



## **Annual Internal Review**

### **LGBTQ Quality of Life Advisory Commission**

**This report covers the period of 7/1/2021 to 6/30/2022**

**The Commission's mission statement (per the City Code) is to:**

- (1) Serve as an advisory body to the city council regarding issues actually or potentially affecting persons within the LGBTQ community or the LGBTQ community as a whole;
- (2) serve in an advisory and consultative capacity to the city council and any identified City departments with the aim of improving the ability of the City and its vendors, contractors, and consultants to serve, support, and employ the LGBTQ community;
- (3) recommend to the city council measures designed to enhance the health, safety, economic opportunity and affordability, mobility, cultural and learning opportunities, and government access and accountability for the LGBTQ community;
- (4) coordinate and/or participate in educational programs to promote equal treatment, opportunity, and understanding of persons within the LGBTQ community, and facilitate gatherings such as meetings, institutes, forums, or courses of instruction designed to lead to greater understanding and crafting of solutions for issues of concern of the LGBTQ community;
- (5) work with other city commissions to address issues of intersectionality;
- (6) create, guide, support, and evaluate LGBTQ quality of life initiatives; and
- (7) perform additional functions as required by the city council.

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**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.**

*As it relates to our mission to serve as an advisory body to the city council regarding issues actually or potentially affecting persons within the LGBTQ community or the LGBTQ community as a whole:*

- The Commission released our landmark [LGBTQIA+ Quality of Life Study](#) in October 2021. The Study proved that while Austin is home to a large and vibrant LGBTQIA+ community, there is much that the City can do to improve the safety, health, economic stability, access to education, and equal rights of LGBTQIA+ Austinites. Key recommendations include:
  - Enhancing sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI+) data collection.
  - Developing affordable housing opportunities.
  - Addressing health disparities and creating a pipeline of culturally competent providers.
  - Leading with anti-racist policies, investments, and strategies.
  - Bolstering support for queer Black, Indigenous, and people of color.
  - Prioritizing the needs of transgender and gender-expansive individuals.
  - Investing in the establishment of an LGBTQIA+ community center.
- The Commission participated in the Winter Storm Review Task Force and endorsed its [final report and recommendations](#).

*As it relates to our mission to serve in an advisory and consultative capacity to the city council and any identified City departments with the aim of improving the ability of the City and its vendors, contractors, and consultants to serve, support, and employ the LGBTQ community:*

- The Commission promoted the Austin Transportation Department's [Vision Zero](#) Stories Program.
- The Commission advised Council Member Fuentes's office regarding municipal IDs or enhanced library cards and their utility for transgender and non-binary people in Austin.
- The Commission provided feedback on the Housing and Planning Department's [Equity-Based Historic Preservation Plan](#).

*As it relates to our mission to recommend to the city council measures designed to enhance the health, safety, economic opportunity and affordability, mobility, cultural and learning opportunities, and government access and accountability for the LGBTQ community:*

- [Recommendation 20211108-3b](#) addresses the need for transparency, accuracy, community involvement, and a reliable process for briefing and accepting Commission recommendations during the annual budget process.
- [Recommendation 20220307-3e](#) addresses the need for city-wide standardized collection of sexual orientation, gender identity, and intersex (SOGI+) demographic data to provide real-time insights into the quality of life of LGBTQIA+ community members.
- [Recommendation 20220328-3a-1](#) addresses additional needs related to the annual budget process, including reporting back to Commissions on the inclusion or exclusion of their budget recommendations.
- [Recommendation 20220328-3a-2](#) addresses the need for tax-supported affordable housing contracts to include language that requires tenant application and selection processes to convey that affordable housing is supportive to all regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual

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orientation, gender identity, age, familial status, disability, marital status, student status, creed, national origin, or source of income, and that there be an annual demographics reporting requirement to ensure diversity, inclusion, and respect are part of the City's affordable housing efforts.

- [Recommendation 20220328-3a-3](#) addresses the need for continued funding for mental health services for LGBTQIA+ youth.
- [Recommendation 20220328-3a-4](#) addresses the need for an executive-level LGBTQIA+ community liaison in the City Manager's Office to ensure representation of the LGBTQIA+ community's interests and needs in all aspects of city government.

*As it relates to our mission to coordinate and/or participate in educational programs to promote equal treatment, opportunity, and understanding of persons within the LGBTQ community, and facilitate gatherings such as meetings, institutes, forums, or courses of instruction designed to lead to greater understanding and crafting of solutions for issues of concern of the LGBTQ community:*

- The Commission hosted three virtual town hall meetings following the release of the LGBTQIA+ Quality of Life Study to gather community feedback and prioritize the recommendations suggested.
- The Commission participated in the Budget Engagement Forums in preparation for the FY2022-23 budget process.

*As it relates to our mission to work with other city commissions to address issues of intersectionality:*

- The Commission conducts much of our work with other city commissions through the Joint Inclusion Committee, especially regarding issues of intersectionality.

*As it relates to our mission to create, guide, support, and evaluate LGBTQ quality of life initiatives:*

- The Commission received a briefing and provided feedback on the Austin Public Health Department's [Breathe with Pride](#) tobacco cessation program.
- The Commission is collaborating with the Communications and Technology Management Department's Open Data Team to make the anonymized data from the LGBTQIA+ Quality of Life Study available on the Open Data Portal.

*As it relates to our mission to perform additional functions as required by the city council:*

- The Commission was not required to perform any additional functions.

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

The actions of the LGBTQ+ Quality of Life Advisory Commission comply with its mission statement.

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

The Commission's goals for the new calendar year will focus on three identified urgent issue areas:

**1. City-Wide Standardized Collection of SOGI+ Demographic Data**

Ensuring city-wide standardized collection of sexual orientation, gender identity, and intersex (SOGI+) demographic data will provide real-time insights into the quality of life of LGBTQIA+ community members.

Not only will this facilitate the evaluation of our progress against the benchmarks found in the LGBTQIA+ Quality of Life Study, but it also reduces or eliminates the need for subsequent investment in large-scale quality of life studies.

**2. Home is Here: Affordability and the LGBTQIA+ Community**

The City's investment in the landmark LGBTQIA+ Quality of Life Study provided a critical point-in-time benchmark of the successes and challenges facing LGBTQIA+ Austinites. Unsurprisingly, the LGBTQIA+ community is experiencing challenges with Austin's affordability, especially in housing.

Our focus on housing affordability acknowledges the valuable feedback provided by LGBTQIA+ Austinites in our Quality of Life Study. We maintain that the \$200,000 investment in the Study does the City no good if the people who participated cannot afford to live here by the time we address their needs and recommendations.

**3. Ensuring Equity for Queer & Transgender Black, Indigenous, and People of Color**

The City's definition of equity centers race as the lens through which it views and addresses all equity-related issues; it is the best predictor of quality-of-life outcomes.

We must ensure that the City's equity initiatives prioritize the experiences and needs of queer and transgender Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in Austin who are most at risk for adverse quality-of-life outcomes.

The Commission's objectives for the new calendar year will include:

- Completing the upload of anonymized Quality of Life Study data to the Open Data Portal.
- Creating a new Commissioner orientation manual.
- Assessing Commission membership to ensure equity of representation.
- Formalizing the process for Commission members to advocate for approved recommendations to their appointing Council Members.