

DAUPHIN COUNTY

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Dauphin County, Pennsylvania **Recovery Plan**

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)

2021 Report

(Reporting Period: Date of Award – July 31st, 2021)

Dauphin County, Pennsylvania
2021 Recovery Plan

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Executive Summary

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Dauphin County Commissioners have overseen both the on-the-ground health response as well as the deployment of millions of dollars in critical federal, state, and local assistance to impacted residents, small businesses, municipal governments, and nonprofit entities within the county. Between March 2020 and the date of this initial Recovery Plan Performance Report, Dauphin County has administered over \$43 million in non-SLFRF assistance to its local governments, small businesses, nonprofits, and residents with the goals of preventing and containing the spread of COVID, supporting the healthcare response to COVID, stabilizing local communities, small businesses, and nonprofits, and ensuring the continued delivery of critical county services.

In addition to the above, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 provides \$54 million in additional State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) to Dauphin County, the potential uses of which this initial Recovery Plan Performance Report covers. On top of the direct Dauphin County allocation, the American Rescue Plan further provides an additional \$48.9 million in direct SLFR funds to the City of Harrisburg, \$22.6 million to the other 39 municipalities within the county, and billions in other ARP specific programs to support a wide range of needs including education, health, economic assistance, broadband, and infrastructure.

Within the broad and complex context above, as well as the pending nature of the US Department of Treasury's Final Rule governing the use of SLFR funds, the Dauphin County Board of Commissioners are taking a methodical, deliberate, and judicious approach to planning for the use of its allocation and developing corresponding programs. Pursuant to this approach, the Dauphin County Commissioners **have not expended American Rescue Plan SLFR funds during the initial reporting period (Award date – July 31, 2021) and will await issuance of the Treasury Final Rule before making final commitments on the use of SLFR funds.** Therefore, this initial Recovery Plan Performance Report **reports zero expenditures to date and contains information on planned uses and program designs currently under consideration, but not final.**

Therefore, metrics like key outcome goals, progress to date on outcome goals, and noteworthy challenges or opportunities identified during the reporting period are somewhat premature as use decisions and corresponding programmatic development are still under consideration—and subject to final guidance from the US Department of Treasury in the form of the Treasury Final Rule. Further, the Dauphin County Commissioners are in the process of gathering specific input from minority and underserved community stakeholders prior to making final spending decisions to ensure robust and full participation by these constituencies.

This cautious and deliberate approach allows Dauphin County to review the Final Rule with its consultants to ensure all spending decisions are eligible, compliant, strategic, and will support a strong and equitable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. It further allows Dauphin County to take stock of the myriad forms of available federal, state, and local assistance (both past and present) to implement a spending strategy that is efficient, impactful, and non-duplicative. Just as importantly, this deliberate approach affords the Dauphin County Commissioners the time necessary to fully consult with all stakeholders, including representatives from minority and underserved communities, to plan SLFRF investments in a manner that promotes equity, inclusion, and an impactful recovery for those communities most impacted by the pandemic. Meetings with minority stakeholders are already underway and will continue through the final spending and implementation process.

As stewards of a historic investment of public dollars, the Dauphin County Commissioners are committed to spending wisely, deliberately, and based on final guidance with thorough stakeholder input.

As we continue to see the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on our community, we will strive to provide as many resources as possible to our residents, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and public service providers to ensure that the public health, economic downturn, disadvantaged communities, and infrastructure needs of Dauphin County continue to be addressed. While the Dauphin County Commissioners await the Treasury Final Rule and develop a judicious final spending plan, Dauphin County will continue to deploy existing resources in response to COVID-19 including the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, Community Development Block Grant Program, HOME Investment Partnerships Program, and any other forms of federal, state, and local assistance available to aid in recovery from the pandemic.

Use of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

As noted in the Executive Summary, the overall strategy of the Dauphin County Commissioners is to choose SLFRF uses within the context of the overall framework of COVID-19 assistance program previously and currently deployed in Dauphin County, as well as new forms of non-SLFRF assistance available to the county (see below for more details on the overall framework of non-SLFRF programs). Coupled with awaiting the Treasury Final Rule, and fully consulting with community stakeholders including minority leaders, this overall strategy will ensure funds are invested wisely, equitably, and in a manner that avoids duplication with other programs.

While awaiting the Treasury Final Rule, Dauphin County has received and considered input from key stakeholders to develop a comprehensive list of potential SLFRF uses currently under consideration and subject to final Treasury guidance. Stakeholders with which Dauphin County has received feedback include minority leaders, small businesses, tourism, emergency management and health sectors, broadband providers, housing developers, and internal departments, to name a few. The Dauphin County Board of Commissioners continues to review this comprehensive list and, in consultation with the pending Treasury Final Rule, will finalize a spending plan *after* the Final Rule is issued and analyzed.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of *potential* SLFRF uses under consideration by the Dauphin County Commissioners based on feedback to date. Please note that Dauphin County is considering uses of funds and activities under all Expenditure Categories (EC 1 through EC 6) and respectfully reserves the right to allocate funds to eligible activities outside of those listed below based on the Treasury Final Rule. The list below encompasses major use categories under strongest consideration.

