

Benton County Government
Recovery Plan



**State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds
2022 Report**

Benton County Government
2021 Recovery Plan

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Executive Summary

President Joe Biden signed the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) on March 11, 2021. Within that Act, the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) provides urgent and targeted state and local funding for COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. Benton County was awarded approximately \$54 million of those funds to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and assistance with long-term recovery through 2024. An American Rescue Plan (ARP) Committee was formed internally to assist in planning how and where these funds should be appropriated.

Benton County recognizes the importance of engaging with community stakeholders for feedback to identify funding priorities and how the funding could best complement existing county mitigation efforts for the COVID-19 pandemic. The County engaged the community by hosting an online survey on the Benton County website to obtain Request for Proposals (RFPs). The period for community stakeholders to submit requests opened on August 1st and closed on October 31st. Based on the U.S. Treasury's Final Rule and guidance, Benton County has developed a comprehensive plan to establish the framework for programming this funding into eligible use categories to address local needs.

- **Public Health & Economic Recovery:** Fund COVID-19 mitigation efforts, medical expenses, behavioral health care and certain county public health, public safety, human services and other related staff.
- **Negative Economic Impact:** Respond to economic harms to workers, families, small businesses, impacted industries and rehiring of public sector workers, including County staff.
- **Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities:** Education assistance, healthy childhood environments, housing support and community violence interventions.
- **Premium Pay:** Offer additional compensation, to those – both county employees and other essential workers in the community – who have faced and continue to face the greatest health risks due to their service.
- **Infrastructure – Water/Sewer:** Make necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, invest in wastewater and stormwater infrastructure and provide unserved or underserved locations with new or expanded broadband access.

The ARP Committee and Quorum Court elected officials held several American Rescue Plan meetings open to the public where organizations presented proposals as part of Benton County's comprehensive selection process. As of June 30, 2022, The Quorum Court has awarded grant aid to nonprofit organizations negatively impacted by COVID-19 to support continued social services efforts, improvements to public facilities, law enforcement safety and communication projects, and construction of roads and bridges throughout the county. Additional details can be found in the *Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category*.

Review of proposals for Infrastructure – Water/Sewer projects is ongoing. The ARP Committee and Quorum Court are working closely with public water and sewer organization leadership to assist with identifying alternative funding sources to reduce project costs and provide improved services to communities at the lowest cost possible.

Project proposals approved in 2022 include:

- Grants in aid to 20 Benton County nonprofit organizations
- Bank stabilization and wastewater improvement projects
- Emergency services equipment and communications systems upgrades
- Public Facility building improvements to prevent the spread of COVID-19
- Body and vehicle cameras for law enforcement to improve public safety

Project proposals under current consideration include:

- Funding assistance for investments in water/sewer infrastructure

County leadership officials continue to take a systematic approach in selection of projects in order to ensure additional funding is available to meet future needs as the influx of COVID-19 cases resurface throughout the region. Complete public transparency of this budget framework remains a top priority. In support of this effort, the county will provide communications via its website, press releases, and partnering community organizations.

Uses of Funds

Benton County leadership is taking a systematic and deliberate approach to planning for the use of its allocation. This strategic approach allows Benton County to ensure that all spending

decisions support an equitable and robust recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. It further provides Benton County an opportunity to review alternate federal, state, and local assistance to avoid potential duplication of other available funding.

To date, Benton County has spent or committed more than \$24 million for Public Health, Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities, Premium Pay, Infrastructure – Water/Sewer and Administrative costs. Funding will be utilized to address concerns such as vaccination clinics, testing, contact tracing, prevention in congregate settings, premium pay for essential workers, personal protective equipment, medical expenses, air quality improvements, improvements to public health and safety communication systems, stormwater, bank stabilization and criminal justice facilities and equipment that will assist in combating crime and reducing the spread of COVID-19.

An overview of each individual project by eligible use category has been provided below.

