

# City of Austin, Texas

## Recovery Plan

### State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

#### 2021 Report

(March 3, 2021 – July 31, 2021)





**City of Austin, Texas**  
**2021 Recovery Plan**

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## **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

### **Executive Summary**

President Joe Biden signed the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) into law on March 11, 2021, apportioning \$1.9 trillion to address the devastating health and economic impacts caused by the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. Through ARPA, Congress established the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund and Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund. These funds provide a combined \$350.0 billion to eligible state, local, territorial, and tribal governments to meet pandemic response needs and rebuild stronger and more equitable economies.

On May 17, 2021, the United States Department of the Treasury (Treasury Department) issued an interim final rule outlining the implementation of the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). In summary, the Treasury Department's rule allows recipients to use federal aid to:

1. Support public health expenditures, by, for example, funding COVID-19 mitigation efforts, medical expenses, behavioral healthcare, and certain public health and safety staff.
2. Address negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency, including economic harms to workers, households, small businesses, impacted industries, and the public sector.
3. Replace lost public sector revenue, using this funding to provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced due to the pandemic.
4. Provide premium pay for essential workers, offering additional support to those who have and will bear the greatest health risks because of their service in critical infrastructure sectors.
5. Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure, making necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, support vital wastewater and storm water infrastructure, and to expand access to broadband internet.

Recipients cannot use this funding to offset a reduction directly or indirectly in net tax revenue due to a change in law from March 3, 2021 through the last day of the fiscal year in which the funds provided have been spent. The Treasury Department also forbids recipients from using these federal funds to make deposits into pension funds.

The Treasury Department's allocation methodology for the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds resulted in the City of Austin (the City) receiving \$188.5 million to help offset lost revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of the City's ongoing commitment to supporting Austin residents, businesses, and organizations that were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, City Council and staff worked diligently for several months to establish a spending framework for the ARPA allocation. On June 10, 2021, City Council approved an ARPA Spending Framework totaling \$245.0 million, which includes \$188.5 million from ARPA – SLFRF, \$35.3 million from ARPA – Emergency Rental Assistance, \$11.4 million from ARPA - HOME, and \$9.8 million from the City's General Fund Reserves.

The Uses of Funds section of this report provides a more detailed overview of the City's intended uses of the ARPA-SLFRF funding, whereas the Project Inventory section provides

additional information by project, including key outcome goals, progress to date on those outcomes, and noteworthy challenges or opportunities identified during the reporting period.

### Uses of Funds

The COVID-19 public health emergency resulted in a significant reduction in revenue for the City. All City of Austin tax revenue categories, except for property taxes, declined in 2020. The tourism industry, including airport and convention center operations, was hit the hardest due to travel and tourism-related mandates put in effect to help mitigate the spread of the disease. In addition, City of Austin facility and program revenue was well below budget due to facility closures and program reductions caused by COVID-19.

City staff calculated the reduction in revenue by using the methodology outlined in the Interim Final Rule issued by the Treasury Department. Actual revenues were compared to a counterfactual trend representing what could have plausibly been expected to occur in the absence of the pandemic. The counterfactual trend began with the last full fiscal year prior to the public health emergency and projected forward with an annualized growth adjustment. Based on this calculation, the City experienced a net revenue reduction of \$566.9 million, or 24.2%, during calendar year 2020, which is well above the \$188.5 million allocated to the City under ARPA - SLFRF. The following is a summary of the calculation:

Background Information	
Fiscal Year End	September
Base Year Revenue Period	9/30/2019
Calculation Date	12/31/2020
Estimate Revenue	
Base Year Revenue	\$ 2,104,587,575
Growth Rate	9.0%
Counterfactual Revenue	\$ 2,343,817,557
Actual Revenue	\$ 1,776,884,672
Reduction in Revenue	
Revenue Reduction	\$ 566,932,885
Revenue Reduction %	-24.2%

The City will use the \$188.5 million of ARPA - SLFRF funding to help offset this lost revenue and provide relief services and assistance to Austin residents, creatives, non-profits, and businesses to address the needs created by this public health emergency. The table below

summarizes the City Council approved ARPA - SLFRF Spending Framework by program area followed by narratives of the services to be provided for each program area.

<b>Program Area</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<b>Health</b>	\$46.3 Million
<b>Homelessness</b>	\$95.3 Million
<b>Economic Development</b>	\$28.9 Million
<b>Resilience</b>	\$6 Million
<b>Creative Sector</b>	\$12 Million

Health - \$46.3 Million

*Public Health*

Public health funding of \$44.3 million is allocated to continue the operations of non-congregate shelters, isolation facilities, alternate care sites, infusion centers, and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Also included is funding for testing services; the purchase of personal protective equipment, and other necessary supplies; the Eating Apart Together (EAT) program for unsheltered homeless and the AISD Caregiver Meals program; and contact tracing, epidemiology, and general public safety.

*Community Navigators*

Through contractors (referred to as “Community Navigators”), the City allocated \$500,000 to ensure businesses, civic organizations, and creative professionals receive the assistance necessary to recover from the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Activities supported by this funding include outreach and engagement to historically underserved communities; high-quality technical assistance for businesses, civic organizations, and creative professionals; and application assistance for federal, state, and local COVID-19 pandemic-related recovery and resiliency programs.

*Colony Park Sustainable Community Health Center*

An allocation of \$1.5 million will be used to install critical infrastructure (water, wastewater, and storm water) needed to construct the Northeast Health and Wellness Center in the 208-acre Colony Park Sustainable Community. Residents living in the Colony Park, Lakeside, and nearby communities disproportionately experienced higher COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, compounded by their historical experience with higher rates of chronic and preventable diseases. Constructing a health center in this community will improve these outcomes by enhancing residents’ access to high-quality and affordable healthcare.

Homelessness - \$95.3 Million

The \$95.3 million total allocation for homelessness is divided into four subcategories: general (\$88.6 million), emergency shelter (\$4.2 million), workforce development (\$2.0 million), and capacity building (\$500,000). Consistent with a motion the City Council adopted as part of the ARPA Spending Framework, staff is continuing conversations with

Central Texas jurisdictions and philanthropic organizations with the goal of having partners commit significant monetary resources to help address homelessness in Austin. Additionally, staff is reviewing recommendations from the recently convened Summit on Homelessness to affirm or revise the recommendations, including financial assumptions. Once this review is complete, City staff will host community meetings to discuss the plan and will use public feedback to inform final recommendations for the general funding subcategory to City Council.

### Economic Development - \$28.9 Million

#### *Childcare/Early Childhood/Family Connects*

This allocation of \$11.0 million is planned to enhance Austin's childcare and early childhood education systems, and City staff continue to coordinate childcare and early childhood efforts with Travis County officials and local community partners. The types of programs that could be supported with these funds include:

- expanding the Family Connects program (a joint partnership between United Way for Greater Austin and Austin Public Health that provides free in-home nursing visits to all families with a newborn),
- expanding access to dual-language full-day Pre-K for four-year-olds; providing additional childcare funding to address gaps created for families due to changes in employment status,
- sustaining and scaling innovative infrastructure to increase access to affordable high-quality care meeting needs of all families,
- implementing solutions to address identified gaps and to strengthen the childcare system, and
- stabilizing the childcare workforce and programs that support families with young children outside of full-time childcare.

#### *Workforce Development*

The \$17.9 million total funding allocated for workforce development is divided into three subcategories.

- Workforce: General (\$15 million): City staff continue to coordinate workforce development efforts with Travis County officials to optimize the use of funds to support residents who were economically impacted by the pandemic. Programs include evidence-based job (re)training and placement services, along with those that prepare residents for career pathways into nursing and skilled trades.
- Workforce: Austin Civilian Conservation Corps (ACCC) (\$1.9 million): This program helps Austinites earn income, serve their community, and gain equitable access to skills, training, and certifications which can lead to careers in sustainability and environmental fields. This expands on an already existing City program.
- Workforce: Homelessness and/or Creative Sector (\$1.0 million): Staff is in the process of evaluating options for maximizing the effectiveness of this funding and anticipate providing an update to City Council in the fall of 2021.

### Resilience - \$6 Million

The \$6 million allocated to resilience activities is divided into two subcategories, food access and resilience hubs, of \$3 million each.

- Resilience: Food Access (\$3 million): This allocation will support several activities consistent with motions that City Council adopted as part of the ARPA Spending Framework. Approximately \$2.5 million will support ongoing food access needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The remaining balance will support the development of nonprofit or community-owned grocery stores in areas of the City that lack healthy food retail outlets; and supporting the development of a regional food system plan that includes sustainable operational structures, policies, food sector resilience planning, programs, and financing.
- Resilience: Resilience Hubs (\$3 million): This allocation will support the development of resilience hubs in local communities. Resilience hubs are community-facing places of refuge during emergencies. These hubs will include redundant power, water and communications, emergency supply storage, and have the ability to serve as central staging areas for City and community-based emergency response. During non-emergency times, these hubs can provide culturally sensitive, multilingual programming for community-building efforts that increase resilience. Per City Council direction, staff will provide budget analysis, funding strategies, and intergovernmental agreement options for potential resilience hub locations, including equity-centered strategies considering the most vulnerable populations.

### Creative Sector - \$12 Million

The total \$12.0 million allocation for creative sector support is divided into three subcategories.

- Nonprofit Emergency Relief-Arts/Music (\$2.0 million): Staff will use these funds for an Austin Arts and Culture Nonprofit Relief Grant. This grant program will support creative sector nonprofit organizations that were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Arts (\$6.0 million) Sector Support: Staff will use these funds to benefit the creative community based on guidance and direction from City Council and collaboration with the Arts and Music Commissions.
- Music (\$4.0 million) Sector Support: Staff will use these funds to benefit the creative community based on guidance and direction from City Council and collaboration with the Arts and Music Commissions.

### Additional Federal Funding

In addition to the ARPA - SLFRF funding, the City also received, or will receive, the following federal funding to help with the pandemic recovery process:

- \$170.8 million allocated to the City under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act was used on emergency response and recovery activities.

- \$58.7 million allocated to the Airport under the CARES funding is being used for monthly debt payment reimbursements and reimbursement of parking expenses.
- \$14.6 million allocated to the Airport under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) will be used for monthly debt payment reimbursements and reimbursement of parking expenses.
- \$1.8 million of CRRSAA-Concession funding will be passed through to Airport concessionaires as a credit to their outstanding balances.
- \$54.1 million allocated to the Airport under ARPA will be used for monthly debt payment reimbursements and reimbursement of parking expenses
- \$7.3 million of ARPA-Concession funding will be passed through to Airport concessionaires as a credit to their outstanding balances.
- \$64.9 million allocated to the City under the ARPA-Emergency Rental Assistance program will be used to provide emergency rental assistance to income eligible households vulnerable to eviction.
- \$11.4 million allocated to the City under the ARPA-HOME program will be used on affordable housing and services.
- An estimated \$50 million of emergency protective measures costs will be claimed by the City under Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Public Assistance program.
- An estimated \$40 million of vaccine distribution activities will be claimed by the City under the FEMA-Expedited Vaccine program.

### Promoting Equitable Outcomes



**EQUALITY**



**EQUITY**

Austin is a beacon of sustainability, social equity, and economic opportunity; where diversity and creativity are celebrated; where community needs and values are recognized; where leadership comes from its community members, and where the necessities of life are affordable and accessible to all.

On March 8, 2018, the Austin City Council adopted [Strategic Direction 2023](#), or SD23, to help guide priorities and budgeting to proactively address multiple time horizons, more thoughtfully assess performance, and improve community outcomes. Under SD23, the City’s goal is to create a community where every Austinite has choices at every stage of life that allow them to experience and contribute to all of the following outcomes:

 <p><b>ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY &amp; AFFORDABILITY</b> Having economic opportunities and resources that enable us to thrive in our community.</p>	 <p><b>MOBILITY</b> Getting us where we want to go, when we want to get there, safely and cost-effectively.</p>
 <p><b>SAFETY</b> Being safe in our home, at work, and in our community.</p>	 <p><b>HEALTH &amp; ENVIRONMENT</b> Enjoying a sustainable environment and a healthy life, physically and mentally.</p>
 <p><b>CULTURE &amp; LIFELONG LEARNING</b> Being enriched by Austin’s unique civic, cultural, ethnic, and learning opportunities.</p>	 <p><b>GOVERNMENT THAT WORKS FOR ALL</b> Believing that city government works effectively and collaboratively for all of us—that it is equitable, ethical and innovative.</p>

The following are the values that support Quality of Life in Austin under SD23:

**EQUITY:** To advance equitable outcomes, the City is leading with a lens of racial equity and healing. Race is the primary predictor of outcomes and it is time to recognize, understand, and address racism at its various levels: personal, institutional, structural, and systemic. Equity is the condition when every member of the community has a fair opportunity to live a long, healthy, and meaningful life. Equity embedded into Austin’s values system means changing hearts and minds, transforming local government from the inside out, eradicating disparities, and ensuring all Austin community members share in the benefits of community progress.

