



Washington
 County

Pandemic Funding and Response



COVID-19 Pandemic Response and Federal Assistance

Washington County, led by its County Board and Public Health & Environment Department, played a key role in the response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. The county took a number of actions to address community needs early in the pandemic, and has used federal assistance through the Coronavirus Relief Act (CARES) and American Rescue Plan (ARPA) to support its businesses and residents. This document highlights and provides a summary of those activities

Coronavirus Relief Funds (CARES Act) – \$31.7 million

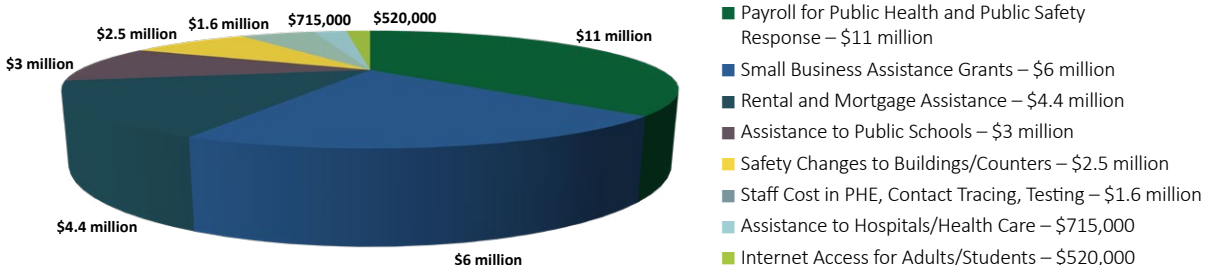


Washington County received CARES Act funding in July 2020 and was required to expend all funds by the end of 2020. The county provided \$6 million in small business grants that went to more than 500 individual county businesses. The county provided nearly \$4.5 million in rental and mortgage assistance, focusing benefits to those who lost jobs, and those whose pay was reduced or hours reduced as many businesses were required to close to help slow the spread of the virus.

The county provided \$3 million to public school districts and more than \$700,000 to hospitals, to address added burden on those entities created by the pandemic response.

CARES Act funding paid for staff to provide contact tracing, testing, masks and other public health supports for long-term and congregate care facilities throughout the county.

As an employer, the county used its funds to make the necessary building upgrades to provide safe service delivery and to support the necessary move to remote work.



County Funding and Response Efforts

Throughout 2020 and 2021, the county initiated a number of programs and took actions to provide immediate relief. Additional time was given to property owners to pay property tax bills, the county provided state provided business relief grants, and rebated public health license fees for highly-impacted businesses, and kept the county property tax levy flat in 2021.



Oversaw state business grant program \$5 million



Coordinated homemade mask donations



Opened parks free to the public (spring/summer 2020)



Filled emergency assistance requests



Provided a property tax payment extension (property owners)



Enhanced county effort to maximize rental assistance (to county residents who qualify)



Approved a property tax levy with no increase in 2021



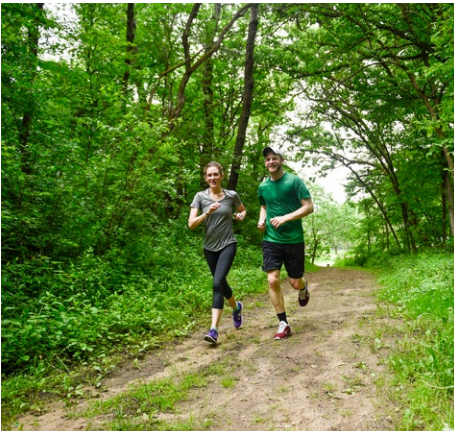
Rebated 2020 & removed 2021 license fees (for restaurants, bars, hospitality entities – \$1 million)



Partnered with Second Harvest Food Bank (food distribution)



Implemented federal leaves & protections for all



American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds – \$51 million

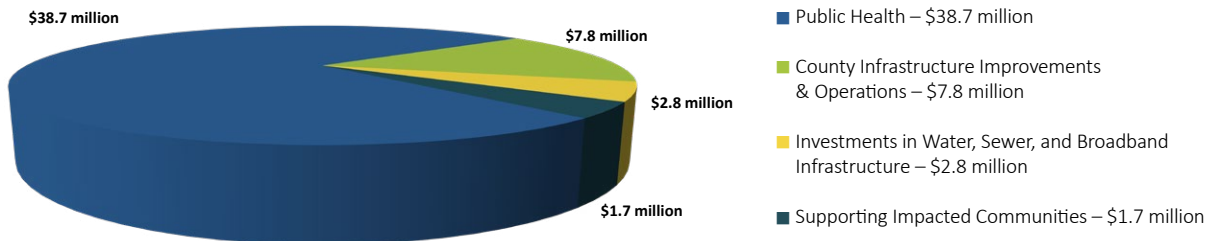
Building off of the CARES Act, and the county response efforts, the county developed its current plan for use of the American Rescue Plan funds.

Public Health: \$38,710,893 community health worker-health equity initiative (multi-year effort), crisis response mental health service augmentation, county emergency/transitional housing capital program, housing outreach team supervision, food security program, library express lockers, building modifications to ensure safe service delivery, payroll and benefit cost of those directly responding to pandemic, public health enhancements to county environmental centers, virtual meeting and service support, safe working environment at Big Marine Park, public health records assessment and support, protective equipment and measures, campus heating and cooling improvements, COVID-19 testing, planning, and implementation, affordable housing, increased cameras and security system upgrade in the jail, court room security glass, access and continuity navigator.

County Infrastructure Improvements & Operations: \$7,766,200 voice-telephone system replacement, St. Croix Bluffs boat launch improvements, sheriff's office mobile squad radio replacement, public works fleet replacement, information technology infrastructure, election equipment replacement, law library loss revenue.

Investments in Water, Sewer, and Broadband Infrastructure: \$2,750,000 broadband matching funds, sewer and water utility matching funds.

Supporting Impacted Communities: \$1,748,800 Career Pathways System project, internet access to support adults and students, county attorney staff augmentation, economic support division assistance, equitable services consultant, small business technical assistance program.



This information was reported to the U.S. Treasury July 31, 2022.