



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Early Childhood Council

20221109-009: Recommendations for Equitable Transit-Oriented Development Policy Plan

WHEREAS, access to high quality child care is a priority for the City of Austin strategic outcomes in economic mobility and affordability; and

WHEREAS, child care is a family's largest expense after housing yet child care programs operate on profit margins of less than 1%. Therefore, for child care businesses increased rents or facilities are cost-prohibitive to expansion or capacity building within Austin; and

WHEREAS, child care programs are reporting unprecedented challenges with recruiting and retaining staff due to the inability of staff making \$12-\$13 per hour to live and work in Austin. Housing and transportation costs are significant barriers; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 Pandemic devastated the child care sector resulting in the loss of 20% of our existing child care capacity in Austin/Travis County while the factors noted above make it difficult for child care programs to remain in operation or to expand to address needs of families in areas at risk of displacement; and

WHEREAS, Black and Hispanic/Latinx families frequently prefer home-based child care programs, and home-based child care programs are more likely to accommodate needs for non-traditional hour care for individuals working in low-wage jobs. Home-based child care programs also tend to serve a high percentage of the community's infants and toddlers. ATX lost 20% of its child care supply during the COVID-19 pandemic, and 72% of closures were licensed/registered child care homes; and

WHEREAS, research shows that the co-location of affordable, high-quality childcare and affordable housing – all within walking distance to public transportation – increases parents' participation in continuing education, workforce development programs, and the workforce. For most families but especially for lower-income families, parents seek child care within three miles of their home. Situating quality child care facilities within new TOD's will significantly benefit those families.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Early Childhood Council encourages the Austin City Council to incorporate the following recommendations to the Equitable Transit-Oriented Development Policy Plan:

- In affordable housing development, consider capacity for including affordable, high-quality child care
- Prioritize home-/family-based child care providers in homeowner and tenant support services
- Include child care staff for eligibility/priority in the universal mobility pilot program
- Incorporate access to child care as a community benefit on the equity score card
- Consider adding child care facilities in the development of station areas

Note: Additional details on these recommendations have also been submitted to the Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD) Team at the Housing and Planning Department, to inform the ETOD Policy Plan.

Date of approval: November 9, 2022

Record of the vote: Unanimous on a 9-0 vote

Attest:

