



Annual Internal Review

This report covers the time period of 7/1/2019 to 6/30/2020

Commission on Seniors

The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) **is:**

The Commission on Seniors shall serve as an advisory board to the council concerning the quality of life for senior citizens in the Austin area and to help ensure older adults are productive, independent, and healthy.

The commission shall:

- (1) advise the council on issues related to the senior population in the Austin area;
- (2) evaluate and recommend programs, policies, and practices that create a positive impact and reduce the burden on seniors;
- (3) determine the needs of seniors in the Austin community, and advise council regarding these needs; and
- (4) promote the contributions of seniors to the cultural, economic, and historical value of Austin.

The council encourages the commission to hold periodic joint meetings with the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities.

Source: Ord. 20130926-081; Ord. No. 20141211-204, Pts. 17, 18, 7-1-15.

- 1. Describe the board's actions supporting their mission during the previous calendar year. Address all elements of the board's mission statement as provided in the relevant sections of the City Code.**

This annual report for July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020, highlights the accomplishments of the Commission on Seniors based on the responsibilities outlined in the mission

statement of the Commission, the implementation of the Age Friendly Action Plan, Council's Strategic Direction, and other important issues facing seniors.

Advise the Council on issues related to the senior population:

Recommendation Number 20190911-04D Recommending an Audit of City Resources for the Senior Population in the FY 2020 Audit Plan

Recommendation Number 20191113-04B Proposed Land Development Code. The Commission on Seniors finds that the proposed Land Development Code does not sufficiently align with the Age Friendly Action Plan and that proposals to completely eliminate parking in some parts of the city will harm older adults and others who cannot use public transportation, cycle or walk and therefore must rely on cars.

Recommendation 2020429-03B (ii) Support for LGBTQ Quality of Life Commission Recommendation 20200408-2A (2) to Utilize Community Organizations and Nonprofits to Achieve Strategic Direction Outcomes

Recommendation Number 20200429-03A COVID-19 and Resources for Older Adults, recommending the City Council direct the City Manager to address the needs of older adults during the COVID-19 crisis and any subsequent time period during which older adults and those with underlying health conditions are required, cautioned or advised to limit social interaction.

The Commission made the following budget recommendations:

- The Commission on Seniors recommends Austin Public Health provide support to the Age Friendly Action Plan Coordinator to conduct a needs analysis and make recommendations on community outreach and engagement to older adults in Austin, with an emphasis on reaching communities of color. Support could include a consultant, dedicated graduate student intern, or VISTA volunteer. The analysis should discover how older adults in various communities (communities of color, LGBTQ, disability) seek and receive information and how to effectively communicate with those groups. In addition, determine how to engage all city departments in effectively communicating with older adults. The Joint Inclusion Committee and other quality of life commissions should be engaged in this discussion as well.
- The Commission on Seniors supports adding \$40,000 to the budget of the Parks and Recreation Department to expand the congregate meal program to two additional sites: Dove Springs and Turner Roberts Recreation Center. Additional funding for the expansion comes from the Area Agency on Aging. The Commission on Seniors recommends Austin Public Health and/or other appropriate city departments determine how to provide free or very low-cost home delivery of groceries to older adults and persons with disabilities who are

- homebound and/or have significant transportation challenges preventing them from visiting grocery stores. This could include funding through social services contracts and/or partnerships (such as with Metro Access).
- The Commission on Seniors recommends the Austin Transportation Department prioritize the construction and repair of sidewalks, audible crossing signals, leading pedestrian interval crossing signals and lighting in the following areas:
 - In and around parks, recreation and cultural centers
 - Near senior centers and senior housing
 - Near medical offices, hospitals and senior care facilities
 - Near grocery stores and other essential retail stores
 - In areas of the city with older populations

Evaluate and recommend programs, policies, and practices that create a positive impact and reduce the burden on seniors:

In addition to the actions above, the Commission has adopted the model of working groups to study, analyze and evaluate major strategies identified in the larger strategic Age Friendly Action Plan. Working groups allow the Commission to involve interested community representatives and City of Austin and Travis County staff to help drive the implementation of the Age Friendly Action Plan.

