

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) AT A GLANCE



Toni Preckwinkle
Cook County Board President

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A Letter from the President

To the Residents of Cook County:

The American Rescue Plan Act is one of the most impactful pieces of federal legislation passed since the New Deal in the 1930s. This federal funding through the American Rescue Plan Act allocated over \$1 billion dollars to Cook County, which will help us recover from the pandemic and continue building a sustainable, affordable, and equitable future for our residents.

The past decade of passing balanced budgets for Cook County has not been easy. We have had to make some difficult decisions—budget cuts, layoffs, and paring back nonessential services to be good fiscal stewards. Local governments across the country have struggled with the same problem: declining revenues and rising costs have led to austerity budgets that can't meet the rising needs of our residents and do not allow government to fulfill its role.

Alongside this challenge, the divide of wealth inequality has only deepened in America. Housing, healthcare, and transportation have become less affordable in every major city. While I am proud of the work Cook County has done to increase access to affordable healthcare, housing, and public transportation, in reality, we needed a radical infusion of money to build a better infrastructure for these rising needs—and President Biden delivered with the American Rescue Plan Act.

This pandemic laid bare the inequities that pervade our society. People of color, working families, single mothers, immigrants, and people with disabilities suffered the worst of this crisis. They struggled to pay their rent, keep their shop doors open, find childcare, and stay healthy.

Cook County strives to center equity as we serve residents, as laid out in our 2018 strategic plan, the [Cook County Policy Roadmap](#). We adhere to the values of equity, engagement, and excellence, and we have taken that approach to our immediate response and long-term recovery efforts. Racial equity shapes our response to this pandemic, and our holistic approach to providing services into the future.

With racial equity at the center, this report outlines our immediate projects and transformative initiatives launching with this funding. Because of the hard work we've done over the past decade, Cook County is able to invest the vast majority of this \$1 billion directly into community programs to help our residents, businesses, and local governments thrive. In the pages to follow, ambitious projects have the potential to transform Cook County: a Guaranteed Income Program, an initiative to abolish medical debt, a new Department of Mental Health at Cook County Health, and many, many more. In the areas of health and wellness, community and economic development, criminal justice and community safety, environmental sustainability, and public infrastructure, Cook County will launch a suite of exciting new programs, initiatives, and grant opportunities.

These projects were designed with feedback and guidance from thousands of residents, community partners, suburban municipalities, and policy experts. Please continue to stay engaged and follow our progress at engagecookcounty.com. We look forward to launching these programs to build a better and stronger Cook County.

Sincerely,



Toni Preckwinkle
Cook County Board President

Cook County Policy Roadmap and the Coronavirus Pandemic

In 2018, the Cook County Offices Under the President (OUP) conducted a strategic planning process that resulted in the release of the [Cook County Policy Roadmap: Five-Year Strategic Plan for Offices Under the President](#). In the Policy Roadmap, OUP identified six policy priorities around which to focus. A central theme is the commitment to ensuring Cook County is a welcoming community that can reach all residents, including those who are often marginalized. We will foster communities that are healthy, vital, safe and thriving, sustainable, smart and open.

Given OUP's role in supporting residents and communities throughout Cook County, the first five policy priorities relate directly to the services provided to residents. To achieve a high standard of efficiency and excellence, the sixth policy priority describes how we deliver services to residents.

Together, these policy priorities create the means to provide innovative and essential services for residents effectively and efficiently and ensure Cook County is an exceptional place to live, work, play and visit.

- **Healthy Communities: Health and Wellness** - Integrating health and social services, addressing the social determinants of health and improving the health and wellness of County employees and residents.
- **Vital Communities: Community and Economic Development** - Creating and retaining jobs, developing industry-sector strategies, supporting workforce training and development, quality housing, safety net services and community and investments in infrastructure.
- **Safe and Thriving Communities: Criminal Justice and Community Safety** - Implementing violence-reduction strategies proven to improve community safety, advocating for sustainable reforms within the criminal justice system and investing in community-based services for residents.
- **Sustainable Communities: Environmental Sustainability** - Prioritizing environmental justice, addressing climate change, investing in clean energy and green jobs and creating equitable access to open spaces.
- **Smart Communities: Public Infrastructure** - Maximizing the benefits of County buildings, improving transportation systems and managing enterprise technology services.
- **Open Communities: Good Government** - Achieving operational excellence by being accountable to residents, investing in the area workforce and continuously improving County services.

Cook County COVID-19 Response and Recovery & CARES Act Funding

In April 2020, Cook County received approximately \$429 million from the U.S. Treasury from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Under the CARES Act, Cook County allocated \$51 million of the relief among over 300 local units of government located within Cook County. Cook County determined allocations to each municipality through an equity lens with factors that included the immediate needs of the municipality to respond to the pandemic, size of the municipal population, municipal median income, and municipal public health statistics (see [An Equitable Distribution Model of Cook County's CARES Act Funding to Suburban Municipalities](#) for more details).

In addition to providing direct support to municipalities, Cook County dedicated CARES Act funding to support residents and businesses hardest hit by the pandemic. Recognizing the magnitude of COVID-19, the Cook County Bureau of Economic Development (BED) took immediate steps to assess the needs of residents and businesses. Armed with this information, we launched the [Cook County Community Recovery Initiative](#), initially funded with \$82 million from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The funding was revised to \$77 million, after \$5 million was reallocated to support the Cook County Department of Public Health's ongoing COVID-19 mitigation work. In partnership with local, regional, and national organizations, we provided equitable, comprehensive financial relief and critical support services to suburban Cook County residents and small businesses upended by COVID-19.

To support Cook County public health infrastructure, the County allocated more than \$300 million from CARES Act funding to public health and safety payroll, personal protective equipment (PPE), medical supplies, supplemental staffing and technical assistance. These investments through the CARES Act helped close budget gaps for critical public health services and helped the County respond directly to the needs of the community amidst the national public health crisis.

American Rescue Plan Act

On March 11, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden signed the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). ARPA is an ambitious federal initiative to stimulate the American economy, support residents, and curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

