



Franklin County, Ohio

Recovery Plan

State and Local Fiscal Recovery

Funds

2021 Report



Franklin County, Ohio
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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Executive Summary

Franklin County has been hard at work since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that no tool or resource at our disposal is left untapped that could help our residents. Whether it was sharing trusted sources of information, deploying local, state, and federal resources, outfitting the Greater Columbus Convention Center as an overflow hospital facility, or forging strong partnerships with community leaders, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and healthcare providers, the County has worked tirelessly to meet unprecedented health and economic challenges brought on by the pandemic.

In 2020, we successfully maintained mandated, essential county services including public health, public safety, and health and human services programs. We also allocated significant funding to support small businesses, public health partners, and nonprofit human service providers struggling with uncertain financial circumstances amid rising demand for their services. When Franklin County residents faced hardship with making rent payments, buying food, getting access to health information and resources, or navigating the uncertainty of the pandemic, we tapped every resource at our disposal to connect our residents with the help they needed. But as the pandemic surged on, the needs of the community greatly outweighed resources available.

Then came the American Rescue Plan, and with it came an unprecedented federal investment in the areas of greatest need. While the COVID-19 vaccines and other mitigation efforts aimed to ease the public health crisis and allowed most of our economy to reopen, we know that many of our Franklin County residents and businesses are still suffering from the effects of the pandemic. Many who lost their jobs or had hours reduced in 2020 still have not returned to their previous salary levels, and not everyone who lost their job has been able to find work again. Many businesses that saw their customer bases dry up are still not back to previous sales, and even for families and businesses that are beginning to recover, it may take years to rebuild family and business balance sheets. Children too are suffering, and many of them have fallen behind in school. The pandemic has impacted all of us, but our most vulnerable neighbors have been hurt the most, and the road to full recovery may be long. However, with the support of the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, Franklin County will be able to put these dollars to work for our community to meet these challenges.

Uses of Funds

We have heard directly from residents and community partners that many of our neighbors are struggling with the threat of eviction, income loss, job uncertainty, mental health challenges, and the ongoing spread of COVID-19. Federal assistance continues to be vital to our collective response and recovery, and the American Rescue Plan delivers significant funding to address these areas of need. With support from the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund established in the American Rescue Plan, along with other federal programs such as Emergency Rental Assistance, we aim to build new, and strengthen existing partnerships, to respond to the community's needs for:

- Public health resources;
- Housing, rent and utility assistance;
- Mental health services;
- Small business and non-profit assistance;
- Workforce and economic development services; and
- Services for seniors and children.

The American Rescue Plan recognized that basic infrastructure like clean water, functioning sewers, and high-speed broadband, is foundational to any community's economic health, especially coming out of the economic crisis related to the pandemic. While we continue to address the short-term and urgent needs of our community, we will also invest in long-term strategies to emerge from this pandemic stronger and more resilient.

Franklin County has always been a great place to raise a family or grow a business. Our community continues to grow and, in some ways, is already moving past the challenges of the pandemic. We know as county leaders, however, that our community will not be successful until every one of our residents is able to share in its success. That is our challenge as we work to rebuild and recover. Our goal is to help the community to return better than it ever was before, and our promise is to continue to serve every resident every day

Promoting equitable outcomes

While Central Ohio is generally experiencing growth and prosperity, there are many people experiencing poverty, which has spread throughout the region. In the fall of 2018, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners began an initiative to analyze the causes of poverty that are unique to Central Ohio, the resources that are available in our community, and to create a plan to more effectively bring those resources to bear on the problem with a community-wide, systematic approach. They assembled a steering committee of subject matter experts and community members from all walks of life, hosted conversations with hundreds of Franklin County residents who are living in poverty, and studied nationwide best practices.