The Commission has four working groups aligning with the eight Domains of the Age Friendly Action Plan and the Council's Strategic Direction 2023. Annually each Working Group reports on its work and established goals for the coming year. Below is the report of the Working Groups established on July 10, 2019

Age Friendly Action Plan Working Groups:

Age Friendly Action Plan Implementation and Communications Working Group:

The Age Friendly Action Plan Implementation and Communications Working Group also serves as the Commission's executive committee and budget committee. The working group met regularly with Age Friendly Action Plan Coordinator Tabitha Taylor regarding implementation of the plan and development of metrics. The working group also:

- Discussed and prioritized budget recommendations from other working groups.
- Working with Ms. Taylor to plan the community engagement forum on the budget.
- Worked with Ms. Taylor to plan activities and awards for Older Americans Month (activities postponed due to Covid-19 Stay Home Stay Safe orders).

- On May 12, 2020, Ms. Taylor, AFAP Coordinator along with Ms. Patricia Bordie, Director, Area Agency on Aging, and David Crabb, Manager, City of Austin, Parks and Recreation Department's 50 plus program were featured and interviewed on KAZI Radio Station, 88.7 FM, Health Talk Show to create awareness regarding OAM and resources available during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Received updates from Ms. Taylor on Emergency Operations Center activities regarding Covid-19 and older adults.

Housing, Transportation and Open Spaces Working Group:

The working group hosted presentations from Wendy Burghardt of Silvernest (a seniors-oriented home sharing site); Susan Englemann (an author who wrote on utilizing smaller vehicles--Tiny Transit-- to reduce overall emissions) and Robin Chase who talked about NEVs (Neighborhood Electric Vehicles); Meredith Powell talked about her efforts to form a public/private partnership to develop a 5.1 mile urban cultural trail in East Austin; Commissioner Lugo presented what his group is doing to develop the asset map and Commissioner Martin Karethi provided regular updates on what Capital Metro is working on; Kim Oliveras with the City provided updates on the metrics and KPIs being refined within the City Strategic Plan. She agreed to work with Tabitha Taylor to assist with our Age Friendly Action Plan metrics going forward; Nefretitti Jackmon and Leticia Brown of the City's NHCD department discussed their anti-displacement and home repair programs.

The working group also discussed and passed recommendations on resolutions for full Commission consideration on next year's budget items, an education program for seniors on how to effectively use the homestead and senior exemptions from property taxes, and providing support (with minor changes to assist seniors) for the Austin Transportation's Strategic Mobility Plan.

Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment:

The working group, with the support of the City of Austin's Communications and Technology Management Department, developed and released an asset map of senior-focused services and programs provided by the City of Austin, Travis County, Williamson County, and nonprofit organizations. Categories included Outdoor spaces & Building, Transportation, Housing, connection & community, Access & empowerment, and Community Support & health Services.

The working group supported AustinUp's community outreach efforts for employment opportunities for seniors.

Community and Health Services Working Group:

During this past year the Community Health Services Working group participated in the following activities:

Began discussions around Emergency Preparedness, assessing existing structures, resources related to older adults and potential goals for working group. City staff joined these group meetings to provide current structure. Group also received regular updates on the Austin/Travis County EMS electronic referral coordination project. Plans include using shared software platform (Apricot) between 22 social service agencies to better coordinate referrals and follow up for older adults identified by Austin/Travis County EMS.

Members of the African American Resource Advisory Group and Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Advisory Group attended the Domain 8 working group meeting to provide insight into their Advisory Group goals, objectives related to issues health and other social determinants of health.

Regularly followed up on Austin Public Health Community Health Worker project receiving updates on job description and grant deliverables. Working group also provided input to Foundation Communities following a project status update.

Domain 8 received regular updates on Aging Services Council activities including a general overview of outcomes from Community Needs Assessment survey. Results were to be reported in May 2020 but have been delayed due to the pandemic.

Group discussed LGBTQ Quality of Life Advisory Commission's recommendation for potential provider work group to better coordinate communication and access to services between HIV/AIDS providers and aging network service providers.

Presentations provided included, 1) Updates on Resolution 41 project from Commissioner Angel, 2) Overview of mental health services provided by Integral Care from Phyllis Wolf, MA, LPC, and 3) Overview of Health Communities Grant project from Stephanie Helfman from APH).

The working group also discussed recommendations for full Commission consideration on next year's budget items. The main topic of discussion was outreach and options for better coordination, messaging and focus on underserved and hard-to-reach communities.

