



Dakota County **Recovery Plan**

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

2022 Report (July 2022)



Dakota County

2022 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.

Dakota County operates under an elected seven-member County Board, each member representing a district of the County. 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. More information regarding Dakota County can be found on the Dakota County website:

www.co.dakota.mn.us.

Dakota County was allocated \$83,332,300.00 in State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (FRF). The first tranche was received on June 14, 2021 and the second on June 16, 2022. 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 passes resolutions in support of each allocation to programs and projects. The Board discussed FRF funding multiple times over the past year. This included discussions on specific funding requests and planning sessions at meetings.

Dakota County has chosen to fund projects that both respond to the pandemic and promote economic recovery. First, Dakota County has provided resources to those most impacted by the pandemic. Examples include a project focused on outreach to communities of color and several projects related to mental health services and supports. Second, Dakota County has funded projects that help to build infrastructure and promote economic recovery. Examples include funding for improvements to the Byllesby Dam and a project related to municipal wastewater connection. Third, in some instances, projects are both providing services for those most impacted by the pandemic and helping to build infrastructure for the future. Examples include work on a youth shelter and a workforce mobility program. A list of all currently funded projects can be found at: [APR Funding \(opengov.com\)](https://aprfunding.opengov.com). One challenge encountered by Dakota County has been hiring staff in a challenging labor market, which has led to some program delays.

Dakota County has an established 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 ([Community Indicators| Dakota County](#)). All programs and services in the County including all FRF funded projects 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. Evaluation information on funded projects can be found in the Project Inventory section of this report.

Uses of Funds

The Dakota County Board 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 discussed FRF funding multiple times over the past year. This included discussions on specific funding requests and planning sessions at meetings.

- In April 2021, the Board reviewed the funding that would be provided directly to the County; reviewed a current snapshot of economic, employment, and housing conditions in Dakota County that was relevant to decision-making on FRF funds; and discussed some of the steps the County would need to take to receive, prioritize, deploy, track, and report on FRF funds.
- In June 2021, the Board received an update on the status of the Fiscal Recovery Funds (FRF) and US Treasury rules for their use, and the current status of FRF planning in neighboring jurisdictions. The Board set principles for decision-making on FRF and other resources and reviewed areas for potential investment of FRF funds in Dakota County.
- In September 2021, the Board reviewed reporting requirements, Revenue Replacement calculations, and a list of potential investment areas.
- In November 2021, the Board held a Budget Workshop to provide direction on the use of funding on eligible items in the County Manager's recommended and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget and to determine the Board's interest in other items that were eligible for FRF funding but not yet in the current recommended budget.
- In February 2022, the Board reviewed reporting, spending, and partner requests for potential funding.
- In June 2022, at their Budget Workshop, the Board reviewed the estimated costs to continue programs funded in 2022 through 2026 and a list of capital projects eligible to be funded that were on track for completion by the end of 2026. Possible future initiatives may include additional mental health services or potential funding for a library in the south metro. All potential projects continue to align with the established principles and focus of the Board.

As noted above, Dakota County has an established strategic plan. All Dakota County projects/initiatives, including FRF projects, support one or more of the goals. A list of all currently funded FRF projects can be found at: [APR Funding \(opengov.com\)](https://opengov.com). Dakota County has chosen to fund projects that both respond to the pandemic and promote recovery. A summary of funded projects sorted according to expenditure category is included below.

- **Public Health (EC 1):** In response to high demand for crisis mental health services and changing community expectations, the Board approved adding 9.0 FTE social workers to Dakota County's Crisis Response Unit. Additional social workers will focus on mobile crisis response, responding in pairs and/or with public safety partners. For Mental Health Crisis Follow-up, Social Services will pair a mental health social worker, employed by Dakota County Social Services, with dedicated law enforcement/public safety partners. The joint law enforcement/public safety and mental health team visits with individuals/households who have been identified by law enforcement as a result of previous contact(s). Providing a mental health versus police response during a crisis can reduce community/individual trauma and promote long-term health for historically underserved and marginalized communities.
- **Negative Economic Impacts (EC 2):** To be completed in conjunction with construction of the Dakota County River to River Regional Greenway trail, the proposed project on former Thompson Oaks municipal golf course property converts 10 acres of the former municipal golf course to a regional stormwater treatment system and restores a former wetland and creek complex. Dakota County is partnering with the City of West St. Paul and the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization to implement the project within a diverse and underserved community within the south metro. The Thompson Oaks project is located within qualified census tract number 601.05. The proposed project will directly work to lower Total Suspended Solids (TSS) levels by targeting a highly urbanized sub watershed for regional stormwater treatment.
- **Water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure (EC 5):** The results of a Power Production Study of Byllesby Dam show the aging turbines, generators, and ancillary components needed to produce electricity have greatly exceeded their operational life. Financial analysis show that a full turbine upgrade provides the best return on investment. This project replaces the aging turbines to produce water generated electricity.
- **Revenue Replacement (EC 6):** To date, eleven projects/initiatives have been funded with revenue replacement. This includes funding to provide additional resources to services impacted by the pandemic such as assistance with the criminal court backlog, funding to assist with mental health resources, and funding for additional staff to assist with managing public assistance programs. It includes funding for an initiative that focuses on contracts with community organizations to address the disproportionate impacts of the pandemic and related hardships on communities of color, as well as support for lasting social and economic infrastructure such as a youth shelter and a program that helps low-income homeowners with a failing septic system make a connection to a municipal wastewater treatment system.

