



Legislation Text

File #: 2610-2022, **Version:** 1

This legislation authorizes the Director of the Department of Development to enter into a contract with Stout Risius Ross, LLC (Stout) in an amount up to \$100,000.00 in support of a cost-benefit analysis study for tenants facing eviction in the City of Columbus.

Stout professionals have expertise in strategy consulting, strategy implementation, impact analysis, cost-benefit analysis, and program evaluation involving a variety of socio-economic issues, including issues of, or related to, access to justice and the needs of low-income individuals and at-risk communities. They have direct experience and expertise with analyses related to housing issues, such as ground-breaking cost-benefit analyses for expanded legal representation in eviction cases, analyses of the sufficiency of housing subsidies, analyses of eviction outcomes and trends, and analyses of trends and issues in public housing conditions.

Stout has served dozens of legal aid organizations across the United States in a wide variety of strategic, financial, economic and other matters. Stout, in collaboration with the County and the City, local legal aid providers, and other interested parties, will conduct research and data gathering regarding the impacts of eviction on low-income tenants and the County and the City (separately) as well as the benefits that could be realized if low-income tenants were represented in eviction proceedings in the County and the City. The objective of the engagement is to quantify the costs and benefits, where possible, to calculate an expected return on investment, for both the County and the City, separately.

A waiver of competitive bidding is requested because Stout Risius Ross, LLC has a proven track record working with municipalities across the country on the study and analysis of tenants facing an eviction.

Emergency Designation: Emergency action is requested to ensure that Stout can immediately begin providing analysis at eviction court on behalf of Columbus residents facing eviction.

Fiscal Impact: Funds are available within the Public Safety Initiatives subfund to support this contract.

To authorize the Director of the Department of Development to enter into a contract with Stout Risius Ross, LLC in an amount up to \$100,000.00 in support of a cost-benefit analysis study for tenants facing eviction in the City of Columbus; to authorize an appropriation and expenditure within the Public Safety Initiatives subfund; to waive the competitive bidding provisions of Columbus City Codes; and to declare an emergency. (\$100,000.00)

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic is continuing to cause financial insecurity for many residents of Columbus, resulting in a full docket of eviction filings, which are expected to continue into 2023; and,

WHEREAS, low-income residents in the City of Columbus are in need of legal services to assist them in eviction court and the Legal Aid Society of Columbus provides assistance in advocating on behalf of residents facing eviction; and,

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the Director of the Department of Development to enter into a contract with Stout Risius Ross, LLC (Stout) in an amount up to \$100,000.00 in support of a cost-benefit analysis study for tenants facing eviction in the City of Columbus; and

WHEREAS, Stout will conduct research and data gathering regarding the impacts of eviction on low-income tenants and the County and the City (separately) as well as the benefits that could be realized if low-income tenants were represented in eviction proceedings in the County and the City; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that it is in the best interests of the City to waive the competitive bidding

requirement because Stout has a proven track record of working with municipalities across the country on the study and analysis of tenants facing an eviction; 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 a contract with Stout so it can immediately begin to conduct research and data gathering regarding the impacts of eviction on low-income tenants; 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 a contract with Stout Risius Ross, LLC in support of a cost-benefit analysis study for tenants facing eviction in the City of Columbus.

SECTION 2: That the Auditor is hereby authorized and directed to appropriate \$100,000.00 to the Department of Development within the Public Safety Initiatives subfund, fund 1000, subfund 100016, in Services-03 per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 3: That per the action authorized by Section 1 of this ordinance, the expenditure of \$100,000.00 or so much thereof as may be needed is hereby authorized in the Public Safety Initiatives subfund, fund 1000, subfund 100016, per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 4: That this Council finds it is in the best interests of the City to waive the competitive bidding provisions of Chapter 329 of Columbus City Codes to enter into this contract and such are hereby waived.

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.