



Recovery Plan

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

2023 Report

County of Luzerne
2023 Recovery Plan

GENERAL OVERVIEW	2
Executive Summary	2
Uses of Funds	2
Community Engagement	3
Labor Practices	4
Use of Evidence	4
Performance Report	4
PROJECT INVENTORY	4
Personnel and Office Materials	5
Marketing to Attract Tourism in Luzerne County	5
2023 Aerial Imagery Capture Project	6
Improved Access and Security To County Buildings	7
Engineering Study for Nanticoke Bridge Replacement	7
Stormwater Infrastructure Improvement	8
Luzerne County Crisis Receiving and Stabilization Centers	8
HVAC System Requirements	9
P25 Digital Radio COVID-19 Response and Support	10
Emergency Management Equipment	11

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Executive Summary

Luzerne County is committed to providing a direct pandemic response to meet our most pressing community needs. The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) allocations have been a crucial lifeline to empower jurisdictions to respond to the needs of their communities that the COVID-19 pandemic has directly and indirectly exacerbated.

President Biden signed into law on March 11, 2021; Luzerne County has received its total allocation of \$112,890,152 in ARPA SLFRF funding from the United States Treasury (UST). Upon receiving notice of the funding award, Luzerne County leadership elicited feedback from County departments, elected officials and their constituents, County administration, and community service agencies to develop a framework for the distribution of these necessary funds informed the County's highest needs related to its COVID-19 pandemic response. The SLFRF framework assures that these projects' design, planning, and implementation equitably meet the needs of Luzerne County's most vulnerable and disproportionately affected community members, local businesses, and historically underrepresented individuals.

Uses of Funds

Luzerne County (County) intends to use the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recover Funds (CSLFRF) in four major categories: Economic Recovery, Pandemic Response, Revenue Loss Revenue Backfill, and Water and Sewer Infrastructure Projects. The Luzerne County Council has approved the following funding buckets for the ARPA funds.

Funding Bucket	Funded Amount	% of Total Funding
Approved Council Projects	\$21,791,875.00	19%
Notice of Funding Opportunity	\$55,063,825.80	49%
Internal Project Applications	\$17,498,671.00	16%
Low Income	\$5,000,000.00	4%
Small Business	\$5,000,000.00	4%
Revenue Replacement	<u>\$8,535,780.20</u>	<u>8%</u>
Subtotal	\$112,890,152.00	100%

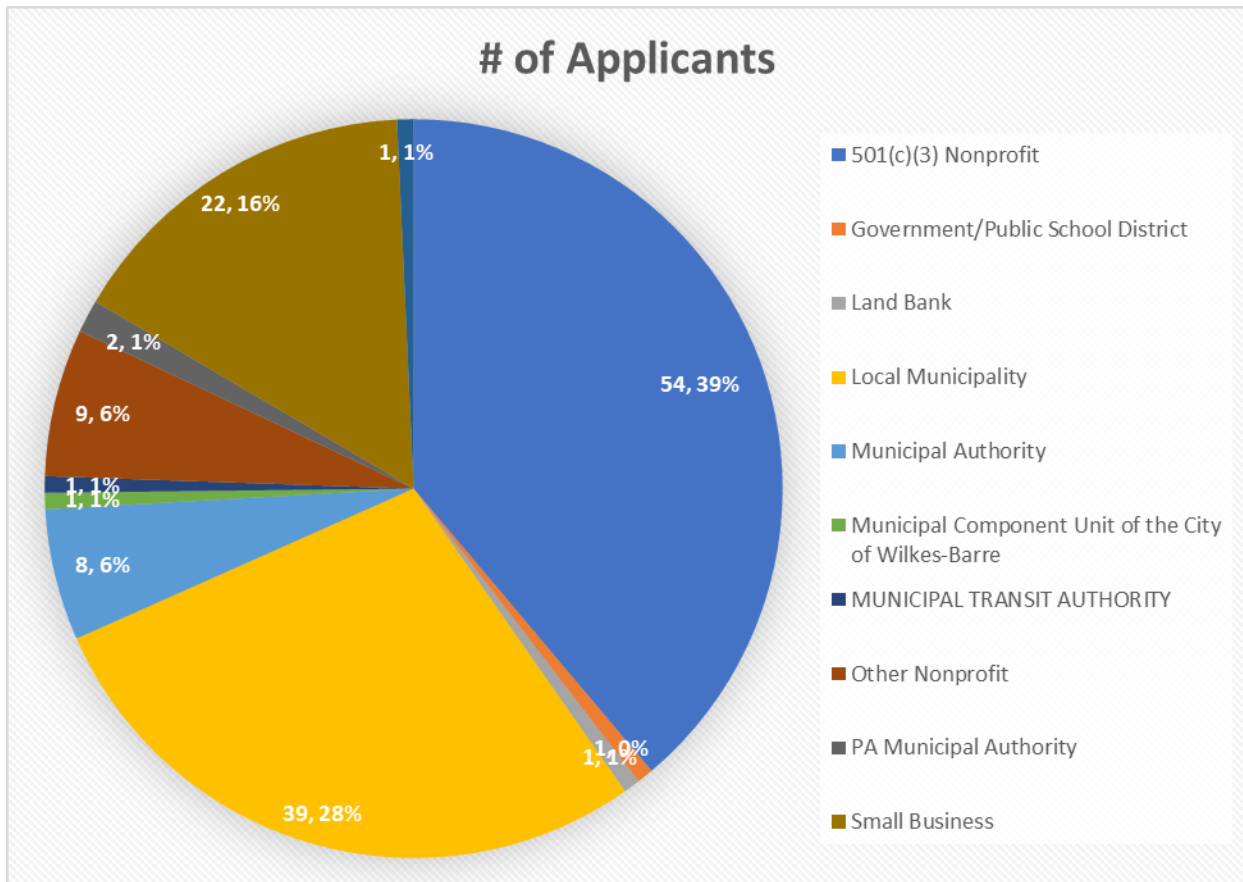
A significant goal is an economic recovery for businesses and individuals that suffered economically due to the pandemic resulting in industry closures affecting workers in the County. The County issued a Notice of Funding Availability, releasing a notice of award to 113 small businesses and non-profit organizations. They are working with other organizations to establish additional programs for senior citizens and disproportionately impacted households. The County

