

St. Johns County, Florida **Recovery Plan**

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

2022 Report

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

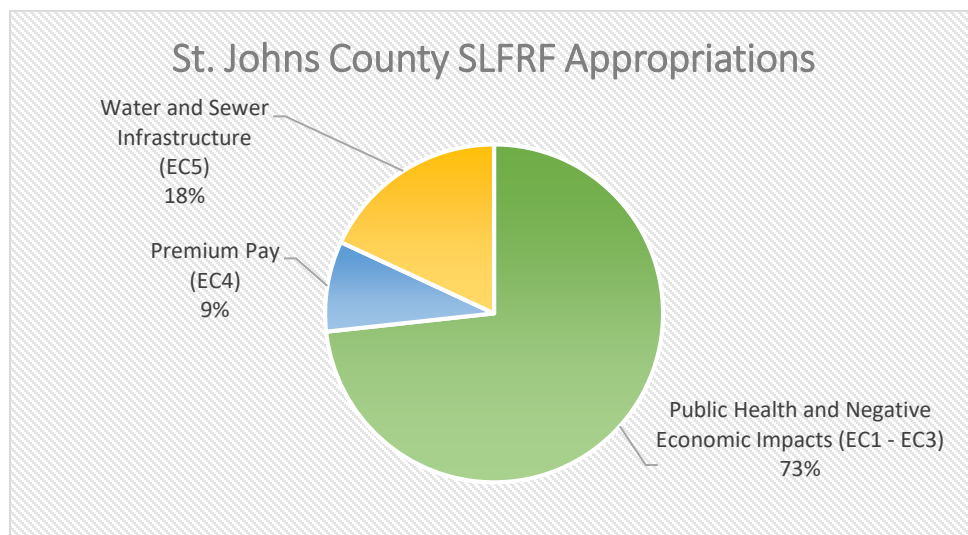
Executive Summary

On March 11, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) was enacted to provide aid and relief to citizens and communities in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Act included funding for state and local fiscal recovery, of which St. Johns County is estimated to receive \$51.3 million.

The County has appropriated \$40,665,500 of the \$51.3 million in State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) the County expects to receive. St. Johns County is committed to upholding the intent of ARPA, acting as financial stewards, to support the County's response to and recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The County will continue to engage the community to determine and address the evolving community recovery needs for future phases of the plan. As required by ARPA, all funds will be obligated to qualifying recovery programs before December 31, 2024 and all recovery funds will be fully expended by December 31, 2026.

The County has compiled and is submitting this report of activities completed through June 30, 2022 to maintain compliance with ARPA.



Uses of Funds

Through June 30, 2022, the County has allocated \$40,665,500 of SLFRF for programs and projects responding to the current public health emergency, addressing the negative economic impacts caused by the pandemic, providing premium pay for public safety workers and water/sewer infrastructure projects. As of June 30, 2022, the County has expended and/or encumbered \$6,127,030 in SLFRF program funding.

The projects are in various stages of development and implementation. The details of the specific projects can be found in the project inventories. Staff is currently working with internal and external partners to move forward with each project. For those projects which have not been

fully implemented, this report provides a status update on the current stage of the project as well as planned activities and expectations. Significant changes to the scope or nature of these projects will be included in subsequent updates to this report.

In alignment with the intent of the American Rescue Plan Act, St. Johns County has committed to use the funds to support a robust and equitable recovery in the county. As evidenced in the below table, the county has prioritized funding in the Public Health and Negative Economic Impacts categories. In assessing the needs of the County, themes emerged which revealed investments could be best used for the County in these two categories. Although water and infrastructure projects are not categorized within the response to negative economic impacts, it should also be noted that the water and sewer project will also significantly impact the economic recovery of an underserved area of the County.

St. Johns County's SLFRF Appropriations as of June 30, 2022		
Category	Category Description	Appropriated
EC1	Public Health	2,173,500
EC1 and EC2	Public Health & Negative Economic Impacts	1,050,000
EC2	Negative Economic Impacts	22,897,000
EC3	Public Health-Negative Economic Impact: Public Sector Capacity	3,675,000
EC4	Premium Pay	3,520,000
EC5	Infrastructure: Water and Sewer	7,350,000
Grand Total		\$40,665,500

Below is a summary of the current and planned interventions for the respective categories.

