



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 1577-2023, **Version:** 1

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**BACKGROUND:** This legislation authorizes the Director of the Department of Development to execute a subrecipient agreement with Greenwood 360 LLC in an amount up to \$1,750,000.00 of U.S. Department of Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance 2 (ERA 2) funds to act as the Application Manager for recipients as part of the department's ERA 2 Investment Strategy, to authorize an agreement start date of June 1, 2023, and to waive the competitive bidding requirements in Columbus City Code Chapter 329.

Ordinance 2275-2021 authorizes the City of Columbus to accept and appropriate up to \$90,537,806.23 of federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA 2) program funds, as passed by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.

The City has disbursed approximately \$23 million of the \$90.5 million of ERA 2 funds received from the U.S. Department of Treasury as a result of the COVID-19 emergency. This is in addition to the \$38.3 million of ERA 1 funds disbursed. The remaining \$67.5 million of ERA 2 funds will be disbursed under two programs: Investment Strategy and Innovations Strategy.

The department's ERA 2 Investment Strategy Program will require a number of agreements/contracts with various entities and legislation will come before City Council as the agreements/contracts are needed. Similar to how prior ERA funds were contracted/expended, the department shall work with various non-profit agencies to inform the public that these funds are available and the non-profit agencies will provide intake/application services. There are other entities involved that will provide "operation services" (web site hosting, eligibility determination, monitoring, fraud investigation, software platform, etc.) as well. The U.S. Department of Treasury has encouraged jurisdictions to look at ways to expedite payments by centralizing application intake processing as one of their best practices.

Of the \$67.5 million available, \$1,750,000.00 will be used for a subrecipient agreement with Greenwood 360 LLC to partner with local non-profit agencies and other program service providers and act as the Application Manager of the Investment Strategy Program. As the Application Manager, Greenwood 360 LLC, would process applications, make determination of eligibility, and provide batch data to The Wells Foundation so The Wells Foundation can process payment to eligible recipients. Applications will be submitted through software called Allita 360. Greenwood 360 LLC developed the software and recently sold it to HDS Companies, LLC. Before the software was sold, the city and non-profit entities used the software to process applications for ERA 1 and ERA 2 early in the pandemic. As the developer of the software, Greenwood 360 LLC is very familiar with it. Because of their expertise, and the fact that ERA 2 funds need to be expended by December 2025, the department is requesting that City Council waive the competitive bidding requirement of City Code Chapter 329 as this will allow the department to implement the Investment Strategy Program as soon as possible.

Emergency action is requested to set up the infrastructure for the Investment Strategy Program as soon as possible in order to provide application determination and funding to eligible recipients who are in immediate need of financial support to prevent eviction or loss of utilities as well the city needing to expend these federal funds by December 2025.

**WAIVER OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS:** A waiver of the competitive procurement requirements outlined in Columbus City Code Chapter 329 is being requested because of the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic: some people are still being negatively impacted even though the public health emergency has been lifted by the federal, state, and local governments; because services funded with federal ERA 2 funds need to be completed by December 30, 2025; and there is not time to complete the bidding process without negatively impacting those in need.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** Funding is available in Fund 2208, ERA 2 fund.

**CONTRACT COMPLIANCE:** The vendor number is 039806 and expires October 1, 2023.

**..Title**

To authorize the Director of the Department of Development to execute a subrecipient agreement with Greenwood 360 LLC in an amount up to \$1,750,000.00 of U.S. Department of Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance 2 (ERA 2) funds to act as the Application Manager for recipients as part of the department's ERA 2 Investment Strategy Program; to authorize an agreement start date of June 1, 2023; to authorize the expenditure of up to \$1,750,000.00 from the Emergency Rental Assistance 2 Fund; to waive the competitive bidding requirements of Columbus City Code Chapter 329; and to declare an emergency. (\$1,750,000.00)

**WHEREAS,** the City has disbursed approximately \$23 million of the \$90.5 million of ERA 2 funds received from the U.S. Department of Treasury and the remaining \$67.5 million of ERA 2 funds will be disbursed under two programs: Investment Strategy and Innovations Strategy; and

**WHEREAS,** the department is building the Investment Strategy Program infrastructure to disburse over \$25 million to eligible recipients before the grant ends in December 2025; and

**WHEREAS,** as the Application Manager, Greenwood 360 LLC, would process applications, make determination of eligibility, and provide batch data to another entity so they can process payment to eligible recipients; and

**WHEREAS,** an emergency exists in the usual daily operations of the Department of Development in that it is immediately necessary to set up the infrastructure for the Investment Strategy Program as soon as possible in order to provide application determination and funding to eligible recipients who are in immediate need of financial support to prevent eviction or loss of utilities as well the city needing to expend these federal funds by December 2025, all for the preservation of the public health, peace, property, safety, and welfare; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

**SECTION 1:** That this Council finds that is in the best interest of the City to waive the competitive bidding provisions of Chapter 329 of Columbus City Code to enter into this subrecipient agreement.

**SECTION 2.** That the Director of the Department of Development is hereby authorized to execute a subrecipient agreement with Greenwood 360 LLC in an amount up to \$1,750,000.00 of U.S. Department of Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance 2 (ERA 2) funds to act as the Application Manager for recipients as part of the department's ERA 2 Investment Strategy Program and to authorize a contract start date of June 1, 2023.

**SECTION 3.** That the expenditure of \$1,750,000.00, or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized in Fund 2208 (ERA Fund), Dept-Div 44-10 (Housing Division), in object class 03 (Services) per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

**SECTION 4:** Funds are hereby deemed appropriated and expenditures and transfers authorized to carry out the purposes of this ordinance and the City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

**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 legislation.

**SECTION 6:** That for reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is

declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.