

Spartanburg County, SC
Recovery Plan

**State and Local Fiscal Recovery
Funds**

2021 Report

Spartanburg County, SC
2021 Recovery Plan

Table of Contents

General Overview.....2

- Executive Summary.....2
- Uses of Funds2
- Promoting Equitable Outcomes4
- Community Engagement5
- Labor Practices5
- Use of Evidence5
- Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category5

Project Inventory.....8

Performance Report.....8

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Executive Summary

Spartanburg County and its nearly 330,000 residents have experienced a myriad of impacts derived from COVID-19. While we have been fortunate to have weathered many of the pandemic's negative ramifications, many local challenges remain. County Council has begun discussing a variety of strategies for deployment of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). It is our hope that these strategies will enhance our ability to shield our community from the negative health impacts of COVID-19, mitigate the negative economic hardships felt by many families throughout the County and restore economic stability, and better position all members of our community for health and prosperity.

County Council has not yet formally adopted or authorized any plans for the disbursement and use of SLFRF proceeds; however, we have been actively engaged in researching and formulating strategies, receiving proposals, discussing partnerships with other community organizations, and evaluating community metrics where data indicates improvement is needed. As part of these efforts, we have heard from many in the community, solicited meetings, and participated in robust discussion of our community's needs.

Through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) 1 & 2, the County has been awarded more than \$12.0 million to date. The County, in partnership with four community based non-profit partners, deployed nearly \$2,228,432 in actual payments through August 18th, 2021, assisting 576 households. Just more than half (52%) of those funds were deployed in the unincorporated areas of the County, while the remaining funds were deployed within our 14 municipalities. While the County continues to aggressively deploy funds and seek new ways to effectively do so, a strong level of funding remains. As a result, SLFRF resources will be retained for other eligible uses so long as ERAP funding remains available to support rental and utility needs of our community.

It is expected that County Council will more formally engage in debate of which programs and initiatives will be funded with SLFRF resources in the coming few months and begin the process of legally appropriating funds for use. While Council retains the authority to decide how and to whom funding is allocated, it is probable that their focus will center on: methods to protect our residents from the negative health impacts of COVID, small business economic and technical support, broadband "last mile" projects, wastewater and storm water collection and conveyance projects, support to non-profits, and education and job training assistance to upskill and connect residents with job opportunities.

Uses of Funds

Public Health Response

Given the ongoing health impacts of the pandemic and the rates of local infection and vaccination, it is anticipated the funding will be needed for promotion of testing and vaccination availability, and for purchase of PPE for medical response. As of the date of this report, SCDHEC reports that just over 126,000 residents have received at least 1 dose of the vaccine out of approximately 261,000 who are eligible (ages 12+). This equates to a vaccination rate of just over 48%. Due to the Delta variant, new cases continue

to climb daily, and local medical resources are experiencing a notable increase in cases requiring hospitalization. Consequently, it is possible that Council may choose to allocate funds to improve public communications about the need for testing, dangers of COVID-19, and the availability of vaccines for those who have not yet chosen to receive them. It is anticipated that messaging will be done in concert with existing efforts and in consultation with local health experts.

Small business support

The County has been engaged in conversations with OneSpartanburg, Inc. (who houses traditional Chamber of Commerce functions, tourism promotion, and economic development efforts) about new programs that can support small businesses. Small businesses are a vital piece of our local economy and existing job base, and, if healthy, they are an engine for new job creation. As a group, small businesses have been disproportionately impacted throughout the pandemic. Early discussions have centered around the need for improving small business' access to technical assistance and expertise as well as access to capital. In response to this, two predominant concepts have been developed: a small business technical assistance program and a small business revolving loan/grant fund. While many details are still being vetted, it is our belief that a local program of this nature will provide small businesses with the tools and access to expertise they need, enhance their level of sophistication and business acumen, improve their financial resiliency, and best position them for access to capital and future success.

Utilizing CDBG-CV funding, the County has partnered with Community Works SC to launch *Back the Burg* Small Business Assistance Program. The program provides grants and loans to small businesses in unincorporated Spartanburg County that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. To date, the program has provided \$45,500 in funding assistance to 35 businesses. The program also provides technical assistance to help business owners access other funding opportunities as well as technical assistance with developing new business plans in an effort to help stabilize businesses in a post-COVID economy.

In Spartanburg County, women and minority business ownership is disproportionately lower than other demographics. While there are pre-existing community efforts focusing on improving these metrics, to include grant programs funded by CDBG CV resources, these new programs will also serve to bolster these community efforts. An inventory of existing minority and women owned small businesses is currently being conducted in the community. Strategies to reach these businesses, improve engagement, and support them through new programs will be integral to our efforts.