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 power's 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. HUD-ARP funds are available for expenditure until September 2030.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

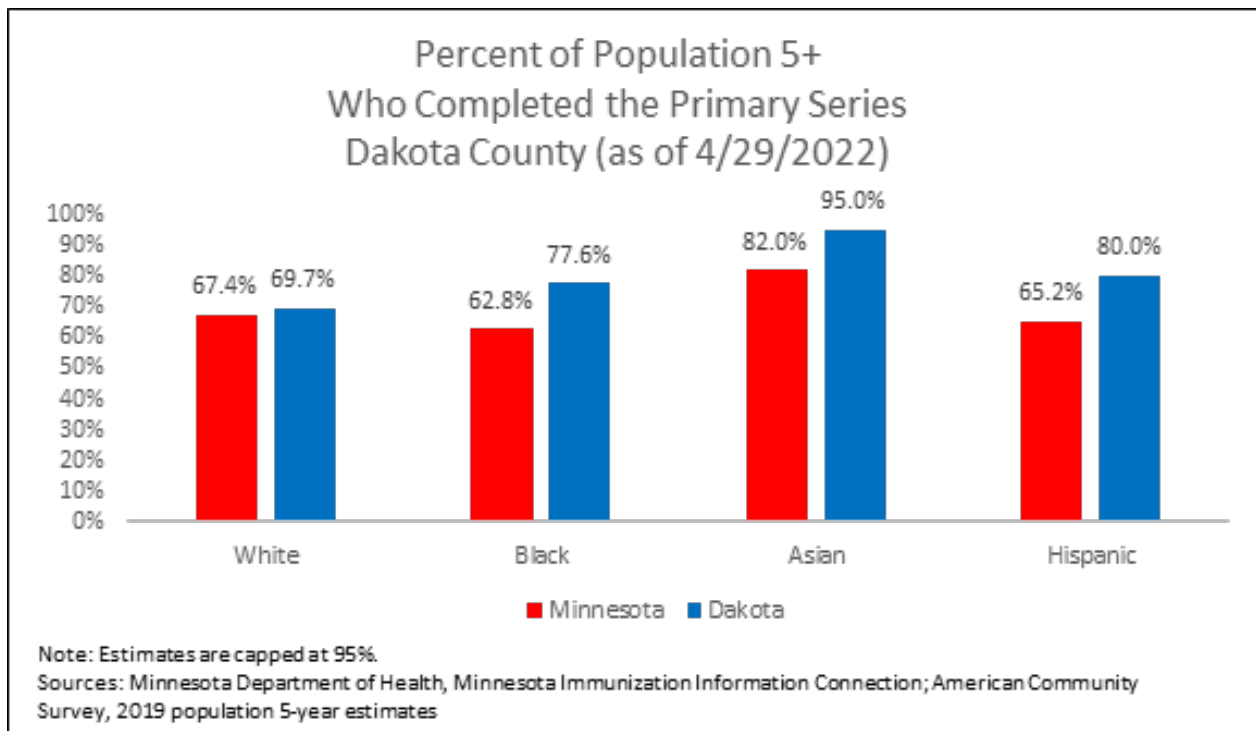
The 2020 population for Dakota County is 439,882. In Dakota County, people of color increased from about 18% of the population to more than 26% during the past decade. In addition to demographic data, Dakota County has a history of monitoring community indicators and using data as an input into decisions. 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 also has a history of engaging in programs and partnerships to produce equitable outcomes. One use of FRF funds has been an initiative that focuses on contracting with community organizations to address the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 and related hardships on communities of color with a focus on Black and Latino communities. Goals include:

- Inform community members about COVID-19 and available resources.
- Assist County residents in navigating support programs and gaining access to services.

