



[Commission Name]

ACTION CALENDAR

October 16, 2018

(Continued from May 29, 2018)

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Housing Advisory Commission

Submitted by: Igor Tregub, Chairperson, Housing Advisory Commission

Subject: Home Share Pilot Program Recommendation

RECOMMENDATION

Direct the City Manager to issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to establish a two-year Home Share Pilot Program that could be expanded into a permanent housing program in the City of Berkeley.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

At this time, the HAC does not know exactly what a program would cost in Berkeley. There are local examples of current programs, for example, in Fremont, the budget is \$75,000. This budget covers the costs of renting out office space and paying staff salaries. Staff would be responsible for conducting interviews, background checks, house screening, as well as follow-up support. Berkeley's RFQ process will be helpful in identifying costs. There is also the possibility of the nonprofit independently funding Home Share services through grant resources, with the City contributing just a portion of the budget, including the donation of office space.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The City of Berkeley is home to a large number of seniors and to a young adult population. According to the 2015-2023 Housing Element, of the 112,580 residents counted by the 2010 Census, 27% were between the ages of 18 and 24, and 23% of the population was over 55 years of age. Students are having a difficult time finding affordable housing while seniors, living on fixed incomes, still need to cover increased costs of utilities for all residents, and continuing costs of property taxes, insurance, and maintenance for homeowners. Home Sharing is a living arrangement in which two or more unrelated people share a house or an apartment. A Home Share Program will benefit both younger and older individuals and households.

The HAC will assist the City in developing an RFQ for this proposed program.

BACKGROUND

The Housing Advisory Commission took the following action at its March 1, 2018 meeting:

Action: M/S/C (Wright/Amezcuca) to adopt the proposed recommendations with amendments as dictated by the Commission.

Vote: Ayes: Amezcua, Johnson, Kesarwani, Owens, Wolfe, and Wright. Noes: Lord. Abstain: None. Absent: Lewis (excused), Tregub (excused).

Home Sharing programs connect homeowners or renters with extra rooms who need assistance to home seekers in need of housing.

To launch a city-sponsored Home Sharing program, it is advantageous to partner with a local nonprofit organization that can help with the vetting and screening process of interested parties. It is essential to have city-backing in order to increase community member trust in the program, and to have a funding model that is not based on charging commissions to home providers or home seekers.

Although there are no age guidelines about who can participate in the Home Share program as a home provider or seeker, most matches are between senior home providers and younger lodgers. In some of these arrangements, reduced rent is given in exchange for the home seeker helping with chores or other household needs. These arrangements may prove advantageous for those who enjoy intergenerational living.

EXAMPLES OF HOME SHARE PROGRAMS

The City of Fremont has officially sponsored a home share program (<https://www.fremont.gov/2375/Home-Sharing-Program>), partnering with the nonprofit organization, HIP Housing (Human Investment Project Housing). Together, they are matching home seekers who currently live, work, or go to school in Fremont, with homeowners or renters with an extra room. (<http://hiphousing.org/programs/home-sharing-program/>).

HIP screens home seekers and home providers at an interview, checking references and income verification. HIP also provides this home matching service in San Mateo County. HIP has operated its San Mateo program for over 30 years. Their program serves as the model for programs in other cities.

In San Francisco, the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development has partnered with Northern California Presbyterian Homes & Service and Episcopal Senior Communities (ESC), to provide a Home Match program. (<http://www.homematchsf.org/>) To take advantage of this free program, home seekers must be 18 years of old or older, earn no more than 90% of the Area Median Income, and undergo a thorough background check. To participate as a home provider, the homeowner must provide proof of home ownership and residence, give a tour of the property during the interview process, and undergo a thorough background check. Both parties must describe their

ideal home arrangement, personal characteristics, meet, and decide if they are a good match to live together. Ninety percent of the San Francisco home share program is funded by the County, and is staffed by a program director and outreach manager.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Recommendations regarding the implementation of a Home Share Pilot Program do not impact the environment directly.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

We need to think of creative ways to help Berkeley residents afford housing and “age in place.” This program would be available both to senior homeowners and senior renters.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) developments are another way to help seniors remain in their housing. However, not all housing is conducive to adding ADUs, and the creation of an ADU requires investment of funds that seniors may not have.

CITY MANAGER

See companion report.

CONTACT PERSON

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