



**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

**TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION**

**RECOMMENDATION NUMBER: 20250305-009:**

**REGARDING: Recommendation for Increased Funding for Digital Skills Training in the FY26 Budget**

**WHEREAS**, digital skills are increasingly necessary for full participation in the workforce, education, healthcare, and civic engagement; and

**WHEREAS**, the Travis County - City of Austin Broadband and Digital Equity Needs Assessment found that lower-income residents, older adults, justice-impacted individuals, and non-native English speakers face significant barriers to digital literacy; and

**WHEREAS**, survey data indicate that 59% of respondents would be interested in free digital skills training for themselves or a household member, with interest particularly high among individuals without home internet access; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin has an opportunity to expand digital literacy programs through partnerships with libraries, schools, community organizations, and workforce development centers; and

**WHEREAS**, the demand for digital literacy training continues to grow, and increased investment will ensure residents have access to relevant skills training in multiple formats, including in-person, online, and hybrid learning; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Technology Commission recommends that the Austin City Council allocate additional funding in the amount of \$450,000 in the FY26 Budget for expanding digital skills training programs, and device distributions, ensuring free and accessible training opportunities for Austin residents who face the greatest barriers to digital literacy.

Date of Approval: March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Record of the vote: Motion to approve made by Commissioner Anga and seconded by Commissioner Combee. The recommendation was approved on a vote of 6-0.

Attest:  \_\_\_\_\_

Dan Martinez

Community Technology Division