- Slowing the spread of COVID-19.
- Supporting recovery from the pandemic.
- Advising the County's communication strategies to improve reach and effectiveness with communities of color.

According to Dakota County Public Health, the following chart represents the best available data from the Minnesota Department of Health allowing comparison of rates of vaccination (people 5 and older who have completed the primary series) by race and ethnicity for Dakota County and the State. As shown, Dakota County outperforms the State in vaccination rates for all racial and ethnic populations, but particularly for residents of color. Comparison data for other counties is not publicly available.



In addition to the project above, other projects are also focused on addressing equitable outcomes and the impacts of the pandemic. One example includes efforts related to crisis response and follow-up. Providing a mental health versus police response during a crisis can reduce community/individual trauma and promote long-term health for historically underserved and marginalized communities. Another example is the Workforce Mobility program. This pilot program will provide free tuition in credit or non-credit training for Dakota County residents in key identified in-demand industry sectors.

Community Engagement

Dakota County has a history of using multiple community engagement strategies including surveys, partnerships, meetings, social media, website, and mailed materials. Dakota County staff have continued to utilize and build on these strategies with FRF funding.

- **Partnerships:** Dakota County works with numerous partners on community engagement. There are several examples of this related to FRF funds. In one example, Dakota County is partnering with community organizations to provide important information and resources to communities of color. In another example, Dakota County engaged diverse stakeholder groups to inform crisis services and continuum expansion including work with a metro children's crisis group to create brief videos to promote use of crisis services with a focus on outreach to communities of color.
- **Public Meetings/Forums/Open Houses:** Dakota County often holds meetings – both virtual and in-person – with residents to collect feedback for specific projects. There are several examples of this related to FRF funded projects. In one example, a series of three public meetings were held regarding the municipal wastewater treatment system project. County staff were present for information and questions as relates to the FRF dollars available to residents. In another example, community/neighborhood outreach and meetings have been held related to the Aspen House youth shelter.
- **Residential Survey:** In addition to numerous program-specific surveys, Dakota County completes a random sample mailed survey with residents every three years. The most recent survey was completed in March 2022. The Dakota County Residential Survey provides residents an opportunity to rate the quality of life in the county as well as service delivery and their satisfaction with county government. The survey also gives residents an avenue to provide feedback to the county about what is working well and what is not, and to share their priorities for the county. When conducting residential surveys, Dakota County forms a partnership with several other counties, which allows real-time comparisons with similar organizations that serve demographically similar residents. More information regarding the residential survey can be found at [Residential Survey| Dakota County](#). Specific COVID related questions were added to the survey this year and results were provided to the Board in June prior to a Board planning discussion regarding FRF funding.
- **Mailing Materials:** For the workforce mobility program, postcards were sent to over 44,000 households in Dakota County with income \$50,000 or less to provide information about the program/opportunity.
- **Social Media:** Dakota County has a presence on social media, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, 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 3.9 million visits (8.2 million-page views) per year.

One use of FRF funds has been an initiative that focuses on contracting with community organizations to address the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 and related hardships on communities of color with a focus on Black and Latino communities. Goals include:

- Inform community members about COVID-19 and available resources.
- Assist County residents in navigating support programs and gaining access to services.
- Slowing the spread of COVID-19.

- Supporting recovery from the pandemic.
- Advising the County's communication strategies to improve reach and effectiveness with communities of color.

This provides an opportunity for contract partners to provide outreach, education, engagement, and navigation assistance to support community members that have historically faced barriers to services.

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 is using evidence-based interventions for both the Mental Health Crisis Response and Mental Health Crisis Follow-up. In addition, specific reports/evidence are cited for both the Byllesby Dam project and River to River Greenway – Thompson Oaks to illustrate the data that was used to plan for each project. More information on all four projects can be found in the Project Inventory.

In addition, Dakota County uses Results Based Accountability as part of an established measurement framework. 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 approach covers both process and outcome evaluation. All FRF projects are required to use this framework to evaluate their efforts. In addition, an evaluation and reporting team has been established to discuss and plan for the evaluation of funded projects, coordinate data collection, and share results.

Performance Report

Dakota County has an established strategic plan with four goals. All Dakota County projects/initiatives, including FRF projects, support one or more of the 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 ([Results-Based Accountability - Overview and Guide \(clearimpact.com\)](https://clearimpact.com)). This includes a set of community indicators that are evaluated on an ongoing basis to provide data at the population accountability level ([Community Indicators| Dakota County](#)). This provides for overarching jurisdictional measurement. All programs and services in the County provide data at the performance accountability or individual project level by providing information on how much they are doing, how well they are doing it, and program impact. All FRF funded projects are required to report this information. In addition, an evaluation and reporting team has been established to discuss and plan for the evaluation of funded projects. Additional measurement information is included in the Project Inventory section of the report.