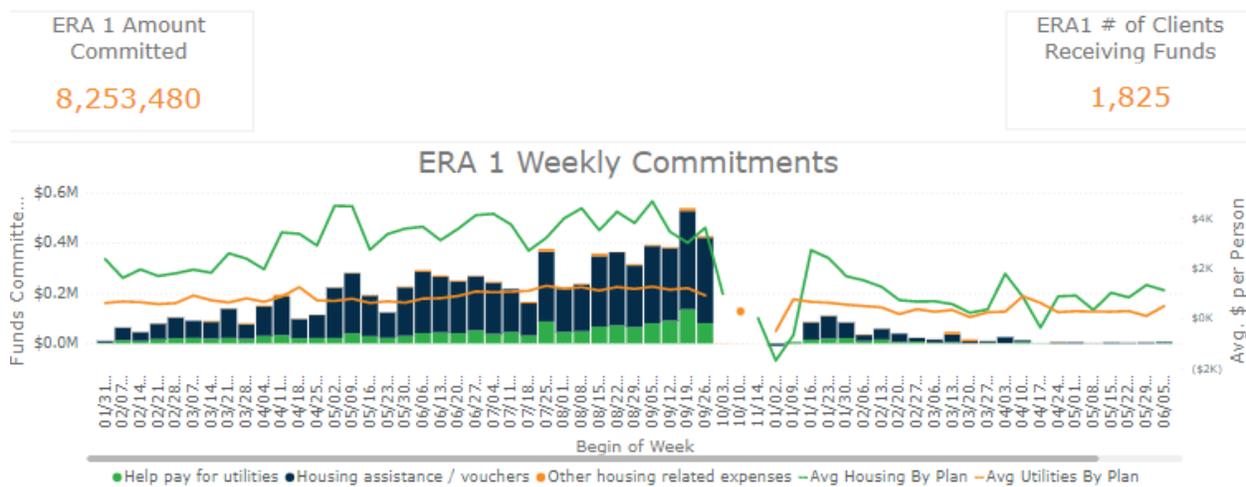
| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Public Health (EC 1) | |
| <i>COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics and Survey</i> | \$213,000 |
| <i>AWIN Channel Expansion/CENCOM Backup Console</i> | \$1,662,502 |
| <i>Personal Protective Equipment</i> | \$33,335 |
| <i>County Jail HVAC Replacement</i> | \$1,035,000 |
| <i>Phase I - Design - CJ Triage Intake Building</i> | \$100,000 |
| <i>Volunteer Fire Departments (ACT 833)</i> | \$1,056,000 |
| <i>County Jail Annual expense for Medical Services</i> | \$1,150,000 |
| <i>Benton County Sick Enhanced Payroll</i> | \$176,616 |
| <i>Benton Morgue Trailer</i> | \$95,000 |
| <i>Benton County Ventilation Improvements</i> | \$1,642,500 |
| <i>Benton County COVID-19 Employee Health Expenses</i> | \$876,558.88 |
| Negative Economic Impacts (EC 2) | |
| <i>Grants in Aid to Nonprofits</i> | \$5,000,557 |
| Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities (EC 3) | |
| <i>Body and Vehicle Cameras</i> | \$648,594 |
| Premium Pay (EC 4) | |
| <i>Premium Pay for Benton County Employees</i> | \$4,179,372 |
| <i>Premium Pay for Public Sector</i> | \$337,171 |

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Infrastructure (EC 5) | |
| <i>Benton County Bank Stabilization/Restoration/Stormwater</i> | \$859,104 |
| Revenue Replacement (EC 6) | |
| <i>Provision of Government Services</i> | \$10,000,000 |
| Administrative (EC 7) | |
| <i>Administrative Expenses</i> | \$408,516 |

In addition to American Rescue Plan Funding, Benton County was also awarded federal recovery funds for **Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA)** and has continued its partnership with Hark to offer rental assistance to residents within our jurisdiction.

Benton County received two installments of Federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) funds. The first through the Consolidated Appropriations Act (\$8,364,838.50 - ERA1) and the second through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) (\$6,618,705.40 - ERA2). Hark disbursed all funding of the initial two installments to households in need in Benton County.

In March 2022, the county received a second installment of ERA1 funding for \$20 million as part of a ERA1 Reallocation Disbursement to continue its support efforts. A detailed overview of Hark Benton County ERA data can be accessed at <https://www.harknwa.com/benton-county-era/> and seen in the charts below.





As businesses in Benton County return to normal operations and the population enters the final stages of recovery due to COVID-19, Hark will end support through the ERA program at the end of December of 2022. However, Hark will continue to provide referrals for those in need through its original business services. Residents can connect via their website, <https://www.harknwa.com/> for further information.

Promoting equitable outcomes

Benton County will prioritize all competitive proposals that serve a disproportionately impacted community. Projects submitted for funding consideration through non-profit organizations and utility companies (water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure) will specify goals for moving historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected groups. Reviewers will also identify strategies for equitable access and distribution and specific, measurable goals for outcomes. This criterion will be a component of the merit review process for evaluating proposals.

Goals: Based on the variety of projects that have been submitted for consideration, the County’s recovery efforts will serve several historically underserved, marginalized, or adversely affected groups. Potential projects to reduce traditional barriers related to housing, food, education, transportation, employment, and water/sewer infrastructure for disadvantaged groups are all under consideration.

