



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, Deputy City Manager *NRV*

DATE: November 16, 2020

SUBJECT: **Update to City Council Resolution 20200729-113 Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update to [Resolution No. 20200729-113](#), which directs the City Manager to "advocate locally and through the National League of Cities and Texas Municipal League for relevant policies that improve health in low-income communities and communities of color, and supports local, state, regional, and federal initiatives that advance efforts to dismantle systemic racism." The resolution further states that the City of Austin should coordinate local efforts to address racism as a public health crisis and has asked the State of Texas federal and state leaders to take similar actions.

In response to the resolution, the Intergovernmental Relations Office (IGRO) provided a copy of the Resolution via email to the State Legislative Delegation for Austin, the National League of Cities and the Texas Municipal League asking that they join in declaring racism a public health crisis and enacting equity in all policies of the State of Texas.

In addition, the following language has been added to the City's 87th State Legislative Agenda and will be included in the City's federal agenda:

Support legislation and funding to dismantle systemic racism, including efforts to address public health disparities due to racial inequities.

The IGRO will also monitor and advise on legislation that meets the goal of the Resolution, including Representative Donna Howard's effort to reinstate the state agency dedicated to investigating and solving racial inequities across the state's health agencies.

Additionally, the Resolution directs the City Manager to "continue work to advance the City of Austin as a race equity and justice-oriented organization, with the Equity Office and departmental leadership continuing to identify specific activities to further enhance diversity and to ensure anti-racism principles across leadership, City staffing and contracting, enhance educational trainings/activities for employees aimed at understanding, addressing and dismantling racism and how it affects the delivery of human and social services, economic development and public safety, and promote relevant policies that

improve health in communities of color.” In response to this directive, staff have coordinated with Council’s Health and Human Services Committee to engage in further discussion at the Committee’s December meeting regarding current and ongoing efforts made by the Equity Office and the Health Equity Unit of the Austin Public Health Department. An additional update, along with recommendations for your consideration, will be communicated pending the meeting in December.

Cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
CMO Executive Team
Brie Franco, Officer, Intergovernmental Relations Office
Stephanie Hayden, Director, Austin Public Health
Brion Oaks, Chief Equity Officer