Public Health (EC 1): Several programs and projects fall under the provision of services to combat the public health impacts of COVID-19. In the initial stages of the pandemic, the County partnered with a local hospital, Flagler Health+, to provide free COVID-19 testing to residents. The County also operated a free vaccination clinic centrally located and adjacent to two Qualified Census Tracts (QCT)¹. One public health mitigation project currently under implementation includes the installation of temperature scanners and touchless equipment dispensers in incarceration facilities and accompanying law enforcement offices. The Exterior Improvement Grant program provides grants to small businesses and non-profits to enhance outdoor spaces. A project in the early formation phase, the St. Johns County Non-Profit program, will likely also include expenditures and interventions in the public health category.

Negative Economic Impacts (EC 2): The Exterior Improvement Grant program referenced above qualifies in both EC1 and EC2. Grantees that are awarded funds from the County to revive neighborhood features and rehabilitate commercial properties fall under this category as they are exclusive to entities operating in disproportionately impacted areas. There are four other large projects for which St. Johns County has allocated funds to address negative economic impacts on the community: a non-profit grant program; workforce training and childcare capital expenditure; medical facility; and affordable housing and housing services. Staff is currently

¹[County Table | HUD USER](#)

working with outside partners to define the scope and terms of these projects which will be established via subrecipient subgrant agreements.

Public Health-Negative Economic Impact: Public Sector Capacity (EC 3): The community of St. Johns County highly values its parks and recreation spaces as they can be used year-round and allow for the enjoyment of the County's bountiful natural resources. In the Final Rule, an enumerated use of SLFRF is for repair or maintenance of public facilities (including parks and recreation spaces) because of the greater use of public facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, the County is using funds to invest in the maintenance and repair of parks and outdoor spaces.

Premium Pay (EC 4): St. Johns County provided premium pay compensation to fire services first responders, emergency services communications staff, public safety personnel, and disaster recovery personnel. The premium pay was directed to compensate those with the greatest exposure/risk to COVID-19 and that were essential in the direct response to the public health emergency.

Water, Sewer, and Broadband infrastructure (EC 5): The Hastings Water and Sewer project will benefit an underserved area of the county bringing potable water to residential, commercial and school sites.

In addition to SLFRF, St. Johns County is utilizing funds from other Federal programs to contribute to recovery from the impacts of the pandemic. The Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) allocated \$25 billion to the U. S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) to provide funds directly to states, territories, local governments, and Indian tribes for households that are unable to pay their rent and utilities due to the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The County administered program began in July 2021 to assist low and moderate-income (LMI) households with rent-related expenses and utilities.

Congress provided \$5 billion in Community Development Block Grant – CARES Act (CDBG-CV) funding to respond to the pandemic. In Florida, the program is administered by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO). It funds various public service activities, housing-related activities, public facility improvements, and other uses. In April 2022, Florida DEO awarded St. Johns County \$406,633 to construct an annex building to the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The annex building will allow for interface with first responders and the public during an emergency response situation. Currently, the operations center is the Emergency Management and Disaster Recovery Office for the County. The addition of an annex building will allow the office operations to continue while disaster recovery activities are coordinated and executed via a separate building.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

Equity in Program and Project Design

St. Johns County has embedded the intent of the American Rescue Plan Act in its SLFRF programs to not only help the County recover from the pandemic but to prioritize interventions that increase equity. The following components are discussed in terms of how equity was incorporated in the design and selection of interventions.

Goals: When identifying and designing programs and projects to be funded by SLFRF, the County upheld the goal of directing interventions toward the most vulnerable groups. Of the projects funded, St. Johns County has prioritized interventions for the incarcerated, medically disadvantaged, and jobless/undertrained, among others. Geographically, as applicable, projects are targeted to historically disadvantaged and/or underserved areas such as QCTs, areas with less access to potable water, areas with higher LMI populations, etc.

Awareness: To ensure equitable access to benefits, St. Johns County held in-person public meetings that were live streamed and recorded as well as a public workshop. The public meetings and the workshop provided residents the opportunity to give direct input to County leadership on how the SLFRF should be allocated. The County also has a dedicated page on the County website to provide information for residents on ARPA. As projects become further developed, St. Johns County will continue to provide updates in public forums, online, and via social media.

Access and Distribution: St. Johns county has made efforts to ensure benefits are equally accessible across groups. One such effort is placing the vaccination center in a historically disadvantaged area adjacent to a Qualified Census Tract. The placement made vaccinations more accessible to those who may be mobile challenged in that area. Another approach to access will be addressed in St. Johns County's non-profit program. According to the program structure as established, the grant administrator will be responsible for providing technical assistance to help potential grantees complete their applications and navigate the grant process.

