



COMMISSION ON SENIORS RECOMMENDATION 20210326-04Aiii
FY 2022 Budget Recommendations
Education and Outreach on Senior Homestead Tax Exemption

Date: March 26, 2021

Subject: FY2022 Budget Recommendations

Motioned By: Varteressian

Seconded By: Nicola

Recommendation

The Commission on Seniors recommends the City Manager designate at least \$20,000 for door to door and community-based education and outreach on the Senior Homestead Tax Exemption. These funds should be allocated from any funds designated for anti-displacement efforts or the most appropriate funding source.

Rationale:

In 2018 the Commission on Seniors adopted Recommendation Number: 20181114- 4B: Recommendation on Senior Property Tax Assistance, calling for education and outreach to older adults on the Senior Homestead Tax Exemption. Community comments regarding anti-displacement identified high property taxes as a barrier to affordability for older adults living in gentrifying parts of Austin. Further, the Commission heard from older adults that they were unaware of, or needed assistance to, apply for the exemptions they were entitled to.

The Council passed Resolution 20190822-070 endorsing the Commission on Seniors resolution. The Council receives periodic updates on implementation of the resolution.

<http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/pio/document.cfm?id=354893>

A relatively new state law makes older adults who have inherited their homes with other relatives eligible for a 100% exemption by filing an updated application with the appraisal district. See :

https://law.utexas.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2020/08/2020-12-ECDC-heirproperty_2pg.pdf

The Commission on Seniors recommends that the next step to implement this resolution is in-person, community-based interaction with households identified as potential beneficiaries of the Senior Homestead Tax Exemption. This could occur with door to door visits, and/or community-based meetings. Both options should be possible in coming months as more older adults receive the COVID vaccine. While there have been difficulties in identifying specific households, the neighborhoods at risk of gentrification are well-known. A contract or grant with a community-based organization would be used to hold community events and, if appropriate, go door to door, to assist older adults in completing the required paperwork to receive these exemptions and potentially save thousands of dollars on their property taxes.

Vote

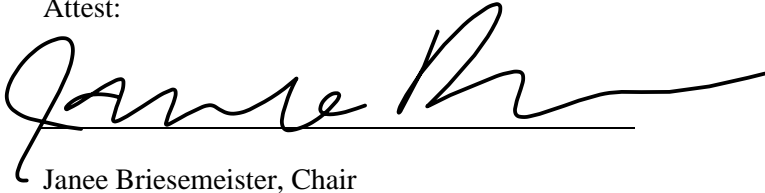
For: Briesemeister, Varteressian, Angel, Bordie, Hauser, Lugo, Nicola, Temperley, Van Sickle, Spain

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Cagle, Kareithi, Garcia-Pittman, Jackson

Attest:



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janee Briesemeister", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Janee Briesemeister, Chair