PROJECT INVENTORY

Directly Funded

Byllesby Dam

Identification Number: BD00008

Funding Amount: \$17,124,830

Expenditure Category: 5.7 Clean Water: Energy Conservation

Website:

<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Environment/WaterResources/LakeByllesbyDamReservoir/Pages/dam-maintenance.aspx>

Overview

Dakota County owns the Byllesby Dam and operates its high-hazard hydroelectric facility under the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) safety regulations. The County is in the process of completing turbine and powerhouse upgrades for the Byllesby Dam Water-to-Wire Redevelopment Project to modernize and maximize production of clean energy from the Dam.

To complete this project, County staff developed a team including an engineering consultant to provide project design, a turbine manufacturer to provide turbine and generation equipment in a complete package (e.g., water-to-wire equipment), and a general contractor for redevelopment of the site with installation of the equipment and modification to the powerhouse structure. A high-level project timeline is included below.

- **Q4 2022:** Initiate contract for Phase 2 work on the powerhouse project as well as the installation of the new turbine equipment

- **Q3 2023:** Scheduled completion date

Use of Evidence

The results of a Power Production Study of Byllesby Dam show the aging turbines, generators, and ancillary components needed to produce electricity have greatly exceeded their operational life. Financial analysis show that a full turbine upgrade provides the best return on investment. This project replaces the aging turbines to produce water generated electricity.

According to a 2014 presentation to County Senior Leadership, the realistic maximum potential savings were gauged to be up to \$1,000,000 annually. Additionally, it was estimated that the updates could reduce the counties' greenhouse gas emissions from over 23,000 metric tons (2010) to 12,500 metric tons through the self-operation of the dam.

Performance Report

Overall project goals include:

- Preserve the clean energy generation capability for at least another 50 years.
- Replace century-old original head gates, draft tubes, overhead crane rails, generators and turbines.
- Remove flood damaged concrete and bedrock chunks from river channel.
- Address dam safety issues like cracks in the Ambursen buttress dam (3) and a stormwater pipe penetration through the north embankment.
- Restore the historic character of the façade by replacing blocked-up windows and repairing walls and roofs.
- Replace the 20- to 40-year old stop logs, interior ventilation system and electrical switchgear.
- Upgrade to generating units that are more efficient and are matched to site head and flow conditions.
- Address worker safety concerns by relocating the maintenance and operator entrance out of the icy spray zone.

Work continued on the demolition of the existing upstream bays intake structures and preparing and pouring concrete for the downstream foundations for the powerhouse. The powerhouse foundations included the setting of the turbine equipment draft turbines, plumbing, and other miscellaneous equipment required in the foundations of the powerhouse.

River to River Greenway – Thompson Oaks Segment

Identification Number: 8470973130

Funding Amount: \$4,975,265

Expenditure Category: 2.22 Strong Healthy Communities: Neighborhood Features that Promote Health and Safety

Website: <https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/parks/CurrentProjects/Construction/Pages/thompson-oaks.aspx>

Overview

The proposed project is located on the former Thompson Oaks municipal golf course property and converts 10 acres of the former municipal golf course to a regional stormwater treatment system and restores a former wetland and creek complex which was destroyed via filling of construction waste and other debris in the 1980s. The project within a diverse and underserved community within the south metro and is located within qualified census tract number 601.05.

The River to River Greenway Master Plan identified this new greenway alignment, which will connect to the Robert Street Underpass east across the former Thompson Oaks Golf Course owned by the City of West St. Paul. By Resolution No. 18-534 (October 23, 2018), the Dakota County Board of Commissioners executed a joint powers agreement (JPA) with the City of West St. Paul to design the Greenway and potential Water Quality Project-adjacent potential City residential development projects on the parcel.

A Clean Water Fund grant was received in 2020 in the amount of \$576,448 was awarded to Dakota County by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources for the Water Quality project component. Subsequently, the City has proposed to contribute \$676,075 in matching funds toward the project. The project scope and estimate has been expanded to include construction of the core River to River Greenway trail alignment, loop trail options, and a boardwalk for a total cost estimate of \$6,227,788.

The proposed project will directly work to lowering of TSS (Total Suspended Solids) and TP (Total Phosphorus) levels by targeting a highly urbanized sub watershed for regional stormwater treatment. Stormwater volumes generated from legacy impervious surfaces in the contributing sub watershed will also be reduced, by mimicking natural hydrology via infiltration and water reuse. Addressing the altered hydrology within the sub watershed will work to reduce peak flows and extended duration baseflows in the south metro Mississippi River, preserving channel and streambank stability and reducing flooding.

