

November 17, 2021

To: Mayor and Members of City Council 202103111

From: Paula Boggs Muething, City Manager

Subject: Emergency Ordinance – Parks: Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Canopy Restoration Grant

Attached is an Emergency Ordinance captioned:

AUTHORIZING the City Manager to apply for, accept, and appropriate grant resources in an amount up to \$25,000 from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Canopy Restoration Grant Program for the purpose of providing funding for the restoration and improvement of urban forests, specifically in the Lower Price Hill and Queensgate neighborhoods; and **AUTHORIZING** the Finance Director to deposit the grant funds into Urban Forestry Fund 428.

This Emergency Ordinance authorizes the City Manager to apply for, accept, and appropriate a grant in the amount of \$25,000 from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) for the purpose of restoring and improving urban forests, specifically in the Lower Price Hill and Queensgate neighborhoods. This Emergency Ordinance also authorizes the Finance Director to deposit any awarded funds into Urban Forestry Fund 428.

The local match requirement will be met by normal staffing hours used to plant the trees, valued at \$20,000, and \$5,000 from Forestry Special Assessments Fund 792. Sufficient resources are available in this fund, and its uses are limited to the Urban Forestry Program. No new FTE are associated with the grant. While the grant application deadline was October 31, 2021, funding will not be accepted without the approval of this Emergency Ordinance by the City Council.

The Lower Price Hill Community Council requested tree planting through the FY 2022 Community Budget Request (CBR) process. The Urban Forestry Program's South District Forester has already been working with the Lower Price Hill neighborhood and Groundwork Ohio River Valley on this ambitious project, in which the community would cover the cost to remove concrete in thirty-eight (38) new planting sites. Eighty-two (82) trees will also be planted in the Queensgate neighborhood.

Cincinnati Parks GIS Analysts performed the attached geospatial analysis utilizing data from the 2021 urban tree canopy assessment to identify the best locations for planting based upon low canopy coverage, high heat island impacts, and proximity to at risk/marginalized communities. The target area for this grant falls primarily

within the underserved, or heavily industrial communities of Lower Price Hill, Queensgate, and the West End.

ODNR announced this round of Urban Canopy Restoration Grants to address the critical need to restore and improve the urban forest due to catastrophic losses from Emerald Ash Borers and to reduce the impact of climate change, while building resiliency through tree planting in urban communities.

Acceptance of the grant is in accordance with the Sustain goal to “Preserve our natural and built environment” of Plan Cincinnati (2012), specifically, the strategy to “Protect our natural resources,” as described on pages 194 – 196. It is also in accordance with the Collaborate goal to “Work in synergy with the Cincinnati Community” and strategy to “Unite our communities” as described on pages 210 – 212 of Plan Cincinnati (2012).

The reason for the emergency is the need to accept grant resources in a timely manner.

The Administration recommends passage of this Emergency Ordinance.

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



Attachment