



Recommendation for Action

File #: 21-1392, **Agenda Item #:** 33.

3/4/2021

Posting Language

Approve an ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Management Services Department's Equity Office Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund (Ordinance No. 20200812-001) to accept and appropriate \$75,000 from Living Cities to build on the work already underway, including but not limited to competency building for staff so that a racial equity analysis is applied to all of the City's work.

Lead Department

Equity Office

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$75,000 is being granted to the Equity Office from Living Cities. A City funding match is not required. A fiscal note is attached.

Prior Council Action:

August 4, 2016 - Council approved Ordinance No. 20160804-014 to accept and appropriate \$75,000 in grant funds from Living Cities.

For More Information:

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Additional Backup Information:

Living Cities harnesses the collective power of philanthropy, financial institutions and local governments to close racial income and wealth gaps in American cities. The City was chosen as a member city of the Closing the Gaps Network that Living Cities is hosting. Within Closing the Gaps Network, six cities are part of a Year of Reckoning cohort. Through this deep, year-long experience, Living Cities and the selected cities will build on the work already underway in the cities, including competency building for staff to equip the City to apply a racial equity analysis to all the City's work. \$75,000 in funding is available from Living Cities for the City to go towards these purposes. This is a yearlong grant.

The Living Cities Closing the Gaps Network in the Year of Reckoning is designed to be a capacity building grant for the City to further examine and strengthen its policies and programs through an equity lens. In the guidance of our convening with Living Cities staff, we've outlined the following funding categories to focus on capacity building for our racial equity work.

- A) **Financial Support for Community Engagement with Vulnerable Populations** - develop a fund that can provide stipends for community members with lived experience to participate in the design and co-creation of various city projects. Our goal is to leverage funding to address barriers that members of vulnerable populations may encounter in being involved with long range co-creative planning projects. For example, Project Connect Equity Scorecard development, Reimagining Public Safety initiatives, Resilience Catalysts, and ECHO equity demonstration project to name a few.
- B) **Deepening Data Analysis and Equity Tool Evaluations** - Living Cities has expressed that their top

priorities for the cohort are displacement, housing, the racial wealth gap, and building wealth in Black and Latinx communities. Our plan is to use funding to deepen our understanding in these areas for policy development. Some of the areas that we are looking into are home ownership strategies for communities of color to build wealth, equitable development strategies, and economic stability through strategies such as direct cash assistance and universal income.

- C) Building Competencies for Racial Equity Analysis** - As part of this Living Cities cohort we must make the commitment to attend monthly skill building workshops around undoing racism and being able to identify how it plays out in systems and structures of local government. It's the desire of Living Cities at the local level that we deploy a strategy to build racial equity competencies. We'll prioritize funding to deepen our analysis around working to eliminate racial disparities in the Austin community. We envision racial equity training as part of a grounding and normalizing process on major city projects and planning. For example, we have seen success in front loading racial equity training to the Climate Plan update. We have plans to leverage this funding to provide training and development for other major city initiatives that intersect with equity.

The General Fund will not be required to contribute additional funds beyond those currently budgeted to this grant. When the grant funds expire, the Management Services Department's need for continuing funding will be evaluated and may be denied.

Strategic Outcome(s):

Economic Opportunity and Affordability.