



Legislation Text

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1. BACKGROUND

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) released a Grid Resilience Formula Grant Program on behalf of the State of Ohio which provides grants for the investment in electric grid infrastructure. The City meets the criteria to be eligible to submit an application. Award selections are anticipated to be approved by the PUCO and sent to the U.S. DOE for the U.S. DOE's required review and approval in the calendar year 2024. The U.S. DOE awarded to the PUCO in 2023 a total of \$14,216,570, which includes Ohio's allocations for federal fiscal years 1 and 2 of the program (\$7,122,706 and \$7,093,864, respectively).

This legislation will authorize the Director of the Department of Public Utilities to formally apply for a funding under this program for fiscal year 2024. It also authorizes the execution of agreements with the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio or others in connection with the application for the grant, the award of the grant, the expenditure of grant funds, and the return of unused grant funds if any should remain at the end of the grant.

The Columbus Division of Power is a full-service, publicly owned electrical utility that provides power to industry, business and residential customers through the purchase of wholesale power and delivered through its own distribution system. The City is requesting funding to improve the reliability of the Furnace 14043 distribution circuit. This Circuit is a critical connector transgressing approximately 8.7 miles within several disadvantaged areas and improvements are needed to replace aging assets and improve operational flexibility. This critical resiliency project involves replacing rotten wood distribution poles, damaged cross arms, potted porcelain fused cutouts, gapped lighting arresters, and main line conductor. In addition, new electronic reclosers, gang-operated air breaks, and solid blade disconnects will be installed to improve operational flexibility. The City is requesting \$1.5 M in grant funding for the first Phase of the project (design and engineering) with a 25% match of the total federal share requirement, or \$500,000. Anticipated future project costs (not requested in this grant) include: Construction \$11M, and Construction Inspection \$2M.

2. FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this legislation will authorize the Director of Public Utilities to appropriate and expend grant funds received from Public Utilities Commission of Ohio.

To authorize the Director of the Department of Public Utilities to apply for a Grid Resilience Formula Grant for Furnace 14043 Distribution Circuit Project from the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO); to authorize the execution of grant and other requisite agreements with PUCO and other entities providing for the acceptance and administration of said grant award on behalf of the Department of Public Utilities; to authorize the expenditure of any awarded funds and the refund of any unused funds. (\$0.00).

WHEREAS, the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) announced funding for the Grid Resilience Formula Grant Program, which is a grant program that includes funds to be awarded on a competitive basis; and

WHEREAS, PUCO is offering an opportunity for grant funding; and

WHEREAS, the City requests funding for construction funds for Furnace 14043 Distribution Circuit Project. Circuit 14043 is a critical connector transgressing approximately 8.7 miles within several disadvantaged areas and improvements are needed to replace aging assets and improve operational flexibility; and

WHEREAS, City Council approval is needed to apply for and accept the grant funding; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

SECTION 1. That the Director of the Department of Public Utilities be and is hereby authorized to submit an application for a grant for the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio; to accept said grant, if awarded; and to execute a grant agreement and any other documents necessary to effectuate said application, acceptance, or agreement on behalf of the Department of Public Utilities.

SECTION 2. That the Director of the Department of Public Utilities be and hereby is authorized to execute any agreement or other documents necessary to effectuate applying for and receiving PUCO grant funding.

SECTION 3. That the Department of Public Utilities be and hereby is authorized to expend any awarded grant funds in accordance with the terms and conditions of said grant.

SECTION 4. That, at the end of the grant period, or upon request of the grantor, 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 5. That this ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.