

Town of Gilbert, Arizona
Recovery Plan

**State and Local Fiscal Recovery
Funds**

2022 Report

Town of Gilbert
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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Executive Summary

Gilbert, Arizona, is a suburban community within the greater Phoenix Metropolitan Region. The community population is 281,600, with a growth of approximately 13,682 during the past fiscal year. Throughout the pandemic, the community has continued to display overall resilience. However, long-term impacts that can be directly correlated to the stresses of the past three years are being felt. Inflationary pressure and the related costs of goods and services resulting largely from the COVID-19 pandemic are impacting our community members and nonprofits. These stressors can be observed via increasing crime trends in key categories and needs for social services within the community. Fortunately, these impacts had been planned for via the intended uses of the State and Local Recovery Funding (SLRF). While Fiscal Year 2022 did not result in the expenditure of any SLRF funds, the wheels were set into motion for its use beginning in July 2022 (Fiscal Year 2023). Specifically, Gilbert intends to apply the SLRF funds to two categories, the support of nonprofit entities serving Gilbert residents and more robust service delivery to victims of crimes, particularly those in underserved demographic populations. Gilbert Town Council continues as the authority that serves to authorize the allocation of funding.

Contained within this report is a discussion regarding the areas of intended SLRF funding support.

Uses of Funds

Gilbert's intentions for fund usage align with two specific areas, a Family Advocacy Center and support of nonprofit entities who have suffered hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Family Advocacy Center aligns with expenditure categories A (Public Health) and C (Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities). In 2019, the Town of Gilbert conducted a Community Needs Assessment, which contained recommendations involving the need for an Advocacy Center.

Recommendation #1: Develop a transitional, seamless model for immediate connection with services and resources, in addition to linkage to follow-up at periodic intervals appropriate to individual and family needs. The assessment recommended for Gilbert:

- Establish the Gilbert Advocacy Center currently under study (modeled after the Chandler and Mesa centers) – where police, social workers/counselors, human services providers, prosecuting attorneys, and on-site physicians work together to reduce the trauma of domestic violence, child and adult sexual assault and abuse, and human trafficking. The center would provide on-scene crisis intervention from trained victim services personnel to avoid re-traumatizing victims by allowing them to tell their stories one time.

Recommendation #2: Establish a visible community program to reduce domestic violence, sexual assault and abuse, and human trafficking in Gilbert. The assessment recommended Gilbert:

- Develop an awareness campaign to inform the Gilbert community and students of the issues/warning signs and resources available to all those impacted by violence – children and adults, witnesses, and survivors.
- Increase visible treatment options for individuals in need of treatment, counseling, and follow-up services (immediate priority to life/death/health endangerment situations).
- Explore opportunities for partnerships (perhaps with local medical facilities, police stations, or fire stations) to provide access to "safe spots" for adults or teens experiencing violence in the home, sexual threats within the community, or exploitation by human traffickers.

Through consideration of the Community Needs Assessment and examining specific crime trend data available, the Gilbert Police Department identified an Advocacy Center as a high priority for the Town of Gilbert. The Advocacy Center will provide needed services for our entire community. We expect that it will have an even more significant positive impact on underserved community members who may not have the resources or capabilities to obtain victim services and ongoing needed counseling services after their initial involvement in an incident. Furthermore, the Advocacy Center will facilitate a "one-stop shop" for victims, enabling them to move through the necessary steps of forensic and criminal investigations while receiving access to victim services in a manner that reduces trauma after a crime has occurred. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to resonate throughout underserved community populations, disproportionately in specific areas such as access to resources, economic viability, and social well-being. The Advocacy Center will assure equitable services to all community members during some of the most challenging points in their lives.

Support of nonprofits serving the Gilbert community has also been identified as a priority in the allocation of federal COVID-19 relief funds, in alignment with federal categories A (Public Health), B (Negative Economic Impacts), and C (Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities). As a portion of the CARES Act funds were also dedicated to nonprofit initiatives, the Town reserved SLRF funds for distribution to nonprofits until Fiscal Year 2023 (July 2022). This methodology helped to assure ongoing support to nonprofits during the protracted years of impact that COVID-19 has had on the nonprofit community. During the 2021 Performance Report, Gilbert noted the intention of dividing a 5% total allocation of SLRF between FY23 and FY24. However, reexamining the needs for nonprofits currently triggered a change in methodology regarding funding division over two years. In early 2022, the Community Resources Division solicited applications for support from the nonprofit community utilizing criteria established in the Final Rule. Gilbert identified priority support areas such as Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Families in Crisis, Survivors of Domestic Violence, and Homelessness and Housing Insecurity for Individuals and Families in this award. After reviewing applications, it was determined that total allocation of 5% of the SLRF funds in FY2023 was appropriate. As such, Gilbert Town Council approved the allocation of these funds at the June 14, 2022, Council Meeting. Allocation will occur after July 1, 2022, via quarterly invoicing, and their performance will be analyzed in the 2023 Performance Report.

