



## Legislation Text

---

**File #: 0740-2024, Version: 1**

---

This legislation authorizes the Director of Public Utilities to accept the award for the 2023 EcoSmart Choice Sustainability Grant, G602100, in the amount of \$167,302.25 from American Municipal Power, Inc. (AMP) and to modify the non-profit service contract with Solar United Neighbors (SUN) and IMPACT Community Action for the Low-to Moderate-Income (LMI) Solar Co-Op program. This ordinance authorizes the appropriation and expenditure of the 2023 grant award for this contract modification to fund the Co-Op for Division of Power LMI customers.

The EcoSmart Choice Sustainability Grant program was instituted by AMP to return unused funds to participating members, recognizing EcoSmart Choice participating communities that demonstrate a commitment to sustainability through the promotion of environmentally focused, community based grant projects. Funds are unused if market renewable energy certificate (REC) prices are lower than anticipated.

Expenditures of prior year EcoSmart Choice Grant Funds contributed to DOP's SMART Street Lighting Project and an offer of smart thermostats to customers in connection with the ongoing Enhanced Meter Project.

In alignment with the Columbus Climate Action Plan, the Sustainable Columbus office has an existing contract with SUN and IMPACT Community Action for a low- to moderate-income (LMI) solar co-op program, authorized by Ordinance 2271-2023. IMPACT Community Action works directly with SUN to identify potential Co-Op participants, mostly through their weatherization program: a federal program that provides energy efficiency upgrades and includes a home audit. The services included in this agreement cannot be provided by existing city employees because these services are beyond the City's current staffing capacity to provide.

The Division of Power's EcoSmart Choice grant award will cover 100% of the installation costs for eligible and participating DOP customers. Estimated costs vary from \$10,000 to \$15,000 per customer for an average 4-kilowatt (kW) solar photovoltaic (PV) installation, and \$15,000 for a battery, so the \$167,302.25 could fully fund 11 to 16 solar PV-only projects, 5 to 6 solar PV plus battery storage projects, or a combination thereof for Division of Power LMI customers.

### **VENDOR**

Solar United Neighbors | EIN on file | D365 Vendor #018434 | Expires 9/27/2025 |  
The company does not hold MBE or WBE status.

### **SUBCONTRACTOR**

IMPACT Community Action | EIN on file | D365 Vendor #001447 | Expires 11/8/2025 |  
The company does not hold MBE or WBE status.

Neither the Contractor nor Subcontractor are debarred according to the Excluded Party Listing System of the Federal Government or prohibited from being awarded a contract according to the Auditor of State Unresolved Findings for Recovery Certified Search.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The EcoSmart Choice Sustainability Grant Program returns unused program funds to participating members through sustainability grants, of which DOP is eligible for \$167,302.25 for the 2023 EcoSmart Choice program year. This

ordinance authorizes an appropriation of this same amount from the Electricity Grants Fund to fund residential customer solar photovoltaic (PV) and battery storage projects. This project will focus on lower/middle income residential DOP customers, with 100% of the installation cost covered by the grant.

\$247,000.00 was spent on the Co-Op in 2023  
\$0.00 was spent in 2022

To authorize the Director of Public Utilities to accept the 2023 EcoSmart Choice Sustainability Grant Award in the amount of \$167,302.25 for the Division of Power; to authorize the Director of Public Utilities to modify the contract with Solar United Neighbors (SUN) and IMPACT Community Action for the Low- to Moderate-Income (LMI) Solar Co-Op program; and to authorize the appropriation and expenditure of \$167,302.25 from the Electricity Grants Fund to support this modification. (\$167,302.25)

**WHEREAS**, the Sustainable Columbus office has an existing contract with Solar United Neighbors (SUN) and IMPACT Community Action for a low- to moderate-income (LMI) solar co-op program that provides discounted solar rates to help LMI participants install solar; and

**WHEREAS**, American Municipal Power's EcoSmart Choice Sustainability Grant Program returns unused funds to participating members, recognizing EcoSmart Choice participating communities that demonstrate a commitment to sustainability through the promotion of environmentally focused, community-based grant projects; and

**WHEREAS**, funds are unused if market renewable energy certificate (REC) prices are lower than anticipated; and

**WHEREAS**, this ordinance authorizes the Director of Public Utilities to accept \$167,302.25 from American Municipal Power for the 2023 EcoSmart Choice Sustainability Grant (G602100), per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance; and

**WHEREAS**, American Municipal Power approved the Division of Power's application to expend up to \$167,302.25 of these funds to cover 100% of the installation costs of the Co-Op for Division of Power LMI customers; and

**WHEREAS**, the expenditure of \$167,302.25 or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized in Fund 6316, Electricity Grants Fund, in object class 03, Services, per the accounting codes attached to the ordinance; and

**WHEREAS**, this ordinance is submitted in accordance with the relevant provisions of Chapter 329 of City Code for not-for-profit service contracts; and

**WHEREAS**, it has become necessary in the usual daily operation of the Department of Public Utilities, Division of Power, to authorize the Director of Public Utilities to accept the 2023 EcoSmart Choice Grant Award from American Municipal Power, to authorize the City Auditor to transfer the necessary funds, to authorize the Director of Public Utilities to modify the contract with Solar United Neighbors and IMPACT Community action for the Solar Co-Op program, and to authorize the expenditure of said grant funds for low- to moderate-income DOP customers participating in the Co-Op; now, therefore

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

**SECTION 1.** That the Director of Public Utilities is hereby authorized to accept \$167,302.25 from American Municipal Power for the 2023 EcoSmart Choice Sustainability Grant (G602100) to cover 100% of the solar photovoltaic (PV) and battery installation costs for Division of Power low- and moderate-income (LMI) customers participating in the Solar Co-

Op.

**SECTION 2.** That the Director of Public Utilities is hereby authorized to modify the non-profit service contract with Solar United Neighbors and IMPACT Community Action to add the \$167,302.25 received from the EcoSmart Choice Sustainability Grant to fund the Solar Co-op Program for Division of Power LMI participating customers in accordance with the relevant provisions of Chapter 329 of City Code for not-for-profit service contracts.

**SECTION 3.** That from the unappropriated monies in Fund 6316, Electricity Grants Fund, 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 ended December 31, 2024, the sum of \$167,302.25.00 is appropriated upon receipt of an executed grant agreement in Fund 6316, Division 6007, Grant No. G602100, in object class 03 (Contractual Services) per the accounting codes attached to this ordinance

**SECTION 4.** That the expenditure of \$167,302.25 or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized in Fund 6316, Electricity Grants Fund, in object class 03, Services, per the accounting codes attached to the ordinance.

**SECTION 5.** 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 6.** 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 7.** 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 8.** That this contract is awarded in accordance with the relevant provisions of Columbus City Code Chapter 329.30 relating to awarding not-for-profit service contracts.

**SECTION 9.** That this Ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.