

Late Backup

ACTION PLAN PUBLIC HEARING
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
6/23/17

My name is Stuart Hersh, and like most in Austin, I rent.

I attended my first planning hearing about use of Community Development Block Grant funds in 1979 before what used to be a joint subcommittee meeting of the Community Development Commission and the Planning Commission.

I am pleased to report that the Action Plan you are reviewing tonight is the most responsive, competent, lucid and balanced recommendation for addressing a variety of needs in Austin that I have seen in more than 30 years of involvement. The staff at Neighborhood Housing and Community Development should receive the highest praise for this achievement. Some may suggest revisiting this delicate funding balance at the end of the process. I ask that you not modify the staff recommendations on allocation of federal funds at nearly the end of the public comment. So many who provided public input at the Needs Assessment stage have not appeared here tonight because they too agree that staff has struck a remarkable balance under trying circumstances.

Like any human work product there are always opportunities for improvement. I have provided you the Housing Trust Fund Task Force recommendation that the Community Development Commission approved unanimously last week. Council adoption of these recommendations could increase local investment through the Housing Trust Fund to \$1,000,000 for the next fiscal year and years to come.

S.M.A.R.T. Housing production is predicted to still be below 75% of homeownership and rental production in 2007-2008. Some of this is the market, and some of this is lack of action on possible policy changes in the University Neighborhood Overlay and other areas that could increase S.M.A.R.T. Housing west of IH 35 and create fee-in-lieu for not-for-profits to create long-term affordability in West Campus. These are other topics for another day.

Finally, I can't find how much Mueller homeownership and rental is scheduled for completion in the next fiscal year. We need to see those projections.

Thanks to the City staffers who listened to all of the comments and tried to bring balance in an environment of shrinking federal resources.

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