

Commission Recommendation
Economic Prosperity Commission
Recommendation Number: 20170621-A.C
Recommendation Regarding Cooperative Housing

WHEREAS the mission of the Economic Prosperity Commission is to advise Austin City Council on construction and job creation; whereas housing for an economically diverse workforce is essential to economic prosperity; and whereas housing is the largest portion of most households' expenses;

WHEREAS the City of Austin has committed to the construction of 135,000 new housing units in the next 10 years to alleviate its affordable housing crisis;

WHEREAS only twenty units of housing are affordable for every 100 households that are considered extremely low income in Austin according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition;

WHEREAS the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan directs the City of Austin to "Investigate the feasibility of creating a program of...cooperative, affordable and permanent supportive housing"; and the Strategic Housing Blueprint recommends that the City "relax regulations on housing cooperatives";

WHEREAS current cooperative housing providers offer housing options that meet the needs of their tenants at the price point determined by their membership which is typically at 50-70% of prevailing market rates; and existing cooperative housing is available in Austin that is accessible to those earning 30% or less of area median family income rates;

WHEREAS The City of Austin requires more information to understand how cooperatives fit into the City's existing affordable housing ecosystem; as well as the identification of contemporary best practices for supporting cooperative housing for affordable housing goals in comparable American and international cities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

The Economic Prosperity Commission recommends that the City of Austin allocate up to \$80,000 within the next fiscal year to commission a report by an independent consultant to provide strategic development planning services and recommendations regarding cooperative housing.

This report should identify how the City of Austin could best support cooperative housing initiatives; existing programs that cooperatives might partake in or interact with; and emerging nationwide best practices in comparable cities for supporting cooperative housing.

Consultants will be recruited via a Request for Proposals outlining the City's goals and information needs.

The scope of this Request For Proposals should include but not be limited to:

- regulatory impact;
- fee and process waivers;
- utilization of existing funds;
- opportunities for financing institutions to support cooperative housing models;
- incentives for housing industry stakeholders to incorporate cooperative models;
- exploration of City-driven investment tools such as seed money, revolving loan funds, incubators, and other innovative financial models;
- potential City staff or contracted staff support;
- preservation of existing affordable housing;
- Fair Housing compliance; and
- analysis of economic feasibility, including return on investment in comparison to existing affordable housing models.

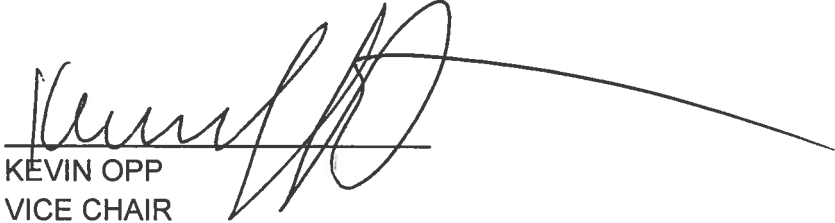
RECOMMENDATION APPROVED:

FOR: 8

AGAINST: 0

ABSTAINED: 0

ABSENT: 2



KEVIN OPP
VICE CHAIR