MEMORANDUM

TO: Mark Washington, Assistant City Manager

FROM: Rondella M. Hawkins, Officer
Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs

DATE: March 14, 2017

SUBJECT: 2017 Grant for Technology Opportunities (GTOPs) Awardees

The purpose of this memorandum is to request your approval to proceed with the 2017 Grant for Technology Opportunities Program (GTOPs) and to negotiate and execute contracts with the nine (9) grant awardees, as recommended by the Community Technology & Telecommunications on March 8, 2017.

GRANT PROGRAM PURPOSE

GTOPs provides matching grant funds to Austin organizations for projects that create digital opportunities and foster digital inclusion.

The goals of the program are to:

   • Provide public access to computers and information technology, especially among underserved segments of our community.
   • Provide information technology literacy, education, and training.
   • Use information and communication technologies in innovative ways to serve the Austin community.
   • Address the Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan Goals.

AWARDEE SELECTION PROCESS

Applications for the 2017 grant were accepted from October 17, 2016 through December 6, 2016. The Community Technology & Telecommunications Commission appointed a volunteer Grant Review Committee comprised of seven (7) qualified community representatives. The City received a total of twenty-nine (29) applications for GTOPs 2017. The Committee eliminated thirteen (13) applications in the first round of scoring. The review board scored the remaining sixteen (16) applicants based on the selection criteria outlined by the Commission including: the ability of the project to reduce disparities and increase technology access and/or literacy, program feasibility, community involvement, community benefit, and a clear plan for success. The applicants were given the opportunity to give a short oral presentation to the review committee, followed by a question and answer session. After the final scores were tallied and discussed, the Committee voted on their final recommendations for full and partial awards.

FUNDING & SCORING GUIDELINES

1) $200,000 in GTOPs funds available
2) The minimum amount any organization may be awarded is 70% of their request amount.
3) To ensure scores are consistent as well as fair, each judge's scores are normalized so that their average score across all applicants is 80%.
4) The highest scores generally receive the highest awards recommendation for each Priority Program, 100% of their request (minimum of $10,000 and up to $25,000).
5) Lower scoring but still above average applicants receive a partial awards recommendation as appropriate.

SCORING GUIDANCE

- Reviewers were provided the opportunity to complete scores after hearing all presentations to serve for a comprehensive evaluation of scoring and assessment.
- Reviewers utilized a comprehensive scoring evaluation, building upon a statistical evaluation, to recommend organizations funded and not funded.
- Reflects Diversity of funding awards adhering to Commission recommended policy including Arts, Social, Education and Public Access.
- The Grant Review Committee's 2017 Recommendations were unanimous with strong consensus.

RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL

Staff requests approval of the GTOPs Grant Review Committee's recommended 2017 GTOPs Awards as approved by the Community Technology & Telecommunications Commission. Upon your approval, staff will negotiate and execute contracts of the nine (9) organizations as indicated in Attachment (A) included with this memorandum. Of the 2017 funding recommendations, (2) are new organizations to GTOPs and (2) are new programs to GTOPs.

Funding is available per the $200,000 allocated by City Council in the FY 2017 budget.

Please feel free to contact me at 974-2422 if you need additional information.

_3/28/17_

City Manager's Designee Approval   Date
Mark Washington, Assistant City Manager

Attachment: Attachment (A)

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2017 Grant for Technology Opportunities (GTOPs) Recommended Awardees					
Organization and Program Description	Imagine Austin Priority	Top Tier Priority Program Area Served	Second Tier Priority Program Area Served	TOTAL Proposed Grant Award Amount	TOTAL Amount of Grant Funds Requested
1) **Goodwill Industries of Central Texas GTOPS Award 100% of Request	Economic Development	Education & Workforce	Social, Health & Well-being	$ 24,985	$24,985
The "Careers in Technology" is a training/employment program offering Linux, Microsoft Suite, and PC Technician (A+ and Network+) certifications for low income individuals. Core services include assessment, work-based learning, placement, case management, and retention services. The program connects disadvantaged individuals to career paths in IT.	Outcomes	The program specifically targets those who are living in poverty, are undereducated, and face other barriers to employment.	The goal is to close the technology skills gap for low-income individuals and providing hard skills certifications that prepare them to enter into a career in a 21st Century field.		
2) Breakthrough Austin GTOPS Award of 98% of Request	Economic Development	Education & Workforce	Public Access & Civic Engagement	$ 24,500	$25,000
The "Connected Classroom" program combines dependable, supported access to computers & information technology with individualized, long-term case management & college access programming to help students overcome significant barriers along the path to college.	Outcomes	Providing technology access and digital literacy for low-income students who will be the first in their families to graduate from college.	More than 90% of the students who enroll in Breakthrough in middle school are still in the program through high school graduation.		
3) *The University of Texas Foundation, Inc. *GTOPs Award 96% of Request*	Economic Development	Education & Workforce	Public Access & Civic Engagement	$ 24,000	$25,000
The UT PREP program is a series of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) summer camps operated by UT Austin with connected school-year opportunities. These six-week camps begin in sixth or seventh grade and continue for four consecutive summers, providing a pathway for internships, college, and STEM careers.	Outcomes	UT PREP's primary goal is to prepare underserved students for college, career, and life via a high-quality STEM program that also meets the need of the community for more qualified workers to enter STEM fields.	UT PREP STEM Camps help meet the demand for quality STEM programs that enhance traditional education for underserved youth.		

