



Board Summary Report

File #: 24-398

Agenda Date: 7/23/2024

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To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Katherine Smith, Director, Community Resources

Prepared By:

Elizzebeth Loomis, Division Manager, Community Development, Housing and Homeless Services

Presenter: Katherine Smith, Director, Community Resource

Subject:

2:45 PM *ERA II Update and Adjustment

Purpose and Request:

The purpose of this study session is to review current data with the Board of County Commissioners and request further direction on the Emergency Rental Assistance program.

Background and Discussion: Arapahoe County received two allocations of Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) named ERA I and ERA II. Arapahoe County is currently in the process of spending our final “tranche” of ERA II funding, which was \$4,136,236.14. The total ERA II allocation was \$13,787,453.80. As of July 1, 2024, the County has utilized 88% of our ERA II allocation with \$1,624,997.44 remaining. Of the ERA II allocation funds left, the County may only expend up to \$120,460.81 for administrative costs.

Arapahoe County’s ERA II program has served 3,313 unduplicated households with retrospective rental assistance, prospective rental assistance, and utility assistance from January 1, 2022 to June 30, 2024. In addition, we have funded 5 temporary grant funded Navigator positions to assist individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or on the verge of homelessness.

On February 27, 2024, the Board of Commissioners approved the utilization of an ERA II allocation of \$1,794,980.98 for homeless prevention through legal aid. After new guidance from the US treasury and recalculation of our remaining housing stability allocation cap (15%), County staff were not able to utilize the ERA II funds for this purpose.

The ERA team currently has 208 applications “pending” in the system that need to be processed. With this number of households in the queue, we would like to discuss options to ensure fiscal sustainability and equity with this program, while also ensuring that we are spending our final allocation to assist our residents in need most effectively. With the September 30, 2025, grant closure date approaching, Community Resources would like to present additional recommendations to utilize remaining ERA II funds:

- Open the Rental Assistance program to serve the residents of the City of Aurora. The City of Aurora was granted their own allocation of ERA funds and expended the remainder of these funds in 2023. Arapahoe County continues to receive a steady amount of applications, but staff are seeing a high number of denials (households do not qualify or have already reached their 18 month federal maximum limit), and

for those that are approved, the amounts paid out are much lower than we saw early in the program.

- Request for an additional American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocation of \$300,000.00 to continue to fund existing staff until at least the end of December 2024. The ERA administrative cap is set a fifteen percent (15%), Arapahoe County has a remaining \$120,460.81 for administrative costs. As of July 1, 2024, the administrative budget is projected to exhausted by early September of 2024.

Fiscal Impact: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocation of \$300,000.00 to continue to fund of existing staff until the end of December 2024.

Alternatives: Community Resources can continue to run the Emergence Rental Assistance program as is, with no changes. This will result in a reduction in the program administration, reducing ability to process applications and spend our ERA II allocation in full.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

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

Staff Recommendation: Community Resources staff recommends opening the Rental Assistance program to serve the residents of the City of Aurora and an additional ARPA allocation request of \$300,000.00 to continue to fund ERA II administrative staff until January 2025.

Concurrence: Todd Weaver, Finance Director and Internal ARPA Team