In-person working group meetings were impacted by COVID-19 crises in April and May. The group did reconvene in June 2020 to discuss the Social Services branch of the Emergency Operations Center and their work on behalf of older adults. Group member also made recommendations on any unmet needs.

Other Activities Implementing the Age Friendly Action Plan:

Interdepartmental Age-Friendly Action Plan Check -in Meeting. On January 7 the Commission held a special called meeting with representatives of six departments to receive an update on implementation of the Age Friendly Action Plan.

Asset Map: The Age-Friendly Asset Map creates an opportunity for older adults to identify programs and service opportunities within the community. The asset map currently provides mapping to participate in accessible, affordable and fun social activities, volunteer and/or paid opportunities to stay actively engaged in community life.

Additional mapping opportunities include connecting with businesses that provide a welcoming and safe experience for all age groups and abilities, transportation options available through Cap Metro, recreational opportunities and access to libraries.

Other mapping opportunities underway includes affordable housing and public health and health services.

Webpage: www.austintexas.gov/agefriendlyaustin

AustinUP: AustinUP, a community partner helping to implement the Age-friendly Austin Action Plan. The key focus has been in Domain 6, “Civic Participation and Employment.” Additionally, AustinUP assisted in development and implementation of the AFA Asset Map released in 2019. AustinUP continues to expand outreach to business leaders by 1) hosting a series of 50+ job fairs and 2) developing an Age-friendly Business Certification that can be used by business owners in their marketing and customer relations efforts.

Determine the needs of seniors in the Austin community, and advise council regarding these needs:

Community Engagement on FY 21 Budget:

The Commission on Seniors conducted extensive community outreach to inform our budget recommendations. The Commission developed an Age Friendly Austin Community Feedback Survey that was provided online and in person to approximately 80 attendees at the AARP South Austin Chapter meeting at the South Austin Senior Center. The survey was available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. More than 300 online responses were received. More than 50 people attended the Commission’s February 4th Community Budget Engagement session at the Gus Garcia Recreation Center. Members of the Commission also attended the budget engagement forums held by most other member commissions of the Joint Inclusion Committee.

Covid-19 Response:

Commissioners received regular updates from Age Friendly Action Plan Coordinator Tabitha Taylor regarding the Emergency Operations Center response re: Covid-19 and older adults. Individual commissioners volunteered in various capacities in Covid-19 response, including making wellness calls to older adults, and responding to requests for information and comments from council offices and the mayor's office.

Invited and requested presentations on issues of interest to the Commission:

August 14, 2019: Presentation: Presentation Presentation Intergenerational Day Center Initiative, Elizabeth Stitt and Nathan Fernandes.

Presentation Intergovernmental Relations Legislative Update, Brie Franco, Government Relations. **Presentation Parks and Recreation Long Range Plan for Land, Facilities and Programs,** Kim McKnight, Parks and Recreation.

September 11, 2019: Presentation, Alzheimer's Association Capital of Texas, Maxine P. Vieyra. **Presentation, Emergency Preparedness,** Lisa Sepulveda, ACTCEMS.

October 2, 2019: Presentation, Keep Austin Fed, Lisa Barden.

Presentation, Human Resources staff briefing on City of Austin Senior Job Fair, Rodney Crain.

November 13, 2019: Presentation Onedermment Project, Ani Colt and Preston Tyree.

February 12, 2020: Presentation, 50+ Services Report, David Crabb, Acting Manager, Community Recreation, Austin Parks and Recreation.

February 14, 2020: Joint Meeting with the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities. Update and discussion of Quality of Life Study for People with Disabilities, Candice Cooper.

June 10, 2020: Foundation Communities: Access to Health Services for Seniors, Sofia Barbato, Director of Supportive Services

Promote the contributions of seniors to the cultural, economic and historical value of Austin:

The Commission promotes the contributions of seniors through engagement with the community, our participation in community events and committees, presentations to other planning and community bodies, and meetings with City staff.

