



Annual Internal Review

This report covers the time period of 7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018

Asian American Quality of Life (AAQoL) Advisory Commission



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

The Commission shall advise the City Council on issues related to the Asian American Resource Center and will provide on-going guidance and support for the City's Asian American quality of life initiatives.

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.

2017-18 Accomplishments

Long-Term Accomplishments

- Final report from the UT Quality of Life Survey (April 2018)
- Completed Asian America Quality of Life Initiative (June 2018)
- Language Access Programs initiated

Work Groups

The AAQoL Advisory Commission accomplishes a large portion of its work through its work groups. The following section highlights work group activity over the past year.

Asian American Resource Center (AARC) Oversight Work Group

Commission Members: Debasree DasGupta (Lead), Peter Chao, Vince Cobalis

Other members: Taja Beekley (AARC Manager), Sonya Alexander-Harris (HR Rep), Thuy Nguyen, Gopal Guthikonda (NAAO rep), Hailey Easley (AARC Non-profit rep)

The AARC Oversight Work Group reviews and provides advice on AARC programming, strategic plans, staffing, information gathering, and cultural events. A major function of the work group is to assess budget needs at the AARC and make recommendations to the Commission and City Council.

Key 2017-18 Accomplishments

- Renovated kitchen utilized as part of facility rentals and received positive feedback
 - The work group reviewed and provided feedback on kitchen use and policies
 - The original plan to have Senior Meal caterers use kitchen has not worked out
 - There have been inquiries regarding renting the kitchen by itself, but there are licenses, food enterprise permits, food handling training, and feasibility to be taken into account
- Purchase of a transportation van was approved in the FY 2016-17 budget, but it has not yet been received during this reporting period
- Overall utilization of AARC has increased
 - Visits to the center is already at 29,925 at this point in the year
 - The number of events and programs are constantly on the rise, emphasizing the need for more FTEs
 - They are getting two additional part-time employees, one of whom is a replacement, but regular FTEs are needed
- Senior Meal program expansion to four days a week has continued despite reduction in funding
 - There continues to be four vendors preparing Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Indian foods

- One of the vendors has increased the cost per meal by a dollar
- The workgroup provided feedback on meal suggestion
 - Recommended that a code of conduct be developed for participants of RICE Senior Meal program
- The Human Resources Department (HRD) is providing an Employment Specialist once a week with limited success
 - Lack of space has been a challenge, and the workgroup has been providing suggestions and support to HRD

Goals for 2018-19

- Continue to explore ways to better utilize the commercial kitchen
- Analyze the option of hiring a chef instead of current vendors for Senior Meal program, using the commercial kitchen
- Consider other opportunities for door-to-door transport for senior participants in RICE instead of congregate pickup
- Support increased staffing due to facility utilization
- Install exercise equipment purchased in 2017
- Complete AARC Master Plan

Human Resources Diversity Issues Work Group

Commission Members: Janki DePalma (resigned) Sarah Chen (new Lead), Vince Cobalis

Other Members (new): HR Representative; Julia Joseph and Chris Chen (AAEN)

The Human Resources (HR) Diversity Issues Work Group seeks to increase parity in City of Austin hiring and focuses on finding ways to increase the number of Asian Americans in executive and lower-salary positions. The group works very closely with the Human Resources Department (HRD).

Key 2017-18 Accomplishments

- Employment Specialist from HRD works eight hours per week at the Asian American Resource Center. This year, in addition to office hours at the Resource Center, there was specific outreach to other events and locations. Unfortunately, this position often requires access to the City's internal system, which is not possible at off-site locations.
- Continued translation of key outreach materials in Asian languages, including announcements for the career fair held by the City

- An Employment Specialist at AARC more familiar with the Asian American community improved the numbers of people assisted, although the numbers continue to be low
- Frequent collaboration with HRD staff on how to maximize the outreach to the local Asian-American community, including participation in Job Fairs, CelebrAsia, and APA Heritage Month
 - Co-hosted community resource/job fair
 - Employment Specialist participated in community meetings to understand specific employment concerns in the Asian American community

Goals for 2018-19

NOTE: The lead Commissioner for this work group resigned in April, so the Workgroup did not meet for months. A new Commissioner with Human Resources background has joined the Commission, so we expect more involvement.

- Review diversity reports from departments and determine where additional focus is needed
- Support the AAEN objectives, which were developed in the spring through surveys with AAEN members
- Work with the HRD to provide an annual report to the Commission
- Work with AAEN to develop a pipeline for Asian employee advancement
- Address systemic problems such as appointments to “Acting” positions

Health Work Group

Commission Members: Kavita Radhakrishnan, Vince Cobalis, Catherina Conte, Molly Wang

Other members: Hailey Easley, Kitty Ho, Sinying Chan, Binh Ly, Veena Vishwanathan

The purpose of the Health Workgroup is to (1) identify the critical health needs of Asian Americans in Austin and explore strategies to address these health needs, (2) address health priority needs of Asian Americans in Austin by planning and implementing action items, and (3) connect with existing health resources in the city and sensitize them to the unique needs of Asian Americans in Austin.

Key 2017-18 Accomplishments

- Outreach to community agencies and individuals empathetic with Asian American health needs

- Held meetings at People's Community Clinic, Integral Care, Austin Public Health's (APH) Equity unit, and Asian American Resource Center (AARC)
- Invited community members to join the Health Workgroup and contribute to the discussion
- Currently, the APH Health Equity Unit has two Asian Americans on staff, which is making a positive impact on health interests of Asian Americans in Austin.
- The health workgroup functions as a liaison, between the different health agencies. For example, it:
 - Increased awareness about the AARC Nonprofit community health worker (CHW) navigator program and People's Community Clinic
 - Helped connect an intern from UT Austin School of Nursing to incorporate cultural competency in Integral Care's curriculum for mental health professions, supervised by Commissioner Molly Wang. The health workgroup also brainstormed to inform Integral Care's language access policies and procedures.
 - Received a presentation by Jackie Nirenberg of CapMetro, who presented several public transit options for clients in lower economic groups. This information was disseminated among health workgroup members, which could be useful to their Asian American clients.
- Reports on output from AAQoL survey data: Dr. Jang, who conducted the study on AAQoL survey, presented her perspectives on possible future uses of the AAQOL survey dataset and its relevance in a public portal. Dr. Jang and her team notified the health work group that approximately 16 reports and publications have been generated from the dataset.
- The health workgroup will closely work with the Navigator program and the APH Equity Unit to obtain a list of resources of free health fairs and flu clinics of relevance to Asian Americans. Related to this endeavor, Vicki Bailey from APH and Ana Todd and Jamie Rock, public health faculty from UT Austin School of Nursing, collaborated to provide immunization of people in the Burmese sub-community of Matus using the flu vaccines reserved for Asian Americans.
- Led by Commissioner Molly Wang, the health workgroup submitted a proposal to Dell Medical School's Center for Place-Based Initiatives to develop a database of all Asian American community leaders, agencies, and places of interest. This proposal has been assigned a student resource, which the health work group could pursue in FY 2018-19.

- Commissioner Cobalis commented on the desired qualities in the director of APH to a recruitment panel. The group discussed in-depth desired qualities in the director of APH.
- Obtained data and presentation from APH on health status of Asian American adult patients who used safety net clinics in Travis county (ICC dataset) during 2016. Data was presented for chronic diseases of diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol and behavioral health for the racial/ethnic groups of White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian. Also, the differences between the ICC data with BRFSS data was presented. Asian Americans had the lowest percentage of safety net clinic visits for behavioral health issues among all other racial groups.
- Monitoring progress of the initiatives recommended for City funding by the AAQOL Commission by inviting reports on their progress. The Community Health Navigator program links Korean, Vietnamese, and Burmese residents to health-related services and benefits. 160 clients were served in 2017, exceeding the goal of 152 clients. 85% (130) clients demonstrated improved life skills, which is way above the expected goal of 66.7% (50).
- Identified budget priorities for FY 2018-19 related to health needs of Asian Americans in Austin, including continued fiscal support to the AARC nonprofit's Community Health Navigator program and Health Equity funding – For services to Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) individuals, including immigrants, affected by physical and mental health disparities.

