

PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE TO FILE 23-3116
(Finance Committee 9/20.2023 9:30AM)

Sponsored by: TONI PRECKWINKLE (President), Cook County Board of Commissioners

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

**PROPOSED RESOLUTION FOR AN ARPA VITAL COMMUNITIES PROGRAM INITIATIVE
IMPLEMENTED BY THE BUREAU OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2021, the federal government authorized the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (“ARPA”) which includes \$1.9 trillion in federal stimulus funds to hasten the United States’ recovery from the economic and health effects caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, specifically, the federal government has authorized and allocated a federal award of approximately \$1,000,372,385B of ARPA funding to Cook County to assist the County in its recovery from the economic and health effects of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on June 24, 2021, the Cook County American Rescue Plan Act Framework (the “ARPA Framework”) was presented to the Cook County Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, the Cook County Board of Commissioners via Resolution 21-3654 accepted the ARPA federal award allocated to Cook County to assist the County in its recovery from the economic and health effects of COVID-19 in the amount of approximately \$1,000,372,385.00; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 21-3654 further authorized the Cook County Budget Director and Comptroller to create and implement a Special Purpose Fund for the ARPA award and other accounting measures to track the acceptance and spending of the federal award; and

WHEREAS, the Cook County Board of Commissioners authorized the Chief Financial Officer, Budget Director, Chief Procurement Officer and applicable using agencies to issue grants, contracts and agreements for ARPA programs approved via Resolution 22-0637; and

WHEREAS, to further the Policy Roadmap Goals, the Bureau of Economic Development (BED) has developed a menu of Vital Community programs and initiatives which have undergone review and approval through the Project Management Office process to utilize ARPA funding for such programs and initiatives pursuant to the issuance of grants, contracts, and agreements; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 22-0637 provided that any grants issued regarding ARPA programs in an amount over \$1M shall require the approval of the Cook County Board of Commissioners.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Cook County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the issuance of the following agreement by the BED to utilize ARPA funding for a multiyear term through Fiscal Year 2026, subject to annual appropriation by the Board, for the BED program as follows:

1. Enter into a Subrecipient Agreement with **Elevate Energy** in an aggregate amount of up to **\$7,820,000** to begin implementation of the **Water Affordability Program**. Elevate will partner with CEDA to continue the water utility assistance program that CEDA has been operating since late 2021, with up to \$7,500,000 of the \$7,820,000 being allocated to CEDA for this purpose. This partnership with CEDA will provide water utility bill payment assistance to help struggling income-eligible households in suburban Cook County. Elevate will also initiate an assessment phase for

several potential additional components of the Water Affordability Program: residential water efficiency efforts, including a leak repair assistance program; a municipal bulk household debt relief strategy in the most water-burdened communities that incorporates water affordability best practices; and a water affordability technical assistance program for municipalities in suburban Cook County. BED will utilize the findings and recommendations from the assessment phase to develop these components and return to the Board for any further program and funding approvals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Cook County Board of Commissioners recognizes that time is of the essence and authorizes the Chief of the Bureau of Economic Development to negotiate and enter into the various agreements that outline the specific metric and impact data, and compliance with all ARPA reporting and monitoring requirements with the agency listed above to implement the above program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Cook County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Chief of the Bureau of Economic Development or its designee to modify the agreements and funding allocations to all BED selected organizations based upon need and utilization.