

Strategic Plan

Atlanta Commission on Women

Completed December 2018

Introduction

Established by the City of Atlanta, the Atlanta Commission on Women (ACOW) studies, addresses, and advises on issues affecting the quality of life and wellbeing of women and girls in Atlanta. Issues include:

- Educational needs of and opportunities for women;
- Social security and tax laws as they affect women;
- Women's health issues;
- Political, legal, civil, property, and social rights of women;
- Employment policies in the public and private sector and their impact on the wage earning capacity of women;
- Child care issues;
- Domestic violence and public safety;
- Employee and wage equity;
- Traditional public housing;
- Equity in recreation and sports services; and
- Aging issues.

Given the wide range of topics and the myriad needs and solutions to explore, the Commission conducted a survey of 100 key stakeholders: women in state and local government, in housing, and women with expertise in civil and human rights, aging issues, childcare, economic development, women's health, domestic violence, wage equity, employment policy, and general business or nonprofit and volunteer work. A summary of results is included as *Appendix A*

Senior Consultant Mary Hughes of the Georgia Center for Nonprofits facilitated a strategic planning retreat 8/31/18 and held three additional sessions to establish priorities based on mission, the commission's unique relationships to city council members, and its capacity. Specifically relative to capacity, the members of the commission agreed that work had to be feasible for the all-volunteer group to handle themselves and through partnerships.

The Atlanta Commission on women decided to focus its efforts on three strategic priorities. They are listed below, with long-term and short-term outcomes, as well as key initiatives, listed on subsequent pages.

More detailed plans for each priority are included as *Appendix B*.

Strategic Priorities



PRIORITY 1

Financial literacy for women

By 2020, increase the City of Atlanta's participation in financial literacy programming toward increasing financial security for women.

Long-term Outcome

- Women in the City of Atlanta are financially secure with resources available to them.

Short-term Outcomes

- Women in the City of Atlanta have access to financial literacy classes that are developed with low-income, low-literacy women in mind.
- Women in the City of Atlanta have access to financial planning services/coaching within their communities.
- Women and girls in Atlanta feel empowered by local, positive, relatable role models to achieve financial stability.

Initiatives

- Ensure City of Atlanta has a well-attended Proclamation for Money Smart Week and Financial Literacy Awareness Month (April).
- Partner with United Way to encourage programming specifically geared toward female head-of-households accessing coaching/financial planning services.
- Partner with Money Smart Week, Bank On, and Georgia Consortium for Personal Financial Literacy to assess availability of programming for low-income, low-literacy women in the City of Atlanta.
- Connect financial literacy partners to the NPU chairs.
- Connect financial literacy partners to councilmembers, specifically the staffer in charge of constituent communications.
- Connect financial literacy partners to Atlanta businesses that employ a high percentage of low- to moderate-income women.

PRIORITY 2

Financial sustainability — peer champions

By 2028, girls and women of Atlanta have easy, popular access to the narratives of peer champions who model the “success story” of financial sustainability.

Long-term Outcome

- Women in the City of Atlanta are financially secure.

Short-term Outcomes

- Girls and women of Atlanta feel empowered by local, positive, relatable role models to achieve sustainability.

Initiatives

- Create a video collection of Women in Atlanta—peer champions—who tell their own stories of their journey toward financial sustainability. The women represent every district of the city and every economic background.
- Identify organizations that provide counseling and support on financial topics to Atlanta women and girls.
- Identify local resources (e.g., universities, journalism programs, public broadcasting) who can participate in production team.
- Identify “destinations” for the video and book archive to be highly visible, such as public libraries, schools, churches, and hair salons.
- Update videos and articles yearly with new stories of financial sustainability.

PRIORITY 3

Legislative review related to women's financial security

By 2020, assure that City of Atlanta legislation, at minimum, does not negatively impact women's ability to become financially secure, and at most actively promotes their financial security and mobility.

Long-term Outcome

- Women in the City of Atlanta are financially secure with resources available to them.

Short-term Outcomes

- City of Atlanta legislation does not negatively impact women's ability to remain or become financially secure.
- City of Atlanta legislation actively promotes the financial security of women, especially those who are low-income.

Initiatives

- Set criteria for inclusion in ACOW's review process.
- Connect with city council members to ask for early drafts of legislation that fit that criteria.
- Set a process to identify, review, and provide content on relevant legislation.
- Bring in key experts from community to speak at ACOW meetings to inform review of legislation and identify areas where legislation should be proposed.
- As needed, actively propose legislation that will promote the financial security of women in the City of Atlanta, especially those who are low-income.

Atlanta Commission on Women

Survey & Interview Results Summary

8/31/18

The Atlanta Commission on Women (the “Commission”) developed an 8-question survey which was distributed to a targeted group of City of Atlanta stakeholders. This group includes members of local government, the nonprofit community, and other leaders whose work either targets or significantly impacts women.

Most individuals who responded to the survey identified themselves as

- City of Atlanta community members (47.1%)
- Community organization leaders (41.2%)
- Elected officials (23.5%)

The organizations the survey-takers are affiliated with span across the public, nonprofit and private sectors.

