



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 1357-2024, **Version:** 1

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### **BACKGROUND:**

Public transportation plays a vital role in ensuring accessibility and mobility for diverse communities. However, negative stereotypes and misconceptions about transit ridership persist. This stigma not only undermines the dignity of transit riders but also discourages others from considering public transportation as a viable option. Columbus City Council seeks to address these issues and foster a culture of dignity and respect in transit.

Public transit ridership is diverse, encompassing individuals from various socioeconomic backgrounds, ages, and cultural identities. By celebrating the benefits of public transportation, and empowering individuals to make informed choices about their mobility options, this campaign seeks to create a more inclusive and respectful transit environment for all residents. Through collaboration with community stakeholders, transit agencies, and advocacy groups, the City aims to promote a positive and empowering narrative around public transit, emphasizing its role as a vital lifeline that connects individuals to opportunities, services, and each other. By elevating the voices and experiences of transit riders and fostering a sense of pride in using public transportation, the City seeks to build a more equitable and dignified transportation system that serves the needs of all members of the community.

Transit Columbus is uniquely situated to assist the City of Columbus in de-stigmatizing public transportation and other modes of transportation outside the norm of single-occupancy vehicles. Their mission is "to transform our mobility options to center people and communities, increase equity, and expand opportunity." Transit Columbus was organized in 2011 by community members who had long been working on sustainability and sustainable transportation. They believed that Columbus residents and the Columbus region could never reach our fullest potential without major improvements in sustainable transportation, most importantly a high capacity public transit system. Since the organization came into existence, they have advocated for better transit, pedestrian, and cycling infrastructure on the local and state level, hosted events, and worked to raise the profile of transit and transit related issues. They are currently running campaigns to promote LinkUS and BikePlus.

An emergency exists insofar as the landscape of public transportation in Columbus is quickly shifting, with more people moving to the City very quickly. The City requires an outreach campaign that aims to inspire mode shift away from single occupancy vehicles in order to protect our infrastructure and make Columbus more navigable for more people of all backgrounds. Additionally, summer is the best time to engage people on this matter, and various event programming initiatives throughout summer and fall will benefit from the conversation that this campaign will inspire. In this way, this public outreach campaign is necessary for the usual daily operation of the City.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

This ordinance authorizes the appropriation and expenditure of \$10,000.00 in the Neighborhood Initiatives subfund, subfund 100018.

To authorize the Director of Public Service to enter into a grant agreement with Transit Columbus to conduct a public outreach campaign regarding the benefits of public transportation and to challenge the stigma of public transportation; to authorize an appropriation and expenditure of \$10,000.00 from the Neighborhood Initiatives subfund; and to declare an emergency. (\$10,000.00)

**WHEREAS**, Public transportation plays a vital role in ensuring accessibility and mobility for diverse communities; and

**WHEREAS**, Negative stereotypes and misconceptions about transit ridership persist; and

**WHEREAS**, Columbus City Council believes that people who utilize public transportation options deserve to avail themselves of those services with dignity; and

**WHEREAS**, An emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the City in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director of Public Service to enter into this grant agreement to enable Transit Columbus to launch a public outreach campaign in time to coordinate with other event programming as summer is the best time to engage people on this matter, all for the immediate preservation of the public health, peace, property, safety and welfare; and **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

**SECTION 1:** That the Director of Public Service is hereby authorized to enter into a grant agreement with Transit Columbus for public outreach services to promote dignity in transit, especially for those who utilize public transportation services such as those provided by the Central Ohio Transit Authority.

**SECTION 2:** That the City Auditor is hereby authorized and directed to appropriate \$10,000.00 in the Neighborhood Initiatives subfund, fund 1000, subfund 100018, to Transit Columbus per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

**SECTION 3.** That the expenditure of \$10,000.00 or so much thereof as may be needed pursuant to the action authorized in SECTION 1 of this ordinance, is hereby authorized in the Neighborhood Initiatives subfund, fund 1000, subfund 100018 per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

**SECTION 4.** 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 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.