**AFFORDABILITY:** Austinites deserve to experience the necessities of life as affordable and accessible. Simply put, this means a household can afford rent or mortgage, transportation, childcare expenses, utilities, and taxes. This strategic direction lays out strategies to increase economic opportunities and affordable choices across Austin, so that Austinites, families, businesses, City employees, and all generations can thrive.

**INNOVATION:** In Austin, we define innovation as any project that is new to you with an uncertain outcome. Aimed at addressing pressing challenges that affect our community, human-centered innovation means a new approach to exercising authority and decision-making that starts with the needs, behaviors, and experiences of our community, and continues through a process of questioning assumptions, engaging with empathy, stewarding divergent thought, reflecting, and learning. Innovation is future-oriented around what outcomes could be created together, rather than an analysis of already formed alternatives.

**SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY:** Being a sustainable and resilient community requires proactive steps to protect Austin’s quality of life now, and for future generations. A sustainable city finds a balance among three goal areas: (1) prosperity and jobs, (2) conservation and the environment, and (3) community health, equity, and cultural vitality. Resiliency is the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems to survive, adapt, and grow from difficult times. In Austin, we bounce back stronger.

**PROACTIVE PREVENTION:** The City embraces the dual responsibility of being responsive to emerging challenges while also dialing up efforts to prevent problems on the front end. For example, this translates into addressing social determinants of health outcomes, rather than only treating the disease. This means investing in preventative maintenance of public assets like bridges, service vehicles, and community facilities. An intentional focus on prevention today leads to a brighter future.

**COMMUNITY TRUST AND RELATIONSHIPS:** Austin is a place where leadership comes from the people. We believe in honoring the spirit and soul of Austin and creating opportunities for civic engagement that are easy, meaningful, and inclusive, and that lay a foundation for lasting relationships. Trust must be earned and through strengthening partnerships with the community, we will make more progress together to advance these six outcomes.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City began to take strides in addressing equitable outcomes for project and service delivery through the creation of SD23, which prescribes reporting detail with greater granularity. Another accomplishment was the establishment of the City’s Equity Office whose work is to provide training on racial equity and hold City of Austin programs and services accountable for tracking the metrics as dedicated in SD23.

During the pandemic, the Chief Economic Recovery Officer for the City required departments providing economic stimulus to the community to produce dashboards for each of the economic relief programs provided. This data is available to the public under Economic Impact on [ATXrecovers.com](https://www.austintexas.gov/ATXrecovers.com). Additional dashboards are created as new programs and projects are launched. Each dashboard includes demographic information about applicants and awardees, as well as other factors that demonstrate historical challenges, such as: legal business structure, industry type, and the City of Austin Council District in which customers reside.

The City plans to use the revenue replacement ARPA - SLFRF funding in a manner which helps promote the Quality of Life values outlined in SD23. Funding will be used to provide relief services and assistance to Austin residents, creatives, non-profits, and businesses that were most affected by this public health emergency and to provide long term resiliency

to help support the health of Austin residents and the Austin economy. Equity is central to the City's development of the projects outlined in this report and most projects will focus on achieving more equitable outcomes for historically marginalized and adversely impacted populations, including low-income residents, communities of color, LGBTQIA+ persons, and those living with disabilities.

Staff is developing communication and outreach activities, as well as partnering with external organizations, such as Travis County, to improve awareness of, and access to, the various services provided under the ARPA Spending Framework.

Project plans are developed in a manner that ensures equal access and distribution of benefits and services for marginalized groups of the community. Some of these activities include, but are not limited to:

- Addressing challenging racial and geographic disparities in COVID-19 rates of infection, vaccination, and health literacy in an urban area of focus made up of 15 zip codes with high social vulnerability indices and populations of color;
- Developing mobile and multi-lingual friendly applications, FAQs, and support;
- Working with third-party providers to support applicants in their request for support; and
- Addressing transportation challenges that would prevent a resident from receiving benefits.

Projects are also being designed with outcomes that are focused on closing equity gaps and universal levels of service. The planned outcomes include, but are not limited to:

- Reducing the rates of homelessness for all Austinites, with a particular focus on reducing the disproportionate harm in adversely impacted populations – African Americans, LGBTQIA+, and people living with disabling conditions;
- Improving housing choice for populations who have historically been subject to discriminatory housing patterns;
- Closing racial, ethnic, LGBTQIA+, and disability community gaps in ownership and leadership of small businesses and non-profits in Austin;
- Ensuring childcare, early childhood education support, and parent education and support programs are available to groups most in need of service, especially households from racial, ethnic, geographic, and socioeconomic groups that are disproportionately impacted by the lack of quality programs;
- Catalyzing food sector business development in underserved areas;
- Addressing challenging racial and geographic disparities regarding COVID-19 rates of infection, vaccination, and health literacy by focusing on an urban area made up of 15 zip codes with high social vulnerability indices and populations of color; and
- Establishing resilience hubs in low-income communities and communities of color, which have traditionally borne the brunt of climate change impacts, to provide hyper-localized, contextually, and culturally relevant solutions to address ongoing stressors in communities and distributed disaster response and recovery efforts.

Additional information on the City's effort to promote equitable outcomes by project can be found in the Project Inventory section of this report.

## **Community Engagement**

In 2020, the Chief Economic Recovery Officer launched a series of focus groups intended to gather real-time feedback on the programs and types of relief needed to allocate the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds. Over the course of several months and 125 unique engagement sessions, staff presented to City Council a framework of opportunities and strategies to provide relief based on the community engagement focus groups. Each of the six focus groups were specifically curated with 5-40 community members representing voices not typically heard in citizen communication. These community members represented multi-racial or ethnic groups, historically marginalized groups like LGBTQIA+ and members of the disability community, as well as intentional inclusion of all City Council Districts and both large and small organizations. Each engagement allowed staff to listen and learn about the real challenges experienced by local business owners, employees, residents, and City staff. Dozens of community members volunteered their time to share personal accounts of the pandemic's impact on their businesses, jobs, and families. These community members also offered their perspective on the types of assistance needed to help communities and businesses survive the pandemic and to become more resilient. While these focus groups were developed to help determine the allocation of CARES funding, the feedback collected is still relevant and helped guide the development of the ARPA Spending Framework and will be considered during program design.

Additionally, as part of the approval of the ARPA Spending Framework, City Council directed staff to create a SpeakUp Austin! page and to hold a minimum of two City of Austin community meetings to discuss the spending plan and intended ARPA investments and solicit public feedback. This feedback should be used to inform recommendations and proposed revisions to the ARPA Spending Framework.

There may be additional community outreach activities at the project level. Additional information on community engagement activities by project can be found in the Project Inventory section of this report.

## **Labor Practices**

The City has a women and minority owned enterprise procurement process that ensures worker safety and compensation. The compliance team reviews solicitations; sets project goals for department solicitations to contract with women and minority owned enterprise contractors or subcontractors; collaborates with project managers to help identify scopes of work on projects; and verifies Compliance Plan information submitted by bidders/proposers which includes labor agreements, community benefits agreements, prevailing wage requirements, and local hiring expectations. Additionally, in 2020 the City hired its first Chief Civil Rights Officer to enforce civil rights anti-discrimination ordinance and federal statutes.

## **Use of Evidence**

While projects under the ARPA - SLFRF Spending Framework are still being developed, the City seeks to use the ARPA - SLFRF funds to advance the use of evidence-based practices as well as evaluate projects through project evaluations designed to build evidence. Additional information on the use of evidence by project as well as the planned project spending that will be allocated towards evidence-based interventions can be found in the Project Inventory section of this report.

## Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category

Expenditure Category (EC)			
		As of 7-31-21	
6	Expenditure Category: Revenue Replacement	Cumulative expenditures to date	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
6.1	Provision of Government Services	430,145	430,145
	Project Inventory List of Government Services	Cumulative expenditures to date	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
4400-A110	EOC Emergency Response Project	\$ -	\$ -
4400-A365	Resilience Food Access	\$ -	\$ -
4400-A375	Resilience Hubs	\$ -	\$ -
5000-9100-A6	Homelessness General	\$ -	\$ -
5500-A240	Colony Park Sustainable Community Health Center	\$ -	\$ -
5500-A340	Non-Profit Emergency Relief - Arts / Music	\$ -	\$ -
5500-A341	Arts	\$ -	\$ -
5500-A342	Music	\$ -	\$ -
5500-A345	Community Navigators	\$ -	\$ -
5500-A350	Childcare/Early Childhood/Family Connects	\$ -	\$ -
5500-A360	Workforce Development: General	\$ -	\$ -
5500-A365	Food Security/Food Access	\$ -	\$ -
8600-A361	Workforce Development: Austin Civilian Conservation Corps (ACCC)	\$ -	\$ -
8600-A362	Workforce Development: Homelessness and/or Creative Sector	\$ -	\$ -
9100-A248	Public Health- IT Project	\$ -	\$ -
9100-A249	Public Health- Communications Project	\$ -	\$ -
9100-A250	Public Health- Staffing and Support	\$ 430,145	\$ 430,145

The City budgeted various government services to be provisioned from the revenue replacement from ARPA - SLFRF allocation. Each program area noted in the Uses of Funds narrative has one or more projects to help execute the program objectives. The individual projects are listed in the table above and in greater detail in the Project Inventory section of this report. The project inventory section of this report provides additional information by project including detailed information on promoting equitable outcomes, community engagement, labor practices (if applicable), use of evidence (if applicable), and key performance indicators.

## Project Inventory

### **Project 4400-A110: EOC Emergency Response Project**

**Funding amount: \$6,000,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

### **Project overview**

This project will support Emergency Operations Center (EOC) response activities. EOC activities have been ongoing since February 2020, but the costs reported here include expenses from March 3, 2021 and later. The role of the EOC in the COVID-19 emergency is to provide support and coordination for public health response activities from community-wide COVID-19 testing, sheltering for those who are COVID-19 positive or under monitoring, sheltering for individuals at high risk of contracting COVID-19, strike team support for group homes, provision of emergency medical overflow services, public information campaigns, and managing logistics such as the distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Expenses include an isolation/quarantine facility (hotel lease) to provide shelter for those who are COVID-19 positive or are awaiting results, and some logistics expenses for the Alternate Care Site (ACS). The ACS was created to establish a field hospital for COVID-19 positive patients who need low to intermediate acuity care. An ACS was activated at the Austin Convention Center in January 2021, in partnership with the State of Texas Department of Emergency Management. This ACS was deactivated in March 2021. In August 2021, due to the surge from the Delta variant, the facility to house an ACS was prepared at the Travis County Expo Center but is not activated at this time.

The intended outcomes are coordination among responder agencies, a reduction in community transmission of the virus, and a relief valve for the hospital system if they become overwhelmed with care of COVID-19 patients.

### **Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

The isolation facility and Alternate Care Site are open to all who have the medical need.

**Project 4400-A365: Resilience Food Access**

**Funding amount: \$500,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

Consistent with City Council's direction, \$500,000 for regional food systems planning will support the growth and stabilization of the local food system (managed by City of Austin Office of Sustainability). ARPA - SLFRF funds will be used to support enhanced food resiliency, regional food system planning, and development of a nonprofit or cooperative grocery store in an underserved area. Additionally, City staff are actively collaborating with Travis County staff to optimize alignment of the City and County's food security investments.

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

**Goals:** There is a pronounced food access problem for low-income and communities of color in Austin. In 2016, the City's Office of Sustainability [issued a report](#) to City Council outlining the challenges and goals of the food ecosystem. The funding has been limited up to now and while the Resilience Food Access project is yet to be designed, some of the goals listed in the 2016 report will be attempted as well as the recent [resolution](#) set forth by City Council.