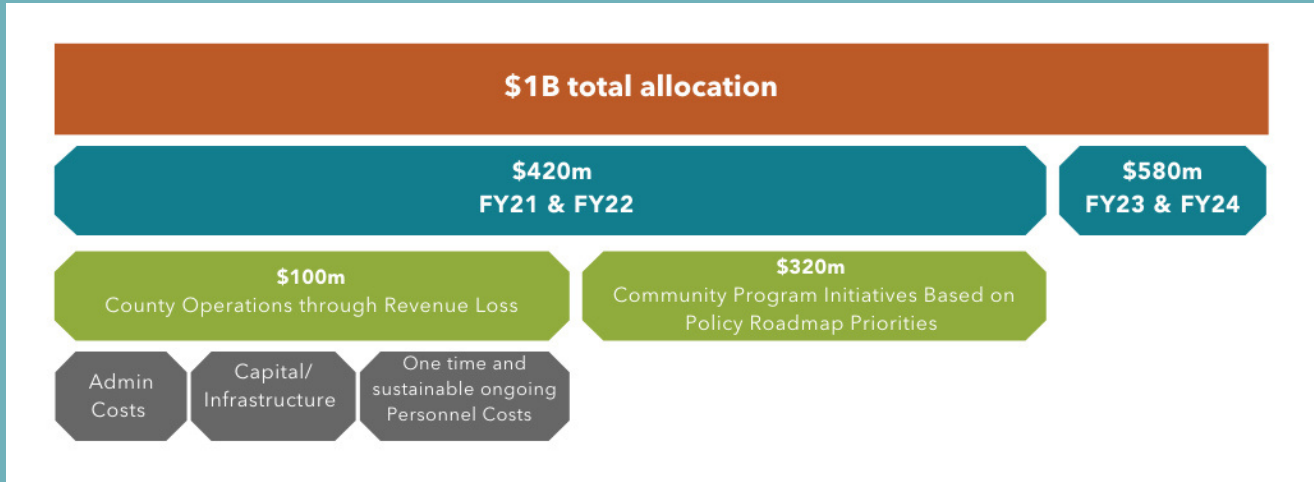
Cook County received more than \$1 billion through ARPA. The County managed a robust process to develop a responsible, comprehensive, and equitable spending plan to use ARPA one-time resources to support both immediate recovery needs and long-term transformative initiatives.

Cook County's ARPA priorities reflect the results of broad community engagement conducted by Cook County and our partners in summer and fall of 2021. The [Cook County Community Engagement Report: State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds](#) published in December 2021 analyzes feedback that Cook County received from online surveys and a series of town hall meetings and listening sessions. As noted above, Cook County's distribution of this crucial funding will also build on the equity best practices Cook County introduced with the distribution of the CARES Act funding last year.

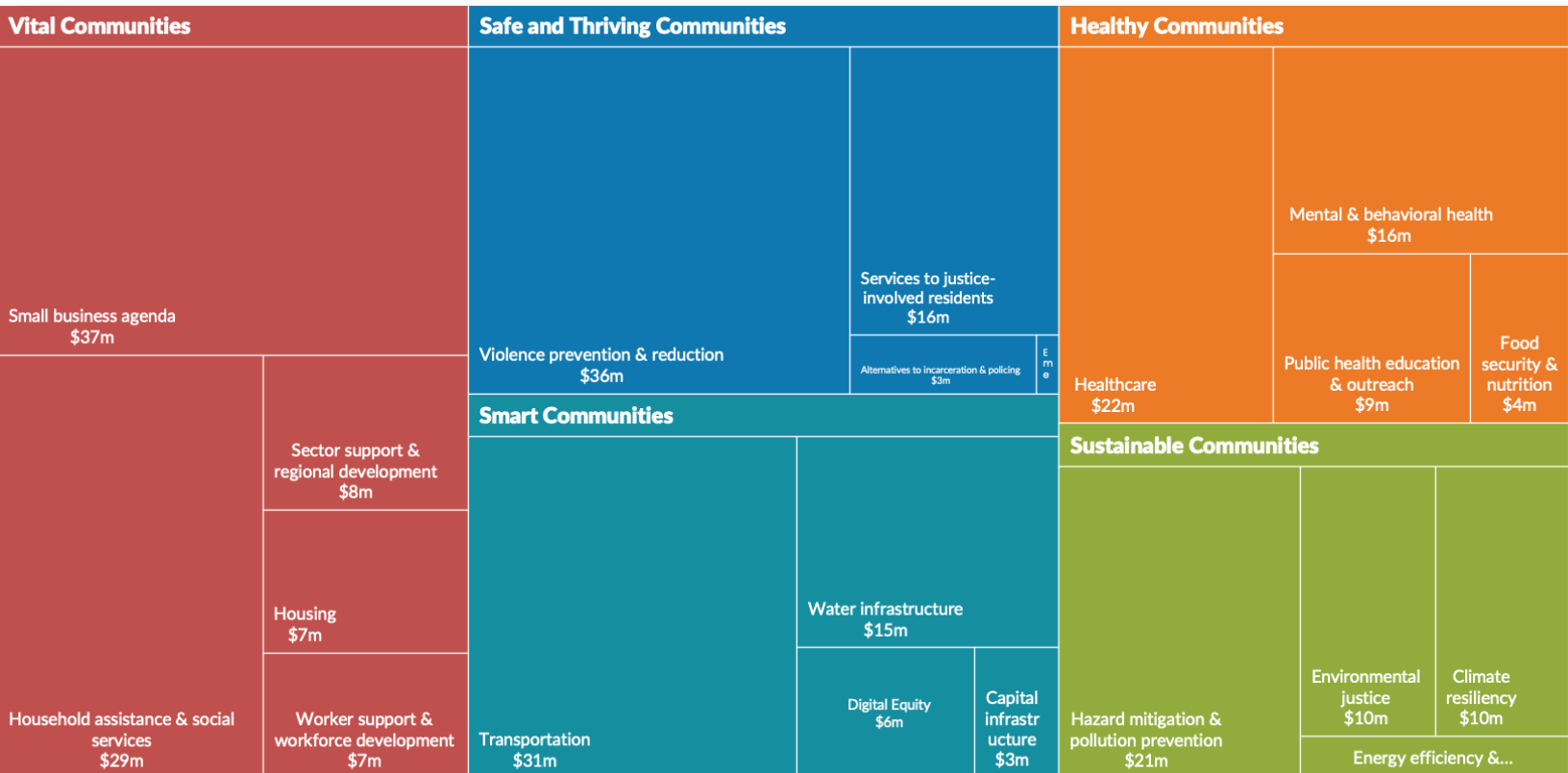
In addition to Cook County's allocation, municipalities in the County with populations over 50,000 will receive direct funding from the federal government through ARPA. The State of Illinois is responsible for distributing funding to entities with fewer than 50,000 residents.

For its initial ARPA spending plan, Cook County intends to divide its \$1 billion total allocation across three fiscal years, distributing funding across the County's six policy pillars. The total funding allocation will include 2021 expenditures to support County operations during the pandemic, and focus on programs, initiatives, and operations in FY2022, FY2023, and FY2024. This report details initial FY22 allocations across the five externally focused policy pillars. Initiatives under the Open Communities policy pillar, which is internally focused to ensure Cook County delivers good government to residents, will be funded under County operations through revenue loss. Cook County recognizes the need to adjust allocations as programs develop and needs evolve. Cook County will share more detailed information on future years during the County's FY23 budget cycle and will publish an updated version of this report with this information by the end of 2022.

Total Allocations



FY22 Community Program Initiatives Allocations



Healthy Communities

Health and Wellness

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Policy Roadmap Goal

Improve the physical, mental and social wellbeing of Cook County residents and communities.

Key Agencies

- Cook County Health (CCH) Cook County
- Department of Public Health (CCDPH)
- Department of Risk Management

ARPA Key Themes and Initial Allocations



1.1 Food Security & Nutrition – \$4,484,000

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Capacity-Building Investments in Food Access Sites

As Cook County responds to the public health and economic crisis, we have a unique opportunity to build a better, stronger more resilient emergency food system that not only copes and recovers in emergency but thrives in a way that it provides stability for anyone in need. This multi-year effort will transform the emergency food system by strategically investing in new food partners where needed and building the capacity of existing partners to serve the communities' needs.