The request from nonprofits to Gilbert for support funds increased between FY2020 and FY2022 by over 59%. Significantly, the requests between FY2022 and those received for FY2023 jumped from \$1.8M to \$2.5M, an increase of an additional 39%. Allocation of AZCARES and additional funding from CDBG-CV3 helped to support the requests in previous years. However, nonprofits have indicated a significant concern about sustainability due to the

impacts of COVID-19. Specifically, they have lost considerable ground in fundraising due to pandemic limitations. Correspondingly, donor contributions have not recovered to pre-pandemic numbers. These noted impacts, attributed to the strain on nonprofits by the pandemic and current economic considerations, have created significant concerns about sustainability. Compounding this challenge is an uptick in service needs identified throughout the community due to the pandemic. Gilbert remains committed to aiding our nonprofits, who, in turn, provide vital services to our community members.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

Gilbert is steadfast in its commitment to promoting equitable outcomes in the distribution of federal relief funds. While recognizing that overall, Gilbert is a community with relative economic stability, its population is diverse, and the needs of citizens are great. Demographic data about Gilbert reflects trends in diversity growth in recent years (Source: U.S. 2020 Census data). Gilbert recognizes the need to provide programming that promotes equitable outcomes for all citizens. Gilbert has a growing senior population, increasing by approximately 2% of the population in the past five years. Gilbert has almost 13,000 residents living below the poverty rate (5.3%), of which 23% are children. 9.3% of Gilberts residents are foreign-born, and approximately 1/3 of its 267,918 residents are people of Hispanic, Latino, Asian, Black, American Indian, or Hawaiian/Pacific Islander descent. Approximately 8.2% of residents of Gilbert identify as having some form of recognized disability, whether physical or mental.

Additionally, while Gilbert continues to be a very safe community, we have experienced an uptick in violent crime from FY2020 to FY2021 reporting. During FY2021, total violent crime increased by 8%, homicides increased by 125%, rapes increased by 8%, and aggravated assault increased by 11%. These trends reinforced the Town's commitment to the Advocacy Center and the services that will be supported by the facility. The Gilbert Police Department dedicated efforts in FY2022 in preparation for this endeavor by expanding their staffing and partnerships to serve the community better. Gilbert Police Department hired a Victim Advocate to assist victims in navigating the criminal justice system and provide resources to help them with future needs. During FY2023, Gilbert Police will add a second Victim Advocate to the staff to assist with increasing workload, the community's future growth, and in preparation for expanded roles following the completion of the Advocacy Center.

The Gilbert Police Department also signed an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Arizona Department of Child Services' Office of Child Welfare and Investigations (OCWI) during FY2022. Gilbert now has two OCWI Investigators working side by side with detectives. The OCWI Investigators assist in conducting investigations of the Child Abuse Hotline reports classified as criminal conduct and provide integrated services to children and families in the pursuit of child safety.

The Victim Advocates and OCWI Investigators will continue to work with Gilbert PD to assist victims and investigate crimes occurring in Gilbert. These are just two of the many components that will be part of the Gilbert Advocacy Center's Multi-Disciplinary Teams upon completion. Their contributions will universally serve to benefit all of our community members but particularly facilitate equitable outcomes for those residents in underserved areas.

Gilbert's Community Needs Assessment and an Inclusivity Study completed in 2022 further highlight the pressing needs for the services provided by our nonprofits within the community. Highlighted within these studies were the significant needs for services in underserved areas of the community. In determining the allocation of 5% of the overall SLRF funds towards the support of nonprofits, applicants were asked to explain economic hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic that threatened their ability to provide services to the community. Furthermore, the nonprofits detailed how the funding award would subsequently enhance service provision to the community. From the applications received, ten recipients were identified. Services identified in the applications will benefit the community in areas such as assistance to domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking victims, assistance for those enduring homelessness or housing insecurity, assistance for families in crisis, aging-in-place services for the elderly, and food bank services.

Projects identified for utilization of SLRF funds align with recommendations and findings from the Community Needs Assessment, the Inclusivity Study, and feedback from community members. Gilbert believes these projects will provide services that promote equitable outcomes in the community. Utilizing the funds towards these projects ensures that marginalized or underserved residents can access needed resources and services.

