



FLOSSMOOR

Welcoming. Beautiful. Connected.

Village of Flossmoor

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Mayor

Michelle I. Nelson

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Village Manager

Bridget A. Wachtel

March 1, 2022

Donna Miller
6th District Commissioner
Cook County Board of Commissioners
118 N. Clark St., Rm. 567
Chicago, IL 60602

Dear Commissioner Miller,

The Covid-19 pandemic has inflicted a severe toll on the Southland both economically and from a healthcare standpoint. With limited access to Cook County Health (CCH) facilities in many communities like ours, residents of the 6th District must travel even further to access County healthcare services and coupled with some of the closings of area hospitals, the far south suburbs have fewer and fewer convenient options for accessing the healthcare they need, including mental and behavioral health services. Historic disinvestment in the south suburbs, and the lack of mental health services has led to a number of problems, including increased hospitalization, more expensive care, high incarceration, homelessness, substance use, suicide, and overburdening of existing programs or facilities. South suburban residents have access to far fewer support services and have greater difficulty accessing behavioral health clinical services due to provider shortages, in fact the majority of communities in the South region are designated as mental health professional shortage areas.

Therefore, I am writing in full support of the transformational American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding proposal for a Cook County Far South Regional Healthcare Hub, which you have proposed. I am grateful for the investments the County has made in the last few years in our south suburban communities, and those investments are bearing fruit as we are seeing new private sector investments flow into our region creating many career opportunities for our residents. Using ARPA funding to expand behavioral health services provided directly by Cook County Health (CCH) by opening a CCH Integrated Care Clinic or Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) south suburban hub or combination thereof in the far south suburbs that would include a behavioral health clinic among other programming such as workforce development would be instrumental in improving the health of the community and supporting these investments from the county.

Such a hub can serve as a focal point for partners from different sectors (i.e., healthcare, housing, transportation, education, senior services, community groups, etc.) that can come together to align individual efforts, thereby improving coordination, and fostering collaboration.

On behalf of the Village of Flossmoor, I would like to thank President Preckwinkle and the Cook County Board for your diligent work during these trying times, and I hope you will be equally supportive of this transformational proposal as I am.

Sincerely,

Michelle I. Nelson
Mayor