Uses Under Consideration (Non-Exhaustive/Subject to Change)

Priority Use – Revenue Replacement - EC 6.1

The first area in which the Dauphin County Commissioners plan to use SLFR funds is revenue replacement (EC 6). Based on the broad range and impact of services provided by Dauphin County to over 286,000 residents in areas ranging from health and human services to housing to public safety, it is a primary objective of the Commissioners to first “shore up” the financial ability of the county to continue to provide said services to all county residents.

Dauphin County is currently calculating lost revenue per the formula instructions provided by the US Department of Treasury pending any changes in the Treasury Final Rule and will utilize this expenditure prior to committing SLFR funds to other projects.

How Revenue Replacement Supports Strong and Equitable Recovery

The financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic forced Dauphin County to cut costs and limit its delivery of government services due to declines in county revenues. Cost-saving actions included both temporary and permanent layoffs, spending freezes, halts in contracts with third-party public service providers, and other measures that continue to limit the ability of Dauphin County to deliver services at pre-pandemic levels. Over the course of the pandemic, Dauphin County furloughed 373 employees with some remaining on furlough to date. The estimated additional costs related to furloughs to the county amount to roughly \$1.8 million. Third-party public service providers through which the county delivers many of its social, health, and human services were further forced to halt or curtail activities.

Using SLFR funds to replace lost revenue will allow Dauphin County to restore its full functional capacity and ability to deliver its full range of services to residents in 40 municipalities, both rural and urban, and many times targeted to the most vulnerable citizens. The wide range of critical functions and services provided by Dauphin County directly to residents lends itself to making revenue replacement a priority use consistent with a strong and equitable recovery as it has the potential to impact every community county-wide.

Strategy to Maximize Programmatic Impact and Effective, Efficient, and Equitable Outcomes

As previously stated, the Dauphin County Commissioners are invoking the strategy of making lost revenue replacement the priority SLFRF use. From an efficiency standpoint, this strategy ensures SLFR funds are invested in a built-in system to maximize programmatic impact and deliver effective, efficient, and equitable outcomes.

Regarding programmatic impact, Dauphin County's existing infrastructure (including over 25 departments and 1,700-plus employees) provides a built-in mechanism for maximum programmatic impact with long-term institutional knowledge and experience in delivering a wide range of services.

Regarding equitable outcomes, Dauphin County's wide range of services and programs in one way or another impacts every one of its 286,000-plus residents. More specifically, a majority of Dauphin County's human services, community development, and social service programs target the residents with the greatest need, whether it be a low-income homeowner in need of critical housing repairs, a public service provider delivering programming for low-to-moderate income residents, a family seeking addiction treatment for a loved one, or a senior seeking assistance with daily activities. The broad and diverse range of constituencies served by Dauphin County programs in all areas lends itself to SLFRF investments leading to equitable outcomes.

Finally, the strategy of prioritizing revenue replacement mitigates pressure on Dauphin County to raise taxes in the next fiscal year. Given the financially precarious position of many Dauphin County residents—especially those on fixed and lower incomes—this strategy protects our most vulnerable from additional financial insecurity and keeps residents in their homes. Coupled with the administration of over \$24 million in Emergency Rental Assistance, this strategy is timely and critical when housing stability is at a potential tipping point.