Broadband "last mile" projects

The County has been engaged to date with 2 local service providers to review broadband maps and proposals for expanding fiber service to areas where broadband is not currently available/committed or where speeds are lower than 25/3. Initial data shows that these unserved/underserved areas also correspond with our areas of lowest residential density and where poverty rates are elevated. Specific plans for broadband infill are not yet available but are in progress.

Wastewater and storm water collection & conveyance projects

The County has been engaged with sewer and water providers within the County to review and vet project proposals. While no funding decisions have been made, multiple projects have been submitted and are being considered. As part of the decision-making process, the County will consider the number of

individuals served, the potential for positive economic impact through job creation or otherwise, the proximity of impaired waters on the 303d list, cost, funding alternatives, and community benefit.

Support to non-profits

The County is blessed to have a robust network of effective non-profits that serve to support the community in areas where there are service gaps. Many non-profits have experienced hardships throughout the pandemic as revenues suddenly declined and demand for services drastically increased. Despite having solid balance sheets before the pandemic, this has resulted in operating losses and financial pressures of late. The County is evaluating to what extent financial support is appropriate given these dynamics and ongoing demands placed upon non-profit partners.

Education and job training assistance

While unemployment rates in Spartanburg County have strongly improved since the highs of 2020, many of our residents remain unemployed, underemployed, or otherwise displaced from their primary occupation. As is the case in much of the nation, Spartanburg County's unemployment has been concentrated on service and hospitality industry jobs. Juxtaposed with this is a shortage of available skilled workforce for many industries within the County. In order to remedy this disconnect, additional job training and educational assistance programs will be needed.

The County is in discussions with the Spartanburg Community College on ways to bridge this divide and improve educational attainment metrics in the County at the same time. In 2019, only 25% of Spartanburg County residents had a 4-year degree or better. This is lower than the State of South Carolina (28%) and the Nation (32%). While program details have not yet been defined, it is evident from the data that ample opportunity exists to help positively influence educational attainment in the County.

Revenue Replacement

The County anticipates a small amount of funding for the provision of governmental services to the extent of the reduction in revenue related to the pandemic. Specific plans for this funding have not yet been determined but will likely support infrastructure projects.

Promoting equitable outcomes

Spartanburg County is blessed to have a solid foundation of information about many indicators within our community. As a founding member of the Community Indicators Project (<https://www.strategicspartanburg.org/>), the County has participated for years, with time and financial resources, in gathering information on the health, status and disparities of our County. Additionally, a number of other community wide efforts surrounding educational outcomes, health outcomes, poverty, and race have been conducted on a countywide basis by community partners. Combined, this basis of information provides a strong foundation of information about our community so that funded programs can be tailored to target the areas of greatest need. Information on performance on key indicators will be gathered as part of funded projects.

Community Engagement

Spartanburg County has been engaged with multiple community partners to date in order to better assess the needs of the community and help provide vital context to the decision-making process. Information on the health of non-profits in Spartanburg County was shared with County Council at their July 2021 meeting by a group of non-profit representatives. Additionally, multiple community-based organizations have submitted proposals for funding consideration outlining their perspectives on the needs of the community.

In partnership with OneSpartanburg, Inc., information on the needs of small businesses is being gathered via survey to include the known list of minority-owned small businesses in the County. This information will be utilized to help develop the program around small business support. It is also anticipated that the County will receive community feedback via its public comment component of its Council meetings where the plans for SLFRF resources will be discussed. Additionally, established community engagement groups and tools utilized by our Community Development department will be engaged to ensure representative participation of the community.

Labor Practices

To date, no projects have been decided upon or committed to by the County. It is anticipated that any funded projects will increase employment for local skilled and unskilled construction workers and local construction firms. In the selection of vendors for funded projects, consideration for local participation will be given. It is our expectation that any funded water, sewer or broadband infrastructure projects will be of high quality, and preferably scalable, so as to provide for the future needs of our residents.

Use of Evidence

As part of our evaluation of individual projects and proposals, the County is and will continue to gather evidence around the prior performance of known similar programs or strategies. If evidence of prior strategies is not known, the County will work to ensure standards and data gathering is integral to the project to properly evaluate its effectiveness.

Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
1	Expenditure Category: Public Health	0	0
1.1	COVID-19 Vaccination	0	0
1.2	COVID-19 Testing	0	0
1.3	COVID-19 Contact Tracing	0	0
1.4	Prevention in Congregate Settings (Nursing Homes, Prisons/Jails, Dense Work Sites, Schools, etc.)	0	0

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
1.5	Personal Protective Equipment	0	0
1.6	Medical Expenses (including Alternative Care Facilities)	0	0
1.7	Capital Investments or Physical Plant Changes to Public Facilities that respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency	0	0
1.8	Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses (including Communications, Enforcement, Isolation/Quarantine)	0	0
1.9	Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Responding to COVID-19	0	0
1.10	Mental Health Services	0	0
1.11	Substance Use Services	0	0
1.12	Other Public Health Services	0	0
2	Expenditure Category: Negative Economic Impacts	0	0
2.1	Household Assistance: Food Programs	0	0
2.2	Household Assistance: Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Aid	0	0
2.3	Household Assistance: Cash Transfers	0	0
2.4	Household Assistance: Internet Access Programs	0	0
2.5	Household Assistance: Eviction Prevention	0	0
2.6	Unemployment Benefits or Cash Assistance to Unemployed Workers	0	0
2.7	Job Training Assistance (e.g., Sectoral job-training, Subsidized Employment, Employment Supports or Incentives)	0	0
2.8	Contributions to UI Trust Funds*	0	0
2.9	Small Business Economic Assistance (General)	0	0
2.10	Aid to nonprofit organizations	0	0
2.11	Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality	0	0
2.12	Aid to Other Impacted Industries	0	0
2.13	Other Economic Support	0	0
2.14	Rehiring Public Sector Staff	0	0
3	Expenditure Category: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities	0	0
3.1	Education Assistance: Early Learning	0	0
3.2	Education Assistance: Aid to High-Poverty Districts	0	0
3.3	Education Assistance: Academic Services	0	0
3.4	Education Assistance: Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Services	0	0

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
3.5	Education Assistance: Other	0	0
3.6	Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care	0	0
3.7	Healthy Childhood Environments: Home Visiting	0	0
3.8	Healthy Childhood Environments: Services to Foster Youth or Families Involved in Child Welfare System	0	0
3.9.	Healthy Childhood Environments: Other	0	0
3.10	Housing Support: Affordable Housing	0	0
3.11	Housing Support: Services for Unhoused persons	0	0
3.12	Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance	0	0
3.13	Social Determinants of Health: Other	0	0
3.14	Social Determinants of Health: Community Health Workers or Benefits Navigators	0	0
3.15	Social Determinants of Health: Lead Remediation	0	0
3.16	Social Determinants of Health: Community Violence Interventions	0	0
4	Expenditure Category: Premium Pay	0	0
4.1	Public Sector Employees	0	0
4.2	Private Sector: Grants to other employers	0	0
5	Expenditure Category: Infrastructure	0	0
5.1	Clean Water: Centralized Wastewater Treatment	0	0
5.2	Clean Water: Centralized Wastewater Collection and Conveyance	0	0
5.3	Clean Water: Decentralized Wastewater	0	0
5.4	Clean Water: Combined Sewer Overflows	0	0
5.5	Clean Water: Other Sewer Infrastructure	0	0
5.6	Clean Water: Stormwater	0	0
5.7	Clean Water: Energy Conservation	0	0
5.8	Clean Water: Water Conservation	0	0
5.9	Clean Water: Nonpoint Source	0	0
5.10	Drinking water: Treatment	0	0
5.11	Drinking water: Transmission & Distribution	0	0
5.12	Drinking water: Transmission & Distribution: Lead Remediation	0	0
5.13	Drinking water: Source	0	0
5.14	Drinking water: Storage	0	0
5.15	Drinking water: Other Water Infrastructure	0	0
5.16	Broadband: "Last Mile" Projects	0	0
5.17	Broadband: Other Projects	0	0

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
6	Expenditure Category: Revenue Replacement	0	0
6.1	Provision of Government Services	0	0
7	Administrative and Other	0	0
7.1	Administrative Expenses	0	0
7.2	Evaluation and data analysis	0	0
7.3	Transfers to Other Units of Government	0	0
7.4	Transfers to Nonentitlement Units (States and Territories only)	0	0

PROJECT INVENTORY

No projects have been funded or committed to by Spartanburg County at this time. Prior to funding finalization, project scopes, timelines, target audiences, demographics, and performance measures will be established for future reporting purposes.

PERFORMANCE REPORT

No projects have been funded or committed to by Spartanburg County at this time. Any funded projects will include benchmarks and performance metrics as conditions of approval. These metrics will serve to both communicate expectations for community impact and benefit and to provide valuable information about the actual impact received from various projects. This information will allow the County to revise plans accordingly to ensure the funding is having the desired impact on the community.