



Legislation Text

File #: 0064-2016, **Version:** 1

1. BACKGROUND

On December 7, 2015, the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced the Smart City Challenge. The USDOT will make an award of up to \$50 Million in federal and private funding over three years to one mid-sized city that can demonstrate how advanced data and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) technologies and applications can be used to reduce congestion, keep travelers safe, protect the environment, respond to climate change, connect underserved communities, and support economic vitality.

The USDOT has issued the first of two separate solicitations to carry out the Smart City Challenge. The first solicitation will result in selection of an estimated five Smart City Challenge Finalists who will receive \$100,000 in federal funding to support concept development and planning activities. Applications are due by February 4, 2016. The follow-on second solicitation, which will be released in March 2016, will invite the Smart City Challenge Finalists to apply for the \$40 Million funding to support implementation of their proposed demonstration. The up to \$40 Million USDOT grant award will be matched by a \$10 Million private sector grant from the USDOT Electric Vehicle (EV) vendor, Vulcan, to assist in implementing the winning city's proposal. The Smart City Challenge winner will be announced in June 2016.

The City meets the criteria to be eligible to apply for the first round in the Smart City Challenge. Should Columbus be selected as a Smart City Challenge Finalist in March 2016, the City will receive \$100,000 from USDOT to develop its concepts and second-round grant application to be submitted in May 2016. No local funding match is expected for the first round of funding. In its application instructions, USDOT states that a local funding match identified by a Smart City Challenge Finalist in its second round application will be viewed favorably in determining the ultimate Smart City Challenge winner. If the City is selected to be a Smart City Challenge finalist, additional legislation may be necessary to identify a local funding match.

This legislation will authorize the Director of Public Service to formally apply for the USDOT Smart City Challenge Grant and, if selected, accept the grant award on behalf of the Department of Public Service. It also authorizes agreements to be signed with USDOT or others in connection with the award of the grant, the expenditure of grant funds, and the return of unused grant funds if any should remain at the end of the grant.

2. FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this legislation will allow the Department of Public Service to apply for, accept and enter into agreement for the Smart City Challenge grant from the USDOT. No local match is required from the city, and there is no fiscal impact at this time.

3. EMERGENCY DESIGNATION

Emergency action is requested to allow the Department of Public Service ample time to apply for the USDOT Smart City Challenge Grant, and to accept, enter into agreement and expend those funds in accordance with the conditions of that award.

To authorize the Director of Public Service to apply for the USDOT Smart City Challenge Grant from the United States Department of Transportation; to authorize execution of grant agreements providing for the acceptance and administration of said grant award on behalf of the City of Columbus Department of Public Service; to authorize the expenditure of any awarded funds and the refund of any unused funds; and to declare an emergency. (\$0.00)

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced on December 7, 2015, the Smart City Challenge, which is a grant program to be awarded on a competitive basis; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Smart City Challenge award is for a mid-sized city that can demonstrate how advanced data and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) technologies and applications can be used to reduce congestion, keep travelers safe, protect the environment, respond to climate change, connect underserved communities, and support economic vitality; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Service intends to apply for the Smart City Challenge from USDOT to fund capital improvements and operations that will demonstrate advanced data and ITS meeting the stated goals of the Smart City Challenge; and

WHEREAS, the USDOT has set February 4, 2016 as the deadline for the first round of applications for the Smart City Challenge; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists within the Department of Public Service in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director of Public Service to apply for and, if awarded, accept grant monies from and enter into agreement with the United States Department of Transportation as soon as possible, 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 the Director of Public Service be and is hereby authorized to apply for the United States Department of Transportation Smart City Challenge Grant, to accept said grant, if awarded, and to execute a grant agreement and any other documents necessary to effectuate said application, acceptance and agreement on behalf of the Department of Public Service.

SECTION 2. If awarded grant funds, the Department of Public Service is authorized to expend the funds in accordance with the grant condition, and to refund unused funds if there should be unused funds at the end of the grant period.

SECTION 3. 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.