Outcomes: As applicable, projects funded through SLFRF will incorporate performance measures that will allow for the disaggregation of data by target populations. St. Johns County has three Qualified Census Tracts in its boundary, and data will be collected to determine the comparative access and interventions in those areas. For other areas of the County that are not in Qualified Census Tracts, socioeconomic or other identifiers will be used to measure impact across specific groups such as the jobless or undertrained.

Equity in Program and Project Implementation

Several larger programs recently allocated funding by the Board of County Commissioners that are intended to address negative economic impacts. As these projects are still in the design phase, the below information discusses the target populations and the projects explicitly focused on improving economic and racial equity.

Goals and Targets: There are two geographic areas of St. Johns County targeted for intervention based on economic and racial equity goals: West Augustine and Hastings.

West Augustine

The County has 3 Qualified Census Tracts, which are part of the West Augustine area, a historically African-American community. This area is targeted for intervention due to the socioeconomic disadvantages and historical inequities faced by the community. For example, according to the US Census of Population and Housing, the community has lower rates of high school and college graduates than St. Johns County as a whole and a higher rate of unemployment. The racial inequity is also evident in the fact that the West Augustine community suffers disproportionately in health outcomes such as infant mortality, diabetes, strokes, heart

attacks, and mental/behavioral health relative to county-wide averages. According to a recent community health evaluation by Flagler Health+², significant evidence abounds regarding the disparities in health results in African-American communities of St. Johns County compared to the County on the whole. According to the report, two indicators of community health, infant mortality and low-birth weight were researched. A summary of the findings is below.

Infant Mortality is often used as an indicator to measure the overall health and well-being of a population. Regional infant mortality continues to be a significant health issue affecting families, particularly African-American families in Northeast Florida. The regional infant mortality rate remains significantly higher than state and national rates at 7.1 deaths per 1,000 births in Northeast Florida (State: 5.8/1,000; National: 5.6/1,000). In 2019, the infant death rate for black infants was three times higher than that of white infants (13.5 black infant deaths per 1,000 births compared to 4.9 white infant deaths per 1,000 births). Despite overall improvements in infant mortality in recent years, racial disparities persist in St. Johns County.

The County Health Rankings Report includes a sub-ranking of a “Low Birth Weight” measure. For this measure, St. Johns County ranked favorably at 8.07%, #2 of 26 counties in Florida in 2017. However, a significant disparity is observed when comparing the low birth weight of babies born to teen mothers by race. More than twice the proportion of low birth weight babies are born to teen black mothers than teen white mothers in St. Johns County (17.1% low birth weight babies born to black teen mothers compared to 7% low birth weight babies born to white teen mothers.)

Hastings

The second community in the County specifically targeted for intervention is the Hastings area which is not part of a QCT but does meet the definition of an LMI community. For example, 61.6% of the employed population are employed in “blue-collar and service” jobs compared to 25.8% in the County overall and educational attainment of high school or higher is 14% less in Hastings than in St. Johns County overall. While the County has been one of the fastest growing communities in the nation in the past ten years, the Hastings area has been hampered by inadequate water and sewer infrastructure. The lack of available infrastructure has constrained the economic potential in this area of the County. Flooding, aging infrastructure, and/or lack of infrastructure has a negative impact on economically disadvantaged residents, causing financial and emotional stress on these residents. The ability to repair or rebuild personal property is limited for cost burdened households in these target areas. Improvements to the infrastructure will provide long-term resiliency for at-risk households. Even the schools in the area will benefit from the infrastructure. South Woods Elementary School, a Title I school, utilizes an onsite package wastewater plant and a small water plant with wells. The school is scheduled for expansion, and the project would allow the school to connect to the central system.

Project Implementation: Based on the County’s analysis and community feedback identifying the areas and interventions needed, several projects were approved to address concerns in the referenced communities. As the projects are in the formulation and design phase, data is not yet available to assess the projects. At this stage, several capital expenditures have been identified to provide the infrastructure to deliver the services in those communities. The capital projects identified include transitional housing and homeless services center; a workforce training campus

² Flagler Health+ Community Improvement, Health Inequity Summary, 2022

with childcare and early learning; and a medical facility. Each of these capital projects intends to bring services to the underserved populations and areas referenced above. In addition to the capital projects, St. Johns County is partnering with United Way to administer a non-profit grant program. The program will allow non-profits to apply for grant funding to provide social services such as behavioral and mental health, homelessness, food insecurity, and adolescent and substance abuse. In subsequent reports, quantitative and qualitative data will be presented as the programs and projects referenced above are implemented.

Community Engagement

St. Johns County is committed to ensuring constituents' and community-based organizations' feedback and suggestions are heard and considered and uses various engagement methods to reach the community.