- The Commission on Seniors is represented on the Joint Inclusion Committee and served as chair.
- The Commission on Seniors is represented on the Equity Office's Equity Action Team
- Members of the Commission regularly attended the budget meetings held by the Equity Office
- Members of the Commission on Seniors participate on the Aging Services Council
- Members of the Commission participated in the Gerontology Society of America (GSA) Annual Meeting held in Austin, November 2019.
- In conjunction with the GSA meeting the Commission and Austin Public Health hosted "Age Friendly Austin: Building an Intergenerational Metropolis" November 16, 2019 at the Central Library.
https://mcusercontent.com/fc6aa9296644cde87d0f4d0b6/files/e438de2e-bd02-4f29-a01f-1f285de77eec/GSA_Newsletter_March_2020.pdf
- Chair Briesemeister attended the Seniors and Law Enforcement Together Fair at the Dittmar Recreation Center, August 2019.
- Chair Briesemeister participated on a panel at the University of Texas OLLI LAMP (Learning Activities for Mature People) lifelong learning for older adults. October 2019.
- Chair Briesemeister participated in the Undoing Racism training sponsored by the Equity Office, October 2019.
- Chair Briesemeister reviewed "Mini Grant" proposals submitted to the Equity Office.
- Commission members attended the Aging and Longevity Summit sponsored by Austin UP. October 23, 2019.
- Chair Briesemeister attended the Opportunity Forum on Transportation Equity, February 2020.
- Chair Briesemeister attended the "Shifting Perspectives" forum held by the Family Independence Initiative, March 2020
- Commissioners participated in the development of the 2018 Community Health Improvement Plan.
- Commissioners are participating in working groups (Mental Health and Stress, Chronic Disease, and Access to Health Care) of the Community Health Improvement Plan.
- Commissioner Bordie, Age Friendly Coordinator Tabitha Taylor and David Crabbe, Parks and Recreation provided outreach and information about Older Americans Month 2020 on KAZI Health Talk broadcast. May 12, 2020
- Commissioner Garcia-Pittman was interviewed for the Austin Active Living Plan.
- Additional activities postponed due to Covid-19 Stay Home Stay Safe orders

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

The Commission on Seniors has acted to fulfill the scope and the responsibilities as outlined in the mission statement as identified in Ord. 20130926-081.

3. List the board's goals and objectives for the new calendar year.

Concurrently with approval of the Annual Review the Commission establishes the following Working Groups and the Commission's goals and objectives for the coming year.

1. Age Friendly Action Plan Working Group:
 - a. The Age Friendly Action Plan Working Group will oversee implementation of the Age Friendly Action plan and coordinate with other working groups on items related to the Action Plan. It will include the Communications and Information Domain.
 - b. Strategic Direction 2023: Government that Works
 - c. Commissioners: Van Sickle (Chair), Varteressian, Briesemeister, Lugo, Bordie, Garcia-Pittman
 - d. Community members: Shubhada Saxena, SAIVA/AAQL; Jessica Lemann, AARP; Teresa Ferguson, AustinUP;
 - e. Other invited members: Representatives of Hispanic Latino Quality of Life Commission; African American Quality of Life Commission; LGBTQ Quality of Life Commission; Mayor's Committee on People with Disabilities; Planning and Zoning/Imagine Austin staff; other staff as requested.
 - f. Goals and Objectives for 2020-2021:
 - i. Continued implementation of Age Friendly Action Plan across the city;
 - ii. Support the Age Friendly Action Plan Coordinator in identifying data for Age Friendly Action Plan metrics
 - iii. Serve as the Commission's Budget Committee, including monitoring implementation of the Commission's budget recommendations.
 - iv. Support AFA Program Coordinator in development of the required Age Friendly Action Plan Report due to AARP in late 2020
 - v. Support AFA Program Coordinator in development of an Age Friendly Action Plan communications plan
2. Transportation, Housing, and Open Spaces:
 - a. The Working Group will review and make recommendations on city budget, city programs and policies and other policies (such as from Cap Metro) related to the Age Friendly Action Plan Domains 1 (Outdoor spaces and buildings), 2 (Transportation), and 3 (Housing).

