

earlymattersgreateraustin

July 15, 2024

Dear Mayor Watson and Austin City Council Members,

On behalf of Early Matters Greater Austin - a coalition of business leaders supporting increased access to affordable, quality child care - we support Item 89 on the July 18, 2024, City Council Agenda. Item 89 directs the City Manager to initiate the process to eliminate the Street Impact Fee (SIF) for child care facilities by amending Ordinance No. 20201210-061.

Thank you to Council Members Alison Alter, Ryan Alter, Vanessa Fuentes, and José Velasquez for co-sponsoring Item 89 and to the Impact Fee Advisory Committee for voting unanimously in support of Council amending the SIF payments to child care facilities to \$0.

The majority of center-based child care providers in Austin are small business owners. The money they will save if they are exempt from the SIF will be reinvested back into their business, strengthening their programs and their workforce - thus benefiting the children they enroll.

We know that fees associated with expansion projects are so burdensome for the child care sector that many providers decide not to go through with expansion projects. With over 5,000 children on a two-year waitlist for a subsidized child care slot in Travis County, Austin can't afford to pass up the opportunity to create new seats.

We are grateful for a Mayor and City Council that understands child care is essential to our economic infrastructure, and for recognizing there is a public benefit and economic benefit to incentivizing development of child care facilities in all areas of the City.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jeanette Ward, Chair
Early Matters Greater Austin