



Legislation Text

File #: 3393-2022, **Version:** 1

BACKGROUND: This legislation authorizes the Director of the Department of Development to enter into a contract with Housing and Development Services, Inc. (HDS) in an amount up to \$239,228.00 of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to provide software to administer the federally funded Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program and to allow for payment of services before the purchase order is approved by the city.

Ordinance 1201-2021 authorized the City of Columbus to accept and appropriate approximately \$187,030,138.00 of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds as signed into law by the President of the United States on March 11, 2021.

HDS' software, Allita 360, is a fully web and end-to-end digital solution. This system supports intake and processing of applications for rent and utility assistance. The system supports separate portals for tenants, property managers/landlords, agencies, and community. The system is ADA compliant and supports multi-language applications. This software moves applications quickly through the process of approval and meets eligibility requirements. The system provides consistency among agency partners and flexibility to fund applications efficiently.

The software has been in use since the city started distributing ERA funds, early in the COVID-19 pandemic. Up until now, HDS has had individual contracts with the city's non-profit partners and each organization paid for a portion of the software. That type of contract management has proved to be challenging and threatened to hold up use of the system by all if an organization did not make payment. Moving the contract to the city, with the city funding it, provides security and continues the efficiency and ease of use already established for the remainder of the program. Program/grant closeout will occur in FY 2023 and records need to be maintained for five years after grant closeout.

Sole Source: The software is only available from HDS and it would be prohibitive to do a competitive procurement effort to change software while nearing the end of the federal program. The current software houses all data and reporting needs for closing out the program and for record retention. Federal regulations (2 CFR 200.320(c)(2)) authorizes a non-competitive procurement if the item is available only from a single source.

Emergency action is necessary in order to make payment promptly to provide continued access by all users and maintain access to data for federal reporting and record retention purposes.

FISCAL IMPACT: Funding is provided to the City of Columbus from the American Rescue Plan Act passed by Congress and signed into law March 11, 2021.

CONTRACT COMPLIANCE: The vendor number is 043386 and expires on 10/24/24.

To authorize the Director of the Department of Development to enter into a contract with Housing and Development Services, Inc. in an amount up to \$239,228.00 to provide Allita 360 software for the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program pursuant to the sole source provisions of City Code; to authorize the reimbursement of expenses incurred prior to the purchase order being established; to authorize the expenditure of \$239,228.00 from the ARPA fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$239,228.00) **(AMENDED BY ORD. 0623-2023 PASSED 3/6/2023) BA**

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the city and its partners needing a software solution to administer the city's and Franklin County's federal Emergency Rental Assistance funds received as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the city and its partners selected the Allita 360 software system and individual organizations paid a portion of the costs for access to the software; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the city and its partners to request sole source provisions and for the city to enter into a contract with Housing and Development Services, Inc. (HDS) to access to Allita 360 for the remainder of the federal grant program and for the duration of record retention because the software is only available from this vendor; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the Department of Development in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director to enter into a contract with the Housing and Development Services, Inc. in order to make prompt payment to provide continued access by all users and maintain access to data for federal reporting and record retention purposes;
now, therefore

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

SECTION 1. That the Director of the Department of Development is authorized to enter into a contract with Housing and Development Services, Inc. (HDS) in an amount up to \$239,228.00 to provide software to administer the federally funded Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program pursuant to the sole source provisions of City Code and to pay for expenses incurred before the purchase order is approved by the city.

SECTION 2. That for the purpose stated in Section 1, the expenditure of \$239,228.00 or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized in Fund 2209 (ARPA), Dept-Div 44-01 (Administration Development), in object class 03 (Services) per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 3. 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 4. 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 5. 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 approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.