

BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

AUSTIN COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

RECOMMENDATION NUMBER: 20140611-08

BUDGET RECOMMENDATION

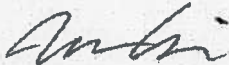
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE AUSTIN COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION:

Recommends that the Austin City Council approve in the FY 2014-2015 budget maintaining current Austin Free-Net funding of \$197,774, increasing the Grant for Technology Opportunities Program (GTOPs) funding to \$300,000 from \$200,000 and funding one (1) new FTE, a Program Specialist in the Office of Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs.

Date of Approval: June 11, 2014

Record of the vote: Unanimously approved by the Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission on a 7-0 vote.

ATTEST:



John Speirs
Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs
City of Austin



Austin Community Technology & Telecommunications Commission

P.O. Box 1088, Austin, TX 78767
(512) 974-2999

www.austintexas.gov/cttc

Commissioners

Lemuel Williams, Jr.
Chair *LW*

Elizabeth Quintanilla
Vice Chair

Wendell Ramsey
Commissioner

Melvin White
Commissioner

Chelsea McCullough
Commissioner

Tracy LaQuey Parker
Commissioner

Marcy Hoen
Commissioner

Date: July 9, 2014

To: Mayor and Council Members

From: Lemuel Williams, Chair, Austin Community Technology & Telecommunications Commission *LW*

Subject: Recommendations supporting FY 2015 Digital Inclusion Funding

At its June 11th meeting, TARA presented its proposed budget for the FY 2014-2015 Budget to the Austin Community Technology & Telecommunications Commission. At that meeting, the Commission approved a budget recommendation to support the City's Digital Inclusion Initiative managed by the Office of Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs.

The Commission's recommendation includes the following three provisions: to support the current level of annual funding in the amount of \$197,774 for Austin Free-Net, to increase the Grant for Technology Opportunities Program (GTOPs) annual funding to \$300,000 from the current level of \$200,000, and to support TARA's unmet needs funding request for one (1) additional FIE, a Program Specialist, in the amount of \$66,984 for FY 15. The proposed FIE would directly support the increasing levels of responsibility to build capacity supporting Digital Inclusion.

Through the City's GTOPs program, we have been able to provide matching funding to Austin area non-profit organizations that provide digital inclusion training programs to underserved residents. In FY 12, the most recent GTOPs cycle that has closed, \$175,000 in grant funding was awarded to eight organizations. Grant awardees were able to raise \$1,172,273 in matching funds made up of 4,037 volunteer hours (\$76,703 labor value), \$148,378 in in-kind donations and \$947,192 in cash contributions. For FY12, the total community investment reflects a total contribution of \$1,347,273 serving at least 1,260 individuals through the various programs. Year end results show an average achievement of 108%.

The Commission recognizes the importance of and the resulting increased workload from actions identified in the Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan that is being developed per Council Resolution Number 20140320-056. While current staff has been able to enthusiastically support the increased levels of Digital Inclusion capacity building, coordination and collaboration across all sectors of the community and City departments, the workload is not sustainable for current staffing levels of one (1) Program Coordinator (dedicated to other contract management tasks) and one (1) part-time, temporary intern. This additional staffing will serve to ensure this frontline position is able to support and enhance Austin's Digital Inclusion quality of life. The FY 15 cost of this additional FTE is \$66,984, which includes the costs of all salary and benefits components.

The Commission's vote for this Budget Recommendation was unanimous. Please let me know if I can answer any questions or provide additional information.

cc: Marc A. Ott, City Manager
Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager
Rondella Hawkins, TARA Officer