



COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Asian American Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission

Recommendation Number: (2020410-04d): FY2021 Budget Recommendations.

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 will provide on-going guidance and support for the City's Asian American quality of life initiatives, and

WHEREAS, the AAQoL Advisory Commission, as part of its duties, annually submits budget recommendations each spring in support of programs of that promote equity and the quality of life of Asian Americans in Austin, and

WHEREAS, the AAQoL Advisory Commission was in the process of finalizing its budget recommendations for submission to the Equity Office for consideration in the City's Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget when the COVID-19 crisis hit the Austin area, and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 crisis has and will continue to strain city resources during the response and recovery effort, and

WHEREAS, City revenues from sales taxes are anticipated to be greatly reduced by the crisis, and

WHEREAS, the complete picture of lost revenue and its effect on the FY 2020-21 budget is difficult to project at this time but it is expected to be severe, and

WHEREAS, the City will need to direct additional resources in the current budget and the FY 2020-21 budget to provide relief in the form of health aid, housing, food aid, and other forms of assistance to those facing financial peril due to the spread of COVID-19, and

WHEREAS, the City is planning to use a portion of its budget reserves to assist residents, and

WHEREAS, City Council and staff are developing guidelines for the Relief in a State of Emergency (RISE) Fund for direct aid programs and health care services and related equipment, and

WHEREAS, based on the City's financial situation and the current and anticipated future resources required to recover from the COVID-19 crisis, AAQoL Advisory Commission made the decision not to submit any budget recommendations to the Equity Office that involve either funding for new programs/projects or additional funding for existing programs/projects, unless offset by reductions;

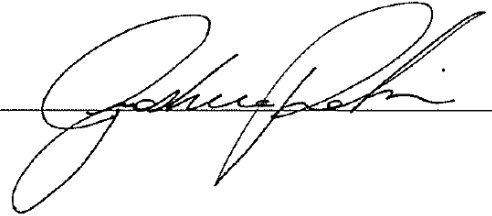
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the AAQoL Advisory Commission request that the City Council accept and review the attached list of unmet needs of the Asian American community in Austin, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the AAQoL Advisory Commission requests that the City Council prioritize equity, including the cultural and language needs of the Asian American community in Austin, as it further develops guidelines for the distribution of RISE funds and other funding programs related to the COVID-19 response and recovery effort.

Date of Approval: April 10, 2020

Record of the vote: Moved by Commissioner Cobalis, Seconded by Commissioner Chen.
Unanimous on a 11-0 vote (Commissioner Yoshida, DasGupta, Saxena, Sethi, Yang, Patil, Huang, Stanton, and Radhakrishnan) Absent: Commissioners Chao, Wang, Conte, and Patel

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and appears to be "John Patil".

ATTACHMENT – FY 2021 BUDGET: ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY UNMET NEEDS

Asian American Resource Center (AARC) Full-Time Administrative Assistant

The Administrative Assistant would be the full-time receptionist at the AARC. This position would cover the front desk by providing visitors customer service, answering phone inquiries, managing room calendars, and providing overall administrative support to the facility. Currently, several temporary staff cover the reception area and turnover is high since many in the position are looking for permanent, full-time jobs with benefits. The high turnover has led to a near-constant cycle of training new front desk staff on policies, procedures, and facility operations. Since 2013, the AARC has grown in programs, services, rentals, and visits. Due to this growth, much more administrative support is needed to help the AARC operate efficiently and effectively to serve the community. This cannot be achieved using temporary staffing for the front desk reception.

Amount: \$48,000 (ongoing)

AARC Ballroom Professional Lighting

This item would address a frequent complaint received by the AARC that the facility does not have professional lighting for the stage and performances. For staged productions, renters and staff must rent outside equipment to provide the correct lighting. It would benefit the AARC facility to have its own professional-quality lighting for this frequently used space.

Amount: \$22,000 (one-time)

AARC Bridge

Since the opening of the AARC, the Rutherford Campus has been the designated overflow parking area for the Center. There is a private lot across Cameron Road, but it is dangerous to cross without police assistance. For years, the Network of Asian American Organizations (NAAO) has advocated for a bridge between the AARC and the Rutherford Campus for safety. Purposes. The AAQoL Advisory Commission passed a resolution in August 2018 to expedite design and completion of the bridge. Construction of the bridge has been an ongoing point of discussion between PARD staff and Watershed Protection Department staff as part of a drainage improvement project and the AARC Master Plan. This would result in the bridge construction in late 2025 at the earliest. With separate funding, the bridge construction could be expedited in a way that would be consistent with the Watershed Protection drainage improvement project. The related drainage improvement program must also be prioritized.

Amount: \$450,000

AARC Master Plan Phase 1 “Gap” Funding

The 2018 Bond allocated \$7.5 million for facility improvements to the AARC. After a lengthy master planning process, the AARC Master Plan was adopted by the Austin City Council on September 19, 2019. The master plan envisions Phase 1 development to include a new Performing Arts Center, an Outdoor Stage/Pavilion, Main Entry Point/Drop-Off Area, Event Court, Event Lawn, Pedestrian Bridge, Picnic Areas and an Exercise Equipment Area. In order to deliver the full Phase 1 development, an additional \$7.5 million in funds are required.

Amount: \$7,500,000

Additional Funding for Immigrant Legal Services

The Asian American Quality of Life (AAQoL) Advisory Commission, in conjunction with the Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission, has supported city funding for immigrant legal services since funding was first requested (and funded) during the FY 2018 budget process. Funding is used to provide dedicated immigrant legal services to low-income immigrants in Austin to address the rising number of individuals and families seeking services for deportation defense and consultations. Demand for these services continues to be high and additional funding would allow the service providers to increase the number of new cases undertaken per week while continuing to manage the many carryover cases from the prior year

Amount: \$170,000 (ongoing)