The proposed stormwater treatment system features three hydrodynamic separators placed on trunk storm sewer lines that drain into the site, 8 acres of enhanced treatment wetlands, a native prairie stormwater infiltration area and stormwater reuse system, and the daylighting of 700 linear feet of a historical creek section buried in storm sewer for several decades. The project infiltrates an estimated 4.5 acre feet/year of treated stormwater from upstream legacy impervious surfaces created prior to the adoption of stormwater treatment standards, and reduces sediment and phosphorus loading to the lower Mississippi River and Lake Pepin by 94 tons and 228 pounds per year, respectively. The proposed project combines stormwater treatment, drinking water protection, and contaminated soil remediation with economic redevelopment, recreational opportunities, and shared green space amenities while fostering community education and public engagement on surface water and groundwater quality issues and solutions. A high-level project timeline is included below.

- **July–November 2022:** Soil remediation and pond grading
- **December 2022–March 2023:** Wetland restoration, weir construction, boardwalk construction
- **April–May 2023:** Final landscape restoration and trail paving

Use of Evidence

In reviewing the property and potential water quality project, a large historical dumpsite was evaluated for remediation.

Additionally, a documented history of dumped construction waste into former wetlands and identification of a historical creek that once flowed through the parcel also presented a significant opportunity for restoration. The proposed project treats approximately 25% of the total impervious land area within the City totaling 216 acres of untreated impervious surface. Levels of total suspended solids currently exceed the TMDL established site specific standard of 32 mg/L TSS at Lock and Dam 2 and 3 under the South Metro Mississippi River TMDL. The project creates approximately 0.4 mile of River to River Greenway plus approximately 380 lineal feet of boardwalk across the pond and wetland complex.

Performance Report

Public engagement occurred via the project website and presentations at West St. Paul City Council Meeting and Dakota County Board of Commissioners meeting in Q4 2021. The project design was finalized in Q1 2022 in preparation for a construction bid advertisement. In Q2 2022, the construction contract was awarded and executed, along with the securing of all building permits. Construction will begin in Q3 of 2022.

Mental Health Crisis Follow-up

Identification Number: 8430021101

Funding Amount: \$319,459

Expenditure Category: 1.12 Mental Health Services

Overview

While phone and mobile response are an important part of the continuum, all services along the continuum are needed for effective response. For the follow-up phase of the crisis services continuum, Social Services will pair a mental health social worker, employed by Dakota County Social Services, with dedicated law enforcement/public safety partners. The joint law enforcement/public safety and mental health team visits with individuals/households who have been identified by law enforcement as a result of previous contact(s).

Following a crisis event, a social worker follows up with the person or family to offer connection to resources and ongoing support. In the Social Services-Public Safety Partnership model, a social worker is embedded in a police department and works closely with a dedicated community services/mental health officer to provide follow-up after a 911 call-related event. This model focuses on meeting with people face-to-face after the moment of crisis has passed.

Services are provided after intervention in the short-term (4-6 weeks, once to three times/week). Staff develop short-term plan with specific, measurable goals and connect the client to ongoing resources. A high-level 2022 project timeline is included below.

- **Q1 2022:** Publish Letter-of-Intent (LOI) for countywide expansion and commence hiring process for positions.

- **Q2 - Q3 2022:** Continue hiring process to reach full staffing complement. Social Services and police departments will begin to work together to develop consistent policies and procedures, data tracking, and Joint Powers Agreements.
- **Q4 2022:** Full implementation of countywide Social Services-Public Safety "embedded social worker" program.

Use of Evidence

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted community mental health as evidenced by increasing numbers of calls to crisis lines and 911 and increases in requests for high acuity mental health services. Partner and community expectations for the County to serve as a primary or first responder to mental health crises have also increased.

During the 2021 legislative session, the Minnesota Legislature appropriated \$16 million to expand County adult mobile crisis services. These funds will be awarded through a competitive application process administered by DHS. Recognizing the significant impact of the pandemic on mental health, the federal government identified behavioral health services, and specifically crisis services, as a designated use with American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (CLFRF) under the reporting category of Mental Health Services.

In response to an internal report from 2014, Social Services worked with the State of Minnesota Office of Management and Budget on the Results First project and with the Improve Group on a study on impact of mobile crisis services. According to the 2016 Results First adult mental health services inventory, mobile crisis response returns \$3.90 on every \$1.00 of taxpayer investment. According to the Improve Group's Mobile Crisis Impact Analysis and Cost Effectiveness Study completed in 2017, key impacts of mobile crisis services are health, safety, prevention, support and navigation.

The federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recently published the National Guidelines for Behavioral Health Crisis Care – A Best Practice Toolkit which defines national guidelines in crisis care, provides tips for implementing a system of care that aligns with guidelines, and offers tools to evaluate alignment. The Toolkit emphasizes the importance of crisis services that are for anyone, anywhere and anytime which fits with Dakota County's model. Toolkit concepts and guidelines will be leveraged as we continue to evolve and improve the local and regional crisis services continuum.

The total project spending that is allocated towards evidence-based interventions is \$319,459.00.

Performance Report

Key performance indicators are included below.

How Much Measures

- Number of cities/Police Departments with embedded social worker.
- Number of Joint Powers Agreements (JPAs) executed.
- Number of residents receiving outreach services.
- Number of residents receiving crisis stabilization services.

- Referral sources.
- Demographic and other data from the DHS Mental Health Information System (MHIS)

How Well Measures

- Outreaches completed.
- Assessments completed.
- Service referral and other data from the DHS Mental Health Information System (MHIS) for stabilization cases.

Better Off Measures

- Client and partner are satisfied with services provided and partnership activities.
- Residents referred to appropriate resources, services and supports.

Progress on key milestones includes:

- Letter-of-Intent for countywide expansion completed. 10 of 12 police departments interested in embedded social worker.
- Hiring for positions and onboarding of staff.
- Presentations to various community groups about crisis continuum expansion.
- In-person meetings with each interested city/PD in June and July 2022.
- Piloting IT/GIS to technology solutions for workflow and data management/tracking.
- Meeting with city and county attorneys to finalize edits to JPAs – anticipate execution by the end of 2022.

Mental Health Crisis Response

Identification Number: 8430021100

Funding Amount: \$605,863

Expenditure Category: 1.12 Mental Health Services

Overview

Website:

<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/HealthFamily/MentalHealth/Response/Pages/default.aspx>

Dakota County's Crisis Response Unit (CRU) was established in 1993 to respond to increasing County costs related to child placements by law enforcement. The County was later required by Minn. Stat. § 256B.0624 and Minn. Stat. § 256B.0944 to have its own mental health crisis response, and CRU evolved to also meet that requirement. Countywide expansion of the Dakota County Social Services-Public Safety "embedded social worker" partnership provides a

centralized response to crisis needs across departments and programs and creates a crisis continuum of care.

In response to high demand for crisis mental health services and changing community expectations, the Board approved adding 9.0 FTE social workers (SWs) to Dakota County's Crisis Response Unit. Additional social workers will focus on mobile crisis response, responding in pairs and/or with public safety partners. Following a mobile crisis assessment or intervention, social workers will connect residents with crisis follow-up or other ongoing services.

Staff respond to calls to provide crisis planning, develop coping strategies, and refer to outside resources. This can be face-to-face or by phone. The CRU is also the after-hours entry point across all County social service programs, including vulnerable adult protective services; child protection; parent/child conflict; and many others.

This program has enacted public engagement strategies through presentations to community and stakeholder groups on Dakota County's crisis continuum expansion. Additionally, frequent check-ins have been conducted, and feedback has been collected from public safety partners through the Service Safety and Justice Committee and other forums.

The CRU has also sought to promote equitable outcomes through the program's expansion as it has focused on providing the appropriate service at the right time, countywide. Providing a mental health response versus a solely law enforcement response during a crisis can reduce community/individual trauma and promote long-term healing for historically underserved or marginalized communities. A high-level 2022 project timeline is included below.

- **Q1 2022:** Monitor 911 call processes, stakeholder feedback, and outcomes. Make adjustments, as needed. Hire, train and onboard new FTEs to expand mobile crisis team. Develop processes for effectively deploying mobile response capacity, countywide.
- **Q2 2022:** Continue with hiring, orientation and program expansion
- **Q3 2022:** Monitor staff progress and service expansion
- **Q4 2022:** Evaluate program progress.

Use of Evidence

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted community mental health as evidenced by increasing numbers of calls to crisis lines and 911 and increases in requests for high acuity mental health services. Partner and community expectations for the County to serve as a primary or first responder to mental health crises have also increased.

During the 2021 legislative session, the Minnesota Legislature appropriated \$16 million to expand County adult mobile crisis services. These funds will be awarded through a competitive application process administered by DHS. Recognizing the significant impact of the pandemic on mental health, the federal government identified behavioral health services, and specifically crisis services, as a designated use with American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (CLFRF) under the reporting category of Mental Health Services.

