



## **Annual Internal Review**

**This report covers the time period of 7/1/2022 to 6/30/2023.**

### **Commission on Aging**

**The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) is:**

The Commission on Aging shall serve as an advisory board to the council concerning the quality of life for older adults in the Austin area and to help ensure they are productive, independent, and healthy.

The commission shall:

- (1) advise the council on issues related to the older population in the Austin area;
- (2) evaluate and recommend programs, policies, and practices that create a positive impact and reduce the burden on older adults;
- (3) determine the needs of older adults in the Austin community, and advise council regarding these needs; and
- (4) promote the contributions of older adults to the cultural, economic, and historical value of Austin.

The council encourages the commission to hold periodic joint meetings with the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities.

[Source: Ord. 20130926-081; Ord. No. 20141211-204, Pts. 17, 18, 7-1-15.](#)

- 1. 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.**

This annual report for July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023, highlights the accomplishments of the Commission on Aging based on the responsibilities outlined in the mission statement of the Commission, the implementation of the Age Friendly Action Plan, Austin City Council's Strategic Direction, and other important issues facing older adults in Austin.

#### **Advise the Council on issues related to the older adult population**

The Commission on Aging adopted the following recommendations:

[Recommendation Number 20230308-7i](#): Maintain Funding for Education and Outreach on Senior Homestead Tax Exemption

[Recommendation Number 20230308-7ii](#): Enhanced Library Card Program (ELCP)

[Recommendation Number 20230308-7iii](#): Expanding Parks and Recreation Department Programs and Services to Older Adults

[Recommendation Number 20230308-7iv](#): APD Training for Alzheimer's, Dementia & Other Related Conditions

[Recommendation Number 20230308-7v](#): Community Engagement & Outreach Funding to Improve Emergency Preparedness and Equity and Age-Friendliness of City Services for Older Adults

[Recommendation Number 20230308-7vi](#): Increased Emergency Housing and Utility Assistance Targeted to Older Adults

[Recommendation Number 20230308-7vii](#): Allocation of New Funds for Education and Outreach on Emergency Resources

**Evaluate and recommend programs, policies, and practices that create a positive impact and reduce the burden on older adults:**

The Commission formed working groups to study, analyze and evaluate major strategies identified in the larger strategic Age Friendly Action Plan. Working groups allow the Commission to involve interested community members and City of Austin and Travis County staff. Representation from the community informs the work of the Commission and aids in implementation of the Age Friendly Action Plan.

The Commission established four working groups aligning with the eight Domains of the Age Friendly Action Plan and the Council's Strategic Direction 2023. Below are the reports of each working group for the period July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023:

**Age Friendly Action Plan Working Groups:**

*Age Friendly Action Plan Implementation and Budget Working Group*

This Working Group had the primary responsibility for drafting the Commission's budget recommendations. Working Group members met with staff and community partners, attended budget engagement meetings, and meetings with Joint Inclusion and other Quality of Life commissions.

*Housing, Transportation and Open Spaces Working Group (Domains 1-3)*

This Working Group received presentations from Foundation Communities regarding affordable housing. As well as a presentation from the Parks and Recreation Department on ongoing and upcoming programs for older adults. This workgroup is also reviewing their related goals in Age Friendly Austin and updating to ensure feasibility.

*Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment Working Group (Domains 4-6)*

This Working Group was primarily responsible for organizing the Older Americans Month event in May. Working group is also reviewing goals to ensure they are quantifiable and progress on them can be measured.

*Health Services and Community Supports (Domain 8) Working Group*

During this reporting period the Domain 8 Working Group continued its focus on providing stakeholder feedback related to the health access and service capacity building for older individuals and family caregivers. Workgroup members identified strategies related to Age Friendly Plan Domain 8 metrics. See time frame below for identified activities:

Ongoing – Throughout the development of the Quality of Life Survey and request for Proposals workgroup members provided feedback regarding survey questions and review of scope of work.

Ongoing – Throughout the budget recommendations process workgroup members provided feedback to Commissioners on priorities related to Domain 8 related topics. Ongoing concerns were raised regarding the topics of access to information about available programs and services, eligibility for services and health disparities in access.

September 2022 – Focused on September as Emergency Preparedness Month and Falls Prevention Awareness Month. Information about Warn Central Texas regional notification system was shared. Information from National Council on Aging was presented by co-chair Patricia Bordie including toolkit for public awareness events related to Falls Prevention Month. Ms. Bordie also shared information about Ageism Awareness Day (October 7, 2022) providing introduction to public awareness activities and video from Ashton Applewhite, Author “Let’s End Ageism”.

January 2023 – Workgroup members crafted new workgroup mission in support of changes required by City Clerk’s Office. Group members began work on priorities with the topic of emergency preparedness identified as important focus. In addition, discussion about issue of

older individuals living alone, and the risks associated with social isolation as another important focus in the upcoming year.

February 2023 – Finalized workgroup mission statement and discussed potential new members.

Throughout the remainder of this reporting period challenges arose to scheduling workgroup meetings as co-chair left the Commission and stepped down. In addition, the reworking on work group guidelines also impacted two spring cancellations of this work group meeting.

May 2023 – Several workgroup members participated in the Older Americans Month event held at the Conley Guerro Senior Center.

### **Other Commission on Aging Working Groups:**

#### *Quality of Life Study Working Group*

This Working Group compiled stakeholder feedback to create the RFP template for the Commission on Aging's Quality of Life Study which was submitted to the Equity Office in February 2023.

#### *Intergenerational Resource and Activity Center Exploration Working Group*

This Working Group is reviewing the Intergenerational Resource and Activity Center proposal and supporting documents for the site at the Nash Hernandez location and determining if the Commission on Aging will draft a letter of support.

