



Legislation Text

File #: 2306-2021, **Version:** 1

BACKGROUND: This legislation authorizes the Director of Development to enter into multiple grant agreements to provide rental and utility assistance using federal Emergency Rental Assistance 2 funds and providing for expenses starting January 1, 2021. The organizations included in this ordinance shall be a “subrecipient” as defined under federal guidelines.

Ordinance 2275-2021 authorizes the City of Columbus to accept and appropriate \$12,774,607.20 of federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA 2) program funds, as passed by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021. Of this amount, \$1,500,000.00 will be used for three agreements with organizations to provide rental and utility assistance (as defined by U. S. Treasury) to qualifying residents of the local community to ensure housing stability.

In July 2021, the Department of Development issued a Notice of Award (NOFA) to solicit responses from community organization who could provide these federal grant funds to hard to reach communities. Twenty-six organizations have been selected to receive these funds. Of the 26, 23 will be funded with ERA 1 funds under the authority of Ordinance 1818-2021 and three will be funded with ERA 2 funds under this ordinance.

The selected organizations, and grant agreement amount, to receive ERA 2 funds are:

- Young Men’s Christian Association (known as YMCA of Central Ohio) \$500,000.00
- The Homeless Families Foundation \$500,000.00
- Somali Community Link, Inc. \$500,00.00

In these contracts, at least 60% of the funding will support households with an AMI at 50% or below and/or have a member of the household who has been unemployed for 90 days; up to 40% of the funding can be used for households with an AMI at 80% or below; and 10% of the funding will be utilized for Administrative costs.

These organizations will manage a program to provide rental and utility assistance to residents in the local area who qualify for the assistance as provided in the laws regulations and other current guidance provided by the U. S. Department of Treasury. It is expected that the guidance from the U.S. Department of Treasury will be modified while this contract is in effect and it is requested that the Director of Development be given the authority to modify the terms and conditions of the grant agreement without seeking additional Council Approval in order to align with the most current version of the federal laws, regulations, and guidance.

Emergency action is requested to prevent as many evictions as possible.

FISCAL IMPACT: Funding is provided to the City of Columbus from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 passed by Congress and signed into law December 27, 2020, and contingent upon passage of Ordinance 2275-2021.

CONTRACT COMPLIANCE: vendor number and expiration dates are:

- Young Men’s Christian Association 006085 1/4/2022
- The Homeless Families Foundation 025439 4/8/2023
- Somali Community Link, Inc. 039435 8/25/2023

To authorize the Director of Development to enter into grant agreements with the Young Men’s Christian Association, The Homeless Families Foundation and the Somali Community Link, Inc. to provide rental and utility assistance using federal Emergency Rental Assistance 2 funds and providing for expenses starting January 1, 2021; to authorize the Director of Development to modify the terms and conditions of the grant agreements as needed without seeking further

City Council approval in order to align with the most current version of the federal laws, regulations, and guidance; to authorize an expenditure of up to \$1,500,000.00 of Emergency Rental Assistance 2 funds; and to declare an emergency (\$1,500,000.00)

WHEREAS, in July 2021, the Department of Development issued a Notice of Award (NOFA) to solicit responses from community organization who could provide these federal grant funds to hard to reach communities. Twenty-six organizations have been selected to receive these funds. Of the 26, 23 will be funded with ERA 1 funds under the authority of Ordinance 1818-2021 and three will be funded with ERA 2 funds under this ordinance.

WHEREAS, the Director of the Department of Development desires to enter into a contracts with

- Young Men’s Christian Association \$500,000.00
- The Homeless Families Foundation \$500,000.00
- Somali Community Link, Inc. \$500,000.00; and

WHEREAS, at least 60% of the funding will support households with an AMI at 50% or below and/or have a member of the household who has been unemployed for 90 days; up to 40% of the funding can be used for households with an AMI at 80% or below; and 10% of the funding will be utilized for Administrative costs; and

WHEREAS, it is expected that the guidance from the U.S. Department of Treasury will be modified while this contract is in effect and it is requested that the Director of Development be given the authority to modify the terms and conditions of the grant agreement without seeking additional Council Approval in order to align with the most current version of the laws, regulations, and guidance; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in much needed assistance when low income households have seen significant decreases in personal income due to COVID-19 and the public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, expenditure of ERA funding to provide low income households with financial assistance is necessary to address reduced income needed to pay rent and utility expenses caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, such expenditure of funds has not been previously accounted for in the 2021 Budget; 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 enter into grant agreements to prevent as many evictions as possible, 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 the Department of Development is hereby authorized to enter into grant agreements and make payment for expenses starting January 1, 2021 with the following: Young Men’s Christian Association in an amount up to \$500,000.00; The Homeless Families Foundation in an amount up to \$500,000.00; and Somali Community Link, Inc. in an amount up to \$500,000.00; for the purpose of providing rental and utility assistance (as defined by U. S. Treasury) to qualifying residents under the guidance of the Emergency Rental Assistance program authorized under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 passed by Congress and signed into law December 27, 2020; and is authorized to modify the scope of services of each grant agreement as needed without further City Council approval in order to align with the most current version of the federal laws, regulations, and guidance.

SECTION 2. That the expenditure of \$1,500,000.00 or so much thereof as may be needed is hereby authorized in Fund 2208 (ERA Fund), Dept-Div 44-10 (Housing Division), in object class 03 (Services) per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 3. That this agreement is awarded pursuant to the relevant provisions of Columbus City Code related to awarding grant agreements.

SECTION 4: Funds are hereby deemed appropriated and expenditures and transfers authorized to carry out the purposes of this ordinance 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 legislation.

SECTION 6: That for reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is 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.