Goals for 2018-19

- Advocating and increasing awareness of unmet mental health needs of Asian Americans
- Sensitizing available mental health resources in the City, such as ATCIC and MCOT, to the unique mental health needs of Asian American
- Liaising between Asian American nonprofit organizations, such as AFSSA with ATCIC, MCOT, and even Austin EMS, to advocate for addressing unmet mental health needs of Asian Americans in Austin
- Continuing to identify and consolidate information and resources on free health clinics and fairs relevant to Asian Americans and identifying ways to disseminate that information in the public domain
- Continue and expand distribution of flu vaccines to at-risk Asian American and immigrant populations.
- Advocating for continuing support, fiscal and otherwise, of the AARC nonprofit's Community Health Navigator program and obtaining periodic reports on their progress, outcomes, and sustainability
- Issues to address in upcoming months:

- Senior Home Meal Delivery
- Address shortage of culturally competent Certified Nurses' Aides / Community Health Workers
- Address children's health needs in the AISD system

Arts and Culture Work Group

Commission Members: Pramod Patil (Lead), Shubhada Saxena

The mission of the Arts and Culture Work Group is to work together with folks from various ethnic backgrounds by sharing and celebrating different cultures. High-level goals include:

- Encouraging Asian Americans in the expression of their culture
- Promoting cultural sharing activities within the Asian American community and the larger Austin community
- Increase awareness of opportunities for the City to participate in Asian American cultural activities

Key 2017-18 Accomplishments

- Active involvement in the AARC's Art Exhibit selection process. Pramod Patil served as one of the judges for the AARC Exhibit Selection Meeting on April 24, 2018.
- In an effort to further engage and exchange culture between Asian and mainstream, we worked on establishing the Austin Pune friendship city relationship
- Commissioner Pramod Patil, Commissioner Shubhada Saxena, and other members of the community initiated a process to sign a MOU between the Indian American Coalition of Texas and Aundh Vikas Mandal for this effort. This initiative has been blessed by Austin Mayor Steve Adler and the mayor of Pune, Mukta Tilak. At this point, the Austin Pune Friendship City is an official initiative of Austin Sister City Initiative (ASCI).
- Applied and got an approval of \$2800 on the City of Austin's Literary Cultural Exchange Grant
- As a part of this Austin's Literary Cultural Exchange, 'Manjari Dhamankar' from Pune came to Austin, and we hosted following events:
 - Intergenerational social integration discussion through literature and other materials from India and U.S.A. on April 28, 2018
 - Donation of Indian American documents to the Austin History Center commemorating Asian Pacific Heritage. The event was held on May 1, 2018 at the Austin History Center.

- Sustainability event related to Earth Day on May 5, 2018
- Discussions with the 'Austin Veteran Arts Festival' team for possible support of the event that will be held in 2019
- Active participation in various Asian American art events/activities along with sharing of various mainstream art and exhibit opportunities with the Asian community
- Working on planning of 'International Hackathon' between Austin and Pune as part of the City of Austin Sister City Initiative. Engaging various Asian and American organizations to be part of this initiative and drive the cultural exchange.
- Worked on creating and submitting a grant proposal for women empowerment through APSCI. This was a proposal to work on project to conduct filmmaking workshops and also create a film on women empowerment. This was a great opportunity to promote Asian Art and culture.