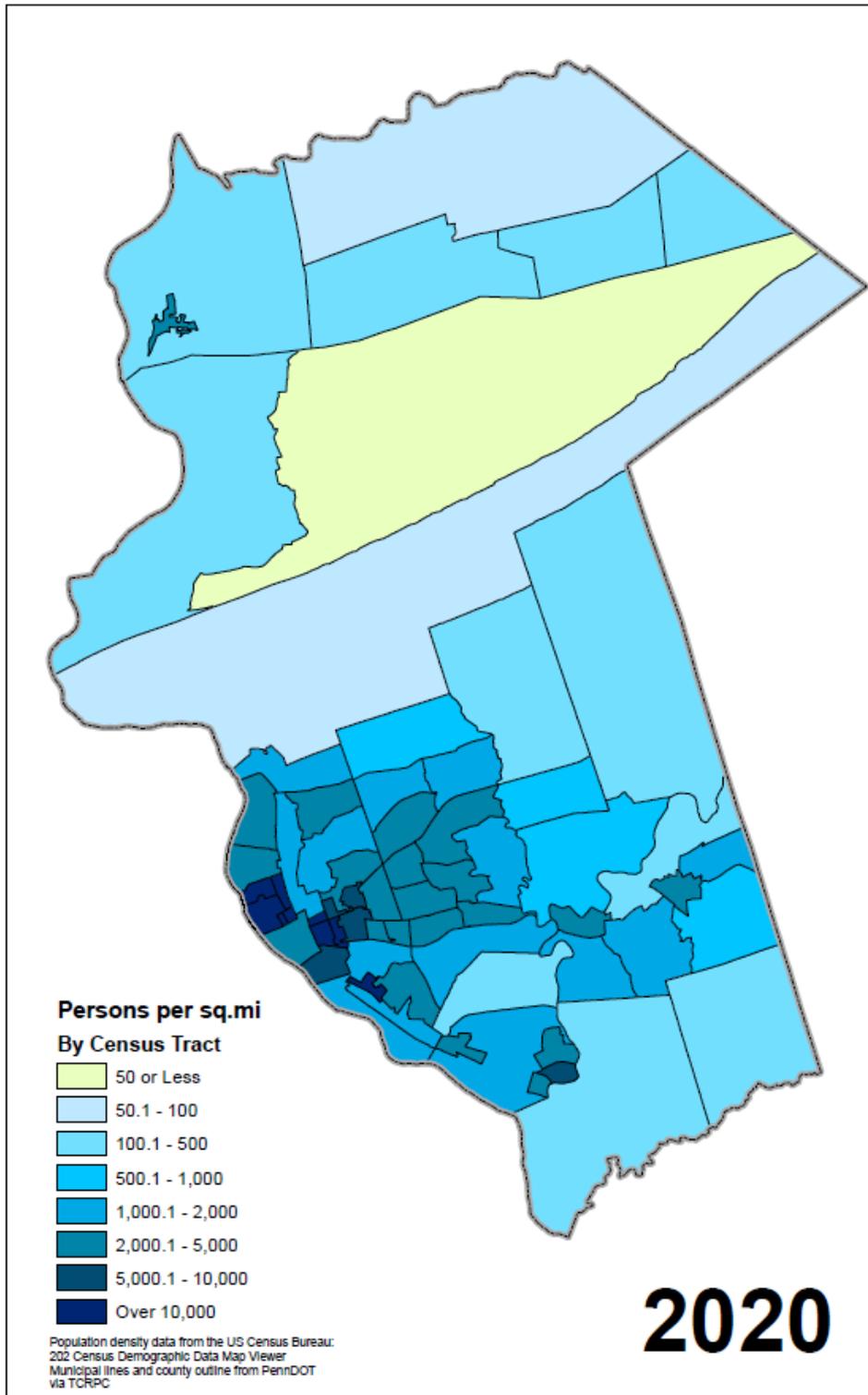
How Investment of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) in Revenue Replacement Supports Communities, Populations, or Individuals in Dauphin County

As noted previously, replacing revenue as a priority use of SLFR funds supports over 286,000 Dauphin County residents by ensuring the continued function of county departments providing critical services in areas including:

- Aging services
- Children and Youth services
- Community and Economic Development
- Conservation District activities
- Criminal Justice
- Planning
- Drug and Alcohol Services
- Public Safety
- Emergency Management
- Magisterial District Justice system
- Mental Health, Autism, and Developmental Programs
- Human Services
- Parks and Recreation
- Pre-Trial Services
- Prison operations
- Solid Waste Management and Recycling
- Tax Assessment
- Tax Claims
- Veterans Affairs
- Victims Services

Please see map below detailing service area of Dauphin County by population density. Dauphin County will be able to continue to provide government services and programs county-wide by prioritizing revenue replacement as the first use of SLFRF funds.

DAUPHIN COUNTY POPULATION BY DENSITY



Broadband Infrastructure – EC 5.16 - 5.17

The Dauphin County Commissioners are also strongly considering setting aside SLFRF dollars to support broadband expansion efforts---either through direct investment in currently shovel-ready projects or long-term planning for future expansion. Over the past year, Dauphin County has worked with internet service providers, municipalities, intermediate units, and its broadband consultant to not only assess the overall need for broadband in the county, but also pursue funding for shovel-ready projects in known areas of need.

Specifically, Dauphin County, in partnership with an internet service provider (ISP) is currently pursuing non-SLFRF grant funding for the purposes of expanding fiber broadband to 115 households and three (3) businesses in Lykens Township, Rush Township, and Jefferson Township (rural communities). These chosen locations are based upon long-standing requests from each municipality and its residents in the project areas who currently lack broadband coverage.

An SLFRF broadband set-aside will first be considered as a potential match (if needed) to current ISP applications to the Pennsylvania Act 132 Broadband Grant Program, the NTIA Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program, or other existing non-SLFRF programs related to broadband. This approach will allow SLFR funds to be leveraged against other sources of funds and be used on immediately impactful projects, thus maximizing the impact of SLFR funds.

If SLFR funds are not needed as a match for the specific projects mentioned above, Dauphin County would utilize the set-aside to engage in a formal broadband study to identify additional areas of need to be funded with the second tranche of SLFR funds and/or other sources. This study would build upon the on-the-ground efforts Dauphin County has been conducting with internet service providers, consultants, and other stakeholders over the previous two years.