Good Food Purchasing Program

The Good Food Purchasing Program (GFPP) is a procurement strategy that directs institutional food purchasing toward five core values: local economies, environmental sustainability, valued workforce, animal welfare, and nutrition. GFPP provides a metrics-based, flexible framework to assess progress of public institutions as they work to become a recognized Good Food Provider. In 2018, Cook County passed a resolution promoting GFPP. This program can support transforming the local food system into one that is transparent and racially equitable by investing in local food producers and businesses of color and ensuring safe and fair working conditions for frontline food chain workers.

* Food as Medicine

Cook County Health (CCH) will expand efforts to identify and address food insecurity among patients, while also improving their health outcomes through the "Fresh Start" program. Fresh Start is a one-stop, whole-person approach to wellness to build and sustain healthy behaviors, which will establish access to healthy foods at CCH facilities, support a multi-disciplinary clinical support team, and provide nutrition education to address patients' dietary needs and manage chronic disease. We will build on the success of other health systems that have established "food pharmacies". CCH will document impact on clinical outcomes, utilization, and behavior change and partner with payers to sustain this work.

* Urban Farming Initiative Gap Analysis Research

South Suburban Cook County municipalities contain many areas that have been identified as food deserts, or urban areas in which it is difficult to buy affordable or good-quality fresh food. Initiating or supporting current urban farming projects in these areas will help deliver healthy and sustainable food options while educating community members on sustainable farming practices and composting organics. Cook County will conduct a gap analysis study to get a more in-depth understanding of how to best support current and future initiatives in the short-, medium-, and long-term.

** Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative*

1.2 Healthcare - \$21,700,000

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Contact Tracing Initiative Continuation

The Cook County Department of Public Health will continue conducting COVID-19 contact tracing for congregate settings like nursing homes and schools and other high-risk and high-volume exposures (e.g., factories) until 12/31/2022.

Hyperlocal Vaccination Program

The Cook County Department of Public Health's Hyperlocal Vaccination Program will fund vaccination providers to continue mobile clinics for COVID-19 vaccination, including boosters and annual influenza vaccinations. The program will also fund associated community engagement, education, and outreach needed to develop and promote mobile vaccination clinics in high-risk communities, including those with low vaccination rates and a high COVID-19 Community Vulnerability Index. Funded community-based organizations will provide education to address vaccine hesitancy as well as co-host and promote vaccination clinics.

In-Home Vaccination Program

The Cook County Department of Public Health's In-Home Vaccination Program will fund vaccination providers to continue in-home vaccinations for COVID-19 vaccination, including boosters and annual influenza vaccinations.

Medical Respite Center

Cook County Health will improve the health of Cook County Health patients and CountyCare members who are at risk for homelessness by funding supportive housing through the Flexible Housing Pool, provide Medical Respite care to patients who need post-discharge clinical support and are at risk of homelessness, and establish a Homeless Housing Navigation program to intercept at-risk patients in the emergency room to help them apply for longer-term housing options.

Vaccine Incentives Program

Cook County Health (CCH) will provide a \$100 incentive gift card for any individual who received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at a CCH community health center or community event hosted by the Cook County Department of Public Health. Additionally, CountyCare will implement a one-time \$25 reward loaded onto a member's Over the Counter (OTC) Rewards Card to buy approved health and personal care items at participating stores.

1.3 Mental & Behavioral Health – \$16,386,500

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Additional Behavioral Health Personnel and Support at Existing Clinics

Cook County Health (CCH) will enhance community behavioral health care and access by adding additional social workers to CCH's Ambulatory Care sites and adding afterhours behavioral health clinics in the community. These additional resources will supplement existing behavioral health resources available at CCH's Ambulatory Care sites and connect high risk patients with the Healing Hurt People program. This enhancement will also serve as a bridge to the transformative project to establish a CCH Department of Mental Health Services.

*** Behavioral Health Specialists at HACC**

The Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC) will provide full-time behavioral health specialists at all HACC affordable housing properties. Many HACC residents have complex behavioral health needs that threaten their ability to live independently and negatively affect quality of life for themselves and others. This proposal aims to reach some of the County's most marginalized and isolated residents by bringing services directly to them and allowing them to build ongoing relationships with service providers. Consistent service by a trusted professional will help many of these individuals remain stably housed and participate fully in their communities.

*** Cook County Behavioral Health Services**

To meet the growing behavioral health needs of Cook County residents, Cook County Health (CCH) proposes transforming its current Behavioral Health footprint to offer a robust menu of mental and behavioral health services and ensure easy access to services of all County residents. The first year will focus on creating and standing up a new Department of Mental Health Services, expanding existing CCH programs, and planning for long term expansions.

*** Crisis Intervention Pilot Program for Cook County**

The Crisis Intervention Pilot Program for Cook County will provide an alternative to law enforcement officers responding to people in behavioral health crises. The program will hire an administrator, generate a small stakeholder team charged with program development, document a system to appropriately triage non-emergency calls, dispatch a response team skilled in prevention and behavioral health and reduce the number of calls where law enforcement officers are sent to respond to non-violent situations. The response team consists of a crisis or street health intervention specialist and a medic trained to respond, deescalate, and redirect persons to wrap-around services.

Sustaining Mental Health Hotline for Suburban Residents

The Cook County Department of Public Health will expand an existing mental health support line in the City of Chicago to provide support and referral for suburban Cook County residents. The hotline will be staffed seven days a week and will provide emotional support; refer callers to mental health treatment, substance use, and other resources; and provide intensive case support for callers with significant needs through its clinical support program. The suburban hotline is funded until May 2023. ARPA dollars will provide for another 19 months of service to suburban Cook County residents.

** Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative*

1.4 Public Health Education & Outreach – \$9,011,666

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Building Healthy Communities Initiative

The Cook County Department of Public Health's Building Healthy Communities Initiative is an overall community engagement strategy that builds power and capacity of grassroots, community-based organizations to advance community solutions towards racial and health equity. The initiative specifically supports them in implementing evidence-informed programs and policy and systems and environmental change strategies that make suburban Cook County a healthier place to live, work, learn, and play. Working with grassroots organizations is critical in reaching priority populations and building trust with communities for sustainable, transformative change.

*** Community Health Worker Initiative**

The Cook County Department of Public Health's Community Health Worker Initiative will leverage community health workers (CHWs) to improve access to healthcare, social resources, and health education in suburban Cook County. This initiative will support Cook County Department of Public Health CHWs in providing resource coordination and COVID-19 mitigation education to residents living in communities most impacted by health inequities and the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding will also support the development and maintenance of a suburban Cook County CHW learning collaborative in which community-based organizations and healthcare partners who employ CHWs can resource and information share.