### **Determine the needs of older adults in the Austin community, and advise council regarding these needs:**

#### **Community Engagement on FY 24 Budget:**

The Commission on Aging conducted extensive community outreach to inform our budget recommendations. The Commission updated the Age Friendly Austin Community Feedback Survey. The survey was distributed through Age Friendly partners and the commissioner's networks. In addition, several Commissioners participated in the virtual budget forums organized by the Joint Inclusion Committee and the Equity Office.

### **Joint Meeting with the Mayor's Committee for People With Disabilities**

This meeting did not take place during the reporting period due to scheduling conflicts. The Commission is working to have this joint meeting in the end of 2023 or early 2024.

### **Invited and requested presentations on issues of interest to the Commission:**

#### *July 2022*

- Introducing Rainbow Connections ATX, Richard Bondi, Program Development Lead, Rainbow Connections
- City of Austin's First Comprehensive Food Plan, Edwin Marty, Food Policy Manager, Office of Sustainability

#### *August 2022*

- Aging and Homelessness Community Needs Survey, Amy Temperley

#### *September 2022*

- ATX Walk Bike Roll (ATXWBR) Project Update, Katie Wettick and John Eastman, City of Austin Public Works
- Senior Homestead Exemption Outreach Overview, Tabitha Taylor, Austin Public Health and Tara Connolly, City of Austin Housing and Planning

#### *November 2022*

- City Services for Older Adults Audit, Neha Sharma and Kelsey Thompson, Office of the City Auditor

#### *February 2023*

- Update ATX Walk Bike Roll, Craig McColloch, City of Austin Public Works

#### *April 2023*

- Intergenerational Resource and Activity Center, Clarke Heidrick
- Upcoming Spending Priorities for Federal Housing and Community Development Grants as part of the Community Needs Assessment for the FY23-24 Action Plan, Christian Duran and James May, Housing Department; Helene Howell, Austin Public Health
- Seniors in Law Enforcement Together (S.A.L.T), Rob Faubion and Christian Mendoza, AGE of Central Texas and Austin Police Department

*May 2023*

- Recap on the Adult Day Center with Intergenerational Programming Feasibility Study, Sam Woolard, Woolard, Nichols, Torres Consulting
- Recap on the Feasibility Study: Intergenerational Resource and Activity Center Pilot Program at the Nash Hernandez Building, Alyssa Tharrett, Parks and Recreation Department, City of Austin

*June 2023*

- Gus Garcia Recreation Center and Park, Martha Langford

**Promote the contributions of older adults to the cultural, economic, and historical value of Austin:**

**Annual Community Service Award**

The Commission on Aging presented its first Community Service Award. The 2023 Community Service Award recognizes members of the community (professional and volunteer) that has demonstrated resilience and dedication to enhance the lives of older adults in the Austin area. Current members of the Commission and staff liaisons were not eligible. Eight nominations were received from commissioners, community organizations and members of the community. Recipients were Joyce Hefner for her professional work and Nancy Walker for her volunteer work.

**Older Americans Month Kick-Off Event**

May is Older Americans Month and the 2023 theme was “Aging Unbound”. Commissioners assisted in planning and volunteered at a kickoff event sponsored by Austin Public Health and organized by Age Friendly Coordinator Nicole Howe and Richard Bondi, Family ElderCare with significant support from the Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment Working Group (Domains 4-6). The event included music and performances, information from local aging service providers and city departments, activities, games, and prizes. Over 30 groups tabled focusing on older adult services and needs. Event was attended by 200 participants.

**Additional Contributions**

In addition, the Commission promotes the contributions of older adults through engagement with the community, our participation in community events and committees, presentations to other planning and community bodies, and meetings with City staff.

- The Commission on Aging is represented on the Joint Inclusion Committee and served as chair.
- Members of the Commission regularly attended the budget meetings held by the Equity Office
- Members of the Commission on Aging participate on the Aging Services Council

- Members of the Commission on Aging participate on the Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council and the Aging & Disability Resource Center Steering Committee

**Other Applicable Action Items:**

- Commissioners finalized updating the bylaws to better reflect the work and goals of the commission and updated the name of the Commission from the Commission on Seniors to the Commission on Aging to better represent the community and remove an outdated term.
- Held a Special Called Meeting in November 2022 to plan the scope of work for the upcoming Commission on Aging Quality of Life Study.
- Successful integration of A Mighty Good Time website offering older adult activities and events onto City of Austin Website.

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

The Commission on Aging has acted to fulfill the scope and the responsibilities as outlined in the mission statement as identified in Ord. 20130926-081.

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

The Commission establishes the following goals and objectives for the coming year.

- Add staff to support the Age Friendly Action Plan, with a priority for communication and outreach to older adults.
- Complete and compile results for two AARP grant walkability studies
- Evaluate and update the Commission on Aging Annual Budget Community Engagement Survey.
- Finalize Commission on Aging new commissioner onboarding documentation.
- Following procurement of a vendor, support the work for a comprehensive Quality of Life Survey for older adults in Austin.
- Improve services to older adults experiencing homelessness.
- Revise and update the Age Friendly Action Plan to have clear and quantifiable indicators to measure success of the Age-Friendly Action Plan.
- Update and maintain asset map listings for Age-Friendly services aligning with AARP domains on the AFA website.
- Work with APH staff to drive improved collection and more granular data regarding how city programs and services are serving older adults in all communities across Austin to include demographics on age, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, persons with disabilities, number, and ages of children in families, and caregivers.
- Working with PARD, enhance and expand programs for the older adult communities.