

Middlesex County, NJ
Recovery Plan

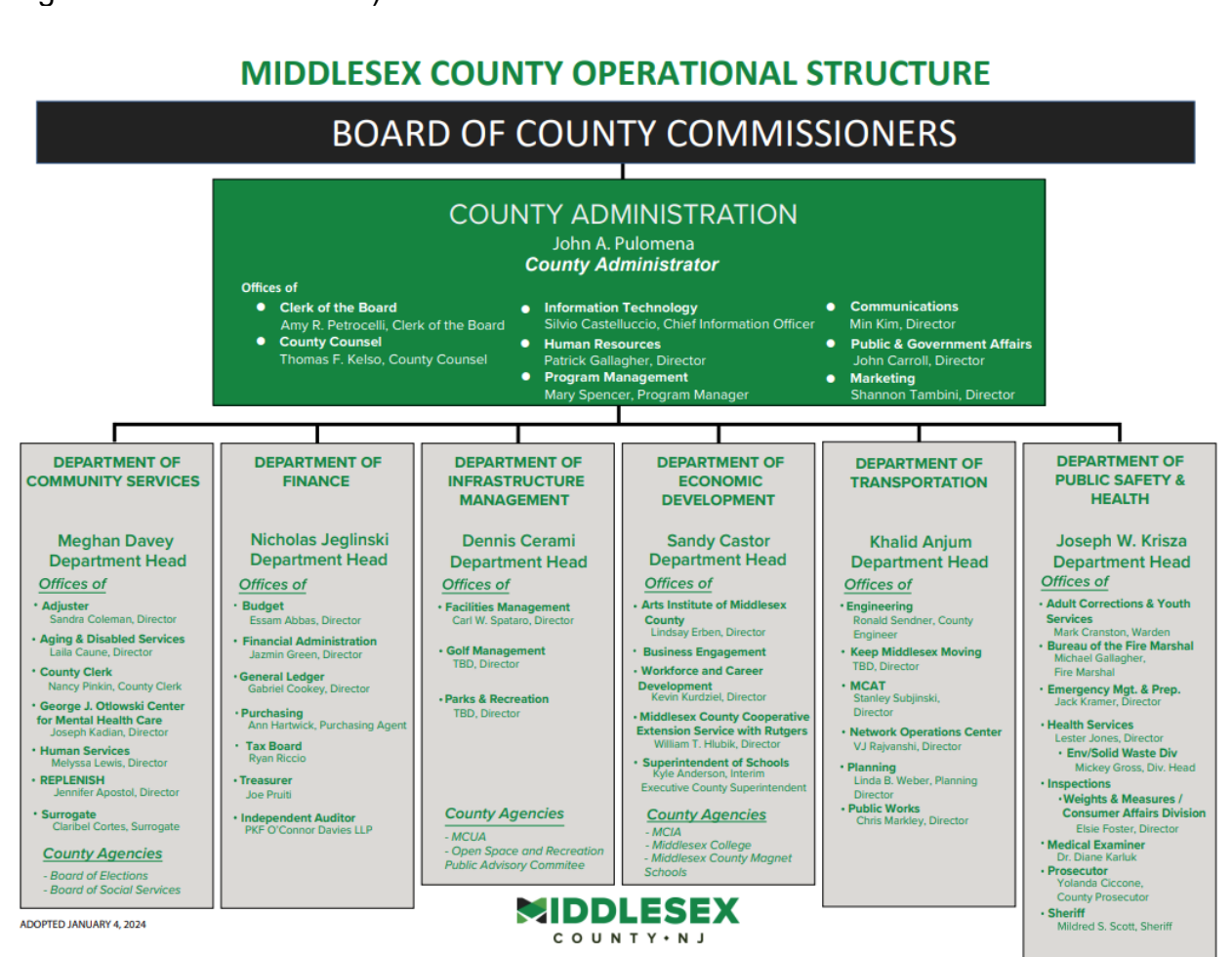
**State and Local Fiscal Recovery
Funds**

August 2025 Report

The County of Middlesex, New Jersey (“County”) is pleased and fortunate to have been awarded more than \$160M in necessary State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (“Funds”) to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The County has received the complete grant of \$160,258,621.