Noticed Meetings

ARPA funded programming has been and will continue to be discussed as noticed agenda items at regularly scheduled Board of County Commissioners meetings. These ARPA agenda items include an opportunity for the attending public to comment. A specific ARPA workshop was also held to solicit direct feedback from constituents on how ARPA funds should be allocated within the County.

Web-based platforms

St. Johns County's website will serve as the primary platform through which the community can find information about ARPA programs offered by the County. A web-based survey was offered in two (2) phases to residents and community groups providing an opportunity to suggest projects and services for the APRA program. The survey was available to all constituents and did not require an invitation to participate.

Community Partners

St. Johns County worked with local community leaders in the non-profit sector to identify projects that would meet the needs identified by the community in the meetings, workshops and survey referenced above. The solutions proposed helped form the various projects identified to address the negative economic impacts of COVID-19. More detail on the community involvement is detailed in the individual project inventories. St. Johns County will continue working with various community partners to collaborate and share information as the projects progress.

Social Media

St. Johns County has utilized and will continue to utilize its social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor, and Twitter, to communicate information about ARPA-funded programs and services.

Labor Practices

St. Johns County is committed to promoting the effective and efficient delivery of high-quality infrastructure projects. The County's existing Purchasing Procedures outline the procurement process and ensure all County projects follow the required Federal, State, and local laws. All ARPA-funded infrastructure projects implemented by St. Johns County will be procured in accordance with the St. Johns County Purchasing Procedures which can be found in Section III of the County Administrative Code.

As of June 30, 2022, no capital infrastructure projects have been implemented. Subsequent reports will report labor standards and related employment practices as capital expenditures and infrastructure projects progress.

Use of Evidence

St. Johns County is committed to evaluating all potential projects and pursuing only those that have a meaningful impact on the community. Through June 30, 2022, St. Johns County has allocated the majority of the funds towards strategies to address the public health and economic impacts of the pandemic. The projects approved by the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners that fall within these two categories are evidence-based, as described below.

Public Health – Prevention and Mitigation

St. Johns County refers to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidance for Correctional and Detention Facilities³ to inform decisions on what measures to implement to best prevent and/or mitigate the spread of COVID-19 among the incarcerated and detained, staff and visitors. In coordination with the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, high-traffic areas were selected to install security systems, including temperature scanners. The CDC references symptom scanning such as temperature scans as an additional layer of protection against the transmission of COVID-19. The Final Rule also enumerates that mitigation measures in small businesses can include developing outdoor spaces. The design of St. Johns County's Exterior Improvement Grant Program relied on the Treasury's enumeration and the data that social distancing and proper ventilation are well documented measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19⁴.

Negative Economic Impacts

As discussed in the section on promoting equitable outcomes, the West Augustine community faces inequitable access to community-relevant health care and medical facilities. The data from Flagler Health+ on racial disparities in health outcomes provide the evidence needed for increased health services in the West Augustine community. As shown in the table below, St. Johns County's black community members have higher incidences of preventable health conditions.

³ [Correctional and Detention Facilities | CDC](#)

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/outdoor-activities.html>

Selected St. Johns County Health Outcomes		
Preventable Incident / Disease	% Black Incident/ Deaths	% White Incident /Deaths
Infant Mortality	13.5%	4.9%
Low Birth Weight	17.1%	7.1%
HIV Deaths	12%	0.9%
Breast Cancer Death	23.6%	22.5%
Prostate Cancer Death	31.5%	19.4%
Stroke	31.8%	12.8%
Diabetes Death	51.1%	32.2%

To address the health disparities, the County allocated \$5,250,000 toward developing a Medical Center in West Augustine, one of the Treasury's enumerated eligible uses to address disparities in public health outcomes in disproportionately impacted populations. The Final Rule cites access to high-quality medical care as central to reducing health inequities; thus, establishing a medical center in this community is backed by strong data linking access to health care to individual and overall community health.

In the Final Rule, Treasury identified certain populations that can be assumed to be disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, such as those at risk of homelessness and the unhoused, the unemployed and underemployed, and those lacking access to mental and behavioral health, among others. In order to take a comprehensive approach to meet the needs of these and other disproportionately impacted populations, St. Johns County considered how best to deliver the services in the community. As the non-profit sector is often closer to the community's needs and best equipped to deliver services efficiently, St. Johns County reviewed other SLFRF non-profit programs implemented by counties in the region. After a thorough review, the County decided to collaborate with the United Way of St. Johns County to administer a non-profit grant program. The County will ensure through the subrecipient subgrant agreement that interventions funded through the non-profit grant program are evidence-based as applicable.

