

Larimer County **Recovery Plan**

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

2025 Report

2025 Recovery Plan

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Executive Summary

Larimer County has completed its reporting on the use of its \$69.3 million in State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) effective July 31, 2024. Of the total allocation, \$53.5 million was reported as lost revenue. These lost revenue funds have been allocated to several projects that are or will soon be implemented – see below for further detail.

Larimer County prioritized the use of SLFRF funds to address the health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to make investments in infrastructure that will help prevent future pandemics and improve health and economic outcomes for our residents, especially those that have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and its effects. Secondary priorities include:

- Provide behavioral health services who work in congregate correctional settings.
- Compensate employees who worked in difficult environments (primarily congregate correctional settings such as the Larimer County Jail).
- Recover the County's costs that had been incurred responding to and mitigating the spread of COVID19 in county operations.

Larimer County has identified service areas and has engaged with state and municipal partners, plus the non-profit and philanthropic communities to obligate funds for specific projects to utilize the full amount of the County's \$69.3 million SLFRF allocation. The broad service areas in which Larimer County will invest its SLFRF allocation include:

- Expanding behavioral health services to all residents, with a special emphasis on youth.
- Improving access to high-speed internet connectivity in areas with substandard service, especially in unincorporated Larimer County.
- Alleviating the economic impacts of the pandemic, including:
 - Improving access to affordable housing and supportive housing services for residents in need
 - Alleviating food insecurity
 - Mitigating revenue impacts on small businesses, non-profit organizations and other local governments
 - Workforce development projects
- Making investments in infrastructure to:
 - Improve access to drinking water in rural areas, recreational facilities, and mobile home parks.
 - Enhancing air quality and our ability to respond to future outbreaks or pandemics in congregate correctional facilities through flexible spaces.

Uses of Funds

Larimer County is prioritizing the use of its SLFRF allocations to projects that do not represent temporary successes but instead create transformative, long-term change in our community. Because of the significant cost of these projects, the County will utilize not only direct SLFRF funding, but also reimbursement under the Lost Revenue provision, which added up to \$53.5 million. The County engaged in a comprehensive effort to evaluate project proposals to provide the most effective return on investment of SLFRF and other funds, resulting in allocations totaling \$26.3 million to several significant projects that will have a regional impact, in addition to smaller projects.

Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities - Public Health

Larimer County made it a priority to make transformative changes for communities that have been disproportionately impacted. The County has allocated \$2.3 million of its \$69.3 million allocation to projects that serve these needs. Based on feedback from a robust community engagement effort (see below), the County has allocated projects utilizing the lost revenue provision that would accomplish the following:

- \$1.3 million has been allocated to support the renovation of five community halls located in small, rural locations in unincorporated Larimer County that provide events and services to local residents, improving community health by reducing isolation.
- \$1 million in assistance to residents of a mobile home park to purchase the park, ensuring that it would not be sold for development to retain it as a source of affordable housing.

Broadband, Water and Sewer Infrastructure

Expanding access to quality broadband services is another key priority for Larimer County. The County has already engaged in partnerships to expand existing high-speed broadband services in municipalities into unincorporated areas of the County, including direct home access and “middle mile” projects. The County has allocated approximately \$16.5 million of the County’s lost revenue funds.

The County has also allocated a mix of lost revenue and direct SLFRF reimbursement projects totaling \$2.3 million to water and sewer projects that will improve water quality at its parks and open spaces, mobile home parks in or near Fort Collins, and in the Town of Berthoud.

Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities - Negative Economic Impacts

The County has allocated \$14.3 million of SLFRF lost revenue funds for regional economic projects such as:

- \$1.5 million for a childcare campus
- \$2 million for workforce housing in a resort community with an acute housing affordability issue
- \$1 million for a medical clinic to serve individuals experiencing homelessness
- A \$1 million contribution to an affordable housing project undertaken by the City of Fort Collins
- A \$250,000 contribution to the construction of a new facility used by a local provider of meals to individuals experiencing food insecurity
- \$3.5 million for affordable housing projects.
- \$1.5 million for construction of a youth shelter
- \$1.5 million for construction of a shelter providing 24/7 housing for individuals experiencing homelessness
- \$2 million for workforce development projects in partnership with local school districts

The County also created an “Immediate Needs” grant program in late 2021 designed to help small businesses, non-profit organizations and individuals mitigate the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of this program, the County made grants totaling \$3.1 million for projects:

- To mitigate revenue losses by small businesses, non-profits, and units of local governments (including a recreation district and a sanitation district)

- To provide eviction prevention, behavioral health, and other social services.
- Contribute to food banks
- Provide rentable information technology resources
- Provide mobile library outreach services; provide eviction prevention services
- To support small businesses owned by the Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) community.

Premium & Retention Pay

The County has recognized employees who have faced a significant amount of stress due to their work in congregate correctional settings. These 230+ employees showed incredible dedication to their jobs that help keep our residents safe while being placed in close proximity to with individuals who are not always cooperative and whose COVID-19 status can often be uncertain. To recognize their service and dedication, the County spent \$1.8 million to provide premium and retention pay as allowed by the SLFRF.

Lost Revenue

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the economy of Larimer County which has resulted in slower revenue growth than during the pre-pandemic period. Based on the formula provided by the U.S. Treasury Department in the Final Rule, the County claimed reimbursement for lost revenue of:

- \$9.3 million for 2020
- \$11.2 million for 2021
- \$16 million for 2022
- \$16.9 million for 2023

It is important to note that, while the Final Rule allows the County to utilize these funds for traditional government services that are not necessarily related to COVID-19 recovery, Larimer County is dedicated to utilizing these funds for projects that will make transformative change in our community, especially for those disproportionately impacted by the economic and health consequences of the pandemic.

Promoting equitable outcomes

In the initial Community Engagement effort (see below), Larimer County acted as a primary facilitator for the Recovery Collaborative. This group used a triple bottom line approach to developing recovery plans and strategies. As a result the County's plan considered equity as one of the primary principals of our efforts. Additionally, the Larimer Recovery Collaborative included representation from community-rooted organizations that represent marginalized communities that provide consistent feedback to the recovery process.

Since that initial effort, the County focused its Community Engagement efforts on determining the priorities of hard-to-reach and traditionally underserved communities through a variety of methods, including community connectors and multi-lingual surveys.

Community Engagement

Larimer County engaged in a robust community engagement process in the summer and fall of 2021 to determine which eligible uses were most important to our residents. The community outreach effort included:

- Hosted in-person and virtual meetings with various stakeholder groups and the public at which the purpose and eligible uses of SLFRF funds were described and feedback was received. These meetings included “root cause” analyses of several issues that SLFRF seeks to alleviate, including access to affordable housing and childcare, workforce development, behavioral health services, and pandemic recovery.
- The County engaged “community connectors” who were familiar with groups that the County had not previously engaged with successfully, such as low-income families.
- The County created two online tools and collaborated with municipalities to collect their survey data on community priorities. One tool allowed community members to submit to the County how they would allocate the County’s SLFRF funds to broad service categories (behavioral health, housing, etc.). A more robust survey tool, combined with surveys implemented by Larimer County municipalities, resulted in 3,300+ survey responses that provided the following priority information that can be broken out between municipal and unincorporated residents as well as by English and Spanish-speaking residents.
- The Board of County Commissioners sought feedback at quarterly public work sessions on this topic, and also routinely encourages the community to provide its input at constituent meetings and other opportunities.

Labor Practices

Larimer County will follow all applicable federal, state and local laws related to labor practices on capital (infrastructure) projects, including the Keep Jobs in Colorado Act (8-17-101(1), Colorado Revised Statutes) which states, “Whenever any public works project financed in whole or in part by funds of the state, counties, school districts or municipalities of the State of Colorado are undertaken in this state, Colorado labor shall be employed to perform at least 80% of the work”. In many cases Larimer County is contributing to an infrastructure project that is managed by another entity.