Community Engagement

Gilbert has examined its internal service provision statistical information and obtained community feedback via the Needs Assessment and the Inclusivity Needs Assessment. Both studies were conducted by an independent research firm and derived their findings from community outreach. The outreach occurred through written surveys, social media engagement to solicit involvement, connections through local nonprofit providers, outreach to targeted civic engagement and activism groups, and focus group interviews. The design of these studies was built on the foundation of civic involvement and input to provide equitable and holistic perspectives about the challenges impacting the residents of Gilbert. As such, the correlating identified priorities for the distribution of federal funds align with this community engagement and research.

Additionally, Gilbert formed a Community Engagement Task Force during FY2022. This Task Force, comprised of nine diverse community members, has been tasked with working with Town Council to evaluate the needs of our community and to provide recommendations that will improve services within Gilbert. The Community Engagement Taskforce will provide continued input in conjunction with the Community Needs Assessment.

Labor Practices

During FY2022, no SLRF funds were distributed. As such, labor practice examination is not applicable at this time. However, Gilbert is committed to utilizing strong labor standards in alignment with the Final Rule guidance to promote effective and efficient delivery of high-quality infrastructure projects as it begins to finalize details regarding the Advocacy Center project.

Use of Evidence

Gilbert is committed to evidence-based and data-supported programming. While no federal funding has yet been obligated to the Advocacy Center, the following data has been utilized to develop a needs determination for the center.

The 2019 National Children's Alliance issued survey results from 2019 us of Children's Advocacy Centers. Seventy-three thousand caregivers and multi-disciplinary team members took the survey. Key takeaways from the survey included:

- 73% of caregivers agree that Children's Advocacy Centers provide them with resources to support their children.
- 98% of team members believe clients benefit from the collaborative approach of multi-disciplinary teams.
- 97% of caregivers would recommend others utilize a Children's Advocacy Center if faced with similar circumstances.

Advocacy Centers provide improved victim services. The National Crime Victimization Survey (2000-2009) found that victims who received victim services were more than five times (24% compared to 4%) more likely to proceed through all four phases of the criminal justice system. The four phases being: 1) Police are notified; 2) Criminal report completed; 3) Arrest is made, and 4) Adjudication of criminal charges. When victims seek out services, they are more likely to see an arrest made in their case than victims who do not receive direct assistance. Compounding the problem, only 58% of serious violent crimes (rape, sexual abuse, robbery, and aggravated assault) are reported to the police. Of those who do report the crime to the police, only 9% of victims of serious violent crime receive assistance from a victim service agency. Advocacy Centers improve the reporting process, increase victim services, increases prosecution, and reduces recidivism.

From 2015 to 2020, Gilbert experienced a 45.6% increase in sex crime-related offenses involving an adult victim and a 48.6% increase in sex-crime-related offenses involving a child victim. In its totality, there was a 47.8% increase in sex crime-related offenses involving adult and child victims. During this same time frame, Gilbert experienced a 24.1% increase in domestic violence-related offenses involving a child victim and a 49.3% increase in domestic violence-related offenses involving an adult victim. Combined, there was a 42.9% increase in domestic violence-related offenses involving adult and child victims.

Similarly, and in keeping with Gilbert's use of evidence and data-based practices, the need for support from our nonprofit community partners is expected to grow. Nonprofits have requested an increase of over 59% in municipal funding support from FY2019-FY2021 and an increase of another 39% increase between FY2021-FY2022. Most of this is directly attributed to the decreased fundraising capacity and economic instability for nonprofit entities during a time of increased service demand.

Performance Report

Currently, the Advocacy Center's performance metrics have not yet been finalized. As programming, construction, and facility opening occur, specific measurables will be finalized to

assess the performance and outcomes of services provided by the Advocacy Center to the community.

Nonprofit entities applying for a portion of SLRF funds agreed to quarterly reporting of performance in the designated areas for projects. Upon distribution of funds in FY2023, nonprofits will provide the following data quarterly:

- Number of residents served (both new and ongoing)
- Number of services provided
- Service definitions
- Race/Ethnicity data
- Poverty level of assisted residences
- Household composition
- Age of residents served
- If the resident is handicapped/disabled
- Measurable outcomes of the contracted service provisions
- Narrative of successes
- Narrative of challenges
- Number of volunteers providing services
- Volunteer hours
- Types of volunteer services provided

The Town will subsequently analyze these metrics to assess SLRF funding performance and determine if the intended goals for the funds were achieved. These metrics will be used as part of the Annual Performance Report for future years, and additional data not listed may also be utilized as appropriate.

