

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, nonprofit corporation Austin Free-Net was established in 1995 to provide computer/Internet access and digital literacy training to foster skills that enable people to succeed in a technological age and help bridge the digital divide; and

WHEREAS, the City Council approved \$53,815.56 for the program for FY 2011-12, the seventeenth consecutive year of the public/private partnership; and

WHEREAS, Austin Free-Net launched and managed more than 75 computer centers in Austin since its inception. The first large scale project was providing the Austin Public Library system with Internet-connected public computers which are now fully self-sustaining.

WHEREAS, Austin Free-Net currently serves an average of 10,000 participants per month and provides 1,700 hours of computer literacy training per month; and

WHEREAS, Austin Free-net, the nation's premier provider of technology education and access to low income (\$15,000 below/year) and under served (low literacy and minority) communities received Federal funding which allowed significant growth and program enhancements, including;

- 40% increase in number of public computer center (15 to 21)
- 76% increase in the number of computers deployed in the field (89 to 157)
- 41% increase in monthly user session (7,300 to 10,000)
- 3,947% increase in monthly training hours offered (18 to 1,700)
- 878% increase in number of training participants per month (47 to 460)
- 263% increase in the number of volunteers participating each month (11 to 40); and

WHEREAS, the projected economic impact of Austin Free-Net is more than \$66.8 million annually (based on minimum wage \$7.64/hour); and

WHEREAS, over the 17 year history of Austin Free-Net, it has demonstrated itself to be a successful economic development and community investment for the people of Austin; and

WHEREAS, Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP) funding is coming to an end, resulting in a decrease and elimination of services; and

WHEREAS, an increase of \$8,968.96 per month in City of Austin funding would provide support to grow sustainable efforts that would result in uninterrupted programs for underserved portions of the community;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE AUSTIN COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION:

To recommend that the Austin City Council increase funding levels up to \$13,453.59 per month for a total of \$161,443.08 for FY 2012-2013.

ADOPTED: June 27, 2012

ATTEST: _____



John Speirs

Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs