



Legislation Text

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The Harmony Project is a non-profit organization created to connect communities across social divides through art, education, and volunteerism. We provide opportunities for individuals of different cultures, religions, ages, affiliations, and orientations to work together, with the intention of fostering a stronger, more inclusive community.

The Harmony Project shares its name and purpose with its 220-plus member choir (and additional 300+ voices in afterschool, shelter, and prison programs) which blends diversity, philanthropy and music. The arts programs are open to anyone, and have attracted diverse participants from throughout central Ohio. Through its first five years, Harmony Project has been successful in meeting its mission and has made exceptional contributions to the Columbus community through hands-on volunteerism, and through charitable fundraising. Among these contributions, Harmony Project, through performances and fundraising efforts, cleaned and refurbished Blackburn Recreation Center for After-School All-Stars, cleaned and mulched beds and playgrounds for Beatty Recreation Center, collected 4000+ toys and gift cards for children and teens in Central Ohio, collected 500+ bicycles for children and teens of Franklin County Children Services, adopted families through Center for Healthy Families and answered wish lists, cleaned Livingston Avenue, created public art murals on the South Side and in Franklinton, built teen study stations for Boys and Girls Club in Franklinton, planted 500+ trees, and was awarded the Greater Columbus Arts Council's Artistic Excellence Award for its One Neighborhood Project.

The Harmony Project is proposing a series of re-beautification projects called "One Week, One Neighborhood" that will include the Hilltop YMCA, Van Buren Family Shelter, King-Lincoln District, South Side, and North Side. The project will feature educational, service, and artistic components. Funding sought from Columbus City Council is for educational and service components. The goals and objectives of this project are to meet identified and unmet needs of underserved neighborhoods by mobilizing thousands of volunteers to serve their Columbus Community.

Partnerships already in place include The Columbus Foundation, AEP, Huntington Bank, Fifth Third Bank, LBrands, and several private foundations. Additionally, ticket sales for performances, and the individual fundraising efforts of choir members, comprise a significant portion of the total dollars raised by the organization. The Harmony Project is seeking additional financial support from the City of Columbus to assist in leveraging additional financial contributions from the private sector. Expenditures will be detailed in a complied annual report.

FISCAL IMPACT: Sufficient funds are available in the Neighborhood Initiatives Fund.

To authorize City Council and the Recreation and Parks Director to enter into contract with The Harmony Project for the purpose of providing programming for at-risk youth; and to authorize the Department of Recreation and Parks to monitor the contract; and to authorize the appropriation and expenditure of \$100,000.00 in the Neighborhood Initiatives Fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$100,000.00)

WHEREAS, The Harmony Project is a non-profit organization created to connect communities across social divides through art, education, and volunteerism. They provide opportunities for individuals of different cultures, religions, ages, affiliations, and orientations to work together, with the intention of fostering a stronger, more inclusive community, and;

WHEREAS, The Harmony Project shares its name and purpose with its 220-plus member choir (and additional 300+ voices in afterschool, shelter, and prison programs) which blends diversity, philanthropy and music. The choir is open to anyone, and has attracted diverse participants from throughout central Ohio. Through two performance seasons, The

Harmony Project has been successful in meeting its mission and has made exceptional contributions to the Columbus community through hands-on volunteerism, and through charitable fundraising; and

WHEREAS, The Harmony Project will enter into contract with the City Council and Recreation and Parks in the amount of \$100,000.00; and

WHEREAS, City Council established the Neighborhood Initiatives Fund in order to provide funding for a myriad of programs that include further emphasizing the importance of targeting at risk youth for the purpose of promoting the healthy growth and development of children through the study, practice and performance of music, to build healthier communities by investing in the positive development of children through music, and to develop children as musical ambassadors of peace, hope and understanding amongst people of diverse cultures, backgrounds and beliefs; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the City in that it is immediately necessary to enter into said contract so funding is in place for said expenditures and programming can continue uninterrupted; now, therefore

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

SECTION 1. That the City Auditor be and is hereby authorized and directed to appropriate \$100,000 in the Neighborhood Initiatives Fund, Fund 018, to City Council Department No. 20-01, Object Level One 03, Object Level Three 3337, OCA Code 200018.

SECTION 2. That City Council and the Director of the Department of Recreation and Parks are hereby authorized to enter into contract with The Harmony Project and directed to expend said funds to promote the mission of targeting at-risk youth by promoting positive youth development through on-going year-round music lessons and youth orchestra participation. The Department of Recreation and Parks is authorized to monitor the contract.

SECTION 3. That this contract is awarded pursuant to the relevant provisions of City Code Chapter 329 relating to not-for-profit service contracts.

SECTION 4. That for the reason stated in the preamble here to, 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