Family Homelessness in Denver

June 22, 2026

Cole Chandler, Executive Director, HOST

Recap and Updates

Family Homelessness Goals 2027

Ensure that no child must sleep outside in Denver.

Reduce the waitlist for shelter to under 100 families.

Reduce family homelessness by 20% (<455 households in HMIS on 12/31/2027)

Tracking Progress on Family Goals

Goal	Progress Measurement
Ensure that no child must sleep outside in Denver	Unsheltered PIT count Reduction in 311 cases Shelter capacity
Reduce the waitlist for family shelter to under 100	Waitlist numbers Unique households sheltered
Reduce family homelessness by 20% (<455 households in HMIS on 12/31/2027)	PIT count (sheltered + unsheltered) HMIS data # of newly homeless families # of family homelessness exits # of prevention interventions

Family Homelessness: Next Steps

1. Create an emergency shelter for families to ensure no family is turned away (in progress, to open by the end 2027)

2. Create a physical location for Connection Center program and serve as the front door to the system that provides more effective screening and case management (in progress, to open in early 2027)

3. Improve coordinated case management for families in the shelter system (in progress)

4. Identify resources for additional prevention, rapid resolution, rapid-rehousing, and housing vouchers (identified 50 housing vouchers and seeking additional funding)

5. Identify resources to address cuts to the social safety net including childcare, employment, legal services, etc. (not started)

Increased Financial Commitment for Families

Item	Amount	Funding Source
30 Additional NCS Units through DRM	$600,000	HRF
Family Shelter Capital Improvements	$1,000,000	ARPA/ CIP
Family Shelter Service Contract	$1,800,000	HRF
Connection Center Service Contract	TBD	HRF
50 Housing Vouchers	TBD	Federal Housing Vouchers
Additional Rapid Rehousing Resources for Families	TBD	HRF

DRM: Denver Rescue Mission
HRF: Homeless Resolution Fund
ARPA: American Rescue Plan Act
CIP: Capital Improvement Plan

Total = $3.4M+ In Increased Supports for Families

Implementaion Timeline

March 2026 – Council Briefings on Family Homelessness

April 2026 – RFP Open for Family Emergency Shelter and Connection Center Services

June 2026 – Councilmembers offered briefings on Family Homelessness Resource Allocation

June 2026 – Capital Dollars for Family Emergency Shelter moving through City Council

Late Summer 2026 – Community Engagement Process for Emergency Family Shelter

Fall 2026 – Service Contract Moving through City Council

Winter 2026 – Family Emergency Shelter Opens before Cold Weather Season

Summary

HOST and DOF are requesting Council support to reallocate approximately $1M in unspent ARPA funding to support families experiencing homelessness in Denver.

ARPA Spend-Down Update and Closeout Plan

Justin Sykes, Budget & Management Director, DOF

Requested City Council Action

Bill Number 26-0926 | Amends Ordinance No. 591, Series of 2021, as amended by Ordinance No. 706, Series of 2021, as amended by Ordinance No. 1145, Series of 2021, as amended by Ordinance No. 1192, Series of 2021, as amended by Ordinance No. 374, Series of 2022, as amended by Ordinance No. 969, Series of 2022, as amended by Ordinance No. 1450, Series of 2022, as amended by Ordinance No. 0548, Series of 2023, as amended by Ordinance No. 1326, Series of 2023, as amended by Ordinance No. 1683, Series of 2023, as amended by Ordinance No. 0802, Series of 2024, as amended by Ordinance No. 1561, Series of 2024, as amended by Ordinance No. 1712, Series of 2025, to transfer cash from the ARPA Operating Grant Fund (11011) to the ARPA Capital Grant Fund (38395) for HOST Micro Communities Projects and to allocate interest earnings in the Administration Category to support ARPA-related personnel and federal grant software and related subscriptions through 2027.

ARPA Program Status and Final Spend-Down Strategy

Goal:

- ✓ Provide an overview of funding Denver received from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
- ✓ Review the city’s ARPA expenditures
- ✓ Ensure all capacity is used before the upcoming federal spending deadline

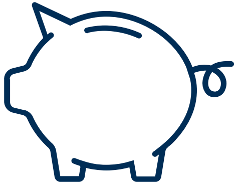
What Is ARPA?

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
Federal legislation enacted in March 2021 to support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)
A component of ARPA that provided direct funding to state and local governments.

Denver's ARPA SLFRF Allocation

- Total allocation: approximately **$308 million**
- Received in two equal tranches (in 2021 and 2022)
- Funds available for eligible recovery and investment activities
- Subject to federal reporting and compliance requirements



Key Federal Deadlines

Milestone	Deadline	Importance
Obligation Deadline	Dec. 31, 2024	Funds must be committed eligible use.
Expenditure Deadline	Dec. 31, 2026	Funds must be spent on eligible costs

Any unspent funds after Dec. 31, 2026, must be returned to the federal government.

Denver's ARPA Strategy

The City approached ARPA as both:

Pandemic Recovery Funding

- Public health response
- Economic stabilization
- Housing and homelessness support
- Community recovery

Strategic One-Time Investment

- Strengthening city services
- Expanding housing and shelter capacity
- Supporting behavioral health
- Investing in neighborhoods

The **Stimulus Investment Advisory Committee** gathered feedback and met numerous times to inform how funding was programmed. Guiding principles included community input, an equity-focused recovery, and transparency.

Where ARPA Funds Were Invested

Housing & Homelessness
- Shelter capacity
- Affordable housing
- Housing stability initiatives

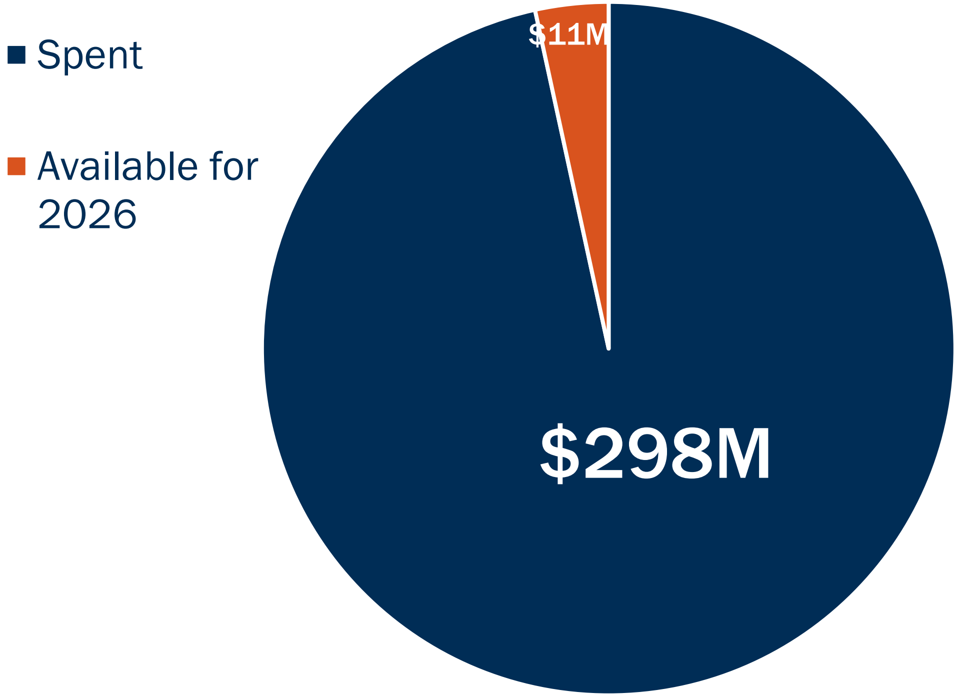
Behavioral/Public Health
- Mental health services
- Substance use treatment
- Violence prevention

Community Investments
- Youth programs
- Community organizations
- Neighborhood recovery

Economic Recovery
- Small business support
- Workforce development
- Corrido activation

Learn more: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/6b885654359d41508a97bc8f8ea46ca6

Current Program Status – June 2026



Current Focus

- Monitoring expenditures
- Managing project closeout
- Reallocating unused capacity
- Ensuring full spend-down by federal deadline (12/31/26)

Why Reallocations Are Needed

As Projects Mature

Some projects:

- Are coming in under budget
- No longer require their full allocation
- Have experienced scope or implementation changes

Result

ARPA funding capacity has become available (estimated to be about $1M by year-end)

Challenge

Federal rules significantly limit how remaining ARPA capacity may be repurposed

City Goal

Ensure every available ARPA dollar is utilized for eligble purposes before Dec. 31, 2026

Where is Projected ARPA Underspend?

- **Projected ARPA underspend will evolve between now and the end of the year but is currently projected at ~$1M (or 0.3% of the $308M total award).**
- **The Dept. of Finance is coordinating with agencies to track projected ARPA spend down.**
- **Current ARPA underspend projections include:**
  - $265K for compliance oversight and $140K for public health in Dept. of Public Health and Environment projects related to public health out of $2.4M awarded
  - $200K in Dept. of Finance ARPA administration
  - $200K in already completed ARPA projects across various agencies
  - $120K in Dept. of Housing Stability projects related to sheltering out of $13.7M awarded
  - $90K in Dept. of General Services contract related to post-encampment security services
  - *There may be other projects NOT projected to underspend at this time that end up underspending.*

IMPORTANT: No dollars are being pulled from projects in advance, and no agencies/nonprofits are being asked to intentionally underspend. This action is to absorb organic underspend.