also supports organizations that promote tourism to boost the industry severely impacted during the Shelter in Place Order.

Community Engagement

In 2021, shortly after the onset of the pandemic, the County released an ARPA Pre-Application Survey on its website, which provided information about the American Rescue Plan funds and solicited funding proposals and expressions of interest from the general public. The County reviewed these funding proposals.

The County received 139 surveys (also called applicants), with 54.39% of the projects being proposed by non-profit organizations, 39% by local municipalities, and 22% from small businesses.



The community identified the following critical uses of the funds:

- Infrastructure
- Local economic recovery
- Mental health and violence prevention
- Educational needs and early childhood development

In some cases, the proposals would be funded in total, some in part, and all submissions were

valuable resources used to inform the County of the community’s needs. In addition to the portal above, the County leveraged its strong network of community-based partners and agencies. The ongoing dialogue and partnership with community agencies helped inform the County regarding the needs of the larger community and provide a network for providing services to County residents. In addition to those above, the County offers opportunities for the general public to provide valued input at County Council Meetings and public hearings. These meetings and hearings were not necessarily exclusive to ARPA funding but were part of the County’s existing practice of providing a venue for community input and engagement.

Furthermore, County Departments have submitted requests for funding of projects that benefit the County and its residents. Additionally, the County is refining a process to determine how to best invest ARPA funding to meet the community’s near- and long-term needs, informed in part by the work of the joint County-County Recovery and Resiliency Committee. As stated previously, Community organizations seeking financial support for proposals utilizing American Recovery Plan funding have been encouraged to submit proposals online utilizing a standard form that includes a budget and description of how the funds will be used.

Labor Practices

For infrastructure projects, Luzerne will engage strong labor standards to promote economic recovery through strong employment opportunities for workers. Furthermore, the County has existing measures/policies concerning responsible wage, wage theft prevention, competitive procurement, supplier and workforce diversity & inclusion, and construction prequalification, which promote strong labor standards, and such policies will be applied to applicable ARPA projects.

Use of Evidence

Evidence-based interventions are currently being evaluated for inclusion in County programs moving forward. The programs already funded through the SLFRF have yet to be primarily designed to create an evidence-building strategy.

Performance Report

On July 1, 2023, the County implemented an electronic Performance Reporting Survey to track the funds’ overarching goals and measure results for individual projects. The survey captures critical performance metrics for funded projects to be assessed and evaluated. The performance metrics will be reported beginning with the FY 2024 Performance Annual Report.

PROJECT INVENTORY

The Project Inventory includes project descriptions, eligible activity, expenditure categories, and internal and external SLFRF-funded projects.

Personnel and Office Materials

1	PERSONNEL AND OFFICE MATERIALS	
	<u>Department:</u>	Luzerne County District Attorney's Office
	<u>Funding Amount:</u>	\$1,582,903.00

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	<u>Department:</u>	Luzerne County District Attorney's Office
	<u>Funding Amount:</u>	\$1,582,903.00
	<u>Eligible Uses:</u>	3: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities
	<u>Expenditure Category:</u>	3.1: Public Sector Workforce: Payroll and Benefits for Public Health,
	<u>Project Description</u>	We are requesting funding to accommodate a new detectives division primarily investigating crimes against children. The office supplies are required to build this division, as well as the supplies to protect detectives from an outbreak. Lastly, with an influx of cases due to the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, we need to restructure the records retention building to store and retain records securely.

