

EMERGENCY

City of Cincinnati

DSC

AWB

An Ordinance No. _____

- 2021

APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING the execution of a Job Creation Tax Credit Agreement with Starstone US Intermediaries, Inc., pursuant to which the company agrees to create 55 new jobs at 201 E. Fifth Street in downtown Cincinnati and, for a period of 4 years, the City agrees to provide an income tax credit equal to 35% of City income tax revenue from such new jobs.

WHEREAS, the City seeks to increase employment opportunities and encourage the establishment of new jobs in the City of Cincinnati in order to improve the economic welfare of the City and its citizens, in furtherance of the public purposes enunciated in Article VIII, Section 13 of the Ohio Constitution; and

WHEREAS, Starstone US Intermediaries, Inc. (“Employer”) intends to expend approximately \$425,000 on leasehold improvements at 201 E. Fifth Street (the “Project” and the “Project Site,” respectively), which will result in the creation of at least 55 new jobs in Cincinnati within three years if certain income tax credit assistance is provided by the City; and

WHEREAS, the City Manager has recommended that Council authorize the execution of a Job Creation Tax Credit Agreement (the “Agreement”) with Employer, in substantially the form attached hereto as Attachment A, which provides for an income tax credit equal to 35% of income tax revenue from new jobs created by Employer at the Project Site for a term of 4 years; and

WHEREAS, the Agreement provides that Employer will spend a minimum of \$425,000 to implement the Project at the Project Site; and

WHEREAS, Employer represents and has documented to the City that the income tax credit authorized by the Agreement is a major factor in Employer’s decision to go forward with the Project at the Project Site; and

WHEREAS, the City income tax credit approved by this ordinance is authorized by Sections 718.15 and 718.151 of the Ohio Revised Code; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Cincinnati, State of Ohio:

Section 1. That Council approves and authorizes the execution of a Job Creation Tax Credit Agreement (the “Agreement”) with Starstone US Intermediaries, Inc. (“Employer”), in substantially the form attached hereto as Attachment A, in order to assist Employer in the investment of \$425,000 in leasehold improvements at 201 E. Fifth Street in downtown Cincinnati (the “Project” and the

“Project Site,” respectively), which provides for a City income tax credit equal to 35% of City income tax revenue from new jobs created by Employer at the Project Site for a period of 4 years, and the creation of 55 new jobs in Cincinnati within three years.

Section 2. That Council authorizes the proper City officials to take all necessary and proper actions to fulfill the City’s obligations under the Agreement and to enforce the Agreement.

Section 3. That this ordinance shall be an emergency measure necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, safety, and general welfare and shall, subject to the terms of Article II, Section 6 of the Charter, be effective immediately. The reason for the emergency is to allow the Project and the corresponding revitalization of the City of Cincinnati and improvement of the City’s economic welfare to begin at the earliest possible time.

Passed: _____, 2021

John Cranley, Mayor

Attest: _____
Clerk

Attachment A to Ordinance

Job Creation Tax Credit Agreement

SEE ATTACHED



Contract Number _____

JOB CREATION TAX CREDIT AGREEMENT

This Job Creation Tax Credit Agreement (this "Agreement") is made and entered into as of the Effective Date (as defined on the signature page hereof) by and between the CITY OF CINCINNATI, an Ohio municipal corporation (the "City"), and STARSTONE US INTERMEDIARIES, INC., a New Jersey corporation (the "Grantee").

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- A. The City seeks to increase employment opportunities and to encourage establishment of new jobs within the corporate boundaries of the City of Cincinnati (the "City Boundaries"), in order to improve the economic welfare of the City and its citizens, in furtherance of the public purposes enunciated in Article VIII, Section 13 of the Ohio Constitution.
- B. The City has determined that the Grantee will create new jobs within the City Boundaries in connection with a project to be implemented by the Grantee at 201 E. Fifth Street, Cincinnati, Ohio (the "Project Site"), consisting of constructing leasehold improvements on the Project Site (the "Project").
- C. Cincinnati Municipal Code ("CMC") Chapter 311 imposes income taxes, including a tax on business net profits. The Grantee represents and has documented to the City that the credit authorized by this Agreement against the tax imposed on the Grantee's net profits under CMC Chapter 311 (the "City Income Tax Credit") is a major factor in the Grantee's decision to go forward with the Project, to offset costs of capital expenditures and/or moving.
- D. The City Income Tax Credit as provided in this Agreement is authorized by Ohio Revised Code ("ORC") Sections 718.15 and 718.151.
- E. The City and Grantee intend that Grantee will implement the Project partly as a result of Grantee cost savings resulting from a thirty-five percent (35%) City Income Tax Credit applicable to new jobs created by Grantee at the Project Site for a period of four (4) years, and thereby create 55 new jobs in the City within three (3) years of the Determination Date (as defined below).

STATEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT

In consideration of the foregoing and the mutual promises and covenants hereinafter set forth, the parties agree as follows:

1. PRECONDITIONS TO EFFECTIVENESS OF AGREEMENT. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, this Agreement shall be of no force and effect unless and until (1) this Agreement is fully executed by both parties and (2) the Council of the City of Cincinnati passes an ordinance approving this Agreement, and the ordinance takes effect.
2. CERTAIN DEFINITIONS. As used in this Agreement:
 - (A) "Aggregate Employees" means, for any stated period, the Number of Full-Time Employee Equivalents employed either by the Grantee or by a Related Member, calculated with reference to all employees of the Grantee and all Related Members of the Grantee for which (1) the primary work location is within the City of Cincinnati and (2) the Grantee or a Related Member withholds City income taxes.
 - (B) "City Tax Credit Term" means the 4-year term commencing for Tax Year 2022 or 2023, at the option of the Grantee.

- (C) **"Determination Date"** means May 18, 2021.
- (D) **"Employment Retention Period"** means an 8-year period commencing as of the start of the City Tax Credit Term.
- (E) **"Grantee's City-Wide Employees"** means, for any stated period, the Number of Full-Time Employee Equivalents employed by the Grantee, calculated with reference to all employees of the Grantee for which (1) the primary work location is within the City (not limited to the Project Site) and (2) the Grantee withholds City income taxes. An employee is considered to have a primary work location within the City if at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the compensation paid by the Grantee to that employee is taxed by the City with respect to work performed in the City.
- (F) **"Income Tax Revenue"** means, for any Tax Year:
- (1) Payments from the Grantee to the City in an amount equal to the aggregate amount of earnings taxes withheld on the qualifying wages (as defined in CMC Section 311-9-Q) paid by the Grantee to all Aggregate Employees whose primary work location is the Project Site; less
 - (2) Any amounts refunded by the City to Aggregate Employees whose primary work location is the Project Site (pursuant to CMC Chapter 311) relating to qualifying wages (as defined in CMC Section 311-9-Q) paid by the Grantee, as such refunds are reported by the City to the Grantee from time to time.
- (G) **"Initial Tax Year"** means the first Tax Year during which the Grantee is entitled to a City Income Tax Credit.
- (H) **"Minimum Qualifying Wage"** means an hourly wage of at least (1) \$12.50 per hour on and after July 1, 2018, (2) \$13.50 per hour on and after January 1, 2019, and (3) \$15.00 per hour on and after July 1, 2019; *provided however*, that if (i) the Grantee contributes to any health, vision and/or dental insurance plan; provides retirement benefits; or provides childcare, tuition, or training reimbursement benefits to a New Employee and (ii) the City approves in writing, in its sole and absolute discretion any such contribution, retirement, or reimbursement benefit, then the hourly cash value of any such City-approved benefit shall be added to the New Employee's base monetary hourly wage for the purposes of calculating that New Employee's hourly wage under this definition.
- (I) **"Net Number of New Employees"** means, for any Tax Year, the lesser of:
- (1) The average Number of New Employees in the final three (3) calendar months of that Tax Year; or
 - (2) The remainder computed by subtracting (a) the Baseline City-Wide Employment Level from (b) the average number of the Grantee's City-Wide Employees in the final three (3) months of that Tax Year; or
 - (3) The remainder computed by subtracting (a) the Baseline Aggregate Employment Level from (b) the average number of Aggregate Employees in the final three (3) months of that Tax Year.
- Computations of an "average number" of employees, as required by this Agreement, shall be made and documented by the Grantee in a manner subject to approval by the City, such approval not to be unreasonably withheld.
- (J) **"New Employee"** means an employee of the Grantee that meets all of the following criteria during the applicable Tax Year: (i) has a primary work location at the Project Site, (ii) is first employed by the Grantee within the City Boundaries after the Determination Date, and (iii) is paid at least the Minimum Qualifying Wage by the Grantee at all times during the applicable Tax Year. An employee is considered to have a primary work location at the Project Site if at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the compensation paid by the Grantee to that employee is taxed by the City with respect to work performed at the Project Site. "New Employees" may include employees of the Grantee employed in

employment positions that were relocated to the Project Site from other operations of the Grantee (or of a Related Member) outside of the City Boundaries.

