

A RESOLUTION TO ADDRESS IMMEDIATE CHILDCARE NEEDS; LAUNCH A CHILDREN'S SAVINGS ACCOUNTS PROGRAM; CONNECT ALL COUNTY HOUSEHOLDS TO BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE; ADDRESS BROADBAND AFFORDABILITY, LITERACY, AND ACCESS; EXPAND THE COUNTY'S WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM; AND ACCOUNT FOR LOST REVENUES DUE TO COVID-19 AS PART OF THE WASHTENAW COUNTY RESCUE PLAN

WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

September 15, 2021

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an extensive impact on the health and wellbeing of Washtenaw County residents; and

WHEREAS, the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act was passed to help communities begin to recover from this negative impact of the pandemic, particularly communities where systemic health and economic disparities have been exacerbated by the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Washtenaw County has been allocated \$71,402,185 in State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) to fill revenue shortfalls and support the communities hardest hit by the COVID-19 crisis; and

WHEREAS, the county engaged in a community engagement process, including a series of town halls as well as a community survey where each of the initiatives included in this resolution had a vast majority of survey respondents indicating support for them, and

WHEREAS, encouraging generational success and providing a path to success has long been a key goal of the Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of having access to quality childcare provision; and

WHEREAS, one key way to help families find and afford childcare services is by providing navigation and financial assistance; and

WHEREAS, Children's Savings Accounts are an evidence informed intervention that provide education-specific savings accounts and financial education programs for children and their caretakers; and

WHEREAS, Children's Savings Accounts have been shown to increase post-secondary educational attainment which has become an important predictor of generational wealth; and

WHEREAS, initial investments in a Children's Savings Account program are planned to be matched by future community, state, and federal funders through active fundraising work by supported staff to ensure sustainability of the program; and

WHEREAS, for many years expanding high-speed broadband internet to all parts of the County has been a key goal of the Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in the dramatic increase of County citizens working and going to school virtually thus reinforcing to the Board of Commissioners that reliable high-speed broadband internet is a basic need for all County citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Broadband Task Force has diligently and proactively worked on its charge to the point where it prepared and published a Request for Proposal (RFP) from service providers who have the capacity to expand high-speed broadband internet into those areas of the County that presently have no high-speed broadband internet access who have the capacity to complete the high-speed broadband internet build-out; and

WHEREAS, while the potential federal infrastructure bill would be an ideal funding source for this project, the County has worked to find immediate alternative sources of funding so that the high-speed broadband internet build-out would not be unnecessarily delayed; and

WHEREAS, while County Administration and the Board of Commissioners have identified funding sources other than the potential infrastructure bill to complete the high-speed broadband internet build-out beyond what will be covered by the ARP SLFRP funds, RDOF awards, or CMIC awards, the County is still looking to a potential federal infrastructure bill to ultimately fund all or part of the high-speed broadband internet build-out to allow for other important investments in our community; and

WHEREAS, Home Weatherization is an evidence informed intervention that provide energy efficiency services including weatherstripping, insulation, and HVAC upgrades that lower energy bills and increase comfort in homes; and

WHEREAS, Home Weatherization programming also offers an opportunity to identify and make related health and safety home improvements, such as ventilation to improve indoor air quality, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and in some cases central air conditioning; and

WHEREAS, the ARP SLFRP guidance includes accounting for lost revenues due to COVID-19 pandemic as an eligible use of funds to ensure local governments are able to maintain operations and not cut safety net services during a pandemic, providing a formula to calculate this amount yearly; and

WHEREAS, County Administration and Finance have reviewed American Rescue Plan State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds guidance and confirm that each of these initiatives is an eligible expense; and

WHEREAS, this item has been reviewed by Corporation Counsel, the Finance Department, Human Resources, Information Technology, Facilities Management, Racial Equity Office, the County Administrator's Office, and the Ways and Means Committee.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners obligate up to a total amount of \$24,746,642 of the County's ARP SLFRP allocation and up to a total amount of \$5,785,500 of County general fund dollars to address immediate childcare needs, launch a children savings accounts program, connect all county households to high-speed broadband internet infrastructure, address high-speed broadband internet affordability, literacy, and access, expand weatherization services, and account for lost revenues due to COVID-19 as part of the Washtenaw County Rescue Plan.