Use of SLFR funds for broadband infrastructure expansion would focus primarily on rural areas in Northern Dauphin County when related to infrastructure expansion with additional consideration for addressing affordability/access in urbanized parts of the county.

How Investment in Broadband Promotes a Strong and Equitable Recovery

Investing SLFR funds in rural broadband will support a strong recovery by expanding digital access to workers, families, and students currently struggling to participate in remote work/educational settings. Improving remote work/education conditions in Northern Dauphin County will further allow more flexibility for workers and students to safely participate in remote scenarios especially in instances of COVID resurgence.

Finally, expanding rural broadband in Northern Dauphin County improves access to digital resources and information allowing rural residents to participate in the digital world that has become increasingly necessary.

Investing in rural broadband also supports an equitable recovery by bringing portions of Northern Dauphin County “up to speed” with Southern Dauphin County (which is highly built out). As previously stated, access to high-speed broadband will help bring digital resources to Northern Dauphin County residents that are currently available widely in Southern Dauphin County thus bridging the “digital divide.” From accessing job postings to retrieving the latest COVID information to accessing online banking, Northern Dauphin County residents will begin to have equitable access to digital resources.

A parallel emphasis on affordability and access issues in Southern Dauphin County will ensure financially vulnerable residents are still afforded access to broadband and the many critical resources it provides.

Strategy to Maximize Programmatic Impact and Effective, Efficient, and Equitable Outcomes Related to Broadband Uses

The strategy to maximize impact and effective, efficient, and equitable outcomes related to broadband will be, first and foremost, to leverage SLFR funds with non-SLFR programs. As Dauphin County has already completed much of the legwork in forming a partnership with an ISP to apply for grants, finance, and execute the projects noted above, SLFR funds will be utilized only if needed to leverage the Pennsylvania Act 132 Program, or the NTIA Broadband Infrastructure Program applications submitted by the ISP. Further, the projects themselves would consist of running broadband fiber, the “gold standard” in reliable broadband infrastructure, that is capable of being upgraded and approved upon in the future.

Regarding the second option for use--funding a comprehensive broadband study--Dauphin County would ensure the study touched on both infrastructure buildout in rural Northern Dauphin County and affordability/access in the urbanized and suburban Southern Dauphin County municipalities. This strategy would ensure no population is left out of the broadband discussion and planned investments in broadband access.

How Investment in Broadband Supports Communities, Populations, or Individuals in Dauphin County

In relation to investing SLFR funds directly in Northern Dauphin County infrastructure buildout, the communities most immediately supported would primarily be residents in Lykens Township, Rush Township, and Jefferson Township. However, additional project

opportunities would be under consideration pending receipt of additional financial resources to continue a build-out throughout Northern Dauphin County.

Regarding the second option of funding a comprehensive broadband study, the communities impacted would encompass all of Dauphin County's 280,000-plus residents.

Other Uses Under Consideration Pending Treasury Final Rule

Aside from the above-stated uses under consideration, the Dauphin County Commissioners continue deliberation on allocating SLFR funds to additional use categories subject to the Treasury Final Rule including but not limited to:

- **PUBLIC HEALTH – EC 1.1 - 1.12:** Dauphin County is continuing to monitor the changing conditions on the ground related to COVID-19 including emerging trends in transmission of COVID variants to determine appropriate investments of SLFR funds related to mitigation and response. Potential uses include vaccine distribution programs, testing, personal protective equipment distribution, re-opening vaccine distribution centers, vaccine education programs, assistance in expanding healthcare capacity to manage surges in hospitalizations, investment in ventilation systems to improve public facilities, etc.

Dauphin County is further considering specific uses related to mental health services including but not limited to:

- **PUBLIC HEALTH – MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES - EC 1.10:**

Based on the SAMHSA Behavioral Health Crisis Response System toolkit published in December 2020, and in response to increased behavioral health crises during the COVID-19 pandemic, Dauphin County is considering use of SLFR funds to develop a Mental Health Crisis Stabilization Center to respond to and deescalate behavioral health crises and provide emergency resources.

Related to mental health, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the important role parks and open greenspace play in promoting the health of Dauphin County residents. As evidenced by the overwhelming demand for park usage over the past year, county parks and open space are critical in promoting physical activity, enhancing well-being, and improving mental health both during and after pandemics. For this reason, the Commissioners are considering allocating SLFR funds to preserve and expand public parks and greenspaces.

- **PUBLIC HEALTH – OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – EC 1.12:**

Dauphin County is considering dedicating a portion of SLFR funds to the Department of Parks and Recreation for purposes of preserving and expanding

greenspace and public park space as a community asset contributing to public health.