Awareness: Benton County is experienced in direct outreach and working with non-profit partners to create awareness of opportunities made available through federal funding

programs. Depending on the program, outreach methods enacted by the County and its partners include, but are not limited to, social media, press releases, county website postings, and outreach through non-profit organizations.

Access and Distribution: Project selection and design will dictate the precise nature of services and requirements for participation. However, all reasonable efforts will be made to remove any barriers to access. Benton County and any sub-recipients of beneficiaries will comply with all applicable non-discrimination regulations.

Outcomes: Programs will be selected based on its ability to satisfy the greatest need in effecting recovery. Program selection will ultimately focus on effective delivery of services to the intended recipients to create positive, long-term investment and foster lasting change. The county will monitor program outcomes through quarterly reporting for all organizations that receive American Rescue Plan funding.

Negative Economic Impacts (EC 2):

In recent months, several nonprofit organizations have been selected for funding that will address Negative Economic Impacts, including food access, homelessness, job training, transportation assistance, and child care access. These proposed programs would fill specific needs for traditionally disadvantaged populations and represent long-term investments designed to promote equity.

Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities (EC 3):

Although no projects have been awarded under Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities, demographics in the areas of affordable housing support, broadband access for low income, domestic violence shelters, mental health support, body/car cameras for law enforcement and critical water/sewer infrastructure indirectly benefit from funded organizations. These offered programs would fill specific needs for traditionally disadvantaged populations and represent long-term investments designed to promote equity.

Use of Qualitative and Quantitative Data

The County distributed more than \$5.8 million in grants in assistance to nonprofits that provide assistance to vulnerable communities through Benton County. These organizations will report demographic information on services provided to recipients and qualitative data on the impact of grant funding. Benton County will take similar measures to manage beneficiary awards, and track how marginalized and underserved residents are impacted by funding.

Geographic and Demographic Distribution

With regards to geographic and demographic distribution of ARPA funds, implementing organizations set equity and racial equity strategies. Targets will vary based on the unique services and clientele served by individual organizations.

Community Engagement

Benton County's ARPA Committee has held several open meetings where the public and business community leaders presented and provided updates on funding efforts. We continue to provide updates via the county's ARPA-specific webpage where information is easily accessible by community members. The Recovery Plan is published annually and accessible on the webpage. There is a community feedback link on the page where members of the public can provide comments that go directly to the ARPA Committee. The ARPA Committee uses various media outlets to keep the public informed.

Labor Practices

Several construction projects have been selected and will be described in the ***Project Inventory*** section of this report. Benton County will ensure current and future projects comply with all local, state, and federal labor practice laws, regulations, and directives. Including compliance with all laws and regulations on wages and hours, state and federal income tax, unemployment insurance, Social Security, disability insurance, workers' compensation insurance, and discrimination in employment. The County, contractors, and subcontractors will comply with all applicable federal laws, including:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d et seq.) and Treasury’s implementing regulations at 31 C.F.R. Part 22, which prohibit discrimination based on race, color, or national origin under programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 794), prohibiting discrimination based on disability under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 6101 et seq.), and Treasury’s implementing regulations at 31 C.F.R. Part 23, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance.
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 12101 et seq.), which prohibits discrimination based on disability under programs, activities, and services

Use of Evidence

The County will utilize evidence-based clearinghouses where appropriate to ensure funds achieve the desired outcomes proposed by the County or the beneficiary. To provide an evidence-based approach when determining funding priorities, the County has and will continue to pursue a high level of community and stakeholder engagement. Following the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s guidance and common practice, evidence-based interventions and projects will receive preference as the selection process for funding continues. Program and project data will be analyzed to help evaluate efficiency and effectiveness and determine if outcomes match intended goals.

Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category

| Category | | Cumulative expenditures to date (\$) | Amount spent since last Recovery Plan |
|----------|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Expenditure Category: Public Health | | |
| 1.1 | COVID-19 Vaccination | \$166,170 | \$56,500 |
| 1.2 | COVID-19 Testing | \$197 | \$197 |
| 1.3 | COVID-19 Contact Tracing | | |
| 1.4 | Prevention in Congregate Settings (Nursing Homes, Prisons/Jails, Dense Work Sites, Schools, etc.) | \$250,127 | \$249,934 |
| 1.5 | Personal Protective Equipment | \$4,377 | \$0 |