Performance Report

St. Johns County is committed to performance measurement and data to inform decisions from program and project selection through completion. As of June 30, 2022, the completed programs include: County-sponsored vaccination program/site, County supported COVID-19 testing and Premium Pay program. Those three projects are measured via outputs of numbers served as reported in the project inventories and project and expenditure reports. To date, the projects designed to respond to the negative economic impacts are in the development stage. As such, the County is presenting potential performance measures within the project inventories. In subsequent reports, the County will provide the formalized performance measures and accompanying data.

PROJECT INVENTORY

Project: COVID-19 Vaccination Site Operation, Project Number 4451

Funding amount: \$1,735,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.1 COVID-19 Vaccination

Project Overview

The County established and operated a vaccination program at the Solomon Calhoun Community Center, offering residents free vaccinations to contain and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. This program provided residents vaccines from January 4, 2021, through May 20, 2021. The vaccination site was centrally located, and vaccines were offered for free to all County residents on a first-come, first-served basis. Vaccination appointments were available to the public online and by phone to ensure equitable access for all residents. The County also operated a COVID-19 hotline seven days a week to assist residents with COVID-19-related questions and scheduling vaccination appointments.

Use of Evidence

The program's goal was to provide free vaccinations at an easily accessible location to increase the available vaccination sites in the County. Accessibility to medical services, including preventative health services, has been shown to be correlated to the level of health in a community. The West Augustine community was identified as an area of the County with a deficiency in accessible non-emergency medical facilities and would benefit from a County vaccination site.

Performance Report

Through the County Vaccination project, 96,284 doses of the vaccine were administered to the community.

Project: COVID-19 Testing, Project 4452

Funding amount: \$50,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.2 COVID-19 Testing

Project Overview

St. Johns County provided financial support to Flagler Health+ to administer COVID-19 testing. As of June 30, 2022, the county has expended \$26,133 of the allocated amount on vaccination testing.

Use of Evidence

COVID-19 testing is an enumerated use by the Treasury in the final rule as an effective measure to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Performance Report

St. Johns County reimbursed Flagler Health+ for testing services provided in March 2021. From 3/3/2011 – 3/31/2021 Flagler Health+ provided vaccine services to the community; administering 61 tests.

Project: COVID-19 Mitigation, Project 4453

Funding amount: \$388,500

Project Expenditure Category: 1.4 Prevention in Congregate Settings

Project Overview

St. Johns County funded mitigation measures in the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office (SJSO) and selected incarceration areas. St. Johns County purchased the procurement and installation of whole-body security scanning systems. The scanning systems purchased include a thermal camera/scanner to detect fevers. The temperature scanning systems will be installed in the SJSO Work Release Center Building and the Booking Area; identified high traffic areas. To date, the County has expended \$298,000 of the project funding.

The County is also considering purchasing Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) distribution machines and related equipment for SJSO. The controlled access distribution machines will allow for a contactless way to access PPE and other supplies needed on the job.

Use of Evidence

Symptom scanning such as temperature scans is referenced by the CDC as an additional layer of protection against the transmission of COVID-19. Similarly, reducing unnecessary interpersonal interactions helps to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. Installation of PPE distribution machines is a method for following CDC guidelines of social distancing.

Performance Report

The measures for this project will be primarily output measures related to the completion of the project.

Project: Exterior Improvement Grant Program, Project 4454

Funding amount: \$1,050,000

Project Expenditure Categories:

1. Public Health, COVID-19 Mitigation and Prevention
 - 1.8 COVID-19 Assistance to Small Businesses
 - 1.9 COVID-19 Assistance to Non-Profits
2. Negative Economic Impacts
 - 2.31 Assistance to Small Businesses: Rehabilitation of Commercial Properties or Other Improvements (Disproportionately Impacted Only)

Project Overview

In September 2021, St. Johns County allocated an initial \$500,000 and an additional \$500,000 in March 2022 for an Exterior Improvement Grant Program. Eligible small business owners and non-profits may receive a one-time grant of up to \$49,500 as beneficiaries to enhance the business or non-profit's outdoor space for COVID-19 mitigation or improve the built environment of a neighborhood in a qualified census tract. Eligibility requirements for grantees meet the Final Rule and include the below. To date, St. Johns County has awarded 17 grants totaling \$512,500, and an additional 15 are currently under review.