PROJECT INVENTORY

Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Project Name: Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Funding Amount: \$1,207,993.00

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 – Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations (Impacted or Disproportionately Impacted)

Project Expenditure Category Group: 2 – Negative Economic Impacts

On June 14, 2022, the Gilbert Town Council awarded contracts for this project after an extensive application and review process. A project for this has been created; however, no expenditure of funds occurred during the current reporting period. Funding is designated to begin in July 2022, at which time performance reporting will commence. Nonprofit award recipients for this project were:

- Dignity Health Foundation, Gilbert Children's Dental Clinic, \$287,993 – Performs preventative dental services, including dental assessments, professional cleanings, X-rays, sealants, and fluoride varnish treatments, using specially-certified dental hygienists

who work with a dentist through teledentistry. Due to COVID-19, families have put off care, and as a result, there are increased numbers of children with advanced dental conditions. These funds will enable the clinic to provide services to the community three days per week in four operatories.

- Child Crisis Arizona, Caring for Homeless Children and Youth, \$100,000 – Child Crisis Arizona provides complete care for homeless children and youth, ages birth through 21 years. Youth originating from or in Gilbert will benefit from services to improve their current situations and provide opportunities to move forward into thriving lives.
- A New Leaf, Domestic Violence Services, \$40,000 – Addressing priorities identified in the Town of Gilbert's 2019 Community Needs Assessment, A New Leaf will provide crisis intervention, safety, and support services for Gilbert residents who are survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence.
- Rebuilding Together Valley of the Sun, Safe At Home, \$100,000 – Safe At Home will provide free critical/emergency home repairs, home fall prevention modifications, and/or code compliance violation remediation services for approximately 80 economically disadvantaged Gilbert resident households throughout 2022.
- AZCEND, Community Action Program, \$300,000 – The Gilbert Community Action Program provides financial assistance to prevent a more significant crisis such as homelessness and utility disconnect for families in crisis. Case management, financial coaching, and referrals to other community resources for low-income Gilbert residents are also part of the Community Action Program service delivery model.
- AZCEND, Gilbert Homeless Services, \$100,000 – The AZCEND homeless services program provides emergency shelter, case management, outreach, connection to resources, and supportive services to those experiencing homelessness in Gilbert. The I-HELP program provides shelter 365 days a year, and resource navigation services are available Monday-Friday through street outreach and in-office assessments.
- My Sisters' Place, Survivors of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault/Abuse, and Human Trafficking, \$25,000 – Located in the East Valley, My Sister's Place is a 24-hour, 365 days per year emergency domestic violence shelter offering safety and healing for women, men, and their dependent children fleeing domestic violence.
- Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS), Emergency Shelter and Case Management Services for Gilbert Residents Experiencing Homelessness, \$100,000 - Central Arizona Shelter Services, Inc. (CASS) 's Emergency Shelter and Case Management Services for Gilbert Residents Experiencing Homelessness Program provides immediate shelter and dedicated case management services in Gilbert 24/7/365 at their Single Adult Shelter and Vista Colina Family Shelter for individuals, children, and families experiencing homelessness in Gilbert, as well as an embedded case manager in a location in Gilbert where collaboration and delivery of resources can occur.
- Midwest Food Bank NFP, Half Million Meals!, \$55,000 - Midwest Food Bank (MFB) proposes distributing 500,000 nutritious meals to partner agencies in Gilbert through June 2023. MFB packages a nutritious meal packet called "Tender Mercies," which contains rice, beans, and protein, and pledges to distribute these meals to the 16 nonprofits they currently serve in Gilbert, along with any new churches, schools, shelters, or community partners that apply for assistance.
- Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona, Aging In Place, \$100,000 - Habitat's Aging in Place (AIP) Program completes safety and functional home modifications and repairs to enable low-income senior homeowners to remain in their homes through low-cost, low

barrier, high-impact home modifications that reduce older adults' risk of falling, improve general safety, increase accessibility, and improve their functional abilities in their homes.

Upon allocation, nonprofit recipients of SLRF funding will provide quarterly performance reporting using the metrics outlined in the Performance Report section. These quarterly reports will be analyzed internally by the Town and also used to congregate data for the Annual Performance Report.

Advocacy Center

Gilbert anticipates that during FY2023, expenditure will begin for the Advocacy Center project, with the next steps being the facility's design. Future Performance Reporting from the Town of Gilbert will include identified metrics and analysis of the Advocacy Center project as this endeavor proceeds forward. Because no expenditure or obligation of funds occurred to the Advocacy Center during FY2022, a formalized project was not established for the reporting time frame. However, as the design process commences, a project will be added to the Federal Reporting Site, and performance will be evaluated.