Washtenaw County Rescue Plan Initiative	American Rescue Plan Funds	General Fund	ARP (Lost Revenues)	Total Obligation
Addressing Childcare Access	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000		\$2,000,000
Children's Savings Accounts	\$2,914,500	\$3,785,500		\$6,700,000
Broadband Infrastructure	\$4,890,757	\$1,000,000	\$8,781,513	\$14,672,270
Broadband Affordability	\$800,000			\$800,000
Weatherization	\$1,400,000			\$1,400,000
ARP Lost Revenues available for future qualified initiatives	\$13,741,385		-\$8,781,513	\$4,959,872
	\$24,746,642	\$5,785,500	\$0	\$30,532,142

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Washtenaw County is obligating \$13,741,385 in ARP lost revenue as part of this initial proposal. Of that amount, \$8,781,513 shall be allocated for high-speed broadband internet infrastructure with the remaining \$4,959,872 available for future ARP eligible initiatives.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that individual funding obligations by initiative are included in the following statements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners obligates up to \$2,000,000 – including up to \$1,000,000 of the County's ARP SLFRP allocation as well as \$1,000,000 of General Fund, to equitably address childcare access needs in Washtenaw County through the provision of navigation services and financial assistance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners obligates up to \$6,700,000 – including up to \$2,914,500 of the County's ARP SLFRP allocation as well as \$3,785,500 of General Fund, over the next 4 years to develop and launch a Children's Savings Account Program to promote healthy childhood environments, address educational disparities through investing in lower-income public schools, and begin to impact social determinants of health (e.g., generational wealth, employment, educational attainment) that caused disparate impact of COVID-19 in specific Washtenaw County communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners obligates up to a total of \$14,672,270 to fully fund the Broadband Task Force's Request for Proposals to expand high-speed broadband internet infrastructure to all households in Washtenaw County, inclusive of up to \$4,890,757 directly from the county's ARP SLFRP, up to \$1,000,000 from the County's General Fund Balance, with the remaining up to \$8,781,513 from recovered ARPA lost revenues funds.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners directs the County Administrator to continue to monitor the pending infrastructure bill in Congress and authorizes the Administrator to apply for the maximum amount of high-speed broadband internet funding which may be available once this bill is enacted, with the express intent that any money received from this bill will be used to off-set alternative funds that were necessary for the

County to expend to insure that its high-speed broadband internet build-out was completed in a timely fashion.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners obligates up to \$800,000 of the County's ARPA SLFRP funds to provide assistance to households to support internet access, digital literacy, and affordability concerns to ensure that everyone who has access to high-speed broadband internet infrastructure is able to adequately connect and use it.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners obligates up to \$1,400,000 of the County's ARPA SLFRP funds over the next 4 years to expand the Weatherization services in Washtenaw County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners instructs the County Administrator to develop the operational framework, including identify and work with key community partners, to take the necessary steps to develop and execute specific program plans for each of these obligations of funds, inclusive of an overview, timeline, project activities, and performance metrics.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners authorizes the County Administrator issue Request for Proposals (RFPs) for initiatives requiring competitive bidding, evaluate responses, identify awardees and issue contracts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners recognizes that necessary modifications to position control, either by way of the creation of regular or temporary positions, may be needed to serve as an intermediary between the service providers, the residents of the County and the Board of Commissioners to ensure the funds are invested and tracked in alignment with treasury guidance, and that work is completed to agreed upon standards.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners instructs that position(s) created to support ARPA initiatives will be earmarked as such and shall be eliminated upon expenditure of all ARPA funds.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners recognizes that the funds obligated as part of this resolution are non-structural in nature, must be obligated by December 31, 2024, and spent no later than December 31, 2026. As such, the outlined initiatives shall not bind the County beyond the timelines as indicated.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners instructs the County Administrator to identify needs within governmental services and other ARPA-eligible projects that-utilize the revenue loss funds in accordance with legislation and bring specific projects to the Board for final approval.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners instructs the County Administrator to bring forth a resolution identifying ARPA-eligible projects for consideration by the Board of Commissioners within 30-days of the authorization of this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners instructs that all ARPA allocations be approved by the County Administrator prior to be expended and in alignment with designated specific activities, timelines, and deliverables.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners authorizes the County Administrator to amend budgets in alignment with the obligated funds of this resolution.