



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 3148-2019, **Version:** 1

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### 1. BACKGROUND

This legislation authorizes the Director of Finance and Management to contract for the purchase and distribution of gift cards from Omnicard, and for the gift cards to be used to compensate research participants for the Smart City Connected Vehicle Environment project, a Smart City Challenge initiative, in an amount of up to \$428,675.00.

The Smart City Challenge is a United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) grant program seeking to “create a fully integrated, first-of-its kind city that uses data, technology and creativity to shape how people and goods move in the future.” In 2016, the City of Columbus, acting through the Department of Public Service, applied for and won the Smart City Challenge, receiving a \$40 million dollar grant from USDOT and a \$10 million grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation (Vulcan).

The Connected Vehicle Environment (CVE) will serve Central Ohio stakeholders by testing vehicle-to- infrastructure communication technologies at 77 traffic signals. The CVE will launch along Cleveland Avenue from Second Avenue to Morse Road, High Street from Fifth Avenue to Morse Road, and Morse Road from High Street to Stygler Road. These areas include intersections with some of the highest collision rates in the City.

During this pilot research program, devices called “on-board units” will be installed on public and private vehicles to allow vehicles to communicate with each other and receive in-car alerts, including blind spot detection and rear-end collision warning. The on-board units also allow vehicles to communicate with traffic signals and other roadway infrastructure to provide in-car alerts, including a red light violation warning. The alerts will give drivers advanced warning of potential hazards or safety concerns so they can slow down or take other precautionary measures. Traffic managers will be able to adjust traffic light timing and mobilize other responses like snow and salt trucks based on real-time information on road conditions relayed by the on-board units. Traffic lights will give priority, by turning green, to connected COTA buses which will help keep them running on-time. Connected emergency vehicles will also get the green light, allowing them to navigate intersections quicker with increased safety.

It is essential for the integrity of the pilot program to minimize loss of the research participants during the pilot program. It is customary to compensate research participants for their time in a research study and data has shown it improves rates of recruitment and retention. For this pilot research program a participant remuneration plan consistent with Federal guidelines (45 CFR 46.116) and Ohio State University policy will be used. The pilot program will consist of up to 1,300 people with compensation totaling up to \$300 per person as follows:

1. Complete Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (15 minutes) - \$15 gift card
2. Complete On-Board Unit Installation (2 hours) - \$200 gift card
3. Complete Incentive Survey 1 (20 minutes) - \$20 gift card
4. Complete Incentive Survey 2 (20 minutes) - \$30 gift card
5. Complete Incentive Survey 3 (20 minutes) - \$50 gift card

Gift cards will be purchased from Omnicard. Omnicard will also be paid up to \$19,175.00 to cover the costs of any fees associated with the management and distribution of gift cards to research participants as approved by the Smart City Program Office.

Ordinance 1901-2017 authorized the transfer of signature authority from the Director of Public Service to the Chief Innovation Officer, or the Chief Innovation Officer's designee, for all past, present and future contracts entered into by the City of Columbus in connection with Smart Columbus, the Smart City Challenge, and Vulcan projects.

Searches in the Excluded Party List System (Federal) and the Findings for Recovery list (State) produced no findings against Omnicard.

## **2. BID WAIVER REQUEST**

95% of the cost of the gift cards is being purchased with grant funds provided by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT). While a formal bid was not conducted for the purchase and distribution of the gift cards, pricing was received from four companies with Omnicard having the lowest price. USDOT has approved the purchase of the gift cards through procurement by noncompetitive proposals so the Connected Vehicle Environment pilot research program can be started and completed per the schedule set for the program by USDOT. A waiver of the competitive bidding requirements of City Code Chapter 329 is also requested to allow this program to be started and completed per the schedule set for the program.

## **3. FISCAL IMPACT**

This is a reimbursable budgeted expense in the amount of \$390,000.00 in Fund 7768 (Smart City Grant Fund), Grant G591610 (2016 USDOT Smart City Award). A transfer of appropriation between object classes is required to align appropriation with the expenditure type.

USDOT will not approve the expenditure of \$38,675.00 in grant funds for the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire gift cards and any fees associated with any gift cards. Funding for this will come from the Street Construction, Maintenance, and Repair Fund, Fund 2265. A transfer of appropriation between object classes is required to align appropriation with the expenditure type.

## **4. EMERGENCY DESIGNATION**

Emergency action is requested in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director of the Department of Finance and Management to contract with Omnicard for the purchase and distribution of gift cards to provide incentives to program participants for the Connected Vehicle Environment pilot research program so it can be started and completed per the schedule set for the program by USDOT.

