TARRANT COUNTY RECOVERY PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT
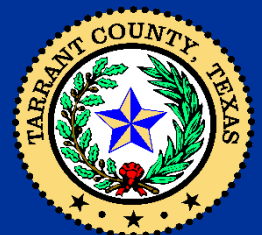
TARRANT COUNTY
2021 RECOVERY PLAN

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Executive Summary

Greetings,

The Tarrant County Commissioners Court and County staff are committed to transparency and accountability in reporting on programs and projects funded with dollars received through the American Rescue Plan Act. Furthermore, we are committed to ensuring the voice of our community guides the decisions made regarding this historic investment of federal funding into Tarrant County.

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), through the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF), has provided local governments with the necessary resources to respond to the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure a strong and equitable economic recovery. Tarrant County is excited to partner with community members to ensure that these funds have the maximum impact for our residents, businesses, and local agencies.

The Tarrant County Commissioners Court, the governing body of Tarrant County, is determined to ensure the resources provided through the SLFRF are expended in the most effective, efficient, and equitable method possible. To that end, the Commissioners Court has engaged a consultant to conduct a COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment, which is discussed at length in the *Community Engagement* section of this report. The assessment, along with a series of public work sessions, will ensure the Commissioners Court is equipped with a comprehensive understanding of the existing needs and resources within our community, and will help guide their prioritization of projects funded by the SLFRF. While the first reporting period does not capture a wide range of expenses, we expect this report to become more substantive as our community engagement strategies inform the prioritization of funds and approval of projects.

Please make sure to sign up for the County Judge's and your County Commissioner's newsletter to stay up to date on opportunities to provide input on ARPA funding decisions, and never hesitate to contact our office with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

G.K. Maenius

County Administrator

Tarrant County

Uses of Funds

Focus Areas, Goals, and Programmatic Activities

Informed by public feedback, and to establish a framework for utilization of the first tranche of SLFRF dollars, the Tarrant County Commissioners Court has approved four (4) Focus Areas with their respective goals and funding allocation. Along with the findings from a COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment, these Focus Areas will guide the development, approval, and implementation of programmatic activities funded by SLFRF. The four (4) Focus Areas and their respective goals are detailed below.

Focus Area 1: Prepare for the Future *(First Tranche Allocation: $51,500,000)*

Through investments in our workforce, facilities, and programs, Tarrant County will position itself to efficiently, effectively, and equitably serve the needs of our community.

- **Goal 1:** Expand & Improve Tarrant County Facilities for Optimal COVID-19 Prevention & Mitigation
- **Goal 2:** Position the County's Workforce to Respond to the Negative Effects of COVID-19
- **Goal 3:** Ensure Equitable Access to Essential Government Services

Focus Area 2: Improve Public Health & Wellness *(First Tranche Allocation: $72,694,445)*

Through investments in our public health infrastructure, Tarrant County will transform its public health system to equitably address the health needs of the community and ensure pandemic preparedness.

- **Goal 1:** Create a World-Class Public Health Department
- **Goal 2:** Improve Access to Care in the Unincorporated Area
- **Goal 3:** Address Disparities in Public Health Outcomes
- **Goal 4:** Improve Access to Quality Behavioral Healthcare

Focus Area 3: Revitalize the Economy *(First Tranche Allocation: $40,000,000)*

Tarrant County will position the local economy for a strong and equitable recovery by investing in the training, development, and support of our current and future workforce; supporting disproportionately impacted industries; and identifying innovative opportunities for growth.

- **Goal 1:** Support Disproportionately Impacted Industries
- **Goal 2:** Strengthen Tarrant County Businesses
- **Goal 3:** Improve Access to High Quality Dependent Care
- **Goal 4:** Expand Job Training & Workforce Development Opportunities
- **Goal 5:** Facilitate Economic Recovery Through Innovation

Focus Area 4: Strengthen the Community *(First Tranche Allocation: $40,000,000)*

Through investments in our community, Tarrant County will ensure residents are equipped with the necessary resources to recover from the negative socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic.

