



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 21-1024A, Version: 1

Subject:

Ratification of acceptance of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) federal stimulus funds for Emergency Rental Assistance and authorization for County Administrator to accept the Fiscal Recovery Funds and other ARPA funds that may be available at a later date.

Recommended Action:

Ratification of the acceptance of ARPA federal stimulus funds for the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA2) program:

- ARPA section 3201(a) provides for funding to support emergency rental assistance funds administered by local governments.
- This program supplements funding provided under the Consolidated Appropriations Act.
- The County Administrator accepted the ERA2 funds totaling \$24,395,835.40 via electronic submission through the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) portal on May 7, 2021.
- While the Board had specifically delegated authority to the County Administrator to accept such funds via resolution on January 26, 2021, that authority expired at 3:00pm on May 7, 2021 when the Local State of Emergency lapsed.

Authorization for the County Administrator to accept ARPA Fiscal Recovery Funds:

- ARPA section 9901 provides for funding of the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund.
- The County allocation is \$189,381,543.00.
- To receive funds, the County must submit the attached signed acceptance via Treasury portal.
- These funds are intended to provide eligible state, local, territorial, and Tribal governments with a substantial infusion of resources to meet pandemic response needs and rebuild a stronger, and more equitable economy as the country recovers

Authorization for the County Administrator to accept other ARPA funds that may be available at a later date:

- ARPA is a \$1.9 trillion stimulus package intended to provide direct relief to Americans, contain COVID-19, and rescue the economy. As such, it includes dozens of programs for which funding may be available to Pinellas County, either directly from the federal government or as a pass through from the State of Florida or another entity.
- This authorization will enable the County Administrator to take action as defined by the disbursing entity to accept such funds and such terms as may be required for the purposes of receiving ARPA funds where the analysis of County Administration shows that all requirements of such program can be met.
- Acceptance of future ARPA funds will be reported on the receipt and file report.

Strategic Plan:

These actions align with all goal areas of the Strategic Plan.

Summary:

The ARPA provided several areas for funding that are or may become available to the County for various programs or needs. The currently available funds are for the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA2) Program and the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. Treasury is responsible for disseminating the funds and requires that acceptance of these funds be accomplished via an acceptance form that contains and acknowledges the federal requirements attached to each of these sources of funds.

Background Information:

ERA2 provides for funding available to the County to provide assistance to eligible households through existing or newly created rental assistance programs under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, which was enacted on March 11, 2021. At least 90 percent of awarded funds must be used for direct financial assistance, including rent, rental arrears, utilities and home energy costs, utilities and home energy costs arrears, and other expenses related to housing. Remaining funds are available for housing stability services, including case management and other services intended to keep households stably housed. ERA2 funds generally expire on September 30, 2025.

On May 10, 2021, Treasury announced the launch of the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, established by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, to provide \$350 billion in emergency funding for eligible state, local, territorial, and Tribal governments. Treasury also released details on how these funds can be used to respond to acute pandemic response needs, fill revenue shortfalls among these governments, and support the communities and populations hardest-hit by the COVID-19 crisis.

According to Treasury's released information statement, Treasury intends this relief to:

- Support urgent COVID-19 response efforts to continue to decrease spread of the virus and bring the pandemic under control;
- Replace lost public sector revenue to strengthen support for vital public services and help retain jobs;
- Support immediate economic stabilization for households and businesses; and,
- Address systemic public health and economic challenges that have contributed to the unequal impact of the pandemic on certain populations.

The Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds provide substantial flexibility for each jurisdiction to meet local needs-including support for households, small businesses, impacted industries, essential workers, and the communities hardest-hit by the crisis. These funds also deliver resources that recipients can invest in building, maintaining, or upgrading their water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure.

The ERA2 Funds are conditioned upon spending, tracking, and reporting the funds in accordance with the terms referenced in the U.S. Department of the Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Acceptance including Award Terms and Conditions.

The Local Fiscal Recovery Funds are conditioned upon spending, tracking, and reporting the funds in accordance with the terms referenced in the U.S. Department of the Treasury Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Acceptance including Award Terms and Conditions.

Programs associated with other aspects of ARPA have not yet been defined. Several federal stimulus programs have required short turnaround times for acceptance funds.

Fiscal Impact:

ERA2 funds totaling \$24,395,835.40 were not anticipated in the development of the FY21 Adopted Budget and a budget amendment may be brought forward to appropriate the portion anticipated to be expended during this fiscal year. Remaining funds will be held in reserve and budgeted based on anticipated expenditures in future fiscal years. Funds generally expire on September 30, 2025. Local Fiscal Recovery Funds totaling \$189,381,543.00 were not anticipated in the development of the FY21 Adopted Budget and a budget amendment may be brought forward to appropriate the portion anticipated to be expended during this fiscal year. All remaining funds will be held in reserve and budgeted based on planned program expenditures in future fiscal years. 50% of the funds will be received shortly after accepting the funds. The second 50% will be received no earlier than one year after receipt of the initial funds. All funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and all funds expended by December 31, 2026. A new fund has been created within the County's accounting structure to facilitate tracking and reporting of the expenditure of these funds.

Staff Member Responsible:

Bill Berger, Director, Office of Management & Budget

Partners:

U.S. Department of the Treasury

Attachments:

U.S. Department of the Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Acceptance including Award Terms and Conditions

U.S. Department of the Treasury Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Acceptance including Award Terms and Conditions