

AGENDA



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	59331	Agenda Number	31.
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Meeting Date:	6/23/2016	Department:	Human Resources
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Subject

Approve an ordinance authorizing acceptance of \$286,188 in grant funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service; and amending the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Human Resources Department Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund (Ordinance No. 20150908-001) to appropriate these funds to implement the AmeriCorps VISTA Program.

Amount and Source of Funding

Funding in the amount of \$286,188 is available from the Corporation for National and Community Service. The required City match of up to \$35,028 is available in the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Operating Budget of the Human Resources Department.

Fiscal Note

A fiscal note is attached.

Purchasing Language:	
Prior Council Action:	
For More Information:	Chiquita Eugene, Program Manager / 512-530-3335 Karen Haywood, Assistant Director / 512-974-3465
Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:	
MBE / WBE:	
Related Items:	

Additional Backup Information

AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) is a national service program designed to fight poverty through the utilization of VISTA members who commit to serve full-time for a year at a non-profit organization or local government agency for capacity and sustainability building initiatives that deal with community issues like literacy, health services, economic development, and neighborhood building. AmeriCorps VISTA members are nationally recruited college graduates who receive a monthly living stipend, health benefits and an educational award at the end of their term of service paid by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). CNCS assigns the AmeriCorps VISTA members to various community agencies.

The primary purpose of this grant is for CNCS to provide the City of Austin with up to 19 AmeriCorps VISTA members to perform volunteer service to strengthen and supplement efforts to eliminate poverty and poverty-related human, social, and environmental problems. Assignments have been identified in the following City departments: Health and Human Services, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development, Parks and Recreation, Public Works (Neighborhood Partnering), Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs, Mayor’s Office, Small Minority and

Business Resources and Human Resources Department (Equal Employment Opportunity and Fair Housing Office, and the Youth and Family Services Initiatives Office).

The funding of \$286,188 represents the cost for CNCS to provide AmeriCorps VISTA members with any benefits to which each is eligible, which may include living allowance, relocation assistance, end of service awards, health coverage, life insurance coverage, and/or child care coverage. Acceptance of these grant funds will have no impact to the General Fund this fiscal year or in future years. The required City of Austin match of \$35,028 is available in the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Operating Budget of the Human Resources Department. The agreement is subject to annual review and renewal every 12 months.

The City's association with the AmeriCorps VISTA Program began in July 2012 with an Inter-local Agreement approved by City Council between the City of Austin and University of Texas, Division of Diversity and Community Engagement. There was a continuation in August 2013 which was also approved by City Council. During the duration of the agreements, the City was assigned a total of nine AmeriCorps VISTA members. The City's cost-share for each member was less than \$12,000.

In 2014, the Chief Service Officer, working with the Mayor, recognized that the City could achieve greater benefits by entering into an agreement directly with CNCS. The City submitted a successful application on June 9, 2014 for the assignment of sixteen (16) AmeriCorps VISTA members for which the City would pay the cost-share for only three (3). The Chief Service Officer signed the agreement with CNCS on behalf of the City on June 25, 2014. The agreement became effective on July 13, 2014 and ends on July 11, 2015. The agreement was amended on January 9, 2015 to increase the number of AmeriCorps VISTA members to 17.

This action also meets the requirements of the City of Austin Administrative Bulletin No. 08-04: Grants Application and Acceptance Process. Although the City does not directly receive the funding of \$286,188 in cash, the City receives value in the form of services supported by CNCS using these funds. This Request for Council Action requests the City Council to approve an ordinance authorizing acceptance of the grant and appropriating the funding in order to fulfill the requirements of the Administrative Bulletin. The General Fund will not be required to contribute additional funds beyond those currently budgeted to this grant. When the grant funds expire, the Human Resources Department's need for continuing funding will be evaluated and may be denied.