Lead Poisoning Prevention Fund

The Lead Poisoning Prevention Fund supplies funding for the Cook County Department of Public Health's lead program, including some staff costs and all the local investment in lead hazard remediation. The fund was created with Torrens Indemnity Fund dollars. The Torrens fund is now defunct, so no additional investments have been added to support the lead program. Investing ARPA dollars will extend funding for the lead program for an additional three years.

Opioid Overdose and Substance Use Prevention Initiative

The opioid overdose prevention initiative expands on existing prevention activities to address the impact of COVID-19 on opioid and substance use disorder in suburban Cook County. The initiative includes 1) distributing naloxone, especially for people who are justice-involved and are especially vulnerable to overdose; 2) bolstering capacity for harm reduction services in the South and West suburbs where harm reduction non-profits are few and far between; 3) expanding medication-assisted treatment capacity in priority communities; and 4) expanding initiatives to leverage existing and new data sources to inform prevention efforts.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness Expansion

The Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) will expand its Emergency Preparedness and Response Unit. Current funding for this unit comes from federal pass-through dollars and is not at parity with the City of Chicago despite similar population size. This limited CCDPH's ability to respond as effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Suburban Cook County Worker Protection Program

The Suburban Cook County Workers Protection Program will continue to equip employers and workers, including temporary and gig workers, with the information, resources, and supports to minimize the transmission of diseases, including COVID-19, in workplaces. The program will work to advance sustainable tri-directional, worker-centered systems for education, reporting and compliance, and support policy changes that promote worker rights, health, and safety.

Vital Communities

Community and Economic Development ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Policy Roadmap Goal

Pursue inclusive economic and community growth by supporting residents, growing businesses, attracting investment and nurturing talent.

Key Agencies

- Bureau of Economic Development (BED)
- Bureau of Finance (BOF)
- Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership
- Cook County Land Bank Authority (CCLBA)
- Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC)

ARPA Key Themes and Initial Allocations



2.1 Household Assistance & Social Services – \$28,700,000

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

* **Abolish Medical Debt**

Cook County will partner with a qualified non-profit organization to purchase and retire the medical debt of income-eligible patients of hospitals located within Cook County who are unable to cover their medical bills. The \$12M program will retire an estimated \$1B in medical debt incurred during the ARPA-eligible period. Eligible recipients will have incomes up to 200% of the federal poverty line or have medical debt that is at least 5% of their household annual income.

* **Community Information Exchange**

Cook County will support the development of a Community Information Exchange (CIE) for suburban Cook County and the City of Chicago to enhance the 211 system already being collaboratively developed by Cook County, the City of Chicago and a range of partners. A CIE is an interconnected and linked network of health, behavioral health, human, and social service providers that share information and coordinate services so that an individual receives the whole person care they need to be healthy and thrive, regardless of how they initially enter services, creating a “no wrong door” access to the social and health services system. Having a CIE will transform systems of care in Cook County by reducing or eliminating the significant barriers created when individuals, families and organizations need to navigate many systems to access care and services and endlessly repeat processes like intake, record-transfers and referrals because systems cannot communicate.

Cook County Legal Aid for Housing and Debt

Cook County Legal Aid for Housing and Debt (CCLAHD) helps residents resolve eviction, foreclosure, consumer debt, and tax deed issues pre-court and during the court process. CCLAHD provides free legal aid, mediation services, case management, and connections for tenants and landlords dealing with evictions, property owners who are behind on their mortgage payments or property taxes, and creditors and debtors with issues related to consumer debt. CCLAHD is a partnership between many Cook County agencies and has received national recognition for its innovative approach to eviction prevention and housing stability.

* **Cook County Residential Water Conservation and Energy Efficiency Program**

The program will increase housing affordability for residents by reducing utility costs. Specifically, the project identifies residents for home energy and water assessments and implement energy efficiency improvements and water conservation measures (such as window replacement, roof repairs, insulation, air sealing, HVAC improvements, LED lighting, energy-efficient windows and doors, installing low-flow water appliances and repairing leaks). This program will also serve as a jobs program by employing local residents.

* *Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative*

2.1 Household Assistance & Social Services – \$27,700,000 (cont'd)

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Cook County Water Affordability Program

The Cook County Water Affordability Program will provide water utility bill payment assistance to help households suffering from income loss and mounting bills during the pandemic. The program will reduce uncollectable debt for municipal water utilities. The anticipated focus of the program is on communities with a high-water burden, meaning that the household spends a significantly larger portion of their income on the water and sewer bill.

*** Guaranteed Income Program**

The Cook County Guaranteed Income Program will provide recurring monthly unrestricted payments to a to-be-defined set of residents for at least 12 months to improve participants' long-term economic stability. The Guaranteed Income Program builds on the demonstrated success of guaranteed income programs in other jurisdictions in increasing residents' financial stability and improving their health outcomes. Cook County's program will include a research evaluation component to help the County better understand participant impacts.

*** Transforming Places**

Coordinated through the Bureau of Economic Development and the Equity Fund Taskforce, Cook County will identify high vulnerability communities and co-design a process to meet community-defined needs for economic development, community building, community safety, public health, education or social services. The County will support communities over a sustained period to ensure implementation and capacity-building, as well as helping attract additional public, private, and philanthropic resources. This place-based approach will be a paradigm shift for the County and will be community-driven and community-led.

Veteran Grant Program

The Department of Veterans Affairs will establish a fund to provide grants to community-based veteran service organizations and veteran-owned businesses. The Veteran Grant Program will begin with a seed of \$5 million for grants in the following areas: Program Enhancement; Capital Improvements; and Small Business Development.

** Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative*

2.2 Housing – \$7,466,667

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Emergency Mortgage Assistance

The Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program will provide funds to support residents who are behind on mortgage, insurance escrow, and residential real estate tax escrow payments. The program will also fund additional housing services supports to offset foreclosure and further increase household stability. Cook County will administer this program in partnership with the Housing Authority of Cook County. Cook County's program will be coordinated closely with the Illinois Housing Development Authority and other agencies administering mortgage assistance programs to encourage broad reach and impact for the County's residents.

Emergency Rental Assistance

The Emergency Rental Assistance Program will provide funds to support residents who are behind on rent, utilities, and household expenses and will cover forward rent to support renter household stability. The program will also fund additional housing services and supports to offset evictions and further increase household stability. Cook County will administer this program in partnership with the Housing Authority of Cook County.

Fixed-Site Emergency Shelter for People Experiencing Homelessness

The Bureau of Economic Development will support organizations within the Cook County Continuum of Care to stand up fixed-site shelter in 5-7 locations to provide health and safety to people in a housing crisis who cannot be diverted from homelessness. These organizations will also provide shelter services to ensure their experience of homelessness is short by reconnecting them to housing and other supports.

Hotel-Based Sheltering

The Bureau of Economic Development will continue the hotel-based sheltering approach implemented during the pandemic, when the existing PADS model of shelter with congregate shelter in rotating church basements was no longer viable. Shelter, meals, and case management will be provided by shelter agencies at various hotels across Cook County. Supportive services will aim to shorten their experience of homelessness by reconnecting them to housing and other supports. Hotel sheltering will decrease over time as the transition to new permanent shelter or other shelter options occurs.

