



CENTER FOR  
TECH AND  
CIVIC LIFE

August 21, 2020

City of Philadelphia  
Office of the Director of Finance  
1401 John F. Kennedy Blvd. Ste 1330  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102

To whom it may concern:

I am pleased to inform you that the Center for Tech and Civic Life (“CTCL”) has awarded the City of Philadelphia (“City”) a grant to support its work in connection with the safe administration of elections in 2020 (the “Grant”).

The following is a description of the Grant:

**AMOUNT OF GRANT:** Ten million, sixteen thousand and seventy-four US dollars (USD \$10,016,074).

**PURPOSE:** The Grant funds must be used exclusively for the public purpose of planning and operationalizing safe and secure election administration in the City of Philadelphia in accordance with the attached Philadelphia Safe Voting Plan 2020.

Before we transmit these funds, we ask that you sign this agreement promising to use the Grant funds in compliance with United States tax laws. Specifically, by signing this letter on behalf of the City you confirm and agree to the following:

1. The City is a local government unit or political subdivision in the meaning of 26 USC 170(c)(1).
2. This Grant shall be used *only* for the public purpose described above, and for no other purposes.
3. The City shall not use any part of this grant to give a grant to another organization unless CTCL agrees to the specific sub-grant in writing.
4. The City has produced a plan for safe and secure election administration in 2020, including an assessment of election administration needs, budget estimates for such assessment, and an assessment of the impact of the plan on voters (“the Plan”). The Plan is attached to this agreement. The City shall use the Grant Funds only for purposes contained in The Plan.
5. The City will endeavor to expend Grant funds pursuant to the section of the Plan entitled “Mail in and absentee equipment” on the items listed in that section of the Plan and shall repay any portion of the Grant funds designated for any item not purchased by November 15, 2020, absent an agreed-upon substitution or expenditure or extension of time by grantor.
6. The City shall expend Grant funds as follows:
  - i. The City and the City Commissioners (“the Commissioners”) have submitted to CTCL a plan which includes a section entitled “Satellite Election Offices and Ballot Drop-off Options. The City shall communicate any changes from this section of the plan including any reduction in planned number, operating hours, or operating dates of satellite election centers to grantor and shall communicate the reasons for any such reduction. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require action inconsistent with state or federal law or regulation nor shall anything in this section be construed to limit in any way the independent decision-making rights, abilities, and obligations of the Philadelphia County Board of Elections.
  - ii. The City and the Commissioners have submitted to CTCL a plan which includes a section entitled “Secure Dropboxes.” The City shall communicate any changes from this section of the plan including any reduction in the planned number, operating hours, or operating dates



of satellite election centers and shall communicate the reasons for any such reduction. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require action inconsistent with state or federal law or regulation nor shall anything in this section be construed to limit in any way the independent decision-making rights, abilities, and obligations of the Philadelphia County Board of Elections.

- iii. The City and the Commissioners have submitted to CTCL a plan which includes a section entitled "In-person Voting at Polling Places on Election Day." The City and the Commissioners shall work to secure 800 or more in-person polling places on Election Day, pursuant to this Section. To extent the goals of that section of the Plan are not met, the City shall communicate to grantor the number of polling places, rationale for opening fewer than 800 polling places, the approximate average and maximum distance between a registered voter's residence and their assigned polling place, a description of all courses of action or plans undertaken to open 800 or more polling places, and why each such course of action or plan was not successful. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require action inconsistent with state or federal law or regulation nor shall anything in this section be construed to limit in any way the independent decision-making rights, abilities, and obligations of the Philadelphia County Board of Elections.
        - iv. Grantor shall not unreasonably withhold agreement to modify any requirement under this paragraph for good cause.
7. The City shall produce a report documenting how the Grant funds have been expended in support of the activities described in paragraphs 4-6. This report shall be written and sent to CTCL by January 31, 2021 or in any other format approved by CTCL.
8. Subject to the City's Code and Charter, the City shall use funds granted pursuant to this agreement only to supplement its election administration as detailed in this agreement. The City shall not supplant state or local funds that have been previously allocated.



9. CTCL may discontinue, withhold part of, or request the return of all or part of any unspent Grant funds if it determines, that any of the above conditions have not been met.
10. The Grant funds shall be used during the project period of June 15, 2020 through December 31, 2020 or as otherwise agreed upon.

Your acceptance of these agreements should be indicated below. Please have an authorized representative of The City of Philadelphia sign below, and return a scanned copy of this letter to us by email at [grants@techandciviclife.org](mailto:grants@techandciviclife.org).

On behalf of CTCL, I extend my best wishes in your work.