**Awareness:** This project will have the marketing and communications support of three highly communicative departments: Austin Public Health, City of Austin Office of Sustainability, and the Economic Development Department (EDD). In EDD alone, the Marketing & Communications team aims to extend the communication and outreach to the existing 28,000 department contacts via email and social content packaged for partner departments and external organizations, like Travis County, to spread the word. All opportunities are listed on the one-stop hub of economic opportunities for Austin: [ATXrecovers.com](http://ATXrecovers.com).

**Access and Distribution:** As mentioned above, City staff will work with third party providers to support applicants in their request for support. In the project design, staff will work with partners to ensure the applications themselves are mobile and multi-language friendly with staff and system capacity to review.

**Outcomes:** The project is still being designed, but in the near-term, EDD is focusing on the deployment of ARPA funding to support nonprofit or cooperative grocery store development and the development of Food Equity and Economic Development (FEED) Program, a program which will utilize CDBG funding to catalyze food sector business development in underserved areas. The intent of FEED is to provide funding to projects that will strengthen the food sector, improve food access, and demonstrate the viability of food sector investments for private sector funders.

**Negative Economic Impacts:** Project is in the design phase.

***Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities:*** Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City began to take strides in addressing equitable outcomes for program and service delivery. These strides include a City Council adopted five-year strategic plan, Strategic Direction 2023 (SD23), which prescribes reporting detail with as much granularity as possible, including specific metrics on the number and percentage of persons who successfully complete workforce development training; the number of people moved out of poverty into middle skills jobs; and unemployment rates with the granularity of demographic data. EDD committed to collecting demographic data (age, gender, race or ethnicity, zip code, and City Council District representation) for all project participants and fund recipients. Another stride taken was the creation of the Equity Office in the City, whose work is to provide training on racial equity and hold City of Austin programs and services accountable to tracking the metrics as dedicated in SD23.

At the onset of the pandemic each City department providing economic stimulus to the community began reporting data on the projects provided on the public facing dashboard at [ATXrecovers.com](https://www.atxrecovers.com) under the Economic Impact section. In 2020, the City provided childcare facilities with economic support through the Austin Childcare Provider Relief Grant. Data related to this project is available on ATXrecovers.com, or directly [here](#). As new programs are launched dashboards are provided. Each dashboard includes demographic information about applicants and awardees, as well as other factors that demonstrate historical challenges, such as: legal business structure, industry type, and what City of Austin Council district their customers reside in.

### **Community Engagement**

In addition to community engagement activities discussed in the General Overview section of this report, this project is expected to conduct additional community outreach in 2021, prior to the launch of project offerings.

### **Use of Evidence**

The project is still in the design phase but expects to use evidence-based criteria such as number of food access retailers per capita and by geography for food access as well as project evaluation for the retail providers. Staff anticipates an administrative fee between 5% and 15% to be incurred.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

Output and outcome measures not yet established.

**Project 4400-A375: Resilience Hubs**

**Funding amount: \$3,000,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

On April 8, 2021, Austin City Council passed Resolution 20210408-028, directing staff to engage with school districts, external partners, and communities to conduct a resilience hub assessment to identify potential locations throughout the City to serve as resilience hubs, including designing and equipping pilot hubs for disasters, including the necessary power and water redundancies.

Resilience Hubs are community locations that provide hyper-localized, contextually, and culturally relevant solutions to address ongoing stressors in communities and distributed disaster response and recovery efforts.

Office of Sustainability staff worked with over 30 individuals from 18 City departments and several external partners and community leaders to develop initial cost estimates to implement Resilience Hub pilots in low-income communities.

Over the next 18-24 months, staff will plan, design, and build features needed to provide at least two initial Resilience Hub pilot projects within the “Eastern Crescent” of the City, in addition to creating a community-wide Resilience Hub Plan. The “Eastern Crescent” is an area that represents the highest number of communities of color and low-income residents. The goal of the pilot projects is to gather lessons learned from a limited number of scenarios and inform a large city-wide Resilience Hub Plan.

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

**Goals:** The goal of this work is to identify areas within the City that could benefit from the activation of a “resilience hub” and where efforts should be prioritized to establish, support, and fund institutions to serve this purpose. To create pilots, staff will work closely with the community most sensitive to climate shocks and stressors. In Austin, low-income communities and communities of color are bearing the brunt of climate change impacts, often being hit first and worst and lacking the investment and resources needed to recover. Because of this, Resilience Hub work will center around low-income communities and communities of color in the planning processes, build an equity lens for all staff participating in these processes, and move toward community leadership and ownership to the maximum extent possible.

**Awareness:** Once the pilot Resilience Hubs are completed, an outreach strategy will be developed to ensure that community members are aware of them and are able to access them in the event of an emergency.

**Access and Distribution:** Resilience Hubs provide hyper-localized, contextually, and culturally relevant solutions to address ongoing stressors in communities and distributed disaster response and recovery efforts. They increase accessibility by bringing City services and support into communities and empowering residents in the selection and distribution of services. The City will assess the accessibility of the two pilots to ensure that they are reachable by all adjacent residents including seniors and children, disabled individuals, and

individuals without vehicles. Street and other public realm amenities will be analyzed to determine bicycle and pedestrian access.

**Outcomes:** The implementation of Resilience Hubs will prioritize communities where these services will be most impactful, such as those most impacted by historical disparities and inequities and most vulnerable to climate-related shocks and stressors.

The City is already experiencing the effects of climate change with more extreme heat and flooding. These impacts are expected to become more severe over the next few decades, including more hot days, increased extreme precipitation, and longer droughts. These effects will not be felt evenly throughout the city. Communities with fewer resources experience hotter summer days and nights from the urban heat island effect while other communities are more susceptible to flooding. Within these communities, certain populations will be more vulnerable to climate impacts, including older adults, children, people of color, people with limited-English proficiency, low-income individuals, people with disabilities, and people with medical illnesses. This project will focus on providing meaningful equity results by inviting residents and trusted community leaders to help design and implement hub operations and programming. The lessons learned from these two hubs will inform future hub planning and provide results at scale.

In Austin, low-income communities and communities of color are bearing the brunt of climate change impacts, often being hit first and worst and lacking the investment and resources needed to recover. These impacts will continue to result in various immediate shocks and long-term stressors in our community, often on top of existing stressors and disparities related to income, health, etc. Because of this, climate resilience work should include a sharper focus on low-income communities and communities of color in the planning processes, build an equity lens for all staff participating in these processes, and move toward community leadership and ownership to the maximum extent possible.

The criteria to select the pilot hub sites will be based on factors including near-term implementation opportunity, ability to provide community gathering space and that the structures are not exposed to flooding or wildfire. To achieve equitable outcomes, staff will use datasets such as:

- Calls to 211 by Zip Code & Call Type
- Unemployment and underemployment rates
- Poverty and low-income neighborhoods
- Focus areas identified in the Central Health 2020 Demographics Report
- Housing insecurity areas
- Areas vulnerable to flooding
- Areas lacking tree canopy coverage
- Neighborhoods near brownfields, landfills, recycling, and wastewater treatment facilities
- Food insecurity

The Office of Sustainability is in conversations with external partners and community groups about adding resilience-related upgrades to pilot hubs in the “Eastern Crescent”. Based on community equity and “Eastern Crescent” datasets, the pilot hubs will be in areas of Austin with traditionally marginalized communities.

### **Community Engagement**

The process to create Resilience Hubs focuses heavily on the values, goals, and needs of the community, and the tasks and costs noted reflect estimates to co-create Resilience Hubs with community members in a meaningful way. This means better, more inclusive, and varied events (house meetings, focus groups, etc.), and costs that reflect the need to reduce barriers for engagement (translation and interpretation, non-traditional outreach and communication channels, childcare at events, etc.). Community engagement costs, however, are estimated and included in the total pilot hub cost estimate.

### **Use of Evidence**

The goal of this work is to identify areas within the City that could benefit from the activation of a “resilience hub” and where efforts should be prioritized to establish, support, and fund institutions to serve this purpose. The ARPA - SLFRF funds will be used to stand up two Resilience Hubs in low-income communities. This includes costs for additional technology (solar, battery backup, etc.), community engagement, and an allowance to explore emerging technologies. To select the two pilot locations, staff recommends working with community members most impacted by recent weather-related events.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

Output and outcome measures and indicators are not yet established. These will be developed in collaboration with key stakeholders and shared in future reporting.

**Project 5000-9100-A6: Homelessness General**

**Funding amount: \$95,300,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0.00**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0.00**

**Project Overview**

The City will utilize \$95.3M of ARPA - SLFRF funding as part of a comprehensive, community-wide effort to reduce levels of unsheltered homelessness. Expenditures will begin in August of 2021 and are anticipated through at least April of 2024. Primary service types within the broader project include:

- Emergency Shelter
- Street Outreach
- Diversion/Rapid Exit
- Rapid Rehousing
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Targeted Prevention
- Landlord Outreach & Incentives
- Mental Health/Substance Use Disorder Services
- Supported Employment/Workforce Services
- Service Provider Capacity Building
- Planning, Management, and Administration
- Housing Development – Capital Subsidy

While some activities will be carried out by City of Austin staff, the majority of services delivered via the ARPA - SLFRF project will be outsourced to third-party service providers via City of Austin contracting processes. The City anticipates partnering with a wide variety of nonprofit and public entities to execute the project and leverage additional funding.

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

Equity is central to the City's work to address homelessness, particularly given the disproportionately high incidence of housing instability among African Americans, the LGBTQIA community, and people living with disabilities.

**Goals:** The project will focus on achieving more equitable outcomes for historically marginalized, adversely impacted populations, including African Americans, LGBTQIA persons, and people living with disabilities.

**Awareness:** Project activities will be integrated into the local Homeless Response System, and housing referrals will be made via the community's Coordinated Entry System, which is a known single point of entry for people experiencing homelessness. In addition, the City anticipates utilizing a portion of its funding to support Street Outreach efforts to improve awareness of, and access to, services.

**Access and Distribution:** The City is committed to working with the local HUD Continuum of Care Lead Agency (ECHO) to improve equitable access to services. Access is mediated

via a centralized referral system and common assessment tool that prioritizes the highest need individuals for services. The Continuum of Care, recognizing concerns that the legacy assessment tool tended to de-prioritize African Americans, has recently adopted a new tool focused on equity across dimensions of race, LGBTQIA status, and disability. The availability of in-person assessments for the Coordinated Entry System has been constrained over the course of the pandemic, and the City will assess potential ARP investments to support expanded and equitable access.

**Outcomes:** The project is intended to reduce rates of homelessness for all Austinites, with a particular focus on reducing the disproportionate harm in adversely impacted populations – African Americans, LGBTQIA, and people living with disabling conditions. Project outcomes will be disaggregated in key areas to assess progress. Given the extreme marginalization of people experiencing homelessness, all funding under this project falls under ‘Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities.’ While services will be funded across the geographic area, the City is committed to Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing by ensuring that capital investment is distributed across the community, improving housing choice for populations who have historically been subject to discriminatory housing patterns.

### **Community Engagement**

The City Homeless Strategy Division has initiated a community engagement process to further refine and guide its investments under this project. Initial community engagement activities will include a survey of people with lived expertise in homelessness, an online survey for the general public, and solicitation of input from homeless service providers. In addition, the city’s Homeless Strategy Officer serves on the local Continuum of Care’s Homeless Response System Leadership Council, whose composition and practice centers the experience of people with lived expertise and disproportionately impacted communities. The City anticipates working closely with the Leadership Council and its committees to shape and prioritize investments. To further the meaningful capacity of community organizations to meet the needs traditionally underserved groups, a portion of project funding will be utilized to support capacity building efforts.

### **Use of Evidence**

The City seeks to advance the use of evidence-based practices across the local response system. Evidence-based interventions currently utilized in city-supported projects include, but are not limited to, Permanent Supportive Housing, Assertive Community Treatment, Motivational Interviewing, Harm Reduction, and Trauma-Informed Care. No allocation of funding to the various types of service have been made to date, such that neither the dollar amount allocated to such interventions, nor specific evaluation plans are available at this time.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

Additional performance indicators will be added as funding is committed.

