

Legislation Text

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Presentation: ARPA Project Scoring Results

Key Issues:

This presentation is a further discussion over the use of ARPA funds. The potential project list has been scored against the City Council Project Criteria, and this presentation will focus on the results of that effort. City Staff is seeking direction on which projects to move forward with detailed budgets and which projects to remove from consideration.

Background:

The ARPA allocated \$8,310,882 in Coronavirus Local Fiscal Relief Funds ("Funds") to the City of Lee's Summit (the "City") to respond to the COVID-19 emergency and its accompanying economic fallout. The Funds allow for a broad range of eligible uses to fill the identified needs of the community.

The guidance for the Funds emphasizes a strong, equitable recovery and addresses those areas disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Many, but not all, of the City's internal acute pandemic response needs were addressed through funding provided by the CARES Act. The CARES Act funds enabled the City to purchase personal protective equipment, provide testing capabilities, upgrade physical facilities to decrease opportunities of virus transmission, improve community awareness, and provide economic support to local non-profits and small businesses.

Additional funds were also made available through the Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG") to help address the needs of the City's low-to-moderate income population. The CARES Act and additional CDBG funding were more restrictive than the ARPA funds and were disbursed in smaller increments throughout the community.

With the ever-changing conditions associated with the Pandemic, additional internal funds may be needed to respond to new variants and conditions, such as those occurring with the current Delta Variant. A portion of the ARPA funds should be reserved to address these needs as they arise.

The federal government has explained that the Funds are intended to support the immediate pandemic response, bring back jobs, and lay the groundwork for a strong and equitable recovery. Accordingly, fund recipients have the latitude to concentrate larger amounts of funding in specific areas to complete larger projects that will benefit the community long-term. The flexibility with the use of the funds opens the opportunity to fund items that would likely not be able to be brought forward in other ways.

In August of 2021 the City Council heard an initial overview of the ARPA funding, agreed upon a general decision making framework, and directed staff to do additional research on the best use of the funds. At that time the general guidance that was available on the use of the funds was not finalized.

In October of 2021 the City Council participated in a survey to further prioritize elements from the Ignite Strategic Plan based upon the impact COVID-19 may have had on the specific elements. The results of the survey were utilized to form the basis for the scoring criteria.

In October and November of 2021 a potential project list was developed by City Council and City Staff.

In January of 2022 the final rules from the U.S. Department of Treasury became available. Several key decisions were made by the City Council at the January 11, 2022 City Council meeting:

- The funds would be utilized for the provision of Government Services and the City would report the maximum allowable amount of "revenue loss" under the standard allowance allowed by the Treasury.

- This decision allows the most flexibility in the use of the funds with the least amount of administrative burden

- The Project List was agreed upon

- The Project Criteria was agreed upon

- City Staff was directed to score the agreed upon projects based upon the agreed upon criteria and bring back a discussion over those results

Impact/Analysis:

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