| Category | | Cumulative expenditures to date (\$) | Amount spent since last Recovery Plan |
|----------|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1.6 | Medical Expenses (including Alternative Care Facilities) | \$1,702,998 | \$245,160 |
| 1.7 | Capital Investments or Physical Plant Changes to Public Facilities that respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency | \$683,482 | \$683,482 |
| 1.8 | Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses (including Communications, Enforcement, Isolation/Quarantine) | \$431,460 | \$167,970 |
| 1.9 | Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Responding to COVID-19 | | |
| 1.10 | Mental Health Services | | |
| 1.11 | Substance Use Services | | |
| 1.12 | Other Public Health Services | | |
| 2 | Expenditure Category: Negative Economic Impacts | | |
| 2.1 | Household Assistance: Food Programs | | |
| 2.2 | Household Assistance: Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Aid | | |
| 2.3 | Household Assistance: Cash Transfers | | |
| 2.4 | Household Assistance: Internet Access Programs | | |
| 2.5 | Household Assistance: Eviction Prevention | | |
| 2.6 | Unemployment Benefits or Cash Assistance to Unemployed Workers | | |
| 2.7 | Job Training Assistance (e.g., Sectoral job-training, Subsidized Employment, Employment Supports or Incentives) | | |
| 2.8 | Contributions to UI Trust Funds* | | |
| 2.9 | Small Business Economic Assistance (General) | | |
| 2.10 | Aid to nonprofit organizations | \$705,500 | \$705,500 |
| 2.11 | Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality | | |
| 2.12 | Aid to Other Impacted Industries | | |
| 2.13 | Other Economic Support | | |
| 2.14 | Rehiring Public Sector Staff | | |
| 3 | Expenditure Category: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities | | |
| 3.1 | Education Assistance: Early Learning | | |
| 3.2 | Education Assistance: Aid to High-Poverty Districts | | |
| 3.3 | Education Assistance: Academic Services | | |
| 3.4 | Education Assistance: Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Services | | |
| 3.5 | Education Assistance: Other | | |

| Category | | Cumulative expenditures to date (\$) | Amount spent since last Recovery Plan |
|----------|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 3.6 | Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care | | |
| 3.7 | Healthy Childhood Environments: Home Visiting | | |
| 3.8 | Healthy Childhood Environments: Services to Foster Youth or Families Involved in Child Welfare System | | |
| 3.9. | Healthy Childhood Environments: Other | | |
| 3.10 | Housing Support: Affordable Housing | | |
| 3.11 | Housing Support: Services for Unhoused persons | | |
| 3.12 | Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance | | |
| 3.13 | Social Determinants of Health: Other | | |
| 3.14 | Social Determinants of Health: Community Health Workers or Benefits Navigators | | |
| 3.15 | Social Determinants of Health: Lead Remediation | | |
| 3.16 | Social Determinants of Health: Community Violence Interventions | \$648,594 | \$648,594 |
| 4 | Expenditure Category: Premium Pay | | |
| 4.1 | Public Sector Employees | \$2,179,372 | \$1,418,896 |
| 4.2 | Private Sector: Grants to other employers | \$106,219 | \$62,026 |
| 5 | Expenditure Category: Infrastructure | | |
| 5.1 | Clean Water: Centralized wastewater treatment | | |
| 5.2 | Clean Water: Centralized wastewater collection and conveyance | | |
| 5.3 | Clean Water: Decentralized wastewater | | |
| 5.4 | Clean Water: Combined sewer overflows | | |
| 5.5 | Clean Water: Other sewer infrastructure | | |
| 5.6 | Clean Water: Stormwater | | |
| 5.7 | Clean Water: Energy conservation | | |
| 5.8 | Clean Water: Water conservation | | |
| 5.9 | Clean Water: Nonpoint source | | |
| 5.10 | Drinking water: Treatment | | |
| 5.11 | Drinking water: Transmission & distribution | | |
| 5.12 | Drinking water: Transmission & distribution: lead remediation | | |
| 5.13 | Drinking water: Source | | |
| 5.14 | Drinking water: Storage | | |
| 5.15 | Drinking water: Other water infrastructure | | |
| 5.16 | Broadband: "Last Mile" projects | | |
| 5.17 | Broadband: Other projects | | |
| 6 | Expenditure Category: Revenue Replacement | | |

| Category | | Cumulative expenditures to date (\$) | Amount spent since last Recovery Plan |
|----------|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 6.1 | Provision of Government Services | | |
| 7 | Administrative and Other | | |
| 7.1 | Administrative Expenses | \$51,161 | \$36,389 |
| 7.2 | Evaluation and data analysis | | |
| 7.3 | Transfers to Other Units of Government | | |
| 7.4 | Transfers to Nonentitlement Units (States and Territories only) | | |

Project Inventory

Recovery plans will include evidence and evaluation-based approaches for applicable programs and provide key performance indicators for each major project. Data collection follows guidance referenced in the Department of Treasury SLFRF Compliance and Reporting Guidance manual.