Sincerely,



Tiana Epps Johnson  
Executive Director  
Center for Tech and Civic Life

**CITY OF PHILADELPHIA**

By:           *Ashley Del Bianco*          

Title: Ashley Del Bianco, Chief Grants Officer

Date: 8/21/20



**To: Center for Technology and Civic Life**  
**From: Nick Custodio, Deputy Commissioner**  
**Date: August 7, 2020**  
**Re: Funding Request for Election Systems for November General Election**

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## **Overview**

The City of Philadelphia faces significant challenges in executing the November 3, 2020 general election. As the June 2 primary revealed, in November the city will essentially have to run two elections, at the same time, on an unprecedented scale: one via absentee and mail-in ballots; and a second at in-person polling places. The number of **total ballots cast is expected to be between 730,000 and 800,000**, potentially split between the two modes of voting, which will each entail special challenges.

This document offers an assessment of resources needed for Philadelphia to safely and thoroughly prepare for the general election. In addition to projecting needs based on the unique June 2 primary, turnout from past presidential elections, and the continued risks of COVID-19, this plan capitalizes on new voting procedures authorized by [Act 77 of 2019](#)<sup>1</sup> that should help ensure the election is safe, secure and accessible for every eligible Philadelphia voter.

In these extraordinary circumstances, to deliver a smooth voting process and a satisfactory voting experience for Philadelphia's 1.1 million voters will require a concerted and collaborative effort. Accordingly, we have convened a working group consisting of my office, the Mayor's Office, the Governor's Office, other relevant public entities, and advocacy groups to work through challenges regarding implementation. Meeting this challenge will also require additional resources to the City of Philadelphia for election implementation.

A preliminary budget overview estimate on top of what is already available to the City is as follows:

|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| Mail-in and Absentee and Processing Equipment           | \$5,500,554         |
| Satellite Election Offices for in-person mail-in voting | \$2,272,220         |
| In-person Voting at Polling Places on Election Day      | \$1,321,300         |
| Secure Dropboxes and related needs                      | \$552,000           |
| Printing and Postage and related needs                  | \$370,000           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$10,016,074</b> |

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<sup>1</sup> Act of Oct. 31, 2019, P.L. 552, No. 77.

## Needs Assessment & Costs

The following sections outline initial details of the mailhouse-type processing operation, installation of drop boxes, additional satellite election offices for early voting, personnel needs, and the costs associated with each:

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### **Mail-in and Absentee Equipment**

Automation will be critical to efficiently and accurately manage hundreds of thousands of ballot envelopes and ballots in the 2-4 weeks leading up to Election Day and in the canvassing process afterwards and help report results faster. The following equipment is needed to relieve the 50+ staffers and extensive overtime that was utilized in the primary:

- **High-speed industrial Printer:** Printer will be used to print mail-in and absentee ballots. Currently, the City Commissioners' six (6) networked printers can produce about 15,000 ballots a day, if running optimally. A high-speed industrial printer capable of 15,000 per hour would greatly reduce the time between application approval and a voter's ballot entering the mail stream. This is particularly important around the application deadline on the Tuesday before the election. **Cost: \$987,980**
- **Specialized VBM Inserter:** An inserter combines the contents of the ballot packet and the prints addresses on the outgoing and return envelope. Ballot packs include multiple items: the ballot, instructions, return declaration envelope with the voter's information printed on it, secrecy envelope, and plain English statements of the ballot questions. An inserter rapidly folds the ballots and constructs the packets, guaranteeing the appropriate ballot is inserted for a specific voter. The inserter also prints the voter's address on the outgoing envelope and the voter's information on the return declaration envelope, information which must include the voter's name, address, ward-division, and a barcode with the same information so that the automation of the sorting equipment can read information. The inserter being requested is able to print on both sides of the envelope and include an intelligent mail barcode (IMB). The double-sided printing and applying the IBM all at once is important to increase accuracy, ensure the voter receives the correct ballot packet and improves efficiency. **Cost:\$798,895; or for two: \$1,597,790, plus \$69,500 for 2 high-speed folder.**
- **Sorters** automate the sorting of both outbound ballot packs for cheaper US Postal Service rates and inbound ballot envelopes, decreasing mailing inefficiencies and delays in opening and scanning returned ballots. The sorter also will do the voter history update scan, which is a time-consuming process currently that takes dozens of Commissioners' staffers at least a week to complete. The scan would also allow for the adjudication of declaration envelopes to be done electronically, which is significantly faster than the current hand method. Lastly, it will sort the ballots into ward and division order, a process that took 40 people several days to complete during the 2020 Primary. **Cost:\$488,592, or for two: \$977,184**

