



**ASIAN AMERICAN QUALITY-OF-LIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION #: 20230321-005**

Date: March 21, 2023

Subject: PARD Senior Language Access

Motioned by: Commissioner Vincent Cobalis

Seconded by: Commissioner Kirk Yoshida

PARD SENIOR LANGUAGE ACCESS

DESCRIPTION

PARD's current contract spending authorization for language access (interpretation and translation Master Agreements) is insufficient. This restricts AARC's use of our language access budget and services. The AARC must then turn to CPIO for contract spending authorization to meet language access needs. The contract spending authorization for language access must be increased to allow the AARC and other PARD centers to use their language access budget to meet the need more effectively.

The AARC senior program has a diverse group of program participants with differing levels of English proficiency, physical abilities, and interests. To accommodate most participants needs, the program offers a variety of wellness activities such as Tai Chi, Yoga, meditation, dance fitness, ping pong, bingo, mahjong, and playing cards. Its health and education workshops include diabetes education, health screenings with Austin Public health, advance care planning, wills and probate, technology class, ESL support classes, and gardening. From these activities, seniors learn new information, apply it to their life, and connect to resources for themselves and their family members. These programs typically require interpretation in multiple languages.

There are limited number of translation vendors on the current Master Agreement, and the vendors provide inconsistent translation quality. For quality assurance, the AARC has asked community members review the vendor's work and reviewers commonly identify and correct the translation errors. Because of the Master Agreement, AARC staff are unable to use outside translation vendors or reimburse our community reviewers for their time.

The major interpretation challenge PARD consistently encounters is the overall interpretation contract authority of about \$6,000 per fiscal year from the Interpretation Master Agreement (NA19*202). The AARC alone has spent more than \$21,000 per fiscal year since 2021 for interpretation. When PARD reaches the spending limit, PARD purchasing staff are required to seek increased spending authority approval from Central Purchasing, a process can that can span from weeks to months. While awaiting approval, AARC staff is forced to limit spending on interpretation funds, which reduces the quality of the AARC senior programming offered. At times, the AARC is only able to provide interpretation to Mandarin Chinese speakers.

With increase in PARD's spending authority on the Master Agreement, the AARC can increase its interpretation funds, which will provide an opportunity to share and expand programs, resources, and outreach to the surrounding Asian communities.

Cost is \$44,000 PARD language access funding.

DEPARTMENT

PARD

ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Culture & Lifelong Learning: Quality of cultural venues, events, programs, and resources; Quality of lifelong learning opportunities.

Government That Works for All: Condition of City facilities and technology; Public engagement and participation; Equity of City programs and resource allocation.

VOTE

For: Kirk Yoshida, Azra Siddiqi, Kuo Yang, Vincent Cobalis, Fang Fang, Mohsin Lari, Meena Mutyala, Hanna Huang, Pramod Patil, and Sarah Chen.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Lily Trieu, Anna Lan, and Zahra Shakur Jamal-Hassan.

Attest: Jeremy Garza, Staff Liaison, Equity Office

x: Jeremy Garza