Survey-takers were asked to choose among pre-selected roles and identify two that they believe are most important for the Commission to undertake. The top three responses were as follows:

- Provide leadership by acting to impact legislation that will protect and support women (82.4%)
- Promote access to services and programs, and promote awareness of issues affecting women (50%)
- Conduct studies and hold public hearings on issues affecting women (41.2%)

In the following question, survey-takers were asked to identify other roles that they believe the Commission should undertake. The responses are in free-form and represent a broad selection of suggested responsibilities such as:

- Including and supporting the LGBT community of women
- Providing technical and financial assistance for women in need
- Provide mentorship
- Advocate for health issues affecting women and better maternity leave policies, among others

Next, survey-takers were asked to choose among pre-selected areas of concern and identify the top 3 that are most important. The top three responses were as follows:

- Pay equity and livable wages (67.6%)
- Affordable housing (61.8%)
- Homeless women and children (47.1%)

The last three survey questions allowed the respondents to freely identify specific initiatives they think the Commission should prioritize, additional considerations they suggest for the Commission, and other organizations or specific individuals the Commission should consult as we develop a strategic plan. These concerns span the criminal justice system, healthcare, housing and workers' equity.

Some of the responses include

- Making Atlanta the example for “equal pay” by embarking on a study to determine whether City employees are afforded pay equity
- Perinatal mental health screening
- Developing programs to eradicate generational poverty
- Working to close the Atlanta Detention Center
- Ensuring that women in our penal systems are afforded adequate care and dignity, among other considerations.

Additional suggestions include

- Bringing on an under-21 member of the Commission
- Mentoring a group of homeless women for 5-years to assist with their transition
- Being a larger presence in the legislative process to identify issues that inadvertently disadvantage women and/or help push legislation that closes disparities in our City.

The group of responders were diverse as were their suggestions for the Commission. This is merely a summary of some of the most prominent concerns raised in the survey and does not fully capture each opinion offered. Additionally, many Commissioners are still expecting responses from stakeholders. New responses may shift the priorities to a degree.

Submitted by Kandice Allen Mitchel

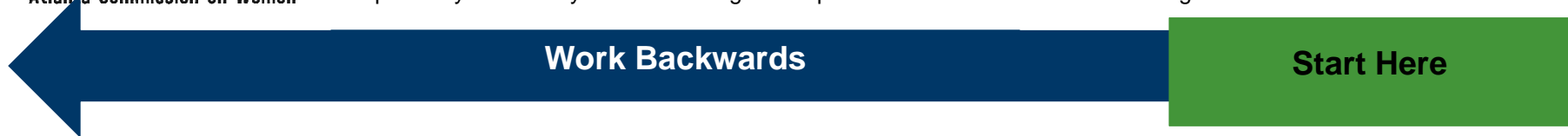


Atlanta Commission On Women

Strategic Planning 2018

Priority 1: Financial Literacy for Women

Prepared by Beth Barry & Elise Blasingame. Updated after 12/4/18 ACOW meeting



OBJECTIVE: By 2020, increase the City of Atlanta’s participation in financial literacy programming toward increasing financial security for women.	BARRIERS	REQUIRED CONDITIONS (Or Required Changes)	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOME
Initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure City of Atlanta has a well-attended Proclamation for Money Smart Week and Financial Literacy Awareness Month (April). • Partner with United Way to encourage programming specifically geared toward female-head of households accessing coaching/financial planning services. • Partner with Money Smart Week, Bank On, & Georgia Consortium for Personal Financial Literacy to assess availability of programming for low-income, low-literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has competing priorities. • Low-income women are often working multiple jobs and/or have home obligations – accessing financial workshops can be difficult. • Logistics of identifying the peer champions, particularly those who represent the most achievable levels of financial sustainability, such as women who have worked their way from poverty to better housing, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councilmembers prioritize access to financial literacy programming in their districts. • City of Atlanta shares activities during Financial Literacy Awareness Month & Money Smart Week (April) with constituents. • City of Atlanta continues to grow its support for Bank On Program in partnership with United Way. • NPUs are encouraged to have a financial literacy presentation during their April meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women in the City of Atlanta have access to financial literacy classes that are developed with low-income, low-literacy women in mind. • Women in the City of Atlanta have access to financial planning services/coaching within their communities. • Women and girls in Atlanta feel empowered by local, positive, relatable role models to achieve financial sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women in the City of Atlanta are financially secure.



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Priority 1: Financial Literacy for Women

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<p>OBJECTIVE: By 2020, increase the City of Atlanta’s participation in financial literacy programming toward increasing financial security for women.</p>	<p>BARRIERS</p>	<p>REQUIRED CONDITIONS (Or Required Changes)</p>	<p>SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES</p>	<p>LONG-TERM OUTCOME</p>
<p>women in the City of Atlanta.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect Financial Literacy Partners to the NPU Chairs. • Connect Financial Literacy Partners to Councilmembers, specifically the staffer in charge of constituent communications. • Connect Financial Literacy Partners to Atlanta businesses that employ a high percentage of low-to-moderate income women • Develop and implement Peer Champion program, a video collection of Women in Atlanta who tell their own stories of their journey towards Financial Sustainability. The 	<p>education, nutrition, and parenting success. Extraordinary stories are also important but easier to identify from other public sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More financial literacy programming is developed with low-income, low literacy women in mind. • Women are willing to share their stories of success. 		



