



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Early Childhood Council

Recommendation Number: 20170510-6cii- CodeNEXT

WHEREAS, The Early Childhood Council of the City of Austin is charged with making recommendations to the City Council that support optimal development of young children and their families, continued development of a system of high-quality early care and education, and cooperative arrangements to support quality early care and education; and

WHEREAS, There is an increasing, critical shortage of affordable, family-friendly housing in Central Austin; and

WHEREAS, There is also a critical shortage of high-quality early childcare and learning centers in Central Austin; and

WHEREAS, A shortage of family-friendly housing, an increase in cost-of-living, and a scarcity of family-friendly amenities such as childcare facilities and stimulating, healthy, educational destinations are driving families out of Central Austin to surrounding suburbs and exurbs; and

WHEREAS, The Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan clearly itemizes and prioritizes a host of initiatives intended to improve quality of life for families with young children, including: "Improve access to quality child care services near homes and workplaces;" and "Increase dense, compact family-friendly housing in the urban core by creating standards and guidelines that encourage private interests to create more family-friendly development;" and

WHEREAS, The Austin Early Childhood Council has made recommendations to the Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Action Plan regarding affordable housing and child care availability as well as alignment with the School Readiness Action Plan (ECC Recommendation 20160608-5bi); and

WHEREAS, CodeNEXT is intended to codify the vision outlined in the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan, creating incentives to address gaps that exist between current conditions and the ideals outlined in Austin's Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, There is very little evidence in current drafts of CodeNEXT that the ideals outlined in the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan (subsection "Children, Families, and Educational Policies, p. 148) have been elevated, addressed or supported in any way; and

WHEREAS, Nearly all of the affordable housing that has been created recently or is incentivized through CodeNEXT is not family-friendly, being predominantly 1- or 2- bedroom apartments in dense development concentrated along high-volume urban transportation corridors.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: The Early Childhood Council recommends that the CodeNEXT Advisory Group and Opticos Design revisit the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan — specifically subsection “Children, Families, and Educational Policies, p. 148 — and itemize the ways that the family-friendly ideals outlined in that plan have been codified in CodeNEXT.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: The CodeNEXT plan incentive construction of family-friendly units (for example, 3- and 4- bedroom units with proximity to child care and proximity to transportation) and construction of child care facilities that would serve families from a range of incomes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: The Early Childhood Council will continue to provide input throughout the process of finalizing CodeNEXT.

Date of Approval: May 10, 2017

Record of the vote: Motioned by Member Son and Seconded by Member Sanchez; Unanimous on an 11-0-0 vote

Vote: For: Members Alvarez, Burson-Polston, Elsner, Harrison, Huston, Overton, Porter, Sanchez, Semple, Son, and Wren

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Member Paver

Attest: _____