Use of Evidence

Larimer County will track qualitative and quantitative data on its projects as they are finalized.

Performance Report

Larimer County will provide project performance information, where available, in each project in the Project Inventory section below.

PROJECT INVENTORY

The projects listed below include only those that have been or are being directly reimbursed through State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). The County is implementing several other projects directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in the spirit of, the SLFRF, utilizing lost revenue funds.

Administration of SLFRF Funds and Community Outreach

Subprojects: LC21A018-Community Outreach and LC21A004-Administration of SLFRF Funds

Funding amount: \$101,184 (final)

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1 – Administrative Expenses

Project Overview: Larimer County has hired one Fiscal Recovery Manager to ensure compliance with all laws, guidance, etc. related to the expenditure of SLFRF funds and to assist policymakers and stakeholders in prioritizing the use of SLFRF funds. The County has also utilized one limited-term position for approximately 50% of their time to manage the Community Outreach process described in the “Community Engagement” section. Both of these projects were completed in 2022.

Use of Evidence

This project will not have use of evidence.

Performance Report

This project will not have performance data.

Vicarious Trauma Training for Community Justice Alternatives Department (formerly known as the Criminal Justice Services Department)

Project: LC21A006 - Vicarious Trauma Training for Community Justice Alternatives Department
Funding amount: \$147,250 (\$73,850 direct reimbursement (final), \$73,400 in lost revenue (ongoing)

Project Expenditure Category: 1.12 – Mental Health Services

Project Overview: Larimer County is utilizing FRF funds to provide vicarious trauma training to staff in the Community Justice Alternatives Department (CJA) and the Office of the Coroner. This training is designed to improve the mental health of employees who have been put in an exceptionally difficult situation by the COVID-19 pandemic. These employees work in a 24/7 congregate facility with individuals coming into and out of the criminal justice system (CJA) or decedents whose COVID-19 status is routinely unknown. During the pandemic, staff came to work each day while most other people, especially in the initial stages of the pandemic, were safely at home. Staff were afraid of being infected at work while providing mentally and emotionally draining services such as addiction and other trauma therapy to clients, sometimes in a new way such as online. This program helps employees deal with the behavioral traumas of the jobs to which they are dedicated.

Use of Evidence

This project will not utilize evidence.

Performance Report

Performance data is not available for this project at this time; however, performance data may be developed as it matures.

Payroll Costs for County Employees Responding to COVID-19

Subprojects: LC21A010-Office of the Coroner Payroll, LC21A011-Office of the Sheriff Payroll, LC21A016-Community Justice Alternatives Payroll, and LC21A019-Health Department Payroll.
Funding amount: \$9,895,173 (final)

Project Expenditure Category: 3.1 – Public Sector Workforce: Payroll and Benefits for Public Health, Public Safety, or Human Services Workers

Project Overview: Larimer County operations were significantly impacted by COVID-19 during the eligible period beginning in March 2021 through the end of 2022 and, as a result, staff performed duties other than those for which they are intended. Examples include:

- In the Office of the Sheriff, command staff and jail staff were required to isolate inmates who exhibit symptoms or who test positive for COVID-19, resulting in additional staffing time for pods that would otherwise not be open and escorts to medical appointments.
- In the Community Justice Alternatives Department, staff were required to keep clients in cohorts depending on when they entered the facility, on symptoms and COVID-19 status. Staff also provided programming, checks or monitoring virtually as public health orders have required the facility to release clients who would otherwise be residing in the facility.
- Staff in the Office of the Coroner took extra precautions to avoid exposure to COVID-19 for all death investigations as the COVID-19 status is initially unknown.
- Staff in the Health Department who would have otherwise provided other services during 2021 were required to perform COVID-19 related duties such as case management and contact tracing. In many cases this resulted in a loss of grant revenue for the programs they could no longer operate.

