



TO: Mayor and City Council Members
FROM: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager, City Manager's Office
SUBJECT: Resolution – Authorizing the use of up to \$15,000 from the City Council's Contingency Fund for a PurpleAir Sensors Pilot Project – July 30, 2019
DATE: July 10, 2019

SUMMARY:

Resolution authorizing the use of up to \$15,000 of City Council Contingency Funds for the purpose of partnering with University of Washington - Tacoma (UWT) and the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) to purchase "PurpleAir" sensors and create a two year pilot program to educate and engage the public in air quality monitoring to be evaluated thereafter; and, directing the City Manager to negotiate and execute an agreement with UWT outlining the scope of work and deliverables for the funding, including identifying members of the community to host the air sensors and providing public education regarding air quality and the use of air sensors. UWT and the City will consult with PSCAA to determine the optimal locations for the air sensors.

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

Mayor Woodards, Deputy Mayor McCarthy, Council Member Mello

STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:

This use of City Council Contingency Funds best aligns with City Council Strategic Priorities of:

- Strengthen and support a safe city with healthy residents.
- Encourage thriving residents with abundant opportunities for life-long learning.
- Assure outstanding stewardship of the natural and built environment.

BACKGROUND:

On November 13, 2009, EPA formally designated part of Tacoma (the Wapato Hills-Puyallup River Valley area) as in 'nonattainment', meaning that the air quality does not meet (or "attain") federal health standards. Air quality in our community is influenced by our topography and the shape of our land, meteorology and weather patterns, and the sources of pollution located in our community. Industry, cars, trucks and ships emit fine particle pollution, but the biggest source of our wintertime pollution is wood smoke. Pollution from wood smoke reaches unhealthy levels on cold, clear winter days when air is trapped close to the land ("inversion" conditions) and there is little wind to blow the smoke away. Poor air quality affects everyone, but children, the elderly, and people with existing respiratory or cardiac health problems are especially at risk. The very tiny size of fine particle pollution allows it to be inhaled deeply in the lungs and even cross into the bloodstream, increasing the potential for health risks. Thanks to the efforts of Tacoma and Pierce County residents – complying with air quality burn bans and participating in a program to remove 5,000 old polluting wood stoves, air quality has significantly improved and



EPA returned the area to ‘attainment’ status in 2015.

Monitoring air quality is essential to understanding and addressing air quality, and the Tacoma airshed is one of the most studied airsheds in the State. While robust air monitoring facilities have historically been expensive to buy, site and manage, new advances in technology and market conditions have yielded lower cost air sensors suitable for residential consumers to purchase and install. Currently, the PSCAA is piloting the deployment of ‘PurpleAir’ air sensors in a short-term North Kitsap winter study. In addition, the PSCAA is considering a future air sensor residential loan program, and independently, the NE Tacoma Neighborhood Council has purchased PurpleAir sensors to better understand air quality in the neighborhood. While these sensors primarily serve educational purposes, they can also provide reliable data for understanding air quality throughout our community. Once obtained, the information collected by the air sensors is shared and mapped with the ‘Purple Air’ website and may be utilized by the PSCAA to obtain additional information regarding air quality in a variety of locations.

On December 18, 2018, the City Council approved Resolution No. 40201, authorizing the one-time use of City Council Contingency Funds, up to \$15,000, for the purpose creating a two-year pilot program in order to educate and engage the public in air quality monitoring. In addition, the resolution directed the City Manager to negotiate and execute an agreement with PSCAA outlining the scope of work and deliverables for said funding, to include consultation regarding the most optimal locations for pollution detection and providing public education regarding air quality.

During discussions in February of 2019, PSCAA indicated it was unable to provide the full scope of work outlined in Resolution No. 40201. Therefore, another partner was needed. UWT was identified as a partner able to fulfill the scope of work.

ISSUE: In order to authorize use of the City Council’s Contingency Funds for this purpose, a resolution must be adopted. Although funding was previously secured, a resolution is needed to redirect the funding from the PSCAA to UWT.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council could reject the use of the Contingency Funds for this purpose.



RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council approve redirection of the Contingency Funds from PSCAA to UWT for the purpose of fulfilling the work outlined in Resolution No. 40201.

FISCAL IMPACT:

EXPENDITURES:

FUND NUMBER & FUND NAME *	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	COST ELEMENT	TOTAL AMOUNT
1030 – Council Contingency	660000	5330100	\$15,000
TOTAL			\$15,000

* General Fund: Include Department

REVENUES:

FUNDING SOURCE	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	COST ELEMENT	TOTAL AMOUNT
1030 – Council Contingency	660000	6311010	\$15,000
TOTAL			\$15,000

POTENTIAL POSITION IMPACT:

POSITION TITLE	PERMANENT/ PROJECT TEMPORARY POSITION	FTE IMPACT	POSITION END DATE
TOTAL			

This section should only be completed if a subsequent request will be made to increase or decrease the current position count.

FISCAL IMPACT TO CURRENT BIENNIAL BUDGET: \$15,000

ARE THE EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES PLANNED AND BUDGETED?

The City Council Contingency Fund has appropriation authority allowing for the expenditure of requested funds. These obligated funds for PSCAA initiative were awarded for the 2019/2020 Contingency Fund budget on December 18, 2018; therefore, if this resolution were adopted it would not reduce the balance of that fund beyond what was previously obligated.

IF EXPENSE IS NOT BUDGETED, PLEASE EXPLAIN HOW THEY ARE TO BE COVERED.