- b. Strategic Direction 2023: All
 - c. Commissioners: Varteressian (chair), Kareithi, Briesemeister, Jackson, Angel
 - d. Community Members: Tommi Ferguson, Capitol City Village, Diana Deaton, Aging 2.0; Shubhada Saxena, SAIVA/AAQL; Teresa Ferguson, AustinUP; Charles Curry, Austin LGBT Coalition on Aging and LGBTQ Quality of Life Commission; Carla Penny, AARP Volunteer; Jessica Lemann, AARP
 - e. Staff from Austin Transportation Department, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development, Parks and Recreation and other departments as requested.
 - f. Goals and Objectives for 2019-2020:
 - i. Ensure policies and programs to serve seniors are included as Austin Strategic Mobility Plan and corridor plans are implemented;
 - ii. Ensure policies and programs to serve seniors are included as the Strategic Housing Blueprint and Affordable Housing Bonds are implemented
 - iii. Ensure policies and programs to serve seniors are included in the Parks and Recreation Department Strategic Plan
 - iv. Ensure expanded and/or innovate transportation and housing options for seniors
 - v. Ensure policies in the land development code that support seniors
3. Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment.
- a. The Working Group will review and make recommendations on city budget, city programs and policies and other policies related to the Age Friendly Action Plan Domains 4 (Social participation), 5 (Respect and social inclusion) and 6 (Civic participation and employment)
 - b. Strategic Direction 2023: Culture and Lifelong Learning; Economic Opportunity and Affordability
 - c. Commissioners: Lugo (Chair), Grampp, Van Sickle
 - d. Community Members: Claire Irwin, Texas Health and Human Services Commission; Richard Bondi, Austin LGBT Elder Task Force; Teresa Ferguson, AustinUP.
 - e. Rebecca Rich-Wulfmeyer, Austin Public Library; David Crabb, Parks and Recreation Department; Preston Stewart Economic Development; and staff from other departments as requested.
 - f. Goals and Objectives for 2019-2020:
 - i. Provide Content Updates for Asset Map
 - ii. Provide opportunities for senior employment, including through work with partners such as AustinUP
 - iii. Identify opportunities to expand and/or enhance programs for seniors:

1. Intergenerational
 2. Civic and volunteer engagement
 3. Cultural and lifelong learning
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4. Community and Health Services
 - a. The Working Group will review and make recommendations on city budget, city programs and policies and other policies related to the Age Friendly Action Plan Domain 8 (Community support and health services).
 - b. Strategic Direction 2023: Health and Environment; Safety
 - c. Commissioners: Bordie and Garcia-Pittman (co-chairs), Angel, Cagle, Nicola, Hauser
 - d. Community Members: Mary Teeters - Gerontology Consultant - Meals on Wheels of Central Texas; Barry Waller, LGBT Coalition on Aging; Korey Darling, LMSW, Research and Planning Division at Travis County Health and Human Services; Teresa Ferguson, AustinUP.
 - e. Austin Public Health staff (including the Office of Emergency Management), the Travis County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, and other city and county staff as requested.
 - f. Goals and Objectives for 2020-2021
 - 8.1.2: Create focus groups of city and community representatives with the charge of developing a strategic plan to integrate aging, mental health and wellness programs.
 - Expand on work completed during 2019 – 2020
 - Increase work on mental health wellness
 - Extend invitation to join the working group
 - 8.1.4: Expand opportunities for affordable and accessible health care services not covered by Medicare, e.g., dental, hearing and vision.
 - Prioritize dental services by coordinating with community agencies (St. David's Foundation, People's Clinic, Manos de Christo, Texas Mobile Dentist, and others not yet identified) to understand current resources with goal to expand resources
 - Continue to communicate with Foundation Communities for updates on the Community Health worker project and ways to expand in the future.

- Consider scheduling a dental week where all agencies could be available to the community
 - Consider a meeting to invite community partners and build strategic plan.
 - Focus on transportation to assist with accessibility to health services
- 8.3.3: Provide emergency response, preparedness strategies on the COA website specific to the needs of the senior population.
 - Continue to assess existing systems and discuss potential outreach needs and opportunities. Complete this item with the assistance of the COA Vulnerability Planner
 - Address community needs and response related to COVID-19. Receive regular update, support requests for information, assistance with outreach from Social Services branch at Emergency Operations Center. Receive regular reports from Aging Services Council and network providers regarding available services and coordinated response activities.
- 8.2.1: Expand community outreach and public awareness around caregiver support and in-home support programs, including respite care, palliative care and other homebased services.
 - Expand on work completed during 2019 – 2020
 - Participate in community engagement and provide information and recommendations related to older adults and caregivers to other Commissions implementing Quality of Life surveys (LGBTQ Quality of Life Advisory Commission and Mayor’s Task Force on Disabilities) or other Commissions’ community engagement activities.