



COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Joint Inclusion Committee

Recommendation Number: 20260325-019: Older Adult Outreach

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization’s age-friendly guidance on Communication and Information notes that many older adults receive information through traditional print and broadcast media and through direct personal contact (including telephone and service centers), underscoring the importance of multi-channel, accessible communications¹; and

WHEREAS, the National Institute on Aging provides a Social Isolation and Loneliness Outreach Toolkit intended to be shared with older adults and caregivers, reflecting the importance of proactive outreach and practical, ready-to-use materials to reduce isolation and connect people with supports²; and

WHEREAS, federal caregiver-support guidance through the Administration for Community Living’s Lifespan Respite Care Program explicitly includes outreach as a core activity—educating family caregivers about respite services and how to access those services—highlighting outreach as a best practice for improving awareness and enrollment³; and

WHEREAS, Austin City Council adopted Strategic Direction 2023, which calls for the City to “engage community members...in ways that are timely, convenient, meaningful, and honor their communication preferences,” including strengthening staff capacity to engage “vulnerable and historically marginalized communities”; and further calls for the City to improve communication, engagement, and participation through clear, consistent communications;⁴ and

WHEREAS, the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan—adopted in June 2012—serves as Austin’s long-range policy framework, and achieving City goals depends on residents being able to learn about and access City and community services and resources⁵; and

WHEREAS, Austin Public Health’s October 14, 2025 memorandum updating Council on Resolution No. 20250605-084 (Age-Friendly Austin) describes ongoing City actions to improve communication and engagement with older adults, including “Listen and Learn” sessions for City departments,

¹ [WHO Age-friendly World, Communication and Information](#)

² [National Institute on Aging, Social Isolation and Loneliness Outreach Toolkit](#)

³ [ACL Administration for Community Living, Lifespan Respite Care Program](#)

⁴ [Austin Strategic Direction 2023](#)

⁵ [Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan Adopted June 15, 2012](#)

centralized guidance for communication for older adults, and a central “Senior Services Hub” intended to make City services more accessible⁶; and

WHEREAS, nearly one-quarter (22.9%) of older adults struggled to afford utilities in the past year, with stark disparities among vulnerable groups. Utility insecurity affects 44.8% of people with disabilities, 40.2% of Native American/Indigenous seniors, and 34.5% of Asian American seniors—roughly three times the rate of White seniors (13.0%). Lower-income older adults earning under \$20,000 face nearly 40% insecurity⁷; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 Quality-of-Life study found that caregiver/provider supports were a leading need—specifically, the fourth most frequent request from older adults for City supports was not for themselves, but for greater supports for providers and caregivers⁸; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 Quality-of-Life study found social isolation scores as high as 5.5 (gay respondents), compared with 4.36 for older adults generally and 25% higher than older adults identifying as heterosexual. The lowest social isolation risk within the LGBTQIA+ group was from bisexual respondents, who still scored high at 5.05. These social isolation risk scores are the highest of any if the demographic groups polled⁹; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 Quality-of-Life study found that many older adults reported that QR codes and online systems are not helpful, and that they prefer printed materials or information shared in person¹⁰.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Joint Inclusion Committee recommends that the Austin City Council direct the City Manager, recognizing current City budget constraints, to prioritize improved outreach and communications to older adults regarding available City and community services—including utility assistance programs, caregiver supports, and opportunities to reduce social isolation—utilizing existing resources, communication platforms, and community partnerships to the greatest extent practicable.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Joint Inclusion Committee recommends that the Austin City Council directs the City Manager to strengthen outreach efforts within existing operational and programming resources to ensure older adults are aware of available services and supports by:

1. Conducting targeted outreach to Asian American older adults to promote awareness of utility assistance programs and emergency relief funding, including through culturally and linguistically appropriate materials and partnerships with trusted community organizations.
2. Expanding outreach regarding caregiver supports, including respite care programming and other caregiver resources, and identifying effective communication methods to increase awareness and enrollment among caregivers.

⁶ [Austin Memorandum Staff Update on Age Friendly Resolution No. 20250605-084](#)

⁷ Austin Older Adult Quality of Life Study, November 2025, page 117

⁸ Austin Older Adult Quality of Life Study, November 2025, page 43

⁹ 2025 Quality of Life Study, Austin LGBTQIA+ Older Adults At-A-Glance, page 1

¹⁰ Austin Older Adult Quality of Life Study, November 2025, page 7

3. Enhancing outreach communications regarding utility assistance and emergency relief programs to reach Latino and Hispanic older adults and other populations experiencing elevated levels of utility insecurity.
4. Increasing community outreach through trusted organizations that can help communicate City information as safe and inclusive in order to better reach LGBTQIA+ older adults experiencing social isolation.
5. Supporting low-technology outreach methods, including mailed printed materials and in-person information sharing where feasible, to reach older adults living alone and others who may not easily access digital communication systems.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Joint Inclusion Committee recommends that the Austin City Council direct the implementation of this recommendation should occur through coordination of existing City departments, programs, and community partnerships, and through the reprioritization of existing communication and outreach efforts, in order to minimize fiscal impact and avoid requiring new appropriations or additional staffing.

Date of Approval: March 25, 2026

Motioned By: Commissioner Parsons

Seconded By: Commissioner Thakkar

Vote: 9-0

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

Against: None

Abstain: Commissioner Laake-Stanfield

Recuse: None

Off the dais: None

Absent: Chair Afifi, Commissioners Bullard, McNary, Melendez

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