

Recommendation

The Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission recommends that the “Equitable Chamber Funding Model,” developed by the City of Austin’s Economic Development Department (EDD), consider factors that do not disproportionately impact the Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce (GAACC)

Description of Recommendation to Council

WHEREAS, the Asian American Quality of Life (AAQoL) Advisory Commission was created to advise the City Council on issues related to the Asian American Resource Center and provide on-going guidance and support for the City's Asian American Quality of Life Initiatives, and

WHEREAS, EDD is developing an “Equitable Chamber Funding Model” for funding Multi-Ethnic Chamber Alliance (MECA) Chambers, and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans are the fastest growing population in Austin/Travis County, which should result in higher Race/Equity Factor portion of the funding model, and

WHEREAS, the funding model should include a “language factor” for which the GAACC should be credited for supporting over 20 Asian languages in their operations, and

WHEREAS, the GAACC is instrumental in attracting international business investment and trade to Austin, and

WHEREAS, in recent years, the GAACC has helped address increasing violence against Asian Americans and Asian American businesses, and

WHEREAS, many immigrants are first generation business owners in need of support from GAACC, and

WHEREAS, refugees may be more likely to open businesses, instead of applying for jobs, due to hiring qualifications and language barriers, and

WHEREAS, at the February 4, 2021, City Council meeting, Councilmember Alter pointed to weaknesses in the “Funding Model,” suggesting that it should be modified to include: (1) meaningful language factors, (2) updates based on current census data, and (3) no disproportionate reduction in funding existing Chambers, and

WHEREAS, on March 25, 2021, Council directed City staff to consult with the Chambers in advancing economic opportunity in Austin and submit a base funding model to Council by November 2021.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the AAQoL Advisory Commission supports adjusting certain equity factors in the EDD “Equitable Chamber Funding Model” as directed by City Council to include a meaningful “language factors” and more focus on support for businesses than household income, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission recommends limiting the disproportionate fiscal impact to the GAACC, estimated to be \$48,000 annually.