



Legislation Text

File #: 0098-2023, **Version:** 1

Background: This ordinance authorizes the Director of the Recreation and Parks Department to modify an existing contract with Applied Geographics to provide professional services associated with the Urban Tree Canopy Assessment 2022 Project. The modification amount being authorized by this ordinance is \$15,000.00.

Columbus faces many challenges today and over the coming decades. Trees are part of the solution. Trees help reduce urban stressors, cleaning our air, providing shade, intercepting stormwater, and more. The benefits urban trees provide is valued up to five times what it costs to maintain them. In Columbus, our trees provide \$38 million in benefits each year. However, our tree canopy is vulnerable to threats from disease, pests, the changing climate and increased development. Also, the City is expecting to grow by 1 million residents in the coming decades. To improve our residents' quality of life, The City of Columbus approved the Columbus Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP) in April 2021. The UFMP is the first Citywide, strategic plan to invest long-term in Columbus' trees. Over the next decades, the UFMP will guide the entire Columbus community to prioritize, preserve and grow our tree canopy.

The UFMP has ambitious canopy goals requiring frequent benchmarking. The first and only Urban Tree Canopy Assessment of Columbus' trees was based on 2013 data and found that 22% of Columbus is covered with trees. This canopy cover is lower than many of Columbus' peer cities. The UFMP recommends obtaining and regularly updating key forestry data, including the Urban Tree Canopy Assessment. As part of UFMP implementation, Columbus needs an updated canopy assessment to measure change since 2013. Additionally, a more comprehensive assessment of the entire county, along with those municipalities neighboring Columbus, is critical to understanding the urban forest on a regional level.

By modifying this contract, the City will receive additional deliverables that were not included in the original scope, including two presentations to City and County leadership, 41 County jurisdiction presentations, 41 fact sheets for Columbus Communities, and 41 Columbus Communities presentations. The additional \$15,000.00 needed to modify the contract has been contributed by the Franklin County Engineer's Office, as part of a cooperative agreement authorized by Ordinance 2512-2022. This additional work is a continuation of the fact sheets and reporting that the consultant is already providing as part of the original scope.

Principal Parties:

Applied Geographics Inc.
33 Broad Street, 4th Floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02109
Brian Coolidge, (617) 447-2422
Contract Compliance Number, Tax ID: 040369, 04-3124927
Contract Compliance Expiration Date: January 23, 2024

Emergency Justification: Emergency action is requested as the project is in the reporting phase and there is a need to avoid delays in the completion of the additional deliverables so they can be presented to leaders across the City and the County jurisdictions.

Benefits to the Public: Understanding the updated tree canopy cover analysis in the City of Columbus and Franklin County will allow stakeholders and leaders to make decisions based on its current spread, where canopy could potentially increase, and how it has changed over time. The data from this report and the fact sheets will inform other UFMP projects such as the creation of private tree protections from development.

Community Input/Issues: On March 4, 2020, over 135 residents attended the “Let’s Talk Trees” public open house to provide input on the Urban Forestry Master Plan. One of the ways they could provide feedback was placing dots on a map where they wanted to see trees planted. Additionally, over 300 residents responded to an online comment form in 2020. Many comments referred to the management of public trees and the need for additional tree plantings. Many stakeholders commented on the need for update tree canopy information and a trends analysis, which is being accomplished in this project.

Area(s) Affected: Citywide (99)

Master Plan Relation: This project will support the Recreation and Parks Master Plan by conserving, protecting, and enhancing the City’s natural resources and overall environmental health, benefiting current and future generations.

Fiscal Impact: The expenditure of \$122,910.00 was legislated for the Urban Tree Canopy Assessment 2022 Project by Ordinance 2040-2021. This ordinance will provide funding that will modify the previously authorized amount by \$15,000.00. \$15,000.00 is budgeted and available in the Recreation and Parks Special Purpose Fund 2223, Green Projects Subfund 222355 to meet the financial obligations of this contract modification. The aggregate total amount authorized, including this modification, is \$137,910.00.

To authorize the Director of Recreation and Parks to modify an existing contract with Applied Geographics to provide professional services associated with the Urban Tree Canopy Assessment 2022 Project; to authorize the expenditure of \$15,000.00 from the Recreation and Parks Special Purpose Fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$15,000.00)
(AMENDED BY ORD. 1636-2023 PASSED 6/12/2023) BA

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the Director of the Recreation and Parks to modify an existing contract with Applied Geographics to provide professional services associated with the Urban Tree Canopy Assessment 2022 Project; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the expenditure of \$15,000.00 from the Recreation and Parks Special Purpose Fund 2223, Subfund 222355; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operations of the Recreation and Parks Department in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director to modify an existing contract with Applied Geographics as the project is in the reporting phase and there is a need to avoid delays in the completion of the additional deliverables so they can be presented to leaders across the City and the County jurisdictions, all for the 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 Recreation and Parks be and is hereby authorized to modify an existing contract with Applied Geographics to provide professional services associated with the Urban Tree Canopy Assessment 2022 Project.

SECTION 2. 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 3. 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 4. That the City Auditor is hereby authorized to transfer the unencumbered balance in a project account to the unallocated balance account within the same fund upon receipt of certification by the Director of the Department administering said project that the project has been completed and the monies are no longer required for said project.

SECTION 5. For the purpose stated in Section 1, the expenditure of \$15,000.00 or so much thereof as may be necessary to pay the cost thereof, be and is hereby authorized from the Recreation and Parks Special Purpose Fund 2223, Subfund 222355 in object class 06 Capital Outlay per the accounting codes in the attachments to 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.