Goals for 2018-19

- Work towards successful execution of International Hackathon between Austin and Pune, which will be held on September 8, 2018
 - Will help resolve different issues for City of Austin and Pune
 - Will also enable citizens of Austin and Pune to engage with each other, start a dialog, and facilitate cultural exchange
- Austin Delegation to Pune for business and cultural exchange in September 2018:
 - We are working with Asian American Chamber of Commerce, the City of Austin, and other related organizations on taking a delegation from Austin to Pune from September 22-29, 2018
 - This will be a business group of about 12 led by the Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce (GAACC) and a municipal delegation led by Austin Council Member Alison Alter
 - This should establish a solid relationship between Austin and Pune for cultural exchanges and create opportunities for civic engagement for the Asian American community in Austin
- Enable the Asian American community to participate in the *Austin Veteran's Art Festival* and help build a partnership of Asian American veterans with the Austin Veterans group
- Take the Austin Pune Sister City Initiative to the next level and help build a strong cultural exchange relationship between two cities
- Educating various Asian American nonprofits in the area of Arts and Culture about the city of Austin's grant opportunities

- Continuously review opportunities for engaging the Asian American community in the City of Austin's Arts and Culture landscape and projects

Community Stakeholder Commissioner Nomination Work Group

Commission Members: Kirk Yoshida (lead), Nguyen Stanton, Shubhada Saxena

NOTE: Only Commission members are in this workgroup.

The Community Stakeholder Commissioner Nomination Work Group was formed to nominate candidates for the Community Stakeholder Commissioner position.

Key 2017-18 Accomplishments

- The group evaluated applications for a vacant Community Stakeholder position and nominated the top candidate for Commission approval

Goals for 2018-19

- Based on lessons learned from the nomination process, the group will develop a supplemental questionnaire for future Community Stakeholder position candidates so that they may be evaluated in a more fair and transparent process

Community Engagement Work Group

Commission Members: Catherina Conte (lead), Kirk Yoshida, Shubhada Saxena, Pooja Sethi, Molly Wang

Other Members: Marion Sanchez

The Community Engagement Work Group is dedicated to fostering the enhancement and involvement of the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) Community within the social fabric of City of Austin services and programs. The Work Group is guided by the following core principles:

- Diversity: Demonstrating respect for all individuals and valuing the unique perspectives and experiences of the API community
- Community Engagement: Working collaboratively with community members and organizations to achieve positive social change
- Inclusion: Breaking down barriers to meaningful participation and fostering a sense of belonging and access to city services
- Social Justice: Challenging injustice and working toward an equitable society

Key 2017-18 Accomplishments

- Held a strategic planning session in October 2017 to develop a 2018 Community Engagement Plan
 - Defined the mission and core values of the work group
 - Used a logic model tool to brainstorm and ultimately define inputs, activities, assets, outputs, outcomes, and impacts
 - Defined four focus areas: (1) education access, (2) targeted engagement to seniors, the API community, refugees, and organizations that serve us, (3) community dialog, and (4) direct participation in city issues
- Conceptualized and planned a Community Dialog event to be held later in 2018 to bring more awareness to the Commission, facilitate communication between commissioners and the community on various topics, and promote the AAQoL Initiative final report
- Created an AAQoL Ambassador Program to recruit community members to the Community Engagement work group and other work groups
- Initiated work on the development of a new Commissioner on-boarding binder to outline the role, responsibilities, community engagement strategies, and other helpful materials
- Hosted a table at the 2018 CelebrAsia to promote awareness of the Commission, solicit community input, and recruit members for the Ambassador Program
 - Created informational flyers for the Commission and Ambassador Program

Goals for 2018-19

- Continue planning activities and ultimately host the Community Dialog event
- Continue to develop the Ambassador Program
- Complete the new Commissioner on-boarding binder
- Host additional tables at community events
- Target engagement with the following underrepresented API groups: seniors, Pacific Islanders, and refugees
- Engage local school districts, with an emphasis on AISD, on issues impacting API students and their families, including language access and support for educators
- Develop and implement a strategy for Commission social media outreach with guidance from CPIO staff

- Develop and implement a plan for direct community outreach and engagement to bring awareness of the Commission within the API community and foster more direct community involvement in city issues

Business Plan Work Group

Commission Members: Kirk Yoshida (lead), Nguyen Stanton, Shubhada Saxena, Kavita Radhakrishnan, Vince Cobalis

The Business Plan Work Group is tasked with coordinating the Commission's budget recommendation process and other commission business not covered by the other work groups. The group meets with city department staff, city council members, and community organizations to prioritize areas of interest and initiatives and develops funding requests for full commission approval. Throughout the year, the work group meets with department staff to ensure that funded initiatives progress in a manner that meets the Commission's intent.