- **Goal 1:** Respond to Individuals Experiencing Housing Insecurity
- **Goal 2:** Address Infrastructure Needs

- ▪ **Goal 3:** Support Community Recovery Programs
- ▪ **Goal 4:** Expand Community Violence Interventions

Note: An additional tranche of funding in the amount of $204,194,446 is expected to be received by Tarrant County in Spring 2022. The Commissioners Court will allocate these funds at a future date.

Expenditure Categories

Expenditure Categories are provided by the United States Department of Treasury to streamline the reporting of the use of SLFRF funding. In the section below, you will find narrative descriptions on the uses of funds within their respective expenditure category for the first reporting period which covers May 10, 2021 to July 31, 2021.

Expenditure Category 1: Public Health

The Tarrant County Commissioners Court has not authorized any program under Expenditure Category 1; however, the Court does plan on exploring potential projects and expending funds under this category in conjunction with the results of the COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment and staff recommendations.

Expenditure Category 2: Negative Economic Impacts

The Tarrant County Commissioners Court has not authorized any program under Expenditure Category 2; however, the Court does plan on exploring potential projects and expending funds under this category in conjunction with the results of the COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment and staff recommendations.

Expenditure Category 3: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities

The Tarrant County Commissioners Court has not authorized any program under Expenditure Category 3; however, the Court does plan on exploring potential projects and expending funds under this Expenditure Category in conjunction with the results of the COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment and staff recommendations.

Expenditure Category 4: Premium Pay

The Tarrant County Commissioners Court has not authorized any program under Expenditure Category 4 and does not currently plan to expend funds under this category.

Expenditure Category 5: Water, Sewer, and Broadband Infrastructure

The Tarrant County Commissioners Court has not authorized any program under Expenditure Category 5; however, the Court does plan on exploring potential projects and expending funds under this category in conjunction with the results of the COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment and staff recommendations.

Expenditure Category 6 – Revenue Replacement

Based on current guidance and preliminary calculations, Tarrant County did not identify a loss of revenue and, therefore, will not be expending funds under Expenditure Category 6. County staff

will recalculate revenue loss at the dates provided in the guidance issued by the United States Department of Treasury.

Expenditure Category 7 – Administrative and Other

All expenses captured within the first reporting period fall within *Expenditure Category 7*. Specifically, the expenses are categorized under *Expenditure Category 7.1 Administrative Expenses*. The expenses within this category consist of the salary and fringe benefits associated with one (1) Grant Manager employee. This employee is dedicated to oversight and audit-related activities to ensure compliance with grant administration and reporting requirements as prescribed by statute and Treasury-issued guidance.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

Promoting equitable outcomes is a priority of the Tarrant County Commissioners Court and County staff, and all programs approved by the Commissioners Court will be designed with equity as a primary concern.

For the first reporting period, the Commissioners Court has not approved any projects outside of the one (1) staff member focused on ensuring compliance with grant administration and reporting requirements. However, in future reports as projects are approved, the *Promoting Equitable Outcomes* section will include substantive documentation and narrative description of programmatic goals, strategies, and outcomes as they relate to promoting equity in Tarrant County. Program Evaluation Specialists will be tasked with developing performance measurement structures that capture quantitative and qualitative data, which will help illustrate the relationship between the county's intended equitable outcomes and actual results. Furthermore, the county is focused on utilizing Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs) to target programs and resources to traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities.

The COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment, discussed in further detail in the following section, will measure the negative economic impact of the pandemic on underrepresented populations. Preliminary findings from the consultant conducting the assessment show that Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs) were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and closed at nearly twice the rate of other businesses. Findings from the COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment will equip the Tarrant County Commissioners Court with an accurate depiction of the impact of the pandemic on these communities and how SLFRF funding can be deployed to advance an equitable recovery.

