



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Early Childhood Council

Recommendation Number: 20200108-6a- Land Development Code Revision

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 affordable and high-quality early child care and learning centers in 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 (subsection "Children, Families, and Educational Policies," p.148), including to: "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 revised Land Development Code 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, the City Council's "Direction in Response to City Manager's March 15, 2019 Memo re: Land Development Code Revision Policy Guidance" included an affordable housing directive requiring the inclusion of code provisions that ensure an increase in "the supply of multi-bedroom housing for families with children;"

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: that the Early Childhood Council supports the provisions for child care facilities as adopted by Council at first ordinance reading which make it easier for child care facilities to locate and open through zoning and process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that the Early Childhood Council recommends that the Austin City Council consider adding or strengthening provisions for "family-friendly housing" in the 2020 Land Development Code revision that supports the development of affordable housing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that "family-friendly housing" be defined as "units with three or more bedrooms with a minimum of 1000 square feet with proximity to child care and transportation;" and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that the above-mentioned provision for "family-friendly housing" include a requirement that "family-friendly units" serve families from a range of incomes.

Date of Approval: January 8, 2020

Record of the vote: Unanimous on a 7-0 vote

Attest: _____

Rachel Farley