

Jefferson County **Recovery Plan**

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

2022 Report

**Jefferson County
2022 Recovery Plan**

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Executive Summary

Jefferson County will use American Rescue Plan funds for COVID-19 expenses in a manner that meets community and county needs. The county will also seek out alternate funding sources for proposed projects to ensure ARPA funds provide the county with maximum financial flexibility. Jefferson County is establishing data-driven decision-making processes to assess community needs that make meaningful impacts to our most vulnerable and underserved communities.

Community engagement surveys were conducted in 2021 to help us better understand the needs of the community. Prioritization of internal department needs were evaluated through Jefferson County's Vision and Strategic Outcomes, along with the US Treasury guidelines.

The seven Strategic Outcomes considered are:

- Create Safe, Healthy, and Thriving Communities
- Enhance Inclusive Community Engagement
- Ensure Responsible Growth and Development
- Protect Natural Resources and Our Environment
- Strengthen Public Facilities and Infrastructure
- Operate as an Employer of Choice
- Provide Innovative, Equitable, and Effective Services

Key goals include support for community members impacted by COVID-19, such as unemployment and industry skills gaps. The funds will be used to support self-sufficiency of people and organizations while addressing root causes of needs. We will strive for transformative system changes where possible, rather than providing a one-time "band-aid" that temporarily treats the symptoms. For example, rather than providing a financial payment to unemployed or underemployed workers, a goal might be to fund programs that reduce the skills gap so that individuals can gain a certification that will help them build a sustainable career. At the same time, we recognize there may be some emergent short-term needs that require funding while long-term solutions are developed.

Internal County department needs continue to be viewed through the following lens:

- Is the proposed use aligned with Jefferson County Strategic Outcomes and eligible under ARPA rules?
- How does the request support COVID recovery efforts within the county or the larger Jefferson County community?
- Which requests have the greatest impact or most improve equity?
- By spending this money right now, will operations be sustainable going forward? Does it create operational savings or help generate additional revenue?
- Does funding fix the problem, or will the same problem exist in 2025?

Another essential goal is to protect the health and well-being of all Jefferson County community members and visitors. This is accomplished through coordinating preparedness and response efforts with state and local public health departments to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. Meeting these needs may consist of both addressing immediate emergency response needs and driving transformative efforts to reduce public health inequities.

Uses of Funds

Jefferson County is evaluating the Expenditure Categories in a collaborative approach with the community, business leaders, and internal departments. Our goal is to fully understand the overarching needs and determine if those requests represent an eligible use of the funds. Along with the Expenditure Categories, requests will be evaluated to ensure they meet at least one of Jefferson County's Strategic Outcomes. Through mindful strategic planning and analysis, the funds will be expended to align with these categories to achieve COVID-19 recovery:

- a. *Public Health (EC 1)*
- b. *Address Negative Economic Impacts (EC 2)*
- c. *Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities (EC 3)*
- d. *Premium Pay For Essential Employees (EC 4)*
- e. *Water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure (EC 5)*
- f. *Revenue Replacement (EC 6)*

Jefferson County is evaluating potential expenditures using the following criteria:

- ARPA eligibility rules
- Relation to COVID-19 recovery
- Jefferson County Strategic Outcomes
- True Recovery: One-time vs ongoing expenses – since this funding is one-time, it should be used to truly solve one-time needs rather than only temporarily meeting ongoing needs
- Relative impact
- Impact on Equity

One key short-term need the county has faced has been increasing staffing to deal with immediate workload increases tied directly to the COVID-19 pandemic. These immediate needs have included:

- Continued Public Health response to COVID-19
- Administration of federal relief funds
- Increased legal representation
- Increased processing of emergency assistance payments
- Technology and operational changes to facilitate ongoing hybrid work and service environments

Jefferson County is aware that there are other potential funding sources that may help finance programs and other ARPA requests. To that end, we are investigating alternative funding sources to be used in addition to or in conjunction with the American Rescue Plan Act funds. Some of these alternate sources include Emergency Rental Assistance, Housing Assistance, pending federal infrastructure legislation, and expected State of Colorado programs addressing COVID impacts. Our goal will be to leverage all funding sources in order to maximize the impact of the ARPA funds. The county will consider these alternative funding sources as we move forward with recommending and prioritizing requests, working towards maximizing impact and equity.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

Jefferson County is invested both in ensuring any programs enacted using ARPA funding are conducted equitably, and in funding programs that specifically address existing inequities.

Jefferson County has hired two ARPA Equity Coordinators to help guide task forces and county leadership in picking viable, sound projects using ARPA funds. These subject matter experts will be housed in the EDI (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) Program under the Jeffco EDI Program Manager and will support the Rescue Team as it governs the projects and task forces process. One position will be initially hired to focus on developing methods for Jefferson County to support decision-making teams working on projects and programs related to ARPA. As programs are selected for funding, the EDI Team will collaborate to institute a recommended framework around monitoring and evaluation while also advising ways to foster enhanced inclusive community engagement.

The EDI Team is instrumental in developing metrics specific to ARPA impacts. To the extent that current equity metrics are available, the manager and her team will utilize and build on that work. Data will be used to evaluate equitable outcomes, provide insight, and will be foundational in creating best practices for distribution of ARPA funds. This evaluation will be in alignment with the evidence-based criteria outlined in federal guidelines. This information will be shared with the Rescue Team and county leadership to enable adjustments to ARPA funding priorities and operations to better address equity.

Overall, the collaboration between the equity coordinator and the Rescue Team and other departments will ensure Jefferson County follows Executive Order 13895's guidance in working to advance equity to all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality.