The steering committee produced the Rise Together Blueprint for Reducing Poverty in Franklin County, including a list of more than 120 goals, action steps, and recommendations with the goals of improving economic mobility, family stability, and equitable access to opportunity across Central Ohio. In taking a frank assessment of poverty in Franklin County, the steering committee

identified and prioritized the need to be candid and direct about the historic and current role race and racial inequities play in perpetual poverty. This led to the understanding that, if real change is to take place, there must be an effort to disrupt the institutional racism and unconscious biases that continue to permeate the community. It is recognized that facing the challenge of racial inequities in the county will require a sustained effort to engage and change. It identified steps and action items in the blueprint to address these issues in individual organizations

As part of that effort, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners recognizes the benefit of competing business opportunities in Franklin County. It also recognizes that greater numbers of minority, female, and disadvantaged businesses constitute a significant portion of Small and Emerging Business Enterprises (SEBE) in Franklin County. To ensure opportunities are afforded to Small and Emerging Business Enterprises, the board established a Small and Emerging Business Outreach Program.

This program is a commitment to the small and emerging business to encourage competition and provide an even playing field for all businesses. This program is designed to provide assistance to small and emerging business enterprises and to encourage their participation in Franklin County contracts and procurements.

Franklin County will continue these efforts to promote equity as it looks to the distribution of the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, with particular emphasis on services to disproportionately impacted communities to align with the County's Rise Together Blueprint for Reducing Poverty. This includes supporting programs that help with food, housing, and other needs; employment programs for people with barriers to employment who faced negative economic impacts from the pandemic; public health resources to address health disparities and mental health challenges.

Community Engagement

The Franklin County Board of Commissioners held a public hearing on July 15, 2021 to hear from residents on how the County should allocate funding from the American Rescue Plan. The hearing was held in-person, but individuals could also join virtually to view and provide testimony. In addition, residents who were not able to attend the hearings could submit their ideas via email to ARP@FranklinCountyOhio.gov.

The County also participated with the United Way of Central Ohio in developing a community survey to provide insight on households that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic to identify their needs. Participants were recruited by United Way of Central Ohio and partner organizations as well as through media outreach. In addition to English, the survey was offered in Arabic, French, Kinyarwanda, Nepali, Somali, Spanish, and Swahili.

The County will continue to work with its local non-profit community partners in order to allocate funding to enhance the capacity of these organizations to serve individuals with significant barriers to services, including people of color, people with low incomes, limited English proficiency populations, and other traditionally underserved groups.

Labor Practices

With regard to the Stormwater projects, the Franklin County Engineer's Office will ensure the implementation of diverse, safe, high-quality labor in the completion of capital improvement projects funded by the American Rescue Plan. To necessitate the highest quality skilled labor, every contractor and subcontractor shall deliver to the Franklin County Engineer's prevailing wage coordinator a certified copy of its payroll. All prime contracts must submit prior to the execution of a contract a copy of a valid Certificate of Compliance for Equal Employment Opportunity purposes as issued by the State Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator. Every contractor must submit prior to the execution of a contract their OSHA Violation History Upload. To foster nondiscrimination and remove barriers to the participation of disadvantaged businesses, each project will be bid with an Equitable Business Enterprise (EBE) goal to be achieved during the progress of the work.

Use of Evidence

Franklin County has a long history of performance budgeting. In 2000, the County implemented a Managing for Results (MFR) initiative and took the first step in reaching a larger goal to run County government more like a business by focusing on customer service, accountability, and results. County agencies and offices developed strategic business plans and reported performance data on the operations of their programs.

In 2011, the County implemented the Budgeting for Policy Results and Outcomes (BPRO) initiative to replace the MFR initiative. The County revised its core strategic principles and goals and refined its strategies to attain those goals. The strategic business plan and performance measurement systems were also revised for County agencies, offices, and courts to use. These important steps were designed to better align and link program outcomes to county goals.

Since 2014, all County agencies, offices, and courts have participated in the County's BPRO initiative. The County continues to utilize and improve upon this framework of outcome-based budgeting and policy goal-centered management. During the 2021 budget process, the County developed the Performance Spotlight. This allowed each agency, office, and court to focus on one performance measure and provide context around that measure to demonstrate its value and better illustrate the policy results and outcomes the County is working towards.

