July 12, 2024

Dear Mayor Watson and Austin City Council Members,

On behalf of the Austin/Travis County Success By 6 Coalition, 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.

We have heard from child care center owners that the SIF is burdensome and can impact their decision to expand their small business. Currently, the SIF for projects between 1,000 to under 5,000 square feet, the collection rate is $608 per vehicle. For one child care provider that accumulated to $11,000 – the cost almost upended their expansion project.

Austin can't afford to lose more child care seats – or pass up the opportunity to create new seats - especially since demand outweighs supply in Travis County with over 5,000 children on a two-year waitlist for a subsidized seat.

We are grateful to live in a City that recognizes access to quality, equitable child care is essential for a thriving community. We are also grateful to have a City Council that seeks creative solutions to support the essential child care sector in Austin. Every bit helps when you are operating on razor thin margins. Thank you for your consideration on passing Item 89 and providing child care providers looking to expand their operations with some reprieve from burdensome fees.

Sincerely,

Barbara Grant Boneta, Director
Austin/Travis County Success By Six Coalition

Success by 6 is a coalition of child and family advocates, providers, parents, policymakers, civic leaders, and early childhood experts working together to improve early childhood outcomes that provide a foundation for long-term educational and personal success.