



## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION 20230607-007

Date: 06/07/2023

Subject: Requesting an Environmental Study on the environmental impact of rescinding work-from-home telework and having city employees commute to a city-owned office

Motioned By: Harris Qureshi

Seconded By: TBD

**WHEREAS**, the Environmental Commission recognizes that the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan aims to decrease emissions of greenhouse gases by encouraging telework and work-from-home initiatives,

**AND WHEREAS**, the Environmental Commission recognizes that the City of Austin's vision for net zero emissions by 2040 prioritizes greenhouse gas emission reduction and calls for 50% of trips to be made by using public transit, biking, walking, carpooling, or avoided altogether by working from home...

**AND WHEREAS**, the Environmental Commission recognizes that the Climate Equity Plan states that climate impacts are not felt equally across all communities and that the City of Austin's Interim City Manager's recent orders to revoke work-from-home will primarily impact employees who may not be able to afford transportation costs, child care, and other expenses related to commuting while inflation and affordability issues continue to be of concern when recruiting and retaining city staff...

**AND WHEREAS**, the Environmental Commission recognizes that the Interim City Manager's recent orders are partially meant to stimulate economic activity in the City of Austin near its currently under-utilized commercial spaces and that allowing local startups and creative classes to take advantage of the under-utilized city office space as incubators and accelerators for their businesses may provide more long-term economic benefits to the City of Austin than having cranky public workers and city staff drive in to an office for their 9-5,

**THEREFORE**, the Environmental Commission recommends that Austin City Council direct the Interim City Manager to conduct a comprehensive and holistic study on the environmental impact of rescinding work-from-home telework and having employees commute to a city-owned office and to explore how other options on what to do with the under-utilized commercial office spaces owned by the city can reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### Vote:

For:

Against:

Abstain:

Absent:

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Kevin Ramberg, Environmental Commission Chair