Proposed Spend-Down Strategy

Step 1

Reallocate available ARPA funding to Micro Communities project.

****Requires Council approval to transfer ARPA cash between operating and capital fund.*

Step 2

Use ARPA funding to support eligible expenditures with that project.

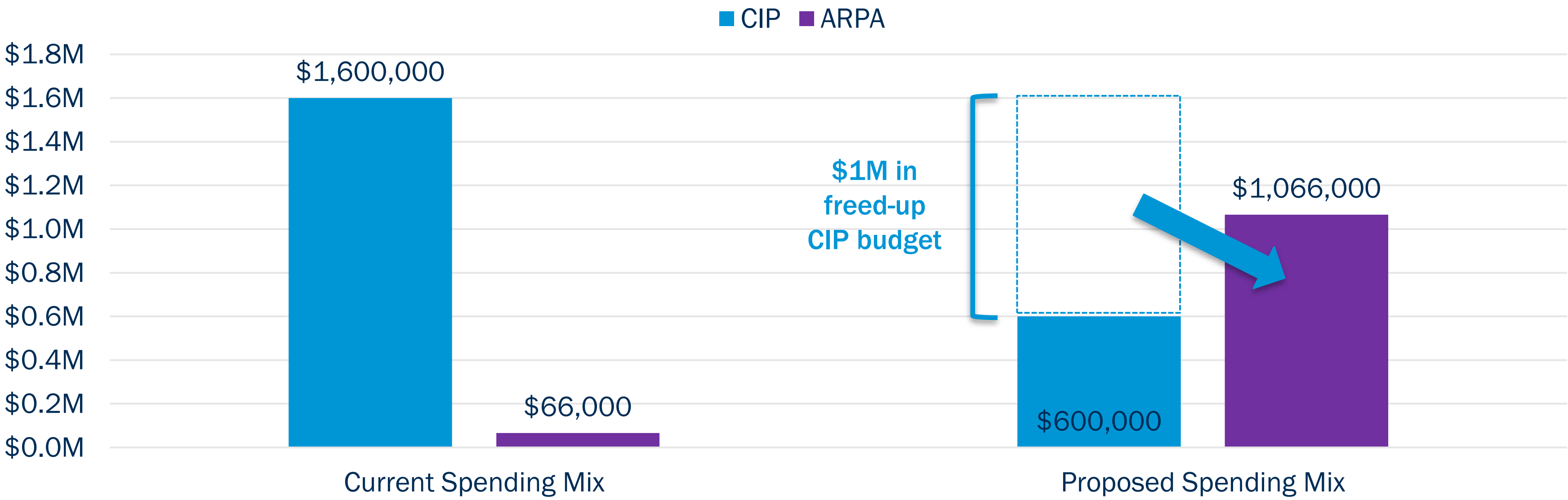
Step 3

Free previously expended capital improvement program (CIP) resources.

Step 4

Redirect freed-up CIP resources high-priority capital needs, including family shelter improvements.

Visualization of Proposed Source Shift



Under either scenario, total project expenditures are <u>$1.666M</u> – the only change is which source covers which amount.

DENVER
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

Appendix

Excerpts of Key ARPA Rules

17.1. How does a recipient incur an obligation?

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 into contracts, subawards, and similar transactions that require payment. Under the amendment to the rule adopted in 2023, an obligation also includes a requirement under federal law or regulation or provision of the SLFRF award terms and conditions to which a recipient becomes subject as a result of receiving or expending SLFRF funds.

17.16. Under what circumstances may a recipient use SLFRF to cover cost increases attributable to a contract that is entered into by December 31, 2024?

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.

17.2. What happens to funds not obligated by December 31, 2024?

Recipients are required to return to Treasury any SLFRF funds that have not been obligated by the obligation deadline of December 31, 2024. Recipients will report funds that were obligated by December 31, 2024, in the Project and Expenditure Report that, in the case of annual reporters, is due by April 30, 2025, and, in the case of quarterly reporters, is due by January 31, 2025. However, recipients are not required to return to Treasury SLFRF funds that recipients have estimated will cover costs in 2025 and 2026 for certain legal and administrative expenses (as discussed in FAQs 17.10-13), certain personnel expenses (as discussed in FAQs 17.7 and 17.8), or certain contract changes or contingencies (as discussed in FAQ 17.17). As noted in the obligation IFR, Treasury will provide a deadline by which recipients must return funds not obligated by December 31, 2024.

