

**Columbus Consolidated Government
Council Meeting Agenda Item**

TO:	Mayor and Councilors
AGENDA SUBJECT:	State of Georgia – American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funds Application for the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit
AGENDA SUMMARY:	Approval is requested to apply, and if awarded, accept State ARP Funds awarded to the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit through the Judicial Council and its Administrative Office of the Courts. The grant funding will be utilized by the courts, prosecutors, and related agencies to address backlogs of court cases caused by the pandemic.
INITIATED BY:	Superior Court

Recommendation: Approval is requested to apply, and if awarded, accept ARP (State Fiscal Recovery) Funds awarded to the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit to address backlogs of court cases caused by the pandemic. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will also be executed between Muscogee County and the other counties in the circuit authorizing Muscogee County to act as the fiscal agent to receive and disburse grant reimbursements as awarded.

Background: The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 was signed into law on March 11, 2021. It was \$1.9 trillion for economic relief from the devastating economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding was provided directly to states and local government. Governor Brian P. Kemp has allocated up to \$110 million in ARP (State Fiscal Recovery) funds to address backlogs of court cases (prioritizing cases involving serious violent felonies). The State in conjunction with The Judicial Council of Georgia and its Administrative Office of the Courts will administer up to \$96 million in grants to authorized classes of court, prosecutors, and related agencies. The State of Georgia has released an application process to provide State Fiscal Recovery Funds to the Judicial Branch. The application deadline is November 30, 2021.

Analysis: If awarded the City could receive funding to incur expenses that meet the American Rescue Plan Act and Administrative Office of the Courts eligibility criteria.

Financial Considerations: There are no match requirements for this grant.

Legal Considerations: The City Attorney will review all agreements requiring the City Manager’s or Chief Judge of the Superior Court’s signature.

Recommendation/Action: Approval is requested to apply, and if awarded, accept ARP (State Fiscal Recovery) Funds awarded to the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit to address backlogs of court cases caused by the pandemic. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will also be executed between Muscogee County and the other counties in the circuit authorizing Muscogee County to act as the fiscal agent to receive and disburse grant reimbursements as awarded.

A RESOLUTION

NO. _____

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER, THE CHIEF SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, OR THEIR DESIGNEE TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT, AS AWARDED, AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN (ARP) GRANT FUNDS FROM THE STATE OF GA THROUGH THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL AND ITS ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS AND EXECUTE A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE OTHER COUNTIES IN THE CIRCUIT AUTHORIZING MUSCOGEE COUNTY TO ACT AS THE CIRCUIT FISCAL AGENT TO RECEIVE AND DISBURSE GRANT REIMBURSEMENTS AS AWARDED.

WHEREAS, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into law on March 11,2021 which provided Fiscal Recovery Funds to both state and local governments; and,

WHEREAS, Governor Brian P. Kemp has allocated up to \$110 million in ARPA (State Fiscal Recovery) Funds to address backlogs of court cases; and,

WHEREAS, The Judicial Council of Georgia and its Administrative Office of the Courts will administer up to \$96 million in grants to authorized classes of court, prosecutors, and related agencies; and,

WHEREAS, The Administrative Office of the Courts has advised that Muscogee County must act as the fiscal agent to receive and disburse any ARPA grant funds allocated to the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA, HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

That the City Manager, the Chief Superior Court Judge of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit, or their designee is hereby authorized to apply, accept, and amend the appropriate fund by the awarded ARPA grant amount and to execute related documents and appropriate memoranda of understanding with other counties in the Circuit authorizing Muscogee County to act as the Circuit fiscal agent to receive and disburse grant reimbursements as awarded.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held on the _____ day of _____, 2021 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____ members of said Council.

Councilor Allen voting _____.
Councilor Barnes voting _____.
Councilor Crabb voting _____.
Councilor Davis voting _____.

Councilor Garrett voting _____.
Councilor House voting _____.
Councilor Huff voting _____.
Councilor Thomas voting _____.
Councilor Tucker voting _____.
Councilor Woodson voting _____.

Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

B.H. "Skip" Henderson, Mayor