

September 29, 2021

To: Mayor and Members of City Council 202102844

From: Paula Boggs Muething, City Manager

Subject: **Emergency Ordinance – Parks: Biochar Replication Bloomberg Philanthropies Grant**

Attached is an Emergency Ordinance captioned:

ESTABLISHING new capital improvement program project account no. 980x203x222004, “Biochar Replication Bloomberg Grant”; **AUTHORIZING** the City Manager to apply for, accept, and appropriate grant resources in an amount of up to \$400,000 from Bloomberg Philanthropies into the newly established capital improvement program project account no. 980x203x222004, “Biochar Replication Bloomberg Grant,” for the purpose of implementing a biochar production facility; and **AUTHORIZING** the transfer and appropriation of local matching resources from the unappropriated surplus of Urban Forestry Fund 428 in the amount of \$100,000 to newly established capital improvement program project account no. 980x203x222004, “Biochar Replication Bloomberg Grant.”

This Emergency Ordinance authorizes the City Manager to apply for, accept, and appropriate a grant in the amount of \$400,000 from Bloomberg Philanthropies for the purpose of implementing a biochar production facility. This Emergency Ordinance would also authorize the Finance Director to establish new capital improvement program project no. 980x203x222004, “Biochar Replication Bloomberg Grant,” for the purpose of providing grant resources for implementing a biochar production facility.

This Emergency Ordinance authorizes the transfer and appropriation of \$100,000 from the unappropriated surplus of Urban Forestry Fund 428 to satisfy the local match requirement. There are no new FTE associated with the grant. While the grant application deadline was September 24, 2021, funding will not be accepted without the approval of this Emergency Ordinance by the City Council.

In March 2021, the Cincinnati Parks Division of Natural Resources partnered with the City’s Office of Environment & Sustainability (OES) and the University of Cincinnati (UC) to submit a proposal to Bloomberg Philanthropies to participate in the Mayors Challenge: Biochar Replication Project. Cincinnati was one of only ten cities in the world chosen to participate. The Urban Forestry team recently completed a summer workshop with Bloomberg Philanthropies learning about the Biochar product. Biochar is a supplemental planting product that is incorporated into the soil of new tree plantings and landscape beds to increase the water and nutrient holding

capacity of the soil. The addition of biochar into the soil helps improve the growth rate and health of the trees and plants by locking the nutrients and water near the root structure.

This Emergency Ordinance is in accordance with the “Sustain” goal to “Preserve our natural and built environment” and strategy to “Protect our natural resources,” as described on pages 193 – 196 of Plan Cincinnati (2012).

The reason for the emergency is the immediate need to assure the timely submission of the grant application and acceptance of any granted funds.

The Administration recommends passage of this Emergency Ordinance.

cc: Andrew M. Dudas, Budget Director
Karen Alder, Finance Director



Attachment