Note that these costs **do not** include premium, or retention pay. As these operations are now mostly back to normal, this project ended in December 2022.

Use of Evidence: These offices and departments have made general estimates, per the requirements of the Interim Final Rule and Final Rule, of employees' staff time that has been dedicated to operating differently due to COVID-19.

Performance Report

This project will not have performance data.

Red Feather Lakes Water System Feasibility Study

Project: LC21A012 – Red Feather Lakes Water System Feasibility Study

Funding amount: \$95,053 (final)

Project Expenditure Category: 5.18 – Water and Sewer: Other

Project Overview: Red Feather Lakes is a community in northern unincorporated Larimer County that currently relies on well systems for drinking water. The community is approaching the size and density level of a town where a robust drinking water transmission and distribution system may be desirable and/or necessary. This project utilized a consultant to determine the feasibility of constructing such a system. This project is complete.

Use of Evidence: This County and the Red Feather Lakes community used a consultant to develop water and sewer system options for this community. No such options were ultimately implemented.

Performance Report

This project produced a study that examines future options and therefore will not have performance data.

Larimer County Health Department Case Management System

Project: LC21A015 - Larimer County Health Department Case Management System

Funding amount: \$56,702 (final)

Project Expenditure Category: 1.3 – COVID-19 Contact Tracing

Project Overview: During the initial stages of the pandemic, the Larimer County Department Health & Environment (LCDHE) utilized the Larimer County Information Technology Department (IT) to build an automated Contact Information and Case Management (CICM) System. This system was designed to replace an existing system made up of cumbersome spreadsheets to track COVID-19 case information. The project completed prior to the Fiscal Recovery Fund eligible date (March 3, 2021) cost approximately \$125,000. During the spring of 2021, LCDHE utilized IT, which had custom developed the original CICM system, to add more functionality to the CICM tool, including communications components to ensure timely, accurate, and comprehensive communications to both patients and the public at large, tracking of vaccination information, and integrations with similar systems developed by the State of Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Larimer County IT spent approximately 630 hours on software development to improve the tool, at which it billed LCDHE for \$90 per hour for the work performed. This project was completed in 2021.

Use of Evidence: This project enabled the LCDHE to utilize real-time case data to allocate resources and determine the necessity of public health orders.

Performance Report

This project was completed in 2021 and therefore does not have performance data.

Health Services for Larimer County Jail Inmates

Project: LC21A020 – Health Services for Larimer County Jail Inmates

Funding amount: \$708,070 (\$536,436 direct reimbursement (final), \$171,600 lost revenue.

Project Expenditure Category: 1.4 – Prevention in Congregate Settings

Project Overview: Additional costs paid to Larimer County Jail inmate medical services contractor for ongoing COVID-19 testing on a monthly basis (approximately \$18,000 per month)

Use of Evidence

This project will not utilize evidence, it is a contract with a medical provider to monitor COVID-19 transmission in the Larimer County Jail.

Performance Report

This project will not have performance data.

Small Business Development Center Contribution

Project: LC21A024 – Small Business Development Center Contribution

Funding amount: \$10,000 (final)

Project Expenditure Category: 2.30 – Technical Assistance, Counseling, or Business Planning

Project Overview: The County made a \$10,000 contribution to Larimer County Small Business Development Center towards its effort to support small businesses in Larimer County through consulting, classes, and other training. This project is complete.

Use of Evidence

This project will not utilize evidence.

Performance Report

This project will not have performance data.

Pre-Trial Services Limited Term Employee

Project: LC21A025 – Pre-trial Services Limited Term Employee

Funding amount: \$18,599 (final)

Project Expenditure Category: 1.11 – Community Violence Interventions

Project Overview: During the pandemic, Pretrial Supervision caseloads increased by nearly 43% to release as many individuals as possible from the jail & ensure community safety by assigning them to pretrial supervision. This increase in jail releases resulted in a 400% increase in the number of high-risk defendants ordered to GPS monitoring. This increase strained our Intake & Supervision staff as GPS monitoring requires added staff time to install & maintain the equipment & 24/7 monitoring of violation alerts. Due to this increase in activity, the County utilized SLFRF funds to hire one limited-term employee in the alternative sentencing program area. This project is complete.

