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Int. No. 127

By Council Members Cabrera, Barron, Ferreras-Copeland, Koo, Palma, Rose, Williams, Mendez, Rodriguez and Cohen

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to designating high needs areas within New York City as “digital technology empowerment zones.”

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Legislative intent and findings. The Council of the City of New York hereby finds that there are neighborhoods within New York City with high concentrations of poverty and joblessness. These neighborhoods typically have low use of and access to digital technology such as broadband Internet. Furthermore, these conditions within these distressed areas have also served to diminish the economic growth potential of area businesses and made the areas less attractive to digital technology companies. In order to remedy these conditions, the Council proposes to create a “digital technology empowerment zone” program. The legislation authorizes the designation of community districts as digital technology empowerment zones using a set of widely-recognized socio-economic indicators at

designated thresholds that serve to increase the overall economic well-being, social welfare, and level of education and employment within distressed areas of the City.

§ 2. Title 22 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new chapter 9, to read as follows:

CHAPTER 9

TECHNOLOGY EMPOWERMENT ZONES

§22-901 Definitions

§22-902 Digital technology empowerment zones

§22-903 Statement of needs

§22-904 Action plans

§22-905 Implementation

§22-906 Progress reports

§22-901 Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

“Action plan” means the digital technology empowerment zone action plan.

“Department” means the department of small business services.

“High level of poverty” means a community district where twenty-five percent or more of the population lives below the federal poverty threshold as established in the two thousand ten United States census.

“Low educational attainment” means a community district where fifteen percent or less of the individuals over the age of twenty five have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher as determined by the two thousand ten United States census.

§22-902 Digital technology empowerment zones. a. Designation. A community district that suffers from a high level of poverty and low educational attainment shall be designated by the department as a digital technology empowerment zone.

b. De-designation. A community district may be de-designated by the department as a digital technology empowerment zone. The department shall only de-designate a community district as a digital technology empowerment zone where the community district no longer has a high level of

poverty or low educational attainment for three consecutive calendar years.

§22-903 Statement of needs. a. For each digital technology empowerment zone, the department shall prepare a statement of needs which shall include, but not be limited to, an analysis of the community's access to and use of broadband Internet, the number of digital technology companies within the community, employment services and workforce training services that focus on digital technology careers, business incentive programs, and such other components deemed appropriate for such community.

§22-904 Action plans. An action plan for each digital technology empowerment zone related to the needs identified pursuant to section 22-903 of this chapter shall be prepared by the department. Such action plans shall include an outline for how the department or other city agency intends to prioritize and address the needs identified in the digital technology empowerment zone statements of needs. Such action plans may include information regarding new and existing agency programs and services, interagency programs and services, and/or additional funding allocations which can be made to meet identified needs. Such action plans shall also include the name and location of for-profit and not-for-profit service providers, businesses and firms located within or providing services within each digital technology empowerment zone that have received city contracts awarded by a city agency the performance of which could substantially assist the achievement of priority needs outlined in the action plan for each digital technology empowerment zone.

§22-905 Implementation. The department shall:

1. Within seventy-five days of the enactment of the local law that added this chapter, designate the community districts that meet the requirements for inclusion in this program;

2. No later than thirty days following the designation of digital technology empowerment zones, provide notice of and publish a draft of a proposed digital technology empowerment zone statement of needs for each digital technology empowerment zone and provide notice of the date of a public hearing

related to such statements;

3. No later than thirty days following the public hearing relating to statements of need, a final digital technology empowerment zone statement of needs for each digital technology empowerment zone shall be prepared and made available to the public on the department's website;

4. No later than thirty days following the final digital technology empowerment zone statement of needs, a draft action plan for each digital technology empowerment zone and notice of the public comment period related to such action plan shall be provided; and

5. Not earlier than thirty days following the end of the public comment period related to an action plan, the final action plan for each digital technology empowerment zone shall be prepared and made available to the public on the department's website.

§22-906 Progress reports. On or before January thirty first, two thousand eighteen, and every four years thereafter, the department shall provide a digital technology empowerment zone progress report for each digital technology empowerment zone to the mayor, speaker of the city council, each borough president and the chairpersons of each of the appropriate community boards in a digital technology empowerment zone. The progress report shall include whether and to what extent applicable action plans are being implemented and adequately addressing each zone's needs; whether such action plans should be revised to provide other appropriate services where progress has been made in addressing a community's needs; and whether such community may be de-designated for inclusion in the program in accordance with subdivision b of section 22-902 of this chapter.

§3. This local law shall take effect ninety days after its enactment.

JCH  
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