



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Joint Inclusion Committee

Recommendation Number: (20240327-015): Emergency Housing Assistance

WHEREAS, the Joint Inclusion Committee (“JIC”) of the City of Austin (“City”) serves as an advisory body that advocates for and inspires the City Council (“Council”) and City Manager on issues pertaining to equity, diversity, and inclusion to promote close cooperation between Council, City Management, City boards, commissions, committees, and task forces, and individuals, institutions, and agencies to increase and sustain equity, diversity, and inclusion in the city; and

WHEREAS, Austin continues to face a housing affordability crisis particularly impacting renters that have seen multiple years of rental increases; and

WHEREAS, the LGBTQ Quality of Life Study noted that the increased cost of rental housing was the highest-ranked domain of priority for participants in the town hall meetings; and

WHEREAS, in the referenced Study, 10% of respondents indicated they had been homeless in the last 5 years, 65% of respondents spent 30% or more of their income on housing while 9% spent more than half of their income; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin provided funding for a program entitled “I Belong in Austin” to provide emergency assistance for renters in danger of losing their housing including short-term rental assistance as well as moving and storage expenses to lessen the impact of forced relocation; and

WHEREAS, “I Belong in Austin” had over 800 people on the waiting list when the program began this year, and that waiting list quickly grew to 4,000 before being capped at that number indicating the continuing need for this assistance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the LGBTQ Quality of Life Commission recommends that the Austin City Council approve continued funding in the next fiscal year based on an evaluation of the program’s effectiveness in preventing homelessness for diverse clients to mitigate the affordability crisis and accomplish strategic goals related to housing stabilization, economic opportunity, and affordability; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Joint Inclusion Committee recommends that the Austin City Council directs \$300K annual funding for culturally appropriate free or low-cost LGBTQIA+ affirming mental healthcare, and/or peer support services. Additionally, we recommend the LGBTQ Quality of Life Advisory Commission be included in drafting the scope of work for the request for proposal process.

Date of Approval: March 27, 2024

Record of the vote: 8-0, Commissioners Vargas and Gordon (ECC), Commissioners Davis and Aslam (Human Rights) absent

Attest: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Gordon", written over a horizontal line.

Vice- Chair