Use of Evidence

The Final Rule enumerates "physical plant changes to enable greater use of outdoor spaces or ventilation improvements" as an eligible expenditure to implement COVID-19 mitigation tactics (Final Rule, p64). The Final Rule cites the CDC's research that transmission of COVID-19 is lower in outdoor spaces⁵ in the rationale for including enhancing outdoor spaces as an eligible expenditure. Concerning disproportionately impacted small businesses, the Final Rule recognizes that those businesses "may benefit from additional assistance to address the sources of that disparate impact" (151). Continuing, the Treasury specifically enumerates, "... rehabilitation of commercial properties; storefront and façade improvements..." (420) are eligible expenditures for disproportionately impacted small businesses in a Qualified Census Tract.

Performance Report

Performance indicators are primarily output in nature for capital expenditures. As the eligible projects in this program are capital expenditures, St. Johns County will hold grantees responsible for adherence to the terms of the grant, which incorporate all requirements of the Final Rule, such as labor standards, procurement, conflict of interest, reporting, et. al.

⁵ See Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Participate in Outdoor and Indoor Activities, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/outdoor-activities.html> (last visited November 8, 2021).

Project: Recreation Space Maintenance, Project 4455

Funding amount: \$3,675,000

Project Expenditure Category: 3.5 Public Sector Capacity: Administrative Needs

Project Overview

St. Johns County allocated \$3,500,000 for repair and/or maintenance of County parks and recreation spaces. To date, St. Johns County has expended \$14,550 and encumbered \$609,332. Expended or encumbered projects include the below. The remaining funds not encumbered or expended will be allocated to similar projects which have been identified and are in various stages of initiation. The maintenance and repairs necessitated by the additional burden on public facilities during the pandemic will be allocated across the County both in Qualified Census Tracts and non-QCTs. The County has chosen to include all park maintenance and repair projects under the Public Sector Capacity: Administrative Needs rather than separate the projects by census tract. Therefore, some park maintenance and repairs will fall under 3.5 and 2.22; but St. Johns County categorizes all under 3.5 for simplicity.

Use of Evidence

SLFRF provides an opportunity for St. Johns County to fund maintenance and repairs necessitated by the additional burden on public facilities during the pandemic. St. Johns County's climate and natural resources provide excellent affordable opportunities for the community to get outdoors. As the transmission of COVID-19 is lower in outdoor spaces, keeping options available for residents to utilize outdoor spaces is essential. St. Johns County Parks and Recreation Department also offers free and low-cost programs for youth and adults. The maintenance and repair of the park facilities will allow residents in all areas of the County to continue safe access to the resources and services offered. As outdoor activity is linked to positive health outcomes, the St. Johns County maintenance and repair program will have the additional benefit of promoting healthy lives.

Performance Report

Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for this project will include output measures such as the number of projects completed, efficiency measures, and geographic areas served, among others.

Project: Premium Pay for Essential Workers, Project 4456

Funding amount: \$3,520,000

Project Expenditure Category: 4.1 Premium Pay: Public Sector Employees

Project Overview

According to the Treasury's Final Rule, an eligible category of expenditures is premium pay to essential workers. Some essential workers, such as fire services, emergency personnel and law enforcement, face a heightened risk of exposure to COVID-19 because of their direct, in-person, close interaction with the public. Due to the nature of their job requirements, these first responders were not able to implement many of the preventative/mitigation measures, such as social distancing, in their daily work.

Other essential workers include those who weren't first responders but are "needed to maintain continuity of operations of essential critical infrastructure sectors..." (221). St. Johns County, in accordance with the final rule also included civilian personnel in telecommunications (managers and below) in the premium pay project.

The recipients for premium pay designated by St. Johns County meet the three-pronged framework: 1) eligible worker, 2) performing essential work, 3) being responsive to essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency. In addition, those receiving the premium pay fall under the category of non-exempt. St. Johns County provided \$2,500 net (two payments of \$1,250) to the specific eligible workers listed below.

- Sworn Sheriff's Office personnel (Lieutenants and below)
- Sheriff civilian personnel in Telecommunications (Managers and below)
- Fire Rescue first responders (all ranks below Deputy Chief)
- Fire Rescue personnel in Telecommunications (Managers and below)
- Emergency Management personnel

Use of Evidence

The final rule cited findings that essential workers are often paid below the average national wage, and not all receive hazard pay. As the SLFRF program was designed with the principles of equity in mind, premium pay is a method that recipients can use to provide greater equity to lower-wage earners in high-risk occupations and those who were required to work longer hours because of the pandemic. The final rule likens premium pay to hazard pay, an established method of supplemental compensation used by governments and the private sector.

