



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – March 23, 2022 Agenda Item 4

Presentation

Presentation on Plans for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds Allocated for Social Service Partnerships and Library

Recommended Council Action

Receive Presentation

Context with Key Issues

The City Council approved the City's ARPA Spending Plan on March 2, 2022, as outlined in Ordinance No. 2022-3 approving and adopting the budget for ARPA-funded projects. The list of ARPA projects to be implemented includes a Direct Cash Assistance Program in the amount of \$2,300,000 as well as \$4,000,000 on hold for new Library construction pending additional information on potential cost-saving options. Staff progress on implementation planning and cost considerations for these two projects will be the focus of the March 23rd presentation.

The City Council has directed staff to distribute the \$2.3 million allocation for direct cash assistance as rapidly as practical. The purpose of the Direct Cash Assistance Program is to provide immediate relief in the form of cash payments to vulnerable residents who were economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including residents living in rent-stabilized apartments or enrolled in income-tested assistance programs. The ARPA Manager will inform the City Council and the community of the progress made by City staff in the development of a Direct Cash Assistance Program. The update to Council on Direct Cash Assistance will touch on ARPA eligibilities, experiences of other jurisdictions, timeframes and staff recommendations.

The Council approved Library project funds in a hold status pending further review by Council. Specifically, Council requested additional information from staff on the value engineering study, construction manage recommendations, and incorporation of bid alternatives into the Request for Proposals. The Deputy Public Works Director will provide an update on the cost-saving options outlined in the value engineering study as well as feedback on the viability of those options from the construction manager and architectural team.

Council Priority

Mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the Community and City Operations
A Livable Community for All
Fiscally Sustainable Government
Environmentally Sustainable Community
Engaged, Responsive & Service-oriented Government
Community Development for an Improved & Equitable Quality of Life

Environmental Considerations

Multiple projects included in the ARPA Spending Plan will have an environmental benefit to the City and further implement the Takoma Park Climate Action Plan goals. The Library project is designed to achieve LEED Gold certification and includes numerous green features including triple-pane glazing, heat pump VAV rooftop units, solar panels, occupancy and daylight sensors, exterior shading, increased use of insulation in the building envelope, use of low-emitting materials, and building product disclosure and optimization to promote sustainable sourcing of raw materials and environmental product declarations.

Fiscal Considerations

Per federal guidance, the City has until 2024 to obligate or encumber the funds, and until the end of calendar year 2026 to fully spend down the funds; any remaining balance of the \$17.4 million not spent by that date will be returned to the State of Maryland. ARPA funds are a one-time funding source and should not be spent on recurring costs that extend beyond 2026.

Racial Equity Considerations

Targeting ARPA relief to vulnerable populations is in line with Executive Order 13985, "Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government," which laid out a federal priority to support "equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality." Both the Library project and the social services partnerships allocations aim to provide resources and supportive services at no cost to vulnerable residents in Takoma Park.

Attachments and Links

PowerPoint Presentation: Direct Cash Assistance Program and Library, March 23, 2022
[City of Takoma Park Ordinance No. 2022-3](#)