- a. Number of people or households receiving shelter services
- b. Number of bed-days of shelter provided
- c. Number of people or households re-housed
- d. Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed
- e. Number of people or households receiving eviction prevention services

**Project 5500-A240: Colony Park Sustainable Community Health Center**

**Funding amount: \$1,500,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

EDD staff is finalizing the project scope and timeline to utilize ARPA funds for the engineering and construction of the water, wastewater, stormwater, and related infrastructure required for the successful development of the Colony Park Sustainable Community Health Center in partnership with Central Health. The delivery of the Health and Wellness Center will help address the critical health needs of northeast Austin residents, who experienced disproportionate health impacts throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

**Goals:** To deliver a healthcare center and services to the [Colony Park Sustainable Community](#), a historically marginalized neighborhood of 208 acres of City-owned property on Loyola Lane between Johnny Morris Road and Decker Lane. In order to deliver this healthcare center and services to Colony Park residents most gravely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, there are necessary infrastructure improvements that must be made.

**Awareness:** The project is led by a group of community leaders known as the Colony Park Core Team. This “Core Team” consists of representatives from the Colony Park, Lakeside, Agave, Woodland Hills and LBJ neighborhoods. Together, the Core Team crafted a community-focused vision for this area and the Colony Park Sustainable Community. To unify their vision, they created **Eight Pillars** to guide their work:

- Improve mobility, connectivity, and safety of community
- Improve access to health care resources and services
- Improve access to open spaces and activate parks
- Improve access to healthy food resources
- Improve access to economic vitality of community
- Improve educational opportunities
- Improve equal access to workforce housing
- Improve quality of life through accessing available City/County resources

The Colony Park Core Team, with the support of a contracted third-party community engagement contractor has been convening community meetings throughout the Colony Park Sustainable Community master planning process. The timeline of activity can be observed [here](#) on the Colony Park website.

**Access and Distribution:** This infrastructure will help deliver a public health facility that will serve low-income residents of Austin and Northeast Travis County through Community Care, an entity related to Travis County Central Health. This population has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Outcomes:** The agreement between the City and the regional Central Health organization fills a critical need for healthcare services in northeast Austin. To date, affordable services are non-existent in this community. On February 6, 2020, City Council authorized an interlocal agreement with Central Health to evaluate the suitability of a Health and Wellness Center within the Loyola Town Center of the 208-acre Colony Park Sustainable Community. The opportunity to develop a Health and Wellness Center further aligns the development at the 208-acre Colony Park site with the City’s Strategic Outcomes of Economic Opportunity & Affordability and Health & Environment.

### **Community Engagement**

In the three-year community engagement and planning process, the Colony Park Core Team developed a COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CHIP) over several engagements with other neighborhood residents. The CHIP is noted on page 12 of the [Master Plan and Design Guidelines](#). The Steering and Core Coordinating Committees participated in a prioritization activity and identified the following priority health issues that would be addressed in the CHIP:

Chronic Disease – Focus on Obesity:

- 1) Reduce burden of chronic diseases caused by obesity among Austin/Travis County residents.

Built Environment – Focus on Access to Healthy Foods:

- 2) All in our community have reasonable access to affordable quality nutritious food.
- 3) Local and regional stakeholders will collaboratively increase accessibility to community resources via safe, active transportation.

Access to Primary Care and Mental/Behavioral Health Services - Focus on Navigating the Healthcare System:

- 4) Expand access to high-quality behaviorally integrated patient-centered medical homes for all persons.

### **Labor Practices**

The City has a women and minority owned enterprise procurement process that ensures worker safety and compensation. The Compliance team reviews solicitations; sets project goals for department solicitations to contract with women and minority owned enterprise contractors or subcontractors; collaborates with Project Managers to help identify scopes of work on projects; and verifies Compliance Plan information submitted by Bidders/Proposers which includes labor agreements, community benefits agreements, prevailing wage requirements, and local hiring expectations. Additionally, in 2020 the City hired its first Chief Civil Rights Officer to enforce civil rights anti-discrimination ordinance and federal statutes.

### **Use of Evidence**

All \$1.5 million spent towards infrastructure improvement is based on evidence based public health need. The technical advisory group of the Colony Park Sustainable Community consists of subject matter experts from the following City of Austin departments:

Austin Energy - Green Building  
Austin Housing Finance Corporation  
Austin Fire Department  
Austin Police Department  
Austin Resource Recovery  
Austin Water  
CAMPO  
CAPCOG  
Capital Planning Office  
Capital Metro  
Austin Code Department  
Colony Park Neighborhood Association  
Downtown Austin Community Court  
Community Development Commission  
Communications & Public Information Office  
Capital Contracting  
Economic Development Department  
Fleet Mobility Services  
Austin Public Health  
Austin Public Library  
Housing and Planning Department  
Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management  
Office of Sustainability  
Parks and Recreation Department  
Development Services Department  
Public Works Department  
Office of Small Minority Business Resources  
Transportation Department  
University of Texas - Public Engagement

There are recommendations from these groups on how to achieve the public health goals set by the community. Those reports can be found on the public facing Colony Park Sustainable Community [website](#), under Documents.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

Output and outcome measures not yet established, but may include:

- Number of contracts awarded to women and minority owned enterprises for engineering and construction of the water, wastewater, stormwater, and related infrastructure.
- Number of healthcare providers located in Colony Park.
- Number of behavioral or mental health appointments made by Colony Park residents per year at the Colony Park Central Health healthcare center.
- Median wage of contracted providers delivering engineering and construction of the water, wastewater, stormwater, and related infrastructure.
- Decrease in obesity rates of Colony Park residents.

**Project 5500-A340: Non-Profit Emergency Relief - Arts / Music**

**Funding amount: \$2,000,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

Non-Profit Emergency Relief: Arts/Culture EDD staff launched the Arts and Culture Non-Profit Relief Grant on July 14, 2021. The grant project provides one-time unrestricted \$20,000 grants to local arts and culture non-profit organizations facing hardships due to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Applications for the grant opened on July 14, 2021 and closed on August 2, 2021. EDD contracted with the Austin Better Business Bureau to serve as EDD's third-party administrator for this grant, and EDD contracted with the Austin Revitalization Authority and Mission Capital to provide application assistance for this grant. Awarded applicants were selected for funding based on a scoring matrix. More information about this project, including a dashboard featuring project metrics, is available at [www.ATXrecovers.com](http://www.ATXrecovers.com).

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

**Goals:** The relief project aimed to serve registered 501c (3) non-profit organizations with programming that promotes or develops art in any medium (visual, performing, music, etc.), preserves or commemorates historical events and local cultures, or promotes the distribution of ideas. The grant prioritized organizations that have been historically underserved and whose Board demographic makeup and Executive Director are from historically underserved communities. The scoring matrix included criteria for race/ethnicity, gender, LGBTQIA, and disability, with funds being allocated to applicants that scored the highest in these areas.

**Awareness:** The EDD Marketing & Communications team extended the communication and outreach to the existing 28,000 department contacts via email and social content packaged for partner departments and external organizations, Mission Capital and the Austin Revitalization Authority, to spread the word. All opportunities were listed on the one-stop hub of economic opportunities for Austin: ATXrecovers.com.

**Access and Distribution:** The ATXrecovers website provided FAQs, checklists, and eligibility requirements for applicants to review prior to applying. Applicants were also offered technical support from City staff as well as Mission Capital and Austin Revitalization Authority. Applications were mobile and multi-language friendly with staff and system capacity to review.

**Outcomes:** Intended outcomes were to stabilize arts and culture non-profit organizations impacted by COVID-19 and during the pandemic. This became especially critical as the pandemic took a turn for the worse. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City began to take strides in addressing equitable outcomes for project and service delivery. These strides include a City Council adopted five-year strategic plan, called Strategic Direction 2023 or [SD23](#) for short, which prescribes reporting detail with as much granularity as possible. As well as specific metrics on number and percentage of persons who successfully complete

workforce development training; number of people moved out of poverty into middle skills jobs; and unemployment rates with the granularity of demographic data. EDD has committed to collecting demographic data (age, gender, race or ethnicity, zip code, and City Council District representation) for all project participants and fund recipients. Another stride taken was the establishment of the Equity Office in the City whose work is to provide training on racial equity and hold City of Austin projects and services accountable to tracking the metrics as dedicated in SD23.

During the pandemic the Chief Economic Recovery Officer for the City required departments providing economic stimulus to the community to produce dashboards for each of the economic relief projects provided. This data is available to the public under Economic Impact on [ATXrecovers.com](https://www.atxrecovers.com). In 2020, the City provided childcare facilities with economic support and this dashboard is available on [ATXrecovers.com](https://www.atxrecovers.com), or directly [here](#). As new programs are launched dashboards are provided. Each dashboard includes demographic information about applicants and awardees, as well as other factors that demonstrate historical challenges, such as: legal business structure, industry type, and what City of Austin Council district their customers reside in.

### **Community Engagement**

In addition to community engagement activities discussed in the General Overview section of this report, EDD sought a third-party organization to administer technical assistance and expertise to eligible applicants for the Austin Nonprofit Relief Grant, referred to as a Community Champion. EDD evaluated third parties based on their experience providing a combination of consultation, outreach, recruitment, one-on-one sessions, phone inquiries, document preparation and a technical assistance program that consists of a “tailored” approach to assist in grant deployment. EDD contracted with the Austin Revitalization Authority and Mission Capital to provide application assistance for this grant.

Community Champions have been identified to support the Nonprofit Relief Grant to ensure historically underrepresented communities receive direct correspondence, access, and education on project requirements, timelines, and application materials and general project support as needed. The City prioritizes the focus on entities less likely to receive assistance elsewhere and those most vulnerable to the effects of COVID-19 and service delivery. Equitable distribution of information about the relief grant project is the core mission of contracting with our Community Champions who have established relationships in the Austin community and can serve in lead roles to support overall recovery efforts.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

Output and outcome measures include the items below and can be found under Economic Impacts “[Austin Arts & Culture Non-Profit Relief Grant](#)” dashboard on [ATXrecovers.com](https://www.atxrecovers.com):

- Number of applicants and awardees by Leadership or Board demographics
- Open status during the pandemic
- Annual revenue
- Applicants and awardees by arts & culture North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)
- Amount awarded
- Number of permanent employees retained

**Project 5500-A341: Arts**

**Funding amount: \$6,000,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

This project is in the design phase. Austin City Council has asked for the feedback from the City volunteer citizen Arts Commissioners to help inform project creation. City Council will receive an update from EDD staff after staff receives and reviews the Arts Commission's feedback and will begin project design after further guidance from City Council.

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

**Goals:** The project is still being designed, however, it is known to the community that unemployment, though overall low for the region, is disproportionately high for non-white Austinites. Additionally, affordable childcare keeps some community members – both historically non-white *and* residing in east Austin - currently out of reach of quality childcare solutions and therefore forced to remain out of the workforce. Further affordability friction is the [hourly median wages of creative workers](#) is almost \$5 less per hour [than the hourly wage required to sustain a family in Austin](#), demonstrating the struggle to retain creative workers in Austin.

**Awareness:** The goal of the EDD Marketing & Communications team is to extend the communication and outreach to the existing 28,000 department contacts via email and social content packaged for partner departments and external organizations, to spread the word. All opportunities are listed on the one-stop hub of economic opportunities for Austin: [ATXrecovers.com](#).

**Access and Distribution:** As mentioned above, staff will work with third party providers and the technical assistance providers established in the Community Navigators project to support applicants in their request for support. In the project design, staff will work with our partners to ensure the applications themselves are mobile and multi-language friendly with staff and system capacity to review.

**Outcomes:** The project is in the design phase.

**Community Engagement**

In addition to community engagement activities discussed in the General Overview section of this report, this project is expected to conduct additional community outreach and gather input from the Arts Commission from September 2021 through November 2021, prior to the launch of project offerings.

### **Use of Evidence**

The program is still in the design phase but will be created from use of evidence. In addition, disaggregated applicant information (those applied and served) will be available by demographic and evidence-based groups.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

Output and outcome measures are currently being developed.