Marketing to Attract Tourism in Luzerne County

2	MARKETING TO ATTRACT TOURISM TO LUZERNE COUNTY	
	<u>Organization:</u>	Visit Luzerne County
	<u>Funding Amount:</u>	\$200,000.00
	<u>Eligible Uses:</u>	2: Negative Economic Impacts
	<u>Expenditure Category:</u>	2.35: Aid to Tourism, Travel & Hospitality
	<u>Project Description</u>	Visit Luzerne County is a Destination Marketing Organization whose mission is to make Luzerne County an attractive destination for visitors and events. It is primarily funded by the hotel tax and lost nearly \$200,000 in revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the ARPA funds requested will help recoup that loss and develop new marketing strategies. For example, Visit Luzerne County promotes a "Beer Trail." With these funds, they would like to develop and market similar campaigns for trails, including pizzerias and kielbasa restaurants, sources of pride in Luzerne County.

2023 Aerial Imagery Capture Project

3	2023 AERIAL IMAGERY CAPTURE PROJECT
<u>Department:</u>	Luzerne County Mapping/GIS Department
<u>Funding Amount:</u>	\$225,000
<u>Eligible Uses:</u>	3: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities
<u>Expenditure Category:</u>	3.4: Public Health-Negative Economic Impact: Public Sector Capacity
<u>Project Description</u>	<p>Upon the onset, and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, it became clear that remote access to government-managed data, such as GIS/Mapping data, was crucial to daily operations for public and private entities. Closing county offices to the public provided hurdles to completing real estate transactions, land development planning, land records management, etc. A specific tool for these tasks Luzerne County GIS/Mapping dept. Offers to the public (internal depts. and external agencies) access to the County’s parcel map via our two web-based mapping applications. However, the current dated aerial imagery in use (captured in late 2015/early 2016) prevents accurate and evidence-based conclusions for current use needs. This project provides the county with updated orthogonal and oblique imagery for those needs, unavailable from other sources. This imagery will be utilized by us and other internal and external entities via access to the data on our web mapping applications. Analysis tools will allow the assessment department to locate unassessed properties missed during the pandemic. It can also identify areas of the county that have lost or gained tree cover caused by human activities.</p>

Improved Access and Security To County Buildings

4	IMPROVED ACCESS AND SECURITY TO COUNTY BUILDINGS
	<u>Department:</u> Buildings and Grounds/Operations - 2
	<u>Funding Amount:</u> \$126,732.00
	<u>Eligible Uses:</u> 3: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities
	<u>Expenditure Category:</u> 3.5: Public Sector Administrative Needs
	<u>Project Description</u> This project will replace obsolete doors and access control hardware at the Brominski Building, Courthouse, Courthouse Annex, Penn Place, and Human Services Building. This will ensure the buildings remain accessible to employees and the public during regular business hours and to employees after hours. This project will also improve the security of the buildings above.

Engineering Study for Nanticoke Bridge Replacement

5	ENGINEERING STUDY FOR NANTICOKE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT
	<u>Department:</u> Engineering
	<u>Funding Amount:</u> \$450,000.00
	<u>Eligible Uses:</u> 3: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities
	<u>Expenditure Category:</u> 3.5: Public Sector: Effective Service Delivery
	<u>Project Description</u> This project is for an engineering study to replace the Nanticoke bridge to determine the best and most economical structure for the replacement.

Stormwater Infrastructure Improvement

6	STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT
<u>Department:</u>	Road & Bridges
<u>Funding Amount:</u>	\$9,960,000.00
<u>Eligible Uses:</u>	5: Water, Sewer, and broadband infrastructure
<u>Expenditure Category:</u>	5.6 Clean water: Stormwater
<u>Project Description</u>	This is for an infrastructure project that involves direct improvements on all 120 miles of the County's Storm Water Infrastructure. The upgrades include a complete hydraulic design, adding inlets and cross pipes, new swales, reconstruction of existing swales, replacement of undersized pipes, shoulder widening, driveway adjustments, and addressing all drainage trouble areas.

Luzerne County Crisis Receiving and Stabilization Centers

7	LUZERNE COUNTY CRISIS RECEIVING AND STABILIZATION CENTERS
<u>Department:</u>	Mental Health and Developmental Services
<u>Funding Amount:</u>	\$800,000.00
<u>Eligible Uses:</u>	2: Negative Economic Impacts
<u>Expenditure Category:</u>	1.12 Behavioral Health and Mental Health Services
<u>Project Description</u>	According to the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention's Crisis now research and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's guidance, a best practice is establishing Crisis Receiving and Stabilization Services (CRSS). With the Managed Care Reinvestment Funds and SLFRF, Luzerne County will establish, develop and operate two Crisis Receiving and Stabilization Centers serving upper and lower Luzerne County.

