Dakota County, Minnesota

Recovery Plan

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

From Award to July 31, 2021 Report

Dakota County, Minnesota

2021 Recovery Plan

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Executive Summary

Dakota County was organized in 1849 as a county in the State of Minnesota. It has an area of 587 square miles, including 13 townships and 21 full and fractional incorporated municipalities. The 2020 population was 439,882, making it the third-most populous county in the State. It is one of seven counties comprising the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The county seat, Hastings, is located on the Mississippi River 18 miles southeast of the state capital, St. Paul.

Dakota County operates under an elected seven-member County Board, each member representing a district of the County. The County Board is elected on a non-partisan basis. County Board members serve four-year staggered terms. County Board responsibilities include passing ordinances, adopting the budget, and hiring the County Manager. The County Manager is responsible for carrying out the policies and ordinances of the County Board, overseeing the government's day-to-day operations, and appointing the heads of the various divisions and departments.

The County provides a full range of services: public safety and law enforcement; probation services; tax assessment and collection; vital statistics and public records; health and human services; highways, parks, public works and planning; environmental management; and recreation and cultural services.

Dakota County was allocated $83,332,300.00. $41,666,150.00 was receipted by the County on June 14, 2021. As of July 31, 2021, the County Board has not approved allocations to programs, and therefore, the County has spent $0.00.

Uses of Funds

The Dakota County Board has been presented with State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (FRF) current pandemic trends, their impact on County services, and FRF eligibility. The Dakota County Board has developed principles for the County's use of FRF funds which include: countywide importance and impacts; lasting impact; partnership and coordination; innovation; avoid duplicating other programs; confidence in the ability to deliver programs and projects as planned; efficient administration; conform to County Fiscal Management Principles. The Board will pass resolutions in support of each allocation to programs and projects.

The next Board discussion on ARP funding will occur at a workshop on September 21, 2021, where the Board will begin to consider specific spending programs, including countywide mobile crisis response.

Dakota County is planning other programming using other federal recovery funds: Emergency Rental Assistance and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME).

Dakota County received two installments of Federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) funds. The first through the Consolidated Appropriations Act ($12.8 million - ERA1) and the second through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) ($10.1 million - ERA2). Dakota County is operating both a Tenant Access Program and a Landlord "Portfolio" Program with the ERA funds. The Tenant Access Program utilizes Dakota County staff to process applications. The Landlord Program, also known as the Zero Balance Project, is structured through a joint powers agreement with the Counties of Dakota, Hennepin, and Ramsey and the Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul.   Family Housing Fund will act as the Landlord Program Administrator. Additionally, Dakota County has contracted with community partners to outreach to both tenants and landlords to help create successful and complete applications.

The ARP provides $5 billion to assist individuals or households who are homeless, at risk of homelessness and other vulnerable populations. These grant funds will be administered through HOME.

The Dakota County HOME Consortium (comprised of Dakota, Ramsey, Washington and Anoka Counties, and the City of Woodbury) is one of the 651 state and local participating jurisdictions eligible to receive HOME-ARP grants. The Dakota County Consortium HOME-ARP allocation is $8,762,441, which will be distributed amongst the Consortium members via a percentage based on the 2021 Consortium percentages. The amount of HOME-ARP funds to be used within the jurisdiction of Dakota County is approximately $3.2 million.

HOME-ARP funds can be used for four eligible activities: Production or Preservation of Affordable Housing, Tenant-Based Rental Assistance, Supportive Services, Homeless Prevention Services, and Housing Counseling, Purchase and Development of Non-Congregate Shelter. Official HOME ARP guidance has not yet been released, with an anticipated release date of Fall 2021. HUD-ARP funds are available for expenditure until September 2030.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

On August 12, the U.S. Census Bureau released its 2020 Census population counts. The official 2020 population for Dakota County is 439,882. In Dakota County, people of color increased from about 18% of the population to more than 26% during the decade. In addition to demographic data, Dakota County has a history of monitoring community indicators and using data as an input into decisions. Some indicators being tracked on an ongoing basis include households burdened by housing costs, median household income, jobs and wages, unemployment and poverty, public assistance, health insurance, crime rates, and access to broadband. Dakota County will continue to monitor these indicators and use the information to assist in setting and monitoring goals and outcomes.