17.19. After December 31, 2024, may a recipient use SLFRF funds that were initially obligated but ultimately not expended for an eligible activity?

After the December 31, 2024, obligation deadline, recipients may have excess funds that were obligated as of the deadline but ultimately not expended on an eligible activity. For example, a subrecipient or contractor may perform work under-budget, thereby freeing up previously obligated funds. As another example, the recipient, an auditor, or Treasury may determine that a recipient's planned project is not an eligible activity. In such cases, the recipient may reclassify the SLFRF funds from the original activity to another project that would be eligible under the SLFRF program rules, including the requirement that the recipient incurred an obligation by December 31, 2024, to expend funds on the activity.

Data on Family Homelessness

HMIS Data: 2025

Household experiencing homelessness 01/01/2025	**503**
Households that became homeless in 2025	983
Households that returned to homelessness in 2025	82
Households with documented exits from homelessness in 2025	311
Household that became inactive in the systems in 2025	686
Households experiencing homelessness on 12/31/2025	**571**
Change (13% increase in 2025)	**68**
Number of unique households that received services in 2025	1574
% of unique households that were homeless less than 1 year	70.4%
% of unique households that were chronically homeless	5.7%

PIT Data (households)

Year	Sheltered	Unsheltered	First Time Homeless
2022	234	1	136
2023	356	40	274
2024	579	9	293
2025	694	7	322
2026	667*	1	221

*Number of people is up, but total households are down by 4%

Shelter Waitlist

Date	# Families	# Newcomers	% Newcomers	# Bed Openings
6/1/2023	89	1	1%	5
3/4/2024	82	33	40%	0
3/4/2025	145	Not available	Estimate 47%	4
2/19/26	356	Not available	Estimate 50%	5
6/1/26	191	Not available	Estimate 55%	2

Average days on list=54, approximately 300 families sheltered

Shelter Units

Year	# Family Shelter Units
2022	194
2023	203
2024	271
2025	303
2026*	325

*Loss of beds and the addition of the Crossing on 6/1/26 and the planned emergency shelter on 10/1/26

Housing Outcomes

Year	# of Households that Exited to Permanent Housing
2022	159
2023	303
2024	335
2025	311

Eviction and Homelessness Prevention

Year	# of families served with Temporary Rental and Utility Assistance
2025	847

311 Calls

Year	Calls Related to Homelessness	Calls Related to Homelessness Involving Children	Percentage of Homelessness Involving Children
2022	26484	254	1.0%
2023	22407	1589	7.1%
2024	12502	703	5.6%
2025	8956	374	4.2%

Action Steps & Results

Family Homelessness: Steps Taken (1 of 2)

1. Expanded rapid rehousing to serve an additional 30 newcomer households in 2026
2. Established an outreach team that focuses on families
3. Implemented an RV outreach program that serves families with children
4. Improved the Connection Center program to serve as a more effective front door
5. Redirected 20 HCVs for families in 2025 and 50 in 2026
6. Developed a family homelessness prevention pilot with DPS
7. Implemented performance-based contracting for better outcomes at our shelters

Family Homelessness: Steps Taken (2 of 2)

8. Added ten non-congregate beds in June by consolidating existing programs
9. Made improvements to screening process for cold weather shelter
10. Added an emergency hotel voucher program specifically for families
11. Expanded efforts to support families with one-time assistance
12. Developed clear policies on the prioritization of unsheltered families in our programs
13. Established weekly HRCP office hours to support providers working with newcomers

Family Homelessness: Results

- 99% reduction in unsheltered homelessness between the 2023 and 2026 PIT Counts
- 29% reduction in newly homeless households between the 2025 and 2026 PIT Counts
- 4% reduction in homeless families between the 2025 and 2026 PIT Counts
- 41% reduction in the average number of families using cold weather shelter between the 2025 and 2026 seasons
- 35% reduction in the shelter waitlist between January and June 2026

Projected Costs & Funding Updates

Estimated Cost/Intervention

- Prevention ($3k-8k/household) – eviction prevention with services.
- Rapid Resolution ($500-$5,000/intervention) – one time, deposit, onward travel, etc.
- Rapid Rehousing ($25-$35k/household) – one time, subsidies + services.
- Permanent Housing ($30-$40k/household) – permanent, subsidies + services.
- Congregate Shelter ($100-$130/family/night) – 24/7 including food and services.
- Hotel Vouchers ($130/family/night) – overnight only, not including staffing, food, or any services.
- Non-Congregate Shelter ($140-$160/family/night) – 24/7 including food and services, does not include capital, security, maintenance or leasing costs).