



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

ARPA SUSTAINABLE AND SMART COMMUNITIES PROGRAM INITIATIVES IMPLEMENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

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 Resolutions 22-3657 and 22-0637; and

WHEREAS, to further the Policy Roadmap Goal, the Department of Environment & Sustainability has developed a menu of Sustainable and Smart 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, Resolutions 22-3657 and 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; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the issuance of the following agreements by the Department of Environment & Sustainability to utilize ARPA funding for multiyear terms through Fiscal Year 2026 subject to annual appropriation by the Board, for the Department of Environment & Sustainability programs and initiatives as follows:

1. Enter into a Subrecipient Agreement with the Forest Preserves of Cook County (FPCC) in an aggregate amount of up to \$3,000,000.00 to implement the Riparian Restoration Program (Sustainable Communities), which is designed to reduce flooding and improve air and water quality by restoring FPCC lands adjacent to Thorn Creek in southeast Cook County and Tinley Creek in southwest Cook County. The program will include ecological

restoration of 400 acres of floodplain and associated upland habitats, development of hydrologic restoration plans, and implementation of best management practices identified in the plans. These activities will create healthy preserves that are assets for the surrounding communities and provide natural infiltration of rainwater to reduce flooding and soil erosion.

2. Enter into a Subrecipient Agreement with the Forest Preserves of Cook County (FPCC) in an aggregate amount of up to \$7,000,000.00 to implement the Southeast Cook County Land Acquisition Plan (Sustainable Communities). This program will allow the FPCC to acquire up to 350 acres in southeast Cook County to create a robust new forest preserve system in an area challenged by public health, equity, and economic factors. The proposed acquisitions were identified by the FPCC Southeast Cook County Land Acquisition Plan adopted in 2019. The land will be purchased from willing sellers and the acres were identified based on ecological value, flood mitigation, connectivity, and equity/social vulnerability.
3. Enter into a Subrecipient Agreement with the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) in an aggregate amount of up to \$5,845,470.00 to implement the Rain Ready Plan Implementation (Smart Communities) program. Rain Ready plans were developed by CNT in 2016 for six communities in the Calumet Corridor: Blue Island, Calumet City, Calumet Park, Dolton, Riverdale, and Robbins with Community Block Development Grant funds issued by Cook County's Department of Planning and Development. This area was disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, has faced a history of disinvestment, and is impacted by chronic, pervasive urban flooding. This program will support the installation of stormwater management improvements with a focus on green infrastructure and nature-based solutions. There will be intensive community engagement to ensure appropriate prioritization of projects.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners recognizes that time is of the essence and authorizes the Director of the Department of Environment & Sustainability to negotiate and enter into the various agreements that outlines the specific metric and impact data, and compliance with all ARPA reporting and monitoring requirements with the Subrecipients listed above to implement the above programs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Director of the Department of Environment & Sustainability or its designee to modify the agreements and funding allocations to all of the Department of Environment & Sustainability's selected Subrecipients based upon need and utilization.