*** Permanent Supportive Housing for People Experiencing Homelessness**

Cook County will create 250 new units of permanent supportive housing, a nationally recognized best practice for ending homelessness. Permanent supportive housing is a housing model that pairs non-time-limited rental subsidies with individualized, intensive, supportive services to help households maintain independent living and housing stability.

** Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative*

2.3 Sector Support & Regional Development – \$8,100,000

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Advancing Equitable Recovery in the Southland – Southland Metals Hub

The Southland Development Authority Metals Hub will build on the region's strength in Metals, Machinery and Equipment (MME) manufacturing. The Hub will assist firms address and recover from the pandemic's disruption of manufacturing supply chains and assist in the identification of new ones. The Metals Hub intends to bring MME firms together to enter new markets and leverage existing strengths and capacity to bolster the productivity and growth of metal manufacturing firms in the region.

*** Cook County Arts and Artists**

The Bureau of Economic Development will develop a Cook County arts and artists program with two major components. An Arts Connection will invest in artists and arts organizations, providing direct arts experiences, giving voice to the County's identity with a focus on the arts and culture assets in suburban Cook. An Arts Integration program infuses the arts into the county's existing plans facilities, programs, and outreach, with a focus on public health and environmental conservation.

Cook County Manufacturing Rebound and Recover Programming

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cook County partnered with the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC) to ascertain the impact of this unprecedented situation and the unique challenges experienced by Cook County's manufacturing community due to structural changes to this sector brought upon by the pandemic. We surveyed and connected with over 1,000 manufacturers in suburban Cook County to understand their most pressing needs as a result of the changed landscape. Based upon these findings, IMEC and Cook County will partner to provide a comprehensive set of solutions for county manufacturers to rebound from the pandemic and improve their global competitiveness, focused on production, market growth, technology, and workforce.

Suburban Cook County Travel, Tourism, and Hospitality Economic Recovery Initiative

The five suburban State designated Convention and Tourism Bureaus will develop and implement a collaborative recovery action plan to invest in the lodging, dining, entertainment, retail, and small sectors that have been severely impacted by COVID-19.

** Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative*

2.4 Small Business Agenda – \$37,050,000

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Advancing Equitable Recovery in the Southland - Building Capacity in the Southland

The Southland Development Authority (SDA) drives comprehensive, transformative and inclusive economic growth in Cook County's South Suburbs. Funding will allow the SDA to continue to support the small business growth programs to advance key sectors.

Small Business Assistance Program & One Stop Shop

Launched in response to the challenges small businesses faced in the wake of COVID-19, the Small Business Assistance Program supports a coordinated network of over 30 partners that provide one-on-one business advising, webinars, and recovery grants. The strong network coupled with pairing grants with services made this award-winning program successful and enabled over 65% of technical assistance support to serve businesses owned by people of color. New funding will further build the capacity of partners to deliver services, increase availability of services in suburban Cook, and support the establishment of a Cook County "One-Stop Small Business Service Center."

Small Business Grant Program

The Bureau of Economic Development will provide grants to small businesses with less than 20 employees that continue to suffer from the impacts of COVID-19, as well as early-stage businesses formed since the onset of COVID-19. The grants will position businesses for growth and a sustainable path forward. The County will continue to link its small business advising services to receipt of grant funds to maximize the impact of these grants. The program will result in renewed entrepreneurship capacity in the short-term and renewed community wealth in the long-term.

2.5 Worker Support & Workforce Development – \$6,562,000

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Community Conservation Corps

The Forest Preserves along with corps partners will recruit and hire up to 282 adult corps members per year from Cook County who are currently unemployed or under-employed to conduct meaningful conservation work in their local Forest Preserve. Corps members will be deployed in teams of 6 to 10 participants and supervised by experienced Field Leaders who have the technical skills to train and supervise conservation work while providing soft job skills for those new to the work force. A minimum of 75% of participants will gain at least three advanced industry skill certifications.

*** Investing in Families and Youth**

Cook County will provide support to workforce and training programs that offer young adults quality paid work experiences to explore career pathways in target sectors or provide opportunities for a “community service corps”. The County will also support the expansion of workforce development programs that serve hard to engage populations including people without stable housing, youth in care and graduates of foster care system, people with disabilities, returning residents, and pregnant and parenting youth. Program resources will support residents of suburban Cook County.

Supporting Apprenticeships in Suburban Cook

As a designated Apprenticeship Navigator by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Cook County will support the establishment of new apprenticeships or expansions of existing apprenticeships in suburban Cook County. The Bureau of Economic Development will fund eligible partners and Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity intermediaries to sponsor and manage apprenticeship programs, conduct industry engagement, provide technical assistance to businesses, and support apprentices' progress.

** Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative*

Safe and Thriving Communities

Criminal Justice and Community Safety ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Policy Roadmap Goal

Create safe communities and an equitable and fair justice system for all residents.

Key Agencies

- Cook County Public Defender’s Office (PD)
- Department of Emergency Management and Regional Security (EMRS)
- Justice Advisory Council (JAC)

ARPA Key Themes and Initial Allocations



3.1 Alternatives to Incarceration & Policing – \$3,000,000

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Justice Reinvestment Plan

The Justice Advisory Council will engage consultants to review Cook County's criminal justice budgets and develop a report with 1) an overview of our current spending; 2) an outline of duplicative efforts or overspending; 3) a strategy to make reductions in criminal justice spending and invest in community; and 4) best practices from jurisdictions that have successfully reinvested criminal justice dollars into public health and community resources.

9-1-1 Alternative Model Study and Strategic Plan

The Justice Advisory Council will engage consultants to develop a report and strategic plan on 9-1-1 alternative response models for Cook County. This includes 1) a comprehensive analysis of Cook County's current 9-1-1 system, 2) best and emerging practices in putting in place alternative responses, and 3) recommendations and a strategic plan on how Cook County may move forward with a new model. The goal of this project is to develop a plan for a response system that both better responds with mental health and other emergency services that do not require a traditional law enforcement response, needs which have been exacerbated during the lengthy pandemic, and to prevent unnecessary involvement of individuals in the criminal justice system.

3.2 Emergency Preparedness & Response – \$350,000

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Supporting Suburban Cook County municipalities in developing, training on and operationalizing preparedness planning

Through the Department of Emergency Management and Regional Security, this funding will support a vendor to develop planning templates and training resources for Emergency Operations (EOP), Continuity of Operations (COOP), Continuity of Government (COG), and recovery plans for all Cook County departments and municipalities. This effort will engage and strengthen the County's preparedness and resiliency, which has been proven especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.3 Services to Justice-Involved Residents – \$16,300,000

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Emergency Reentry Vouchers

The Justice Advisory Council will administer emergency re-entry vouchers to assist people leaving Cook County Jail in securing safe housing. Currently, approximately 1,100 people in Cook County are kept behind bars after their release date because they cannot find affordable housing.