In response to an internal report from 2014, Social Services worked with the State of Minnesota Office of Management and Budget on the Results First project and with the Improve Group on a

study on impact of mobile crisis services. According to the 2016 Results First adult mental health services inventory, mobile crisis response returns \$3.90 on every \$1.00 of taxpayer investment. According to the Improve Group's Mobile Crisis Impact Analysis and Cost Effectiveness Study completed in 2017, key impacts of mobile crisis services are health, safety, prevention, support and navigation.

The federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recently published the National Guidelines for Behavioral Health Crisis Care – A Best Practice Toolkit which defines national guidelines in crisis care, provides tips for implementing a system of care that aligns with guidelines, and offers tools to evaluate alignment. The Toolkit emphasizes the importance of crisis services that are for anyone, anywhere and anytime which fits with Dakota County's model. Toolkit concepts and guidelines will be leveraged as we continue to evolve and improve the local and regional crisis services continuum.

The total project spending that is allocated towards evidence-based interventions is \$605,863.

Performance Report

Key performance indicators are included below.

How Much Measures

- Numbers of 911 calls transferred to Crisis Response Unit (CRU) from 911, including numbers that did not need law enforcement response.
- Numbers of mobile site visits, including referral source.
- DHS Mental Health Information System (MHIS) Data Collection - demographics, primary reason for intervention

How Well Measures

- Stakeholder satisfaction surveys
- Assessments completed within timelines
- Mental Health Information System (MHIS) data collection
- Location of assessment
- Service referrals

Better Off Measures

- Mental Health Information System (MHIS) data collection
- Disposition at the end of crisis episode.

Progress on key milestones includes:

- Hiring, training, and onboarding new staff to expand mobile crisis team. As of June 2022, 1 supervisor and 7 of 9 social workers hired and onboarding. Hiring and onboarding will continue until all 9 positions filled. Pace of hiring is slower than anticipated due to competitive job market and internal hiring challenges (salary limitations, etc.)

- Deploying mobile response capacity, countywide.
- Implemented new 911 call transfer process.
- New mobile response capacity resulting in more mobile site visits and intakes. Number of site visits/day has already doubled from average of 1/day to average of 2/day. Goal when fully staffed and trained: average 7 site visits/day.
- Intakes (which often involve multiple calls/contacts) are now averaging 30/day. In 2021, total intakes averaged 19/day.
- Working with police departments to identify potential touchdown spaces for mobile workers to facilitate relationship-building and proximity for timely response.
- Piloting GIS technology for tracking and reporting data on crisis continuum activity.
- Applied to DHS for \$600,000 in new grant funding to offset costs for 9 social worker positions – request pending with decision expected in early July 2022.

Revenue Replacement

Project Summary

Identification Number: 8400006100

Funding Amount: \$5,868,179

Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services

Overview

Dakota County has funded several projects utilizing revenue replacement funds. A brief description of each is included below. Information on all projects can be found here: [APR Funding \(opengov.com\)](#).

- **Communities of Color Outreach:** This program establishes contracts with community organizations to address the disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 crisis and related hardship on communities of color, with a focus on Black and Latino communities. Contracts focus on the following goals: inform community members about COVID-19 and available resources; assist County residents in navigating support programs and gaining access to services; slowing the spread of COVID-19; supporting recovery from the pandemic; and advising the County's communication strategies to improve reach and effectiveness with communities of color. Work is underway to finalize contracts with six organizations.
- **Criminal Courts Backlog:** As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a significant backlog of criminal cases in the Dakota County District Court. The project includes the hiring of two full time equivalent (FTE) entry-level Assistant County Attorneys and one Legal Administrative Assistant to assist with the backlog of criminal cases and to reduce caseload numbers for criminal prosecutors. The overall goal is a 20% reduction of the criminal court backlog each quarter and ultimately to attain and maintain lower prosecutorial caseload numbers to ensure better public services for victims, witnesses,

law enforcement and defendants. Efforts have reduced the active average caseload per general criminal prosecutor from 211 in August 2021 to approximately 162 currently.