**Project 5500-A342: Music**

**Funding amount: \$4,000,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

Proposed Spending Framework for Music approved at Special Called Music Commission Meeting on Friday, August 20, 2021:

1. **Live Music Venue Preservation Fund:** \$1.7M to fund the remaining scored Phase 2 Applicants that are eligible based on adhering to project requirements for Equity Strategic Planning training.
2. **Austin Music Disaster Relief Fund 3.0:** \$2.3M Project Budget remains after estimated 3rd Party fee subtracted from total available funds.
  - Music Commission approved recommendations for updated grant guidelines, including:
    - Expand criteria to include music industry workers based on past eligibility requirements for Creative Worker Grant
    - Grant awards of either \$2,000 or \$1,000 based on scoring that prioritizes equity and greatest financial need
    - Awardees remain eligible for Live Music Fund Event Program
    - Extend eligibility to those living in the Austin–Round Rock Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)
    - Collect and deliver data to counties in MSA and ETJ about applicant need within their jurisdictions
    - Consider previous or new 3rd Party to facilitate project using City provided guidelines and application system. Reach out to Musicares to inquire if they can serve as either 3rd Party again or at least as a Community Champion
    - Scoring Requirements:
      - Lead with equity based on new federal direction from Treasury, as well as using scoring criteria from latest COA relief & recovery programs focusing on equity
      - More points for greater losses and those in extreme need
      - More points for applicants that are financially responsible for multiple dependents
      - More points for applicants that have lived in Austin area for multiple years
      - Priority given to those who haven't yet received any City relief and recovery funding since March 2020

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

**Goals:** The project is still being designed, however, it is known to the community that unemployment, though overall low for the region, is disproportionately high for non-white Austinites. Additionally, affordable childcare keeps some community members – both historically non-white *and* residing in east Austin - currently out of reach of quality childcare solutions and therefore forced to remain out of the workforce. Further affordability friction is

the [hourly median wages of creative workers](#) is almost \$5 less per hour [than the hourly wage required to sustain a family in Austin](#), demonstrating the struggle to retain creative workers in Austin.

**Awareness:** The goal of the EDD Marketing & Communications team is to extend the communication and outreach to the existing 28,000 department contacts via email and social content packaged for partner departments and external organizations, to spread the word. All opportunities are listed on the one-stop hub of economic opportunities for Austin: [ATXrecovers.com](#).

**Access and Distribution:** As mentioned above, staff will work with third party providers and the technical assistance providers established in the Community Navigators project to support applicants in their request for support. In the project design, staff will work with our partners to ensure the applications themselves are mobile and multi-language friendly with staff and system capacity to review.

**Outcomes:** Project is in the design phase.

### **Community Engagement**

In addition to community engagement activities discussed in the General Overview section of this report, this project is expected to conduct additional community outreach and gather input from the Music Commission from September 2021 through November 2021, prior to the launch of project offerings.

### **Use of Evidence**

The program is still in the design phase but will be created from use of evidence. In addition, disaggregated applicant information (those applied and served) will be available by demographic and evidence-based groups.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

Output and outcome measures are currently being developed.

**Project 5500-A345: Community Navigators**

**Funding amount: \$500,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

Community Navigators will help support local businesses, non-profit organizations, and creative professionals impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic by offering application assistance and technical assistance for local, state, and federal relief projects. EDD staff intends to contract with several experienced, culturally informed, and technically knowledgeable third parties to deliver these services. Staff anticipate publishing a Request for Applications in September 2021. Services are expected to begin in November 2021. The intended outcomes are increased knowledge to gain access to new patrons and revenue streams.

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

**Goals:** Several questions in the Request for Applications require potential third parties to demonstrate their ability to deliver services to “historically underserved communities.” For the purposes of this Request for Applications, “historically underserved communities” means local communities that have experienced exclusion, marginalization, and discrimination because of City policies and practices. These include communities in the following zip codes: 78617, 78653, 78660, 78702, 78719, 78721, 78722, 78723, 78724, 78725, 78741, 78744, 78745, 78747, 78748, 78752, 78753, and 78754. Additionally, third party contractors must have capacity to deliver services in languages other than English, and they must have capacity to deliver services without discrimination of technological access.

**Awareness:** In addition to leveraging owned communications assets (e.g., the department’s existing newsletter with 45,000 contacts, social media accounts, etc.), EDD staff will partner with local chambers of commerce, business associations, and commercial districts to inform businesses about the Community Navigator Project. Additionally, EDD staff will contract with third-party organizations to conduct outreach and engagement to raise awareness about the Community Navigator Project services. Outreach and engagement will include marketing materials in languages other than English.

**Access and Distribution:** Austin businesses and creatives seeking support from the Community Navigator project will self-select the type of assistance they need.

**Outcomes:** EDD has set forth objectives of closing racial, ethnic, LGBTQIA+, and disability community gaps in ownership and leadership of small businesses and non-profits in Austin. The application will collect these data points and are used as measures of outreach success. An evaluation rubric, not yet designed for this project, will be deployed to ensure technical assistance is provided to groups most in need of service. All this information will be aggregated and displayed to the public in the form of a dashboard for a comparison of application demographics and service provided demographics.

**Negative Economic Impacts:** The City’s Chief Economic Recovery Officer published an [Economic Recovery & Resiliency Framework](#) which outlined the economic situation of the community and the metrics to monitor whether equitable outcomes are achieved over the course of the deployment of economic relief of all kinds (p. 11 and p. 27 of the PDF).

The Community Navigator project will likely target only Austin businesses and creatives who reside or are located in the Austin city limits, but that may change to include the broader MSA region due to the affordability issues in our City. Businesses, non-profits, and creative professionals from Austin’s historically underrepresented communities will be especially encouraged to participate in the project.

### **Community Engagement**

As discussed in the General Overview section of this report, feedback collected in 2020 from focus groups which were developed to determine the allocation of CARES funding is still relevant and helped guide the development of the ARPA Spending Framework. This feedback will be considered during project design. In fact, one of the strategies recommended in the Framework reflects the need for workshops, one-on-one coaching, and technical assistance.

### **Use of Evidence**

The project is still in the design phase but will be created from use of evidence. In addition, disaggregated applicant information (those applied and served) will be available by demographic and evidence-based groups.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

Output and outcome measures not yet established, but likely will gather:

1. Total number of businesses or creatives utilizing technical assistance
2. Number of hours of technical assistance service
3. Survey results of satisfaction or gaining knowledge or support.

**Project 5500-A350: Childcare/Early Childhood/Family Connects**

**Funding amount: \$11,000,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

EDD and Austin Public Health are designing projects that enhance childcare and early childhood outcomes in Austin, especially in the City's historically underserved communities. Also, City staff is actively collaborating with Travis County staff to align and maximize outcomes from City and County early childhood investments. A final project plan is not complete, but staff anticipates finalizing a project plan within the calendar year.

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

**Goals:** This ARPA - SLFRF investment intends to serve low-income households with children enrolled in childcare and early childhood education programs (e.g., pre-kindergarten). Many of these households reside in communities like East Austin and Del Valle, which are local historically underserved communities that lack access to affordable, quality-rated childcare facilities and early childhood education programs. These funds will also be used to support and stabilize the fragile childcare sector and childcare workforce, the majority of which is made up of women of color.

**Awareness:** The City has a robust marketing and communications program. City staff will leverage existing owned media assets (e.g., newsletters, social media accounts, websites), community partnerships, existing relationships with schools and childcare providers, and paid campaigns to ensure residents are aware of these services.

**Access and Distribution:** Staff anticipates differences in access levels due to project guidelines that are intended to connect services to underserved communities that face the greatest challenges accessing quality childcare, early childhood education programs, and parent education and support programs (e.g., residents earning low wages, residents living in a historically underserved school district, etc.). To the extent possible, staff will limit administrative burdens that can result in participation disparities.

**Outcomes:** While the final project metrics are not complete, staff will collect metrics to ensure childcare, early childhood education support, and parent education and support programs are available to groups most in need of service, especially households from racial, ethnic, geographic, and socioeconomic groups that are disproportionately impacted by the lack of quality programs. Staff also anticipates using a portion of these funds to help a postpartum support program move toward reaching universal coverage. Project staff anticipates supporting with these funds include evidence-based home visiting parent support and education, as well as improving access to early childhood education with the goal of reducing racial/ethnic and socioeconomic disparities in kindergarten readiness in our community.

## **Community Engagement**

As discussed in the General Overview section of this report, feedback collected in 2020 from focus groups which were developed to determine the allocation of CARES funding is still relevant and helped guide the development of the ARPA Spending Framework. This feedback will be considered during project design. In fact, one of the strategies recommended in the Framework reflects the need to enhance access to affordable and quality childcare.

The planned support for early childhood education and families with young children was the result of recommendations from the community's Success by Six early childhood coalition. The coalition's recommendations were based on input from coalition partners, which include representatives of programs that serve people with significant barriers to services, including people of color, people with low incomes, limited English proficiency populations, and other traditionally underserved groups. For example, a portion of the funds will be used to expand our largest school district's free Pre-K program for 3-year-olds from half-day to full-day. Free public Pre-K serves children from income-eligible families and those who are English language learners.

## **Use of Evidence**

The project is still in the design phase but will be created from use of evidence. In addition, disaggregated applicant information (those applied and served) will be available by demographic and evidence-based groups. A portion of these funds will be used for evidence-based programs that provide parent education and support. For example, Family Connects is an evidence-based, universal postpartum support program. A portion of the funding will be used for an evaluation of the impact of the local Family Connects program. The evaluation results will be used to build the case for sustainable funding sources.

## **Key Performance Indicators**

Output and outcome measures are currently being developed, but may include:

- Number of additional Pre-K classrooms for 4-year-olds opened
- Number of 4-year-olds served in new Pre-K classrooms
- Number of Pre-K classrooms for 3-year-olds expanded from half-day to full-day
- Number of 3-year-olds served in full-day Pre-K
- Number of early childhood educators receiving a wage supplement
- Number of educators supported to further their education in the early childhood field
- Number of families receiving childcare assistance
- Number of providers participating in a family home childcare provider network
- Unemployment rate of parents
- Number of parents participating in job employment programs
- Number of parents successfully completing job employment programs
- Number of families served by home visiting

**Project 5500-A360: Workforce Development: General**

**Funding amount: \$15,000,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

Economic Development Department (EDD) staff anticipate using Fiscal Year 2021 workforce development funds for initiatives that support Austinites economically impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic; train Austinites for careers in the healthcare industry; and provide Austin creatives with job training and placement to complement media production, content generation, and facilities management services. The first contract is with Austin Film Society (AFS) for media production training and public access television facilities management. EDD staff will seek City Council approval in Fall 2021 for additional contracts with Workforce Solutions and Capital Idea, both of which have successful records of delivering required services. Staff is also actively collaborating with Travis County employees to align the City and County's workforce development investments. In Fiscal Year 2022, EDD staff intend to solicit additional workforce development concepts and services from more third parties through a competitive Request for Proposals.

The \$400K Austin Film Society contract will:

- provide workforce development training to economically disadvantaged individuals for occupations related to Austin's creative sector residents and organizations,
- distribute local content and manage video programming over cable television systems and streaming content services, and provide community access to the Public Access Television Facility and production equipment, and
- advance access to services, community engagement, and leveraged opportunities.

Timeline: 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2024 with two 1-year extension options.

Link to the website of the project: <https://www.austinfilm.org/austin-public/about-austin-public/>

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

The City Equity Statement was co-created with over 200 community members who logged over 900 volunteer hours in its creation. In the Austin Strategic Direction 2023, the City has identified equity as a core anchor across all of our strategic outcomes. The City Equity Statement is as follows:

Racial equity is the condition when race no longer predicts a person's quality of life outcomes in our community.

The City recognizes that race is the primary determinant of social equity and therefore the journey toward social equity begins with this definition. The City recognizes historical and structural disparities and a need for alleviation of the wrongs by critically transforming its institutions and creating a culture of equity.

The Austin Film Society contract prioritizes advancing racial equity in the area of media production and workforce training for our creative sector, historically underserved

community members, managing our community media/public access production facility and partnership development. Increasing equity while mitigating racism means examining the history of racial segregation and social justice issues in Austin. This includes considering the structural and systemic barriers that have contributed to racial inequities in our community. Government sponsored programs may not always be the best forums to create spaces for genuine, authentic engagement of all members of the community. Cable television, streaming content services, and public facilities are not always relevant to all members of the community to reach everyone. That's where this contract comes in.

