



Council Question and Answer

Related To

Item #2

Meeting Date

May 6, 2021

Additional Answer Information

Approve an ordinance to accept \$97,900,000 in funds from the Federal government, United States Department of Treasury, American Rescue Plan; and amending the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Financial Services Department Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund (Ordinance No. 20200812-001) to appropriate \$44,800,000 for public health expenses related to the Coronavirus disease outbreak and recovery efforts and for community navigators to support the community in accessing funding available through the American Rescue Plan.

QUESTION/ANSWER: Council Member Tovo’s Office

1) Resolution No. 20210325-111 stated: *Prior to conducting the other critical work directed in this Resolution, the City manager shall prioritize staffing resources to assist individuals and local businesses in identifying and applying to applicable federal assistance programs. The staffing resources dedicated to this action shall mirror the need and demand within the community for these services.*

Please provide an update on the responsive work conducted thus far in response to that direction. Please provide a detailed breakdown of the \$500k earmarked for navigation services. Please provide a list of “community navigators and champions” who will receive these funds for the purposes of navigation.

City departments do not have internal staff capacity to provide direct technical assistance to individuals and local businesses that are applying for federal assistance programs. The City would need to recruit and hire several multilingual full-time staff with expertise in federal relief programs to provide high-quality technical assistance to individuals and businesses. The lack of internal staff capacity is why City staff propose a Community Navigator system for technical assistance.

A Community Navigator model is a recommended best practice by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Under this system, Community Navigators and Community Champions will ensure resources are available and accessible to Austin-based federal program applicants, especially those located in zip codes most disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Outreach and engagement will prioritize potential applicants who face more barriers to applying for and receiving financial assistance – including language access barriers, barriers to banking with mainstream financial institutions, and barriers associated with historic and contemporary discrimination.

Staff anticipate a localized application support system will cost \$500,000. This estimate is based on the following:

- \$450,000 to retain navigators who can provide application assistance for local businesses.
- \$25,000 to retain five community champions who can amplify City outreach and engagement with local stakeholders.
- \$25,000 for contingency and ancillary costs (e.g. additional hours for application assistance, purchase of software for enhanced virtual stakeholder engagement, additional translation and interpretative services, etc.)

City staff will follow the City's procurement procedures for soliciting interests from potential Community Navigators and Community Champions. Entities seeking to serve in either role must be able to demonstrate a strong and deeply established relationship among historically marginalized communities and businesses, non-profits, and creatives; in-house capacity to provide technical assistance and/or stakeholder engagement services; and demonstrated experience providing technical assistance and wrap-around services to small businesses, non-profits, and/or creatives.

- 2) *Please provide a detailed breakdown for the \$44.8 million allocated for funding non-congregate shelters, isolation facilities, etc. For initiatives such as the AISD Caregiver Meals and EAT, please indicate not just how much is allocated per program, but the timetable for delivering those programs.*

The APH expense projections were \$57m for COVID operations January-September 2021, with the exception of ProLodge which was budgeted through April 2021. The \$44.8m is the difference once FEMA reimbursable items are removed from APH and HSEM budget needs.

The below includes operations through September 2021, unless otherwise noted.

COVID testing operations (\$21.6) including technology for the public portal (\$4m), contracts for the operation of the drive thru testing location, home based testing and facility based testing (\$6.3), staffing agencies for community testing sites (\$175k), medical supplies (\$1m) and lab expense (\$9.9m);

Protection of Vulnerable Populations (\$1.8m) for the operation of hygiene stations, ProLodge housekeeping and guest services staffing;

Non-congregate shelters (\$5.7m) for all ProLodge operations including leases, security, fencing rental, laundry, food, staffing, taxi vouchers, sanitization/cleaning, utilities and pest control for City owned properties through April 2021;

Food Assistance (\$6.4m) EAT and Caregiver meals

Public Health and Safety Measures (\$13.9M) includes temporary staffing related to epidemiology & public health preparedness (approximately \$6M) and contractual/commodity costs of \$6.7M which include temporary staffing agencies for testing sites, marketing media & promotional items and PPE distribution for the public and childcare providers.

Miscellaneous category (\$7.4M) includes temporary staffing related to administrative functions, social services, and health equity & community engagement (\$6.4M). The remaining \$1.0 million is related to contractual and commodity costs that support these functions such as computer and office equipment for temporary staff roles, facility modification and retrofitting to reduce exposure and vehicle and storage rental.

EAT and Caregiver Meals

Funding for both of these pandemic related initiatives is budgeted through September 30, 2021. The EAT initiative operates as part of the COVID emergency response under the EOC. The delivery of emergency food services is continually assessed in relation to ongoing needs and available resources. To date, 990,384 shelf stable and prepared meals have been distributed.

The term for the AISD Caregiver meal agreement is scheduled to end on September 30, 2021. It is anticipated that there will be approximately \$665K available for summer meals for caregivers. To prepare for the start of the new school year, AISD plans to distribute the last curbside meals the week of August 1, 2021. To date, 1,335,106 caregiver meals have been distributed.

- 3) *Please identify for which programs we anticipate receiving an estimated \$36.7 million of reimbursement by FEMA. Please see the following table for a breakdown of the estimated cost and FEMA reimbursement of the \$36.7 million.*

Cost Category	Estimated Costs	Estimated FEMA Recovery	Estimated FEMA Reimbursement %	American Rescue Plan	Department	Expense Description
COVID-19 Emergency Management	\$ 7.6	\$ 4.1	54%	\$ 3.5	HSEM	PPE inventory, administrative support (temps, contracts), PIO, Infusion Center
Protection of Vulnerable Populations	1.8	1.1	60%	0.7	APH	Homeless services
Testing	21.7	5.0	23%	16.8	APH	Lab costs, test kits, testing site operations & support, software & support
Shelters & Quarantine Facilities						
Non-congregate Shelters	5.8	-	0%	5.8	APH	Protective lodges
Isolation Facilities	9.6	8.8	92%	0.8	HSEM	IsoFac #1 & #2 plus temporary IsoFac #3 stood up during Winter Storm Uri
Alternate Care Site	6.8	5.1	75%	1.7	HSEM	Site assets & operations
Public Health & Safety Measures	13.9	7.6	55%	6.3	APH	Epidemiology & public health preparedness, staffing contracts, PPE, media
Miscellaneous Items	7.4	5.1	69%	2.3	APH	Community services, disease prevention & health promotion, health equity & community engagement, administration
Food Assistance						
Eating Apart Together (EAT) Program	2.5	-	0%	5 ^{2.}	APH	
AISD Caregiver Meals Program	3.9	-	0%	3.9	APH	
Totals	\$ 81.0	\$ 36.7		\$ 44.3		