Programs and Services for Domestic Violence Victims and Survivors

The Offices Under the President will administer grants to providers that serve survivors of domestic violence. Domestic violence advocates have requested this funding to support legal resources, mental health resources, and rapid housing resources for domestic violence victims and survivors.

*** Public Defender Community Defense Center**

The Law Office of the Cook County Public Defender proposes to develop a Community Defense Center to leverage the success of the Public Defenders Police Representation Unit (PSRU) with the work of community organizations to provide robust legal services to two Cook County communities that have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19, incarceration, and gun violence. The Community Defense Center will seek to partner with and support communities within the two identified neighborhoods with legal services, community empowerment, advocacy and education. The Community Defense Center will work predominantly with African American and Latinx communities in greater Roseland/South Chicago and greater West Garfield Park/Humboldt Park.

Reentry Housing Resources

The Justice Advisory Council will fund Cook County community-based organizations to provide rental assistance, security deposit assistance, and outreach counseling to justice-involved individuals. The initiative will also explore more effective housing strategies, partnerships and supports to connect these individuals to stable and permanent housing thus helping to reduce recidivism.

* Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative

3.4 Violence Prevention & Reduction – \$35,889,166

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Behavioral Health Expansion

The Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) will expand existing mental health and substance use services, treatment, and prevention programs in priority communities in suburban Cook County in part through a community-based grants program in partnership with the Justice Advisory Council. Key areas of focus will include suicide prevention (including school-based screening), counseling and treatment, behavioral health workforce development, and youth-focused programs, including restorative justice and school discipline reform. CCDPH will also hire additional staff including a program coordinator, health educators, an epidemiologist, and a policy analyst to support this work.

Gun Crime Strategy Unit

The Gun Crimes Strategies Unit (GCSU) embeds Assistant State's Attorneys in six of the most violent police districts in Chicago. Expansion of the Gun Crimes Strategies Unit will allow the Cook County State's Attorney's Office to expand the reach and efforts of the GCSU in order to help combat the rise in violence and shootings within the City and the South Suburbs. These communities have been historically disinvested in and are some of the most impacted by COVID-19. Expanding the GCSU will have a direct impact on public safety and will align with President Biden's directive to increase investigation into gun trafficking and gun traffickers to prevent the further influx of illegal guns in our communities.

Healing Hurt People Chicago

Healing Hurt People (HHP) is a trauma-informed violence intervention program for survivors of urban intentional violence. HHP works to advance the notion that unaddressed psychological trauma is a key driver of the cycle of violence, fueled by the structural violence of racism and stigma. HHP Chicago's goals are to reduce re-injury, retaliation, and criminal justice involvement by having a positive impact on trauma recovery, mental health, and drug use, and help participants achieve independence, work, education, and create a strong future.

*** State's Attorney's Office Crime Investigations**

This request will assist the Cook County State's Attorney's Office in investigating and prosecuting violent gun crimes. The State's Attorney's Office will use funding to add Investigators to the unit to work with prosecutors (state and federal, law enforcement agencies, etc.) and other stakeholders to help ensure public safety in communities across Cook County.

** Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative*

3.4 Violence Prevention– \$35,889,166 (cont'd)

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

* **Strengthening Chicago’s Youth Juvenile Justice Collaborative Expansion**

This project aims to reduce violence and minimize justice involvement of youth who have experienced violence or trauma or are at high risk of exposure to violence. Services include trauma-informed care coordination for 500 justice-involved youth per year over three years, including youth on diversion (arrested for a felony or violent misdemeanor) or youth granted deferred prosecution. Services include intake, assessment, connection to evidence-based programming and pro-social services, emergency assistance, family support services, and post-discharge monitoring. In addition to providing care coordination and direct services for youth and their families, funds will support data tracking and analysis, continuous quality improvement, and developing an evaluation plan.

* **Supporting Education and Employment Development**

The Justice Advisory Council will provide funds to sustain and expand the Supporting Education and Employment Development (SEED) Program. This program is a 13-month pre-plea diversion program for individuals aged 18 to 30, charged with possession with intent to deliver or manufacturing/delivery of a substance. The program provides case management, educational services, trauma-informed and cognitive behavioral interventions, job readiness training, job development and placement, supported employment, and restorative justice activities. The successful completion of the program results in case dismissal and expungement at graduation.

Violence Prevention and Reduction Grant Portfolio

The Justice Advisory Council (JAC) will expand funding for community-based services supporting justice-involved adults or youth, and those at high risk of experiencing violence as either a victim or perpetrator. These resources build upon the existing JAC grants portfolio and are complementary with similar investments made by the State of Illinois, City of Chicago, and philanthropy. Communities served include areas in Chicago and suburban Cook with highest incidents of shootings and homicides as well as justice system involvement. Services include direct street-level intervention, mentoring, basic needs assistance, educational and vocational programming, and behavioral health and wellness support.

* *Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative*

Sustainable Communities

Environmental Sustainability ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Policy Roadmap Goal

Support healthy, resilient communities that thrive economically, socially and environmentally.

Key Agencies

- Department of Environment and Sustainability (DES)
- Department of Planning and Development (DPD)
- Department of Transportation and Highways (DOTH)
- Forest Preserves of Cook County (FPCC)

ARPA Key Themes and Initial Allocations



4.1 Climate Resiliency – \$9,873,225

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

* **Implementing the Southeast Cook County Land Acquisition Plan**

The Forest Preserve District of Cook County completed its Southeast Cook County Land Acquisition Plan in 2019, which outlines an integrated model of land conservation and enhanced quality of life with healthy active communities. In alignment with this Plan, the Forest Preserves will acquire up to 500 acres from willing sellers in this area, promoting land conservation while reducing flooding and building greater resilience to storm events and impacts from climate change. The preservation and restoration of public open space is a nature-based solution to reduce future flooding and build community resilience. The preservation of public land will also provide outdoor recreation activities that promote improved public health, aid in the generation of economic benefits and boost community and social resilience.

* **Riparian Restoration**

The Forest Preserve District of Cook County's nearly 70,000 acres of public land provide significant ecosystem services to Cook County residents, including reducing flooding and improving air and water quality. The Riparian Restoration will conduct restoration of creek banks and drainages and restore floodplains, reducing flooding and soil erosion and improving community resilience to impacts from climate change. Flooding is a growing concern as climate change triggers more frequent storms and heavier, more intense rainfalls. Many Cook County creeks have suffered from damaged banks, soil erosion, and intense flood stage damage. Restoration contractors and Conservation Corps Crews will conduct the work including engineering, removal of invasive plants and brush, stabilizing banks and surrounding soils, and replanting and reseeding the natural areas with native plants.

* **Climate Resiliency Plan Development**

The Department of Environment and Sustainability will identify up to five environmental justice communities that want to develop Climate Resiliency Plans but need staff or funding to do so. Together with community partners, we will generate actionable goals that support planning, policy, and funding decisions to reduce threats from a changing climate and promote resiliency. Upon completion of Climate Resiliency Plans for each community, Cook County will issue grants to implement select projects, prioritized by community impact and regional importance. This support will emphasize green infrastructure, tree planting, job training, and maintenance in each community.

