



WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: February 17, 2026

DATE: January 21, 2026

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Gabrielle Enfield, Community Reinvestment Manager
Office of the County Manager, genfield@washoecounty.gov

THROUGH: Kate Thomas, County Manager
Office of the County Manager, kathomas@washoecounty.gov

SUBJECT: Recommendation, to approve award of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds through the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) in the total amount of [\$155,000], approve associated resolutions, and authorize the County Manager to sign necessary award documents for the following two subrecipient agreements. Both agreements are focused on nonprofit capacity building as included in the Community Reinvestment Administration Memorandum of Understanding executed prior to the December 31, 2024, obligation deadline.

1. Community Foundation of Northern Nevada, in the amount of \$100,000, to support the nonprofit capacity building initiative including standardized assessment, facilitation, and structured debriefs to help participating Washoe County organizations identify strengths, gaps, and priority capacity needs; technical assistance and systems building customized consulting and one-on-one coaching to 20-25 Washoe County participating nonprofits. Assistance will be tailored to each organization's priority areas identified through assessments; and leadership development and training group learning experiences, including cohort-based workshops and peer learning sessions, focused on improving operational systems.
2. Aha Projects, in the amount of \$55,000 to support a nonprofit resource center nonprofit. The 16,000 square foot building will provide Northern Nevada's nonprofits access to shared space through offices, conference rooms, and event space. Providing a collaborative environment for all to share. This award will fund critical infrastructure and workspace improvements at Aha

AGENDA ITEM # _____

Connects, including the installation of a WiFi mesh network, one year of fiber internet service, and the purchase of two private, soundproof meeting pods. These investments will ensure reliable, high-speed connectivity and provide dedicated quiet spaces for video conferencing, phone calls, and one-on-one meetings, supporting nonprofit tenants' productivity while maintaining a functional and collaborative shared workspace. (All Commission Districts.) FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

SUMMARY

Washoe County has worked to identify community-based initiatives and regional programs to support community members in recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The two projects named in this report represent a \$155,000 investment in nonprofit capacity building in Washoe County. The Board of County Commissioners have authority to approve sub-granting of funds to nonprofit organizations and governmental entities in accordance with NRS 244.1505.

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Fiscal Sustainability, Economic Impacts, Vulnerable Populations, and Innovative Services

PREVIOUS ACTION

On October 28, 2025 the Board of County Commissioners approved the deobligation of previously approved allocations of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds through the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) in the amount of [\$197,017.96] for projects that have been completed under budget, cancelled, or no longer need the previously approved levels of funding: Juvenile Services Mental Health \$9,777.57, High Sierra Area Health Education Center \$1.47, Civil Rights and Equity Engagement \$187,238.92 and approved increased allocations in the amount of [\$197,017.96] to Washoe Behavioral Health Center (formerly West Hills) Facility Upgrades in the amount of \$197,017.96

October 14, 2025, the Board of County Commissioners approved the deobligation of previously approved allocations of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds through the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) in the amount of \$645,527.47 for projects that have been completed under budget, cancelled, or no longer need the previously approved levels of funding: National Fitness Courts \$137,888.48, IVCBA – Mainstreet \$3.00, Community Foundation of Northern Nevada \$0.01, Sun Valley GID – Gepford and Highland Ranch Parks \$7.98, Seven Magic Mountains \$500,000, Incline Village Justice Court Renovations \$7,628.00. Approving increased allocations to following approved projects in the amount of \$645,527.47: Washoe Behavioral Health Center (formerly West Hills) Facility Upgrades in the amount of \$637,899.47, Tahoe Lending Locals Program in the amount of \$7,628.00.

For all Board of County Commissioner actions related to the American Rescue Plan Act Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds between July 20, 2021 through January 28, 2026 visit the [Washoe County ARPA webpage](#).

BACKGROUND

On March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act was signed into law, and established the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund and Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund. The passage of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in 2021 provided a lifeline for local governments through its State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) program, which awarded every municipality a portion of \$65.1 billion in funding. Washoe County was awarded a grant of \$91,587,038 in State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). Under the SLFRF program, recipients must obligate all award funds by December 31, 2024, and expend all funds by December 31, 2026.

