Austin's Fair Housing Initiative:
Anti-Displacement & Economic Inclusion

More Mixed Income Developments

As working-poor communities face gentrification, we have a responsibility to work to ensure that new developments will include working class communities rather than exclude them. We should initiate inclusionary zoning where state law allows and consider appropriate affordable housing linkage fees, especially for commercial developments.

- Direct the City Manager to meet with stakeholders and provide a plan to initiate inclusionary zoning in Homestead Preservation Districts;
- Direct the City Manager to conduct a comprehensive local real estate market analysis in order to reevaluate and provide recommendations to enhance affordable housing production by the City's existing SMART Housing policy and any changes to the City's density bonus programs in CodeNEXT;
- Direct the City Manager to initiate a code amendment to require non-discrimination based on source of income as part of our voluntary SMART Housing and Density Bonus programs.

Smaller Housing in High-Opportunity Areas

Our most desirable and highest-opportunity neighborhoods are becoming increasingly more exclusive and expensive. We should change or eliminate rules in our land development code that force homeowners and renters to pay for large pieces of land and large homes to live in certain neighborhoods. We should preserve affordable units and create new opportunities for people at all income levels in different parts of town by adding new housing supply and housing types.

- Direct the City Manager to prioritize opportunities for smaller housing and smaller lot sizes in "high opportunity" areas in Code NEXT, and if necessary present potential amendments to the growth concept map if Fair Housing principles indicate that the Council should consider any such amendments;
- Direct the City Manager to present options to the City Council to create more diverse housing opportunities in areas where deed-restrictions or other private covenants may have a disparate impact on low-to-moderate income communities or communities of color, such as deed restrictions that exclude renters or those who cannot pay for large pieces of property.

Larger Public Investment

We should commit more funding towards subsidizing affordable housing. In December, the Council committed more than $50 million of anticipated property taxes to the City's Housing Trust Fund which currently has under $2 million in it. We should dedicate new property tax revenue from developments on former state-owned or county-owned lands to below-market housing, and repurpose our vacant and under-utilized city land for affordable housing. We also should consider amending our fees to have more developments support the creation of affordable housing.

- Direct the City Manager to include new property taxes generated from former county-owned and state-owned land as funding for the City's Housing Trust Fund in order to ensure the City's Strategic Housing Plan and affordable housing goals are funded and viable;
- Direct the City Manager to provide a recommendation on how to redevelop any city-owned land, including properties with existing facilities, for affordable housing;
- Direct the City Manager to research and provide recommendations regarding the possible introduction of affordable housing fees for new developments, commercial developments in particular, and conduct any necessary nexus study to do so.

'Stay in Place'

Many homeowners are faced with the choice of either having to sell their home or spend an untenable portion of their income on property taxes. We can help neighbors stay in place as property values rise by giving them the tools to downsize in place by renting parts of their property.

- Direct the City Manager to initiate a process to consider tools including, but not limited to, code amendments and funding programs that would provide lower-income homeowners the option to rent or sell more portions of their property in order to maintain ownership of parts or all of their property as values rise.