Community Engagement

Commissioners Court Work Sessions

County staff facilitated a series of public work sessions during regular meetings of the Commissioners Court. These ongoing work sessions provide relevant information related to eligible uses of SLFRF funding and information from subject matter experts and key community stakeholders. In Work Session 3, for instance, subject matter experts from local mental health organizations and health providers presented an overview of pandemic-related impacts on various community health needs and associated strategies to respond to those impacts. For example, Dr. Jasmine Tiro, from UT Southwestern Medical Center, presented various

community engagement strategies to eliminate health disparities within Tarrant County. Additionally, Virginia Hoft, Executive Director of Mental Health Connection, presented community-focused strategies to address mental health needs exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. These presentations have assisted in identifying pandemic-related community needs and potential programmatic strategies that can be supported with SLFRF funding.

COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment

Although the expenses are not captured in the reporting period for the first report, the Tarrant County Commissioners Court approved a contract with the management consulting firm Innovative Emergency Management (IEM) on Tuesday, August 3, 2021 to conduct a COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment within Tarrant County. The COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment will play a pivotal role in informing the allocation of relief funds and will ensure that SLFRF funding is deployed in a manner which effectively, efficiently, and equitably meets the needs of residents in Tarrant County.

The COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment will consist of a GIS analysis to gauge Tarrant County's Social Vulnerability Index; a pre-March 2020 profile of the county to gauge the impact of COVID-19; and, most importantly, input and feedback from a wide variety of community stakeholders and the general public.

Community engagement is the foremost priority of the COVID-19 Needs Assessment, and IEM will employ several strategies to engage a diverse group of community leaders and stakeholders. Strategies to be employed during the needs assessment include, but are not limited to, sector-specific surveys, zoom workshops with county leaders, and virtual roundtables with community stakeholders. Community and faith organizations, nonprofit organizations, private sector organizations, and community leaders will be among those engaged throughout this process. Additionally, the public will have multiple opportunities to provide input in the assessment aside from the public comment section during Commissioners Court meetings.

Needs Assessment Deliverables to Guide Decision Making

IEM will deliver an Interim Report to the Commissioners Court in September 2021. The Interim Report will provide information related to the initial findings of the GIS analysis, a preliminary needs and resources assessment, and identification of immediate needs within the community. In January 2022, IEM is slated to present the Final Report and Final Strategy and Recommendations. The Final Report will provide the results from data analyses and the needs assessment; outline the public outreach approach employed and findings; and provide data for compliance and reporting purposes. The Final Strategy and Recommendations will consist of programmatic recommendations which align with identified community needs and statutory eligible uses. Furthermore, the Final Strategy and Recommendations will create a framework to capture positive and measurable outcomes.

Ongoing Communication with Intergovernmental Partners

In addition to the Commissioners Court Work Sessions and COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment, the county conducts regular calls to engage intergovernmental partners and facilitate cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among local entities. These calls also serve as a channel for information-sharing by allowing local partners to disseminate important announcements and information related to the pandemic. Among the calls are Tarrant County

Judge Glen Whitley's weekly COVID-19 update for our local legislative delegation and County Administrator G.K. Maenius' ARPA discussion with local city managers to coordinate and avoid duplication of efforts in the context of local projects funded by State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds.

Labor Practices for Infrastructure Projects

No infrastructure projects have been approved at this point.

Use of Evidence

Projects included within the current and future Recovery Plan Performance Reports will be rigorously evaluated. Tarrant County is in the process of hiring three (3) Program Evaluation Specialists to develop program evaluation models and employ them in the context of SLFRF-funded projects. The second iteration of this report is planned to include detailed information regarding program evaluation design and preliminary findings.

Utilizing the COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment, the Commissioners Court will be equipped with the information to make evidence-based decisions and funding allocations. The COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment will provide the county with a baseline to affect real and meaningful change in the community through targeted SLFRF investments.

Additionally, project development will include the use of logic models to create linkages between goals, inputs, outputs, and outcomes. Logic models will assist in the development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each SLFRF-funded project and ensure clarity in the relationship between programmatic resources and outcomes.

Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category

The Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category will list the cumulative expenses within each Expenditure Category. For the initial report, the only expense reflected is the salary and fringe benefits for one (1) public sector employee. As the COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment progresses, additional expenses will be incurred and reflected in future reports.