- (K) **"New Income Tax Revenue"** means, for any Tax Year, the lesser of:
- (1) Income Tax Revenue in such Tax Year relating only to New Employees; or
 - (2) The amount computed by multiplying (a) the Net Number of New Employees for such Tax Year by (b) the average amount of Income Tax Revenue received by the City in such Tax Year per New Employee (which average amount is computed by dividing (x) the total Income Tax Revenue for such Tax Year relating only to New Employees by (y) the monthly average of Number of New Employees (determined on a twelve (12) month basis) employed during such Tax Year.
- (L) **"Number of Full-Time Employee Equivalents"** means one fortieth (1/40) of the total number of compensated hours worked in a work week by permanent employees that are paid at least the Minimum Qualifying Wage for the duration of the applicable Tax Year (whether full-time or part-time), provided that the hours included in the calculation may not exceed forty (40) per week for any individual employee.
- (M) **"Number of New Employees"** means, for any stated period, the Number of Full-Time Employee Equivalents employed in that period, calculated only with reference to hours worked by New Employees.
- (N) **"Related Member"** means any of the Grantee's "related members" (as defined in ORC Section 122.171(A)(7)) that has at least one employee whose primary work location is within the City Boundaries (not limited to the Project Site), including those "related members" that begin operations within the City Boundaries on or after the Effective Date.
- (O) **"Tax Year"** means the fiscal year used by the Grantee to compute net profits under CMC Chapter 311.

3. **PROJECT; JOB CREATION AND RETENTION.**

- (A) **Grantee Representations.** The Grantee represents that:
- (1) The monthly average of the Number of Full-Time Employee Equivalents employed by the Grantee, for whom the Project Site was the primary work location, for the three (3) full calendar month period immediately prior to the Determination Date was 0.
 - (2) The monthly average of the Grantee's City-Wide Employees for the three (3) full calendar month period immediately prior to the Determination Date was 2 (the "**Baseline City-Wide Employment Level**").
 - (3) The monthly average of Aggregate Employees for the three (3) full calendar month period immediately prior to the Determination Date was 2 (the "**Baseline Aggregate Employment Level**").
 - (4) Related Members of the Grantee with any employees whose primary work location is within the City Boundaries as of the Effective Date (and the Related Members' Cincinnati addresses and Federal Tax Identification Numbers) consist of the following: None.
 - (5) The Grantee shall give written notice to the City of any Related Member that begins operations within the City Boundaries on or after the Effective Date.
- (B) **Minimum Expenditures.** The Grantee agrees to expend a minimum of \$425,000 on or before December 31, 2023 to accomplish the Project.
- (C) **Minimum Number of New Employees.** Within three (3) years from the Determination Date, the Grantee agrees to employ a Number of New Employees at the Project Site equal to at least fifty-five (55). The Grantee agrees that the aggregate annual wages of the New Employees will be equal to at least \$7,960,000.

- (D) Relocation of Employment Positions from Elsewhere in Ohio. The Grantee may not relocate a substantial number of employment positions from elsewhere in Ohio (i.e., outside the City) unless the Director of the Department of Community and Economic Development determines that the legislative authority of the county, township, or municipal corporation from which the employment positions would be relocated has been notified by the Grantee of the relocation.
- (E) Employment Retention by the Grantee.
- (1) During each year of the Employment Retention Period, the Grantee agrees to maintain a monthly average of Aggregate Employees (determined on a twelve (12) month basis) equal to or greater than the Baseline Aggregate Employee Level.
 - (2) During each of the first three (3) years of the City Tax Credit Term, the Grantee agrees to maintain a monthly average of the Grantee's City-Wide Employees (determined on a twelve (12) month basis) equal to or greater than the Baseline City-Wide Employee Level.
 - (3) Beginning with the fourth (4th) year of the City Tax Credit Term and continuing during each subsequent year of the Employment Retention Period, the Grantee agrees to maintain an average Net Number of New Employees (determined on a twelve (12) month basis) of at least ninety percent (90%) of the highest Net Number of New Employees reported by the Grantee in calculating the City Income Tax Credit in any prior Tax Year during the City Tax Credit Term.

The Grantee acknowledges and agrees that the obligations of the Grantee under this Agreement may be affected by decisions of the Related Members, as the City's agreement to provide the City Income Tax Credit authorized herein is conditioned on maintenance of the existing employment within the City Boundaries by both the Grantee and the Related Members. The Grantee may apply to the City Manager for waiver of this employment retention requirement (which waiver may be granted in the City Manager's sole discretion) on the grounds that the Grantee's failure to maintain the required Net Number of New Employees is excusable based on exceptional circumstances not under the control of the Grantee or of the Related Members, as described in Section 12.

