



Legislation Text

File #: 22-0289, Version: 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT SUB-AWARDS

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 \$1,000,372,385.00 of ARPA funding to Cook County to assist the County in its recovery from the economic and health effects of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the County may subaward to subrecipients portions of the County’s ARPA funding for purposes approved by the County Board (see County Board Item Nos. 22-0637, 22-0691, 22-1626, and 22-2807); and

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves of Cook County (the “Forest Preserves”) has requested subaward funds in the following amounts for the following Forest Preserves programs:

1. **Conservation Corps - Not to Exceed \$3,875,000.00.** The Forest Preserves will continue to engage youth and adults from Cook County in meaningful hands-on job training. Participants receive job training, attend networking events, and earn valuable certifications while improving the ecological health of the Forest Preserves. In subsequent years, the program may feature an expanded career pathways focus and new partners.
2. **Riparian Restoration -Not to Exceed \$3,000,000.00.** These funds will allow Forest Preserves to restore 400 acres of floodplain and associated uplands habitats along Tinley and Thorn Creeks allowing for improved natural infiltration of rainwater, reducing flooding, and improving water quality. Funds will support the development of hydrologic restoration plans. A portion of the project area will involve riparian restoration in the Sauk Lake preserve system, which includes the communities of Park Forest, Chicago Heights, South Chicago Heights, and Steger.
3. **Personnel Costs -Not to Exceed \$2,000,000.00.** These funds are for one-time payments for Forest Preserves employees for pandemic related impacts, similar to one-time payments made by the County for its employees in 2021.
4. **Implementation of the Southeast Cook County Land Acquisition Plan -Not to Exceed \$7,000,000.00** . These funds will help us acquire an estimated 350 acres in southeast Cook County. This land preservation project is a nature-based solution that will contribute towards the reduction of flooding and build greater resilience in the area to storm events and potential impacts from climate change and will create a vibrant forest preserve system that promotes improved public health, aids in the generation of economic benefits and boosts community and social resilience. The ARPA funds will build on awards from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Land and Water Conservation Fund and Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation that are helping to secure several other parcels in the area.
5. **Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations.** Cook County will purchase and install up to five (5) EV

Charging Stations on Forest Preserves property. Each charging station is valued at approximately \$35,000.00. Once installed, the charging stations will be owned and operated by the Forest Preserves. These charging stations will be used in Forest Preserves operations and will be available as an amenity to Forest Preserves patrons. Any proposed fees for the use of the charging stations will be brought to the Forest Preserves Board of Commissioners for approval in advance. The goal is to help increase access to electric vehicle charging stations throughout Cook County, focusing on where there are currently large gaps in service areas.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Forest Preserves of Cook County Board of Commissioners does hereby authorize the Forest Preserves, as a grant subrecipient, to enter into one or more Intergovernmental Agreement(s) or Subrecipient Agreement(s) with Cook County for funding for the projects described above, provided such agreements are limited to terms of no more than five (5) years.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Forest Preserves of Cook County shall present to the Board of Commissioners an annual report of expenditures from County ARPA funds received.