- **NEGATIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS – EC 2.1 - 2.14:** Based on recent feedback from the small business community and community stakeholders, Dauphin County is considering additional small business/nonprofit grant programs targeted to entities continuing to demonstrate revenue losses due to COVID-19 (2.9, 2.10). These programs may consist of general small business assistance as well as minority-owned business and nonprofit assistance. Potential EC 2 uses under consideration include:
 - General Small Business and Nonprofit Assistance Program based on continued revenue loss.
 - Minority-owned Small Business and Nonprofit Assistance Program to promote an equitable economic recovery (2.9, 2.10).
 - Replenishment of funds to the Dauphin County Tourism Grant Program which supports tourism generating activities and major events. This program experienced significant revenue loss due to COVID-19's impact on the hotel industry whose room tax funds the program (2.11).
 - Financial support of Dauphin County's Destination Marketing Organization (2.11).
 - Investing in county technology upgrades to provide faster and more efficient delivery of services (2.13).
 - Studies to examine minority and women-owned businesses (MBE/WBEs) and strategies to ensure COVID economic recovery is inclusive and equitable.
- **SERVICES TO DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED COMMUNITIES - EC 3.1 - 3.16:** Dauphin County is currently considering several uses within the "Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities" category. Specific uses under consideration include but are not limited to:

- **COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTIONS – EC 3.16:**

Dauphin County is considering investment of SLFR funds as leverage to increase capacity of the existing Dauphin County Co-

Responder Program. A Co-Responder serves as a behavioral health professional that is positioned alongside police officers to respond to behavioral health calls by helping de-escalate situations and connect people in crisis to needed mental health resources.

- **HOUSING SUPPORT – EC 3.10 - 3.12:**

In preparation for increased housing instability caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and as part of the Blueprint to End Homelessness, Dauphin County is considering using SLFR funds to support the development of affordable housing options for persons experiencing homelessness or at-risk for homelessness, including but not limited to, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, rental housing, and additional shelter facilities. Any use of SLFRF funds in this category would leverage existing resources and partnerships with homelessness providers to deliver the broadest impact.

In addition, consideration is being given to use SLFR funds to increase the number of traditional permanent affordable housing units in Dauphin County, specifically in high opportunity areas close to employment centers and educational opportunities. This use would include increasing the number of accessible, affordable units to allow for persons of all abilities to successfully live independently.

- **OTHER — EC 3.13:**

SLFR funding under this category would be used to support additional training and resources to the Dauphin County District Attorney’s Office to combat human trafficking. Potential uses include increasing capacity at the Children’s Advocacy Center, expanded trauma certification and training for direct support staff, support for mental health services for victims of human trafficking, public awareness programs, and other supports to combat human trafficking whose victims are disproportionately from low-income and vulnerable populations.

Dauphin County will further consider use of SLFR funds for additional activities within the “Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities” category and is taking the additional steps below to ensure disproportionately impacted communities benefit from SLFR-funded programs:

- Dauphin County is reviewing the list of qualified census tracts (QCTs) within the county boundaries to determine areas of potential SLFRF investments.
- Support to organizations in disproportionately impacted communities to build social resources and capacity to deliver services.
- Dauphin County continues to hold minority stakeholder meetings to inform SLFRF decisions related to all areas of impact, including services to disproportionately impacted communities.
- **WATER/SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE – EC 5.1 - 5.17:** Dauphin County is currently assessing infrastructure needs of its municipalities and will consider these projects within the context of existing county infrastructure programs like the Dauphin County Infrastructure Bank, available state and federal infrastructure grant and loan programs, and planned uses of direct SLFRF allocations by municipalities.
- **ADMINISTRATIVE - EC 7.1 - 7.4:** Dauphin County will use a portion of SLFR funds to cover administrative costs related to programs including day-to-day operational costs related to administering programs, materials, and evaluation and data analysis costs.

As seen below, Dauphin County is implementing a broad strategy to ensure each use enumerated above results in a strong and equitable recovery with maximum impact. Additional equity strategies specific to each use will be provided on future reports where appropriate—after uses and program designs are finalized.

It is important to reiterate that, due to the interim nature of Treasury guidance governing use of SLFR funds, the Dauphin County Commissioners are deliberately waiting for issuance of the Treasury Final Rule before making final commitments to SLFRF fund uses.

Overall Strategy to Maximize Impact of SLFRF Uses

To maximize impact, aside from taking the deliberate approach of fully analyzing the Treasury Final Rule prior to committing SLFR funds, Dauphin County is further considering SLFRF investments within the context of the totality of available COVID-related assistance (both prior and current) as well as non-COVID standing assistance programs like CDBG, ESG, HOME, Tourism, Local Share, and other traditional assistance programs administered by Dauphin County. This strategy ensures SLFR funds are either targeted to areas of unmet need or leveraged with existing assistance programs where demand exceeds availability of assistance.

Consideration of Existing Forms of Other Assistance When Determining SLFRF Investments

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Dauphin County has administered multiple forms of COVID-specific federal, state, and local assistance in response to the pandemic. From small business grants to emergency rent and utility relief to direct municipal allocations, Dauphin County continues to administer myriad forms of COVID-related financial assistance that—coupled with traditional grant programs administered by Dauphin County—forms the total context in which the Commissioners must consider SLFRF investments.