As with all other counties in the United States, Middlesex County has been adversely impacted by the pandemic. As such, the County has judiciously approaching utilizing these critical Funds. The County leveraged its existing “Strategic Leadership Team” (“Team”) to research and arrive at well-calculated recommendations to County officials on the usage of the Funds for the greatest benefit of the County and its constituents.

The aforementioned Team comprises all County department leaders, including the office of information technology, legal counsel, human resources, communications, marketing, and public & government affairs. This group provided valuable input to the deliberations regarding the management and disbursement of such Funds (see Middlesex County organizational chart below).



Additionally, the County's Board of Commissioners were also tasked with the development of the strategic plan along with the County's Utility Authority (MCUA) and Improvement Authority (MCIA).

Outreach to various community groups, elected officials, and the public has resulted in recommendations from the broadest universe of constituents on how to leverage the Funds. Moreover, the Team engaged and communicated with the private sector, and separately the County's public College and Vocational Schools are working on a number of efforts that are underway (e.g., telemedicine in the health care sector).

The County's main objective, and biggest challenge, is to ensure that the broadest universe of individuals, including County staff, community groups and the public, are able to voice their ideas and are represented in the process applying the Funds for the greatest benefit of the County.

As we continue to identify areas of targeted expenditures for the use of the Funds in the Public Health category, the following are examples, but not limited to, of what we have expended Funds on:

1. Salaries of County staff (public safety, public health, health care, human services) who have been working in response to the pandemic. For example, Health Office staff members who worked on testing, monitoring and contact tracing. Others worked on vaccinations programs and operations, including the management of supplies, equipment, facilities, administrative expenses, and the call center.
2. County staff also worked on the emergency medical response to the pandemic, including transportation expenses, supplies and equipment.
3. The staff at the County's Office of Sheriff manned testing facilities, vaccination sites, and aided in other public safety related efforts in response to the pandemic.
4. Communications and marketing expenses to publicly promote the availability of COVID testing and vaccinations.
5. Ventilation improvements in congregate settings, public health facilities, or other public facilities.
6. Purchase of PPE and disinfection supplies for facilities and public areas.
7. Capital investments towards public facilities such as hospitals and health clinics.
8. Enhanced services that address the mental health needs of the community exacerbated by the pandemic.
9. Expand the use of telehealth services to assist our most vulnerable populations.

The County reviewed the disproportional impact that COVID-19 has had on its communities, to offer proper attention in the various areas of with the greatest need. For example, housing instability and service needs; childcare and child welfare services; access to health services; education; lead paint remediation; expanded use of telehealth in the impacted communities, etc. The County's Office of Public and Government Affairs, in conjunction with the Finance Office and Information Technology Office, are spearheading collaborative efforts to conduct studies regarding these issues, supported by the Strategic Leadership Team.

The County is utilizing SLFRF funds for various improvements to the existing infrastructure, including water and sewer. There is an opportunity to improve and repair wastewater treatment plants; improve the resilience of infrastructure to severe weather conditions; protect waterbodies from pollution; improve flood control; ensure compliance with federal and state environmental safety requirements; improve and address those conditions that cause the most risk to human health, etc.

The pandemic has severely impacted Middlesex County, with millions of dollars lost in revenue from a variety of areas. For example, the lack of real estate transactions, decreased motor vehicles fees, sheriff's revenue, Adult Correction Center revenue, reimbursement of elections expenses from municipalities, etc. It is anticipated that the County will employ SLFRF funds towards revenue lost during the past 18 months, and future periods of budget cycles. The reimbursement of loss revenue will contribute directly to our annual capital improvement program in future years.