- (F) City Residents; Referral Procedure for New Hires. The Grantee agrees to use its best efforts to fill at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the new jobs created in connection with the Project with employees residing within the City Boundaries (the "City Resident Hiring Goal"). In furtherance of such goal, the Grantee shall implement the following procedures:
- (1) City Representative. In its efforts to meet the City Resident Hiring Goal, the Grantee agrees to request referrals from the OhioMeansJobs Center (or such other agency as the City Manager may designate) when positions need to be filled. A representative of the personnel office of the Grantee will meet periodically with a representative of the OhioMeansJobs Center (the "City Representative") to assess the Grantee's future employment needs and to assure that qualified applicants can be recruited and trained in a timely manner.
 - (2) Initial Positions. As soon as practicable after execution of this Agreement, and no later than ninety (90) days prior to the earlier of (a) the scheduled initial occupancy of the Project or completion of renovation or expansion or (b) the date when the following employment positions will be filled, the Grantee agrees to notify the City Representative of the following:
 - (i) the number of new employees that will be required, and the date when the positions must be filled;
 - (ii) the training, qualifications and experience required for the individuals who will fill the positions; and
 - (iii) the name, address and telephone number of the person responsible for hiring. For positions requiring customized training, the Grantee agrees to provide such notice as far in advance of such ninety-day period as is practicable.
 - (3) City Referrals. The City Representative shall, within thirty (30) days after receiving such notification from the Grantee, submit in writing the following: (a) the positions for which the City intends to make referrals; (b) the names and qualifications of referred applicants for each position available; and (c) the date when these applicants will be available for interview. For positions requiring customized training, however, such information may be submitted to the Grantee up to thirty (30) days prior to the date that such positions are to be filled.

- (4) Interviews. The Grantee agrees to interview those applicants who are referred by the City Representative and shall consider for employment those applicants the Grantee finds to be qualified for an available position. If (a) the City Representative informs the Grantee that it does not intend to make referrals for a position, (b) the City Representative fails to refer applicants who are available for interview for a position in accordance with this subsection or (c) the applicants referred for a position are deemed not qualified by the Grantee, then the Grantee may hire individuals from other sources for such position, without any further obligations or restrictions hereunder as to such position.
- (5) Subsequent Positions. During the three (3) year period following the date upon which this Agreement becomes effective, if the Grantee needs to fill a vacant employment position (either from attrition or an increase in employment), the Grantee agrees to notify the City Representative for an additional referral of applicants. The Grantee, however, is under no obligation to postpone the hiring of a new employee pending receipt of referrals from the City Representative. If the position is still vacant at the time referrals are received from the City Representative, the Grantee shall interview those applicants who are referred by the City Representative and shall consider for employment those applicants the Grantee finds to be qualified for an available position.
- (6) Continuation of Referral Procedure. If the Grantee and the City agree that this referral process has been mutually beneficial, the parties shall continue the process after the three (3) year period.

4. CITY INCOME TAX CREDIT.

- (A) Credit Requirements. Subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, for each Tax Year during the City Tax Credit Term in which the Grantee has claimed the City Income Tax Credit on an income tax return filed directly with the City with respect to its net profits and is otherwise in full compliance with all requirements under both CMC Chapter 311 and this Agreement, the Grantee shall be allowed to apply the City Income Tax Credit stated in this Section against the tax imposed on the Grantee's net profits under CMC Chapter 311. The City Income Tax Credit shall be applied in accordance with any applicable rules and regulations (consistent with this Agreement) that may be adopted by the Board of Review (as defined in CMC Section 311-9-B1).
- (B) Amount of Credit. The amount of the City Income Tax Credit shall be the lesser of \$30,000 or thirty-five percent (35%) of any New Income Tax Revenue in a given Tax Year. The City Income Tax Credit shall be applied against net profits tax due to the City (pursuant to CMC Chapter 311) from the Grantee for such Tax Year. The City Income Tax Credit shall be allowed only after the allowance of all other credits and deductions under CMC Chapter 311. If the City Income Tax Credit exceeds the Grantee's tax liability for such Tax Year, the City Income Tax Credit shall be fully refundable.
- (C) Related Members. The Grantee acknowledges and agrees that the City Income Tax Credit calculated under this Agreement will be reduced to the extent that reductions in the number of Aggregate Employees of both the Grantee and the Related Members affect the calculation of Net Number of New Employees.

5. COVENANT AS TO OUTSTANDING LIABILITIES; INSPECTION OF RECORDS; FALSE STATEMENTS. In accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 9.66, (A) the Grantee affirmatively covenants that it does not owe: (1) any delinquent taxes to the State of Ohio (the "State") or to a political subdivision of the State; (2) any moneys to the State or a State agency for the administration or enforcement of any environmental laws of the State; or (3) any other moneys to the State, a State agency or a political subdivision of the State that are past due, regardless of whether the amounts owed are being contested in a court of law or not; (B) the Grantee authorizes the City and/or the State to inspect the personal financial statements of the Grantee, including tax records and other similar information not ordinarily open to public inspection; and (C) the Grantee authorizes the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the Ohio Department of Taxation to release information to the City and or other State departments in connection with the above statements. As provided by statute, a knowingly false statement under this Section may be prosecuted as a first-degree misdemeanor under Ohio Revised Code Section 2921.13, may render the Grantee ineligible for any future

economic development assistance from the State or any political subdivision of the State and will result in the City requiring the Grantee's repayment of any assistance provided by the City in connection with the Project.

