



RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission

Recommendation Number: [20260324-006] Supporting Maternal Health Services in the FY 2026-2027

Date of Approval: March 24, 2026

Recommendation

Maintain full funding for Mama Sana Vibrant Woman at FY26 levels (\$900,000), including maternal health and perinatal housing stabilization services. Restore rental assistance support to at least prior-year levels to prevent further erosion of critical maternal health infrastructure serving Austin families.

Description of Recommendation to Council

Mama Sana Vibrant Woman (MSVW) has partnered with the City of Austin since 2016, providing culturally responsive maternal health services to Black and Latinx families during pregnancy and the first two years postpartum.

Despite growing need and rising housing costs in Central Texas:

- MSVW's maternal health contract was reduced by 10% in FY26
- Rental assistance for perinatal families was fully eliminated

The Commission urges the Austin City Council to restore and maintain prior funding levels of \$900,000 (\$500,000 for housing stabilization and rental assistance; \$400,000 for maternal health). This request is a stabilization measure, not a program expansion, aimed at preventing family displacement, maternal health deterioration, and downstream public costs.

2025 Program Impact: MSVW services helped families remain stable during pregnancy and postpartum recovery by preventing eviction and reducing housing-related stress.

- 218 households served
- 477 children supported
- \$666,759 distributed in rental assistance

Rationale

- **Housing Stability Is Health Care:** Research shows that housing instability during pregnancy increases risks of low birth weight, preterm delivery, maternal mental health challenges, and NICU admissions. Stable housing is a key factor in improving maternal and infant health outcomes.

- **Equity-Focused Intervention:** Black and Latinx mothers in Austin experience disproportionate maternal morbidity and housing insecurity. Programs provided by Mama Sana Vibrant Woman directly address these disparities through culturally responsive care and support.
- **Preventing Critical Service Gaps:** Without restored funding, service reductions could result in longer waitlists for maternal health services, reduced rental assistance support, decreased capacity for follow-up and care coordination, more families experiencing instability during pregnancy and postpartum recovery
- **Proven Partnership with the City:** Since 2016, MSVW has demonstrated a strong track record of responsibly administering City funds, collaborating with partner organizations, and responding to community needs.
- **Preserving Citywide Maternal Health Infrastructure:** MSVW's housing stabilization funding supports several maternal health organizations across Austin. Maintaining these resources helps preserve a coordinated network of services supporting pregnant and postpartum families.

Alignment with Commission Mission

The work of Mama Sana Vibrant Woman advances the mission of the City of Austin Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission by promoting equity, supporting Latino families, and ensuring Black and Latinx mothers remain housed, healthy, and connected to culturally responsive care. To cut funding now would undermine years of progress and contradict the City of Austin's public commitments to equity, maternal health, and community-rooted care.

Motioned By: Commissioner Castañeda

Seconded By: Commissioner Ruiz

Vote: 8-0

For: Chair Afifi, Vice Chair Ramos, Commissioners Castañeda, Flores, Galvan, Perales, Morales, Ruiz

Absent: Commissioners Peña and Moya Fábregas

Attest: *Nekaybaw Watson*, Staff Liaison