

THREE COMMISSIONS BUDGET RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the African American Resource Advisory Commission, the Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission, and the Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission (the “Commissions”) are authorized by Austin City Code § 2-1-101 to advise the City Council on issues related to the quality of life for the City’s African American, Asian American and Hispanic American communities; and

WHEREAS, the Commissions are specifically authorized to recommend programs designed to alleviate any inequities that may confront African American, Asian American, and Hispanic American communities in social, economic, and vocational pursuits, including (1) health care; (2) public safety; (3) housing, including affordable housing, home ownership, and homelessness; (4) entertainment opportunities for professionals and students; (5) employment; and (6) cultural venues, including museums, theaters, art galleries, and music venues; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor’s Task Force on Institutional Racism and Systemic Inequities was formed to help identify and address structural inequities and the City Equity Office has developed a tool to be used by individual Departments; and

WHEREAS, the City budget is **not currently structured** to address changing demographics and language access needs in the community, especially related to culturally responsive safety net services; and

WHEREAS, the Commissions believe that safety net services should be restructured to allocate funding to culturally responsive providers, large and small; and

WHEREAS, the Commissions, in concert with Equity Office, desire to continuously pursue policies that address inequities through an equity instrument which accurately scores the impact of the implementation of policies on the populations represented by the Commissions; and

WHEREAS, the Commissions are specifically recommending that the City Council of Austin, Texas and staff seek out best practices throughout the nation to identify funding streams and policies that address equity and promote the inclusion of both small local social services providers as well as large institutional social services providers through culturally specific services and programs; and

WHEREAS, culturally specific services and programs are defined as those that are informed by specific communities, where the majority of members/clients are reflective of that community, and use language, structures, and settings familiar to the culture of the target population to create an environment of belonging and safety in which services are delivered; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has recently developed a Strategic Plan, including 6 foundational goals: (1) Economic Opportunity and Affordability; (2) Mobility; (3) Safety; (4) Health; (5) Cultural and Learning Opportunities; and (6) Government That Works. Austin is a minority-

majority city and the Quality of Life Commissions request that the City make social and racial equity a priority for the City of Austin within these foundational goals.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE COMMISSIONS HEREBY RECOMMEND AS FOLLOWS:

That the City Council of Austin, Texas direct the City Manager to address structural inequities in all departments, especially those Departments that provide services, directly or indirectly, to the general public by assuring that City staff and contracted services reflect the cultural demographics of the community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THE COMMISSIONS RECOMMEND

That City Departments use a consistent Equity Assessment Tool and that the City Equity Office be provided with the staffing and authority to make Department-level recommendations to address systemic inequities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THE COMMISSIONS RECOMMEND

That in support of the value of social and racial equity, a dedicated funding source be assigned to equity-related programs and services and a new Quality of Life fund be established. This fund will be the basis of supporting Quality of Life initiatives. A part of this fund will be dedicated to capacity building grants for new organizations along with larger grants for more established organizations.

Kenneth D. Thompson, Sr.
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