



City of Takoma Park  
Office of the City Manager

# American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Direct Cash Assistance Program

## Staff Recommendation for Contractor

**Presented By:**  
**Vernae Martin**  
**ARPA Manager**

July 20, 2022  
City Council Work Session

# Objectives and Anticipated Outcomes of Today's Presentation

- **Share staff recommendation with City Council for a contractor to administer the ARPA funded Direct Cash Assistance Program**
- **Introduction of Recommended Contractor and Overview of Expertise**
- **Obtain feedback from City Council**



# ARPA/SLFRF Eligibility Information: Direct Cash Assistance Program

- **ARPA Eligible Use Category:** To address negative economic impacts. Respond to economic harms to workers and families.
- **Treasury Enumerated Project Type: Cash Assistance**  
Use of ARPA funds for this purpose is recognized as responsive to the impacts or disproportionate impacts of COVID-19. Recipients providing enumerated uses to populations presumed to be eligible are operating consistently with the Final Rule.
- **Purpose:** Deliver assistance to workers and families, including support for unemployed workers, aid to households, and survivor's benefits for families of COVID-19 victims.
- **May use funds within a Qualified Census Tract (a low-income areas as designated by the Dept of Housing & Urban Development).**
- **Recipients may undertake projects on their own or through subrecipients which carry out eligible uses on behalf of a recipient.**
- **Funds may be used for direct and indirect administrative expenses involved in administering the program.**



# Purpose of Direct Cash Assistance Program

**Utilize \$2,300,000 of ARPA/SLFRF to assist low- and moderate-income City residents who are in need of financial assistance due to the negative economic impact of the pandemic.**

**The contractor will recruit beneficiaries, process applications and distribute Direct Cash Assistance to eligible residents.**

- **One time lump sum payment to eligible household: \$1,000**



# Program Beneficiaries

Eligible households include those with incomes of \$50,000 or less per year. In the City of Takoma Park, this represents approximately 2,131 households. A majority of these households have experienced housing cost burden.

To be impactful, City staff recommends a one-time benefit of \$1,000 per household.

Recipient households may use the benefit amount at their discretion and will not be required to report on use of funds.

The applicant pool will be available to build a City database of low- and moderate-income households.



# Scope of Work

- **Design and distribute outreach and application materials**
- **Train personnel**
- **Receive and process applications**
- **Notify eligible applicants**
- **Distribute grant funds**
- **Maintain record of funds**
- **Maintain records of households receiving grant funds to include Name/ Address**
- **Monthly progress reports**
- **Prepare and submit Final Report**



# Timeline

- **RFP Issued June 2 and Closed July 11, 2022**
- **Present staff recommendation to City Council for consideration - 7/20/22**
- Prepare draft contract for review by City Attorney
- Receive City Council approval to enter contract – 7/27/22
- Provide contract to selected contractor for ratification
- Conduct Kick-Off meeting with selected contractor – Week of August 15
- Program Launch: To begin in September



# Proposal Advertised

- **City Website, Social Media Platform, e-Mail Blast and Newsletter**
- **Maryland eMarketplace**
- **Shared with local non-profits**
- **Shared with Council Members**

**One Proposal Received from [LiveStories](#)  
Local Nonprofit Partner Org: [Shepherd's Table](#)**

**Bid Amount: \$149,900  
(6.5% of ARPA budget of \$2,300,000)**





# Working With The City

## **Kick-Off Meeting**

- Key Personnel Introductions
- Scope of Work
- Target Population
- Processes
- Reporting and Recordkeeping Requirements
- Confirm Distribution Channels/Locations

**City to Provide Guidance to Contractor Team**

**Monthly Check-In Meetings with ARPA Manager**

**Conduct Presentations to City Council**

**Submit Final Report to the City Manager's Office**



# Staff Recommendation: LiveStories & Shepherd's Table

- Manage the Direct Cash Assistance Program
- Ensure City criteria is used to identify eligible applicants
- Distribute cash assistance to eligible applicants: ACH, paper checks and/or debit card
- Contractor has experience working with local governments and with federal grant programs
- Contractor has experience administering Direct Cash Assistance programs
- Contractor will provide complete operational support for marketing and outreach, application creation and intake, eligibility verification and processing of payments



# Approach

- Shepherd's Table will partner with LiveStories in marketing and outreach efforts.
- Shepherd's Table will create and distribute marketing materials and assist LiveStories with program equity goals.
- Applications can be submitted online via an electronic assistance platform, FORWARD, by the participant themselves, or the authorized partner on behalf of the participant.
- The frequency and location of distribution of grant funds will be determined during the Kick-Off meeting with the City and LiveStories. Proposed distribution: minimally, 12 in-person events held evenings and weekends.
- Before and after the program goes *live*, the team will establish partnerships with additional community-based organizations that have a local presence in the City and work closely with organizations serving the target audience. This level of partnership and engagement will ensure we can amplify the reach of the program throughout the community.



# INTRODUCTIONS

## LiveStories Staff Recommended Contractor

- Raven McShane
- Kelsey Martin