6. TERMINATION; REIMBURSEMENT FOR DEFAULT.

- (A) Suspension or Termination of the City Income Tax Credit. Subject to the provisions of subsections (B) and (C) below, if the City provides the Grantee with written notice of an event of default under this Agreement, and such default is not cured to the City's satisfaction within thirty (30) days of such notice, the City shall suspend or terminate the City Income Tax Credit hereunder and may, in the City's sole discretion, take such other measures as may be lawful (including suing for specific performance). Except as provided in subsections (B) or (C) below, such suspension or termination shall only affect City Income Tax Credits otherwise allowable after the date of suspension or termination.
- (B) Grantee's Failure to Comply with Job Creation and Retention Obligations. If the City provides the Grantee with written notice of an event of default under Section 3(C) or 3(D), and such default is not cured to the City's satisfaction within thirty (30) days of such notice, the City may, after giving the Grantee an opportunity to explain such default, require the Grantee to pay to the City all or a portion of the City Income Tax Credits previously claimed under this Agreement. In determining the portion of the City Income Tax Credit amounts to be repaid, the City may consider the effect of market conditions on the Grantee's Project and whether the Grantee continues to maintain other operations and employment in the City. For the avoidance of doubt, the City shall have the ability to exercise its rights under this Section with respect to each event of default under Section 3(C) or 3(D) (i.e. in the event that Grantee defaults under Section 3(C) or 3(D) in multiple Tax Years, the City may require the Grantee to pay to the City all or a portion of the City Income Tax Credits previously claimed and not repaid under this Agreement after each event of default).
- (C) Grantee's Failure to Comply with Outstanding Liability Obligations. If the City provides the Grantee with written notice of an event of default under Section 5, the City may, after giving the Grantee an opportunity to explain such default, require the Grantee to pay to the City all or any portion of the City Income Tax Credits previously claimed under this Agreement. For the avoidance of doubt, the City shall have the ability to exercise its rights under this Section with respect to each event of default under Section 5 (i.e. in the event that Grantee defaults under Section 5 in multiple Tax Years, the City may require the Grantee to pay to the City all or a portion of the City Income Tax Credits previously claimed and not repaid under this Agreement after each event of default).
- (D) Reimbursement. The Grantee hereby agrees (i) to make any payments required by the City under this Section within thirty (30) days of written demand by the City and (ii) in the event that the City refunds any Income Tax Revenue in a subsequent Tax Year for which a City Income Tax Credit was previously granted pursuant to this Agreement (the "Refund Amount"), then no later than thirty (30) days following Grantee's receipt of written notice from the City (the "City's Notice"), the Grantee will either (a) pay an amount equal to the Refund Amount to the City, as detailed in the City's Notice or (b) deliver written notice to the City that the Grantee will reduce its future City Income Tax Credits by the Refund Amount, such reduction to begin with the first City Income Tax Credit the Grantee is eligible to receive pursuant to this Agreement following the Grantee's receipt of the City's Notice. In the event that the Grantee fails to make a timely election pursuant to the foregoing sentence, then the City may, in its sole and absolute discretion, reduce the amount of any future City Income Tax Credits by the Refund Amount, charge interest on the Refund Amount, terminate this Agreement, and/or take any and all other actions available to the City pursuant to this Agreement and applicable law. Amounts due and not paid when due shall bear interest at the rate specified in ORC Section 1343.03(A) (as such rate is in effect on the date of the applicable payment demand by the City). The Grantee hereby expressly waives the statute of limitations period contained in CMC Chapter 311 with respect to any such demand and payment.

7. **SUBMISSION OF ANNUAL REPORTS.** During the Employment Retention Period, the Grantee shall submit to the City an annual progress report documenting the Number of Full-Time Employee Equivalents at the Project Site, the number of the Grantee's City-Wide Employees, the number of Aggregate Employees, the Net Number of New Employees, the New Income Tax Revenue, the hourly wages and any related Grantee-paid benefits claimed as part of a Minimum Qualifying Wage for each New Employee for the duration of the applicable Tax Year, and any other information that the City deems relevant to this Agreement. The report shall include computations of necessary employment information for the Grantee and the Related Members for the report period, and the City may, in its discretion, require that the report be submitted in a certain format and manner (e.g., submission of a particular electronic file format, mailing a hard copy, etc.). The Grantee agrees to furnish the progress report to the City no later than the first business day of May following each year during the Employment Retention Period. The annual report, as submitted, must be certified as accurate and signed by (A) an independent certified public accountant licensed to do business in the state of Ohio (an "ICPA"), (B) the Chief Executive Officer of the Grantee and (C) the Chief Financial Officer of the Grantee; provided, however, that (1) reports for any or all of the initial two Tax Years may be submitted without certification and signature of an ICPA, so long as the Grantee's report for the third Tax Year includes an ICPA certification and signature for all Tax Years in which a City Income Tax Credit has been claimed without previous certification by an ICPA and (2) after the report for the third Tax Year, the ICPA certification and signature need not be provided more frequently than once every two years, so long as each ICPA certification and signature applies both to the current reported Tax Year and any previous Tax Year in which a City Income Tax Credit has been claimed without previous certification by an ICPA. If the report is approved by the City as demonstrating compliance with this Agreement, a certificate of verification from the City will be sent to the Grantee and the Tax Commissioner (as defined in CMC Section 311-9-T2) within thirty (30) days after receipt of the annual report. Failure to submit an annual report within the time periods specified herein will be considered a default and may result in termination of this Agreement.

