



COMMISSION ON SENIORS RECOMMENDATION
20220309-04Ciii
MAINTAIN FUNDING FOR EDUCATION AND OUTREACH ON SENIOR
HOMESTEAD TAX EXEMPTION
Strategic Direction: Affordability and Government That Works

Date: March 9, 2022

Subject: FY2023 Budget Recommendations

Motioned By: Van Sickle

Seconded By: Spain

Recommendation

The Commission on Seniors recommends the City Manager continue to designate at least \$20,000 for door to door and other community-based education and outreach on the Senior Homestead Tax Exemption.

Rationale:

In 2018 the Commission on Seniors adopted Recommendation Number: 20181114- 4B: Recommendation on Senior Property Tax Assistance, calling for education and outreach to older adults on the Senior Homestead Tax Exemption. Community comments identified high property taxes as a barrier to affordability for older adults living in gentrifying parts of Austin. Further, the Commission heard from older adults that they were unaware of the exemptions they were entitled to and/or needed assistance to apply.

The Council passed Resolution 20190822-070 endorsing the Commission on Seniors resolution. The Council receives periodic updates on implementation of the resolution.

<http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/pio/document.cfm?id=354893>

A relatively new state law makes older adults who have inherited their homes with other relatives eligible for a 100% exemption by filing an updated application with the appraisal district. See:

https://law.utexas.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2020/08/2020-12-ECDC-heirproperty_2pg.pdf

The FY2022 budget includes \$20,000 for this initiative in response to the Commission on Seniors request. The Commission on Seniors recommended in-person, community-based interaction with households identified as potential beneficiaries of the Senior Homestead Tax Exemption. This could include community events and, if appropriate, going door-to-door, to assist older adults in completing the required paperwork to receive these exemptions and potentially save thousands of dollars on their property taxes.

However, due to the pandemic new strategies are being developed. We are hopeful that in-person outreach will be viable in the next fiscal year. Ensuring older adults receive all the tax exemptions they are due is a low-cost way to improve affordability and reduce displacement.

Vote

For: Briesemeister, Varteressian, Angel, Bauman, Bordie, De Maria Nicola, Garcia-Pittman, Kareithi, Lopez-Guerrero, Lugo, Spain, Temperley, Van Sickle

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Cagle

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Janee Briesemeister", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Janee Briesemeister, Chair