



Legislation Text

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This ordinance authorizes the Director of the Department of Technology to accept a grant totaling \$200,000.00 from the Federal Communications Commission on behalf of Smart Columbus. These grant funds will be used to reimburse Smart Columbus for outreach efforts related to their digital equity program.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has established the Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program to provide eligible partners with grant funds to conduct outreach in support of the Affordable Connectivity Program. Earlier this year, the City of Columbus, Department of Technology applied for these grant funds on behalf of Smart Columbus. The FCC awarded \$200,000.00 of the total \$445,820.00 requested. The City has also committed an additional \$140,000.00 for this effort.

The City of Columbus is committed to ensuring digital equity for all our residents and visitors. This funding is meant to help our most underserved community members in gaining access to affordable internet services, and to empower them with the knowledge and resources they need to realize the full potential of this access.

The above-referenced funding is supplemental to Smart Columbus' existing digital equity expenditures, which will be expended during the period of performance for this grant. It is also supplemental to the labor cost-sharing commitments made by our Digital Equity Coalition partners for this initiative.

Second, this ordinance authorizes entering into a sub-recipient agreement with Smart Columbus for the above-described purpose.

This ordinance also authorizes the appropriation of \$200,000.00 to the general government grants fund, subfund yet to be determined, for use.

Finally, this ordinance also authorizes the total expenditure of \$340,000.00 to reimburse Smart Columbus as appropriate; \$200,000.00 from the above-referenced grant and \$140,000.00 from the Department of Technology, Information Services operating fund, as committed by the City.

EMERGENCY

This ordinance is being submitted with emergency designation so that we can begin reimbursing Smart Columbus for costs associated with services provided.

FISCAL IMPACT

Once appropriated, \$200,000.00 in grant funds will be budgeted and available for reimbursement. The city's committed portion of \$140,000.00 is budgeted and available in DoT's 2023 operating fund.

To authorize the Director of the Department of Technology to accept a grant in the amount of \$200,000.00 from the Federal Communications Commission on behalf of Smart Columbus to reimburse Smart Columbus for digital equity outreach efforts; to authorize entering into a sub-recipient agreement with Smart Columbus for the above-described outreach efforts; to authorize the appropriation of \$200,000.00 to the general government grants fund, subfund to be determined; to authorize the expenditure of \$340,000.00; \$140,000.00 from the Department of Technology, Information Services operating fund and \$200,000.00 from the general government grants fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$340,000.00)

WHEREAS, as part of their digital equity program, Smart Columbus is conducting outreach efforts within the community; and

WHEREAS, in January of 2023, the City of Columbus, Department of Technology applied for a grant from the FCC on behalf of Smart Columbus to assist with said outreach; and

WHEREAS, the FCC has awarded the city \$200,000.00 to reimburse Smart Columbus for outreach efforts; and

WHEREAS, this ordinance accepts the above-referenced grant; and

WHEREAS, this ordinance also authorizes entering into a sub-recipient agreement with Smart Columbus so that the City can reimburse them as appropriate; and

WHEREAS, this ordinance also authorizes appropriating \$200,000.00 in grant funds to the general government grant fund, subfund to be determined, for use; and

WHEREAS, this ordinance authorizes the expenditure of \$340,000.00 for the purpose described in this ordinance; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the Department of Technology in that it is immediately necessary to accept a grant from the FCC on behalf of Smart Columbus for digital outreach efforts, to enter into a sub-recipient agreement with Smart Columbus, and to appropriate and expend funds as described above so that the Department can begin reimbursing Smart Columbus for costs associated with essential outreach services provided, 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 the Department of Technology is hereby authorized and directed to accept a grant award of \$200,000.00 from the Federal Communications Commission.

SECTION 2. That from the unappropriated monies and from all monies estimated to come into said fund from any and all sources and unappropriated for any other purpose during the fiscal year ending December 31, 2023, the sum of \$200,000.00 is appropriated in Fund 2220, General Government Grant Fund, per the account codes in the attachment to this ordinance. (see 2132-2023EXP)

SECTION 3. That the Director of the Department of Technology is hereby authorized and directed to enter into a sub-recipient grant agreement with Smart Columbus in the amount of \$340,000.00 to reimburse Smart Columbus for outreach efforts related to their digital equity program.

SECTION 4. That the expenditure of \$200,000.00 or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized in Fund 2220, General Government Grants fund, Dept-Div 47-02, Division of Information Services, in object class 03, services, per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance. (See attachment 2132-2023EXP).

SECTION 5. That the expenditure of \$140,000.00 or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized in Fund 5100, Information Services Operating fund, Dept-Div 47-02, Division of Information Services, in object class 03, services, per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance. (See attachment 2132-2023EXP).

SECTION 6. That at the end of the grant period, any repayment of unencumbered balances required by the grantor is hereby authorized and any unused City match monies may be transferred back to the City fund from which they originated in accordance with all applicable grant agreements.

SECTION 7. 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 8. 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 9. 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.