Lastly, the County has successfully received Emergency Rental Assistance Program ("ERA" or "Program") funding, \$24M from ERA 1 and \$28M from ERA 2. It has engaged the services of an outside consultant to assist in the development, management and oversight of the Program and has enlisted a digital web portal provider to enable applications to be processed and managed electronically to facilitate payments, track important data and to maintain a robust audit trail.

Multiple community-based organizations have also been engaged to provide case managers to assist applicants and landlords in completing their applications, determining eligibility, and providing recommendations on rental and utility assistance payments to County officials. To date, the County has distributed more than \$20M rental and utility assistance to more than 1500 applicants.

A sample of projects that are being funded with ARPA Funds that will contribute towards addressing the disproportional impact that COVID-19 has had on County communities, are as follows:

Project: Fire Academy Warehouse

Funding amount: \$12M

The County has determined to utilize ARPA funds for use of a new Fire Academy Warehouse ("Warehouse") for the County's Fire Training Facility located in the Borough of Sayreville. The Warehouse will provide for the increased storage of: personal protection equipment ("PPE") that may be needed for future disasters and other safety equipment; cleaning supplies; additional essential parts kept as a precaution due to supply chain issues; use for training and additional office space to ensure social distancing for essential work to continue in the event of another pandemic; placement of an Emergency Operations Center ("EOC") for (an incident management/backup EOC for Middlesex County's OEM).

The Borough of Sayreville is located near the City of New Brunswick and City of Perth Amboy, both Qualified Census Tracts that include disproportionately impacted households, and nearby other similarly situated communities. Residents in these communities will benefit from the Fire Academy Warehouse being constructed for the reasons stated above.

Project: MCUA Warehouse

Funding amount: \$12M

The MCUA is using ARPA funding for the construction of a Centralized Storage Facility (MCUA Warehouse) at the Central Treatment Plant in Sayreville, NJ. This warehouse, spanning 35,000 square feet, will incorporate organized storage spaces of spare parts, equipment and critical components, while facilitating emergency response in accessing inventory, providing for efficient asset management and organized/catalogued accessibility. This would support MCUA's ability to store and repair essential equipment needed to safely operate its facility, particularly when considering the incremental delivery times being experienced due to supply chain and lead times.

Currently, MCUA mission-critical equipment required for the safe operation of the Central Treatment Plant (CTP) and to effectively respond to emergencies, is located at multiple sites within the Plant. When urgent operational conditions arise, identifying components, fittings, pumps, and electrical equipment deemed essential to address these conditions becomes time-consuming, which adversely affects repair durations. The new structure will enable MCUA to maintain a robust and centralized inventory of spare parts for quick retrieval, which will lead to reduced response times.

In addition, MCUA currently operates with insufficient space in which field personnel could gather to plan, coordinate, direct and manage emergencies. The available space for conference rooms with adequate communication capabilities is scarce, and often in conflict with other multiple non-operational needs. The new facility will provide MCUA with space to host in-person meetings and training sessions, as well as a space for employees to attend online training. It will have mechanical and electrical utilities rooms with information technology capabilities and meeting rooms suitable for multiple purposes in an ADA compliant environment.

Once completed, the facility will significantly enhance MCUA's capacity to have weekly and/or monthly meetings, in addition to health and safety trainings with the proper tools and equipment. Stored parts would be better tracked and managed, thus reducing MCUA's susceptibility to disruptions to supply chains. The facility will also serve as a centralized location for storing and cataloging construction contract documents, product manuals, operations manuals, and warranty information.

In summary, the proposed building will shorten response times, provide efficiencies, and improve MCUA's capacity to serve the public, by ensuring that the services provided to nearly one million people is maintained during unplanned events.