In addition to utilizing performance budgeting, Franklin County also has a history of requiring reporting from its non-profit Community Partners. Community Partners provide program outcome goals and objectives (i.e. outcomes, activities, and outputs) as part of their grant agreements which are reported in their mid-year and final financial and performance reports that must be submitted to the County. Franklin County will continue this practice in providing COVID-19 Recovery Grants utilizing the funding from the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund.

Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category

Category		Total amount obligated	Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
1	Expenditure Category: Public Health			
1.7	Capital Investments or Physical Plant Changes to Public Facilities that respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency	\$680,000	\$340,000	\$340,000
2	Expenditure Category: Negative Economic Impacts			
2.1	Household Assistance: Food Programs	\$7,000,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000
2.4	Household Assistance: Internet Access Programs	\$80,585	\$40,293	\$40,293
2.7	Job Training Assistance (e.g., Sectoral job-training, Subsidized Employment, Employment Supports or Incentives)	\$4,500,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
2.11	Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality	\$3,250,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
3	Expenditure Category: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities			
3.5	Education Assistance: Other	\$55,472	\$0	\$0
4	Expenditure Category: Premium Pay			
5	Expenditure Category: Infrastructure			
5.6	Clean Water: Stormwater	\$1,000,000	\$357,133	\$357,133
6	Expenditure Category: Revenue Replacement			
6.1	Provision of Government Services*	\$0	\$0	\$0
7	Administrative and Other			
TOTAL		\$16,566,057	\$7,487,425	\$7,487,425

*Based on the revenue replacement formula outlined in the Interim Final Rule, Franklin County has identified the loss of \$50,769,000 in revenue for the year ending December 31, 2020. The intent is to use this funding to support public safety and public health expenditures, grants for community partnerships and economic development, support of the County's human services agencies, poverty mitigation, and various capital projects at the County's facilities. However, a final determination on the types of Governmental Services has not been made at this time.

Project Inventory

Resolution No. 0353-21: Economic Support

Funding amount: \$3,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.11 Aid to Tourism, Travel, and Hospitality

Project overview

- This grant provided support to Franklin County Stadium, Inc. to offset the negative economic impact due to COVID-19. Franklin County Stadium, Inc. is a non-profit County owned corporation organized under the laws of the State of Ohio that operates Huntington Park; and through its subsidiary, Columbus Baseball, Inc., is the holder of the franchise issued by the International League of Professional Baseball Clubs and is the owner of the Columbus Clippers. Franklin County Stadium, Inc. plays a significant role in creating tourism in Franklin County as a leading force selling, marketing, and attracts visitors to Franklin County. The funding was used to support its operations, including the avoidance of furloughs and filling vacancies, and maintain Huntington Park due to the loss of revenue during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of jobs created or retained

Resolution No. 0399-21: Summer Youth Employment

Funding amount: \$4,500,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.7 Job Training Assistance

Project overview

- The Summer Jobs & More or Summer JAM program will support juniors and seniors in targeted suburban school districts who are not on track to graduate or earn their diploma. The proposed student credit recovery initiative will support six weeks of summer education and specialized college and career coaching that aligns with the Ohio Department of Education. Students will have access to career advocates to help develop individualized success plans for life after high school. Enrolled participants will receive a bi-weekly stipend and will be eligible to earn additional financial incentives for successfully completing education and career readiness goals.
- The Ready 2 Earn summer youth work readiness training program offers youth ages 14-18 the opportunity to develop the employability and technical skills necessary to be successful in today's workplace while earning a stipend to meet basic needs. Through the use of interactive webinars as well as self-paced instruction, youth will receive training on essential workplace behaviors such as professionalism, teamwork, and 21st century workplace skills to include critical thinking and problem solving.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of people participating in summer youth employment programs

Resolution No. 0408-21: Stormwater Repairs

Funding amount: \$1,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 5.6 Clean Water: Stormwater