* **Resilience Hubs**

The Department of Environment and Sustainability and the Department of Emergency Management and Regional Security will create a Resilience Hub in 3 - 5 communities in Cook County's South Suburbs. Resilience Hubs are existing physical facilities that provide day-to-day services that address community chronic stressors and support the community during disaster events, addressing both capacity-building and emergency functions. Resilience Hubs work at the nexus of climate mitigation, adaptation, and equity to improve community sustainability and resilience through a bottom-up approach centered on community co-development and building local power and leadership. This exciting model has been implemented in Baltimore and Minneapolis.

* *Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative*

4.2 Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy – \$3,085,155

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Residential Renewable Energy Subsidy

The Department of Environment and Sustainability will offer financial support for residential renewable energy installations, expanding affordability to residents for whom renewable energy may not be attainable because they lack the up-front capital to pay for installations even though savings will pay back the investment over time. This program reduces barriers to clean energy for residents, reducing their energy burden and their utility bills over the lifetime of renewable energy installations, as well as helping to combat climate change.

4.3 Environmental Justice – \$10,000,000

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Healthy Homes and Deep Energy Retrofit Residential Properties

Currently, children identified as having elevated blood lead levels are referred to the Cook County Department of Public Health and families who qualify for services can receive free lead remediation at the residence. In this extension effort, Healthy Homes inspectors will complete an assessment within these same residences, identify other household health impacts, and address repairs or remediation. Additionally, a free energy assessment will be conducted. Families selected for full program participation will receive grant-covered household enhancements including deep energy retrofits, beneficial electrification, and renewable energy integrated strategies to deliver the greatest cost savings and health improvements.

4.4 Hazard Mitigation & Pollution Prevention – \$20,666,667

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

* **Businesses Reducing Impact on the Environment (BRITE) Fund**

The Department of Environment and Sustainability will create the Businesses Reducing Impact on the Environment (BRITE) Fund to support assessments, recommendations, and a grant pool for commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities. The BRITE Fund will provide grants for toxics and pollution reduction, renewable energy, energy and water efficiency and waste reduction projects. The BRITE Fund will also support technologies and equipment for commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities located within environmental justice, minority, and under-resourced communities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce release of toxics and other waste to the environment, and conserve water, materials, and energy.

Neighborhood Revitalization Brownfield Remediation

Brownfield sites are underutilized or vacant sites that have real or perceived environmental issues that deter their redevelopment. The Department of Environment and Sustainability proposes expanding its current brownfield program, currently limited to a few communities the County received Federal grants to serve, to assess and remediate sites throughout suburban Cook County to promote economic growth and investment through redevelopment. Marketing will be targeted to Environmental Justice communities. Brownfield sites can also be remediated and returned to other productive uses such as open green space, parks, and flood and stormwater retention.

South Suburban Hazardous Household Waste Facility and Satellite Collection Locations

This initiative is for a facility in the south suburbs for residents to properly dispose Household Hazardous Waste (HHW). HHW include items typically present in homes including toxic cleaners, pharmaceuticals, and gasoline/oil and pose serious health and safety concerns and can cause environmental damage. There are no facilities conveniently located for residents of the south suburbs to dispose of HHW, negatively impacting a region already with historically high pollution and open dumping issues. The facility will also serve as a consolidation location for satellite collection events and will be operated through an agreement with Illinois Environmental Protection Agency which will fund ongoing disposal costs.

* *Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative*

Smart Communities

Public Infrastructure ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

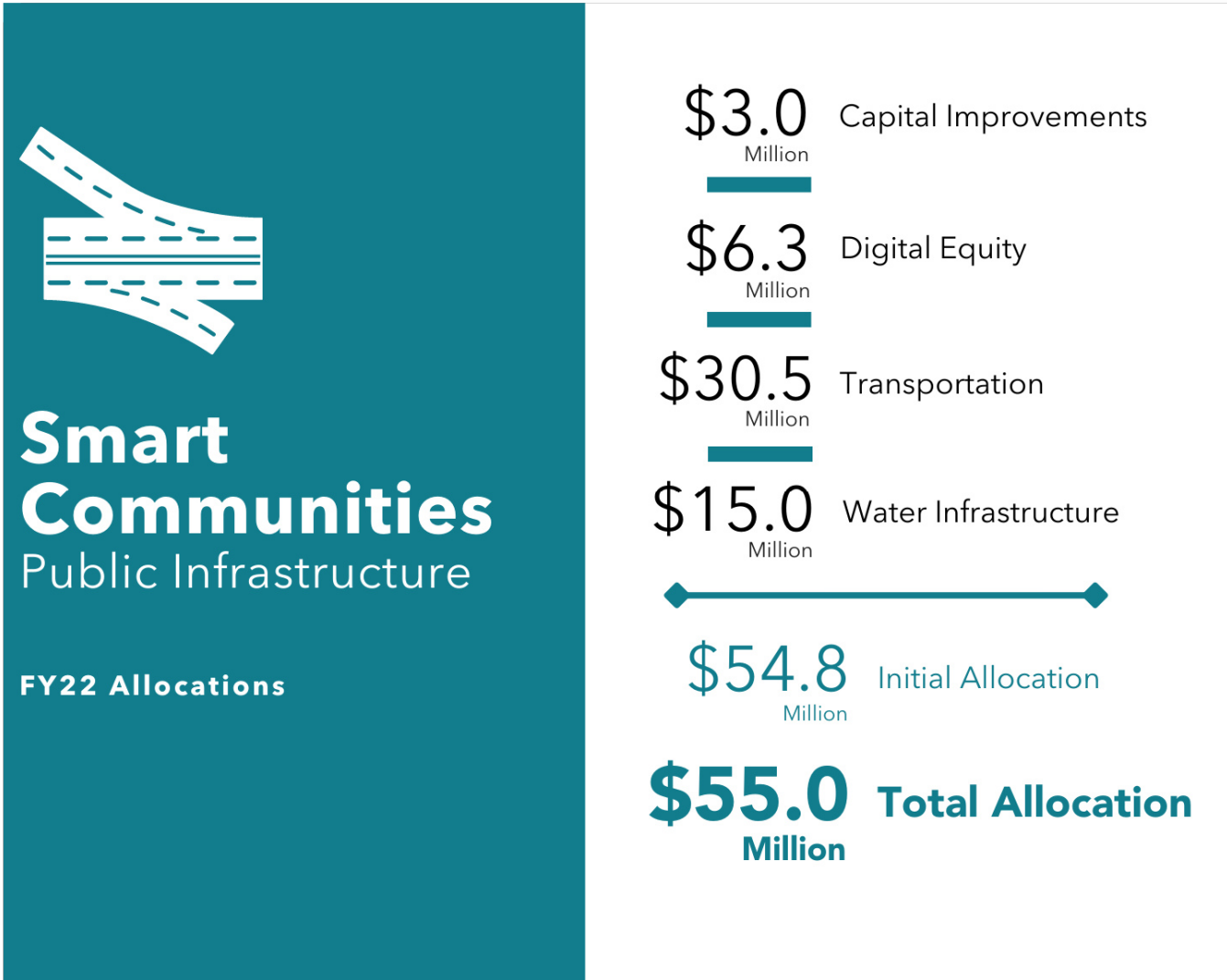
Policy Roadmap Goal

Provide an innovative infrastructure that will change how we live, work and connect.