Key 2017-18 Accomplishments

- Attended Joint Quality of Life Budget Recommendations work session meetings to collaborate and advance equitable outcomes through the budget process
- Develop budget recommendations in conjunction with city staff and other stakeholders, matched to the AAQoL Initiative recommendations and city council strategic priorities
- Drafted a resolution granting work group authority to prepare a joint budget recommendation and letter on their behalf for submission to the City Council and City Manager
- Submitted budget recommendations through the new template created by the Equity Office for submission to City Council and the City Manager
- Prepared materials and detailed notes related to the Commission's strategic planning session
- Oversee production of the Annual Internal Review
- Held follow up discussions with city staff and other stakeholders regarding funded budget items to get updates on how funds are being spent
- Provided information to Austin Public Health on how social service Requests for Proposals (RFPs) may be restructured to increase participation of organizations that serve the API community
- Worked on the development of a template and workflow for Commission support resolution requests from the community (in progress); drafted a resolution for submission to City Council recommending that they place a

- priority emphasis on the outcome Government that Works for All as the strategic planning process moves from development to implementation
- Followed the development of the city's November 2018 bond proposition, especially funding related to the Asian American Resource Center facility
 - Created a detailed table that maps all AAQoL Initiative recommendations with applicable strategies and metrics from the City Council's Strategic Direction 2023 document
 - Provided a FY 2018 budget update to the full Commission, including the status of our funding requests and other budget items of interest

Goals for 2018-19

- Continue work with the Mayor's Office, the Equity Office, and city departments to increase Commission influence during the budget process
- Continue to work with the Joint Quality of Life Budget Recommendations task force to collaborate and advance equitable outcomes through the budget process
- Solicit more involvement from outside groups such as the Network of Asian American Organizations (NAAO), Dell Medical School (as a potential partner), and Austin Travis County Integral Care (ATCIC)
- Complete development of a template and workflow for Commission support resolution requests from the community
- Follow up on items related to the Commission strategic planning session

Commission Actions Summary

- Provided continued guidance on the Asian American Quality of Life (AAQoL) Initiative study and report (Ongoing monthly)
- The AAQoL Initiative has been well received by public and received two awards
- Monthly reports from Workgroups (Ongoing)
- Monthly oversight of AARC Kitchen Renovations
- Systemic inequity works to exclude Asian Americans (July 2017)
- Support multigenerational facility at Asian American Cultural Center
- Recommended \$15 million in the 2018 bond for AARC expansion
- Strategic Direction discussion, part I

- Recommendation for hiring Austin Public Health Director
- Created and approved the Commission's FY 2018 Budget Recommendations spreadsheet and companion presentation for submission to the City Manager's Office
- Support for AARC Nonprofit grant application from the Austin Parks Foundation
- Designated Commission members to participate in Joint Quality of Life Equity budget recommendations
- Designated Commission members to participate in APD Chief hiring process and the AARC Facility Manager position

Briefings/Presentations to the Commission

- Introduction to SB4 (American Gateways) July 2017
- Great Lawn Improvements at AARC (August 2017)
- 2016 Mobility Bond update
- Economic Development Policy
- Monthly Workgroup briefings
- Stephanie Hayden, Austin Public Health Director, presented on Asian American staffing and services, including contracted services.
- Pune Sister Cities program
- Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department five-year plan
- PARD Artist Access Program
- PARD Budget Presentation
- Hiring process for AARC Manager position
- Final report and Executive Summary on Asian American Quality of Life Initiative.

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

The AAQoL Advisory Commission did not conduct any actions during the year that did not comply with its mission statement.

