



## **Annual Internal Review**

**This report covers the time period of 7/1/2024 to 6/30/2025**

### **African American Resource Advisory Commission** **(Official Name of Board or Commission)**

**The Board/Commission mission statement** (per the City Code) **is:** *to advise the City Council on issues related to the Quality of Life (QOL) for the City's African American community, and recommend programs designed to alleviate any inequities that may confront African Americans in social, economic and vocational pursuits, including: health care; housing, including affordable housing, home ownership and homelessness; entertainment opportunities for professionals and students; employment; and cultural venues, including museums, theaters, art galleries and music venues. The Commission also advises the Council on matters related to the African American Cultural and Heritage Facility and the George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center.*

**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.**

In support of our mission, our 15-member African American Resource Advisory Commission (AARAC), during the 2024-25 year, remained committed to involving and supporting the City's African American community through open dialogue, meaningful conversations, information sharing, and intentional invitations to attend and participate in our monthly meetings. During this reporting period the AARAC prepared and submitted a detailed recommendation for the City of Austin FY25-26 Budget. This recommendation addressed quality of life and equity issues concerning: the Austin Public Library and its deficient African American related resources, the Millennium Youth Entertainment Complex and the continued need for sufficient resources to update, replace, and renovate aged equipment and facility spaces, resources to improve the opportunities and representation of Black Women in literary spaces around the Austin community, and the long-standing need to provide

funding to resume and complete the overdue renovations and expansion of the George Washington Carver Museum Cultural and Genealogy Center.

During this reporting period we addressed concerns around the African American Cultural Heritage District, the City of Austin's programs and efforts to provide affordable housing, the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan, the impact of Transportation and Public Safety issues on our African American Community, the preservation of historic landmarks in East Austin and throughout our city, the support of immigrant communities, grassroots work being done to support justice involved persons, and the remarkable progress and innovations being experienced on the campus of Huston-Tillotson University, the oldest of institution of higher education in the City of Austin. During this time period we also supported our mission through consistent engagement with the Joint Inclusion Commission of the City of Austin.

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

During this reporting period our actions were consistent and did comply with our mission statement. This past year was a challenge for our Commission. We unfortunately experienced five cancelled meetings due to the inability to meet quorum. Our Commission experienced an unexpected number of vacancies which resulted in our inability to meet consistently throughout the year. Our Commission also experienced at least one transition in Executive level and City Department sponsorship during this year. Despite all the changes and challenges our Commission encountered, we persevered and worked together to submit our annual budget recommendation, support the Joint Inclusion Commission, hear from and support our African American Community, and participate in strategic planning sessions.

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

The primary goals and objectives for the AARAC in the new calendar year will focus on the engagement and onboarding of new Commissioners. We are excited to have seven Commissioners who have joined us since 2024. We will focus on ensuring all Commissioners have a thorough understanding of the history and purpose of our Commission. We will continue to advocate for the much needed facility renovations and resource investments in our community for the George Washington Carver Museum Cultural and Heritage Center and the African American Cultural Heritage District. We will remain consistent and work to address continued systemic disparities and issues in the areas of Health, Transportation, Public Safety, Cultural Preservation, Education and Employment opportunities, and Affordable Housing.