

April 3, 2023

Honorable Toni Preckwinkle
President, Cook County Board of Commissioners
and Members of the Cook County Board of Commissioners
118 North Clark Street, Room 1018
Chicago, IL 60602

Re: Item #23-2282 Proposed Resolution for an Infrastructure Beneficiary Grant to the Cook County Forest Preserve District, Chicago Botanical Garden and Brookfield Zoo to be paid from ARPA Revenue Loss Allocation

Dear Madam President and Cook County Commissioners:

The purpose of this letter is to provide information on proposed Resolution 23-2282 which requests the approval of the issuance of Beneficiary Grant Agreements between: (i) the County and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County (“FPDCC”), (ii) the County, the County Chicago Horticultural Society (“Garden”) and FPDCC, and (iii) the County, the Chicago Zoological Society (“Zoo”) and FPDCC. Each Beneficiary Grant Agreement would utilize a portion of Cook County’s American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) revenue loss allocation through Fiscal Year 2026 for the capital projects identified by the County, FPDCC, the Garden and the Zoo.

The Cook County Board of Commissioners approved Resolution 21-3654 which accepted ARPA federal funds to assist the County in its recovery from the economic and health effects of COVID-19. The amount of the ARPA federal award was approximately \$1 billion. To date, the County has allocated up to \$300 million from its ARPA federal award for revenue loss. Pursuant to its home rule powers and in accordance with U.S. Department of Treasury ARPA guidance, the County desires to allocate \$25 million of its ARPA revenue loss allocation to the FPDCC, the Garden, and the Zoo to fund various capital projects in furtherance of Cook County’s Policy Roadmap Goals and the County’s commitment to improved health and wellness, government services, and public infrastructure. Specifically, the County desires to award \$10 million to the FPDCC, \$10 million to the Zoo, and \$5 million to the Garden in the form of a Beneficiary Grant Agreement for capital projects for each entity.

The FPDCC will institute general maintenance and upgrades to public facilities (including HVAC replacements), build new comfort stations and rehabilitate up to 40 existing comfort stations throughout the forest preserve system. The Garden will facilitate roof replacement(s) at the Chicago Botanic Garden. The Zoo will institute HVAC upgrades, roof repairs and animal exhibit upgrades at the Brookfield Zoo. The FPDCC, Garden and Zoo may fund other capital projects as approved by the County, through the Bureau of Finance. The Bureau of Finance, through the Department of Budget and Management Services, will work to satisfy the reporting requirements set forth by the U.S. Department of Treasury as they relate to the Beneficiary Agreements.

We respectfully request your support in the issuance of the Beneficiary Grant Agreements as we believe that funding such capital projects will improve the experience and public health of the surrounding community members and visitors. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

Annette C.M. Guzman
Annette C.M. Guzman