Use of Evidence

This project will not utilize evidence.

Performance Report

This position was filled only for a short time, and this project is complete.

Public Safety Employee Premium & Retention Pay

Subprojects: LC21A026-Larimer County Jail Civilian Staff Premium Pay and LC21A027-Community Justice Alternatives Premium Pay.

Funding amount: \$1,784,639 (final)

Project Expenditure Category: 4.1 – Premium Pay

Project Overview: Premium pay was being provided to civilian employees in the Larimer County Jail and the Community Justice Alternatives Department (formerly the Criminal Justice Services Department) to recognize the significant risks they undertook and resulting stress they endured by working in a congregate correctional setting. These individuals' jobs required them to be in close contact with clients who are not always cooperative and whose COVID-19 status is often uncertain. Approximately 230 employees received this benefit from September 2021 to June 2022. This project is now complete.

Use of Evidence: This benefit is being provided to recognize the special role these employees pay. While it is not possible to gather exact data, it is hoped that this benefit will reduce employee turnover.

Performance Report

This project will not have performance data.

Office of the District Attorney – Complex Case Prosecutor

Project: LC21A031 – District Attorney Complex Case Prosecutor

Funding amount: \$443,340 (\$263,720 direct reimbursement (final), \$179,620 in lost revenue (ongoing))

Project Expenditure Category: 1.11 – Community Violence Interventions

Project Overview: In analysis of our case data, discussions with our attorneys, conversations with law enforcement, and other study of state and national trends, it has become apparent to the District Attorney's Office that four case types have grown or been substantially impacted during the COVID pandemic: Drug Task Force (fentanyl distribution) cases, Domestic Violence cases, Economic Crimes, and Violent Crimes. As a result the County utilized \$443,340 of its SLFRF allocation to hire an additional prosecution position to assist in the backlog of criminal cases.

Use of Evidence: When the program was created in 2022, there had been an incredible uptick in fentanyl quantities. In the first three quarters of 2021 alone, the Northern Colorado Drug Task Force (NCDTF), of which the District Attorney's office is a member, seized more than 123,000 fentanyl pills. While accurate data is not available to compare previous years, by all accounts this is a dramatic and exponential rise over pre-pandemic conditions. Fentanyl investigations are concurrently becoming much larger and more complex. For example, where a defendant may have possessed 15 pills for distribution previously, the County began seeing individuals with 1,000 pills. In 2020 the County had 3,735 domestic violence victims in the system, as of October 30, 2021, the total was already 3,878.

Performance Report

At a County Commissioner Work Session on March 20, 2023, the Office of the District Attorney [gave a presentation](#) on the accomplishments of this position. The workload included:

- Two significant domestic violence cases that included an attempted murder
- Ongoing investigation of an economic crime that at the time included a loss of \$3 million, including \$2 million in Larimer County.
- 13 significant violent crimes
- As of March 16, 2023 there had been more than 174,000 fentanyl pills seized by the County's Drug Task Force, a pace of 696,000 pills for the year. In comparison just over 300,000 pills were seized in 2022.

Immediate Needs Grants

Project: LC21A035 – Immediate Needs Grants

Funding amount: \$3,089,553 (\$3,013,174 direct reimbursement (final), \$76,379 in lost revenue.

