



Arapahoe County

5334 South Prince Street
Littleton, CO 80120
303-795-4630
Relay Colorado 711

Board Summary Report

File #: 23-674

Agenda Date: 12/5/2023

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To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Katherine Smith, Director, Community Resources; Interim Director, Open Spaces

Prepared By:

Katherine Smith, Director, Community Resources; Interim Director, Open Spaces

Presenter: Katherine Smith, Director, Community Resources; Emma Knight, City of Aurora; Jessica Prosser, City of Aurora

Subject:

11:30 AM *Aurora Navigation Center ARPA Project Update

Purpose and Request:

The purpose of this study session is to request from the Board an approved allocation for the Aurora Navigation Center and Shelter. This study session will provide an update on Aurora's plans for a regional navigation center and solidify the request for a County contribution of \$5 million in ARPA funding to assist in the purchase of an existing hotel and convention center in the metro area.

Background and Discussion: The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) is a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus bill signed into law March 2021. The goal of ARPA is to support public health response, address negative economic impacts resulting from or exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency, replace public sector revenue loss, address premium pay for essential workers, and invest in water, sewer and broadband infrastructure. The legislation builds on the CARES Act funding from 2020, which provided Arapahoe County \$114 million in one-time funding. Arapahoe County received over \$127 million in ARPA funds, which have to be obligated no later than December 31, 2024, and expended no later than December 31, 2026.

In 2022, the Board of County Commissioners tentatively approved an ARPA allocation of \$5 million to partner with The City of Aurora on the creation of a homeless services campus/shelter. The BoCC tentatively approved this funding allocation, pending additional information and planning from The City.

Since this tentative approval, The City and The County have worked closely to develop a plan for use of these ARPA funds. In addition, The City has secured funding for this project from multiple sources: \$15.3 million from the Division of Housing (DOH) with the State of Colorado, \$8.37 million from Adams County, and \$1.125 million from Douglas County.

The Aurora Regional Navigation Center will be a transformational, coordinated, low-barrier campus that streamlines access to resources and services needed for people experiencing homelessness to transition back into housing and thrive. The campus will close the gap between people experiencing unsheltered homelessness and the amount of shelter beds available in our region.

The target population for the Aurora Regional Navigation Center will be adults experiencing homelessness in the Denver Metro area. All entities will be eligible to access services. The ARNC will serve approximately 500 individuals each day, with the ability to scale up to 550-700 in extreme conditions. These services include:

- Pallet/Safe Parking: 30-50 pallets and up to 40 parking spaces
- Transitional Housing: 255 beds, up to 500 people annually
- Emergency Shelter: 200-300 bed, up to 1800 people annually

The City of Aurora has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an operator of the navigation center, who will provide all onsite safety/security as well as services. The City of Aurora will also partner with community partners and county services to ensure onsite services are comprehensive to best meet the needs of the population served.

The City of Aurora has located an existing hotel and convention center in the Denver metro area that they have submitted a letter of intent to purchase. If approved, Arapahoe County's ARPA allocation of \$5 million would be utilized to purchase this existing property. The City of Aurora would renovate this structure to meet its needs in 2024, with the goal of opening services in 2024. With the purchase of this existing structure, they will be able to begin service delivery much faster than with a new build, which was previously explored.

Fiscal Impact: This approval would finalize the use of \$5 million in ARPA funding from the County's ARPA allocation. This allocation has been included in current ARPA calculations.

Alternatives: The Board could amend existing allocation or deny this ARPA allocation.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

- ☐ Be fiscally sustainable
- ☐ Provide essential and mandated service
- ☒ Be community focused

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approving the requests.

Concurrence: ARPA Team