Key Agencies

- Bureau of Asset Management (BAM)
- Bureau of Technology (BOT)
- Department of Transportation and Highways (DOTH)

ARPA Key Themes and Initial Allocations



5.1 Capital Improvements – \$3,000,000

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

* **Municipal Capacity for Capital Improvements**

Coordinated by the Bureau of Economic Development, Cook County will provide technical assistance to suburban Cook communities to use existing resources and attract additional, sustainable funding for critical capital improvement projects. Cook County will provide priority and deeper assistance to municipalities disproportionately impacted by COVID or by disinvestment. This initiative will leverage existing expertise within the County to benefit municipalities that need assistance. It will also provide new capacity via County staff or other partners to understand the universe of needed or desired projects, help municipalities prioritize projects, and identify the most appropriate resource for implementation.

5.2 Digital Equity – \$6,333,333

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

* **Broadband Expansion at HACC Properties**

This initiative will upgrade broadband infrastructure at all Housing Authority of Cook County-owned (HACC) properties. Current network infrastructure can only support 2-3 users at a time and is inadequate to meet the needs of both staff and residents who use the communal computers. This upgrade responds to the increased need for Internet access among HACC residents and staff due to COVID-19 restrictions and will additionally address the digital divide by providing low-income residents access to high-speed Internet.

* **Chicago Southland Fiber Network Expansion**

The Chicago Southland Fiber Network provides gigabit broadband to government, education, healthcare, and businesses. Cook County will support the extension of the broadband infrastructure into south suburban communities with the highest Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) scores in the State of Illinois. Cook County will also add public WiFi access in certain anchor institutions, education institutions and government institutions that serve vulnerable communities.

Digital Equity Planning

To coordinate our long-term digital equity work, Cook County will develop an action plan to evaluate where suburban Cook's digital divide exists and outline solutions. Specifically, this action plan will cover gaps in broadband access, physical connectivity infrastructure, and financial barriers residents face when accessing digital devices and connections. Using best practices, guidance from digital inclusion experts, and insight from internal and external stakeholders, the process will conclude with a final document that provides policy recommendations, along with a detailed action plan, describing detailed initiative plans, including implementing partners, resources identified, timeline, and evaluation metrics.

* *Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative*

5.3 Transportation – \$30,524,214

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

This initiative involves four components related to increasing access to electric vehicle charging stations throughout Cook County, focusing on where there are currently large gaps in service areas, primarily in the south and west suburbs, through installing 50 Level 2 charging stations, 10 DC fast chargers, 10 Level 2 streetlight charging stations and purchasing one all-electric bus and wireless charger installation to pilot at the Department of Corrections Campus. The initiative will be community driven, increase access for residents in multifamily homes, reduce the locations without an electric vehicle charging station dramatically and greatly increasing the regional charging network.

Invest in Cook Expansion

Invest in Cook is an existing grant program that annually awards \$8.5 million to communities to advance local transportation infrastructure projects that implement the priorities of the County's long-range transportation plan and support economic outcomes. The current demand for this program far exceeds the funding available. The expansion of this program will increase the award amount for broader infrastructure projects over the next three years, yielding an additional \$25 million investment overall.

5.4 Water Infrastructure – \$15,000,000

ARPA Initial Allocation Breakdown

* **Lead, Leaking, & Obsolete Service Line Replacement Pilot Program**

Coordinated by the Bureau of Economic Development, Cook County will work in partnership with municipal water utilities to oversee and manage lead, leaking, and obsolete service line replacement across Cook County. This program will target high-risk communities, including improvements to individual homes, and high-risk facilities, including preschools, daycare centers, home daycare providers, group daycare homes, parks, playgrounds, hospitals and clinics.

Lead Pipe Removal at Vera Yates Homes and Richard Flowers Home

This initiative will remove remaining lead water pipes at two Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC) affordable family housing properties: the Vera Yates Homes in Ford Heights and the Richard Flowers Homes in Robbins. This funding will allow HACC to remove all lead pipes at each of these properties, preventing children living at these sites from suffering irreparable, life-long neurological damage associated with lead exposure, and provide all residents of these developments a healthier, safer living environment.

* **Rain Ready Plan Implementation**

Cook County partnered with the Center for Neighborhood Technology to create a Rain Ready plan for the Calumet Corridor, which includes Blue Island, Calumet City, Calumet Park, Dolton, Riverdale, and Robbins and has a history of both disinvestment and flooding. The Department of Environment and Sustainability will put these six communities on a path towards greater resilience by implementing many of the recommended projects to improve stormwater management through green infrastructure and sustainable economic development. Prior to implementation, we will work with communities, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, and other partner organizations to prioritize efforts by community impact and regional importance.

* **Stormwater Management Project Implementation**

Coordinated by the Department of Transportation and Highways, Cook County will provide funding to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) to support stormwater management in communities that experience significant flooding. This funding will allow MWRD to expand beyond funding to include overall responsibility for stormwater management project implementation since local capacity constraints currently limit the existing program's impact. Expanding the MWRD initiative with County funds will build climate resiliency within more Cook County communities through increased identification and implementation of flood mitigation projects. Over the long-term, this project will help communities build local capacity, allowing their staff to perform more of this work internally.

* *Indicates a Longer-Term or Transformative Initiative*

Open Communities

Good Government

Policy Roadmap Goal

Ensure that Cook County provides responsive, transparent services and develops a thriving, professional workforce that reflects the communities served.

Key Agencies

- Bureau of Finance (BOF)
- Bureau of Human Resources (BHR)
- Bureau of Technology (BOT)
- Office of the President (OOP)
- Office of Research, Operations and Innovation (ROI)

Cook County will support its commitment to Open Communities by using revenue loss to cover eligible expenses for supporting County operations through the pandemic and the implementation of approved ARPA programs and services. This includes:

- One-time personnel and non-personnel costs (e.g., pandemic pay and administration cost for ARPA management);
- Building County capacity to meet increased demands and to support ARPA initiatives; and
- Capital improvement projects that would have required debt funding instead.

Organizational Values

Mission

To serve as a good steward of public resources by building equitable and sustainable communities for all residents.

Vision

To be a leader in building vibrant, sustainable and inclusive communities where people want to live, learn, work and play.

Values

Equity, Engagement, Excellence

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

We believe in the dignity and worth of all people and the strength in the diversity of all perspectives. Cook County commits to cultivating equity, inclusion and opportunity within County government and the diverse communities it serves—where we celebrate employees, residents and visitors and welcome diversity of perspectives. Empowered by an inclusive workforce, Cook County is dedicated to equity and fairness in governance—in all its forms—to strengthen and serve our communities to the best of our abilities.



Toni Preckwinkle
Toni Preckwinkle
Cook County Board President

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