Project Expenditure Categories: This project has multiple expenditure categories:

1.12 – Mental Health Services: \$239,281

1.13 – Substance Abuse Services: \$20,000

1.14 – Other Public Health Services: \$192,301

2.1 – Household Assistance: Food Programs: \$80,000

2.19 – Social Determinants of Health: Community Health Workers or Benefits Navigators: \$225,469

2.2 – Household Assistance: Eviction Prevention: \$125,000

2.22 – Strong Healthy Communities: Neighborhood Features that Promote Health and Safety: \$300,000

2.29 – Small Business Assistance: \$632,221

2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations (Impacted or Disproportionately Impacted): \$846,954

2.36 – Aid to Other Impacted Industries: \$163,788

2.37 – Economic Impact Assistance: Other: \$81,658
5.11 – Drinking Water: Transmission & Distribution: \$147,881
5.14 – Drinking Water: Storage: \$35,000

Project Overview: Larimer County implemented a program to provide grants to the community, including small businesses, non-profit organizations, other units of local government, and other appropriate organizations. The County issued a grant application in November 2021 and ultimately awarded 52 grants to various organizations. These grant programs include:

- \$1.2 million to small businesses, non-profit organizations and local governments to mitigate lost revenues and improve safe operating conditions
- Assistance to non-profit organizations and local governments to provide behavioral health and suicide prevention programs
- Benefits navigation
- Legal services to prevent eviction
- Meals for children in need
- Sobriety programs
- Medical services for the homeless
- Enhancing Hispanic-focused service for a local chamber of commerce
- Improved physical access for the elderly and individuals with disabilities to a community hall
- Drinking water improvements at mobile home parks
- Improved access to internet and technology
- Mobile library services
- A new ambulance for a rural fire protection district
- Drinking water system improvements

Use of Evidence

In many cases these grants have made up revenues lost during the pandemic period by small businesses, nonprofit entities, and units of local government. Most other programs that provide services are still ongoing.

Performance Report

A performance report was not required when these grant awards were made in January 2022. Many of these grant programs expired by the end of the second quarter of 2023. Reports and presentations on the use of funds by grantees can be found on the County's website [at this link](#).

Lost Revenue

Project: LC21A017– Revenue Replacement
Funding amount: \$53,474,376 (final)
Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 – Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: According to the formula provided by the U.S. Treasury Department in the Final Rule, the amount of lost revenue due to COVID-19 was \$9.3 million for 2020, \$11.2 million for 2021, \$16 million for 2022, and \$16.9 million for 2023. Larimer County revenues subject to the formula grew rapidly in the pre-pandemic period by 8.1% on average due primarily to rising sales and property taxes based on strong economic and population growth.

The Final Rule allows Larimer County to utilize these funds on any routine government service. In its final Quarterly Project and Expenditure Report, Larimer County has applied \$53,474,376 in lost revenue to the following routine governmental costs:

- Operating costs for departments and elected offices in the Larimer County general fund, including salaries, benefits, social security, overtime, and other costs not including those services that are reimbursed through the County's indirect cost allocation plan (human resources, budget, legal, etc.): \$48,474,376
- Operating costs, including salaries, benefits, social security, etc.: \$5,000,000.

The County then intends to use the saved General Fund resources to fund - in addition to projects described previously – the following uses:

- \$3.4 million for improvements to a congregate correctional facility that houses clients who receive services for both alternatives to incarceration programs and re-entry from prison
- \$610,000 for development of a new swim beach area at Carter Lake open space that has seen increased use as an "unofficial" beach area to overcrowding at existing beach facilities
- \$1.4 million for improvements to well, wastewater and dump station facilities at County parks
- \$300,000 for grants to community partners to enhance worker training, along the lines of the Workforce Innovation Grant program
- \$205,000 for the hiring of a budget analyst position
- \$556,000 for services for substance abuse, re-entry, wellness court, and net operating costs of the Midweek program in alternative sentencing
- \$4 million to partially fund increased costs for a capital project to construct a new Fleet Services campus
- \$5.5 million to fund the construction of a new Emergency Services facility for the Office of the Sheriff
- \$5 million to Road and Bridge for capital projects

Use of Evidence

This project will not utilize evidence.

Performance Report

This project will not have performance data.