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

2018-19 Goals and Objectives

Long-term goals:

- **Re-assess Commission structure/Strategic Direction**
- **Increase Community dialogue**
- **Expand progress on language access**
- **Advocate for services for Asian Americans proportional to the population, particularly basic needs/social services**
- **Support expansion of the role of the Equity Office**

Equity

Work to address structural inequities that are reflected in City staffing and budget allocation.

- Front line staff and management should reflect the diversity on the population
 - Obtain regular diversity updates from the Human Resources Department
 - Support the Asian American Employee Network (AAEN) initiatives
- Limited English speaking populations need translated documents and language interpretation to fully participate in government. Continue to monitor progress for Department's implementation of Equity Office Equity Tool.
- Advocate for continuing support, fiscal and otherwise, of the CPIO's translation/interpretation of Asian American languages, and obtain periodic reports on their progress, outcomes and sustainability including how public departments will be funded to meet language access needs in the future
 - Support community non-profit access to the vendors and pricing for translation & interpretation services identified through the City RFQ processes

AAQoL Initiative

One of the AAQoL Advisory Commission's primary goals for the upcoming year will be to expand awareness of the Quality of Life Initiative and continue to evolve through community participation.

- Commission will conduct ongoing Community Dialogue event(s)
- The data set from the UT Quality of Life Survey will be made available for future analysis

- Additional reports will be developed by UT researchers and made available on City CPIO website
- Develop ongoing policy and budget initiatives based on the AAQoL Initiative

Collaboration

The AAQoL Advisory Commission will seek to strengthen its ties with other city and community organizations by:

- Increasing participation in joint committees and collaboration with other minority Commissions
- Increasing support of and collaboration with Austin Independent School District on language programs and the International Welcome Center (IWC)
- Increasing collaboration with Austin Public Health (APH) for health-related functions at the AARC
- Expand workgroup membership and participation to include individuals from the community as well as and subject experts. Ideas for the upcoming year include:
 - Health – include representatives of APH, ATCIC, People’s Community Clinic
 - Review UT Survey process and available data to determine additional analysis needs
 - Address shortage of culturally competent Certified Nurses’ Aides
 - Address children’s health needs in the AISD system
 - Human Resources – Include HR Department, Asian American Employee Network (AAEN) and non-City HR advisor
 - Work with City HR to increase effective outreach (in addition to AARC office hours)
 - Work to create other events at the AARC that focus on employment with the City (resume writing, interview skills)
 - Translate key outreach documents and have interpreters available
 - Work with AAEN and HR to identify ways to help increase the number of City of Austin executives
 - AARC Oversight – include AARC staff, NAAO representative and AARC Nonprofit representative
 - Food permit waiver for senior meal vendors to use kitchen

- Improve effectiveness of HR Employment Specialist position
- Increase collaborations with NAAO and AARC Nonprofit
- Expand participation from other communities
- Support AARC Strategic Plan
- Full participation in the AARC Master Plan, including strategies for utilizing bond funds.
- Re-evaluate and re-purpose HR role
- Intergenerational exercise equipment in Great Lawn
- Increase AARC staffing to meet demand
- Community Outreach – include community leaders, especially those ethnicities not represented on the current Commission
 - Finalize list of community organizations, leaders, and events to target for outreach efforts
 - Continue to develop community dialogue opportunities.,
 - Attend additional events and meetings to promote interest in the Commission and its efforts
 - Develop a one-pager describing the work of the Commission and the Community Outreach Workgroup for distribution to community organization members
 - Publicize the AAQoL Initiative and its findings to the community
 - Strengthen ties with AISD

Our Communities

In addition to the goal and objectives presented above, the AAQoL Advisory Commission will work to support our communities by:

- Providing outreach to better understand and support refugee, new Asian Immigrants, and other underserved populations
- Continuing to support the Austin American Resource Center (AARC)
- Providing more language access for Asians at the AARC, other City services and City contracted services (primarily Social Services)
- Collaborate with CAN (Community Advancement Network) to make language access available to community nonprofit agencies
- Continuing to develop diverse programming at the AARC