HVAC System Requirements

8	HVAC SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS
<u>Department:</u>	Buildings and Grounds/Operations
<u>Funding Amount:</u>	\$126,732.00
<u>Eligible Uses:</u>	3: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities
<u>Expenditure Category:</u>	3.5: Public Sector: Administrative Needs
<u>Project Description</u>	This project will replace obsolete HVAC equipment with modern, higher-efficient units with better humidity and outside air exchange. Specifically, we will replace the eight rooftop units at the Courthouse Annex, replace the Courthouse chiller, replace the four rooftop units at the Records/Coroner's Office and integrate the systems to the existing Building Management System, replace air handler #1 at the Brominski Building, replace the chilled water coil on air handler #4, replace the rooftop chiller and controls, and replace the pneumatic thermostats at the Engineer's Office/Garage. This project will allow for better temperature regulation, airflow control, energy efficiency, and humidity control.

P25 Digital Radio COVID-19 Response and Support

9	P25 DIGITAL RADIO COVID-19 RESPONSE AND SUPPORT
<u>Department:</u>	Luzerne County 9-1-1 Operations
<u>Funding Amount:</u>	\$2,976,181.00
<u>Eligible Uses:</u>	3: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities
<u>Expenditure Category:</u>	3.5: Public Sector Capacity: Administrative Needs

9	P25 DIGITAL RADIO COVID-19 RESPONSE AND SUPPORT
	<u>Department:</u> Luzerne County 9-1-1 Operations
	<u>Funding Amount:</u> \$2,976,181.00
	<u>Eligible Uses:</u> 3: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities
	<u>Expenditure Category:</u> 3.5: Public Sector Capacity: Administrative Needs
	<u>Project Description</u> This request will provide enhanced services and capabilities to our existing P25 Digital emergency response radio system. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused unimaginable strain on 9-1-1 staffing, including our ability to support the 175 County agencies, police, fire, and EMS agencies. We provide dispatch services and radio communications. This request is to activate and purchase two additional services cut from the original contract to stay within our project budget. Group services is a feature that enables the 9-1-1 center radio programming personnel to complete software, firmware, and alias updates over the air as part of P25. The current configuration requires personnel to connect to the 4000+ radios on the new system physically. This method could be more efficient and highly time-consuming, as we will only have two staff members (one part-time and one full-time) programming and maintaining the radios before and after they go live. This tool has the added benefit of being hands-free and completely remote during the ever-changing COVID-19 pandemic. GPS on Push to Talk (PTT) is a feature that will transmit the coordinates of a portable or mobile radio over the new P25 network. Paired with the integrated mapping feature, we will get the actual time location of every first responder when they transmit or communicate on the new system. This additional responder safety tool will enable us to better respond to emergencies.

Emergency Management Equipment

1 0	EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT EQUIPMENT
<u>Department:</u>	Luzerne County Emergency Management Agency
<u>Funding Amount:</u>	\$127,855.00
<u>Eligible Uses:</u>	3: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities
<u>Expenditure Category:</u>	3.5: Public Sector Capacity: Administrative Needs
<u>Project Description</u>	<p>As an Emergency Management Agency, we are responsible for responding to, and mitigating and recovering, the national pandemic and all future related incidents. Having assisted the Dept. of Health with the establishment and operations of numerous Covid testing sites and vaccination clinics throughout our county, we have utilized and expended many of our resources, have discovered considerable gaps in our response and storage capabilities, and have noted several factors that have hindered our mitigation efforts that need to be addressed, including transportation issues.</p> <p>Our submission and requested items directly relate to the abovementioned issues and gaps. For example, we received a pull-behind traffic message board and trailer from our local ten-county task force and have used it several times for testing sites and vaccination clinics. However, a gap was the limited access to transportation vehicles needed to place the board accordingly—most of our vehicles transported materials and PPE to various locations or utilized elsewhere in the county. We also had a shortage of lighting at these locations, and we are requesting to purchase light towers/generators. Additionally, upon receipt of any PPE, we were utilizing any available space in all sorts of county-owned locations. Due to these locations, some PPE was subjected to accountability and storage issues. The construction of a pole barn and the purchase of storage containers will significantly enhance our ability to preserve the integrity of the material and help us sustain the longevity of the items. Also, upon activating our Emergency Operations Center, we need additional personnel to occupy our emergency support functions sections. These requests will ensure the health and</p>