To authorize the transfer of appropriation within the Smart City Grant Fund and within the Street Construction Maintenance and Repair Fund; to authorize the Chief Innovation Officer to provide incentives to program participants relative to the Smart City Challenge Connected Vehicle Environment project; to authorize a waiver of the formal competitive bidding requirements of Columbus City Code Chapter 329 for the purchase of the incentives; to authorize the Director of the Department of Finance and Management to enter into contract with Omnicard for the purchase and distribution of incentives to program participants; to authorize the expenditure of up to \$390,000.00 from the Smart City Grant Fund for the purchase of the incentives; to authorize the expenditure of up to \$38,675.00 from the Street Construction Maintenance and Repair Fund for the purchase of incentives and the cost of fees associated with the distribution of the incentives; and to declare an emergency. (\$428,675.00)

**WHEREAS**, in 2016 the City of Columbus, acting through the Department of Public Service, applied for and won the Smart City Challenge, receiving a \$40 million dollar grant from USDOT and a \$10 million grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation (Vulcan); and

**WHEREAS**, the Smart City Program Management Office has initiated the Connected Vehicle Environment pilot program, where devices called “on-board units” will be installed on public and private vehicles to allow vehicles to talk to each other and receive in-car alerts, like blind spot detection or rear end collision warning; and

**WHEREAS**, the Smart City Program Management Office has determined it necessary to utilize a participant remuneration plan to improve rates of recruitment and retention as it is deemed essential for the integrity of the project to minimize loss of participants; and

**WHEREAS**, participant remuneration will consist of gift cards; and

**WHEREAS**, it is necessary to purchase, control, and manage the distribution of the gift cards; and

**WHEREAS**, the grantor, the United States Department of Transportation, has approved the purchase of the gift cards through procurement by noncompetitive proposals; and

**WHEREAS**, it is also necessary to waive the competitive bidding requirements of Columbus City Code for the purchase and distribution of the gift cards; and

**WHEREAS**, it is necessary to transfer appropriation with the Smart City Grant Fund and within the Street, Construction, Maintenance, and Repair Fund to align appropriation with the correct object classes; and

**WHEREAS**, Ordinance Number 1901-2017 authorized the Public Service Director to transfer signature authority to the Chief Innovation Officer or the Chief Innovation Officer's designee for all past, present and future Smart Columbus, Smart City Challenge, Paul G. Allen Family Foundation contracts, documents, and projects; and

**WHEREAS**, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the Smart Columbus Program Management Office in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director of the Department of Finance and Management to contract with Omnicard for the purchase and distribution of gift cards to provide incentives to program participants for the Connected Vehicle Environment pilot research program so it can be started and completed per the schedule set for the program by USDOT, 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 transfer of appropriation in the amount of \$390,000.00 is hereby authorized within Fund 7768 (Smart City Grant Fund), from Dept-Div 5912 (Design and Construction), Grant G591610 (2016 USDOT Smart City Award), Object Class 03 (Purchased Services) to Dept-Div 5912 (Design and Construction), Grant G591610 (2016 USDOT Smart City Award), Object Class 02 (Materials and Supplies) per the account codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

**SECTION 2.** That the transfer of appropriation in the amount of \$19,500.00 is hereby authorized within Fund 2265 (Street, Construction, Maintenance, and Repair Fund), from Dept-Div 5901 (Director), Object Class 03 (Purchased Services) to Dept-Div 5901 (Director), Object Class 02 (Materials and Supplies) per the account codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

**SECTION 3.** That the Chief Innovation Officer be and is hereby authorized to establish a participant remuneration plan for the Connected Vehicle Environment project in the amount of up to \$428,675.00; and to pay for participant remuneration associated with the project up to a maximum of \$428,675.00.

**SECTION 4.** That City Council finds that it is in the best interest of the City of Columbus to waive the formal competitive bidding requirements of Columbus City Code Chapter 329 to authorize the Director of the Department of Finance and Management to enter into contract with Omnicard for the purchase and management of the distribution of gift cards to compensate research participants in the Connected Vehicle Environment pilot research program.

**SECTION 5.** That the City's Director of the Department of Finance and Management be and is hereby authorized to enter into contract with Omnicard, Foster Plaza 10, Suite 430, 680 Anderson Drive, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15220, for the purchase and distribution of gift cards to compensate research participants in the Connected Vehicle Environment pilot research program and to issue purchase orders for the gift cards and services associated with their control and distribution.

**SECTION 6.** That the expenditure of \$390,000.00, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby authorized in Fund 7768 (Smart City Grant Fund), Dept-Div 5912 (Design and Construction), G591610 (2016 USDOT Smart City Award), Object Class 02 (Materials and Supplies) per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

**SECTION 7.** That the expenditure of \$38,675.00, or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized in Fund 2265 (Street, Construction, Maintenance, and Repair Fund), Dept-Div 5901 (Director), in Object Class 02 (Materials and Goods) and Object Class 03 (Services) per the account codes in the attachment to 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 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 10.** That the City Auditor is hereby authorized to transfer the unencumbered balance in a project account to the unallocated balance account within the same fund upon receipt of certification by the Chief Innovation Officer administering said project that the project has been completed and the monies are no longer required for said project.

**SECTION 11.** 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 10 days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.