



Office of Ellis County Judge Todd Little
For Immediate Release

October 18th, 2021; Ellis County Staff Reports
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“Ellis County Judge Summarizes Intended Uses for ARPA Funding”

Ellis County, TX – On March 11th, 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into law, providing local governments across the nation with extensive grant funding to mitigate the negative economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ellis County received \$17,953,587.55 in ARPA funds in May, and it expects to receive \$17,950,142 in May 2022.

According to the U.S. Treasury Department, ARPA funding may be spent in each of four eligible-use categories:

1. To respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses & non-profits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality;
2. To respond to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency by providing premium pay to eligible workers;
3. For the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year prior to the emergency; and
4. To make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.

Ellis County will cover the increased costs associated with maintaining and operating county facilities due to the pandemic. Social-distancing measures necessitated that court proceedings be held at off-site facilities or remotely, but ARPA funding will adequately cover these increased operating and technological costs. To help prevent the spread of the virus, the county will also use ARPA funds to improve the HVAC and water management systems in its public facilities.

The county may invest in various government services that include (but are not limited to) maintenance or pay-go funded building of infrastructure & roads, modernization of cybersecurity, health & environmental services, and the provision of public safety services. In particular, the county will increase funding for its mental health service programs, as mental health has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lastly, Ellis County will allocate extensive funding to improve its water infrastructure. Ellis County is served by several water districts and is considering using ARPA funding to improve water quality and access, thus decreasing the risk of virus transmissibility in underserved areas.

Under ARPA rules, Ellis County retains broad discretion to use ARPA funding to respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. It will allocate funding under several of ARPA’s eligible use categories to cover increased operating costs, improve government services, and develop water infrastructure.

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