8. **SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM.**¹

(A) **Small Business Enterprise Program Policy.** The policy of the City is that a fair share of contracts be awarded to Small Business Enterprises (as such term is defined in CMC Section 323-1, "SBEs"). Pursuant to CMC Section 323-7, the City's annual goal for SBE participation shall be thirty percent (30%) of the City's total dollars spent for construction (as such term is defined in CMC Section 323-1), supplies (as such term is defined in CMC Section 323-1), services (as such term is defined in CMC Section 323-1) and professional services (as such term is defined in CMC Section 323-1). Accordingly, the Grantee shall use its best efforts and take affirmative steps to achieve the City's goal of voluntarily meeting thirty percent (30%) SBE participation. A list of SBEs may be obtained from the City's Department of Economic Inclusion. The Grantee may refer interested firms to the City's Department of Economic Inclusion for review and possible certification as an SBE. The Grantee shall comply with the provisions of CMC Chapter 323, including without limitation taking at least the following affirmative steps:

- (1) Including qualified SBEs on solicitation lists.
- (2) Assuring that SBEs are solicited whenever they are potential sources. The Grantee must advertise, on at least two separate occasions, both in local minority publications and in other local newspapers of general circulation, invitations to SBEs to provide services, to supply materials, or to bid on construction contracts, as applicable.
- (3) When economically feasible, dividing total requirements into small tasks or quantities so as to permit maximum SBE participation.
- (4) If any subcontracts are to be let, the Grantee shall require the prime contractor (if different from the Grantee) to take the above affirmative steps.
- (5) Prior to the commencement of work under any subcontracts, the Grantee shall provide to the City a list of such subcontractors, including information as to the dollar amount of the subcontracts and such other information as may be requested by the City. The Grantee shall update the report monthly.

¹ Note: The Department of Community and Economic Development is currently reviewing alternatives for updating this provision based on recent legislative changes adopted by Council. If an alternative policy is approved by DCED prior to the execution of this Agreement, this provision will be revised accordingly.

- (6) The Grantee shall periodically document its best efforts and affirmative steps to meet the above SBE participation goals by submitting such information as may be requested from time to time by the City.
- (B) Small Business Enterprise Program Remedies. Failure of the Grantee or its contractors and subcontractors to take the affirmative steps specified above, to provide fair and equal opportunity to SBEs, or to provide technical assistance to SBEs as may be necessary to reach SBE participation as set out in CMC Chapter 323 may be construed by the City as failure of the Grantee to use its best efforts, and, in addition to other remedies under this Agreement, may be a cause for the City to file suit in Common Pleas Court to enforce specific performance of the terms of this Section. The provisions of CMC Section 323-99 are hereby incorporated by reference into this Agreement.
- (C) Equal Employment Opportunity Program. This Agreement is subject to and hereby incorporates the provisions of the Equal Employment Opportunity Program set forth in CMC Chapter 325 (including, without limitation, CMC Section 325-9).
- (D) Further Information. Details concerning both the SBE Program and the Equal Employment Opportunity Program can be obtained from the City's Department of Economic Inclusion, Two Centennial Plaza, 805 Central Avenue, Suite 222, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, (513)352-3144.
9. RECORDS, ACCESS AND MAINTENANCE. Throughout the period required by CMC Section 311-81, the Grantee agrees to establish and maintain such records as are necessary to document compliance with this Agreement (including but not limited to, financial reports, payroll records, documentation with respect to any Grantee-paid benefits claimed as part of a Minimum Qualifying Wage, intake and participant information and all other relevant information). For the three (3) year period following the end of the Employment Retention Period, the Grantee agrees to maintain records of the amounts of City Income Tax Credits claimed and allowed. The parties further agree that records with respect to any audit disallowances, litigation or dispute between the City and the Grantee shall be maintained for the time needed for the resolution of said disallowance, litigation or dispute, and that in the event of early termination of this Agreement (or if for any other reason the City shall require a review of the records related to the Project), the Grantee shall, at its own cost and expense, segregate all such records related to the Project and this Agreement (or copies thereof) from its other records of operation.
10. AUDITS AND INSPECTIONS. At any time during normal business hours upon written notice and as often as the City may deem necessary, the Grantee shall make available to the City and to appropriate State agencies or officials all records of the Grantee and the Related Members with respect to matters covered by this Agreement including, but not limited to, records of personnel and conditions of employment, and shall permit the City to audit, examine and make excerpts or transcripts from such records.
11. FORBEARANCE NOT A WAIVER. No act of forbearance or failure to insist on the prompt performance by the Grantee of its obligations under this Agreement, either express or implied, shall be construed as a waiver by the City of any of its rights hereunder.
12. ENFORCED FAILURE TO PERFORM FOR CAUSES BEYOND CONTROL OF THE GRANTEE -- RELIEF FROM REIMBURSEMENT OBLIGATION.
- (A) The Grantee shall not be required to pay the reimbursement required for default under Section 6(B) of this Agreement for any Tax Year in which such default is due to unforeseeable causes beyond the control of the Grantee and the Related Members and without fault or negligence of the Grantee or the Related Members, restricted to: acts of the federal, state or city government; orders of courts; fires, floods, epidemics, earthquakes or similar natural disasters; quarantine restrictions; strikes; and other causes which in the opinion of the City Manager are beyond the control of the Grantee and the Related Members and without fault or negligence of the Grantee or the Related Members. Economic difficulties of the Grantee or the Related Members (including, without limitation, bankruptcy), do not constitute causes beyond the control of the Grantee or the Related Members under this subsection.