Through this contract, equity means ensuring all members of the Austin community, regardless of background or identity, positively benefit from Media Production Training and Public Access Television Facility Operations. The contractor shall center its approach in advancing racial equity and elevating equitable outcomes for all people as it relates to the services available to the community. Starting the work to fulfill the contract objectives with communities of color will allow the effort to elevate the voice of members of our community who have historically been underrepresented in media, production, and the creative sector workforce. This will mean focusing more Contract resources on building relationships and trust with historically underrepresented communities in the beginning of the process to create a more equitable playing field later in the project implementation. This does not mean that other parts of our community will be left out or ignored, merely that additional resources will be devoted up front to ensure equitable outreach.

**Goals:** The majority of this project is still being designed, however; it is known to the community that unemployment, though overall low for the region, is disproportionately high for non-white Austinites. In addition to facing disproportionately high rates of unemployment, non-White Austinites were also disproportionately impacted by pandemic-related job loss and have faced slow rates of pandemic job recovery. Barriers of access to affordable childcare also keep some community members – historically non-white, female, *and* residing in east Austin - from being able to secure quality childcare solutions, therefore forcing them to remain either out of the workforce entirely or underemployed.

The Austin Film Society contract goals: Offer short term occupational training and non-degree certification to economically disadvantaged trainees, annual goal to be determined, with 3 pathways 1) Mentorship with IATSE Local 484, local chapter for all professional crew in studio film, 2) production in the Austin area which includes chapter's Inclusion and Diversity Committee and 3) mentorship program.

**Awareness:** The goal of the EDD Marketing & Communications team is to extend the communication and outreach to the existing 28,000 department contacts via email and social content packaged for partner departments and external organizations, like Workforce Solutions Capital Area or Capital IDEA, to spread the word. All opportunities are listed on the one-stop hub of economic opportunities for Austin: ATXrecovers.com. In addition to EDD's outreach efforts, Workforce Solutions Capital Area and Capital IDEA both have extensive community ties and a history of collaborating with area nonprofits and community-based organizations for information sharing sessions as well as for client and service referrals.

The Austin Film Society contract awareness: The services are available to anyone who is interested in learning media production skills and creating digital content to air on the cable

channels which area also streamed. Community outreach efforts and partnerships established to raise awareness about services.

**Access and Distribution:** As mentioned above, staff will work with third party providers like Workforce Solutions Capital Area, Capital IDEA, and the technical assistance providers established in the Community Navigators project to support applicants in their request for support. In the project design, staff will work with our partners to ensure the applications themselves are mobile and multi-language friendly with staff and system capacity to review.

**Outcomes:** The majority of this project is still being designed. For the healthcare-specific track with Capital IDEA, staff anticipates that 75% of clients served will be women of color who will receive training in high-opportunity healthcare fields such as nursing (earning an RN BSN) or as dental hygienists. Staff anticipates that all data related to these programs will be disaggregated by race-ethnicity as well as hourly wage earned at project completion.

The Austin Film Society contract outcomes: Intend to establish partnerships that focus on economically disadvantaged individuals.

**Negative Economic Impacts:** While the scope of work will target people facing barriers to employment and/or other negative pandemic-related impacts, the project itself has not yet been designed.

The Austin Film Society contract negative economic impact: Offer short term occupational training and non-degree certification to economically disadvantaged individuals – annual goal to be determined. Focus on creative sector industry and workers that were negatively impacted by COVID-19.

### **Community Engagement**

As discussed in the General Overview section of this report, feedback collected in 2020 from focus groups which were developed to determine the allocation of CARES funding is still relevant and helped guide the development of the ARPA Spending Framework. This feedback will be considered during project design. In fact, several strategies recommended in the Framework identified ways to support workforce development.

#### The Austin Film Society contract

AFS is committed to ensuring all Austinites can access the training classes, media equipment, and studio resources available through the community media program at Austin Public. By partnering with public and private organizations, AFS will help Austin's diverse communities understand and connect with the opportunities and services offered at Austin Public. These partnerships are vital to increasing participation from historically disadvantaged communities, and to facilitating civic dialogue and free speech as outlined in the Communications Act of 1986.

AFS will continue to administer services with the following guidelines in order to facilitate community accessibility:

- Maintaining the Producer Portal, public computer stations and remote and on-site content uploading options to maximize opportunities for self-service for users

- Maintain at least 40 hours a week of open access to studios and equipment, with additional hours for specific programs such as workforce development training
- Develop specific access tracks for groups and organizations
- Maintain virtual class options in addition to hands-on, in-person options
- Make classes available to anyone in the community regardless of their connection to the producer program subscription
- Offer classes in English and Spanish, both for virtual and in-person classes
- Offer scholarships to ensure that anyone in the community can access classes, while keeping class prices affordable
- Distribute content on cable access channels 10, 11 and 16, while also providing all content on over-the-top (OTT) services, streaming and on-demand, to make community content accessible via cable or a myriad of internet options

Outreach and community engagement are key ways AFS will maximize community accessibility. Over the last six years, AFS has engaged with 224 local organizations specifically to increase awareness of the opportunities and services offered through Austin Public, and to increase participation from historically disadvantaged communities in Austin. These engagements encompass different modalities through which the services and resources at Austin Public are utilized by these organizations to help further their own missions and goals. Additionally, the organizations help AFS connect to target communities and provide necessary partnership and feedback to support the community media programs.

AFS will also expand access to equipment and training services to the community through partnerships with host organizations. Classes, like Orientation, will be taught by AP staff at additional sites around the community, particularly in communities where transportation to the AP facility is challenging. Additionally, AFS will find partners who would like to engage their communities more regularly in the production of public access programming to host mini studios. Community members would be trained on how to use the remote production equipment kits and will be able to distribute content to the AP channels and digital platforms directly from their location.

### **Use of Evidence**

The program is still in the design phase but will be created from use of evidence. In addition, disaggregated applicant information (those applied and served) will be available by demographic and evidence-based groups.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

#### **Performance Evaluation Structure**

The contractor will report on the Key Performance Indicators detailed below on a quarterly basis, and report final performance annually via a progress report.

Organizational data will be captured via classroom testing, workshop surveys, and annual surveys.

Output and outcome measures not yet established, but likely also gather:

- Number of workers enrolled in sectoral job training programs
- Number of workers completing sectoral job training programs
- Number of people participating in summer youth employment programs: depending on project design
- Number of those who successfully completed training and obtained jobs with middle skill wages.

#### The Austin Film Society contract

##### Objective 1: Media Production (Workforce Development) Training

- Outcome 1: The number (and percent) of individuals who complete this workforce development project.
- Outcome 2: The number (and percent) of individuals who become employed in a job related to their training following this workforce development project.
- Outcome 3: The number (and percent) of individuals who increase their income following this workforce development project.

##### Objective 2: Community Content Distribution & Public Access Television Facility Operations

- Outcome 1: The Percent of programming that is non-repeat
- Outcome 2: Number of hours cablecast
- Outcome 3: Number of production media equipment checkouts
- Outcome 4: Number of studio and facility reservations

##### Objective 3: Access to Services, Community Engagement, & Leveraged Opportunities

- Outcome 1: Number of engagements with community partners
- Outcome 2: Percent of engagement opportunities that led to increased awareness and/or participation of these services
- Outcome 3: Number of challenges and needs addressed not served by existing resources or services

**Project 5500-A365: Food Security/Food Access**

**Funding amount: \$2,500,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

The proposed food system project will be centered on equity and resiliency and includes the following three components:

- 1) Disaster preparedness, including the development of a Disaster Food and Drinking Water Appendix to the Emergency Operation Plan,
- 2) Food Supply Chain Vulnerability Analysis, including engagement with supply chain stakeholders and development of recommendations, and
- 3) Development of a community food vision including specific metrics, goals, strategies, and a dashboard.

City staff are actively collaborating with Travis County staff to optimize alignment of the City and County's food planning efforts.

Proposed Food System Planning Process and timeline:

- September - November 2021: Develop scope of work, solicit, and onboard a contractor to help lead with the food planning process
- December 2021 - April 2022: Recruit and onboard the Community Advisory Committee, conduct listening sessions, co-develop a vision for the plan, conduct a community food assessment
- March 2022: Hold Equity Workshops with all key stakeholders
- April - October 2022: Conduct community and stakeholder engagement to develop goals, strategies, and recommended actions
- October - December 2022: Identify and define evaluation indicators and determine accountability structures
- December 2022 - February 2023: Draft plan and associated deliverables, including a dashboard and web page
- March 2023: Solicit and incorporate feedback on draft plan
- Summer 2023: Present final plan to all stakeholders

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

**Goals:** There is a pronounced food access problem for low income and communities of color in Austin. In 2016, the City's Office of Sustainability worked closely with the University of Texas LBJ School of Public Affairs to produce a report called ["Food For All, Inclusive Neighborhood Food Planning in North Austin"](#). This pilot planning process and the subsequent report showed clearly how access to food was disproportionately affecting certain communities and the impact was split along racial and geographic lines. Subsequently, the Office of Sustainability [issued a report](#) to City Council outlining the challenges and goals of the food ecosystem. The funding for food system planning will

prioritize reaching out to these specific communities and documenting their voices and perspectives on how the food system could better serve their needs.

**Awareness:** The food planning process will include a significant amount of effort dedicated to community engagement and community involvement. A community Advisory Board will be created to provide leadership for the entire planning process. A series of community engagement sessions will be hosted to ensure a broad number of community voices can be captured and documented in the process of developing a plan.

**Access and Distribution:** Language barriers exist to providing equal access to benefits and services to Austin's Hispanic community. The food planning process will include multi-lingual engagement and address transportation challenges across the community.

**Outcomes:** The Food Planning team will include staff from the City's Equity Office and have specific data collection strategies that disaggregate all information collected by race/ethnicity.

**Negative Economic Impacts:** The project has not yet been designed. However, negative economic impacts to disadvantaged groups will be a key consideration in project design. Specific targets and strategies to achieve those targets will be developed as part of project design.

**Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities:** The project has not yet been designed. However, services to disproportionately impacted communities will be a key consideration in project design. Specific targets and strategies to achieve those targets will be developed as part of project design.

The City measures and reports specific metrics on number and percentage of persons who successfully complete workforce development training; number of people moved out of poverty into middle skills jobs; and unemployment rates with the granularity of demographic data. EDD has committed to collecting demographic data (age, gender, race or ethnicity, zip code, and City Council District representation) for all project participants and fund recipients. The City [Equity Office](#) provides training on racial equity and holds City of Austin programs and services accountable to tracking equity-related metrics.

During the pandemic the Chief Economic Recovery Officer for the City required departments providing economic stimulus to the community to produce dashboards for each of the economic relief programs provided. This data is available to the public under Economic Impact on [ATXrecovers.com](#). As new programs are launched dashboards are provided. Each dashboard includes demographic information about applicants and awardees, as well as other factors that demonstrate historical challenges, such as: legal business structure, industry type, and what City of Austin Council district their customers reside in. For more information, see [ATXrecovers.com](#).

### **Community Engagement**

As discussed in the General Overview section of this report, feedback collected in 2020 from focus groups which were developed to determine the allocation of CARES funding is

still relevant and helped guide the development of the ARPA Spending Framework. This feedback will be considered during project design.

Since the project design is still underway, additional details will be provided in the future regarding how funds will build the capacity of community organizations to serve people with significant barriers to services, including people of color, people with low incomes, limited English proficiency populations, and other traditionally underserved group.

**Use of Evidence**

The program is still in the design phase but will be created from use of evidence. In addition, disaggregated applicant information (those applied and served) will be available by demographic and evidence-based groups.

**Key Performance Indicators**

Output and outcome measures not yet established. These will be developed in collaboration with key stakeholders and shared in future reporting.

**Project 8600-A361: Workforce Development: Austin Civilian Conservation Corps (ACCC)**

**Funding amount: \$1,900,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

The Austin Civilian Conservation Corps (ACCC) is a workforce development project established by City Council Resolution in May 2020. The project helps Austinites who have been economically affected by the COVID-19 pandemic earn income through work that beautifies our community and achieves community goals. Participants also receive training, certifications, and experience that will help them establish careers in conservation and sustainability-related job fields. The goals of the Austin Civilian Conservation Corp are:

- Creating lasting, positive effects for residents
- Inspiring hope and build community
- Advancing the City’s strategic sustainability & equity goals

In its first pilot year, ACCC used base funding from the City to create jobs for 100 individuals over 11 projects. Recovery Act funding for the ACCC will become available October 1, 2021, and at that point the next phase of the project will begin. To date, the ACCC working group has primarily focused on finding work and partners that can employ residents immediately and exploring longer-term and more diverse work that can be added to the project in FY21.