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Priority 1: Financial Literacy for Women

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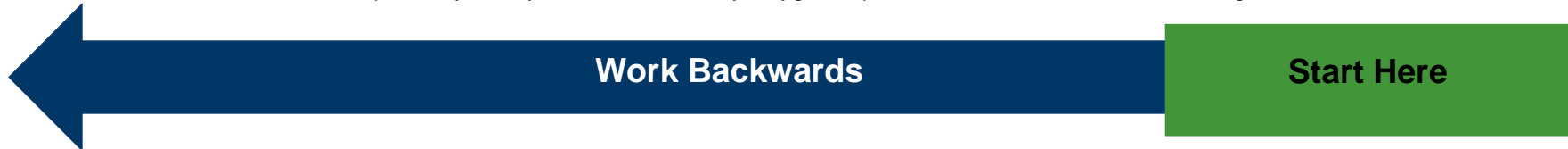
OBJECTIVE: By 2020, increase the City of Atlanta’s participation in financial literacy programming toward increasing financial security for women.	BARRIERS	REQUIRED CONDITIONS (Or Required Changes)	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOME
women represent every district of the city, and every economic background. <i>– See separate priority, #2, which fully describes this initiative of financial literacy and security.</i>				

Adapted from ActKnowledge & Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change | https://www.theoryofchange.org/pdf/Superwomen_Example.pdf

Strategic Planning 2018

Priority 2: Financial Sustainability – Peer Champions

Prepared by Maeryia Williams & Cathy Huyghe. Updated after 12/4/18 ACOW meeting



OBJECTIVE: By 2028 girls and women of Atlanta have easy, popular access to the narratives of peer champions who model the “success story” of financial sustainability.	BARRIERS	REQUIRED CONDITIONS (Or Required Changes)	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
<p>Detail of Peer Champion Initiative: Create a video collection of Women in Atlanta, Peer Champions, who tell their own stories of their journey towards Financial Sustainability. The women represent every district of the city, and every economic background.</p> <p>Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify organizations that provide counseling and support on financial topics to Atlanta women and girls. • Identify local resources (universities, journalism programs, public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generational poverty • Lack of role models of success, financially speaking, among people who “look just like me.” • Funding or partners to execute production of videos and books. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls and women at every stage of life have access to examples and models that illustrate the path of financial sustainability. • Resources available to create the archive. 	<p>Girls and women of Atlanta feel empowered by local, positive, relatable role models to achieve financial sustainability.</p>	<p>Women in the City of Atlanta are financially secure.</p>



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Priority 2: Financial Sustainability – Peer Champions

Prepared by Maeryia Williams & Cathy Huyghe. Updated after 12/4/18 ACOW meeting

<p>broadcasting) who can participate on production team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify “destinations” for the video and book archive to be highly visible, such as public libraries, schools, churches, seasonal fairs, and hair salons. • Update videos and articles yearly with new stories of financial sustainability 				
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Strategic Planning 2018 Priority 3

Legislative Review Related to Women’s Financial Security

Prepared by Elise Blasingame, Anissa Ferrell, & Carrie Salone. Updated after 12/4/18 ACOW meeting



<p>OBJECTIVE: By 2020, assure that City of Atlanta legislation at minimum does not negatively impact women’s ability to become financially secure, and at most actively promotes their financial security and mobility.</p>	<p>BARRIERS</p>	<p>REQUIRED CONDITIONS (Or Required Changes)</p>	<p>SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES</p>	<p>LONG-TERM OUTCOME</p>
<p>Initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set criteria for inclusion in ACOW’s review process. • Connect with Councilmembers to ask for early drafts of legislation that fit that criteria. • Set a process to identify, review and provide content on relevant legislation. • Bring in key experts from community to speak at ACOW meetings to inform review of legislation and identify areas where legislation should be proposed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has competing priorities. • Time required to search for relevant legislation. • Time required to analyze said legislation. • Time required to provide comment. • Availability of ACOW Commissioners to provide testimony during a hearing or prior to a vote. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councilmembers consider the impact of legislation on women’s financial security and mobility. • ACOW is able to consistently review City of Atlanta legislation relevant to the financial security of women and provide comment. • Pending City of Atlanta legislation has to be proactively published so that ACOW may access for review prior to any hearing or vote. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Atlanta Legislation does not negatively impact women’s ability to remain or become financially secure. • City of Atlanta legislation actively promotes the financial security of women, especially those who are low-income. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women in the City of Atlanta are financially secure with resources available to them.



Strategic Planning 2018 Priority 3

Legislative Review Related to Women's Financial Security

Prepared by Elise Blasingame, Anissa Ferrell, & Carrie Salone. Updated after 12/4/18 ACOW meeting

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