Performance Report

Premium pay was provided to eligible staff at the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office in two installments. The first installment in January 2022 covered 551 FTEs and the second in June 2022 covered 530 FTEs.

St. Johns County also provided two installments of premium pay to Fire Rescue (including Telecommunications) and Emergency Management personnel. The first installment was distributed to 327 FTEs and the second was distributed to 364 FTEs.

Project: Hastings Water and Sewer Infrastructure, Project 4459

Funding amount: \$7,350,000

Project Expenditure Category: 5.2 Clear Water: Centralized Wastewater Collection and Conveyance 5.11 Drinking water: Transmission and Distribution

Project Overview

The proposed project will install approximately 20,000 feet of potable water lines and 14,000 feet of sewer force mains to expand water and sewer availability to existing and vacant commercial and industrial parcels. Currently, South Woods Elementary School utilizes an

onsite package wastewater plant and a small water plant with wells. The school is scheduled for expansion, and the project would allow the school to connect to the central system. The utility would potentially gain ownership of the CUP and infrastructure. The project would enable several existing commercial sites to connect to the central sewer system and eliminate commercial septic tanks. The new potable water line will connect to the existing system and provide a loop to increase water quality and pressure for fire protection in several areas. Additionally, the new wastewater force main would terminate at a potential new WRF plant site that will be developed to serve residential development on parcels that currently have development rights.

Use of Evidence

The Hastings area has lost much of its retail businesses over the last 30 years and without adequate water and sewer infrastructure, new commercial growth cannot occur. The project will provide the necessary distribution and transmission backbone to allow proposed commercial development. For example, the required land use and zoning for most of Hastings have already been established with development rights. There are several large commercial and industrial areas with job growth potential if water and sewer infrastructure is provided. Concerning residential development, two potential residential projects have requested letters of availability to construct attainable housing. If these projects move forward, they will provide the necessary density to promote the development of commercial sites, including a grocery store to serve the area. The project will also improve the existing infrastructure by providing additional pressure and volume for fire protection and increasing water quality by offering loops for water circulation.

Performance Report

Performance indicators will be developed and data collected during implementation. Potential KPIs include the number of residential connections, the number of potable and sewer lines laid, and the number of commercial sites served.

Project: West Augustine Medical Center, Project 4460

Funding amount: \$5,250,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.21 Assistance to Households: Medical Facilities for Disproportionately Impacted Communities

Project Overview

The West Augustine Medical Center will focus on illness prevention strategies by influencing behavioral changes that will result in healthier living through increased health check-ups, exercise, encouraging a healthier diet, encouraging follow-up on major health episodes (i.e., strokes, diabetes, etc.), prenatal care, and increased awareness and improvement of behavioral health. One major focus of the medical center will be redirecting residents to the Center as an alternative to emergency room visits for non-emergency health issues or concerns.

Use of Evidence

While capital expenditures are not an evidence-based program in and of itself, the capital expenditure will result in a medical center serving a disproportionately disadvantaged population in a qualified census tract. Access to health care is correlated with better health outcomes. As such, the intervention of funding a capital project to build a medical center supports an evidence-based response to improving health outcomes.

Performance Report

This project will expand health services to the West Augustine Community with the goal of lowering health costs while increasing access to a comprehensive continuum of health care for the most vulnerable and ill-prone population. Performance measures will be incorporated in the sub-recipient sub-award agreement with the West Augustine Community Development Corporation as the project is formulated. Data will be collected and reported according to Treasury's requirements. In addition to the output indicators related to the capital expenditure, potential KPIs post construction includes the number of LMI served via the medical center, type of health services provided, and reduction in the number of patients referred to the emergency room, among others.

Project: Vocational Training Center, Project 4461

Funding amount: \$7,665,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.10 Assistance to Unemployed or Underemployed Workers

Project Overview

The County has allocated \$7,665,000 towards a sub-recipient sub-award agreement with the St. Johns County School District to establish a second campus of First Coast Technical College. The sub-award will provide funds to the school district to offer workforce training in the southern part of St. Johns County. The second campus will be located in an underserved area of the County with a targeted population of undertrained and unemployed. The campus is designed to mirror offerings at the main campus including Adult Basic Education (ABE) and General Education Development (GED) programs, technical courses in high-wage jobs, a pre-kindergarten program, and childcare.

