



332 S. Michigan Avenue, Suite 634
Chicago, IL 60604
312- 939-5935, ext. 127
www.lwvcookcounty.org

May 8, 2022

To: Chair Bridget Gainer and Members of the Business and Economic Development Committee

re: Item 22-2807, Proposed Resolution Approving the Issuance of Agreements by the Bureau of Economic Development Utilizing ARPA Funds for Vital Communities Program Initiatives

Dear Commissioners:

As noted in the Proposed Resolution, in January the Board authorized up to \$100 million utilizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for programs under the category of Vital Communities pursuant to Resolution 22-0637. When that Resolution came before the Finance Committee for approval, the League of Women Voters of Cook County urged that prior to final authorization of the specific programs utilizing ARPA funds, the County should include

- (1) The **specific outcomes** the County is looking to achieve through the dollars expended, both near-term (by some point prior to the end of the 2022 fiscal year) and, if applicable, longer-term (when those long-term outcomes can be expected).
- (2) How the County plans to **measure achievement** of the hoped-for outcomes, including what data is to be provided, by whom, and how often.
- (3) Who will be **analyzing the effectiveness** of the dollars spent (what outside entities with expertise and/or what County departments).

At that Finance Committee meeting, Chief Financial Officer Ammar Rizki said that this would be done as part of the review and approval of such specific programs through the Project Management Office. This Proposed Resolution 22-2807 states that such review and approval by the Project Management Office has taken place with regard to the specific proposals in this Proposed Resolution.

The League is seeking confirmation that this information has been provided to you for your consideration prior to recommending approval of this Proposed Resolution to the Board.

As stated in our letter of January 4, specifying up front how program effectiveness will be measured will provide the County the ability to share the outcomes transparently with the public and assure them that the money is being used wisely. The results of these measurements can also provide a basis for making decisions as to how the ARPA funds will be spent in 2023 and 2024.

Yours truly,
Cynthia Schilsky, President