



Legislation Text

File #: 2009-0290, **Version:** 1

Clerk 04/23/2009

AN ORDINANCE relating to oversight of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds; ensuring public transparency and accountability for funds managed by county government.

STATEMENT OF FACTS:

1. On February 17 2009, the President of the United States signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act ("ARRA") providing \$787.2 billion in an economic stimulus package, which includes some new federal aid for local government. ARRA is the largest single infusion of spending (\$575.3 billion) and tax cuts (\$211.9 billion) made by Congress into the United States economy in American history.
2. Congress and the President intend ARRA to stimulate economic growth and create jobs by providing funding for more than seventy-five federal programs, many of which will also benefit local governments. In some cases local government funding has been provided by direct federal appropriation or through already established formulas or procedures; and in other cases federal agencies will host a grant competition in the near future for local governments seeking to obtain additional stimulus dollars.
3. According to congressional and administration projections, ARRA will create or preserve approximately seventy-five thousand jobs in Washington state over the next two years. Based on this projection and King County's current working age population, the stimulus funding could create or preserve approximately twenty-three thousand jobs countywide, if state pass-through

funds are allocated as expected and local jurisdictions and agencies are successful in applying for and receiving state and federal grants associated with ARRA.

4. ARRA includes provisions to promote the public's ability to monitor spending and accomplishments for the funded programs. The federal executive branch has launched www.recovery.gov <<http://www.recovery.gov>> as its official website to track spending and offer transparency for the ARRA programs; and the United States Vice President will oversee the implementation of the stimulus spending package in conjunction with a newly established Recovery Act Transparency and Accountability Board.

5. Between \$7 billion and \$10 billion in federal stimulus money might eventually come to Washington state. Slightly less than half of this money will directly support state government programs, with the balance passed from the federal government directly to local governments such as schools, cities, housing authorities, counties and other agencies. By executive order, the Governor has ordered the creation of a new web site at www.recovery.wa.gov <<http://www.recovery.wa.gov>> so every Washingtonian can see where federal dollars allocated to state use are going and to hold state government accountable.

6. Some federal ARRA funds allocated within the state of Washington for state improvements and programs will also benefit residents of King County. While the funds will benefit King County residents, these are state-managed ARRA programs for which King County has no management responsibility. Between these state programs and other grant opportunities, current ARRA funding is projected to provide approximately: \$151 million in transportation funding, including state highways and roads projects; \$86.3 million for state education programs (early education, K - 12; colleges; worker training); \$4.8 million for public safety; \$7 million for health and human services; \$17 million for energy related programs and projects; and \$233,000 for military base improvements. Increases to these estimated amounts will be subject to King County, its cities and other agencies successful application and award of grant funding under ARRA, in addition to other direct allocations.

7. King County gratefully acknowledges direct allocation of federal ARRA grant awards for several programs that are administered by county government, including, but not limited to:

homelessness prevention, neighborhood stabilization and community development, Workforce Investment Act, "HOME" Program, Byrne Justice Assistance Grant, brownfields, employment training, energy efficiency and conservation block grants, public health clinics and community health centers, health care for the homeless, low-income weatherization grants, and flood control.

8. Receipt of additional ARRA funding will be contingent upon successful award of competitive grants, in program areas managed by county government including but not limited to: public health, public safety, natural resources, transportation, transit, water quality, human services,

public housing and airport improvement.

9. Current projections estimate a funding shortfall of \$43.4 million for the county current expense fund in 2010; and the Metro transit budget faces a shortfall of nearly \$100 million in 2010. In general, federal ARRA funds may provide aid and stability to some important programs of county government, but will not provide substantial relief to the significant funding shortfalls facing the general operation of essential county services. ARRA and other federal appropriations provide significant aid to Metro transit, and much smaller contributions are projected for justice system support and public health funding that will provide welcome, albeit minor, respite to the county general fund in 2010.

10. The council intends that the people of King County have access to information regarding federal economic stimulus grants administered by King County, so that every county resident can see where federal dollars allocated to county use are going and can hold county government accountable for successful project completion.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. Within five days of the effective date of this ordinance, the executive shall designate one employee as recovery act coordinator, to serve as liaison between the county's federal government consultant in monitoring legislation and competitive funding opportunities from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and with county departments. The coordinator shall regularly:

A. Identify all appropriate competitive grant opportunities and provide estimated timelines for agency application submittals for competitive grants to departmental and independent elected officials, ensuring adequate time to complete applications and for submittal to the federal government;

B. Participate in a team led by the deputy county executive made up of representatives from county government and invited representatives of city and other local governments to help streamline permit readiness for qualifying projects, to advise agencies on how best to educate project proponents about readying their

projects for timely application and permit approval and to monitor the status of expeditious permit reviews.

The recovery act coordinator shall facilitate interagency and intergovernmental grant applications as needed to improve competitive ranking for federal funds; and

C. Monitor county American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funded programs and projects and provide accurate information summaries for dissemination to the council, county agencies and to the people of King County including the associated jobs created and preserved via the program and project investments.

SECTION 2. Within twenty days of the effective date of this ordinance and once a month thereafter until January 2010, the executive shall submit a brief report to the council listing all American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant programs and projects currently being applied for or pending award and programs and projects awarded funding by the federal government or passed through the state of Washington for management by county government. Program and project information shall include estimated costs for completion, duration, descriptions and outcomes anticipated, including job creation and preservation, and appropriate contact information for assigned county staff. The report shall identify pertinent funding obligations, restrictions or encumbrances on county government associated with each grant award. The report shall also include an estimated benefit, if any, to the county current expense fund relative to the projected 2010 deficit for each grant award. The report must be filed in the form of eleven copies with the clerk of the council, who shall retain the original and will forward copies to each councilmember and to the lead staff of the budget and fiscal management committee, or its successor.

SECTION 3. Within twenty days of the effective date of this ordinance, the executive shall establish a web page listing American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant programs and projects currently being applied for or pending award and programs and projects awarded funding by the federal government or passed through the state of Washington for management by county government. Programs and project information shall include estimated costs for completion, duration, descriptions and outcomes anticipated, including jobs created or preserved, and appropriate contact information for county staff. The executive shall arrange to have the web

page information updated at least monthly, following review by the county recovery act coordinator. The executive may wish to provide links from the county's economic stimulus web page to federal and state American Recovery and Reinvestment Act web sites.

SECTION 4. When King County is applying for federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds for programs and projects, priority shall be given for competitive funding opportunities that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- A. Funding opportunities for programs and projects that create or preserve jobs in King County;
- B. Funding opportunities that specifically address or seek to rectify funding shortfalls in the 2009 adopted county budget for those programs that do not have twelve-month funding;
- C. Funding opportunities that promote public safety by providing funds for county law enforcement, prosecution, courts and public defense;
- D. Funding opportunities that sustain essential public health programs, consistent with the adopted public health operational master plan; and
- E. Funding opportunities that: support essential regional human services, such as public housing and homeless shelters; improve safety conditions for the people of King County through maintenance or replacement of antiquated buildings or other structures; address inefficient transportation infrastructure; improve or replace antiquated emergency management communications and technology; sustain public transit operations or improve transit equipment; or improve energy efficiency of county operations and county facilities.