- **Extractors:** Though the Commissioners had automatic letter openers in the primary, they were not enough. The process of physically removing ballots from the envelopes took too long and took staff away from other activities and created a backlog so that the Commissioners' were unable to keep their scanners constantly going. The extractors not only cut open the ballot return and secrecy envelopes, but they also present the contents for staff to remove and immediately replace with a fresh envelope. Discarded envelopes are checked automatically to ensure their contents were removed. Twenty-two extractors, eleven for working on each envelope, will eliminate the need for any envelope opening by hand and open all anticipated ballots in three working days. **Estimated cost: ~\$660,000**
- **Ballot scanners:** Philadelphia used four Election Systems and Software (ES&S) DS450 scanners in the primary election, each of which can scan up to 72 ballots per minute. ES&S manufacturers another scanner (DS850) which can scan up to 300 ballots per minute. With the additional equipment speeding up the ballot opening process, additional scanners are needed to prevent a backlog. Philadelphia will seek to purchase 4 additional DS450s and 4 DS850s. **Cost: \$611,300.**

|  | <u>Total cost</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Unit costs</u> |
|--|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| <b>Printer</b>                           | \$987,980         | 1            | \$987,980         |
| <b>Insertter</b>                         | \$1,597,790       | 2            | \$798,895         |
| <b>Sorter</b>                            | \$977,187         | 2            | \$488,592         |
| <b>Extractors</b>                        | \$660,000         | 22           | \$30,000          |
| <b>Ballot<br/>Scanners<br/>– DS850</b>   | \$411,500         | 4            | \$102,875         |
| <b>Ballot<br/>Scanners<br/>– DS450</b>   | \$199,800         | 4            | \$49,950          |
| <b>Highspeed<br/>Folder</b>              | \$69,500          | 2            | \$34,750          |
| <b>Space for<br/>equipment</b>           | \$200,000         |              | \$2000,000        |
| <b>1 year<br/>Additional Maintenance</b> | \$334,137         | 1            | \$334,137         |
| <b>Ink</b>                               | \$14,060          | 1            | \$14,060          |

|                             |                    |   |          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---|----------|
| <b>Ballot Prep Software</b> | \$48,600           | 1 | \$48,600 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                | <b>\$5,500,554</b> |   |          |

### Satellite Election Offices and Ballot Drop-off Options

Act 77 of 2019 allows counties to set up multiple election offices where a voter can request an absentee or mail-in ballot, then complete and return it in the same visit.<sup>2</sup> A voter can go to any satellite office and register to vote, if needed, request a mail-in ballot in-person, receive it, vote, and return it all at the same location. In addition, voters could bring already voted ballots making the satellite offices additional drop-off locations. Early voting satellite offices will be open and fully staffed until the deadline to apply for a mail-in ballot, thereafter through Election Day they will remain open as ballot drop-off locations. They must also be sufficiently staffed with permanent staff with hazard pay to limit worker turnover, handle a surge in voters before polls open, and manage sites in a pandemic environment.

**The City Commissioners already have two in-person mail-in voting locations set up at their existing offices at City Hall and 520 N. Columbus Blvd, that are fully equipped to offer these services. These two offices are both in the Center City Region. The City Commissioners would like to open up 15 additional regional offices throughout the city.** However, it will require a notable investment in equipment, staff, real estate, and close collaboration with other city departments. Satellite election offices must meet the following conditions according to PA Department of State guidance:

- Staffed by trained elections staff and in a municipal or county-owned or leased property
- Connected to the Statewide Uniform Registry of Electors (SURE) system for staff to confirm voters’ registration record (via local county network or a VPN connection)
- Ability to provide any ballot style used in the election (Philadelphia has nearly 60 in the November 2020 general election)
- Secure storage for completed ballots

Cost per additional satellite location is as follows:

|           | <b>Item</b>                        | <b>Quantity</b> | <b>Base</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|-----------|------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| Onetime   | Voting Booths                      | 4               | \$ 165      | \$ 660       |
| Onetime   | Accessibility Voting Booths        | 1               | \$ 190      | \$ 190       |
| Onetime   | Ballotar laptop and Oakie Printers | 2               | \$ 10,810   | \$ 21,620    |
| Recurring | ES&S Ballotar Annual Software Fee  | 2               | \$ 880      | \$ 1,760     |

<sup>2</sup> Pennsylvania Applications and Balloting Guidance: Mail-in and Absentee Ballots and Voter Registration Changes. PA Department of State. January 10, 2020.