Project: HVAC Replacement

Funding amount: \$5.7M

This project includes a complete HVAC replacement and roof replacement for specific congregate settings such as nursing homes, schools, prisons, childcare facilities, etc., as the existing HVAC equipment is not operating properly or efficiently. The new HVAC equipment will be energy-efficient and provide optimum heating and cooling throughout the facility. Also, a new roof will address any previous leaking issues and provide a long-lasting sturdy structure for the new HVAC equipment.

Project: OEM Equipment/Vehicles

Funding amount: \$6.5M

The purpose of the project is to replace vehicles and equipment which have been deemed to be beyond economic repair as some of these vehicles are from the 1980s and 1990s. Most of this equipment was deployed for COVID 19 response and operated for almost two years straight. The equipment used at the Ericsson site ran 24 hours a day for a total of over 12,000 hours of running time. Some of the vehicles and equipment have already been pulled from service and auctioned off by the County. The vehicles and equipment are routinely loaned out to other County offices and departments almost daily when not in use by the Office of Health Services.

Project: Other Health Expenses

Funding amount: \$7M

This category is for sanitation supplies for County sites, which increased when mitigating the spread of COVID-19. Employees were issued items to disinfect their stations, maintenance staff did hourly wipe downs in common areas, and other supplies used to clean testing sites, vaccination sites, and the contact tracing center. There were also costs that ensured the voting polling places for the in-person election were properly maintained and safe.

Project: Economic Impact – Other

Funding amount: \$6M

Programs promoted through this contract include, but are not limited to, COVID-19 Testing and Vaccinations Awareness, Promotion of Health and Health Education, Emergency Preparedness Training and Education, Emergency Rental Assistance Programs, and Small Business Relief Programs. Outreach was performed to educate constituents of the effects of COVID-19 and discuss programs that could address economic disparities.

Project: Payroll Costs for Public Health

Funding amount: \$71M

These expenses were a result of more than 70% of the Public Safety and Health departments being 50% (or more) dedicated to mitigating the spread of COVID-19. These offices were dedicated to COVID related tasks, per the Final Rule issued by US Treasury.

Project: Surface Transportation

Funding amount: \$11.7M

The County is utilizing ARPA funding for the Milling and Paving at various locations in the County.

For infrastructure projects utilizing SLFRF funds, vendors must comply with the following 'workforce' related requirements by state statutes:

- EEO/Affirmative Action compliance
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- NJ Anti-Discrimination Provisions
- Prevailing Wage (when applicable)
- Public Works Contractor Registration

In conclusion, the County is deeply committed to addressing the disproportionate impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on low-income and marginalized communities. The County will continue to examine and assess this issue closely and ensure that SLFRF funds are utilized to address the greatest areas of impact identified from this investigation.



RECOVERY PLAN 2025

	Expenditure Category	Expended	Obligated	Remaining Obligation
1.1	Vaccination Support	679,461	679,461	-
1.12	Mental Health	405,069	405,069	-
1.14	Other Public Health Services	1,844,939	4,036,519	2,191,580
1.2	Covid Testing Support	1,389,954	1,389,954	-
1.3	Contact Tracing Support	139,662	139,662	-
1.4	Prevention in Congregate Settings	9,811,471	9,811,471	-
1.5	PPE	180,703	180,703	-
1.7	Other Health Expenses	22,800,364	42,848,698	20,048,333
2.1	Household Assistance: Food Program:	50,614	50,614	-
2.16	Long-Term Housing Security	759,461	759,461	-
2.2	Negative Economic Impacts	2,715	2,715	-
2.22	Strong Healthy Communities	122,337	122,337	-
2.37	Economic Impact Other	6,043,053	6,043,053	-
3.1	Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety	46,950,415	71,081,939	24,131,524
6.1	Revenue Replacement	10,000,000	10,000,000	-
7.1	Administrative Support	651,235	1,006,967	355,731
9.2	Surface Transportation	11,587,190	11,700,000	112,810
Total		113,418,643	160,258,621	46,839,978