Current Projects:

Project 1.4-1: Phase I - Design - CJ Triage Intake Building

Funding amount: \$100,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.4, Prevention in Congregate Settings

Project overview

Funds will be used complete the initial assessment for the proposed Triage Intake Facility to support quarantine of new inmates and isolation of those testing positive for COVID-19 to mitigate the spread of the virus to the general population. Facility will also screen and identify inmates in need of additional mental health services.

Project 1.4-2: Jail IEQ Improvements

Funding amount: \$1,839,600

Project Expenditure Category: 1.4, Prevention in Congregate Settings

Project overview

The interior lining of the rectangular ductwork in the facility is beginning to fail, causing restrictions in the ductwork which contributes to low airflow and pressure imbalances in the building. Project will aid in improving internal air quality for staff and inmates.

Project 1.4-3: Jail HVAC

Funding amount: \$1,035,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.4, Prevention in Congregate Settings

Project overview

The jail facility has HVAC equipment and infrastructure nearing or past the end of its useful life. Project funds will be used to replace and improve the HVAC system at the county jail to support prevention efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in congregate living spaces.

Project 1.4-4: Benton County Facilities Improvement and Maintenance

Funding amount: \$1,642,500

Project Expenditure Category: 1.4, Prevention in Congregate Settings

Project overview

This is a public health project that will aid in the improvement of air quality throughout the Benton County Administration building and reduce contact with surfaces in congregate areas. Project will fund the installation of air ventilation system replacement and upgrades, installation of air purification system, and construction of separate staff and public restrooms in the judicial tower.

Project 1.5-1: Personal Protective Equipment

Funding amount: \$33,335

Project Expenditure Category: 1.5, Personal Protective Equipment

Project overview

Access to and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is a vital tool to mitigate the impact of the pandemic for those in the County's direct care, for employees, and the public utilizing County services. Funds will be used to continue providing the County departments the ability to mitigate the impact of the pandemic through PPE purchases and utilization.

Project 1.6-3: Benton County COVID-19 Healthcare

Funding amount: \$876,559

Project Expenditure Category: 1.6, Medical Expenses

[Project overview](#)

This program provides coverage of medical expenses for County employees directly impacted by the COVID-19 epidemic. Medical costs to uninsured individuals; deductibles, co-pays, or other costs not covered by insurance; costs for uncompensated care at a health provider; emergency medical response costs; and, for recipients with a self-funded health insurance plan, excess health insurance costs due to COVID-19 medical care.

Project 1.6-3: Benton County Sick Enhanced Pay

Funding amount: \$176,616

Project Expenditure Category: 1.6, Medical Expenses

[Project overview](#)

County employees infected with COVID-19 were paid sick pay during the self-isolation in accordance to sick pay policy. This program aligns with eligible uses provided in the Final Rule that allow assistance for paid sick, medical and family leave programs.

Project 1.6-3: Benton County Body Vehicle Cameras

Funding amount: \$648,594

Project Expenditure Category: 1.11, Community Violence Interventions

[Project overview](#)

The population is increasing at a record pace; about 30 people per day and expected to grow 10% by 2024. This project will aid in minimizing violent crimes due to the socioeconomic effects of COVID-19 and rapid population growth. Arkansas has experienced a 30% increase in violent crime in large metropolitan areas similar in size to Benton County. Cameras will aid in crime prevention, prosecution efforts and transparency.

Project 1.6-4: Benton County Jail Medical, Dental & Hospital

Funding amount: \$3,554,535

Project Expenditure Category: 1.6, Medical Expenses

Project overview

Due to an increase in the number of inmates contracting COVID-19, the County has provided funding to ensure professional healthcare services are provided to help mitigate infection and limit exposure to County employees. Project goal is to provide includes continued public health efforts to slow the spread of the disease and to protect individuals living in congregate facilities. Project allows the Benton County Sheriff's Office to standardize healthcare and processes, while minimizing the potential of increased cost of treatment as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Project 1.6-4: Benton County Morgue Trailer

Funding amount: \$95,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.7, Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses

Project overview

This program houses overflow from hospitals and morgue due to limited space and helps control the spread of COVID-19 infection to staff. Trailer will also serve as a resource for future outbreaks and disasters. Project provides services to prevent and mitigate COVID-19 to the general public and county staff. As COVID-19 related deaths continue, the trailer will provide the necessary space needed to maintain public health and reduce transmission.