Use of Evidence

While capital expenditures are not an evidence-based program, the capital expenditure will allow for evidence-based programming to occur in an underserved area of the County. First Coast Technical College under the St. Johns County School District currently offers courses in high-wage and fast-growing occupations. The community in the southwest geographic area of the County is underserved and marginalized in job training, early learning options, and child care. Currently, only one vocational school in the County serves the central and northern part of the County and is continually on a waitlist. The population in the geographic area is also disproportionately susceptible to disruptions in the workforce as 61.6% of the employed population are employed in "blue-collar and service" jobs compared to 25.8% in the County overall. Regarding childcare and early learning, there is only one PreK option available in the southwest region and no low-cost childcare options compared to the numerous options in the other geographic areas of the County.

Performance Report

While a capital project may not directly tie to KPIs as it isn't a program, the project will be evaluated in a minimum of two ways. As a subrecipient, the St. Johns County School District will be required to report on the capital project and adhere to all Federal requirements as stated in the Final Rule. Additionally, the County will ensure that the project meets the intended outcome of providing workforce training, childcare, and preschool education to the targeted population. The details of the evaluation criteria will be established in the agreement, and the St. Johns County School District will be responsible for measuring the data. Potential KPIs preliminarily identified include:

Output Measures:

Vocational School

- Number served by zip code
- Number served by income
- Number of certificates
- Number of licensures

Adult Basic Education

- Number served by zip code
- Number served by income

Child care and PreK

- Number served by zip code
- Number served by income

Outcome Measures:

Vocational School

- % completion rate
- % placed in jobs upon completion or in continuing education
- % employed in the field of study 12 months post completion

Adult Basic Education

- % completion rate (GED or high school diploma)

Child care and Pre-Kindergarten

- % PreK completion rates
- Maintenance of Pre-Kindergarten qualification

Project: Non-Profit Grant Program, Project 4462

Funding amount: \$7,700,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Project Overview

St. Johns County signed a subrecipient subaward agreement with United Way of St. Johns County (United Way) to administer a non-profit grant program on behalf of the County. A

steering committee was established with members from the community, county leadership and the United Way to establish the terms of the agreement. The structure of the grant programs including program and grantee outcome and output measures will be defined via the agreement and steering committee as applicable.

Use of Evidence

Through public workshops, meetings and the survey, the community made clear the need to support the non-profits in St. Johns County. Many non-profits in the community receive appropriations from the County's general fund budget. The SLFRF program allows the County to broaden its support to non-profits and extend additional services to the community. The non-profits supported by the community provide critical services to the residents such as adolescent substance abuse treatment, services for adolescent and adult single mothers, services to help at-risk youth avoid criminal pathways, and homeless services, among others.

Performance Report

KPIs will be established via the signed agreement between St. Johns County and the United Way of St. Johns County. KPIs will be required for United Way as a subrecipient and the non-profit grantees. Potential KPIs for grantee projects are not included in this report as the KPIs will be tied directly to each subgrantee's projects. As a wide variety of eligible projects are available through the non-profit program, KPIs will be developed upon seeing the types of projects that potential grantees submit.

Project: Home Again Housing Security Project, Project 4463

Funding amount: \$2,282,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.15 Long-term Housing Security: Affordable Housing; 2.16 Long-term Housing Security: Services for Unhoused Persons

Project Overview

St. Johns County allocated \$2,282,000 to Home Again St. Johns, Inc. to provide housing services and affordable housing. The County intends to sign a subrecipient subaward agreement with Home Again St. Johns, Inc. for vertical and horizontal construction of a combined office building, service center, and transitional housing units. The allocation and project specifications are based on estimated construction costs and will be adjusted as estimates are received. The agreement details are pending and will be updated at the next annual report.

Use of Evidence

The PIT Count⁶ results showed that on February 28, 2022 there were 349 individuals experiencing homelessness in St. Johns County. Of those, 242 were experiencing unsheltered homelessness and 107 were residing in the shelter. This total was a decrease of 17% from the 419 individuals who were experiencing homelessness on the day of the 2021

⁶ [2022 PIT COUNT \(squarespace.com\)](https://squarespace.com)

count. Overall the number of homeless decreased year-over-year, but there was a 16% increase in the number of those who were chronically homeless.

Care Connect+ serves the homeless in the community and collects data on the homeless population in St. Johns County. According to their annual statistics, in 2021, 6,682 people were served by all Care Connect+ Information Network programs. Of those, 27% of adults reported that they were homeless at the time of requesting assistance. Additionally, in 2022, the St. Johns County School District has identified 780 homeless children and youth in the school district.

Performance Report

St. Johns County will incorporate key performance measures in the contract agreement with Home Again St. Johns, Inc. Such measures will include capital project milestones and impact measures (output and outcome).