



COUNTY of VENTURA

COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE
Sevet Johnson, PsyD
County Executive Officer

October 11, 2022

Mike Pettit
Assistant County Executive Officer

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County Chief Financial Officer

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Assistant County Executive Officer/
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Board of Supervisors
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Subject: Receive and File an Update on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding Plan and Priorities; Approve the Funding Plan for the County's Entire \$164,326,748 State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) Allocation and Authorize the County Executive Office (CEO) to Reserve Funds for Programs and Projects as Listed in the Funding Plan; Direct the CEO to Provide Semi-Annual Updates on the Status and Progress of the ARPA Funding Plan

Recommendations:

- 1) Receive and file an update regarding the County of Ventura's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding Plan and priorities
- 2) Approve the Funding Plan for the County's entire \$164,326,748 State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) allocation and authorize the County Executive Office (CEO) to reserve funds for programs and projects as listed in the Funding Plan
- 3) Direct the County Executive Office to provide semi-annual ARPA updates to the Board of Supervisors on the status of the Funding Plan

Fiscal Mandates/Impacts:

Mandatory:	No
Source of Funding:	American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF)
Funding Match Required:	None
Impact on Other Department(s):	General Services Agency, Public Works Agency, Health Care Agency, Human Services Agency, District Attorney's Office, Ventura County Animal Services, Ventura County Sheriff's Office

Discussion:

On November 16, 2021, your Board was presented a report by the County Executive Office (CEO) on the County's preliminary Funding Plan and priorities for the approximately \$164M in direct State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) funding the County expected to receive through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The November 2021 update followed a previous report to your Board on October 5, 2021 that discussed the approximately \$392M in federal, state, and local funds that had been expended by the County to date on COVID-19 response and recovery, as well as information and background on ARPA and the SLFRF.

On April 26, 2022, your Board authorized the CEO to reserve \$65.3M in SLFRF funds for various additional future projects. Taking together the approximately \$7.4M in SLFRF funding approved for projects by your Board prior to the April recommendation, and the total \$65.3M in SLFRF funding from the April recommendation, this left approximately \$91.6M of the County's total \$164M SLFRF allocation remaining to consider for funding additional programs and projects.

Since the April 2022 report considerable effort has been made in crafting the complete ARPA Funding Plan before your Board today. This plan represents over 18 months of work by our office in partnership with multiple County agencies, community-based organizations, stakeholders, and the public at large, to engage, survey, intake, review, analyze, and recommend the programs and projects ultimately included in the recommended ARPA Funding Plan.

These efforts include:

- Discussions with local non-profits including the Ventura County Economic Development Collaborative (EDC), First 5 Ventura County (F5VC), the Ventura County Taxpayers Association (VCTA), the Ventura County Community Foundation (VCCF) and the Complete Count Committee, and the Ventura County Economic Vitality Strategic Plan (EVSP) Committee
- Public engagement through the County of Ventura's ARPA multilingual website and public survey, with tri-lingual translation and interpretation made available in Spanish, English, and Indigenous Languages during Board Meetings in addition to assistance from the Complete Count Committee
- Review and assessment of the over 600+ survey responses through the May 1, 2022 survey period
- Issued a "Call for Projects" for County agencies and review and assessment of the 100+ project ideas from departments, agencies, and staff
- Development of ARPA project evaluation criteria with support from the SLFRF Advisory Team and in consultation with the County's COVID-19 consultant Ernst & Young

- Additional engagement and discussions with stakeholders and potential partners including the California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (CPHEN), California State University Channel Islands (CSUCI), Ventura College (VCCCD), Women's Economic Ventures (WEV), the Housing Trust Fund Ventura County (HTFVC) & Ventura County Housing Coalition (VCHC), among others
- Ongoing identification of potential opportunities, programs, and projects for funding
- Continued coordination, oversight, and management of the SLFRF federal award to ensure County compliance with U.S. Treasury guidance and requirements
- Active monitoring of ever-changing and evolving U.S. Treasury Guidance including updated Compliance & Reporting Guidance on June 10, June 17, August 15, and September 20, 2022; Updates to the Final Rule & FAQs on July 27, 2022; and updated Eligibility Guidance regarding uses towards Affordable Housing on August 10, 2022

The Funding Plan:

Before your Board today is a recommendation to approve the complete and comprehensive APRA Funding Plan for the \$164,326,748 in SLFRF Funding the County received from the U.S. Treasury through the American Rescue Plan Act of March 11, 2021. The full list of programs and projects is provided in Exhibit 1.