In April 2020, the County received approximately \$850,000 in 2020 HUD Community Development Block Grant-COVID Recovery Funds to provide working capital and payroll assistance grants to small businesses and nonprofits recovering from the economic impact of the pandemic. These grants were awarded based upon the applicant meeting certain eligibility criteria and were targeted to low-to-moderate income small businesses and nonprofits. Through this program, the County was able to award 73 grants to assist in the economic recovery process.

In August 2020, the County was awarded \$25.1 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding. With CARES funding, the County ran three separate grant programs: one offering direct funding to local municipal governments, another providing additional financial support to local small businesses, and the final providing additional assistance to nonprofit organizations. Through these programs, the County awarded a total of \$17 million (68% of funds received) in grant funds, with the remaining funds used to reimburse internal County response expenditures. Over \$11 million in CARES Act assistance was directly appropriated to municipalities based on eligible expenses while over \$5.2 million was provided to small businesses and nonprofits.

In December 2020, the County received an additional \$1.8 million in 2020 CDBG-COVID Recovery Funds (Round Two) to provide even more working capital and payroll assistance grants to assist small businesses and nonprofits in recovering from the economic impact of the pandemic. Through this program, the County was able to award

an additional 118 grants to assist businesses and nonprofits in the economic recovery process.

In February 2021, Governor Wolf signed into law legislation to set aside funds to aid hospitality industry businesses that were adversely impacted by COVID-19. Dauphin County applied for and received \$3.1 million to provide grant money to selected eligible hospitality businesses and to pay allowable administrative costs. Through this program, the County was able to award a total of 129 grants to hospitality industry businesses within the County. Grants were awarded between \$5,000 and \$30,000, with 105 businesses receiving at least \$25,000. Awards were based on the business’ allowable expenses incurred between March 1, 2020, and the date of the application, less any other COVID-19 relief funds received for those same expenditures.

In February 2021, the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) was created to help renters dealing with financial challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Dauphin County was awarded approximately \$24.4 million in Federal and State funds under this program. For eligible households, the program offers rental and utility assistance to help avoid eviction or loss of utility services. Through this program, the County has been able to award a total of \$4.1 million to further help residents of the County to obtain not only household stability, but also financial security. The Program is still open for residents to apply and continues to provide targeted relief to residents of the County to address housing stability.

Related to addressing the potential increase in homelessness due to the pandemic, Dauphin County is further in receipt of \$2,348,835 in HOME Investment Partnerships Program – American Rescue Plan (HOME-ARP) assistance. This assistance will be used to develop additional affordable housing in Dauphin County to support permanent homeownership amongst vulnerable populations.

Table 1 provides a summary of COVID-related assistance provided through Dauphin County to date. This assistance (both previous and still available) must be considered when finalizing the framework on SLFRF investments by Dauphin County.

Program	Total Assistance	Beneficiaries
CDBG-CV Round 1 Small Business/Nonprofit Assistance	\$853,568	73 small businesses/nonprofits
CDBG-CV Round 2 Small Business/Nonprofit Assistance	\$1,810,829	118 small businesses/nonprofits
CARES Act Small Business/Nonprofit Assistance	\$5,273,638	261 small businesses/nonprofits
COVID Hospitality Industry Recovery Program	\$3,085,000	129 small businesses

CARES Act Municipal Grant Assistance	\$11,768,106	20 municipalities
CARES Act Tourism Assistance	\$150,000	1 Destination Marketing Organization
Emergency Rental Assistance Program	\$24,865,241	TBD
HOME ARP	\$2,348,835	TBD

On top of county administered assistance noted above, the American Rescue Plan further provides over \$70 million in direct SLFRF allocations to Dauphin County’s 40 municipalities (including over \$48 million to the City of Harrisburg) and over \$106 million to Dauphin County school districts. Direct ARP allocations to Dauphin County municipalities and school districts must also be considered as part of a strategy to invest the county’s allocation in an efficient and non-duplicative manner. To ensure this, measures taken to date include surveying Dauphin County municipalities to gather information on planned uses of their specific SLFRF allocations.

In addition to previous and currently available non-SLFRF COVID assistance and concurrent ARP specific allocations to municipalities and school districts, the Commissioners must also consider current requests and investments made from Dauphin County’s traditional standing grant programs which cover many of the eligible SLFRF uses.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- The Dauphin County Infrastructure Bank and Bridge Bundling Program.
- The Dauphin County Local Share Grant Program.
- The Dauphin County Tourism Grant Program.
- The Dauphin County Community Development Block Grant Program.
- The Dauphin County HOME Investment Partnerships Program.
- The Dauphin County First-Time Homebuyer Program.
- The Dauphin County HOME Rehab Program.
- The Dauphin County CDBG-ESG Program.

