



Department Source: Public Health and Human Services

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: May 15, 2023

Re: Report – Update on the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA)

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an update background information and an update for Council on the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) process.

Discussion

The City of Columbia was awarded \$25,284,624 from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). The first half of the ARPA funding, \$12.6 million, was received in September 2021. For the initial funding, the City Council prioritized the following: mental health care (crisis center), homelessness, community violence and workforce development.

For the second half of funds, Council requested Columbia/Boone County Public Health and Human Services (PHHS) design a community engagement plan to gather meaningful data on community members' experiences throughout the pandemic and their ARPA funding priorities.

In June 2022, PHHS conducted a survey and received 4,470 completed surveys from people that lived, worked, or owned a business in Columbia. The survey had a representative sample size for each race demographic in both the city and county, with the exception of the Asian population in Columbia. The survey results were presented to the Council in July of 2022.

PHHS also conducted 12 focus groups for the following populations: Black/African American individuals, Spanish speaking individuals, local refugee populations, individuals with disabilities, low income households, mental health professionals, housing cost burdened individuals, parents, frontline workers, local business owners, youth and local non-profits. A full report was presented to Council in November, 2022.

Based on the survey results and the community engagement process, the following priorities for ARPA funding were identified for the second half of the funding: Homelessness, Health and Mental Health Access, Workforce Development/Support, and Access to Services.

City staff worked with Resource Exploration, Inc. to utilize its Resource X software and processes developed to aid in the distribution of ARPA funds. With Resource Exploration Inc.'s assistance and guidance, city staff created a process for accepting initial proposals or letters of intent through Resource X. Staff informed the community about the process by publishing the scopes of work in the newspaper, providing regular updates on the Beheard.com website, issuing a press release, responding to various media requests,



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and by working with community partners to reach local nonprofits. To assist applicants with little or no grant writing experience, staff held a Grants 101 workshop and made the recording available online. In total, 91 letters of intent were submitted by 58 unduplicated organizations. This equals \$92,862,678 in requests for ARPA dollars. Letters of intent were received for every council and community priority.

The letters of intent were reviewed and scored by an internal review committee of City staff. Scoring criteria, as published on beheard.como.gov and columbia.ionwave.net within the scopes of service, included alignment with ARPA priorities and the City strategic plan, demonstration of need, efficiency (program posts per individual and project goals), equity impact, outcome measurement, and financial sustainability past 2026. Applicants needed to score at or above the average score and be ARPA eligible to move forward in the process.

Of the 91 letters of intent, 46 scored at or above average. This equals \$31.8 million in requests for ARPA dollars. A breakdown of these funds by priority area is provided in the table below.

Category	No. of proposals*	Amount req.*
Access to Services	6	\$3,312,128.00
Affordable Housing	4	\$8,024,413.00
Community Violence	8	\$5,130,335.00
Homelessness	8	\$3,713,359.00
Mental Health	1	\$510,292.00
Multiple priorities	5	\$3,386,499.00
Workforce Dev	6	\$4,143,603.00
Workforce Sup	8	\$3,628,257.00

**This doesn't include proposals for previously discussed agreements with for a behavioral crisis center, Columbia Housing Authority.*

Seventeen (17) agencies that have not previously applied for funding from our three large community funders: Boone County (Children's Services Fund), Heart of Missouri United Way, and the City of Columbia (Human Services funding) are advancing. All of the organizations who scored at or above average will have until June 9th to submit their full proposal and complete all information required in the Apricot software.

The City is responsible for ensuring that any procurement using ARPA funds, or payments under procurement contracts using such funds are consistent with the procurement standards set forth in the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200.317 through 2 CFR 200.327, unless



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stated otherwise by the U.S. Treasury. 2 CFR 200.320 allows for the use of formal procurement methods including requests for proposals when appropriate. Because the process utilized the solicitation of letters of interest and proposals, city staff considered the proposals and related documents to be closed records pursuant to Section 2-25.3 of the City Code, which states: "All city records to the extent they relate to the following shall be closed records to the extent allowed by law....(11) Sealed bids and related documents until the bids are opened; and sealed proposals and related documents or any documents related to a negotiated contract until a contract is executed, or all proposals are rejected." See also 610.021(12) RSMO.

Full proposals will be reviewed by an external ARPA scoring committee. Proposals will be scored on the following criteria; alignment with ARPA priorities and the City strategic plan, demonstration of need, efficiency (program posts per individual and project goals), equity impact, outcome measurement, and financial sustainability past 2026. After the meeting(s), the external ARPA review committee will have recommendations for the City Council. Based on the current timeline, Council would discuss the recommendations at an August meeting. ARPA funds are available to cover eligible costs and incur obligations by December 31, 2024, and such obligations must be expended by December 31, 2026. Recipients may use award funds to cover eligible costs incurred during the period that begins on March 3, 2021, and ends on December 31, 2024.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: ARPA funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and spent by December 31, 2026.

Long-Term Impact: none.

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Safe Neighborhoods, Secondary Impact: Resilient Economy, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Livable & Sustainable Communities, Secondary Impact: Not applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Legislative History

Date	Action
04/17/2023	Ordinance B74-23 – Council authorized an affordable housing funding agreement with the Housing Authority of the City of Columbia and Park Avenue Housing Development Group.



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Suggested Council Action

Staff requests that Council accept the report.