	Category	Cumulative expenditures to date ($)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
1	Expenditure Category: Public Health		
2	Expenditure Category: Negative Economic Impacts		
3	Expenditure Category: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities		
4	Expenditure Category: Premium Pay		
5	Expenditure Category: Infrastructure		
6	Expenditure Category: Revenue Replacement		
7	Administrative and Other	$28,013	$28,013
7.1	Administrative Expenses	$28,013	$28,013

PROJECT INVENTORY

The Project Inventory aims to provide the United States Department of Treasury and the general public with an overview of the various SLFRF-funded projects undertaken by Tarrant County. In the first reporting period (*May 10, 2021 to July 31, 2021)*, the Project Inventory will not be as expansive as in future reports. This is a function of the Tarrant County Commissioners Court hosting work sessions to solicit community input and onboarding an external consultant to conduct a COVID-19 Needs and Resources Assessment prior to developing and approving projects. This process will help ensure that SLFRF funding is expended in a manner which effectively, efficiently, and equitably meets the needs of our residents.

Administrative Capacity for Implementation and Oversight of Recovery Programs

Project Identification Number: F1G2B
Funding amount: $1,992,696
Project Expenditure Category: 7.1 Administrative Expenses
Focus Area: Prepare for the Future
Goal: Position the County's Workforce to Respond to the Effects of COVID-19

Project overview

- This project aims to ensure Tarrant County has sufficient staffing levels to respond to the negative effects of COVID-19 and the administrative burden associated with the response. As of the first reporting period, the only expenses reflected under this project are the salary and fringe benefit expenses associated with one (1) Grant Manager employee in the Auditor's Office to ensure compliance with applicable grant administration and reporting guidelines for SLFRF. In future reporting periods, as the Commissioners Court approves SLFRF-funded programs, county staff expect several additional positions to fall under this project. This includes the Performance Evaluation Specialist positions approved on August 10, 2021. This project is authorized by §35.6(b)(10) of the Interim Final Rule and FAQ 10.2 promulgated by the United States Department of Treasury.

Use of Evidence

- The goals of the project are to ensure effective, efficient, and equitable administration of SLFRF funding through adequate staffing. This project will employ a program evaluation specialist to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the project.

- This project will be evaluated through a rigorous annual program evaluation consisting of a quasi-experimental research design to build a base of evidence for the intervention strategies utilized during this project. The program evaluation design is currently in development.

ARPA PROGRAMS OTHER THAN SLFRF

In addition to the funding provided through the SLFRF, Tarrant County and local governments around the nation received federal funding for other programmatic activities related to the COVID-19 response. Below you will find information related to non-SLFRF programs which are funded through ARPA.

Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)

The Tarrant County Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) is designed to assist eligible households who are unable to pay rent and/or utilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic as established by section 501 of Division N of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (ERA 1) and Section 3201 of Subtitle B, Title III of the American Rescue Plan Act, 2021 (ERA 2). Tarrant County received $24,281,300 from the CAA and $26,407,662 from ARPA to assist with emergency rental assistance needs.

Assistance may be provided for unpaid, overdue rent (arrears) from April 1, 2020, and for future rent. Using a combination of ERA 1 and ERA 2, total months of assistance is not to exceed 15 months, or 18 months if necessary, for housing stability as defined by US Treasury.

Programmatic Data:

APPLICATION STATUS	TOTAL
Applications in Progress	1,299
Applications Under Review	133
Ineligible Applications (Area & Income)	424
Applications Approved	466
TOTAL APPLICATIONS	2,322

Tarrant County Public Health (TCPH) Grant Funding

TCPH received several grants funded by ARPA from several pass-through agencies such as the CDC and DSHS. The table below details ARPA-funded public health grants received by Tarrant County.

GRANT NAME	COURT APPROVAL DATE	AMOUNT RECEIVED
CDC COVID-19 Health Disparities Grant	June 8, 2021	$27,241,785
DSHS – COVID-19 Vaccination Capacity Enhancement Program	April 27, 2021	$12,349,513
DSHS – CDC Public Health Crisis Response Workforce Grant	August 17, 2021	$1,500,000
TOTAL ARPA PUBLIC HEALTH GRANT FUNDING RECEIVED		$41,091,298