The design principles that shape the ACCC are as follows:

- Build hope, connectedness, and beauty. While the pandemic prompted the initial creation of the project, it has long-term potential to contribute to a thriving future for Austin and its residents. ACCC programs provide a positive employment experience for residents who may feel left behind by Austin’s prosperity. Their ACCC work builds closer connections with the natural environment, and directly improves the city we love.
- Advance the understanding of green jobs. Many jobs, in many sectors, can be green jobs. A green job is not necessarily defined by the type of work, but instead how the work is done. It is a lens. Using this lens, the ACCC has the potential to establish work and build pathways into many career fields.
- Pathways, not projects. The ACCC is not just a collection of projects that provide income for residents in need. Nor is it only a career training program for professionals to progress in their field. The ACCC establishes job pipelines through a variety of programs, from low-barrier work to advanced training, which allow residents to enter at many points and achieve their career goals.
- Jobs, with training. Many workforce development programs focus on training and education to prepare for jobs, but don’t provide their participants income during the program. This, in many cases, forces participants to forgo income or other opportunities to make time to participate in the program, and they risk not getting a job after the training. The ACCC provides a job and income along with training, certifications, and experience. Participants can count on income in the ACCC; no one has to hope that their participation will pay off.

- Economic opportunity for individuals. Many initiatives focus on the economic development of businesses, which in turn provide opportunities to individuals. The ACCC focuses on the economic prosperity of individuals - providing low-barrier income, support, experience, training, and advancement - which in turn drives positive progress for Austin communities and our environment.
- Equitable access, equitable spaces. Many green job sectors, and natural areas in general, have become racialized and exclusionary spaces. The ACCC will provide equitable access to green and conservation careers and evolve the view of who typically holds them. The project will help communities reclaim spaces and evolve the narrative around the environment, outdoors, and sustainability.
- Meet people where they are. The ACCC strives to build a diversity of community-driven programs that provide the right opportunities at the right time, based on what participants need, want, and the barriers they face. Rather than try to fit people to programs, we co-create programs that fit people.
- Regional alignment. Sustainability opportunities to not lie neatly within political boundaries. The ACCC will strive to create and scale collaborations at the local, regional, state, and federal levels to maximize opportunities for residents and positive outcomes.
- New operational practices. A new project as wide-ranging as the ACCC is a rare opportunity. We will use it to demonstrate new patterns of practice in the COA organization, such as operationalizing equity, focusing on individual economic prosperity, community-led data collection and feedback, and new types of collaborations, staffing models, and project focuses.
- Innovation and advancement. We acknowledge that many opportunities for advancement in conservation and workforce development do not yet exist. Therefore, the ACCC will constantly strive to identify gaps and opportunities in our program pipelines based on community- and landscape-level feedback and develop new programs to fulfill them.

Project Website: [www.austintexas.gov/accc](http://www.austintexas.gov/accc)

### **Promoting Equitable Outcomes:**

ACCC focuses on job development for individuals in the conservation and sustainability arena and is a re-creation of the historic Civilian Conservation Corp. The roots of the Civilian Conservation Corp are steeped in racist culture. In addition, people of color are substantially underrepresented in the conservation and sustainability field.

**Goals:** To focus in-equities by working with the community. During the pilot phase of the ACCC, Build with Humanity and Measure were contracted to build an understanding of the project's potential users, their current and potential future needs, their desires for income and career training, and their current and potential future barriers to participation. Without this information, the project could invest in programs that residents do not actually want to participate in or are not structured in a way that lets them effectively participate. To avoid such pitfalls and create successful outcomes, ACCC is working with two highly experienced user research organizations who have built trusted relationships within Austin communities. MEASURE and Build with Humanity are wrapping up their user research activities by the end of Fiscal Year 2021. These organizations have strong ties to communities of color and other underserved groups that may realize significant benefits from participating in the ACCC, but often face barriers to accessing such projects. MEASURE and Build with Humanity are also owned and operated by people of color.

**Awareness:** The pilot phase of ACCC involved working with a limited number of community partners. More funding is available through the Recovery Act allowing for wider distribution using directed marketing and a broader variety of community partners to bring awareness of the opportunities provided by ACCC.

**Access and Distribution:** ACCC is aware of the disparities that arise in administrative requirements, and as a result has worked to partner with local community organizations to help with recruitment. This will be key in the next phases of ACCC to improve access to the opportunities provided in ACCC. Specifically, MEASURE’s research will detail the lived experience of those economically affected by the COVID pandemic at the neighborhood and community level. They will also highlight the historical and current experience (and understanding) of conservation-related work in the communities the ACCC is intended to serve. This will let ACCC to address barriers to participation and to design a project that is desirable to residents both now, and in the future. MEASURE will rely on surveys and focus groups and will create feedback mechanisms and metrics to gauge progress and opportunities for improvement.

**Outcomes:** The research from Build with Humanity will provide a framework to evaluate programmatic outcomes from the perspective of individuals in ACCC. This information will be used to develop future project outcomes once funding is made available.

**Negative Economic Impacts:** Assistance to households, small businesses, and non-profits to address impacts of the pandemic, which have been most severe among low-income populations. This includes assistance with food, housing, and other needs; employment programs for people with barriers to employment who faced negative economic impacts from the pandemic (such as residents of low-income neighborhoods, minorities, disconnected youth, the unemployed, formerly incarcerated people, veterans, and people with disabilities); and other strategies that provide disadvantaged groups with access to education, jobs, and opportunity. The City Council resolution lays out a basic direction for the Austin Civilian Conservation Corps project, and the work initially aligned with it in the pilot phase focuses on outdoor environmental work. However, over the long term, communities in Austin should be able to have significant influence on what they consider conservation work to be and how it could be most useful, as well as what a community-driven service corps could look like and function. This area is the most important for building a project that is equitable, and that delivers long-term value for all residents. The pilot phase of ACCC ensured that all participants were directly impacted by COVID through the application process and future phases will be guided by community-based research currently being conducted.

**Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities:** Services to address health disparities and the social determinants of health, build stronger neighborhoods and communities (e.g., affordable housing), address educational disparities (e.g., evidence-based tutoring, community schools, and academic, social-emotional, and mental health supports for high poverty schools), and promote healthy childhood environments (e.g., home visiting, childcare).

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City began to take strides in addressing equitable outcomes for project and service delivery. These strides include a City Council adopted five-year strategic plan, called Strategic Direction 2023 or SD23 for short, which prescribes reporting detail with as much granularity as possible. As well as specific metrics on number and percentage of persons who successfully complete workforce development training;

number of people moved out of poverty into middle skills jobs; and unemployment rates with the granularity of demographic data.

### **Community Engagement**

As discussed in the General Overview section of this report, feedback collected in 2020 from focus groups which were developed to determine the allocation of CARES funding is still relevant and helped guide the development of the ARPA Spending Framework. This feedback will be considered during project design.

### **Use of Evidence**

Research currently being conducted on the ACCC pilot will:

- Develop a system-map of the current economic conditions facing Austin communities that includes micro- meso- and macro-level drivers. Such a map will help us understand how these drivers interact, and where the leverage points are to best serve residents in highly impacted and underserved communities.
- A deep understanding of the different ACCC user groups economically affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, including their work/income-related needs, desires, and barriers.
- An enhanced ability to recruit and scope ACCC work programs that most closely match participants' needs.
- The ability to affirmatively target outreach and recruitment to the communities most economically affected, and/or the groups most likely to want the types of work the project provides.
- Ongoing feedback on whether the project is meeting the needs of the residents it intends to serve. This feedback will also allow us to adapt the project if/as economic conditions shift throughout the life of the ACCC.
- Identify the dollar amount of the total project spending that is allocated towards evidence-based interventions for each project in the Public Health (EC 1), Negative Economic Impacts (EC 2), and Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities (EC 3) Expenditure Categories.

Funding will be allocated in Fiscal Year 2022 and at that time more details can be provided on the total project spending that is allocated to evidence-based interventions.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

The project has not yet been designed but expects to use evidence-based criteria such as industry demand, educational qualifications, and applicant income.

Outcomes are still being designed given the research in progress on the ACCC pilot, but it will likely include the number of those who successfully completed training and obtained jobs with middle skill wages.

**Project 8600-A362: Workforce Development: Homelessness and/or Creative Sector**

**Funding amount: \$1,000,000**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

This project is still in the design phase, but City of Austin volunteer citizen Arts Commissioners are interested in providing input to help inform project creation, and they created a corresponding Working Group for this purpose. City Council will receive an update from EDD staff after staff receives and reviews the Arts Commission's feedback.

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

**Goals:** The project is still being designed, however, it is known to the community that unemployment, though overall low for the region, is disproportionately high for non-white Austinites. Additionally, affordable childcare keeps some community members – both historically non-white *and* residing in east Austin - currently out of reach of quality childcare solutions and therefore forced to remain out of the workforce. Further affordability friction is the [hourly median wages of creative workers](#) is almost \$5 less per hour [than the hourly wage required to sustain a family in Austin](#), demonstrating the struggle to retain creative workers in Austin.

**Awareness:** The goal of the EDD Marketing & Communications team is to extend the communication and outreach to the existing 28,000 department contacts via email and social content packaged for partner departments and external organizations, to spread the word. All opportunities are listed on the one-stop hub of economic opportunities for Austin: [ATXrecovers.com](#).

**Access and Distribution:** As mentioned above, staff will work with third party providers and the technical assistance providers established in the Community Navigators project to support applicants in their request for support. In the project design, staff will work with our partners to ensure the applications themselves are mobile and multi-language friendly with staff and system capacity to review.

**Outcomes:** The project is still being designed.

**Community Engagement**

As discussed in the General Overview section of this report, feedback collected in 2020 from focus groups which were developed to determine the allocation of CARES funding is still relevant and helped guide the development of the ARPA Spending Framework. This feedback will be considered during project design.

### **Use of Evidence**

The project has not yet been designed but expects to use evidence-based criteria such as industry demand, educational qualifications, and applicant income. Of the \$1 million allocated by City Council, staff anticipates an administrative fee between 5% and 15% to be incurred.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

Output and outcome measures not yet established, but likely also gather:

- Number of those who successfully completed training and obtained jobs with middle skill wages.
- Number of workers enrolled in sectoral job training programs
- Number of workers completing sectoral job training programs
- Number of people participating in summer youth employment programs

**Project 9100-A248: Public Health-IT Project**

**Funding amount: \$11,572,775**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

Over the next three years, one of Austin Public Health's (APH) main activities related to the COVID-19 emergency response will be to continue the enhancement and development of the Austin Health Force platform into a comprehensive system for all 70+ reportable conditions. This will also support improvements to the public-facing aspects of COVID-19 testing and vaccinations as well as support epidemiology and disease surveillance functions.

Link to website: <http://austintexas.gov/covid19> and [https://covid19.austintexas.gov/s/?language=en\\_US](https://covid19.austintexas.gov/s/?language=en_US)

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

Austin, Texas is home to a diverse population of 978,908 people constitute over 75% of Travis County. The health and socioeconomic disparities in Austin illustrate significant disadvantages for minority populations, particularly amongst Black/African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos/Latinx. APH reports that COVID-19 is now the leading cause of death for Hispanics in our community. Black/African Americans have the lowest vaccination figures when compared with Whites, Asians, and Hispanics of any race. APH, in collaboration with partners and community leaders, will provide outreach and vaccination services all populations including Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, people experiencing homelessness, and adults 65 and older by going to community settings where targeted populations reside or gather.

APH will address racial and geographic disparities in COVID-19 rates of infection, vaccination, and health literacy by focusing on an urban area of up of 15 zip codes with high social vulnerability indices and populations of color.