- **Customer Relations Management:** Dakota County Employment and Economic Assistance (EEA) has a long-term strategy of providing self-help features for clients to obtain status information about their cases and update changes in household information. The first step of this strategy, and the focus of this project, is to replace an outdated and no longer supported interactive voice response (IVR) software, with a more versatile solution that not only provides IVR features but also call center features that will provide efficiencies for the EEA staff. An RFP was issued and demonstrations from vendors are underway.
- **Emergency Shelter:** In 2020, Dakota County Social Services significantly increased non-congregate emergency shelter capacity for people experiencing homelessness in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021 and 2022, Social Services sustained this capacity through a variety of funding sources, including federal grant funds, state grant funds, and county levy funds. In total, Social Services added 110 hotel shelter spaces in Dakota County for single adults, families with minor children and young adults.
- **Law Library Grant:** Funding for a limited-term Assistant Reference Librarian for the Dakota County Law Library to expand access to residents. The pandemic effects on society and constriction of access to courts has exacerbated the need for supporting residents navigating the judicial system. This is happening at the same time as primary revenues through court fees have fallen considerably and staffing levels have been cut. Individual was hired for position, but they left Dakota County. Position will be reposted during third quarter 2022.
- **Mental Health Civil Commitment Screening:** Funding for 1.0 FTE Social Worker in the pre-petition screening unit to respond to high demand for mandated civil commitment services including screening, court processes, family and collateral engagement, service coordination and case management. Dakota County and other counties continue to experience high demand and high acuity in mental health and substance use services. Referrals for civil commitment screening increased 30% since the start of the pandemic and continue to hold at that level.
- **Municipal Wastewater Connection:** The Municipal Wastewater Connection program is designed for low-income homeowners with failing septic systems who are eligible to make a connection to a municipal wastewater treatment system. The program was designed to accommodate the city of Randolph's unique situation as the city moves from onsite septic systems to a community solution. Outreach to eligible residents started in Spring 2022.
- **Pre-petition Screens Social Worker:** Hire 1.0 FTE Social Worker in the pre-petition screening unit to respond to high demand for mandated civil commitment services for clients were also involved in the Rule 20 process through the criminal court. Dakota County and other counties continue to experience high demand and high acuity in mental health and Substance Use services. Referrals for civil commitment screening and Rule 20 referrals increased 30% since the start of the pandemic and continue to hold at that level.

- **Financial Assistance Specialists (Time-Limited):** A fully trained Financial Assistance Specialist can manage public assistance programs for 200-450 households. Due to the COVID Pandemic, public assistance caseloads increased by 35.1% (May 2022). These additional positions will aid in the management of increased public assistance caseloads and help people get the critical services they need in a timely way. Dakota County anticipates being able to hire staff in the second half of 2022.
- **Workforce Mobility Program:** The Dakota County Technical College and Inver Hills Community College will collaborate with the Dakota County Employment and Economic Assistance and area CareerForce Centers to draw more people into the workforce. This pilot program will provide free tuition in credit or non-credit training for Dakota County residents in key identified in-demand industry sectors. This initiative would also support incumbent workers looking to upskill or shift to high-wage industries. Outreach is underway.
- **Youth Shelter:** Dakota County purchased a 12-bed residential facility located in Mendota Heights to provide temporary emergency housing and support services for youth ages 12 to 18 who do not have a safe place to stay. The facility, named Aspen House, will be leased at no/low cost to Nexus Family Healing to provide Shelter Care Services at the DHS licensed facility. Aspen House will provide 24-hour on-site supervision and support services. Shelter Care Services are defined in MN Statute as no more than 90 days, although the vast majority of youth will stay less than three weeks. Following the closure of the shelter in Hastings in 2019, Dakota County and Washington County began partnering to fill this hole in the continuum of safe housing options for youth. Washington County has contributed \$400,000 of its ARP funding to the purchase and to have priority access to this resource with Dakota County. Remodeling is needed to ready the property for new clientele and improve energy efficiency. Renovations are estimated at six months and Aspen House is expected to open in Fall 2022.

Use of Evidence

Dakota County uses Results Based Accountability as part of an established measurement framework. 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 approach covers both process and outcome evaluation. All FRF projects are required to use this framework to evaluate their efforts.

Performance Report

As noted above, Dakota County uses Results Based Accountability as part of an established measurement framework. A list of sample measures for revenue replacement projects is included below:

How Much Measures

- Number of people provided services or resources including percent who identify as people of color
- Number of people reached through targeted media campaigns
- Outreach activities

- Number of events or trainings completed
- Civil commitment cases assigned
- Number of civil commitment screenings
- Number of applicants for job training classes
- Bed days utilized by Dakota County

How Well Measures

- Cases reassigned and charging/screening numbers (County Attorney)
- Civil commitment screenings completed withing 72-hour timeline
- Timely processing of public assistance applications
- Number of applicants for job training classes that complete the program
- Satisfaction with Aspen House

Better Off Outcome Measures

- How many low-income homeowners use program to connect to a municipal wastewater facility
- Number of job training program completers who secure employment within three months
- Positive discharge reasons from shelter