Dakota County also has a history of engaging in programs and partnerships to produce equitable outcomes, including using data to plan for and evaluate outcomes. Examples of past work are included below.

- **Access to Internet:** This program's goal was to reach some of the almost 17% of the County's households that lack consistent internet access. In October 2020, the library began lending 390 WiFi hotspots or 213 Chromebook and hotspot kits at all nine

locations. WiFi hotspots have been checked out over 1,600 times by 873 unique users as of June 2021. The kits have been checked out 1,013 times to 634 unique users during the same period. A follow-up survey to those individuals who used a device showed that 62% of respondents reported annual income below $25,000, and 38% of respondents identified as BIPOC.

- **Community Partnerships:** People of color are affected by the COVID-19 virus and related economic challenges at a higher rate. Dakota County is partnering with community organizations to provide important information and resources to communities of color, with a focus on Black and Latino residents. COVID-19 materials have been shared through virtual meetings, social media, one-on-one meetings with social workers and visits to stores, neighborhoods and other community locations.

- **Housing:** To ensure we are reaching people most in need with federal funds, we have examined who is most likely to be impacted by COVID both economically and health. After looking at a variety of factors, including pre-COVID job, poverty level, race, and household size, we determined that single-parent households headed by a female who is also non-white are most likely to lose their housing due to COVID. We use this information to target our outreach and marketing to households that have these qualities. We also use this information to review whom we have served with federal dollars to see if we are reaching these households in significant numbers. We also look at zip code data and match this data against the above demographics to determine if additional outreach is needed in particular geographic areas.

- **COVID-19 Testing:** Dakota County Public Health partnered with Dakota Child and Family Clinic to offer free, no documentation required COVID-19 testing to community members. The testing clinic was one of the first of its kind in the state and has had positive outcomes. 33% of people who made appointments for testing didn't have insurance, likely making them ineligible at other sites. 8.5% of people who made appointments for testing were Black, 20% were Hispanic, and 7% were Asian. Over 9,710 people have been tested to date. The partnership is ongoing.

- **COVID-19 Vaccinations:** Dakota County Public Health has committed to providing free vaccines to underserved communities, especially people of color and people with low socioeconomic status. 68% of people vaccinated at our mobile clinics have been people of color. Public Health offers translation services at all clinics through onsite translators and video translation services. Similar to testing, all vaccinations do not require insurance or documentation from those receiving the vaccine.

- **COVID-19 Outreach:** Dakota County Public Health promoted health and safety information through various county and community channels. Digital and physical materials (including videos, posters, FAQs, and web pages) were developed and translated into Spanish and other languages to reach diverse audiences. Public Health has teamed up with Spanish radio stations, African community organizations, and other partners to reach historically underserved communities. Public Health staff have also joined community forums to share updated COVID-19 guidance, data, and tested/approved messages. Dakota County continues to participate in these efforts.

Dakota County will build on this strong foundation of data use and partnerships to work with the Dakota County Board of Commissioners to make decisions on funding priorities along with associated goals, awareness, access, and outcomes.

- **Goals:** Building on the success of previous programs, Dakota County will continue to use data and input from the community to identify underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected groups that could be served by FRF funds.
- **Awareness:** Dakota County uses multiple communication channels to provide information to residents. This includes public meetings/open houses, social media, surveys, and partnerships. These methods will continue to be evaluated on an ongoing basis, including a question on the statistically valid residential survey regarding residents' preferred method of receiving information from the County. The next residential survey will be conducted in 2022.
- **Access and Distribution:** Dakota County will continue to use data to understand the differences in levels of access to benefits and services as well as any administrative requirements that may impact diverse groups.
- **Outcomes:** Dakota County is currently forming an evaluation and reporting team. The purpose of this team will be to discuss and plan for the evaluation of funded projects, coordinate data collection, and share results. Where relevant for the policy objective, data will be collected and disaggregated by various equity dimensions to help understand the impact of outcomes on economically disadvantaged residents and those disproportionately impacted by COVID.