These programs cover a wide range of uses and beneficiaries providing the potential for overlap with eligible SLFRF uses. This is also the case for direct ARP allocations to municipalities and school districts in Dauphin County. For this reason, the Dauphin County Commissioners are attempting to gain a comprehensive picture of use of funds from other available sources, as well as await any guidance related to duplication of benefits requirements in the Treasury Final Rule prior to making final SLFRF commitments.

Again, during this interim period, it is critical to consider ARP investments after reviewing the Treasury Final Rule and in the context of the many forms of assistance (both COVID and non-COVID) already available prior to committing Dauphin County’s SLFRF

allocation to specific uses. In doing so, the Dauphin County Commissioners will ensure all uses are necessary, non-duplicative, and serve a purpose that either leverages existing programs or would otherwise not be served.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes in SLFRF Planning and Implementation

Dauphin County is awaiting issuance of the Treasury Final Rule prior to making final SLFRF use and program decisions. Therefore, during this interim period, specific goals, strategies, and program designs related to promoting equitable outcomes and tied to a specific use are forthcoming. When appropriate, Dauphin County is prepared to implement a strategy of performance evaluation, measurement, and promoting equitable outcomes utilizing existing program models when specific programs are finalized. In the interim, Dauphin County is performing proactive outreach to minority and disadvantaged community stakeholders to ensure a full understanding of on-the-ground needs on which to base equitable outcome measures. Stakeholder consultation meetings began in August 2021 and will continue throughout the SLFRF planning and implementation process.

Dauphin County has extensive experience in administering equity-based assistance programs with specific qualitative and quantitative performance and evaluation metrics including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Community Development Block Grant Emergency Solutions Grant (CDBG-ESG) and HOME Investment Partnership Programs through its Department of Community and Economic Development and Human Services Department. Through these programs, Dauphin County has provided significant support to underserved communities for decades with the goal of promoting equitable outcomes. Program outcomes are regularly measured, reported, and quantified for performance evaluation and program effectiveness purposes. The eligibility guidelines, accomplishment metrics, and overall composition of these programs can serve as a framework for SLFRF program designs related to promoting equitable outcomes and assessing program performance compared to specific goals.

In considering final uses of SLFR funds, considerations related to promoting equitable outcomes will include:

- Reviewing historically underserved areas (outside of the City of Harrisburg due to its separate SLFRF allocation) for potential areas of priority investment. This includes a review of historically low-to-moderate income census tracts in Northern and Southern Dauphin County based on data used by Dauphin County in administering the CDBG program.

- Utilizing the Qualified Census Tract listing specific to the SLFRF program to identify areas for eligible investments.
- Reviewing the continuum of public service providers based on previous CDBG experience to determine effective providers in areas of need based on past performance.
- Utilizing public feedback and stakeholder input to identify areas of greatest need.

Once final uses are determined, design considerations for Dauphin County SLFRF programs related to promoting equitable outcomes will include:

- Equitable Promotion
 - Earned media promotion of Dauphin County SLFRF programs.
 - Utilizing the Dauphin County website and social media to promote Dauphin County SLFRF programs.
 - Public outreach events to promote Dauphin County SLFRF programs in low-to-moderate income communities.
 - Multi-lingual translation of material related to Dauphin County SLFRF programs and partnering with providers to non-English speaking populations to disseminate program information.
 - Distribution of SLFRF program materials in high-volume areas of low-to-moderate income communities (e.g., post offices, laundry mats, convenience stores, government buildings.)
- Income or area-based eligibility guidelines like the CDBG/HOME Program or utilizing QCTs specific to the SLFRF program.
- Program eligibility guidelines based on benefit to low-to-moderate beneficiaries or limited clientele beneficiaries based on HUD standards, specifically related to any SLFRF public service activities.
- Program evaluation and performance metrics including number of income-qualified beneficiaries served, number of limited clienteles served, programs and services delivered by type, location, and specific beneficiary goal measurements.

Dauphin County intends to quantify equity strategies, goals, and outcomes tied to specific SLFRF programs in the next Annual Recovery Plan Performance Report proceeding

issuance of the Treasury Final Rule to allow for the development of goals and strategies specific to final approved SLFRF programmatic investments.

Community Engagement Plans

Public input and community engagement is a cornerstone to Dauphin County's SLFRF development process. Specifically, the Dauphin County Commissioners are in the process of hosting minority stakeholder meetings to fully understand the needed investments to promote an equitable recovery. The first such meeting with African American community leaders took place on August 24th, 2021, with additional meetings specific to minority communities planned throughout the SLFRF planning process. These preliminary meetings serve as the foundation and beginning of a robust community engagement process that considers all constituencies.