If the Grantee seeks the benefit of the provisions of this subsection it shall, within sixty (60) days after the beginning of any such unforeseeable cause, notify the City thereof in writing.

- (B) Notwithstanding the provisions set forth in subsection (A) above, the Grantee shall not be allowed a City Income Tax Credit hereunder (including any credit carried forward from prior tax years) in any Tax Year in which the Grantee is not in full compliance with all requirements of this Agreement.

13. **COMPLIANCE WITH IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT.** In the performance of its obligations under this Agreement, the Grantee agrees to comply with the provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act codified at 8 U.S.C. §§ 1324a(a)(1)(A) and (a)(2). Any noncompliance with such provisions shall be solely determined by either the federal agencies authorized to enforce the Immigration and Nationality Act or the U.S. Attorney General, in accordance with Executive Order 12989 of the U.S. President dated February 13, 1996, and as amended by Executive Order 13465 of the U.S. President dated June 6, 2008.
14. **INDEMNIFICATION.** The Grantee shall indemnify, defend and save the City, its agents and employees harmless from and against any and all losses, claims, damages, liabilities, costs or expenses (including reasonable fees, disbursements, settlement costs and other charges of counsel) imposed on, incurred by or asserted against any of them in connection with any litigation, investigation, claim or proceeding commenced or threatened related to the negotiation, preparation, execution, delivery, enforcement, performance or administration of this Agreement, any other documents related to this Agreement or any undertaking or proceeding related to any of the transactions contemplated hereby or thereby or any act, omission, event or transaction related or attendant thereto, including amounts paid in settlement, court costs and the fees and expenses of counsel, except that the Grantee shall not have any obligation under this Section to the extent that such losses, claims, damages, liabilities, costs or expenses do not result from an act or omission by the Grantee. To the extent that the undertaking to indemnify, pay and hold harmless set forth in this Section may be unenforceable because it violates any law or public policy, the Grantee shall pay the maximum portion which it is permitted to pay under applicable law to the City in satisfaction of indemnified matters under this Section. To the extent permitted by applicable law, neither the Grantee nor the City shall assert, and each of the Grantee and the City hereby waives, any claim against either the Grantee or the City, as applicable, on any theory of liability for special, indirect, consequential or punitive damages (as opposed to direct or actual damages) arising out of, in connection with, or as a result of, this Agreement, any other documents related to this Agreement or any undertaking or transaction contemplate hereby. All amounts due under this Section shall be payable upon demand. The foregoing indemnity shall survive the termination of this Agreement.
15. **CITY IDENTIFICATION IN MARKETING MATERIALS.** The Grantee shall acknowledge the financial support of the City with respect to this Agreement in all printed materials (including but not limited to informational releases, pamphlets and brochures, construction signs, project and identification signage and stationery) and any publicity (such as but not limited to materials appearing on the Internet, television, cable television, radio or in the press or any other printed media). In identifying the City as a funding source, the Grantee shall use either the phrase "Funded by the City of Cincinnati" or a City of Cincinnati logotype or other form of acknowledgement that has been approved in advance in writing by the City. The Grantee's obligations under this Section shall be in effect throughout the term of this Agreement.
16. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST.** The Grantee agrees that no officer, employee or agent of the City who exercises any functions or responsibilities in connection with the planning and carrying out of this Agreement, nor any immediate family member, close business associate or organization which is about to employ any such person, shall have any personal financial interest, direct or indirect, in the Grantee or in this Agreement and the Grantee shall take appropriate steps to assure compliance.
17. **MISCELLANEOUS.**
- (A) **Relocation of Project Site Within the City.** During the City Tax Credit Term, the Grantee may change the location of the Project Site to another location, but only within the City of Cincinnati's corporate boundaries.

