



Legislation Text

File #: 2266-2023, Version: 1

This legislation authorizes the Director of the Department of Technology (DoT) to enter into a non-profit services contract in an amount up to \$610,000.00 with Smart Columbus LLC. Smart Columbus LLC is the non-profit organization created to continue the efforts of the Smart Columbus US Department of Transportation Grant.

This contract is in addition to, and provides additional funds, to continue work authorized by ordinances 3301-2021, 0670-2022 and 2657-2022. The first two ordinances authorized contracts between the Development Director and Smart Columbus. The third contract authorized a contract between the Director of the Department of Technology and Smart Columbus.

The Department of Technology, in alignment with the Franklin County Digital Equity Coalition, are partnering with Smart Columbus to establish a program management office to advance the digital equity action agenda with a diverse set of stakeholders and partners. Funds authorized by this legislation will be used to:

- facilitate and administer the Digital Equity Coalition; and
- build the digital equity team dedicated to this work; and
- execute pilot programs in alignment with the Digital Equity Action Agenda; and
- build momentum around the coalition, awareness among community organizations and residents; and
- implement brand strategy.

Specific activities to be undertaken to achieve the above noted goals are:

- Community Management and Coalition Building, to include-
 - o General coordination meetings, regular touch bases with individual organizations, and in person “convenings” that activate Digital Equity Coalition members in alignment with the Action Agenda.
 - o Expansion of coalition membership and community awareness of the digital divide.
 - o Implementation of resident facing campaigns and messaging that is shared and utilized across community organizations and institutions.
 - o Presentations for community groups to build support for the action agenda and produce deliverables that answer resident and community leader questions and concerns.
 - o Human-centered research to evaluate pilot performance and evolve design of new programs.
- Pilot Scoping & Execution, with overall program management support, to facilitate partner collaboration, engage experts, and complete associate deliverables to-
 - o Run a digital skills pilot to test the efficacy and impact of courses aligned to the Learning Framework and deployed in a decentralized model that can scale across the region; distribute devices to participants upon completion.
 - o Create and evaluate the effectiveness of a unique donation, refurbishment, and distribution process that will meet our community region’s need for high quality, low-cost digital devices.

This ordinance also authorizes the appropriation of \$610,000.00 to the Department of Technology, Information Services

Division, from the unappropriated cash balance of the Information Services Operating Fund. Finally, this ordinance authorizes the expenditure of \$610,000.00 from the Department of Technology, Information Services Operating Fund.

The services included in this agreement cannot be provided by existing city employees because these services are beyond the City's current staffing capacity to provide.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds are budgeted and available in the above-stated Operating Fund, pending the above-described appropriation of \$610,000.00.

To appropriate \$610,000.00 to the Department of Technology, Information Services Division, from the unappropriated cash balance of the Information Services Operating Fund; to authorize the Director of the Department of Technology to enter into a non-profit services contract with Smart Columbus LLC in an amount up to \$610,000.00 to support the ongoing efforts and work of the Smart Columbus organization; and to authorize the expenditure of \$610,000.00 from the Information Services Operating Fund. (\$610,000.00)

WHEREAS, Smart Columbus LLC, a non-profit organization, was created following award of a grant by the US Department of Transportation; and

WHEREAS, the city's Department of Technology desires to enter into contract with Smart Columbus, LLC to continue to support plans and activities related to the City's broadband and digital equity initiatives with Smart Columbus and also to study and plan further efforts to scale solutions that close the digital divide in the city; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the Director to enter into contract with Smart Columbus LLC so that Smart Columbus LLC can continue to find ways to provide affordable and quality internet to opportunity neighborhoods in the city without delay, for the preservation of the public health, peace, property and safety; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That the sum of \$610,000.00 be and is hereby appropriated to the Department of Technology, Information Services Operating Fund from the unappropriated cash balance of the Information Services Operating Fund for the purpose stated in this ordinance and as provided in the attachment to this ordinance (see 2266-2023EXP).

SECTION 2. That the Director of the Department of Technology is hereby authorized to enter into a non-profit services agreement with Smart Columbus, LLC to provide services to support plans and activities related to the City's broadband and digital equity initiatives with Smart Columbus and also to study and plan further efforts to scale solutions that close the digital divide in the city at a cost of up to \$610,000.00

SECTION 3. That the expenditure of \$610,000.00, or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized as shown in the attachment to this ordinance. (see 2266-2023EXP)

SECTION 4. That this contract is awarded in accordance with the relevant provisions of City Code Chapter 329 relating to not-for-profit service contracts.

SECTION 5. That the City Auditor is authorized to make any accounting changes to revise the funding source for all contracts or contract modifications associated with this ordinance.

SECTION 6. That the funds necessary to carry out the purpose of this ordinance are hereby deemed appropriated, and the City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

SECTION 7. That this ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.