Project 1.7-4: Benton County AWIN/Consolette

Funding amount: \$1,662,504

Project Expenditure Category: 1.7, Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses

Project overview

Funds will be used to purchase additional channels for emergency personnel. Upgrade to communications system will allow law enforcement and emergency personnel to respond to elevated public health emergencies and better coordinate response efforts. The final

rule allows for emergency operation centers and emergency response equipment (i.e., emergency response radio systems).

Project 1.8-1: ACT 833

Funding amount: \$263,490

Project Expenditure Category: 1.8, Over COVID-19 Public Health Expenses

Project overview

Act 833 provides funding for improvements to qualified volunteer fire departments. Benton County will provide matching funds to ensure a sufficient level of qualified firefighters and equipment is available to respond to public health emergencies.

Project 2.1-1: UA Divisions of Agriculture – Cooperative Extension Services

Funding amount: \$79,500

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Project overview

Healthy Meals and Wheels proposes to improve the health of limited resource families in Benton County through nutrition programming and bicycle education. Adults will attend a free six-session class focused on healthy eating and cooking, making good use of food resources, and the importance of being a physically active family. Classes would be offered through the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

Project 2.10-1: Benton County Fair Sustainability

Funding amount: \$25,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Project overview

Funding provided to Benton County Fair Association will assist in providing the following improvements: 1. Upgraded HVAC thermostat with greater consumer-friendly programmable controls. 2. Upgrade and replace nonworking lighting across the campus and in buildings with LED lights to decrease energy use and help reduce our utility expenses. 3. Improve our gates at two main entrances to better accommodate traffic, and security at our facility. 4. Install a video security system on the campus. 5. Install campus

wide Public Announcement system to communicate with guests on our property in the event of an emergency.

Project 2.10-2: Individual Eye Examinations and Eyeglasses

Funding amount: \$1,300

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Project overview

Funding was awarded to Gravette Lions Club to assist low-income residents with eye examinations and the purchase of eyeglasses. The nonprofit was unable to host annual fundraisers that assisted in providing this annual service due to the negative impact of COVID-19.

Project 2.10-3: Ventilation Improvements

Funding amount: \$47,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Project overview

Funding was awarded to the Sunshine School and Development Center to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to keep staff and children safe. Project will provide UV lighting in ventilation system to control the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious pathogens.

Project 2.10-4: Community Alternative Program (CAP), Benton County

Funding amount: \$175,200

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Project overview

Returning Home provides an alternative sanction to incarceration in NWA. Individuals will participate in: Trauma Informed care through trained counselors, Relapse Prevention Programming, Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, Medication Management, Health and Wellness goals, Housing, Case Management, Healthy Relationships classes and other various services.

Project 2.10-5: *Safe Nights of Shelter During COVID-19*

Funding amount: \$54,600

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

[Project overview](#)

The Northwest Arkansas Women’s Shelter provides safe shelter and support services for adults and children fleeing domestic violence in Benton County. Organization operates a secure facility located in Rogers, in which shelter is provided for more than 300 people (adults and children of all genders) every year. Annually provides more than 5,000 nights of safe shelter in Rogers.

Project 2.10-6: *Gravette Public Library Hotspot Lending*

Funding amount: \$2,400

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

[Project overview](#)

The Gravette Public School District catchment area includes a large portion of Northwestern Benton County. Funding for this program will allow residents without connection to broadband services. The Gravette Public Library serves this area and is a vital resource for internet connection to facilitate student virtual learning as well as work from home in light of an ineffective and spotty broadband infrastructure.

Project 2.10-7: *Gravette Public Library Hotspot Lending*

Funding amount: \$43,802

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

[Project overview](#)

This proposal mitigates the economic impact of Covid-19 to the Hope Cancer Resources’ Patient Transportation Program, specifically transporting Benton County residents, for the period of March 3, 2021 through October 15, 2021, in support for vulnerable populations (Benton County cancer patients) to access medical or public health services. The proposal also includes costs to respond to the Covid-19 public health emergency for prevention or mitigation tactics to enable social distancing, and

enhanced cleaning efforts for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and added sanitation measures utilized in transporting Benton County patients. Finally, it facilitates replacement of one of three vans with over 200,000 miles.

Project 2.10-8: NWA Food Bank

Funding amount: \$500,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Project overview

As a result of projected population growth in Northwest Arkansas over the next 25 years, the Northwest Arkansas Food Bank is estimating a need for as many as 20 million meals by 2045. However, inadequate space for increased distribution, staff support and expanded program offerings has left NWAFB unable to meet current or future clients' needs within its current space constraints. In order to fulfill its mission to nourish Northwest Arkansas communities by feeding hungry people, NWAFB must make significant capital improvements to increase food distribution and improve the quality and reach of its services.