The statute requires that SLFRF funds may only be used to cover costs incurred by December 31, 2024. Treasury implemented this requirement by providing that a cost is considered incurred by December 31, 2024, if a recipient has incurred an **obligation** with respect to the cost by December 31, 2024. Under the rule adopted in 2021, an “obligation” means an order placed for property and services and entering contracts, subawards, and similar transactions that require payment.

The [US Code of Federal Regulations](#) defines “obligation” as “an order placed for property and services and entering into contracts, subawards, and similar transactions that require payment.” The U.S. Treasury has further clarified that “similar transactions that require payment” may include certain [interagency agreements](#) and, under certain circumstances, payroll expenses for recipients’ employees. Consequently, municipalities must do more than budget their SLFRF dollars they must allow extra time to place orders and negotiate contracts. Finalizing obligations, including funds used for revenue replacement, includes reporting the obligation through the normal reporting process.

Treasury considers an interagency agreement, including an agreement in the form of a memorandum of understanding (MOU), to constitute a “transaction requiring payment” similar to a contract or subaward and therefore an obligation for purposes of the SLFRF rule, if the agreement satisfies one of the following conditions:

- it imposes conditions on the use of funds by the agency, department, or part of government receiving funds to carry out the program;
- it governs the provision of funds from one agency, department, or part of government to another to carry out an eligible use of SLFRF funds; or
- it governs the procurement of goods or services by one agency, department, or part of government from another and the agreement also satisfies each of the following conditions:
 - it sets forth specific requirements, such as a scope of work and project deliverables;
 - it is signed by the parties to the agreement, or otherwise evidences that each party has assented to the agreement; and

- it does not disclaim any binding effect or state that it does not create rights or obligations.

ARPA regulations require local governments to return grant funding that remains unobligated beyond the end-of-year deadline December 31, 2024.

With the Board of County Commissioners' approval for the final SLFRF allocations and subsequent MOUs for these projects prior to December 31, 2024; Washoe County's \$91,587,038 in State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds has been fully obligated. These obligations include contracts, subgrant agreements, and Memorandum of Understandings for projects being implemented through Washoe County.

In general, recipients cannot re-obligate funds or obligate additional SLFRF funds after the obligation deadline of December 31, 2024. However, if a contract entered into by December 31, 2024, expressly provides for change orders or contract contingencies, the recipient may use SLFRF funds to cover increased costs attributable to such change orders or contract contingencies. Such increased costs are not considered new obligations but are instead attributable to a preexisting obligation to accommodate the change or contingency.

Additionally, recipients may cover the cost of amendments to contracts if the amended contract is within substantially the same scope and for substantially the same purpose as the contract that was incurred by December 31, 2024. This flexibility is consistent with recipients' ability to terminate a contract for convenience and to use SLFRF funds for costs associated with change orders and contingencies that are contemplated by their contracts and subawards.

Community Foundation of Northern Nevada – Nonprofit Capacity Building

Northern Nevada's nonprofit sector is the backbone of community well-being. Delivering essential, life-changing services across health, housing, youth development, arts, the environment, and more. Yet many nonprofits lack access to capacity building opportunities and investments.

The Nonprofit Capacity Building Collaborative emerged from a series of interconnected efforts to better understand and respond to nonprofit capacity needs in Northern Nevada. The Nonprofit Capacity Landscape Analysis, commissioned by the Community Foundation of Northern Nevada, revealed that capacity building remains a critical yet under-resourced area.

In Washoe County, the findings highlighted a clear mismatch between demand for capacity building services, availability of providers, and the cost of support. These insights helped shape a strategic planning process funded by Washoe County, which further elevated the need for a coordinated, system-level response. Collectively, this work informed and inspired the launch of the Nonprofit Capacity Building Collaborative as a pilot initiative designed to address the identified gaps.

The Nonprofit Capacity Building Collaborative (NCBC), led by the Community Foundation of Northern Nevada, exists to solve this problem through a coordinated,

multi-year funder-led initiative that strengthens Washoe County nonprofits from the inside out. The goal is to educate organizations and provide tools to help them sustain their mission in a rapidly changing environment. This three-year collaboration aims to:

- Increase organizational resilience
- Strengthen leadership and governance
- Build diversified, sustainable revenue models
- Improve operational and financial systems
- Foster shared learning

Through carefully designed cohort experience, nonprofits receive organizational health assessments, technical assistance, fundraising training, mini-grants, and donor-facing opportunities that position them for long-term sustainability and greater impact.