Project overview

- This project will support the County Drainage Engineer's efforts to improve drainage in areas in Franklin County. The focus is on upgrading the County's 100-year-old stormwater drainage system, built primarily for agricultural purposes, to meet the needs of a rapidly developing urban and suburban county. These grants will re-establish proper drainage, improve crop-farming yield to help feed people, and provide for safe operation of home sewage treatment systems and drinking water wells.
- As climate change continues to impact local weather patterns, the focus is on being proactive to upgrade our systems to handle additional necessary drainage capacity. In addition, upgrades to heavy equipment and the use of alternate fuels are continuing to reduce emissions and improve efficiency as much as possible. Finally, the Drainage Engineer continuously reaches out to local partner agencies to include their projects in our own. This effort not only allows financial savings via economy of scale but also to have positive environmental impacts by saving on mobilizations and completing larger projects more efficiently.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of linear feet of ditches maintained and repaired

Resolution No. 0473-21: Alvis Expansion

Funding amount: \$680,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.7 Capital Investments or Physical Plant Changes

Project overview

- This grant will allow for Alvis to expand its current facility to serve additional residents. Alvis was founded in 1967 with the mission to provide evidence-based programs that empower clients to build successful and productive lives. The expansion includes a carved-out space for a new health center to be operated by PrimaryOne Health, a federally qualified health center (FQHC). The health center would be located in a qualified census tract and be able to provide dental and vision services in addition to medical care.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of individuals receiving health care services

Resolution No. 0484-21: Diversity Apprentice Program

Funding amount: \$250,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.11 Aid to Tourism, Travel, and Hospitality

Project overview

- This grant will support a program designed to provide hands-on experience to ethnically diverse apprentices interested in pursuing a career in the tourism and hospitality. Potential apprentices will receive an opportunity to choose a tourism, hospitality, events, venue, or sports career path that aligns with their professional goals. The apprentices will complete a total of 600 working hours, and during that time gain experience working across multiple departments (i.e. technology, sales, marketing, finance, operations, etc.).

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of individuals serving in the diversity apprentice program
- Percent of individuals securing a full-time entry level supervisor position

Resolution No. 0553-21: Youth Enrichment

Funding amount: \$55,472

Project Expenditure Category: 3.5 Education Assistance: Other

Project overview

- This grant will support a summer camp for black girls ages 12-16 to help increase healthy behaviors, learn and improve “soft skills”, strengthen academic skills, and prepare to become leaders.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of girls participating in the summer camp program
- Percent of participants showing improvement in healthy behaviors and increase in skill attainment

Resolution No. 0571-21: Technology Grants

Funding amount: \$80,585

Project Expenditure Category: 2.4 Household Assistance: Internet Access Programs

Project overview

- This grant will provide socially and economically disadvantaged seniors living in qualified census tracts with devices, hot spots, and opportunities to learn and experience the digital world. Digital access will allow these seniors to reduce social isolation, engage in telehealth opportunities, as well as connect to employment and other commercial activities such as e-grocery shopping and transportation and attending virtual naturalization and citizenship classes.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of seniors receiving services
- Percent of seniors reporting increased confidence with using technology and feeling socially connected

Resolution No. 0572-21: Enhancing Food Security

Funding amount: \$7,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.1 Household Assistance: Food Programs

Project overview

- This grant will support the Mid-Ohio Food Collective in expanding to meet the increased food security needs of Franklin County residents. The Mid-Ohio Food Collective proposes to build a 19,000 square-foot addition to an existing warehouse which will house a new 14,000 square foot freezer that provides more than 1,000 additional pallet positions, roughly doubling current storage and picking locations
- The Mid-Ohio Food Collective has struggled with capacity constraints which have resulted in turning down donations of frozen foods or redirecting those donations to other food banks. These issues were further compounded by the unprecedented need for food assistance that emerged as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- One of the most fundamental ways our hungry neighbors can grow and thrive is when they are certain where their next meal will come from. Each time an individual is provided with healthy, nutritious food, they are also provided the opportunity to lead a healthier life, to excel at work, to succeed in school, and to pay for other critical expenses such as medical care or housing.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of people served with access to healthy food