Project 2.10-9: Northwest Arkansas Industries for Education

Funding amount: \$145,442

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Project overview

Due to the Pandemic, the manufacturing industry had loss of skilled workers that furthered the skills gap. Difficulties incurred from COVID 19 resulted in many individuals in the Manufacturing Industry having restrictions that limited their ability to receive third party training. The goal of this project is to close the skills gap by providing support and training to current manufacturing employees and also by introducing new professionals to local manufacturers.

Project 2.10-10: Samaritan House Community Center

Funding amount: \$667,974

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Project overview

This project will expand critical services including social services, counseling, and dental. Streamline the process of clients needing services from many organizations, we choose to collaborate with other like-minded organizations rather than duplicate services. streamline the process of clients needing services from many organizations, we choose to collaborate with other like-minded organizations rather than duplicate services

Project 2.10-11: *Pedal It Forward*

Funding amount: \$11,800

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Project overview

Pedal It Forward aims to scale operations to put 2,000 bikes per year into the community. Recipients are children and adults in Northwest AR who cannot afford to purchase bicycles. Pedal It Forward has partnerships with several other nonprofits in the Benton County area that provides services to underserved residents.

Project 2.10-12: *Exellerate Foundation*

Funding amount: \$1,702,074

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Project overview

Upskill NWA is a new organization that will move lower-income wage earners to higher wage, high demand jobs through additional education and certification. Excellerate Foundation is incubating the organization internally, offering day-to-day guidance and support to its staff and operations. Upskill NWA provides assistance with tuition and all academic fees, as well as connects participants to additional wraparound services that will allow regular class attendance.

Project 2.10-13: *Micah 6:8 Initiative*

Funding amount: \$595,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

[Project overview](#)

The proposed day shelter and center for productivity will fill a gap in the continuum of care of homeless services in Rogers, Bentonville and surrounding area, while mitigating COVID-19 among persons experiencing homelessness, and addressing economic harm for those persons whose homelessness is related to COVID-19.

Project 2.10-14: *Boys & Girls Club of Benton County*

Funding amount: \$130,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

[Project overview](#)

Funding for the Boys & Girls Club of Benton County will assist in the following projects:

1. Upgrading ventilation systems for 7 AC units at our Bentonville club and 6 AC units at the Rogers Club.
2. Playground Improvements at our Rogers, Bentonville and Bella Vista locations including shade canopies and safety/rubber surfacing.
3. Samsung tablets for tracking of kids at all of our units

Project 2.10-15: *Illinois River Watershed Partnership*

Funding amount: \$134,650

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

[Project overview](#)

This project proposes to assist Benton County to respond to increased demand for river recreation opportunities, speeding the recovery of the tourism, travel and hospitality sectors hard-hit by COVID-19 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Project 2.10-16: *Restoration Village*

Funding amount: \$110,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

[Project overview](#)

Restoration Village is requesting support for the housing of women and children who have been impacted by domestic violence, other forms of abuse, and homelessness. Throughout the pandemic, the organization continued to provide safe shelter and life-changing services. Funds requesting funds assist with providing this shelter (utilities costs), maintaining this shelter (property manager), and caring for our residents (program director, resident aides).

Project 2.10-17: *The Salvation Army – Northwest Arkansas Command*

Funding amount: \$174,815

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

[Project overview](#)

The funding will be used to support three separate but similar responses to homelessness in Benton County. It will provide two Housing- Focused Case Management professionals for homeless service re-housing. Housing-Focused Case Managers are essential to ensuring homeless families and individuals can be rehoused.

Project 2.36: *Benton County Fire Departments*

Funding amount: \$700,817

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Aid to Other Impacted Industries

[Project overview](#)

This project will replace existing, outdated, and unrepairable SCBAs for fire departments in unincorporated Benton County receiving no support from a municipality. It will place firefighters in the most current level of respiratory Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), allowing them to perform job duties safely and efficiently.

Project 2.36-5: *Benton County Fire Departments*

Funding amount: \$39,190

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Aid to Other Impacted Industries

[Project overview](#)

Cave Springs Fire Department is replacing the current cascade system that was manufactured in 1994 and does not have the Containment Fill Station. The Fill Station is designed to contain the debris if a cylinder were to burst during the filling process. System allows the fill of two air tanks at a time with clean air.

Project 4.1-1: *Benton County Premium Pay for Employees*

Funding amount: \$4,179,372

Project Expenditure Category: 4.1, Public Sector Employees

[Project overview](#)

The County has afforded premium pay to its eligible employees who continue to protect the health and well-being of the residents during the COVID-19 pandemic and now with emerging variants.