The Nonprofit Capacity Building Collaborative is a three-year, multi-phase program combining four critical phases to strengthen nonprofit performance:

1. **Phase 1: Organizational Health Assessments** – to understand where organizations stand
2. **Phase 2: Technical Assistance & Systems Building** – to strengthen internal infrastructure
3. **Phase 3: Fundraising & Development Training** – to grow skills that increase individual donations and financial resilience
4. **Phase 4: Leadership Development & Training** – Group learning experiences, including cohort-based workshops and peer learning sessions. Focused on improving operational systems.

Each year, 20–25 mid-sized nonprofits with annual budgets of \$500K–\$5M will participate. The initiative will support three cohorts in total.

The Nonprofit Capacity Building Collaborative is a pilot initiative. As such, the program will be closely monitored, evaluated, and assessed throughout its implementation to inform learning, continuous improvement, and potential future scaling. This is a three-year project with an annual budget of \$200,000 funded collaboratively by Washoe County, the CFNN, the NV Energy Foundation and the Redfield Foundation. This award of \$100,000 partially funds the first year of the project.

Aha Projects – Aha Connects - Nonprofit Capacity Building

Aha Connects, is a Nonprofit Resource Center that addresses the most persistent challenges facing charitable organizations in Northern Nevada. AHA Connects is being built to gather nonprofits together under one roof. The space is designed to offer affordable office and coworking space, shared meeting and event areas, and opportunities for organizations to collaborate, learn, and grow together. The goal is simple: create a place where good ideas and community-focused work can thrive.

Many organizations face steep behind-the-scenes challenges: limited administrative capacity, unaffordable workspace, limited volunteer-led operations, and constant financial pressure. While their missions are impactful, the lack of infrastructure and support systems hinders long-term sustainability, impact, and growth.

With the support of a family foundation, Aha Projects purchased a 16,000-square-foot building at 199 East Moana Lane in Reno for \$3,750,000, establishing AHA Connects, a Nonprofit Resource Center, which will offer:

- Affordable, below-market rental space for nonprofits, including private offices, meeting rooms, event venues, and secure storage — all within a collaborative, community-focused environment.
- Fiscal sponsorship to reduce administrative burden and enable community members to launch impactful projects without the need to form a new 501(c)(3).
- A network of shared services (such as HR, bookkeeping, grant writing, etc.) that small organizations can access together at a reduced cost. Also, it includes plans to expand into outsourced accounting for established nonprofits.
- Year-round learning and collaboration opportunities include lunch-and-learns, Reno-specific training videos (e.g., 990s, compliance), and expert-led workshops. An online, nonprofit community channel will foster ongoing peer learning and knowledge exchange.
- A membership-based model providing discounted space rentals, day passes, access to convenings, and shared resources.

Washoe County works closely with nonprofit partners every day to serve our community. Supporting AHA Connects aligns with our shared goal of strengthening collaboration, innovation, and long-term impact across Northern Nevada. This project is a great example of how strong relationships and shared spaces can help communities do better work together. This grant award in the amount of \$55,000, will support the final stages of development by funding critical infrastructure and workspace improvements

FISCAL IMPACT

Sufficient authority exists in the Adopted Fiscal Year 2026 budget within Internal Order 12309-Community Reinvestment Rev Rec, and included in the Community Reinvestment Administration Memorandum of Understanding executed prior to December 31, 2024, obligation deadline.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation, to approve award of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds through the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) in the total amount of [\$155,000], approve associated resolutions, and authorize the County Manager to sign necessary award documents for the following two subrecipient agreements. Both agreements are focused on nonprofit capacity building as included in the Community Reinvestment Administration Memorandum of Understanding executed prior to the December 31, 2024, obligation deadline.

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20-25 Washoe County participating nonprofits. Assistance will be tailored to each organization's priority areas identified through assessments; and leadership development and training group learning experiences, including cohort-based workshops and peer learning sessions, focused on improving operational systems.

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POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be: "move to approve award of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds through the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) in the total amount of [\$155,000], approve associated resolutions, and authorize the County Manager to sign necessary award documents for the following two subrecipient agreements. Both agreements are focused on nonprofit capacity building as included in the Community Reinvestment Administration Memorandum of Understanding executed prior to the December 31, 2024, obligation deadline.

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