After reviewing the Treasury Final Rule, Dauphin County will follow a public input process to help inform its final spending plan. Measures taken to incorporate written, oral, and other forms of public input from constituents and stakeholders in the planning process are as follows:

- Dauphin County will host a dedicated, public-facing, SLFRF webpage where the public can view SLFRF reports, plans, and provide feedback on planned uses of funds via an SLFRF-specific email address. The website will be promoted by Dauphin County via a local media release and social media.
- Dauphin County will publicize significant planned SLFRF investments via local media.
- Continued meetings with leaders from minority and underserved communities through the planning and implementation process.
- The Dauphin County Board of Commissioners will provide periodic updates on the SLFRF spending plan during regularly scheduled weekly board meetings. These meetings are open to the public and covered by the local media.
- Where applicable, provide translated materials promoting SLFRF programs including program announcements, applications, and guidelines when administering specific programs.

It is important to note that, in this interim period between date of award and issuance of the Treasury Final Rule, Dauphin County has consulted with a wide range of stakeholders within the community to solicit feedback informing SLFRF spending decisions. Stakeholders have ranged from small businesses to community organizations/nonprofits to broadband providers to tourism/hospitality. It is Dauphin County's full intent to engage

the community further through the SLFRF planning process both via direct outreach and public relations efforts.

Labor Practices in Administration of SLFRF-funded Programs

For any infrastructure projects (EC 5) funded either partially or wholly with SLFRF dollars, Dauphin County will mainly follow federal labor standards utilized in the administration of the Dauphin County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, with some practical exceptions. Utilizing the CDBG administrative framework will allow the county to enforce strong labor practices using rules and standards in which it is highly experienced, knowledgeable, and has an administrative capacity to enforce.

Labor standards to be implemented include the following:

- Utilization of federal procurement requirements related to bidding infrastructure projects including proper method of procurement, prohibition on restrictive bidding practices, equal opportunity employment and non-discrimination requirements.
- Requirement that all contractors/subcontractors pay Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage to employees based on proper workforce classification. This includes submission of weekly certified payroll reports detailing employee, classification, hours worked, dates worked, wage rate, and fringe benefit rate.
- Requirement that all contractors/subcontractors comply with the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act, where applicable, including provisions for overtime compensation.
- Standard bid, performance, and payment bond requirements for all construction contracts and bids to ensure capacity to pay employees in instances of contractor default.
- Requirement that all SLFRF infrastructure projects are managed by a certified engineer including review of all contractor applications for payment, certified payroll reports, and other labor compliance standards.
- Requirement that any project receiving more than \$200,000 in SLFR funds follow federal Section 3 training and outreach requirements for any job openings. This will ensure local economic opportunity for the lowest-income individuals in a project community.
- Provisions for use of women and minority-owned businesses (WBE/MBE) in bidding and contracting including participation goals for infrastructure projects.

- Certification by contractor of non-segregation of facilities, Section 3 outreach (when applicable), non-collusion, nondiscrimination, etc.

Additional labor standards will be implemented at the discretion of the Dauphin County Commissioners.

Use of Evidence-Based Interventions and Performance Evaluations in Administration of SLFRF Programs

Due to the interim status of the Treasury Final Rule, Dauphin County does not have SLFRF funds committed to specific uses related to evidence-based interventions and/or projects being evaluated through rigorous program evaluations.

Pursuant to guidance in the Treasury Final Rule, Dauphin County will utilize evidence-based interventions and program evaluations, where appropriate and required, in the design and implementation of final SLFRF-funded programs. This will include, but not be limited to, considering SLFRF subrecipients that can demonstrate evidence of an intervention, program, or activity's effectiveness and implementing program evaluations specific to approved activities.

Dauphin County is considering making reporting of evidence-based intervention data a part of SLFR application processes including prioritizing applicants that can demonstrate strong or moderate evidence of program/service effectiveness.

SLFR funds will also be considered for building internal evaluation capacity, perform evaluations, or contract with external organizations for evaluation of related activities.

Performance Report

Due to the interim status of the Treasury Final Rule, Dauphin County has not finalized SLFRF spending decisions and, therefore, does not currently have specific SLFRF projects for which to report key performance indicators.

Dauphin County will report both key performance indicators and progress-to-date on chosen indicators on its 2022 Recovery Plan Performance Report. This will include both self-selected and mandatory performance indicators required by Treasury and specific to Expenditure Category.

Dauphin County is currently coordinating with its Information Technology Department to develop a data-driven infrastructure to collect, aggregate, analyze, and report performance data on SLFRF program-specific metrics. Dauphin County is considering incorporating performance reporting as part of a public dashboard available on the Dauphin County ARP website.

Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category

The Dauphin County Commissioners have made the decision to wait for the issuance of the Treasury Final Rule before committing to the best use of the ARP-SLFR Funds. As such, no expenditures have been incurred as of July 31, 2021, and this section will be completed with the issuance of subsequent reports filed with Treasury.

PROJECT INVENTORY

For the period covered in this plan (date of award until July 31st, 2021) no projects are reported nor are underway. The Dauphin County Commissioners continue to identify projects in which to invest SLFRF funds and are awaiting issuance of the Treasury Final Rule prior to committing funds and developing a project inventory.

A copy of this report is available to the public at www.dauphincounty.org/arp.