



Ramsey County, Minnesota Recovery Plan State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds 2024 Report

Use of Funds

In the 2023 fiscal year, the following Ramsey County projects were shifted from their previous Expenditure Category (EC) (indicated below) to the EC 6.1: Revenue Loss category.

- **Expenditure Category 1.** Public Health.
 - Trusted Messenger.
 - Appropriate Responses Initiative.
 - Healing Streets.
- **Expenditure Category 2.** Negative Economic Impacts.
 - Workforce Solutions projects, including Connectivity Blueprint, Early Childhood Academy, Driver's License Academy, Learn and Earn, LEAP, County Case Plus, Digital Media and Youth Employment Hub, School Affiliate Efforts, Employer Engagement, Right Track Plus Expansion, and No Barrier Jobs.
 - Public Health Career Pathways.
 - Emergency Homeless Shelters.

Workforce Solutions' Right Track Plus 2021 project remained allocated under EC 2.10 with an investment of \$1 million. This project was completed in 2021 and final numbers reported in Ramsey County's 2022 ARPA Performance report. No further ARPA-funded allocations are scheduled for this project.

Deeply Affordable Housing remained under EC 2.15 with an investment of approximately \$37 million allocated to build or renovate multi-family housing units in Ramsey County, with 10% of these units dedicated to low-income families. Ramsey County has a well-documented shortage of affordable housing, which impacts a wide range of economic and social issues for residents who struggle to find low-cost options in a competitive market. Ramsey County is partnering with the City of St. Paul to invest a total of \$74.5 million in ARPA funds to develop 1,000 new or renovated housing units, which will provide long-term, sustainable housing options.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

The investment in Deeply Affordable Housing promotes equitable outcomes by expanding the availability of affordable housing, especially units designated for families below the average median income. In Ramsey County, a disproportionate rate of lower-income residents are community members who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). The lack of affordable housing also contributes to the ongoing homelessness crisis in Ramsey County, where deep racial disparities also exist.

Ongoing COVID-related economic challenges have also disproportionately affected the county's lower income residents, who were more deeply impacted by changes in the labor market, the end of the eviction moratorium, e-SNAP benefits and other pandemic-era emergency benefits. These changes can require families to make tough choices about which bills or emergencies they can afford to pay for, while also maintaining stable housing. The provision of more affordable housing is a crucial investment for Ramsey County to promote security and prosperity among our most vulnerable residents.

Use of Evidence

Ramsey County is deeply committed to evaluation and evidence-based planning. Our [Open Ramsey County](#) data portal is a dedicated space through which the county disseminates data and shares performance reports with the general public, including county residents. Many of these data sets are updated weekly and most others on a regular basis, to provide a living dialogue that ensures accountability to and promotes engagement with the community.

2023-2024 Project Inventory

a. *Negative Economic Impacts (EC 2)*

2.10 Assistance to Unemployed or Underemployed Workers

Right Track Plus

Project Identification Number | G111012

Funding amount | \$1.1 million

Project Expenditure Category | 2.10 Assistance to Unemployed or Underemployed Workers

Project Overview

In 2021, Ramsey County's Workforce Solutions team implemented Right Track Plus with \$1.1 million in ARPA funds, working in partnership with the City of Saint Paul. This collaboration was built on the success of Saint Paul's original Right Track program established in 2014, which worked with youth as young as 14 years old and focused on high school students. Ramsey County's ARPA-funded 2021 Right Track Plus project worked with residents between the ages 18-24 who were unemployed or underemployed but seeking full-time work. The project focused on youth whose employment opportunities were impacted by COVID, such as hospitality, food service, retail sectors, and youth with limited education.

Workforce Solutions' ARPA-funded Right Track Plus program was completed in 2021 and final numbers reported in Ramsey County's 2022 ARPA Performance report. No further ARPA-funded allocations are scheduled for this project.

2.15 Long-term Housing Security

Deeply Affordable Housing

Project Identification Number | G111013

Funding amount | \$37 million

Project Expenditure Category | 2.15 Long-term Housing Security: Affordable Housing

Project Overview

CDC guidelines identify safe and stable housing as an essential environment to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Without adequate and affordable housing residents must “double-up” with other family members, or perhaps move into a shelter, which can increase the risk of disease and other social-emotional issues that increase fragility. Stable housing is also necessary for students to succeed in school, especially when they are in remote school settings, as children have been during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To address this issue, and in line with the strategies of the county’s Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion Plan, Ramsey County allocated an estimated \$37 million in ARPA funds to build a planned 600 affordable housing units throughout the county by 2026. The City of Saint Paul allocated a matching investment for a total of approximately \$74.5 million in ARPA funds to build or renovate at least 1,000 housing units, including those designated for low-income families. Ramsey County’s ARPA funding investment complements other funding sources, including the HRA Tax Levy and HUD funding, to increase the overall availability of affordable housing throughout the county.

As of the end of 2023-2024 fiscal year, Ramsey County’s ARPA-funded Deeply Affordable Housing program has obligated funding for ten housing projects to provide 584 housing units (some of which are still being built). As of the end of the reporting period, about half of the allocated funding has been obligated to specific projects; the remaining funding will be obligated by the end of the year deadline.

Use of Evidence

The goal of the Deeply Affordable Housing project is to increase the availability of affordable housing in Ramsey County so that ultimately, fewer residents allocate a significant portion of their monthly income to rent, especially low-income families. The evidence base for this project includes the [2018 study](#) “Unstable Housing and Caregiver and Child Health in Renter Families” published in the *Pediatrics* journal. This study found that unstable housing circumstances, including homelessness, rent strain, or experiencing multiple moves (more than two in one year) have “demonstrated associations with adverse caregiver and child health status and other household hardships,” including food insecurity.¹

Dollar Amount being allocated towards evidence-based interventions: \$ 37,000,000

¹ Sandel M, Sheward R, Ettinger de Cuba S, et al. Unstable Housing and Caregiver and Child Health in Renter Families. *Pediatrics*. 2018;141(2):e20172199. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29358482/>



b. Revenue Replacement (EC 6)

6.1 Provision of Government Services

Project Identification Number | G111009

Funding amount | \$ 68,787,813.00

Project Expenditure Category| 6.1 Provision of Government Services

Ramsey County experienced revenue loss due to the impacts of COVID: for 2020-21, lost revenue totaled \$80 million. These figures were calculated using the GFOA Revenue Loss Calculator and details were provided in the Treasury portal with quarterly expenditure reporting.

In 2023, Ramsey County shifted from reporting on multiple individual projects to revenue loss, while continuing to use the funds for Ramsey County Board-approved projects, as well as support for our overall operations. Since 2021, ARPA funds have been used to reduce funding gaps in public health, workforce, employment educational training, staffing needs due to increased work volumes due to covid, county technology, etc.

Ramsey County continues to track, evaluate, and monitor all programs that are using ARPA dollars to assess their outcomes, and gather feedback on how we do business and provide services to our residents into the future.