Community Engagement

Jefferson County conducted community engagement surveys to better understand current needs related to COVID-19, its impacts, and existing inequities. These surveys were specifically targeted at individuals in diverse groups who live or work in Jefferson County, businesses, and non-profit organizations. These surveys were conducted by a local, female-owned company that broke down the survey responses by demographic categories to differentiate needs as identified by segments of the community. We also have set up a "suggestion box" on the County website to ensure anyone can (still) submit an idea for a way to spend ARPA funds. The survey results and community/staff input helped us identify several spending priorities (see <https://www.jeffco.us/4277/American-Rescue-Plan-Act>). Those priorities became potential projects and led to the creation of eight separate task forces meeting regularly to thoroughly vet projects to receive ARPA funding.

Labor Practices

One of Jefferson County's Strategic Outcomes is to continuously focus on enhancing infrastructure resiliency, creating versatile spaces and amenities for residents and visitors to enjoy, and ensuring ease of movement within the County. We recognize that one of

the allowable uses of funds is to make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure. In addition, the State of Colorado is working to improve infrastructure. We are also investigating improved access to broadband, water, stormwater, and sewer infrastructure within our County. We are exploring opportunities to partner with other public entities to maximize use of our resources and avoid duplication of efforts. Once we have determined which infrastructure projects will be supported by Jefferson County ARPA funds, we will be able to give more information on planned workforce practices.

Use of Evidence

As stated earlier, we are still in the process of researching which projects to support via our task forces and county project managers. We are evaluating economic data; reviewing county department and community needs; and utilizing those residential, business, special district, and county surveys/input. Also, projects will be evaluated upon how they meet Treasury guidelines on the use of funds and Jefferson County’s Strategic Outcomes. With this information, we have developed our initial priority list and are beginning to allocate funds and designing program specifics using evidence-based understanding of interventions most likely to address determined needs. As more projects are thoroughly researched and approved for funding, we will incorporate the use of metrics to continuously evaluate program success. Jefferson County will also use metrics to measure progress towards our county-wide strategic goals. Funding a project is a start, but monitoring its success is crucial to understanding if ARPA funds were used properly.

Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
1	Public Health	246,793	246,793
1.4	Prevention in Congregate Settings (Nursing Homes, Prisons/Jails, Dense Work)	50,243	50,243
1.5	Personal Protective Equipment	16,126	16,126
1.9	Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Resp	180,424	180,424
7	Administrative and Other	737,488	531,119
7.1	Administrative Expenses	727,488	521,119
7.2	Evaluation and Data Analysis	10,000	10,000

Project Inventory

We have not yet determined which projects we will be undertaking except for some pandemic-related purchases and the addition of County staff in areas that have been impacted by COVID.

Project: Additional Litigation Attorney - 1.0 temporary litigation attorney to assist with defense of COVID-19 inmate lawsuits filed against the Sheriff's Office and assist with anticipated increase of tax appeals also related to COVID-19

Planned Total Funding Amount: \$202,600

Project Expenditure Category: 1.4 Prevention in Congregate Settings (Nursing Homes, Prisons/Jails, Dense Work)

Project: COVID Supplies Support – The safety and compliance team hired a warehouse manager to receive, rotate, and distribute stock of personal protective equipment.

Planned Total Funding Amount: \$97,500

Project Expenditure Category: 1.5 Personal Protective Equipment

Project: Administration Temp Employees – Sheriff Business Office Functions – The Sheriff's Office needed to hire additional temporary support staff for business office functions. This only supports LTE positions, with no FTE positions supported.

Planned Total Funding Amount: \$125,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.9 Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Response

Project: Intake Attorney, Process Server, SVU Attorney – The District Attorney needed to hire an intake attorney, process server, and SVU attorney to keep up with the increased caseload created by the pandemic and shutdown.

Planned Total Funding Amount: \$553,643

Project Expenditure Category: 1.9 Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Response

Project: Grant Team to handle execution of ARPA Funds - The "Rescue Team" was created to support our community through the distribution of the ARPA funds by providing budget recommendations, stewardship, fiscal oversight, and compliance with federal regulations.

Planned Total Funding Amount: \$ 4,403,772

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1 Administrative Expenses

Project: Consulting Services – CLA for ARPA - Our county ARPA team has contracted Clifton Larson Allen as an audit consultant to help us ensure compliance with federal and local regulations while also maintaining best practices for awarding funds.

Planned Total Funding Amount: \$ 1,625,000

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1 Administrative Expenses

Project: Rescue Contract Attorney - .5 temporary transactional/contract attorney to assist in creating contracts for programs that will be created in response to American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA)

Planned Total Funding Amount: \$101,300

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1 Administrative Expenses

Project: Peak Support (Human Services) – The county hired additional staff to help process the higher number of emergency benefits applications as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Planned Total Funding Amount: \$1,285,068

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1 Administrative Expenses

Project: Recruiters in Human Resources – Human Resources needed to hire recruiters to assist with hiring additional staff needed to continue to respond to COVID-19 and to carry out other ARPA projects

Planned Total Funding Amount: \$360,000

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1 Administrative Expenses

Performance Report

Within the first few months of 2022, we have refined and prioritized specific county projects, sought Board of County Commissioners' approval, and have created a stringent checklist of procedures to ensure task forces & project managers use the best process for overall success. This success will be measured in impact to county residents and visitors, increased equity, and inclusion to those who may have been excluded in the past, and good stewardship of the taxpayer's dollar. Taking a fiscally conservative and thoughtful approach on spending ARPA funds continues to be the main goal. The Rescue Team, supported as needed by audit consultant Clifton Larson Allen, will support annual single audits by the county's independent auditor to ensure the use of ARPA funds has followed both the U.S. Treasury's final rule and the original legislative text.