

## Recommendation Number \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup>

### Online Access of ECAD Results

**Targeted Underserved Group:** All Renters

**Recommendation:** Make the results of ECAD audits and disclosure forms for multi-family properties available on the city's website.

**Time Schedule:** Implementation in 2016

**Budget Impact:** The budget impact is unknown at this time. It is anticipated that the posting of documents on a website should be achievable at a reasonable cost and may therefore be possible within the current ECAD budget allocation.

**Community Need:** The ECAD ordinance was adopted in 2008 and amended in 2011. In 2013, 54.9%<sup>2</sup> of all households in Austin were renters. The survey further shows that 32.8% of renter households have annual income under \$25,000 and another 31.1% have income between \$25,000 and \$49,999. Thus, 63.9% of renter households have income under \$50,000 per year.<sup>3</sup> Median household income for renters is \$37,538 compared to \$85,246 for homeowners. As utilities become a more significant part of the affordable housing equation ECAD can provide important guidance to consumers choosing a different apartment to rent. The problem is that the average consumer is unaware of ECAD and the information it provides. At the July 17, 2015 Austin Energy Affordable Energy Summit, and informal poll taken by hand indicated that 4 attendees knew about the program.

**Program Description:** Under the city's Energy Conservation Audit Disclosure (ECAD) ordinance, apartments with 5 or more units were required to have an energy audit conducted by June 1, 2011. The results are to be made available in three ways. 1) the results must be prominently displayed in facility common areas where public and legal notices are regularly posted, 2) copies of the audit must be available for review at the leasing or manager's office, and 3) the standardized audit disclosure form must be provided to a prospective tenant prior to the tenant's signing of a lease application or if no application is required prior to the signing of a lease.

Searching the Internet for information about rental properties is a common practice. Having the ECAD documents posted on the city's website would give consumers the ability to access and compare the documents early in the process of searching for housing.

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<sup>1</sup> Number will be assigned in final report.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder , S2503 FINANCIAL CHARACTERISTICS, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*