



RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

Joint Inclusion Committee

Recommendation Number: [20260325-008] : Support and Funding of an Austin Multicultural STEM Symposium in the FY 2026-2027 Budget.

Date of Approval: March 25th, 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 care infrastructure.

Description of Recommendation to Council:

Mama Sana Vibrant Woman (MSVW) has been a long-standing partner with the City of Austin since 2016, providing culturally responsive maternal health care to Black and Latinx communities. Despite the growing need and the rising cost of living in Central Texas, funding for MSVW's maternal health services was reduced by 10% in FY26, and their rental assistance support was fully eliminated.

We urge the City Council to restore and maintain prior funding levels—\$900,000 total (\$500,000 for housing stabilization and \$400,000 for maternal health). This is not a request for expansion; it is a stabilization measure aimed at preventing family displacement, maternal health deterioration, and downstream public costs.

In 2025 alone, MSVW:

- **Served 218 households**
- **Supported 477 children**
- **Distributed \$666,759 in rental assistance, directly preventing eviction and promoting safe postpartum recovery.**

Rationale:

- **Housing Stability Is Health Care:** Research confirms that housing instability during pregnancy increases rates of low birth weight, preterm delivery, maternal mental health issues, and NICU admissions. The data is clear: stable housing improves health outcomes.
- **Equity-Focused Intervention:** Black and Latinx mothers in Austin experience disproportionate maternal morbidity and housing insecurity. MSVW's services directly counteract those disparities.
- **Preventing Crisis-Level Gaps:** Without restored funding, service reductions will lead to longer waitlists, decreased rental support, reduced follow-up, and more families falling through the cracks at a vulnerable life stage.
- **Proven Partnership with the City:** MSVW has a strong track record of responsibly administering City funds, effectively collaborating with sister organizations, and responding quickly to emerging community needs.
- **Preserving Multi-Organizational Capacity:** MSVW's housing stabilization program also supports six other maternal health organizations. Without restored funding, citywide perinatal care infrastructure will fragment.

Alignment with JIC Mission/Vision/Values:

MSVW's work directly furthers JIC's goals of racial equity, family support, and displacement prevention as expressed through the mission of several Quality of Life Commissions (AARAC, HQoL, Women, ECC). Their programs help keep Black and Latinx mothers housed, healthy, and connected to culturally competent care, ensuring a just and inclusive Austin. To cut funding now would undermine years of progress and contradict the City's public commitments to equity, maternal health, and community-rooted care.

Date of Approval: March 25, 2026

Motioned By: Commissioner Parsons

Seconded By: Commissioner Thakkar

Vote: 10-0

For: Vice Chair Bondi, Commissioners Alvizo, Benson, Castaneda, Chang, Laake-Stanfield, Kanawati, Oliva-Martínez, Parsons, Thakkar

Against: None

Abstain: None

Recuse: None

Off the dais: None

Absent: Chair Afifi, Commissioners Bullard, McNary,
Melendez

Attest: *Ryan Sperling*
(Ryan Sperling, Staff Liaison)