Project outcomes include:

- Outcome: Promote usability, interoperability, data sharing, and integration
  - Improve the management and governance of data across APH
  - Deploy an APH Business Intelligence Strategy that promotes data and information exchange standards
  - Capture data sharing best practices from APH internal and external partners
  - Promote interoperable exchange of data across APH
  - Deploy an APH Business Intelligence Strategy that promotes data and information exchange standards
  - Ensure attention to usability and accessibility of all systems and data access throughout the life cycle by engaging user and critical partners.
  - Increase APH's ability to use, benefit from, and manage advances in real-time electronic health information for public health surveillance, situational awareness, and targeted alerting

- Increase APH's ability to manage electronic health information to inform planning and decision making to ensure continuity of appropriate care during disasters and public health emergencies.
- Outcome: Implementation & management of quality IT services that meet the needs of the business
  - Ensure customer satisfaction
  - Consistently meet customer outcomes
  - Elimination of redundancies in processes and technologies through standardization
- Outcome: Protect critical systems and data
  - Ensure regulatory compliance
  - Improve the security and privacy posture of data and information systems
  - Advocate for a secure, cloud environment, consistent with existing regulatory requirements

In order to promote equity, APH will align our data strategy with our business strategy. This will be accomplished by defining data standards, guidelines, formal processes, rules, and templates for controlled sharing of data in order to support open sharing while protecting sensitive information. Utilizing the City's Strategic Direction plan as our guide, APH will collect, analyze, interpret, and distribute data throughout its life cycle. The data life cycle refers to the various stages of a data project that offer opportunities to practice greater consciousness of and commitment to equity, fairness, and access.

APH will utilize current funding in order to address challenging racial and geographic disparities regarding COVID-19 rates of infection, vaccination, and health literacy. This effort will focus on an urban area made up of 15 zip codes with high social vulnerability indices and populations of color.

**Community Engagement**

During the project, APH will conduct user experience assessments to enhance the design of the system that encompasses the entire user journey. Scope would include accessibility, useability, functionality, and aesthetics.

**Key Performance Indicators**

Proposed Performance Measures:

Output: Numbers of individuals signed up with an Austin Health Force account.

Outcome: Percent of customers with a satisfactory rating of the system

**Project 9100-A249: Public Health- Communications Project**

**Funding amount: \$10,412,754**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$0**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$0**

**Project overview**

Over the next three years, one of APH's main activities related to the COVID-19 Emergency Response will be the continued public health education and awareness campaigns focused on high-risk populations. APH has begun the procurement process for engaging a public relations consultant specializing in behavior change messaging for longer-term campaigns development and implementation. Part of this communication strategy also includes material translation and interpretation services which will be partially leveraged by existing partnerships with local agencies.

Link to the website: <http://austintexas.gov/covid19>

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

Austin, Texas is home to a diverse population of 978,908 people and constitutes over 75% of Travis County. The health and socioeconomic disparities in Austin illustrate significant disadvantages for minority populations, particularly amongst Black/African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos/Latinx. Austin Public Health (APH) reports that COVID-19 is now the #1 cause of death for Hispanics in our community. Black/African Americans have the lowest vaccination figures when compared with Whites, Asians, and Hispanics of any race. APH, in collaboration with partners and community leaders, will provide outreach and vaccination to Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, people experiencing homelessness, and adults 65 and older by going to community settings where the populations of focus reside or gather.

APH will address challenging racial and geographic disparities in COVID-19 rates of infection, vaccination, and health literacy in an urban area of focus made up of 15 zip codes with high social vulnerability indices and populations of color.

APH has developed communication procedures for the public with information about COVID-19, vaccination, and other mitigation measures. These procedures, which include materials and in-person messaging, were developed in accordance with Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS standards), using the top 6 languages in the City's Language Access Plan.

APH will leverage existing organizational partnerships and contracts focused on COVID-19 outreach to help develop the culturally specific communications and COVID-19 operation strategies. Examples of organizations that APH has partnered with in the past include clinical providers like El Buen Samaritano (El Buen) and CommUnityCare (CuC) who use evidence-based strategies to advance health literacy objectives with clients and address vaccine hesitancy. These providers serve high-risk and racial and ethnic minority populations in the focus areas. El Buen provides culturally responsive clinical and social services for Latinx communities and focuses on family and health literacy programming with services provided by bilingual, bicultural staff. CuC is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) with 25 locations throughout Travis County that provide CLAS-standard services.

APH proposes partners employ a patient-centered ‘health literate care model’ in which providers confirm patient understanding and assess the impact of implementing this approach.

APH will use outcome-based performance metrics that measure the reach of media campaigns and strategies by race, ethnicity and/or age.

Current funding is allowable throughout the areas that APH serves, however, APH will address challenging racial and geographic disparities in COVID-19 rates of infection, vaccination, and health literacy in an urban area of focus made up of 15 zip codes with high social vulnerability indices and populations of color.

### **Community Engagement**

APH, in conjunction with community partners, will enhance culturally and linguistically appropriate communications, outreach, education, and connections to services to decrease disparities in health literacy and vaccination and overall COVID-related health outcomes.

Addressing COVID disparities will take a comprehensive approach that addresses not only the mitigation of the virus, but also one that collaboratively addresses resources and partnerships to support community resilience and other factors that contribute to overall health and well-being. The Department utilizes Community Workers, which are individuals with lived experience and connections to the people in the community. APH also hires contract interpreters to ensure that in-person interpretation will be available at vaccine and testing sites to provide accurate information to both patient and provider. In addition to interpreters, APH contracts with translators who review and produce content in 8 to 10 languages and align messages with population-specific strategies. APH also has bilingual staff that assures that translated content is updated on its website and that translates content in emergency situations when time precludes the use of a translation vendor. APH has established health equity task forces work with community organizations and the public. APH pays for targeted advertising—in print, network media, radio, online and social media advertising, out-of-home, and text service advertising—to reach communities at various touch points, to be sure that messages are received in various ways and get through. And APH collaborates with ATXN to provide media question-and-answer forums and public service announcements that are available in Spanish and other languages and target vaccine hesitancy in communities disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

Proposed Performance Indicators:

Output 1: Number of individuals by race, ethnicity and age reached by APH media campaigns.

Outcome 1: Number of people contacted through outreach activities versus the number of engagements (comments, shares, likes) and click-throughs.

**Project 9100-A250: Public Health- Staffing & Support**

**Funding amount: \$16,314,471**

**Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services**

**Project Amount Obligated to Date: \$430,145**

**Project Amount Expended to Date: \$430,145**

**Project overview**

Over the next three years, one of Austin Public Health's (APH) main activities related to the COVID-19 emergency response will be to sustain a temporary workforce to reinforce our public health infrastructure and continued COVID-19 activities. These activities include planning, testing, vaccination, disease surveillance, case investigations, contract management, public information and communications, nurse and equity assistance lines, and support service functions. In addition to the staffing, APH's response activities will also include general support of departmental operations including a Vaccine Call Center, supplies and the continued function of hygiene stations and sanitation services.

Link to the website: <http://austintexas.gov/covid19>

**Promoting Equitable Outcomes**

Austin, Texas is home to a diverse population of 978,908 people which constitutes over 75% of Travis County. The health and socioeconomic disparities in Austin illustrate significant disadvantages for minority populations, particularly among Black/African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos/Latinx. APH reports that COVID-19 is now the leading cause of death for Hispanics in our community. Black/African Americans have the lowest vaccination figures when compared with Whites, Asians, and Hispanics of any race. APH, in collaboration with partners and community leaders, will provide outreach and vaccination services to all populations including Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, people experiencing homelessness, and adults 65 and older by going to community settings where targeted populations reside or gather.

The COVID-19 pandemic response has further highlighted the existing gap of core public health staffing. APH has designated a significant portion of the ARPA allocation for current and future temporary staffing needs for the COVID-19 response. Without additional staffing, APH will not be able to sustain response operations and provide core public health and social service programs to the public. Many APH direct service programs currently serve at a reduced capacity, assisting in a reduced volume, by appointment only, and with a curbside or remote access model.

Since December 2019, the 549 staff of APH and hundreds of temporary staff have been on the frontline of the COVID-19 response, working diligently to protect the health and safety of Austin and Travis County, without significant breaks and limited overtime. The work performed includes epidemiology and disease surveillance, including case investigations of positive individuals; working with long-term care providers; staffing call centers, building IT infrastructure, operating testing and vaccination clinics, sharing information to the public through the media and in digital formats; collaborating with community organizations to ensure access to response resources; and providing support functions such as purchasing, finance, IT and human resources.

APH is experiencing high turnover and retirements among our regular workforce, similar to what is trending in public health nationwide. If this high turnover and retirement trend continues, APH will more than double its turnover rate due to retirement separations. The vacancy rate and retirement trend have combined to create a critical staffing and sustainability issue for APH that needs to be addressed. APH will utilize ARPA - SLFRF funding to implement strategies to encourage existing APH staff to continue their current employment to maintain critical institutional knowledge and competency in public health practice throughout the pandemic response.

Austin Public Health's Equity Action plan includes finalizing an equity and inclusion policy and goals for hiring, recruiting, and retaining a diverse workforce. APH also has a Workforce Development Plan, which includes objectives to consider the characteristics of the populations served, and to recruit a diverse workforce reflective of the population served. As data indicates, the current systems to respond to the pandemic require an approach that includes an equity lens to ensure that the most vulnerable in our community have trust in the systems of care and easy access to needed services.

Some of the metrics to track progress on these efforts include the diversity of applicants, number of relationships built and changes to recruiting practices.

The Equity Line and the 311 Vaccine Call Center, both funded through APH's ARPA - SLFRF dollars, allows the department to be more responsive to historically underserved populations by providing individuals with information and resources to address health disparities. The Call Centers take calls in various languages including Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Serbian and French.

APH will utilize current funding to address challenging racial and geographic disparities regarding COVID-19 rates of infection, vaccination, and health literacy. This effort will focus on an urban area made up of 15 zip codes with high social vulnerability indices and populations of color.

### **Community Engagement**

The City acknowledges in the importance of fostering community within the organization as well as the local communities where City employees, clients, and their families live and work. The City has Employee Affinity groups that accelerate development through mentoring, learning, networking, organizing outreach and service activities, and addressing challenges that are important to the community and the City through targeted initiatives. The City believes that strengthening the community externally and internally will help create sustainable change.

The City has a partnership with Careers in Government, which is a Diversity Network designed to promote diversity-committed employers as well as to attract and engage potential applicants. Their network has over 80 job boards in all 50 states providing City job postings significant national reach. The network includes Latino job network, African American job network, LGBT job network, Women's job network and Asian job network just to name a few.

APH is actively building a Workforce Development pipeline through many avenues. To highlight some of the initiatives in workforce development, for the last 20 years APH has partnered with Travis County to provide the Summer Youth Internship Program for approximately 750 underrepresented youth each year. The program prepares and

empowers Travis County's young people with the foundation of career awareness, readiness, and access through training opportunities and paid internships. In the Summer of 2019, APH rolled out the Austin Public Health Internship Program as another component of the workforce development pipeline. Austin Public Health Department Internship Program has a mission to provide opportunities for high school and college students interested in exploring components of public health. One goal of the program is to introduce minority groups to the concept of public health work. By providing information that addresses disease, high blood pressure and cancer, the youth of Austin will have an awareness to the variety of diseases that are present in the community. Students will be educated and then provided with an internship assignment to gain a hands-on experience with the resources provided to the residents of Austin and how those resources are in place to help improve the health of Austin.

APH is committed to focusing on research and data to more clearly identify and outreach to the populations more disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, typically historically marginalized populations. With the support of a dedicated senior research analyst, data will be gathered and analyzed to inform strategies to address vaccine hesitancy and best practices to prevent infection. APH's newly funded community engagement specialist will regularly engage key stakeholders, including members in communities of focus, grassroots organizers, nonprofits, and the provider community, to develop, plan and implement the focused outreach and vaccination strategy. The strategy will be based on local COVID-19 health data, local vaccination data analyzed by race, ethnicity, zip code, and qualitative data concerning vaccine readiness collected by our community partners. It will be built on chronic disease prevention and education practices - culturally relevant messaging, placed-based options, mobile vaccination programs, education support and relationship building, utilizing the community health worker model. The data will be analyzed and tracked on a regular basis to continue to inform outreach efforts.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

Proposed Performance Indicators:

Output 1: Number of 311 Vaccine Support Call Center calls taken and interpreted in a language other than English

Outcome 1: Percentage of staff on payroll by race, ethnicity, and age