Project 4.2-1: *Premium Pay UI Fire Departments*

Funding amount: \$876,559

Project Expenditure Category: 4.2, Private Sector: Grants to Other Employers

[Project overview](#)

Funding for this project provides premium pay for fire and emergency medical service personnel. Participating organizations include the Beaver Lake Fire and Northeast Benton County Volunteer Fire Departments.

Project 6.6-1: *Benton County Bank Stabilization/Restoration/Stormwater*

Funding amount: \$859,104

Project Expenditure Category: 5.6, Clean Water: Stormwater

[Project overview](#)

Award includes funding for several Benton County projects that include bank stabilization, stream restoration, drainage improvements, assessment and survey mapping. Funds will aid in flood mitigation and reduce erosion in high-risk areas.

Project 6.1-1: *Revenue Replacement*

Funding amount: \$10,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1, Provision of Government Services

[Project overview](#)

Under the new Treasury Final Rule, Benton County has elected to enroll in the standard revenue replacement allowance. Recipients that select the standard allowance may use that amount for traditional government services.

Project 7.1-1: *Administrative*

Funding amount: \$389,772

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1, Administrative Expenses

[Project overview](#)

The County hired a grant administrator to handle all administration aspects of the ARP funds in October 2021. The administrator will be responsible for reporting and all other administrative functions for the entirety of the grant period. Funds will also be used to purchase other items as necessary to grant administration.

Completed Projects:

Project 1.1-1: *Benton County Vaccination Clinic*

Funding amount: \$28,170

Project Expenditure Category: 1.1, COVID-19 Vaccination

[Project overview](#)

Funds assisted in providing additional vaccination locations for Benton County to mitigate or reduce the spread of COVID-19. Additional vaccination location assists in COVID-19 recovery efforts through lowered transmission rates. Program was based on guidance and recommendations by the CDC.

Project 1.1-1: *COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics and Survey*

Funding amount: \$138,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.1, COVID-19 Vaccination

[Project overview](#)

The overarching goal of this project was to increase awareness through community outreach and access to vaccinations for the purpose of minimizing the spread of COVID-19. Response is based on CDC recommendations and guidelines. The program provided vaccinations at no cost to members of the general public and residents negatively impacted in receiving equitable treatment to improve public health.

Project 1.6-1: Benton County Healthcare Expenses

Funding amount: \$876,559

Project Expenditure Category: 1.6, Medical Expenses

Project overview

This project provides Benton County funding to pay COVID-19 related healthcare expenses for employees. Funding reflects expenses incurred between March 3 – December 31, 2021.

Performance Report

Key performance indicators will be identified based on each project agreement/contract with sub-recipients and beneficiaries. Performance measurement is a core part of the County's funding process and will be tracked in accordance with the Treasury's Final Rule.

Because the Quorum Court expects to fund a large and diverse set of organizations, we will provide guidance and resources to align applicants and beneficiaries with a shared understanding of performance management. As part of this effort, the Quorum Court has adopted the following **Guiding Principles:**

- **One-Time Funding** – There is no expectation that these funds would recur in the future and shall be treated as one time rather than funding on-going commitments.
- **Nexus to Pandemic** – to comply with restrictions on funding, a nexus to the pandemic should be clearly demonstrated. These may include:
 - Pre-existing gaps- Circumstances may have existed prior to the pandemic, but the impacts or negative outcomes are exacerbated by the pandemic.

- Direct Impacts – Things that are necessary to respond to the present and immediate impacts associated with the pandemic. (may be characterized as disaster response.)
- Recovery – Items that improve or accelerate the recovery from COVID-19 for the County and its citizens or better prepare the County against future disasters.
- **Needs Based / Data Informed** – Project or Programs funding request should contain a demonstrated need and available data must be provided to properly align the funding with the need.
- **Maximize Opportunity** – The county should partner to the extent possible with cities, state or other agencies to create or support broader regional programs to stretch the impact of county funding.
- **Avoid Duplication** – Significant disaster funding has been approved at the State and Federal Level. The county should not duplicate funding unless the need shows current funding is inadequate to meet that need.
- **Prioritize Transformational Projects** -The county should prioritize projects or programs that may be transformational in solving challenges or improving its ability to serve constituents.
- **Transparency** – establish ARP website, communication tools, clear process.

Applicants must provide performance measures and describe the intended successful outcome at the proposal stage. At the evaluation, Quorum Court members will score based on whether the proposal meets the established criteria for a successful and impactful project. Finally, quarterly performance reports from beneficiaries and support from Benton County will reinforce evidence-based, data-driven implementation.