|              |                                    |   |    |        |    |                   |
|--------------|------------------------------------|---|----|--------|----|-------------------|
| Recurring    | Clerk 1                            | 2 | \$ | 33,476 | \$ | 66,952            |
| Recurring    | Additional Regular OT              | 2 | \$ | 12,400 | \$ | 24,800            |
| Recurring    | Additional Holiday OT              | 2 | \$ | 438    | \$ | 875.00            |
| Onetime      | Temporary Employee                 | 1 | \$ | 6,000  | \$ | 6,000             |
| Onetime      | Temporary Employee - OT            | 1 | \$ | 1,391  | \$ | 1,391             |
| Onetime      | Office Equipment - Folding Machine | 1 | \$ | 7,800  | \$ | 7,800             |
| Onetime      | Computer Equipment                 | 2 | \$ | 750    | \$ | 1,500             |
| Onetime      | Furniture & Furnishings            | 2 | \$ | 500    | \$ | 1,000             |
| Onetime      | Secure Ballot Box                  | 1 | \$ | 1,500  | \$ | 1,500             |
| Onetime      | Signage                            | 1 | \$ | 500    | \$ | 500               |
| <b>Total</b> |                                    |   |    |        |    | <b>\$ 136,548</b> |

Team Leader (4) @ \$56,000 each= \$224,000

**Estimated cost to open 15 additional satellite locations - \$2,272,220**

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### Secure Dropboxes

Installing at least **15 secure, 24-hour drop boxes** at each early vote location will help ensure that voters have some opportunity to return their ballots if it may be too late to send via USPS. (Current law does not honor postmarks.) These would be in addition to 24-hour drop boxes located at City Hall and the Voter Registration Office at Delaware and Spring Garden. **Purpose-built ballot drop boxes cost approximately \$10,000 each**, including installation, and can be more easily secured on election night to prevent ballots from being deposited after 8pm. Each box needs 24-hour video surveillance. In addition to equipment costs, courier/pick-up teams will be needed to pick up deposited ballots from 24-hour drop boxes and to monitor drop-off boxes within public facilities. Chain of custody protocols and sufficient staffing to manage higher volume prior to Election Day will be critical.

|  | <u>Total cost</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Unit costs</u> |
|--|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| <b>Secure Dropbox</b>                    | \$150,000         | 15           | \$10,000          |
| <b>Temporary Ballot Collection Staff</b> | \$40,000          | 5            | \$8,000           |
| <b>Ballot Collection Team Leader</b>     | \$112,000         | 2            | \$56,000          |
| <b>Security needs</b>                    | \$250,000         |              |                   |

|              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>\$552,000</b> |
|--------------|------------------|

**In-person Voting at Polling Places on Election Day**

The Office of the City Commissioners is committed to working to secure more than 800 fully-staffed polling places on election day. The Commissioners will make the final decisions based on ADA standards, relative distance to the division, accessibility, and voter convenience.

For each division to have a full, 5-member Election Board (Judge of Elections, two Inspectors of Election, one Clerk, and one Machine Inspector) will require recruiting, training, and assigning up to 8,515 poll workers (1,703 divisions x 5 Election Board members). Philadelphia's Election Board unit is reaching out and confirming Election Board workers currently, earlier than usual. Currently the Election Board unit has confirmed 1,898 Election Board Workers.

The City Commissioners and elections staff are working to update training materials (currently a 52-page guide and 40-slide presentation). Additional changes may be necessary based on further changes to the Election Code made by the General Assembly, the outcome of active litigation, and new COVID guidance. Training resources will ideally include:

- Updated Election Board Guide and seminar presentation
- Online training with audio and visual components (e.g., videos, self-assessment)
- In-person training sessions with up to 20 attendees, depending on space and health risks
- Additional space for poll workers to access computers and Internet for online training (e.g., school computer labs)

|   | <u>Total cost</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Unit costs</u>          |
|---|-------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Online training platform</b>           | \$19,500          | 15           | \$1300 per user/per year   |
| <b>Training Manual</b>                    | \$10,500          |              |                            |
| <b>Poll Worker Hazard Pay</b>             | \$851,500         | 8,515        | \$100 per poll worker      |
| <b>Poll Worker PPE</b>                    | \$250,000         |              |                            |
| <b>Poll Place Cleaning Bonus</b>          | \$94,800          | 474          | \$200 per private location |
| <b>OT Costs to Open Schools</b>           | \$60,000          |              |                            |
| <b>Student Poll Worker Campaign Costs</b> | \$10,000          |              |                            |

**Advertising for Poll**

**Worker Recruitment**      \$25,000

**TOTAL**                              **\$1,321,300**

**Conclusion**

The investments outlined above will allow the City of Philadelphia to reduce the risk of exposure to coronavirus for Philadelphia voters, election staff and poll workers; identify best practices; innovate to efficiently and effectively educate our residents about how to exercise their right to vote; be intentional and strategic in reaching our historically disenfranchised residents and communities; and, above all, ensure the right to vote in a diversity of communities throughout the City of Philadelphia. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this request.