- (B) Governing Law. This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State as to all matters, including but not limited to matters of validity, construction, effect and performance.
- (C) Forum and Venue. All actions regarding this Agreement shall be brought in a court of competent subject matter jurisdiction in Hamilton County, Ohio.
- (D) Entire Document. This Agreement and its exhibits and any documents referred to herein constitute the complete understanding of the parties and merge and supersede any and all other discussions, agreements and understandings, either oral or written, between the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof.
- (E) Severability. If any provisions of this Agreement are declared by final non-appealable court order to be unlawful or invalid under applicable law, then such order shall not invalidate the remainder of this Agreement not found to be unlawful or invalid and shall not create any liability to the City resulting from the unlawfulness or invalidity of such provisions. Any provision so declared to be unlawful or invalid shall, if possible, be construed in a manner which will give effect to the terms of such provision to the fullest extent possible while remaining lawful and valid.
- (F) Assignment. Neither this Agreement nor any rights, duties, or obligations described herein shall be assigned or subcontracted by the Grantee without the prior express written consent of the City.
- (G) Successor in Interest. Each and all of the Grantee's obligations under this Agreement shall extend to and bind not only the Grantee, but its successors and assigns. Only in the case of assignment consented to by the City (as provided in subsection (F) above), the Grantee's benefits hereunder shall inure to the benefit of any approved assignee.
- (H) Certification as to Non-Debarment. Grantee represents that neither it nor any of its principals is presently debarred by any federal, state, or local government agency. In completing the Project, Grantee shall not solicit bids from any contractors or subcontractors who are identified as being debarred by any federal, state, or local government agency. If Grantee or any of its principals becomes debarred by any federal, state, or local government agency during the term of this Agreement, Grantee shall be considered in default under this Agreement.
- (I) Notices. All notices, consents, demands, requests and other communications given hereunder shall be in writing and shall be deemed duly given if personally delivered or sent by mail, registered or certified, to the addresses set forth hereunder, or to such other address as the other party hereto may designate in written notice transmitted in accordance with this provision.

To the City:

City of Cincinnati
801 Plum Street, Room 152
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
Attention: City Manager

with a copy to:

City of Cincinnati
Centennial Plaza Two, Suite 700
805 Central Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
Attention: Director, Department of Community and Economic Development

To the Grantee:

StarStone US Intermediaries, Inc.

221 Dawson Road
Columbia, SC 29223

And a copy to:
StarStone U.S. Intermediaries, Inc.
201 East 5th Street, 12th Floor
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
Attention: Lynn Tetley, Assistant Vice President Human Resources

If the Grantee sends a notice to the City alleging that the City is in breach of this Agreement, the Grantee shall simultaneously send a copy of such notice by U.S. certified mail to: City of Cincinnati, 801 Plum Street, Room 214, Cincinnati, OH 45202, Attention: City Solicitor.

- (J) Wage Enforcement. This Agreement is or may be subject to the Wage Enforcement provisions of the Cincinnati Municipal Code. These provisions require that any person who has an agreement with the City, or a contractor or subcontractor of that person, shall report all complaints or adverse determinations of Wage Theft and Payroll Fraud (as defined in Chapter 326 of the Cincinnati Municipal Code) against the person, contractor or subcontractors to the Department of Economic Inclusion within 30 days of notification of the complaint or adverse determination. Under the Wage Enforcement provisions, the City shall have the authority, under certain circumstances, to terminate this Agreement or reduce the incentives or subsidies to be provided under this Agreement and to seek other remedies.
- (K) Legal Requirements. In completing and operating the Project, and in undertaking the matters contemplated by this Agreement, the Grantee shall comply with all applicable statutes, ordinances, regulations, and rules of the government of the United States, State of Ohio, County of Hamilton, and City of Cincinnati.
- (L) Counterparts and Electronic Signatures. This Agreement may be executed by the parties hereto in two or more counterparts and each executed counterpart shall be considered an original but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument. This Agreement may be executed and delivered by electronic signature; any original signatures that are initially delivered electronically shall be physically delivered as soon as reasonably possible.
18. FEES. The Grantee shall pay to the City (i) within 10 days following the Effective Date, an initial administrative fee in connection with the City's application, underwriting, processing and documentation costs equal to \$3,000.00, and (ii) concurrently with the submission of each required annual report under Section 7, an annual monitoring, review and administration fee of \$2,000.00.

[Remainder of page intentionally left blank]

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement on the dates indicated below, the latest date of which shall be the "Effective Date."

STARSTONE US INTERMEDIARIES, INC.,
a New Jersey corporation

By: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____, 2021

As authorized by corporate resolution dated _____, 2021

CITY OF CINCINNATI,
an Ohio municipal corporation

By: _____

Paula Boggs Muething, City Manager

Date: _____, 2021

Approved as to Form:

Assistant City Solicitor

Certification of Funds:

Certified Date: _____

Fund/Code: _____

Amount: _____

By: _____

Karen Alder, City Finance Director