



Legislation Text

File #: 2098-2021, **Version:** 1

This ordinance authorizes the Director of Development to enter into a contract with Renter Mentor, LLC in the amount of up to \$100,000.00 for the Housing for All Community Education Campaign.

In March 2021, Columbus City Council passed the Housing for All legislative package that amended Chapters 4501 and 4551 of Columbus City Code. The amendments address some of the critical affordable housing challenges within the City of Columbus by providing residents fair access and protections in the search for affordable housing. The three ordinances include:

Source of Income Discrimination (0494-2021) - Operators are prohibited from denying prospective tenants based upon their lawful source of income, including but not limited to, income derived from wages, social security, supplemental security income, public or private sources, all forms of federal, state or local assistance payments or subsidies, including rent vouchers, child support, spousal support, and public assistance.

Renter's Choice (0495-2021) - If an operator requires a tenant to pay a security deposit, they must provide two alternatives to paying the deposit in full, including the payment of the security deposit over a series of 3 monthly installments, or the payment of the security deposit in 6 monthly installments.

Rental Receipt (0496-2021) - Operators must provide tenants with a written receipt upon payment of rent or a security deposit.

The Columbus City Council solicited proposals from community housing experts and providers in Central Ohio to receive a contract of \$100,000.00 to provide a comprehensive community education and marketing program regarding the code changes. The intent of this project is to educate tenants and landlords on the rules and regulations associated with compliance and enforcement of the code, and also to engage the greater Columbus community on critical housing topics.

A successful community education and marketing program will inform the public of the new policies; provide guidance to residents who seek to file complaints; and elaborate on potential penalties for operators who violate the code amendments. Strategies for engagement include public forums, social media marketing, television and radio advertising, and data collection.

Two proposals were received for the Housing for All Community Education Contract. A five person review committee of City Council staff reviewed the applications and recommended award to Renter Mentor, LLC, in partnership with Cohear and the Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio.

Emergency action is requested because the code changes are already effective.

Fiscal Impact: Funding is available within the General Fund Neighborhood Initiatives subfund.

Contractor Compliance: The vendor number is 038193 and expires on 7/1/23.

To authorize the Director of the Department of Development to enter into a contract with Renter Mentor, LLC for the Housing for All Community Education Campaign; to authorize an appropriation and expenditure of \$100,000.00 from the General Fund Neighborhood Initiatives subfund; and to declare an emergency. (\$100,000.00)

WHEREAS, there is a need to enter into a contract to provide a comprehensive education and marketing campaign in relation to the Housing for All legislative package; and

WHEREAS, Columbus City Council solicited proposals for the Housing for All Community Education campaign contract; and

WHEREAS, Renter Mentor, LLC, in partnership with Cohear and the Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio, submitted the best overall proposal for this project; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the Director of the Department of Development to enter into a contract with Renter Mentor, LLC to provide the services described above in the amount of up to \$100,000.00; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the Department of Development in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director to enter into a contract with Renter Mentor, LLC as soon as possible because the code changes are already effective, thereby preserving the public health, peace, property, safety and welfare; now, therefore

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

SECTION 1: That from the unappropriated monies and from all monies estimated to come into said fund from any and all sources and unappropriated for any other purpose during the fiscal year ended December 31, 2021, the sum of \$100,000.00 is appropriated in Fund 1000 (General Fund), Subfund 100018, Dept-Div 44-10 (Housing), in object class 03 (Services) per the account codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 2: That the Department of Development is hereby authorized to enter into a contract with Renter Mentor, LLC for the Housing for All Community Education Campaign in an amount up to \$100,000.00.

SECTION 3: That the expenditure of \$100,000.00 or so much thereof as may be needed is hereby authorized in Fund 1000 (General Fund), Subfund 100018, Dept-Div 4410 (Housing) 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 ordinance.

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