Following the parallel path described to your Board during the November 2021 update of identifying immediate opportunities while also finalizing the funding framework, the Funding Plan represents a blend of both general conceptual spending areas as well as specific defined programs and projects, many with already identified project partners.

This comprehensive funding recommendation is the result of months of deliberate engagement, thoughtful review, and thorough assessment by our office with support from the SLFRF Advisory Team – which includes the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; County leadership; and the County's COVID-19 consultant Ernst & Young; all with your Board's priorities as guiding principles:

- Measured approach, one-time projects, maximize funding
- Public Health & Mental Health
- Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness
- Homelessness & Housing
- Infrastructure Needs
- Early Learning Initiatives/Childcare
- Economic Recovery
- Parks & Recreation Capital Improvements
- Disadvantaged Communities in the County Unincorporated Area
- Arts Community

- General Plan Programs

The list of projects and programs in the Funding Plan reflects input and feedback from all corners of the County including numerous community-based organizations, trusted leaders within the County government, and the public at large.

Delivery of the Funding Plan:

Similar to the approval from your Board on April 26, 2022 to authorize the CEO to reserve portions of the SLFRF funds for future programs and projects, our office is recommending today that your Board authorize the CEO to reserve the County's entire SLFRF allocation of \$164,326,748 as detailed in the Funding Plan in Exhibit 1.

The purpose of this recommendation to reserve and set aside ARPA funds is to signal to the community, as well as potential project partners, your Board's commitment to funding these programs and projects using ARPA and SLFRF.

While the amounts being recommended to your Board today are best faith estimates aligned to projects with general objectives, staff will return to your Board for final project approvals, including approval of any agreements and budgetary adjustments, when the specific project scope has been determined and the final estimated cost has been identified. The recommendation today, if approved, will enable staff to begin the process of working with the related project stakeholders and start the formal project development process including final scope, design, budget, potential environmental reviews, and timeline.

As part of the funding plan, our office is recommending your Board authorize the CEO to allocate a portion of the SLFRF funding identified in the Funding Plan in the amount of \$4,883,748 as contingency funds in support of only those projects within the Funding Plan. As the amounts in the Funding Plan are best faith estimates, and many are infrastructure or construction type projects, it is reasonable to anticipate some projects in the Funding Plan will have unforeseen and unplanned expenses that will cause the final cost to be above the current estimates. By leaving a portion of SLFRF available as contingency, this will help mitigate the impact of any potential overruns and the need for additional funding from other sources. If any contingency funds remain as the County moves forward with the Funding Plan and moves closer to the ARPA and SLFRF requirement that funds are obligated by Dec 31, 2024 and expended by Dec 31, 2026, our office will present to your Board a recommendation for these funds prior to those dates.

Regular ARPA Updates:

As a priority for your Board and as part of completing projects within the ARPA Funding Plan, staff recommends your Board direct the CEO to provide semi-annual updates on the progress and status of the ARPA Funding Plan. This will allow for transparency and

accountability in delivering on the objectives for your Board for ARPA and SLFRF, in addition to providing staff an opportunity to seek guidance and direction in case any changes or refinement to the Funding Plan are needed.

We wish to thank those that supported and helped our office with the recommendation and development of the Funding Plan before your Board today, and we look forward to the opportunity to continue to the discussion with your Board on the County's ARPA SLFRF priorities, process, and Funding Plan. For questions on this item please contact Scott Powers at 805-677-8761 or Dr. Sevet Johnson at 805-654-2681.



Scott Powers
Senior Deputy Executive Officer



Sevet Johnson, PsyD
County Executive Officer