



Legislation Text

File #: 3416-2022, Version: 1

BACKGROUND:

This ordinance authorizes the Director of the Department of Development to authorize the expenditure of \$14,628.80 to the Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District (SID) to continue to enable employees who work in City buildings that are within the Capital Crossroads SID boundaries but do not pay SID assessments (Non-SID Assessment Employees) to participate in the Downtown C-Pass Program (the Program). These Non-SID Assessment Employees work in the following City buildings: 77 North Front Street, 345 South High Street, 373 South High Street, 375 South High Street, and 120 Marconi Blvd. The City will pay \$27 from 2022-2025 per each eligible employee (currently 113) in the 345 South High Street, 373 South High Street, and 375 South High Street Buildings at a cost of \$3,051.

The City will pay \$0.04 per square foot of the entire building for the 77 North Front Street and 120 Marconi Buildings for all the employees to have access to the Program at a cost of \$11,577.80.

The total cost for 2023 is \$14,628.80 to cover the Program participation for Non-SID Assessment Employees.

Through Ordinance 2900-2020, The Department of Development entered into a 5 year agreement (2021-2025) with the Capital Crossroads SID to continue the City's involvement with the Program. The Department of Development will seek Council approval to fund participation each year in 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024.

Council previously supported the Program and provided Program access for Non-SID Assessment Employees in Ordinances 0817-2020, 0540-2019, and 1465-2018.

The cost to cover the remaining City employees who work within City buildings in the Capital Crossroads SID (90 North Front Street and 111 North Front Street) will be handled through the City's annual Capital Crossroads SID assessments.

The Capital Crossroads SID created the Downtown C-Pass Program (the Program) for eligible employers and employees in downtown Columbus in partnership with the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) and the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) in 2018. The initial 3 year Program ended in 2020. The Capital Crossroads SID, COTA, and MORPC have agreed to extend the Program another 5 years through the end of 2025.

The Program provides unlimited access to COTA transportation services at no additional cost to eligible employees.

The Program was originally launched in 2018 by the Capital Crossroads SID (CCSID) in partnership with the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) and the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) to proactively address parking shortages, access to jobs and high employee turnover within the CCSID that threatened the further development of Downtown Columbus. Because of its success in the three-year initial program that ended in 2020, the property owners in the CCSID renewed the program for an additional five years through 2025 and doubled their contribution.

Prior to the pandemic, the program was exceeding expectations. Ridership among the eligible pool more than doubled and COTA was enjoying its highest ridership in more than 30 years thanks in part to the Program. Program participants reported the Program helped them retain and recruit workers, and companies also reported that the Program helped influence their decisions to renew or sign a lease in C-pass-eligible buildings.

CCSID negotiated a price reduction with COTA in 2020, 2021, and 2023 due to the pandemic. As the community comes

out of the pandemic, the importance of the Program remains. As workers gradually return to downtown offices, many on a hybrid basis, they are rethinking commuting choices providing an opportunity of growth for C-pass and transit ridership.

Emergency action is requested in order to ensure continued participation in the Program without interruption.

FISCAL IMPACT: The costs to participate in the Program are fully covered within the 2022 Operating Budget and will be included in the subsequent 2023 and 2024 Operating Budgets.

To authorize the Director of Development to make a payment of \$14,628.80 from the general fund to the Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District (SID) to continue to enable employees who work in City buildings that are within the Capital Crossroads SID boundaries but do not pay SID assessments (Non-SID Assessment Employees), to participate in the Downtown C-Pass Program (the Program); and to declare an emergency (\$14,628.80).

WHEREAS, this ordinance authorizes the Director of the Department of Development to Director of Development to make a payment of \$14,628.80 from the general fund to the Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District (SID) to continue to enable employees who work in City buildings that are within the Capital Crossroads SID boundaries but do not pay SID assessments (Non-SID Assessment Employees) to participate in the Downtown C-Pass Program (the Program); and to declare an emergency; and

WHEREAS, these Non-SID Assessment Employees work in the following City buildings: 77 North Front Street, 345 South High Street, 373 South High Street, 375 South High Street, and 120 Marconi Blvd; and

WHEREAS, the City will pay \$27 per each eligible employee (currently 113) in the 345 South High Street, 373 South High Street, and 375 South High Street Buildings at a cost of \$3,051.

WHEREAS, the City will pay \$0.04 per square foot of the entire building for the 77 North Front Street and 120 Marconi Buildings for all the employees to have access to the Program at a cost of \$11,577.80; and

WHEREAS, the total cost for 2023 is \$14,628.80 to cover the Program participation for Non-SID Assessment Employees; and

WHEREAS, through Ordinance 2900-2020, the Department of Development entered into a 5 year agreement (2021-2025) with the Capital Crossroads SID to continue the City's involvement with the Program; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Development will seek Council approval to fund participation each year in 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024; and

WHEREAS, Council previously supported the Program and provided Program access for Non-SID Assessment Employees in Ordinances 0817-2020, 0540-2019, and 1465-2018; and

WHEREAS, the cost to cover the remaining City employees who work within City buildings in the Capital Crossroads SID (90 North Front Street and 111 North Front Street) will be handled through our annual Capital Crossroads SID assessments; and

WHEREAS, the Capital Crossroads SID created the Downtown C-Pass Program (the Program) for eligible employers and employees in downtown Columbus in partnership with the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) and the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) in 2018; and

WHEREAS, while the initial 3 year Program ended at the end of 2020, the Capital Crossroads SID, COTA, and MORPC have agreed to extend the Program another 5 years through 2025; 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 make payment to the Capital Crossroads SID in order to continue the Program without interruption; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

SECTION 1. To authorize the Director of Development to make a payment of \$14,628.80 from the general fund to the Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District (SID) to continue to enable employees who work in City buildings that are within the Capital Crossroads SID boundaries but do not pay SID assessments (Non-SID Assessment Employees) to participate in the Downtown C-Pass Program.

SECTION 2. That for the purpose stated in Section 1, the expenditure of \$14,628.80, is hereby authorized in Fund 1000 General Fund in Object Class 03 Contractual Services per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 3. That the contract authorizing these funds was awarded in accordance with the relevant provisions of City Code Chapter 329 relating to not-for-profit service contracts.

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 the passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.