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4)	**Latinitas Inc.** *GTOPs Award 94% of Request*	Economic Development	Education & Workforce	Arts, Culture and Community	$ 23,500	$25,000
	The Gigabit Girls program is a new thread of programming focused on virtual reality design for Austin's most economically marginalized students. The "Gigabit" in the program name refers to maximizing the city's new high-speed fiber access hubs at certain public housing sites and soon, East Side libraries, where Latinitas lives.	Outcomes	Latinitas programming is dedicated to empowering Latina youth & other youth of color through media & technology using the latest Web 2.0 platforms.	The program achieves this through; blogging, photography, video & audio production, graphic & web design, app & video game development, coding & robotics.		

5)	**Boys & Girls Clubs of Austin & Travis County** *GTOPs Award 92% of Request*	Economic Development	Education & Workforce	Public Access & Civic Engagement	$ 22,000	$23,826
	The Expanded Technology Program addresses the need to engage a significant sector of Austin's low-income and minority youth in technology-based STEM learning opportunities, allowing them to develop strong computer science and STEM skills that empower them for success in the classroom, in college and in future skilled careers.	Outcomes	This program provides crucial STEM learning opportunities for a population whose families do not generally have resources to send their children to afterschool enrichment.	This program helps to 'level the playing field' so that lower-income youth can explore STEM subjects and careers at the same time and through similarly high quality programming.		

6)	**American YouthWorks** *GTOPs Award 90% of Request*	Creative Economy	Education & Workforce	Social, Health & Well-being	$ 21,500	$24,000
	The YouthBuild Austin's IT Pathways program will enable Opportunity Youth achieve the CompTIA A+ Certification by combining academics, classroom vocational training, hands-on project-based learning, soft-skills training, community service, paid internships and guided and supported connections to employment and post-secondary education. GTOPS support would focus on the internship portion of this initiative.	Outcomes	The focus of this proposal is YouthBuild Austin's IT Pathways and Digital Leadership Pilot Initiative, an innovative, national collaboration to enable Opportunity Youth to achieve the CompTIA A+ Certification.	This valuable credential is often a gatekeeper to entry-level positions in IT Support, but often difficult for Opportunity Youth to successfully complete.		

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Meals on Wheels and More, Inc. *GTOPs Award 88% of Request*	Healthy Austin	Social, Health & Well-being	Public Access and Civic Engagement	$ 16,250	$18,500	
7) The Technology for Seniors program helps connect homebound elderly or disabled adults connect with the internet. MOWCTX provides tablets, internet sign up, and tech support for eligible and interested clients.		Outcomes	Meals on Wheels Central Texas (a.k.a. Meals on Wheels and More) strives to help our clients remain independently in their own homes with dignity for as long as possible.	More than half of their homebound elderly and/or disabled clients live alone, making it difficult for them to meet their basic needs.		

Austin Pathways (HACA Scholarship Foundation) *GTOPs Award 86% of Request*	Economic Development	Education & Workforce	Social, Health & Well-being	$ 21,750	$25,000
8) The Lap Apprenticeship Program (LAP) provides HACA residents with computer lab management & facilitation training to serve as apprentices that assist HACA residents utilizing community-based computer labs. This program will expand the positive impact of LAP in addressing the digital divide by increasing the number of apprentices; housing properties and residents served.		Outcomes	To use housing & supportive services as a platform to improve low-income resident's education & employment outcomes,	To provide residents with the tools & skills to combat poverty & promote self-sufficiency.	

***Creative Action (Theatre Action Project)** *GTOPs Award 81.80 % of Request*	Creative Economy	Arts, Culture & Community	Education & Workforce	$ 21,515	$25,000
9) The Spark Schools Program will enhance the quality and rigor of digital media education at Campbell while increasing the amount of arts and technology opportunities offered during the school day and expanding access to technology for 250+ scholars annually.		Outcomes	Spark Schools at Campbell Elementary helps at-risk young people discover their talents, achieve their goals, engage deeply with the world around them, and succeed as leaders and innovators now and into the future.	This program propels hundreds of scholars at Campbell Elementary towards positive futures in the digital age.	
*Denotes first time GTOPS recipient, **Denotes a new program to GTOPs.		Total 2019 GTOPs Funds Awarded $200,000			