Planning for projects will include consideration and design for equitable impacts. This will include tracking of projects in the Expenditure Categories of Negative Economic Impacts (EC2) and Services to Disproportionally Impacted Communities (EC3).

Community Engagement

Dakota County has a history of community engagement using multiple methods to provide information and capture feedback from constituents, community-based organizations, and the communities we serve. Examples of ongoing community engagement strategies are included below. Dakota County staff will continue to utilize and build on these strategies as they work with the Dakota County Board of Commissioners to make decisions on funding priorities.

- **Partnerships:** Dakota County works with numerous partners on community engagement. These partnerships continue to evolve. One example is the community partnership noted in a previous section of this report. Dakota County is partnering with community organizations to provide important information and resources to communities of color, with a focus on Black and Latino residents. COVID-19 materials – translated in several languages - have been shared through virtual meetings, social media outlets, one-on-one meetings with social workers and visits to stores, neighborhoods and other community locations.
- **Public Meetings/Forums/Open Houses:** Dakota County often holds meetings – both virtual and in-person – with local residents to collect feedback for specific projects.
- **Social Media:** Dakota County has a presence on social media, including Facebook, Twitter, NextDoor, LinkedIn, and Instagram.
- **Website:** The Dakota County website provides an opportunity to both share information and receive feedback or questions. The website receives more than 4 million visits (8.5 million page views) per year.

- **Residential Survey:** In addition to numerous program-specific surveys, Dakota County completes a random sample mailed survey to residents every three years. The next residential survey will be conducted in 2022.

Labor Practices

Dakota County complies with Minnesota law and Dakota County policy regarding seeking competitive bids and quotes. Dakota County in all requests for proposals, requests for bids, and contracts includes language requiring contractors to comply with all laws, including the Fair Labor Standards Act and other labor laws. Furthermore, the Dakota County Board has adopted a resolution requiring all construction contracts over $25,000 to include language requiring contractors to comply with prevailing wage requirements. Dakota County's standard contract assurances (which are part of all contracts) include language specifically relating to prevailing wage compliance. Finally, Dakota County requires contractors to post prevailing wage information at job sites.

Use of Evidence

Dakota County has a strategic plan with four goals:

- **A great place to live:** Dakota County strives to be a welcoming place where all people are safe, have opportunities to thrive, and enjoy a high lifelong quality of life.
- **A healthy environment with quality natural areas:** Dakota County protects and maintains natural resources for the health and enjoyment of current and future residents.
- **A successful place for business and jobs:** Dakota County fosters business and employment success through modern infrastructure, low taxes, and a prepared, connected workforce.
- **Excellence in public service:** Dakota County demonstrates stewardship of human and financial resources, communicates and engages with the public, and innovates and collaborates to provide excellent service.

Dakota County uses Results Based Accountability as part of an established measurement framework. This includes a set of community indicators that are evaluated on an ongoing basis to provide data at the population accountability level. All programs and services in the County provide data at the performance accountability level by providing information on how much they are doing, how well they are doing it, and program impact. This information is included each year as part of the annual budget process.

The County has established a funding team that is working with the Dakota County Board of Commissioners on planning for the use of FRF funds. In addition, an evaluation and reporting team is also being established to discuss and plan for the evaluation of funded projects, coordinate data collection, and share results. Where relevant for the policy objective, data will be collected and disaggregated by equity dimensions to help understand the impact of outcomes. For shared awareness, information on goals and outcomes will be shared among teams working on implementing and evaluating funded programs.

Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category

	Category	Cumulative expenditures to date ($)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
1	**Expenditure Category: Public Health**		
1.1	COVID-19 Vaccination	$0.00	
1.2	COVID-19 Testing	$0.00	
1.3	COVID-19 Contact Tracing	$0.00	
1.4	Prevention in Congregate Settings (Nursing Homes, Prisons/Jails, Dense Work Sites, Schools, etc.)	$0.00	
1.5	Personal Protective Equipment	$0.00	
1.6	Medical Expenses (including Alternative Care Facilities)	$0.00	
1.7	Capital Investments or Physical Plant Changes to Public Facilities that respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency	$0.00	
1.8	Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses (including Communications, Enforcement, Isolation/Quarantine)	$0.00	
1.9	Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Responding to COVID-19	$0.00	
1.10	Mental Health Services	$0.00	
1.11	Substance Use Services	$0.00	
1.12	Other Public Health Services	$0.00	
2	**Expenditure Category: Negative Economic Impacts**		
2.1	Household Assistance: Food Programs	$0.00	
2.2	Household Assistance: Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Aid	$0.00	
2.3	Household Assistance: Cash Transfers	$0.00	
2.4	Household Assistance: Internet Access Programs	$0.00	
2.5	Household Assistance: Eviction Prevention	$0.00	
2.6	Unemployment Benefits or Cash Assistance to Unemployed Workers	$0.00	
2.7	Job Training Assistance (e.g., Sectoral job-training, Subsidized Employment, Employment Supports or Incentives)	$0.00	
2.8	Contributions to UI Trust Funds*	$0.00	
2.9	Small Business Economic Assistance (General)	$0.00	
2.10	Aid to nonprofit organizations	$0.00	
2.11	Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality	$0.00	
2.12	Aid to Other Impacted Industries	$0.00	
2.13	Other Economic Support	$0.00	

	Category	Cumulative expenditures to date ($)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
2.14	Rehiring Public Sector Staff	$0.00	
3	**Expenditure Category: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities**		
3.1	Education Assistance: Early Learning	$0.00	
3.2	Education Assistance: Aid to High-Poverty Districts	$0.00	
3.3	Education Assistance: Academic Services	$0.00	
3.4	Education Assistance: Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Services	$0.00	
3.5	Education Assistance: Other	$0.00	
3.6	Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care	$0.00	
3.7	Healthy Childhood Environments: Home Visiting	$0.00	
3.8	Healthy Childhood Environments: Services to Foster Youth or Families Involved in Child Welfare System	$0.00	
3.9.	Healthy Childhood Environments: Other	$0.00	
3.10	Housing Support: Affordable Housing	$0.00	
3.11	Housing Support: Services for Unhoused persons	$0.00	
3.12	Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance	$0.00	
3.13	Social Determinants of Health: Other	$0.00	
3.14	Social Determinants of Health: Community Health Workers or Benefits Navigators	$0.00	
3.15	Social Determinants of Health: Lead Remediation	$0.00	
3.16	Social Determinants of Health: Community Violence Interventions	$0.00	
4	**Expenditure Category: Premium Pay**		
4.1	Public Sector Employees	$0.00	
4.2	Private Sector: Grants to other employers	$0.00	
5	**Expenditure Category: Infrastructure**		
5.1	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater treatment	$0.00	
5.2	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater collection and conveyance	$0.00	
5.3	Clean Water: Decentralized wastewater	$0.00	
5.4	Clean Water: Combined sewer overflows	$0.00	
5.5	Clean Water: Other sewer infrastructure	$0.00	
5.6	Clean Water: Stormwater	$0.00	
5.7	Clean Water: Energy conservation	$0.00	
5.8	Clean Water: Water conservation	$0.00	
5.9	Clean Water: Nonpoint source	$0.00	
5.10	Drinking water: Treatment	$0.00	

	Category	Cumulative expenditures to date ($)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
5.11	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution	$0.00	
5.12	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution: lead remediation	$0.00	
5.13	Drinking water: Source	$0.00	
5.14	Drinking water: Storage	$0.00	
5.15	Drinking water: Other water infrastructure	$0.00	
5.16	Broadband: "Last Mile" projects	$0.00	
5.17	Broadband: Other projects	$0.00	
6	**Expenditure Category: Revenue Replacement**		
6.1	Provision of Government Services	$0.00	
7	**Administrative and Other**		
7.1	Administrative Expenses	$0.00	
7.2	Evaluation and data analysis	$0.00	
7.3	Transfers to Other Units of Government	$0.00	
7.4	Transfers to Nonentitlement Units (States and Territories only)	$0.00	

Project Inventory

At this time, no projects have been undertaken.

Performance Report

Goals, measures, outputs, and outcomes will be prepared during project development and tracked as the projects are implemented. No projects have been started.