, 67)

- Through the City council priority, Government that Works, they are looking at ways to address problems with adverse impact in mind, instead of just addressing the worst, first. (Q64,65, 66).
- An unmet need in budgeting or planning that could advance racial equity is developing a strategic plan for department facility needs to include improving facilities for the Field operations staff, which is the most racially diverse unit in Watershed. (Q67)

### **Threats**

- Citizen reporting occurs via 311, which may introduce bias based on who is most likely to use 311. (Q31)
- Threats to progress in community engagement for decision making include: lack of funding for community engagement at certain points in the process, lack of full time staff dedicated to outreach, engagement or equity, and a push to accelerate project delivery processes which may cut out or minimize time for effectively getting community input. (Q32)
- Budget structures prevent tracking of investments that promote equity and inclusion (Q52-54):
  - Capturing resident/client satisfaction with programming and services
  - Expand racial/ethnic diversity of staff hired
  - Training funds for issues related to equity or institutional racism
  - Grant funding for programs and services that advance racial equity
  - Services and accommodations for individuals with visual or hearing impairments
  - Making public documents the appropriate reading level
  - Holding public meetings for the purpose of Involving internal and external stakeholders in the department's budget process
  - Increasing involvement of marginalized community members input in the budgeting process.
- Although staff support efforts to improve racial equity, this work is not accounted for or specified in the department budget. Doing so would help to ensure that these functions are retained and prioritized. (Q55)
- The majority of efforts to advance racial equity do not have dedicated funding. This is reflective of the fact that the department does not have a unified effort to advance racial equity. (Q56)
- Disproportional benefits of budget: Engagement in decision-making for the department budget is done equally but not equitably, ensuring that some have better ability to providing input into decision-making than others. Capital projects, which represent the largest area of investment are driven by calls to 311, which limits community voice to those comfortable using that service. Similarly, prioritization of smaller projects depends on citizen reports (passive engagement). Computational models used to assess severity do not take into account community input and access to resources. There is a lack of continued community engagement through all stages of project planning and implementation. Engagement is not occurring early enough in planning processes, and doesn't have specialized staff or resources needed to be done effectively. Finally, there is a lack of involvement of the community in the budgeting process. (Q57)
- Policies and practices that may unintentionally benefit, burden or marginalize others include: Changes to the City's flood plan based on the recent Atlas 14 study may disproportionately benefit some groups over others. Payment based on property value for the use of easements on residential

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**APPENDIX D: Department Level SWOT Analysis**  
**WATERSHED PROTECTION**

property creates inequalities. Small, minority and women-owned businesses can't compete effectively for bids because of higher cost of operations. Field operations staff have been used to clean up homeless encampments, exposing them to additional hazards and engaging the these workers in efforts that may cause harm to homeless populations. (Q68)