



COMMISSION ON AGING BUDGET RECOMMENDATION
Recommendation Number: 20230308-7iii
EXPANDING PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS AND
SERVICES TO OLDER ADULTS

Strategic Direction: Health and Environment, Mobility, Culture and Lifelong Learning

Date: March 8, 2023

Subject: FY2024 Budget Recommendation

Motioned By: Varteressian **Seconded By:** Bordie

Recommendation

The Parks and Recreation Department (PAR) provides numerous programs that serve older adults in Austin, including congregate meals and transportation to meals and some other appointments. PAR needs additional funding and staff to ensure all older adults who want to participate are able.

- Funding three part-time designated drivers and a dispatcher for the Senior Transportation Program will ensure PAR's ability to serve the Adult 50+ Community while expanding congregate meal programs.
- Funding 18 FTE Administrative Assistants at each of the 18 PAR facilities servicing the Adult 50+ Community will ensure an equitable standard of administrative operations for each site that is consistent and the same throughout the Community Recreation Division. Funding permanent positions should reduce the turnover of staff in administrative positions.
- Funding an FTE Marketing Representative for the community recreation division would allow for the increase in targeted marketing campaigns to help staff spread the word about all of the Varsity Generation programs and services offered throughout the department.

Rationale:

Senior Transportation Program: PAR offers participants rides through the Senior Transportation Program. The program is partially funded through a grant with the Capital Area Council of Governments that provides reimbursement for rides provided to facilities that participate in the Congregate Meal Program. Pre-pandemic, this program provided daily ride routes to 8 senior and recreation centers throughout the City of Austin as well as private rides to doctor's appointments and personal errands. These routes were provided to all registered participants living within a 5-mile radius of the center. In 2019 the Council approved the expansion of the congregate meal program from 8 to 10 sites. In FY22, PAR was able to add 2 new sites and expanded an existing site to 5 days per week. These changes improved equity in PAR meal services and were supported by the Commission on Aging. Additional drivers and a dispatcher are needed to serve older adults who take meals at the additional sites. The additional staffing will also allow the program to meet the higher demand for private and medical rides.

Administrative Assistants:

PARD offers many programs and services to adults aged 50 and older in Austin. Demand for PARD's programs and services has increased in line with the growing population of 50+ seniors. Currently, only 2 of 18 sites within PARD have an Administrative Assistant position. Of the remaining 16 sites, 6 have 40- hr/wk Administrative Associate positions with a lesser pay grade, while 8 sites have a 30- hr/wk Administrative Associate position. The remaining 2 sites and Senior Transportation Program have no administrative position. Additional funding would allow the 14 sites to increase their Administrative Associate positions to an Administrative Assistant position while also providing 2 sites and Senior Transportation with a new position.

Marketing Representative:

The recommendation of this request includes additional funding to provide a Marketing Representative for the community recreation division. The necessary position benefits the division by extending our Department's marketing reach to customers and potential customers. It further supports the division by providing a representative of marketing for social media and web content, community marketing campaigns, and community engagement while maintaining a consistent standard of operation. The supplementation of this position would ensure brand consistency of the visual standard of the Parks and Recreation Department and Varsity Generation branding.

Date of Approval: March 8, 2023

Record of the vote:

For: Chair Temperley, Vice-Chair Bondi, Angel, Bordie, Briesemeister, De Maria Nicola, Garcia-Pittman, Lugo, Van Sickle, Varteressian.

Against: None

Abstain: Van De Putte

Absent: Bauman, Kareithi, Lopez-Guerrero



Attest:

Amy Temperley, Chair