

## **RANKIN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

### **STATEMENT ABOUT AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDS**

In March, 2021, Congress authorized distribution of federal funds to counties across the United States pursuant to the American Rescue Plan Act for use in (1) off-setting negative financial impacts of the pandemic suffered by local communities; and (2) to make investments in infrastructure associated with water, sewer and broadband technology. With the funding came interim regulations issued by the United States Treasury setting restrictions on the use of ARPA funds by counties. The restrictions are voluminous, difficult to follow, and subject to multiple and various interpretations. What is also very clearly stated in the regulations is that any funds that are “misspent” according to the federal government’s interpretation must be repaid to the federal government. Based on these responsibilities, the Rankin County Board of Supervisors has carefully analyzed several projects that are believed to meet the criteria established by U.S. Treasury. The cost estimates for the projects that have already been identified will require a commitment of nearly all of the ARPA funds provided to Rankin County.

In 2019, the Rankin County Board of Supervisors adopted its County-Wide Storm Water Management Plan and has, since the adoption of the Plan, initiated the implementation phase of the Program. The Board has authorized the creation of specific watershed plans that serve to address endemic storm water issues that impact the quality of the County’s drinking water, the county’s water quality generally, and provide for measures that address soil erosion, flood control, and many other related impacts outlined in the County’s plan. In keeping with the Board of Supervisors’ already-established Storm Water Management Plan, the Board is focusing on uses of ARPA funds that will serve to accelerate the implementation of the Plan to more quickly promote the stated goals outlined in the Plan. The Board has invested heavily in an evaluation process that serves to pre-qualify individual projects and numerous projects have already been identified and evaluated for compliance. The Board is satisfied at present that its plan for use of the funds is sound and that each project that has been identified addresses critical and necessary functions of county government for which the Board of Supervisors is responsible.

While the Board of Supervisors understands that there are a number of ways in which ARPA funding could potentially be used, the Board has already determined that its Storm Water Management Plan occupies a position of high priority and the Board intends to focus on its Storm Water Management Plan for use of the majority of its ARPA funds. For these reasons, the Board does not expect to entertain other potential uses of its ARPA funds.