

STAFF REPORT

Date: July 26, 2023

To: Mayor and City Council

Thru: Doug Thornley, City Manager

Subject: Staff Report (For Possible Action): Approval of Subrecipient Agreement with Reno Food Systems for Award of American Rescue Plan Act State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to support senior food insecurity in the amount of \$300,000. (ARPA Funds)

From: Noemi Gomez, Community Relationships Program Manager

Department: City Manager's Office

Summary:

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) establishing the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF). The City of Reno received \$51,519,997 from the SLFRF and began allocating funds to critical projects on August 25, 2021, following initial acceptance of the funds. Since acceptance, Council adopted seven priority categories based on community input, Council direction, Treasury requirements, and the City of Reno master and strategic plans. On April 26, 2023, Council approved \$300,000 in funding to Reno Food Systems to go towards food insecurity for Reno seniors. Staff is seeking approval of the Subrecipient Agreement with Reno Food Systems that relates to this action.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Fiscal Sustainability

Previous Council Action:

April 26, 2023 - Council approved to adopted the proposed Senior ARPA plan of the amount of \$1,000,000 for Senior-focused programming and initiatives.

February 8, 2023 - Council requested staff to get further input from the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee and the community regarding the senior ARPA allocations plan, then bring a plan forward approved by the SCAC.

January 26, 2022 - Council approved the recommended \$24,499,998.50 American Rescue Plan

Act (ARPA) allocation. \$1,000,000 of the funds were allocated for senior support.

Background:

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 establishing the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF). The SLFRF allocates funding to state, county, and local governments to support efforts to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The SLFRF allocated \$51,519,997 directly to the City of Reno to assist in response and recovery efforts related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Discussion:

Reno Food Systems (RFS) operates to ensure the fulfillment of their mission, to be farmers, mentors, and advocates stewarding lands and sharing food and resources for the well-being of our earth, community, and future generations. RFS work is guided by many motivating factors including community engagement and advocacy, personal health and wellness, regional economic stimulation and growth, and environmental stewardship. They are dedicated to their vision of a vibrant, resilient, and just local food system cultivated by an empowered community.

Food insecurity specifically among seniors is often an overlooked or hidden problem in our community. According to the 2020 data from Feeding America, 6.2 percent of Nevada seniors are experiencing food insecurity. That statistic has decreased from 14.8 percent in 2018, placing Nevada on the list of the top ten states with the highest senior food insecurity. Through the approved ARPA funding, RFS will focus on the following to help combat senior food insecurity and isolation as follows:

1) **The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)** through the USDA. This program provides seniors with a packet of vouchers that they can take to any farmers market and spend on fresh fruits and vegetables. The purpose of this program is to increase the consumption, production, and distribution of fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables and to supplement the nutritional needs for Nevada seniors, whilst supporting Nevada Farmers.

2/3) **Nutrition Education / Access to Fresh Produce:** The Mobile Market is design to increase access to fresh produce for seniors with limited transportation and mobility. Targeting neighborhoods with an increased number of seniors with either SNAP benefits and/or the SFMNP Coupons is the goal. RFS has partnered with the Housing Authority and will be working with other community stakeholders to increase outreach. RFS will also be providing nutritional education classes for seniors to teach them how to cook with fresh produce and the health benefits of what is being given to them.

4) **Garden Access for Seniors:** RFS will work with Urban Roots, a local non-profit organization that focuses on garden education. Growing food is beneficial to everyone, especially to seniors

for emotional wellness, improved nutrition, the promotion of physical activity and relaxation, socialization, cognitive stimulation, personal fulfillment, and a sense of purpose. The model of using gardens to expand people's willingness to try new vegetables has been used with great success in elementary schools and the goal is to use it to increase the variety of vegetables seniors are eating to help improve their health and well being.

Financial Implications:

Approving the \$300,000 Subrecipient Agreement has no impact on the General Fund. The funds have been allocated from the City of Reno's ARPA SLFRF funds.

Legal Implications:

Legal review completed for compliance with City procedures and Nevada law.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends Council approve the Subrecipient Agreement with Reno Food Systems for Award of American Rescue Plan Act State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to support Senior transportation, in the amount of \$300,000. (ARPA Funds)

Proposed Motion:

I move to approve staff recommendation.

Attachments:

Reno Food Systems ARPA Agreement